

THROUGH THE LENS OF THE LAND:
*Reflections from Archaeology, Ethnoecology, and
Environmental Science on Collaborations with
First Nations, 1970s to the Present*

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You need to meet communities where they're at.
– *Siemthlut* Michele Washington

INTRODUCTION

Collaborative research around the world has burgeoned over the past decade and a half, as can be seen from even a quick search in Web of Science. In British Columbia, collaborations among academic scholars and Indigenous communities have a much deeper history. It could be argued that collaborations began in the late 1800s with the efforts of William Beynon, George Hunt, and James Teit – whose work continues to connect Indigenous peoples and Western scholars (Newell 2015; Wickwire, forthcoming).

Since the late nineteenth century, relationships between university-based scholars and Indigenous peoples have evolved considerably. Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, experts, and knowledge holders in British Columbia have been at the forefront of discussions about the asymmetries of such relationships and have offered avenues towards more balanced (decolonized) partnerships (e.g., Angelbeck and Grier 2014; Carlson et al. 2018; Ignace et al. 1993; Martindale and Lyons 2014; McDonald 2004; Menzies 2001, 2004; Nicholas and Hollowell 2007; Salomon et al. 2018). Many have actively created such partnerships, within British Columbia and beyond.

We have been participants in these conversations and partnerships as non-Indigenous scholars and from the vantage points of our respective disciplines. Dana is an academic anthropological archaeologist and ethnoecologist. Since the early 1980s, she has worked with BC First Nations and academics in the natural and social sciences to understand how people interact with their biological worlds. Ken is a forest ecologist,

who, since the mid 1980s, has worked at the interface of ecosystem science, management, and communities. We have worked together on a variety of social-ecological projects with First Nations communities. We agree that collaborative research, which encompasses diverse perspectives and knowledge, results in more ethical research *and* better science. By “collaborative,” we refer to mutually respectful relationships in which each party benefits and has equal voice in setting the relationship’s parameters.

Here, we reflect on the development and legacies of these collaborations in our fields (broadly defined) over the past five decades in British Columbia. Our discussion is biased towards areas in which we have experience, focussing on issues related to lands and resources, archaeology, and ethnoecology. Given constraints of time and space, we highlight only a subset of collaborative relations. We focus primarily on relationships between university-based scholars in our fields and First Nations in British Columbia, recognizing that these parameters exclude many other meaningful collaborations.¹

We begin our discussion in the 1970s, with only a nod to the decades leading up to it. We do so not only to further limit the scope of the article, or because this period coincides with the birth of this journal, but because it is when collaborations in British Columbia really started to flourish. The work of pioneering researchers like Wilson Duff, Audrey and Harry Hawthorn, and Nancy Turner prior to this time foreshadowed the collaborations of the 1970s. All of these early partnerships laid the foundation for initiatives that remain ongoing today.

We contextualize our historical review within developments in our respective disciplines and socio-political transformations across British Columbia and Canada. There are many more examples of collaborations than we list or discuss in the text. Excellent summaries of the development of the relationship between BC First Nations and archaeology and archaeologists can be found in Roy (2010), Klaasen (2013), and Roth (2015). Here we focus on a few examples that influenced and inspired us in our careers.

Our review highlights three themes: (1) from the outset, BC First Nations took the lead in crafting academic-community collaborations; (2) on the academic side, most early collaborations involved anthro-

¹ For instance, we don’t discuss the many cutting-edge collaborative relationships forged by BC scholars working primarily outside of the province (e.g., Cathy D’Andrea’s work in Ethiopia [e.g., Nixon-Darcus and D’Andrea 2017] and Julie Cruikshank’s work in the Yukon Territory [Cruikshank 1990]), the collaborations between non-university affiliated museums and BC First Nations, or the rise of Indigenous-led, community-based museums (e.g., Haida Gwaii Museum).

pologists or practitioners of related disciplines; and (3) more recent projects, while involving more researchers from more disciplines, and sometimes having multiple goals, are based on the same collaborative principles as many of the earlier collaborations that developed between individual researchers and community partners.

THE 1970s

In the 1970s, collaborations between academics and BC First Nations blossomed for many reasons, not the least of which were the expanding arenas for social justice and activism in North America. Indigenous activists and scholars challenged non-Indigenous people to recognize Indigenous perspectives of current social-economic contexts (e.g., Manuel and Posluns 1974). Anthropologists, including archaeologists, were challenged to justify the relevance of their discipline and, indeed, its very foundations (Deloria 1969). This self-reflexivity likely motivated many early collaborative efforts. This time of social action certainly motivated ecologists to use ecological science to address environmental problems and, in the late 1970s, resulted in the rise of the field of conservation biology. In Canada, the landmark report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry led by Judge Thomas Berger in 1977 was an inspiring model for highlighting community voices in resource development. However, with some notable exceptions (e.g., Fikret Berkes [Berkes 2018], Robert E. Johannes [Ruddle 2007]), it was many years before environmental scientists were engaged broadly in community-centred collaborations with First Nations.

In British Columbia, the 1970s saw many new collaborations between young ethnographers and First Nations. Indigenous community members chose, and sometimes actively sought, to work with these academic partners so that they could tell their story in their own way either as a personal narrative (e.g., Blackman 1982)² or to represent broader cultural knowledge (e.g., Turner and Bell 1971; Turner 1975; Ridington and Ridington 1978; Kennedy and Bouchard 1983; Sequin Anderson and Blumhagen 1994). This sharing was often done in the context of seeking support for environmental or social battles the community was facing (e.g., Kew 2017; Albright 1982).

Archaeology has always been a natural entry point for working with First Nations communities. In British Columbia, this began before the 1970s in the form of hiring First Nations as crew members or as consultants, and

² The most recent BC contribution to the genre of personal narratives is by Tla'amin Elder Dr. Elsie Paul (Paul 2014).

seeking permission to excavate on traditional lands. In 1973, in recognition of the inherent interest by First Nations in archaeological heritage, Della Kew from Musqueam and Ardyth Cooper from T'souke Nation were appointed to the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board (ASAB) – the archaeological advisory board composed largely of academics (Klaasen 2013; Roy 2010). Out of these early encounters, with archaeologists such as Philip Hobler, Roy Carlson, and Charles Borden, long-term friendships and working relationships developed. Throughout this time, however, First Nations voices in archaeology were limited, and the archaeological endeavour was largely driven by non-Indigenous archaeologists (Klaasen 2013).

Ethnohistorian Wendy Wickwire's relationship with Silyx storyteller Harry Robinson is one example of the personal collaborations that were initiated in the 1970s (Robinson 1989; Wickwire, forthcoming). As Wickwire (forthcoming) notes, her conversations with Harry and other Elders were more fluid than anything prescribed by her discipline at the time. Conversations took place over meals, while helping with tasks, or observing daily life. Such conversations were foundations for lasting friendships that transcended academic-community boundaries and, in some cases, expanded to other Indigenous communities. Fundamental to these early conversations was that the learner (i.e., the academic) truly listened and was willing to receive the knowledge being shared. Paige Raibmon (2014) aptly terms this process "transformational learning."

One of the contexts for the burgeoning collaborations of the 1970s was the establishment of First Nations cultural centres. Then, as today, such centres provided a focal place for conversations, where researchers could contact knowledge holders, obtain permissions, gain access to unpublished information, and seek help understanding the social and cultural contexts of the community. Stó:lō's Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre was one such place (founded 1973). It facilitated the research of linguist Brent Galloway (then a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley), among many other researchers. Many of the staff at Coqualeetza (e.g., Clarence Pennier, Mark Point, Frank Malloway) became Stó:lō community leaders over the subsequent decades. For many First Nations, these centres have been foundational to their current education initiatives and assertions of rights and title as well as ongoing academic-community partnerships (e.g., <https://heiltsuk.arts.ubc.ca/>).

The Nuxalk Food and Nutrition Program (NFNP, 1979–86), a collaborative multi-year study, was one of the first multi-disciplinary collaborative projects in British Columbia (Kuhnlein et al. 2013); it was not until the 1990s that such projects became more common. Harriet

Kuhnlein, a newly appointed ethnonutritionist at the University of British Columbia (UBC) headed the academic side of the project; Nancy Turner (then a research associate with the Royal BC Museum) coordinated the ethnobotanical component. The project entailed full collaboration between the academic researchers and the Nuxalk community health centre and was guided by the Nuxalk chief and council and community Elders (Kuhnlein et al. 2013). As is characteristic of good collaborations, the NFNP had longevity, as indicated by the re-visiting of the project some twenty-five years later (Turner et al. 2013).

The initial NFNP project assessed and promoted health, and documented the nutritional quality and uses of traditional foods. This was done through food events, feasts, publications, presentations, fitness classes, a community demonstration garden, and the distribution of a food handbook and a recipe book (e.g., Nuxalk Food and Nutrition Program Staff 1984). The focus on the co-creation of education and outreach materials in the NFNP was groundbreaking and has since become an essential element of many collaborations (e.g., Turner et al. 2008; the Math Catcher Outreach Program <https://www.sfu.ca/mathcatcher.html>). Dana's involvement in the NFNP, as a first-year archaeology master's student at UBC (Lepofsky et al. 1985), and especially the mentorship of Drs. Kuhnlein and Turner, and many young and Elder Nuxalk community members, was formative for her.

Among this project's important outcomes was the fact that, in 1985, the academic partners of Margaret Siwallace successfully nominated her for an honorary doctorate from UBC. Dr. Siwallace was an Elder who not only played a lead role in the NFNP, but also advised many non-Indigenous coastal scholars – including archaeologist Phil Hobbler in 1968. Dr. Siwallace was the first Indigenous woman to receive this honour from UBC – a step that reflects the increasing value that at least some academics were placing on Indigenous knowledge by the mid-1980s.

These foundational projects in the 1970s didn't necessarily have the explicit focus on land management, rights and title, or cultural heritage management that many later projects do. However, they provided a foundation and context that crossed disciplines and had influence beyond their original intent. For instance, Nancy Turner's early ethnobotanical publications inspired generations of biologists to broaden their perceptions of biology to include the cultural context for the natural world. Ken remembers a group of biology graduate students in the early 1980s talking over beer and all saying that, if they could start over, they would be ethnobotanists in the mold of Nancy Turner. Similarly, Hugh

Brody's *Maps and Dreams* (1981) inspired natural resources specialists to see beyond the formalities of resource planning to the communities and people living on the land.

THE 1980s

Anthropologists continued to examine their disciplinary practice throughout the 1980s and 1990s. As scholars note (e.g., Menzies 2004; Lyons and Blair 2018), this angst produced several positive forward moves, including more collaborative and community-centred research. Among archaeologists, there were heated debates about the possibility of multiple ways of knowing the past, and about the social and political implications of archaeological interpretation. As graduate students during the 1980s, we were struck by the passionate opinions about the “right” way to do science. Debates occurred over how to position Indigenous voices in scholarship and, in the case of local BC archaeology, the role of oral traditions in interpreting the past. In ecology, equally heated debates about epistemology and method focused on contrasting descriptive, experimental, theoretical, and modelling paradigms.

During the 1980s, BC First Nations expanded assertions of rights and responsibilities with respect to their lands and resources within their traditional territories. The formalization of Aboriginal rights and title in the Canadian Constitution in 1982 (and the court cases it spawned) supported this evolution and facilitated a broader social context and public awareness of First Nations rights. It was within this context that an increasing number of academics worked with BC First Nations to assert rights and title in the courts. Expert witness testimony by academics in support of Indigenous legal claims began with Wilson Duff's testimonies in the 1960s (*Calder v. Attorney General of BC* [1973] and *R. v. White and Bob* [1965]), and burgeoned in the many landmark cases of the 1980s (e.g., Michael Kew in *R. v. Guerin* [1984] and Wayne Suttles in *R. v. Sparrow* [1985]), and would only continue to grow with many researchers from diverse disciplines associated with *Delgamuukw* [1997], and *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* [2014]). Scholars also increasingly wrote and reviewed documents that would be used to support Indigenous legal claims (e.g., Miller 2001, 2004).

Broader social awareness about Indigenous issues, coupled with increasing resource development in British Columbia, facilitated alliances between First Nations and environmentalists on issues of shared concern. In some cases, environmentalists entered these partnerships

with relatively narrow conceptions of environmental protection as their goal. However, they quickly learned that cultural heritage, identity, and the “natural” world are inseparable.

A landmark example of this later kind of collaboration occurred in the Stein Valley in southwestern British Columbia in the mid 1980s. The effort to stop planned logging in the Stein involved academic researchers from multiple disciplines and universities together with Lytton First Nation, Nlaka’pamux Nation Tribal Council, Mount Currie Band [Lil’wat], and the Lillooet Tribal Council (M’Gonigle and Wickwire 1989; Wickwire, forthcoming). Then a master’s student at UBC, Dana was involved in the Stein project both as an archaeologist working with the First Nations and as one of the environmentalist organizers of the “Stein Alliance.” These were heated times; Dana’s qualifications as an archaeologist were variously challenged by archaeological colleagues because she collaborated with First Nations and/or supported environmental issues. For Ken, as an ecology PhD student, working on the Stein project was eye-opening and inspiring, both in terms of what was possible as an applied ecologist and in terms of the social justice dimensions involved. Overall, these efforts were successful, and in 1995, the Stein was designated as the Stein Valley Nlaka’pamux Heritage Park, co-managed by the Lytton First Nation and BC Parks.

While enduring collaborations among ethnoecologists and archaeologists and First Nations multiplied (e.g., Main Johnson 2019; Mohs 1987), a new focus developed around the shared governance of natural resources. This emerged earliest and strongest in co-management initiatives between fisheries managers and First Nations (e.g., Haggan et al. 1998; Pinkerton 1999; Weinstein and Morrell 1994). Such initiatives are now commonplace among BC fisheries and marine scientists – and in protected areas management at both the provincial and federal levels, with Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, established 1988, as a notable early example.

Two other important developments in the 1980s reflect the increasing ties between BC First Nations and academics around questions of lands and resources. The first was the development of explicit guidelines for community-centred research. On the university side, James McDonald, influenced by his collaborations with Tsimshian communities, spearheaded this initiative in the early 1980s (McDonald 2004). Among First Nations, the Heiltsuk Tribal Council, for instance, outlined in 1980 its requirements of researchers in their territory. These initiatives mirror the kinds of fundamental requirements we see in later agreements among

researchers and First Nations and other statements about ethical research conduct (such as the Canadian Archaeology Association's Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples). In particular, the Heiltsuk document states that: (1) research must be relevant to the Nation – and they get to decide what counts as relevant; (2) research should be conducted ethically (no harm, prior informed consent); and (3) ownership and copyright need to be worked out beforehand.

Another significant development was the establishment of the Simon Fraser (SFU) University Kamloops Program, located on the Secwépemc Kamloops Indian Reserve. From 1988 until the program closed in 2011, scholars such as George Nicholas and Marianne Ignace taught Indigenous students topics that were relevant to First Nations, including language proficiency, archaeology, and ethnobotany (Nicholas and Markey 2018). The existence of a program that highlights Indigenous needs and values reflected a major, systemic shift in the academy. Over twelve years, more than four hundred Indigenous students received undergraduate degrees through this program.

THE 1990s

In the 1990s, a convergence of disciplinary and political developments resulted in larger, more trans-disciplinary collaborative projects. Both anthropology and ecology increasingly recognized the value of integrating the social and natural sciences and connecting Indigenous traditional knowledge with Western science. Among ecologists, this arose from a growing understanding of the embeddedness and interrelatedness of what had been seen as distinct social and ecological systems (Holling and Meffe 1996). Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples highlighted many social and economic issues facing Indigenous populations, and several landmark court cases affirmed Aboriginal rights. Perhaps not coincidentally, during this decade the Tri-Council developed its statement on ethical research with humans, with special attention to Indigenous peoples, as did the Canadian Archaeological Association. In British Columbia, the establishment of the BC Treaty Commission further increased points of intersection between First Nations and natural and social scientists. Finally, the scope and number of the collaborations was increased by the creation of rights and title departments in many First Nations communities as well as by increased access to innovative funding sources (e.g., Forest Renewal BC [FRBC]).

The Clayoquot Scientific Panel (1993–95) illustrates this broadening of collaborations. Protests by the Nuu-chah-nulth and environmentalists against logging in Clayoquot Sound began in the early 1980s and continued through that decade. However, they came to a head as a reaction to the province's new land-use plan for Clayoquot Sound in the summer of 1993, leading to massive demonstrations and arrests (see Berman, this issue). In response, the province appointed a panel of scientists and Nuu-chah-nulth Elders to review forestry practices and policies and recommend changes. The panel was tasked with combining Western science and traditional knowledge in its recommendations. It was co-chaired by Dr. Fred Bunnell, a wildlife biologist at the Faculty of Forestry, UBC, and Dr. Richard Atleo (*Umeek*) from the Ahousaht First Nation, an academic, Elder, and hereditary chief. Ken was a member of the panel.

The panel formally adopted a Nuu-chah-nulth-based working protocol, grounded in consensus and respect for diverse systems of knowledge (e.g., disciplines and cultures). Its central report on forest practices and planning (Scientific Panel 1995) recommended a system of sustainable ecosystem management. The Nuu-chah-nulth concept of *bishuk ish ts'awalk* – everything is connected (e.g., Atleo 2005) – resonated with this approach and was a major theme in the report. The government's acceptance of all the panel's recommendations was both an environmental achievement *and* an endorsement of Indigenous knowledge. It demonstrated that collaborations across disciplines, epistemologies, and cultures could address the nexus of science, public policy, and social justice. The Science Panel's recommendations have been influential in forest policy and management throughout British Columbia and around the world.

Through the 1990s and subsequently, academics have been increasingly engaged with Indigenous communities in gathering data for conservation and restoration efforts, and to support Indigenous perspectives to be heard – often in the face of accelerating resource and land development (e.g., Armstrong and Brown 2019; Booth and Skelton 2011a, 2011b; Senos et al. 2006; Joseph 2012; Menzies 2015). Many collaborations developed between Indigenous communities, academics, and NGOs in the context of resource management and conservation issues. The partnership that developed focussing on the Kitlope watershed in the early 1990s between the Haisla Nation, Ecotrust, and researchers from various academic institutions and government is a good example of this. It was led by then Chief Gerald Amos and resulted in the designation in 1996 of the Kitlope

as the Huchsduwachsd Nuyem Jees / Kitlope Heritage Conservancy, co-managed between the Haisla and BC Parks.

Like the NFN two decades prior, the large research projects that characterized much collaborative work in the 1990s involved multiple researchers, students, and sometimes several partner First Nations. The Secwépemc Ethnobotany and Ethnoecology Project was a large collaborative project involving Secwépemc Nation and many students and researchers across institutions (Ignace et al. 2016). Like many such efforts, this project had roots decades earlier, with collaborations between several Interior Salish communities and Nancy Turner and Marianne Ignace. Over the past five decades, Nancy Turner's research has been a model for academic collaborative relationships: her research has directly or indirectly positively touched most BC First Nations communities. Marianne Ignace's research on Secwépemc ethnoecology, conducted with her husband Ron Ignace of the Skeetchestn Indian Band, has likewise been a model for community-centred, interdisciplinary collaborations in their community and beyond (e.g., Ignace and Ignace 2017).

Among the initiatives that blossomed in this decade were research-based archaeology field schools. For instance, in 1992, at the invitation of Stó:lō chief Clarence Pennier, Dr. Michael Blake, UBC field school students, and Sqwelets community members excavated a burial mound and other mortuary features at the confluence of the Harrison and Fraser Rivers in the Fraser Valley. In 1995, Michael invited Dana, a newly appointed faculty member at SFU, to join the team. Together, until 2006, they ran several community-centred field schools at Sqwelets and with other Coast Salish communities in the Fraser Valley. There was a similar, long-term collaborative relationship, which emerged from partnerships started in the 1970s, between Denis St. Claire [Coast Heritage Consultants], Alan McMillan [SFU, Douglas College], and several Nuu-chah-nulth communities.

The Fraser Valley archaeology field schools shared a common theme: descendent communities actively helped craft the focus, process, and outcomes of the research. Field school teams lived on or near the reserves of their First Nations host partners, and this allowed for a fluid exchange of ideas and a daily deepening of relationships. The exchange of knowledge and practice occurred at many levels: outreach to other local First Nation and non-Native communities, spiritual protection of the researchers under the guidance of partner nations, and ensuring that interactions with the ancestors were respectful and appropriate (Lepofsky 2008). Many of these qualities characterized the other collaborative field

schools that emerged in the 1990s in archaeology (e.g., Xá:ytem: UBC, Stó:lō), in anthropology (UBC–Stó:lō Ethnographic field school), and ethnohistory (Stó:lō Ethnohistory field schools: UVic–USask–Stó:lō), as well as collaborative relationships between individual academic researchers and First Nations communities (e.g., the archaeological research of Colin Grier and Eric McLay with various island Coast Salish groups). Importantly, all of these projects were training grounds for Indigenous participants who have since become intellectual, social, and political leaders in their communities and beyond, and for students who went on to work with First Nations heritage initiatives. This co-creation of knowledge and practice, so fundamental to collaborative relationships, is now common in field schools in archaeology and in other disciplines in British Columbia (e.g., Carlson et al. 2018; Salomon et al. 2018; <http://www.web.uvic.ca/~darimont/2013/06/consilience-knowledge-integration-in-theory-and-practice/>).

2000s AND 2010s

In the 2000s and 2010s, natural science disciplines increasingly recognized the value of integrating Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous people into research agendas, while Indigenous peoples further expanded their assertion of rights and responsibilities with respect to their territories. This took place in the context of global growth in research that focused on social-ecological systems perspectives, recognizing that critical environmental problems facing society cannot be addressed by excluding people from our conception of “the system” (Gunderson and Holling 2002). Thinking among Western researchers broadened, and community-engaged research *with* rather than *about* Indigenous communities is now valued in many disciplines and highly valued in SSHRC grant adjudications. Furthermore, SSHRC and (sometimes) NSERC have awarded substantial funding to projects that combine diverse kinds of knowledge from a wide range of academic and Indigenous communities (e.g., Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage [IPinCH, Nicholas 2018]; Coast Under Stress, FishWikis). Recently, a small number of NSERC-funded projects have explicitly proposed the collaborative integration of Western and non-Western epistemologies. Within our own university, participation in community-engaged work is rewarded through various small grants and awards, and it is central to SFU’s branding of “engagement.” However, the value of community engagement and its drain on activities that are considered

to be part of the traditional academic reward structure are still unevenly recognized across universities and university departments.

The collective impact of a history of landmark Supreme Court of Canada cases and a national context of reconciliation has supported a shift towards the normalization of inclusion in land-use planning and resource management. This normalization is reflected in increased Indigenous access to and control over resources in traditional territories and new policies of the provincial government, such as the creation of First Nations forest tenures. This has led to a mandated norm of inclusion and collaboration in many processes associated with land and resource planning in which intra-First Nations collaborations have played a lead role (e.g., the Great Bear Rainforest agreements; Howlett et al. 2009). Collectively, this has also led to an increased need for the training of professional resource managers with the skills to work effectively for, and in, First Nations communities. At the School of Resource and Environmental Management at SFU (Ken's home department), First Nations have been the fastest-growing source of employment for graduates for more than a decade. All the major universities in the province have begun to recognize the need to train resource professionals who are prepared to work with, in, and for Indigenous communities. This is a largely undeveloped opportunity for collaboration with the potential to fundamentally alter the nature of the relationships between academic institutions and First Nations.

Among academic archaeologists, ethnoecologists, and environmental scientists, collaborations with First Nations have become the disciplinary standard over the past two decades. The number and kind of such projects have burgeoned and there are too many to list. Importantly, these projects have been and continue to be training grounds for future non-Indigenous and Indigenous researchers. In some ways, the greatest impact that an academic setting can provide is an educational experience that models best practices for inclusion, collaboration, and respect – this will shape what is seen as normative by the next generations of researchers.

Large multi-disciplinary and multi-community projects have flourished in British Columbia over the past decade. Some were part of larger national initiatives (e.g., the Gitga'at Plant Project for the Coasts Under Stress [Turner et al. 2008]; Fish-WIKS [fishwiks.ca]). On the BC coast, many projects during this period are associated with the Hakai Institute, which is part of the Tula Foundation, headed by Eric Peterson and Christina Munck (hakai.org). Since 2005, the Tula Foundation has financially, logistically, and intellectually supported

hundreds of researchers and projects. That activity increased in 2009 with the establishment of the Hakai Institute, and its first field station on the Central Coast. An early important component of this initiative was the Hakai Network for Coastal People, Ecosystems, and Management, based at SFU (of which Ken was the director). Hakai researchers have collaborated across multiple boundaries (national, disciplinary, institutional, cultural). A number of the projects facilitated by Hakai exemplify this broad thinking (e.g., the Herring School [pacificherring.org], the Clam Garden Network [clamgardens.com], the Húyat Eco-Cultural History project[[hauyat.ca]), as do the field schools run out of the Hakai field station on the Central Coast (e.g., Salomon et al. 2018; <https://qmackie.com/2011/08/08/old-site-on-calvert-island-central-coast-of-b-c/>) and elsewhere in coastal British Columbia (e.g., the collaboration with University of Victoria, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, Tseshaht First Nation, and the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre). The Coastal Voices project, led by Anne Salomon, with a host of collaborating partners (coastalvoices.net) is another extraordinary example of a large, multi-cultural, multi-investigator, multi-disciplinary project that emerged in the context of Hakai but whose scope encompasses the whole of the northeast Pacific rim.

These many partnerships have made apparent the necessity to seek new ways to store and display data that are culturally sensitive and respectful of intellectual and cultural property. The Reciprocal Research Network (RRN), initiated in the early 2000s and launched in 2010 (Rowley 2013), was a groundbreaking initiative to encourage collaborative heritage research in British Columbia. The Musqueam Indian Band, the Stó:lō Nation/Tribal Council, the U'mista Cultural Society, and the Museum of Anthropology co-developed this online tool to facilitate culturally appropriate access to and descriptions of museum heritage collections. The formation of “data curation and access agreements” between SFU and local First Nations, for instance, is also part of this positive trend towards democratizing all aspects of research practices.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous research partners alike seek ways to present knowledge in a manner that is consistent with Indigenous worldviews rather than segmented by traditional academic units. Kate Hennessy's Making Culture Lab at SFU (<http://hennessy.iat.sfu.ca/mcl/>) is at the cutting edge of innovative and culturally appropriate data presentation (Hennessy, this issue). The award-winning Sq'ewlets website (sqewlets.ca), which documents the long-term collaboration between the Sqwelets community and SFU and UBC researchers,

illustrates what is possible when alternative narrative forms are considered (other examples are Húy'at: Our Voices, Our Land [hauyat.ca]; “cəsnaʔəm, The City Before the City” exhibitions [Sparrow et al. 2018]; and “the Distributed Text” [Glass et al. 2017]). The emergence of collaboratively produced eco-cultural atlases focused on particular First Nations and their territories, told from an Indigenous point of view (e.g., Carlson 2011), is another example of how to present information in new and integrated ways.

The Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society (Haida Gwaii Semesters program) grew out of a vision created by various Haida Gwaii communities and resource professionals, and it highlights the multi-dimensional strengths of partnerships between communities and academic institutions. Beginning in 2010, HGHEs has run university courses focusing on social, cultural, and environmental issues facing natural resource managers and communities seeking sustainability and social justice. Courses are accredited through a partnership with UBC, and faculty come from many universities and from local communities. Programs are experiential, grounded in the Haida Gwaii environment and Haida Gwaii communities. HGHEs now offers three fourteen-week semester programs: Natural Resource Science, Natural Resource Studies, and Reconciliation Studies.

DISCUSSION

The history of collaborations between scholars in our fields and First Nations in British Columbia is really a history of Indigenous peoples taking increasing control over the research that is of direct relevance to them – and of non-Indigenous academics learning to be more ethical, more inclusive, and, indeed, more innovative researchers. Good, collaborative research is inherently decolonizing and has been so for decades. Funding has increased and collaborations have grown in number and scale from individual relationships to multi-investigator and multi-community initiatives. Such integrative initiatives align with Indigenous worldviews that encourage fluid interactions among knowledge domains – as expressed by concepts such as *hishuk ish ts'arwalk* (Atleo 2005). Many of today's collaborations build on the friendships, communications, and commitments forged in the 1970s. These relationships rely upon a broadening of the thinking of all partners – a broadening that is ultimately based on trust and respect.

Thus, one measure of collaborative success of the past five decades is the blurring of boundaries between academics and Indigenous community members. This results not least from the fact that Indigenous people have increasingly entered academia, often to work with their own communities (e.g., Claxton 2015; Joseph 2012; Menzies 2004; Reimer *Yumks* 2010; Sparrow et al. 2018; White *Xanius* 2006). At the same time, academic partners have been honoured with Indigenous names and adopted into communities with whom they work. There is a demographic shift taking place, whereby many young researchers who might previously have worked in government or industry are redefining their professional goals around the needs of Indigenous communities – and academic institutions are beginning to re-tool to prepare them to do so.

An important caveat to the generally positive trend in academic-community partnerships is that the First Nations side of these partnerships is still too often constrained by limited resources. Despite increasingly large grants and the now-accepted practice of hiring and training within the community, many collaborative projects are conducted off the side of the desk of a community leader. Few First Nations staff members are designated to work with outside partners, and even though some new grants incorporate funding to support this, it still may be difficult to find time for this extra workload. This can create an imbalance where, on the First Nation's side, project participation is one of a myriad of pressing needs, whereas it is the primary focus for the academic side. Academic partners need to remember, as *Siemthlut* Michelle Washington of Tla'amin Nation often told Dana, "you have to meet the communities where they're at."

GOING FORWARD

In the past five decades, we have learned much about how to be better collaborators, researchers, and allies. Below is a summary gleaned from our teachers, mentors, and communities with whom we have worked.

1. Academics need to be mindful that we are not just working with "data" but, rather, with people – and people's history, identity, and connection to place. There is an intellectual, social, and spiritual importance to much that we do.
2. Scientific data coupled with traditional knowledge offers a powerful path towards understanding how the world works. We would do well to listen to and respect both of these voices, to combine them when it makes sense to do so, and to honestly acknowledge when it does not.

3. Language matters. Consider carefully the language used to talk about your research so that it is accessible, respectful, and informative.
4. Consider the political and social consequences of your partnership.
5. Consider alternative forms of presenting and sharing knowledge (websites, story telling, etc.).
6. Realize that relationship building takes time and is a long-term commitment.
7. Be gracious, be flexible, and never lose a sense of humour.

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