



Consider How We Paddle Together: A Pathway Forward...

Literature Review

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Description of cover art: The cover art for this document depicts Raven, Wild Man, and Wild Woman in a canoe together with five paddles. Raven is perched on the bow of the canoe (which is facing left), four paddles point up towards the sky, and Wild Man and Woman sit at the stern holding the final paddle which also points towards the stern (facing right). The background of the art is an photograph of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth afternoon sun over some distant islands and the Pacific Ocean, meaning this photo faces West. The sun is behind the second sky-facing paddle. In the foreground, the branches of evergreen trees frame both the left and right sides of the image. The sunshine reflects in the water that is seen below the canoe. There are also some black rocky bluffs at the bottom left side of the photo. Four salmon of different sizes are in the water below the canoe, swimming towards the right. The title text is split into a line on the top right that reads “consider how we paddle together” and on the bottom left reading “a pathway forward...”.

I extend my gratitude to: auntie char, Fiona, nettle, Okanagan sage, Odette, Mack, Lizzie, Gloria, Callie, Točka, the caterpillar I saw on our first walk, Karmella, Suna, salmonberry, blackberry, my car, my bike, my parents' electric car, nanay, dad, Christine, Jackson, cedar tree, fir tree, huckleberry, fern, frog's ear, Ascher, Haya, Shelley, Flossie, Gabrielle, Aurora, Hannah, David, my laptop, nona, tatang, caterpillar 2, Jacquie, Karen, Linda, the Naam, soy, honeybee, bumblebee, wild rose, spider, salmon, orca, seagull, bear, coyote, wolf, swan, eagle, raven (specifically the 2 in my neighbour's tree), crow, squirrel, sunflower, bee, hummingbird.

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An Introduction and Invitation (Where to start)

Hello and welcome to this literature review. My name is Melissa Plišić, my pronouns are they, she, and siya¹. I am a queer, second-generation immigrant-settler in colonial “British Columbia”. I had two Filipina/o/x grandparents and two Croatian grandparents. I am writing this from the unceded, active² lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh, and sə́lilwətaʔt̓ nations, colloquially/ colonially known as “North Vancouver”. As a graduate-level post-secondary student at the University of British Columbia (UBC), this work is implicated in another level of the ongoing settler occupation of xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh, Stó:lō, sə́lilwətaʔt̓, Syilx lands, and many neighbouring nations. I am taking the time to introduce myself to you in this way to follow Coast Salish protocol (as was taught to me by my mentor for this project, kQwa'ste'not³, and her niece, Slii'em'tunaat⁴) and queer protocol.

This literature review houses the thinking that went into “Consider How We Paddle Together” (CHWPT), a process guide/ bridging tool that I was tasked to create by and alongside *auntie char*. Our intention with CHWPT is to invite people who were enculturated in the West (like myself) to consider how they know what they know (onto-epistemological reflection), and to invite them into a process of transformational learning where we might become more self-aware about how our value systems and possession-based worldview deeply inform the so-called “Anthropocene”. My intention

¹ Siya (pronounced “shah”) is a Tagalog personal pronoun; Tagalog does not have a differentiation between “she” and “he”, and constructions of binary genders were brought to what has come to be known as The Philippines by Catholic Spanish colonizers.

² Many thanks to Xanalas for the insight about using this language for land acknowledgements.

³ Her colonial name is charlene george. She also goes by char, Aunty, gramma, and many other names depending on what hat she is wearing. char is a member of the tSouke nation.

⁴ Her colonial name is Lizzie Thorne.

with this literature review is to model how one might centre Indigenous⁵ and diverse knowledges in work regarding our changing climate, which is a need stressed in the work done last year by Elizabeth Jackson. CHWPT and this literature review focus on how to take the first step towards building meaningful relationships with Indigenous nations and all others around us.

CHWPT builds upon work done by Elizabeth Jackson and kQwa'ste'not~charlene george during the last solar calendar, titled *A Pathway Together* (APT). The goal of this work was to “help to bridge the gaps that have divided the mainstream environmental movement from Indigenous and diverse populations”, and was also supported by UBC and Sierra Club BC (Jackson 5). I have endeavoured to meet Jackson's suggestion that ENGO's and higher education institutions need another invitation to begin their decolonization processes; I designed CHWPT to address her call for “a next step [that] will start with specific critical thinking and guiding thought based on education silos, deeper connections, personal responsibility, and awareness...” (5–6). CHWPT also extends kQwa'ste'not~'s prior work, *Seeing Through Watcher's Eyes* (STWE), an online Coast Salish learning tool. The STWE Prezi presents “an authentic Indigenous world view that retains its integrity and meaning” (kQwa'ste'not~, *Rebuilding Our THEE LELUM* 5). I used STWE as a source throughout this literature review, and I encourage you to explore it and APT after this work.

I thank my ancestors for the gift of book-smarts (scholarly prose) so that I can use my familiarity with the academic vernacular to re-present it to you as something that I hope is less siloed. I pay student fees to a colonial institution that occupies stolen land

⁵ As a settler, I capitalize the “I” when referring to Indigenous nations. If I am citing an Indigenous scholar who has not capitalized it, I leave it as is.

and makes the “Point Grey” campus legible in terms of nation-state bureaucracies, thus I am embedded in its institutional, colonial power. Unlike many of the articles that I read in preparation for this document, this one will not be hostage behind a paywall that requires institutional credentials (and thus enough class privilege to attain such credentials) to access it. I am writing not only for academics, but also for Sierra Club BC and other environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO’s), “regular people”⁶ who care about the environment and are committed to showing up for Indigenous sovereignty, and more than human worlds. I am focusing through a Coast Salish lens, as tasked by x^wməθk^wəy̓əm and kQwa’ste’not~, which I hope “will aid in the development of an approach that will ensure that the teachings will transfer easily between the two worlds, the modern academic world and the Coast Salish world” (Antoine x).

By virtue of my social location as a UBC graduate student who is a racially ambiguous and white-passing femme, I hold much (undeserved) authority from the perspective of those who think about decolonization only metaphorically. Dotson describes this epistemic power as “relations of privilege and underprivileged afforded via different social positions, relevant resources and/or epistemological systems with respect to knowledge production. It is often bound up with social, political and economic power” (125). This means that I have a more listened-to voice in the Ivory Tower than my selenii co-contributors to this work.

As Tuck and Yang explain, “the settler intellectual who hybridizes decolonial thought with Western critical traditions (metaphorizing decolonization), emerges superior to both Native intellectuals and continental theorists simultaneously” (16). Due

⁶ Read: settlers.

to the continued history of colonial extraction of knowledge from colonized peoples, I want to be clear that I am not the author of any of this knowledge; “it was shared with me to shed light on two-way seeing. I have a responsibility to hold it and pass it on to others who need to hear it. It does not belong to anyone. It belongs to the land and water” (Slii'em'tunaat). This project is not a simple hybridization of decolonial and Western traditions, but an invitation to step out of the comfortable zone of Western thinking and into an “elsewhere” (Tuck and Yang 36).

Context

Centering Indigenous knowledges in the context of the changing climate reveals how processes of (settler) colonialism are linked to environmental degradation. Initial (North) American settler terraforming was contingent upon chattel slavery and land dispossession (Davis and Todd 770). If we understand settler colonialism to be about transforming Indigenous lands to fit the agendas and appetites of colonizers, then settler colonialism is by definition “climate change”. This means that if we are to fully realize meaningful climate action, we must foreground decolonization, which prioritizes Indigenous sovereignty and Land Back, Black solidarity and reparations, and “fundamentally questions the bounds and the legitimacy of the nation-state structure itself” (774). Only when we respect Indigenous self-determination over their own lands, rather than seeking authority from “Canada”⁷, do our efforts to engage the changing climate have a possibility of success.

Settler colonial extractive views of colonized lands stands in stark contrast to Indigenous perspectives that have an “embedded ecological perspective”, which “ties

⁷ This includes the colonially-implemented band office structure that easily accommodates extractive practices.

into concepts of ecological balance that extend beyond the mere physical environment” (Tanaka 154). Maracle explains that from the Coast Salish standpoint, “our conditions and the health of our bodies are linked to the earth, the sea, the sky and all humans. To imagine we are disconnected is to delude ourselves. Yet Western scholarly practice generally disconnects objects and subjects of study in its pursuit of history” (Maracle 59). This scholarly context is one of the places I am directly writing to, as asked by Odette and Mack from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm.

The assimilation of decolonization into settler social institutions is antithetical to Indigenous sovereignty. Our (the UBC community’s) lack of knowledge about proper protocol for approaching xʷməθkʷəy̓əm has resulted in a parasitic relationship where we feel entitled to labour from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm when we want to check off our “decolonization” or “equity and inclusion” check-boxes; it often is the result of panicked last-minute considerations⁸. The fact of the matter is that we are swamping xʷməθkʷəy̓əm in requests for doing all the heavy-paddling work of decolonizing for us.

My hope is that this document and CHWPT act as a faucet that interjects into the overflow of demands made to xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, so that settlers have a better understanding of when it would be appropriate to introduce themselves to xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, and by extension exercising the “intercultural muscle” for approaching relationships with other Indigenous nations. When I use the word “decolonize”, I mean it literally and I embolden you to understand it as such.

⁸The scare quotes signify the trend identified by Tuck and Yang, that “is the ease with which the language of decolonization has been superficially adopted into education and other social sciences” so that it eclipses “Indigenous peoples, [their] struggles for the recognition of [their] sovereignty, or the contributions of Indigenous intellectuals and activists to theories and frameworks of decolonization” (2, emphasis mine).

Coast Salish Transformational Learning and Decolonial Methods

As a settler, I am doing this work to answer the “continued calls for non-indigenous people to engage in good relations” where I am “acting out of obligation to the indigenous collective” (TallBear). Over the past moons as I have experienced transformational learning, I have done my best to implement decolonial research methodologies. As Sunseri explains, scholars using decolonial methodologies, “‘research back’ - a process whereby the researcher firstly acknowledges that Indigenous peoples have been constructed and represented in negative ways and that power and knowledge are interconnected,” so that “an analysis of colonialism” is central to their work (Sunseri 97). I hope to have followed other non-Indigenous scholars who have invited respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and foreground their diverse ways of knowing (104).

After spending so much time with *auntie char* while doing this work, I have come to learn that “Coast Salish practice invites all to experience a ‘new day’ (iy soácel). This can be interpreted as transforming oneself” (kQwa’ste’not~, *Rebuilding Our THEE LELUM* 5). This type of learning is something that I had not done in a long time. As Tanaka identifies, “Indigenous approaches can be useful not only for [learners] of Aboriginal heritage but also for all learners, especially those who are steeped in the traditions of the dominant Western paradigm” (6). At the end of the day, I am a subject of the West, so learning in a different pedagogical context comes with growing pains, for “to open a space for education to transform, a new model of thinking needs to be invited to the table. Change or transformation is not easy or comfortable for most” (kQwa’ste’not~, “Char’s Blog”). The unease that presents itself when we encounter

“change can threaten or compromise what exists, or what we are used to, yet these points of tension can illuminate our way forward...” (Tanaka 144). Please take care of yourself while you do this work and know that I am lending you some of my patience for you to use with yourself.

In a move away from Western siloed thinking, rather than having a section dedicated to Coast Salish teachings, I have woven it throughout the whole of this document; the structure of this literature review mirrors the structure of CHWPT. The Western thinking that is included in this project serves as a familiar anchor point for those of us who may be more hesitant to walk across the bridge, so to speak. And to those readers I say, it is okay (perhaps even expected) to be uncomfortable, and I want to re-remind⁹ you that this type work is slow and sustained.

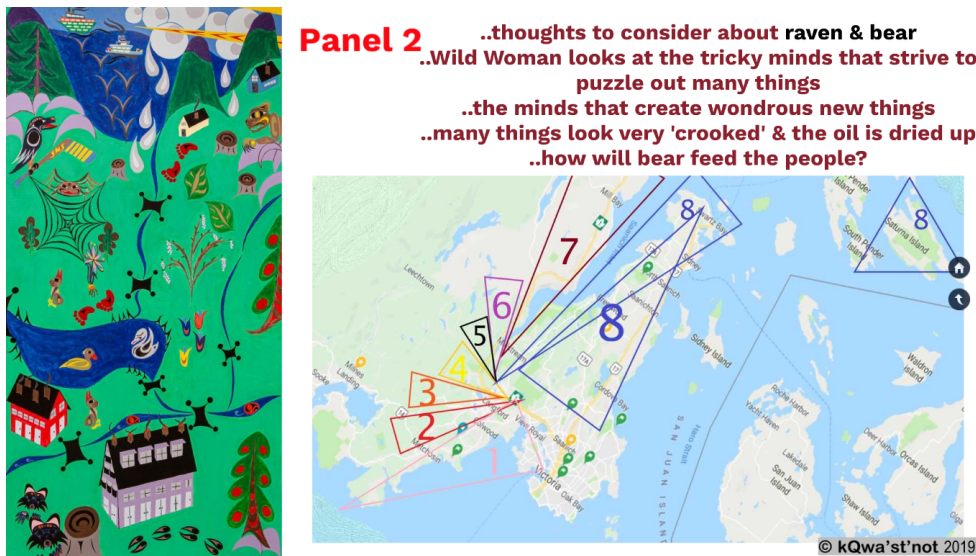


Fig. 1: STWE PP #91, link: <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/watcherseys/>

The teachings in the story of Raven’s transformation have guided me from the outset of this project (kQwa’ste’not~, STWE 91). While Raven is most famous for his tricky antics, he is also an important “harbinger of change and a metaphor for social

⁹ By this I mean that I am certainly not the first one who has reminded you of this.

transformation. She calls us to forever grow and change” (Maracle 99). The simplifying of Raven’s multitudes into a simple trickster figure is one of the effects of colonial extraction of knowledge (discussed in CHWPT section *Siloing Severely Limits What’s Possible*). In addition to being a trickster and a transformer, they also reminds us of our responsibilities of taking care of our homes shared with many beings:

Raven is also the ultimate preserver. She teaches us to cling to images of environmental responsibility and spiritual responsiveness. She reminds us that we gave spirit-to-spirit relations with all beings. She reminds us that all things have a spirit. They being with their aliveness and they die. ‘Are these rocks alive?’ this white man asks. ‘I don’t think so,’ the old man replies. ‘Some of them must be dead’ (Oratory). Raven calls us to assert our belief inside our own world. Raven calls us to take on the responsibility of cherishing the environment, nurturing it and ending wanton environmental destruction. (Maracle 103)

In this literature review, inspired by Max Liboiron’s footnote use in *Pollution is Colonialism*, I use them as a place where I have invited Raven’s voice to make an appearance; may they push us towards more sustainable futures.

What my connection was as I moved into the work

“Consider Invitations Practice Introductions” is informed by my experiences navigating different spaces as a queer mixed-race settler/ immigrant. Many times in group settings, I am the only person to share my pronouns, thus immediately outing myself and being marked as an “other” in contrast to cisheterosexual societal norms. As a settler who grew up in the suburbs, I have the rare experience of having heard land acknowledgements since I entered the colonial public education system. So I am very

familiar with land acknowledgements that are performed by rote or are otherwise simply “checking the box”.

The ideas in “Siloing Severely Limits What’s Possible” come from both my lived experiences in my subject position¹⁰, and my post-secondary training. This section serves as an intellectualization of my grad school cross-disciplinary woes. In my GRSJ courses, I am often the only one¹¹ inviting conversation about “climate change”, and in my environmentally-focused courses, I am met with resistance when I bring up white supremacy, human supremacy, cisheteropatriarchy, and ableism in my environmentally-focused courses¹². In a certain sociology course, I was told (in front of the whole class, with no objections) that the histories of racial capitalism and colonialism are irrelevant for discussions of contemporary “sustainable” cotton farming in Peru, Tanzania, and India - all nations who are heavily implicated in global imperial power relations. Cotton is one of the beings that was instrumentalized by colonizers who enslaved Indigenous peoples from Africa and enacted genocide upon Indigenous peoples in North America¹³. We jeopardize our shared planet and all beings, but particularly the ones who are already in precarious situations, when we think narrowly like this. UBC (and all academic institutions) must do better.

On a similar trend, “Moving Away From Societal Norms: Consider More Than Humans” stems from my disenchantment with the unrelenting anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism in academia and mainstream environmentalism. My scholarship beyond this work is in the avenue of Critical Animal Studies, which continues to be a

¹⁰ I constantly am navigating the attempts of others to silo me.

¹¹ It is not surprising that the other person who invites conversation beyond human social justice is the only Indigenous person in my cohort.

¹² Even when resistance is not verbally expressed, I still notice a shift in the air in the room.

¹³ For more information, see Anna Tsing’s discussion on the Plantationocene.

marginal discipline in the colonial order of things. The title of this section refers to how normalized it is to disregard more than humans not only in theory or academic work, but also in everyday life. Even when more than humans are considered in Western paradigms, the norm is for us humans to have extractive relationships with them and ignore or minimize their contributions to our world (which I have observed in some of my fellow scholars' projects). For example, less critical streams of animal advocacy and environmentalism position humans as the saviours of other beings, often as a "voice for the voiceless"¹⁴. For this reason, I ask the question: Are you doing research *about* a being, or *with* a being?

The final section, "How Do We Paddle Together?: Moving Towards Prosperity For All" is fed by an experience I had being invited to a x^wməθk^wəy'em ceremony for tə šx^whələləm's tə k'wałk^wəʔaʔt, where the names for five new student residence buildings were gifted to UBC. Because I am seen as a woman (I am not), I was expected to wear a skirt to follow current Coast Salish protocol. This burst open a deep trauma for me, and I can honestly say that I spent an entire day crying about it¹⁵. As Leanne Simpson says so eloquently, "Under colonialism the skirt has been and still is in many cases a tool of oppression. My body remembers this" (*As We Have Always Done* 140). When I am non-binary, I am non-binary for all my ancestors who were also forced into cisheteropatriarchal gender norms. I am so grateful to my community for uplifting me during that time and helping me to show up in a way that honours who I am; I recognize that not everyone has the same support system that I do, and that is why I have included these thoughts CHWPT. This section is also fed by conversations that I had

¹⁴ For further discussion on how this logic maintains both speciesism and ableism, see Sunaura Taylor's *Beasts of Burden*.

¹⁵ In hindsight, I should have added these hours to my timecard.

with my co-gardeners at x^wci'cəsəm, Karmella and Suna, who gave me a wealth of knowledge about mixed-race Indigenous experiences. Having just cited colonialism as the root of my gender trauma, I want to complicate things by reminding you that settler colonialism in North America is not the same as Spanish colonialism or American imperialism in The Philippines:

Decolonization “here” is intimately connected to anti-imperialism elsewhere. However, decolonial struggles here/there are not parallel, not shared equally, nor do they bring neat closure to the concerns of all involved - particularly not for settlers. Decolonization is not equivocal to other anti-colonial struggles. It is incommensurable (Tuck and Yang 31).

This quote may make you uncomfortable, and that's okay. To end this section, I want to share with you some more wisdom that Slii'em'tunaat gave me, which is that “sometimes it's just sitting with your ugly feelings. They aren't wrong, but you may need to let go of some parts of yourself for a better future.”

Consider Invitations Practice Introductions

Land acknowledgements. We hate them. We love them. I don't think a consensus will ever be reached about them, and it is probably better that way. The norms of (liberal) settler colonial institutions have adopted “‘pretty’ land acknowledgements and that's it, I'm decolonized, I'm behaving appropriately” (kQwa'ste'not~). A sketch comedy skit by Baroness Von Sketch poignantly illustrates this trend:

- So if we're on someone else's land shouldn't- shouldn't we do something about that or?

- Uh, hopefully we'll enjoy the performance. (*Land Acknowledgement | Baroness von Sketch Show*)

The Baroness Von Sketch sketch is lesson in how decolonization is taken up superficially to assuage settler guilt. Tuck and Yang explain:

The easy adoption of decolonization as a metaphor (and nothing else) is a form of [settler] anxiety, because it is a premature attempt at reconciliation. The absorption of decolonization by settler social justice frameworks is one way the settler, disturbed by her own settler status, tries to escape or contain the unbearable searchlight of complicity, of having harmed others just by being one's self. The desire to reconcile is just as relentless as the desire to disappear the Native; it is a desire to not have to deal with this (Indian) problem anymore. (9)¹⁶

"Consider Invitations Practice Introductions" is worded as such because of the problems that the UBC community is creating for xʷməθkʷəy̓əm. Consider how you might invite a relationship with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm. The more you practice introducing yourself, the better you will get at it.

How to Show Up

When considering how to show up, it is important for settlers to remember how we have showed up in the past (and present). This is a moment for settlers to pause, decentre yourself, and ask yourself, what kind of neighbour are you? I acknowledge the tensions (attempted moves to innocence) present in settlers calling themselves "guests", but when settlers are decentered from this discussion, and we are *invited*¹⁷ to

¹⁶ One notable trend (or lack thereof) in the literature I reviewed is an ambivalence between and among Indigenous groups towards "reconciliation". At the time of writing this, Pope Francis is doing his "Reconciliation Tour" across Canada, igniting a barrage of affects from outrage to healing to indifference. Rather than attempt to come to a conclusive stance on reconciliation, I leave this tension in the pages.

¹⁷ Guests have an invitation, after all.

think of ourselves as guests in somebody else's house, there is a possibility for critical and meaningful thinking.

On my first walk with *autie char*, she told our group the story of a being called "Scotch Broom". This being asks us to consider, Are you going to be an invasive species? Or are you going to look around you and see what's going on, then try to make yourself a part of that community in a helpful way? *If one family could make this much happen, imagine if we used our tricky minds to do lots to help?*

Leanne Simpson's story "Good Neighbours" poses similar questions to settler readers, albeit from a Nishnaabeg perspective. This framing of settler colonialism explains how "the problem was the neighbours – those ones who moved in beside the Nishnaabeg" (Simpson, "Good Neighbours" 39). Decentering and de-normalizing settler practices invites critical self reflection, where we might realize that extractive mindsets "...also makes this really-bad-medicine soup that make everybody sick - even those animals and the fish. Everybody. It was a slow kind of sickness, that one, the kind that sneaks up on you" (Simpson, "Good Neighbours" 40). Simpson's perspective also illuminates how Indigenous peoples have continually made opportunities for settlers to form respectful relationships, which has gone unreciprocated ("Good Neighbours" 40). Yet when settlers are confronted with their bad behaviours, we become defensive and play the victim¹⁸: "We can't stop trampling all your medicines our economy fall apart and we'll have no health care and we'll get sick. You don't want us to get sick, do you Nishnaabeg?" (Simpson, "Good Neighbours" 41). If we were to stop trampling all the

¹⁸ Another salient example of this is Andrew Scheer's comments about how those protesting in solidarity with Wet'suwet'en land defenders need to "check their privilege" and that they are "holding the country's economy hostage".

medicines here and making really-bad-medicine-soup, would we need a mediocre, bureaucratized, state-run healthcare system?

How you're showing up in your community also impacts a whole host of other communities. For example, if one community allows fish farming for commercial interests, it still harms the fish for whole other communities (Xanalas). How does what you do in your home impact your neighbours?

Acknowledging Your Authentic Self

When you show up as your authentic self, you remind others to do the same. When I wore my rice paddy hat to the x^wməθk^wəy^{əm} gifting ceremony, I reminded another person from my side of the Pacific that they could have worn something from their culture instead of business-casual attire. The wisdom housed in the bodies¹⁹ of mixed-race folks (myself and *auntie char* included) is to “stand within that and wholly all of those things”, not just a bunch of parts, “then you can act out of that place” (kQwa'ste'not~). *There's no wrong way to do it right* is a teaching shared from an uncle to *auntie char*, and that I am now sharing with you.

One of the more challenging and uncomfortable parts of this process is acknowledging your authentic self; it is scary to lay yourself bare before others. When we are not our authentic self, however, how can we expect to form authentic relationships? Tuck and Yang identify that “the work of Liberal Arts education is in part to teach settlers to be indigenous, as something admirable, worthwhile, something wholesome” (8). Speaking from experience, it can be very tempting to claim Indigeneity

¹⁹ I am borrowing this wording from Leanne Simpson.

as a way to satiate our discomfort about our complicity in a genocidal system²⁰. But this evacuation of the self represents “the reluctance of some settlers to engage the prospect of decolonization beyond the metaphorical or figurative level” so that their entitlement to land remains unthreatened (26). Addressing this is a specific ask I got from xʷməθkʷəyəm. Being honest with yourself about how you maintain settler colonialism is not the end of the world, it is the beginning of where the work of making new possibilities begins.

Showing up as your authentic self may more difficult for those who occupy more marginal social positions; showing up must be balanced with space being made for authenticity. This is a community responsibility, and should be done so as to not replicate the exclusion of those who have been othered²¹ (Simpson, *As We Have Always Done* 134). Policing of spaces, and toxic work environments are two examples of how this might manifest. How do you introduce yourself? What do you think is important for people to know? How do you properly acknowledge who you are? How do you introduce yourself to a place?

Siloing Severely Limits What is Possible

Under what circumstances has your (environmental) education taken place? This question references the disciplinary structure of Western pedagogies that promote narrow-minded, siloed thinking. In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains that colonial universities “were established as an essential part of the colonizing process, a bastion of civilization and a sign that a colony and its settlers had

²⁰ In some cases, such as the Canadian “Freedom” Convoy, known white supremacists claim Indigeneity to both distract from its both anti-Indigenous and anti-immigration settler colonial nationalist agenda.

²¹ By cisheteropatriarchy in particular.

‘grown up’” (Smith 68). There is much ambivalence towards decolonizing institutions that played a critical role in not only the theft of Indigenous lands, but also Indigenous knowledges (see Fig. 2). Due to this colonial ordering of knowledge in academia, my selenii co-contributors to this work occupy an object position in Western thinking, where:

objects of research do not have a voice and do not contribute to research or science [...] Thus, indigenous Asian, American, Pacific and African forms of knowledge, systems of classification, technologies and codes of social life [...] were regarded as ‘new discoveries’ by Western science. These discoveries were commodified as property belonging to the cultural archive and body of knowledge of the West. (Smith 64)

The theft and re-branding of Indigenous knowledges by the colonial pursuit of knowledge becomes increasingly problematic when considering that intellectuals trained in Western canons then go on to gaslight and dismiss the original source of knowledge.

As Janelle Baker has observed, “often though, scientists can only appreciate the knowledge that Elders share insofar as it can be understood scientifically, dismissing all other types of knowledge as ‘superstition’” (3). Western silos are so resistant to other forms of knowing that on occasions when Baker has “been tasked by First Nations with protecting rocks, sasquatch dens, and underwater nests [, the] only way [she has] been able to do this is by calling them spiritual or ceremonial sites, converting the knowledge being shared with [her] into the western paradigm to grant it ‘authority’” (16).

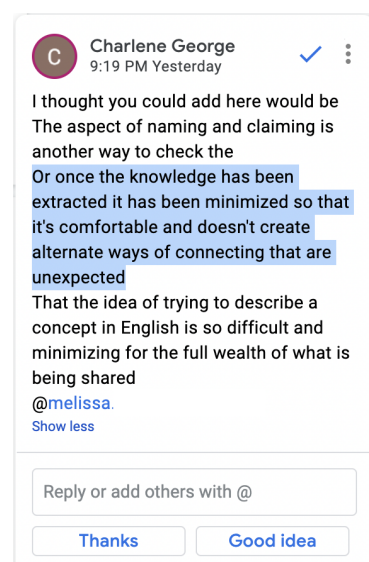


Fig. 2. Comments from auntie char

The positivist tenors of Western epistemologies make it so that for Indigenous knowledge to count as knowledge, it must first be evacuated of any wisdom that would upset the colonial order.

I am not suggesting that Western and Indigenous epistemologies are incompatible with each other. I am inviting those of us in Western education settings to reflect on what we think counts as knowledge, sources, and facts. In a transformational educational setting with kQwa'ste'not~, Michelle Tanaka identified that "by consciously letting go of the familiar ingrained Eurocentric practice[s] [...], participants were better able to attend to the wisdom keepers through oral and other indigenous ways of learning" (141). This is not merely "thinking outside the box", but looking around noticing the other boxes... can you visit another box and have a conversation there? What becomes possible when we collaborate?

A Storm Is Coming

This project is oriented towards the Western environmentalist context, where the links between climate change and (settler) colonialism are still hazy, despite much scholarship illustrating their connections²². The severance between these issues is a product of Western disciplinary boundaries that silo ideas into isolation. Our current geological epoch has been dubbed the "Anthropocene" by Western scientists, meaning the "Age of Man"; this language obscures the more accurate reality that it has been "petrochemical companies and those invested in and profiting from petrocapi-talism and colonialism [who] have had such a large impact on the planet that radionuclides, coal, plutonium, plastic, concrete, *genocide* and other markers are now visible in the geologic strata" (Davis and Todd 765). If left unquestioned, Anthropocene discourse "serves to

²² This is the premise of *Pollution Is Colonialism* by Max Liboiron.

re-invisibilize the power of Eurocentric narratives, again replacing them as the neutral and global perspective” (763). Davis and Todd explain:

The Anthropocene inadvertently and unintentionally signals what we are arguing here: that the Anthropocene as the extension and enactment of colonial logic systematically erases difference, by way of genocide and forced integration and through projects of climate change that imply the radical transformation of the biosphere. Universalist ideas and ideals are embedded in the colonial project as it was enacted through a brutal system of imposing “the right” way of living. In actively shaping the territories where colonizers invaded, they refused to see what was in front of them; instead forcing a landscape, climate, flora, and fauna into an idealized version of the world modeled on sameness and replication of the homeland. (769)

When Western (E)NGO’s fail to make connections between (settler) colonialism and the changing climate, they risk replicating the very problems that they are attempting to address. For example, in his case study of the commercial seal hunt, Darren Chang discusses how “modern NGOs have taken on corporate models situated within a nonprofit industrial complex, where priorities centre on the growth of their organizational capacities through appealing to the moral sentiments of their funders (i.e. the settler-colonial population, Europeans, and the state)” (32). This means that the settler colonial and capitalist agendas of monetary wealth accumulation, which are contingent upon extractivist mindsets and practices, are still on the table. Sierra Club BC is currently grappling with their financial structure that relies on donations whose dollars

carry a great deal of power. How do you continue to feed an organization while undergoing transformation and shifting focus that may be uncomfortable for some?

As Western scientists and ENGO's begin moving towards a place where Indigenous knowledges are not so easily dismissed, there is a possibility of having more rigorous understandings of and approaches to the changing climate. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that Western scientific research methods do not "undermine the value of [Indigenous Elders'] knowledge in a system that prioritizes European thought" (Baker 13). Again, Western science and Indigenous science are not mutually exclusive, given that "we do often find that the scientific results reinforce the Elders' observations, to the extent that the Elders often get the sense that the science is finally catching up to what they have been saying all along" (Baker 13–14). *auntie char's* uncle voiced the very same sentiment.

What Kind of Gatekeeper Are You?

In academia, "gatekeepers" are people who allow access to a certain community you want to research. Typically this is imagined as someone at the top of a power hierarchy who "permits" access. In social justice discourse, "gatekeeping" typically has a negative connotation towards people who are excluding others. My thinking about the role of gatekeepers shifted on my first walk with *auntie char*, where she posed the question: How do you walk through a doorway?

While the context of *auntie char's* question directly relates to how humans carry ourselves in recreational forests, it has a useful application in academic situations as well. To continue the conversation about what counts as "knowledge" in colonial institutions, siloing exists not only between Western and Indigenous knowledges, but

also among different fields of Western inquiry: “While disciplines are implicated in each other, particularly in their shared philosophical foundations, they are also insulated from each other through the maintenance of what are known as disciplinary boundaries [...] Their histories are kept separate and ‘pure’” (Smith 70). “Discipline” here has a

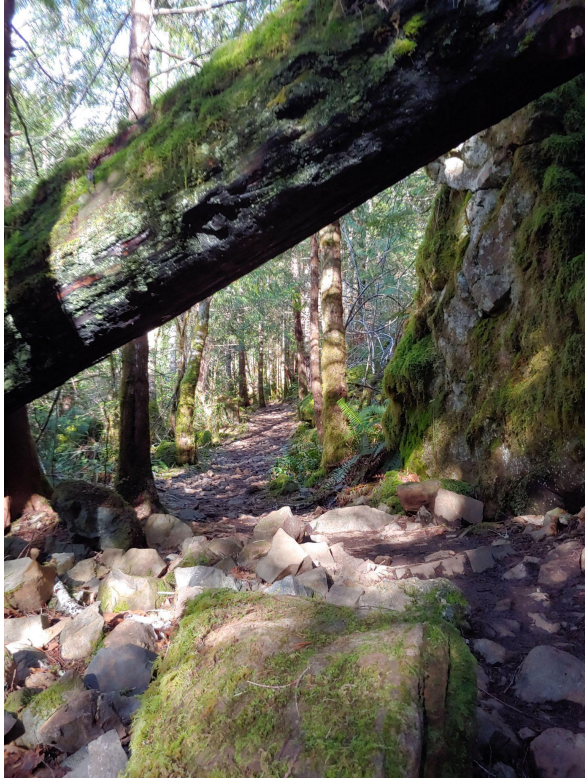


Fig. 3. A doorway, courtesy of auntie char.

double-meaning: it refers both to the categorization of knowledge, and also to the implementation of rules that relies on punishment. Smith highlights the damage that Western disciplines have done to Indigenous peoples, which were “designed to destroy every last remnant of alternative ways of knowing and living, to obliterate collective identities and memories and to impose a new order”, with the goal of eliminating the knowledge and languages of Indigenous peoples, “for ever in some cases” (72). While some organization of boundaries

helps us make sense of the world around us, this must be done with care so as to avoid the policing behaviours that give “gatekeeping” its negative connotation.

auntie char would call the shift in my thinking about gatekeeping an “activating moment”, which refers to a moment where I paused and reflected on my own thinking, and how I came to think that way (Appendix B). This is characterized elsewhere by

Kristie Dotson as a “third-order epistemological change”, the most challenging type of epistemological shift, which “concerns recognizing and, possibly, enabling the ability to alter operative, instituted social imaginaries, in which organizational schemata are situated” (119). In my case, the change was first recognizing that because of my Western education, I did not see the entrance to a forest as a gateway, and secondly opening the possibility to seeing it as such. Dotson cautions that an absence of interactions with diverse knowledge systems “runs the risk of maintaining unacceptable levels of ignorance [...] This kind of insensitivity to the limits of one’s instituted, social imaginaries fosters and maintains poor epistemic habits, for example, epistemic laziness, closed-mindedness and epistemic arrogance” (121–22). The stakes of epistemic arrogance are that it can result in epistemic exclusion, which “refers to anything that unwarrantedly hinders one’s ability” to participate in collective knowledge production (Dotson 119). The dismissal of Indigenous knowledges in colonial institutions is certainly unwarranted, and signals the high “level of resilience that maps onto its stability and the scale required for a disturbance to induce radical alteration” (121). I, ironically, have included Dotson’s paper in this literature review for those readers who are particularly epistemically stubborn. I encourage you to make connections beyond your epistemic comfort zone.

A similar critique from a Salish perspective comes from Maracle, who draws “attention to how the colonial world maps obliterate the capacity for reasoned thinking between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people” (78). There is an opportunity for reflection here: do you consider critiques of academia from Western subjects (ie. Dotson) to be more legitimate than critiques from those who have historically occupied

an object position (ie. *auntie char* and Maracle)? Are you acting more like a police than a gatekeeper?

Moving Away From Societal Norms: Consider More Than Humans

Western logics are devastatingly anthropocentric; we humans owe the other beings much restitution. This section is guided by the story of Eagle and Whale, which teaches about how to come to terms with harms that you have done to others (kQwa'ste'not~, *STWE* 258). Humans have been an awful lot like whale, destroying the homes and livelihoods of more than humans (and some humans too). While Billy-Ray Belcourt's article "Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects" speaks to the context of industrial animal agriculture²³, his definition of anthropocentrism extends more than humans in other contexts, such as settler hunting:

Anthropocentrism, I argue, is therefore the anchor of speciesism, capitalism, and settler colonialism. This logic holds that settlers (as reifications of whiteness) are always already entitled to domesticated animal bodies as sites of commodity/food production, eroticism, violence, and/or companionship. (4)

The anthropocentric basis of Western thinking that allows, and even promotes, humans to have extractive relationships with more than humans also prevents us from fully realizing who we must include when we consider the changing climate or decolonial movements. Far too often in my own experiences in social justice contexts, more than humans are only an afterthought, if considered at all. It must be remembered that "the genocide of the Americas was also a genocide of all manner of kin: animals and plants

²³ My contention is that this article implies that settlers ought to immediately divest from the consumption of animals in settler institutions. Yes, this includes "free-range" and "local" settler farmers who still maintain extractive relationships with more than humans. It also applies to commercial fish farming.

alike” (Davis and Todd 771). Given this framing, we might come to realize that state-sanctioned attempts at “reconciliation” easily replicate Western logics. For example, “the TRC calls for action don’t sufficiently address [our] kinship obligations to nonhuman kin [, who] were also violated by the settler state. The decimation of humans and nonhumans in these continents has gone hand in hand” (TallBear). When we recognize that settler colonialism impacts more than humans, then we can orient ourselves in a way which does not replicate anthropocentrism.

It is worth noting that the very category of “human” is defined through whiteness, cis-hetero-maleness, able-bodiedness, and neurotypicality. When people say talk about “dehumanizing” language, what they are referencing is how beings that are not human occupy a lower status than humans²⁴. In the Coast Salish context of settler colonialism, “Indigenous people were reduced to the same rung on the ladder of Western hierarchy as sockeye. Neither Indigenous people not animals and plants are assigned any capacity” to meaningfully contribute to society (Maracle 60). This is not to say that Coast Salish salmon and humans have had the same experiences of settler colonialism (they certainly have not), but that when we continue to focus only on humans, we replicate settler colonial thinking in our decolonization efforts. Given these histories, “it would thus be anthropocentric to ignore animality if our politics of decolonization is to disrupt all colonized spaces and liberate all colonized subjects” (Belcourt 4). If we continue to ascribe less value to beings who are not human, we will merely replicate the very systems that we are attempting to thwart.

²⁴ In *Dangerous Crossings*, Claire Jean Kim has an rigorous discussion on how Indigenous peoples, Asians, and Black people were likened to different non humans to advance white supremacist agendas.

Extraction or Relationship

Viewing beings as tools for our use promotes extractivism and prohibits the ability to form meaningful and authentic relationships. The story of *Clooksha and the Shadow People* demonstrates that there are consequences for those who refuse to acknowledge that they are in relationships with other beings (human or not). In this story, Clooksha refuses to acknowledge the shadow people living in a village he passes, despite ample evidence of their existence: “Nobody was around, but there was smoking from a house—but no people showing” (kQwa’ste’not~, “CLOOKSHLA AND THE SHADOW PEOPLE”). Because he has overlooked the shadow people, Clooksha feels entitled to their wealth. He even enlists his wife, the daughter of Dog Salmon to help him burglarize the village: “Come up with me... there’s lots of dried fish... empty houses... we’ll take it all” (kQwa’ste’not~, “CLOOKSHLA AND THE SHADOW PEOPLE”). While at the end of this story, the shadow people stand up to Clooksha, this is not always the case in our contemporary dealings with more than humans. Had Clooksha attempted to make a relationship with the shadow people, they may have offered to share their wealth with him and his wife anyways.

It is inevitable that humans will need things from the environment for survival; we need to eat, drink, clothe ourselves, have homes, and transport ourselves. How we go about doing this is the problem – when we are in an extractive mindset we do not take the time to ask a being to share with us, and we take more than we need. The ancestors of these lands knew how to get enough wood to build a house without taking down a cedar tree, and in the cases where a tree would have to be felled, it was necessary to plead to it for its life (kQwa’ste’not~). Further, even after a tree had been

made into a canoe, its life continued to be carried in it (kQwa'ste'not~). Even beyond the tree itself, "it is important to be aware of all the things close to this red cedar tree. For example, is there an eagle nest or other bird's nest, or wolf or bear dens? Or is it close to a salmon stream? [...] always be respectful, as Nature will provide for our needs, but not our greed!" (Martin and Hoover 50). These are Nuu-Chah-Nulth teachings, and it would do the rest of us well to use them as a model for when we need to ask for something.

A more Western rendering of the similar sentiment is found in Chang's work, where he identifies that Western "efforts going towards defending wild animals and the ecological environment they depend on will likely be rendered ineffective if settler-colonial capitalist processes of dispossessions and destructions go

unchallenged" (29–30). To be realize their goals, ENGO's must uncouple themselves from the colonial approaches to "charity", and focus on building relationships with Indigenous nations and aligning with "Indigenous self-determination and sustainable economies, while the failure to do so involves legitimizing state powers and relying on state legitimacy to either sustain or collapse

capitalist industries" (Chang 30). This is a continuation of the conversation from the *Context* section of this document, where I posited the idea that Indigenous self-governance really is *self*-governance, and not necessarily the colonially implemented band council. When we form relationships with

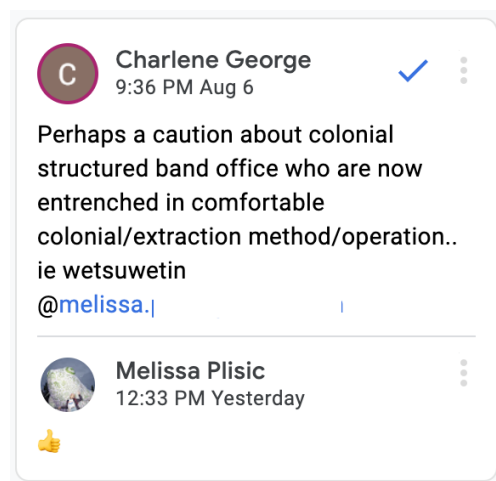


Fig. 4. More comments from auntie char

local Indigenous nations, we stop relying so heavily on the settler colonial nation state (which was build for the purpose of extraction of wealth or “resources” for the mother colony).

Every Being’s Contribution Matters

Anthropocentrism makes it easy to forget the many contributions that more than humans make to our collective well being. For example, on one walk with *auntie char*, our group included a dog, Nika. Near the end of our learning, *auntie char* reminded us that Nika chewing up a stick was aiding in the forest’s decomposition process. We also must be mindful of how our four-legged friends can potentially complicate ecological processes when we allow them to dig holes in inappropriate places²⁵, let them run off leash when they are not supposed to, and (wilfully) forget to pick up their poo.

Moving forward, it is crucial that Western-minded humans begin to recognize more than humans as subjects, rather than objects. While the realization that animals have agency is relatively novel in academia, the agency of plants, animals, minerals, and other beings is old news to many Indigenous cultures (Chang 42; Baker 3; Maracle 103). More than humans may in fact be *better* than many humans at “routinely challenging and



Fig. 4. *cuzzins*, courtesy of Karmella Benedito de Barros

²⁵ I say this because if we are fully recognizing the needs of dogs, they require an outlet for digging.

dismantling the geographical, physical, and material divisions separating humans and animals, such as walls, fences, private properties, and legal or political borders,” and “[disrupting] the ideological divides that conceptualize humans as superior and animals as inferior” (Chang 41)²⁶. Once we recognize this, we open the possibility to “imagine how solidarities could be built across species between humans and [more than humans] to collectively challenge oppressive ideologies, structures, and institutions dominating all life on Earth” (Chang 42). How do more than humans contribute to your well-being every day? How are you being accountable to more than humans?

Vilification of Beings

At this juncture, I would like to remind you consider not just the animal relatives, but also the plant relatives (and even the mineral relatives and relatives who don't so easily fit into Western taxonomies). At things stand, humans have not gone very far from extraction thinking, and we must consider that relationship building must be applied to beings such as trees and creeks. Have you considered how tankers and your car are still parts of the earth (kQwa'ste'not~)?

Swamp cabbage and nettle are two beings who ask us reflect upon how we might assign lesser value to a being based on a Western value system (kQwa'ste'not~). When we call a swamp cabbage a “skunk cabbage”, it signals an extractive mindset that describes beings from the perspective of someone who has not taken the time to form a relationship with them. The words “skunk cabbage” obscure the ways in which this being filters wetlands, refines nutrients, and is in fact useful to humans for first aid and cooking needs (kQwa'ste'not~, *STWE* 205–06). Nettle only “stings” if you don't respect

²⁶ For a historical example of how animals have resisted British Empire, check out *Animalia: An Anti-Imperial Bestiary* by Burton and Mawani.

its boundaries, and it is a very powerful healer (kQwa'ste'not~). How we describe the world around us matters, and it can shed a light on the value systems behind the language that we use.

How Do We Paddle Together?: Moving Towards Prosperity for All

This section of the process guide moves us forward into a future that supports prosperity for all. It ties together the previous themes of introductions/ invitations, silos, and more than humans. Laura Antoine's story *yey'sul'u hi'yay'utul'* teaches us about how to have meaningful, tender, loving, and playful relationships with others who are very different than us. The story is about "two men who are friends yet have the bond of brothers. Their skills differed but they complimented each other [...] These two were generous to a fault with each other. Their feelings were so very gentle toward each other, a bond you don't often see even with brothers" (Antoine 35). As *auntie char* explains, the teaching here invites us to consider how it should not be a different experience when you look at a rock, tree, nettle, whale, or human from another community. There are huge differences between these types of beings, but we can still act like brothers towards them.

The whole process guide shares a title with this section because canoes and paddles not only make for a translatable metaphor, but also because canoes are central to Coast Salish (and Nuu-Chah-Nulth) society. Canoe paddles ask us:

the action of paddling ..

take care of your paddle ..

you are responsible for your belonging ..

thinking further ..

how are you paddling? ..

are you strong enough to paddle through a storm? ... (kQwa'ste'not~, *STWE* 251–52)

My further questions are: How can we paddle together in a way that does not perpetuate harm? When and how can we use tricky thinking to disrupt colonial violence?

How Do We Balance Power to Ensure Prosperity For All?

In the CHWPT Prezi, this section is introduced with wild woman. Her shell earrings represent wealth from a value system that is not centered on capital accumulation (kQwa'ste'not~, *STWE* 163). The question of balancing power is meant to invite consideration about how each of us may benefit from the oppression of someone else.

This is particularly important for immigrants who are invited into the project of neoliberal Canadian multiculturalism. As Tuck and Yang aptly explain, “immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to. Settlers become the law, supplanting Indigenous laws and epistemologies” (6–7). The name of the game for racialized immigrants is either adopt settler customs or be marked as criminal (Tuck and Yang 17). There is a great opportunity here for those of us who are marginalized by global imperial forces to form solidarities, while keeping in mind that colonialisms are not interchangeable. From the Coast Salish perspective, Lee Maracle reminds us that:

We need to go back to the beginning. In the beginning, we had a duty to access this wealth disciplined by the land's right to exist in a mutually beneficial

relationship with humans and we offered the same access to the newcomers. We need to end this business of inviting newcomers to a humiliating position, off side of the table. We need to repair the damage to the land and our souls and being to rethink of ourselves and the future of North America from the perspective of the island and all its people, one thousand years ahead. (84)

How Do We Create Common Inclusive Spaces?

When I pose this question, I mean it not in the neoliberal “equity and inclusion” check-box sense. I mean it in a solidarity-forming way that helps people show up as their authentic selves and does not forget more than humans. We might take the lead from Leanne Simpson, who invites critical self-reflection through “engagement with the theories and practices of co-resistors,” which “is powerful because it often illuminates colonial thinking in myself, and it demonstrates different possibilities in analysis and action in response to similar systems of oppression and dispossession” (*As We Have Always Done* 66). Questions she asks herself include: “Does this engagement replicate anti-Blackness? Colonialism? Heteropatriarchy? Transphobia?” (*As We Have Always Done* 63). To her list I would add speciesism and ableism, to name just two.

As we approach the end of this iteration of the process guide, I return to Coast Salish teachings. Maracle re-reminds us that “difference is valuable. Each culture has something unique and specific to offer. The complexity of culture from which I arise is made manifest by the complexity of character and being in my family” (98). And finally, to return to *yey’sul’u hi’yay’utul’*, how do we act in a way like those two men, who “took care of each other on everything they would try and do” (Antoine 40).

Why I Chose These Hints

The resources in the “Hints” section of CHWPT can be used as examples for things that have gone right; “hints we learn from others’ successes can help us” (kQwa’ste’not~).

tə šx^whəleləms tə k^wałk^wəʔaʔt was highlighted by x^wməθk^wəy^əm as an example of when UBC has done things properly. As was made clear in the gifting ceremony, UBC has taken premature and superficial attempts at decolonization. This hint ties to my sections “Consider Invitations Practice Introductions” and “How Do We Paddle Together?: Moving Towards Prosperity For All”. It also models how to show up when you have made past mistakes.

Sierra Club BC’s education department embraces a place-based learning process, rather than a scripted education, so I have included a rubric of their evaluation format. While much work has yet to be done, Sierra Club’s decolonial priorities are rare in the ENGO-sphere. The work for “Why the Relatives Are Leaving” has also only just begun, but this initiative’s non-anthropocentric framing of environmental harms is noteworthy. As the partner organization for this work, it comes with little surprise that their work addresses all four sections of the CHWPT²⁷.

“Re-Storying Our Relationships” is the work done by my co-intern, Fiona. Their work showcases CHWPT in action, as this process guide was informed by it. While all parts CHWPT are present in Fiona’s work, the most notable points of influence are “Considering Invitations Practice Introductions” and “Moving Away From Societal Norms: Consider More Than Humans”.

²⁷ But don’t get cocky about it, peoples!

I am very grateful for the opportunities I had this summer to volunteer at the xʷcíçəsəm garden in the xʷməθkʷəyəm farm at UBC. I included the Culturally Relevant Urban Wellness (CRUW) program as a hint because each section of my process guide was so obvious when I went there. CRUW also models place-based teaching, has better introduction protocols than probably any other setting I have been, and is precisely about considering more than humans. It is also a program that directly intervenes in settler colonial dispossession of Indigenous lives and livelihoods.

Reflection

Through the process of decolonizing our thinking we will regain our strength as a people working together ~ our SNWÍŁ. Standing strong with our SNWÍŁ, we will be able to work with the others in our canoe to begin building a way to transform education to ways of knowing and being. This will happen when we are able to nurture the many ways, including but not limited to Euro-American, that learning can occur. Our canoe can paddle strongly towards our collective future with a better balance. (kQwa'ste'not~, "Char`s Blog")

It has been an honour to do this work for UBC and Sierra Club BC, but mostly for xʷməθkʷəyəm; I have only the highest gratitude for the host nations. It is truly the highest honour to have been invited into this work that will have a life of its own. I have made so many new friends along this pathway, and my eyes and ears are more open than they were just a few months ago. I hope that the work I have done honours the gifts that my ancestors gave to me, as they are with me wherever I go. Both sides of my family are from places where mountains meet salt water, and particularly for my Filipinx

side, whenever I dip my paddle in the Salish Sea here, I know it will ripple across to my cousins there.

What was witnessed at the ceremony for gifting both my and Fiona's work to UBC was a great exchange of wealth: a wealth of relationships, of knowledge, of caretaking, of song, of tenderness, a few quarters, and of gratitude. Those who work in the silo of "environmentalism" showed up and have begun making connections beyond what was thought to be possible. They know there is much work to do, and I hope that my tools will nurture their journeys. When we misstep, we hold each other and ourselves accountable and take the next steps to reconcile that harm. The work that I gifted today came from my heart, and in my voice I have brought the voices of all the beings whose wisdom is normally either extracted or ignored. When we come together like this, we support each other in our journeys toward being better humans. Throughout the ceremony, gifts were passed out in a counter-clockwise direction as per Coast Salish protocol - opposite of the norm of Western society. The question is, how are we going to collectively act in a way that changes the course of the current path that cannot sustain us? We might find the strength to do so in with the wisdom and spirits of our grandparents. And finally, but most importantly, the land is sacred. Yes, even the land that has been dubbed "Main Mall" with all its dry grass and diagonal sidewalks. You can build a *thee lelum* anywhere, because everywhere you go is sacred.

thee lellum here represent
..shared area ..shared
stewardship ..shared
resources
..all with good intentions
..respect for all beings
..good wishes past
forward for all
..depth of feeling equal to
coast salish anthem



Houses ~ thee lellum or Á,LEÑ

© kQwa'st'not 2019

Fig. 5. STWE PP# 195. Link: <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/watcherseyes/>

Appendix A: Glossary AKA Bridging Our Language

The West: Stuart Hall defines the West as “a *historial*, not a geographical, construct. By ‘Western’ we mean [...] as society that is developed, industrialized, urbanized, capitalist, secular, and modern. [...] The meaning of this term is therefore virtually identical to the word ‘modern’” (Hall 57).

Settler: “Settler describes a set of behaviors, as well as a structural location, but is eschewed as an identity” (Tuck and Yang 7)

Protocol: “Enacting protocols is a way of belonging. It is a very simple way to say ‘I know the rules’ and therefore I belong” (Simpson, *As We Have Always Done* 124); <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/page-3-invitation-to-protocol.pdf>; showing up in an authentic way

Selenii: a person who brings new life

Epistemology: Inquiry about how we come to know things as “knowledge”

Tricksy thinking: a gift from Raven who reminds us to think outside the box

Transformation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11XrNDeXjd8RfhjqPV5IWmVZZ6mbOLrno/view>

coloniality: a mindset; understanding that colonial approaches, while maybe well-intentioned, are doing harm/ not helping

Quin’ee: seagull, who reminds us to watch out for the incoming storm and not to take more than we need

Spaken: flower, who reminds us of our inner child, and to act for our grandbabies’ grandbabies

Long-sightedness: a gift from Eagle who reminds us to look at the big picture

entitlement: thinking that you have unfettered access to something or someone, don't know how to take no for an answer, a sense of assumed ownership

Auntie: slightly older generation feminine figure who are knowledge keepers and caregivers, very good at reminding you about boundaries; many cultures have similar relationship dynamics (eg. Titas)

Silo: isolated and disciplined thinking within narrow boundaries

Thee lelum: an honoured house

Anthropocentrism: "the anchor of speciesism, capitalism, and settler colonialism."

(Belcourt, "Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects" 4)

Appendix B: Transformational Learning

WHERE DID TRANSFORMATIONAL THEORY/PROCESS/THINKING START:

“Mezirow was able to report that a return to study often lead to ‘consciousness raising’ and that the process tended to occur in a number of steps.”

1. Disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination
3. Sense of alienation
4. Relating discontent to others
5. Explaining options of new behaviour
6. Building confidence in new ways
7. Planning a course of action
8. Knowledge to implement plans
9. Experimenting with new roles
10. Reintegration.

WHAT HAS THE PRACTICE EVOLVED TO:

5 STEPS:

1. **ACTIVATING EVENT** (disrupting or disorienting ‘problem’ dilemma)
2. **INTERNAL REFLECTION** (disorientation & resistance & muddy)
3. **CRITICAL DISCOURSE** (exploring ideas & input including Indigenous Lens)
4. **MAKING A PLAN** (with mentorship or examples from other views)
5. **DOING IT** (testing it out to see if new thinking/process/plan/ideas work)

****Then evaluate** (this then becomes the activating event) **& repeats 2-5**

Time is being used as a boundary so that the cycle has limitations & may create safety
(the calendar year divided into 13 moons for planning)

short video



questions/reflections

- What has been an activating event for you?
- Do you have examples of success where you transformed?
- How do you best learn or approach new/diversely different situations?
- Have you ever ‘taken your backpack’ & travelled somewhere where ‘english’ is not primary language or culture?

Why is transformational growing imperative for SCBC:

To approach the goals in our strategic plan & to grow into the role of being an ally
Individuals & organization as a whole needs to adjust in all parts
If only 1 or 2 parts of the organization moves towards transformation these 1 or 2 will be heavily weighted with the rest of the organization
There are 2 parts to the transformation ~ internal & external ...
The internal work could be understood as ‘decolonizing’
The internal work will reflect in external ways as the community/business/governments/NGO we interact with also shift
The best way to bring about change on a larger scale is to model that change ...
“Be the change you wish to see in the world” (attributed to Mahatma Gandhi)

Two quotes from WGU (what is the transformative learning theory & how do we apply it)

“Mezirow’s transformative learning is defined as “an orientation which holds that the way learners interpret and reinterpret their sense experience is central to making meaning and hence learning.” Put in simple terms, transformative learning is the idea that learners who are getting new information are also evaluating their past ideas and understanding, and are shifting their very worldview as they obtain new information and through critical reflection.”

“This kind of learning experience involves a fundamental change in our perceptions—learners start to question all the things they knew or thought before and examine things from new perspectives in order to make room for new insights and information.”

<https://www.wgu.edu/blog/what-transformative-learning-theory2007.html#close>

(In our situation it is used to help decolonize)

Moving forward together

Reflections for you part of the family... what:

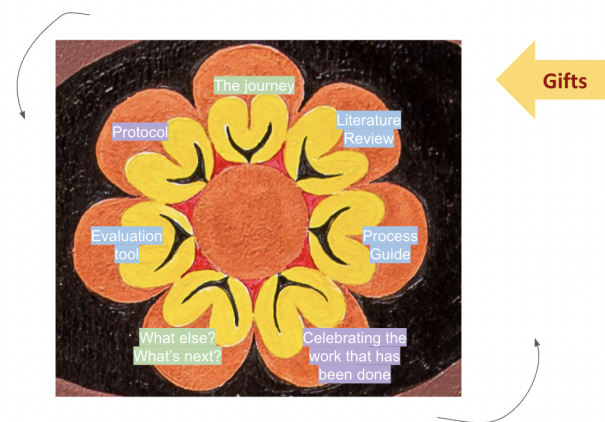
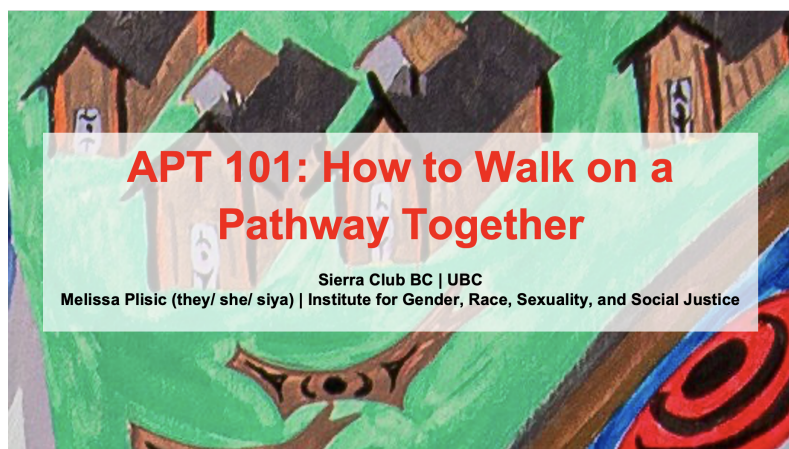
Areas of your work are transformed?

In the process of transforming?

Require help or mentoring to kick start the transformation?

Have you noticed is stuck places from what you have tried?

Appendix C: Mid-Project Presentation



Long-Sightedness

The first objective of this project is to **create a process guide** for how social institutions, such as Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs) or universities, might **centre Indigenous knowledges and protocols** in their approaches to climate action.

Another objective of this project is to **foster deeper connections, personal responsibility, and awareness through critical thinking and guided engagement**. Further, this project has an explicitly **anti-colonial** orientation because of the historic and ongoing colonial violence that both seeks to oppress Indigenous peoples and the so-called natural world. This objective is necessary to resist coloniality that is embedded in social institutions such as ENGOs and universities.

How can boundaries be an invitation to change and transform?

How are we all implicated in the matrix of coloniality?

How am I honouring my gifts?

What gifts do we each have that can aid in the process of transformational learning?

When and how can we use tricky thinking to disrupt colonial violence?

How can we make space on the path for us to be our authentic selves?

What to do when we encounter trauma on the path?

Where is the common ground?

How can we walk on a pathway together in a way that does not perpetuate harm?

Appendix D: We are all in one canoe



We are all in one canoe

Our canoe is really tippy right now.... together we will journey well or capsize

The way to 'balance the canoe' is difficultwe must strive to better balance our relationship with each other embrace Western & Indigenous knowledge systems or ways of knowing ... moving away from silos or pieces of pie

Change or transformation **is not easy** or **comfortable for most** & we recognize that this work is imperative to our collective ability to survive & thrive.

Prerequisites for growth is ..openness to experience & willingness to be changed by them (B.Mau)

5 focuses from Alfred & Cortassal: land is life, language is power, freedom is the other side of fear, decolonize your diet, change happens one warrior at a time

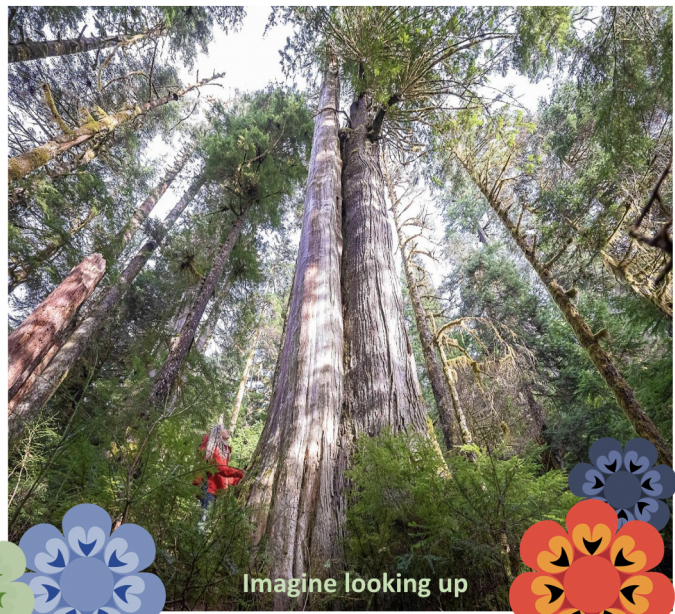
Our canoe can paddle strongly towards our collective future with a better balance when we nurture the many ways of knowing (not just Eurocentric)



Imagineself-reflection:

We all have gifts. Each being both human & non-human have unique gifts that make up a whole community of wealth. Consider the many gifts we might borrow until we understand our own gifts or responsibilities. All gifts belong to the future grandbabies.

Consider how we make decisions & take actions ... or don't take action



Imagine looking up

Image by Mya V & art by C.George

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