

De-Colonizing Post Secondary Education:
Using Ktunaxa students' experiences to inform decolonization processes
of post secondary institutions.

By

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Supervisory Committee

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Completed with permission from the Ktunaxa Nation Council

Abstract

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Post secondary institutions are a product of, and teach colonial ontology, epistemology and axiology. Because of this, there is significant under-representation of Indigenous students who pursue post secondary education. Of the students who pursue post secondary education, many do not finish because the institution is an unwelcoming environment. This thesis examines how to decolonize the post secondary institution using a Ktunaxa perspective. Decolonization of the post secondary system is necessary to develop and support a more welcoming environment for Indigenous students. Decolonization is also an important factor in ensuring that the education Indigenous students receive is not only relevant to them, but is an accurate representation of who they are as people and in society. The researcher interviewed Ktunaxa students both past and present and then provided evidence for common themes that surfaced through the interview process. General conclusions indicate that decolonization needs to permeate the entire post secondary system from policies and procedures, to general attitudes, to curriculum and staffing.

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Ktunaxa Creation Story

The Ktunaxa (pronounced 'k-too-nah-ha') believe in the interconnectedness of all things. Their creation story talks about a sea monster called the Yawuʔnik who was known for killing all the animals of the land. Naʔmuqʔin, a creature so tall that he needed to crawl on his hands and knees so that he wouldn't hit his head on the roof of the sky, formed a hunting party to catch the Yawuʔnik and together they chased him around and around the Kootenay and Columbia river system. It is believed that at that time, the Kootenay and Columbia river systems were connected. While the hunting party chased the Yawuʔnik, Naʔmuqʔin gave names to many places in the area. After many rounds chasing the Yawuʔnik through the river system, a wise old creature named Kikum told Naʔmuqʔin to stop wasting their time, and told them to block the river so that the next time the Yawuʔnik came into the lake he would be trapped. Naʔmuqʔin did this and the hunting party was able to trap the Yawuʔnik and kill him. As Naʔmuqʔin butchered the Yawuʔnik he gave pieces to each of the animals, and he scattered the ribs to make the Hoodoos, and then he made the four races. He scattered the white balloon-like organ in all directions and said this would be the white race of people. He took the black flesh from the backbone and kidney and scattered it saying this would be the black race of people. He took the orange roe and scattered it saying this would be the yellow race of people, and in the end his hands were covered in blood. He reached down and picked some grass to wipe his hands and said, this will be the red race of people, and they will be here forever. Each of the animals were asked what they would give to support the humans and each animal gave what they could to the humans with the expectation of certain thanks back from the humans for their sacrifice. Naʔmuqʔin was so excited for the coming of the humans that he stood up and hit his head on the ceiling of the sky. He knocked himself dead and his body now forms the Rocky Mountains. (Ktunaxa Nation, 2015; Joe Pierre, personal communication 2014)

The Ktunaxa creation story gives us many clues as to how we are to interact with one another, our planet and everything on it. Although the rendition above is not the full story, the creation story talks about how we have all come from the same place, we are interconnected. The story also talks about how we are to honour each other and all things. It is with this in mind I give thanks.

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I give thanks to the students who participated in this research. I hope your information will open new doors for future students and pave the way to a better experience for all Ktunaxa in the post secondary school system.

I give thanks to my thesis supervisors Kundoqk, Dr. Jacquie Green, Dr. Leslie Brown and committee member, Naadali Dr. Todd Ormiston. Your guidance was integral to completing this work in a good and respectful way.

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Hu Sukiḵuniḡni nawsanmiyitki, I am grateful for today.
Taxa

Chapter 1. Introduction

Aboriginal¹ education is a contentious topic in Canada. Indigenous peoples were and continue to be, marginalized, colonized and racialized through education. Taiaiake Alfred writes about this in his paper *Warrior Scholarship*. He writes, "The university is contentious ground...academe today is such a crucial part of the larger injustice of modernity—and specific injustices against our nations..." (cited in Abbott Mihesuah and Cavender Wilson, 2004, pg. 92-93). Education was a genocidal tool along with state legislation (ie. Canada's Indian Act), provision of alcohol which led to addiction, blankets infected with small pox which led to rampant disease, and outright violence. Settlers used these gross colonial violence acts to subdue and control Indigenous peoples in order to have access to the lands and resources that Turtle Island had to offer a new world (Fear-Segal, 2007). Colonialists saw Indigenous people as savage, childlike, and unable to use the land to its fullest potential and therefore undeserving of land and its resources. Colonial stereotypes of Indigenous people became more of a reality as more and more people lost their sense of self worth and began to perpetuate the cycle of violence and addiction. "With continued marginalization of Indigenous peoples by White society, it's like Indigenous people have found themselves in a hole with nothing more than a spoon to dig themselves out" (Anonymous, personal communication).²

After the closure of the last residential school in 1996, there has been a strong uprising and Indigenous people have begun using their traditional knowledge and culture to rebuild their nations that have been broken through settler contact (Corntassel, 2009). Indigenous peoples

¹Aboriginal, Indigenous and First Nations are terms that are used somewhat interchangeably when discussing the people who are the original inhabitants of a particular land base and their descendants. Throughout this paper I will be using the word Indigenous except in quotations where another term was used, or if the term is commonly used within the dominant discourse. For example when discussing education, the most commonly used term is *Aboriginal* Education so as to encompass those who are status, non-status, Inuit or Metis.

² This metaphor is used to give the reader a mental picture of the grossly inadequate support and tools that have been given to Indigenous people so that they can overcome the effects of colonization.

have used the spoon that they were given to create a set of stairs out of the hole they were placed in so many years ago.³

However, the journey to self-governance⁴ and holistically healthy Nations is not a journey that Indigenous people need to make alone. I am a firm believer and many Ktunaxa people that I have spoken to over my years of employment with ʔaǰam also believe that allies are a very important piece of decolonization. For me, the ally's place is to support, listen, learn and un-learn through continually de-centering self and making space for Aboriginal/Indigenous/Treaty rights, knowledge, and traditions within the mainstream consciousness. In my walk as a non-Indigenous woman, it is the responsibility of the ally to acknowledge and challenge privilege gained through whiteness and to 'see' where and how Indigenous people have been excluded from the "White man's club" (Fear-Segal, 2007). It is also the ally's place to use this privilege to collaborate to "change the systems that keep [Indigenous] people oppressed" (Kendall, cited in Aveling, 2012, p. 8).

Given how colonial laws, legislation and policies have marginalized Indigenous peoples, it is necessary to examine how we can draw upon western notions of education systems to decolonize and incorporate Indigenous knowledges given Audre Lorde's statement, "The master's tools will never dismantle the masters house" (1984), and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s rebuttal that "only the master's tools will dismantle the master's house" (cited in Strega and Brown, 2005, p. 199). What these writers debate and/or question is the means for more effective deconstruction of white ontologies and epistemologies and changing white hegemonic notions of "normalcy" in dominant discourses. I believe that decolonization within education systems requires an intricate

³ In this case the 'spoon' is inadequate Canadian law that is both cumbersome and inherently colonial; the 2008 apology from the Canadian Government for the treatment of Indigenous people, which was insufficient, but is considered a "good start" in Ktunaxa territory (anonymous, personal communication); and the operational funding that Bands receive from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) to serve their people on reserve, which is typically far less than what is received by provincial and municipal governments providing the same services to people living off reserve (eg. K-12 education and child welfare).

⁴ Self-governance for First Nations people often means having the same rights, respect and dignities as any other Sovereign Nations in the world (ie. Canada). Self-governing First Nations make their own laws and regulations on their sovereign lands, and other governmental and corporate entities are required to negotiate with First Nations as such.

weaving of diverse knowledges that include westernized and Indigenous epistemologies to dismantle the master's house.

To advance the movement of self-governance⁵, a revitalization of culture and tradition is not enough, and neither is getting an education that emphasizes white ways of knowing and being in the world. What is needed is an integration of world-views so that Indigenous students can maintain their own ontology, epistemology and axiology⁶ while obtaining skills necessary in order to function within, and throughout dominant Eurocentric structures and systems that are still very much a part of Indigenous peoples' existence (Green, 2013; Ormiston, 2012).

Below are some definitions on Indigenization and decolonization. These serve as useful focal points for the remainder of this paper. Finding a succinct and clear definition of decolonization that encompassed the spirit of freeing ourselves and our systems from the underpinnings of what holds western society together was difficult. I believe this is because what decolonization of self and system looks like is still in the early stages of theorization. I used the definition that I found on Wikipedia, even though Wikipedia is not typically considered a reliable or academic source of information because I felt, of all sources I sought out and considered, this was the one that resonated with me and encompassed the ideals of decolonization in the style that I am accustomed to when thinking of a definition.

Indigenization: The infusion of Indigenous ideas, values, people's, symbols, aesthetics, procedures and an authentic history into an organization so that it is as thoroughly a product of Indigenous imaginations and aspirations as it is of Western or settler ones (Collins Dictionary, 2014)

⁵ In Ktunaxa territory self-governance is defined by these goals: preservation and promotion of Ktunaxa traditional knowledge, language and culture, community and social development and wellness, land and resource development, economic investment and self-government. (Ktunaxa Nation, 2015) The Ktunaxa wish to make decisions for themselves that are independent of federal and provincial laws. This is my understanding of what self governance means to the Ktunaxa.

⁶ Ontology is defined as a person's worldview or their sense of reality. It encompasses how someone believes they and others should be in the world. Epistemology is defined as how we come to know what we know about the world. Axiology is a person's set of ethics or values. Typically Indigenous people have an ontology, epistemology and axiology that is based on a holistic self that includes the physical, the emotional, the spiritual and the mental aspects of the self (Kenny, 2004).

Decolonization: The undoing of colonialism, the withdrawal of a colonial power and the acquisition of political, economical and cultural independence. Retrieved Feb 23, 2015 from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decolonization>

Indigenization is the common terminology used when discussing how to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into various western systems, however this paper aims to go one step further, into the exploration of decolonizing and Indigenizing simultaneously. To decolonize is to become independent of a dominating force, and I believe this to be a true reflection of what is needed in western society, for all people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike (Fanon, 1963). For too long our society has been based on one truth, one reality, one way of knowing that is based on how one group of people view the world, this group of people fitting the dominantly situated “White, male, heterosexual, able-bodied norm” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). The dominant colonial way of knowing the world has become common knowledge and societal views and realities that are different are othered or marginalized (Hart, 2010). We are missing out on a wealth of information because it does not necessarily fit within in the paradigm of common knowledge. Decolonizing education de-centers Eurocentric knowledge, which then offers students space to experience Indigenous knowledge without running the risk of Indigenous knowledge being subordinated or appropriated (Hill, 2012).

This research focuses on one particular Indigenous group’s experience, the Ktunaxa people, whose territory consists of what is now called South Eastern BC, as well as parts of Alberta, Montana, Washington and Idaho. The Ktunaxa are a linguistically and culturally distinct group of people who have lived on the land adjacent to the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers and the Arrow Lakes for more than 10,000 years. The territory is inclusive of 7 Bands⁷, 5 in Canada, and 2 in the USA (Ktunaxa Nation, 2014). The Ktunaxa people are quickly becoming regarded as leaders in the National and International struggle to decolonize themselves and become a self-

⁷ It is important here to mention that the term “Band” is a federally constructed grouping of First Nations people. In Ktunaxa territory people did not separate into ‘Bands’ traditionally they would separate into family groupings. When one group became too large to be sustained by the land that they occupied, they would split, and one group would move to a new area to ensure that there would be enough resources for all people. (Rachelle Sebastian, personal communication, 2015).

governing nation. For example the Ktunaxa Nation was one of the original nations that participated in the negotiation of the BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance (Debbie Whitehead, personal communication, 2014); two of the Bands associated with the Nation are 2 of 50 First Nations that are negotiating jurisdiction over education; and the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society has a long standing partnership with Australian child protection services for cross-cultural training and innovation and is one of the only child protection agencies in BC using the 'Signs of Safety' child protection model that was developed in Australia (Heidi Hebditch, personal communication, 2014). They are invested at all levels in supporting their people to be successful and healthy. As one Ktunaxa leader states, "We cannot afford to leave even one behind!" (Gwen Phillips, personal communication, 2013). As an ally to this group, this research is how I can support those efforts such as working with post secondary institutes to decolonize and Indigenize programs to better serve Ktunaxa students. If this research is able to provide information that assists the Ktunaxa Nation in making post secondary institutions, particularly the local post secondary institution, more inclusive and comfortable places for their people to go to school, then the work has served its purpose.

Purpose

Indigenous people are consistently under-represented in postsecondary educational institutions and those who do attend postsecondary institutions often drop out before finishing their programs (FNESC 2013; Malatest, 2002; Ormiston, 2012; Ottman, 2013; Restoule et al). In many cases, students drop out of school because they do not feel welcome within the institution because of pervasive racism and exclusion from the social and political context of the institution (Assembly of First Nations, 2012; Cowin, 2011; Malatest, 2002; Restoule et al). Indigenous students feel they are outsiders within the walls of the institution, and that these institutional spaces are reserved for a certain type of person...a white, middle class person. For instance, although the local College (the College of the Rockies) seems to be quite open to indigenization, has been active in the indigenization process for over 20 years and has a positive relationship with the Ktunaxa Nation, there are only two programs that are specifically Indigenous and these

programs are both new (within the last three years) to the College⁸. To an Indigenous person, it is quite clear that the post secondary institution is part of the “White man’s club”, and they are not White (Fear Segal, 2007). This research will also examine why students have felt that some of the progress post secondary institutions have made and tout as major achievements when working with Aboriginal people are taken up at a surface level, are tokenistic activities and at best serve only to check the ticky boxes to meet funding or institutional requirements.

Post secondary institutions have historically been founded on White “male-stream” ontology (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Historically and commonly within mainstream institutions, in order for an Indigenous person to attend and be successful in post secondary education, it was necessary that they self marginalize their own epistemology, ontology and axiology. They must push their own sense of self aside and take up mainstream ways of knowing and being about who they are and where their traditional knowledge resides within colonial social structures (Cowin, 2011). Many students will find alternative methods of incorporating their knowledge or adapting their learning in order to have it make sense within their own ontology (Green, 2013), but still many more students will drop out of their programs before completing because they are unable to reconcile the two and refuse to give up their ways of knowing, being and doing (Cowin, 2011; Gehl, 2010; Ottmann, 2013).

The purpose of this research is to examine approaches or methods of how to minimize this notion of marginalization for Ktunaxa people, in an effort to make the postsecondary institution a place for Ktunaxa students to learn without the fear of racialization and without the fear of being excluded because of their culture. The research explores how we can create a place where Ktunaxa students see themselves within the institutional walls and they know that

⁸ The College of the Rockies has made a conscious effort to maintain a relationship with the Ktunaxa Nation and there has been a consultative process between the two organizations since the inception of the College. Throughout the years there have been numerous programs and services that have been put into place to serve the Indigenous population, however these programs are often proposal based and therefore are unsustainable due to lack of funding. This phenomenon is not isolated to the College of the Rockies, as participants have exemplified through this research, this is a common method of delivering Aboriginal programming across Canada. In my experience governmental agencies typically distribute funding through grant and proposal streams rather than providing core funding for social service programming. It needs to be noted that the College of the Rockies is very interested in working with the Ktunaxa Nation to support Indigenous learners, and has been participating in the effort to serve this population since the institution came into being.

they belong; a place where what they learn both in and outside the classroom is an accurate representation not only of themselves, but their history as people. This research fills a present gap in the literature examining the process of decolonization in education using a Ktunaxa perspective and worldview.

Situating the Researcher

As a non-Indigenous ally engaging in ethical research with Indigenous communities, it is important to follow various Indigenous protocols. By doing so, not only does this build trust and rapport with participants, following Indigenous protocols show a commitment and responsibility to recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing and being. More specifically than knowing my responsibility, I must acknowledge that I am an ally working with Ktunaxa communities, and therefore I must follow Ktunaxa protocols in order to demonstrate my commitment to ethical research for Ktunaxa people. Whenever meeting someone new to me from the community, I am typically asked if I am *suyapi* (White) and how I fit in to the community. People want to know if we both know the same people or they want to know if they know people in my family. Protocols establish relationship and connection to community and show community that you are there to support and work with them rather than coming to appropriate and personally benefit from information provided (Smith, 2005). Generally, in Indigenous communities, relationships are built based on self-location, reciprocity and maintaining a connection to the community (Absolon & Willett, 2005). When common ground is found through establishing these relationships, trust begins to form between researcher and community people. In Ktunaxa territory, there is no exception. For example, when I began the journey of seeking permission from the Nation to do this important work, I was granted permission partly because I had been a part of the Nation system as an employee of *ʔaqam*. It was expressed by Christopher Horsethief that even though I was an outsider, I was also an insider because of the service I performed for the community (C. Horsethief, personal communication 2014). Also, when granted permission to do this research, a leader from the Nation expressed, "I hope that you will continue to work with the Nation" (K. Teneese, personal communication, 2014). Even in this simple and unassuming

statement, it was made clear to me that maintaining relationships after the research had been completed was going to be an important part of the bond of trust that had been created during the actual research process.

As a researcher, and as a human being, I locate myself as an outsider/insider/ally. I am a white female settler on Ktunaxa territory, and was raised steeped in Eurocentric hegemonic ontology. I feel as though I am a work in progress, as I strive to decolonize my ontology and epistemology, and will forever be in the process of becoming de-colonized. I situate myself as an ally working with Indigenous people, for Indigenous people. Specifically I situate myself as an ally working with Ktunaxa people, for Ktunaxa people. I have spent the last three years enmeshed with the community of ʔaq̓am where I am employed as the Education Coordinator. This position allows me to communicate and collaborate with a number of post secondary institutions and to support numerous students as they pursue their post secondary education. It is my job to know, generally speaking, how post secondary institutions operate, and to anticipate the needs of my students so that I can support their success during their studies. This position gives me insider knowledge about Ktunaxa struggles with education both historically and currently. In my professional experience as an Education Coordinator employed by ʔaq̓am, this knowledge does not come from me learning in school or reading a textbook, this knowledge comes from listening to the students' experiences of post secondary education. This knowledge of student dis-satisfaction comes from the relationships I have built with community members, and the trust they have placed in me while I work with individuals seeking support on their educational journey. While I acknowledge that I am privileged with the opportunity to be informed by ʔaq̓amniks knowledge, I must also recognize that my knowledge is and forever will be partial to lived realities of Ktunaxa ʔaq̓smaknik'. Although I come from a place of holding insider knowledge, I am by no means an insider to the experience of Ktunaxa ʔaq̓smaknik', and I cannot purport to represent personal or communal struggles of this group. What I can do is represent the knowledge I gain while making explicit that this knowledge is partial, and is informed by my location as a suyapi. Levinasian ethics tells us "our representations of persons are always

inadequate. Something always overflows, escapes our knowledge, comprehension, conceptions” (Rossiter, 2011). As a researcher seeking to work with the Ktunaxa, I must make this clear in my representation.

As I completed the research, I practiced relationality through practices such as self-location, reciprocity and following Ktunaxa protocol. The research method demonstrated openness and transparency about myself and showed my intention with the research and I did this through gifting my participants as a way of showing thanks for the knowledge they shared with me. Importantly, I demonstrated reciprocity by collaborating with the Nation to test their recently formed research protocol document – I was the first researcher to apply this protocol. Throughout the research process, I drew upon an Indigenist methodology, which I will discuss in detail in Chapter 3. Through this methodology, I affirmed and broadened my relationships to all participants and interested parties. For example, I built relationships with participants that I could not meet face to face through phone and e-mail conversations and through these conversations we dialogued about how we both know people who connected us. Being able to show connection, or rather relationality through knowing similar people was a method that established trust and a mutual understanding for common goals within this research. As a result of relationship building and nurturing, we have let each other into personal and privileged territories and aspects of our lives because relationships are important whether it is personal or for ethical research purposes. To contextualize relationships within Ktunaxa territory extends beyond what a typical researcher/participant relationship would look like in a western research model. Looking back, it is difficult to contextualize relationship building as practicing a methodology simply as a means to complete ethical research. The relationship building experience is much more than this and is much more than a means to an end because there can be no end. My relationship and my commitment to honour relationship does not end when the research is complete. It is ongoing and continuous. So how can it simply be part of a methodology for completing ethical research when it is inherently a part of what it means to be human and to connect with other humans?

To that end, relationality is how I make meaning of what it is to situate myself as a researcher and as a person, working with people, to achieve a common goal.

Significance

Initially I believed this research to be significant because it would provide a springboard from which the Ktunaxa people could begin discussions and actions in de-colonizing both the local post-secondary institution and additional institutions that are frequented by Ktunaxa students in a way that promotes collaboration and respectful relationships. I now know that Ktunaxa people have been voicing their needs for decades, but their voices have not been fully acknowledged. Four out of the six participants told me their stories about how they felt exasperated at how many times they shared their frustrations within post secondary with people in management positions, to know nothing has really or ever changed. Some participants believed it was because their voices were not heard collectively, therefore their individual frustrations to administration could have been taken up as just one person's opinion. Some participants felt even today, because of their Aboriginality, their voices were marginalized and expressed to me "what was needed were white ally's voices in order to be heard" (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). These participants, as much as they loathed to say it, believed that the only way for the institution to hear the words would be to have them spoken by a white person. When I think about how to take this up as an ally, I think about what it must feel like to always have to have someone else speaking for you. Conversely I think about a comment made by participant 2 who stated "I'm tired of having to educate white people." When I think of these two statements together it becomes clearer to me how to act as an ally. As an ally I must question what systems and structures are in place to make a person feel they need to have someone else speak on their behalf. As an ally it is my role not so much to deliver the message, but to question the listeners as to if the message was heard, and what they are going to do about it. Much like some participants expressed it was time for post secondary institutions to start having conversations among themselves to explore why they cannot hear what they are being told by Indigenous students. To that end this research becomes significant because

participants voices have been collected so as to be heard together. They have also been combined with this ally's call for post secondary institutions to act on the information being presented in order to more effectively support Indigenous learners.

This research is also significant because there is no current research, that I am aware of, that centers a Ktunaxa epistemology, or way of knowing in regards to how decolonization should take place within the education system. Having said this, I must acknowledge that this is a very western-centric way of viewing what knowledges and discourses are considered legitimate and of value in Canadian society. For example, research is commonly determined as the only way to know whether information is valid or reliable, however, one of the participants in the research discussed the significance of Ktunaxa stories and legends in communicating Ktunaxa epistemologies and ontologies. This participant challenged me to consider that everything we need to know about how to decolonize ourselves using a Ktunaxa perspective can be gleaned from stories such as the creation story. In this, perhaps the significance is in opening the dialogue about the legitimacy of Ktunaxa ontology and epistemology and to learn how this legitimacy is asserted when examining how to better support Ktunaxa students in the post secondary system.

A third significance of this research is that this process has assisted the Ktunaxa Nation Council in assessing and testing a new ethical research protocol for their Nation. The Nation has decided it is important to establish their own method of determining ethical research with and for the Nation due to the large number of requests they receive from outsiders to complete research. Currently a draft protocol document has been created and my research was examined and approved for completion using their newly drafted protocol. The intent was that it would assist in informing what works and what needs to be changed so that the protocol is an accurate reflection of the desires of the Ktunaxa people. What was learned through this process is that there is still much work to be done. I have learned that a significant amount of information was obtained through this process, and the Nation continues to work to develop a protocol that is reflective of the needs of the Nation.

Ethnic additives and de-colonization pedagogies

The process of de-colonization has already begun at most post secondary institutions. Several years ago the Ministry of Advanced Education mandated the creation and support of an Aboriginal Education Coordinator position, the creation of an Aboriginal student council, an Aboriginal advisory committee, Aboriginal programming and the establishment of an Aboriginal access policy through the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework issued in 1995 (Cowin, 2011). Many post secondary institutions, including the College of the Rockies in Ktunaxa territory have developed and included such things as an Aboriginal gathering place, and have added what Dr. Martin Brokenleg refers to as surface level "ethnic additives" within institutions walls. (Dr Martin Brokenleg, personal communication, November 2013). During a presentation from Dr. Martin Brokenleg I learned of his interpretation of an "ethnic additive" versus true "multi-cultural" education. In his presentation he talked about how there are the minimal activities in which an institution can participate in order to feel good about being an inclusive and multi-cultural institution. He listed off activities such as participating in Aboriginal Day, or other multi-cultural days, hanging art from racialized groups and naming certain places or buildings using traditional Indigenous languages. He coined these activities as "ethnic additives" because they don't really take a lot of effort or engagement with the politics of multiculturalism. He then talked about his interpretation of multi-cultural education and used an example from his own community. He stated that for every illustrative point made from a Eurocentric point of view within the classroom, an equally useful illustrative point would be made from another point of view such as an Indigenous perspective. Dr. Brokenleg talked about how being a true multicultural institution meant weaving knowledge from multiple cultures throughout the institution and holding each way of knowing as equally important to the learning.

What is still missing from most institutional processes, in my opinion, is de-colonization pedagogies that work in a deep and meaningful way; a way that permeates through the entire systemic and social identity of the institution and the staff; a way that reflects real multiculturalism as Dr. Brokenleg envisions. For example, including scholarly work from

Indigenous authors into the curriculum of every program, not just as a one-week focus, but through the entire course. Currently, from my perspective, there is still somewhat of an air of resistance to including this knowledge in the curriculum, and an implicit understanding that Indigenous people must fit within the socially constructed institutional identity. As an ally I can feel this resistance in meetings and gatherings. If I can feel it, so can the students that post secondary institutions are trying to serve. For example I'd like to illustrate the experience of one of the students I have worked with who took a course in First Nations studies. They stated that the curriculum reflected a pan-Indian perspective and sidelined local Indigenous knowledge. I was told by this student that the First Nations Studies course they took did not include very much knowledge specific to the local territory and the people, rather it is information based on Indigenous people of another place (anonymous, personal communication, 2013). Within the construction of this type of course is a good example of "ethnic additive" where a local elder is asked to come and do a presentation on local knowledge, but the local knowledge does not permeate the entire course. There is no reason, that I can see, why this type of course cannot be based on local knowledge, and in fact there is a strong argument that could be presented as to why this particular course *must* be based on the knowledge of the people whose territory the course is taught in. It can be argued that a local knowledge base is important because Indigenous people are often place based and space based. They are connected to the land of their traditional territories. It is in this physical space that learning is contextualized and understood (anonymous, personal communication, 2015). If people want to live and work in a certain territory, they need to know whose territory they are in and the land based knowledge that is imbedded from tens of thousands of years occupying that territory. I conversed with a colleague of mine about courses like this and she informed me (as she attended similar courses in another institution) that this is often the case. She also informed me that most Indigenous students do not perform well in First Nations studies courses because they are not reflective of Indigenous student's traditional knowledge (anonymous, personal communication, November 2013). Another example of surface level inclusion is in using Indigenous languages to name

certain areas within the institution, or creating displays of Indigenous artwork or historical items, but then placing these displays in underutilized areas, or confining these displays to one area as opposed to having the work seen in various locations on campus.

What this research aims to accomplish, is to highlight ways in which the post secondary environment can change to better incorporate Indigenous, specifically Ktunaxa epistemologies that are relevant for all learners, teachers and external partners not just at the local institution, but at all post secondary institutions who serve Ktunaxa students. I wish to turn the gaze 'up' and problematize the systemic Eurocentric social and educational environment of the post secondary institution, rather than letting the problem lie with the Indigenous learner (Strega, personal communication, 2013). As one of the participants states, "It's the school systems, you have schools and they're like, well the kid has to get ready for school and I'm like no, the school actually has to be ready for my kid" (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). The long-term goal for the research is that the Ktunaxa Nation will utilize the findings to build and enhance the visibility of Ktunaxa ontology, epistemology and axiology within social constructs of, and in, the curriculum of post secondary institutions that their people commonly attend. Education that is relevant to Ktunaxa learners will enhance their participation and success within post secondary institutions and will enhance the educational experience of the broader student body.

Question

The number of Ktunaxa people planning to attend post secondary education is steadily growing. The numbers of students graduating from high school is increasing, and people in the Nation are becoming more aware of post secondary possibilities. Parents are also more aware of how they are role models for their children so they are seeking out higher learning themselves. When I first started my employment as the Education Coordinator for ʔaḡam, there was no application waitlist for post secondary funding. Prior to my taking over this position ʔaḡam struggled with finding enough people to go to school to use up the per capita amount they received from AANDC (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada). Last year we had four people waitlisted, and this year we have six people waitlisted. This waitlist does not include

numerous people who have come to me to ask about school but have not applied, nor does it include people who have come to me who were not eligible for funding. The increasing number of students wanting to attend post secondary school indicates that now is a good time to ensure that their post secondary education is relevant to them. Not only will this enable better learning outcomes for current students, but this may further increase the numbers of students who choose to pursue post secondary education. Therefore, to conduct this research, the question was: What is the experience of Ktunaxa students in post secondary education and how can we use this experience to decolonize post secondary institutions?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Extensive literature is available on the topic of decolonization of post secondary schools and Indigenous post secondary education. Most of this literature focuses on Indigenizing post secondary and/or public institutions. A good portion of this literature is written by, or in collaboration with Indigenous scholars. What is lacking in the literature is information based on Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being. As more and more young Ktunaxa are graduating from high school and pursuing post secondary education, it makes sense that their epistemology becomes part of the narrative and discourse about Indigenous post secondary education. Although there is no literature specific to the Ktunaxa experience with post secondary education, we can draw on existing literature to underscore the need for relevant Ktunaxa pedagogy.

My literature review includes national, provincial, collegial and scholarly publications focused on post secondary education and how to make the post secondary institution a relevant space for Indigenous learners. Much of the information included in the literature reflects policy and research papers commissioned by National and provincial organizations, as well as individual universities. There are a number of statistics in regards to Indigenous participation in, and completion of, post secondary education (Canadian Council on Learning, 2011; Cowan, B., 2011; FNEESC, 2013; Malatest, 2002; Restoule et al, 2013). As current literature is ripe with this type of information it will not be included in this work other than to say that Indigenous people are consistently under-represented in post secondary education. The literature also gives a clear picture of the educational attainment gap that currently exists between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people in Canada. The literature indicates the history of Indigenous education, which is an important underlying factor in why Indigenous students are not coping well within post secondary education (Assembly of First Nations Education, Jurisdiction, and Governance, 2012). It is important to acknowledge the history of Indigenous people within education systems. Recognizing Indigenous ontology illustrates an Indigenous epistemology of interconnectedness, which includes recognizing and understanding events that have occurred seven generations

before us. These events are in fact affecting us now, and the events of today will affect the next seven generations after us (Hart, 2010; anonymous, personal communication, 2014).

It is also important for me as an ally to continue to acknowledge the history of Indigenous education because it is important for me to continue to disrupt the complacent thinking of settlers like myself and to always ensure that the legacy of residential schooling and continued colonial racism in our society does not get relegated to history. What I mean by this is namely dominantly situated settlers begin to believe it is acceptable to ignore and brush aside current issues that are a result of colonial history because it is in the past and we need to move on. This can be exemplified in the common Canadian discourses around multiculturalism and reconciliation (Blackburn, 2007). This can also be exemplified in many white peoples' backyard discussions around Indigenous issues. The issues that Indigenous people experience, stemming from colonization are not in the past; they are present and still occurring, affecting every aspect of daily life for Indigenous people. One needs only to read the Indian Act to find evidence of continued colonization and racism.

Indigenization has been heralded as the answer to the issues surrounding Indigenous education. For the most part this looks like acknowledging the territory, including some language and following the guidelines set out by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education on indigenization (2012). However, indigenization is becoming more of a surface level additive where the literature is concerned. The literature is moving towards decolonization. This is decolonization, not only for Indigenous people, but for all people. Keith James (2004, In Abbott Mihesuau and Cavender Wilson) states:

Academic faculties and staffs bring to higher education implicit cultural and class values, norms, social identities, and social statuses. The structures and procedures of higher education flow from, build on, and reinforce the values, norms, identities and status systems of the mainstream majority (p. 50).

Decolonization aims to subvert these normative notions of western ideological dominance because they are not meeting the needs of any students, least of all Indigenous students. These

westernized notions serve to maintain the status quo which only serves to support the elite few while marginalizing all other populations including Indigenous people, women, disabled, LGBTQ, poor, etc.

What post secondary Institutions are doing

There are several institutions in Canada that have done amazing work within the area of Indigenization and de-colonization. They have created spaces that are highly visible and receive heavy traffic from Indigenous students. They have hired Indigenous academics in all positions within the institutions from the executive to the faculty. They have hired elders and support people who provide traditional cultural support. They have created policies and a social environment that emphasizes acknowledgement of the territory and the people of the territory. They have included Indigenous scholarship within the curriculum. All of these efforts aim to recruit Indigenous learners and close the educational attainment gap that exists between them and non-Indigenous people. Many of the leaders in this process in BC have received funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education for several years to achieve this end (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2012). Indigenous education seems to be a priority for the Ministry of Advanced Education in BC as evidenced by the allocation of funding to support this process. Educational ministries in the provinces of Ontario and Nova Scotia have also designated funding towards Indigenous education, so one can conclude that there is a level of importance involved. Even though not all post secondary institutions receive funding, it seems to me that indigenization is a worthwhile process to complete, with or without funding. Although without this funding, much of this work would be nearly impossible to complete.

Institutions across Canada have created documents that discuss Indigenization (Cowin, 2011; Michel, 2013; Ottmann, 2013; Pidgeon, 2009; Stonechild, 2006). I have also found national reports that discuss what is being done at the national level (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, 2011; Canadian Council on Learning 2009). Each of these publications seems to support the notions of Indigenization and/or de-colonization of the post secondary institution and the social justice emancipatory

effects that this process can have. The majority of post secondary institutions have done some sort of work in the area of Indigenization and this has increased both the numbers of and the support available to Indigenous learners (Cowin, 2011; Malatest, 2002). That being said, there are still a number of barriers including: access, funding, and social issues such as racism and distrust of the education system as a whole (Malatest, 2002). My analysis within this is that Indigenization has consisted of surface level activity. As one of my participants stated, "It's a politics of distraction, it is a wonderful distraction, it makes people feel good...", yet it doesn't get right down to the roots of the problem which are the western and colonial ideologies of power and knowledge within post secondary education (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). Abbott Mihesuah (2004) writes about how institutions do just enough to be able to check the box to meet an imposed standard, but still enable themselves to maintain the status quo of western ideologies within their institutions. Some examples that she provides include:

purposely ignoring Indigenous voices...hiring unqualified faculty, graduating unprepared students, and devaluing Indigenous programs and concerns on campus...[and] hiring non-Indigenous [people] to teach courses under the umbrella of American Indian/Native American studies despite the existence of qualified Indigenous scholars in the pool...she calls this...gatekeeping strategies that keep Indigenous voices subsumed so that the gatekeepers' opinions representing the status quo emerge at the forefront... (pg. 31-33).

Later in the analysis piece the reader will see evidence of these very issues highlighted by the participants. So although some schools can be said to be doing great work, the literature points to a need to delve deeper into the social and political workings of the institution in order to dig out and examine the roots of colonialism within, and to plant seeds of decolonization that will have long lasting impact and presence within the system.

Indigenization and Decolonization

Indigenization is the key term throughout the discourse on Indigenous education; however, as I have discussed earlier in the paper some authors believe that Indigenization is not enough because it continues to relegate Indigenous knowledge as other, as less than.

Indigenization continues to allow for surface level engagement without challenging the status quo. Elaina Hill critiques the notion of Indigenization in her article *A Critique of the Call to "Always Indigenize"* (2012), however it is not a critique of including Indigenous knowledge within the academy, it is a critique of the methods of Indigenization. Hill suggests that the work of Indigenization is still only focusing on the surface level inclusion of Indigeneity. She, Dr. Martin Brokenleg, and many Indigenous scholars have made a call for a deeper and more meaningful analysis of what it means to include Indigenous pedagogy institutionally (Abbott Mihesuah and Cavender Wilson, 2004; James, 2004; McConaghy, 2000; Mihesuah, J., 2004). Now I make a call for a deeper and more meaningful analysis of what it means to include Indigenous pedagogy institutionally.

It is essential that multicultural education be inclusive of diverse knowledges, center diversity and set the mainstream status quo ideologies to the peripheral. Elaina Hill's article and Dr. Brokenleg's presentation were both influential in my decision to frame this research as an effort towards decolonization rather than Indigenization. Perhaps it is time to think of Indigenization as the springboard, or the first step, towards decolonization, and to now turn our attention to weaving Indigenous knowledge through the very core of the post secondary institution. Audre Lorde's (1984) essay, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" launches a scathing critique of the need for marginalized groups to work within dominant ontologies. Marginalized groups are continuously made to adopt thinking that they do not agree with and it's time to stop. Although this quote or critique is not specific to Indigenous people's experience, this critique is useful across a spectrum of marginalization and has bearing on the discussion of decolonization. Indigenous groups have very distinct and rich ontologies that western thinkers are often in conflict with, but are none-the-less no less valid than western thought. In fact Indigenous people have lived tens of thousands of years, survived attempted genocide, and are now re-centering Indigenous ontology using these worldviews. Throughout the analysis I wondered, 'why should we continue to marginalize these worldviews?' At a time when several battles have been fought and won towards social justice for all people regardless of race,

sexual orientation, sex, ability, economic or marital status, why would we continue to accept only one way of thinking in our educational institutions? Should we not be opening ourselves up to the possibilities that there are other, perhaps better ways of doing things? We live in an era where it is necessary to decolonize ourselves, and to stop living and thinking that just because worldviews have always been done a certain way, that it needs to continue to be done a certain way.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework: Perspectives, Methodology, and Methods

Theoretical Perspectives

The research is informed by two theoretical perspectives; Indigenist and anti-oppressive. These perspectives were chosen because they encapsulate notions of working across difference, they center not just the perspective of the researcher or the author, but the perspective of everyone involved in the research. Indigenist theory seeks to center Indigenous thought and traditional methods of gathering and sharing information. Anti-oppressive theory also seeks to center marginalized perspectives whether they are perspectives of people of colour, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, etc. Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha writes, "I take the view that anti-oppressive theories do not signify separate and "alternative" theorizations; rather, they engage in a conversation with other social theories that is dialectical in nature, where they contest, influence and are in turn influenced by [them]" (2005, pg. 38). In this research I also attempt to challenge certain theories of research, particularly those that would subvert the knowledge presented by the participants. It is important that research with Indigenous people center the voice and knowledge of the people such as Indigenist and anti-oppressive methodology does. For purposes of the research, it is important that this research not use mainstream, Eurocentric theories and research methodologies because these methodologies marginalize Indigenous worldviews (Hart, 2010). For many Indigenous peoples, they would state that research is synonymous with appropriation, mistreatment and mis-representation in Indigenous communities, and for these reasons I could not, in good conscience, conduct research that was complicit in maintaining dominant, hegemonic notions of good research, which has consistently had detrimental effects on and for Indigenous communities.

I see research with people as a collaboration because without research participants' knowledge, there is no research. As well, within an Indigenist methodology research is an act of storying (J. Green, personal communication, 2015). Gathering information from people for the purpose of research is an act of opening up someone's life experience in order to learn from it

and effect positive change, not just for them, but for everyone like them. Using anti-oppressive and Indigenist methodologies ensures that this storytelling is done in a respectful manner that highlights the participants, rather than the researcher as the knowledge keeper and story teller. Participants need to be honoured, recognized and respected, and the research needs to have emancipatory outcomes and result in long lasting change for the participants in order to be successful (Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 9). This is an element of anti-oppressive theory that I take to heart. Research is also intended to bring light to that which has not been known, and to amplify voices that have been historically silenced.

Methodology

During my on campus institute at the University of Victoria, the students were called to gather and meet with various faculty of the School of Social Work for our orientation to the Master of Social Work program. At this time I was still undecided about what I wanted to complete the research on. I had the privilege of speaking to Susan Strega, a faculty member and student advisor about some possibilities and she asked me what I did for work and what were the major initiatives I was engaged in. I spoke about being the Education Coordinator for ʔaqam. I told her about one of the committees I participate on, which is the Aboriginal Education Committee for the College of the Rockies. This committee consists of voting members from all Aboriginal stakeholder groups as well as representation from stakeholder groups that support Aboriginal learners. I spoke about how I had suggested to this committee that we could do some work around Indigenization of the College, and how we were now in the beginning stages of exploring what that might look like. Susan asked me why I didn't conduct research around Indigenization for my thesis project. I stated...because I didn't know I could. Thus began my journey of conducting this research. I am telling you this story because it is important in understanding how and why I chose to complete this project on this topic and why I chose the methodologies that I did.

As I already discussed, I am influenced by Indigenist and anti-oppressive theories around how to conduct research. With this in mind I chose to ground the research in Indigenist

methodology in order to honour my commitment to this influence. Above all else, this methodology should be clearly evident throughout the paper. I also chose to complete the research using a Participatory Action Methodology as I felt it was a great way to honour both Indigenist and anti-oppressive theory. Because of the policies around how I could conduct the research by the University of Victoria, the limited time frame, the distance between myself and most of the participants, as well as who the participants and the community committee member were, I was unable to fully realize the true potential of a participatory action research (PAR) methodology. That being said, I strove to anchor the research in an initiative that was already taking place between the Nation and the College of the Rockies. I worked closely and collaboratively with Dr. Horsethief in order to center the community and Nation voice. And at all times I sought feedback from Dr. Horsethief and the participants in how the research was conducted and/or presented. Although true PAR is not evident within the methods, it is important to recognize that the intent was there, and that wherever possible elements of PAR were included methodologically. This is further articulated on page 32.

Indigenist

Throughout the research, I have come to know that it is important to highlight the difference between Indigenous and Indigenist methodology. Indigenous methodology is a methodology created by, and for the use of, Indigenous people. The role of Indigenous methodology provides for Indigenous people a more culturally appropriate theoretical and methodological base from which to theorize and share Indigenous knowledge. Historically and institutionally, research methodologies have been based on dominant ontology. This situates Indigenous people within dominant discourses of raciality, and inferiority while also problematizing the individual or community. Indigenous methodology is defined as drawing upon Indigenous ontology, epistemology and axiology as a way to disrupt dominant discourses on what constitutes good research, and promotes a more contextually accurate view of Indigenous people and the systems within which they live, using their own lens and experiences (Hart, 2010; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005). To that end Indigenous methodology encompasses experiences, cultural

teachings, practices, ceremonies and histories developed by Indigenous scholars as a discourse to engage in research without using mainstream research methodologies.

With this in mind, the definition of Indigenist methodology has been proposed as a way for non-Indigenous people to use the philosophies and ideologies of Indigenous methodology without appropriating the cultural and historical significance of the methodology for research with Indigenous people (Tuhiwai Smith, 2005). Although there are differing viewpoints in the literature on whether or not this is an adequate way for a non-Indigenous person to take up research with Indigenous people, I have found that Indigenist approaches are a way to work across difference that respects and honours Indigenous knowledge. Indigenist space is a central concept when non-Indigenous people set their aims at working within Indigenous communities with Indigenous people. As a non-Indigenous person, I cannot claim to be using an Indigenous methodology because I am not Indigenous. Rather, I wish to remain respectful and inclusive of Indigenous knowledge in order to center Indigenous voices.

Indigenist methodology necessitates conducting research using a more culturally appropriate methodological and theoretical base, much like Indigenous methodology. This includes using self-location and reflection, centering Indigenous ontology, epistemology and axiology, engaging in reciprocal relationships, and valuing the relationship within the research process, resistance and political integrity (Moreton-Robinson & Walter, 2009; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005). For example, one way to center Indigenous ontology is in using storying. I used storying as a method for interpreting the data, as it came out strongly in the research as a way to make sense of the information I was given. Individual participants shared stories with me during the data gathering process, which is much more in tune with Indigenous perspectives on how knowledge is shared. I was able to use this storying to make meaning of the data after it was compiled. I was also able to use some of my own stories to bring context and meaning to some of the ideas presented within the thesis. There will be more detail on the importance of storying later in the paper.

The main difference between Indigenist and Indigenous methodology is in where the researcher situates him or herself in relation to the ownership of the knowledge and process within the methodology. For example, I must acknowledge that the work was completed within a Ktunaxa framework of what constitutes ethical research. In relation to and within the work with Ktunaxa ontology, it is customary to situate yourself as to where you belong within the territory. People want to know if you are Indigenous or settler, they want to know who your family is, and what your intent is; they want to know if you can be trusted. Through a Ktunaxa ontology one is expected to participate in community events, to be part of the community, but also to respect when certain events are closed to non-Ktunaxa people. There are some aspects of Ktunaxa living that are inclusive only to Ktunaxa people because the gathering is considered sacred to their people and cultural teachings. I still remember my first few weeks of working for ʔaqam where I was expected to attend the funeral of a community member and pay my respects, even though I did not know the man. Moreover, one is expected to participate in reciprocal relationships as well. If someone gifts you with knowledge, you are expected to gift back to them in a similar or equal manner. This could be a reciprocal gift of knowledge, or a small token of appreciation, traditionally tobacco or plants used for smudging. You are also expected to maintain relationships whether this is through service to the community, through joining community events, or feasts, or through talking to visitors in the offices. As an ally working for the community, you are also expected to support the initiatives of the community without trying to take over the initiative. In this, I engage in these relationships through talking about my family and their history within the territory, through attending community events and volunteering my time when I am able and through offering my knowledge and abilities if needed or requested. I am also engaging with community through the gathering and sharing of knowledge for this research.

I have a lot to gain from the completion of this research project because it will enable me to complete my education and attain the designation of a Masters Degree in Social Work. At the same time, I took on this research idea because the research findings can greatly contribute to

the work I do for the ʔaḡam community. Within my position, I am fully confident that the findings from this research can inform or be an educational policy to support learners from the community within their post secondary journeys. As much as possible, and throughout this research I must acknowledge those who helped me in the research process, and center the voices of the participants. I must honour the knowledge that has been shared with me, and the relationships that have been created in the sharing of that knowledge. My hope is that my advisors, the participants and all Nation members who read this paper feel that I have lived up to their expectations of honouring them. As discussed in more detail below, I engaged in a process of meeting with individual participants and listening to their stories. I am going to share part of this experience in this section because it illustrates the importance of building relationship, and how integral this is within an Indigenist methodology.

In meeting with participant 2, she had many questions for me about how I conducted the research, how I decided to do this research and how I was intending to honour the participants and the communities they came from. She challenged me to deeply examine how and why I was doing the research and tried to ensure that I fully understood what it meant to honour those that helped me in this process. Many of us are well versed in the use of social media and I am no exception. Throughout this journey I have been commenting on social media the process of learning and conducting this research project. On one occasion I made a comment about how transcribing the stories that I had heard was difficult and tedious. Participant 2 showed me how this was dishonouring the participants and the time they took to share their stories. She stated that she had felt that I was “suffering the relationship” in having to complete the transcribing work, just as white mainstream colonizers have been “suffering the relationship” with Indigenous people for hundreds of years (Participant 2, personal communication, 2015). My conversation with this participant really solidified for me what it means, and what it takes, to be in relationship with another person, to honour another person. She told me that the personal really is political and the political really is personal, and she

provided me with a real world example of what that means. For this teaching from my participant, Hu Sukiłxuniłni, I am grateful.

PAR turned Anti-Oppressive Research

I was first introduced to PAR during a call out to community and community workers to gather together and dialogue about developing a research agenda for the Ktunaxa Nation. A Ktunaxa scholar working to complete her PhD program invited two researchers from outside the Nation and the territory to present on what PAR is and how it operates. They spoke about how and why participants were engaged in the research process. They talked about how often times, research is conducted on people rather than with people, often with damaging effects, particularly in Indigenous communities (Absolon and Willett, 2005). The entire premise of Participatory Action Research is that the participants are not just passively participating by giving the data to the researchers, they are actively engaging throughout the process from start to finish. Within a true PAR paradigm, participants are engaged in deciding what to research as well as how. They are involved in deciding the methodologies, methods and theoretical perspectives. They are involved in collecting, compiling and analyzing the data. They are involved in presenting the data when the research is complete. What stood out for me through this presentation were stories about emancipatory and esteem building effects that the research produced in and for participants. I knew then that I wanted to use PAR to complete my own research and that this project would be an excellent way to engage in that process (anonymous, personal communication, 2013).

Barlow, Brown, Hubberstey and Rutman, define PAR as "a tool for fighting oppression by involving people affected by an issue directly in the research design and process" (2005, pg. 154). They go further to write, "PAR starts with people who wish to research their own lives" (2005, pg. 155). I had thought that by anchoring this research in an initiative that had already begun between the Nation and the College of the Rockies, that I was engaging from this starting point. Within the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting I had volunteered to take up the work of researching what other post secondary institutions were doing before I had even thought of

doing so as my Master's thesis research project. It was only after speaking to Susan on that fateful day that I decided to seek permission to do this work not only as a member of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, but as a student completing a thesis project.

I had big dreams about utilizing PAR in a way that would be unique and specific for the Ktunaxa Nation. My plan was to have the participants engage in the process from start to finish. I already had what I felt were the roots of PAR knowing that this process had already been initiated in a forum for supporting Indigenous students. I wanted to grow this project through having participants join me in the process of writing the proposal and the ethics application; something that had never been done in Master's thesis project before. With this in mind I began to seek permission from the Ktunaxa Nation, as well as a community member that could both guide me in protocol, and be recruited as a participant in the research after the ethics application had been approved. I began this process long before I even started writing the proposal or looking at the ethics application that I would need to fill out from the University of Victoria. I wanted the community committee member to help me write the proposal and ethics application, or at least provide feedback and comment into the submissions. I knew that I could not recruit participants until ethics had been approved, and I had planned that by including this person as a committee member and then asking them to be a research participant after the ethics was approved, I could still remain within the policies of the University. I wanted them to collect the knowledge, transcribe, code and analyze the data with me. I had opened up to and welcomed the possibility that additional participants might also want to be co-researchers. The thought of how this research could blossom was both exciting and terrifying because I was not confident that I would be able to perform the research well. I wanted the participants to have the opportunity to gain a thorough education within PAR paradigm, similar to what I knew I was going to get. Unfortunately this did not work out for several reasons. It took a significant amount of time to find the right person to ask for permission and to connect with Dr. Horsethief as the committee member. By the time I was able to connect, and start the process of having

the research approved by the Nation, I needed to submit the proposal and the ethics application to the University of Victoria.

Although I could not involve Dr. Horsethief in the proposal writing or ethics application process, I was able to send these documents to him for review and comment before they were submitted to the University of Victoria. Having Dr. Horsethief as a committee member ensured that I followed Ktunaxa protocol in engaging with the Nation and its members and it ensured that the Ktunaxa Nation as represented by Dr. Horsethief had a voice in how the research was carried out, analyzed and distributed. After I met with the Nation Chair Katherine Tenneese to seek permission to do this research Dr. Horsethief connected with me and agreed to take on the role of the community committee member as he was one of the people who had been tasked with creating a new research protocol for the Nation. Within this protocol I needed to submit a synopsis of the research for review. Then I needed to submit a full application (appendix b) for review by a committee of the Nation. Once this was complete, I was invited by the Nation to complete the research and signed a contract (appendix c) that detailed how this research would be conducted in an ethical manner according to Ktunaxa ontology. Dr. Horsethief reviewed and, with the assistance of the Ktunaxa research ethics committee, approved the application to complete this work within the Ktunaxa Nation. Once this approval was finalized, I received a letter of approval from the Chief Administrative Officer Dale LeClair (appendix d). Dr. Horsethief was able to assist me not only in working with the Nation, but also in ensuring the research was conducted respectfully.

Within the paradigm of PAR, Dr. Horsethief participated in reviewing and commenting on all of the materials such as the ethics application, sample research questions (appendix e), and recruitment posters before they were submitted to the University of Victoria. He was not directly involved in the process of creating the questions or the posters, however he was able to make suggestions on how they could be revised to ensure I was following the protocols of the Nation. He also reviewed the draft thesis work before it was submitted to my thesis supervisor and was provided opportunity to comment. Dr. Horsethief assisted in recruitment efforts through ensuring

that the process I proposed was respectful to participants including reviewing and approving the draft consent form (appendix a). Potential participants were solicited through the Education Coordinators of ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation, Tobacco Plains Indian Band and Yaq̓an Nukiy. The Chief Operating Officer of ʔaq̓am sent recruitment invitations on my behalf so as to prevent a conflict of interest and ensure ethical practice. Many of the participants contacted me because of hearing about the research through word of mouth. Much of this was due to the efforts of Dr. Horsethief as he connected with many of the participants and told them of the research. Many times he encouraged people to connect with me through inviting people he knew to participate. As part of the ethics of recruiting participants this way, I also ensured that participants were aware that participation was voluntary.

Finally, the remaining piece of the PAR paradigm that needs to be examined within this project is the dissemination of the research findings. The intent of this project is for the Ktunaxa Nation to use this information to engage in the initiative of decolonizing the College of the Rockies as well as any other post secondary institution that Ktunaxa people attend. When this project is complete, there will be a feast to celebrate and anyone who wants to learn about the research and the outcomes is invited to attend. At this feast the final document will be presented to the Ktunaxa Nation to act upon as they will. This may be to file the research in archives beside other research projects that have come before, but the intent is that this information will be presented to the various post secondary institutions as a way to open up the dialogue of how to engage with the Ktunaxa Nation and their learners in order to provide a more relevant educational experience. Within true PAR, according to Rutman et al (2005, pg. 155), "the research participants determine the focus of the inquiry, the methods of research, and ultimately the course of action that stems from the knowledge emerges from the research activity, ideally PAR participants are involved in all aspects of the research." So although I was not able to use true PAR as defined here, I have outlined some ways that the spirit of PAR was present within the methods of preparing for and conducting the research.

Because I was only able to conduct the research in the spirit of PAR what came out in the research process was an anti-oppressive methodology that was not planned, although I am heavily influenced by anti-oppressive theory as a researcher. As Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha writes, "The "conversations" that influence and affect social theories, including anti-oppressive theories, is reflected in a process that is both creative and unpredictable so that over time it is not always easy or possible to distinguish all the various strands that come together in any one theoretical framework" (2005, pg. 38). I believe this is what happened as I worked through the research project. As students and as researchers we can make all of the plans that we want in regards to how we will conduct our research, in the theories and methodologies and methods that we will use. When it comes to the execution of our plans we must be open to change as this often will lead us to a better outcome in the research than we could have anticipated. This also leads us to a better understanding of the intricacies of what it takes to complete a research project. So although the lines between PAR and anti-oppressive research can not be neatly drawn in the sand as I identify the methodologies that I used, I can exemplify that elements of each were present in conducting the research.

Anti-oppressive methodology is characterized through three tenets according to Potts and Brown (2005, pg. 260-263), these are that "anti-oppressive research is social justice and resistance in process and outcome; anti-oppressive research recognizes that all knowledge is socially constructed and political; the anti-oppressive research process is all about power and relationships." To this end I will provide evidence as to how a PAR methodology turned into an anti-oppressive methodology. Or maybe it is better stated to say that a PAR methodology was woven together with anti-oppressive methodology. As evidenced above, I included various elements that are indicative of the spirit of PAR. Some people may argue that I cannot call these actions PAR and so to those people I say, if it is not PAR in the true sense of the methodology, it is anti-oppressive because the intent of conducting research in this way is to resist mainstream methods of conducting research and producing knowledge.

You may notice through the analysis piece that there are very few inclusions of outside knowledge resources. Mainstream research methodologies often insist that in order for data to be valid or reliable it must be framed or supported by existing literature, typically through a literature review, and that it must be generalizable or transferable to other populations. On the other hand qualitative research seeks to use "alternative measures of rigour and validity" (Brown and Strega, 2005, pg. 9). Brown and Strega go further to write, "by centering questions of whose interests are served not only in research products but also in research processes, it challenges existing relations of dominance and subordination and offers a basis for political action" (2005, pg. 10). Deciding not to include outsider knowledge in the analysis was done purposefully in an attempt to challenge mainstream notions of validity, reliability and knowledge creation. These stories are specific to Ktunaxa experience, and they do not need confirmation from outsiders to make them true, or valid. Throughout my research and experiences with participants, I have been thinking recently, about how and why certain knowledges are validated. In conversation with a colleague he told me that you quote people who have come before you in your work to support your own work because they have been published and because they had good and widely accepted ideas. He said "nobody wants to hear about what a short, fat guy from Cranbrook thinks..." (anonymous, personal communication, 2015). Participant 3 told me a story about a woman she worked with. This woman was called to court as an 'expert' in a case. And although she had told the court that the true experts would be the elders who could give them the information they were seeking, the court system validated her only because she had a degree and credentials. This academic was made to consult with the elders and then represent their knowledge in court because the court would not accept their knowledge as valid unless it came from a person with an alphabet behind their name. Part of the decolonization process is understanding that there are different ways of knowing and being and that just because a certain ideology is different, doesn't mean that it is wrong, or invalid, or needs support from someone else who has already been accepted as being right.

“With storying, there is protocol around how, when and who can share stories. There is a strong sense of responsibility, integrity and accountability in generating collective knowledge through stories and passing this knowledge through generations. In merging oral history with academe it is [my] job [as a researcher and an ally] to understand, interpret and re-tell these stories in a respectful way” (Jacquie Green, personal communication, 2015).

And so with these thoughts in place, I do not quote people outside of the research in the analysis in order to demonstrate validity and credibility. These stories do not need supporting evidence from outside the research. They are valid because someone took the time to share their experience, and that is all that is required. In all of this is how I demonstrate the second tenet of anti-oppressive research, that it recognizes that knowledge is socially constructed and political.

Also in line with anti-oppressive methodology, participants were each given the opportunity to review and edit their transcripts to ensure that the information they gave me was the information they meant me to have. Within a true PAR paradigm, participants engage in analysis of the data. In this case participants were not given the opportunity to analyze the data. The biggest reason for this was to maintain confidentiality and minimize any unanticipated negative consequences due to information sharing. Many of the participants were known to each other, and on occasion would vent their frustrations with certain people or entities. It was necessary not to share this raw data among participants, or even with Dr. Horsethief, in order to maintain a place of safety in participants’ individual stories. Also, due to the significant time commitment that would have been involved, individuals were not asked to participate in reflective meaning making. So instead an anti-oppressive approach was used to ensure that the participants maintained power over their words, and I maintained relationship with the participants in being transparent in the analysis. Participants had another opportunity to review the research in its entirety to ensure that my re-presentation of their knowledge is an accurate representation.

Conducting the research project using an intertwined PAR and anti-oppressive methodology was intended to allow me to concretely centralize a Ktunaxa perspective within the research project. The intent was not to do research 'on' or 'for' Ktunaxa people, it was to do research 'with' Ktunaxa people. I feel that I was able to accomplish this goal and I believe that the participants would agree because participants' knowledge and voices were centralized through their participation in the research project as much as possible (Rutman, Hubberstey, Barlow & Brown, 2005). The participants' ownership of the knowledge is also made clear throughout the paper. The spirit of PAR created space for this research to be anti-oppressive. Elliott (2011) tells us that PAR is "not a trowel for digging up information. It is a political stance derived from conditions of inequality and oppression" (pg. viii). The first and second tenets of anti-oppressive research are to focus on social justice and resistance to oppression, and to be political. Research conducted in Indigenous communities in the past has been rife with inequality and oppression. Historically, research has "perpetuated ongoing racism and colonialism, and fails to value Indigenous ways of knowing or recognize Indigenous worldviews" (Saunders, West and Usher, 2010, pg. 2). Combining the spirit of PAR and anti-oppressive research helps to resolve this oppression by ensuring avenues for participants to be co-owners of the research.

Lastly but perhaps most importantly, I learned through conducting the research that even if I had been able to engage participants as I had envisioned, it would not have been anything new to the participants I interviewed. I had assumed that the participants would not have experience in PAR, and by engaging them in this process I would be assisting in building capacity for the Nation to conduct their own research. This was not the case, in fact, all but one participant had multiple degrees and far more education than I. Some participants had already completed research on their own, using a PAR approach, and did not need me to engage them in this process of capacity building because the capacity was and is already there among participants and the Nation. In this experience and knowledge gained from the participants who were well versed in PAR, I soon recognized that my thinking and reasoning for conducting PAR was based in a colonial assumption that the research capacity of the participants was not there

and that I, a white person, would be assisting the Nation in developing a research knowledge capacity. As previously mentioned I am and always will be a work in progress as I strive to decolonize myself. To that end, this research process has enabled me to move further along in this decolonizing process than I had originally anticipated, and for this learning experience I am humbled and thankful.

Methods

Qualitative Sampling

“Qualitative sampling requires identification of appropriate participants, being those who can best inform the study” (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002, p. 726). The Ktunaxa Nation Council consists of roughly 1000 status Band members⁹ from four distinct Bands. The Ktunaxa Nation is also the primary service provider for roughly the same number of urban Aboriginal people who may or may not identify as Ktunaxa, and who may or may not have Indian Status according to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). Due to the large number of people who could possibly have a vested interest in the outcomes of this research, it was necessary that I complete a sampling of the population, and that I be specific in recruiting efforts. What I mean by this is that I needed to recruit only people who would be able to provide me with the rich and nuanced data that I was seeking. I needed to recruit people who were actively engaged with education and would have a decent amount of experience to draw their stories from.

Originally I had planned to speak with everyone and anyone who would talk to me. I quickly realized that if I conducted the research this way, I would not be able to stay within the timelines set out by the University for completing a Masters degree. So to limit the sample population I decided on no more than 5 Nation members (status or non-status) who have attended post secondary education and who are living locally within the Cranbrook area. I also decided to recruit no more than five Ktunaxa leaders and five professional individuals who

⁹ ‘Status’ is based on federally (Canadian) defined legislation that was created in an attempt to control Indigenous identity and there are many people who would still identify as Ktunaxa, but who are unable to gain status for a variety of reasons.

support Ktunaxa students pursuing post secondary education. In this recruitment strategy the intent was to hear the stories from the students individually, and gather information from Ktunaxa leaders and support staff using focus groups. I did not limit recruitment criteria further because I wanted a good cross section of the population. I accepted both sexes within the adult age range of 19 plus. Initially I sent out research invitations through community newsletters and various staff members of the four Bands. In the research invitations I identified the three groups that I sought and how I would gather information from them. I noted that students would be individually interviewed and staff and Nation leaders would be asked to participate in focus groups (appendix f). Education Coordinators of each Band other than ʔaʔam forwarded the invitation on the prospective participants, and the Chief Operating Officer forwarded the invitation to students of ʔaʔam in order to prevent an ethical dilemma of myself having power over students decisions to participate as I am the Education Coordinator for ʔaʔam. The participants e-mailed or called me to express interest in participating in the research project and I in turn sent them the consent forms. Potential participants were given time to read the consent forms, sign them, and send them back to me. When they were ready, we set up calls or face to face interviews that I recorded in order to transcribe later. I conducted three interviews by phone, and three interviews in person.

During the research recruitment phase, I was able to recruit 6 students who were representative of three of the four bands that make up the Ktunaxa Nation, and who were living, working, and continuing post secondary across Canada. The majority of the participants were female, all were between the ages of 20-50, and most had completed either a master's degree or a PhD. What was most notable to me was that many of these students had dual experiences within the post secondary institution. Not only were they students, they were faculty and support staff as well. I was not able to recruit Nation leaders or support staff. In the end, the participants I interviewed have proven to be a much better representative sampling of the population than I had hoped for because I was able to obtain representation from nearly the

whole Nation as opposed to gathering information only from those living near by. I am unsure as to why I was not able to recruit leaders and support staff.

Data Gathering Processes

The data gathering processes I intended to incorporate within the research included focus groups and interviews. Because I recruited only students, three of whom did not live in the Cranbrook area, I focused on individual interviews as the process for gathering data. I was able to schedule mutually agreeable times with the participants and before asking any questions I asked them if they had read the consent form and if they had any questions regarding informed consent. Once they had their questions answered and I was able to build some rapport with them I asked them one simple question. I asked them to tell me about their experience with post secondary education, what they liked, what they didn't like, and what they felt needed to change. After the participants had answered the question I then asked them to identify any parting words or things that they wanted to emphasize about their experience. The interviews lasted anywhere from half an hour to an hour and a half and when the interviews were complete I later transcribed them. These transcriptions were sent to the individual participants and they provided any edits that they wanted to make.

In my research application to the Nation, I had voiced intention to create data gathering instruments in collaboration with Dr. Horsethief. When my original ethics application was submitted to the University of Victoria, it was stated that these documents would be created in collaboration with the community committee member after ethics was approved. However, the ethics committee of the University of Victoria decided that it was necessary for me to provide sample questions (appendix e) before the application could be approved. Dr. Horsethief was sent copies of draft questions for review, however he did not directly participate in the creation of the questions before submitting to UVic because I felt that I could easily adapt these questions after the fact if Dr. Horsethief felt it was necessary to revise them. In the end, I did not use the research questions because I did not need to. When I asked the opening question, participants answered all of the other questions without my having to ask them. They were very eager to

engage and tell their stories. Although I call these interactions interviews because an initial question was asked in order to start the conversation, I did not do much talking, nor did I interject while participants were talking, unless I did not understand what they had said or I wanted to convey that I was actively engaged in listening to their stories. This was very much an open-ended process where participants actively engaged and willingly told me everything they had ever wanted to say about their experience in post secondary education: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Ethical Considerations

There are numerous ethical considerations when working across difference. Because of my location, I am in a position that is afforded a significant amount of power within dominant discourse. I need to be both self-reflexive and explicit in acknowledging and challenging this privilege in order to work across difference (Frankenberg, 1996). Not only are self-location and self-reflection two key methods within Indigenist methodology, but also they are key to a third method, which is building and maintaining relationships. Relationship building is important not only in Indigenist research, but also in anti-oppressive research. These self reflective and relational concepts are also key to working with Indigenous people in general. Through my professional work in the community, I have particular insider knowledge that I can draw on when interpreting the data, however I must be mindful that this particular knowledge does not replace direct insider knowledge (from community participants) within the research. Throughout the entire research process, and in re-presenting the information I received, I must be careful in how knowledge and my position as an insider/outsider is presented to the reader, lest I be considered the knowledge holder above those from whom I have received the knowledge. Using Levinasian ethics, Rossiter discusses unsettled practice which highlights the dichotomy of the violence of knowledge and purporting to know the other in relation to the necessity of representation (2011). As a researcher I am placed within this dichotomy, where in order to bring social justice to the educational experience of Ktunaxa people, I must re-present knowledge to which I am not an insider. The participant who questioned me heavily on processes and relationships with the

Nation expressed to me that in order to do research in a good way, I needed to know my place and my role throughout the research process. In an effort to know my place and know my role I cannot stress enough that I am not the holder of the knowledge presented here. I can only partially re-present this knowledge, based on my location within my profession, and my relationship with community and my role as a graduate student researcher.

Including participants from proposal phase through to presentation/dissemination phase was another ethical consideration. In order to be true to the PAR paradigm, the participants should have been involved at every stage of the research process from proposal submission, to ethical application, to data collection, to analysis and finally through to presentation or dissemination of the data. More importantly, to be ethical in maintaining an Indigenist methodology and in the spirit of PAR, the Ktunaxa Nation had a certain amount of control over the process. The Nation exercised control throughout the entire process; ensuring I followed their own research approval process, consulted directly with a Ktunaxa Nation approved Committee member who ensured that I followed Ktunaxa protocols in conducting the research, and through evaluating all documents that were prepared. Because I was restricted from recruiting participants before ethical approval, as is a policy of the University of Victoria, I felt restricted in enlisting participant participation during the stages of proposal writing and ethics application. To mitigate these ethical considerations, I collaborated with staff and leaders of the Ktunaxa Nation to identify Dr. Horsethief so that he could act as one of my advisors on my thesis committee to ensure that I followed Nation protocol on not only keeping them informed of the process, but ensuring they had input into how the process unfolded. It was important to me that as much of this research as possible remain the property of and be informed by Nation members.

Limitations

There are many factors that affect Indigenous people who attend postsecondary schools that are beyond the scope of this research. For example, some negative effects of education for Indigenous peoples include, but are not limited to: lack of support in the primary and secondary school system, continued systemic racism, and poverty. All are issues requiring attention and

perhaps are future avenues for research (FNESC, personal communication; Malatest, 2002). Other intersecting issues that serve to discourage students include issues within the Ktunaxa Nation's systems and ability to support their members, as well as issues with post secondary institutions' failure to look at themselves and how they are continually ignoring Indigenous voices. Two participants talked about similar experiences of feeling like they could "scream from the roof tops" or "talk until they were blue in the face" but post secondary institutions still aren't listening. Two students talked about persistent corruption in the institution (Abbott Mihesuah (2004); James, Keith (2004) In Abbott Mihesuah and Cavender Wilson). Although necessary to investigate, it is not within the scope of this paper to examine these intersecting personal and political issues.

This research paper is limited to the Ktunaxa Nation. This Nation's collective voice is not representative of all Indigenous voices. Because I choose to limit the scope this way, the research is very much specific to this population. The information gleaned from this research and the outcomes that are established as a result of this research may not be generalizable to other Indigenous communities. Although the literature review and research is informed by articles written by Indigenous people about several postsecondary institutions and how they envision the task of decolonization, this perspective may not necessarily be the same approach that the Ktunaxa wish to take.

Because I locate as a white woman, and I cannot fully know the experience of Aboriginal people within the post secondary school system, this lens will affect how the data is collected, organized and interpreted. Although I am aware of the historical issues, these are not my experiences. This insider/outsider knowledge was mitigated somewhat with the use of anti-oppressive research strategies. In all aspects of the research process I sought collaboration with the Ktunaxa Nation through Dr. Horsethief's participation in reviewing data and as a committee member. I sought to center participants' voices not only in the analysis, but also throughout the thesis as their words were often applicable in additional sections of the paper. I also sought to be transparent in my actions and my communication with the participants, Dr. Horsethief and

community members that did not participate in the research, but expressed interest in knowing what I was doing. I also ensured that participants were accurately re-presented through asking participants to review their data both after initial transcription and after completing the first draft of the paper.

Analyzing the Data

Triangulation

Triangulation ensures data validity and credibility. As Tracy notes, "*triangulation* in qualitative research assumes that if two or more sources of data, theoretical frameworks, types of data collected, or researchers converge on the same conclusion, then the conclusion is more credible" (Tracy, 2010, pg. 843). There are many ways that triangulation can be achieved, and one of these is through ensuring that the researchers eyes are not the only lens through which the data is viewed and interpreted. I offered participants the opportunity to review and edit the information they shared with me throughout the research process (Fossey et al, 2002). After transcribing the stories of the participants I sent them each their own transcriptions to review and edit as they saw fit. In doing so, this enabled participants to see their words in writing and make sure they did not misrepresent themselves in any way. In addition, the first draft of the thesis was sent to participants to review and edit for accuracy in re-presentation. In doing this, participants were able to ensure that what was written about them, or how their voice was used was how they intended themselves to be re-presented. Being influenced by both Indigenist and anti-oppressive theories, and using more than one methodology allowed me to collect and analyze the data from different perspectives. Through the Indigenist lens I am able to ensure that the data is analyzed respectfully, using methods that would make sense to the participants. Through the anti-oppressive lens I am able to ensure that the participants perspectives are centered within the analysis, and the analysis does not become my interpretation of the data, rather the data and the participants speak for themselves. Approaching in the spirit of PAR ensured that the interests of the Ktunaxa Nation would be served as they had envisioned. Dr. Horsethief provided detailed commentary on the draft and made specific edits where he felt the

information would best support the Ktunaxa Nation in their initiative to decolonize post secondary education.

Coding

I chose to analyze the data by coding the information received by each participant into several themes: tokenistic evidence, fear/self doubt, relationships, positive experiences, positive experiences in Indigenous programs, negative experiences, parting words, Band/Nation governance issues, cultural involvement, place based/land based connections, support in the home, support from the band, representation in faculty, representation in curriculum, representation in student body, process, connection to secondary school experience, opening knowledge to all students, having to represent all Indigenous people, internal colonization, dualism of Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, desire to go to school, personal obstacles, personal strengths, multiple degrees, racism, being heard, and the role of stories in understanding Ktunaxa perspectives. These themes emerged as I analyzed the data and immersed myself in listening to and reading stories told by the participants. I didn't plan themes purposefully because I wanted to hear what came out of the data instead of looking for what I felt were pre-conceived or presupposed outcomes of the data.

Secondly, I focused on themes that all or most of the participants commented on extensively. These included: The role of stories, being heard as Indigenous people, what was working, what wasn't working, (which came out in discussions around processes, politics and procedures of post secondary institutions), relationships, Indigenous programming and space, and representation. It is on these themes that I will focus my analysis, although all of the themes were important in highlighting interconnected issues that can either help or hinder Indigenous peoples' success in post secondary education. So although I do not write about all of the themes that emerged from the data, this does not mean that they are not important pieces of decolonization.

Self reflection

Working within an Indigenist framework and respecting an Indigenous ontology means self-reflection, not only in conducting the research, but also in the analysis (Aveling, 2012). With this in mind, I would spend hours after speaking to a participant, or transcribing the story just thinking about the information I was given and how it would fit into the research. I would also spend hours thinking about how this research has changed me as a person, both confirming what I thought to be true and challenging me to develop in my personhood and in the relationships that I was building through this process. I spent hours listening to the recordings of the interviews and transcribing them word-by-word, pulling out themes as they appeared in the stories. Through hearing the stories of the six participants, and transcribing them, I collected over 50 pages of data. I listened to first hand accounts of how several colleges and universities worked with, or did not work with Indigenous students both locally and internationally. There were many stories of activities and processes that contributed to successfully engaging Aboriginal learners in colleges and universities; and I would encourage readers to hear these stories. As human beings, we often focus on the negative and can easily forget that there is some great work that is already taking place within institutions that are trying to de-colonize.

With that being said, anti-oppressive and Indigenist research is about challenging the status quo and acting in a political manner in order to bring about change that is beneficial for all people. Because of this it is necessary to focus on the issues of what is not working, in order to make change. There were many stories of things that were not working so well. Not only did I hear about the participants' stories, but through their stories I heard of other Indigenous peoples' experiences. To that end, it is these instances wherein I think we must delve deeper to get a good understanding of the work that still needs to be done academically and institutionally.

Chapter 4-Making meaning of the Data (analysis)

I recognized several themes that came out of the data. There were some themes that one or two participants spoke of, and because these themes did not stand out as being common among at least half of the participants I chose not to focus on them extensively. However, because they came out of the research they deserve brief discussion. The first theme identified was that of fear or self-doubt. One participant stated, "I didn't know that I actually had what it took to proceed into post secondary...you're already coming from a place of feeling intimidated, like you're in somebody else's world" (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). This is important because even though only one participant revealed that they felt this way, current literature supports that this is a common experience for Indigenous learners (Fear-Segal, 2007). This participant also talked about how this, coupled with their secondary school experience, was an important factor in having and maintaining the desire to go to school. The second theme that emerged was that of Band/Nation governance issues. Participants made comments around not having a central education system within the Nation. Up until 2015 education has been strictly individual Band domain. This year the Ktunaxa Nation has moved towards creating this central education structure by making education one of the Nations pillars, meaning one of their priorities. As well participants made comments around the Nations governance structure and how there is more work that needs to be done in order to ensure that every Ktunaxa person benefits from activities aimed at improving lives, as opposed to a select few members of the Nation (participant 3, personal communication, 2015).

One participant stated that they believed that personal involvement in tradition and culture was a supportive factor in being able to navigate post secondary education, as well as support from the Band and their family being a supportive factor (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). Two participants stated that a significant piece of the work that needs to be done includes ensuring that elementary and secondary schools are providing the right experience and education to Indigenous learners in order to support them in pursuing post secondary education (participants, 3 and 6, personal communication, 2015). This notion of

starting in elementary and secondary school has also been a significant part of the conversations that I have with stakeholders and education partners as an Education Coordinator. Participant 4 felt that it was important to ensure that all students, not just Indigenous students, were educated in Indigenous issues and knowledges (personal communication, 2015). Participant 6 talked about personal struggles and strengths such as family support and family or work obligations having an impact on success in post secondary schools (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). And finally one participant talked about the dualism of Indigenous and western ways of knowing. This participant stated, “we had to learn the white guys way, and our own way on the side” (participant 3, personal communication, 2015). This statement was made in the context of having very little in the way of published works created by Indigenous people to draw upon when designing courses or conducting research.

The Role of Storying

As previously mentioned one of the participants thoroughly questioned me on my research processes and intentions. In this questioning she had asked me if I had read the creation story, or any of the other stories and legends of the Nation. She asked if I understood that Ktuanxa stories had within them everything that we needed to know about Ktunaxa methodologies for research. She explained to me that these stories held within them Ktunaxa ontologies and epistemologies. She stated that everything we needed to know about how to work in partnership was encapsulated in these stories. It was because of what this participant shared with me, that I went back and included a very brief and incomplete version of the creation story at the beginning of this document. I had not originally intended to use storying as part of my analysis but this participant showed me how stories are important teaching tools and history keepers. I felt that as a non-Indigenous person working within an Indigenist and anti-oppressive framework, it was important for me to hear what she was saying, and include the importance of stories in the analysis. As it is traditional practice for the listener to draw their own conclusions from the stories they are told, it is up to the reader here to search for and find the meaning that they would make from what is being shared in this analysis. This often means

hearing, or in this case reading, the stories many times and each time a new meaning may present itself. To that end I have attempted to weave important pieces of information gained from participants with my own analysis in order to present a cohesive and linear account as opposed to separating the knowledge shared from the analysis of that knowledge.

For example, the creation story tells us of how we are all interconnected. There is not one person, animal or thing that is more important than another. We are all equal, we are all equally responsible to each other for each others well being. If we apply these principles of equality and interconnectedness to the current challenges of making postsecondary institutions safe places for Indigenous learners the answer is clear. As a public institution it is critical for post secondary schools to 'listen to what we are being told the needs are' from the people who are requiring institutional change (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). It is important to do what is required to address those needs, such as ensuring successful methods of working with Indigenous students becoming policy rather than courtesy. And finally, institutions need to honour the relationship that is built in this exchange through continuing to be actively engaged with First Nations and communities during and after the work of decolonization takes place, if there ever is an *after*. In the creation story the animal chiefs are told that the humans are coming and that they, the humans, will need support from the animals to survive. In this story, each animal offers parts of themselves to the humans to assist them. The deer, for example, offers his body for food, his coat for clothing and his bones for tools. In return, the deer asks that humans give thanks and honour this sacrifice, and as long as this exchange is honoured, the deer will continue to provide for these needs for time eternal. Simple.

Another participant shared another Ktunaxa story with me, and I include this part of her story in it's entirety.

...it is a story of two young men. These two young men, they are anxious to join the older men in a hunting party, but they're repeatedly denied, and they're repeatedly told that they are too young and too inexperienced to join that hunting party. When they're finally accepted into that hunting party, the story goes on to relate a number of instances

where the visioning and the spiritual powers of the young men repeatedly save the other members. Now this story speaks to a number of issues. First of all, like your work itself, it speaks to the importance of stories. Because, the truth about stories is that's all we are. And narratives that we tell about our experiences help us to express and implement alternatives to the neo-liberal colonizers versions of ourselves and our needs that we live with every day. The stories we tell ourselves allow us to develop solidarity and kinship with each other when we recognize we are not alone in our experiences, and we recognize that we are not the outsiders that we are normally portrayed to be. This specific story speaks of the important role of the young, the role of hard work, the role of dreaming and visioning, the role of persistence and optimism, and I think it teaches us about the role of destiny. So, on that note I think the story tells us about the larger issues by situating the place of Indigenous knowledge in the academy as a practice of destiny. So it cannot be questioned whether at this stage in our collective history whether Indigenous peoples have a right to be visible and present in post secondary education institutions. It's not whether or not we will have a right to be, it's how we will be there. So it's the form and the processes of breaking down barriers. That is where we should be focusing our attention (participant 3, personal communication, 2015).

This story and the participants meaning making of the story speaks to me about how decolonization is not just a destiny of Indigenous people, rather, decolonization is a destiny of all of us. Several participants stated that decolonization was not just for Indigenous people. One participant stated, "Everyone is a product of colonialism. Non-native people are products of colonialism just as much as native people because they are taught the exact same things we are taught. Native people are further colonized because we've internalized all those things that we've been taught. So, each of us has the responsibility to make those changes" (participant 4, personal communication, 2015). We are all part of a socially constructed story where a certain group of people are supposedly inherently superior to all other people and we all need to be a part of constructing a different story, one where we are all equal. All of us need to make

decolonization a priority in order for it to take place in a sustainable and meaningful way. This participant also stated “we’re here, we’re not going anywhere [so] get on the right side of history” (participant 4, personal communication, 2015). Another participant stated, “I think that sometimes there’s this unsaid notion that institutions are doing Indigenous people a favour by including this information. So I think it’s important that they understand that it’s also in their best interests. We’re part of this country, we’re stakeholders in this country, we’re the fastest growing population and it’s not going to be long before we make up the majority of the students, well maybe not the majority but...” (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). What this participant didn’t finish saying is that the Aboriginal population is the fastest growing population in Canada today and it will not be long before there is a significantly larger number of Aboriginal people seeking postsecondary education.

It is true that Indigenous students are graduating from secondary school and entering post secondary institutions at higher rates. As I already mentioned, in just the three years that I have been employed with ʔaḡam, we went from having no waitlist to having four people on a wait list the next year and six people the next year. I expect this waitlist to grow again this year as we move towards deciding funding allocations. In the analysis, these waitlists are examples from one small community of 350 people, and I can imagine the numbers of waitlists as we think about this reality on a provincial or even national level given there are over 617 First Nations communities across Canada with 1,836,035 people who claimed Aboriginal ancestry in a 2011 census (AANDC, 2015). It is time for institutions to get ahead of the work that needs to be done so that they are prepared for these up and coming students. It is our destiny.

Throughout stories from participants, there were also what I would call “micro-stories”. These micro-stories were stories about other people that participants had come into relationship with who had similar or relevant experiences. These micro-stories expand the base of this research beyond the original six participants because I began to hear many overlapping stories of racism, marginalization and failures to truly support Indigenous learners. I began to see the web of challenges existing in the colonial post secondary education system taking shape as the

connections were being made between people and common experiences. Had there been more time, and more stories, I wholeheartedly believe that this web of challenges would become so clear that it would be impossible for institutions to continue to ignore its existence.

Hearing Voices from the Margins

Three participants commented about having pointed out the challenges Indigenous people face in the post secondary institution over and over again, in some cases for 20 years (Participant 6, personal communication, 2015). Hearing the stories, and the frustration and defeat in them resonated for me because I have also felt this frustration as the Education Coordinator trying to advocate for the people I serve. I also sensed a feeling of power and persistence because even though it has been 20 years, the Ktunaxa have not given up and continue to point out the challenges waiting for someone to take them up and address them. They commented about not just them saying these words, but advocates before them having said these words. Yet still, no one is really listening. Participants made comments about “screaming from the rooftops” or “talking until they are blue in the face”, yet they still are not being heard (participants 4 and 5, personal communication, 2015). The obvious question at this time is why? Why are institutions still not hearing what is being said? One participant believes that the reason activities towards decolonization are not performed with any sort of deep and meaningful outcome, or without having any teeth is because managers and executives at institutions are not committed or connected themselves to decolonization (Participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Participant 5 stated that in order for decolonization to be successful it must come from the top down. The presidents of the institutions themselves must be 100% committed to this work. The trickle down effect of this concept is that everyone else will follow suit and the process and the action will become ingrained within the institution (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). The participant’s words here clearly outline one of the many activities that any post secondary institutions executive could engage in. The same participant stated that there is no continuance or stability in programming because people change over. For example, when someone who holds great power within the institution leaves, the next person to

come in must be convinced all over again and we are right back at square one (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). At some point the procedure of how to work with and for Indigenous populations must be core to the institutions operations. A third participant went further to state that in order for institutions to be decolonized we, as white mainstream people ingrained in the colonialist mindset, must quit asking Indigenous people what they want and look at ourselves in figuring out why we are not ready to hear them (participant 2, personal communication, 2015).

I stated that I had a sense of participants feeling defeated, but also a sense of being powerful and persistent. As one participant noted, "I think that things have been progressively getting better and I don't know if it's because we're becoming more adapted to the school, or if the schools are becoming more adapted to us. As we become more comfortable with education and institutions we're learning to adapt to it, so we're kind of learning how to ask the questions and those kinds of things, it's not really the school that's changing you know, we're just becoming better at being students, or at being students in that environment" (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). This same participant told me of her daughter who has just started her educational journey and is hiding the fact that she is Indigenous because she just wants to fit in. In a country that touts multi-culturalism and inclusion, a young woman feels that she needs to hide her identity to be successful in the institution. This is unacceptable. Clearly, it is necessary to insist that our institutions implement decolonizing policies, procedures, programs and curriculum to confront marginalization.

The reason I say there is also a sense of power and persistence is because even though the participants expressed that institutions are not listening to Ktunaxa peoples concern, and are not changing their core values, policies or social constructs, Indigenous people keep confronting institutional colonialism. In recent memory, the call for change has been spoken over and over by generation after generation of Ktunaxa, and they continue to call for change. The Ktuanxa continue to meet with, and challenge the local institution to do better. What several participants stated in various ways, was that Ktunaxa people and the Ktunaxa government need to stop

compromising. One student stated that it is always Indigenous people who have to compromise, and that shouldn't be how it is (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). Another participant stated that the Ktunaxa government institution needs to focus on long term gains for all Ktunaxa rather than short term gains for those who are affected in the moment when working with the post secondary institutions and deciding what is acceptable practice within them (participant 3, personal communication, 2015). The message I received from this participant was to stop saying 'well they tried, and that's good enough' and start saying 'don't just try, do.' Commit to changing the system and commit to long lasting, sustainable change.

Processes, politics and procedures

The bulk of this analysis will focus on the good, the bad and the ugly of the relationship between post secondary institutions and the participants. Much of what was shared in the stories I collected was not around institutions lack of trying. Participants shared about process and playing politics. It was about *how* they are trying to work with Indigenous students and what they are accomplishing or not through their efforts. The majority of the participants stated that they believed that much of the efforts institutions put towards including Indigenous knowledge are tokenistic. What this means is that the effort is focused on surface level activities or lip service. For example creating programs and services that are delivered with grant funding rather than core funding, often ensuring they are short lived and largely ineffective in meeting the needs of the people served (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). To me these are activities that look inclusive from the outside but upon closer inspection are more like smoke and mirrors, parlour tricks that check ticky boxes for funding and reporting purposes but have no legacy. One participant stated, "that presence on campus is really big. And not a presence like oh, well you can come and do your song and dance but we don't actually care about Aboriginal people, we don't want the billboard presence, we want things actually happening on campus" (participant 5, personal communication, 2015).

Some examples that were given where institutions have only marginally met the mark were in things like Aboriginal Advisory Committees, Aboriginal Education Coordinators, elders

programs, hiring Aboriginal staff and faculty and setting up Aboriginal spaces. For example, participant 6 talked about the Aboriginal space at one institution. It started as an old dilapidated trailer at the back of the building, seemingly hidden away. When construction and renovation took place, a larger international students association was built and the Aboriginal space was relegated to a room that was originally intended to be a storage closet. When funding was available to build an Aboriginal space the opportunity was nearly missed resulting in far less funding for the project than originally anticipated; but an appropriate Aboriginal space was built. Participant 6 also stated that they did not feel that this progression of Aboriginal space allocation, although somewhat insulting, was purposefully meant to be so. Rather it felt like this progression, or lack thereof, was due to the needs of Indigenous students being an afterthought as opposed to being on the forefront of the institutions collective mind (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). In BC, the Ministry of Advanced Education has mandated that postsecondary institutions have Aboriginal Education Coordinators and advisory committees (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2012). What Ktunaxa students have found is that many times Aboriginal Education Coordinators positions are filled with white people. Participants noted that these people were open, helpful and they did their jobs well, but because they were white, there were things that they just didn't and couldn't know, so there was always a piece missing (participant 1, personal communication, 2015). They noted that Aboriginal Advisory Committees were not real advisory committees because there was no advising going on, only reporting (participant 6, personal communication, 2015). They talked about elders programs being integral and extremely positive components of an Indigenous support program, but that these programs are underfunded and would most likely be the first programs cut in the event of budget constraints (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Not only this but these programs having been considered additives as opposed to necessities that everyone in the institution should be aware of and respect (participant 4, personal communication, 2015).

Lastly participants talked about postsecondary institutions hiring unqualified staff just to fill their quota or commitment to have Aboriginal staff (participant 3, personal communication,

2015). One participant even talked about being hired herself in one of these positions even though she did not feel qualified. She stated after being hired to teach an Indigenous Knowledge course, "there likely wasn't one person in that entire province that would have said 'that girl raised in a white family who has all those formal degrees from white universities would be a great person to learn Indigenous knowledge from'" (participant 3, personal communication, 2015). But she took the job because one of her own advisors told her, 'Just do it. Just learn it and just do it. We are at too sensitive of a place in our history right now for you to say you can't do it. We've been fighting for this space for IK, and we don't want to lose that space by your little argument that you don't know how to do it. So, just do it'. So she learned it, and she did it (participant 3, personal communication, 2015). This kind of evidence not only puts people in a position to have to represent knowledge that they sometimes don't understand themselves, but it negatively affects students abilities to know who they are in the process. If the teacher is unqualified to deliver the message, how is the student supposed to take it up and make sense of it for themselves? This participant said that "...they just see that you're an Indian...it ends up being too hard to explain that for me as a displaced Ktunaxa person trying to teach Indigenous Knowledge in Cree traditional territory, it would be like having Canadian parents with Italian ancestry and then going to Italy as an adult and doing an exchange and being told to teach Chinese knowledge to Italians" (Participant 3, personal communication, 2015).

The recommendations from participants included ensuring that budgets were in place to ensure that successful programs were maintained. In addition to budgets, policies and procedures need to be created so as to ensure that future generations of leaders can also see the importance of these programs and ensure longevity. They stated that as much as possible, Indigenous people should be hired in any position that is directly aimed to be of service to Indigenous students. This includes advisors, counselors, and faculty teaching about Indigenous people and knowledge. Although it was not directly stated by participants, I would include that people who are hired in positions for the institutions should as much as possible be local people. Hiring local people is particularly important in places where there is a pool of qualified people to

take on these roles as there is within the Ktunaxa Nation. One participant stated, “what we do as Indigenous people is we situate ourselves within a family, we situate ourselves within a territory, we situate ourselves within a language, this to me, is Indigenous knowledge” and “you’re in ktunaxa homelands, if anything, you should be talking about Ktunaxa centric methods” (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). In particular participant 2 was talking to me specifically about how I conducted the research, but it applies in a much larger context of what knowledge, or whose knowledge should be taught when engaging in courses such as First Nations studies or Indigenous knowledge courses.

Relationships

Another major theme that emerged from the stories was that of relationships. Indigenous people in general are highly focused on relationship, and the Ktunaxa are no exception. The Ktunaxa do not care what you know, until they know that you care (anonymous, personal communication, 2015). Even in conducting the research it was clear from the onset that relationship was an important factor. Relationships emerged for me from the research approval process, to the people who volunteered to participate, to how people got to know me better before and through the research process before they would open up to me about their stories. Many participants would ask me if I knew people that they knew, or if I had connected with who they felt were important people through the research process. In specific context to the information gathered many participants talked about just getting to know people, one student stated, “go talk to an Indian, we’re fun, we’re funny, I always say once you get to know one of us, literally, once you get to know one of us you can’t be racist anymore. That’s how I feel, just spend some time, come have a meal with us” (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Participants talked about how everyone, not just Indigenous people needed to engage. They said things like, everyone should attend events, and meals, or even just come hang out in the Aboriginal centre and get to know what we are all about (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Some of the best experiences that were told to me were about different people engaging, about people wanting to know more about Aboriginal history, traditions and

knowledge. The most uplifting stories in this process were the ones that were told about people within the institutions who individually took it upon themselves to build those relationships (participant 1, personal communication, 2015). Building relationships and educating ourselves is one of the most powerful methods of decolonizing our systems. When people see that you are genuinely engaged and genuinely concerned for their wellbeing, this is when deeper dialogues can occur and long lasting change can take effect.

Indigenous programming and space

Programming and courses that were facilitated by and for Indigenous people were rated as providing much higher levels of satisfaction for participants than general courses. Several of the participants had taken courses in, or even specialized in Indigenous programs (participants 2-5, personal communication, 2015). They all said the same things about their experiences in Indigenous programs. Within these Indigenous programs is where they felt the most comfortable, the most welcomed and the most able to be who they are. Moreover, participants shared that they were able to have the conversations they wanted to have as opposed to being shushed (as they experienced in mainstream classrooms). Participants could see mentors in the teachers at the front of the class and they could see themselves in the faces around them. They said things like the program felt "more holistic", and "you felt like you meant something to the teacher and I was more than just a number" (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). So the question that I have is how can we take what is an overwhelmingly positive response to a certain subset of programming and curriculum, and expand this to all curriculum and experience? What is it that these programs are doing differently that we are not seeing in the rest of the institution? Throughout my analysis, my guess is in the valuation of the students in these courses and having a place where they felt they belonged. Institutions would be wise to internally examine what is happening in these pockets and apply the knowledge gained across the spectrum.

Speaking of places where they belonged, participants all acknowledged the spaces that were made specifically for them. Some participants had really great stories to tell of sweat

lodges and tipis on campus that were used for teaching and practicing Indigenous ceremonies. Some students talked about not so great experiences where they were stationed in old run down trailers and then closets before getting a proper building where they could gather. All of the students stated that it was important to have this space no matter where it was and what it looked like. There was a place for Indigenous students to gather, share their knowledge, share their stories, and share their trials and tribulations. As already discussed it was also important to a few of the participants that these spaces be open to non-Indigenous students so that they could also come and learn and build those relationships and begin the process of decolonizing themselves.

Representation

One thing that I did learn that I did not expect was that many of the participants moved on into employment with colleges and universities they had attended because of their degrees. This additional level of institutional understanding as a faculty member added another level of intersectionality that I hadn't anticipated when I started the research. Not only are students suffering from inadequate systems and structures in place to support them, but staff are as well. Not only are students feeling racism, marginalization and that efforts to date are little more than tokenistic, staff are also feeling this way. So even though a Ktunaxa person has been accepted into the upper echelon of post secondary education, they are still being treated as second-class citizens. One participant talked about having to limit their academic freedom in order to collaborate with the institution. Meaning they could not teach what they felt was relevant because it was outside of the political comfort zone of the institute. Students and staff were silenced. For example, one participant felt that when they spoke of Indigenous issues, they were merely tolerated, and sometimes not even that (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Faculty felt that they could not express the knowledge that students needed to learn because if they went outside of the parameters the institution set out for them, they would be denied funding for their programs (participant 3, personal communication, 2015). One participant talked about how at the same time that they were teaching a class on Indigenous Knowledge systems

and how and why they were important, the history teacher down the hall was teaching the same students that Indigenous people were all still savages without sophisticated systems, thus undoing any work that she had done to subvert this colonial fallacy (participant 2, personal communication, 2015). Both as staff and as students participants felt that they were called upon to represent all Indigenous people simply because they were the only Indigenous person in the room (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). So although Indigenous people are being allowed into postsecondary institutions both as students and as staff, their knowledge is not being welcomed. Their knowledge is being marginalized and silenced thus preventing deep and meaningful relationships and understanding from developing.

Participants talked about having more representation in the student body, in the faculty and in the curriculum. Even in the maths and sciences where people typically think that non-western knowledge cannot fit, it can. Indigenous knowledge, Ktunaxa knowledge does not need to be and should not be relegated to the social and historical sciences. There are many ways that we can open up curriculum to include additional and equally valid ways of knowing being and doing. Participants talked about how decolonization of education needs to start in the elementary and secondary systems. People should not be hearing about Indigenous peoples for the first time when they go to University. They should be hearing and seeing this knowledge truthfully represented earlier in life. One participant talked about mandatory First Nations studies courses for all disciplines as a good way to start the knowledge sharing (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). And several participants talked about the need for cultural competency (participants 2, 3, 5, personal communication, 2015). When we speak of cultural competency we don't mean an ungraded, internet based, westernized course on cultural competency as one participant states. We need to see cultural competency training that is meaningful, directly impactful and directly engaging with Indigenous people (participant 5, personal communication, 2015). Of course there are other intersecting factors that influence success in post secondary education including personal strengths and challenges, personal fears and the issues of living life in general that come up for all of us. Issues such as support from Bands, families, and the

Ktunaxa Nation as a whole are factors. Funding, cultural involvement and racism that is not only overt, but covert and sometimes barely noticeable on a conscious level, but there none the less are also issues. Participants also mentioned internalized colonialism and the dualism of walking in two worlds, a white western world, and a world where Indigenous tradition is alive and well, and having to know and function in two different systems. Lastly participants talked about governance issues, both with the federal government, with Ktunaxa Nation government, and the governing policies and procedures of the institution that function to uphold the status quo. All of these issues deserve much more focused and nuanced attention than I can give them here, and even though this project is done, the work has only just begun.

Chapter 5-Conclusion

Going back to the research question: What is the experience of Ktunaxa students in post secondary education and how can we use this experience to decolonize post secondary institutions? What can be taken away from this research? The participants have discussed the lack of supportive policies and procedures. They have talked about both the programs and services that have supported them, and those that failed to support them. They talked about how people in executive positions need to be committed to supporting Indigenous learners. The participants have concretely exemplified some of their expectations and the literature supports these calls for change. So what is to be done with the information and who is going to do it? At this point in the dialogue decolonization begins when postsecondary institutions become willing to invest in the process. What I mean is, post secondary institutions need to invest financially, socially, and politically. Financially, resources need to be dedicated that are both adequate and sustainable. Socially, the people who staff the institution from the custodian to the president of the school need to have a good understanding of Indigenous peoples and the issues they face. Not only do they need to understand, they need to act on this understanding in a way that benefits Indigenous learners. The best place to start that I can think of is to discuss in detail, with Indigenous learners, what concrete changes can be made, and then make them. The entire post secondary system needs to become a place where those who enter the doors, whether they are Indigenous or not, will know it is a culturally safe space, and will leave with competence in working across difference. Politically, post secondary institutions will make lasting policy changes that withstand changes in leadership, and are reflected in the actions of every staff person and student. Since the system of education was the system that was used to colonize Indigenous people, it needs to be the first system used to decolonize all people.

Decolonization starts when people begin to understand and accept what that means for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The decolonizing work that needs to be done requires a far deeper commitment from institutions than has been exemplified to date. The decolonizing work that is required is a work of process and politics, and a work of changing the

institution at the core, or the heart of its being. It is the work of decolonizing the people, from the president to the secretaries to the students. It is the work of decolonizing the system from the inside out, starting with core values and principles. It is the work of a perpetual, sustainable and continuous process of decolonizing. Decolonization needs to be at the forefront of the institutions goals and strategic priorities. Decolonization is not just something that we can talk about doing, or do haphazardly. It is something that needs to be a concentrated and deliberate effort because as the participants have stated, "we're here, we're not going anywhere", and "the school needs to be ready for [our] children" (participant 2, personal communication, 2015).

Maybe through this research, the message is clear enough, and collective enough for institutions to understand the needs of Indigenous learners, specifically Ktunaxa learners. At the very least, this research begins a process of data collection that the Ktunaxa Nation can encourage people to add their own knowledge to. But this is only if the information is shared. As the researcher I will be sharing the information in this paper at a feast to celebrate the end of this particular piece of the work. Those who attend are welcome to take copies and decide for themselves what their next step will be. As to how this information is shared beyond the Nation; that is a choice to be made by the Ktunaxa Nation Council. The Ktunaxa Nation Council will be receiving a copy of the thesis, and will also be taking on ownership of the document and the information it contains once it is complete. It will not be my choice as to if, when, or how the information is shared, and I will not be able to further share the information without consent from the Nation. I invite the Nation to take up this information and use it when sharing with post secondary institutions both locally and at a distance. I invite the Nation to use the information in this document to influence their own process of developing a strategy to support Ktunaxa learners, and I invite the use this information to inform their discussions at various tables where the topic is Indigenous education. As an Education Coordinator, I can see some of this work was started shortly after I started this research project. I cannot say that this work started because this research was taking place, but I can say that the work has been timely, and now is an excellent time and place for this research to be influential and useful to this work. For example,

an education summit was held early in the new year, and another summit is scheduled to take place. Perhaps the information gained from this research can inform some of the discussion that happens at that event. Finally, I hope that this document can be one of many that discuss Indigenous education and decolonization from a Ktunaxa perspective, thereby including the Ktunaxa voice among many other voices discussing these topics in the literature.

As some of the participants discussed there are still many avenues to be explored that cannot be included in this paper. For example, two participants mentioned that there is still more work to be done within the Ktunaxa Nation to prepare themselves to take on the challenge of decolonization, both within education and generally speaking. Perhaps this is something that can be explored further in regards to how the Nation is supporting their people, and if there are approaches or actions that may yield more positive results. In addition, participants discussed the role of elementary and secondary school. I believe there is a wealth of knowledge that can be gained by doing further work in the realm of supporting Indigenous students and more specifically Ktunaxa students in the kindergarten to grade 12 school system. It is within the k-12 school system that Indigenous students will learn whether or not they are worthy of or have the potential to go to post secondary school. They learn their worth through how they are treated within that system by adults that are supposed to be there to educate them and help them grow. They learn their worth through interactions with their peers at pivotal points in their human development. They learn their worth through seeing that policies and procedures are supporting their education and their wellbeing as opposed to the policies and procedures of the residential school era. There is as much work to be done, if not more, at the k-12 level as there is at the post secondary level. Finally, there is also room to explore how families, culture, and Band systems play a role in supporting Indigenous learners as they navigate their educational journeys. The intersections of the life events and experiences that help or hinder a persons ability to do well within a post secondary Institution can be varied and vast. All of them are worth exploring in order to determine best practice in supporting Indigenous learners within post secondary institutions.

This research has privileged Ktunaxa voice and knowledge in ways that have not previously been done in the literature, or at an institutional level. The potential outcomes for Ktunaxa students extend further than functioning within the post secondary system. This research could have far reaching effects for this generation of Ktunaxa learners and seven generations to come. If the goals of this research are achieved, future Indigenous students will finally have a place to feel comfortable with who they are, their culture and their traditions within the postsecondary system. This will lift Ktunaxa people from the hole they were placed in through colonization, by giving them not only larger spoons, or even shovels, but heavy machinery with which to build the stairs towards reclamation of themselves as "strong healthy citizens and communities, speaking [their] languages and celebrating who [they] are and [their] history in [their] ancestral homelands, working together, managing [their] lands and resources, as a self-sufficient, self-governing Nation" (Ktunaxa Nation, 2014).

Researchers Learning

Conducting this research was a steep learning curve for me as the researcher. Not only did conducting this research expand my knowledge academically, this research expanded my knowledge of who I am as a person and how I need to be in this world. This research solidified that I am, and always will be in the process of decolonizing myself. Academically this process took me on a journey that increased my ability to express myself articulately and with the confidence that comes from understanding the content of this subject area. Personally this research has shown me how to be a person that focuses more on my relationships with others, because without relationship there is no trust, and without trust there can be no understanding, nor common ground. This research also gave me a more nuanced understanding of perseverance as I worked to obtain permission to complete the research. Most of all conducting this research gave me many opportunities to see where I could decolonize myself. For example immersing myself in Indigenist and anti-oppressive theory has truly shown me that there is no one way of knowing, doing, or being in the world. Further this immersion has shown me that the hegemonic white western way of knowing, being and doing is not necessarily the best way.

Certainly in this case, conducting the research and myself according to western ideology would have been detrimental to the research, to the participants in the research, and to the relationships that I have formed with the participants and other members of the Ktunaxa Nation. I move forward in my life journey with the knowledge that I must always be mindful of my colonial roots and how that affects my thinking, my attitude and my relationships. I move forward with the goal of continuing to decolonize not only myself, but those people and systems that I will come into contact with. For this knowledge, I am grateful. Hu Sukiḵxuni?ni.

Ownership of the knowledge

Now that the formal academic part of the research has come to an end, one more very important part of honouring my relationship with the Ktunaxa Nation is to ensure much of the ownership of this document will reside within the Ktunaxa Nation. I recognize I must submit this thesis to the "d-space" so that others can access the work but the true use of this document is meant to be for the members of the Ktunaxa Nation in an effort to improve and enhance their relationship with not only the local post secondary institution, but other institutions that their students may attend. It is important that future readers and users of this work also acknowledge the true knowledge holders, and where the true ownership of this knowledge lies, with the Ktunaxa people. I cannot control how this work will be used once it is submitted to the University of Victoria, I can only ask that if you are reading this work, and plan on using information that you have received from this work, that you do this with an air of respect and honour for the participants, and for the Nation.

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De-Colonizing Post Secondary Education: Improving cultural recognition in post secondary institutions using Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being.

You are invited to participate in a study entitled De-Colonizing Post Secondary Education: Improving cultural recognition in post secondary institutions using Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being that is being conducted by Wendy Haley.

Wendy Haley is a graduate student in the department of Social Work at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions by phone _____ or e-mail _____

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Social Work. It is being conducted under the supervision of Kundoqk, Jacque Green. You may contact my supervisor at _____ .

Purpose and Objectives

Indigenous education has been a hot button topic in Canada for centuries. Indigenous peoples were marginalized, colonized and racialized through education. Education was a genocidal tool along with alcohol, disease, violence, and legislation that settlers used to subdue and control Indigenous peoples in order to have access to lands and resources. After the closure of the last residential school the political climate in Education for Indigenous students has been changing. The major push from many Indigenous groups is to include Indigenous ways of knowing and being into every aspect of the college/university environment. The purpose of this research project is to include a Ktunaxa voice in the conversation about what Indigenization/decolonization of post secondary education looks like or should look like. There is a wealth of information on Indigenization that comes from various Indigenous perspectives, but the Ktunaxa perspective is missing from this dialogue. I believe that it is important for the Ktunaxa to have their voices heard because increasing numbers of Ktunaxa people are graduating and looking forward to attending College or University and they deserve an education that is relevant for them, and supportive of them. Literature indicates that the experience of going to college or university is often a negative one for Indigenous people for several reasons including racism, a lack of cultural inclusion, and a lack of support within the system. This research aims to hear from Ktunaxa people about their experiences in post secondary education to determine what is missing, what is working well, and what needs to be changed from a Ktunaxa perspective. This information will be used to support current literature on this topic, as it informs post secondary institutions that are moving towards better policies around Indigenous education. It is also hoped that this information will be used by the Ktunaxa Nation to improve cultural inclusion in our local college, and in other colleges and universities that our students commonly attend.

Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because it will provide a springboard from which the Ktunaxa can further discussions and actions in de-colonizing both the local post-secondary institution and additional institutions that are frequented by Ktunaxa students in a way that promotes collaboration and respectful relationships. It is also important because there is no current research that centers a Ktunaxa way of knowing in regards to how decolonization should take place within any system working within the Ktunaxa territory. A third significance of this research is that this process will assist the Ktunaxa in establishing a research protocol for their nation. Currently a draft document has been created and this project will be completed using the

draft protocol with the intent that it will assist in informing what works and what needs to be changed so that the protocol is an accurate reflection of the desires of the Ktunaxa people when people wish to conduct research with and for the Nation.

What I am hoping this research will accomplish, is to highlight ways in which the post secondary environment can change to incorporate Ktunaxa ways of knowing that are relevant for all learners, teachers and external partners, but most importantly for Ktunaxa students. I wish to locate the problem at the level of the social and educational environment of the post secondary institution, rather than letting the problem lie with the Indigenous learner. The end goal is that the Ktunaxa Nation will use the information from the research to build a solid foundation of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being both in the physical environment, and in the curriculum of post secondary institutions that their people commonly attend. This in turn will enhance participation and success of Ktunaxa learners through providing a culturally relevant educational environment for Ktunaxa people and the broader student body.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a member of the Ktunaxa Nation, and you have attended or are attending a college or university; or because you are a person in a position of employment to support students; or because you are a leader within the Nation.

What is involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include:
Students-Up to three meetings lasting approximately 1 to 1.5 hours in length where you will tell me about your experience as an Indigenous student in college or university, and where you will have the opportunity to review the information that is presented about you as the research is being documented and put together. We can meet at a location and time of your choosing.
Support staff and Ktunaxa leaders-One focus group meeting lasting approximately 1 to 3 hours in length and additional meetings as requested by individual participants to review information that is presented as a result of the focus group as the research is being documented and put together. We can meet at a location and time of your choosing.

All potential participants who are unable to attend meetings in person or over the phone are also welcome to submit their stories to me through e-mail or regular mail. I wish to ensure that everyone who wishes to participate in the project has the opportunity to do so.

Participants who schedule review meetings can expect that these meetings will consist of reviewing, modifying or correcting the information that was shared in the initial meeting. These review meetings are not intended to solicit new information.

All participants will be invited to attend a feast at the end of the research process where gifts will be given for your participation, and the results of the research will be shared. The date, time and location will be determined near the end of the research process. Participants will be audio recorded and those audio recordings will be transcribed by me. Written notes will also be taken after each interview, and these notes will also be available for participants to read as requested.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including scheduling time and places to meet, however every action will be taken to accommodate your needs.

Risks

There are some potential risks to you by participating in this research and they include emotional or social risks such as re-living past negative experiences through storytelling, or having your information be identified by other community members or people who read the research findings. To prevent or to deal with these risks the following steps will be taken: All personal and identifiable information will be altered to maintain anonymity unless participants request to have their names and information disclosed within the research. If emotional distress is caused by

telling your story, appropriate referrals to support personnel will be made for you upon your request.

Information cannot be guaranteed to be confidential during focus group meetings and participants are encouraged to keep this in mind when choosing what information they wish to share during these meetings.

Given the nature and size of the communities there is a potential risk of a “power over” situation. If you feel at any time that you are being coerced into participating, or that you are obligated to participate as a result of your relationship with either myself or the community committee member (Dr. Horsethief), you have the option to withdraw from the research without penalty or repercussion. If you feel that you have experienced repercussion resulting from your withdrawal, you are able to pursue disciplinary measures through my employer (aqam) or the Nation.

Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include improving the state of Education for yourself and future generations of Ktunaxa students through the use of this information to change college and university systems to be more inclusive of your cultural needs, and ways of knowing and being in the world. You will also benefit from this research through assisting to establish ethical, reliable, research protocols for the Nation that will promote better relations and outcomes for future research. You will also benefit by having your voice included among the many voices already discussing Indigenous education in literature. The Ktunaxa will have the opportunity to contribute to scholarly knowledge about Indigenous education through publication of the research findings.

Compensation

As a way to compensate you for your participation, you will be given a token of appreciation after the data has been compiled, prior to the feast and presentation of the research findings. If you choose to withdraw your participation at any time, compensation will be reflective of the amount of time spent engaging in the research process. If you consent to participate in this study, this form of compensation to you must not be coercive. It is unethical to provide undue compensation or inducements to research participants. If you would not participate if the compensation was not offered, then you should decline.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. Individual participants who wish to withdraw from the study will have the option to also withdraw all of the information collected to date, or to allow the researcher to include the information in the results. Focus group participants will not have the option to withdraw the information that they have included during the discussion therefore it is important to think carefully about the information that will be shared in this context. Compensation will be in line with the amount of participation up until the point of withdrawal and is up to the discretion of the researcher. Participants may choose to inform the myself as the researcher, or the community committee member, whomever you are most comfortable with.

Researcher’s Relationship with Participants

The researcher may have a relationship to potential participants as the Education Coordinator for the St Mary’s Indian Band. To help prevent this relationship from influencing your decision to participate, the following steps to prevent coercion have been taken:

Dr. Christopher Horsethief has been asked to participate as a committee member of my thesis. His role will be to comment on, and guide the research process. If at any time you feel uncomfortable discussing an aspect of the research process, wish to withdraw, have a complaint or a comment, you will be able to contact him at .

Policies and Procedures are in place to govern my work as the Education Coordinator, and these policies will be followed at all times. If you feel that they are not followed, or that you are being mistreated within our professional relationship because of the research, you are able to initiate a complaint process through my supervisor _____ who can be contacted at _____.

Throughout the research process you will be given opportunities to give continued consent and/or withdraw if you feel that participating in the research is affecting our professional relationship.

Invitation to participate in this research process was presented using a third party means of contact (community newsletter, word of mouth etc). No participants will be directly approached by the researcher, participants must approach the researcher if they are interested in participating.

On-going Consent

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, I will connect with you at regular intervals established between us, or as needed when your information will be used. Consent will be sought and given by you BEFORE the data will be used in any way that has not already been specified in this consent form.

Anonymity

In terms of protecting your anonymity personal information and other identifying information will be changed unless you request to have your name and information included in the research unaltered, and provide written consent.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by ensuring that identifiable information is changed in the results, limiting access to raw data to myself and my thesis committee (on an as needed and limited basis.), and storing information within my home in a locked filing cabinet behind a locked door, or as files on my personal computer that only I have access to.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed within focus group sessions therefore it is important for participants to be mindful of the information they are sharing to ensure the confidentiality of third party information.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:
Shared with the Nation and participants at a feast at the end of the research process.

Shared by the Nation with local colleges and universities as desired.

Shared with my thesis committee, and interested persons who attend the oral defense of the research project in Victoria at the end of the research.

Shared on the "d-space", an electronic documents library where all students must submit their thesis work, at the University of Victoria where students, professors and people with a University of Victoria library card will have access to the results.

Possibly shared through publication of the thesis in whole or in part.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be disposed of after 7 years. All paper documents will be shredded, electronic documents will be erased.

Contacts

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include:

Dr. Jacquie Green, University of Victoria thesis supervisor-

Wendy Haley, Researcher-

Dr. Todd Ormiston, thesis committee member-

Consent to use data collected up until the point of withdrawal. Please select a statement.

I consent for information collected up to the point of withdrawal to be included in the results _____ (participant to provide initials.

I do not consent for information collected up to the point of withdrawal to be included in the results _____ (participant to provide initials.

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix b-Research Application
APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH CONCERNING THE KTUNAXA NATION

<p>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>Date Received: _____</p> <p>Date Reviewed: _____</p> <p>Reviewed by: _____</p> <p>Date of KNC Response to Applicant: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/> Conditional approval subject to changes</p> <p>Comments: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

The purpose of this application is to provide detailed information to KNC and Ktunaxa Nation about the proposed research project and to assist the applicant in following the *Ktunaxa Code of Ethics and Procedures for Conducting Research Concerning the Ktunaxa Nation*.

This application is Step Two in a three-step permission process required to conduct research concerning the Ktunaxa Nation. **Please note that only applications that have been invited by KNC after review of a Research Synopsis will be considered.**

SECTION 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name:

Institutional Affiliation:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Other relevant information about the Applicant (optional):

SECTION 2: PROJECT INFORMATION

Please concisely answer all of the following questions below. Use plain, accessible language. Avoid the use of acronyms and jargon.

Basic Information

- Who are the research proponents and what are their institutional affiliations?

- What is the purpose of the research and what are the research goals?
- Why is this research important?
- How is the research relevant to Ktunaxa people and Ktunaxa Nation priorities?
- What is the source and amount of funding for the research project, if any? If a funding application has been made, please append a copy. Please indicate if no funding is involved (e.g., conducted by volunteers, unfunded graduate student research).
- Does the proposed research involve human participants?
- Does the proposed research require review by an institutional human research ethics review board (e.g., university or government agency)? If an application for institutional research ethics review has been submitted, please append a copy of the application and a copy of the certificate of approval from Research Ethics Board (REB) or Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Benefits and Risks

- What benefits to Ktunaxa people are anticipated from the research process, outcomes or applications? In particular, please explain if research methods and outcomes will support the transfer of skills to individuals in the community, increase the capacity of the community to manage its own research, and/or support the local economy?
- What foreseeable risks are involved in the research, to participants and to the Ktunaxa Nation? How will these risks be minimized and addressed?

Participation, consent and remuneration

- Who from KNC and/or the Ktunaxa Nation will be invited to participate in the research project?
- How will prior informed consent from individual participants be established? If an individual consent form will be used, please append a copy.
- How will ongoing consent to participant and the opportunity to withdraw participation be ensured throughout the project?
- What will happen to a participant's contributions if s/he withdraws?
- Describe how participants be compensated (e.g., honorarium or reimbursement of expenses incurred) for their participation? If applicable, state the amount of honorarium (note that honoraria should be consistent with standard rates for internal Ktunaxa research so please consult with KNC).
- Describe what will happen to participants' compensation if they withdraw participation before the research is complete?

Methods and Data

- What type research data will be sought?
- What methods and activities will be involved in research data collection?
- Who will have responsibility for data collection and what are their relevant qualifications?
- Explain who will have access to the data, and how and where it will be used, stored and managed during the research project.
- Are there plans for destroying data? Please explain why or why not. If the data will be destroyed, provide the rationale and outline the time frame and method of destruction for all forms of physical and electronic data. Also understand you are

required to inquire if KNC would take ownership of the data. If the data will not be destroyed, explain the rationale and outline the proposed data stewardship plan, including plans for retaining and stewarding data, who will have continued access to what, and how/where the data will be stored for how long.

Findings and Reporting

- What tangible outcomes or end products are anticipated from the research project (practical and/or academic)?
- Who will hold copyright to the anticipated end products?
- If copyright is not held by the Ktunaxa Nation, how will permission from the copyright holder(s) for use and reproduction of the anticipated end products by the Ktunaxa Nation be obtained?
- What involvement or responsibility will individual participants have in verification of accuracy of data, interpretation or review of research findings, or co-authoring resulting publications?
- What involvement and responsibility will KNC or the Ktunaxa Nation designate have in review or interpretation of research findings or co-authoring resulting publications? Please note that the appropriate designate of KNC, Ktunaxa member Band(s) and/or other Ktunaxa organization (as applicable) should be provided with an opportunity to review the research results and provide comments before the final research product(s) are completed or made public.
- How will acknowledgement and due credit in research reporting and publications be given to participants and knowledge holders for their contributions?
- How will KNC and Ktunaxa Nation be acknowledged in research reporting and publications? Please note that an agreed acknowledgement text or script may be developed for his purpose.
- How will anonymity be protected, if applicable? Explain any limits to anonymity, if applicable. Please note that if anonymity is requested by a participant but is not possible, the participant must be informed and their data must not be collected.
- How will confidentiality be protected, if applicable? Explain any limits to confidentiality, if applicable. Please note that if the degree of confidentiality requested by a participant is not possible, the participant must be informed and their data must not be collected.
- What are the plans for sharing the research results with participants?
- What are the plans for sharing the research results with the Ktunaxa Nation? Please note that one hard copy and one electronic copy of the final product(s) of the research project must be provided to KNC. These should also be provided to any participating Ktunaxa individuals, committees, agencies or Bands, at their request.
- What are the plans for sharing the research results with the funder(s), if any?
- What are plans for sharing the research results with the public, if any?
- What Ktunaxa traditional knowledge, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, language, oral history, or other sensitive cultural information will be shared as part of, or incidentally, during the research process. If this occurs, what measures will be used to protect what is shared from misinterpretation, misuse or misappropriation by others?

Applications and rights to research

- Describe existing or potential commercial applications to the research? Please note that no research with commercial potential will be permitted without prior KNC approval.
- How will Ktunaxa interests and cultural and intellectual property rights be respected and addressed in applications of the research, if applicable?

Conflict management

- Describe a conflict resolution strategy if differences arise between the parties involved in interpreting or implementing the proposed research? Please note that good communication about misunderstandings or misinterpretations and best efforts to resolve the dispute in accordance with the spirit of the *Ktunaxa Code of Ethics and Procedures for Research* are expected.

SECTION 3: APPLICANT CHECKLIST

To ensure this application is complete, please check all of the following that apply. If not applicable, leave blank.

- Ⓟ This Research Application was invited by KNC after submission of a Research Synopsis.
- Ⓟ All sections of this Research Application have been completed and all points have been addressed.
- The proposed research has secured, or is seeking to secure, funding support [please check one of the following boxes]:
 - A funding application has not yet been made.
 - A funding application has been made and a copy is appended.
- Ⓟ The proposed research is affiliated with a Canadian academic institution and involves human participants. The proposed research will comply with the **2nd Edition of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)**, specifically Chapter 9 "Research Involving First Nations, Métis and Inuit People of Canada."
- Ⓟ The proposed research has undergone, or will undergo, institutional review by a university or other agency [please check one of the following]:
 - An institutional research ethics review application to that institution has not yet been submitted.
 - Ⓟ An institutional research ethics review application has been submitted and a copy is appended.
 - An institutional research ethics review application to that institution has been submitted and approved. A copy of the research ethics review application and a copy of the certificate of approval from that institution's Research ethics board (REB) or Institutional review board (IRB) are appended.
- Ⓟ The proposed research will use a participant consent form. A copy of the consent form that will be used is appended.

Appendix c-Research Agreement

RESEARCH AGREEMENT for the project entitled: De-Colonizing Post Secondary Education: Improving cultural recognition in post secondary institutions using Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being.

BETWEEN:

The Ktunaxa Nation represented by: Katherine Teneese

AND

University of Victoria Grad Student
Wendy Haley

The **purpose** of this research agreement is to clarify and confirm mutual understandings, expectations and obligations between the Parties named above in conducting the research project named above, and to achieve an effective collaborative research relationship consistent with the *Ktunaxa Nation's Code of Ethics and Procedures for Research*.

WHEREAS:

1. Each Party will make best efforts to dedicate the necessary time and effort to fulfill the obligations under this research agreement. Each Party will notify the other in writing and in a timely manner regarding any circumstances that may affect the implementation of this research agreement.
2. This research agreement will be signed by all Parties before recruitment of individual research participants, collection of data, or gaining access to existing information.
3. Prior informed consent will be obtained from each individual research participant before he or she participates in research activities. Researchers will make available evidence of research participant consent to the Ktunaxa Nation.
4. A representative cross-section of community experiences and perceptions will be included in the research, to the extent possible and as appropriate.

NOW THEREFORE The Parties understand and agree to the following:

The names of researcher(s) and their institutional affiliation(s) involved in this project are:
Wendy Haley BA, BSW, RSW. Graduate Student –University of Victoria

The purpose and goals of the research are:

- A. For Wendy to fulfill the requirements to obtain a Master's degree in Social Work.
- B. To improve cultural recognition in post secondary institutions using Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being.

The research is important because:

Indigenous people are consistently under represented in postsecondary educational institutions (Ormiston, 2012; Ottman, 2013; FNEESC 2013; Restoule et al; Malatest, 2002) and those who do attend postsecondary institutions often drop out before finishing their programs. In many cases, students drop out because they do not feel welcome, or safe within the institution because of pervasive racism and exclusion from the social and political context of the institution (Restoule et al; Malatest, 2002; Assembly of First Nations, 2012; Cowin, 2011). To an Indigenous person, it is quite clear that the post secondary institution is part of the "White man's club", and they are not White (Fear Segal, 2007). This research is important because it will add a local context to this knowledge which can be used to support change at the local college as well as other colleges and universities that Ktunaxa students attend.

Possible relevance of the research to the Ktunaxa people and Ktunaxa Nation priorities are:

This research will examine approaches or methods of how to minimize this feeling of colleges and universities being an unwelcoming place for Ktunaxa people, so that the postsecondary institution becomes a place for Ktunaxa students to learn without the fear of racialization, and without the fear of being excluded because of their culture; a place where they see themselves within the walls and they know that they belong; a place where what they learn both in and outside the classroom is an accurate representation, not only of themselves, but their history as people. This research fills a present gap in the literature as no literature currently exists that examines the process of decolonization using a Ktunaxa perspective.

The source and amount of funding for the research project is:

Student personal expense totaling \$750.00

The benefits to Ktunaxa Nation citizens anticipated from the research process, outcomes or applications include:

Participants will have the opportunity to have their opinions heard and will know that their knowledge will be used collectively to make real life changes to the way that not only the local, but perhaps other post secondary institutions interact with them, and provide schooling to them.

Describe the foreseeable risks to research participants by being involved in the research will be made clear to each research participant as part of the individual consent process. These risks include:

Potential inconveniences may include needing to take time away from work, for which participants could be compensated. Presenting research findings may initially increase tension at the local level when discussions begin to take place between the local college and the Nation, however there is already a good working relationship established so I do not believe this will be a concern. Some participants, or community members may not understand the purpose of the study or what information is being collected and may have concerns that traditional or sacred information is being shared where it should not be shared. For this reason, it is important that I work collaboratively with my community committee member. Inconveniences can be minimized with personal conversations and information sessions for the community as needed. Importantly, I will make myself available for any questions and/or concerns from community members about my research and intentions. By having a celebration or dissemination feast, community members will be well informed about my research.

Social risks such as stigmatization, loss of status, privacy and/or reputation: Students/leaders/staff who choose to speak negatively about their experience have the risk of being identified locally because the population is so small. If participants are currently attending the local post secondary institution they may be subject to undue and targeted negative consequences from professors and other members of faculty or administration. If participants are involved in subsequent partnerships with the local college, this could impact the relationships and outcomes of those partnerships. Participants may also risk negative feedback from community members who do not know what information is being shared for the purpose of

research and may have concerns about this. Participants who are attending post secondary will anticipate 'quick change' at the college level and may experience dis-satisfaction or frustration during the remainder of their study. Due to sharing their experiences and identifying what they see necessary, the risk may be that students could be disappointed with the current level of post secondary education

Describe foreseeable risks to the Ktunaxa Nation by being involved in the research are:

Please see above

Risks to research participants and/or to the Ktunaxa Nation will be minimized and addressed in the following ways:

The risks to students, and partnerships between the Nation and the College is minimal as "Indigenization" is something that the College and the Nation have already agreed to explore. This is merely a more formal way that the Nation can present their information. Prevention will include anonymity measures such as name, gender changes and the exclusion of identifying details as determined by the participant. Prevention will also include personal conversations about the research with community members and community information sessions if needed. Regular updates about the research will be provided in community newsletters and I will be available to answer any questions as needed. As an accredited organization, the local institution has policies in place that will address any targeted negativity towards students by staff. Students will be advised that change is a process and although they may not see immediate changes, their information will be used to support movement in this area.

KNC staff and/or members of the Ktunaxa Nation who will be invited to participate in the research project include:

The target population are people who belong to the Ktunaxa Nation (on and off reserve; status and non status Ktunaxa members) who have attended a post secondary Institution. Additional information may be collected from Nation leaders who are filling roles related to supporting post secondary students such as Education Coordinators.

Research participants will be invited by the following ways and means:

Potential participants will be contacted through personal invitations to participate, and through recommendations from the Community Member who will serve as an advisor/community member for my research. Methods of recruitment include e-mail letters, notices in Community Newsletters, requests to attend meetings, and word of mouth. Education Coordinators will be invited to participate through an e-mail letter. Nation leaders and students are best contacted through the chain of command at the Nation's Administrative office, through a community newsletter, personal request to attend a band meeting, Council meeting, or Nation meeting, and through personal introduction by community members. Education Coordinators will be contacted through business contact information. The Nation leaders may also be contacted through business contact information. Students will be solicited through third party assistance, such as word of mouth from my community committee member, or through newsletters. Because of my role as an Education Coordinator, I will not be contacting students personally. As this could be construed as a power over relationship. I will recruit the Education Coordinators through e-mail. My community committee member will assist me in preparing a notice for the community newsletter, and will also use this notice which will contain my contact information to recruit students and community leaders. Community leaders may also be recruited through personal invitation. Students may be recruited through personal invitation, only by the community committee member.

Prior informed consent from individual research participants will be established by the following ways:

A consent form will be used (attached). Those who are interested in participating will make first contact. At this first contact a more detailed description of the research will be provided to participants, including a discussion about participants ability to read the research proposal.

Potential risks will be identified at this time. Once the participants are satisfied that they understand the research, they will give written consent which details what they are consenting to and how they can withdraw their consent. Participants will be asked if they have any further questions or concerns, which will be addressed at that time. At the beginning of every meeting I will remind the participants of their consent and their rights to withdraw consent at any time. Consent forms will be available for review. In between meetings participants will be provided with contact information for myself and the community committee member so that if they have concerns between meetings they are able to contact either of us. Ongoing consent will not be documented at each meeting, however if consent is withdrawn, this will be documented in writing.

Ongoing consent to participate and the opportunity for research participants to withdraw their participation will be ensured throughout the project by the following ways and means:

Participants will be informed about their right to withdraw as part of the consenting process. They will be informed that they can withdraw at any time, with no penalty, and no explanation needs to be given. They will be given contact information (phone and e-mail) for both myself and the community committee member, and they will be able to contact whomever they feel more comfortable contacting to inform us that they would like to withdraw from the research. Participants will be told that those who complete the project will receive a gift, however this will be done in a manner where it does not seem they are being coerced to participate until the end to get the gift. The gifts will be given before the feast, but at the very end of data collection when the information is ready to be presented to community. Those who have withdrawn from the research will not get a gift unless they spent significant time participating in the process before they withdrew. At this time it will be up to researcher discretion as to the nature and value of the gift.

As part of the consent process, it will be made clear to research participants what will happen to their contributions if they withdraw. This will entail:

If the participant agrees that the data collected prior to withdraw can be used, this will be documented in writing on the consent form. If the participant wishes to remove their data entirely, this data will be removed and returned to the participant, or destroyed.

No pressure or inducement will be used to convince individuals to participate in the research. Research participants will be fairly compensated according to standards acceptable to the Ktunaxa Nation for their participation (e.g., financial honoraria, expenses to enable participation).

Compensation for participation in this research project will include:

Participants will receive a small gift for their participation once data has been collected and included in the thesis write up, but before the feast so as to maintain confidentiality. This gift may be something that is traditional in nature, or not. There will also be a feast at the end of the research when the findings are presented to the community. The reason this is necessary is because it is protocol within the First Nation being studied to give a person a gift when they have gifted you (ie. with knowledge).

As part of the consent process, it will be made clear to research participants what will happen to their compensation if they withdraw participation before the research is complete. This will involve:

The gifts will be given before the feast, but at the very end of data collection when the information is ready to be presented to community. Those who have withdrawn from the research will not get a gift unless they spent significant time participating in the process before they withdrew. At this time it will be up to researcher discretion as to the nature and value of the gift.

The specific type of research data that will be collected includes:

Qualitative

The methods and activities involved in research data collection include [describe concisely without use of jargon]:

Participatory Action Research, focus groups, individual story telling.

Qualified individuals who will be involved in collecting research data include:

I will be collecting the data, I am a student of the University of Victoria in the Master of Social Work program. I currently hold a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Bachelor of Social Work. If there are participants who are interested in this aspect of the research process, they will be invited to collect data as well with permission from the participant.

Storage, access, use and management of data during the research project will involve:

I will be collecting field notes and audio recordings of interviews. These data sources will be reviewed by myself, including for the purposes of creating transcripts. These data sources will be used to inform the research only. These sources will not be publicly available and will be kept in my home in a filing cabinet behind a locked door. Electronic information will be stored on my personal computer which is password protected.

Plans for destroying data or stewardship of data after the research is complete include:

Should I choose to pursue a Doctorate degree, I may further research the same topic in order to get a more nuanced picture, and to provide a more in depth analysis. This research may be used to inform that research at that time. If this is the case, permission will be sought from the Ktunaxa Nation to use the research to extend the study. Once this is given, I will contact the research participants individually to obtain consent at that time. If I am unable to contact the participant, the data will not be included in further research.

There may also be a chance that the Ktunaxa Nation wishes to use this information to inform discussions with the College of the Rockies about their needs and desires for the Ktunaxa people in relation to post secondary education locally. If this is the case (as I hope it will be), I may be party to reviewing the research within my role as the Education Coordinator for the ʔaḡam community as part of this role is to sit on the Aboriginal Advisory Committee for the College. The raw data will not be available for public consumption, the review in this case will be strictly limited to the findings of the research which will be made available to the Nation to disseminate as they see fit.

The electronic data will be securely stored in my password protected computer that is used only by myself. This computer is securely stored in a locked office in my home. Written data will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office in my home for seven years.

This data will be will be stored on a local disk drive on my computer, or in a filing cabinet (for paper data). Both are securely stored behind a locked door in my home.

Data will be kept for a period of up to seven years. If, after this time I have not pursued a doctoral degree, the information will be destroyed.

Data will be destroyed through shredding and permanent deletion from my personal computer including emptying the trash folder and doing a scan for any remnants of the documents after deletion.

Should the Nation wish to keep this information for archival purposes a discussion would take place between the Nation representatives and myself as to ensuring that this information will be kept confidential within the Nation, and ensuring that this information would not be used for other purposes without the consent of the participants.

The tangible outcomes and end products anticipated from the research project are:

Post secondary institutions have historically been founded on White "male-stream" ontology (Moosa-Mitha, 2005, p. 42). Historically and commonly within mainstream institutions, in order for an Indigenous person to attend and be successful in post secondary schooling, it was

necessary that they must assimilate into this paradigm. This often means that the Indigenous student will either struggle immensely between the competing and dualistic ways of knowing of their people and the settler, or abandon their epistemology, ontology and axiology, thus abandoning their people. Many students will find alternative methods of incorporating their knowledge, or adapting their learning in order to have it make sense within their own ontology (Green, 2013), but still many more students will drop out of their programs before completing because they are unable to reconcile the two, and refuse to give up their ways of knowing and being and doing (Ottmann, 2013; Gehl, 2010; Cowin, 2011). For Ktunaxa people studying in their territory, indigenous knowledge is minimal. For instance, although the local College (the College of the Rockies) is quite open to Indigenization, and has been active in the process for over 20 years, there are only two programs that are specifically Indigenous programs, and these programs are both new (within the last three years) to the College.

This research is important because there is nowhere in the literature where a Ktunaxa worldview has been included in the conversation around decolonization of post secondary education. This research will provide Ktunaxa worldviews in the literature. Moreover, this research will also provide the Ktunaxa people with information (data) to inform their discussions with the local institution. The data collected will inform curriculum and pedagogical shifts for the institution, while at the same time will support successful completion of post secondary education for Ktunaxa people.

Copyright of the anticipated end products will be held by:

I would like to see both the Nation and myself hold copyright to the finished product where neither would be able to use the data for purposes other than originally intended without the others consent.

If copyright is not held by the Ktunaxa Nation, permission from the copyright holder(s) for use and reproduction of the anticipated end products by the Ktunaxa Nation will be obtained as follows and under the following conditions:

Plans for sharing research results include:

Involvement and responsibility of individual research participants in verification of accuracy of data, interpretation or review of research findings, or co-authoring resulting publications are as follows:

Participants will have the opportunity to review and edit their data before it is included in the final document. Participants will also be gathered at the end of the research to feast and hear the results of the data. Participants will not be co-authors however if they choose, they can be recognized and thanked in the final document for their contribution. A designate of the KNC, Ktunaxa member Band(s) and/or other Ktunaxa organization, as appropriate, will be provided with an opportunity to review the research results and provide comments before the final research product(s) are completed or made public. The involvement and responsibility of the Ktunaxa Nation designate in review and interpretation of research findings or co-authoring resulting publications will be as follows:

The Ktunaxa Nation has been asked to provide a suitable designate of their choosing to sit on my thesis committee. As the Interim chair of the Ktunaxa research ethics board Dr. Christopher Horsethief was approached by myself and agreed to take on this role. This position will assist throughout the process including review and commentary on the final document before it is made public. The designate will not be considered a co-author but will be recognized as a member of the committee and will be gifted. If the final document were to be publicly published the Ktunaxa Nation would be recognized as a significant contributor to the work.

Acknowledgement and due credit to all research participants and those who are the sources of documented knowledge will be given in all forms of dissemination such as research papers, reports, presentations and publications, in the ways specified by the research participants or knowledge holders, unless anonymity has been requested.

The Ktunaxa Nation will be acknowledged in all forms of dissemination, such as research papers, reports, presentations and publications as follows [describe and include the agreed acknowledgement text or script that will be used, if applicable]:

This could be accomplished through an acknowledgments statement at the beginning of the final document.

Research participants have the right to request anonymity (i.e., having their identity protected). If there are practical limits to providing anonymity (e.g., information shared as part of a focus group), these limits will be made clear to research participants in advance of data collection. If anonymity is not possible, the research participant will be informed and their data will not be collected. Anonymity of research participants, when requested, will be protected by the following ways and means:

Participants will be given the option to remain anonymous or not. Those who wish to remain anonymous will have their names and/or genders changed, and any information that would be easily identifiable will be removed from the data. As much as possible if confidentiality is desired, names, genders and identifying information will be changed or deleted. Participants will have the ability to review their contributions and determine what can remain part of the research and what needs to be removed to protect confidentiality. I cannot control the information that is shared outside of a focus group. The focus group will be informed of this prior to starting the session. The focus group will also be informed about confidentiality and respecting others rights to privacy and anonymity. Because I am working with a small population sample, it may be easy for some members of the community to point out who's information is included in the research by the context of the stories told. As much as possible I will endeavor to make the information anonymous, and when this cannot be done, participants will have the option to remove information that they feel may be identifiable.

Research participants have the right to have some or all of the information they provide be treated as confidential. If there are practical limits to keeping information confidential (e.g., information shared as part of a focus group), these limits will be made clear to research participants in advance of data collection. If the degree of confidentiality requested by a research participant is not possible, the research participant will be informed and their data will not be collected. Confidentiality of information shared by research participants, when requested, will be protected by the following ways and means:

Please see above

Plans for sharing the research results with participants include:

Research results will be verified throughout the process and when the final document is produced a feast will be held where participants and all interested parties will be able to come and hear the findings.

One hard copy and one electronic copy of the final product(s) of the research project will be provided to the KNC as well as any participating Ktunaxa individuals, committees, agencies or Bands, at their request. Specific plans for ensuring the research results are shared with the Ktunaxa Nation include:

As above

Plans for sharing the research results with the funder(s) include:

Not applicable

Plans for sharing the research results with the public include:

As a requirement of the University the results will be posted to a list serve where anyone with a University of Victoria Library card will have access to the thesis. At this time there is no plan to have this work otherwise published. If the researcher were approached to have the work published, this would be decided through conversation with the Nation about how they would like to proceed.

Ktunaxa cultural heritage resources that may be shared as part of, or incidentally, during the research process will be protected from misinterpretation, misuse and misappropriation by the following ways and means, as applicable:

This project is not seeking any direct information on traditional knowledge or practice to be included in the findings. There may be instances where particular cultural pieces are recommended by participants that should be included when serving students at the schools, however specific details of "how to" or significance will most likely not be mentioned, or will be mentioned in consultation with the Ktunaxa Committee member as to the best way to include this information. I am hoping that there will be a traditional knowledge piece that I can use as an analogy or teaching tool within the document. For example using the medicine wheel teachings to inform how the document is written or how information is processed, however this will be done in consultation with the Ktunaxa thesis committee member. I think that as much as possible Ktunaxa knowledge and Language should be used in order to instill that this work is a product of Ktunaxa Knowledge rather than of a westernized interpretation of that knowledge, but how this is to be incorporated in a respectful manner requires the guidance of the Ktunaxa Committee member.

Existing or potential commercial applications of the research include:

I do not believe that this research has commercial applications other than potential publication which is rare for graduate student research. If this were to become an option the Nation would be consulted before proceeding.

Ktunaxa interests in commercial applications will be addressed by the following ways and means, as applicable:

As above

Ktunaxa cultural or intellectual property rights and interests related to the research include:

My intended application of this research is for the sole use of the Ktunaxa Nation to inform colleges and universities on how they can best serve Ktunaxa students. Because of this, the Nation will be the entity who determines how to use this information to best serve their purposes.

Ktunaxa cultural or intellectual property rights and interests related to the research will be respected and addressed by the following ways and means, as applicable:

As above

Upon becoming aware of any potential dispute related to the interpretation or implementation of this research agreement, the Parties will immediately notify the other Party or Parties about the concern or disagreement, and use best efforts to resolve the dispute in accordance with the *Ktunaxa Code of Ethics and Procedures for Research*. The conflict resolution strategy that will be used if differences between the Parties to this agreement arise in interpreting or implementing this research agreement is:

I believe in collaboration and communication. Both of these activities will support the conflict resolution process. I have every confidence that between the thesis committee and myself any conflict that may occur will be minimal and will be manageable with communication and collaboration. I am also a learner in this process so I will rely on the expertise of my committee to provide direction and clarity when interpreting the data. In regards to implementing the data, this is at the discretion of the Nation. Once the final report is completed, it will be given to the Nation to determine how they would like to use the report to support the education of their students.

This research agreement comes into effect on the date of the last signatory and will remain in place until the research project is completed or until this agreement is amended or terminated by mutual consent of the Parties involved.

The undersigned agree to the provisions as well as the spirit and intent of this research agreement, however this agreement is not a legally binding contract. Instead, this research agreement represents a structured and respectful relationship that each party agrees they will mutually work toward.

SIGNED

Ktunaxa Nation representative

Date

[Representative of other Party]

Date

Appendix d-Letter of permission to conduct research



Ktunaxa Nation Council
7468 Mission Road
Cranbrook, BC V1C 7E5
tel: 250-489-2464
fax: 250-489-2438

visit us at:
www.ktunaxa.org

Via Email

January 19, 2015

Dear Wendy:

The Ktunaxa Research Ethics Committee (KREC) has reviewed your Synopsis, Application and Agreement. The KREC acknowledge the following points:

- The candidate has completed the University of Victoria review for ethical research, which specifically addressed the Tri-Council Party Statement regarding ethical research, as well as the TCPS II with regard to vulnerable populations (including First Nation and elderly research participants);
- The candidate has addressed all questions posed by the KREC, including requests for clarification regarding research questions, interview questions and joint ownership of collected data; and
- The candidate has incorporated requests for clarification on community member participation in the analysis phase, and incorporated suggestions for adding digital data collection techniques.

Therefore KREC agrees the candidate has sufficiently addressed not only the research ethics concerns of the University of Victoria, the larger Canadian research endeavors of the TCPS, but also the concerns of the Ktunaxa Nation Council

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dale LeClair", written over a horizontal line.

Dale LeClair
Chief Administrative Officer
Ktunaxa Nation Council

Nakwānuk

Lower Kootenai

St. Mary's

Tobacco Plains

Appendix e-Sample Questions

Possible thesis research questions for individuals and focus groups

1. Can you please tell me about your experience in post secondary education?
2. Can you please tell me more about experience (A)?
3. What do you see as strengths within your post secondary institution?
4. What do you see as strengths within your post secondary experience?
5. What do you see as challenges you faced within your post secondary experience?
6. What do you think the post secondary institution is lacking that would have enriched your experience?
7. What do you see as personal strengths that assisted you in your post secondary experience?
8. How important is your culture to you?
9. On a scale of 1 to 10 with one being not at all involved and 10 being completely involved, how involved are you in your culture?
10. Do you feel that culture is an important component in post secondary education? Why or why not?
11. Do you feel that your culture is represented at your post secondary institution? Why or why not?
12. Do you feel that your culture should be represented at your post secondary institution? Why or Why not?

For focus groups, questions will be modified to state "the local" or "at post secondary institutions in general" as opposed to "your". And questions around personal strengths and weaknesses will be generalized so the group can discuss what makes a strong student. Other questions that may be asked could include:

- What has been your experience when visiting the local post secondary institution?
- How were you treated by staff and leaders of the institution?
- What do you think is necessary to build partnerships between the Nation and the institution?
- Is there anything else that you wish to discuss that you think is important to this research?

Appendix f-Recruitment invitation

Are you a current or past postsecondary student?

Are you employed in a position that supports Indigenous students?

Are you a Ktunaxa Leader who is passionate about Education?

if so...

You are invited to participate in a research project titled

De-Colonizing Post Secondary Education: Improving cultural recognition in post secondary institutions using Ktunaxa ways of knowing and being

conducted by Wendy Haley.

Wendy Haley is the Education Coordinator for ʔaḡam, and is a graduate student in the department of social work at the University of Victoria and is required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Masters degree in Social Work.

This research is being conducted under the supervision of Kundoḡk, Jacque Green of the Haisla Nation-Director of the University of Victoria School of Social Work.

with committee members

Todd Ormiston of the Tutchone & Tlingit Nations

and

Dr. Christopher Horsethief of the Ktunaxa Nation

Post Secondary students will be asked to participate in individual interviews lasting approximately one hour, followed by follow up reviews where you will be able to review and edit your information as you like. Nation Leaders and support staff will be asked to participate in a 1-2 hour focus group discussion.

For further information or to express interest in being a participant contact Wendy by phone or e-mail

Thank you in advance for your interest in volunteering to participate in this project.

All volunteers who participate in the research project to the end will receive a token of appreciation for sharing their knowledge and a feast will be held to present the research findings to the Nation.