Asserting Coast Salish Authority through *Si´em Slheni´*

by

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Abstract

Colonization within Indigenous territories has impacted Indigenous governance structures and women in leadership in different ways. In order to best understand the violence, displacement and oppression that Coast Salish women face today we need to focus on the ways that the state has attacked the powerful role that *si´em slheni´* (honoured and respected woman) held within her socio-political societies prior to contact. I use an historical institutional analysis to draw out the ways that history has impacted Coast Salish people. I also utilize Diane Million's *Felt Theory* (2008) by weaving Coast Salish women's stories, experiences, and understandings of colonization within their own ancestral territories. The research question at hand is: How have Coast Salish *si´em slhunlhéni´* (honoured and respected women) been impacted due to colonization historically and how are these impacts still affecting our *slhunlhéni´* and our communities today? In asking this question, I hope to urge the reader to engage a territorially-based approach in dealing with the violence and displacement that Indigenous women in Canada face today. I aim to do so by illustrating what an approach based in Coast Salish history and governance would look like. I argue that if we do not choose to take up a territorial based approach, we are only furthering the erasure and silencing of Indigenous womanhood denying its resurgence.

I highlight how settler statecraft has played out in Coast Salish territory and explore the myriad of ways that racist ideologies and colonial violence have taken shape within Coast Salish territories. To do so, I examine the different ways that the state has attempted to control and pathologize coastal people and illustrate the shift that has occurred in moving from Coast Salish economies to capitalism. Ultimately, I demonstrate the multi-faceted approach taken by legislative discrimination that was fueled by ideological racism that the settler colonial project depends upon in order to maintain control over Indigenous lands,

waters, and people. By examining these issues, I highlight how the settler project was able to weaken *slhunlhéni´* role and therefore firmly establish itself within Coast Salish territories

Finally, I turn to present day reality in Coast Salish territory and argue that while there are ways the state, settlers and Indigenous people living within Coast Salish territories are attempting to address the wrongs of colonization, Coast Salish women's voices and roles are being left out of decolonial discourse and actions. In order to liberate Coast Salish women, we need to turn back to our ancestral ways and for those who are not a descendant to these territories one must work to understand what your responsibility is to the local people and women of these lands. In this way, centering a territorially based approach to governance in all acts of resurgence and decolonial action allows for Coast Salish women to maintain authority, therefore empowering these women. Centering local laws and governance will center Indigenous women, lifting them from the displaced positions they find themselves in today.

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Dedication

To my mom Tlpuhtunat, Collette Jones, who has maintained the strength and fight of our ancestors. Even through all that you endured while colonization attempted to break you as a Coast Salish slheni´, you managed to pass along that strength to me, my two daughters and to all your granddaughters. We have all learned what it means to be xwum' xwum slheni´ from you. And to Lily, Emma, Kvai-Lynn and Natalie, always remember where you come from, contemplate the present moment of your life, and move forward with the teachings, strength and wisdom of our relatives and ancestors.

Introduction

A settler colonial state is conditioned by the ongoing physical and legislated violence inflicted unto Indigenous peoples in order to render itself as sovereign over Indigenous homelands. Consequently, Indigenous women within North America face racialized gender violence and displacement at extreme rates. This colonial violence is not only perpetuated by settlers through sexualized and physical violence but also through state policy and law. The current era of reconciliation presented by the Canadian state attempts to address the impacts of colonialism with one single overarching approach rooted in reconciliation. This has also resulted in a singular approach in responding to violence through the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry.

However, tackling the issue of violence against Indigenous women with a one size fits all approach is not a reality. In order to effectively deal with the issue of violence and displacement, one must use an intersectional lens that recognizes the diverse background of Indigenous governance and culture across Canada. There must also be an awareness about how the maintenance of the colonial state depends on devaluing and dehumanizing Indigenous women. This thesis will highlight how colonialism is dependent on gendered violence and displacement of Coast Salish women within their territory. Coast Salish people are located on the central to southern tip of Vancouver Island and over to the mainland close to Vancouver B.C. and also into Washington state with approximately seventy distinct nations. For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on the history of nations from the southern tip of Vancouver Island - Songhees Nation (present day Victoria B.C.), Quw’utsun Tribes (present day Cowichan B.C.) and Snuneymuxw Nation (present day

Nanaimo B.C.) as these are the nations that I am closely connected to and have seen the direct impacts of colonization on these people.

Coast Salish people, for thousands of years, have connected to the land and waters within their territories in order to maintain survival and have created deep connections to these elements, allowing for governance and cultural spirituality to flow throughout the longhouses of Vancouver Island. These connections maintain Coast Salish identity and *snuw´uyulh*. *Snuw´uyulh* translates loosely in English to Coast Salish laws, which have existed for thousands of years. Su-taxwiye, Sarah Morales, of the Quw'utsun nation has defined *snuw´uyulh* as Coast Salish ways of life that include language, governance and culture, much of which is guided by the land and waters of these people's territories. Because of the deep and inherent connection that Coast Salish people and their governance systems hold to both land and water, the colonial state has focused a continuous attack on the ways that Indigenous peoples connect to their ancestors, their territory, and their spiritual strength that have kept them strong for thousands of years. The colonial state has deployed control, heteropatriarchy and capitalism in order to break down any form of governance that Indigenous people hold in connection to the land and water. One foundational piece to Coast Salish governance systems is premised on value and respect for all members of community including women and children and this clashed with hetero-normative patriarchy that exists within the western world.

Songhees Nation member, Butch Dick, carved a number of house poles that now stand at the Songhees Wellness Centre that was completed in 2013. This beautiful building is a place that operates on the Songhees reserve as a multi-use space. It contains a band office, programs for Songhees youth, a fitness space and gymnasium, a health center and a

space for elders to sit and visit. House poles are the first markers one encounters before entering the premises and they are there purposefully, as they represent certain aspects of the laws and governance of Coast Salish people. These structures are meant to visually demonstrate the values and laws of the house/nation that the poles sit in front of and have done so since before the colonialists arrived on these shores.

One pole that stands in front of the Wellness Centre illustrates how the power of women is embedded within Coast Salish societies and governance. A grandmother, or *thunu si'lu,* is carved at the bottom of the pole and she is shown holding up sacred cultural items as if she is offering this cultural knowledge to all those who are willing to listen. The objects *thunu si'lu* holds are tied to coastal sacred ceremonies directly linked to Coast Salish governance and laws. *Thunu si'lu,* who has her arms stretched out before her, is shown holding these objects and is passing them up to the messenger Raven, who is carved just above her. Carved just above Raven is the figure of a *slheni´,* or woman, who is holding a baby, which symbolizes all future generations. The Songhees Pictorial describe this house pole stating that, "…it is important to honour the important role that the *slheni´* play…For it is the women, our great-grandmothers, our grandmothers and our mothers, who care for the communities needs and are keepers of the community's cultural legacy," (Songhees, p14). This pole clearly illustrates that it is through the female line that important pieces to Coast Salish governance are passed along for the future generations. Therefore, we can understand this respect for *thunu si'lu* and for coastal Indigenous women by seeing these images carved deeply into a cedar pole, acting as visible reminders of law and governance for all to recognize.

Si´em slheni´ translates roughly from Hul'qumi'num to English as highly respected and valued woman. Rather than using the term matriarchy in this thesis, I will refer to the term *si´em slheni´* or plural as *si´em slhunlhéni´* so that we can begin to understand the incredible roles that women play in supporting, growing and maintaining their coastal Indigenous societies. I debated on using the term matriarchy and realized that word was not accurate in translating the knowledge that I intend to discuss here. This is in part because Coast Salish societies were never governed exclusively by a matriarch nor are the values and laws only passed through the women. Rather, all members from all genders of the nation within Coast Salish borders are recognized as people who have gifts to share with the community in order to foster strong and stable nations. However, Coast Salish women were, and still are, essential to the functioning of everyday Coast Salish societies. This thesis takes the role of Coast Salish women into consideration because of the profound impacts of colonialism on Coast Salish *slhunlhéni´* and important role in governance.

The research question at hand is: How have Coast Salish *si´em slhunlhéni´* been impacted by colonization historically and how are these impacts still affecting our *slhunlhéni´* and our communities today? In asking this question, I will urge the reader to think about what a territorially-based approach in dealing with gender violence looks like, an approach that centers local Indigenous voice in order to deal with the issues of violence and displacement of the Coast Salish *slheni´*. For the purpose of this paper, I will be speaking to a specific form of gender based violence that is focused on understanding how gendered dispossession, gendered discrimination, systemic and historic violence has played out against Coast Salish women. These forms of violence against *si'em slheni´* are ways that Coast Salish women were denied the authority over

their family, lands and within community. The intention of this thesis is not meant to add to the national movement of decolonization within Canada. Rather, it is speaking directly to Coast Salish people about the ways in which we have been impacted, the ways in which our governance and our roles as members to our nations have been displaced, and, at times, have even faced attempted erasure. The information provided in this thesis are relevant areas of study because currently, within Canada, the government is attempting to rectify impacts of colonialism within Canada. During the 21st century, the era of reconciliation has brought with it many state-driven responses to address the gender violence that Indigenous peoples face and to transform the Canadian-Indigenous relationship. To believe that one single approach rooted in Canada's framing of reconciliation will alleviate the colonial and violent reality that Indigenous women face only further homogenizes and oppresses Indigenous peoples as a whole. As this thesis will illustrate, Indigenous nations within Canada have distinct governance systems, laws and teachings. This means that Indigenous nations across Canada all have faced impacts differently, therefore, to suggest that one overarching approach to bring about healing does not take into account the diversity that is present within each nation's governance structures and socio-political ways of life. Without working to understand these differences to develop ways forward, the Canadian state will only continue to homogenize and control Indigenous peoples healing and liberation paradigms.

The specific scope of my research will focus on examining the settlement period during the mid 1800's, especially settlement on south Vancouver Island, while attempting to understand the important roles that Coast Salish women played within their socio-political communities and governance structures. Because this study will focus on my own

relationship with Coast Salish womanhood it is important to locate myself in this work. My ancestral name is Ma´ma´mu´thiye and I come from the Good family of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. Having grown up in an urban setting with a mother who is a residential school survivor, there was very little cultural knowledge shared about the roles that she or I should engage being Coast Salish women. Throughout my studies I began to think about how colonialism has impacted the transmission of *snuw´uyulh* within my own family and how this disruption has not only impacted myself, but also my community, as there are many others that have faced the same interruptions.

My six aunties, three uncles and mother spent most of their adolescent lives in residential school. My late grandpa attended Indian Day school and my late grandmother was forced to attend residential school. My story is very similar to many other Indigenous people's stories across this vast country. Recently, I had conversations with my mom about her own grief from being taken from her home and forced to adapt and learn Christian-European worldviews rather than growing and flourishing with her own ancestral teachings. The inherent right that every Coast Salish person holds is to know, learn and engage who they are as Coast Salish people and also actively work to apply teachings and laws in all that they do. This is the way that we intend to keep strong as *xwulmuxw* (First people of the land). This is what our ancestors fought so hard to maintain. The colonial constraint that has been thrust on Coast Salish people has impacted the way that many of us have been able to learn, live and take in the teachings of our ancestors.

This thesis will illustrate how the state constrained *slhunlhéni´* from maintaining their roles grounded in Coast Salish womanhood by examining the colonial violence that these women have faced since contact. Through analyzing racist colonial ideologies and

racist laws and legislation that are grounded in hetero-patriarchy and have been carried out within Coast Salish homelands, we can better understand how the state has attacked the Coast Salish *slheni´* in their efforts to secure their sovereignty. Today, it is apparent that Coast Salish women do not hold the same prominent positions of authority within their socio-political societies that they once had. This fact is evidenced by Indigenous women being are three times more likely to self-report sexual assault than non-Indigenous women (Department of Justice, 2018). Indigenous women are also 50% more likely than non-Indigenous women to fear for their lives due to violence they experience. This thesis will engage roles that Coast Salish women had in community prior to European contact and study the breakdown of these prominent roles. Finally, it will illustrate how colonization facilitates the violence that Coast Salish women currently face by ensuring erasure and silencing of their powerful roles. By restricting and dehumanizing one of the most precious and vital people to Coast Salish governance systems, settlers were better able to establish themselves, their gendered narrative, patriarchy and capitalist ideals that frame up European, and mostly English, standards of living.

Research Methodologies

Woven throughout this thesis are themes from interviews with my aunties and one of my sisters from both the Snuneymuxw and Quw'utsun Nations. In total I interviewed five women within a three week period. These interviews were semi-structured. I had guiding questions but also followed Coast Salish protocol by listening and learning from teachings, stories and experiences that were shared during our time spent together. I listened to stories about both the direct teachings of our ancestors and also indirect

teachings that we are meant to take up in our daily lives, I understood both of these types of teachings to be the laws of our nations and ancestors. The more that I listened and went home to think about what I had heard, the more the bigger picture about our nations became clear. This thesis will highlight these laws and also address the ways that the colonial state has worked to disrupt the ways that we as Coast Salish people are to live and govern over ourselves and territories.

While sitting and talking with these women, there were common threads that came up when they were critiquing colonization in Coast Salish territories. The three common themes that each woman addressed were: 1) the lack of respect that Coast Salish women receive from community and mainstream society, 2) that *si´em slheni´* are overworked and tend to face burnout, and 3) that loss of the transmission of language and culture are impacting our nations in a negative way. At the same time, these issues are symptoms of colonization and therefore, it is important for Coast Salish people to understand how these colonial issues came to be within our territories in order to best address them. There were also some teachings and words shared about the sacredness of our laws, these are pieces that I will not be adding into this work.

When I began thinking about this research and work would play out, I kept feeling like I had hit a block because I wondered how I would write about the laws and teachings of our people without sharing the sacred pieces that make up what we are, the pieces that we as Salish people hold close to ourselves. The more that I listened to my relatives stories the more I began understood the larger concepts that they were sharing with me and how colonization impacted pieces of our socio-political structures. By sharing their stories with me, I could see how not only they were impacted but also their families, communities,

nations and territories were negatively impacted as well. Coast Salish laws with all their complexities are also very simple. Our laws are grounded in holding one another up, respecting the earth, waters and beings around us and also maintaining self-discipline and agency in a way that is productive not only for ourselves but also for our communities and nations. These, of course, are only a small portion of our laws, but these are also the laws that the colonial state has worked aggressively to disrupt and dismantle in order to insert Western laws, ideologies and norms into Coast Salish societies.

I began to think about how these three themes that my relatives shared with me have impacted Coast Salish people as a whole. As I researched the settlement of Snuneymuxw and Songhees territories, I began to see how my relative's critiques of colonization were shaped by the colonial tactics for claiming and reshaping these lands. Implementing Athabascan scholar, Dian Million's *Felt Theory* I too agree that, "we need models for what can be achieved by *felt* action, actions informed by experience and analysis, by a *felt* theory," (2008, p267). Coast Salish women have *felt* the impacts of colonization in numerous ways, through: physical and emotional violence, displacement, restraint and oppression. To frame up my relative's words allows the readers to learn from experts who have lived through governance and cultural changes to best understand how these shifts have impacted them and their community. As a result of these interviews, I will be addressing three themes of settlement, connecting them back to the critiques of my relatives, highlighting the negative impacts of colonization on *si´em slheni´*. These three themes are: (1) transmission of Victorian values and hetero-patriarchal family structures, (2) the enforcement of western institutions such as Indian hospitals (3) and the forced introduction of western systems of capital. I will argue that these themes worked together

as the state crafted its attempt to erase Coast Salish governance systems. These become important pieces to understanding the impacts settler societies had, and continue to have, on *si´em slhunlhéni´* and their roles within their communities.

Colonial values and everyday relationships illustrated in these themes will highlight how the state encouraged or forced the removal of Coast Salish women from the prominent roles they had within their societies due to values of heteropatriarchy founded in racist ideologies, capitalism and western institutions. Once we better understand the different aspects of these colonial processes, we will be able to more directly channel our energies to countering colonialism by living in ways more consistent with Coast Salish philosophies. Without this analysis we cannot fully resist the current colonial reality and fully account for the diverse impacts of colonization on Coast Salish peoples, their teachings and governance, and *si´em slheni´*.

Research Methods

As mentioned, the research for this thesis utilized a semi-structured interview style, where I connected with five Indigenous women from both the Snuneymuxw and Quw'utsun Nations to ask questions that focus on personal and lived experiences as a Coast Salish *slheni´*. These interviews focused on Coast Salish teachings and *snuw´uyulh* that have been shared with these women. They also shared personal experiences of their own displacement and oppression due to Western settlement within their territories. Alongside interviews with Coast Salish women, this research will utilize a historical institutional analysis to analyze the political struggles that societies are impacted by. This approach is useful for this thesis because it focuses on how aspects of history have worked to shape

social, political and economic behaviors. By examining how institutions are impacted by history and time we can better understand the current reality that Coast Salish people live today. Charles Tilly states that we must critically address systems of governance and large structures in order to, "…see whence we have come, where we are going, and what real alternatives to our present condition exist," (1984, p11). Understanding how colonial structures and institution have impacted Indigenous people can assist in determining the causes and effects that occur within a group or society, and, in this case, the causes/effects on the Coast Salish *sl̓heni̓*. This approach focuses on understanding how these institutions operate and aids to better understand how power related to certain groups, as well as how institutions shape political strategies and influence outcomes.

There is also a focus within the historical intuitional analysis on path dependence, whereby institutions are seen as constant features of the historical landscape that influence historical development down a particular path (Hall and Taylor, 1996). According to some historical institutionalists, the flow of this path is dependent on critical junctures. Collier and Collier (2002) state that a critical juncture occurs when outcomes from crucial transitions establish distinct trajectories unique to that situation. Collier and Collier maintain that there are three distinct components that affirm the concept of a critical juncture: first, the claim that a change took place, second, the claim that this change was distinct from other cases with similar circumstances, and third, that there is an explanatory hypothesis with regards to the consequences of the critical juncture.

Historical institutionalism, then, provides a number of tools with which to evaluate colonialism in British Columbia with relation to the role of Indigenous women and colonial settlement. The first chapter of this thesis will focus on how racist and colonial ideologies

were learned and asserted throughout Coast Salish territories. Within British Columbia, one relevant critical juncture was the forced transition from coastal Indigenous governance to that of colonial occupation. Enforcing negative symbols and scripts, via Victorian notions of morality, on *si´em slheni´* was one way that settlers were able to quickly break down the role of Indigenous womanhood within Coast Salish society. By developing the stereotype that these women were only useful for White settler men with regards to sexual gratification and then shifting this to a fear of the Indigenous sex workers, colonists were able to interrupt the critical roles that Coast Salish women had within their homelands.

This first chapter will focus on teasing out the relationship between heteropatriarchy, colonialism, and gender violence and will set the foundation for this entire work. In order to understand why the settler colonial state depends on the displacement of Coast Salish *slheni´* we must first understand the immense value that they carried with regards to Coast Salish community, governance structures, and the social well-being of all community members. Europeans had recognized that the prominent roles that Coast Salish women held differed vastly from that of their own standards of living. In Europe they were immersed in heteropatriarchal norms where men governed over women and there was little space for a gender equality. This chapter draws on theories of settler violence from feminist scholars such as Anne McClintock (1993), Sarah Hunt (2013), and Traci Voyles (2014) and will be used to further my argument that the settler state requires racist ideologies and heteropatriarchal disruption to Coast Salish values and governance structures in order to assert itself as sovereign. Settler disruption then, occurred not only in the colonial process, but is continuously operating in order for the state to ground itself as a powerful entity. This continuous disruption explains the perpetual violence that Coast

Salish women face today. We can understand this violence as an attempt to remove them from meaningful positions within Coast Salish governance structures and strip these women of their core values.

Chapter two will examine how Canadian society has come to view and understand violence that is inflicted against Coast Salish women within British Columbia, specifically on Vancouver Island and from Snuneymuxw territory. I will highlight how the state actively worked to deny Coast Salish women their inherent right to engage their governance and pass down critical knowledge to keep Salish governance systems functioning. In doing so, I recognize the *Vagrancy Act* as a critical juncture in the developing province of B.C. By way of this *Act,* Indigenous bodies were restricted and controlled. This chapter will illustrate the history of that policy and its enforcement, tying it to one theme my relatives all spoke to, that is: loss of the ability to transmit language and cultural teachings.

I know that the residential school system and the child welfare system have both played tremendous roles in the disruption of transmitting language and culture. However, I also know that for the past two or three decades there has been a lot of research undertaken to understand these impacts on Indigenous nations across Canada. With this thesis I intend to highlight how other institutions (such as policy and legislation and health care systems) that make up Canada have also worked to restrict the transmission of language and culture. By examining the impacts of policy and legislation, with focus on the *Vagrancy Act* in B.C., we can then understand how the state worked to restrict women's movement on the land and engage in sharing ancestral teachings related to their governance structures. I argue that this has led to a disruption of governance and cultural obligations to

neighbouring nations and also in the way that *si´em slheni´* is able to work to carry on vital teachings for her nation. Furthermore, I assert that the control and pathologizing of Indigenous bodies by way of Indian Hospitals is another way that colonization worked to effectively weaken how Coast Salish women could engage their roles as *si´em slheni´* and has led to a dependence on the colonial state.

Chapter three will highlight the shift in the way that economies functioned, transitioning these economies based on relationship (related to Coast Salish systems of governance) to that of capitalism, where focus is on exploitation and resource extraction. This shift in economy was another critical juncture within British Columbia. As White settler populations became more significant, there became less need to maintain ties and relations with Indigenous communities and a greater desire to dominate and control Indigenous homelands. By understanding the roles that these women had pre-contact and contrasting this with where they sit within the current society, violence and oppression can be understood as central to the story of colonization for Coast Salish women.

Detailing the impacts on Coast Salish economies, I will illustrate how the *Indian Act* was amended in 1885 to include the Potlatch Ban and how this affected coastal communities. Coastal peoples' inherent right to govern themselves as *xwulmuxw* suddenly became illegal, weakening Coast Salish governance and territorial control. The roles that women played in maintaining their governance structures was one site of systemic attack by settlers and settler governments. With this chapter I illustrate how this breakdown occurred and identify conspicuous ways that the colonial state was able to control Coast Salish women and therefore displace Coast Salish nations in order to establish itself as a sovereign nation over their territories.

Finally, chapter four illustrates the ways that Indigenous people have pushed back against colonization within Coast Salish territory. I will also highlight the ways that the state has attempted to address the wrongs of colonialism by introducing the notion of reconciliation to Canada, detailing the impacts that has had at the everyday or micro-level for Coast Salish people. I will further argue that although many Indigenous activists and academics, along with non-profit organizations, are pushing for positive change for Indigenous people, there is still a number of components missing when attempting to secure Indigenous liberation or reconciliation. One issue that is not addressed in these movements meant for creating change is the centering of local nations, their laws and ancestral teachings, whenever this push for change occurs on Coast Salish territories. I will also illustrate how this era of reconciliation is the state's attempt to force a one size fits all approach for Indigenous nations within Canada and highlight the issues found there. It will be argued that this umbrella approach for Indigenous healing and liberation will not alleviate the violence or disruption that Coast Salish *slheni´* face within their homelands today.

The current modes for Indigenous healing and liberation taking place on Coast Salish territory is too often adding to the erasure, silencing and racist violence that *slhunlhéni´* have faced since contact. I will conclude this chapter by reiterating the importance of the resurgence of Coast Salish womanhood in Coast Salish territories. Without doing so, a silencing, erasure, and re-colonization will continue to occur within the healing and liberation paradigms being advanced within Coast Salish territory.

Chapter One: Racist Ideology and European Culture Merge to Secure Colonial Footing within Snuneymuxw Territory

Introduction to Coast Salish Slheni´

Coast Salish *slheni´* are the heart that pumps life to their communities through their irreplaceable ties to the Salish people, their families, governance, culture, and land. Indigenous women play vital roles in maintaining both the community's governance and its connection to the land. The position of women is one of deep respect and power because of the sacred space they hold in critical aspects of governance and culture. Coast Salish culture contains a deep and rich history that has largely been maintained through the matrilineal line. Culture is a foundation of Coast Salish governance and this culture is closely linked to land and water and through maintaining movement across the land and water. Culture and governance are so closely tied that they are inseparable. Without culture there is no governance and without the laws and ancestral teachings that are our governance, there is no culture. Although the Coast Salish people have been prominent in national legal cases such as *R v Sparrow* (1990) and *R v Van der Peet* (1996), relatively little is publicly known about Coast Salish governance and culture. This is so because of the fact that many of Coast Salish teachings are considered within the nations to be too sacred to share publicly. As Coast Salish people we do not showcase our culture or governance for photographs or other people. These sacred acts have been handed down from our ancestors and are meant to be enacted within our Bighouses, within our families and ourselves and are not to be spoken about or shared in a public way. That being say, even less attention has been paid to the power that Coast Salish women hold within these governance structures and their communities. Yet, Coast Salish women's prominent role

has been attacked and broken down by Canadian settler colonialism and these women now face violence and racism on a daily basis.

Representations of Indigenous women in Canada commonly reflect racist and gendered stereotypes, contributing to the high levels of violence against Indigenous women. The history of colonization continues to manifest itself through structural oppressions such as: poverty, lack of access to lands and waters, health services and education. As Sami scholar Ruana Kuokkanen (2015) argues, it is Indigenous women of colonized lands that tend to bear the brunt of these factors because of the imperative roles women have within their families and communities. One main feature to this chapter is to better understand the way that Coast Salish women have been removed from systems of power and authority, consequently facing violence on many levels of their lives. This chapter explores the way that racist ideologies and colonial violence have taken shape within Coast Salish territories. By examining the settlement of Salish territories and the enforced European ideologies that were normalized, this chapter will highlight the impacts of the settler colonial project for Coast Salish women and the specific impacts this has had on the Coast Salish *slheni´*.

Sto:lo writer Lee Maracle seeks to reclaim the original positions that Coast Salish women held within our societies. Maracle argues that by retracing the history of our grandmothers we are able to trace the steps back to our original selves. She states, “I need to reclaim their journey and reclaim the cultural base upon which we organized ourselves and our communities. I need to know how it came to pass how Native women are no longer valued, treasured, and protected inside and outside our villages. I need to know how it came to pass how women’s issues exist separately from men’s,” (p2, 2008). Similarly, this

chapter will look back to the colonial settlement within Snuneymuxw territories to retrace the roles our women had prior to contact as well as the ways that White settlement, particularly heteropatriarchy and racist ideologies, disrupted the roles that Coast Salish *slheni´* held within their socio-political societies.

Mohawk scholar, Audra Simpson (2016) coined the term *settler statecraft* to illustrate how settler states in North America have maintained the normalization of violent acts, dispossession and the disappearance of Indigenous women to secure state sovereignty. Settler states require a constant and ongoing settling of land in order to maintain its assertions of sovereignty. She argues that in order to understand White settler violence we must understand two factors that make up a settler state, these are the *settler statecraft* and the *settler imperative*. The *settler imperative* is a way that the settler state understands how the settler nation is formed and what counts as governance and authority. *Settler statecraft*, which is what I will focus on in this thesis, is the way that the settler state is continuously remaking itself in order to assert control and dominance. S*ettler statecraft* requires the disappearance of Indigenous women, while apologizing/reconciling for past violence yet this violence still carries on.

This chapter will highlight how *settler statecraft* has played out within Snuneymuxw territory since contact, beginning this overview with examining ideologies that settlers brought with them and how this impacted Coast Salish women. Furthermore, by examining Coast Salish women's roles alongside theories of settler statecraft regarding the legislative injustice in Coast Salish territory, this chapter will ultimately demonstrate the multi-faceted legislative and racially discriminating approach fueled by ideological

racism that the settler colonial project depends upon in order to maintain control over Indigenous lands, waters, and people

These racist and colonial ideologies illuminate how aggressively the state has worked to assert itself as dominant over these lands. By looking at Coast Salish people's territories specifically, we will see later in this thesis how the state actively works to reconstruct itself in order to maintain oppression and supremacy over Indigenous people's lands. This analysis will begin by examining the racist ideological methods that were employed by Settlers. These ideologies work to disrupt Coast Salish women's roles. In order to do so, I will examine three different theories of colonialism that will contribute to understanding the ongoing colonial imperative for managing a colonial state within Coast Salish territory, these being: *gendered nationalisms* (McClintock, 1997), the theory of *wastelanding* (Voyles, 2014) and Hunt's theory of the *colonialscape* (2014). These three theories will frame up this chapter to better understand the shift in power that occurred within Coast Salish territory and to illuminate the impacts of the racist doctrines that make up what is now southern Vancouver Island and Coast Salish territory. After providing an overview of these theories, I will then apply each of them to the study of a Coast Salish colonial setting to draw out the argument of this paper, namely that colonial sovereignty is dependent on the subordination of Indigenous societies and entails the breakdown of Coast Salish womanhood. In particular, I will demonstrate that the colonial state depended on the binary gendering of Indigenous men and women, alongside gendering White men and women.

For the purpose of this thesis, I interviewed five women who were my relatives from Snuneymuxw and Quw'utsun Nations' and listened to their teachings about what it

means to be a Coast Salish *slheni´* and how colonization interrupted those roles. While listening to my relatives I found that there were three common themes highlighted in their interviews. This chapter will also address one of those themes/concerns which is the lack of respect they have witnessed as Coast Salish women in their lifetime from both general society and from within community. To gain a sense of how Coast Salish women's value in society shifted as a result of colonialism I identify two major factors rooted in Victorian morality/Christianity and also patriarchy. These Western values worked to weaken Coast Salish family structures rooted in *snuw´uyulh* and the power of choice and agency therefore weakening the positions that *si´em slheni´* hold. These Western values will be addressed by looking back to experiences of Coast Salish women within the past 100 years and help us to understand how multifaceted and all-encompassing colonization has worked to attack a Coast Salish governance structures. Colonization has worked with the intention to kill, displace and conquer Coast Salish family units or the law of *nuts´umat shqweluwun.* Translated to English this phrase means to be always be working with, "one mind, one heart…looking after and reaching others," as explained by Snuneymuxw nation member Haqweybuxw (2018). This is one of the core values of what it means to be Snuneymuxw and ultimately to be Coast Salish. As Hunt (2014) illustrates, colonialism in British Columbia displaced these Coast Salish values, and the laws arising from them, through imposing colonial laws that reordered society and the lands upon which it is built via the racial category 'Indian'. Within the *Indian Act,* Coast Salish people were not understood via *nuts´umat shqweluwun* but were instead treated as all other 'Indians,' people who were deemed lesser than others living in Settler society.

While there are beautiful teachings, stories, and roles regarding Coast Salish women, there are also many dangerous situations that these women have experienced due to colonization in order to disrupt the powerful roles that Coast Salish *slheni´* held in her society. One of the reasons it is difficult to easily maintain Coast Salish teachings that hold up Indigenous women is that they directly contradict European notions of womanhood. For example, in European society one of men's many roles is to maintain ownership over the woman and enforce moral ideas about relationships. These beliefs are embedded within British Victorian and Christian values. Because Coast Salish women had such prominent roles in their socio-political societies, European settlers soon realized that in order to establish themselves in these communities they needed to break down *si´em slheni´*

Gendered Nationalism

Feminist scholar Anne McClintock (1993) illustrates that nationalism is the foundation of nation building when nations are newly developing. She states that nationalism is dependent on people's identities and these identities are developed through social constructs, which are often violently gendered because all nations depend on construction of gender in order to sufficiently function. McClintock argues that nationalism is constituted from a gendered discourse that cannot be understood without addressing a theory of gendered power.

For instance, in the mid 19th century and in a newly founded colonial society such as British Columbia, a sense of nationalism had to be developed in order to bring the people together to form a nation state. Ferdinand et.al, (2013) illustrate how modernist thinkers see the nation as being constructed or invented as a tool of social organization, whereby

the nation's elites seek to gain power within a state and use nationalism as a tool to control the masses within that country. Furthermore, modernist Ernest Gellner (1983) argues that nationalism is a product of the industrial revolution in Europe. During this era, people would leave their small rural villages to seek work in growing cities. Upon leaving their villages, identities, local dialects, and cultural traditions these people needed a new sense of identity, one that could be shared with the metropolis and with those very different from themselves. Therefore, the dislocation of their homelands, loss of former identity and a sense of vulnerability all helped people cohere to a national identity that elites promoted as attractive and acceptable by the masses. With regards to the development of nationalism in settler colonial states we can better understand how people leaving their European homelands and arriving in a new environment (with those of English, Irish, Scottish heritage, to name a few), nationalism would have been an important factor in developing social coherence within the newly settled populations of White settlers. Indeed, Whiteness and English traditions embedded in patriarchy were defining features of this emerging nationalism in these Indigenous homelands.

In her analysis of nationalism, McClintock states that women (in this case, White settler women) are often depicted as giving birth to a nation but are denied any direct relations to the ability to engage national agency. For instance, in 1854 on Vancouver Island and within Snuneymuxw territory, the Princess Royal set sail from England for Nanaimo bringing with it 24 families to the 'New World'. Before this, there were only 21 male miners who had been working the coal mines within Snuneymuxw territories. These men, women, and children had come to these lands with the hopes that a new Eurocentric society was underway. No longer was Nanaimo a small coal mining town. It was beginning

to form a White imagined community with little room for the Snuneymuxw people. Jean Barman (2005) argues that Nanaimo B.C. has not had a neat and tidy history with regards to race. She illustrates the erasure of diversity within Nanaimo and how that perpetuated the settler colonial project within Snuneymuxw territories. This erasure of Indigenous authority worked to displace Coast Salish people and solidify a nation premised on Whiteness and Western governance structures which included patriarchy.

Barman states that many men from the HBC were in common law relationships with Snuneymuxw women, sometimes resulting in mixed White-Snuneymuxw children. However, the arrival of the Princess Royal brought with it the promise of a White settler town, no longer needing “mixed blood” offspring to work the mines and enlarge settlements. Indeed, the birth of Nanaimo's first “white girl” and “white boy” were celebrated in the small coal mining town, where there were plaques erected for all those living in these lands to see and to celebrate. Moreover, according to Barman, upon arrival, the settlers from the Princess Royal ship, asserted a way of life that was similar to their lives in Europe. This included producing large White families and marrying their children young so they too would continue to promote the growth of White settler families. Not only were settler families carried over on the boats from Europe, Europeans also brought with them identity, family structures, laws, and beliefs that made up much of the western world at the time, creating a shared sense of nationalism in the newly founded lands.

Metis scholar Kim Anderson (2000) states that upon arriving in North America, settlers felt threatened when they recognized the power that Indigenous women held within their respective socio-political societies. This power ran in direct contrast to the thousands of years of entrenched formality of patriarchy that operated throughout Europe and the

western world. Eurocentric patriarchy runs in contrast to the roles that Coast Salish women have with regards to their governance structures. One way that the colonial state attempted to break Indigenous governance structures that were incongruent with that of patriarchy was to impose *Indian Act* requirements for Indigenous men to be on band councils that governed nations which had been converted into 'Indian bands.' (Thomas, 2018). Coast Salish scholar Qwul'sih'yah'maht, Robina Thomas, illustrates how from 1869-1951 in Canada Indigenous woman were forbidden to hold formal leadership roles and could not vote in band council elections. She states that although these formal restrictions have been amended in the *Indian Act* Coast Salish communities are still dominated by male leadership within the communities. Thomas asserts that due to this forced shift in power, women were no longer seen as imperative to the governance of their nation. Furthermore, because many Indigenous people accepted band councils as legitimate forms of power, the role of women was further diminished.

We have seen throughout history that power in the band council system largely still resides with men, alongside a failure to recognize the roles other genders have to offer to the daily operations of a nation. Thomas argues that much of the chaos that exists in Coast Salish communities is, "…directly due to the imposition of racist and sexist polices which attempted to replace our *snuw´uyulh* with Christian values and beliefs," (2018, p26). However, unlike the adoptive method of the band council system (where there is less female representation than male), women are still active in the political structures of what it means to be *xwulmuxw* with regards to Salish governance. Because Indigenous matriarchy contradicts western forms of governance, one must also understand the construction of western *gendered nationalism* and the role that it plays within a colonial

society. As discussed, after colonial settlement was established in North America the next logical step was to develop a sense of the nation that was founded on male domination and ownership over lands. This nationalism was also rooted in notions of control over female bodies.

Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson argues that in particular the bodies of Two-Spirit people[1], children and women represent an alternative to the hetero-normative constructions of colonial systems of power (2017). She argues that these systems represent a threat to the expansion of colonial control because they offer alternative functioning political and legal orders that refuse systems of capitalism, heteropatriarchy and Whiteness. Through settler colonialism's structures of expansion and domination, largely carried out with the implementation of the *Indian Act,* Indigenous peoples, especially women's bodies and agency, have been controlled. As this thesis highlights, domination over Indigenous women and land, through reinforced notions of heteropatriarchy and capitalism, are imperative to the settler colonial project. Building these ideologies into the fabric of the settler society, creating a national sense of identity that excludes Indigenous people and their systems of governance, are also imperative to the way that Canada was established as a whole and crucial for how Nanaimo, British Columbia has been maintained today.

McClintock (1993) argues that there is no single narrative for the development of nationalism, but that one factor is continuous and clear: that all nationalisms are dangerously gendered. She states that people's identities are generally and violently developed in order to allow for patriarchy to assert itself as a dominant national governance

[1] This is an umbrella term but doesn't fully capture the gender diversity within coastal nations but is being used to recognize the gender and sexual diversity for Coast Salish people.

system. This argument, however, relates differently to colonized women. Within a colonial context, and with regards to land, there is a narrative that legitimizes European occupation by the notion that 'virgin lands' are passively awaiting European domination. McClintock states that Indigenous lands are conquered by the feminizing of 'virgin' colonial lands, and that nationalisms are constructed around the exclusion of these Indigenous women.

Anderson (2011) examines the connection between the violence inflicted upon Indigenous women's bodies and the control of land within a colonial state. She states that sexualized violence and the domination of land have close ties and is maintained through a number of ways. Anderson asserts that the trope of the squaw, Pocahontas, or whore within North America are used in the colonial narrative to justify conquest. By defining Indigenous women via their supposed ‘loose sexuality’, their political authority and their bodies were undermined because these became necessary. The stereotype of the ‘the Indian whore’ is rooted in Christian notions of womanhood and purity. Indigenous women being framed up as whores was one way that *si’em slheni´* and her body became a site of shame, heathenism and needing to learn White ways of womanhood. This construction of the Indian whore also called for state surveillance controlling Indigenous women to enforce control, dominance and civilization. Marking Indigenous women sanctified the colonial transformation over both women's bodies and colonized lands. This speaks to what occurred in Coast Salish territory, specifically in relation to Coast Salish women. The women are conveyors of culture and embody governance in terms of roles and responsibilities. By circumventing the women and dealing only with the men as leaders colonists thought they could eradicate or cut the ties that Coast Salish women had with

governance structures. By doing so, Settlers were able to control Coast Salish Nations and impose a colonial and a *gendered nationalism*.

The colonial state relies on this form of gendered colonial nationalism that has been reinforced through racist tropes in order to establish itself as powerful, therefore disrupting the strength of Indigenous women. Kwagu'ł scholar Sarah Hunt (2014) analyzes settlement in B.C., arguing that the primary embodied and spatial categories of colonialism are Indians and reserves (p59) and that issues of gendered violence should be understood as integral to self-determination because of this linkage between governing the body (Indians) and land (reserves). Hunt describes the interconnected scales of settler violence as the *colonialscape,* linking the emptying of lands via *terra nullius,* the creation of the frontier (racialized zones on the edge of society) and the reserve, where 'Indians' naturally reside. She addresses the settler geography of B.C. and also the ways that western legal order trumped Indigenous authority impacting the agency that Indigenous people had within their territories. Similar to Sarah Hunt's (2014) method for drawing out the *colonialscape* that makes up British Columbia, this paper will also draw on understanding the history of a local space (that is Snuneymuxw territory) to better understand the colonial logic at play within Coast Salish territory and to highlight the ways that Coast Salish women have been removed from systems of power within their socio-political societies. The creation of a *gendered nationalism* created for a colonial state depends on the erasure of identity, space/land and Indigenous bodies in order to enforce its racist ideological underpinnings that helped stitch together settlement within Coast Salish territories and across Canada.

Settler Statecraft:
Wastelanding & the Colonialscape within Snuneymuxw Territory

Kwagu'ł scholar Sarah Hunt (2014) examines the legal geographies and colonial history of British Columbia, arguing that the spatialized (geographic) and embodied (felt and experienced) processes of settler colonialism are inherently violent. Yet the racialized and gendered categories of 'Indians' and Indian reserves are themselves understood as spaces of violence – violence against Indian women and on reserves is expected – which serves to uphold the authority and necessity of colonial law. The *colonialscape* is a concept that Hunt has coined to better understand the "spatial rationale through which colonial relations are continually remade," (2014, p60). The legal categorization of 'Indians' in the *Indian Act* rests on the legal rationale that Indigenous people are incapable of maintaining law, therefore validating Western forms of law that foster civilization in colonized territories by subjugating Indigenous peoples to the state.

Hunt asserts that the colonial and racist understandings of what it means to be an 'Indian' is interwoven with the creation of the racialized space of the reservation, as they work together to erase Indigenous identities and territories, which are grounded in ancestral relationships between peoples and lands. Underlying this legal categorization are racist stereotypes in which the 'Indian' is understood as backwards, lazy, and violent. The only space that is deemed fit for the 'Indian' is lands set aside for them on the reserve, at a safe distance from White settler society. This categorization provides the rationale for removing Indigenous people's agency and asserting settler dominance over already founded nations and governance systems. Along with the colonial legal fiction of *terra nullius* and the frontier, Hunt understands these legal imaginaries work together to create the

colonialscape, justifying colonial violence unto Indigenous people due to their inherent lawlessness. For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on state strategies through which the *colonialscape* imposes European legal consciousness and law in attempting to make void Coast Salish law and governance. I will highlight how these *colonialscape* imaginaries have negatively impacted *si'em slheni´* creating violent experiences for her and leading to disempowerment.

Within the *colonialscape,* the term 'Indian' is also rooted in the notion that Indigenous peoples are now colonial subjects, with no political authority, and therefore are to be subjugated in order to save, protect, or civilize her 'for her own good'. This is true with regards to the way that *si'em slheni´* has been stripped of her political authority and, as we shall see, restricted by laws that were used to "empower and enforce colonial worldviews," (Hunt, p66). Law was used as a civilizing agent and 'Indian' women and men became "racialized subjects of colonial rule," (Hunt, p66). The *colonialscape* imposed a false reality by constructing Indigenous people as a racialized group who were not capable of maintaining their own law, legal systems and societies. In this way, the *colonialscape* worked to remove *slheni´* from her role by making her role invisible, as there could be no *slhunlhéni´* authority if Indigenous law simply did not exist. European values and laws were simultaneously used in violent ways to force restriction over Coast Salish women and communities. However, the violence enacted through these laws was not seen as violent, but rather, it was understood as imperative for creating order and civilization within a newly founded settler society. With this belief in tow, Canadian/colonial relations are continuously remade through this form of the *colonialscape* and reinforced within a settler state which actively works to subjugate and normalize this governance over Indigenous

people. The state has worked hard to create and maintain the *colonialscape* and this colonial logic is so tightly woven in Canada's socio-political fabric that it works to erase Indigenous governance and agency, ultimately leading to experiences of violence and continual displacement of Indigenous peoples (Hunt, 2014).

As we shall see throughout this thesis, European ideologies were used to create racialized stereotypes about coastal women and therefore 'Indians' were to be pushed to the edges of society. While being forced to the margins, there was also a need for coastal people, and especially *slheni´,* to be surveilled and controlled by way of law and health institutions. Hunt states, " as the violence of displacement is rendered invisible, violence against Indigenous women is also made to be invisible in their gendered and racial construction of reserve subjects," (2014, p74). Here we can see how law was used in violent ways to control coastal women by restricting their movement through the *Vagrancy Act* and the Potlatch Ban and also by pathologizing bodies and restricting the maintenance of ancestral teachings that often flowed from the women regarding health and medicine. The violence connected to the use of these laws insidiously caused harm taking the form of a civilizing mission, when in reality these laws were working to disempower Coast Salish women by categorizing them as worthless 'Indians'. This categorization reinforced the notion that these women had no value. *Si'em slheni´* is now forced to face the *colonialscape* as a racialized woman, within a mostly White settler society, who can only be recognized as, "colonized subjects: dependent, victimized incapable of progress, a product of spaces which are inherently violent, impoverished and marginalized," (Hunt, p58)

This creation of the *colonialscape* then renders Indigenous people to wastelands, a land that is not fit for White settlers but only meant for Indigenous people who are thought

to be incapable of progress. Traci Voyles (2014) discusses her theory of *wastelanding* by addressing colonial settlement within Navajo people's territory. Similar to Hunt, the notion of spatialized violence and the idea of so-called empty lands enables settlers to continuously take up space, land and territory all while exploiting the resources and people of those lands. Ultimately, Voyles argues that colonial relationships construct Indigenous lands as being seen as either: always belonging to the settler (through his manifest destiny), or because the land is undesirable, unproductive or unappealing, in other words a wasteland. These wasted landscapes are only fit for the people who inhabit them (Indians) and these people are generally targeted for exposure to environmental harm.

Voyles (2014) states that settler colonialism is a distinct form of power and it has a particular focus on land and resources. Voyles quotes Deborah Bird Rose who states that Indigenous peoples, "got in the way… just by staying home," because land and territory is exactly what the settler requires in order to maintain his manifest destiny (2014, p 7). This is the grounding argument in wastelanding, whereby settler focus goes beyond extracting resources and labor and goods. It also means that settlers are making their home in Indigenous people's home without invitation or welcome, or by violating treaty agreements. Voyles argues that the *wasteland* is a racial and spatial signifier that allows for society to act violent or engage in polluting the land and the people who belong to that territory and these people are always Indigenous. This remaking of the story regarding Indigenous homelands in order to naturalize settler invasion involves a deeply complex construction of the land belonging to the settler by way of his destiny, or with the notion or *terra nullius* and the belief that lands were barren or unused space.

Voyles argues that there is a culturally agreed upon logic that derives categories of difference; these trains of thought become natural, almost a common sense, and are acted out as real. She illustrates how John Locke's theory on property, individualism and ownership excluded Indigenous people because of the belief that Indigenous folks were not able to be productive with developing in the sense of having economic systems that rely on labor and exploitation in order to sustain production. Conveniently, many European settlers were readily available to engage exploitation of land and their desires for vast expansion. This is a structured form of exploitation and with regards to the settler project, it relies on social constructions about racialized Indigenous bodies and lands that are deemed to be exploitable, negligible, and marginal. Voyles states that *wastelanding* does not only rely on the exploitation of territory for the progress of the settler colonial project, it also depends on social, cultural, and ecological exploitation and the social norms created from these acts of mistreatment.

Applying the Colonialscape & Wastelanding to Snuneymuxw Territory

We can take up theories of *wastelanding* and the *colonialscape* and apply them to settler colonialism with regards to Coast Salish people's territory. Settlement on southern Vancouver Island occurred because land was acquired by the Crown with the promise that the HBC would begin to turn their small settlements meant for resource extraction into larger Crown colonies. As the expansion of these settlements took place, Coast Salish peoples were removed from their homelands and placed onto reserved lands that were deemed far less valuable than their village sites.

The development of Nanaimo as a city over the territories of the Snuneymuxw people not only physically displaced the Coast Salish people but also served to spiritually and culturally disconnect people from their land and culture. This fracture was reinforced by the expansion of European style cities, pushing the Snuneymuxw people to the undesirable lands on the outskirts of Nanaimo, or to a frontier zone on the edge of an emerging city. Today, these reserves are located in four different areas of Nanaimo. Doug White of the Snuneymuxw Nation illustrates that if these reserves were not situated on the floodplains of the Nanaimo River, then they are found to be intersecting with the Nanaimo landfill or recycling plant, railway lines, cement plants, lumber mills, and log booms (White, 2004). This destruction of ancestral territories creates disconnection from land where many teachings are drawn from. Two-hundred years ago, the ancestors of the Snuneymuxw people could practise *snuw´uyulh* anywhere they chose within their territorial borders. Today, it is difficult to find the space and privacy to do so. If land is not privatized, developed or restricted Coast Salish people find that they can be viewed by hikers, people driving on logging roads or even provincial park officers.

In 2013 in the local paper, the *Nanaimo Daily*, Nanaimo citizen Don Olsen wrote a comment piece regarding reconciliation, describing his thoughts about the inability of the Indigenous people to evolve as equal Canadian citizens. The letter was titled, “Educate First Nations to be modern citizens.” In Olsen’s mind, Indigenous peoples are incapable to ‘get with the program’ and to evolve and assimilate as general members of the Canadian society and he felt empowered enough as a White Settler to have published a small article asserting that society should, “turn off the taps. Do away with this ‘traditional use’ and ‘cultural’ nonsense. Educate their children to become modern citizens,” (Huffington Post,

2013). In Olsen's words we can see how the logics of the *colonialscape* came into modern play by the way that he frames Indigenous people as not being on par with the rest of colonial society but rather still existing on the frontier zone at the edge of civilization. Olsen states that the only way to 'fix' the current situation of Indigenous peoples overspending federal dollars and not being responsible for themselves is by forcing them to pay taxes like the rest of Canadians and pulling them into the society as equals. The racist ideology that framed up Nanaimo B.C. in claiming that Indigenous people are not capable and void of any sort of agency or authority oozes from this article and sadly the Nanaimo Daily Newspaper. This newspaper saw it fit for publishing in March of 2013 therefore reproducing the age old colonial belief that Snuneymuxw people still are incapable of progress and are void of legal order and therefore subjugated to the colonial state as subjects needed of saving from themselves.

The production of this racist mentality demonstrates the ongoing production of the *colonialscape* for other Nanaimo Settlers as they can look to media publishing outlets like the Nanaimo Daily to reaffirm any thoughts that the Snuneymuxw people are incapable of governing themselves, therefore void of any sort of agency. It also deepens the rationale that there is no place for them in a progressive city and therefore they belong on reservations or in the poorest parts of town, in the frontier zones beyond the respectable spaces created via Whiteness. This reaffirms what Hunt describes as the "closure of settlement…[which] reinforce[s] Indigenous people's status as colonized subjects," (2014, p58). Alternatively, to Olsen's beliefs and many that foster the racist ideology that Nanaimo is founded on, we can look to the colonial reality that the Snuneymuxw Nation faces today and recognize that our ancestors, family, and community members

continuously have fought and pushed back against colonialism. Historically Indigenous women have been viewed as less valuable, as they represent Indigenous reproduction, harvesting, governance and kinship; everything that colonization attempted to dismantle in order to establish itself in Indigenous homelands. As Hunt states, colonization has always been gendered and has impacted Indigenous women, two-spirit people and men differently.

I have numerous coastal women in my life who persevere through traumatic and life altering situations and continue living, existing and carrying on the values of what it means to be a *slheni´* today. Although the state, media and much of the Canadian population imagines that Indigenous women are victims and subjects to Canada via the *Indian Act*, we can see that these Indigenous women carry forward teachings, values and the truth of what it means to be Coast Salish through connection to our homelands. Our relationship with our territories as Coast Salish peoples is one way that we are connected to language, governance and our ancestors. Coast Salish women's relationships with land, however, continues to be violently disrupted through the same European settler priorities which deemed what land was useful for expansion, resource extraction and settlement. Therefore, by looking closely at the development of the city of Nanaimo, we gain a better understanding of how the establishment of settler governance was advanced through displacing Coast Salish women from their governing roles.

Coal was discovered by the HBC in the mid-19th century within Snuneymuxw territory, pushing for the settlement of Nanaimo BC. In 1854 Governor James Douglas negotiated 36 miles of Snuneymuxw territory with the Snuneymuxw people to use for coal extraction. Within two decades the small mining zone was incorporated into British Columbia as a city. Snuneymuxw people were pushed from their village sites as waterfront

property began to be developed. By 2005, the City of Nanaimo had almost tripled the geography that was laid out in its original treaty to 36 miles in size. The Reserve Commission that was operating in the 19th century removed Snuneymuxw people from their waterfront village sites and placed them onto reservations. Currently, almost two-thirds of the Snuneymuxw population are not able to live with or near family because there is not enough room on the small reservations that have been laid out for them by the Reserve Commission (Snuneymuxw First Nation, 2013). Racist ideologies underpin this dispossession of land. As illustrated in the theories above, the newly established c*olonialscape* that justified the subjugation of Indigenous people and *wastelanding* whereby Indigenous people were seen as not using the land to its fullest potential and thus utilized colonial laws to strip Indigenous political authority which worked to further entrench heteropatriarchy. This resulted in Indigenous women being further displaced from their homelands and from their role as leaders in their communities through social reinforcements of patriarchy by making it legal to enforce that land was always left to a son; never a daughter.

Gendered nationalisms, even though they were never meant to include Indigenous people, were being taken up and reinforced through acts of patriarchy within Indigenous communities and against one of their most valuable beings, the *slheni´*. Although there was never actually legislation in the *Indian Act* that outright excluded women from owning property on reserve, the cumulative effect of the *Act* that denied them property rights and inheritance rights created the perception that women could not hold a Certificate of Possession for land (Harry, 2009). Despite this, Indigenous women often countered these patriarchal norms; I will draw from my own families experience here. Today, my mother

owns one acre of land on the Snuneymuxw reservation and has left half an acre to my brother and half an acre for myself, as her daughter. Rather than being governed by patriarchy, my mom held fast to ancestral ways of life in which families lived together to promote the well-being of their communities and also included equity for both her daughter and her son on the reserve.

Regarding the *colonialscape* and *wastelanding* of Snuneymuxw territory , three of the reserves that have been allotted for the Snuneymuxw people are technically uninhabitable because they are not fully serviced for the requirements of a community. For instance, Reserve number two needs water trucks to fill Snuneymuxw members water tanks because the wells have become so contaminated that the water is no longer potable (Snuneymuxw First Nation, n.d.). Reserve number three floods out every year because it is situated on a flood plain at the mouth of the Nanaimo River, where the ocean and river meet. Generally, the peoples on this reserve are evacuated, sometimes so quickly that they must be transported to safety on the front bucket of a tractor. In contrast, the non- reserve homes about one kilometer towards the end of Raines Rd. that are not situated on reserve land, have been built up and away from the river bed so not to be affected by the flooding every year that has become such a hazard to Snuneymuxw band members.

Thus, the same river that has many sacred stories to teach Snuneymuxw people about the relationship they have to the salmon and waters is also the same river that carries destruction to present day Snuneymuxw people's livelihood and homes. This is mainly due to the working of the settler colonial project and forced removal of Snuneymuxw peoples from their village sites onto reserves which are comprised of land that has been deemed as wastelands and not fit for White settlement. The well-endorsed ideology of the

colonialscape in Nanaimo B.C. saw that the Indigenous peoples to these territories were not fit to maintain the waterfront village sites that they had for centuries. Under the ideology of *wastelanding* these 'Indians' are only deemed fit for lands that are not habitable for White settlers. Snuneymuxw territory was taken and Settlers made their home without invitation or by violating treaty agreements made decades prior. The violent removal of Snuneymuxw territories was naturalized due to the construction of the land belonging to the Settler by way of his destiny and simultaneous to the construction of Snuneymuxw people as 'Indians' incapable of governing and improving the land or themselves.

It can, therefore, be argued that Voyles (2015) would see the uninhabitable locations of these reserves as a process of *wastelanding*, whereby Indian bodies are segregated and delegated to spaces of wasted land that is no longer desirable for White settlers. Strengthening this argument is the location of Reserve number one, which is located on waterfront property in Nanaimo close to downtown and situated right next to a mill. These reserve lands retain a constant influence of colonial occupation; as Peterson (2006) notes, in the early 20th century, the waterfront beach was used as a bathing beach for the Settler public without the consultation of the Snuneymuxw peoples, even though it was ironically exoticized as "Indian Beach." The need to control and dominate all aspects of Indian land, even reserve lands, is one way that the colonialscape has fostered the constant seal of colonial domination over the Snuneymuxw people as they have been socially constructed as too primitive to develop in the same trajectory of European capitalist expansion, and unfit for any lands except a *wasteland*.

With European strongholds over Indigenous territory, settlers established a common national interest based in heteropatriarchal norms. By utilizing theories of

wastelanding and the *colonialscape* I have highlighted how the shift from centering Coast Salish laws and governance centred on connection to land and water has occurred and how a European dominated systems were established. This next section will illustrate how racist ideologies were enacted in the newly founded colony of Nanaimo. It will illustrate how Victorian culture entrenched in Christian morality and hetero-patriarchy were colonial footings for cementing colonial control within Snuneymuxw territory. By examining the insidious ways that hetero-patriarchy was normalized in these territories I will highlight how colonization has worked to disrupt the agency and power that Coast Salish *slheni´* had prior to contact.

Imposing Eurocentric Values & Family Structures within Snuneymuxw Territory

> *The Snuw´uyulh brought a sense of unity, as it expected and required the clear communication that outlined family protocol. These protocols may differ slightly between communities or families themselves but the Snuw´uyulh provided structure for the community and society based on Respect… Snuw´uyulh was discussed with every member of the family or group from the youngest to the oldest. Everyone had a role, a job, a place in the family and community structure. (Paige, 2004, p.61)*

European settlement on the west coast of Canada brought with it an influx of Victorian values and a forced hetero-normative family structure onto coastal Indigenous people. Prior to contact, and still today, Snuneymuxw people operate with a kinship structure that goes beyond the nuclear family and maintains communal values that center all those in their communities especially the young and old – these are the underpinnings to their livelihood and socio-political societies and a part of *snuw´uyulh*. *Snuw´uyulh*, the

ancestral teachings from thousands of years ago, not only allows Coast Salish peoples to regulate self, individuals, and communities, it also guides decision making and laws. Though Snuneymuxw *snuw´uyulh* was not permanently erased due to colonization, we can see the fracture that colonialism brought to Indigenous communities as a whole and the impacts on Coast Salish governance structures.

In this section, I will highlight how imposed Victorian values and family structures impacted Coast Salish people, forcing a shift away from *snuw´uyulh* and towards a focus entrenched in western values. During interviews and conversations with Coast Salish women I began to realize that one common theme was the concern that many of their relatives and community members have shifted away from implementing our teachings and governance in everyday life. Rather, they have seen that many families center heteropatriarchy, therefore silencing the voices of Indigenous women and children. It is important to reiterate that *snuw´uyulh* has not disappeared but maintaining this way of life in a western world has become increasingly difficult as many coastal values oppose daily systems of survival. Indigenous people have been forced to live in a western and colonial way to this day. Despite this, thousands of Coast Salish people still practice *snuw´uyulh* daily and seasonally, keeping these teachings alive for the future and demonstrating resiliency and strength while doing so.

Nonetheless, Snuneymuxw community values were displaced in many ways, one of which was through the everyday colonial discourses of civilization. Said (2003) defines Western understandings of civilization as bias held in a dominating narrative and canons of knowledge, especially when it comes to the invention of the ‘Other’. Said illustrates this argument through the definition of Orientalism, demonstrating how this grouping of people

comes to be understood in a Western sense as the ‘Other.’ Said highlights how the construction of the ‘Other’ is based on the epistemological differences of cultures, contributing to perceived differences across civilizations, often based on racial difference. According to Said the ‘Other’ represents how the West maintains control through both physical institutions and discursive ones. Further to this analogy of the ‘Other’ we can see how aspects of nationalism came into play alongside the ideologies of both civilization and the Other. McClintock (1993) argues that nation building and nationalism are dependent on the way that people’s identities are formed through social constructs. She also argues that these identities are always violently gendered.

Transferring these understandings of social control over identity building and understandings of civilizations to the founding of the New World, we can see how the ideologies of the ‘Other’ and gendered binaries formed within a newly founding nation. The imperial idea that the first people of North American were inferior and lacked advancement allowed for the colonial expansion to occur at the rate it did. Peterson (2008) highlights how early cultural influences in the development of Nanaimo were overwhelmingly European due to the large number of British immigrants that landed in Coast Salish territory. She illustrates that these first settlers, mostly miners, were literate and brought with them many pleasures of European culture, such as music and arts, and she claims that these things brought the “settlement community to life.” (p23). Other Western art forms that came to Snuneymuxw territory were British music and reading groups, drama clubs, and an opera house. Moving forward, I will identity a subtheme that stems from the impacts of European settlement on Coast Salish communities. The marriage laws of the *Indian Act* acted as insidious ways of colonization forcing racist and colonial

ideological shifts within Snuneymuxw territory by way of encouraging European norms and culture within the family. In this way, the *Indian Act* worked to foster systems of hetero-patriarchy which ultimately enforced the displacement that *si´em slheni´* faced and continue to face today.

(i) Impacts of Victorian Morality & Christian Ideology

For this next section, I will utilize *Felt Theory*, which is a model relying on informed personal experience and knowledge in order to address the multifaceted aspects of racist and sexist colonial history (Million, 2008). Million argues that academia has, "repetitively produced gatekeepers to our [Indigenous women scholars] entry into important social discourses because we *feel* our histories as well as think them" (2008, p267). To combat these gatekeepers and to include the *felt* histories of Coast Salish colonization, this next section will draw on Coast Salish women's experiences as well as my own experiences with colonization to highlight the negative impacts of hetero-patriarchy and control on our *slheni´*.

The attack on *si´em slheni´* continued even beyond removal of Indigenous peoples from their territories and their subjugation as victims or subjects of the state. This attack was enacted in multiple ways. As mentioned above, one focus was through patriarchal marriage laws that were used as powerful tools to dismantle the positions of women in their society by denying agency and choice. These laws and policy could be found in the *Indian Act.* First enacted in 1876, this piece of colonial legislation governed every aspect of Indigenous people's lives across Canada. No matter the nation you belonged to, this umbrella approach of control treated every Indigenous nation the same and stripped many

Indigenous people of power or control over their own bodies, lives and the lands they governed. survived on. The dangers of not differentiating between the laws of governance for the Coast Salish, Cree, Heiltsuk or Mohawk places a barrier at the forefront of every nation that attempts to maintain their inherent sovereignty because the deeply defined differences of Indigenous cultures and governance are not acknowledged. This umbrella approach worked to turn diverse nations of Indigenous people into 'Indians' and all Indigenous lands into reserves or known as 'Indian space'. For Snuneymuxw people, this denial of difference and an imposed umbrella approach of the I*ndian Act* impacted Coast Salish people on numerous levels. Still today, they face these impacts as they engage with colonial systems and their roles as Snuneymuxw people and as Coast Salish women.

For instance, the *Indian Act* imposed regulations whereby if a Status Indian woman chose to marry a non-status male, she would forfeit her status along with her children. Once the *Indian Act* was implemented, this legislation governed who was and was not legally considered an Indian person (Palmater, 2011). In order to buy or own a house on the reserve you must have Indian Status within the particular Indian band that governs the reserve where you hope to live. If a woman married a man that did not have status, her status would be stripped and she would no longer be considered an Indian, therefore, she could no longer secure her livelihood amongst her own people. Today, many Indigenous communities have adopted these colonial ideas of what it means to be Indian. Blood quantity and affirmation of Indian status have been used by some communities as barriers to being accepted as their own, driving lateral violence in many Indigenous communities. Many people are scrutinized and face being ostracized because they have 'mixed' blood or do not hold a status card . The idea of being a 'full-blooded Indian' has become paramount in the minds

of many Indigenous people, perhaps due to the fear of losing teachings as non-native blood mixes with Indigenous blood. However, the rejection and persecution that is faced by those of mixed-blood can be dangerous and work to fracture families and nations. The desire to govern blood-quantum has stemmed from policies such as the *Indian Act* and the European measures that were used to control, displace and ultimately dismantle Indigenous nations from the west to east coast and from north to south.

Interestingly enough, one of the so-called 'founding fathers' of Vancouver Island, Governor James Douglas himself was of mixed blood. His mother was of Creole decent, African and European heritage and his father of Scottish decent. Although Douglas was of mixed race, both Victoria and later Nanaimo (of whom he is the founding 'father') would still be established on the foundation of a white racial hierarchy, where Indigenous peoples' land, governance and culture were all deemed uncivilized therefore making way for British norms, western capitalism and European settlers. Even though establishing racial hierarchies in Snuneymuxw territory was one way that Snuneymuxw people were displaced, many Indigenous communities have adopted these colonial structures to displace and disregard some of their own people. Therefore, this fractured colonial idea of identity still continues to harm Coast Salish people today.

Furthermore, until 1985, Indigenous women lost status from marrying out of their nations and their children did not receive status if the father did not have status. The repercussions from this piece of the *Indian Act* had severe implications on many Indigenous women. For instance, one elder from Quw'utsun that was interviewed recalls when she married 'out' of her community in the 1960's, she forfeited her status and was forced to move away from her community. She struggled to make ends meet for her son and was no

longer connected in *nuts´umat shqweluwun* (one mind, one heart, working together, looking after and reaching others), a core value for what it means to be Coast Salish and to be in relation to one another and self (T´uwahwiye´, 2020). Being disconnected from *nuts´umat shqweluwun* also meant that she would face economic consequences as she was no longer supported by her community and her people.

As will be discussed later in this paper, one foundational teaching and law is to hold others up and also to offer support for those when they are in need. Once T´uwahwiye´ was forced to move from her home community she found herself living outside her ancestral territory of Quw'utsun and in the city of Nanaimo. Although she had extended family from Snuneymuxw, she was forced to live in the city of Nanaimo and was disconnected from her community who could provide support in way of food or harvesting if she so needed.

T´uwahwiye´ was raised with sacred and ancestral teachings of the Coast Salish Longhouse, along with the teachings about *si´em slheni´*. Today, this elder does reside back home and within her community and shares Quw'utsun strength by way of the beautiful coastal laws and teachings with many Coast Salish people. However, the ostracization she faced for marrying a non-status man not only physically forced her out of her home but also mentally and spiritually disconnected her from family, community and *snuw´uyulh*. As she recalls, many people looked at her as no longer being Indian for not having her Indian status yet she carried many ancestral teachings that grounded her as *si´em slheni´* and enabled her to overcome many colonial barriers she faced.

Another example of the impacts of marriage and federal control of Indian status is one very close to my heart. My mother Tlpuhtunat, (Collette Jones, nee Good), fell in love with my father, a third-generation settler of German and Welsh decent, Gary Jones. She

first became pregnant with my brother and then five months after Colin was born, she found she was carrying me. Rather than being able to embrace a full celebration for the two lives of her Snuneymuxw children, Tlpuhtunat was now focussed on maintaining the legal status of her children to ensure that they receive what little benefits Indigenous people in Canada are entitled to and also that we would be able to stay connected to the Snuneymuxw community through our Indian Status. My father, wanting to maintain the protocol of white European norms, quickly asked to marry my mother upon finding out that she was pregnant with my brother. In 1981, my mother knew that if she were to wed my father, she would be forced to give up her status and her son Colin would be born with no status, so she refused him.

Today, my mother explains that she was afraid to marry my father, even after *Bill C-31* was amended in 1985, which allowed status Indian women to marry non-status men and maintain a certain level of Indian Status. Tlpuhtunat still waited ten more years just to be sure that marrying him would not impact the 'Indian' way of life that my brother, her and myself would be entitled to, living under the patriarchal thumb of the *Indian Act.* Today, all three of us have status, allowing for the colonial permissions to be 'Indian' in Canada and to benefit from the small pot that Status Indians have been granted from our colonial forefathers. That being said, more than 1/3 of Snuneymuxw band members cannot live on reserve because we have the smallest land base per capita of any First Nation within British Columbia (SFN, nd). Therefore, the fracture of *nuts´umat shqweluwun* is even further perpetuated. We are not able to live close to our relatives to learn and maintain our ways as our ancestors once did.

Tlpuhtunat speaks to the fact that if she were to marry my father in 1981, she would have not only faced disenfranchisement physically, but spiritually as well (Personal Communication, 2019). Having grown up most of her life in residential schools she had been denied the ability to learn the culture, language and teachings of her ancestors. When her and I spoke about why she didn't marry my father, she stated that she would have not only lost status, she would have also not been able to move home to the reserve and been able to reconnect with her community after spending five years in the residential school system. Tlpuhtunat maintains that she would also have faced a spiritual disenfranchisement as she would have never moved home to connect with her family and community to engage her teachings of *nuts´umat shqweluwun* and her role as *si´em slheni´*. Today, Tlpuhtunat resides back home on Reserve no. 4 in Snuneymuxw territory and she has been home for over twenty years. In this time, she has reconnected to her nation, community, language and culture. She firmly believes that if she had lost her Indian status, which is a legal and state sanctioned connection to your Indigenous community, she may have never returned home to reclaim pieces that were stripped from her while in the residential school system.

These two examples illustrate how Snuneymuxw women were directly impacted by the *Indian Act* and how this *Act* stripped Coast Salish women of one of the most important aspects of Coast Salish humanity – the agency and power to make choices. The denial for Coast Salish women to maintain their power in choice fractured the foundation for Coast Salish *snuw´uyulh*. For Coast Salish people to trust in the power of their mind and to trust in their choices allows for *kw'am'kw'um'stuhww tun' shqweluwun* which roughly translates to a make your feelings and mind strong. In Snuneymuxw when a young person reaches pubescent life, which is considered a new stage in their life, they are taught

that they now must always keep a *kw'am'kw'um'sthuw tun' shqweluwun* so that they ensure that they pass on teachings and laws of the Snuneymuxw people. At pubescence, Coast Salish people are reminded that they must walk carefully in the world and to make choices that will keep not only their Snuneymuxw self-strong but also bring strength to Snuneymuxw people.

At puberty, you must take on the responsibility to learn and share ancestral teachings in order to keep your mind and body strong and healthy. The marriage rules of the *Indian Act* attempted to break the ability to keep a strong mind, to make choices and to trust in your choice. My mother was denied the ability to make the choice of how she wanted to live her life even if that meant marrying a White man and having two half White children. Because she chose to marry and commit to a White man but was denied that choice for almost 15 years, she was also denied the ability to maintain *kw'am'kw'um'sthuw tun' shqweluwun.* Tlpuhtunat was denied the ability to keep her mind strong in the choices she made; she was denied a fundamental right as a Snuneymuxw *si´em slheni´*. This impacted Snuneymuxw people not only because it negates a core law of being Coast Salish, it also denies the humanity in a person when their ability for choice is denied by opposing colonial law such as legislation of the *Indian Act.*

In contrast to the denial of choice for Coast Salish women, if a non-Indian woman married a Status Indian, she would then gain status, gain property rights and even her children (if she brought children into that marriage) would gain status and the benefits that a status card had with it. Often, white women married into Indigenous communities and while an Indigenous woman with blood ties to that community would be rejected for marrying a non-Status male, a white woman would legally have a position created for her

in that community. Pushing Indigenous women out from their communities and inviting new non-Indigenous women into community alongside the insidious ways that Euro-culture and arts introduced patriarchal values, ensured that these communities would be fractured, losing powerful decision makers and people that traditionally maintained many aspects of Indigenous socio-economic societies. Inviting and enticing non-Indigenous women, mostly white women, into Indigenous communities would ensure that 'half-breed' children are reared with European values, customs and language including adopting the norms of this culture. This also enables some foundational underpinnings of Western civilization to be introduced to Indigenous communities along with displacement of Coast Salish women from their current positions within their societies.

Not only did the *Indian Act* displace women from their respected positions in community it also enforced Western notions of morality and Christian norms, especially the idea of the illegitimate child to those born out of wedlock. The denial for Coast Salish women to have choice in who they have children with or spend their life with connects back to the control that European values had over Coast Salish ways of life, these values impacted Indigenous womanhood on the coast infringing on reproductive freedoms to the ability to be free to make life altering choices. Coast Salish children are one of the most precious beings to their people and are to be treated as gently as a flower to ensure their growth and vitality. T´uwahwiye´ (2018) recalls older ones calling their children *spequm* in English this means flower. She states that children were called *spequm* to remind those caring for them to always nurture them and to help them grow.

With European settlement also came the belief of European morality and most of these thoughts were grounded in the notions of Christian ideas of right from wrong. For

instance, according to the Bible it is considered a sin to have a child out of wedlock. In Europe, children born out of wedlock were considered bastards and would bring great shame not only to the mother but also the entire family. These notions of right from wrong were transmitted during settlement. Coast Salish women who had children out of wedlock were doubly marked as inferior, once for carrying children out of sin and once for not being of European ancestry in newly colonized lands.

Take for instance a Snuneymuxw woman in the early 1900's. Written dialogue between two Indian Agents of Chilliwack BC and Vancouver Island area discussed children belonging to a Snuneymuxw woman and a Chehalis man. The Chehalis man was already married to another woman in legal western manner, but it was clear that that relationship had dissolved, and he had started another family. In the letters between Agent Moore and Agent Duant the children were named as 'illegitimate' and there was detailed explanation that the Snuneymuxw woman had been, "…warned off the Chehalis Reserve, or in fact any other Reserve in this Agency [New Westminister Agency], and we have told her that she will be treated as a trespasser if she persists on staying on a Reserve in the Agency, so perhaps she will take Stanley back to Nanaimo with her!!!! Stanley Michell already has a wife…"(Aboriginal Digital Collections, p20). This dialogue between Agent Moore and Agent Daunt shows the disgust and strong desire to maintain strict order of colonial matrimonial law whereby a man who had left his wife to be with another woman was deemed immoral and the couple needed to be evacuated from the area and treated as trespassers if they tried to stay on any reservation, including the Chehalis man's own ancestral territory.

According to Christian faith, marriage was a sacrament of the Lord and the cornerstone to Christian family life. In England and many parts of Europe, marriage was considered to be indissoluble and was used in a way to control women, their choices and human rights. Opposite to that is Coast Salish law and the right to choose and agency, this denial for the Snuneymuxw woman and separated Chehalis man to engage life together was one way that settlers controlled a foundational piece of Coast Salish life: the ability to make choice. Further discussion between the two Indian Agents finds that all four of this woman's children are illegitimate according to Eurocentric notions of right and wrong barring children out of wedlock. The anger and disgust portrayed in this dialogue showed the desire for settler government to maintain European standards of monogamous relationships and heteropatriarchal family structures.

Another example of Victorian morality impacting Coast Salish people occurred between Reverend JH Wright who lived in the Nanaimo area and Nanaimo's Indian Agent Moore. Reverend Wright corresponds with Agent Moore to express his pleasure that a Snuneymuxw couple had been married and he enclosed the marriage certificate with his letter. The Reverend wrote, "I am so glad that this has been done, for several children have already been born to this couple and another is on the way…they need a house badly, for they had 3 children and live in the poorest of a shack. I hope the next building will come to them," (Aboriginal Digital Collections, p41). Here we can see that Snuneymuxw people were rewarded for following and maintaining Christian norms and there was sway and control over people that was organized by the state and church guided by moral acceptance. The Snuneymuxw couple who was legally bound by marriage were rewarded with a new

home and had the enticement and support of the local Reverend as he handwrote this request to the Indian Agent of the time.

Within these two situations the creation of moral and responsible citizens born of moral citizenship illustrates the heightened discourse of sexual purity, marital monogamy and also distinct gender roles, all of which were being enforced via the *Indian Act* in these newly populated lands. A coastal Indigenous woman could not make the choice to leave a man if she so desired. She was not allowed to start a new life for herself or her children because these actions would be considered a sin and immoral. Women could be run off reserves, which may have been the only safe places these women were accepted in that day, had their children labelled as illegitimate and not supported by the government even if they were impoverished and struggling to make ends meet for them and their children while adjusting to colonial norms and values. The impacts of impoverishment are also closely tied to the introduction of capitalism, imperialism and the denial for Coast Salish institutions of economy to co-exist within the colonial context.

Conclusion

Upon contact Indigenous women were targeted in order for White settlement to occur because they were recognized as central political actors within Indigenous governance systems. European settlers quickly realized that in order to govern land and resources they first must conquer Indigenous women (Casselman, 2016). By examining the colonial reality of Coast Salish people's lives through these theoretical lens' of *gendered nationalism, wastelanding* and the *colonialscape* we can better understand how settler statecraft has and is still working on the west coast of Canada. Together, these three

analytical tools illuminate a number of key insights. First, settler colonial states depend on the marginalization of Indigenous peoples, particularly Indigenous women, in order to maintain the project of domination and control over lands and Indigenous peoples. This form of *settler statecraft* is maintained through a number of different approaches, including the creation of spatialized and racialized hierarchies. Second, demeaning social constructions and the breakdown of Indigenous womanhood are ways that the colonial state was able to morally justify the atrocities that they have committed unto Indigenous peoples. Today too, the derogatory social stereotypes surrounding Indigenous peoples are deployed by the settler state to justify violent acts and therefore maintain its false notion of sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and homelands.

Thirdly, I have highlighted in this chapter how Eurocentric family structures have impacted traditional Coast Salish Communities in numerous ways. These include enforcing the idea of moral laws around hetero-sexual marriages that were ordained and governed by the Church in order to maintain Coast Salish socio-political structures. Across Canada, Indigenous women were targeted in order for White settlement to occur because they were recognized as central political actors within Indigenous governance systems. European settlers quickly realized that in order to govern land and resources they first must conquer Indigenous women (Casselman, p.10). According to a 2014 RCMP report, Indigenous women are six times more likely than non-Indigenous women to become victims of homicide (RCMP, 2017). Indigenous women are almost three times more likely to face violent acts than those of non-Indigenous ancestry (Dunham, 2017). We have also seen in this chapter how gendered violence for Coast Salish women also includes being denied the right to live in one's own territory, control over who one chooses to marry, and being

disconnected from your territories which tie you to your language, governance and culture and community. At different points in time, the direct racist ideological assault on Coast Salish women has impacted the way that they were able to engage their laws and governance. This breakdown can also be linked to the way that *slheni´* face immeasurable violence within her homelands today. I know of many stories of cousins, aunties, and friends who have faced violence, in many different forms, from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike. The disruption of the powerful position that *slheni´* are all ways that the colonial narrative justifies its conquest over Salish territories.

Chapter Two: Disempowered through Restriction and Control Over Coast Salish Bodies

Introduction

This chapter will demonstrate how colonial issues have unfolded historically in Coast Salish communities by way of controlling Indigenous bodies through policies such as the *Vagrancy Act* and through settler institutions such as the provincial health care system. By examining health care systems and racist policies, I will draw out the way that settler colonialism has impacted the socio-political societies of Coast Salish people. I will illustrate this by focusing on the deliberate disruption of the roles that Coast Salish women have within their communities.

Coast Salish structures have been fundamentally altered by colonialism and these impacts have had negative effects on coastal Indigenous people, especially women. I will illustrate how colonial laws such as the *Vagrancy Act* have impacted Coast Salish women by examining the ways these laws worked to attack the foundations of Coast Salish governance. By restricting women's movement within their territory, this legislation impacted the way that Coast Salish *slheni´* were able to connect to land, water, people and their communities, therefore impacting Coast Salish governance structures.

The *Vagrancy Act* was implemented in B.C. in 1869 and prohibited able-bodied people who were unemployed from "wandering" place to place for fear of heightened criminal behaviors occurring in newly founded cities. In Victoria B.C., the *Act* was implemented in a way not only to restrict movement of Indigenous women on Vancouver Island, but it was also used to mark Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Nuu-chah-nulth

women as sexually deviant, promiscuous and as illegal vagrants within their own homelands. Indigenous scholars have argued these ideas of deviancy continue today, as seen in ongoing attempts at restricting Indigenous women's movement. As Hunt argues in her theory on the *colonialscape*, the colonial governments "…used both ideologies of European superiority and the actions of individual legal technicians…to cement the new colonial vision…creating social relations in which these power relations were naturalized and seen as necessary for progress," (2014, p 65). She argues that European law was used to further entrench colonial worldviews as 'normal', as categorizing Indigenous people as 'Indians' defined them as subjects of the colonial state, with the idea that they 'belonged' on reservations. This chapter will show how these ideological shifts occurred by threading theories of the *colonialscape* to the situations that Coast Salish women have experienced.

Relying on my relative's interviews, I will examine the impacts of the loss of transmission of language and culture within Coast Salish communities. In doing so, I will highlight the role of Western health care institutions in their attempts to break down connections to ancestral teachings, governance and law by removing women from the relationships through which Coast Salish language and culture was transmitted. These institutions were rooted in Western forms of health care that focused on a Western scientific lens related to racial hierarchies. As a result of this narrow lens that only centered Western forms of health care, racist understandings regarding Indigenous peoples, their worldviews and holistic approach to medicine was denied, thus impacting the way that Coast Salish people transmitted culture, ancestral teachings regarding medicines and caring for self and community.

I will also draw on the experiences of a Songhees woman, Joan Morris, and the late Kwulasulwut, Ellen White, of the Snuneymuxw Nation. Using their stories of hospitalization, I will argue that the state used the Western health care system to enforce settler colonialism and to disrupt and weaken Coast Salish governance. By providing these examples I will illustrate how Canadian laws and health institutions have established themselves within Coast Salish territory, causing immense damage at both the individual and community level. By highlighting how these Western institutions and laws function in Coast Salish territory, I will also track systems of heteropatriarchy that were imposed on Coast Salish communities. This will highlight the conspicuous and yet harmful impacts Canadian health policies and institutions, along with Western medicine, continue to have on Coast Salish *slheni´*. By controlling and pathologizing Indigenous bodies, the state was once again able to restrict and control Indigenous governance. Both of these sites of colonial policy—the Vagrancy Act of 1869 and the Indian hospital system—highlight how control over Indigenous bodies impacted the transmission of ancestral teachings and laws and how Coast Salish women's roles were therefore disrupted.

Vagrancy Act 1869

In the nineteenth century, vagrancy laws developed in Britain to monitor able-bodied and unemployed people (Gordon, 2004). The state assumed that those living as vagrants were more likely to engage in criminal behavior to support themselves, and therefore needed to be controlled by law. In 1824, the *Vagrancy Act* targeted a broad range of citizens such as: sex workers, pan handlers, and those who slept in public places. As Gordon explains, this legislation was also used to separate the 'worthy' poor from the less

worthy counterparts within society. The worthy poor within Britain were deemed to be the elderly or people with physical disabilities that prohibited them from work. The unworthy were deemed to be those living on the streets, vagabonds and those that were able bodied but did not have employment or homes.

Vagrancy laws in Canada played a similar role to that of Britain's vagrancy laws. In 1869, the *Vagrancy Act* was passed in the Dominion of Canada as part of the government's consolidation of criminal law. This act was modeled on British laws, with the intent to control those who (a) had no visible means to maintain themselves, (b) were able to work but refused to, (c) begged, (d) loitered on the streets, and (e) caused a disturbance in the street by swearing, singing, or being drunk. Such individuals were to be targeted by police and charged under the *Vagrancy Act* (Gordon, 2004). Gordon argued that the *Act* was intended to control the working class by enforcing work ethics and maintaining the streets. Shifting to the use of this *Act* in Coast Salish territory, and the newly established market of resource extraction and colonial settlement, we can see how the *Vagrancy Act* with the underpinnings of state control over bodies, was used to establish sovereignty over Indigenous homelands.

This *Act* was specifically directed at those who had been displaced from their ancestral homelands in order to make way for White settlers, as part of the colonial foundations of creating British Columbia. As illustrated by Hunt (2014), the colonial state used western law to subjugate Indigenous people in their own territories by reordering space along racial lines, such as by legally distinguishing who did and did not belong in settler towns, and then using law to enforce this. Likewise, vagrancy laws in B.C. were not only justified towards settlers with regards to the working class, but they also targeted

Indigenous women in an attempt to restrict movement within their homelands. Smith (2009) illustrates how the *Vagrancy Act* was used to keep Indigenous women away from the settler populations in developing settlements such as Victoria, therefore subjugating them to spaces deemed less worthy such as reserve lands. An example that Smith highlights was that of Alert Bay women, but all Indigenous women on Vancouver Island were subjected to similar constraints. Edward Dewdney, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in 1889, recommended to the Privy Council that a bill be enacted to restrict Indigenous women from travelling to Victoria from the north island by steamship. His claim was that this would prohibit these women from frequenting towns for immoral reasons, such as engagement in sex trade.

Also, through the implementation of the *Vagrancy Act* coastal Indigenous women were restricted from traveling and connecting with other nations and relatives, which was vital for engaging the laws and teachings of being a Coast Salish *slheni´*. Coast Salish women travelled to engage their ancestral teachings and support other families doing cultural work while embodying culturally-specific laws. The ability for *slheni´* to travel and participate in potlatches, or in Hulquminum – *stlunuq*, were crucial to her role within governance for Coast Salish people as a whole. Although the potlatch was not banned until 1885, the *Vagrancy Act* effectively limited women's ability to uphold their responsibilities within the potlatch system decades earlier. Settlers attempted to keep Indigenous women from travelling the island drawing on stereotypes about their sexuality, which was deemed a threat to settler society. Within this research it will become apparent that this restriction contributed to an attack on Coast Salish governance structures. Coast Salish women pushed back and resisted these settlers polices by engaging in their inherent rights as *slheni´*

maintaining their roles in community, culture and governance structures. These acts of colonial defiance contributed to the survival of the attempted erasure of this coastal way of life, as will be discussed throughout this thesis.

Prior to 1869, there was no official law that stopped these women from travelling and leaving Indian reservations. In response to settler concerns about Indigenous women's presence in newly forming towns, the Federal Minister of Justice suggested that Dewdney implement the *Vagrancy Act* because he felt the time was not right to implement a law specifically restricting Indigenous women's travel. However, this was not because of some commitment to equality for Indigenous women. According to Smith (2009), there was not enough colonial authority to enforce this law in the newly established territories of B.C. The vast distance between Indian agents, policing, and reservations in the newly founded settlement of the west coast worked against implementing restrictive laws, as these governing agents would not be able to coherently work together in order to enforce this law. Settlers recognized the power and authority that was given to *si´em slheni´* and therefore restriction and control needed to be placed over her to allow for colonization to occur within Coast Salish territories.

Recognizing this difficulty in legally controlling Indigenous bodies due to the geography and still-emerging colonial bureaucracy of the newly founded province of B.C., I.W. Powell, the General of Indian Affairs, introduced policy that restricted Indigenous people's ability to travel to engage in ceremony or potlatching. As mentioned previously, movement on the land and water is vital to coastal peoples and their governance structures as part of carrying out their responsibility to their own nations, relatives and neighboring nations. We shall see later in this thesis that one foundational piece to Coast Salish

snuw´uyulh is to hold up families, which is practiced by travelling up and down the southern Island to support families in cultural work of the Bighouse. Coast Salish women's *snuw´uyulh* was therefore disrupted by this new limitation on their mobility, and by the actions taken by representatives of the state to enforce this policy.

Powell wrote to local steamship companies asking that they refuse access to Indigenous women attempting to travel by ship. The steamship companies agreed and eventually Indigenous women would only be permitted to travel if they were escorted by a male adult such as a father, husband, or a brother. The justification made for the restriction of Indigenous women's bodies was that it would prevent Indigenous women from 'losing their way' and falling into sex work in the city centers (Smith, 2009). As a further means to control Indigenous bodies, it also became apparent that this law was necessary due to settler fear of miscegenation and the 'impurity' that this would create in the newly founded colonies. Helps states that systems of power rely on citizen's bodies and the "making and unmaking of assemblages through coding and reterritorialization," (2007, p129). We can view the implementation of the *Vagrancy Act* in B.C. and its attempted control over Indigenous women's bodies as a way that the colonial system attempted to code and reterritorialize these women in order to subjugate them to their reservations, thereby segregating them from White society.

Thus, it is clear that the *Vagrancy Act* worked to control Indigenous bodies and restrict Indigenous movement on the land. The colonial state was able to better control land and resources that they depended on for colonial domination and success by creating negative stereotypes about Coast Salish women as sexually promiscuous which justified denying them movement within their own territory. This denial for engaging on the land

and waters around them also denied *si´em slheni´* her role in engaging in Coast Salish governance. Settlers depended on restricting Coast Salish *slheni´* from travel to restrict a foundational piece of Salish law which is to connect with folks from your own community and neighboring nations to support, hold one another up and give back to one another in ceremony and through different life stages. As mentioned prior, travel for Coast Salish peoples to engage in governance in the Bighouse is one vital way that we maintain ancestral laws. Furthermore, restricting the movement of Coast Salish *slheni´* ensured they could not engage in century old teachings of harvesting medicine, foods and resources and also actively working to maintain relationships with neighboring nations and relatives.

This restriction to reservations only became seen as necessary when colonial towns and cities began to emerge. Edmunds (2010) discusses how White civic spaces were created during colonial times, focusing on the development of Victoria B.C. She states that in the early 1860's, prior to the *Vagrancy* Act being implemented, surveillance and control over Indigenous women's bodies became a real focus for the colony, as there was a shift from the fur-trade mercantilist economy to that of a White settler city. In an attempt to segregate White settlers from Indigenous peoples, and especially White men from Indigenous women for fear of, “missed-race licentiousness,” Edmunds illustrates that White people (mostly men) were apprehended if they were found cohabitating with Indigenous people (2010, p13). However, there was a shift with Augustus F. Pemberton, police magistrate in Victoria B.C. during the 1870's, who began to frame Indigenous peoples as 'vagrants' to validate their removal from the city center of Victoria and implement the laws of the *Vagrancy Act*. He stated that,

> such Indians have no visible means of support and are the associates of thieves, or prostitutes who are

> disorderly and be treated as vagrants, are to be given the option either to remove to the Indian reserve, or be dealt with under 5 Geo.4.C.83, and be sent to prison" (Edmunds, p.15).

Here the gendered-racism of settler colonialism was revealed, whereby if Indigenous peoples were not rightfully employed, by European masculinist standards, they would be considered criminal in urban settings. By way of the *Vagrancy Act* the settler government was able to reinforce its colonial power and assert its claim to cities as White spaces. Not long after the *Act* was implemented, there was an attack on coastal nations governance structures when the anti-potlatch laws were introduced. Birthed from ideology entrenched in heteropatriarchy, Coast Salish governance structures were threatened by colonial policy and legislation. There were numerous ways in Coast Salish territory that the colonial government gained control over coastal Indigenous people and their lands. Through policy and legislation, as discussed in the *Vagrancy Act,* the settler government gained control over Indigenous bodies, governance and land. Moving forward I will argue that by enforcing western modes of health the settler government was further able to control Indigenous bodies, thereby disrupting the role that *slheni´* had within her society.

Indian Hospitals & Impacts on Coast Salish Identity

Through the *Vagrancy Act,* I highlighted how Coast Salish people were restricted on how they could move about within their territory. This impacted the ways that Coast Salish people ensured the well-being of their family's survival by maintaining connection to their territories and also engaging in governance through ceremony. Coast Salish people were also denied the ability to support the physical, mental and spiritual health of their

family members through using legal force to medically institutionalize them. In 1914 a section of the *Indian Act* was amended allowing for the colonial government to apprehend, by force, patients thought to be sick if they were not accessing western forms of medicine (Meijer, 2012). During this time, it was made illegal for Indigenous people to practise their teachings and methods of healing and if any person within BC was found to be avoiding western treatment by a qualified physician they could be arrested and charged. A motivating factor for this law was the concern of the spread of infectious and communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and measles, which were exploding in communities throughout Canada at this time (Kelm, 1998).

The government was attempting to protect public health and at the same time denying the livelihood and health of Indigenous people within British Columbia. In Coast Salish territory this denial for access to their *snuw´uyulh* can be seen in stories shared by many survivors of the Indian hospital that was located within Snuneymuxw territory. Meijer claims that the government became fixated on, "healing bodies and harming living cultures and people through isolation and segregation," (2012, p.22). One step further, I believe this mandated health policy was less about 'harming' living cultures and more about the blatant desire to ensure the erasure of all that brings strength and life into these people. Here on the coast the strength of our people can be found in our *snuw´uyulh*.

Whether or not the state recognized the power of *snuw´uyulh*, this denial for Indigenous people to practice ancestral teachings regarding physical and spiritual health worked to reinforce western forms of medicine. This was another way in which colonial powers once again stripped Coast Salish people of their inherent right to live as *xwulmuxw*. Indian hospitals were one of the many tools used by the state in their attempt to dismantle

the foundation that *snuw´uyulh* provided. *Snuw´uyulh is* strength for Coast Salish governance systems and also ensures the health and well-being of a people. By denying Indigenous healing methods, practicing ancestral teachings and impacting the way that culture and language was transmitted the state was able to disrupt Coast Salish socio-political societies in an attempt to control them, their territory, and their governance structures.

Moving forward I will make connections between the Indian residential school system and the Indian hospitals, demonstrating how these institutions worked together to deny Coast Salish children their inherent right to language, culture and governance. While studying Indian Hospitals on Vancouver Island, you can hardly do so without coming across the name of Joan Morris, a Songhees woman who is a survivor of the horrific experiences in the Nanaimo Indian Hospital. Joan's mother also was a patient at these institutions. Joan has shared of her mother's experiences and how the Indian Hospital had severe impacts on her mother's ability to raise her, as a daughter, with love and strength that is rooted in Coast Salish societies. Looking back to the house pole that illustrates *si´em slheni´*(p.x) and the transmission of culture and governance through the female line, we can see how the separation of families through forced institutionalization in Indian Hospitals led to widespread trauma and a breakdown in parenting skills and teachings being handed down from mother to child. Also, thinking back to the stories shared by Haqweybuxw of Snuneymuxw Nation, Snuneymuxw women learned much of their role as *si´em slheni´* by watching and spending time with older women in their families. Joan's story reaffirms that institutions such as the Indian Hospital attempted to break down these

imperative pieces necessary for ensuring the translation of Coast Salish governance, language and culture to the younger ones.

In addition to her mother, Joan also spent four years in the Nanaimo Indian Hospital. She recounts all types of physical and sexual abuse, restricted movement, loneliness, mysterious injections, broken toes and the removal of a piece of her lung. Joan was between the ages of two to four when she was first taken to this hospital and then taken back at age five to seven. In 1953 she was to return 'home' but was instead brought by a small boat to the Kuper Island Residential School (Geddes, 2017).

In an interview with Gary Geddes, Joan shows photos of her mother before attending the Indian Hospital. She was described as healthy and full of life. After she was admitted, the photos show her bloated and sickly looking. Geddes describes Joan's mother from the pictures post-stay in the Indian Hospital as all the "confidence and youthful exuberance gone; and in their place a close-cropped woman with a puffy, unhealthy face and no light in her eyes," (2017, p.20). Joan's mother began to receive injections of some sort when she was first in the Indian Hospital. The description of her before and after shows that her health would not have called for medical care prior to the strange treatments.

It is stated by many Indigenous peoples here on the coast that the treatments in these hospitals were mysterious and painful and that many people received treatments yet often never showed symptoms of being sick. Some of these patients argue that while in these hospitals they were used as lab rats and were tested on by doctors and nurses. While there is no hard evidence, except for the word of the victims and patchy records of health complications that surfaced years after being released, their experiences demonstrate the

way that the health care system worked to control and contain their bodies in order to sever the connection to family, language and culture.

There are many accounts of these atrocities from Indigenous people from up and down Vancouver Island whose stories show similar situations of unnecessary medical interventions and subsequent health issues. However, there were some people who spent time in these hospitals in order to have actual medical issues tended to. While they faced loneliness, harsh restrictions and different levels of abuse, some did not have health complications afterward. But for the people and families of those that suffer today, the pain is difficult to erase and intergenerational trauma continues producing an intergenerational fear of the medical institutions in this province.

Nanaimo opened the doors of the Indian Hospital in 1946, operating with 210 beds, and closing 21 years later in 1967 (Lang, 2014). This building, previous to being a segregated hospital for treating Indigenous people, was used for the Department of National Defense after the Second World War and was located near present day Vancouver Island University. Today, the building itself has been demolished and only the remnants that remain are the sting of old memories for those that stayed in these hospitals as patients or family members. The haunting aftermath of these hospitals can be blamed for much of the fear that these ex-patients have with regards to doctors and the health care system currently. For many family members who had parents, siblings, cousins or friends stay in these hospitals, there was worry and fear and, similar to the residential school system, a deep longing for their missing family and community members. Geddes (2017) and Meijer (2012) both touch on how their interviewees spoke to the deep pain that was felt for family members who were in these terrible institutions. In Meijer's work, she spoke with the late

elder Kwulasulwut, whose English name was Ellen White, of the Snuneymuxw Nation. Kwulasulwut was raised with *snuw´uyulh* and was show how to work with local medicines and as a midwife. She was a highly respected *slheni´* along the south Coast, who carried and shared sacred teachings of the Coast Salish people.

Kwulasulwut shares a story about how she came to Snuneymuxw territory to marry after having been raised on Rice Island, which is located near the eastern part of Vancouver Island. Kwulasulwut held many ancestral teachings; she states that her Granny shared much with her about medicines and the old ways of the Coast Salish people (Meijer, 2012). She shared that Coast Salish medicine was still used in these hospitals alongside western forms of medicine but almost always in secret, sometimes because the nurses and doctors did not know that medicine and *snuw´uyulh* were actually being shared. This type of Indigenous resistance can be seen as one pillar in the foundation of strength that helped these people face the atrocious and drastic forms of treatment that they were being subjected to in segregation from the white population. However, when Kwulasulwut came to Snuneymuxw territory and practised the medicines of her ancestors, some people from the Snuneymuxw Nation poked fun at her, calling her "witchy." With colonialism hard at work and Western laws that endorsed only western medicines and forms of healing, we can see with this example that some of the minds of Coast Salish people began to be twisted, believing that Western forms of medicine may be the only welcome form of healing available to *all* folks living in Nanaimo B.C.

The newly enforced law led to the arrests of people who failed to utilize western medicine, yet another way in which the colonial state was attempting to strip power from coastal Indigenous people. Take for instance the way that Kwulasulwut stopped working

with Coast Salish medicines for some time because she was teased for practicing healing methods that her relatives shared with her (Meijer, 2012). Once again colonial powers were able to break through centuries old teachings and, within a few short decades, shift the way that coastal Indigenous folks healed themselves, sustained themselves and their families, and reinforced their governance and culture. Tied closely to this is how *si´em slheni´* was impacted in her role as mother, aunty or grandma and what that entailed to ensure that *snuw´uyulh* was being passed down and practiced by the younger ones to carry on for generations to come. Going out to engage the land and waters also included learning Hul'qumi'num words and phrases for plants and medicines and also cultural connections to the land that was harvested from. As children spent time in these hospitals, they never learned this *snuw´uyulh* or skills to raise children in their community as Coast Salish people. In other words, their life line to Coast Salish ways of life had been severed. Alongside issues that stem from the trauma and neglect they faced in these institutions; coastal Indigenous peoples were stripped of the core values of what it meant to be *xwulmuxw* while being forcibly confined to these institutions.

Maintaining Coast Salish Teachings of Healing in a Modern Day

Nevertheless, in present day, we still see people harvesting and practicing ancestral teachings with regards to medicine work. Further, we see increasing numbers of Indigenous people taking back their rights to harvest and practice Coast Salish forms of healing through medicine. This is not to say that harvesting and using traditional medicine ever fully stopped. Indeed, many coastal people resisted colonial law and continued to care for their communities in the way that ancestors showed. However, the combined impacts of

western medicine, being kept away from traditional harvesting sites, and being forced into institutions such as the Indian Hospitals disrupted the way in which coast peoples could maintain knowledge about local medicines and ancestral healing methods as they once had. Next, I hold up the ongoing work of several women who are working to revitalize and reclaim these practices.

Sahiltineye harvests medicine throughout the year and shares her harvest with our family. She has shared the teachings she has learned regarding safe plants to use and the many medicinal values that we can find all around us if we are just to look. These teachings come from her grannies and she fondly shares memories with me as we walk in the forest looking for medicine to pull from the ground. Sahiltineye also takes my daughters to harvest as well. She works to pass down teachings to the generations below her to ensure that her role as *slheni´* (working to ensure that our culture and teachings are carried) related to harvesting, plants and the land that is around us is always shared.

PEPAKIYE of the W̱JOŁEŁP Nation is another beautiful example of a sovereign Coast Salish woman taking back her right to harvest and practice healing with local coastal medicines and plants. PEPAKIYE works with the PEPÁḴEṈ HÁUTW̱ Nursery Program, supporting youth of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nation by teaching them how to care for native local plants and how to use local medicines while also connecting land to the SENCTOEN language. In an interview with the United Way PEPAKIYE states, “Some of our children are living in poverty and can’t afford medicines, so to know I can teach them how to go to a maple tree and harvest T̲ESIP, and heal their sore throat makes everything I’ve gone through worthwhile,” (United Way, 2019). PEPAKIYE is just one of many Coast Salish

people reclaiming their harvesting and ancestral teachings with regards to healing through the land and through ancestors.

Opposite to healing, many coastal Indigenous people still carry fear and mistrust for the health care systems in British Columbia. These fears are also passed down intergenerationally and impact the way that Indigenous people choose to seek support for ailments or injuries. Not only is there fear regarding the institutions themselves but there is also a fear of being subject to racism and hatred in these spaces. These negative experiences are not new to Indigenous people seeking medical attention in hospitals or with doctors. In July 2020, BC Provincial Health Minister Adrian Dix announced the investigation into allegations of hospital staff throughout BC's emergency rooms that were playing games to guess the blood alcohol level of Indigenous patients who came in for medical support. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond was assigned as chief investigator to look into whether racism is prevalent within BC's health-care system and to release a public report on the findings. Soon after she was assigned this task, she stated that the investigation was not trying to determine whether racism was a part of this system but rather that she is well aware that it does in fact exist within these institutions (Ghoussoub, 2020). The foundations of the western health-care systems in B.C. in the early 20th century were formed on the racist ideology that coastal Indigenous medicines were not efficient and legal action was taken to ensure that all Indigenous people in Canada would be forced to undergo colonial treatments or be prescribed foreign medications.

Fast forward one-hundred years and these forced foreign medical treatments are not so foreign to many Indigenous folks today. However, the fear that has been instilled for many is always forefront of many people's minds. T´uwahwiye´ of the Quw'utsun Nation

speaks to the imperative need for coastal Indigenous people to return to their old ways in all aspects of life and to find ways to incorporate these teachings into our daily worlds. These teachings include taking up culture, language, harvesting and fishing. T´uwahwiye´ states that, “We need to look back to what our value and teachings are and then start to use them in our present day as Coast Salish people,” (Personal communication, 2019). This includes reinforcing Coast Salish governance to combat all the pressures of assimilation and erasure that the colonial state has imposed on our people by constantly opposing the most precious governance structures that our ancestors have passed down to us, *snuw´uyulh*.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have come to understand how the *Vagrancy Act* and Western medical institutions have impacted Coast Salish people and also displaced the roles that Coast Salish women had within their communities prior to European settlement in Snuneymuxw territory. Women’s bodies were criminalized, pathologized, institutionalized and their mobility limited through colonial law. These laws were justified through racist ideas about Indigenous womanhood, not only were they sexualized but their healing methods were deemed heathen or backward. Together, these laws worked to keep *si’em slheni´* from travelling to other nations to uphold ceremony and governance, to engage the land around them and to transmit vital aspects of culture and languages, especially with regards to Indigenous healing and wellness. The control over Indigenous women’s bodies was one way that colonial control secured itself within Coast Salish territories and impacted coastal nations.

The speed at which colonialism occurred and the lack of control that Indigenous people in western Canada had over this contributes to the spiraling of Coast Salish *snuw´uyulh* on a larger scale and loss of Indigenous control over much of their homelands. However, despite all the interconnected colonial forces embedded in violence and erasure, *si´em slheni´* persist and their relationship to land, to political authority and governance structures lives on throughout all of our communities.

Overall, this chapter has highlighted that throughout British Columbia's development as a province within Canada there have been imposed laws and racist ideologies based in Western medicine that made it illegal for *xwulmuxw* and to practice ancient Coast Salish teachings and stay connected daily to language, culture and governance. We can see how institutions such as the Indian Hospitals have impacted the way that Indigenous knowledge was transferred by way of language and cultural transmission. Through denying the practice of *snuw´uyulh* and traditional medicine use alongside an attempt to break the ways that Coast Salish people learn their roles within community by watching, learning and engaging, colonization persisted. All of these experiences are directly connected to expressions of settler colonialism that bear down on Coast Salish women as part of the attempt to disposes their authority in order to establish themselves on Vancouver Island, all while denying the roles that *si´em slheni´* have held within their nations for thousands of years.

This chapter has also highlighted how Coast Salish bodies and minds have been controlled and institutionalized and therefore has created a dependence on capitalism as we have been forced away from our socio-political structures. Our *snuw´uyulh* encourages power in agency and choice and in turn encourages wellness in both physical and mental

health. The state imposed control over how Coast Salish people and especially women could practise governance in order to ensure the health and wellness of their community. By restricting *slheni´* from travelling throughout her territories or by prohibiting *slheni´* to practise medicine and healing the state also worked to deny *si´em slheni´* of her inherent right and strip away her authority. These were ways that contributed to the push towards engaging in western forms of capitalism as their ancestral rights to holding one another up were made illegal. The next chapter will discuss how the introduction to capitalism has impacted *slheni´* leaning on the argument made by my relatives that our women tend to be overworked and face burnout.

Chapter Three: Overworked and Underpaid: Control and Capitalism

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the interconnected colonial strategies used to control Coast Salish bodies and minds as we have been forced away from our socio-political structures of governance by restricting the transmission of culture and language. This in turn has resulted in a dependence, for many coastal Indigenous folks, on capitalism. In this chapter, I discuss another piece of colonial legislation that also substantially impacted coastal Indigenous people on Vancouver Island, connecting this legislation back to the racist ideologies and legislation underlying the colonial settlement of Coast Salish territories. In 1885, the *Indian Act* was amended to include the Potlatch Ban. Essentially this legislation made it illegal for Coast Salish people to govern themselves. The word similar to that of potlatch in Hul'qumi'num is stl*unuq*. The *stlunuq* is the basis of our governing system – a system in which economic, governance, spiritual/cultural and daily practices are all interwoven. During *stlunuq* we engage important and cultural work that relies on our teachings and governance to ensure we are following protocol of our ancestors. Not only were Coast Salish people impacted, all Indigenous people who practised forms of potlatching, and even Indigenous people living further east for those who engage the Sundance, were criminalized for engaging with their governance structures. In this chapter, I will illustrate the direct impact that this ban had on Coast Salish people.

The content of this chapter will be guided by my relatives' narratives and their critiques of colonization which are used to define the impacts of capitalism on Coast Salish communities. After discussing the Potlatch Ban, I will then engage with my relatives'

stories to draw out key distinctions between capitalist production versus Coast Salish economies and ways of working. A common thread when sitting and listening to my relatives was the recognition that many of them tend to be overworked and face burnout at extreme rates. This western insistence on one way (and that one way is colonial and capitalist) has fractured Coast Salish people's socio-economies where everyone is cared for and forced Coast Salish women into participation in a labor economy. The colonial state has worked to control Coast Salish economy through: legislation such the Potlatch Ban, by forcing a shift away from Indigenous centered economies; by domination and violence over land; and through creating dependence on the waged labour market. All of these factors have led to a shift away from our economies premised on relationship and reciprocity and at times has forced Coast Salish women to the brink of exhaustion.

As discussed, prior to contact Coast Salish women held powerful positions within their socio-political economies. Kuokkanen (2011) argues that within Indigenous communities' women contribute to both family and community survival in crucial ways, while caring for the environment and resources along with ensuring access to food. She argues that in addition to those roles, Indigenous women also focus on the health and healing of their families (Kuokkanen, 2011). I will use Kuokkanen's argument as a framework to highlight the importance of Coast Salish women related to Salish economy. We shall come to see how these women have been and remain essential to the functioning of our societies. However, I will extend Kuokkanen's argument to illustrate how Coast Salish women are not only crucial for the survival of family, community and land/resource management, but also how these women are imperative for functioning governance structures and socio-economic systems to operate efficiently for their people.

Potlatch Ban 1885

On January 1st, 1885 the colonial government in British Columbia banned all potlatch ceremonies throughout the west coast. The Department of Indian Affairs superintendent I.W. Powell and missionaries alike argued that there could be "no progress in civilization" while potlatches still functioned on the west coast (Lutz, p.94). Missionaries related these ceremonies to that of heathenism and witchcraft and argued that these events needed to be contained by colonial law. The ultimate goal of the anti-potlach law was to enforce assimilation into western society by attacking the heart of their socio-political governance structures. Lutz argues that by banning the potlatch, settlers were banning Indigenous economies as well as hereditary ownership of key resources and territory (Lutz, 2008). Even further, and with deeper connection to the *stlunuq*, is a spiritual tie that connects Coast Salish peoples to ancestral laws and the maintenance of their societal roles alongside governance systems, culture and relationships. There is no separation between the economic, governance, spiritual/cultural and daily practices for the Coast Salish people. These systems are intricately entwined and by way of ceremony or *stlunuq*, these systems are reinforced, embodied and maintained for generations to come.

Stlunuq then, for Coast Salish peoples, consists of more than economical and territorial maintenance. It also promotes *kw'um kw'am tun shqweluwun*, translated roughly in English to "make your mind strong while coming together to do important work," (White, 2001). Coast Salish women, alongside other members of their families, play valuable roles in developing Coast Salish communities while engaging these laws and ceremony. As seen in the introduction of this paper and the illustration of the house pole at

the Songhees Wellness Center, many sacred ceremonial pieces are passed down through the matrilineal line along with century old songs that hold teachings and laws for Coast Salish people. *Stlunuq* and ceremonies are held to ensure that these pieces are formally passed along to younger generations. The roles that are passed along in these ceremonies are also to be engaged and respected outside of the Bighouse and enacted in everyday life. *Uy' shqweluwun,* translated to English means to act with good heart and mind, one is ensuring the survival of Coast Salish law. Law to Coast Salish peoples is not only carried as a formality but our laws are meant to flow through us daily as we carry ourselves in this world. In western terms, it can be somewhat described as maintaining a strong sense of morals or maintaining a legal consciousness—these are our laws, these are our teachings from long ago.

Stlunuq are also a time that our governance systems are highly enforced. During this time sacred work occurs and Coast Salish people come together to engage laws and governance with one another. There are different types of work that engage Coast Salish *snuw´uyulh* and they happen in forms of naming ceremonies, deaths, mask dances, among other sacred practices. However, no matter the sacred work that is happening, you must work together with your relatives with *nuts´umat shqweluwun* – to come together with one heart and mind and working together, looking after one another and reaching out to others (Manson, 2018). In this way we are honouring our ancestors along with family ties to the work being done. For every *stlunuq* that happens, there are ancestral teachings and laws that come into play that are associated with the particular cultural work being done and these laws have been passed down from generation to generation. Not only do they create a seamless and successful process for the work in progress, but they also teach those

engaged in this work the foundations of what it means to be *xwulmuxw*. Thus, while engaging in ceremony, we engage our laws, our teachings, spirituality and our culture. This intricate web of governance and culture are what guides Coast Salish people. Year round our people prepare for such events and reinforce our inherent connection to our territories and the power that we have within our homelands. Most importantly, each person's role is specific to the knowledge they carry, their name, and their ancestral and familial connections.

Morales (2017), a legal scholar from the Quw'utsun Nation, illustrates that long before the Europeans arrived to Coast Salish territories, our ancestors had developed systems of social, political and spiritual customs to guide interactions and relationships with all forms of life. She states that these customs naturally developed into systems of Coast Salish laws and that they are still highly functioning today. As mentioned prior, with regards to *stlunuq*, these laws are displayed in any sort of sacred work that occurs for Coast Salish people. Morality and law within Coast Salish life are interchangeable (Morales, 2017). Our *snuw´uyulh* teaches us that to live a good life, we must follow our laws that promote the good for our people as a whole, the earth, our ancestors and children. Therefore, *snuw´uyulh* enforces governance and law through ancestral teachings, but these teachings also ensure that folks are living a wholesome life that is guided by our laws. These laws enable folks live in a way that promotes the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of our people.

Ancestral laws are foundational in the cultural work that is engaged in our *stlunuq*. White (2000) describes the Bighouse as being not only meant as a space where ceremonies are held, but also a place that we go to represent our family, relatives and ancestors along

with a place that we come together to represent all of the most important aspects of Coast Salish socio-political communities. In these spaces, we connect with our history, our present and future, and we commit to carry on the good work for our children yet to come. By understanding the importance of sacred work, we can better understand why this governance system was targeted by agents of the Settler state, with focus on the disruption of Coast Salish women's roles related to these spiritual and governing institutions.

The introduction of this thesis discusses a house pole located on the Songhees reserve that illustrates the invaluable positions that Coast Salish women hold in relation to their culture and governance. Much of the sacred cultural pieces linked to our governance structures, such as masks or particular songs, are passed through the matrilineal line and, therefore, the role that *slheni´* have in passing down ancestral teachings and history to families is imperative to Coast Salish governing structures. The banning of *stlunuq* within Coast Salish territory then was to deny and ban *si´em slheni´* from engaging her inherent and ancestral right to maintain her matrilineal position, preventing the passing of cultural knowledge, ancestral land rights and belongings to her relatives. This interfered in her ability to foster the growth of Coast Salish communities founded on *snuw´uyulh.* Therefore, women's roles in governance were also connected to maintaining their economy as the *stlunuq* is one important aspect connected to Coast Salish economies.

The denial for Coast Salish people to practise their governance and culture by way of the Potlatch Ban also denied Coast Salish women their inherent right to leadership roles in their economies and governance structures. As we will see later in this chapter, tied to the *stlunuq* and ceremony were the rights to lands and to manage economic systems such as the camas fields, also known as *kwetlal* fields. The camas bulb was an important piece

to Coast Salish economy and ownership and responsibly of these fields was passed on through the female line by way of *stlunuq.* These potlaches were used to make announcements of ownership of land or permission to harvest from particular sites. This is just one way that the Potlatch Ban impacted the way that women engaged their economic positions within their societies. The connection that *stlunuq* have to the maintenance of Coast Salish governance is so closely knit that it can barely be distinguished as any different. More than just cultural governance structures, Thom (2005) illustrates how territories formed networks of trade, defense, kin, ritual, and sport among the Coast Salish people. Because of women's roles in community, there was also focus on breaking that power, as the state attempts to break what is most threatening to their colonial project, the heart of what holds Coast Salish people together – *si´em slheni´*. *Coast Salish women* represent to the state Indigenous reproduction through both the birth of nation members and economic reproduction meant to maintain the survival of Coast Salish governance.

Capitalism & Economy vs Coast Salish Economy

Qwul'sih'yah'maht, Robina Thomas, from the Lyackson Nation (2018), affirms that women's informal leadership roles within their nations are foundational to the well-being of Coast Salish communities. Yet Qwul'sih'yah'maht demonstrates that these roles are often overlooked within the academic literature regarding colonization of Indigenous womanhood. Qwul'sih'yah'maht conducted many interviews with Coast Salish women to best understand the roles that women played and continue to play in our communities to bring strength and cohesion to the functioning of Salish governance and society as the foundation for our economies.

Sarah Modeste, a Quw'utsun elder, shared with Qwul'sih'yah'maht, "In our culture the women, from the beginning right from the time they are born are trained to be a leader," (2018, p 42). Coast Salish women continue to carry ancestral teachings, holding space and having a strong voice for young ones, passing on language. These women carry ancestral teachings of *snuw´uyulh*. They continue to hold space and a strong voice for younger generations. These women carry on language, weaving and harvesting which encourages ancestral teachings and continued growth. They continue to hold up family, community and their nations no matter the circumstances and hold fast to the teachings they have received from the ones before them.

Likewise, Haqweybuxw (Personal Communication, 2019) of the Snuneymuxw Nation shared memories of her upbringing as a Coast Salish woman and the teachings that were passed down for generations by her aunties, mother, father, and other family members. Haqweybuxw recalls that women in community were always meant to lead by example. She understood that one of her roles as a child was to watch the older women in her family and community and recalls that this was how she learned what it meant to be a Snuneymuxw *slheni´*. She understood what it was that she needed to give to her family and community by learning from the females in her life in order to support the well-being of her whole community. Haqweybuxw exudes these teachings every day to the highest form. I have been blessed to have her as an Aunty. I too look to her guidance whenever I am with her. Watching her at a community gathering or just being able to sit and visit with her, I am always learning ways that I should be acting as Snuneymuxw *slheni´* as too are my two daughters. Haqweybuxw recalls her mother teaching her that above all, she should always share love within community and that the leadership in community should also

bring these values of love to life, providing a trickle-down effect for all those in Snuneymuxw to gain from.

Drawing on the teachings regarding love, this chapter will highlight the contrast of western and Indigenous values with focus on capitalist economies and Indigenous subsistence economies, emphasizing the differing values that underpin these economic systems. Understanding a woman's role in the economic systems of both Coast Salish and European systems will aide in understanding the displacement that women face due to colonial settlement and the entrenchment of foreign institutions alongside other colonial processes that have impacted Coast Salish people.

For instance, the term value in a Western context, is connected to capital through production and financial gain for the sole benefit of an owner or producer. Value, in a Coast Salish system of economy is understood in relationship to all living things within the nations territories and the beings that the nation has stewardship over. As discussed by Haqweybuxw, another understanding of value for Coast Salish communities is rooted in love. Therefore, we can see that relationship and love are important pieces to the socio-political and economic systems of the Coast Salish people (Personal Communication, 2019). When there is love, there is value placed on everyone and the desire to deepen and grow relationships of all ages and genders in community. When there is love there is also an inherent drive to support everyone within the community to be sure that not only a select few individuals benefit from the success or riches of a harvest, trade, or a gathering. I therefore understand the love of women leaders to be a foundation of Coast Salish laws and governance. Consequently, by imposing a Settler economy, Coast Salish values came

to be replaced by European values, thereby disconnecting Indigenous women's love and leadership from Coast Salish economic and governing systems.

The Coast Salish economy has strict ties to land and spirituality which ultimately guide Coast Salish governance and leadership. As I describe below, settlement in Coast Salish territories brought new worldviews and systems of economy to Indigenous territories. Western values of capitalism operate in an entirely different worldview, where there is a required dependence on physical labor and resource extraction. The shift from Coast Salish control over Coast Salish economies and subsequent forced impoverishment via engagement with a foreign system of capitalism immensely impacted the role that *si´em slheni´* had for her people.

Sto:lo Nation member Lee Maracle states Coast Salish women maintained and orchestrated the survival of their nations by way of managing goods and resources used for sustenance (as quoted by Anderson, 2000). This important role of resource management can be recognized as one of the lifelines to the survival of not only their nation but hundreds of thousands of coastal Indigenous people, providing these women powerful positions within their nations. For coastal Indigenous people, resource management means to maintain a balance within the world—a definition that is entirely distinct from capitalist ideas of resource use. Rather than over extraction of natural resources for personal profit, Coast Salish protocols are followed when harvesting or hunting for goods. These laws and protocols ensure the sustenance of communities while guaranteeing that the animal or ecosystem being harvested is taken only on an as-needed basis, preventing the over-use or over-extraction of resources.

In contrast, the impulse behind European expansion and settlement was driven by individually focused capitalist desire to obtain land, profit, and jobs. Settlers travelled to Coast Salish territory on three-month long steamship passages and sailed with the promise that everyone on board would experience personal gain and wealth. Many young couples arrived in these lands with the hope to find a better life while leaving behind a daily struggle, dangerous working conditions, and poverty in Northeastern England as coal mine towns had been established throughout that area but were drying up (Nicholls, 1992). These ships carried people from many different stratospheres of European society-some Scottish settlers, others were from higher class English families, some Welsh and others were poor miners from deserted coal mines. Historian Peggy Nicholls, in her account of the first Nanaimo settler families, provides a vivid illustration of those who travelled from England to begin their new life in the late 19th century.

Many young miners who sailed to the west coast of Canada with their wives were promised a secure job and small parcels of land if they met a certain level of coal extraction, this promise was based on the settler desire to establish a substantial settlement on Vancouver Island. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) had very recently been handed the Island from the Crown and among monetary cost, the only promise the HBC had to make to the Crown was that they would focus on settling and enticing colonists to populate the newly found land (Peterson, 2002). Little regard was shown to the Indigenous women who lived in Snuneymuxw territory. The HBC worked to populate B.C. with Settler workers and coal miners who worked to displace Indigenous women and their authority over these lands. As will be illustrated next, the introduction of patriarchal family structures was also

introduced which worked to erase the influence and authority that Indigenous women had with regards to their economies by way of harvesting and resources management.

Lutz (2008) illustrates one way that Coast Salish people's sociopolitical way of life was impacted by highlighting the difference between Coast Salish and European understandings of land and ownership. Coast Salish people maintained physical and spiritual connections to land where ideas of ownership did not sit with individuals in the form of monetary payment as was familiar to western settlers. Instead, as mentioned, land and resources were inherited through familial ties or marriage and the maintenance of land and its resources were harvested and trades and contributions were made to the community rather than to individuals. In contrast to Coast Salish economy, capitalism largely focusses on resource accumulation and labor extraction. Lutz (2008) illustrates how Coast Salish economy relied on accumulation for distribution amongst the community to provide socio-political stability. We can see this in the economy of the *stlunuq* where the family who was hosting this event was sure that gifts were given to those that took the time to witness and physically support the cultural or spiritual work that was happening for their family. Accumulation of goods and resources for Settlers meant redistribution, but not given away for the betterment of the community, rather there was focus on extraction and sale for personal profit and gain.

In contrast to European norms of patriarchy, Coast Salish Nations operated in such a way that women contributed vastly to their economies, land management and governance systems for their nations. Take for instance the role that women had with maintaining the *kwetlal* or camas bulb food systems. The *kwetlal* was a staple to the coastal people's diet. This diverse ecosystem on Vancouver Island sustained Coast Salish peoples providing the

camas bulb as one of the nutritious resources they consumed. This bulb contains a high source of carbohydrates and protein and due to its dietary health factors, it was a backbone to coastal Indigenous people's economic systems. The camas bulb was traded up and down the coast and it was Coast Salish women who managed this food production (Corntassle & Bryce 2012).

However, upon contact and with the implementation of racist ideologies and colonial policies coastal Indigenous womanhood was attacked. Beckwith states that these fields allowed for the function of Coast Salish economies by producing a resource that would enable, "complex management activities and social systems of production, preservation, exchange and redistribution," (2004, p204). Proctor (2013) argues that there were numerous ways that the camas fields were impacted by colonization, these were due to: economic changes, land appropriation and cultural repression, alongside ecological degradation. By way of colonial policies and actions such as the Potlatch Ban along with the creation of the reserve system, Coast Salish women witnessed the destruction of the economy that camas fields provided and therefore a removal from their powerful positions as the managers of that economy.

With settlement occurring at rapid rates in Coast Salish territory during the late 19th century and into the 20th century, Coast Salish women faced displacement and disruption from their roles as *si´em slheni´* and as managers of a vast economic system such as the camas fields. For instance, Songhees nation member Cheryl Bryce (2012) argues that colonial settlement in Lekwungen (Victoria B.C.) territory impacted the camas fields drastically. Due to white encroachment on Lekwungen ancestral territories and with the vast expansion of Fort Victoria areas that Coast Salish people had designated for space

meant for camas harvesting along with the introduction of western forms of food and trade the camas food systems rapidly deteriorated.

As discussed above in relation to *kwetlal* fields, Coast Salish economies were based on resource harvesting for communities and for trade and engaged in spiritual connections to land and other beings alongside political connection to territory and neighboring nations. Sto:lo scholar Lee Maracle (2006) states that Coast Salish systems of governance and economy always included the voices of all those that belonged to the community, no matter how young. She states that Indigenous women had command of the economy and the governance of the relationship among the citizens of the nations. She refers to women as the, "great sociological governesses" that held jurisdiction over land and families (Maracle, p32). Coast Salish women foster ancestral teachings when working the economy, recognizing that taking more than what is needed for their community was not only wasteful but also dangerous. Still today, there is an understanding about allowing life to replenish itself whether that is for fishing, shellfish, or harvesting medicines. The teaching to only take what you need is still shared today and following this protocol ensures the community future harvests and seasons. Therefore, Coast Salish economies were not driven by resource extraction for mass production or desecration of territory for personal gain, rather Coast Salish economies encompassed Indigenous women taking charge of the communal realm and ensuring the communities had what they needed to survive.

Coast Salish economy was premised on trade for goods and intake for the community, with spiritual and relational principles governing individual roles. When Snuneymuxw people hunt or harvest medicinal plants they are taught to always leave behind a gift to acknowledge the plant, the tree, or the animal to show respect and to thank

that life form for sharing with us. These teachings ensure that our connection remains strong to all other life that resides within our territories and operate in direct contrast to Western forms of economy with focus on exploitation of land, resources and people. For instance, cedar, an important lifeline for Coast Salish people, is stripped from trees and Indigenous people connect with the life being of this tree to be sure that the cedar tree can share that bark. Sahiltiniye of the Snuneymuxw Nation explains that before you strip the bark or take any boughs from the cedar tree you first introduce yourself to the tree in your ancestral language. Once you have introduced yourself you then connect to the tree asking permission to take some bark. This engagement and connection with the cedar tree is not to be mistaken for the romanticized understandings of Indigenous peoples 'being one with nature.' Rather, it is a way that Coast Salish people engage their economic relationship to the earth in understanding that the land and waters will provide for us so long as we maintain respect for all living things. In other words, so long as people do not over extract and become the reason for the extinction of specific beings and resources within certain territories, we will be able to harvest to provide for our children and old ones for generations to come.

Fishing and hunting are also premised on the same teachings; you are to take what you need for you, your family, or community and leave the rest. Although today most forms of hunting have changed and we see that many Indigenous hunters use modern items like rifles, trucks, and pit lamps, we still know that they operate with the ancestral teachings as the foundation of their hunt as they enter into the mountains. An example of this is in 1965 the *R V. White and Bob* case was a legal court battle between Snuneymuxw Nation Member Clifford White and Snaw-naw-as member, David Bob. These two men along with their

nephews were hunting for deer and had six blacktails in their truck. As they drove back to their community, they were pulled over by a Gaming Officer and were arrested for hunting out of season. They were questioned as to why they had six deer in their vehicle and the men replied that they were hunting to provide for those in need from their nations. This arrest set off a legal court battle that was eventually won by White and Bob, recognizing the hunting rights that were assured in the 1854 Douglas Treaty. The point here is not an attempt to understand state sanctioned Indigenous rights through the Douglas Treaty, but rather to illustrate that Coast Salish men were maintaining ancestral teachings by taking six lives from the deer to help provide for those in need in their communities.

Taking care, building relationships and uplifting one another are foundational to Coast Salish laws. We can see these core values in the two examples shared regarding cedar harvesting and hunting and can understand that Coast Salish economies are based on relationship of care as opposed to western economies based on extraction and depletion. In the case of the Coast Salish hunters, they were not taking six deer for themselves out of greed, but rather, they were bringing sustenance to their communities that faced high levels of poverty due to colonial expansion and the imposition of western economic systems that outright denied many Indigenous peoples. Not only were Indigenous peoples denied opportunities because they had been suppressed within their territory and not welcomed into the new systems of capitalist expansion, these racist systems of capitalism also operate in direct contrast to Coast Salish institutions of economies and ancestral teachings of maintaining subsistence economies.

Kwulasultun, Doug White III of the Snuneymuxw Nation (2015), speaks to the vibrant cultural literacy that still functions within Coast Salish communities today. These

actions do not coincide with Western forms of capitalism and economy because the demand for large scale extraction and production do not allow for the relationships to be built with each tree, coal mine, or life in the ocean. This form of relationship based economy produces little economic gain and therefore is ignored as part of the process in their extraction methods because it is not conducive with the capitalist economy.

Settlement broke down powerful positions held by *si´em slheni´* by settling over these fields and dispossessing the women of their right to maintain these economic systems. Forcing Coast Salish women away from management positions within this economy was one powerful way that the state subjected coastal Indigenous peoples to the oppressive forms of state governance regimes. I view this as an expression of the *colonialscape:* by creating settler towns over camas fields and simultaneously confining Coast Salish people to reserves, Coast Salish women were removed from their socio-economic positions no longer being able to maintain the fields for their communities. In this way, laws related to harvesting, Coast Salish economy and relationships were made void and the once powerful *slheni´* was subjugated to a new system of economy based on resource extraction, property ownership based on individualism and profit alongside the norms of patriarchy which made little room for her authority.

Today, Coast Salish women's movement on the land can be seen as acts of political endeavors with the survival of Coast Salish people always at their heart. Illustrated throughout this thesis is the argument that recognition of Coast Salish *slheni´* are imperative for the function of Coast Salish governance and society. It is important to note, that as I illustrate how colonization has worked to displace *si´em slheni´*, that we also think of ways to reposition Coast Salish women within their ancestral governance structures. By

doing so, we are continuing to re-center Coast Salish women in their foundational roles of governance. Centering Indigenous women naturally means to include the voice of these women in all areas of resurgence. This adherence to a territorial approach, while centering Coast Salish governance within Coast Salish territory works to reassert Coast Salish women's authority. This territorial approach needs to be taken up by: Coast Salish people, by the state and by other Indigenous people who are visiting these territories, in order to produce ways that truly bring about change and liberation for coastal Indigenous communities.

(i) Domination & Violence on Land & ***Si´em Slheni´***

In 1827 the HBC founded two trading forts, one in Fort Langley on the Fraser River and one in Fort Victoria in 1843. Fort Langley was located near a Snuneymuxw summer village site near Barnstone Island on the Fraser River, and Peterson states that before long, the Snuneymuxw were trading furs and fish for blankets and other European goods with the HBC. By December 1854, and with the signing of the Douglas Treaty, a 'true' community of White families had begun in Nanaimo (Norcross, 1979). A turnover in control of the lands, and therefore the economy and governance structures, allowed for White domination over Indigenous territory. Coast Salish forms of governance, such as *stlunuq* and ceremony, were soon to be illegal and these people would be forced to practice and maintain these values deep underground.

This section will highlight the ways that Coast Salish women have been displaced and removed from prominent roles in coastal socio-economic realms due to colonization through the domestication of the waged and unwaged economies of these communities. Today, rather than centering Coast Salish teachings and governance there are times that

slheni´ must struggle to find balance between both worlds: the colonial waged economy and also their inherent responsibility to their family and community (which will be labelled here as 'unwaged' economy). Communities have been exposed to hetero-patriarchy and therefore gender-based violence is one of the guiding factors for capitalism in colonized territories in all its forms. For instance, young Settler men and families came to benefit from the lands of the Coast Salish people with no focus on redistributing the wealth amongst the local Indigenous people. Instead, the Indigenous people were pushed to the outskirts and offered menial labor jobs and paid in the form of tickets to trade for goods at the shops in Victoria, rather than being offered payment in the form of currency (Norcross, 1979).

Most European settlers in Nanaimo B.C. also committed to creating and maintaining capitalist economies grounded in patriarchy, individualism, private property and ownership for profit. By 1914 and within three decades of Nanaimo establishing itself as a city, the population within Snuneymuxw territory was almost ten-fold and forms of Western capitalism had established strong footings within Coast Salish territories. By the early 20th century, the population in Nanaimo consisted largely of coal miners, loggers and their families had created a community based in European values and morals. The miners and loggers were a product of the western economic system that focussed on labour production and resource extraction. However, as we have learned and prior to contact, Coast Salish economies were premised on elements such as relationship, stewardship and the important role that *si´em slheni´* played maintaining aspects of the economy. The disruption of the role of *si´em slheni´* impacted Coast Salish economic structures but also the way disruptions would have had on communities on a social level.

Coast Salish people were brought into the developing economy to exploit their labor, but they were not acknowledged as having agency as people to decide what their payment would be spent on (Norcross, 1979). Rather, they were restricted to being paid in tickets meant for purchasing European goods in order to aid in their assimilation, and enable reliance on daily items such as tools or cookware that would further place a divide on their Coast Salish way of life. The coercive involvement of Indigenous people to western economic systems still occurs today. We can recognize the young settler families moving to Snuneymuxw territory and other Indigenous territories across the coast as the precursor to the 20th century explosion of man camps and oil patches related to widespread industrial exploitation of Indigenous homelands.

These camps are heavily populated with men and the violence of resource extraction, unfortunately not only is the land impacted by the need to extract and dominate territory. We can see that the violence against women and especially Indigenous women living close to these oil patches is extremely high. The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) illustrates the connections between violence, Indigenous people's bodies, territories and colonization (NYSHN, 2014). Since the beginning of colonization Indigenous peoples and their lands have been impacted by violent acts. The NYSHN argue that the shift from a culture of consent and valuing folks of all genders is now entrenched by, "colonial governance systems in Indigenous communities, by patriarchal and paternalistic solutions…and by intense invasion of their lands and bodies themselves, (2014, p16). Within Coast Salish territory there has not been the introduction of man camps related to oil fields, rather we have seen this colonial violence enacted through logging within Coast Salish territories, hydroelectric projects, mills situated on ocean beds, and the

building and expansion of roads and railways through Coast Salish lands. This onset of territorial destruction within Coast Salish territory can be closely linked to the violence that Coast Salish women face today. Violence on land and bodies is very much one of the anchors to capitalism.

Understanding the connection that colonialism, hetero-patriarchy and capitalism all have on these types of situations, we can compare the settlements in Indigenous territories to the expansion of capitalism today, nothing has changed and these danger zones for Indigenous peoples still exist. Alongside this physical violence, we can see in the examples shared that there has been a shift away from the roles that *si´em slheni´* had within Coast Salish economies to that of capitalism which is embedded in patriarchy and expansion. This has not only impacted coastal Indigenous women but also Coast Salish economies that are founded on teachings of the *stlunuq* and upholding one another, stewardship and relationships and therefore Coast Salish nations as a whole.

Kuokkanen (2011) illustrates how Indigenous peoples developed a vast array of systems to govern themselves making use of natural resources establishing what is known as subsistence economies which she argues are economic and social systems that exist and are inseparable from one another. Although Kuokkanen speaks to the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples on a broader level this chapter speaks to these issues on a local Coast Salish level so that we may best understand how *si´em slheni´* has been impacted due to colonization in her homelands and on Coast Salish governance structures.

Kuokkanen's definition of a subsistence economy along with her analysis of capitalism is helpful to set this frame. She states that subsistence economies are characterized by an endless circulation of goods, services and other production and that

this system encompasses social, cultural, economic and spiritual dimensions for nations and communities. Kuokkanen argues that colonization has impacted the ability for Indigenous economies to operate as they once did and this shift has led to intense colonial governance structures. These are largely founded on that of global capitalism such as economic development from mass resource extraction and land privatization which are all premised in ideologies that run in direct contrast to Coast Salish economic systems. Kuokkanen also argues that globally the war against subsistence economies also represents a war on women and their, "economic, political and social autonomy in society," (2011, p223). I will illustrate how this war on Coast Salish women and their roles in the Coast Salish economy has impacted their economic, political and social autonomy within their nations and show what this has meant for their communities.

Despite efforts to suppress the values underpinning Coast Salish economies, *si´em slhunlhéni´* (women) role in teaching and sharing about Coast Salish culture is one that women continue to be born into and reared up to be even today. During our interview, T´uwahwiye´(2019), spoke to the ways that the women in community are to sit with and get to know the children whom are born into families of the community. They are to watch and learn what gifts these small ones are carrying and then encourage them to foster their gifts so that they may share them with all those in the village along with making contributions to the nations flourishing economy. For instance, if a child is showing strengths with regards to hunting, weaving or harvesting the are encouraged to continue developing on that skill. Here we can see the role that women play in supporting the function of Salish economies, as they spend time with young ones to understand their strengths, they find what gift they can share with the nation in the form of hunting,

harvesting, or creating (weaving or building canoes). As such, the women in Coast Salish communities encouraged and fostered these skills needed in young ones in order to maintain their communities' economies to strengthen the nation as a whole.

Therefore, we can understand how the disruption from the forced introduction of capitalism impacted a prominent role the Coast Salish women had, promoting the maintenance of their economies by engaging the young and encouraging their participation in their nation's economy to ensure the well-being of their people. Not only did women play vital roles in supporting those around them to foster skills that would contribute to a strong economy, they also played imperative roles in the larger economy and the production and trade of staple resources. A shift for Coast Salish *slheni´* from the powerful positions within their Coast Salish socio-economic systems to that of displacement and oppression has also led to many of these women being overworked and facing high level of burnout. This is a concern for my relatives who I interviewed.

(ii) Waged and Unwaged Suppression of *Slheni´* and Colonized Burnout

As coal mines developed within Snuneymuxw territories, European families were enticed to the new lands of Western Canada with the promise of work, job, and small parcels of land. This was a deliberate tactic of Settlers as Rauna Kuokkanen (2011) argues that Indigenous peoples were often left little choice but to join settler economies in order to survive. However, one similar side effect that Indigenous nations across Canada experience from the forced engagement with settler economies is that of gender-based violence. Hunt (2014) speaks to this gendered violence in her dissertation and coined the

term *colonialscape* to argue that the naturalization of violence unto Indigenous people is integral to the maintenance of the colonial state that is Canada.

The *colonialscape* is the settler narrative in action, and it understands and portrays Indigenous peoples as inherently violent and lawless therefore needing to be contained. This containment is only welcome at the edges of Settler society and Indigenous peoples are always kept in line through the violence of Western law. This Settler narrative helps to erase the possibility that Indigenous women could ever manage land, manage economies or resources because of the belief that Indigenous people are incapable of forming or maintaining their own laws. According to Hunt, these forms of violence are experienced differently by Indigenous two-spirit folks, women and men. This categorization of Indigenous people and violence works to, "affirm the closure of settlement, and reinforce Indigenous peoples' status as colonized subjects: dependent, [and] victimized…," (Hunt, p58). Categorizing Indigenous people to fit into the boxes of colonization not only ensures colonial control by way of gender-based violence but it also ensures that Indigenous people are separated from their territories, traditional economies and governance structures.

This separation also ensures that Indigenous peoples of all genders are set to either become dependent on the state through the welfare system or engage in the labor force in order to survive within their colonized homelands. However, engaging in the economic labor force can also lead to exhaustion and burnout due to the fact that Coast Salish women's role as *si´em slheni´* has not lessened with colonization, in fact it may be more prominent now that these women are working to ensure the transmission of culture in community and support their families and community members as they push forward and through the trauma and oppression that colonization has used in an attempt to demobilize

Indigenous worldviews. In interviews, this was a common theme that my relatives brought up. They recognized that Coast Salish women are highly overworked yet are a fundamental piece to our governing structures and worry that *slhunlhéni´* burnout has negative impacts on our communities and governance.

Ruanna Kuokkanen (2011) argues that Indigenous women contribute to their family and community in an undeniable way but that these crucial roles within communities remain invisible and unacknowledged. Within Coast Salish communities, these definitions shared by Kuokkanen regarding unwaged labour, or working in the home or for community, can extend to the ways in which Coast Salish women play vital roles in maintaining governance and culture following teachings that are meant to uplift, love and support those around them. When you are asked to support these sacred ceremonies or families engaging cultural work it is very rare that you decline and once engaged in this work you are busy with supporting the family for weeks or even months prior to the work being enacted. Therefore, there is no invisibility to the work that Coast Salish women do to engage in their governance and economy by way of *stlunuq* and ceremony. Coast Salish people who actively practice governance and culture understand that the roles that these women have within the Bighouse and without everyone engaging their roles, the governance would not exist.

As shared with me by Sahiltineye, Coast Salish women today carry a heavy load. They are tasked with raising the children in community, ensuring safety for those around them, carrying on culture and governance and also maintaining a household all while likely participating in the waged economy in order to support their families working 9-5 in order to bring food and clothes home to young ones (Personal Communication, 2018). Pre-

contact, these actions to sustain culture and community would not have been recognized as unwaged economy, they were plainly ways that Coast Salish women engaged their people and power within society. However, with the current context of colonization many women are forced to engage full-time jobs in the waged labor pool and also continue on their full-time care and maintenance for their families, alongside their communities and governance structures. This long list of duties becomes exhausting to uphold: maintaining your family financially all while staying dedicated to your people, ancestors and culture. Certain ceremonies can endure for days and for those women involved in these events, balancing work, family and ceremony can drive one into exhaustion and being overworked.

Sometimes juggling both Coast Salish and Settler colonial roles for Indigenous women becomes too much and burn out can drive one to take time away from the waged labor economy while choosing to focus on children and maintaining culture. Kuokkanen (2011) explains that the undermining of traditional Indigenous economies and governance through the integration of Indigenous people into Western economic systems has produced a form of 'welfare colonialism.' This means that welfare is employed within a Settler country and used to control Indigenous people from a distance by generating a subtle yet dependent form of neo-colonial social control. Kuokkanen states that supports and policies linked to welfare must be followed in a controlled way, that they do not eliminate stress and poverty and are often gender specific because they were established and embedded in patriarchy related to capitalism and male dominated work force. These are ways that Coast Salish women are also impacted by the imposition of Western economic systems, the weight of maintaining the role of *si´em slheni´* while also engaging in the exploitive labor market to support family can contradict one another. Once *si´em slheni´* was widely

protected, valued and uplifted, today *si´em slheni´* is often overworked, exhausted and at times on the brink of burnout.

Furthermore, capitalist systems of economy are founded on the domestication and devaluation of Indigenous women's work as is evident in the settlement of Vancouver Island. For instance, in the residential school system, alongside receiving poor education, the focus was on teaching girls or young women to be homemakers while boys and young men were taught manual or trade labor skills, reinforcing the domestication of women and the naturalization of these gendered roles. Shifting from Coast Salish governance structures that valued the gifts and skills one was born with, the colonial narrative of women in the kitchen and men as breadwinners became firmly entrenched. This theme regarding the impacts of capitalism on Coast Salish people's also impacts one of the main laws of *nuts´umat shqweluwun*. This pulling together and working with one heart and one mind in all major tasks needed for the functioning of a healthy Coast Salish society. However, the residential school system separated people from working together and even more damaging, set distinct and domesticated gender roles to both women and men. Addressing capitalism and the Western economy when examining colonial occupation is an important piece to understanding why *si´em slhunlhéni´'* displacement was imperative to the settler colonial project of Coast Salish territory. This project is dependent on the domestication of Coast Salish women to ensure there is dependency on the colonial state.

The burnout that many coastal Indigenous women face can be seen as ways that the colonial state has attempted to force these women into exhaustion in order to remove them from the prominent roles that they hold within their socio-political societies. By enforcing Western values rooted in capitalism and patriarchy Coast Salish women have been forced

to live double lives as both *si´em slheni´* and as 'Indian' woman engaged in the waged labor force that is driven by patriarchy and exploitation. At times this also means that coastal Indigenous women must engage in systems that they are opposed to.

For example, similar to all students that work hard and struggle to complete a master's degree, this also means that I spend long days at my computer working rigorously to finalize my research and meet the standards of the university and the academic world. During this time, I have not been able to fully engage the role as a mother to my two teenage daughters. This age is imperative as they grow into a new stage in their life. Sahiltineye shares teachings regarding the four stages of Coast Salish life (Aleck, n.d.). She states that the first stage of life is what largely shapes adolescents for years to come and for this reason it is considered a crucial stage to Coast Salish people. During this first year of a new stage of life Coast Salish youth engage in puberty rights ceremonies and they learn important roles to support their community and to also engage and carry on cultural teachings. The distraction I face from my role as a student who is focused on the completion of this thesis, alongside having to work full-time, impairs the way that I can support my daughters, my extended family and my community in the way I am expected to as *si´em slheni´*.

At times, my job or role as a student tends to take over much of my day and rather than taking my daughters to sit with and learn from our relatives and the land, I am stuck at home and isolated on my computer. The removal from our land and culture, by engaging in Western systems of capitalism and academia have negatively impacted my daughters, myself, mother and relatives. Naturally, we should have all been able to engage our rights as *slheni´,* as a mom, Nan, Aunty or cousin in guiding and teaching my daughters how to engage our territories following our teachings to ensure we carry our laws and ancestral

rights. The distraction of my studies and job that I must engage to ensure I can support my family financially has strained my role as *slheni´* on many levels. Ironically, I am writing about these impacts rather than enacting my role as a Coast Salish woman and mother because of the pressures I face due to colonization.

These impacts of colonization have also affected the way that coastal nations once operated, as we have seen thus far, with *slheni´* centered in powerful and prominent roles within her economic systems of Salish governance to that of exhausted, overworked and burnt out. However, there is hope in finding solutions to the oppressive forms that we experience under the guise of capitalism and engaging in Western systems to sustain our families. Nuu-chah-nulth scholar Chaw-win-is-uxsup states, "We can build strong leadership among our women if we hold each other up, gathering strength we already possess to maintain our rightful places in our homelands," (Chaw-win-is-uxsup, p262). Chaw-win-is-uxsup goes on to state that steering clear of state centered politics and decolonizing gender roles that have been firmly entrenched in our communities are ways that coastal Indigenous people can begin to find liberation from the harms of colonial occupation in our homelands. Burnout for coastal Indigenous women operates in the same fashion on Vancouver Island's west coast for Nuu-chah-nulth women so leaning on Chaw-win-is-uxsup's call to decolonize our roles within our homes and communities in order to mobilize our nations capacity to find true liberation is one way that the needs of our communities can be met and we can begin to care for one another in the ways that we once did, rooted in the coastal laws of upholding one another and caring deeply for all those in community.

Conclusion

Drawing on interviews with my relatives, this chapter has illustrated how the banning of the *stlunuq* by the state negatively impacted Coast Salish nations and disrupted the powerful roles that *slheni´* had within her socio-economic society. Coast Salish women were and continue to be derailed from actively engaging in leadership positions and having a say in how their governance and economies operate. Today we can see that Coast Salish women are not represented fairly in their leadership with regards to politics related to colonial-state relations or in band council systems as seen in the second chapter. However, Coast Salish women are still leaders withing their families and communities with regards to the unwaged categories of raising children and engaging culture.

Capitalism has impacted Coast Salish economies and societies because this system is based on extraction and accumulation of capital, something that directly contrasts with Coast Salish laws and teachings. Coast Salish communities have of course not disappeared and have pushed back against colonial forces. In the next chapter, I continue to draw on interviews with Coast Salish women to highlight other ways that foster the strength of Coast Salish governance and teachings and ways that Indigenous people can deny colonial control that attempts to seep into all aspects of our lives.

I will also draw on the importance to include territorial forms of governance in moving forward and away from the current state of displacement that colonization has had on Coast Salish women. As I have highlighted throughout this chapter with regards to *slhunlhéni´* role in the socio-economical systems of Coast Salish people, to take back and enact ancestral teachings that center Coast Salish women will only be a continuation of Coast Salish women's authority that we have always held. Colonization has only worked

to disrupt this role, but has not erased it completely. By engaging these teachings this will be one way that coastal people can deflect the racist demand for the erasure of their ancestors and families. Even while facing burnout, racism, and denial for their authority, *si´em slheni´* carry on their roles and responsibilities to their ancestors, children and those yet to come. We will be working to ensure our nations are carrying on these foundational teachings that our ancestors fought so hard for us to maintain.

Chapter Four: Moving Forward: *Si´em Slheni´*

Introduction

Within Coast Salish territory, responses to colonization have taken a number of forms, including those based in asserting Indigenous sovereignty and those based in improving relations with the settler state. Today, Indigenous activists and Indigenous academics located in these territories continue to undertake work intended to foster Indigenous liberation. At times, this work may be focussed on addressing the oppression of Indigenous peoples but can end up being problematic. We also see widespread state-led reconciliation efforts that are meant to bring about positive change for Indigenous people but are often centered in Western worldviews. Additionally, there are attempts made by the colonial state to reconcile with Indigenous peoples by offering up funds and supports for Indigenous folks to engage in healing paradigms, yet are often grounded in Western bureaucracy. As a Coast Salish woman who has spent years studying at the University of Victoria (UVic) I have witnessed diverse Indigenous efforts to push back against colonization by engaging in academia and Indigenous activist movements within Lekwungen territories. Working for nearly ten years in the non-profit sector, I have also seen firsthand the growth of projects focused on Indigenous healing within Greater Victoria. While quietly watching these three sites of response and resistance to colonization, I began to recognize the ways that these three sites were causing more dissension to my Coast Salish relatives in Lekwungen territory. What I witnessed within these three sites was that, even though they were meant to center Indigenous injustice, they were actually often perpetuating the silencing and erasure of local Coast Salish people and their governance. This contributes to further injustice rather than building towards

solutions that uphold Coast Salish women's authority within their territories. To uphold Coast Salish women's authority pushes back against colonial violence in all its forms as *si´em slheni´* is upheld once again.

My own direct knowledge and experience to these three sites of contention will be the methodological framework that I will use to assert my argument in this chapter. As directed by the teachings that my relatives have shared with me during our time together, I recognize that it is my responsibility to share this knowledge as I step into embracing my role as a Coast Salish *slheni´*. T´uwahwiye´ of the Quw'utsun Nation states that Coast Salish people need to work hard to apply our *snuw´uyulh* in all aspects of our modern life to bring about change for our people. As is my responsibility being a Coast Salish woman, I need to make a good assessment and be discerning while thinking collectively as to whether or not certain movements are building towards decolonization, liberation and healing for *si´em slheni´* or analyze whether these movements are taking us further away from that.

Because I have lived most of my life in Lekwungen territory, I will be focussing on what I have watched and experienced with regards to these sites of contention. However, as a Coast Salish woman who is not from Lekwungen territory and only connected by family and through my partner, I recognize that I too must walk carefully in asserting my findings. As such, I am not aiming to call-out particular organizations or groups of people. Rather, I am being transparent in the way that I utilize my direct knowledge to confirm the fact that Coast Salish people's authority is continuously being ignored and that Coast Salish women are often depoliticized and left out from movements that should naturally center both Salish laws and *slheni´*.

First, within the world of non-profit organizations, there are many programs directed at supporting the healing of Indigenous communities. However, these agencies are often grounded in Western frameworks that tend to favor bureaucracy and worldviews that do not coincide with Coast Salish ontologies making it difficult for these settler-led organizations to create space for meaningful change for local Indigenous people. Non-profits tend to carry an altruistic framework intended to bring healing, to do good, and offer a path forward for Indigenous people. However, if non-profits are not careful in the way that they are building up the foundation of the project or program that they are developing, they perpetuate the reproduction of colonial power by denying local voice and governance.

Second, within academic institutions, universities are taking steps to reconcile with Indigenous peoples by including territory acknowledgements, Indigenous art on campus, and by hiring more Indigenous staff and faculty. However, if we look at the University of Victoria, there are still very few Coast Salish people, or Indigenous people from Vancouver Island in positions of authority, decision making and secure faculty positions. Recently, Qwul'sihyah'maht, Robina Thomas of the Lyackson Nation, was hired in 2021 as the associate vice-president Indigenous at UVic. However, she is one Coast Salish woman among only a few coastal scholars from Vancouver Island, that has been hired and expected to carry an immense load within the institution that is largely made up of White men. Furthermore, within academic institutions, Indigenous folks from other nations are coming to Lekwungen territory to study at the UVic. While coming into another nation's territories, I often see there is little attempt for these Indigenous scholars to work at building relationships with local people or nations and to learn about how colonization has impacted their governance structures. This critique applies to all folks that are working within the

institution and at UVic, but for the purpose of this thesis I will be speaking specifically about the role in responsibility that Indigenous scholars should have to local nations. To not center local nations will lead to the erasure of the Lekwungen people as others are benefitting from learning within their territories yet they are not actively working to connect or learn from the local people.

Finally, over the past seven years I have witnessed movements taken up by Indigenous folks, mainly youth, who have pushed back against the many forms of colonial violence that we see perpetuated by capitalism, Whiteness and hetero-patriarchy. As powerful as many of these events have been, I have also seen that they can quickly become problematic and at times inadvertently work to silence and even re-colonize their Coast Salish relatives in their territories. Often, grassroots organizers only include Coast Salish people in a tokenistic way, such as to provide welcomes and openings, or don't invite Lekwungen representatives to their events at all. There is also a lack of consultation with the local nations to ensure they are working respectively and building relationships with Lekwungen people.

I will highlight in this chapter how these three sites of contention, which are often meant to do good and bring about change for Indigenous peoples, tend to be limited in their ability to address colonization and assert Indigenous sovereignty because of a lack of recognition for local Indigenous people. As has been illustrated in the first three chapters of this work, the denial for Coast Salish women to engage their rightful role as *si´em slheni´* has worked to bring harm to her people and governance structures. This same denial brought out by settlers and other Indigenous folks in their refusal to engage *slhunlheni* power and authority is still occurring today. Perhaps not in a blatant racist and sexist

manner as that of the settler state enacted at the turn of the century, but it still occurs because there is active erasure and silencing of her voice and the teachings of her ancestors of specific territories in which we are in. By disengaging or failing to lift up *si´em slheni´* these three sites of contention will continue to maintain the status quo of weakening *slhunlheni* and the role that they have to the well-being of their nations and for those living within their territories. This chapter will illustrate how these three sites have impacted Coast Salish people with a focus on Lekwungen territory as that is where I have witnessed impacts throughout the years.

I will make connections between these sites to that of present-day colonialism within Coast Salish territory drawing on settler statecraft theory of the *colonialscape* to highlight the way that gendered nationalisms, by disengaging with *si´em slheni*, come into play within these spaces. By showing how these theories are being enacted on the ground and highlighting the geographic, political and cultural context, I will also highlight the need to center Coast Salish communities across these three sites. In doing so, I work to ensure that Coast Salish *snuw´uyulh* is operating at all levels of Coast Salish life creating strong individuals, families, communities and nations. As a result, Coast Salish people are able to push back against colonial barriers and attempts at re-colonization by both the state and other Indigenous people living within their territories who are asserting their Indigenous authority over Coast Salish laws. This chapter will call on others to recognize their positions as settlers or as Indigenous people from nations not ancestral to these lands and to recognize their inherent responsibility to local Coast Salish nations. By doing so, I am also shedding light on my family's teachings with regards to Coast Salish people taking up their rightful place in relation to the other island nations and within our own territories.

In a similar vein, Mikki Kendall has written about the issues that arise when social movements—in Kendall's case the Black liberation movement alongside feminism—tend to leave out particular groups of people impacted by patriarchy or colonization (Hood Feminism, 2020). Kendall is writing from the view point of women from the Hood in the United States, arguing that they have been largely forgotten in the struggle against white supremist patriarchy when it comes to larger feminist movements. With this chapter I will take up a similar framework to Kendall but will center Coast Salish women and the way in which these women and their communities are largely left out from both Indigenous led activist and academic movements that are being conducted within their territories.

In the following sections, I will highlight the ways in which local Indigenous folks and their laws are forgotten or ignored, and how this erasure is treated as acceptable within these decolonial and reconciliation paradigms. I argue that if local nations and their teachings are not being centred in the work, neither then are the local women and their leadership. When Salish laws are centered, our governance will naturally offer a way forward that pulls everyone along. Without first centering the local people and their laws and protocols, these movements inadvertently harm Coast Salish women through contributing to their systemic erasure, invisibility and denial for Coast Salish authority. Without first centering local ancestors and the teachings that they have passed down, these movements will continue to foster a disconnection between theories and practices of decolonization, denying opportunities for local voices to be listened to. We must also be willing to face the reality that the agendas of Indigenous scholars and activists, as well as local non-profit's, may not mesh with the teachings of local nations, but it is the teachings and leadership of local nations that must nonetheless be recognized and upheld. I first

discuss these contentious dynamics as I have observed them working within the non-profit sector in Lekwungen territories.

Reconciliation: The Context for Contention

The 21st century Canadian state has created a façade claiming that reconciliation is the new way forward while also stating that the Canadian government works hard to build 'a new relationship' and supports for the Indigenous peoples living within its borders. Just after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was re-elected as the liberal leader of Canada in the fall of 2019, he stated, "We will continue to engage with Indigenous leadership across the country… to ensure that reconciliation isn't just a word that we use…and respect that is so necessary as we move forward with Indigenous peoples in this country is at the core of everything we do," (APTN, 2019). In recent years, the Harper and Trudeau governments have attempted to reconcile with Indigenous peoples in Canada by making amends. For instance, we can see how Harper's government in 2008 delivered a formal apology to residential school survivors and their families alongside offering amounts of money to the hundreds-of-thousands of residential schools' survivors living within Canada.

In more recent years, Trudeau's Liberal government has focused on building relationships with Indigenous people and nations. By doing so, the state has ensured that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in order to document the truths of colonization, especially those linked to the residential school systems, in order to bring forth healing for Indigenous people and draw historical truth out to the rest of Canadian society. Scholar Paulette Regan (2010) illustrates how many nations that have been birthed from utilizing the tools of colonization often grapple with guilt regarding acts of

domination and oppression and attempt to "morally rehabilitate" their colonial state no matter how illegitimate the state may be. She references political philosopher James Tully's work that states legitimizing systems of colonization for state profit is deeply rooted in liberal theory whereby governments engage and recruit various ways to foster the assimilation of Indigenous peoples in a sly way to legitimize the colonial states existence (Regan, 2010). Regan highlights the recent attempts that Canada has taken to reconcile with Indigenous people, arguing that these acts of reconciliation are actually deepening the divide and reinforcing a superficial understanding of reconciliation within the socio-political society that makes up Canada.

These attempts made by the state to address the wrong doings of colonization in order to morally rehabilitate the colonial nation-state, also known as reconciliation, have also fostered a saviorism complex within much of Canadian society. By examining institutions such as education systems, we can see that a saviorism complex has, in fact, been established in the minds of colonial settlers since the early 20th century. For instance, while researching the curriculum used in B.C. from 1871 onward that was used to educate settler students on Indigenous people from that time, I found many illustrations regarding perceived Indigenous inferiority alongside the roots of a saviourism complex for settlers.

For example, in a 1906 history textbook written for British Columbian students, Lawson & Young illustrate the way that James Douglas was able to maintain order over the Indians and protect settler society from hostile Indians by way of displaying settler power through war-ships. These and other measures were seen as teaching the Indians how to maintain civil order. Lawson & Young sate that the, "Indians were treated by the company [the Hudson Bay Company] with kindness and justice, and the white men were

not allowed to injure or molest them in any way," (1906, p42). This illustration of the Indigenous-Settler relationship taught settler children in the colonial era that Indigenous people needed to be saved from themselves and that the colonists were the ones who taught the Indians how to maintain good order. The textbook also taught children that settlers protected Indigenous nations from harm by ensuring they were not "injured or molested" by those settling in the new colonies. This depiction illustrates to the reader that Indigenous people had no legal order and could not protect themselves, therefore being illustrated as people who need saving, mostly from themselves, to live harmoniously with settler society. In the minds of settlers these war ships, which are generally known to bring about violence, appeared irenic and was understood as being needed in order to civilize Indigenous people and to keep them in line with Settler society. Likely the same war ships used to claim and colonize Indigenous lands were now being displayed as ships that protected the Indians.

Hunt's *colonialscape* theory (2014) can be used to understand how the colonial education system, since the late 19th century, has been used to perpetuate a worldview that void Indigenous people of any legal order thereby making it appear legitimate that they are subjects of the colonial state. This creates the appearance that Indigenous authority does not exist across the board, including within the Indigenous individual, the family and on the land. Socialization of Canadian settlers on a large scale through the education system was a tactic to assert the *colonialscape* logics in which it was necessary to control and subjugate Indigenous peoples. As illustrated above, White settler students were educated and socialized to believe that Indigenous nations in B.C. were incapable of governing themselves and therefore subjected to state protection and control in order to keep them safe. As we saw in the depiction of B.C. history textbooks, Indigenous peoples were seen

as inherently violent and chaotic and so the violence of the state can be read as simply needed for the establishment of civilization. Children in B.C. were taught that the land they now lived on was not taken through violence but by a necessary form of (almost peaceful) authority in order to create a lawful civilization.

Today, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action* have encouraged curriculum amendments with focus on sharing the truths of Canada's history. Within Coast Salish territory, the underpinnings of what reconciliation is calling for is not in fact located in the material bodies and lands that we are on, instead it is located in ideas that call for 'good' for all Indigenous people. Rather than working to empower local Indigenous peoples and learning about local Indigenous strength, authority and resilience, much of the curriculum works to re-victimize Indigenous peoples in the minds of Settlers. I believe that public discourse in general needs to strike a balance in 'uncovering' the past but also working to understand the strength, agency and political authority that Indigenous people still hold and making that content exclusive to the local territories that the schools or people are on. With this example we can see how the *colonialscape* still operates within the education system today, serving to weaken Indigenous authority, encourage erasure of Indigenous law and governance, and foster a saviorism complex in Canadians while they center the victimization of Indigenous people.

Tanana Athabascan author Diane Million (2013) addresses the issues that have come up within the era of reconciliation in response to the 1990 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and what she coins reconciliation as the "last link" in RCAP's policy strain (2013, p4). Million critiques this current era, arguing that it is rooted in finding truth and justice because this era operates within systems of neoliberal and capitalist

responses of upholding human rights and liberation for Indigenous people around the globe. She highlights how true liberation and sovereignty for Indigenous people in North America cannot exist in these settings because the starting point for healing has been centered in the telling of trauma and therefore the Indigenous/traumatized person is first recognized as a victim before anything else.

Furthermore, Million critiques the role of fostering healing from a state centered response because it relies on a western capitalist and liberal framework which will always default back to the rejection of the understanding that Indigenous nations and their polities existed before the current colonial nation-state's existence. This chapter then, takes into account Million's critique of reconciliation, which is framed on a broader scale and creates the belief that Indigenous peoples are helpless victims and quite often face silencing of their authority, nationhood and sovereignty under the guise of 'healing'. I build on these critiques by first examining local ways that these expressions of reconciliation have played out within Coast Salish territories, highlighting the harms that come out of non-profit organizations' responses to colonization.

Non-profits:

Moving forward, I address the work of non-profits whose programming is generally aimed at addressing violence and the impacts of colonization unto Indigenous people. At times, these groups are funded by government, think tanks, churches and philanthropists offering large sums of money to support reconciliation and Indigenous-focused programming. Although these projects and programs are meant to bring about positive change for Indigenous communities struggling with the negative impacts of colonialism, if

we look a little closer at how these organizations operate, we can begin to understand the ways these organizations damper rather than foster Coast Salish liberation. Drawing from my personal experiences and conversations with community, I will highlight the way that non-profits often attempt to swoop in with westernized frameworks and their system processes and programming, adding a dash of pan-Indigeneity in the hope of bringing about healing for Indigenous nations. Many non-profits may appear to be altruistic in nature but in fact they are also constantly adjusting themselves to the shifts in government policies and program priorities in order to increase funds for the agencies own gain. In the current reconciliation era, I have observed a growing number of non-profits working to secure funding to develop programming that will engage Indigenous people and their nations in order to foster healing.

Within this era of reconciliation, governments have prioritized funds meant to be spent on issues with Indigenous people related to colonization in an attempt to right the wrong doings of the past. As noted by Million, the Canadian government has attempted to offer support in the way of monetary funds to produce programming meant to 'heal' Indigenous communities. For example, millions of dollars are offered from federal government departments such as Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) to develop programming that attempts to prevent family violence and violent crimes against Indigenous women and children (WAGE, 2021). Furthermore, we see similar funding streams being offered by other federal departments such as the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) or the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. While this dedicated funding for non-profits may claim to foster healing, and no doubt the feeling is genuine; the reality is that organizations also benefit financially from Indigenous specific

funding, often taking 10-15% off the top for "administration costs", which does not benefit the healing of Indigenous communities. Likewise, there is no guarantee that Indigenous people are hired into any positions meant for these Indigenous focused projects, let alone top decision-making positions, within the organizations receiving these funds while there are few Indigenous staff hired in at part-time, non-salaried roles. This works to keep Indigenous folks as frontline workers yet they are working in precarious financial positions while creating stability for the agency that is often run by White folks. These organizations also tend to tokenize and pat their own backs once these projects have been completed, using past programming to maintain or confirm more funding for the agency.

The anthology *The Revolution will not be Funded* illustrates the history of non-profits outlining the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) that grew from individuals, usually White people, prior to the Civil War in America to address the social issues of poverty, community breakdown and violence. However, these individuals were generally guided by community elites who chose to assist people or places that they considered were deserving of such help and were most always guided by Christian understandings of right from wrong (2007, INCITE!). As time passed and the political landscape shifted to that of black and brown people activating responses to their own liberation, we can see how non-profits have been guided by the state, philanthropists, and law makers along with white civilians in an attempt to restore white control over North America.

Many large-scale funders provide large sums of money to non-profits or organizers but their underlying politics of white hegemony guide how the money must be spent, ultimately harnessing the work that the project or organization had dreamt of completing. This upholding of white supremacy then can be seen as foundational to the way that the

NPIC has been controlled to maintain western and white centered authority over much of the impoverished, oppressed and racialized communities that so threatened North America's existence.

As Rodriguez (INCITE!, 2007) argues, the NPIC is formed by a relationship between states (governments and institutions, elites and bureaucracies) and non-profit organizations. While the rise of NPIC has its roots in state facilitated repression of movements related to the liberation of black and brown people in the 1960's-1970's, this form of maintenance and control continues today as we have seen in the example of reconciliation-focused funding. Rodriguez states that throughout the years there has been a, "creative relation of power" that has been established in order to respond to dissent and ultimately shut down any sort of upheaval that may threaten the security of white hegemony in North America (INCITE!, p34). Here we can see how the NPIC only solidifies the institutionalization of relations of dominance ensuring the principles of white supremacy within society. I would argue this relation of institutional dominance is at work when non-profits attempt to respond to colonial injustice and Indigenous healing because the foundation of the programming is rooted in White hegemony and colonization. As we shall see later in this chapter, building relationships and centering Coast Salish laws are what needs to be at the forefront of this work, however how can this occur when often the funding or guidance for a project is centered in maintaining white supremacy, or in today's world a colonial state governed by White hegemony? Further, how can non-profits break free from colonial relations of dominance when funding priorities determined by the federal government are used to shape priorities, with no measures of accountability to local nations?

One response that we have seen nation-wide with regards to reconciliation is that non-profit organizations are now taking up this work and securing funding to work with or for Indigenous nations and urban Indigenous people in order to develop programing or curriculum that leads to healing and supports Indigenous people's path to justice. However, even though many of these projects proclaim to be led by Indigenous voices and survivors, the underlying power still lies within the structure of the organization that is delivering the project. In other words, the non-profit institution is holding the purse strings, at times very tightly, and all actions that the project takes up are guided *by* and rooted *in* western forms of bureaucracy.

For instance, a local non-profit in Victoria BC that took up the work of addressing sexualized and gender-based violence unto and within Indigenous communities began its quest for supporting Indigenous justice by receiving just over a million-dollar grant from the federal WAGE Department. While hiring a Coast Salish woman to coordinate the program and being attentive to learning about local laws, the agency still was unable to ground itself in the teachings that were needed in order in order to truly advance Indigenous authority within Coast Salish territory. This agency, being rooted in a western bureaucratic nature, was not able to connect with the local peoples on a level that was imperative to produce the positive change that they had hoped for. Being preoccupied by administrative nuisances and leaving little time for relationship building while passing the buck to the Indigenous coordinator were all problems rooted in responses to living within a capitalist society where one is expected to meet deadlines and produce measurable outcomes, often under the weight of an overloaded work schedule. These issues directly oppose the ways that Coast Salish people connect with one another, build trust and relationship and also

engage in work or cultural ceremony with one another. Therefore, by being rooted in western bureaucracy and worldview, this agency's foundational structure and system of operation already opposed Coast Salish ways of being, yet they presumed they could jump straight into the work of supporting justice and healing.

Framing this foundational structure and operating systems of non-profits in the theory of the *colonialscape* we can see how the factors that foster domination make up a colonial settler society are still largely at play and even more troubling it is reproducing dynamics of White supremacy by denying Indigenous authority at the level of non-profit service delivery. Settler statecraft is so embedded in institutions that even those that are meant to bring about positive change for Indigenous people face denial for their own authority and laws regarding fundamental structures such as relationship building.

The *colonialscape* has been established so thoroughly in Canada that well-intentioned projects, appearing to be rooted in reconciling harms committed against Indigenous nations, continue to actively work to subjugate and control Indigenous people. I have illustrated in chapters one through three of this thesis the harms that have grown from the state actively working to displace, silence and remove power from Coast Salish women. Today, the work of reconciliation that non-profits engage in continue to deny the Coast Salish authority and protocol and in this way they are re-solidifying the same type of Western power and domination that the settler state engaged. Many non-profits may acknowledge the territories they exist in and the peoples who belong to those lands, but generally, they continue to operate from a bureaucratic framework that denies space for Coast Salish governance. The gap between recognizing the territories in words/land acknowledgements to appear like organizations are engaging meaningfully in the work of

reconciliation but then not changing their actions to center the Indigenous people and their laws whose land the organization exists on ensures there is no loosening of control for the organization. By taking up the popular language of including land acknowledgements in meetings and added to their mandates these organizations are able to 'get off the hook' and still maintain business as usual not having to put in the extra work of building relationships and learning positive ways to center local people and *si'em slheni´*.

Another harmful western dynamic present within the non-profit sector and often one of the biggest hinderances to furthering social change within capitalist systems, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike, is the concept of time. In the West time is understood in a linear fashion with a beginning and an end. Time is viewed as something precious because of the belief that there is a limited supply especially within capitalist systems where one is expected to produce work and meet deadlines, with a failure to do so being interpreted as a poor work ethic or incompetence.

Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), illustrates the connections between Western institutions and the development of the concept of time, these being: the industrial revolution, Protestant ethics and through imperialism and science. The concept of time related to work ethic became important after the arrival of missionaries and the development of systematic colonization unto Indigenous peoples and also because the rise of the lower middle class due to the industrial revolution. Smith highlights how ideals about progress were orientated towards time and space, we can see how the 'development' of the Western world was framed up in space and time from the labels placed on eras of human history such as: prehistoric, to historic and then from the Dark Ages to the Enlightenment Era. These are all temporal periods in history that have been connected to the idea of

progress from humanity and only ever include the history and viewpoint of time from a Western lens—what has been offered as relevant pieces to world history often leave out Indigenous truths and experiences (Smith, 2016). While leaving out Indigenous truth and history, Western concepts of time also work against the laws meant to uphold *si´em slheni´* by gendering notions of time. Women were to be governed by time while working in the house and with the family, catering and providing for her husband as he engaged in the work force. Rather than *si´em slheni´* adhering to her teachings related to the maintained of her community and governance structure, she was now limited to the house and domesticated chores related to rearing her own children and caring for her husband.

McClintock (1993) highlights the way that the West has gendered concepts of time in the creation of developing nations. By applying the notions that women and all colonized people are inherently backwards and do not contribute to the progressive agents of time and modernity in the way that men have, a sort of gendered concept of time emerges which centers men. According to McClintock, all colonized people and women were seen as the irrational and regressive aspects to the "living archive of the national archaic," (1993, p67). Men were seen as the forward thrusting agents in developing nations while women and colonized people were seen as the archaic subjects only related to the development of that nation or the domesticated spheres of life related to family and female spaces.

In contrast to gendered and Western understandings of time, Coast Salish people recognize time in a different way. Of course, today, Coast Salish people are involved in capitalist systems in which they are expected to produce work and abide by western forms of time, but culturally speaking, time is recognized as space for relationship building and for connection, for learning and connecting to ancestors. Take for instance the late-night

visits that many coastal Indigenous people have. I have had Aunties come to visit knocking on my door close to midnight and enjoying our time together well into the wee hours of the morning. Also, on the coast, Indigenous people take the time needed to share teachings or engage in ceremonies. There have been times that we have sat in the Bighouse until well into the morning while ceremonies take place. Time becomes irrelevant and the most important piece to the ceremony is completing the important cultural work at hand to ensure the health and well-being of the person, family or people involved. The focus on building relationship and allowing for the flow of ancestral teachings is the center of time in Coast Salish culture whereas Western culture needs to focus on production, efficacy and deadlines. Non-profits rarely respect the way that Coast Salish people engage with time, this can be seen in the rigidity of meeting agenda and the way that people are restricted with how long one can share or spend time getting to know another person because of the time schedule that a work day permits and the deliverables that need to be met. Likewise, Coast Salish governance operates with rigidity but in contrary to time restriction related to the West, we take the time that is needed to ensure that our protocol and teachings are followed accordingly. There is no cutting corners in our Bighouse and in our ceremonies, these events can run well into the morning to be sure that we are meeting these standards, no matter the time it takes.

To do the work of reconciling and working with Indigenous communities, organizations must be prepared to spend the time to build relationships with the local nations, to get to know the elders, children and adults that make up these communities and nations. In order to work effectively with a Coast Salish community, you cannot rush your way through beginning to learn and understand centuries old teachings and the foundations

of what it means to be Coast Salish. Therefore, to build up programming related to healing or fostering a sense of justice for Indigenous people, western bureaucratic norms arising from western notions of time and capitalist productivity must be replaced by Coast Salish values. That is, the work must center the laws of the territories on which the organization exists, because to deny that is to deny the existence of the local nations on whose territories the work is being done.

Moreover, rushing through the process of building relationships with local Indigenous people, their communities and laws can result in co-optation of local teachings and processes. For example, the local Victoria organization that attempted to address sexualized violence had a communication strategy to learn about local teachings, which was meant to bring about positive change and inclusion for the Lekwungen and WSANEC people whose territory the organization resides on. The agency wanted to take up the language of including local laws and governance in their draft strategic plan when in reality they had only spent five months for a total of three hours a week learning about the local laws and governance. Despite this short time frame of engaging with local teachings, the organization claimed through their strategic plan to already understand these laws and therefore to have the right to implement them as an organization operated mostly by White settlers.

The settler leadership within the organization hadn’t taken the time to build relationships with local Indigenous communities and had relied on the Indigenous coordinator to carry out much of that relationship building and maintenance. The organization had hoped to include something as precious and valued as local laws and governance into their strategic plan when the leaders of the organization and the project

had literally not even stepped foot into specific Indigenous communities. At the same time, we also know that funding structures and funders rarely permit the time to strengthen relationship and build trust, even in deliverables that are specific to reconciliation or Indigenous healing. In the funder's eyes, there are deliverables to be met and time constraints to be handled.

In contrast to this, Coast Salish leadership takes the time to build relationships to better understand the strengths and gifts that particular people carry and then focus on supporting one to embrace those strengths. For instance, T´uwahwiye´ recalls the way that women in Coast Salish communities would begin this relationship building when children were small. The older women in the community would watch the children and support them to take up their gifts (Personal Communication, 2018). Generally, she recalls these children would be mentored with cedar weaving, hunting, harvesting food, and other cultural and political practices. In this way, the leadership-built relationships with all in community, even children, to ensure that the community was able to positively function. There was no person too small for these relationships to be built and this was done for the well-being of the nation.

Thus, it is clear that centering a western and gendered understanding of time leads to the denial of Coast Salish people being able to implement their laws within their own territories by ultimately preventing relationships, programs, projects and attempts at justice therefore failing to recognize and actively suppressing the cultural practices and worldviews of local Indigenous people. This negatively impacts ways that Indigenous communities actually operate because relationships and responsibility to one another are key factors in Coast Salish governance and nationhood. Due to the bureaucratic structure

that many non-profits work under, these stories must be similar across the board for many projects that are hoping to support health and well-being for Indigenous nations. Non-profit agencies need to stop and think about ways that they can first incorporate relationship building and actually center the laws of the territories they are on in order to begin working collaboratively with the local people they are so interested in supporting.

Because these examples occurred in Coast Salish territory, I, along with other Coast Salish women, can provide ways to respond to these issues via Coast Salish teachings. Just as my relatives have shared their critiques of colonization and the history of settlement, alongside offered responses to these issues that worked to center our women and all people within our nations; we can look to the ways in which we as Coast Salish people have been attempting to address issues of colonization within our communities and suggest how non-profits can take steps to ensure that they are working from a respectful and meaningful space. T´uwahwiye´ from the Quw'utsun Nation states that we as Coast Salish people need to be working together in everything that we do (Personal communication, 2018). In the time that I spent talking with T´uwahwiye´ about issues related to colonization and Indigenous womanhood she stated that our Coast Salish leaders need to work hard at showing their community the right direction and that by centering our old ways, our teachings remain strong and so do our communities and families. She also asserts that leadership needs to recognize, validate and hold-up the resilience and strength of our women, explaining that so much of the work in our communities both past and present is because of the roles that our women play.

Tsumkwaut of the Snuneymuxw Nation adds that building strong relationships and returning to old ways would encourage our women and children to be treated honorably

and recognized as sacred once more. Furthermore, T´uwahwiye´ speaks to the teachings regarding Coast Salish nations and illustrates how the community all worked together for the greater good, recalling that women would often mentor the younger ones. While sitting with her she looked at me and asked, "How do you keep that *shkwaluwun*?," she sat for a bit and then answered herself stating that we need to maintain our teachings that are based in self-discipline and a constant coming together for our community. She then asks, "But how are we going to implement these things into the system and get the leadership to see the simple ways of life that we have in our teachings and incorporate them into the modern world that we now live in?" (Personal Communication, 2018).

Similar to T´uwahwiye´ and Tsumkwaut, I too believe that by taking up the laws regarding working together, holding one another up, re-centering women, and relationship building, we can once again build our people back up. These teachings are not only beneficial to Coast Salish people, but also need to be actively engaged and respected when working within these territories because these are laws that have sustained the Indigenous people here for centuries. Therefore, if non-profits began to work to build relationships prior to obtaining funding and centered the work around justice and healing around these teachings listed above, the projects would be much more powerful and supportive for Indigenous people's governance structures were more involved to truly advance their promises of reconciliation and decolonization. Building relationships with local nations is foundational for the work of non-profits to be guided by the nation whose territories the agency is situated in.

Here on the coast when Indigenous people visit other territories, there are longstanding protocols dictating that they too should abide first by the laws of these

territories. In this way, the reciprocal relationship was built, one of respect and support for one another. If organizations operated with similar cause, they too would gain trust and respect. In showing respect by abiding by local laws they would be a step closer to being invited to the table to have their thoughts heard regarding violence and injustice. In adherence to local laws this ensures that all people involved would be pulled forward in a clear and healthy direction. After all, Coast Salish teachings are meant to hold people up and work together for the better of the entire community. So how then, have these imperative teachings been ignored even by those who intend to offer programs rooted in justice, healing, liberation and reconciliation? Colonization is founded on the erasure and silencing of another group of people's laws and governance. We have seen how non-profits perpetuate this type of erasure and control here in Coast Salish territories. Moving forward we will examine how this erasure/silencing also plays out in academia, through the work of the institution itself and, specifically, with Indigenous scholars.

Indigenous Scholarship

Academic institutions actively engage in the erasure of Coast Salish authority and this is another site of contention that Coast Salish people run into regarding colonization and the fight for liberation within their homelands. This erasure leads to many issues for Coast Salish people and is perpetuated on both institutional and individual levels. Again, I it is important to connect the first three chapters to this section of the thesis. The continual denial for *si´em slhunlheni´* role and authority to be recognized and held up within academic institutions built on Coast Salish territories only works to maintain the silencing and erasure of *si´em slheni´* that the settler state depended on when establishing itself on

southern Vancouver Island. Gaudry & Lorenz argue that indigenization policies within academic institutions lack the substance needed to produce real change and, as such, they critique the "one-size-fits-all," approach that many universities have taken up (2018, p 222). Recognizing the diversity that the hundreds of unique Indigenous nations hold with regards to governance and socio-political functions, this section will highlight the way that Coast Salish diversity tends to be erased within their own territories. This erasure can also work to lead to Indigenous academics, who are not from these lands, into the colonial trap as they inadvertently uphold these harmful colonial values founded on erasure.

Take for instance the relationship that the Lekwungen people have with the University of Victoria and Indigenous scholarship. I am not aware of many positions on campus that are dedicated to fostering and building up Lekwungen leadership by way of hiring Lekwungen people to ensure their laws and teachings are being taken up correctly. As aforementioned, Qwul'sih'yah'maht, Robina Thomas from Lyackson Nation was recently hired into a new Indigenous leadership role as the associate vice-president Indigenous at UVic. While this hiring is a step in the right direction it is also a heavy role that Qwul'sih'yah'maht must uphold. As the only Indigenous woman/person in a position of authority such as this, she is still left alone in the institution with many other, mostly White, men. The cumbersome role that she carries actually works contrary to the way that Coast Salish governance operates.

As highlighted throughout this thesis Coast Salish women within our governance structures and culture come together to take up work so that it is completed in a beneficial way for all people. However, within the institution, Qwul'sih'yah'maht is one Coast Salish *slheni´* who has been hired and expected to take up this role in the president's office, rather

than having numerous Coast Salish people working together to support the work that she is doing. Of course, she is guided by the teachings and laws from local community and her own community, but she is ultimately one of a few local coastal scholars working within this entire institution. While there are a small handful of Coast Salish people teaching in positions at UVic and a few other Indigenous folks from Vancouver Island, it is important to note that the work they are expected to do while maintaining their responsibilities to local communities and engaging in the institution can become a heavy load to carry while trying to materialize structural changes for Indigenous people.

Furthermore, adding to the erasure of Lekwungen people within this institution, the fact that I have never come across any course material that centers Lekwungen nations and their worldview, nor have I come across any research centers that explicitly center the Lekwungen nation for the benefit of its nation's members. I have not seen the university engage the Songhees or Esquimalt nations in building programming based on Lekwungen governance and teachings although this University is situated within their homelands. On campus, there is very little visible connections to the Lekwungen people outside of the First Peoples House. For instance, many of the poles that sit on campus are not Lekwungen poles they come from other Indigenous nations and in the wooded trails surrounding the campus there is no reference to Lekwungen sites of importance or place names. Failing to center the nations existence, laws and governance within these institutions or programming results in a blissful ignorance about how the local Indigenous people are still the caretakers of these territories and have an inherent say to what occurs in their homelands. By disengaging with local nations, laws and ancestral teachings other Indigenous folks are also functioning

to uphold the *colonialscape* that has worked so strenuously to disconnect Coast Salish peoples from their positions of authority at all levels.

As Hunt's *colonialscape* (2014) would argue, after the state established itself in Indigenous homelands it would craft its position within society by erasing, demeaning and denying Indigenous peoples of legal, political and territorial authority. In doing so, the state is actively working to weaken the authority of Indigenous sovereign nations and instead turn them into dependent 'Indians', making this dependence appear to be natural or expected. The disconnection of Coast Salish people from their territory and authority can be understood as an expression of the *colonialscape* within coastal settlements and within academic institutions.

(i) Indigenous Scholars: A Responsibility to Local

The Canadian state depends on masses of Indigenous people to separate themselves from their ancestral identity and ties. As stated by Peruvian philosopher and artist, Felipe Coronel, in response to colonial control and violence, if every Indigenous person living within the state's borders gained a true sense of their identity and enacted the laws they had been handed down by their ancestors, there is no way that the state could continue to push its colonial operations against the power of Indigenous nations and people (Coronel, 2001). Because Indigenous teachings are meant to empower Indigenous people and Indigenous laws are meant to uphold one another and to fairly regulate systems of power, for Indigenous folks to fully bring forth these ways of operating would naturally bring strength and power to their minds and agency.

However, Indigenous people are also increasingly pushing back against colonial powers by engaging in academia, in order to gain the tools of the current system that we live in which then enable them to speak to and push back against their oppressor, the colonial state. Nevertheless, the age-old problem comes into play: trying to change the system by adapting to the system naturally evolves to the system co-opting or consuming you, ultimately changing you. Black feminist Audra Lorde states that the tools of the master, or in this case the colonizer, can never be used to dismantle the structures that reinforce its own power. One can take up the same tools and try to challenge a colonial and heteropatriarchal system that is meant to control and contain particular groups of people in order to ensure domination. Lorde argues that there might be fleeting moments that folks feel they are empowered but ultimately, genuine change will never be met accessing the tools of the 'master' or in this case, the colonizer (p27, 2018).

Coronel (2001) speaks to the dangers of compromising yourself in a situation when you disengage with your teachings and take up foreign structures leaving behind your ancestors. This becomes apparent when Indigenous people who are not familiar with the academic world attempt to understand the work of the Indigenous academic but cannot interpret and decode what they are reading. At times, Indigenous academics can forget to pull along their community and speak only to the academic world, mystifying the words and writing so that often only other academics can comprehend what is on paper. This can become problematic because Indigenous scholars often only speak to other Indigenous scholars or institutional priorities, rather than addressing priorities set out by Indigenous communities and nations. This inaccessibility and silencing that some Indigenous

academics play into can cause a sort of re-colonization as many nations and voices are left out when speaking back to oppressors and centering their laws, teachings and experiences.

(ii) Indigenous Scholars: Studying Away From Home

In addition to failing to center community priorities, Indigenous academics often fail to center relationships with the nations whose lands their institution is located on. Within Coast Salish territories, this could look like learning about the roles that Coast Salish people have within their socio-political societies and then finding ways to uphold these folks related to their roles. As highlighted in the first three chapters of this work, *si´em slheni´* role with regards to maintaining Coast Salish governance structures is imperative for the functioning of the nation. For Indigenous scholars studying away from home, this denial to work to understand and uphold these roles is partially due to the way that the institution has led Indigenous scholars into the colonial trap because nothing on campus gleans light to the Lekwungen people in a meaningful way. In this way, many Indigenous scholars have lacked taking meaningful action to build relationship and center local people along, with their needs, within their own homelands. The *colonialscape* is actively recrafting itself when even other Indigenous folks are coming into Coast Salish territory and not working to learn, uphold local laws or build relationships with the local people. This denial for recognizing Coast Salish agency and authority is one way that Hunt illustrated how the *colonialscape* enforces a set of state-determined power relation that is grounded in both physical and legal violence contributing to the categorization and erasure of local Coast Salish authority (2014).

Similar to Coronel's argument, I have observed that at times Indigenous academics are compromising the political and cultural values of their own nations when challenging systems of oppression, dominance, and power. Core values of Indigenous nations are to uplift and support your community and, within academia, this can also be transferred into the world of scholarship. Indigenous scholars can work to mentor and support younger generations, as well as to build relationships and understand the governance of the local people to ensure that they are working respectively in the territories they live or study on.

Equally important, Indigenous people who decide to take up academia must also find ways to walk within these institutions to ensure they do not lose themselves or their teachings. Chaw-win-is-uxsup, a Nuu-chah-nulth mother, community members and Indigenous scholar defines the way that we as Indigenous people can take up the work of academia, stating, "We as Indigenous women will find ways to write ourselves into our research, we don't need to abandon ourselves for academia, we do not need to leave ourselves at the 'doors of the fort,'" (Chaw-win-is, Personal Communication). This can be a difficult walk, because it can be distracting to engage in a world that can feel so foreign from our own experiences and Indigenous ways of living. Academia has begun to produce classes of Indigenous people that divides us and it is imperative that we hold onto ourselves and our teachings in these situations so that we do not play into perpetuating these newly formed class systems within our Indigenous communities. Indigenous scholars must continue to engage their own community relations along with the nations whose land they are studying on to ensure they are not actively silencing any groups of Indigenous people. The failure to do so can become apparent in written work and studies that are drawn out in

such a way that has become unrelatable to community members when speaking to issues of colonization.

Many would ask how I can critique academia but be writing a thesis for a master's degree in Political Science at the same time. They may question if I too am choosing to co-opt myself into this system of classism for Indigenous people yet hiding behind the critique itself. In response to that I would state that by being careful not to lose myself at the 'doors of the fort' as I enter into the institution of post-secondary, I hold tightly the teachings of my family and my nation. While studying within Coast Salish territories as a Coast Salish woman, my local community relations constantly remind me of these teachings and of the endurance of Coast Salish laws that exist even in the soil that the University of Victoria resides on. I let the words of my Aunties guide this thesis, by listening to their critiques of colonization and situating them in a local context so that Coast Salish people can relate to the impacts that European settlement has had on our teachings, our laws and the way in which we relate to one another. I have also worked to write to and for our people, not for the institution nor the larger Indigenous population in Canada. It is important at this point in time with colonization that we begin to situate how our nations can move forward bringing forth our laws and ancestors. Critiquing the impacts of colonization on a larger scale is important to push the narrative forward, but I do not see these critiques being able to move past the current point now without finding ways to center the local nations, communities and people. Indigenous scholars learn about resisting the state and yet as they do so, they tend to fail to center the priorities and laws of the Nations whose lands they are on.

(iii) Indigenous Scholars: Adhering to Colonial Constraints

Finally, one additional colonial constraint that is placed on Indigenous scholars is connected to an argument previously in this chapter—the fact that we are forced to center colonial notions of time and productivity. Due to institutional demands that are connected to production and schedules, many Indigenous scholars are prevented from finding time to maintain Indigenous law that is based on relationship building. As stated prior, relationship building is central to Coast Salish laws and without finding the time to build and work at these relationships, we are not centering the voices, experiences and laws of the territories that we may work or study on. In this way, Indigenous scholars studying at the University of Victoria are actively working to silence Lekwungen people and their ancestors by prioritizing their productivity over the quality of their relationships.

Relatedly, in recent years in Victoria, I have noticed how many of the activist movements that engage in shutting down businesses or organize marches downtown or at the legislature buildings, have grown from the minds of Indigenous academics who have obtained the tools to critique the colonial-state and engage in activism. However, I have also noticed that these movements often leave behind many Indigenous people who are not as equipped with similar training, language, and the experience in examining colonial institutions. Even worse, local people are once again not consulted or connected to the Indigenous-focused events occurring in their territories, similarly to the way they are left out of Indigenous programming at the University. This becomes problematic while fighting for Indigenous liberation. What I find even more bewildering is the amount of activism that occurs in Lekwungen territories that centers other Indigenous nations and their struggles, without first consulting or sitting with local people. I have rarely come across

movements in Victoria that center the Songhees and Esquimalt people or that center them beyond asking an individual to do a welcome/opening prior to an event.

Many Indigenous people who take up activism in Coast Salish territory center their activism on struggles regarding nations from other territories. All too often we get caught up in dismantling oppressive state structures when in reality we should be first centering local people, their laws and their governance in the work that we are doing and then taking the next steps to call out and resist the colonial state. This first step is rooted in relationship building with Indigenous nations, after all, that is all of our responsibilities as Indigenous people living away from our homelands and following the teachings of our ancestors. In the next section, I further discuss this contentious space of Indigenous activism in Lekwungen territories.

Indigenous Activism

It is important to begin this next section differentiating between two types of movements that Indigenous people engage with, these are activism and resistance. Here, I understand activism to be putting in the effort to promote your ideas or to intervene in the current socio-political system that is at present, with a strong desire to make change within that socio-political system for the greater good of the group that you are actively engaging with. On the other hand, resistance can be understood as literally pushing back, rejecting and resisting the current order. It is a strong opposition to the current flow of happenings in the socio-political system and the refusal to accept something. As an example of resistance occurring outside of the state box, we can look to the ways that Coast Salish women have resisted state oppression since contact. The prior chapters of this thesis speak

to the strength and resiliency that these women have had in ensuring that their laws and governance continue on within their families even though they strongly oppose Western cultural values. In opposition we can see how some Indigenous activism centers the state by working in a way that fits inside the box that is the state.

Take for instance the most recent movement at the legislature buildings in Lekwungen territory in the winter of 2020. Youth who were engaged in that movement chose to center the province by utilizing and therefore validating state power by setting up and locking down the legislature. Rather than reframing that space as a sacred territory for the local people, the activists empowered the state by recognizing that land as powerful because of the legislature building and the function this building has for British Columbia. In this way, the erasure and exclusion of the local Songhees people was largely at play in this movement.

Further, I have seen this movement and related groups of organizers to be utilizing space such in and around the Greater Victoria harbor in a way that specifically reinforces White superiority. Rather than recognizing the power of that place to Lekwungen people, which was one of their main village sites, the youth who organized for Wet'suwet'en decided to lock down the capital cities legislature building. The failure to recognize the land for what it means to the local people shows the recognition of the authority of the nation state in activists minds. In a sort of twisted and internalized form of colonization, the local people and their history and connection to the land was left out and, instead, the legislature building was focused on as a site of power. The statecraft of the *colonialscape* is actively working to deny Coast Salish authority in the minds of both settler and Indigenous folks from other nations. This is apparent in the way that the ancestral village

sites of the Lekwungen people are not framed up in movements, nor are the Lekwungen nations consulted regarding laws and protocols for engaging political feats within their territory. In this way, the erasure of Coast Salish lands and denial of Lekwungen authority over their territory. These lands have now been so disconnected in the minds of settler and Indigenous visitors alike, and ironically acts of silencing and erasure occur within movements that are meant to center Indigenous governance and fight for Indigenous liberation.

Moreover, many people living within Canada, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, seem to have complicated what colonization has meant for Indigenous people. This over-complication regarding the critiques of colonization have allowed for some people to maintain a livelihood while philosophizing and theorizing, along with focusing their resistance in activist movements. The in-depth critique of colonization was useful in the early days of resistance, thinking back to AIM (American Indian Movement) in the 1970's and the way that these acts of pushing back were kept simple. For instance, Madonna Thunder Hawk (2007) speaks to the simplicity in movements focused on Native resistance in the 70's and how the expectations of getting paid or gaining credit was never a piece that guided the protests themselves. She speaks to the passion and yearning to return to ancestral teachings as opposed to viewing these movements as work and in today's society perhaps a highly viewed social media post. How would these movements become stronger or more inviting if folks stopped to think about the local people and *their* laws? How would these movements and projects operate differently if they centered and held up local people and laws without overcomplicating critiques of colonization?

As mentioned prior, the current critiques of colonization have become complicated and at times out of touch from reality for those stuck in the hamster wheel that is made up of surviving colonization. This over complication also leads to a disconnect for many Indigenous peoples creating classes of Indigenous folks who are well versed in the dialogue of decolonization and those who are not. What about those who live the violence, oppression and depression of colonization daily? Why are we not hearing from youth or young mothers on the 300+ reserves throughout British Columbia when their territories are being used as platforms for these movements?

Again, take for instance the stance that Indigenous youth took against the state within Lekwungen territory in the winter of 2020. As I watched this movement unfold in Lekwungen territory, I found it interesting that there were very few Lekwungen people attending these sit-ins and rallies, therefore their laws and teachings were not included in these events. The disconnect from local nations, people, laws and protocol became apparent in those moments. Although these events were made somewhat more accessible than other movements taken against colonization this stance/critique towards the state and the pipeline in Wet'suwet'en territory did not adhere to any of the local laws. That disconnect from local people, the disconnect with regards to relationship building and learning how to act within these territories has been lost or ignored and therefore working to actively silence *si´em slheni´* and the laws of her ancestors.

In recent weeks within Lekwungen territory, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations took a stance against activism that was occurring within their ancestral territories, publicly addressing young activists who defaced a statue of Queen Victoria that stood on the legislature grass. The Lekwungen people came together stating, "…we have protocols and

ways in which we conduct ourselves on others' territories. These protocols have been passed since time immemorial," (Sam & Thomas, 2021). The Lekwungen people stated that there is a lack of respect for Lekwungen laws within these territories and while they welcome concerns over sacred lands and waters, they do not permit outsiders to act without consulting the local Nations first. To deny local laws is to deny local Indigenous people in the work of decolonization and this becomes problematic because it leads to erasure of a local people. Take for instance the hash tag #LandBack, this movement is led by Indigenous folks who are confronting colonialism and "fighting for the right to our relationship with the earth. It's about coming back to ourselves, as sovereign Indigenous Nations," (Gamblin, n.d.). However, in the fight for sovereignty and relationship with land, without connecting first with local nations, folks are working to reproduce dynamics that deny Lekwungen authority in their own territories as they are being disregarded in numerous events regarding Indigenous liberation. It is imperative for folks engaging in activism when in someone else's territory, that they consult with local Indigenous folks who are working tirelessly to uphold the laws and governance of their ancestors on a daily basis.

Furthermore, there are needs within these territories that should be addressed before the hardships of other nations are brought over and onto these territories. Of course, colonization and the way that cities have been built within certain Indigenous territories also play a role in the way that these movements are poorly carried out. Ugarte et.al (2017) argue that urbanisation has been an integral part of the settler colonial project and its primary objective was land appropriation in order to replace social order to consolidate the emerging sovereign state. Within Victoria B.C. this erasure and domination has somehow

even expanded into some of the minds of many other Indigenous people who are visitors in another nation's territories – in colonized territories. Metropolis or not, these lands still need to center the laws and voice of the local Indigenous people whose ancestors have existed for thousands of years.

For instance, I doubt that we would ever see a group of Indigenous activists enter into secluded villages such as Ahousaht Nation or Heiltsuk Nation's territory to address particular issues without first consulting the local people. Because of the nature of settler development, which has divided the land up into urban, rural, industrial and reserve, they have never had to confront Indigenous folks entering their territory and ignoring their laws while resisting the state. Therefore, in centering the logics of the state, Indigenous people who are visitors are also drawn to these epicenters (such as places with legislature buildings, headquarters etc.) in order to bring awareness to the issues that they deem imperative to the movement. However, certain Nations that have been unfortunate enough to have their ancestral territories transformed for the development of these urban epicenters face a type of invasion from both settler and other Indigenous people alike. That being said, how would these protests and acts of resistance look different if indigenous activists approached their movements differently and followed the laws of the territories they were on? What differences would that make for the local people? Would we see an uptake in the way that these movements became more accessible to local people, youth and leadership?

Learning Local Laws, Respecting Local Protocol

Returning to the teachings of my relations, by centering Coast Salish teachings in movements that occur within Coast Salish territories you are ultimately centering Coast

Salish women. According to Sahiltineye of the Snuneymuxw Nation, governance within Salish societies has always been passed down through the female line and in this way women must, “always look at the larger picture, the whole everything, that’s why we have to as mothers and auntie’s, we have to look at our whole community and families,” (Personal Communication, 2018). By examining the complete picture, Coast Salish women will then find ways to pull everyone who is vulnerable to the center and then continue moving forward. These underlying teachings are ways that Coast Salish communities have centered women in the governance of the nation in the past and proved to sustain our ancestors for centuries.

Similarly, Hayweybuxw speaks about the role that women bring to our communities, stating that our role as women is to raise strong generations and bring medicine to the nation, as many women carry knowledge related to the spirit world, to old teachings and songs (Personal Communication, 2018). For instance, she shares that one of our teachings is to always be watching in order to see what is needed to be done, we are not to wait to be told what to do, and should be aware of what is needed by observing. She shares that she was taught to help in the kitchen of the Bighouse and that growing up as a child, she was told to be aware of what was needed to be done in order to ensure the work in the kitchen flowed smoothly. By following the teachings that are shared by Coast Salish women, these folks would be watching and learning to best understand what is needed for the people. A big piece of this watching and learning would be rooted in connecting to the local nations and understanding what is needed there. By centering these teachings, Coast Salish women too would be placed at the forefront of any movement because it is the

women in our communities who bring strong medicine to our people and who are always watching and knowing what is needed for the sake of the people.

Coast Salish culture is rooted in supporting our relatives up and down this island and sharing good energy. We are always preparing and thinking ahead to be sure we are providing support and this support is always given in return because Coast Salish culture is about returning what has been shared with you. Help is in our nature and is intended to be done in all aspects of life: death, new life, and in ceremony (Sahiltineye, Personal Communication, 2018). Sahiltineye speaks to what is needed for our people to move forward, stating that our teachings need to be centered and drawn to the forefront. She goes on to share how Coast Salish teachings are meant to keep us strong and encourage self-discipline.

Furthermore, as for activism and especially movements led by Indigenous youth, it is becoming apparent many are being guided by folks who have been disconnected from their culture. I understand that colonization has impacted the way that people have maintained connections to their territories, teachings and even families, however, when taking up a fight against the state, capitalism and colonization, we must be armed with the teachings of our ancestors to hold strong. As Celestine states it is our teachings that we can use as a type of armour against our oppressors because, “Everything we learn is what keeps us strong and keeps up grounded, living in today’s two worlds is really hard, we need our roots to be strong in this White man world so it can’t eat us up…” (Personal Communication, 2018). Without the protection of our teachings, we can be severely impacted by the hate and racism that many colonial societies hold. Furthermore, we can easily get lost, making swift decisions that don’t include the Coast Salish foundational

teachings of relationship building and consultation. Although Indigenous structures of governance differ vastly across Canada, one foundational law is the respect one must carry while on another's' territory. Long ago, this disrespect could have been met with swift consequences and even death (Chaw-win-is, personal communication 2017). Today, many activists and youth do not carry the same safeguards of respect while engaging in state rejection and that in itself can cause harm not only to the local people, but also the activists themselves by further increasing tensions with local nations.

When engaging in a fight for the land, resisting the colonial state, and taking a stance for other Indigenous nations and people, it then becomes imperative to ensure you are walking with your teachings alongside you. Folks should be focused on relearning what is needed to be in relationship with other Indigenous people and nations and try to understand how our ancestors held relations with one another before we take up the work of activism as strangers to certain lands. I find myself asking, how does one pick and choose the Indigenous fight or movement to support, and allow that to override the laws of the local people? It is backwards and not a part of what it means to be Indigenous if one cannot centre the laws of the local people first. We can see that troubles come to rise and the re-colonization of territories happens as visiting Indigenous people impose their teachings, beliefs or lack of teachings on another's territories.

Conclusion

This current era of reconciliation within Canada has encouraged many different colonial institutions such as governments, non-profits and universities to participate in the discourse of healing, apologizing and telling truths in order to move together as one unified

nation. Throughout this chapter I have examined ways that due to reconciliation, Indigenous people and particularly Coast Salish people, have been negatively impacted by the responses that different institutions and people have taken towards healing, learning, and resisting. I have also highlighted how in the fight for Indigenous liberation by other Indigenous folks not from local territories also, ironically, contribute to the erasure and silencing of local laws and therefore Coast Salish *slheni´*.

My argument is that by upholding Coast Salish women's authority we are also working to reduce violence against her. Coast Salish women need to be able to freely express their own agency in order to fulfill the roles that are included in our governance structures. The interviews woven throughout this thesis highlight my relative's agency that all Coast Salish women have which is connected to Coast Salish law. The key to empowering Coast Salish women and their nations is working to foster space that allows for the expression of *si´em slhunlhéni´* and their Coast Salish authority.

I have stated that without centering Coast Salish people and laws within each of these three sites of contention discussed above, erasure and further silencing of a colonized people will persist. Without acknowledging the teachings regarding centering Coast Salish laws and governance, these movements and responses that are wrapped tightly in good intentions can ultimately end up perpetuating the initial colonial tools that were designed to ignore and disregard local people. In this way, the three sites that I have addressed: non-profits, Indigenous scholarship and Indigenous activism have unintentionally worked to uphold and perpetuate colonial systems and relations that deny Coast Salish authority over their own territories and do so in the name of either decolonization or reconciliation.

Woven throughout each site of contention are examples of the ways that I, as a Coast Salish woman, have seen the dangers of the *colonialscape* at play in Lekwungen territory. I argue that with the onset of colonization, not only are settler folks taking up these theories of statecraft in their daily actions, but so too are some Indigenous folks who are away from their territories and living or working within Coast Salish homelands. How ironic to be fighting against Indigenous oppression and erasure but then re-enacting that colonial oppression unto local Indigenous people because their laws and governance are not centered in the work that is being done within their territories.

If these sites of contention do not begin to shift to incorporate local voices into their movements, superficial reconciliation (Regan, 2018) will continue to persist, suffocating the local people of whose ancestral laws have maintained these territories for centuries. As Regan (2018) discusses, superficial reconciliation is a main contributor to the deepening divide between the Canadian state as colonizer and Indigenous peoples. No matter how much energy or dollars are spent on reconciliation, efforts across the contentious site of non-profits will continue to deny, erase, or ignore Coast Salish laws unless the teachings and voices of local peoples are centered. No matter the strength of the scholarship or protest that is being enacted in Coast Salish territory, without first building relationship, centering Coast Salish laws and governance and holding up Salish *slheni´* and children, the damage and re-colonization of Coast Salish peoples will continue. Continuing to deny Coast Salish laws, and therefore the leadership of Coast Salish women, continuously works to oppress the local Nations all while asserting foreign systems of governance.

This chapter has highlighted ways that the state (by way of non-profits) and those that work in these organizations (mostly White folks) are working within colonial

frameworks and institutions while attempting to advance reconciliation to push for Indigenous healing. Yet it has also illustrated the impacts of this work on Coast Salish peoples, especially Coast Salish *slheni´*, who have not been centered in any sort of reconciliation process or attempts to reduce state harm within their own territories. Because local laws are not drawn out in movements or programs implemented by non-profits, the local people will continue to be left behind, ignored and ultimately silenced within their territories.

Furthermore, academia can also bring about damage for Indigenous peoples if an Indigenous scholar does not hold tightly onto teachings of Indigenous people that rely on relationship building. If these scholars do not first center and bring their community forward in the work that they do, they too are complicit in the ongoing oppression of Indigenous people. To complicate decolonization and twist it so that many Indigenous folks stuck in the daily struggle of colonization itself cannot access or make sense of the convoluted writing at hand, then what good is it for the masses of Indigenous people often trying to make sense of their colonized worlds. From academia to activism, there is danger in taking up activists' movements when not properly adhering to local teachings regarding relationship building and reciprocity and then pulling forth your own teachings from your homelands. Often that order gets twisted, or people come to the table empty handed and not prepared to bring forward any teachings at all.

The ignorance to abiding to local laws brings much harm to the local Indigenous people. Already, we know that Indigenous women face the highest amount of violence in Canada, and a leading factor in the violence and death that they face is the way that colonization has attempted to breakdown their positions power within their nations. This

disregard for Coast Salish womanhood is only perpetuated when other Indigenous folks come to their homelands and disengage with them, their communities and their laws. Ultimately, this chapter has highlighted the ways that movements related to reconciliation and decolonization have, at times, brought more harm than good to Coast Salish communities and their women. How are the lives of Lekwungen women and girls directly benefiting from the work of Indigenous scholars at UVic or Indigenous activists on their lands? How could Indigenous activists engage the unhoused women from Coast Salish nations who are sleeping outside and perhaps down the road from their action?

I do not have the answers to how this work can effectively occur but I do recognize that one of the biggest pieces to this colonial puzzle is to ensure that visiting Indigenous people and with Settler folks need to carefully engage with the local peoples before any work begins, and to build up relationships with Coast Salish nations and find ways to center these people. The answers can be found within the local laws and governance of Coast Salish people. These laws were strong enough to maintain Coast Salish socio-political societies for thousands of years and when engaged appropriately will pull people forward in a way that brings about positive change for everyone, and most notably Coast Salish *slheni´*.

Sahiltineye states that one way that we can be strong and begin to heal as Indigenous people is by sharing our stories with one another, and by learning from one another to move forward to the future (Personal Communication, 2018). By sharing stories, we are building relationships, trust and continuously consulting with one another – these are topics that this chapter has critiqued as the missing links in responses to reconciliation and resurgence. If we as Indigenous visitors and Settlers are able to center local people,

listen to their teachings and stories and wait for the correct time to share our own, there would be positive movements forward with regards to healing from colonization and also with asserting our Indigenous selves as rightful caretakers of specific territories. Coming together and respecting the processes that have been laid out by the relatives that I sat with who have shared stories and teachings with me regarding moving forward are so important. By taking up these teachings in Coast Salish territories we can work together to facilitate change and produce strong resistance against a colonial society that was meant to erase, assimilate or even kill the Indigenous people.

By understanding the leadership roles that Coast Salish women play within their communities, movements for change can empower the women who are rendered most vulnerable in colonial society, contributing to the restoration of the power they once had to voice concerns and be listened to. By taking up these teachings, we are resisting the way that the colonial state has attempted to erase Coast Salish ways of governance and therefore Coast Salish women. The words that have been shared in teachings from my relatives can help us to understand the pivotal role that Coast Salish women have within their communities today and always.

By finding ways to uphold these teachings within all that happens within Lekwungen, Snuneymuxw or Quw'ustun territories, we are pushing back against the state and showing them and all settlers that Coast Salish women are still very much here and still very much engaged in ancestral laws that have maintained their people for thousands and thousands of years. Taking steps to center these laws and teachings will naturally involve centering Coast Salish women and, by doing so, we are showing society that our women are not rapeable, invisible, or worthless. In fact, we are showing colonial society

how powerful our women are to our communities and therefore pushing back against state violence and all behaviours that engage or encourage violence against Coast Salish women.

Reducing violence against Coast Salish women means upholding their authority within their own homelands. This is required to push beyond the current reconciliation and decolonization paradigms and to ensure that neither saving (in the programs of non-profit's) nor silencing them (in certain aspects of Indigenous activism and academia) is allowed to carry on in the fashion that it currently is. Ignoring a Coast Salish woman's authority and her role within her territory only furthers her oppression; there need to be organizations, institutions and movements that draw in and include Coast Salish governance, laws and teachings in order to reach a level of freedom for the local Salish people.

Conclusion

This thesis has addressed the impacts that colonization has had on Coast Salish governance structures while examining the ways that *si´em slheni´* have been removed from positions of authority and at times had their agency stripped from them. Through violent forms of hetero-patriarchy, gender-based violence, racist and colonial ideologies, and through restrictive policy and legislation, the settler state was able to gain control over Coast Salish communities and governance structures. As highlighted throughout this paper, Coast Salish women held and continue to hold, powerful positions within their nations related to governance, upholding family and community and ensuring the growth of the nation. European settlement within Coast Salish territories directly impacted the way that these women were able to engage with their communities as patriarchy and racist ideologies targeted them on multiple levels.

This thesis was written for my relatives, community and other Coast Salish nations. By working to illustrate the colonial history of southern Vancouver Island and by making connections to how particular pieces of this history has impacted our nations and *si´em slheni´* I hope that Coast Salish people are better able to understand how and why there has been so much disruption to our way of life, governance and the roles that we have within our communities. We have fought hard to maintain the roles that our ancestors have shared with us and also to survive within this colonized world. I hope that my Coast Salish relatives begin to use this work as a stepping stone to unravelling the harms of hetero-patriarchy, capitalism and the negative impacts that western institutions have had on our people. Other people from Coast Salish nations carry teachings and enact

the ways of our old people. I hope that they can take this work and dig even deeper in finding how legislation, policy, racist and sexist ideologies and western concepts have negatively impacted all members of our community here on the coast. By examining and then drawing out these harms we as a people can more easily combat the colonial impacts that we face while living within our own territories.

Today, we see our mothers, aunties, grandmas and great-grandma's as the backbone to our families and our communities both in our longhouses and outside of it, they are the strength to so much that we do as *xwulmuxw*. I always wonder, what would it look like if these women regained their authority outside of our communities and were once again held up according to Salish laws from all those living within their territories? Things could change immensely with regards to the violence and mistreatment these women face daily if other institutions recognized the authority that every person belonging to Coastal Nations holds within their territories

In addition to writing for Coast Salish People, I also hope that this work can speak to other Indigenous peoples and that they are able to take the framework and transfer it to their own territories centering the historical analysis and the breakdown of colonization within their nations alongside recentering their laws and authority in the roles that folks have within their nations. And finally, I hope that this work speaks to settler people as well, so they too recognize the importance of maintaining their responsibility in relationship building with local nations. They need to ensure that while they are: implementing programs and projects (via non-profits), ignoring the value of upholding relationships in institutions, and by engaging as allies in activism but not centering local laws, that are working to uphold *si´em slheni´* so they are not actively silencing her

authority. The refusal to take up local laws and teachings that value each member of Coast Salish society are in place to ensure that our nations are functioning with all members well-being in mind, to undermine these values is to deny the local people and their ancestors their inherent right to maintain their authority within their territory.

Chapter one of this work examines the vital role Coast Salish women have had within their communities. This section argues that Coast Salish women have been removed from systems of power by examining: settlement within their territories, legislated policy and the way in which *settler statecraft* (Simpson, 2016) has played out within Coast Salish territory. Unsurprisingly, patriarchy and violence against Indigenous women were central factors in the disruption to Coast Salish authority. By utilizing theories based in understanding *gendered nationalism* (McClintock,1997), *wastelanding* (Voyles, 2014, and the *colonialscape* (Hunt, 2014) I make the connections between how European settlement impacted not only Coast Salish women but also Salish governance and territories. I argue that the settler colonial state depended on the marginalization and dispossession of Indigenous women in order to secure itself as sovereign within Coast Salish territories.

McClintock's theory of a *gendered nationalism* is useful to frame up how nationalism was gendered and focused on colonial understandings of racial inequity to ensure that patriarchy and Whiteness were valued in settler communities. In order to assert settler dominance in the form of a national governance system, which directly opposes Coast Salish governance, *si'em slheni´* and her authority needed to be broken. I illustrate how *gendered nationalisms* were developed within Coast Salish territory by examining from a historical institutional analysis the settlement on southern Vancouver Island. I

highlight many critical junctures that worked to actively silence, erase and disregard Coast Salish authority and therefore remove the agency of *si´em slheni´*

Hunt's (2014) theory of the *colonialscape* is situated within this thesis to assist in understanding settlement within Snuneymuxw territory. The *colonialscape* becomes useful to recognize the impacts that colonialism has had on Coast Salish women, their territories and their nations. The legal categorization of the 'Indian' that stemmed from the *Indian Act* became the legal rationale that Indigenous people were incapable of governing themselves, that they were inherently backwards and dangerous. This in turn led to the racist settler ideology that European law would then foster civilization for Indigenous people therefore subjugating them to the colonial state. Throughout this civilizing mission *si'em slheni´* and her role within her community along with the authority she held was violently attacked. The *colonialscape* paved the way for this violence to occur and to even be understood as natural and needed. Colonial relationships are continuously needed to be remade in order to dominate space and territory. Within Snuneymuxw territory, White settlement utilized the *colonialscape* to foster and maintain settler domination over a land and people and therefore disempowered *si'em slhunlhéni´.*

Finally, Voyles (2017) theory of *wastelanding* becomes useful when situating settler statecraft with the settlement of Nanaimo BC because it highlights how colonial settlement and the notion manifest destiny, *terra nullius,* has led to a complex and violent relationship between settler and Indigenous people. Voyles argues that wastelanding is a way that settlers actually 'settle' in to Indigenous people's home by violating treaty, invitation or responsibility to self-governing Indigenous nations. The understanding of wasted-land goes beyond just extracting resources and labor, it is also grounded in

affirming settler invasion grounded in the belief that much of Indigenous homelands are barren or unused. This culturally agreed upon logic by settlers creates a path for natural settlement and that Indigenous lands naturally belong to the White man. I highlight how settlement within Snuneymuxw territory was founded on the *wastelanding* in order for White settlement to establish itself. to White settlers but sufficient enough for a colonized and subjugated people.

This chapter also highlights how heteropatriarchal and Christian norms established national interests that would ensure a stronghold over Snuneymuxw territory, governance and gender roles for the Snuneymuxw people. In this way, Snuneymuxw women were directly impacted as they could no longer engage their agency and power of choice that they once had when in positions of authority.

The second chapter of this thesis, I argue that through violent legislation and policy coastal women were physically controlled through the *Vagrancy Act* of 1869. These are ways that the settler government directly attacked the roles that Coast Salish women had within their communities. As illustrated, the restriction of women being able to travel to hold up a foundational teaching grounded in Coast Salish governance and that is to travel to practice governance and ceremony with relatives and neighboring nations was one way that Coast Salish governance was disrupted.

In addition, this chapter also addresses the impacts that loss of language and culture has had on Coast Salish people was immeasurable. I illustrate how the settler state pathologized and controlled Indigenous bodies by way of the Indian hospitals and residential schools that this too has impacted Coast Salish identity. The denial for Coast Salish people to engage *snuw´uyulh* to ensure spiritual and emotional well-being was one

way that colonial control impacted coastal governance and therefore the roles that *si´em slheni´* held. Indian hospitals can be seen as one institution that worked to disrupt the foundation of *snuw´uyulh* impacting the nations governance structure and kept nations strong, functioning and healthy.

In the third chapter, I address the ways that women's role in coastal governance and ceremonial practices was impacted when the amendments to the *Indian Act* was made in 1884 in the Potlatch Ban. This assault on the power of *si´em slheni´,* and her role in cultural ceremonies such as the *stlunuq* (potlatch), and also in transmitting ancestral teachings to younger generations that teach the values of our *snuw´uyulh* impacted Coast Salish people. Looking back to the Lekwungen house pole, we can see that Coast Salish women hold immense value in relation to ceremony, culture and governance. The denial for Coast Salish people to engage in their *stlunuq* was a denial for Coast Salish women to step into their roles to ensure the survival of their governance structures and nations. This disruption in the role of *si´em slheni´* only worked to weaken her position of authority within her community and general settler society as patriarchy quickly settled itself across the territories of Coast Salish people.

Coast Salish economy is connected to the *stlunuq* and can be understood as one foundational underpinning to these events. By examining capitalism and western economy and comparing that to Coast Salish economy, we can better understand that impacts that the forced shift from Coast Salish economies, based on subsistence and relationship building, to that of capitalism and labour production has impacted the way that Coast Salish women maintained their roles and also were able to find balance in their daily lives. Today, the expectations for Indigenous women to maintain their cultural roles within the

Longhouse, their communities and their families alongside caring and providing financially for their families. As highlighted in many of the interviews I had with Coast Salish women, this tends to lead to burnout and exhaustion as expectations of Coast Salish women have grown immensely while they attempt to keep up with the expectations of their community and colonial society.

Finally, in chapter four of this thesis, I argue that this current era of reconciliation has led to negative impacts for Coast Salish communities. I also draw attention to the way that many Indigenous people who are not from Coast Salish nations are not maintaining their responsibilities as visitors in Coast Salish territories therefore harming Coast Salish nations. I make this argument by identifying three sites of contention that have grown in response from state-led reconciliation and acts of Indigenous resistance.

The first site of contention examines the way that non-profits have taken up space in the reconciliation movement, but are failing to center local people's governance and voice in these projects meant for wellness or healing. These organizations remain complacent in their colonial authority and also the inability that is present in breaking away from western forms of bureaucracy. This works against Coast Salish nations because many factors that make up Coast Salish governance vastly contradict western bureaucratic structures. This in turn works to deny applying the foundations of Coast Salish values into the projects being funded by non-profit agencies ultimately working to silence these nations and the say they have in their healing and well-being.

Secondly, I work to uncover how the institution of academia works to erase Coast Salish authority by attempting to take up reconciliation and focusing mostly on a one-size-fits-all approach. This in turn has led Indigenous scholars studying at the University of

Victoria into the colonial trap of perpetuating the erasure for local nations such as the Lekwungen people and in this case *si´em slheni´*. I examine the way that Indigenous scholarship has been taken up in Lekwungen territory and illustrate that many Indigenous scholars, who are not from these territories, are failing to center local nations in the work they are doing and rarely working to build relationship with Lekwungen people in order to hold up Coast Salish authority.

The third site of contention argues that many Indigenous scholars engage in activism to resist the state, but more often than not within Lekwungen territory we see that the local nations are rarely consulted. Lekwungen values and voices are not being centered and their laws and protocols are not adhered to. This denial or exclusion acts to silence local Indigenous people and therefore deny Coast Salish women their power and agency just as we had seen in the first two chapters of this work. By removing *si´em slheni´* authority through colonial tactics such as through asserting racist ideologies, racist and sexist legislation and pathologizing bodies, the state also worked to erase *si´em slheni´* and make valid hetero-patriarchy, capitalism and western norms. Silencing *si´em slheni´* and her authority within her own territory only leads to further dispossession and violence. I argue that centering Coast Salish voice in Lekwungen territory in the fight for Indigenous liberation will work to counteract the violence that these women face within their own territories because it will re-instate their authority as *si´em slheni´*

Finally, woven throughout all four chapters of this thesis are the stories of strength, resilience, power and brilliance of five Coast Salish women who have survived a direct colonial attack because they represent *si´em slheni´*. These women have ensured to carry on the teachings and strength of their ancestors with younger generations. Their stories are

key to this work as it was these *slhunlhéni´* who illustrated for me the critique of the colonial state that is present in this thesis. As I sat and visited with these women, I was able to pull out common threads in the way that they have witnessed and understood how colonization. They also recognized how colonization has impacted their roles as *si´em slheni´* and also the way that their communities and governance have been impacted. Without the words, guidance and teachings that these women shared with me, this paper would not have encapsulated the direct assault that colonization has taken on our people.

Ultimately, all of these women have called for similar actions to be taken in order to combat colonialism and that is calling for a return of our *snuw´uyulh* to be actively taken up in everything that we do as Coast Salish people. I was constantly reminded by these *slhunlhéni´* how powerful our ancestors were and how powerful our laws and teachings are. By engaging these teachings and ensuring that our children are reared up with this power and knowledge we then hold an unbreakable power against our oppressor, against violence and against colonization as a whole. Our *snuw´uyulh* enables our agency, fosters our self-regulation and relationship with others, and also demands that others visiting our territories, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, respect, comply and consult with our nations and our laws and governance.

Likewise, it is not only Coast Salish people who need to commit ancestral laws of this land but also: settlers, Indigenous people from other nations, and all levels of government, NGO's, institutions, the list goes on. Re-establishing these systems of authority within the various sites and levels of governance that Coast Salish people maintained for thousands of years is necessary for *si´em slheni´* in order to combat the violence, oppression and dispossession that she currently face within today's colonial

society. Without re-establishing these systems, *si'em slhunlhéni´* will continue to be dispossessed of their authority over their bodies, families and lands.

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