ONKWEHÓN:WE WOMEN'S ROLES IN REGENERATING AND RECLAIMING THEIR ANCESTRAL FOOD SYSTEMS: A PATHWAY TO HEALING

BY

KATSISTOHKWÍ:IO JACCO

B.A, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, 2017

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Onkwehón:we Women's Roles in Regenerating and Reclaiming their Ancestral Food Systems: A Pathway to Healing

By

Katsistohkwí:io Jacco

B.A, Syracuse University, 2017

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Jeff Corntassel, Supervisor
Department of Indigenous Studies

Dr. Rita Dhamoon, Departmental Member
Department of Political Science

ABSTRACT

Onkwehón:we Food Systems throughout Turtle Island have always been and continue to be foundational to Onkwehón:we worldviews, social interactions with all living kin, and community health. However, the process of colonization and federations of the settler states now known as "Canada" and "The United States," have greatly impacted all Onkwehón:we peoples' abilities and capacities to maintain their ancestral food systems; this thesis will illuminate how colonial-imposed structural barriers, laws and phenomena such as the Indian Act, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited (MMIWG2S+) gender-based genocide and environmental violence have particularly affected Onkwehón:we women's engagement with their ancestral food systems historically and continually. Yet, Onkwehón:we women have remarkably found innovative ways to regenerate their ancestral food systems, which is an actionable way for them to reclaim and reembody their traditional roles in leadership, governance, decision-making and nation-building. Underlying impacts of these undertakings by Onkwehón:we women are improved wholistic health and wellness for Onkwehón:we women, which can pave a positive pathway for Onkwehón:we communal healing especially by promoting collective relations, collaboration, and normalizing women's leadership. To bring this theoretical argument to life, I include a case-study of an Indigenous food sovereignty project that I initiated and co-created in my community, Kahnawà:ke. As a Kanien'kehá:ka, Rotinonhsón:ni and Onkwehón:we woman, initiating an Indigenous food sovereignty project with the ultimate goal of contributing to the regeneration of my own ancestral food system was important for me to attempt to address community health issues and improve community relationships through fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for Onkwehón:we women. Ultimately, this thesis celebrates Onkwehón:we women's excellence in resurgence, particularly highlighting their work in reclaiming and regenerating Onkwehón:we food systems.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I must acknowledge all of the sacrifices that my parents, Mandie and Louis, have had to make throughout their lifetime to ensure that I could achieve all of my dreams. They have taught me to never give up on what you truly wish for in life and to give all of my effort in everything I undertake, and I would not be where I am today without them. I would also like to thank all of my family and friends in Kahnawà:ke for their endless support, words of encouragement throughout my academic career. To my nephews and nieces, Kaden, Kylen, Liana and Romy; you all inspire me to be the best auntie and role model that I can be. I also would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Jeff Corntassel for his guidance, time and endless support throughout my time as a graduate student at the University of Victoria. I am so thankful for the time and effort that he has invested in me. I would also like to thank Dr. Rita Dhamoon for her insights and attention to my work over the course of my studies; she has contributed immensely to my political awareness and critical thinking and for that I am truly grateful. Finally, I would like to thank my partner for being by my side throughout this process; his hard work, dedication and studying alongside me truly helped me to overcome the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented in completing this project.

KEY TERMS

1. **Áhsen Nikontennò:sen:** is a Kanien'kéha term that roughly translates to "The Three Sisters", which are Corn, Beans and Squash.

2. **Food Sovereignty:** this term is used in the context of the definition of food sovereignty by La Via Campesina, which is "the right of nations and peoples to control their own food systems, including their own markets, production modes, food cultures and environments" (cited in Wittman et al., 2010, p. 2). This definition food sovereignty does not include or encompass the right of Onkwehón:we to re-establish their land-based food and political systems that simultaneously uphold their sacred relationships to the land, culture, spirituality and future generations (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 11).

3. **Hao' Tewakhón:ni:** the name of the pilot-project that I initiated and co-created at Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa. Roughly translates to "Let's All Cook Together".

4. **Indigenous Food Sovereignty:** refers to "a connection to land-based food and political systems and seeks to uphold sacred responsibilities to nurture relationships with the land, culture, spirituality and future generations" (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 11). This concept extends beyond the conventional definition of food sovereignty because it encompasses and emphasizes the regeneration of Onkwehón:we ancestral food systems, which must be a process that is inclusive of all Onkwehón:we no matter the sex, gender, age or ability of an individual. Inclusivity is important for dismantling existing barriers and hierarchies that may currently be in place in order for Onkwehón:we to participate in food regeneration projects and activities. Indigenous food sovereignty, as a concept, also speaks to the fact that a pre-existing relationship to the land and waters was established among Onkwehón:we prior to colonization that non-Onkwehón:we people on Turtle Island have not necessarily inherited.

5. **Ionkhi'nistén:'a Tsi Iohontsá:te**: a Kanien'kéha term that roughly translates to "Our mother the earth".

6. **Kahnawa'kehró:non:** the people of Kahnawà:ke.

7. **Kanien'kéha**: the original language of the Kanien'kehá:ka.

8. **Kanien'kehá:ka**: is the Kanien'kéha word for the name of my nation, which is also commonly known as the Mohawk nation.

9. **Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa:** A Kanien'kéha immersion elementary school located in Kahnawà:ke, QC.

10. **Onénhste:** translates to "corn" and is used in reference of Rotinonhsón:ni traditional corn, such as Rotinonhsón:ni white, blue or red corn.

11. **Onkwehón:we:** a Kanien'kéha word that roughly translates to "the original people that come from the land". I use the term Onkwehón:we in reference to Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island.

12. **Onon'onsè:ra:** translates to "squash" or "pumpkin" and is used in reference of Rotinonhsón:ni traditional squash plants, such as crookneck, pumpkin and butternut.

13. **Osahè:ta:** translates to "beans" and is used in reference of Rotinonhsón:ni traditional beans, such as pole and bush beans.

14. **Rotinonhsón:ni:** is a Kanien'kéha word that roughly translates to "they make the house". This translation was provided to me by my friend and Kanien'kéha language speaker and teacher, Kahsennókwas Jacobs. Rotinonhsón:ni is a Confederacy of six Onkwehón:we nations, which are the Kanien'kehá:ka, Onyonta'a:ká, Ononda'gega, Cayuga, Onondowa'ga and Tuscarora. The Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy was established nearly one thousand years ago according to Oral tradition with five nations. In 1722, the Tuscarora nation joined the Confederacy. Each of the six nations share similar cultural values, practices and teachings, the Iroquoian language group, and a food system.

15. **Tiohnhéhkwen:** is a Kanien'kéha word that translates to nourishment that sustains the people physically, mentally, and spiritually. The three foods that are linked to the word Tiohnhéhkwen are Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra, also known as Corn, Beans and Squash. Through Kanien'kehá:ka oral traditional, I have been reminded throughout my lifetime that Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra are the most significant foods for all nations apart of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, as they are said to be the most nutritious foods for our people. I will use this word in this project when I am referring to the food system of my nation and the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, because this is the best way to define our ancestral food system.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Research Focus and Objectives

"Food is more than nutrition; it is bound up with social relations, culture and meanings of health".
-Hoover, 2017, p. 169

Across Turtle Island, the movement to restore and regenerate Onkwehón:we[1] ancestral food systems among Onkwehón:we and within their communities is momentous. From the *Indigenous Food Freedom Schools*[2] in Secwepemc territories and Vancouver, BC, to the *Kanenhí:io Ionkwaienthón:hakie* initiative in Akwesasne[3], NY - Onkwehón:we from coast to coast are striving to re-establish their connections to and consumption of the food systems that sustained their ancestors since time immemorial. Food is a powerful aspect of Onkwehón:we cultures because it is interconnected with language, the wholistic health of the society, the land and waters, as well as governance. It is therefore a key factor in both distinguishing and defining a specific nation as a distinct, self-determining and sovereign entity, especially since there are several hundred Onkwehón:we nations that pre-date the federations of the United States and Canada on Turtle Island. Historically, Onkwehón:we food systems are place-based, made up of various living beings that come from the natural world, such as plants, animals, water beings and fungi. Therefore, the foods that a specific nation consumed prior to colonization on Turtle Island are intrinsic to Onkwehón:we identity because they are related to and come from the specific lands

[1] "Onkwehón:we" is a Kanien'kéha word that translates to "The Original People of the Land". I will use this term throughout this work to describe the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island.
[2] The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty in British Columbia launched two cohorts of the Indigenous Food Freedom School in 2020. The purpose of this new initiative is to revitalize Coast Salish food systems by producing an educational toolkit on topics such as Indigenous food rights, permaculture, job opportunities in regenerative farming and the Secwepemc food and water system (Gilpin, 2020).
[3] A grassroots initiative in the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Akwesasne that aims to support families with agricultural projects. Home projects have ranged from supporting families to growing Haudenosaunee white corn to teaching them how to raise chickens and pigs (Hoover, 2017).

and/or waters that Onkwehón:we variously lived on. Onkwehón:we have always had distinct and important connections to the land and waters that they were surrounded by because their natural intelligence and connections to other living kin within their habitat contributed to their understanding that all that was needed for sustenance and nourishment surrounded them.

This project will illuminate Onkwehón:we ancestral food systems as contemporary sites of resilience, strength and resurgence for all Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island. The objective of this project is to demonstrate the importance of particularly Onkwehón:we women's involvement and engagement with their respective ancestral food systems as imperative to reclaiming their pre-colonial roles, responsibilities and empowerment within their societies. The scope of this thesis concentrates on cisgender Onkwehón:we women's reclamation and involvement in regenerating their ancestral food systems and in the Indigenous food sovereignty movement contemporarily. I am aware and respectful of the fact that there are broader conceptions of gender and I recognize that genders which do not conform to the binary of cis-male and cis-female also immensely contribute to Onkwehón:we resurgence in a variety of ways. However, based on my lived experience as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman from the community of Kahnawà:ke, I am most equipped to focus my scope on Onkwehón:we women's roles and responsibilities in this particular realm of Onkwehón:we resurgence. This inspiration comes from both lived experience and also knowledge that fellow-Kanien'kehá:ka women have experienced hardships when attempting to assert their knowledge, authority and participation in the regeneration of our food system in the community. I created this project in part to shed light on the hardships that Onkwehón:we women continue to face when asserting their presence in cultural revitalization work and with the hope that this can continue to be improved upon. I am aware of the fact that there are power dynamics that are often unfavorable to women in my community, to which I hope regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen can help people begin to question or be inspired to dismantle. All of that to say, my ultimate purpose in

writing this thesis is to focus on Onkwehón:we excellence, joy and women's empowerment through a foodway lens.

The key questions of this Thesis are:

1) How have Onkwehón:we women's engagement with their ancestral food systems been impacted by colonization? What can Onkwehón:we women gain by making profound efforts in restoring their ancestral food systems?
2) How can the reclamation and regeneration of Onkwehón:we food systems help to heal Onkwehón:we intergenerational trauma? Can healing intergenerational trauma in this way help to promote restored respect for women within their communities?

Thesis Statement

In contemporary literature, there is recognition that structural barriers that operate under settler-colonialism are determinants of health for Onkwehón:we women and Onkwehón:we communities and nations in general (Greenwood, de Leeuw and Lindsay, 2018; Reading, 2018; Holmes and Hunt, 2015). Since there is very little existing literature and scholarship that analyzes the connection between Onkwehón:we women's historical and ongoing experience with the forced removal from their ancestral food systems and the negative impacts on their personal wholistic health and wellness, this thesis will contribute to filling this gap. Onkwehón:we women's diminished capacity to engage with all aspects of their ancestral food systems, largely as a result of colonization and ongoing settler-colonial structures of oppression, assaults the ability of the entire community or nation's ability to do so as well. This is because of the fact that Onkwehón:we women have and continue to be central to decision-making and governance within their nations; and because of their natural abilities and kinship ties in giving, sustaining and nurturing new life that contributes to the replication of Indigeneity. To clarify, Onkwehón:we women who cannot or

choose to not produce new life via birth can and do still hone many abilities in nurturing, growing and sustaining life in unique ways, whether that is via kinship roles, relations with nonhuman life, or spiritual connections. Although I do not seek to make pan-Onkwehón:we generalizations, it is a fact that many Onkwehón:we nations throughout Turtle Island were societies that were matrilineal in nature. Onkwehón:we women typically had distinct roles, responsibilities and leadership duties within their societies, and were also largely responsible for passing down cultural knowledge and practices to subsequent generations (Monture 1995; Monture and McGuire, 2009, Million, 2013). Further, "in many Onkwehón:we traditions of customary law, women figure as this embodiment of the relations that configurate order into the community, the community's relationship to the earth and to wellness" (Sarah Deer qtd in Million, 2013, p. 38).

Onkwehón:we women's unique experience with depravation from their ancestral food systems is a form of violence that echoes ostracization and dispossession that has and continues to occur through the Indian Act, gender-based violence and attempted genocide. Based on this experiential historic violence, I will argue that Onkwehón:we women's efforts to reclaim and regenerate their ancestral food systems is a means to personal and communal empowerment and healing on Turtle Island. Leading or participating in Indigenous food sovereignty projects is a tangible, actionable and meaningful undertaking that Onkwehón:we women are currently engaged in, or such activities should be supported and expanded. This master's thesis seeks to make the correlation between an Onkwehón:we woman's increased capacity to regenerate her ancestral food system and the positive effects that this may present for her, her family, community and nation in terms of healing from intergenerational trauma as a collective.

Ultimately, this master's thesis will argue that that **Onkwehón:we women's reclamation and involvement in the regeneration of their ancestral food systems is a response to the ongoing health challenges and inequities they continue to face, which includes**

disproportionate and high levels of gender-based violence; further, such reclamation has the power to pave a positive pathway for Onkwehón:we communal healing especially by promoting collective relations, collaboration, and reinstating women's leadership. By reinstating and (re)normalizing Onkwehón:we women's roles and capacities as leaders in Indigenous food sovereignty and ancestral food regeneration projects, a movement can be fostered toward building restored respect, love and fairness within Onkwehón:we communities for women. I truly believe that with the growing awareness about the true history of Onkwehón:we genocide on Turtle Island (Sinclair, Little Child and Wilson, 2015), the recent Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirited (MMIWG2S+) federal report (Buller et al., 2019), as a society at large, we are at a turning point in terms of actively choosing to re-build positive relations among all living kin. Regeneration work geared toward Onkwehón:we food systems has the power to facilitate an environment that promotes positivity, respect and fairness for all living beings, which is why I believe that it can contribute to addressing violence and unequal relationships that may exist within Onkwehón:we communities. Addressing these types of issues is crucial in order to begin the necessary work for Onkwehón:we to address intergenerational trauma that still presents itself within many communities and to strive to achieve improved communal wellness.

The initiation of Onkwehón:we-led projects that seek to revitalize Onkwehón:we food systems is significant in terms of resurgence, because it involves reclaiming authority and decision-making over *what* an Onkwehón:we individual, community or nation are consuming and *how* they are consuming it. According to Cherokee Scholar Jeff Corntassel (2021), resurgence is a process by which Onkwehón:we choose to disengage from the state-related politics of recognition, and rather focus their energies on renewing and regenerating Onkwehón:we nationhood, relationships, and community-centered practices. This is an important moment for

Onkwehón:we across Turtle Island because food systems across this land have been nearly diminished by numerous tactics that the settler-colonial governments of the United States and Canada have used in order to ensure Onkwehón:we became disconnected from their foods; these tactics, as I examine later, which has led to a range of issues from dependence upon a foreign and global food system to illnesses and disease (Matties, 2016; Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019). The experience of nearly every single Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island in relation to the disconnection, dislocation and depravity of their ancestral food systems and their current dependency upon a global and foreign food system is an essential component for the sustainability of settler-colonialism. Settler-colonialism is defined by scholar Patrick Wolfe (2006) as a structure, not an event, driven by the elimination of Onkwehón:we peoples. Settler colonialism is a process by which there is attempted or actual eradication of Onkwehón:we ways of self-governing and ongoing dispossession of Onkwehón:we land (Dhamoon, 2016, p. 7) for the benefit of European settlers and also non-European settlers.

Food security is a term used to describe the maximization of food production and food accessibility for all people in a society (Wittman et al. 2010). Onkwehón:we often reference their inherent right to food security when they are seeking to ensure that all of their family, community and kinship relations are fed properly. The term food sovereignty differs in that it speaks to a decision-making capability of local people over how food is grown, produced and consumed either for themselves, their families and their communities or nations. The food sovereignty movement among Onkwehón:we across Turtle Island has undoubtedly gained traction within the last decade. The original definition of food sovereignty, composed by La Via Campesina[4], is "the right of nations and peoples to control their own food systems, including their own markets, production

[4] A grassroots group of small-scale farmers originating from Latin America, and were the first group to publicly argue that food shortages around the world are linked to neoliberalism, globalization and capitalism (Wittman et al., 2010).

modes, food cultures and environments" (Wittman et al., 2010, p. 2). Many Onkwehón:we individuals and communities are striving to re-gain control over their food production, markets and food systems, as well as revitalize an ancestral connection to a place-based and nation-specific food system influenced and informed by the land and waters. The term Indigenous food sovereignty conceptualizes this process, which is defined by Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah and Elizabeth Hoover (2019) as "a connection to land-based food and political systems and seeks to uphold sacred responsibilities to nurture relationships with the land, culture, spirituality and future generations" (p. 11). When put into practice, Indigenous food sovereignty also aims to achieve food justice for Onkwehón:we. Food justice "is a holistic and structural view of the food system that sees healthy food as a human right and addresses structural barriers to that right" (Food Justice, 2021, np). At the current time, barriers that hinder physical access to food include, but are not limited to, the denial to hunt and harvest on traditional lands – which is enforced through legislation and law enforcement, environmental degradation – fueled by capitalism, industrialism and corporations, and physical removal or dislocation from ancestral territories, all of which contribute to high rates of food insecurity and diet-related health issues among Onkwehón:we populations (Matties, 2016, np). I believe that it is important for all Onkwehón:we to strive to adhere to the principles of Indigenous food sovereignty, because it encompasses the regeneration of Onkwehón:we ancestral food systems, restoring the inherent right of Onkwehón:we to reclaim their decision-making authority over food which includes dismantling colonial-imposed barriers to access food and highlights the pre-existing relationship to the land and waters that was established among Onkwehón:we prior to colonization. Based on these facets of Indigenous food sovereignty, it is important for Onkwehón:we-led projects on food regeneration in relation to their respective culture to employ a framework and approach that centres their culture, values, principles and worldview. Additionally, I view the decolonization and dismantlement of hierarchies and

relationships that may be exclusive in this work as imperative to achieve the true essence of Indigenous food sovereignty. All Onkwehón:we, no matter the sex, gender, age or ability must have the opportunity to participate in projects that seek to instill an Indigenous framework to food sovereignty. Otherwise, it is not Indigenous food sovereignty.

Hierarchical and heteropatriarchal systems of power, which are often contrary to Onkwehón:we worldviews, continue to operate within many communities and often cause harm to women, children and LGTQ2S+ identifying people. According to Krill (2019), heteropatriarchy can be understood as "a system of social and political dominance whereby cisgender heterosexual men have power over cisgender women and other diverse sexual and gender orientations. It is a structure combining cisgender male power alongside the privileging of cisgender and monogamous relationships" (p. 2). Heteropatriarchy is deeply rooted in the process of colonization that occurred on Turtle Island and has successfully been transmitted and entrenched into many Onkwehón:we spaces, communities and societies. Onkwehón:we women and scholars have identified this structure as critical not only for settler colonial powers to gain control over Onkwehón:we, but as a means to maintain this power and control. Settler colonial domination has been extremely violent and has had devastating impacts on the lives of Onkwehón:we women (Simpson, 2017; Million, 2013). Heteropatriarchy and hierarchical systems of power have historically degraded Onkwehón:we women's knowledges and intelligence by consciously erasing their political authority and leadership out of the colonial narrative (Horn-Miller, 2016, p. 34). According to Kanien'kehá:ka scholar Kahente Horn-Miller, who draws from Rotinonhsón:ni women's historic experiences specifically, women were purposely erased out of colonial history because of European discomfort in accepting women's leadership and authority in societies on Turtle Island (Horn-Miller, 2016). Horn-Miller further elaborates that "when colonists were confronted with examples of [Rotinonhsón:ni] women's influence and the threat it presented to the

colonial project, they silenced and legislated away the legitimacy of our role, erasing it from historical documents and national histories" (Horn-Miller, 2016, p. 34). Such discomfort with women's leadership and authority led to a common experience of oppression for all Onkwehón:we women through a variety of tactics that contributed to delegitimizing their knowledges and presence in governing structures, such as the Indian Act legislation, Onkwehón:we women's high rates of disappearance and murder, and environmental violence, which will be explored at length in chapter two. Heteropatriarchal and hierarchical systems of power largely contributed to Onkwehón:we women's removal from political and governing spheres in both settler societies, and in Onkwehón:we communities, which effectively erased women's knowledge and intelligence (Kermoal, 2016, p. 114). As a result, Onkwehón:we women's knowledges on their food systems and land-based practices, and current legal frameworks and spiritual traditions that are associated with them, have been compromised (Kermoal, 2016, p. 115). For example, given the deep patriarchal and hierarchical structure of the Canadian state, Onkwehón:we women have only occupied a minimal role in contemporary political negotiations around land and land use planning, and their "perspectives are largely missing in land use studies, environmental monitoring and wildlife management" contemporarily (Kermoal, 2016, p. 113).

La Via Campesina boldly stated that "food sovereignty means stopping violence against women," because at its core, the food sovereignty movement is about collaboration (Wittman et al., 2010, p. 5). Collaboration and collectivity in Indigenous food sovereignty projects for Onkwehón:we must have the goal of working towards productive and healthy relationships in order to successfully produce, consume and retain food for the benefit of the entire community or nation. There is simply no space for individualism, as this promotes greed, clout and a negative atmosphere for all. Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives cannot be successful without

recognizing and challenging the existing heteropatriarchal power dynamics that exist both within and outside of our communities Integrating an Indigenous framework to food sovereignty projects may compel those who are involved to decolonize their views and practices pertaining to gender roles and relations because Onkwehón:we values of respect and responsibility to the land, other participants and all living beings must be centralized (Delormier et al., 2017, p. 2).

In Canada specifically, "colonialism is undoubtedly the single most urgent structural condition affecting [Onkwehón:we] women," (Green, p. 5), which is evident through the high levels of systemic violence and the gender-based genocide that Onkwehón:we Women, Girls and Two-Spirited people continue to be victim to (Buller et al., 2019; Deer, 2015; Million, 2013; A. Simpson, 2014; L. Simpson, 2017). Violent oppression, abuse and sexual abuse, disappearance and murder are a product of heteropatriarchal power structures that are dominant and essential to the project of settler-colonialism on Turtle Island. These impacts on Onkwehón:we women can be understood as powerful and influential determinants of health. Some of these health outcomes include, but are not limited to, "diminished life expectancy, disproportional burden of chronic disease and communicable illness, addictions and social violence" (Reading, 2018, p. 3). From my perspective, structural inequities stemming from colonization have immensely contributed to Onkwehón:we women's loss of connection to land and waters, and by proxy, to their food systems. Onkwehón:we women and girls are uniquely impacted by malnutrition and hunger worldwide based on the intersection of their race and gender (Lemke and Delormier, 2017).

How the Research Chose Me

I personally view the (re)connection to Onkwehón:we ancestral food systems as a mechanism for Onkwehón:we wholistic healing from colonial-induced trauma because of my own lived experience that speaks to this truth. I am a Kanien'kehá:ka woman and I was born and raised

in my home territory, Kahnawà:ke[5], by my Kanien'kehá:ka parents and family. As a child, I learned Kanien'kehá:ka cultural teachings and the Kanien'kéha language primarily from Elders in the community, all of whom were teachers at Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa[6]. These Elders were predominantly Kanien'kehá:ka women from Kahnawà:ke, all of whom were extremely influential in shaping my identity, worldview, and cultural knowledge as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman.

As an Onkwehón:we born in the mid-1990s, I am the first generation in my family who was not forced to attend either an Indian Residential School or an Indian Day School within the last several hundred years. Residential and Indian Day Schools were mandated by the federal government of Canada and the Catholic Church from the time of Canadian Confederation in 1867 until 1996. The year 1996 was one year after I was born; I recognize the privilege that I have had as an Onkwehón:we person, simply by being born at a time when Kahnawà:ke regained control over our education system and school curriculum. It is a crucial time to shed light on the devastating impacts that these genocidal institutions had on all Onkwehón:we people in Canada and the United States, given that the bodies of Onkwehón:we children are currently being recovered at mass grave sites at former Residential Schools across Turtle Island. For further context, on May 27, 2021, the bodies of 215 Onkwehón:we children who previously attended Kamloops Indian Residential School were recovered at a mass grave site on the old school grounds (Dickson and Watson, 2021). Since then, several more sites of former Residential Schools across Canada have been searched, and the total number of deceased Onkwehón:we children recovered

[5] Kahnawà:ke translates to "By the Rapids", which is in reference to the community's proximity to Kaniatarowanenh or The St. Lawrence River. Kanien'kehá:ka have always lived along Kaniatarowanenh since time immemorial.

[6] Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa is an elementary school in Kahnawà:ke that offers Kanien'kéha immersion from Nursery to Grade 4. The school itself was named after a woman whose name was Karonhianónhnha, as she pioneered the establishment of the school.

from mass grave sites is approximately upward of six thousand at the time of writing. As Onkwehón:we people, we have always known that many of our ancestors never had the chance to leave those despicable institutions, however, for that knowledge to finally be recognized on a national level as truth is not only validating, but brings about feelings of grief, anger and sadness for all of our relations who never had the chance to live their lives as Onkwehón:we.

My parents are part of a generation in Kahnawà:ke that were forced to attend Indian Day School in Kahnawà:ke, which was operated under the same umbrella and purpose as the Residential School system. Indian Day Schools differed from Residential Schools in that they were operated on-reserve, which meant that the students were permitted to go home in the evenings and weekends, but the purpose and intent of them were the same. Between 1868 to 1988, as many as eleven Indian Day Schools operated in Kahnawà:ke. Therefore, the majority of Kahnawa'kehró:non[7], including several generations of my ancestors beyond my parents, were forced to attend Indian Day Schools. This system of education intentionally sought to eradicate Kanien'kehá:ka culture and the Kanien'kéha language through inflicting physical, spiritual, and mental violence and harm onto the most vulnerable population in our community, the children. The ultimate goal of Indian Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke was to eliminate the identity of the Kanien'kehá:ka as a distinct Onkwehón:we nation, and force assimilation into Canadian society.

From my perspective, the most tangible result of my parents' generation's attendance at Indian Days Schools was that they were the first in Kahnawà:ke to *not* speak Kanien'kéha as their mother tongue. This has had devastating impacts on our ability to maintain our language, which is a key component of what makes Kanien'kehá:ka a distinct Onkwehón:we nation. As of 2018, the Kanien'kéha language is considered to be endangered. On the "Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale," Kanien'kéha is at Stage 7 (Stacey and Whitebean, 2018, p.

[7] Translates to "The People of Kahnawà:ke".

12). Stage 7 indicates that the language is endangered because the majority of fluent Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke are above age 65 and remain the best resources for access to language authenticity, which is poses significant challenges in maintaining Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke (Stacey and Whitebean, 2018, p. 12).

Furthermore, my parents' generation has also experienced mass loss of cultural knowledge and practices, due to the legacy of the Indian Day School system. This attack on Kanien'kehá:ka identity, culture and language has had extreme consequences on our ability to maintain a wholistically healthy and well community. Despite the fact that I have inherited a colonial legacy of intergenerational trauma that, in part, stems from the atrocities committed in Indian Day Schools, I continue to exist, resist and strive to be part of the revival, reclamation and regeneration of the Indigenous food sovereignty and ancestral food revitalization movement, or *Tiohnhéhkwen*[8]. Tiohnhéhkwen is a Kanien'kéha word that translates to nourishment that sustains the people physically, mentally, and spiritually.

My experience of colonial imposed deprivation, dislocation, and disconnection, from both knowledge and consumption of Tiohnhéhkwen is a driving force for my desire to contribute to its revival in the community and among my nation. For nearly my entire life, my awareness, knowledge, and consumption of Tiohnhéhkwen was non-existent. I am cognizant of the fact that this is the experience of the majority of living Kahnawa'kehró:non as well. This is not an accidental or unique experience for Kahnawa'kehró:non, because "over the past several centuries,

[8] The three foods that are linked to the word Tiohnhéhkwen are Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra, also known as Corn, Beans and Squash. Through Kanien'kehá:ka oral traditional, I have been reminded throughout my lifetime that Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra are the most significant foods for all nations apart of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, as they are said to be the most nutritious foods for our people. I will use this word in this project when I am referring to the food system of my nation and the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, because this is the best way to define our ancestral food system.

colonialism has unleashed a series of factors that have disrupted Onkwehón:we communities' ability to retain control of their food systems" (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p.4). Throughout the course of settler-colonial history on Turtle Island, acts to diminish Onkwehón:we communities' ability to maintain their food systems ranged from "deliberately destroying food in acts of war, to interfering with the transfer of food related knowledge from one generation to the next" (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 5). This deliberate and forced disconnection between Onkwehón:we and their ancestral food systems continues to influence a high level of dependency on industrialized and processed foods for nourishment, which is typically not conducive to spiritual or cultural beliefs (Matties, 2016).

Yuchi and Muscogee Scholar Daniel Wildcat refers to the displacement of Onkwehón:we from their natural environments as the "fourth removal" (Hoover, 2017, p. 9), which has undoubtedly occurred in relation to the forcible disconnection from the food systems that come from the environment. Other comparable and equally traumatizing "removals" that Onkwehón:we have experienced were the forced relocations from their ancestral territories, the residential or boarding school systems – which forcefully and physically removed Onkwehón:we children from their families, communities and their identity, and lastly the attempted removal of Onkwehón:we identity – largely accomplished through Indian Act legislation that either revoked Onkwehón:we identity or through illegalizing many customs, practices or traditions (Hoover, 2017, p. 9).

The removal from the natural environment, and therefore from Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke has transpired through generations. Scholar Melanie Lindholm (2019) defines the process by which Onkwehón:we within settler-states went from having autonomy and authority over how foods were being produced, acquired and what was being consumed, to being removed from this practice and way of life in an extremely rapid manner with the onslaught of colonization. She coined the term "nutritional colonialism", where a "negation of subsistence lifestyles, cultural

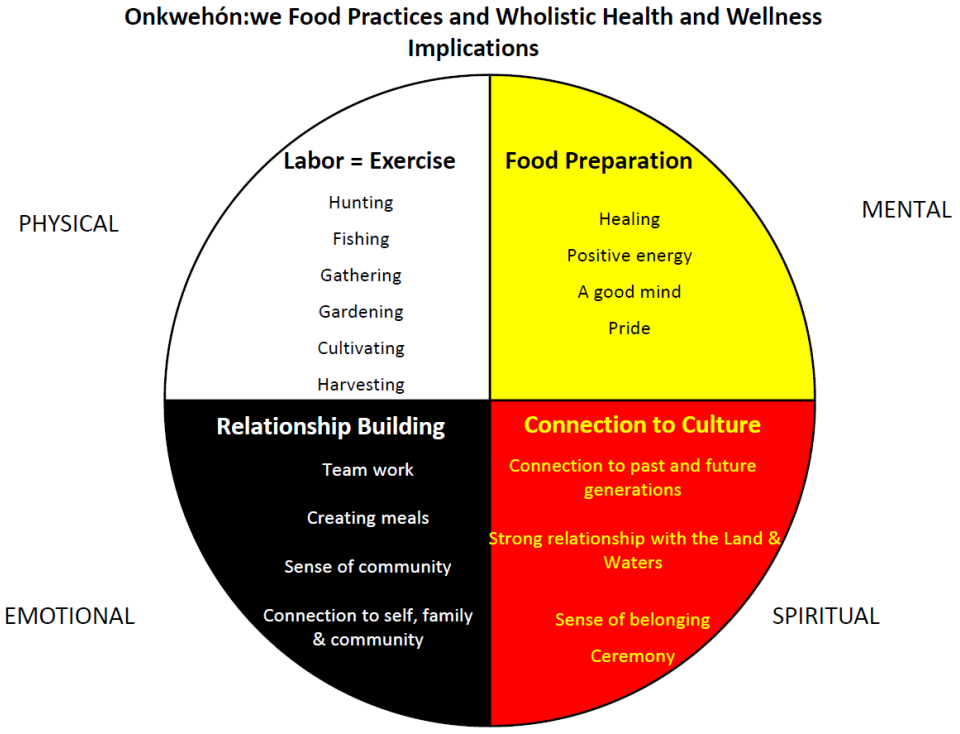
suppression or marginalization, removal of control over resources, lack of food sovereignty, fostered dependence, environmental degradation, increase in chronic diseases, and negation of any dominant sense of responsibility" has occurred (p. 162). The human body is not suited to adjust to drastic diet and lifestyle changes in just a few generations. Thus, these changes have contributed to the increased evidence of Western illnesses – which were not present prior to colonization – such as diabetes, heart stroke, cancer and obesity, all of which threaten the livelihood of Onkwehón:we (Lindholm, 2019, p. 159).

I have personally experienced the negative impacts of nutritional colonialism, which was not apparent until I experienced several health issues that stemmed from unknown causes, according to Western medicine. For the majority of my life, I consumed unhealthy foods that were processed, unnatural and not derived from Tiohnhéhkwen. In all honesty, I did not know any better at the time, which also speaks to the essence of nutritional colonialism. Upon reconnecting with my traditional foods in many different ways, I came to understand that because I am Kanien'kehá:ka and have ancestral ties to the land, waters and the food system of my ancestors, I am physiologically and spiritually meant to consume foods from Tiohnhéhkwen. The rebuilding of this relationship to Tiohnhéhkwen, and with myself quite frankly, has been the most influential aspect of my healing journey. My life experience informs my belief that Tiohnhéhkwen, and the traditional practices preparation and consumption, are modes of healing for the body, mind and spirit. My goal continues to be to role model this lifestyle to other Kahnawa'kehró:non.

Re-engaging with Tiohnhéhkwen has been the most powerful wholistic healing mechanism that I have experienced to date. I created Figure 1 below which is represented through the medicine wheel to visually depict the areas in which I have experienced improved mental, spiritual, physical and emotional wellness by participating in a range of activities pertinent to revitalizing Tiohnhéhkwen in my personal life. I chose to represent this visual through the medicine wheel,

which is a commonly used depiction in many Onkwehón:we cultures of how mental, spiritual, physical and emotional health are interconnected. For me, this circle of wellness represents that as human beings, we must constantly work to keep our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness in balance, which is a lifelong process that does not necessarily ever end.

I created Figure 1 as pictured below as a representation of my personal experience in (re)connecting with Tiohnhéhkwen and how it has addressed the four major aspects of my wellbeing.



(Figure 1)

The following is an elaboration of how I came to develop Figure 1 based on my lived experience.

PHYSICAL: In my early adulthood I experienced several physical health challenges within a span of three years, which at times were debilitating. Although developing gallstones in my gallbladder and chronic inflammation in other parts of my body – which occurred at different time periods – were considered unrelated, I later learned that they were caused in-part by my diet. For the majority

of my life, my diet consisted of processed, unnatural and unhealthy foods, and I rarely had the opportunity to consume foods from Tiohnhéhkwen, and nor did I have the cultural knowledge that would have inspired me to do so. After living with chronic inflammation and pain for two years, my main goal was to heal my physical being, which I accomplished through both Western and traditional healing practices. However, reconnecting with natural, unprocessed and foods from Tiohnhéhkwen was not only the most influential factor in healing and overcoming the chronic inflammation and pain in my body, but was the catalyst for healing my mental, spiritual and emotional being, which were quite weakened after this experience.

The main physical activity associated with regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen that I enjoy is gardening. Gardening is great physical activity because it requires physical labor in order to create the garden and maintain it on a daily basis to encourage the plants to flourish. Gardening was also important in terms of bringing me mental clarity, creating relationships with my plants, enacting traditional practices – such as singing planting songs – in order to help the plants grow, and building a stronger relationship with my father. One of the most rewarding experiences in co-creating a garden with my father was that it was the first time he shared planting techniques and teachings with me, which is knowledge that was passed down to him through his late grandfather. It felt amazing to keep these traditions alive, while strengthening my bonds to the plant beings, my family and my ancestors. Figure 2 below is a photo I captured of the Áhsen Nikontennò:sen[9] Garden I grew for the 2021 season on my family's land in Kahnawà:ke with the help of my father and partner:

[9] Áhsen Nikontennò:sen translates to "The Three Sisters", which are Corn, Beans and Squash.

(Figure 2)

MENTAL: After living with chronic inflammation and pain for two years, it took a serious toll on my mental wellbeing. While I was learning about the nutritional benefits of foods that come from Tiohnhéhkwen, I was compelled to experiment with these foods by creating new and innovative meals using these ingredients. I have always loved cooking; it has been a hobby of mine since I was a child, and a skill that was taught to me by my mother and sister when I was growing up. By challenging myself to cook without processed meats and foods, I learned a completely new way to cook with natural ingredients. Cooking is a major part of my personal healing journey for my mental wellness because it gives me the space to disconnect from my busy life, focus on one task and allows me to be creative. In particular, cooking for others brings me so much joy and satisfaction, especially when it is a new dish that the people I am sharing with may have never tried.

EMOTIONAL: Learning about and consuming foods from Tiohnhéhkwen is something new that I have undertaken. The learning process will be lifelong, because there are so many Kanien'kehá:ka, both in Kahnawà:ke and beyond, who possess unique and important knowledge on our food system. The main way that I have learned about Tiohnhéhkwen thus far has been

through talking, sharing stories and connecting with fellow Kanien'kehá:ka or Rotinonhsón:ni people. This learning process has helped me to strengthen positive relationships with my family, my friends and fellow-community members. As Kanien'kehá:ka, we put our minds together, the possibilities of what we can do in terms of resurgence are endless.

SPIRITUAL: The connection to my spirit and Kanien'kehá:ka spirituality and culture has been profoundly strengthened by learning culturally-specific teachings related to regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen. I now have a greater respect and appreciation for the natural world because of these teachings and because of my deepened understanding of my responsibility to all living kin. Re-connecting with this aspect of my culture has given me the space to become more culturally grounded, respectful toward the natural world, strengthened my relationship with the land, waters, plants, animals, family and community members, and more importantly with myself. This is what Kanien'kehá:ka culture is all about; living in harmony with the self and with all living beings.

I chose this research, *Onkwehón:we Women's Roles in Reclaiming and Regenerating their Ancestral Food Systems: A Pathway to Healing,* because of my lived experience, in reclaiming and regenerating Tiohnhehkwen has been a major pathway for healing my wholistic health and wellness. In this way, the research topic also chose me. Intergenerational trauma manifests itself differently for all Onkwehón:we; for me, it manifested in my body. The intergenerational trauma that I experienced was the deprivation and separation from Tiohnhehkwen, but fortunately, (re)connecting with Tiohnhehkwen has also been part of the major solution to help heal the trauma. I want to shed light on the fact that this is important healing work for Onkwehón:we women, who have experienced heightened levels of gender-based violence, ostracization from their communities, families and support networks and negative effects on their bodily autonomy as a result of existing both as Onkwehón:we and as women living within a settler-colonial state.

Methodological Considerations

In order to produce this thesis, a variety of methodologies have been considered. I have chosen to weave in autoethnography as a method throughout this project because of my lived experience that speaks to the reality of my thesis argument. I utilize autoethnography as a method to illuminate that my understandings of Onkwehón:we ancestral food systems, Onkwehón:we women's life experiences in a settler-state, and colonial induced-trauma are all sources of knowledge that were acquired through my personal and lived experience. I utilize my lived experience and knowledge as an Onkwehón:we woman through political understandings of my positioning in society, and the experiences and constraints I encounter as a result (Etorre, 2016, p. 2). Autoethnography is an important method in the development of this project because it reveals several levels of consciousness that links my personal to the political (Etorre, 2016, p. 2). I understand and employ autoethnography in this project using my own personal experiences as a foundation to the topic of this thesis and the research, where cultural and social exploration and critique are then employed (Shaw, Grant and Anderson, 2018).

I am a woman part of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation, which is one of the six nations that makes up the Rotinonhsón:ni[10] Confederacy. Therefore, I am both Kanien'kehá:ka and Rotinonhsón:ni. I have lived experience and embodied knowledge that speaks to the multiple topics of Onkwehón:we colonial-induced trauma and resiliency that are integrated and interconnected in this project. I have personal experience with health and wellness challenges, have been a prime witness to the ways in which violence against Onkwehón:we women continues to permeate both within and outside of my community, and truly understand the implications of the negative side-

[10] The Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy is made up of six Onkwehón:we nations which are the Kanien'kehá:ka, Onyonta'a:ká, Ononda'gega, Cayuga, Onondowa'ga and Tuscarora. Historically and at current, the nations are geographically located in what is not referred to the South-Eastern Canada and the North-Eastern United States.

effects of the colonial legacy in Kahnawà:ke, as the last five hundred years of traumas live within me and my fellow community members. As aforementioned, the most significant colonial trauma that I experienced was growing up disconnected and deprived from ancestral knowledge related to Tiohnhehkwen and without the ability to consume my traditional foods. My (re)connection to Tiohnhéhkwen, through participating in gardening, planting and foraging, consuming more natural and unprocessed foods, and finally, my refusal to participate in a global food system that abuses other living beings and the natural environment for profit, allowed me to heal from this trauma that manifested itself in my body.

Autoethnographic thinkers that I particularly align with are two Onkwehón:we women scholars, academics and community activists. These are the late Patricia Monture-Angus, who is Kanien'kehá:ka from Ohswé:ken or Six Nations of the Grand River, and the late Lee Maracle, who is Stó:lō, whom completely altered my perception of what counts as truth and validity in academia**.** I consider Monture-Angus and Maracle ethnographic writers and thinkers in that the majority of their scholarly work, writings and poetry is explicitly informed by their life experiences as Onkwehón:we women in Canada who have struggled to find their place within the settler-colonial confines. In much of their scholarly writings and books, Monture-Angus and Maracle include their own voices, perspectives and ideas to showcase the struggles that Onkwehón:we women in Canada have faced. For example, in *Thunder in my Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks* (1995), Monture-Angus freely shares her life experiences as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman with the readers in order to convey her arguments that racism against Onkwehón:we remains an issue in education and the criminal justice system. In Maracle's *I Am Woman* (1996), she explicitly states that her purpose in writing the book was to express her "personal struggle with womanhood, culture, traditional spiritual beliefs and political sovereignty" (vii). *I Am Woman* is Maracle's personal account and examination of the ways in which colonialism in Canada has impacted Onkwehón:we women's

social conditions at the time of her writing. Monture-Angus and Maracle's work helped me to realize that our lived experiences as Onkwehón:we women is the most authentic source of knowledge because it is valid, real and felt. I came to the realization that everything that I have ever experienced as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman, especially in terms of my knowledge and understanding of Tiohnhéhkwen and how it has influenced and shaped my existence, is political in that it speaks to what it means to be Onkwehón:we in a settler-state.

Existing literature on topics of **Indigenous food sovereignty** (Cote, 2016; Daigle, 2016; Matties, 2017; Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019; Whyte, 2019), **Onkwehón:we food systems** (Mihesuah, 2005; Corntassel and Bryce, 2012; Hoover, 2017, Whyte, 2019), **colonial dispossession in relation to Onkwehón:we women** (Million, 2013; Coulthard, 2014; Hunt, 2015; Simpson, 2017; Monture and McGuire, 2009; Kermoal and Jimenez, 2016; Bourgeois, 2016), **Indigenous feminisms** (Green, 2017; L. Simpson, 2017; Monture and McGuire, 2009), **structural and social determinants of health for Onkwehón:we in Canada** (Holmes and Hunt, 2017; Greenwood, de Leeuw and Lindsay, 2018)**, the global food system** (Borges, 2018; Wittman et al., 2010, Nierenberg, 2018), and, **Rotinonhsón:ni history in relation to the food system and women's roles and responsibilities** (Oral tradition, Delormier et al., 2017, A. Simpson, 2014; Horn-Miller, 2016) have been researched and explored at length in order to produce this project. Particularly, I have chosen to highlight the existing literature on these various topics that are written by predominantly Onkwehón:we scholars, thinkers and community members. It is crucial to center the voices, perspectives and theories of Onkwehón:we in the field of Indigenous Politics, because in most cases, they too are the experts of their own realities and experiences, which they bring to life through their writing.

This thesis aligns with existing scholarship from Onkwehón:we scholars who focus their work, values and approaches on Onkwehón:we food systems, Indigenous food sovereignty, community health and Indigenous feminisms. As previously mentioned, I have been inclined to conduct research on Onkwehón:we food systems and the importance of regenerating them in terms of addressing Onkwehón:we health disparities and intergenerational trauma based on my lived experience. I align myself with literature that foregrounds the importance of Onkwehón:we food systems, especially Devon Mihesuah (2005; 2019), Jeff Corntassel and Cheryl Bryce (2012), Elizabeth Hoover (2017; 2019) and Kyle Whyte (2019). Each of these scholars are Onkwehón:we or are of Onkwehón:we ancestry, and engaging with their work helped me to conceptualize the validity of Onkwehón:we food systems as foundational to Onkwehón:we wholistic health and wellbeing at present. *Hoover's The River is In Us* resonated and inspired me most in that she brilliantly captures issues of environmental racism and environmental violence that Onkwehón:we communities grapple with on Turtle Island, all while centering the voices of matriarchs in the community on which the book is based. Corntassel and Bryce (2012) emphasize how land-based activities and enacting community responsibilities to the land are imperative for community sustainability and self-determination; they illuminate the importance of centering and upholding localized Onkwehón:we food systems, which evokes a place-based consciousness. Whyte (2019) and Mihesuah (2005) tackle political issues involving Onkwehón:we foodways, such as responses to the global climate crisis and the health crisis faced by many Onkwehón:we across Turtle Island, both of which have been important in shaping my understanding of the impacts of environmental violence, health outcomes for Onkwehón:we and how these two issues intersect with the degradation of Onkwehón:we food systems. The work of Onkwehón:we scholars who created scholarship on the importance of regenerating Onkwehón:we food systems are foundational to my understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty; many of the prominent issues that Onkwehón:we

face today, such as health and wellness challenges, environmental violence and climate change are not only in-part a result of diminished Onkwehón:we food systems, but, as I contend, the revival of these same food systems can help to address many of these key issues.

For quite some time, I shied away from utilizing the term Indigenous food sovereignty in my writing on Onkwehón:we food systems, projects and regeneration work; this was because of that fact that the term "food sovereignty" is currently a buzz word that many associate with the saying "you cannot say you're sovereign if you cannot feed yourself," which I have heard in my community and beyond, and is typically in reference to Onkwehón:we territorial sovereignty. Initially, I did not align with the term food sovereignty, because I believed, and still do, that Onkwehón:we who are trying to achieve food sovereignty must strive for so much more than just the ability to feed the individual, the family or the community; since becoming interested in this specific cultural revitalization work, I have believed that at its core, food sovereignty for Onkwehón:we means restoring place-based and culturally specific practices and attitudes around food and in my nation, this involves restoring respect and leadership roles for women. However, the exposure to an increased amount of existing scholarship on Indigenous food sovereignty changed this perception. I align most with scholars Zoe Matties (2016), Charlotte Cote (2016), Devon Mihesuah and Elizabeth Hoover's (2019) conceptions of Indigenous food sovereignty. Matties (2016), who is a non-Onkwehón:we scholar and activist, and Cote (2016), a Nuu-chah-nulth scholar, both foreground the history of settler-colonial dispossession in regards to Onkwehón:we food systems, and how Onkwehón:we excellence lies within the Indigenous food sovereignty movement. Mihesuah and Hoover in their book *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health* (2019), truly contextualized the meaning and practice of Indigenous food sovereignty, emphasizing the restoration of cultural practices around food and fighting climate change and

environmental degradation as a means to achieving communal health. The definitions and conceptualizations of Indigenous food sovereignty put forth by these scholars has influenced me to include it in my own writing on Onkwehón:we-led projects that seek to restore ancestral food systems; this is because my understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty, based on Matties (2016), Cote (2016) and Hoover and Mihesuah (2019) contributions means that there is concurrent work happening to achieve food justice, address community health outcomes, and restore decision-making authority amongst Onkwehón:we over foods produced, cultivated and consumed within community.

My awareness around the disproportionate struggles that Onkwehón:we continue to face regarding their wholistic health and wellbeing grew once I experienced health challenges, navigating the westernized medical system as an Onkwehón:we person, and finally, recognizing the root cause of my personal health and wellness challenges. My own experience inspired me to investigate the broad spectrum of health challenges that Onkwehón:we face throughout Turtle Island, mainly because I was and continue to be interested in helping other people. I have been intrigued by the works of Devon Mihesuah (2005), Cindy Holmes and Sarah Hunt (2017) and Margo Greenwood, Sarah de Leeuw and Nicole Lindsay (2018), all of whom explore Onkwehón:we health and wellbeing through various lenses. Mihesuah (2005) broadly relates Onkwehón:we health issues with the disconnection from Onkwehón:we food systems, while Holmes and Hunt (2017) provide an overview and insights into how violence within Onkwehón:we families is a key health determinant and how it can be addressed. Finally, Greenwood, de Leeuw and Lindsay (2018) present a book encompassing chapters written by numerous Onkwehón:we scholars on the overarching topic of colonialism’s impact on Onkwehón:we health.

Further, I became very interested in connecting the importance of regenerating Onkwehón:we food systems to Onkwehón:we women's reclamation and re-embodiment of their traditional roles; it became clear to me that the resurgence of food systems could mitigate high levels of violence toward Onkwehón:we women that continues to persist , and the power structures that support this violence. To center the role of women, I draw on the work of Indigenous feminisms, especially Dian Million (2013), Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017), Nathalie Kermoal, Isabel Jimenez (2016), and Joyce Green (2016). Many of these women are Onkwehón:we scholars who foreground their experiences as Onkwehón:we women within their work, and I have been particularly inspired by L. Simpson's (2017) work where she draws many of her points on Indigenous feminisms from her Nishnaabeg culture. As I discuss later, each of these scholars illuminated the impacts of either the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ crisis or environmental violence on Onkwehón:we women's lives. I was inspired to analyze each of these structural issues in terms of the health challenges that they present to women based on the work of these scholars. In particular, I analyze these topics in the next chapter in order to better understand how these structural barriers have and continue to contribute to Onkwehón:we women's dislocation from their ancestral food systems.

It is important for me to draw from existing scholarship on Onkwehón:we food systems and Indigenous feminisms to further advance my argument that instilling place-based Indigenous food sovereignty projects deeply involves making space for Onkwehón:we women; this, I contend, will help to address community health. Secondary themes (mentioned above), such as structural and social determinants of health for Onkwehón:we in Canada, the global food system, and Rotinonhsón:ni history of the food system are also analyzed, and included in this project in order to support my argument that Onkwehón:we women are instrumental to the Indigenous food sovereignty movement.

Lastly, I have been inspired to produce this work because of stories shared with me by other Rotinonhsón:ni on topics involving our shared food system. Throughout my lifetime, I have received cultural teachings primarily through storytelling, which has typically been done orally. As an adult, I still receive cultural teachings in this way; however, much of my learning about Tiohnhéhkwen specifically, comes from communicating and sharing with other community members about our knowledge and experience. The regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen is a prominent topic in Kahnawà:ke as of late, and there it is a greater topic of discussion and promotion which has contributed to my learning through engaging with other Kahnawa'kehró:non's[11] willingness to share stories and knowledge. Although I will not be including any formal community interviews or "data collection" in my research findings, as an Onkwehón:we woman, the oral teachings and lifetime of stories will inform this Thesis. This knowledge is authentically Onkwehón:we that cannot necessarily be credited toward anyone in particular; it is simply inherent knowledge derived from my upbringing as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman.

In Rotinonhsón:ni culture, stories are what essentially comprise our oral history. Oral history and storytelling are the main ways in which Rotinonhsón:ni culture has been passed down and has managed to stay alive despite hundreds of years of attempted erasure. It is a critical component of the culture in this way. According to Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach (2009), stories are considered particular to Indigenous ways of knowing and doing because they are vessels for passing along teachings, medicines, practices that can assist members of the collective. Stories also "promote social cohesion by entertaining and fostering good feeling" (Kovach, 2009, p. 95). This proves true for Rotinonhsón:ni culture, as a Rotinonhsón:ni person often does not describe historical events, cultural values and teachings without referencing a

[11] Kahnawa'kehró:non: translates to "the people of Kahnawà:ke".

specific story that is integral to our culture. Our cultural teachings and ways of being would not have survived hundreds of years of attempted destruction by colonial powers if it were not for the stories that continued to be told, shared and passed down. Stories are the vessel of knowledge and connection between Onkwehón:we ancestors and future generations.

The teachings, lessons and knowledge that I have been given about Tiohnhéhkwen through storytelling and sharing are an integral part of my methodological approaches in developing this project. Rotinonhsón:ni cultural stories that have been passed down to me were extremely influential in my identity development and worldview. My identity and worldview has influenced me to prioritize Rotinonhsón:ni and Kanien'kehá:ka cultural stories as truth, and instilled personal values such as respect, harmony and caring for all living things. In this way, part of this work will be sharing *my* story with the reader(s).

Chapter Layout

Chapter two of this thesis is a gendered analysis of the oppressive structures that continue to exist in Canada and shape Onkwehón:we women's experiences and challenges in everyday life, which seeks to answer my first research question: *How have Onkwehón:we women's engagement with their ancestral food systems been impacted by colonization?* The oppressive structures and phenomena include the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide in Canada, the sexism embedded in the Indian Act that serves to disadvantage Onkwehón:we women, and environmental violence's impacts on the bodies of Onkwehón:we women. These three structural conditions impede on the lives of Onkwehón:we women in many ways, but the purpose of my analysis is to investigate the ways in which they contribute to contemporary challenges that Onkwehón:we women face in (re)connecting with their ancestral food systems. The MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide, the Indian Act and environmental violence continue to pose certain wholistic health and wellness

challenges for Onkwehón:we women, which partly determines their inability to access their ancestral food system. For Onkwehón:we, having access to our ancestral food system is *also* a health and wellness determinant. Though this entire project broadly describes the experiences of Onkwehón:we women on Turtle Island, chapter two will focus primarily on existing data, literature and scholarship on the abovementioned topics of the MMIWG2S+ crisis, the Indian Act and environmental violence for Onkwehón:we women who live within settler-colonial confines of Canada. Though the Indian Act is legislation specific to Canada and not quite experienced by Onkwehón:we women living within the United States, both the MMIWG2S+ crisis and environmental violence are experiential for Onkwehón:we women across nation-state borders.

Chapter three will begin by analyzing the concept of intergenerational trauma and how it relates to Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island. Since a central question of this research project is to explore *how the reclamation and regeneration of Onkwehón:we food systems can help to heal Onkwehón:we intergenerational trauma,* it is important to first introduce the reader to the term intergenerational trauma, prior to discussing healing mechanisms that seek to address it from an Onkwehón:we lens. I will then review numerous studies that prove that engagement with Onkwehón:we food systems for Onkwehón:we people enables the inception of a process of healing for the mind, body, spirit and physical being. I will then make the case that because (re)engagement with ancestral foods and involvement in Indigenous food sovereignty projects has the power to help heal intergenerational trauma, and Onkwehón:we women's lives are over-determined by high rates of gender-based violent trauma, women must be at the forefront of this movement and projects in order to address Onkwehón:we women's personal health outcomes. I will highlight that despite the overwhelming challenges that Onkwehón:we women face, they continue to exemplify pure and remarkable resilience in terms of cultural reclamation and resurgence. In the existing literature, it is well-documented that Onkwehón:we women are often the pioneers for language

revitalization (Deer 2020), #LandBack frontline actions, environmental restoration and activism (Hoover, 2017), and reinstituting traditional ways of birthing, to name a few. To contribute to the growing recognition of Onkwehón:we women as leaders who demonstrate strength and resiliency within our communities, I will highlight the exemplary work of five renowned Onkwehón:we women who have made immense contributions to the Indigenous food sovereignty movement on a personal, communal, national and inter-national level.

To conclude, Chapter four will present a case study on the Indigenous food sovereignty movement in Kahnawà:ke Kanien'kehá:ka Territory. I will draw from both embodied and kinship knowledges, as well as existing literature on Rotinonhsón:ni culture that speaks to the fact that Rotinonhsón:ni ways of knowing and doing prioritize equality among all living beings and,in particular, places an emphasis on women's roles and responsibilities within this culture. I will then provide an overview of the reasons why it is crucial for Kahnawà:ke to increase food sovereignty projects that are based on the principles and values of the Rotinonhsón:ni; these principles and values, I contend, cannot be extracted from contemporary issues of gender because we have been a matrilineal Confederacy since the time of its inception over one thousand years ago. Lastly, I will discuss the traditional food regeneration project that I personally initiated and co-developed with fellow community members who specialize in education and have extensive knowledge on Tiohnhéhkwen. The ultimate goal of this project is to regenerate Tiohnhehkwen in Kahnawà:ke in accordance with the principles, worldview, and culture of the Rotinonhsón:ni, which is matrilineal in nature. I include a discussion of this pilot-project, *Hao' Tewakhón:ni*, because the creation of this project is in-part a product of my theoretical assumptions that seek to answer my main research questions, which are: *What can Onkwehón:we women gain by making profound efforts in restoring their ancestral food systems? Can healing intergenerational trauma in this way help to promote restored respect for women within their communities?* Like many other fellow-Onkwehón:we

women, my desire to help my fellow community members heal, strengthen relations and be well comes from my own struggles and experience with Tiohnhéhkwen and how it has transformed my life.

CHAPTER 2: A Gendered-Analysis of the Structural Barriers that Factor into Onkwehón:we Women's Historic and Ongoing Disconnection, Deprivation and Dislocation from their Ancestral Food Systems

"Land and bodies are commodified as capital under settler colonialism and are naturalized objects for exploitation. This has always been extremely clear to Indigenous women and 2SQ people, and it is why sexual and gender violence has to be theorized and analyzed as vital, not supplemental to discussions of colonial dispossession"

-Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, 2017, p. 41

In order to adequately highlight the importance of Onkwehón:we women's efforts in reclaiming and regenerating their ancestral food systems, an analysis of their historic and ongoing experiences with barriers to participate and engage with this aspect of their respective cultures must first be presented. To reiterate from chapter one, the forced removal and deprivation between Onkwehón:we and their respective food systems has been a common experience for *all* on Turtle Island, regardless of their gender, age or sexual orientation, even as Onkwehón:we have resisted and some have remained connected to these food systems. However, Onkwehón:we women's experiences with colonization is unique in that it was and continues to be a simultaneously sexist and racist experience. Since the onslaught of colonization, Onkwehón:we women have been stripped of their humanity based on their gender and race through state-sanctioned violence, disappearance and murder, disempowerment from their roles in governance and decision-making in their nations, and physical removal from their communities and culture. High levels of targeted violence toward women remains a unique experience to that of Onkwehón:we women on Turtle Island, as this has been an important tool of patriarchal control, racism and colonialism (Starblanket, 2016, p. 5).

There is a general consensus in contemporary settler-colonial studies that in order for settler-colonialism to be successful and maintained on Turtle Island, the endless acquisition and

control over land and bodies of water is essential. For European colonizers, both land and waters were not viewed as living entities that provide nourishment, vitamins, fresh breathable air and water - all of which are essential for human survival on earth. On the contrary, Onkwehón:we cultures are considered to be "cultures of reciprocity" by Potowatami botanist and scientist Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013, p. 113), because of the fact that gratitude is typically demonstrated toward all elements of the natural world through various and differing cultural protocols, practices and ceremonies. Onkwehón:we cultures are cognizant of the fact that the natural world does not depend on human beings for its survival, but it is human beings who depend on the natural world on a daily basis in order to survive (Kimmerer, 2013, p. 115). Perhaps this stark contrast between worldviews and cultures explains why the colonizer has viewed dominance over land and water as paramount to human rights in order to achieve a society that engages in destruction of the natural environment and Onkwehón:we bodies in exchange for power and wealth.

In essence, Onkwehón:we were very much a part of the natural environment on Turtle Island. In order to acquire the land, Nishnaabeg scholar L. Simpson (2017) argues that the connection and relationship between Onkwehón:we and the land needed to be severed in the eyes of European colonizers. Simpson further asserts that both land and Onkwehón:we bodies were and continue to be considered mere commodities under settler-colonial capitalist regimes, which is why they have been viewed as objects for exploitation (Simpson, 2017, p. 41). Although all Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island have been subjected to the violent removal from their homelands, waters and environment, it has particularly been the bodies of Onkwehón:we women who have experienced colonial violence on a deeper level; as will be further demonstrated in this chapter, the colonial violence that is inflicted onto the land and waters is also inflicted onto the bodies of Onkwehón:we women, girls and Two-spirits (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016; Simpson 2017). Onkwehón:we women have the natural ability to grow,

create and sustain new life, and this ability to reproduce and bring forth new generations of Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island, which essentially sustains and replicates Indigeneity, was viewed as the greatest threat to the goal of settler-colonialism in which there is an unsatiable desire for land and settler control over that land (Lickers qtd in Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p. 4). Therefore, an analysis of Onkwehón:we women's historic and ongoing disempowerment and oppression on Turtle Island is vital in order to comprehend their current struggles to engage with and consume their ancestral foods. These historical and contemporary relations of power are also important to analyze in order to highlight how Onkwehón:we women are empowered by their collective efforts to regenerate their respective food systems and reclaim leadership and Onkwehón:we governance.

The central issue that prevents Onkwehón:we from engaging with and consuming foods that were part of their place-based and nation-specific food systems is "interference by state and corporate actors [that] continue to dispossess [Onkwehón:we] of their lands and self-determination" (Lemke and Delormier, 2017, p. 3). According to Lemke and Delormier (2017), Onkwehón:we women around the globe are among the most marginalized when it comes to accessing and consuming culturally significant and nutritious foods. This chapter will provide an in-depth gendered analysis of three major structural and oppressive conditions that are specific to the experiences of Onkwehón:we women in Canada, especially in relation to Onkwehón:we food systems.

Firstly, I will examine how the Indian Act has negatively affected Onkwehón:we women's capacity to maintain their important roles in community governance, and their capacity to remain physically connected to our cultures, identities and homelands. Second, I will provide an overview of the high levels of violence, disappearance and murder that Onkwehón:we women have

historically and continue to be subjected to. For decades, thousands of Onkwehón:we women and girls from nations throughout Turtle Island have been stolen through a violent social phenomenon commonly referred to as the "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited" (MMIWG2S+) crisis (Bourgeois, 2016, p. 253). As recently as 2019, the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirits was re-categorized from a national crisis to a present-day gender-based genocide (Buller et al., 2019). Finally, I will analyze the current rhetoric and existing literature on environmental violence and its particularly negative impacts on Onkwehón:we women. Environmental violence refers to the "disproportionate impacts of environmental contamination on [Onkwehón:we] and communities of color on the basis of… environmental racism" (Carmen and Waghiyi, 2012). Environmental violence disproportionately affects the bodies of Onkwehón:we women, girls and two-spirited people, partly because of their capacity to replicate one of nature's many functions, which is to create, grow and sustain new life, evidenced through profound negative impacts on women's "reproductive and other bodily health systems" as a consequence (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 208).

The Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide and environmental violence are not stand-alone and coincidental issues in terms of how they have negatively affected the lives of Onkwehón:we women. Rather, they are "interlocking systems of oppression," meaning that they are derived from and supported by systems of power such as colonialism, racism and patriarchy in order to simultaneously and mutually sustain "hierarchical relations of dominance" in Canada (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 255). The outcome of each of these phenomena have been matched; Onkwehón:we women have been largely physically removed from their cultural identities, communities, nations and from their leadership positions within these spaces. The destruction or outright disappearance of Onkwehón:we women's positionality within their societies has and

continues to contribute to the erasure of Onkwehón:we women's knowledges and physical presence. The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on how these specific oppressive structures imbued onto the lives of Onkwehón:we women have hindered their ability to grow, produce, harvest and consume their ancestral foods, which has been a major aspect of Onkwehón:we life since time immemorial.

Colonialism relies on the dehumanization of all Onkwehón:we people and the deprivation of experience. However, the dehumanization is felt more acutely on the bodies of Onkwehón:we women, LGBTQ2S+ identifying persons and children, because violence and sexual against these people has always been exacerbated (Hunt, 2015). In order to stay within the scope of this thesis, Onkwehón:we women's experiences with colonial dispossession will be primarily focused upon. Historically, Onkwehón:we women have been prime targets for physical violent removal from their homelands, communities and nations since colonization, primarily because colonizers recognized that women had the natural ability to reproduce and bring forth new generations of Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island (Lickers qtd in Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p. 4). According to Seneca land defense organizer Iako'tsira:reh Amanda Lickers (2016), who draws from Rotinonhsón:ni culture, the fact that women are the carriers of the Rotinonhsón:ni clans is a major reason as to why they have been targets for violent removal from their communities (p. 4). In Rotinonhsón:ni culture, there are nine different animals that represent the nine clans[12]. Clans are symbolic of the people's relationship to the various animals within the ecosystem that the Rotinonhsón:ni have inhabited since uniting over one thousand years ago. Clans are extremely significant because they define family groups and Rotinonhsón:ni identity and citizenship. The Rotinonhsón:ni were and continue to be a matrilineal society, and

[12] These animals are Bear, Turtle, Wolf, Snipe, Hawk, Eel, Beaver, Deer and Heron.

one major characteristic of this is that it is only women who have the ability to pass down their clans to future generations. The role of women as the carrier of clans is common in many Onkwehón:we cultures and signified that they were also responsible for transmitting their language and cultural knowledge to new generations. For this reason, women are foundational to the existence of Onkwehón:we people and cultures because of they have the ability and power to replicate the people of their nation and ensure its continuance and survival. The replication of Onkwehón:we nations on Turtle Island is also indicative of the need for land for new generations to continue to inhabit (Lickers, qtd in Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p. 4).

Women experience a different connection with the natural world because of their capacity to give life and through other experiences that women share with creation such as monthly menstrual cycles, which has parallels with the moon and seasonal cycles (Starblanket, 2017, p. 31). They are inherently connected to the natural world based on these mutual abilities and experiences. Thus, the tactic to specifically target Onkwehón:we women for violent removal, dislocation or disappearance from their nation, community or identity was deliberate because of the recognition of their natural connections to the earth, ability to give life, and their role in transmitting cultural knowledge and wisdom, all of which equate to a replication and survivance of Indigeneity. In effect, in the eyes of the colonizer, when Onkwehón:we women are destroyed, the nations are destructed and access to land is possible (Lickers, 2016, qtd in Women's Earth Alliance/Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p. 4).

The Indian Act

The Indian Act is a piece of legislation in Canada that was introduced in 1876, and generally dictates the rights, liberties and constraints of Onkwehón:we who live within the borders

of Canada. The Indian Act attempts to regulate the bodies of Onkwehón:we primarily through federally controlled eligibility criteria that deems who can and cannot be considered an "Indian" in Canada. The Indian Act remains in effect today, and while it is a clear example of the unequal power dynamic that exists between the federal government of Canada and Onkwehón:we nations – to which Canada is the self-declared authority -- Onkwehón:we in Canada, including me, are reluctant to relinquish our rights and liberties as a distinct peoples as defined by the Act. Yet, while non-cisgender Onkwehón:we men and nonbinary people have been discriminated against, suppressed and outlawed in many instances, my focus will be on the Indian Act as a significant structural barrier for Onkwehón:we women's historic and ongoing participation in Indigenous food sovereignty projects.

In the contemporary context, Onkwehón:we women's leadership capacities, roles in governance and actual presence in their communities are all important components of their participation in Indigenous food sovereignty; all of which have been severely compromised by the sexism and discrimination embedded in the Act. The following is an account of how the sexism and discrimination against women that has been part of the Indian Act for over one hundred years has created significant structural barriers for women to take part in participating in activities related to Onkwehón:we food systems.

The Indian Act explicitly defines who is considered to be an "Indian" in Canada. The Act defines an "Indian" as "a person who pursuant to [the] Act is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian" (Legislative Services Branch Canada, 1985). Those who are eligible to be registered as an Indian under the Indian Act are essentially afforded certain rights and benefits by two federally operated institutions, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) or Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Currently, those who are registered as a "status Indian" have

certain rights for the overall process and cultural practices associated with obtaining traditional foods such as harvesting, gathering, foraging and hunting protected under the Indian Act. In my experience as a "registered Status Indian," who lives on an "Indian Reserve" that is recognized by the Act, the Canadian state cannot impede on any activities that I may participate in in order to acquire traditional foods in Kahnawà:ke. While in my community, I am free to forage and grow my own foods where and as I see fit, and can also participate in hunting or fishing activities in specific areas designated by the community; as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman, my rights and freedoms to engage in traditional food acquisition and activities in my community is protected because of the Indian Act. Onkwehón:we who are not registered under the Act or do not have access to an Indian reserve may encounter barriers to obtain and access traditional foods as they are not recognized by the state as being a "status Indian", essentially.

Registration under the Indian Act is typically linked with band membership and/or citizenship[13], and thus, the concepts and rights pertaining to citizenship, membership and Indian registration are interlinked in Canada. Indian status is a unique construction of the Canadian state; it does not exist in other settler-colonial states such as the United States (King, 2017, p. 180). Prior to Canadian federation, and still ongoing in some contexts, the recognition of the right to Indian status also transferred directly to membership and citizenship rights within Onkwehón:we communities. Audra Simpson (2014), a Mohawk scholar, argues that the state's power was made real and enforceable through the granting of these citizenship rights, which encompasses structural and legal conditions for intimacy, the sense of belonging, acceptable forms of sociability within

[13] Every individual who is registered under the Indian Act is assigned to a designated number that is linked to a "Band" in Canada. A "Band" is defined "a body of Indians for whose use and benefit in common, lands, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, have been set apart before, on or after September 4, 1951" (Legislative Services Branch Canada, 1985).

Onkwehón:we communities (p. 18). I agree with A. Simpson's argument that the Indian Act has had a major influence on Onkwehón:we communities because I have witnessed how my own community has often modelled acceptance and belonging within based on criteria set out by the Indian Act. Certain Onkwehón:we women and their children have been excluded from Onkwehón:we communities across Turtle Island on the basis of a woman's marital status, (which I will elaborate on later in this chapter); this has not only caused a great number of Onkwehón:we to be physically expelled from their communities, but often discriminated against them, prohibited them from partaking in cultural practices and activities, and prevented them from obtaining cultural knowledge. This contributed to a severed connection between Onkwehón:we women and children who were subject to this provision of the Act and their respective ancestral food systems.

From its inception, the Indian Act "defined an Indian as a man"; this remained the case until 1985 (Million, 2013, p. 41). By only acknowledging one gender that could legally be recognized as an Indian[14], not only did the Indian Act automatically categorize women as inferior to men, but it reinforced the gender-binary (Simpson, 2017, p. 104). According to L. Simpson, queer and two-spirit Onkwehón:we and relationships were effectively eroded under the Indian Act, as there was intense pressure to conform to heteronormativity in order to gain Indian status and have rights as such recognized by the federal government (p. 104), and Onkwehón:we were economically penalized and/or criminalized for not following a conventional male/female binary. Women (as well as LGBTQ2S+ people) were ultimately disempowered because their power, authority and special abilities within their societies posed a threat to settler-colonialism (Simpson, 2017, p. 107). According to L. Simpson (2017), "the more [Onkwehón:we] women exercised their body sovereignty, the more we were targeted as 'squaws' and 'savages', subjected to violence and

[14] I am using the term "Indian" only in relation to terminology in the Indian Act which describes Onkwehón:we as such.

criminalized" (Simpson, 2017, p. 107). The labelling of Onkwehón:we women as deviant and criminal not only subjected them to violence, but significantly discounted their knowledge and power within their communities.

With the inception of the Act also came the imposition of the band council system. The band council system represented a patriarchal and hierarchical system of governance that was intended to, and in most cases was successful in, eliminating traditional systems of governance in Onkwehón:we communities. The band council system introduced an electoral system to determine leadership in Onkwehón:we communities, which was contrary to a model of consensus-based governance that many Onkwehón:we nations endorsed. This new electoral system was attractive to some because it offered the opportunity to Onkwehón:we to be in leadership positions, with the appeal that they would have to ability to have direct communication and connection with the federal government. The band council system was and remains linked to the federal government of Canada. However, up until the post-WWII period, the only Onkwehón:we who had the opportunity to run in band council elections were cisgender-heterosexual men. From 1876 until 1951, Onkwehón:we women were not permitted to run for positions as elected "Chiefs", and nor were they allowed to vote in these elections (Simpson, 2017, p. 105). Despite the formal end of this sexist practice in 1951, males continued to dominate in band councils. For context, in 2021, Kahnawà:ke elected its first-ever woman Grand Chief, who identifies with the LGBTQ2S+ community, which speaks to the fact that band councils remain a male dominated space in communities. Essentially, the Indian Act has historically been instrumental in diminishing Onkwehón:we women's political authority, positions in governance and decision-making, and ability to be a leader within their communities for over one hundred years. This fostered an attitude toward women as being incapable of leading or holding a position of governance, which continues to permeate within communities. The erasure of traditional Onkwehón:we structures and systems

of governance and replacing it with a colonial, patriarchal and hierarchical system is directly connected to the federal government's attempts to erase Onkwehón:we women's physical presence in these spaces. The band council system has historically contributed to displacing Onkwehón:we women's decision-making power in several ways; place based-Onkwehón:we food systems are dependent upon adequate land-use, community planning, and management. When Onkwehón:we women no longer had the ability to make decisions about community planning for the survivance of their food systems, their roles as caretakers of these food systems were greatly diminished.

In addition, in 1876, the Indian reserve system was officially mandated under the Indian Act. However, there were precursors to the modern reserve system, dating back to the seventeenth century in what is now referred to as Quebec (Hanson, nd, np). An "Indian Reserve" is defined as "a tract of land set aside under the Indian Act and treaty agreements for the exclusive use of an Indian Band" (Hanson, nd, np). The Reserve system in Canada physically confined and segregated Onkwehón:we from their traditional territories, waters and Canadian society as a whole, and this was maintained through sanctioning priests and Indian agents to be authoritative figures within communities. By severing Onkwehón:we access to their traditional territories, this system of confinement disrupted their family and kinship ties, their connections to the land, mobility, and their ability to access, hunt, fish and forage their traditional foods. Indian reserves were also instrumental tool of control for Onkwehón:we women, especially during the time of the presence of Indian agents on the reserve. The reserve system was initially utilized in order to confine Onkwehón:we until they were considered to be assimilated and enfranchised, and the presence of Indian agents on reserves were from the 1830s to 1960s in order to monitor Onkwehón:we life (Irwin, 2018). According to Heidi Stark (2016), Onkwehón:we women's sex, marriage and domesticity quickly fell under microscope by priests, Indian agents and government authorities, which was the impetus for restricting their mobility and activities through a constructed lens of

"criminality and savagery" (Stark, 2016, p. 8). Indian agents had the power to punish Onkwehón:we on reserves who did not conform to heteronormativity, monogamy, or other colonial expressions of gender (Simpson, 2017, p. 105). Punishment came in the forms of removing children from their mothers, refusing economic aid in times of need, and by formally criminalizing Onkwehón:we people by charging them with an offense and taking them to court (Simpson, 2017, p. 105).

Onkwehón:we women's sexuality, prior to colonization, was typically not suppressed and controlled by men in the way that European women's sexuality was. Onkwehón:we honed societies that were ordered through a matrilineal or matriarchal system of governance (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 261). On the contrary, in European societies, "the relationship between husband in wife…paralleled between master and servant" (Eberts, 2017, p. 79) Thus, the fact that Onkwehón:we women practiced sexual and bodily autonomy was the impetus for them to be categorized as objects that needed to be tamed by white men (Stark, 2016, p. 8). Sex, marriage and domesticity quickly fell under colonial surveillance in Onkwehón:we communities, not because this perception of Onkwehón:we women was true, but because the labelling of deviance justified the introduction of numerous restrictive policies that sought to govern and control their bodies (Stark, 2016, p. 9). Dian Million (2013) notes that in the early twentieth century, the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) created a category of "Immorality on Reserves" within the Indian Act (p. 45). This clause made it the Indian Agent's duty to monitor Onkwehón:we families on reserves, particularly women's sexual morality (Million, 2013, p, 45). The ultimate purpose of instituting such a policy was to control the bodies of women and their behavior in order to re-enforce settler-colonialism through stripping Onkwehón:we women of their political autonomy and authority, which colonizers recognized as crucial because of the fact that women were essentially "the backbone of [Onkwehón:we] nations on the North American continent" (St. Denis, 2017, p. 46).

The control of Onkwehón:we women's bodies ensured that they remained confined to the domestic sphere through threats of punishment and criminality. The domestication of Onkwehón:we women in this context meant that they were more or less confined to performing duties within their household, such as childcare, cooking and cleaning; essentially forced to conform to western perception of "motherhood", which largely restricted their ability to exercise bodily autonomy and authority, nor could they leave the imaginary borders of the reserve on their own free will. While on reserve, Onkwehón:we women could not engage with their ancestral food systems during the time period of intense surveillance from Indian agents. Overall, Onkwehón:we women's assimilation and progress toward "civilization" became measured by their success in their home life (Stark, 2016, p. 8). Any activities outside conducted outside of the accepted sphere of domesticity were considered to be demoralizing and warranted categorization of Onkwehón:we women as "out of control" (Stark, 2016, p. 9). In addition, the inability to leave the reserve without permission for all Onkwehón:we community members also meant that they were unable to undertake traditional practices to acquire foods. Access to traditional territories in order to obtain traditional foods is crucial in maintaining Onkwehón:we food systems, and yet, women and other community members were virtually unable to do so for over one hundred years. Thus, for over one hundred years, Onkwehón:we women were not free to exercise their authority and responsibilities in activities pertaining to their ancestral food systems, both on the reserve and off the reserve.

Another key assimilatory and genocidal function of the Indian Act was that it oppressed and discriminated against certain Onkwehón:we women and children through sex-based discrimination of Indian status. As mentioned above, Indian status is a colonial construct specific to Canada and defines who is afforded the recognition - and the rights that accompany this recognition - as an Indian. In contemporary times, an Indian refers to a an Onkwehón:we person who meets the criteria to be deemed as such by the federal government of Canada. There are many

non-status Indians who are Onkwehón:we, such as Métis and Inuit people, Onkwehón:we who were born outside of Canada, and some who do not conform to Canada's criteria of what is deemed to be an Indian. Based on the fact that the federal government of Canada historically, and continues to, control who is recognized as an Onkwehón:weperson in Canada, Dene Scholar Glen Coulthard argues that "the Indian Act has itself come to discursively shape, regulate, and govern how many of us have come to think about Indigenous identity and community belonging" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 103).

Canada's gendered criteria for who is deemed eligible to claim status pre-dates confederation (Coulthard, 2014, p. 84). In 1850, the first piece of legislation that governed Onkwehón:we identity was created (Simpson, 2014) *The Act for the Better Protection of the Lands and Property of the Indians in Lower Canada* introduced the concept of Indian status (Henderson, 2018, np). At this time, the criteria for claiming Indian status was to have been born of "Indian Blood" and to have been a member of a "Body or Tribe of Indians" (Henderson, 2018, np). Originally, status was transferrable to both non-Indian male and female spouses of Onkwehón:we who met registration criteria (Simpson, 2014, p. 57). This meant that non-Indian men and women had the ability to "hold land, operate businesses, and claim tax exemption on the reserve" (Simpson, 2014, p. 57). A few years later, the 1857 *Gradual Civilization Act* was implemented, which introduced the concept and practice of voluntary enfranchisement (Hanson, nd, np). Enfranchisement can be understood as the relinquishment of Indian recognition and the rights that accompany this recognition in return, enfranchisement allowed Onkwehón:we to gain citizenship rights in settler-society (Hanson, nd, np). This was a process of encouraged assimilation into settler society targeted at Onkwehón:we. However, voluntary enfranchisement was not as popular an option among Onkwehón:we as the settler-state had hoped. Thus, in 1869, the settler-state introduced the *Gradual Enfranchisement Act*, which mandated enfranchisement for certain

Onkwehón:we based on their personal decisions regarding their schooling, career and marital status.

The 1869 *Gradual Enfranchisement Act* marked the beginning of a legacy of overt sex-based discrimination against Onkwehón:we women in Canada. The *Gradual Enfranchisement Act* further instituted colonial patriarchy by defining Onkwehón:we women's identity on the basis of her husband's. For instance, if an Onkwehón:we woman's husband was enfranchised, she would also be declared as such, without her consent; one of the consequences was that she was no longer permitted to own property (Coulthard, 2014, p. 84). The most invasive and sexist rule under the *Gradual Enfranchisement Act* was the introduction of the forced enfranchisement of Onkwehón:we women who married non-Onkwehón:we or non-status men. I use the term "Non-status" in reference to Onkwehón:we who were not recognized as an Indian under the Indian Act, such as Inuit, Métis and people from Onkwehón:we nations outside of the borders of Canada. Coulthard (2014), summarizes the effects that this legal clause had on Onkwehón:we women based on this marital choice:

> …any status woman who married a non-status man would lose all rights and benefits commonly associated with membership in a federally recognized community, including rights to reside on reserve and receiving housing there, federally subsidized health care, post-secondary education and so on (Coulthard, 2014, p. 84).

The children of the Onkwehón:we women who were affected by this legal provision also had their Indian status revoked or were not afforded this recognition at birth. Thus, Onkwehón:we women and their children who were affected by this legal provision were essentially banished from their communities, as they were forced to move off reserve and were therefore ostracized from their families, communities, cultures and outcast from their identity as an Onkwehón:we person. The

elimination of many Onkwehón:we women's, and their descendants', physical presence in their communities undoubtedly made it extremely difficult for them to stay connected to their traditional foodways, teachings and practices, because often, these women did not have access to cultural activities that took place within their communities. In addition, the enfranchisement of thousands of Onkwehón:we women and children meant that they were no longer recognized as Indians, and as abovementioned, this was an attitude and approach that was deeply ingrained in many Onkwehón:we communities.

Simultaneously, Onkwehón:we men who married non-Onkwehón:we or non-status women were not subjected to this legal provision. In fact, Onkwehón:we men who were recognized as status Indians had the ability to not only pass their status on to their non-Onkwehón:we or non-status spouse, but to their children as well. According to Mary Eberts (2017), the underlying motive of this legal provision was to replace Onkwehón:we mothers on reserve with "civilized white mother figures who would indoctrinate children in the practices, values and faiths of the [white] settler-regime" (p. 80). Essentially, this policy "tore the heart from [Onkwehón:we] women's role in their families as it tore their children from their families and communities" (Eberts, 2017, p. 80).

Onkwehón:we women and their children in Canada experienced this sex-based discrimination based on their marital status and choices from 1869 until 1985. In 1985, the federal government of Canada enacted Bill C-31, an amendment to the Indian Act aimed at "redressing the patrilineal bias in the Indian Act" (Simpson, 2014, p. 56). However, passage of Bill C-31 was by no means a voluntary action that the federal government of Canada decided to undertake. In actuality, numerous court cases initiated by Onkwehón:we women against the federal government began to emerge between the 1960s-1980s that challenged the sex-based discrimination toward Onkwehón:we women based on their marital status in the Act (Eberts, 2017). In 1971, the *Lavell*

v. Canada as well as the *Bedard v. Canada* case in 1972 sought to "force a repeal of the sexist provisions of the Indian Act by challenging in court their lack of conformity with Canada's 1960 Bill of Rights" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 85). Neither of these cases against the federal government were successful. However, in 1977, Sandra Lovelace, a Maliseet woman from the Tobique community in New Brunswick, challenged the sex-based discrimination embedded in the Indian Act at the international level. Lovelace's complaint was brought to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, where she argued that the Indian Act's sex-based discrimination was in violation of Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Coulthard, 2014, p. 87). In 1981, the United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled in favor of Lovelace and ordered the federal government of Canada to redress the sexism in the Indian Act and restore the rights to Onkwehón:we women and their children who were subject to this clause for hundreds of years. In addition, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was also in the midst of completion, and influenced the legislation of Bill C-31 as well.

Essentially, "Bill C-31 followed on the heels of a decade-long battle that saw non-status Indian women go head-to-head with their reserve or band council governments, the state, and, finally, international authorities" (Simpson, 2014, p. 56). For over one hundred years, thousands of Onkwehón:we women and children were expelled from their communities, families, nations because of this legal provision[15]. The entire purpose of this legal provision was to alienate Onkwehón:we women from their families and communities, which increased their vulnerability through familial fragmentation, community exile and a decrease in systems of support (Bourgeois,

[15] It is important to note that inequities based on sex within the Indian Act were not eliminated by Bill C-31, in fact, since then, several more court rulings on this matter were the impetus for the passage of Bill C-3 in 2011 and Bill S-3 in 2017. Bill C-3 and Bill S-3 have been passed and enacted by the federal government in their attempt to rectify the sex-based discrimination in the Act, again, with the order to do so by the courts. From my perspective, I do not believe that legislation that has harmed Onkwehón:we women and their children for several hundred years can ever rectify these harms by using the same model of rights recognition time and time again.

2017, p. 262). The goal of this legal provision that enforced sex-based discrimination was successful in forcibly removing untold numbers of women and children from their nations and communities (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 262). This physical removal cast Onkwehón:we women and their children who were affected by this legal provision essentially as non-Onkwehón:we outsiders, which also produced insidious stereotypes of Onkwehón:we women and objectification by Europeans; all of which left them marginalized and without a sense of belonging both within Onkwehón:we and Canadian societies (Green, 2017, p. 5).

To summarize, Onkwehón:we women's historic participation in activities pertinent to their ancestral food systems were significantly weakened and devalued due to the heteropatriarchal and discriminatory nature toward women embedded in the Indian Act. Since the Indian Act was and remains a legal document that dictates the rights of Onkwehón:we in Canada, it served as a colonizing threshold for determining acceptable behaviors and activities, especially over the lives of Onkwehón:we women. Repressive forces such as the reserve system, the band council system and the sex-based discrimination against certain women that forcefully enfranchised them and their children have all attempted to sever Onkwehón:we women's relationship, connection and engagement with their ancestral food systems – the goal has been to remove women from Onkwehón:we governance, authority and leadership positions. This has also physically confined Onkwehón:we women's activities to the domestic sphere and within the colonial-made borders of the reserve, or Onkwehón:we women and their children are expelled from their identities, families and communities. In addition, a major consequence of the marginalization and alienation of Onkwehón:we women, accomplished through the practices legitimized under the Act, is that they have, and continue to be, subject to heightened vulnerability "to physical and emotional male violence" and murder (Green, 2017, p. 5). In effect, the current heightened levels of violence, disappearance and murder that "permeate the lives of [Onkwehón:we] women today is largely the

result of the Indian Act, which functions to make [Onkwehón:we] women populations of prey" (Eberts, 2017, p. 69).

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Gender-Based Genocide

Onkwehón:we women's experiences with colonization, including intended eradication, disappearance, erasure into the settler-society or outright murder, have led to disproportionate levels of violence and assault (Million, 2013). The political and social destruction of Onkwehón:we societies has been largely attributed to this heightened and normalized experience of violence. A. Simpson (2014) argues that "Canada requires the death and so-called disappearance of [Onkwehón:we] women in order to secure its sovereignty; and this is a sovereign death dance that requires us to think hard about the ways in which we imagine not only nations and states but what counts as governance itself" (np). The violation of an Onkwehón:we women's bodily sovereignty directly correlates to the destruction of an Onkwehón:we nation's sovereignty (Million, 2013). As such, L. Simpson (2017) contends that colonial dispossession on Turtle Island cannot be analyzed without examining the high levels of gender-based violence that Onkwehón:we women have and continue to face since the time of contact (p. 41). Onkwehón:we women's heightened levels of experiential violence is to be considered when understanding the ways in which their capacities and abilities to engage in the contemporary regeneration of their respective ancestral food systems, or resurgence in general, is compromised.

The violent social phenomenon that captures the atrocities targeted at thousands of Onkwehón:we women, girls and two-spirited people who have gone missing or murdered in Canada has recently been classified as a gender-based genocide in 2019, in the *Final Report to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (Buller et al.,

2019). According to the Commissioners of the report, they were mandated by the federal government to “investigate all forms of violence against Inuit, Métis and First Nations women and girls, including 2SLGBTQQIA people” (Buller et al., 2019, p. 2). Over two-thousand people affected by this crisis, including survivors of extreme violence, abduction or attempted murder, family members of those who have passed on or remain missing, experts, and knowledge-keepers participated in the truth gathering process in order to produce this inquiry (Buller et al., 2019). The final report identifies Onkwehón:we women, girls and two-spirited people as targets for extreme violence, and therefore states that due to the high volume of the continuing murders and disappearances of this population, it warrants categorization as “identity and gender-based genocide” (Buller et al., 2019, p. 5).

Existing research and literature demonstrates that Onkwehón:we women and girls “experience disproportionately high rates of all forms of violence”, which includes intimate partner, family and sexual violence (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 259-260). This high prevalence of violence has resulted in a normalized experience of an Onkwehón:we woman or girl (Koukannen, 2017). In Canada, statistics show that Onkwehón:we women and girls are twelve times more likely to be murdered or go missing than any other population of women (Buller et al., 2019). Furthermore, between 2001 and 2015, Statistics Canada identified that "homicide rates for [Onkwehón:we] women were nearly six times higher than for non-[Onkwehón:we] women” (Buller et al., 2019, p. 7). Between 1980-2012, the Royal Mounted Canadian Police stated that [Onkwehón:we] women made up approximately “16% of all homicide cases, despite making up only 4% of the female population” (Buller et al., 2019, p. 55). This situation has only been further exacerbated, as when the final inquiry into the MMIWG2S+ report was released in

2019, Onkwehón:we women and girls made up 24% of all homicides in Canada (Buller et al., p. 55). Rates of domestic violence are extremely high, and Onkwehón:we women and girls are targets of violence from their partners, families, acquaintances, strangers and serial killers (Buller., 2019, p. 55). Onkwehón:we women are more likely than non-Onkwehón:we women to be killed by a stranger and nearly half of the murders are unsolved (Eberts, 2017). In addition, the majority of victims of the MMIWG2S+ genocide were women under thirty years of age, many of whom were mothers (Eberts, 2017; Bourgeois, 2017). This speaks volumes of a generational impact; Onkwehón:we mothers are targets in this extreme form of violence, where their children are left motherless and feel this violence as well (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 258).

It is recognized that Onkwehón:we women are generally the victims of Onkwehón:we family and intimate partner violence (Holmes and Hunt, 2017). In 2010, the Native Women's Association of Canada stated that family violence was one of the most prominent issues affecting Onkwehón:we women (Native Women's Association of Canada). Onkwehón:we women who are experiencing violence or are survivors of violence often face numerous and various health challenges as a consequence. These include, but are not limited to, physical injuries such as broken bones, sexual and reproductive health impacts such as low birth weight babies, urinary tract and bladder infections, and mental health challenges including depression, anxiety, and substance use (Holmes and Hunt, 2017, p. 30). For some, these health challenges, whether mental, physical or emotional, can be debilitating and require much of the victim's attention. Because violence is a prevalent health determinant (Holmes and Hunt, 2017), victims who are in a perpetual state of violence and are attending to the health issues that accompany it may not have the capacity to be wholistically well enough to focus their energies on resurgence work. The MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide directly impacts Onkwehón:we women and girls' ability to participate in

resurgence work geared towards their ancestral food systems because this violent phenomenon poses significant health challenges for survivors and victims of violence. In addition, for Onkwehón:we women who have gone missing or have been murdered, their right to exist and live as an Onkwehón:we person has been taken from them by a partner, a stranger, a serial killer, or an acquaintance. The physical elimination of an Onkwehón:we woman obviously entails that she is no longer able to enact culturally specific responsibilities within her community. Because this is a crisis in Canada, where large numbers of Onkwehón:we women have gone missing, been murdered or have been subjected to extreme violence, it impacts the women's ability to participate in regenerating her ancestral food system or eliminates her existence in order to do so.

Violence is also a key determinant of health for Onkwehón:we individuals and communities (Holmes and Hunt, 2017, p. 4). For Onkwehón:we women who are living in a perpetual state of violence, it has significant implications on a community or nation's ability to maintain communal wellness; extreme violence leaves communities and families devastated and in a perpetual state of grievance (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 253). Violence against Onkwehón:we women has been an effective colonial tool in genocide and dispossession because the damage it causes is so impactful that it makes it difficult for victims and their families to be strong mentally (Simpson, 2017, p. 88). This type of communal grievance hinders Onkwehón:we communal capacities in resurgence work, such as reclaiming and revitalizing Onkwehón:we food systems, because when a community is in a constant state of grief, their ability to be well and resilient enough to participate in this work is compromised

Violence on the Land, Violence on Onkwehón:we Food Systems, Violence on the Body

As of recent, several studies that measure the impacts of industry and resource extraction have concluded that there is a direct linkage to the increase in violence against Onkwehón:we

women and girls (Amnesty International, 2016; Gibson et al., 2017; Hoover, 2017; Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018). Onkwehón:we communities and communities with a high concentration of people of color continue to be subjected to higher burdens of "environmental exposure from air, water, and soil pollution from industrialization, militarization and consumer practices," where policies, directives and practices that systematically disadvantage communities of color and the environment concurrently (Hoover, 2017, p. 8). This can be understood as environmental racism. Both environmental racism and environmental violence are products of an industrial system of resource extraction, which is predicated on systems of power and domination (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 214).

In contemporary Indigenous studies literature, the "land as body" rhetoric is increasingly theorized through a gendered lens (Gilpin, 2020; Simpson, 2017; Hoover, 2017; Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016; Cook, 2003). Many Onkwehón:we scholars, activists and community members are arguing that "land as body" essentially means that the health of the land and natural environment directly correlates with and affects the health of human bodies. Onkwehón:we have argued that "everything connected to the land is connected to our bodies" not only because of traditional knowledge systems that inform this worldview, but because of historic and ongoing experiences with environmental violence since the onslaught of settler-colonialism (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018). The degradation of the environment by settler-colonial governments and extractive industries, which occurs through fracking, mining, pipelines, and the industrial food system and has detrimental effects on the livelihood of Onkwehón:we.

Onkwehón:we encounter an array of issues in connection with environmental violence, including but not limited to “cancers, mental health issues, birth ratio abnormalities, toxin’s in women’s breast milk”, addictions, and the epidemic of particularly women, girls and two-spirits going missing or being murdered (Women’s Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018). At the same time that Onkwehón:we experience the direct effects of the destruction of the environment on their wholistic health and wellbeing, the land and waters are experiencing severe degradation and negative change due to extractive industries, capitalism and colonialism. The phrase “violence on the land, violence on the body” has been coined by the Women’s Earth Alliance and the Native Youth Sexual Health Network (2016) in order to portray this phenomenon. Environmental violence is a process by which natural resources are extracted from the earth at unprecedented rates by industries and corporations with the support of the settler-state. The Women’s Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network (2018) have stated that the system of natural resource extraction is “based on the r*ping and pillaging of Mother Earth as well as violence against women,” because with the expansion of industries comes both the desecration of land and heightened levels of violence against Onkwehón:we women (p. 214). This violence is evidenced through the increased numbers of Onkwehón:we women and girls who go missing or are murdered who live in proximity to physical extraction sites, severe impacts on their reproductive and mental health systems, cancers and sexualized violence (Women’s Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 207). The most insidious ways that environmental violence impacts [Onkwehón:we] women is through toxic health contaminants that make their way into the body and often cannot be seen until years later or after prolonged exposure (Women’s Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 207). The results of toxic contaminants that flow through the bodies of Onkwehón:we women are:

high levels of toxins in breast milk, placenta chord blood, blood serum and body fat, as well as infertility, miscarriages, premature births, premature menopause, reproductive system cancers, and an inability to produce healthy children due to compromised endocrine and immune systems while in utero (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 207).

Toxic contaminants often make their way to the bodies of Onkwehón:we women through their consumption of traditional food sources; violence on the land often leads to natural food and medicine sources becoming polluted, contaminated or degraded. For example, a study led by Akwesasró:non[16], the U.S Environment Protection Agency and New York State in the early 1980s in the community of Akwesasne, NY, examined how the community's physical proximity to a toxic dumpsite impacted the environment. General Motors was in fact leaching polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which is a manmade toxin, into the St. Lawrence River. The St. Lawrence River, or Kaniatarowanenh, has always been a life-source of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation; according to oral tradition, the water and variety of marine life were main sources of hydration, physical activity, travel and nourishment for the Kanien'kehá:ka since time immemorial. The PCBs that were leached into the St. Lawrence River were consumed by the fish in the River, the fish were being consumed by the Kanien'kehá:ka and thus, Kanien'kehá:ka were consuming the PCBs. The ingestion of contaminated fish via Kaniatarowanenh had severe consequences on the bodies of all Akwesasró:non, but particularly on the women in the community. The contamination in the food chain in Akwesasne caused by environmental violence found its way into the breast milk of the women who consumed the fish from Kaniatarowanenh. In effect, the contamination caused by environmental violence lived through the bodies of Akwesasne women, as they passed these toxins onto their descendants through their breast milk. The phrase and concept "violence on the land,

[16] Translates to "the People of Akwesasne".

violence on the body" in this context speaks to how the contamination of traditional Onkwehón:we foods as natural food sources can be negatively impacted by the consequences of environmental violence, which then pose significant health challenges for Onkwehón:we who consume them and their future generations.

Overall, environmental violence impacts the land's ability to sustain itself concurrently with Onkwehón:we women's ability to reproduce and sustain healthy new generations, or for those cis and trans women that choose not to have children or cannot biologically reproduce environmental violence interrupts their specific role in Onkwehón:we food collection, production, and use. Environmental violence also produces physical and sexualized violence for Onkwehón:we women, girls and two-spirits. In particular, the MMIWG2S+ genocide is further exacerbated at natural resource extraction sites, due to an increased population of predominantly non-Onkwehón:we men who are housed temporarily at these sites in what are referred to as "man camps" (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 214). With this high concentration of non-Onkwehón:we men at extraction sites, which often border Onkwehón:we communities, "the rates of sexual violence have risen" (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 214).

The direct consequences of environmental violence, the sexism in the Indian Act or the MMIWG2S+ genocide are traumatic experiences for those that have had to endure them, and are rooted in the colonial experience of what it means to be an Onkwehón:we woman. Each of these oppressive structures produce trauma by impacting Onkwehón:we women's reproductive health, bodily autonomy, role in leadership, governance and decision making, their ability to remain physically present in their communities or with their families, and in some instances, eliminates their existence altogether. Each of these negative and traumatic consequences have or continue to

contribute to a historically diminished capacity for Onkwehón:we women to engage with their respective ancestral food systems or present contemporary barriers to participate in its revitalization at current. From my perspective, I view the conditions necessary to regenerate one's ancestral food system requires inspiration that often comes from being involved in community, access to Indigenous food sovereignty programs, territory to acquire foods and community support, having autonomy over one's self in order to decide to participate, a safe environment that respects women's opinions and ideas, and ultimately, being alive and well in order to do so.

Resilience, Strength and Reclamation through Onkwehón:we Food Systems

As analyzed in this chapter, Onkwehón:we women's experiences with colonial dispossession, dislocation and disappearance has produced a series of traumatic events that can lead to: ostracization and marginalization from their families, communities and identities; loss of the important roles and capacities in governance, decision-making and leadership; historic restricted bodily autonomy and confinement of activities; and death and severe/long-term adverse impacts on health and wellness. Each of these consequences stem from three colonized structures that historically and continually operate within Canada: the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide, and environmental violence – these all impede the ability of Onkwehón:we women to maintain, develop or redevelop their connection and relationship with their respective ancestral food systems. Since Onkwehón:we women are foundational members in our communities in terms of their reproductive power in expanding the nation and as primary transmitters of culture and ancestral knowledge, their disappearance or ostracization from their communities, as well as their poor health outcomes renders barriers for their entire communities and nations to achieve wellness on a communal-scale (Million, 2013, p. 37). According to the *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework* (2015), Onkwehón:we cultures, traditional knowledges and practices are increasingly serving as healing forces, especially in terms of mental

wellness, leadership and community care (p. 23). In addition, as a response to the violence crisis in Onkwehón:we communities, Holmes and Hunt (2017) identify that addressing and decolonizing Onkwehón:we violence requires centering and upholding self-determination for Onkwehón:we, which includes centering "place-based cultural practices and teachings", while working to re-establish Onkwehón:we kinship systems and law (p. 52-53). Wholistic health and wellbeing, and therefore the ability for Onkwehón:we to practice and participate in cultural activities and initiatives specific to their nation are not only methods of healing and reclaiming leadership, but they are a foundational aspect of what makes a self-determining people (Million, 2013, p. 37).

As analyzed, the physical body of an Onkwehón:we woman is the source of life and future generations, and yet it is also subject to extreme violence, degradation, and destruction. Yet, Onkwehón:we women continue to exemplify strength in order to resist it all (Women's Earth Alliance/Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p. 12). Despite the fact that Onkwehón:we women's bodies have been under attack by the settler-state through systemic oppressive structures and legislation such as the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ genocide and environmental violence, as analyzed in this chapter, they continue to exemplify strength, perseverance, resiliency and most importantly, resistance, as they have done for over five hundred years (Simpson, 2017). Onkwehón:we women continue to resist all forms of colonial aspects of life that seek to oppress them because they are at the center of upholding their responsibilities to take care of all living things.

For thousands of years, Onkwehón:we peoples built and lived in societies that were outside of capitalism. In this way, we carry ancestral memory that informs a way of living that is rooted in sharing, reciprocity with the natural world, and anti-greed. I believe this ancestral embodied memory and wisdom is carried strongly within Onkwehón:we women since we were responsible

for protecting, caring and bringing forth new nations, and is a power we hold within us that is proven through our efforts as the pioneers of resurgence projects. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate that Onkwehón:we women who are at forefront of regenerating their ancestral food systems and leading Indigenous food sovereignty movements are guided by our responsibilities, roles and connections to and with the natural world. Onkwehón:we women's leadership in this realm is remarkable considering all of the structural barriers identified in this chapter that we have had to fight to overcome. Reestablishing the prevalence of ancestral food systems and reclaiming our right to decide what we consume and how we consume are important to resurge traditional Onkwehón:we systems of governance, and thus it is also remarkable that women are reclaiming their roles in governance through food. Onkwehón:we governance can be understood as the ability of all Onkwehón:we to have agency, autonomy and decision-making over their bodies, traditional territories, and communities in which they reside, without interference from any foreign government or entity. Food systems are fundamental to Onkwehón:we governance because they involve exercising decision making and authority over what the community consumes and how they are consuming it. The acts of planting, hunting, fishing, foraging and harvesting are key components of Onkwehón:we food systems as they are empowering, and enable Onkwehón:we to be self-sufficient and non-reliant on external communities or governments for nourishment. In Onkwehón:we cultures, food was, and remains, a focal point of celebration, relationship building, survival and livelihood (Mihesuah, 2005, p. 26).

CHAPTER 3: Onkwehón:we Women's Impacts on Intergenerational Healing and Community Wellness through Indigenous Food Sovereignty Projects

"The production, consumption, and distribution of culturally appropriate food must be accomplished while strengthening community, livelihoods and environmental sustainability"
-Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 9

As analyzed in the previous chapter, Onkwehón:we women in Canada have historically and continue to be particularly susceptible to the forced removal and disconnection from their ancestral territories, family and kinship relations, and governance structures, as a result of colonial imposed structures and policies such as the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide and environmental violence. Each of these phenomena have or continue to operate in conjunction and have negatively impacted Onkwehón:we women's bodily autonomy, roles in cultural transmission and nation-building, as well as leadership and governance roles in community. The structures and policies abovementioned have made Onkwehón:we women not only vulnerable targets to heightened levels of sexualized violence, which increases health and wellness challenges, but have made it more difficult for Onkwehón:we women to be part of the regeneration of their respective cultures at present. Poor wholistic health and wellness outcomes result in a limited capacity for Onkwehón:we women to engage in resurgence, which has implications for the entire family, community or nation to which they are part of (Neufield et al., 2020, p. 2).

Against all odds, Onkwehón:we women across Turtle Island have been instrumental in the regeneration and reclamation of their ancestral food systems, and such has facilitated the re-embodiment of their identity as leaders and nation-builders who are integral to Onkwehón:we governance. It is important for all Onkwehón:we, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation and other identifying factors to have the ability to learn about their ancestral food systems, participate in activities that seek to regenerate food such as gardening, hunting, cooking or food preservation, and to consume it in ways that are consistent with Onkwehón:we teachings. A study recently

conducted by Métis-Saulteaux scholar Erynne Gilpin (2019), affirms my belief that a pathway toward wholistic health and wellness for Onkwehón:we women "requires a meaningful, culturally grounded relationship to land and waters" (np). Since Onkwehón:we food systems are place-based, culturally specific and come from the natural world, a strong and culturally grounded connection the land and waters can foster a stronger relationship with one's ancestral food system.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that the relationship between Onkwehón:we and their participation or efforts in regenerating their food systems has positive implications for healing intergenerational trauma, and can be a pathway toward mitigating wholistic health and wellness challenges that are prevalent across communities. I will provide a brief analysis of the term intergenerational trauma and what this means for Onkwehón:we individuals, communities and nations under settler-colonialism, and how healing programs specific to Onkwehón:we ought to be conducted. My goal is to showcase how Indigenous food sovereignty projects can address wholistic health and wellness challenges for Onkwehón:we and thus are modes of healing from intergenerational trauma. I will highlight several existing studies conducted by Onkwehón:we and non-Onkwehón:we scholars who have concluded that there is a correlation between improved wholistic health and wellness outcomes for Onkwehón:we who have (re)built their relationship with their respective ancestral food systems in some way. I will also draw from my own experiential knowledge in terms of my own (re)connection to my ancestral food system and what that has meant for my personal wellbeing and healing, which not only was the inspiration for this project, but *informs* this project. Lastly, I will explore how Onkwehón:we women from across Turtle Island who are leading the Indigenous food sovereignty movement, combine the promotion of women's bodily autonomy, teaching techniques focused on Onkwehón:we food systems and environmental restoration work as a means to restore and regenerate their respective food systems. The information that will be presented on these influential and powerful women is based on

existing literature, scholarship, and public interviews. The work of Tekatsi'tsia:kwa "Katsi" Cook, Cheryl Bryce, Brit Reed, Dawn Morrison and Winona LaDuke exemplifies their resiliency as Onkwehón:we women who have successfully reembodied their roles as caretakers of the land, waters and communities by leading and promoting the (re)connection to their respective food systems for their communities through facilitating innovative Indigenous food sovereignty projects.

Ancestral Food Systems as a Response to Intergenerational Trauma

Although the term trauma has not been universally defined (Clark, 2016, p. 4), it is phenomenon that can be conceptualized as a challenging emotional consequence that is derived from an individual's experience of living through a distressing event (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, nd, np). Human experiences that quantify as trauma fall under a large umbrella that ranges from "single incident experiences to… genocide" (Clark, 2016, p. 4), and thus, each individual's trauma is embodied, expressed and felt differently based on differential circumstances. In recent years, the term "intergenerational trauma" has been widely used in order to conceptualize Onkwehón:we peoples collective experience with colonization, which can be understood as a communal trauma that has been embodied by Onkwehón:we and passed down from one generation the next (Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al., 2011; Clark, 2016). The effects of intergenerational trauma for Onkwehón:we on Turtle Island are most widely attributed to the Indian Residential School System (IRSS). The generational impacts of the IRSS are most evident due to the fact that survivors were separated from their parents and families, experienced the suppression of their cultures and traditions, were often subject to bullying, physical and sexual abuse from those who ran the institutions, were malnourished and more (Sinclair, Littlechild and Wilson, 2015). According to the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), the experiences of the IRSS left many survivors without a sense of love, affection, respect,

destroyed their sense of self-worth and forced them to carry a burden of shame and anger for the remainder of their lives (p. 103). The survivors of IRSS are not the only Onkwehón:we who had their lives disrupted and forever scarred by this legacy; it has also profoundly impacted their partners, children, grandchildren, extended families and their communities (Sinclair, Littlechild and Wilson, 2015, p. 103; Million, 2013). For instance, the learned behavior from IRSS, such as abuse, lack of affection, love and respect, was often embodied by the survivor and then transferred to those close to them. In addition, the behaviors and emotions accrued through the IRSS experience have resulted in "chronic stress on the functioning of all body systems" (Brant Castellano, 2018, p. 57).

The legacy of the IRSS is only one example of the real effects of colonization and intergenerational trauma for Onkwehón:we. Many other experiences that are a result of colonization, such as land-dispossession, loss of language, culture, food systems, family and kinship ties, and as analyzed in chapter two, for Onkwehón:we women specifically in Canada, the sex-based discrimination within the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ genocide and environmental violence are all examples of how Onkwehón:we have experienced collective and historic traumatization (Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al., 2011), that has evolved into what is now understood as intergenerational trauma.

Programs and interventions that seek to address Onkwehón:we collective or intergenerational trauma that are rooted in Western thought and approaches or that are state-centric or sponsored are now being recognized as mechanisms that serve to "further colonize and pathologize [Onkwehón:we] health and their bodies" (Clark, 2016, p. 3). According to Dian Million (2013), state-centric or sponsored interventions and programs that seek to "heal" Onkwehón:we trauma are problematic in that the source of intergenerational trauma is linked to

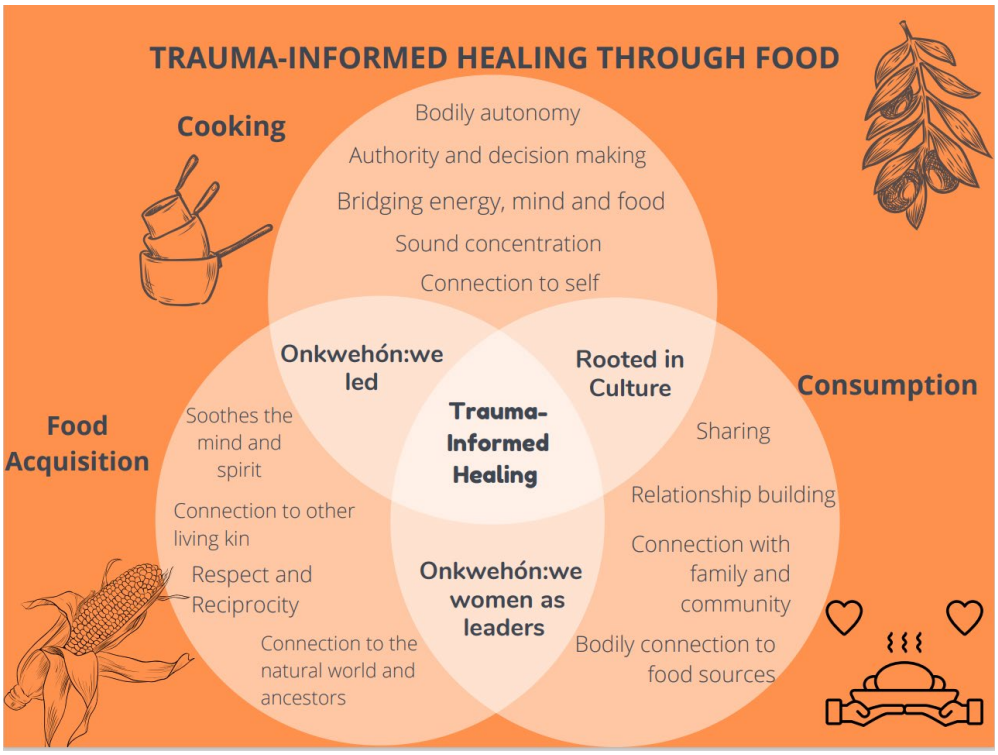
outcomes of power relations that remain in our dealings with the state (p. 150). In other words, seeking out healing programs and mechanisms from a state that is based on colonizing structures and that caused the trauma in the first place will not address Onkwehón:we trauma. Onkwehón:we critical scholars have been at the forefront of dismissing Western and state conceptualizations of health and wellbeing in Onkwehón:we communities and are turning inward. In 2006, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation report identified characteristics of successful healing programs that are geared toward Onkwehón:we (Castellano, 2018, p. 57). Two of which are:

1) Reflecting the underlying philosophy and worldview of the [Onkwehón:we] who design and benefit from them;
2) Establishing physical, emotional and cultural safety for participants; (Brant Castellano, 2018, p. 57).

A key lesson from existing studies reveals that it is vital that Onkwehón:we are not only involved in the development and leadership of healing projects that seek to address intergenerational trauma, but that they are informed and grounded by the respective culture of the participants. Onkwehón:we cultures are the connection to the past, present and future for Onkwehón:we livelihood, and are a steppingstone for a better quality of this livelihood (Health Canada*,* 2015, p. 1). Culture is at the foundation of responding to collective trauma; it is an important social determinant of health, and thus, culturally-specific interventions to trauma must attend to the body, mind, spirit and emotions concurrently (Health Canada, 2015, p. 6).

Potawatomi scholar Kyle Whyte (2019), defines a food system as "collective self-determination that integrate ecological, cultural, social and political dimensions of our lives as members – or relatives or kin – of our [Onkwehón:we] societies, communities and nations" (p. 321). Onkwehón:we food systems shape and touch all aspect of Onkwehón:we culture, knowledge

and life, which is why it is so crucial for Onkwehón:we to have access and opportunity to connect with them. As stated in chapter one, my own lived experience informs my belief that Onkwehón:we people's (re)connection to their ancestral food systems and consuming these foods has the power to address wholistic health and wellness challenges. For Onkwehón:we, partaking in activities to regenerate our foods attends to the mind, body, spirit and emotions of our being. Further, I believe that a positive pathway toward healing intergenerational trauma can be cultivated through Indigenous food sovereignty projects, particularly if they are 1) rooted in Onkwehón:we culture, 2) led by Onkwehón:we people, and 3) inclusive spaces for all and create leadership opportunities for Onkwehón:we women. These three characteristics of actionable Indigenous food sovereignty projects are crucial in cultivating safe spaces for all Onkwehón:we. Culturally-specific activities involved in partaking in regenerating ancestral foods are typically 1) food acquisition, 2) cooking, and 3) consumption. Figure 3 is a Venn diagram that I created in order to visually how such activities, acquisition, cooking and consumption of traditional foods, can help Onkwehón:we reclaim their bodily autonomy, decision-making capacities, connect with themselves, their ancestors and other living kin, and build positive relationships with family and community.



(Figure 3)

Onkwehón:we ancestral food practices and activities that seek to revitalize these practices are part of a culturally-informed mechanism which can help address and heal intergenerational trauma for Onkwehón:we. Reclaiming and practicing cultural teachings and activities such as this can foster feelings of empowerment, happiness and a greater sense of purpose.

Case Studies: Addressing Wholistic Health and Wellness Outcomes

There is a growing body of literature and recognition on the fact that the most nutrient dense foods that are suitable for consumption – especially for Onkwehón:we – are Onkwehón:we foods that come from the land, are natural and unprocessed (Alfred and Corntassel, 2005; Lindholm, 2019; Mihesuah, 2005; McNaughton, 2019). In recent years, there has been a major shift among Onkwehón:we individuals, communities and nations toward encouraging the consumption of traditional foods as a means of health promotion. According to Neufield et al. (2020), locally harvested and hunted sources of food are more micronutrient-dense and have a

greater biodiversity in comparison to processed foods (p. 3). Food systems based on hunter-gatherer lifestyles have been the norm for all of humanity up until the last hundred years or so and are best suited for human physiology (Lindholm, 2019, p. 156). In addition, many Onkwehón:we pre-colonial diets were high in Omega 3 fatty acids, which numerous studies confirm are best suited for protecting against cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and some psychological disorders (Borges; 2018, Lindholm, 2019; Hoover, 2017). Omega 3 fatty acids help form "prostaglandins, a class of lipids that decrease various functions relating to the inflammatory response, normal blood clotting and the relaxation of blood vessels" (Borges, 2018, p. 38). On the contrary, imported and processed foods are increasingly being recognized as unhealthy for human consumption (Borges, 2018; Neufield, 2018). For Onkwehón:we, unnatural and processed foods that come from the Western and industrialized food system inherently lack culturally appropriate, nutrient-dense compounds fit for consumption (Lindholm, 2019, p. 156). While products from the global and industrialized food system may prevent physical starvation, they do not nourish the wholistic being of humans in any other way (Lindholm, 2019, p. 156).

In a qualitative study on Alaska Native foodways with Alaskan nations, conducted by scholar Melanie Lindholm (2019), participants stated that their traditional foods "represented cultural, spiritual, emotional, social, physical and mental nourishment" (p. 156). In a physiological sense, Alaskan Natives described their traditional foods as helping them to feel stronger, warmer and provide them with a greater amount of energy. In addition, Alaskan Natives stated that practicing respectful attitudes and reciprocity with the natural world, other kin and themselves in relation to food acquisition allowed them to establish a spiritual connection with themselves and social relations with other living beings. In particular, their relationship with animals was highlighted, and it was stated that it is vital in Alaskan Native culture to treat the animals that they are hunting with respect through minimizing suffering, thanking the animal for giving its life, and

using every part of the animal without waste (Lindholm, 2019, p. 161). In terms of a cultural connection, the study participants also stated that food from the land is a means to connect to their ancestors through eating the same foods as them. The study concluded that a return to a more subsistence-based lifestyle and diet was essential for personal and communal wholistic wellbeing, and that the right to healthy, safe and culturally appropriate foods must be accessible and shared in order to achieve this (Lindholm, 2019, p. 170).

In 2012, the "Decolonizing Diet Project" was initiated and explored the relationship between Onkwehón:we of the Great Lakes Region and their traditional foods (Cedar Tree Institute, NMU Center for Native American Studies and United States Forest Service, 2011; Reinhardt, 2019, p. 40). This project was led by Anishinaabe scholar Martin Reinhardt and the Center for Native American Studies at Northern Michigan University. Twenty-five individuals of Onkwehón:we and non-Onkwehón:we backgrounds participated in this research study (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 40). The majority of participants consumed traditional foods from the Great Lakes Region at twenty-five to ninety-nine percent levels (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 41). The study was conducted for one year (Geist, 2017), and during this period, participants were not only encouraged to eat predominantly traditional foods from the Great Lakes Region, but to also increase their physical activity to better match a pre-colonial level of exercise (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 41). The results of the "Decolonizing Diet Project" found that participants had improved biological health outcomes, established a greater connection Anishinaabe culture and gained a plethora of knowledge about the traditional foods of the Great Lakes Region. Biologically, the group data proved that there were significant reductions in weight, girth, body mass index levels, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 41). Culturally, the study found that family and community support was crucial for participant success in maintaining a decolonial diet and way of living. Lastly, the knowledge about Onkwehón:we foods that participants acquired as a result of

this research study prompted them to take this knowledge with them and make better food choices into the future (Reinhardt, 2019, p. 41).

In Akwesasne, NY – a Kanien'kehá:ka community – scholar Elizabeth Hoover (2017) conducted a community-based research study with Kanien'kehá:ka of Akwesasne to explore the relationship between the effects of environmental racism, violence and degradation and the livelihood of Akwesasró:non. The findings of this study were shared by Hoover in her book *The River is In Us* (2017). When prompted to discuss their experiences with environmental racism, violence and degradation, Akwesasró:non were compelled to share their observations on the negative effects that this had on their food system – Tiohnhéhkwen[17]. Tiohnhéhkwen is made up of the land and waters that Akwesasne is part of, and as analyzed in chapter two's focus on environmental violence, the community's physical proximity to a toxic waste dumpsite at the hands of General Motors corporation contaminated many of the community's traditional food sources. According to Akwesasró:non who participated in the study, food in Kanien'kehá:ka culture is central to their identity, as it represents a connection to family and other community members through food sharing and spending time together to consume food, which are key components of the culture (Hoover, 2017, p. 169). In addition, study participants identified that growing their own food through activities such as planting and gardening helped them to uphold cultural responsibilities embedded in the Rotinonhsón:ni cycle of ceremonies and are part of the original instructions given to the Rotinonhsón:ni from the creator (Hoover, 2017, p. 180-181). Lastly, traditional Kanien'kehá:ka foods were identified as containing medicinal properties that promote physical health (Hoover, 2017, p. 211). In particular, the three staple foods of the Rotinonhsón:ni – Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra – were highlighted among the

[17] I use the term Tiohnhéhkwen to describe the food system of Akwesasro:non because they are a Kanien'kehá:ka community and share the same food system.

participants as being the most nutritious foods for their people and one community member emphasized that consuming them helped to stabilize their blood sugar (Hoover, 2017, p. 2017).

The key messages that emerged from each of these studies, which involved differing Onkwehón:we nations, was that it is crucial for Onkwehón:we to collect and consume their ancestral foods in order to obtain a desired level of wholistic health and wellness. The results of these three studies indicated that Onkwehón:we involvement in both the processing of their traditional foods and consuming them fostered:

1) A stronger connection to their respective **cultures** and a sense of **upholding cultural responsibilities** (Lindholm, 2019; Reinhardt, 2019; Hoover, 2017);
2) A greater **spiritual connection** with themselves, their communities and other living beings through practicing the principles of respect and reciprocity in food acquisition activities (Lindholm, 2019);
3) An improved **physical health** status or feelings of increased strength and energy levels (Lindholm, 2019; Hoover, 2017);
4) **Improved relationships** with their families and communities (Lindholm, 2019; Reinhardt, 2019; Hoover, 2017).

On this basis, it is crucial for Onkwehón:we to have the opportunity to engage with their respective ancestral food systems to encourage improving their personal and community wholistic health and wellness. At the individual level, improving diet and making healthy and active lifestyle changes contributes to the broader goal of achieving healthier communities and nations (Mihesuah, 2005). Communal and nation-wide positive health and wellness is crucial for the survival for all Onkwehón:we, because of the fact that it has been identified that "the disruption of traditional food systems has led to a number of health and social problems in [Onkwehón:we] communities" across

Turtle Island (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 6). Accordingly, in order to improve Onkwehón:we communal wholistic health and wellbeing, it begins with the actions, choices and consumption of traditional foods amongst individuals. According to Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah (2005), Onkwehón:we who are making these lifestyle improvements have the power to positively influence other community members, due to their common heritage, culture and experiences.

It is important for Onkwehón:we women to have the space and opportunity to not only participate in Indigenous food sovereignty projects, but be respected and uplifted in these spaces; food is a site of governance, wellness and empowerment, and by cultivating this space for Onkwehón:we women, it can also help them in reclaiming their roles in the governance of their communities, and regenerate their personal wellness and empowerment, which can be influential in shaping their familial, kin and communal relations. The restoration of Onkwehón:we women's roles as leaders and in their governing structures is vital in helping to promote respectful actions and attitudes toward Onkwehón:we women in their societies and communities. The restoration of respect and love toward Onkwehón:we women through practices embedded in Indigenous food sovereignty projects can help all Onkwehón:we unlearn colonial patriarchy and hierarchy, which seek to dismantle relationships rather than build healthy ones. Based on personal observations and the research conducted for this project, it is very clear that it is Onkwehón:we women across Turtle Island that are leading the regeneration of their ancestral food systems and are promoting this on communal, nation-wide or inter-national levels through the creation of innovative Indigenous food sovereignty projects. In the following section, Onkwehón:we women from across Turtle Island from various nations will be highlighted for their work in the traditional food regeneration movement and for the projects or activities that they have initiated as part of the Indigenous food sovereignty movement.

Onkwehón:we Women Leading the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement

All across Turtle Island, Onkwehón:we women are engaging in meaningful and powerful work to regenerate their respective ancestral food systems primarily through their involvement in innovating or contributing to Indigenous food sovereignty projects. The work of five Onkwehón:we women, Tekatsi'tsia:kwa "Katsi" Cook (Kanien'kehá:ka), Cheryl Bryce (Lekwungen), Dawn Morrison (Secwepemc), Brit Reed (Choctaw) and Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe) will be examined in this section based on the important work that they have and continue to do in the realm of Indigenous food sovereignty which warrants recognition as pioneers in this movement. Each of these Onkwehón:we women have contributed immensely to the Indigenous food sovereignty movement through their work and advocacy on the following themes:

1) Advocating for Onkwehón:we women's bodily sovereignty;
2) Illuminating the negative health impacts on Onkwehón:we women's bodies as a consequence of violence on the land;
3) Reclaiming their role in cultural practices associated with their ancestral food systems;
4) Educating Onkwehón:we and non-Onkwehón:we alike on colonization's negative impacts on Onkwehón:we food systems and practices;
5) Teaching fellow-Onkwehón:we how to cook with traditional foods;
6) Ancestral food conservation;
7) Mobilization and networking around Indigenous food sovereignty;
8) Reconnecting with community; and,
9) Protecting and restoring Indigenous seeds.

Traditional food conservation, mobilizing and networking around Indigenous food sovereignty, as well as protecting and restoring seeds or wildlife has largely been the work

undertaken by Dawn Morrison and Winona LaDuke. Both Dawn and Winona have successfully implemented projects that are specific to the needs of their nations in terms of traditional food revitalization (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020; LaDuke, 2016). Dawn is the founder of several important projects that seek to protect the environment and Secwepemc foodways, promote Indigenous food sovereignty and land-based learning. Two important projects that Dawn founded are the *Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty* and the *Wild Salmon Caravan* (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020). Most recently, the *Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty* has implemented two cohorts of a new project, *The Indigenous Food and Freedom School*, based in both Vancouver, BC and in Dawn's home territories, Secwepemcúlecw (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020). In an interview with Canada National Observer First Nation's Forward key advisor Emilee Gilpin (2020), Dawn stated that the purpose of the *Indigenous Food and Freedom School* is to actualize the principles of Indigenous food sovereignty by providing Onkwehón:we with the opportunity to participate in growing and raising their own food on a daily basis. This project was ultimately inspired by feedback from over thousands of Onkwehón:we throughout the last fifteen years, whom the *Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty* consulted with over this period of time (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020).

In the context of Anishinaabe food sovereignty, Winona has pioneered the establishment of the *White Earth Land Recovery Project (WELRP)* and the *Honour the Earth Project.* White Earth Reservation is Winona's home community, and the purpose of the *WELRP* is to support Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives that promote the protection of traditional seeds and plants from genetic modification, toxic contamination and resists industrialized agriculture (LaDuke, 2016, p. 126). The three vision statements of the *WELRP* are: 1) Working toward preservation and control over the wellbeing of the White Earth community, 2) Unifying Ojibwe identity and practices, and, 3) Building and strengthening relationships with the earth in a positive manner

(White Earth Land Recovery Project, nd, np). Winona founded this project in 1989 and was the director of it for twenty-five years before moving onto to directing the *Honor the Earth Project* (White Earth Land Recovery Project, nd, np). The *Honor the Earth Project* which is a non-profit organization that creates awareness around Onkwehón:we environmental issues, while also developing financial and political resources in order to ensure Onkwehón:we communities can remain or works towards sustainability (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 349).

The programs that Dawn and Winona have spearheaded in their plight to revitalize their traditional foodways and work towards attaining Indigenous food sovereignty are fundamentally tools of education for folks within their nations and beyond. I personally believe that education is a key tool in the process of working toward food sovereignty, especially in terms of sharing teachings to fellow-Onkwehón:we on our food systems. Cheryl Bryce and Brit Reed are two influential Onkwehón:we women who offer differing educational programs that promote the restoration of Onkwehón:we food systems. Cheryl has been actively involved in reviving Kwetlal in her homelands for most of her life, which is a staple food of the Lekwungen people in the region of what is now known as Victoria, B.C. (Down2Earth, 2010), and Brit is a Choctaw Chef and cooking teacher who was brought to this work through her desire to reconnect with her culture and community as an adoptee (Mancall and Reed, 2018). Cheryl is renowned in her home territory for initiating projects that promote Indigenous food sovereignty, two of which are the *Community Tool Shed* and workshops that teach people how to create and cook in a traditional Lekwungen pit cook. The goals of the *Community Tool Shed* are to focus on educating participants on the importance of revitalizing the Kwetlal food system through pulling invasive species, maintaining traditional plant life, and overall environmental restoration (Corntassel and Bryce, 2012). As a previous participant in the making of a traditional Lekwungen pit cook, teachings associated with this traditional cooking method that I was given were around responsibilities to the land – such as the

significance of the land that we were standing on - which was the University of Victoria campus, Lekwungen women's roles and responsibilities in land and food management and how to successfully cook food using elements of the natural world. Cheryl's work in environmental and food revitalization and restoration through her educational programs and activities exemplifies that she lives up to her role as a Lekwungen woman as a caretaker of her homelands and waters.

Brit's educational endeavors are focused on teaching fellow-Onkwehón:we how to cook with traditional foods at the Tulalip Health Clinic in Tulalip, Washington (Murphy and Reed 2018). At the Tulalip Health Clinic, she promotes cooking with traditional and natural foods from the garden located on site (Murphy and Reed, 2018). In an interview with Andi Murphy on the *Toasted Sister* podcast, Brit stated that she believes there are significant physical, emotional, spiritual and emotional benefits that come from the act of cooking (Murphy and Reed, 2018). From her own life experience, she attests that processing food and consuming it with others helps to build relationships (Murphy and Reed, 2018). Brit also stated in this interview that her involvement in the traditional food regeneration movement is inspired by Choctaw culture, the desire to promote healthier Onkwehón:we communities and to connect with other Onkwehón:we (Mancall-Bitel, 2018; Murphy and Reed, 2018). Both Cheryl and Brit also stated that their motivation in working toward Indigenous food sovereignty comes from their mutual aspiration to embody their roles as Lekwungen and Choctaw women. Similarly, Kanien'kehá:ka midwife Tekatsi'tsia:kwa "Katsi" Cook stated that her plight in promoting Kanien'kehá:ka women's empowerment through her midwifery practice is to relate women's roles to ecology (Follet and Cook, 2006, p. 185).

Katsi's work throughout her lifetime has been largely centered on Onkwehón:we women's reclamation over their bodily sovereignty through reviving traditional birthing practices in her home community, Akwesasne (Hoover, 2017, p. 5). She has been an avid advocate for the

autonomy over Onkwehón:we bodies as a means to achieve Onkwehón:we sovereignty. Katsi has initiated a variety of very important projects throughout her lifetime that relate women's bodily sovereignty with the protection of land and environmental justice, such as The *Mother's Milk Project*. Advocacy for women's bodily sovereignty and illuminating the impacts of violence on the land to Onkwehón:we women's bodies is important in the context of Kanien'kehá:ka regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen, but important in other cultures as well, where it is said by Cheryl and Brit that the women of the Lekwungen and Choctaw cultures were instrumental to managing their food systems.

The *Mother's Milk Project* was a research study that was intended to investigate the impacts of toxins, particularly PCBs on the breastmilk of Akwesasne women, impacts of which were aforementioned in chapter two's analysis of environmental violence. The *Mother's Milk Project* later transformed into the *First Environment Research Project*, which was "named in recognition of the fact that mothers are the first environments experienced by all humans" (Hoover, 2017, p. 98). The purpose of the *First Environment Research Project* was to support mothers in Akwesasne who were dealing with the fact that their breast milk was now known to be contaminated, using culturally appropriate strategies and methods to help them cope (Hoover, 2017, p. 98). Out of this initiative came the Iewirokwas Program, which helped to establish the midwifery practice and birthing center in Akwesasne; the goal of this program was to provide improved maternal and child health care to the community, under the leadership of Akwesasne women (Follet and Cook, 2006, p. 90). Advocacy for women's bodily sovereignty and illuminating the impacts of violence on the land to Onkwehón:we women's bodies proved to be a crucial step in creating *Kanenhí:io Ionkwathón:hakie* in Akwesasne. *Kanenhí:io Ionkwathón:hakie* is a community-based organization that seeks to boost local food production through assisting community members to access land, equipment, funds and other experienced gardeners and was

born from the discoveries of the *Mother's Milk Project* which Katsi initiated (Hoover, 2017). Restoring and reembodying traditional Onkwehón:we women's roles was also important in the context of regenerating traditional food systems in Lekwungen and Choctaw cultures, as indicated by Cheryl and Brit.

The inspiration in regenerating Onkwehón:we food systems and desire to participate and/or lead Indigenous food sovereignty projects is inspired by a) Dawn's personal healing journey (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020), b) Cheryl's reclamation of her role as a Lekwungen woman through ensuring that their foods and ecosystem continue to survive for future generations (Corntassel and Bryce, 2021), c) Brit's desire to reconnect with her community as an adoptee (Murphy and Reed, 2018), d) Katsi's life mission to protect traditional bodies of water and promote women's empowerment through an ecological framework (Hoover, 2017), and e) Winona's realization through her father's words - "I don't want to hear your philosophy if you can't grow corn" - which signified that growing her own food is the utmost way contribute to the survival of Anishinaabe foodways (LaDuke, 2019, p. xiii). Each of these inspirations come from self-less goals to promote community healing and ensuring the continuance of Onkwehón:we food systems. Through this work, Katsi, Dawn, Winona, Cheryl and Brit have exemplified their excellence is reclaiming their roles and responsibilities as Onkwehón:we women in leadership capacities and governance through reconnecting with community, ensuring the continuance of their food systems, and restoring women's bodily autonomy, all of which promote communal well-being and positive nation-building.

Significance of Onkwehón:we Women's Leadership

When Onkwehón:we women are well, we are not only better equipped to take part in taking care of ourselves and our families, but to participate in the protection of the lands and waters

(Gilpin, 2019), which is integral to the regeneration of our respective ancestral food systems. Cultural restoration, balance and wellness in communities is dependent upon collective resilience, which re-establishes a healthy mind, body, spirit for individuals, families, and communities (Neufield et al., 2020, p. 8). The concept of Indigenous food sovereignty is not solely about regenerating ancestral food systems; it entails the rebuilding of values and social structures of a particular nation while tying in the importance of culture and family in food systems (Neufield et al., 2020, p. 10). Re-instilling respectful attitudes, behaviors and love toward Onkwehón:we women within communities is integral in order to rebuild governance and social structures among Onkwehón:we nations, because this will create space for Onkwehón:we women to have the opportunity to reclaim these roles and responsibilities that were practiced since time immemorial. When women are respected, honored and are in normalized leadership positions, it can help to eliminate the higher levels of violence that women currently experience within their communities. In accordance with Dian Million (2013), changing the fabric of community actions and attitudes is going to be the most effective way moving forward in order to restore respect toward women and to keep them safe. Focusing on cultural revitalization and Onkwehón:we resurgence in order to aim to decrease and end violence against Onkwehón:we women is more important than increasing policing and prosecution within Onkwehón:we communities, because as analyzed in this chapter, restoring cultural practices is a pathway to achieving community health, wellness and healing (Million, 2013, p. 38). Surveillance, monitoring and policing do not keep women safe; it is a communal attitude of respect toward women that does (Million, 2013).

The Onkwehón:we women highlighted in this chapter, have each exemplified perseverance, resilience and dedication to the resurgence projects in or beyond their respective nations. In particular, these women are pioneers of the Indigenous food sovereignty movement, which is remarkable and inspiring considering the systemic barriers that exist within Canada and

the U.S that have sought and continue to dismantle Onkwehón:we women's roles presence and existence within their communities which has greatly impacted their engagement with their food systems since colonization began. Their work in promoting and regenerating Indigenous food sovereignty, through educational programs, environmental restoration projects and women's bodily autonomy reclamation initiatives, each have the common goal to restore healthier Onkwehón:we communities. Many of the women featured in this chapter have publicly stated that they have been inspired to promote Indigenous food sovereignty based on their own healing and wellness journeys, and to fulfill their roles and responsibilities within their respective cultures and nations. Onkwehón:we across Turtle Island have been becoming increasingly vocal on the fact that (re)connecting and (re)engaging with their traditional food practices and consumption has been a healing tool that has addressed issues stemming from intergenerational trauma. Food is a political aspect of Onkwehón:we life on Turtle Island because of the ways in which it has been diminished or taken-away by settler-colonial governments, which has contributed immensely to poor health and distorted relationships, and contributed to dismantling systems of governance. Reclaiming this aspect of Onkwehón:we culture, which entails allowing Onkwehón:we women the space to reclaim their roles in their food systems, is therefore a healing mechanism and culturally appropriate response to intergenerational trauma.

CHAPTER 4: Building a Tiohnhéhkwen Regeneration Project in Kahnawà:ke

As a Kanien'keha:ka woman, Tiohnhéhkwen has been instrumental in my personal healing journey to address wholistic health and wellness challenges. For me, healing from an embodied trauma is a lifelong journey and regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen in both my personal life and beyond is also a lifelong process that I have decided to commit to. My inspiration to be part of the movement to regenerate Tiohnhehkwen comes from the positivity that this has brought to my life, which includes improving my health and wellness, and re-establishing strong relationships to the land, waters and other Onkwehón:we. Within the last year, I have sought out new ways to help fellow Kahnawa'kehró:non to also reclaim this part of our culture, identity and wellbeing as a people. In this fourth and final chapter, I will present the Indigenous food sovereignty project that I initiated and co-developed with local leadership in my home community of Kahnawà:ke. I have decided to introduce the work that I have done in regards to Indigenous food sovereignty to bring to life my theoretical assumptions on how my work as an Onkwehón:we woman strives to address community health issues and improve relationships within community by aiming to cultivate a welcoming and open space for Onkwehón:we women's knowledge and excellence.

In 2020, I began a pilot Indigenous food sovereignty project titled *Hao' Tewakhón:ni*, which translates to "Let's All Cook Together. I was compelled to initiate *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* based on the need to fulfill a Community Governance Project as a student in the Indigenous Nationhood graduate certificate program at the University of Victoria. *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* is a land-based learning and cooking class for students who attend Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa and their families. Creating *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* is a product of my theoretical assumptions of what it means to regenerate Tiohnhéhkwen and reclaim Indigenous food sovereignty in Kahnawà:ke while adhering to the philosophies and principles of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy. When the concept "Indigenous Governance" comes to mind, I think of my nation having the ability to

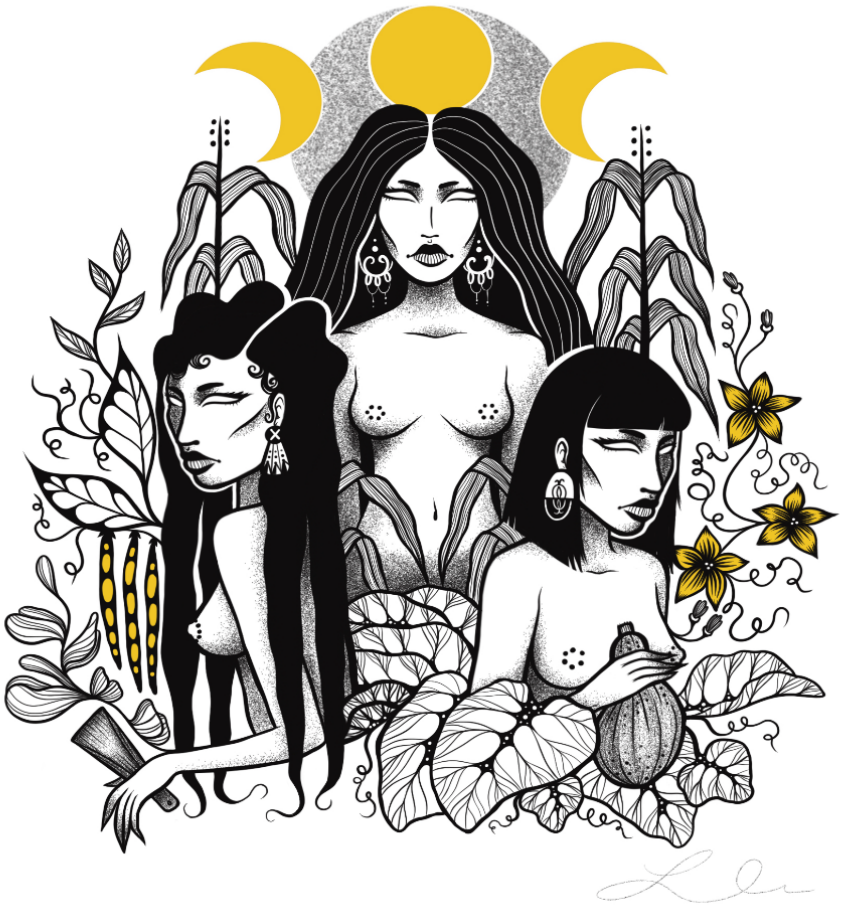
revitalize Tiohnhéhkwen, control our food sources, choose what foods we put into our bodies on a daily basis, have access to knowledge and physical sources of food, and restore respect toward our women (who direct so much of food related practices) on a communal level. A politically, spiritually and socially strong Onkwehón:we nation is a healthy nation; and nourishing food that is grown and shared according to our philosophies is the foundation of a healthy and well Kanien'kehá:ka nation.

The ultimate goal of this new pilot-project, which is currently operational, is to contribute to regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke. Specifically, informed by my teachings, relationships, scholarly pursuits, and Indigenous food sovereignty practices, I truly believe that over time, if we as a community continue to strive towards achieving Indigenous food sovereignty while upholding Rotinonhsón:ni values and principles, we will i) work toward restoring wholistically well individuals, families and eventually a community as a whole, and ii) improve gender relations by returning to our traditional principles of valuing, respecting and upholding women in leadership positions. In this chapter, after discussing the process to develop *Hao' Tewakhón:ni*, I will examine both of these aspects. Overall, I provide an analysis of the significance of Tiohnhéhkwen in Rotinonhsón:ni culture, and examine why projects that promote the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen are important in Kahnawà:ke.

Overview of Tiohnhéhkwen in Rotinonhsón:ni Culture

To reiterate, Tiohnhéhkwen is a Kanien'kéha word that roughly translates to "life sustaining foods that nourish the people physically, mentally and spiritually". The three foods that are linked to the word Tiohnhéhkwen are Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon'onsè:ra, also known as Corn, Beans and Squash, which are often referred to as Áhsen Nikontennò:sen in Kanien'kéha and

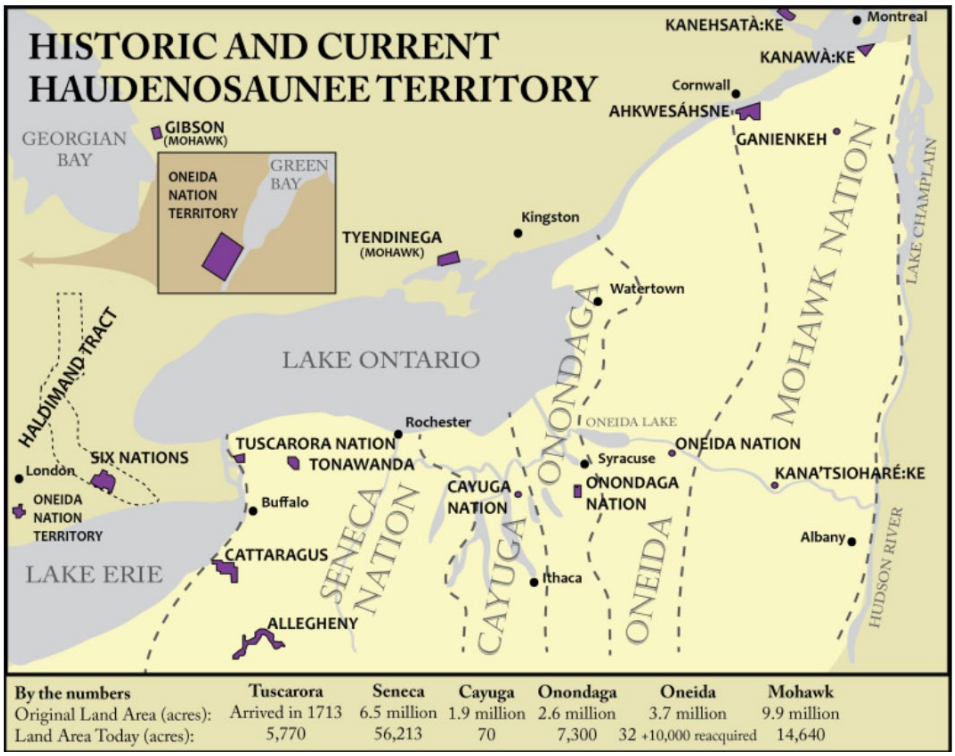
this translates to “the three sisters”. Through Kanien’kehá:ka oral tradition, I have been reminded throughout my lifetime that Onénhste, Osahè:ta tanón Onon’onsè:ra are the most significant foods to the people of my nation, as well as the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, as they are said to be the most nutritious foods for our people and nourish the entire mind, body and spirit through planting, caring for them, harvesting them and consuming them. The cultural practice of planting these seeds together symbolizes the relationship to its nutritional properties and benefits, a practice that represents women supporting women and the “[Rotinonhsón:ni] philosophy that a strong society depends upon a complementarity of supporting relationships” (Delormier et al., 2017, p. 3). As depicted in Figure 4 below, Áhsen Nikontennò:sen are cultural symbols for women being supported, and working, growing and being nourished together. The names of these three plants are linked to the feminine through their Kanien’kéha names and the responsibility of women to plant and care for these three plants. Áhsen Nikontennò:sen also represent the notion of the importance of women supporting women through their nature of depending on one another to grow successfully, quite literally, as the Onénhste serves as the strong and tall plant that can physically hold up the growth of the Osahè:ta plant, which wraps itself around the corn stalk, and the Onon’onsè:ra plant is the base for the three. Figure 3 is a visual representation of the connection between Áhsen Nikontennò:sen and femininity in Rotinonhsón:ni culture, created by Kanien’kehá:ka and Paiute artist Leilani Shaw:



(Figure 4 - Artwork created by Leilani Shaw – Shaw, 2021)

Tiohnhéhkwen nourishes the people physically, mentally and spiritually in a number of ways. First, Tiohnhéhkwen is a food system that is shared with the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, based on a shared traditional territory and the natural environment[18]. All Onkwehón:we food systems are place-based, nation-specific, and shaped by the natural environment that the nation inhabited. The traditional territory of the Rotinonhsón:ni is mapped here in Figure 5:

[18] Each of the six nations that make up the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy have different languages, which are all derived from the same Iroquoian language group. I define our shared food system as Tiohnhehkwen according to the Kanien'kéha language, but this is defined in a different language by the Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora nations.



(Figure 5 - Image created by the Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation, 2013).

According to Gerald Reed (nd), the natural environment of the Rotinonhsón:ni was

> a forest region stocked with abundant supplies of wild game, fish, nuts, roots, fruits and other resources. At the same time, it was a country of temperate climate, sufficient rainfall and fertile soil. As a result, it was an environment favorable to the development of a hunting, fishing and agricultural way of life (p. 91).

Second, prior to colonization, the Rotinonhsón:ni were completely sustained, nourished and energized by other living kin that make up the natural environment, such as animals, plants, fungi and fish. They acquired sustenance, nourishment and energy by consuming foods and waters from their natural environment. In addition, animals were a source from nature that also provided shelter, clothing, warmth and cultural activities such as beading. Wild plants and fungi were also harvested and used as medicines to treat diseases and illnesses. Rotinonhsón:ni had reciprocal

relations with the natural world and to sources of nourishment according to oral tradition.

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, when I think of the term and meaning of "Indigenous Governance," I think of Tiohnhéhkwen because it is at the foundation of the existence of all people and is crucial component of my culture. Tiohnhéhkwen has been part of the governance system of Rotinonhsón:ni societies because the process of growing, acquiring, cooking and consuming food requires community collaboration, decision-making, adhering to roles, and upholding responsibilities toward the natural world and all living beings. Tiohnhéhkwen both informs and inspires cultural beliefs, values and the worldview of the Rotinonhsón:ni. The Rotinonhsón:ni – and all of humankind - would cease to exist without the nutrients, sustenance and energy that comes from the natural elements in the world that nourish us. On a very basic level, humankind simply would not exist if it were not for the animals, plants, fungi, fresh bodies of water and marine life that have and continue to provide – these more-than-human relations are critical so understanding processes of Tiohnhéhkwen and community governance.

Third, and related to the previous point, the Rotinonhsón:ni have always recognized that the natural elements that made up their environment contributed to their survival and prosperity as a people. This is not only for physical well-being but also intrinsic to the spiritual well-being of humans and the nonhuman world. As a culture that prioritizes the philosophy of living in balance, harmony and reciprocity with the natural world, the Rotinonhsón:ni expressed their gratitude to the non-human kin in their natural environments in a variety of ways. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen and the cycle of ceremonies are two very significant components of Kanien'kehá:ka culture that demonstrate the importance of Tiohnhéhkwen and its relationship to governance within this nation. Based on oral tradition, the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen and the cycle of ceremonies have been integral cultural practices of the Rotinonhsón:ni since the time of creation. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is an oral expression of gratitude toward the natural world

and has been instructed to be recited amongst Rotinonhsón:ni at the beginning and end of each day. Every natural element that is recognized and acknowledged in the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is either directly a food source, such as the fresh bodies of water, fruits and vegetables, wildlife, Áhsen Nikontennò:sen, fish, and birds, or an indirect food source that contributes to its growth and prosperity such as the moon, thunder and lighting beings, the sun, the stars and the trees. According to Rotinonhsón:ni oral tradition, it is important for us to maintain this tradition in order to express our gratitude toward nature for all that it provides for us, and if we cease to recite the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, the natural world will no longer be inclined to provide for humankind. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is an expression of gratitude toward the natural world that upholds the values of respect and reciprocity. The Rotinonhsón:ni view of paying respect to the natural world through the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is necessary to maintain a respectful and reciprocal relationship with the natural world. As Rotinonhsón:ni, this relationship is reinforced on a daily basis when we recite the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen and behave in a way that adheres to these teachings.

Fourth, the cycle of ceremonies is an important cultural practice of the Rotinonhsón:ni that is routinely carried out throughout entire year. The purpose of the cycle of ceremonies is to acknowledge and commend the natural world for providing for the Rotinonhsón:ni at a given time in the year, where certain songs, dances, and other practices are performed within the Longhouse. Figure 6 is a visual of the Rotinonhsón:ni Cycle of Ceremonies that depicts the thirteen ceremonies that are conducted throughout the year based on the seasons:

(Figure 6 - created by Teyowisonte Deer, 2010).

Each of the thirteen ceremonies of the Rotinonhsón:ni either directly or indirectly commemorate plants or plant foods. Some of these plant foods are Ken'niiohontéhsa (Strawberries), O'rhotshé:ri (beans), Onénhste (Corn) and Wáhta (Maple). The act of giving thanks to our foods throughout the year is an essential part of Rotinonhsón:ni culture, and as evidenced through these ceremonies, plants and plant foods are central components of pre-colonial Rotinonhsón:ni diets. Plants and plant foods are also significant in terms of their connection and relationship to women. One of the primary responsibilities of Rotinonhsón:ni women prior to colonization was to take care of the land and waters. As depicted in Figure 6 above, a major responsibility of women was to plant and

maintain the gardens within our communities. In Rotinonhsón:ni culture, women's connection to the natural world, plants and plant foods is linked to feminine connections to nature; one of these is that Rotinonhsón:ni women "are the ones who bring forth new life and our spiritual, social, and societal responsibilities reflect those close connections" (Horn-Miller, 2016, p. 33), but women who do not bear children carry similar connections.

The attachments between female reproduction and women's important roles in providing life and/or sustenance may seem to over-determine the relationship between women and nature, but this connection also elevates the role of mothers and other women who provide care in an age when patriarchy dominates. Because of the mutual ability and responsibility to create, nourish and give new life, Rotinonhsón:ni recognize that women and the earth are one in the same; this is also reflected in our word for "earth" in Kanien'kéha, which is "Ionkhi'nistén:'a Tsi Iohontsá:te," and roughly translates to "Our Mother the Earth". Ionkhi'nistén:'a Tsi Iohontsá:te is a word that derives from the Rotinonhsón:ni creation story, where it is said that the Turtle Island was created because a pregnant woman, Katsi'tsí:son, fell from the Sky World. Up in the Sky World, where Katsi'tsí:son was from, the people depended solely on the Tree of Life for sustenance and nourishment. As a child, I was taught by Elders that the Tree of Life only grew edible plants, and that the people in the Sky World lived in harmony and were well-nourished because the Tree never stopped providing for them. Katsi'tsi:son fell at the base of this Tree, and managed to pull some of the roots down with her as she fell down to the Great Turtle's back. Eventually, by dancing counter-clockwise and shuffling her feet on the Turtle's back, Katsi'tsí:son created earth. When the earth was created, the first available food to Katsi'tsí:son was Ken'niiohontéhsa – "leader of the berries" - which is symbolic of the connection between women, the earth and Tiohnhéhkwen. In Rotinonhsón:ni ceremonies, the dance that Katsi'tsi:son performed to create Ionkhi'nistén:'a Tsi Iohontsá:te is replicated and is called the women's dance. Thus, Rotinonhsón:ni culture

recognizes that there is a deep relationship between women's bodies and Ionkhi'nistén:'a Tsi Iohontsá:te, as they both can create, nourish, give and/or sustain life. By commemorating foods that come from the land through the cycle of ceremonies, women are also being commemorated simultaneously.

Fifth, Tiohnhéhkwen and Rotinonhsón:ni women have a strong complementary relationship and have both historically been intrinsic to the governance structure of the Rotinonhsón:ni. Prior to colonization, the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy system of governance was matriarchal. Even when men and women held different responsibilities and positions within the social, political and governing structures of the society, these were of equal 'value'. Moreover, leaders of Rotinonhsón:ni societies were Chiefs and Clan mothers, and the entire community had a role to play in decision making as well. Men held the role and title of Chiefs and women held the role and title of Clan mothers. Clan mothers continue to exercise their authority in the contemporary governance of the Longhouse in Rotinonhsón:ni communities. Both Clan mothers and Chiefs had decision-making and governing powers that complemented one another and worked in conjunction. Clan mothers had the ultimate authority in governance in that they deemed which men were eligible for the role of Chief, and could remove them from that role and title if necessary. Women also carry the clans of the nation and have the ability to pass them onto their children, which symbolizes the replication of Rotinonhsón:ni and ensure the survival of the Confederacy. Women embodied motherhood, caregiving, strength, authority and were responsible for land management, opening the gardens, planting and cooking in Rotinonhsón:ni societies.

Overall, today, food remains part of the political, cultural and social life of the nations that are apart of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy. In pre-colonial times, food inherently connected people, as numerous individuals with a variety of skillsets in gathering, gardening, hunting,

harvesting, and cooking, were required to come together in order to produce a successful and bountiful meal. At present, cooking and producing a meal in community also requires the bridging of a variety of skillsets, and those who are involved in this process connect and build strong relationships with family members and community members. As Onkwehón:we, when we utilize and replicate cooking techniques, ingredients and modes of food production similar to that of our ancestors, a strong sense of identity, pride and connection to place is reinforced. The practices that Rotinonhsón:ni engage in within their food system are part of the environmental identity of the nation, where ecological, nutritional and behavioral beliefs are enacted (Hoover, 2017, p. 169). In this way, relationships, political arrangements and forms of authority are practiced and renewed through maintaining Tiohnhéhkwen (Daigle, 2019, p. 302). Further, teachings on reciprocity and expressive gratitude toward food sources are embedded within everyday practices of the Rotinonhsón:ni. I believe that a strong attachment and involvement in cultural activities and practices can encourage Onkwehón:we to become stronger mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally, and are then equipped to pass on these traditions to future generations. This is crucial to embodying and enacting Onkwehón:we governance and is in part a healing mechanism for intergenerational trauma experienced by all Rotinonhsón:ni, which includes women's experiences with structural oppression through Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ crisis and environmental violence. All Rotinonhsón:ni share a common settler-colonial history with other Onkwehón:we, which is that of attempted genocide and assimilation, through violent removal from our homelands, loss of governance structures, languages, food systems, and the imposition of the IRSS in Canada and the Indian Boarding School system in the U.S., all of which have been traumatic experiences felt by our ancestors and often lived through current generations. Therefore, reclaiming this aspect of our culture, which is foundational to our existence as a people, is crucial to address much of the intergenerational traumas that live within current generations. In particular, Kanien'kehá:ka and

all Rotinonhsón:ni women are integral to the practices and protocols associated with Tiohnhéhkwen. As such, female leadership and decision-making capacities are integral in Indigenous food sovereignty projects in any Rotinonhsón:ni community across the Confederacy. We have the privilege to live in a time where engagement in resurgence is at minimum a possibility.

Why the Regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen is Important for Kahnawà:ke

Kahnawà:ke is a Kanien'kehá:ka community that is geographically located in what is now referred to as Quebec, Canada. Kahnawà:ke translates to "By the Rapids," which describes the community's proximity to Kaniatarowanenh, or the St. Lawrence River. Since contact with Europeans nearly five hundred years ago, the nation has split into seven different communities across Canada and the United States. The communities are Kahnawà:ke, Akwesasne, Ganienkeh, Wahtha, Kanehsatà:ke, Tyendinaga and Ohswé:ken. Kahnawà:ke, in accordance with the name of the community, has always maintained its proximity to the St. Lawrence River, despite past needs to relocate several times due to colonial impositions. Nevertheless, the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke remain a community and nation that are part of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy. As analyzed in previous chapters and now well-documented , Onkwehón:we across Turtle Island have experienced an assault on their abilities to access, maintain and consume their ancestral food systems as a result of colonialism (Coté, 2016; Matties, 2016; Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019). This was also experienced by Kahnawa'kehró:non; two unique ways that this was experience by the community were through the imposition of Indian Day Schools on reserve from 1868-1988 – which sought to eliminate all aspects of our culture and assimilate Kanien'kehá:ka children, and the creation of St. Lawrence Seaway – which was constructed in the 1950s and literally cut off Kahnawa'kehró:non from Kaniatarowanenh or the St. Lawrence River and therefore eliminated access to fresh water and fish, and cultural practices to acquire these foods. In this section, I will

focus on two effects of colonial deprivation and dislocation from Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke: 1) food production and consumption patterns, and 2) the physical health of the community.

Food production and consumption patterns contemporarily dramatically differ from that of five hundred years ago, specifically in that there is much less food self-sufficiency, disconnection from cultural-spiritual-governance systems, and uncertainty about availability of nutritional foods. In a study conducted in 2017 by Kanien'kehá:ka scholars and community members Treena Delormier, Alex McComber, Kahente Horn-Miller and Kaylia Marquis, it was found that the majority of the community relies on food that was produced outside of the community (p. 4). By heavily relying on food produced outside of the community, Kahnawa'kehró:non are not in control over what is being consumed on a communal level, and nor are we practicing ways of collecting and preparing foods informed by our own philosophies and epistemologies. As a community member, I am cognizant of the fact that many individuals and families rely on unnatural and processed foods for nourishment, often based on socio-economic reasons, lack of access to healthy and nutritional foods, as well as lack of access to foods that come from Tiohnhéhkwen, and lack of cultural knowledge or opportunity to engage in cultural practices pertaining to Tiohnhéhkwen. The reality that Kahnawà:ke is not self-sufficient when it comes to food production became further apparent when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, there was a sense of panic in terms of Kahnawà:ke's food security, because as a collective, we are currently unable to grow, process and feed our entire community without outside assistance.

In addition, the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen is important for Kahnawà:ke because there is a diabetes crisis. In order to convey the most common health challenges for Kahnawa'kehró:non, Onkwata'karitáhtshera, the health agency of Kahnawà:ke, released a "Community Health Portrait" in 2018. The authors, Fuller et al., identify four prominent health challenges in the community, which are type 2 diabetes, cancer, tobacco use and substance use (Fuller et al., 2018). When I

initially read this report in 2019, the key area that stood out was the prominence of type 2 diabetes in the community, especially because I had recently learned that this disease had been increasingly recognized as a serious health issue for Onkwehón:we as a result of colonization's impacts on our food systems and current consumption patterns. The report states that in 2015, approximately 17.9% of adults in Kahnawà:ke were living within diabetes, which is roughly every 1 in 6 adults[19] (Fuller et al., 2018, p. 20). Those living with type 2 diabetes reported that they lived with other health complications simultaneously, which included high blood pressure (66%), high cholesterol (41%), heart disease (24%), and blindness or vision impairment (12%) (Fuller et al., 2018, p. 23). Risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes that were identified in the report included being overweight, obesity, lack of physical activity, family history of type 2 diabetes and a diet high in processed and unnatural foods (Fuller et al., 2018). The report noted that that 81% of adults in Kahnawà:ke are overweight or obese, and 55% of children aged 0-11 are also overweight or obese (Fuller et al., 2018). In terms of healthy food consumption, it was identified that 1 out of 3 Kahnawa'kehró:non adults are eating vegetables and/or fruits less than once per day, but 9 out of 10 children are eating at least one fruit per day.

Since I had already begun to change my lifestyle by learning about Tiohnhéhkwen and increasing my consumption of natural and unprocessed foods at the time of initially reading the Community Health Portrait, I believed, and continue to believe, that a key piece that is missing from this report is that the reclamation, (re)consumption and regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen is a major diabetes prevention tactic. In terms of addressing physical health challenges that Kahnawa'kehró:non are experiencing or are at a greater risk of developing, such as type 2 diabetes, my contention is that there is a clear need to promote a healthy diet that emphasizes the consumption of foods from Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke; this is because traditional

[19] The report does not distinguish type 2 diabetes statistics for men, women or other genders.

Onkwehón:we foods are some of the nutritious foods for Onkwehón:we people – they are typically unprocessed, high in nutrients, and biodiverse. Regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke is also important in terms of addressing current food production and consumption patterns in the community. If the community works together to make a shift toward producing food – through individual, familial and communal gardens – as well as acquiring our own food through hunting, fishing and foraging practices, or even trading with other communities in order to promote sustainable growth, not only will we become more food secure, but we will work toward achieving Indigenous food sovereignty and regenerate Tiohnhéhkwen all concurrently. In other words, Indigenous food sovereignty can achieved by (re)establishing our connection to our food sources, the natural world, and with one another. This type of resurgence is crucial for Kanien'kehá:ka and Rotinonhsón:ni, as Onkwehón:we cultures are considered to be healing mechanisms for mental health challenges, restoring traditional leadership, and community care (Health Canada, 2015, p. 23). As depicted in Figure 1, the ability to make intentional choices rooted in Onkwehón:we values of labour, food preparation, relationship building, and connecting to culture is important for the health of our bodies and minds; this is also related to solving our health issues in the manner in which our ancestors did (Mihesuah, 2005, p. 7). Tiohnhéhkwen is a crucial component of Kanien'kehá:ka and Rotinonhsón:ni culture that addresses health and wellness outcomes, while strengthening communities' abilities to produce and consume healthy and nutritious foods that are grown locally, sustainability and in accordance with cultural protocols. For me, doing this work is meaningful to begin to address the intergenerational trauma that lives within Kahnawa'kehró:non , because of the fact that it has contributed to negatively impacting community health, wellness, relationships and our strong cultural knowledge and traditions.

The community is not unaware that food production and consumption patterns, and the physical health of the community has suffered under colonialism. Similar to many other

Onkwehón:we communities that continue to exist within settler-colonial states, Kahnawà:ke faces challenges to restore our culture and reclaim our identity as a distinct Onkwehón:we nation while simultaneously striving to enact resurgence within the community. Within the last few years, regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen has become a higher priority in Kahnawà:ke as indicated by community members through an open house hosted by the Kahnawà:ke Collective Impact (KCI) in 2019. The KCI is a grassroots group in Kahnawà:ke that works to promote cultural, economic and social initiatives. The purpose of the open house was to ask the community their feedback on which initiatives – all of which involve cultural revitalization – were the most important for the KCI to help implement. The six options were:

1. A Food Sovereignty Initiative – which proposed to initiate a large-scale community garden called the "Three Sisters Mound Garden," as it was intended to focus on growing an abundance of Corn, Beans and Squash;
2. A Language and Culture Mentorship Program;
3. A Wholistic Health and Wellness Initiative for Youth;
4. An Economic Development Strategy;
5. Kahwá:tsire Family Resource for New or Expecting Parents;
6. A Community Plan to Fulfill Our Shared Vision. (Delormier, 2019, p. 4).

The results of the open house showed that Kahnawa'kehró:non collectively decided that the number one priority for Kahnawà:ke was the Food Sovereignty Initiative (Delormier, 2019, p. 4). KCI's definition of food sovereignty is "the right to food which is sufficient, safe, secure, healthy and appropriate to use and share in a socially and environmentally safe and sustainable way" (Delormier, 2019, p. 3). The KCI also reported that feedback from Kahnawa'kehró:non at this event included discussions surrounding the "importance of preserving… traditional foods, the importance of growing, harvesting and eating…local foods" (Delormier, 2019, p. 5). Community

members also expressed a clear interest in increasing their gardening practices and their desire for a community grow-op facility (Delormier, 2019, p. 5).

The movement to achieve Indigenous food sovereignty and reclaim our food system is gaining traction and community interest and involvement as of late, which is evidenced through several community-led projects that promote the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen. Two important Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives in the community are the inception of the *Kahnawà:ke Community Garden* and *Kaienthókwen.* The *Kahnawà:ke Community Garden* was established in 2015 by two Kanien'kehá:ka language speakers and teachers. The *Kahnawà:ke Community Garden's* purpose is to improve community health, address food insecurity, revitalize Kanien'kehá:ka culture, preserve traditional knowledge and pass along gardening and planting teachings to future generations (Coppolino, Fuoco and Mokrusa, 2018). The *Kahnawà:ke Community Garden* also represents a successful #LandBack project; geographically, the garden is located on a piece of land that was disputed between Kahnawà:ke and surrounding municipalities, despite the fact that it is Kanien'kehá:ka territory, and was returned back to Kahnawà:ke in 2012 (Coppolino, Fuoco and Mokrusa, 2018). More recently, *Kaienthókwen* was created as a business endeavor by a Kanien'kehá:ka woman and language speaker, where she sells food and food products that she grew along with her family. In addition, *Kaienthókwen* sells Onkwehón:we sourced food products from nations across Turtle Island. The goal of *Kaienthókwen* is to provide the people of Kahnawà:ke with accessibility to our traditional foods and to be a hub that promotes Indigenous food sovereignty through committing to nation-to-nation trade with other Onkwehón:we and their food products (Monkman, 2020).

Thus, regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke is an extremely important communal commitment that can help revitalize an important aspect of our culture, foster better health and wellness, strengthen relationships amongst individuals, families and community members, and

promote respectful treatment and attitudes toward women by restoring and normalizing their voices, decisions and place in this movement. All of which are important in doing the work to confront the living realities stemming from intergenerational trauma in our community. Each of these elements represent a profound effort to restore communal and cultural wellness. Tiohnhéhkwen is a site of Kanien'kehá:ka resilience, reclamation, autonomy, governance and sovereignty. Inspired by these resurgent practices, I too have taken up issues of food sovereignty in my community, as I discuss next.

Creating *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* – "Let's All Cook Together"

In August 2020, I approached Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa, which is a school operated under the Kahnawà:ke Education Center (KEC), to request a partnership to design a pilot-project that promotes the restoration of Tiohnhéhkwen. Karonhianónhnha is an elementary school in Kahnawà:ke that offers a Kanien'kéha language immersion program for children aged four to twelve, where cultural teachings and values are embedded within the curriculum. I chose to request to partner with Karonhianónhnha to help (re)introduce and teach students at Karonhianónhnha, as well as their families, about Tiohnhéhkwen because I wanted to normalize cooking skills and the consumption of Tiohnhéhkwen among young students in the school and build our collective capacity to obtain Indigenous food sovereignty in Kahnawà:ke. I also have a strong personal tie to Karonhianónhnha, as I attended the elementary school there as a child. It is at Karonhianónhnha where my identity as a Kanien'kehá:ka person was shaped through learning my ancestral language Kanien'kéha and other aspects of my culture, such as significant stories, ceremonies, songs and dances. Thus, I also wish to give back to my community and share knowledge about the importance of regenerating our Tiohnhéhkwen to the current students and their families at Karonhianónhnha.

The mission of the KEC's curriculum program, called Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten, is to "ensure [the] students are being taught in a culturally engaging way by embracing who they are as Onkwehón:we people through the highest quality curriculum" (Kahnawake Education Center, nd, np). The objectives of *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* are: 1) Contributing to the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke, 2) Teaching children and young families cooking skills and techniques in a culturally sound and safe environment, and 3) Enhancing the community priority of Indigenous food sovereignty in Kahnawà:ke. These all coincide with the mission of the Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten curriculum. *Hao' Tewakhón:ni,* also strives to contribute to enhancing the quality of education for Kanien'kehá:ka children by giving them the tools and real-life skills in growing, harvesting and preparing traditional foods; something that has not yet been done in an educational facility in Kahnawà:ke.

My approach to the development of this project has been collaborative, where I ensured that community involvement and leadership were present in the planning and implementation phases of the project[20]. In September 2020, I submitted a Research and Ethics Application to the KEC, where I requested to enter into a partnership with Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa in order to create *Hao' Tewakhón:ni*. In January 2021, I made a formal presentation to the KEC's research and ethics board, specifically to request the pilot-project and to work with staff from KEC and Karonhianónhnha to collaboratively plan and create *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* for the 2021/2022 school year. I proposed that I would apply for all external funding for the project, take direction from the planning committee who work directly at Karonhianónhnha or KEC, complete all tasks necessary to initiate the project – such as draft work plans, activity

[20] The majority of the planning committee for Hao' Tewakhón:ni, which I took direction from and was guided by, were predominantly Kanien'kehá:ka women from Kahnawà:ke and included one Kanien'kehá:ka man from Kahnawà:ke. Each of the planning committee members are very invested in health promotion, regenerating Tiohnhehkwen or cultural revitalization either in their personal, familial or work lives.

plans, job description for the new employee, help to train the new employee within the first few weeks, as well as complete all required funding reports, presentations and follow-up with the KEC. During this proposal, I stated that my intention was to complete the work required to plan and start *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* successfully, and once implemented, I expected Karonhianónhnha and the KEC to oversee its operation and make future decisions about the project that may arise. My partnership request received formal approval in February 2021, and in March 2021, a planning committee composed of staff at the KEC, Karonhianónhnha, the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Program, and me began meeting regularly in a virtual format to develop the project. Below is an overview of how I worked with the planning committee to actualize the values identified in the medicine wheel image or Figure 1 in this thesis. I approach this image and the pilot project as a representation and exercise of my own female empowerment, and present it here not to self-promote but to share knowledge.

Hao' Tewakhón:ni Objectives, Goals and Activities

1. *Objective #1:* Contributing to the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke.

   Goals:

   a) Contribute to knowledge transference on Tiohnhéhkwen through incorporating teachings on Tiohnhéhkwen, cooking skills and consumption activities into the existing Garden and Greenhouse curriculum at Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkwa;

   b) Center, uphold and create space for Kanien'kehá:ka women's leadership.

In order to effectively expand upon the existing teachings on gardening and greenhouse maintenance at Karonhianónhnha, a new position to facilitate the *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* pilot-project was created. When creating an Indigenous food sovereignty project in the context of Kahnawà:ke,

it was important for me to prioritize the hiring and onboarding of a Facilitator for this project who is Kanien'kehá:ka and has extensive knowledge and experience in regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen. Another key priority for me was to create space for Kanien'kehá:ka women's leadership opportunities where necessary. The successful candidate for the *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* Facilitator is a young Kanien'kehá:ka and Onondowa'ga:' woman and mother who has extensive knowledge pertaining to Tiohnhéhkwen and lived experience in regenerating it. The Hao' Tewakhón:ni Facilitator was raised in Onondowa'ga:' territories, which is one of our Rotinonhsón:ni communities, and indicated that she was taught to live off the land by her family; planting, gardening, hunting, cooking with matriarchs and sharing meals with her family were normal aspects of her upbringing.

Hao' Tewakhón:ni is a multi-generational pilot-project that seeks to regenerate Tiohnhéhkwen by offering children who attend Karonhianónhnha the opportunity to participate in land-based learning that emphasizes food cultivation, production through cooking and consumption. As the project continues, families of students at Karonhianónhnha will also be offered the option to participate in virtual cooking classes that incorporate foods that are rooted in Tiohnhéhkwen hosted by the *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* Facilitator, in order for them to learn how to cook with these ingredients within the home. I believe that cooking and consuming foods that come from Tiohnhéhkwen in the school and in the home, using the Kanien'kéha language, will facilitate the incorporation of this positive behavior and practice into the daily lives of children and parents who have access to this program. Normalizing cooking and consuming ingredients from Tiohnhéhkwen will help to regenerate this aspect of our culture within Karonhianónhnha. As this is a pilot-project, the targeted participants are Karonhianónhnha students and parents. However, it is my hope that in the future,

more organizations within Kahnawà:ke will adopt this type of programming in order to regenerate Tiohnhéhkwen.

For Kahnawa'kehró:non , sharing knowledge on Tiohnhéhkwen, creating meals in community using ingredients that our ancestors did, and consuming these sacred foods together are all active forms of resistance to colonization and assimilation. This resistance is also a means to heal from intergenerational traumas and begin to do the work to move forward into the future and cultivate a culturally strong environment for the next seven generations. Regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen is part of the broader goal to revitalize our culture and reclaim our Kanien'kehá:ka identity, sovereignty and autonomy. By entrusting a Kanien'kehá:ka and Onondowa'ga:' woman to facilitate this pilot-project, the planning committee and I have also actively created space for her leadership and excellence in Tiohnhéhkwen teachings to flourish within our community, which I believe is crucial in order to restore governance, and improve relationships and wholistic health and wellness in our community.

2. *Objective #2:* Teaching children and young families cooking skills and techniques in a safe environment.

   Goals:

   a) Promote cooking in the home;
   b) Strengthen family relationships;
   c) Strive to achieve health and well individuals and families within Kahnawà:ke on a wholistic level.

In Kahnawà:ke, the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen is occurring in multiple sectors across the community. In the last five years, there has been a significant increase in individual and familial

gardening in the home as well as community-wide garden projects. Individuals are taking up hunting and fishing in order to increase their consumption of wild game and fish. While all of these initiatives, whether on a personal or community level are outstanding, there are currently no official programs in the community that teach our ancestral ways around food preparation, especially cooking.

Food preparation through cooking is an important life skill for all. In the past, one could not survive if they did not know how to cook their foods for themselves. Today, this crucial skill is often not prioritized in the home or in formal educational facilities. From personal experience, I am aware that many Kahnawa'kehró:non youth are lacking this skill or simply do not enjoy it, which makes it less likely for them to cook with more natural and unprocessed ingredients, let alone foods that are part of Tiohnhéhkwen. I believe that the skill of cooking is an important component of the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen in Kahnawà:ke for it promotes positive energy, pride, a good mind and healing. If Kahnawa'kehró:non are not cooking and consuming healthy and traditional foods, the regeneration of Tiohnhéhkwen cannot be fully realized.

Cooking is much more than just a skill; it is tied to Kanien'kehá:ka culture, and as depicted in Figure 2, it is a mode of healing through autonomy over what is consumed, decision making, concentration and bringing forth good energy. Preparing food in a kitchen, outdoor setting or in community allows folks to disconnect from daily stressors, and focus solely on one task. For Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah, cooking is all about peace, mental clarity and bringing one into a state of calm (2005). Especially because it is about slowing down our busy lives and relaxing our bodies and minds (2005, p. 6). Food preparation and the process of cooking not only has mental health benefits, but can have physical benefits for the body as well. By actively choosing to incorporate healthier foods into our diets, we can improve how our bodies function and can work

to address health and wellness challenges. Food is foundational to all health determinants of our people.

The goal of teaching children who attend Karonhianónhnha and their families' cooking skills, both in both indoor and outdoor settings, is ultimately to inspire them to utilize these skills in their every day lives. It is also about teaching children and young parents that cooking can be an enjoyable activity that the whole family can participate in, it is an activity that can strengthen bonds. For Onkwehón:we, making intentional choices about what we put into our bodies is an active form of resistance to colonization and assimilation from the settler-colonial confines in which we live (Alfred and Corntassel, 2005, p. 613). The choice to cultivate and prepare foods that are more natural and rooted within Tiohnhéhkwen is an active choice that we must make on a daily basis in order to resist colonization, and the negative impacts of globalization and industrialization, and to work to heal our minds, bodies, spirit and emotional beings from intergenerational trauma.

3. *Objective #3*: Contribute to the Community Priority of Indigenous Food Sovereignty in Kahnawà:ke

   Goals:

   a) Create an Indigenous Food Sovereignty project that incorporates the principles of Tiohnhéhkwen in the context of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation.

Indigenous food sovereignty is about the promotion of re-connecting Onkwehón:we to their land-based food and political systems, and restoring cultural responsibilities and relationships with the land, spirit and future generations (Mihesuah and Hoover, 2019, p. 11). In the context of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation and Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy, because Tiohnhéhkwen is inherently linked to women's bodies, leadership and decision-making capacities, Indigenous food

sovereignty projects must also work to decolonize patriarchal and hierarchical structures that tend to be embedded within our communities. Onkwehón:we women must be respected, listened to, and given space for leadership opportunities in Indigenous food sovereignty projects that seek to promote the restoration of Tiohnhéhkwen within Rotinonhsón:ni communities. Otherwise, it will not truly be decolonizing work, nor will it adhere to the true principles of Indigenous food sovereignty in a Rotinonhsón:ni context.

It is my hope that *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* will contribute to the goals of food sovereignty in the context of Kahnawà:ke, because children and their families will learn place-based and nation-specific practices around food, under the guidance and care of a Kanien'kehá:ka and Onondowa'ga:' woman who is sharing her lived experience and knowledge pertaining to regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen. For the participants, being involved in this project may bring about a strong sense of community connection, pride in their identity as a Kanien'kehá:ka person and the opportunity to connect with other community members through reclaiming and relearning ancestral practices and values.

Concluding Thoughts

My experience in creating this pilot-project was empowering, exciting, overwhelming and gratifying. I am a twenty-six year old Kanien'kehá:ka woman, born and raised in my home community, and when I reflect on the fact that *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* was successfully planned, implemented and is now being offered to Karonhianónhnha students and families, I feel the greatest sense of empowerment and accomplishment. To be quite honest, for most of my life, I never considered that my identity as both Kanien'kehá:ka and a woman was a barrier in achieving and leading, because I come from a strong family and community of female leaders. However, it was not until I embarked on this journey that I understood that while my possibilities in life and

resurgence are endless as a Kanien'kehá:ka woman, sexism and misogyny are still very real attitudes both in my community and in society as a whole. Nonetheless, now that my work on *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* is near completion, I feel gratified by the fact that this project is adhering to Rotinonhsón:ni principles in almost every way possible. *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* is i) being delivered under a Rotinonhsón:ni woman's guidance, leadership and knowledge, ii) bringing the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen to life through enacting and teaching the meaning of reciprocal relationships with the natural world, such as teaching the students about the importance of planting songs, iii) teaching students and their families how and what to cook based on the availability of food sources according to the seasons, and ultimately, ix) restoring the community relationship and engagement with Tiohnhéhkwen through planting, gardening, harvesting, cooking and consuming together.

The creation of this project also had its challenges. Firstly, this project was a vision of mine and my sister's prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Planning for the project did not go as quickly or smoothly as it would have had me and the planning committee not been forced to meet and do everything virtually. Meeting and planning a project from scratch in a virtual setting was challenging because there was often limited time to meet, and receiving direction often took much longer through email than it would have if we had been together in-person. At times, the project was also overwhelming because I shouldered the majority of the work, as I had promised. I successfully obtained a large amount of funds for the *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* in order for it to be free of cost to participants and to pay the Program Facilitator's salary for one year. However, in some cases, when it came time to accessing funds, it proved to be extremely trying, hierarchical and even demeaning. Debating over the acquisition of funds often felt so colonial and hierarchical, especially because I felt that there was significant mistrust in me as an Onkwehón:we youth. Despite the hardships and challenges, I feel proud that I not only accomplished the implementation of this pilot-project, but did so under the guidance of community members who are experts in

regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen, and that I created new relationships with Kanien'kehá:ka women who share the same passion and vision for our community. The greatest gratification is knowing that working with the planning committee and the *Hao' Tewakhón:ni* Program facilitator exemplified what it means to truly collaborate, and that the work is about the betterment of our community especially when guided and led by predominantly Kanien'kehá:ka women and involves the younger generation that is now taking part in this program.

As abovementioned, a big part of my inspiration in initiating my project was to bring to life my theoretical assumptions of what Indigenous food sovereignty and regenerating Tiohnhéhkwen looks like in the context of my community and nation. Since Rotinonhsón:ni women are so integral to the maintenance of Tiohnhéhkwen and to the governance of our nations, this is what also inspired me to investigate my main research questions: *How have Onkwehón:we women's engagement with their ancestral food systems been impacted by colonization? What can Onkwehón:we women gain by making significant efforts in restoring their respective ancestral food systems?* Onkwehón:we food systems are place-based, nation specific, culturally important and have been proven to promote wholistic health and wellness in several existing studies analyzed in chapter three (Lindholm, 2019; Hoover, 2017; Reinhardt, 2019). I therefore argue that Onkwehón:we food systems positively impact the wholistic health and wellbeing of all Onkwehón:we people, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation and abilities. However, I was compelled to investigate health outcomes for Onkwehón:we women specifically, because their experience with heightened and extreme levels of violence throughout the course of settler-colonial history on Turtle Island has been identified as a major health determinant (Holmes and Hunt, 2017).

There are significant wholistic health and wellness challenges that stem from of the Indian Act, the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide and environmental violence, according to my gendered-analysis of these phenomenon in chapter two. The goal of this gendered-analysis was to look at how these historic and ongoing structural barriers have and continue to hinder Onkwehón:we women's abilities in regenerating their ancestral food systems. I found that these three structures and/or policies not only contribute to barriers for Onkwehón:we women in accessing their traditional food systems, but challenge women's wholistic health and wellness in three key ways: i) heightened levels of marginalization both within Onkwehón:we and Canadian societies, which has led to a situation of increased vulnerability, subjection to physical and emotional violence, and murder, typically committed against them by men (Green, 2017, p. 5); ii) impacts on reproductive systems and bodily functions caused by environmental violence, which include toxin's in breastmilk, higher rates of infertility and reproductive system cancers among many (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2018, p. 207); and iii) their death, disappearance and heightened levels of violence in association with the MMIWG2S+ gender-based genocide, contributes to exacerbated health challenges for victims and the community's or nation's ability to maintain communal wellness; extreme violence leaves communities and families devastated and in a perpetual state of grievance (Bourgeois, 2017, p. 253).

Violence against Onkwehón:we women has been an effective colonial tool in genocide and dispossession because the damage it causes is so impactful that it makes it difficult for victims and their families to be strong mentally (Simpson, 2017, p. 88). This type of communal grievance hinders Onkwehón:we resurgence projects because if a community is in a constant state of grief, their ability to be strong enough to revitalize their cultural practices, - including but not limited to languages, ceremonies, birthing practices and of course, food systems - is compromised. When

Onkwehón:we women's wholistic health and wellness are compromised, it impacts their families, communities and nations. Yet, as I have argued, when Onkwehón:we women are able to engage with their food systems, this can help to address wholistic health and wellness outcomes, which means that we are not only equipped to take care of ourselves, but also our families, communities and our nations.

The second set of central questions of this project was: *How can the reclamation and regeneration of Onkwehón:we food systems help to heal Onkwehón:we intergenerational trauma? Can healing intergenerational trauma in this way help to promote restored respect for women within their communities?* Intergenerational trauma is a collective trauma experienced by all Onkwehón:we due to the effects of colonization. In my view, this trauma comes from being stripped from our cultures, livelihoods, governance systems, and identities as Onkwehón:we people. Reclaiming Onkwehón:we food systems is therefore a major part of resurgence work, and Onkwehón:we cultures are a means to achieve wholistic health and wellness. Onkwehón:we food systems shape and touch all aspect of Onkwehón:we culture, knowledge and life, which is why it is so crucial for Onkwehón:we to have access and opportunity to connect with them. As stated in chapter one, my own lived experience informs my belief that Onkwehón:we people's (re)connection to their ancestral food systems and consuming these foods has the power to attend to wholistic health and wellness challenges, and begin to do the work to heal from intergenerational trauma. For Onkwehón:we, partaking in activities to regenerate our food systems attends to the mind, body, spirit and emotions of our being, as Figure 1 also aims to reflect.

Further, I believe that a positive pathway toward healing intergenerational trauma can be cultivated through Indigenous food sovereignty projects, particularly if they are 1) rooted in Onkwehón:we culture, 2) led by Onkwehón:we people, and 3) inclusive spaces for all and create

leadership opportunities for Onkwehón:we women. Providing space for women's leadership can help to allow them to reclaim their roles in decision-making and community governance, and can help to normalize this in communities, which is crucial in creating safer spaces for all. Culturally-specific activities involved in regenerating ancestral foods are typically 1) food acquisition, 2) cooking, and 3) consumption. Figure 3 in chapter three visually depicts how such activities (of acquisition, cooking and consumption of traditional foods) can help Onkwehón:we reclaim their bodily autonomy and decision-making capacities, promote reconnection with themselves as well as their ancestors and other living kin, and build positive relationships with family and community. Additionally, several studies support the notion that when Onkwehón:we have the opportunity to (re)connect with their ancestral food systems contemporarily, the following can be facilitated:

1) **A stronger connection to their respective cultures** and a sense of upholding cultural responsibilities (Lindholm, 2019; Reinhardt, 2019; Hoover, 2017);

2) **A greater spiritual connection** with themselves, their communities and other living beings through practicing the principles of respect and reciprocity in food acquisition activities (Lindholm, 2019);

3) **An improved physical health** status or feelings of increased strength and energy levels (Lindholm, 2019; Hoover, 2017);

4) **Improved relationships** with their families and communities (Lindholm, 2019; Reinhardt, 2019; Hoover, 2017).

Further, in accordance with the Onkwehón:we women who are leading the Indigenous food sovereignty movement and the regeneration of their food systems, their roles in this work contributes to:

1) Their personal healing journey(s) (Gilpin and Morrison, 2020);
2) Reclaiming their roles within their nation's food system (Corntassel and Bryce, 2012);
3) Reconnecting with their community after being adopted out (Murphy and Reed, 2018);
4) Promoting women's empowerment through an ecological framework (Follet and Cook, 2006);
5) Upholding familial responsibilities through learning to grow their own food (LaDuke, 2019).

On this basis, and on the basis of my research, (re)engaging and (re)connecting with ancestral food systems for Onkwehón:we women are profound ways to begin to heal intergenerational trauma, not only because it is a cultural reclamation, but because it fosters a space for Onkwehón:we women to reembody their roles in decision-making, leadership and governance, and model a positive lifestyle for themselves, their families and communities. This master's thesis has argued that Onkwehón:we women's reclamation and involvement in the regeneration of their ancestral food systems is a response to the ongoing health challenges and inequities they continue to face, which includes disproportionate and high levels of gender-based violence; further, such reclamation has the power to pave a positive pathway for Onkwehón:we communal healing through promoting collectivity, collaboration and normalizing women's leadership. By reinstituting and (re)normalizing Onkwehón:we women's roles and capacities as leaders in Indigenous food sovereignty and ancestral food regeneration projects, a movement can be fostered toward building restored respect, love and fairness within Onkwehón:we communities and for Onkwehón:we women. My own healing journey and process of undoing the intergenerational trauma that lives within me has been my greatest source of empowerment. I am grateful to reclaim my ancestral knowledge and practices associated with Tiohnhehkwen, and that I can consume these foods to heal my mind, body, spirit and emotional being.

References

Alfred, T., & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. Government and Opposition (London), 40(4), 597-614. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2005.00166.x

Altamirano-Jimenez, I and Parker, L (2016). Mapping, Knowledge, and Gender in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. In I. Altamirano-Jimenez and N. Kermoal (Ed.), Living on the Land: Indigenous women's understanding of place (pp. 85–106). Athabasca University, AB: AU Press.

Amnesty International. (2016). (rep.). *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Gender, Indigenous Rights, and Energy Development in Northeast British Columbia, Canada*. Amnesty International . Retrieved from https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Out%20of%20Sight%20Out%20of%20Mind%20EN%20Embargoed.pdf.

BC Food Security Gateway. (2016, April 6). *A travelling caravan celebrates the spirit of wild salmon throughout BC*. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from https://bcfoodsecuritygateway.ca/1839-2/.

Borges, M. (2018). *The greenprint: Plant-based diet, best body, better planet*. New York: Harmony Books, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group.

Bourgeois, R. (2017). Perpetual State of Violence. In J. Green (Ed.), Making Space for Indigenous Feminisms (2nd ed., pp. 253–273). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Buller, M., Audette, M., Eyolfson, B., & Robinson, Q. (2019). Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (Vol. 1a, pp. 1–722). Federal Government of Canada.

Carmen, A., & Waghiyi, V. (2012). Indigenous women and environmental violence. Submission to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Expert Group Meeting, January 18-20, 2012. Retrieved from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/EGM12_carmen_waghiyi.pdf

Cedar Tree Institute, NMU Center for Native American Studies, United States Forest Service. (2011). *Decolonizing Diet Project*. Learning from the Earth. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from http://learningfromtheearth.org/decolonizing-diet-project-2/.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (n.d.). *Trauma.* Retrieved September 23, 2021, from https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/trauma.

Center for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). *Indigenous people, trauma, and suicide prevention*. SuicideInfo.ca. Retrieved September 23, 2021, from https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resource/trauma-and-suicide-in-indigenous-people/#:~:text=Indigenous%20people%20have%20experienced%2C%20and%20may%20continue%20to,next%3B%20this%20is%20referred%20to%20as%20intergenerational%20trauma

Clark, N. (2016). Shock and awe: Trauma as the new colonial frontier. Humanities (Basel), 5(1), 14. https://doi.org/10.3390/h5010014

Coppolino, J., Fuoco, D., & Mokrusa, M. (2018, April 12). Kahnawake garden grows culture and community along with vegetables. *CBC Montreal*. Retrieved October 17, 2021, from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/kahnawake-garden-grows-culture-and-community-along-with-vegetables-1.4616290.

Corntassel, J. (2021). Life Beyond the State: Regenerating Indigenous International Relations and Everyday Challenges to Settler Colonialism. Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies, 2021(1), 1–28.

Corntassel, J., & Bryce, C. (2012). Practicing sustainable self-determination: Indigenous approaches to cultural restoration and revitalization. The Brown Journal of World Affairs, 18(2), 151-162.

Coté, C. (2016). "Indigenizing" Food Sovereignty. Revitalizing Indigenous Food Practices and Ecological Knowledges in Canada and the United States. Humanities, 5(3), 57. doi: 10.3390/h5030057

Coulthard, G. S. (2014). *Red skin, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. University of Minnesota Press.

Daigle, M. (2016). Tracing the terrain of Indigenous food sovereignties. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 46(2), 297-315. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2017.1324423

Deer, T. (2010). *Karihwaieronnítstha Kanonhweratónhtshera*. Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center. Retrieved from https://www.korkahnawake.org/about

Deer, S. (2015). Introduction: Sovereignty of the soul. (pp. ix). University of Minnesota Press. https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctt17w8gfr.3

Delormier, T. (2019). Report on the Community Open House (pp. 1-14, Rep.). Kahnawà:ke, Canada: Skátne Teionkwakà:nere: Kahnawà:ke Collective Impact.

Delormier, T., Horn-Miller, K., McComber, A. M., & Marquis, K. (2017). Reclaiming food security in the mohawk community of Kahnawà:ke through Rotinonhsón:ni responsibilities. Maternal and Child Nutrition, 13, e12556-n/a. doi:10.1111/mcn.12556.

Dhamoon, R. (2016). Re-presenting Genocide: The Canadian Museum of Human Rights and Settler Colonial Power. *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics, 1*(1), 5-30. doi:10.1017/rep.2015.4

Dickson, C., & Watson, B. (2021, May 27). Remains of 215 children found buried at former B.C. residential school, First Nation says. *CBC News*. Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/tk-eml%C3%BAps-te-secw%C3%A9pemc-215-children-former-kamloops-indian-residential-school-1.6043778.

Desmarais, A. A., & Wittman, H. (2014). Farmers, foodies and first nations: Getting to food sovereignty in Canada. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 41(6), 1153-1173. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2013.876623

Down2Earth. (2010). *Down2Earth 1.3 - Cheryl Bryce (Lekwammen)*. *YouTube*. Retrieved September 27, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKTxP_zy_mA.

Eberts, M. (2017). Being an Indigenous Woman is a “High-Risk Lifestyle”. In J. Green (Ed.), Making Space for Indigenous Feminism (2nd ed., pp. 42–62). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Food Justice. FoodPrint. (2021, March 11). https://foodprint.org/issues/food-justice/

Fuller, C., Montour, D., Diabo, V., Horne, S., Bordeau, P., Kane, A., & Armstrong, B. (2018). (rep.). *Onkwaná:ta Our Community, Onkwatakarí:te Our Health* (Vol. 1, pp. 1–127). Kahnawake, QC: Onkwata’karitáhtshera.

Geist, M. E. (2017, November 22). *Eating the Great Lakes: The DECOLONIZING DIET PROJECT*. Great Lakes Now. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from https://www.greatlakesnow.org/2017/11/eating-great-lakes-decolonizing-diet/.

Gibson, G., K. Yung, L. Chisholm, and H. Quinn with Lake Babine Nation and Nak’azdli Whut’en. (2017). Indigenous Communities and Industrial Camps: Promoting healthy communities in settings of industrial change. Victoria, B.C.: The Firelight Group.

Gilpin, E. (2020, June 9). First Nations Forward. National Observer. https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/06/09/features/we-desperately-need-be-talking-about-food-sovereignty

Gilpin, E. (2019). *Land as Body - Indigenous Wellness Research*. *Youtube*. Retrieved September 22, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2hkQmoGuLQ&t=8s.

Gilpin, E., & Morrison, D. (2020, September 19). In Conversation with Dawn Morrison. *Youtube*. Interview. Canada's National Observer: First Nations Forward. Retrieved October 19, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PrwxyUbSdQ

Gilpin, E. & Peruzzo. (2020). University of Victoria. *Rising Tides*. *UATE Stories*. Retrieved September 27, 2021, from https://www.uatestories.com/.

Green, J. (2017). *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (2nd ed.). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Greenwood, M., Leeuw, D. S., & Lindsay, N. M. (Eds.). (2018). *Determinants of indigenous peoples' health: Beyond the social*. Vancouver: Langara College.

Hanson, E. (n.d.). *Reserves*. Indigenous Foundations. https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/reserves/.

Health Canada. (2018). (rep.). *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework - Summary Report* (pp. 1–10). Ottawa, ON: Health Canada.

Holkup, P., Tripp-Reimer, T., Salois, E. M., & Weinert, C. (2004). Community-based Participatory Research: An Approach to Intervention Research With a Native American Community. ANS Advances in Nursing, 27(3), 162-175. Retrieved December 3, 2020, from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2774214/pdf/nihms127083.pdf

Holmes, C., & Hunt, S. (2017). *Indigenous Communities and Family Violence: Changing the Conversation.* Prince George, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Hoover, E. (2017). The River is in Us: Fighting toxics in a Mohawk community. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Horn-Miller, K. (2016). Distortion and Healing: Finding Balance and a "Good Mind" Through the Rearticulation of Sky Woman's Journey. In N. Kermoal & I, Altamirano-Jimenez. (Ed.), *Living on the Land: Indigenous women's understanding of place* (pp. 19–38). Athabasca University, AB: AU Press.

Hunt, S. (2015). More than a poster campaign: Redefining colonial violence. Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society. https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2013/02/14/more-than-a-poster-campaign-redefining-colonial-violence/.

Hunt, S. (2018). Embodying Self-Determination: Beyond the Gender Binary. In M. Greenwood, S. De Leeuw, & N. M. Lindsay (Eds.), *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health: Beyond the Social* (2nd ed., pp. 22–39). essay, Canadian Scholars.

Idle No More's Momentum and Meaning. (2021). *TVO*. Retrieved September 19, 2021, from https://www.tvo.org/video/idle-no-mores-momentum-and-meaning#:~:text=It%20began%20in%20November%20of%202012%20in%20protest,environmental%20protection%2C%20staged%20a%2Cteach-in%2C%20called%20Idle%20No%20More

Indigenous Food Systems Network. (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from https://indigenousfoodsystems.org/about#:~:text=%20Working%20Group%20on%20Indig

enous%20Food%20Sovereignty%20,7%20Political%20Advocates%208%20%E2%80%A6and%20others%20More%20

Hilal Elver. (2018). In Nierenberg, D., Fisher, L., Frederick, B., & Peñuelas Michael (Eds.). (2018). Nourished planet: Sustainability in the global food system. Island press.

Irwin, R. (2018, October 28). *Indian agents in Canada*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. Retrieved October 26, 2021, from https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-agents-in-canada

Kahnawake Education Center. (n.d.). Curriculum Development. Retrieved January 19, 2021, from https://www.kecedu.ca/administration/education-services/curriculum-development

Kermoal, N., & Altamirano-Jimenez, I. (2016). Metis Women's Environmental Knowledge and the Recognition of Metis Rights. In N. Kermoal (Ed.), *Living on the Land: Indigenous women's understanding of place* (pp. 107–138). Athabasca University, AB: AU Press.

Kermoal, N. J., & Altamirano-Jiménez Isabel (Eds.). (2016). Living on the land: Indigenous women's understanding of place. Athabasca University, AB: AU Press.

King, T. (2018). *Inconvenient Indian: A curious account of native people in north america* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Minneapolis, MI: Milkweed Editions.

Koukannen, R. (2017). Politics of Gendered Violence in Indigenous Communities. In J. Green (Ed.), Making Space for Indigenous Feminism (2nd ed., pp. 21–41). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Kovach, M. (2009). Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations and contexts. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Legislative Services Branch Canada. (1985). The Indian Act. Retrieved from https:// laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/section-10.html

Lemke, S., & Delormier, T. (2017). Indigenous peoples' food systems, nutrition, and gender: Conceptual and methodological considerations. Maternal and Child Nutrition, 13(S3), e12499-n/a. https://doi.org/10.1111/mcn.12499

Lexico Dictionaries. (n.d.). CAPITALISM: Definition of capitalism by Oxford dictionary. Lexico Dictionaries | English. https://www.lexico.com/definition/capitalism.

Lindholm, M. (2019). Alaska Native Perceptions of Food, Health and Community Well-Being. In D. A. Mihesuah & E. Hoover (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health* (pp. 26–56). Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Mancall-Bitel, N. (2018, May 18). *Brit Reed is Leading a New Generation of Indigenous Chefs*. BonAppetit. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from https://www.bonappetit.com/story/brit-reed.

Maracle, L. (1996). *I Am Woman* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Press Gang Publishers, an imprint of Raincoast Books.

Matties, Z. (2016). Unsettling Settler Food Movements: Food Sovereignty and Decolonization in Canada. Cuizine, 7 (2). https://doi.org/10.7202/1038478ar.

McNaughton, L. (2019). Voices from the Indigenous Food Movement. In D. A. Mihesuah & E. Hoover (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health* (pp. 26–56). Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Mihesuah, D. A. (2005). *Recovering Our Ancestors' Gardens: Indigenous recipes and guide to diet and fitness*. Nebraska: Nebraska Press.

Mihesuah, D. A., & Hoover, E. (2019). Introduction. In D. A. Mihesuah & E. Hoover (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health* (pp. 3–25). Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Million, D. (2013). Therapeutic nations: Healing in an age of indigenous human rights. Arizona: The University of Arizona Press.

Monkman, L. (2020, December 5). Kahnawake woman starts shop for Indigenous-sourced food from near and far. *CBC Indigenous*. Retrieved October 17, 2021, from https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/kaienth%C3%B3kwen-indigenous-food-shop-1.5829559

Monture-Angus, P., & McGuire, P. D. (Eds.). (2009). First voices: An aboriginal Women's reader. Toronto, ON: Inanna Publications and Education.

Monture-Angus, P., & Turpel, M. E. (1995). *Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Morrison, D. 2011. Indigenous food sovereignty: A model for social learning. In Food sovereignty in Canada: Creating just and sustainable food systems, ed. H. Wittman, A.A. Desmarais and N. Wiebe, 97–113. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Murphy, A., & Reed, B. (2018, September). Brit Reed - Its definitely a win. *Toasted Sister Podcast*. Spotify.

National Resource Defense Council. (2020, January 31). *Industrial Agriculture 101*. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from https://www.nrdc.org/stories/industrial-agriculture-101.

Native Women's Association of Canada. (2010). *Fact Sheet: Violence Against Aboriginal Women*. Akwesasne, ON; Native Women's Association of Canada. Retrieved October 29, 2021, from https://www.nwac.ca/browse/.

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation. (2013). *Historic and Current Haudenosaunee Territory*. Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign. Retrieved from https://honorthetworow.org/learn-more/haudenosaunee-territory/.

Neufeld, H. T., Richmond, C., Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre, & The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre. (2020). Exploring first nation elder women's relationships with food from social, ecological, and historical perspectives. Current Developments in Nutrition, 4(3), nzaa011. https://doi.org/10.1093/cdn/nzaa011

Nierenberg, D., Fisher, L., Frederick, B., & Peñuelas Michael (Eds.). (2018). *Nourished planet: Sustainability in the global food system*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Oregon Wild. (2014). (rep.). Increased Logging is a Threat to Our Global Climate Impacts of Senator Wyden's proposed "Oregon and California Lands Act of 2013" (S.1784 and S.2734) and Reps. DeFazio and Walden's "Oregon and California Railroad Grant Lands Trust Conservation and Jobs Act of 2013" (HR.1526.RH). Oregon Wild. Retrieved from https://oregonwild.org/sites/default/files/pdf-files/Climate%20White%20Paper%209.17.14%20O%26C%20Legislation.pdf

Reading, C. (Ed.). (2018). Structural determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health. In Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health: Beyond the Social (2nd ed., pp. 3–17). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Reed, G. F. (n.d.). *Mohawk Territory: A Cultural Geography*. (G. O'Brien, Ed.). Kahnawake, QC: Center for Curriculum Development, Kahnawake Survival School.

Reinhardt, M. (2019). Voices from the Indigenous Food Movement. In D. A. Mihesuah & E. Hoover (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health* (pp. 26–56). Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Shaw, L. (2021). *Three Sisters*. leilanishaw. Retrieved October 29, 2021, from https://leilanishaw.myshopify.com/

Simpson, A. (2014). *Mohawk interruptus: political life across the borders of settler states.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Simpson, A. (2014). "The Chief's Two Bodies," keynote address, International R.A.C.E Conference, Edmonton, Alberta, October 2014, available online. https://vimeo.com/110948627.

Simpson, L. B. (2017). *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Sinclair, J. M., Littlechild, C. W., & Wilson, D. M. (2015). (rep.). *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation* (pp. 1–145). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from www.trc.ca.

St. Denis, V. (2017). Feminism is for Everybody: Aboriginal women, feminism and diversity. In J. Green (Ed.), *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (2nd ed., pp. 42–62). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Stacey, K. I., & Whitebean, W. S. (2018). (rep.). Skatne Enionkwaio'ten: Community Language Plan. Kahnawa:ke Education Center and Aboriginal Languages Initiatives Committee. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from https://skatneenionkwaiotenorg.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/skaten_enionkwaioten-final_english_web.pdf.

Starblanket, G. (2017). Being Indigenous Feminists: Resurgences against contemporary patriarchy. In J. Green (Ed.), Making Space for Indigenous Feminism (2nd ed., pp. 21–41). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Stark, H. K. (2016). Criminal Empire: The Making of the Savage in a Lawless Land. Theory and Event, 19(4), 1-18.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1(1), 1–40.

Wadden, J. (2010). De-linking from dependency. Briar Patch, 39(5), 35.

White Earth Land Recovery Project. WELRP. (n.d.). Retrieved September 22, 2021, from https://www.welrp.org/.

Williams, N. (2021, June 6). What's going on in Fairy Creek? A primer on the battle over B.C.'s old-growth forests. Vancouver Sun. https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/whats-going-on-in-fairy-creek-a-primer-on-the-battle-over-b-c-s-old-growth-forests

Wolfe, P. (2006). Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 8:4, 387-409, DOI: 10.1080/14623520601056240

Women's Earth Alliance, & Native Youth Sexual Health Network. (2016). (rep.). *Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence* (Vol. 1, pp. 1–41). Toronto, ON: Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network.

Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network. (2018). Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies. In *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health: Beyond the Social* (2nd ed., pp. 204–223). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Whyte, K. (2019). Indigenous Climate Justice and Food Sovereignty. In D. A. Mihesuah & E. Hoover (Eds.), Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments and Regaining Health (pp. 320–334). University of Oklahoma Press.

Yellow Horse Brave Heart M, Chase, J, Elkins, J. & Altschul, D.B. (2011) Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Concepts, Research, and Clinical Considerations, Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 43:4, 282-290, DOI: 10.1080/02791072.2011.628913