



University of Victoria

Indigenous Pedagogy at UVIC:

An Exploration of Teaching Methods by and for Indigenous Peoples

This research was supported by the Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Award, supervised by Dr. Sikata Banerjee and Dr. Christine Sy, Department of Gender Studies

Personal Positionality

Hadih Sage Lacerte Sahdnee. Loretta Madam s'loo, Paul Lacerte s'ba. Te be snachalya Lekwungen keloh. Sigh gunna luchshiboo yinkak dene keloh.

My name is Sage Lacerte, I am a Carrier woman and member of the bear clan from the Lake Babine nation. My mother is the late Loretta Madam and my father is Paul Lacerte.

I would like to acknowledge that this research is taking place on the territory of the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSANEC First Nations and say mussi cho (thank you immensely) to the Indigenous contributors from across Turtle Island.

Methodology

This research is being carried out through

- **One-on-one conversations** with self-identified Indigenous students and professors at the University of Victoria who have engaged in Indigenous teaching methods
- **Autoethnography in the form of "love letters"** that are being written as an ode to the Indigenous mentors and peers who have shaped my personal learning experience at UVIC
- **A literature review** based on academic and non-academic written materials provided by all contributors, with the architecture of the research stemming from Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2012) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions 94 Calls to Action, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



Introduction

Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions are inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. A key element of settler colonialism is to remove Indigenous means of knowledge transferral by eliminating community involvement in the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual development of Indigenous learners to silence and condemn Indigenous pedagogy because they challenge the colonial mission and promote the survival and revitalization of Indigenous culture (Smith, 2012, p. 21).

This tactic has been used throughout Canadian history in the Indian Residential Schools which were jointly established and run by the federal government and various churches from 1830 to 1996, and continue to promote settler colonial discourses about the Indigenous Other through "institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (Smith, 2012, p. 2).

Professors in Canadian Universities have begun the process of decolonizing and Indigenizing their departments and courses, it is through this research that I would like to supplement this movement by pointing to the importance of community engagement that centers Indigenous worldviews and pedagogies within and beyond the academy, and shed light on the impacts of Indigenous pedagogy and decolonial praxis on Indigenous professors and students who study and teach at the University of Victoria.

"What is the impact on Indigenous students and professors who learn and teach through Indigenous pedagogies, within and beyond the University of Victoria?"

It is my intention to

Center Indigenous worldviews, issues, and concerns by calling on the voices of Indigenous professors and students to share their lived-experiences

Unpack what decolonial praxis looks like in the classroom, while considering hopeful futurities for next generations within and beyond the academy

Ground my research in a relational epistemology which frames the researcher as an active, subjective participant in the research process (Wilson, 2008, p.7).



Conclusion

This research will hopes to draw on and center the lived-experiences of Indigenous students and professors who engage with Indigenous pedagogies in the past, present and future.

This research will not draw any final conclusions since Indigenous methods of knowledge transferal embrace a relational and intergenerational epistemology that was started prior to this study and will continue long after it is "complete".

The stories and conversations shared in this research will be shared with the Indigenous community at UVIC and beyond in hopes of visibilizing the decolonial efforts and logging progress.

In place of results or conclusions, thoughts on hopeful futurities will be discussed.

References

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