



a pathway together

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL
CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT
USING INDIGENOUS AND
DIVERSE LENSES**
Literature Review

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Disclaimer

This literature review was produced as part of the UBC Sustainability Scholars Program, a partnership between the University of British Columbia and various local governments and organizations in support of providing graduate students with opportunities to do applied research on projects that advance sustainability across the region. This project was conducted under the mentorship of Sierra Club BC. The opinions and recommendations in this document and any errors are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Sierra Club BC, or the University of British Columbia.



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Environmentally focused organizations have a long history of ignoring the presence of Indigenous Peoples in the areas that they are attempting to protect. Frequently the leaders and members of environmental organizations and movements have gone so far as to actively participate in the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their homelands. In 2020, the Sierra Club officially announced that the organization's founder John Muir and other leaders during the early years, forwarded ideas of white supremacy, racial purity, and Asian exclusion (Brune 2020). At the time some leaders of the environmental movement advocated for the forced sterilization of women based on eugenicist ideas of racial cleansing and helped facilitate the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their homelands during the creation of the United States national park system (Brune 2020, Fox 2020). For several years Sierra Club BC has been ahead of the curve in their organization's decolonizing efforts and this project and others like it are the direct result of these efforts. However, for more than a century, the mainstream environmental movement and most Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) have remained very white (Jones 2020).

Now that the environmental movement and ENGOS are beginning to reckon with their past mistakes and striving for equity and inclusivity, it is crucial for ENGOS to have the tools they need to create meaningful and lasting organizational change. This project named "A Pathway Together" (APT) is a joint endeavor between the Sierra Club BC, who have been successfully transforming to include Indigenous and other diverse Peoples in their leadership and programming (Sierra Club BC 2020), and the University of British Columbia who are also actively working toward institutional decolonization (University of British Columbia 2020).

A Pathway Together seeks to identify and create innovative approaches to intercultural climate engagement using Indigenous and diverse lenses. The following report and accompanying materials are coming to life to help ENGOs in their decolonization process. The toolkit, which includes an electronic Prezi guide and print resources, will help to bridge the gaps that have divided the mainstream environmental movement from Indigenous and diverse populations.

1.1 History of the project

“A Pathway Together” (APT) can be seen as a continuation and expansion of a project started by Sustainable Scholars mentor kQwa’ste’not~ Charlene George a cultural knowledge holder from the T’Sou-ke Nation on what is now called Vancouver Island, British Columbia. As part of her advanced graduate degree at Royal Roads University and in dual roles for Sierra Club BC (SCBC), both as the Cultural Voice and on the Executive Team; Charlene facilitated the creation of an art and environmental based interactive learning tool using Prezi technology. This technological guide was created to accompany Through Watcher’s Eyes ~ Between the Worlds (TWE), a mural which lives at Spencer Middle School on Vancouver Island. The mural was brought to life by Char, and many collaborators, to represent and share a complex and deep story within Coast Salish teachings. TWE depicts a story shared by many Coast Salish Nations about Wild Man and Wild Woman (George 2019).

The prezi, Seeing Through Watcher’s Eyes (STWE) is an electronic bridging tool that guides participants through Coast Salish knowledges, while bridging gaps between “the Western” and “the Indigenous,” and enhancing and interacting with existing K-12 curriculum. STWE and the accompanying curriculum was a collaborative creation of the local community,

the local school districts, SCBC, Char, and the many *beings*¹ who also provided their voice. The project was a success and is now integrated into the teaching materials of several Vancouver Islands school districts (George 2018, Sierra Club BC 2021). The collaborative work that breathed life into TWE and STWE follows Coast Salish protocol, a concept and practice that will be explained further below. This important practice of following protocol has been carried through the life of this project, as well.

1.2 Climate Change, Indigenous perspectives and environmental non-governmental organizations

Climate Change is almost certainly the most urgent problem in the history of human life on planet Earth. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) report, released in October of 2018, estimates that if world greenhouse gas emissions continue at their current rate, the atmosphere will warm by as much as 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2040. If these projections are realized, in addition to wide-spread drought and famine, there will likely be continued marine ice sheet instability resulting in sea rise, small island and low-lying coastal area disappearance, delta flooding, impacts to biodiversity and ecosystems, species loss and extinction (IPCC 2018). Although not mentioned explicitly, if the projections outlined in the IPCC report do occur, the world's already troubling problem of the displacement of people due to unlivable climate related issues will likely multiply exponentially (Jackson 2020).

The field of environmental sociology has long held that the effects of environmental problems disproportionately impact people of color, women of all races and ethnicities, and the

¹ Beings in this sense means all living and non-living beings that are present in and between the worlds in Coast Salish and other Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies.

very poor (Pellow and Brehm 2013). Recent environmental research shows that Indigenous people are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change, although they contribute much less to the underlying cause of the problem, which is the burning of fossil fuels and the production of greenhouse gases (Pellow and Brehm 2013, Jackson 2020).

Indigenous Peoples' unique relationship to the land, and United Nations recognized legal status has proven to be important, highly visible, and often successful in stopping the damaging effects of extraction resource industries. For some Indigenous Peoples, remaking communities and global societies through movement organization and policy, while utilizing Indigenous Knowledge Systems is beneficial on many levels. The experience and knowledge of Indigenous and diverse people in relation to environmental actions should not be discounted, as they can be invaluable for ENGOs success.

Environmental movement actions led by Indigenous Peoples and allies (including organizational allies) can draw more attention to critical environmental problems leading to more successful outcomes. In addition to protecting the planet's threatened sentient and non-sentient lifeforms, Indigenous involvement in environmental movements also help to heal historic and adverse traumatic experiences in Indigenous communities. In Canada, this can be a critical step in the Reconciliation process. Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, treaty protected legal status, and a long legacy of resilience make Indigenous Peoples uniquely situated to be leaders in the environment and climate movements. Many Indigenous People have answered this call and through their participation in movements; Indigenous Peoples are "fixing" the world for future generations. This work of leading movements to heal the planet validates the Indigenous ontology that "the health of the people equals the health of the land" and conversely "the health

of the land equals the health of the people" (Karuk Tribe 2016, Krol 2018). With a long history of lifeways that strive to maintain a healthy sacred planet, as well as a history of survival and resistance to colonial acts of destruction, Indigenous and other diverse Peoples carry an immense amount of knowledge and resilience necessary to win hard battles against corporate polluters.

For these reasons, the inclusion of Indigenous and diverse lenses in environmental non-governmental organizations is needed to extend and transform mainstream environmental protection practices to be inclusive and diverse. It is imperative that ENGOs work with Indigenous and other “*marginalized communities*”², and forward their environmental goals on a foundation of social and environmental justice. This project attempts to do just that. We invite ENGOs to utilize STWE and the materials from this project, A Pathway Together (APT), which were developed as a University of British Columbia Sustainability Scholars and Sierra Club BC joint project. This literature review delves into important concepts of Indigenous, decolonial, intercultural and transformational theories, and worldviews. Together these concepts will help to create a guide for organizational transformation that includes tools to help bridge Indigenous and diverse perspectives with western science and perspectives of the environment.

1.3 *Indigenous Activism*

The continued environmental injustices and loss of Indigenous lifeways that have occurred since European contact have increased the environmental devastation of the sacred Earth, created the climate crisis, and necessitated the need for constant Indigenous resistance and

² While widely used and accepted, the term *marginalized* can be interpreted as a colonial word that suppresses the many strengths and contributions of diverse communities (Jones 2017).

action. This resistance has been ongoing and persistent for hundreds of years and is born out of the desire to survive and provide for future generations (Jackson 2020). Caring for future generations is a common thread that many Indigenous Peoples hold center to their lifeways. Thinking far in advance may be interpreted as a difference in temporality between Indigenous cultures and Western ways. In “We Don’t Really Want to Know” Kari Norgaard explores this difference of time scales when she writes, “failure to think on a longer time scale is part of why we have created long-term environmental degradation such as nuclear waste. In contrast, the Iroquois nation is reputed to make decisions from the perspective of how they would affect people living 7 generations in the future” (Norgaard 2006). Many Indigenous Peoples have and have always held this perspective when making decisions that could impact the environment. Many are also trained and working fields that facilitate institutional transformations to include Indigenous knowledge and solutions to help heal the People and the planet. Why are Indigenous and diverse Peoples uniquely situated to transform long standing organizational processes that perpetuate colonial methods of protecting the environment? Perhaps the opposite of the 7 generational thinking is our present day consumerism practices that promote extraction based thinking where indigenous peoples are resisting.

Indigenous Peoples have always resisted colonization and the environmental devastation that accompanies it. They have long been advocates for the environmental protection of their lands and waters. Recently these efforts have gained even more momentum and media attention. The Wet’suwet’en Resistance and the No Dakota Access Pipeline (No DAPL) pipeline protests are just a few examples of Indigenous Peoples and Nations leading highly visible and important social and environmental movements founded on protecting Indigenous rights, lands, and waters.

To unite and strengthen environmental and social justice movements, it is important to facilitate communication between diverse Peoples and organizations. By taking time and using protocols that respect diverse peoples, the decolonization of the environmental movement can help to bring Indigenous and mainstream movements together. It is critically important to facilitate a transformation and recenter the focus of environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) to appreciate, respect, and work with Indigenous and other Peoples of Color to protect the environment while respecting Indigenous rights and worldviews.

As Arturo Escobar eloquently wrote in *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*, Indigenous (and feminist) activism is often about,

An ethical and political practice of alterity that involves a deep concern for justice, the radical equality of all beings, and non-hierarchy. It's about the difference that all marginalized and subaltern groups have to live with day in and day out, and that only privileged groups can afford to overlook as they act as if the entire world were, or should be, as they see it. In the interstices of resistance, people are "living fearlessly with and within difference (Escobar 2018).

Indigenous resistance strategies for environmental causes are tied to a decolonial political ontology. This ontological way of being examines strategies that are focused on defending the sacredness and respect of the Earth. A decolonial trajectory rearticulates the colonial difference of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews. Unlike colonial concepts of a detached and hierarchical scale of life, Indigenous ontologies place the Earth and all life forms including people, as interconnected and affecting each other in a multitude of ways (Jackson 2020). If organizations are open to change, these ways of being and knowing can help bridge western

colonial structures to an organizational structure and strategy that includes the Peoples, practices, and knowledges that have worked to protect the Earth since time immemorial.

2. Reciprocal relationships, oneness, balance, and possibilities

An important concept in Indigenous thought that presents itself in virtually every Indigenous group across the world is the concept of oneness and reciprocal relationships between humans and other lifeforms and beings. This is an overarching worldview that differentiates Indigenous groups from others when interacting with the natural world. Eugene Atleo writes about this concept which is so integral to the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation to which he belongs. For the Nuu-chah-nulth, from what is now known as Vancouver Island, this concept is called “Tsawalk” which loosely translates to the oneness of all living things, human, plant, and animal. In *Tsawalk: A Nuu-Chah-Nulth Worldview* (2004), Atleo provides a vivid description of Tsawalk and lays out a path for utilizing this worldview to bridge Indigenous views of the world and western science. This lesson is important in teaching about relationality and how all life is impacted when the environment is harmed. These concepts can also be a reminder that human impacts are not always equal and Indigenous use and connection to homelands should not be disrupted. The displacement of Indigenous Peoples from their land through the structures of settler colonialism has contributed to the rapid degradation of ecosystems, harmed Indigenous cultural practices, and hindered important environmental preservation practices.

Indigenous ontologies, or ways of “being” emphasize the inseparability of humans from other living things, and it is important to acknowledge that the features of landscapes, such as mountains and rocks, are sentient and significant beings. The interconnected environment is treated as a living dimension of society and culture. Kyle Whyte, Chris Caldwell, and Marie

Schaefer describe this connection in terms of relationships, and the quality of relationships, between humans and the nonhuman world in their essay “Indigenous Lessons about Sustainability Are Not Just for *All Humanity*.” They describe the importance of the quality of relationship and how the reciprocal relationship between the nonhuman and humans “strengthens human motivation as the benefits of taking responsibility are physically manifest” (Whyte et al. 2018:149). Simply put, Indigenous peoples have always known that when humans care for the environment the environment will care for humans with food, materials, and other gifts. Russell Means in the preface to Jace Weaver’s *Defending Mother Earth*, (1996) spoke about consequences of the absence of this knowledge in European thought:

From our traditional ways, we know that we do not have the right to degrade our Mother and that we must live in harmony with all creation. The Europeans’ lopsided emphasis on human beings at the expense of the rest of the created order and their presumptuous assumption that they are somehow outside the chain of interrelatedness of all things have led inevitably to imbalance and disharmony and...[with as yet unrealized consequences for the larger human family and all beings who are intrinsically intertwined] many of our prophecies tell us that (Means 1996).

Means’ words, while a harsh reality lens, can be useful to ENGOs when preparing to transform to a more inclusive and healing practice. Indigenous Knowledge Systems are complex and involve many different fields of thought and perception. The ability to navigate the complexities requires bridging for ENGO’s and institutions of learning, particularly those who still operate within silos of understanding. An Indigenous lens insists on integrated understanding with a deep respect of complexities, Means’ shifts responsibilities back to the imbalance.

Imbalance is understood from an Indigenous lens. To right an imbalance many of our cultures turn to ceremony. Indigenous healing ceremonies are especially important for many Indigenous nations with many ceremonial dances taking place at specific intervals uninterrupted for thousands of years. A large number of these traditional ceremonies and prayers are held to heal and maintain the equilibrium of the Earth and prevent disaster from occurring due to human mistakes and failure to follow protocols and proper ways of living. These types of ceremonies are evidence of how Indigenous Peoples have always been hard at work striving to heal the world. While much of the ceremonial aspects of Indigenous cultures is not shared with those outside the community, ENGOs will benefit by learning from and uniting with Indigenous experts on projects to heal and protect the lands and waters.

2.1 Storytelling in Practice and Protocol

Traditional Indigenous creation stories often convey lessons that carry common themes of respect for other lifeforms and a disdain for greed and taking more than one needs. Included in STWE and APT, one such story is “Why the Women Left.” This story holds many meanings and lessons, but one central theme is the repercussions that can happen when people are greedy and take more than they need and don’t share with others (George 2019). This common theme of the importance of taking only what is needed and caring for others crosses oceans and continents, languages, and cultures, and is a common thread running through the stories of Indigenous Peoples around the globe.

Many Indigenous oral histories tell stories of survival, adaptation, resilience, and an intimate connection to place, spirit, and other lifeforms. One method of Indigenous resilience is

the acknowledgment of cultural disruption and the making of futurity through storytelling and personal narratives. People use stories to make sense of their own predicament. Indigenous people, through storytelling, are able to draw upon a collective history, through the lessons within “myths”³ and sacred teachings to guide individuals in proper ways to behave or “how to live in a good way.” Jo-Ann Archibald draws on Coast Salish knowledge systems and oral traditions in her book, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. In her work, Archibald shares how storytelling can help in the process of healing and growing. The focus of *Indigenous Storywork* is to bring local stories into the educational curriculum of school districts. The rich research in this book came together with the help of many Coast Salish Elders and storytellers. Archibald points out several important lessons that are at the heart of most traditional stories and how they are helpful in every aspect of life and learning, including lessons about the “seven principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy” (Archibald 2008).

As part of the groundwork for resilience in storytelling work, Kirmayer et al. draw upon more recent Indigenous narratives that speak directly to the ruptures of cultural continuity that have occurred with the systematic suppression and dismantling of Indigenous ways of life during colonization. Their work explores the art of talking and writing about the structural forces of settler colonialism as part of the process of Indigenous healing. This process can also be used in the transformational process of ENGOS. Narrative resilience is helpful to circulate a communal dimension that articulates cultural power and strength and affirms Indigenous knowledge

³ The term “myth” comes from colonial thinking and for many Indigenous Peoples, these are “truths” and not myths.

systems as vital in protecting the environment from corporations that damage it in their hunger for profit (Kirmayer et al. 2011:85).

2.2 *Buen Vivir and an invitation for institutional and organizational decolonization*

Indigenous academics and scholars are important in the process of decolonizing history and academia. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2012), stresses the need for Indigenous scholars to reevaluate the existing material and build upon it from an Indigenous centered standpoint. This process involves rereading, rewriting, and re-righting (Smith 2012:29).

Tsawalk and Buen Vivir are two conceptual models that could easily be incorporated into the frameworks of ENGOs when Indigenous Peoples have a seat at the table. With Indigenous and diverse community members in leadership positions or enmeshed in organizations in meaningful ways, they are much more likely to transform their practices to be more inclusive and socially just. These principles are especially critical when doing important local environmental work, such as forest and water protection and working on climate change issues. The Buen Vivir model, now used in a wide variety of organizational settings, is a good example of how institutions can work with Indigenous groups and utilize concepts that create positive and lasting societal changes. This transformational model based on ancient teachings was created with the help of the Indigenous community, at the National University of Education (UNAE), in Ecuador.

Ecuador became the first country in the world to recognize the Rights of Nature when they drew on the principles of Buen Vivir and rewrote and ratified their Constitution in 2008. Javier Collado-Ruano, et al. describes the model in their paper “Training Transdisciplinary Educators: Intercultural Learning and Regenerative Practices in Ecuador.” This transdisciplinary

training model is based on the Kichwa worldview of Buen Vivir and has been demonstrated to promote inner spiritual awareness, healing, and positive change in socio-ecological challenges (Collado-Ruano, et al. 2008). Ancient worldviews and practices such as Tsawalk and Buen Vivir which have been central to Indigenous worldviews, in many cases have been hidden or lost due to the colonization and displacement of Indigenous Peoples. It is vital to consciously include decolonization principles and practices in organizations and institutions to promote healing in communities, organizations, and the environment.

The practice of decolonization can and should take many different paths toward organizational and institutional transformation. Kerstin Knopf outlines an important step to decolonizing educational institutions in her 2015 paper, “The Turn Toward the Indigenous: Knowledge Systems and Practices in the Academy.” This paper unpacks the relationship between Indigenous and Western knowledge and focuses on the Indigenous concepts of Saytk’ihl Wo’osim’ (Nisga’a common bowl concept of protocol of sharing), Enowkinwixw (Okanogan concept of deep understanding and consensus), Tsawalk (Nuu-chah-nulth concept of oneness), and Hahuulism (unifying Indigenous and Western philosophies - Atleo 2011). Smoothly bridging western and Indigenous thinking, Knopf guides practitioners in paths to fold these important concepts into a variety of disciplines including political and social sciences, economics, and environmental studies (Knopf 2015).

3. Indigenous knowledge systems and environmental studies

Indigenous Knowledge Systems are beginning to be recognized as an important and much older type of science than modern scientific knowledge systems. This shift is particularly evident in ecosystem services, however Indigenous knowledge systems, sometimes referred to as

traditional knowledge systems can benefit a wide variety of scientific fields. Joy Hendry explores the vitality of Indigenous knowledge systems in sustainability studies in her 2014 book *Science and Sustainability: Learning from Indigenous Wisdom*. This book challenges the Western definition of science and explores how Indigenous knowledge systems are passed down through all aspects of culture and serves to create a society that recognizes the interconnectedness of all things and promotes practices that nurture the environment (Hendry 2014). It is also important to note that Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Indigenous resilience strategies are almost always situated in *community*. Indigenous communities exist in an ecological balance with the surrounding environment. These kinds of communities require a *moral economy* regulated by ideas of coexistence (Kirmayer et al. 2011). A moral economy lies in direct opposition to the temporal system of neoliberal global capitalism ('consumerism dependent lens').

The institution and culture of consumerism is both an extension of and a result of capitalism. Consumerist societies and neoliberal global capitalism play a significant role in the demise of Indigenous Peoples and the degradation of the sacred Earth. Sociologists, political scientists, and experts from many other fields have connected neoliberal capitalism to our planet's rapid environmental degradation and the demise of Indigenous populations, particularly since the industrial revolution. In her study, Jodi Melamed (2011) details the shift from a white supremacist modernity to a postmodern Western World that is officially antiracist, but with normalized racial violence when People of Color get in the way of the Capitalist free-market. Currently. There are many wars occurring over the extraction of natural resources, such as oil wars in the Middle East and fights between Indigenous Peoples in Latin America, and other regions, and the corporations that are expelling them from their lands for the purpose of extracting resources (Melamed 2011). The structures of settler colonialism force Indigenous

Peoples to struggle against capitalist corporations and governments that continue the forceful takeover and poisoning of their homelands and water sources (Jackson 2020). Through understanding and learning from societies based on a moral economy and transforming their practices, ENGOs will be better prepared to work with Indigenous and diverse peoples to encourage a mainstream societal shift from a consumer based society to one based on a moral economy.

Chanza Nelson and Anton de Wit share an important global perspective on Indigenous knowledge systems and the environment in their 2016 paper, “Enhancing climate governance through Indigenous Knowledge: Case in sustainability science.” With a focus on the African Sahel region, Nelson and de Wit explore the benefits and necessity of incorporating the Indigenous Knowledge of Peoples impacted by climate change in international and regional climate governance. This paper draws out the ways that acts to adapt and mitigate climate change can be enhanced and strengthened by local Indigenous knowledge and an emphasis on climate justice (Nelson and de Wit 2016). Another important study with a focus on IKS and the decolonization of the sciences in academia, but could be repurposed for ENGO use, is “Interfacing Indigenous Knowledge and Climate Change Education” by Pasang Dolma Sherpa (2017). Sherpa’s paper focuses on the Lamjung District of Nepal and how the district is utilizing Indigenous worldviews and knowledge to teach climate change science. Environmental sustainability studies and climate change science are obvious fields to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems, however Indigenous knowledge can and should be integrated in many other disciplines and environmental plans.

In approaching work that bridges cultures and rests on a foundation of Indigenous and diverse practices, it is important to distinguish between taking a universal or generalized approach and a culturally differentiated approach. This distinction is helpful in many areas and especially important in environmental work. Localizing the focus and goals of projects is something often missed in projects that rely on national or even regional frames that often exclude diverse voices. Inclusion of the local community, inviting their expertise, and communicating and practicing in ways that uphold local customs and protocols can help in the realization of project goals. Conversely, using a generalized approach can minimize the importance of local involvement and potentially repel and/or minimize the voice and skills of individuals and groups in the local community. This is akin to using a pan-indigenous lens and/or terminology which can harm and are potentially counter to protocol (Tuck and Yang 2012). This westernized approach, which may be comfortable for some people, needs to be troubled in order to develop a new lens that centers the true diversity of peoples, including their unique cultures, customs, and gifts.

Helio Manuel Garcia-Campos explores Interculturality in his 2019 paper, “Environmental education from an intercultural approach: A glimpse into Latin America.” Focusing on questions such as, “how can we learn... from peoples with the lowest ecological footprint on the planet... to come to a new understanding of, and transform, societies that are based on the vision of progress and consumeristic, industrial urban development?” Garcia-Campos explores pedagogical approaches to incorporate intercultural, local Indigenous knowledge, and thinking in sustainability curriculum. This paper highlights the diverse, yet related, Indigenous teachings in Latin America and other areas to demonstrate the importance of bringing Intercultural and

Indigenous thought into environmental studies and sustainability curriculum. Intercultural communication studies can also help bridge gaps in understanding between diverse peoples.

In “Connecting Community Voices Using a Latino and Critical Race Theory Lens on Environmental Justice Advocacy,” C. Anguiano et al. utilizes intercultural communication research and Latino Critical Race Theory to explore contested spaces in environmental justice issues and encourage environmental organizations to accept responsibility for past harms to diverse peoples and to actively work for environmental justice and cultural activism. An important overarching message embedded within this piece, which is directly relevant to APT is stated on page 137, “in order to uphold social and environmental justice and enhance movement success] the larger environmental movement must honor the voices of local communities and acknowledge the importance of linking cultural orientation within the larger environmental agenda” (Anguiano et al. 2012).

5.

Transformational Theory

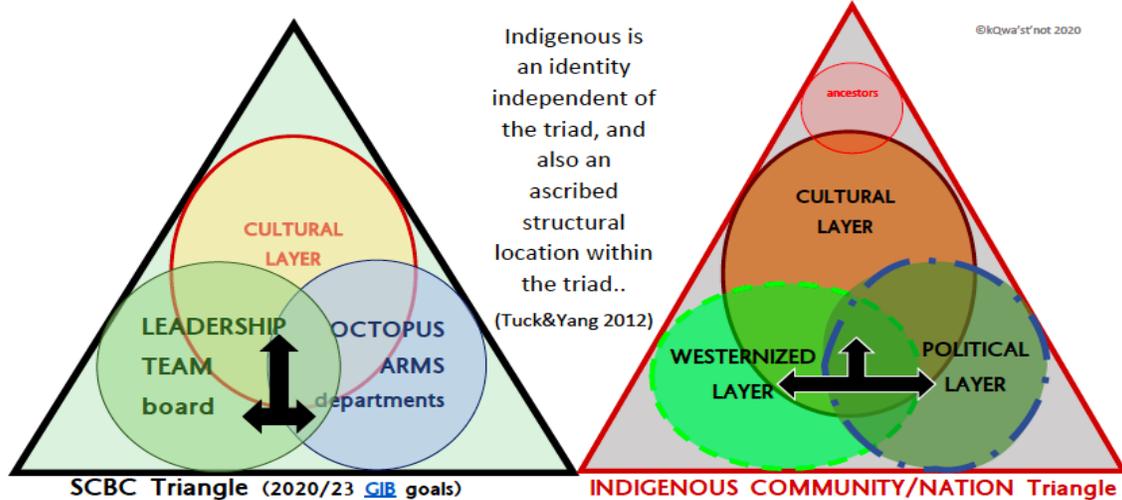
Incorporating lessons of human responsibilities to “act with wisdom, respect, love, honesty, humility, bravery, and truth toward each other and all creation” in business ethics, teamwork, and leadership is important in relational thinking. In their 2014 paper “A Native American Relational Ethic: An Indigenous Perspective on Teaching Human Responsibility” Amy Verbos (Potawatomi) and M. Humphries provide guidance in Potawatomi and Ojibwe Indigenous relational ethics. Basing their work on the Seven Grandfather Teachings, this paper outlines strategies for bridging Indigenous ethics of responsibility for each other and the Earth into Western management perspectives. Particular attention is paid to social justice, decolonization, and environmental sustainability and several practical activities are included for

use in transforming an organization to better work together and strive toward their goals with humility and the values of the Seven Grandfathers (Appendix 1).

5.1 Transformative learning through affective connection

Central to the process of inter and cross-cultural emergent methods and curriculum is the understanding that people must change their epistemological and ontological assumptions to make room for diverse perspectives and understandings. Since the early 2000's, academia has produced new models of transformative learning that include a more nuanced understanding of cross-cultural awareness and training (O'Sullivan, Morrell & O'Connor 2002; Tisdell 2001). While generally focused on individual transformation, transformative learning has also been accredited by some theorists for its role as a catalyst of social change (Torres and Schugurensky 2002). Indigenous and diverse communities have continued to express that respectful relationships are necessary in all aspects of life. Much of the difficult work for ENGOs is to understand the complex layers of ways of being and practicing protocol in each community. The concept of triangular power relationships, called triad structures by Tuck & Yang (2012), which kQwa'ste'not ~ Charlene George explored in depth in her research "Rebuilding Our THEE LELUM ~ Collaboratively Moving Forward ~ YÁ ŁTE SE ŚELŚ TEN (we're going for a walk) ~ Developing Stewardship Framework Together ÍY SCÁĆEL ~ transforming ourselves to greet and embrace this new day; Steps to Lifelong Learning by asking: where do we start?" is helpful in any organizational transformation process, see Figure 1 (kQwa'ste'not ~ Charlene George 2019). The concept of triangular relationships is an important bridging tool that can help to balance protocol, and bridge both the cultural and political layers within communities and organizations.

TRIANGULAR POWER RELATIONSHIPS



“Settler colonialism is built upon an entangled triad structure of settler-native-slave, the decolonial desires of white, non-white, immigrant, postcolonial, and oppressed people, can similarly be entangled in resettlement, reoccupation, and reinhabitation that actually further settler colonialism.”

Tuck, E. & Yang, K.W. (2012). Decolonization is not a Metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1-40. Retrieved from: www.decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/18630 .

Figure 1 Triangular Power Relationships

By exploring and incorporating the processes laid out in analyses based on transformational theory, ENGOs can be better equipped to incorporate those diverse voices so necessary for enriching and strengthening their goals. This type of transformational growth has the potential for creating positive and lasting organizational change. As an example of a reflexive transformational approach, kQwa'st'not ~ Charlene George reflects below on the transformational process that occurred while working with the community and completing STWE.

Through the process/work of this project I found myself transforming to be able to aid the continuing discovery of collective need, wishes for direction to aid discussion for specific and overall images/needs. I continued to use these guiding questions: What is working or not working ~ why? What does my community look like in 100 years? Who are my relatives/community/ neighbors? How can we

be better? Where do we start? These questions along with journeys to local areas, time spent with contributors, and following Indigenous practice/theory, the foundation was built, the voices were given digital space, and next steps were envisioned. The work completed in STWE is only a snapshot set by the limit of time. Two moons time was spent gathering, one moons time was spent transcribing into digital format and asking for feedback. See Figure 1 for a visual of this stage of the transformational process, knowing that future work is expected for STWE which is past this Figure’s representation (George 2019).

The work of APT is represented in this figure as the bottom maroon circle “On to the future...~ Echoing voices.

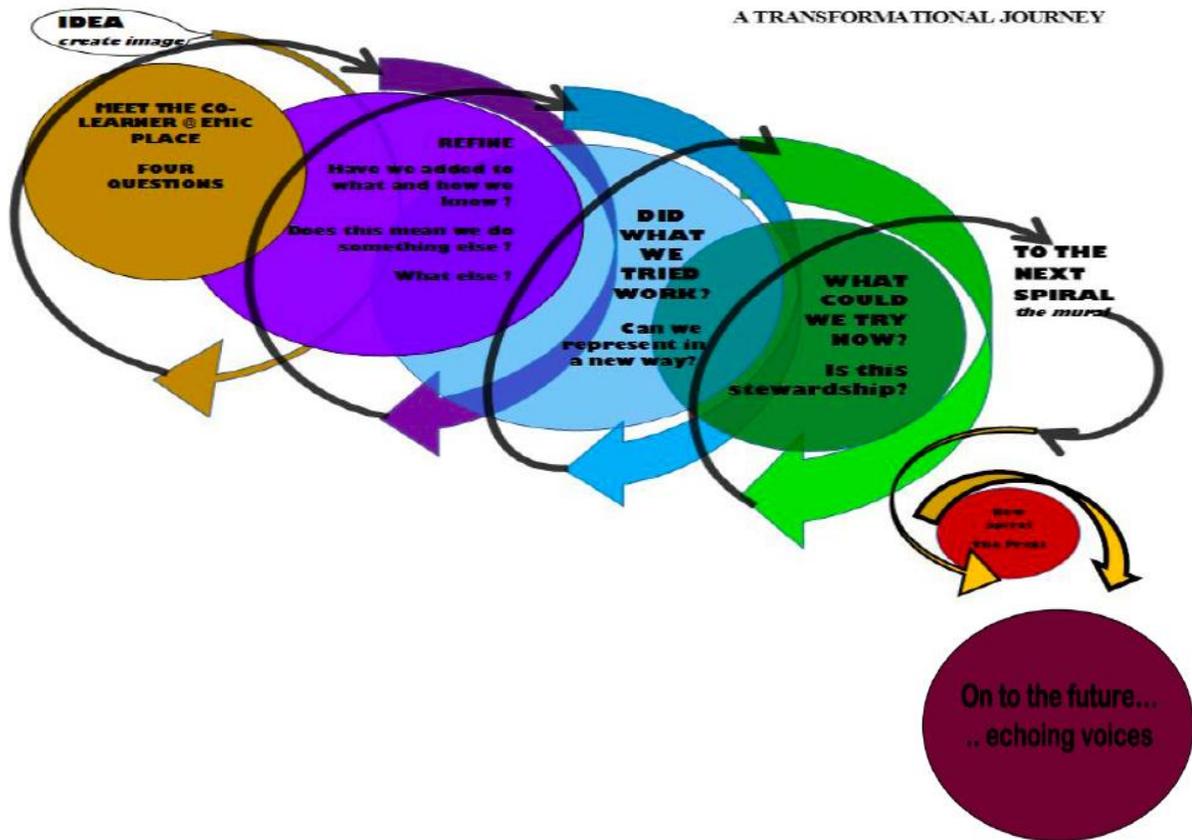


Figure 2 A Transformation Journey Diagram

Indigenous resilience is rooted in culturally distinctive concepts of the individual and beings, a diverse yet collective history, the richness of language and traditions, and the importance of individual and community agency and activism. One core practice of resilience is transformative justice - the practice of transforming the conditions that make injustice possible. Transformative justice can be accomplished only through the acknowledgment and affirmation of systems rooted in continuance. Through transformative justice, harmful aspects of institutional systems can be dismantled in order to achieve sustainability in community and the environment.

The strength, energy, and magic behind Indigenous resilience can be partially unpacked by theory. Theories of emergence and organization look at the processes that result in complex systems that are not fixed or static, but constantly adapting, often existing within conditions of instability, poised between the order and the chaos. Autopoiesis theory (Escobar 2017:172) reconceptualizes the relations of determination, requiring active engagement with other lifeforms (this reciprocity allows for an exchange of energy). Autopoiesis can be seen as the conditions that prepare systems (beings and communities) for confident relating and greater sharing.

Escobar contributes to this line of thought in *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds (New Ecologies for the Twenty-First Century)*.“ This entire book is recommended to encourage an organization to center transformative justice in their practices. An especially enlightening and helpful quote from this work about the way some communities plan, adapt, and process follows: “In the case of subaltern communities, this preparation takes a lot of conjunctural thinking and strategizing (at

times engaging in what to outside observers might appear like strategic essentialism or the defense of culture” (Escobar 2017:172). In other words, Indigenous and diverse organizational practices are sometimes seen as purely political. However, this is most often not the case. The processes, while sometimes not easily translated to the western mind are purposeful and rich with meaning and experience.

6.

Discussion and next steps

A Pathway Together, and the accompanying literature and tools are meant to help bridge gaps in understanding between mainstream organizations and the Indigenous and diverse communities around them. It is well documented that the organizational inclusion of Indigenous Peoples has been ignored by the structures of settler colonialism. A synthesis of the skillsets of Indigenous and diverse communities and environmental organizations is overdue and can and should be an imperative in tackling daunting environmental problems like climate change.

An example of the ways that the tools and knowledges laid out in this project can be a catalyst for change is the success of Seeing Through Watchers Eyes (STWE). Once STWE and the curriculum was complete and incorporated into the Vancouver Islands school districts, the project was immediately nudged and a clear pathway forward was revealed. Those next steps included the creation of a physical Treasure Box for three local school districts and an invitation into Royal Roads University. Along the pathway it became apparent that a further bridging tool was required for inviting deeper understanding for post secondary institutions and ENGOS. Similarly in “the process of APT conversations about the processes and next steps are needed for

universities and other post secondary thinkers. A next step will start with specific critical thinking and guiding thought based on education silos, deeper connections, personal responsibility, and awareness with attached STWE and APT prezi points.

7.

Tying Our Woven Strand Together

A Pathway Together digital bridging guide and this accompanying literature have been created with the help of many communities, individuals, and beings. By listening to the rich and complex histories and stories of diverse communities, ENGOs will be better situated to make the necessary organizational changes to their structures and facilitate strong partnerships to better protect the environment. To close this literary journey, I will conclude with two beautiful quotes. One from my mentor kQwa'st'not ~ Charlene George and another from Marilyn Olsen-Page that sum up why this project has come to life and why Indigenous and diverse voices need to be centered in mainstream environmental movements. Many Sep'keca and Hych'ka from Elizabeth and kQwa'st'not ~ Charlene.

The reason for doing this project STWE [and APT] Prezi is to meet a need defined by the communities and those that wish to work alongside in a respectful manner, engaging in new ways. Our joint wish was, and continues to be, a rebuilding of an honored house (thee lelum) where transformational learning may guide change. This change may aid in developing a stewardship to better care for our relationships with those who are in our community, including the voices rarely heard in present-day society which are labelled as non-human. My transformational learning approach to this project with Indigenous Theory/Practice centered in Coast Salish protocol, has breathed life into seeing through another way. STWE Prezi is an example of how to move forward respectfully balancing relationships, dancing through the landscapes of TWE mural and the minds/hearts of future co-learners. Many Hych'ka / HISWKE to all who helped \0/ \0/ ..hands raised high (George 2019)..

Why Everything Is Connected ~ by Marylin Olsen-Page : As shared by Edith Pelkey:

Why everything in creation is connected and considered our brothers and sisters: When creation first started there was only human beings. One day the humans decided that they wanted more in creation. A couple of the humans told the creator that they wanted to be the great cedar that would provide, wood for the houses, a soft inner bark that would make clothing, baskets and many other things that their brothers and sisters could use to help them, as well as medicine that could be made from their beautiful branches. Then others came forward and said they wanted to be Kwetholomechen, they would carry the spirits of the ancestors and they would help the people when they are travelling on the water. More and more came forward, some wanted to be the many different kinds of salmon, the animals, the sea creatures, trees, shrubs, flowers, and many different things. Everyone of them volunteered to become these things so that they would provide food, medicine and clothing for their human brothers and sisters. That is why our people are connected to the land, the ocean and the sky. That's Why all of creation is connected and they are all of our brothers and sisters. That's why our people, First Nations, were left to take care of all of creation (Marylin Olsen-Page 2020).

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This exercise is available in Amy Verbos and Maria Humphries 2014 publication “A Native American Relational Ethic: An Indigenous Perspective on Teaching Human Responsibility.” It is a good example of ways that organizations can use activities to grow and learn from each other and the ethics of relationality, which is a vital aspect of many Indigenous perspectives.

Exercises

Table 1 Seven Grandfather Teachings and their opposites

Seven Grandfather's Teaching	Opposite
Wisdom	Foolishness, stupidity
Bravery	Timidity, cowardice
Respect	Disrespect
Honesty	Dishonesty
Humility	Arrogance, hubris
Love/care	Hate, indifference
Truth/integrity	Falseness, incongruence

Table 2 Values missing in the seven habits of spectacularly ~~unsuccessful~~ executives

Finkelstein's (2004) seven habits	Missing values
They see themselves and their companies as dominating their environment	Respect, wisdom, humility
They identify so completely with the company that there is no clear boundary between their personal interests and their corporation's interests	Honesty, wisdom, humility
They think they have all the answers	Humility, wisdom, bravery
They ruthlessly eliminate anyone who isn't completely behind them	Love/care, bravery, respect, wisdom
They are consummate spokespersons, obsessed with the company image	Truth, humility, wisdom
They underestimate obstacles	Truth, respect, humility, wisdom
They stubbornly rely on what worked for them in the past	Humility, wisdom

Leadership Values Exercise

Assign Finkelstein's (2004) *The habits of spectacularly unsuccessful executives*. This article distills research about CEO failures into seven cautionary lessons. Provide students with a handout listing the Seven Grandfather values each with a line and a blank where you ask them to fill in the opposite of this value (see Tables 1 for past responses). Then, first individually and then as a class, we analyze each habit and the underlying behaviors described by Finkelstein. Students identify where on a continuum between the opposite terms each habit falls with regard to each of the seven pairs (see Table 2). This lesson is helpful in connecting values with actual leader behaviors that result in failure as well as to connect what those leaders could have done to enact the opposite; i.e., the positive, ethical value. The first author has used it in an undergraduate strategy class, and it would fit well into a business ethics, leadership development, organizational behavior, or other class in conjunction with discussions about leadership.

Creativity Exercise

Native American story education produces inductive learning through stories that do not have a beginning, middle, and end in the manner of Western stories (Cajete 2000; Verbos et al. 2011b). In order to teach students to create a story that will impart inductive lessons, the first author developed characters with colleagues and then she wrote a story mostly consistent with Native American story form (See Appendix A for the characters and story).

To use this exercise in a class, students are briefed on the differences between Native American stories and western stories in form, purpose, and how they are interpreted. Specifically, Native American stories do not occur in a linear fashion and focus on interactions between and among characters (Wiget 1990). The listener then raises questions which are answered by the listener, resulting in inductive learning. Thus, students raise their own questions about the story, and we discuss how they are to answer the questions for themselves.

Then, students are asked in groups of 3 to write a story using the characters in 20-30 min. It can be helpful to direct them to a common theme such as sustainability or leadership. If you have internet available, ask students to bring their laptops or tablets and have them write the story using Google Docs as it permits more than one student to type at the same time. It also works well if you are using virtual teams. When a group is having trouble getting started, you may offer a "story starter." It can be almost anything that will draw people, animals, or other aspects of nature into relationship with Max and Minnie. Some possible starters are:

Minnie is asked to give a speech about Max's leadership...

Max is contemplating his strategy for negotiating with the union at his manufacturing plant...

Minnie convinces Max to go on an eco-tour to Costa Rica...

Max is trying to decide whether to buy widgets from Mortimer or to make widgets in China...

After clear cutting 100 acres of forest, Max comes face to face with the animals he has displaced. .

Once students have completed their story, ask each group to read their story aloud. Then ask the other students to indicate what questions it raises for them. Often, student stories take the more familiar Western form in which students linearly proceed from the end of the original story and wrap it up with an ending and a moral. Nevertheless, some students embrace the task of creating a story that may occur at any time (before or after the original story) in the midst of the path of the characters and create interesting stories that raise a variety of questions. Students genuinely enjoy the story process. The first author has used this exercise in conjunction with a chapter on creativity in a leadership development class.

Team Values Exercise

In many undergraduate and graduate business classes, students form teams for a semester-long project. This exercise has as its objective to start students off considering positive, ethical team behaviors. Begin the exercise by first presenting students with Brutus and Donia's (2010) framework for team performance dimensions, then show a simple powerpoint slide with the seven values within a circle (or write them on the board): wisdom, bravery, love (care), honesty, respect, humility, and truth (integrity) . Ask students, within their student teams, to develop a list of seven ways that they will enact these values in their dealings with each other in the team project. Student feedback suggests that if behavioral problems arise in a team, this document can serve to remind students of their responsibilities to each other. "The team values exercise was helpful because it was important to discuss these concepts with our teammates. If we had not taken time to do so, we probably would not even have taken time to think about important values to our team" (Student feedback). This exercise may be conducted in any class where there is a team assignment.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings also lend themselves to reflective discussion of contemporary issues.

Discussion Starters

The relational values found in the Seven Grandfather Teachings could be applied to classroom discussions of issues such as financial crises, fair remuneration (including minimum wage and CEO compensation discussions), universal access to a sustainable livelihood, and responsibility for restoring social and environmental damage. They provide a different ontological perspective on ethical action and bring a relational ethic that extends the breadth and depth of responsibilities people owe each other and Mother Earth. By reflecting on positive values emanating from an unconventional source, we indirectly question what "prevails" as normal and suggest new ways that teachers and students may evaluate possible courses of action and engage in sense-making about whether a given action is wise.

Extensions and Limitations

We invite an extension toward Indigenous worldviews more generally because respect for diverse ontological perspectives from the most marginalized people can enrich mainstream management thought (Fitzgibbons and Humphries 2011). Indigenous people are frequently exploited, alienated, and harmed by corporations (see, e.g., Banerjee 2011; United Nations 2009). Greater respect for Indigenous people, entailing their greater representation in the Academy as equally deserving of respect, will add a different perspective to management education. This is consistent with the Principles of Responsible Management Education ("PRME"), an extension of the United Nations Global Compact. The exposure draft referenced above makes clear that the rights of Indigenous people are to be considered and respected by corporations agreeing to the Global Compact. The exposure draft is incorporated by reference into the **PRME**. Thus, our exercises are one way that management educators could bring new stakeholder perspectives into the classroom.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of our contribution is that we invite educators to elevate those who have been silenced and deemed completely irrelevant, a difficult psychological barrier for some individuals to overcome. Another is that a relational ethic privileges relationships over instrumental economic calculations. Positive organizational scholars are beginning work on this approach (see e.g., Cameron 2008; Cameron et al. 2003; Caza and Caza 2008; Dutton 2003; Verbos et al. 2007; Roberts et al. 2005), while others hold skeptical views (cf. Fineman 2006; Hackman 2009; Learnonth and Humphreys 2011). We anticipate resistance from our many colleagues in the Academy who frame every issue through an economic theoretical lens, a practice decried by the late Sumantra Ghoshal (Ghoshal 2005; Ghoshal et al. 1999; Ghoshal and Moran 1996). We anticipate a tendency to dismiss a relational ethic as either too simplistic, romantic, or, paradoxically, too complex for the speed of business today. Wildcat (2009) provides us with the following response:

Advanced societies, with their powerful rationality and technologies, evidence an adherence to a body of myths and romanticism that eclipses anything imagined in tribal worldviews and lifeways.. If romanticism denotes impracticality and unrealistic fantasy, can there be a more romantic myth than the idea that humankind can always rise above the forces of nature through our rationalities and application of technology? (p. 136).

Conclusion

Native American knowledge (we argue it is also wisdom) is the source to which we turn for an ethical framework that could provide a transformational opportunity for those willing to engage with it. In particular, Native American philosophy and relational ethics have the potential to counterbalance the hegemonic grip of economic thought in management education and lead to greater ontological variety and support environmental sustainability. While we advocate for the

greater inclusion of Indigenous voices, we do so with a deeply ethical concern and caution-that their inclusion does not signal a system requiring assimilation but co-existence with *respect*, *humility*, and *truth*.

We urge that any pedagogical step toward including Indigenous knowledge is done with careful thought. It is preferable that Indigenous teachers or in strong collaboration with Indigenous scholars or local Indigenous leaders initiate and develop an understanding of Indigenous knowledge in part to prevent its assimilation into a largely unchanged curriculum. We caution against instrumental uptake of Native American wisdom through cooptation, as this has been a common practice in the past encounters and exacerbates mistrust (cf. Simpson 2004; Stuckey and Murphy 2001; Whitt 1999), instead we encourage practicing inclusion through inviting Native Americans and other Indigenous peoples into stakeholder dialogues.