

Idle No More: Indigenous Resurgence as Revitalization

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that this thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Tamie Coleman

Abstract

North American Indigenous people throughout contact have resisted the paternalistic and assimilationist policies of colonization. In recent history, Indigenous peoples resistance has been predominately localized in nature. However, the current resistance is widespread. Despite the fact that Bill C-45 was the catalyst for Idle No More (INM), the resistance encompasses deeper meanings for those standing against the current status quo than the solely political concerns covered by the media. In order to fully understand contemporary Indigenous resistance this thesis will be the result of a collaborative research effort that will challenge the mainstream research and theoretical models when seeking to understand Indigenous people and their acts of resistance. In this thesis I will argue that, in taking a cue from Alfred's concepts of Wasasé and Indigenous resurgence, modern Indigenous resistance may be interpreted as a contemporary expression of classical revitalization movements. Thus, by engaging the work of Indigenous academics and the grassroots people at all levels of inquiry: methodologically and theoretically this thesis argues that we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the motivations and choices of resistance actors. The focus for understanding the motivations and strategies of the actors in INM will reflect the work of Taiaiake Alfred, whose concept of Wasasé has given Indigenous people a framework for a theorized and effective form of resistance at political, economic, spiritual, and cultural levels. Additionally, the peoplehood matrix that has its origins in the work of Edward Spicer will provide a framework for understanding some of the not so apparent meanings, goals, and messages in Indigenous resistance.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the many Indigenous Warriors who continue the struggle of decolonization, the youth who have reawakened the spirit of their peoples, and the women who carry the responsibility of holding the knowledge of the people in their stories, and all of those who are committed to protecting their nations, the land and water, and strengthening their communities.

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CHAPTER 1

Throughout North American history, the Original peoples have resisted¹ the efforts of colonialists to take over their culture, spirituality, language, and lands. Over time, their forms of resistance have varied. For example, children in the residential schools resisted the assimilationist practices and policies of the schools by running away, burning the schools' buildings, and secretly speaking to each other in their mother languages (see Haig-Brown, 1988; Miller, 2003, 369; Milloy, 1999). Historically, First Nations people have also organized so that they can work together by creating both political alliances and special interest advocacy groups such as the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), American Indian Movement (AIM), Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Iroquois Confederacy, Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Sisters in Spirit, Defenders of the Land, etc). Furthermore, First Nations people have responded to threats against their lands and treaty rights through both peaceful protests and more violent confrontations as they arose, such as in the cases of Gustafson Lake, The Oka Crisis, The Burnt Church Crisis, Ipperwash, the Caledonia Crisis, Attawapiskat Housing Crisis, and First Nation Education Act (see Chief, 2013; Fennel, 1995; Furniss, 1999; Howorwitz, 2009; Marketwire, 2013; Morden, 2013; Obamaswin, 1993, 2002; Palmeto, 2001). Although progress has been made to achieve recognition of their rights to their traditional lands, use of their Native languages, and ability to practice their culture and spirituality has been limited.

Alternatively, since the time of global colonization, explorers and researchers have endeavoured to study and understand Indigenous people who live in the areas that Europeans sought to colonize (see Boas, 1911: Comte, 1844 (1856); Evans-Prichard, 1937, 1940;

¹ When I speak of resistance, I am referring to actual acts of resisting governmental laws, policies, intrusion, and/or resource extractive activities by Settlers, Settler Corporations, or International Corporations activities that the Original people of Canada see or saw as negatively affecting their rights.

Malinowski 1913, 1922, 1923, 1926; Mauss, 1990 (1922); Morgan, 1877; Tyler, 1920).

Although their reasons for seeking this knowledge may have varied, there was a universal problem at the core of how they sought to accomplish their goal. This problem resides in the fact that Europeans sought to understand those they saw as ‘primitive’ within a European perspective (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Holm et al., 2003; Martin-Hill, 1995:1-21; Smith, 2002). As a consequence, mainstream academic methods and theories have resulted in the production of knowledge that marginalizes the people within the researchers' gaze economically, sociologically, culturally, spiritually, and politically (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Alfred, 2005; Martin-Hill, 1995:1-21; Smith, 2002). For instance, early theories of social evolution informed the production of policies that justified the subjugation of people considered to be less evolved than those of European descent (see Dieckmann, 2007:37; Morgan, 1877; Thong, 2014:107-132; Tyler, 1920). Therefore, a primary goal in this research is to give voice and recognition to the participants for their knowledge and efforts in this collaborative project. In doing so, this research seeks to produce an ethnography that explains INM² (Idle No More) and those involved in a manner that gives priority to how the participants see themselves within this resistance.

Trying to Convey the Indigenous Perspective within Mainstream Academia

In conducting my research, one of the first problems I faced was attempting to conduct my research and write my thesis in a manner that highlighted and portrayed the perspective of both myself and my participants. Initially, I was directed to read up on mainstream sociological theories of social movements, to include: new social movement theory, relative deprivation

² Idle No More is to be understood as the contemporary Indigenous resistance. Resistance events may be reported under different names, and many people may argue that INM only lasted a few short months. However, according to my participants Idle No More is what they are, it is not a name of a movement that is a name given by the media to their activities. Thus for the purpose of this thesis INM and “resistance” can be used interchangeably to describe contemporary Indigenous acts of resistance.

theory, resource mobilization theory, frame theory, and contentious politics (see Carrol & Ratner, 1996; Cohen, 1985; Dalton & Manfield, 1990; Klandermans, 1986; McCarthy & Mayer, 1987; Melucci, 1989; Snow & Benford, 1998; Snow et al., 1996; Tarrow, 2011). While reading this given reading list, I was also watching and listening to what was going on in the field. I quickly realized that none of these theories attended to spirituality which was a primary topic of conversation by the people I was speaking and listening to in the field.

Malinowski (1922:3-4) is the first social science researcher to be credited for moving away from conducting research on other peoples in the library to going into the field and living with participants for an extended period of time. His reasoning for doing this was to better learn how the people lived and why they did the things that they did (Malinowski, 1922: 3-4). However, he still studied his participants through a Western lens. In the 1970s, minority researchers began to criticize the Western academic models of research by revealing the ethnocentrism in the Eurocentric ideologies that guide research and representation of those who are not of White European descent (see Preiswerk & Perrot, 1978). Considering that minority academics have made attempts to overcome these Eurocentric paradigms in academic thought and methodologies, it continues to be a topic of academic discourse today (see Blaut, 1993; Kermanshahi, 2009; Malhotra, 2013; Martin-Hill, 1995; Rüsen, 2003; Ryan, 2013:56; TCPS, 2010, Article 19). Even when speaking with scholars in my community, they have made it clear that misrepresentation of First Nations people continues to be a problem when they are the subject of academic research. Jean Becker³ relayed a story to me about how her home community had been the subject of academic studies (Personal Communication). In her

³ Jean Becker is an Innu elder and academic who is currently the Senior Advisor to Aboriginal Initiatives at Wilfrid Laurier University

community's case, after the research was completed and published, the people could not even recognize themselves in the ethnographic accounts that were written about them. Stories such as this were not uncommon in my discussions with people out in the field.

For me, the problem of representation became a central concern throughout my research. For this reason, I felt the need to first reflect on my own background and how I might inadvertently misrepresent my participants. I grew up in the Southern United States, unknowingly walking in two worlds. I understood that I had a mixed ancestral background of having both Irish and Ani-Yuⁿwiya heritage⁴. Having the identity of being both an Original person of Turtle Island and someone of European descent was never a question for me; however, the differences between these two worlds were something that I was not truly aware of until much later in my life.

In my younger life, I would spend the majority of my summers with my Grandmother who taught me about my Native heritage, and during the school year I lived with my parents attending an Irish Catholic school. At the time, I felt my biggest conflict was that I was going to a Catholic School and I was not Catholic. However, I can distinctly recall being at my paternal Grandmother's house on one occasion, and listening to her saying horrible things about "Indians" and that they were "horrible savages" while my Mother whispered to me not to say anything. No one ever questioned my ethnicity when I was younger; they just assumed I came from a completely European line of descent. My facial features and other phenotypical traits, however, strongly display my Native heritage. So growing up, whenever I was not with my Grandmother, I was treated as White. I do recall being at a powwow one time with my

⁴ Ani-Yuⁿwiya is the Cherokee (Tsalagi) term meaning principle people. This term is the most closely related term used by the Cherokee peoples to indicate that they are the original peoples of their territory.

Grandmother and someone thinking she was trying to help me find my parents, because it did not seem plausible to them that a blonde headed kid could possibly be related to her.

As a teenager, my Grandmother taught me about our ceremonies. At first she would sit me down and tell me about the ceremonies, and then we would do them. Soon I learned how central this spirituality would be in my life. Looking back, I can now understand the importance it has held in my life. This is because whenever I was practicing my spirituality, everything in my life would go fairly smoothly. However, when I was not, my life was in chaos.

During the times I was trying to ignore who I was as a woman of Native heritage, I was doing it for my own protection. My Grandmother began her journey to the spirit world when I was still young. My mother did not practice any of our cultural heritage, and thus never encouraged me to. After my Grandmother passed, we also did not see my Mother's side of the family much. Eventually, I had lost touch with them and became involved in the life events of a young adult: University, dating, getting married, and having children. Social pressures discouraged me from practicing any of my culture, and at the time I felt it more important to focus on raising a family and living the "American Dream". To make a long story short, my life fell apart and did not begin to get any better until I returned to my cultural practices and spirituality in my early 40s.

I slowly learned that my idea of the cultural norms of behaviour were conflicting because I was unknowingly trying to traverse my way through life by walking in two worlds. I constantly had difficulty communicating with mainstream people. This struggle was not just because I did not conform to the socially constructed norms of behaviour for my gender. It ran deeper than that, because I did not think about my world in the same way as those around me. I had trouble seeing my world and understanding it in a compartmentalized manner. I have always seen things

as both interconnected and interdependent. This played out recently in an interaction I had with a medical specialist. While talking with my doctor in a visit before I had surgery, I was trying to convey how my condition was affecting my quality of life. It quickly became apparent to me that all he was concerned about was the mechanics of how my body worked; he could not even consider how my condition impacted my health outside of just my digestive system. Out of frustration, I rolled my eyes and told him that he needed to learn how to “shut up and listen” so that he could look at my health from my perspective. Needless to say that did not go over well with him. My point, however, is; how do I write my thesis in a manner that not only accurately represents my participants and their worldviews, but also getting my research accepted and understood by Non-Indigenous academics?

Brief History of Resistance on Turtle Island⁵

Canada’s Original peoples came together on a national level in the late 1960s when the federal government attempted to pass *The White Paper* and when the Lubicon Cree resistance of the late 1980s. The Original peoples of Canada felt that the changes proposed would further marginalize them. This was because the *White Paper* required the Original people of Canada to assimilate into wider society under the premise of equality, while the government retained control over their lands indefinitely (Canada, 1969). The *White Paper* also did not take into consideration the systemic racism still being experienced in the residential schools (Canada, 1969). It also neglected to recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples of Canada laid out in the treaties (Canada, 1969). Moreover, the claims that the government made in the *White Paper* were ethnocentric and avoided acknowledging that the policies are anything more than

⁵ Turtle Island is what the Original people call North America which includes Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

colonial racism that sought to eliminate the “Indian Problem’ through assimilation and the silencing of Canadian history through the elimination of all Indigenous rights set out in the treaties (see [âpihtawikosisân](#), 2012; Canada, 1969; Flanagan 2010:177, 2005:36). During the time that the *White Paper* was written and the elimination of “Indian Status” was considered being removed, the residential schools were still highly active across Canada. This created an inconsistency in what the government said that they were trying to accomplish because they were continuing the practice of kidnapping Indigenous children and putting them in residential schools, while simultaneously eliminating any legal difference between Indigenous peoples and the rest of Canada. After reviewing the policy changes proposed in the *White Paper*, it is quickly apparent that all changes were structured to benefit the Federal government, while simultaneously not ensuring any true benefits for the Original people of Canada (Canada, 1969). Although the authors claimed that “Indian” people were consulted, it is never disclosed how many were involved in discussions leading up to the release of the paper or exactly how much consultation actually took place (Canada, 1969). Considering that there was nationwide outrage by the Original Peoples of Canada over the proposed changes in policies, it is safe to say that whatever consultation that took place was in fact insufficient.

In the late 1960’s into the 1970’s, there was a renewed pride in being Indigenous in North America, which many attribute to the writings and influence of Vine Deloria (Deloria, 1969; Demaille, 2006:933). There were also continuing resistance events and standoffs with government officials across North America, to include the Indigenous peoples in Canada and Mexico (see Klien, 2015). Conversely, in the US, there continued to be a great amount of activity being covered in the nightly newscasts. In 1969 in California, Peoples of all Tribes and Nations occupied Alcatraz Island that had been abandoned by the US Government. Their claim was

founded on the *Treaty of Fort Laramie*, and although women were involved in this resistance, they played supporting roles to the men (see Johnson, 1994; US, 1898). After the occupation of Alcatraz, another notable resistance event by the Original people of Turtle Island was the Pine Ridge standoff with the FBI in 1973 (see Brand, 1993; Churchill, 1996; Kades, 2005; NAPT, 1999). The importance of the standoff at Wounded Knee is that the number of women involved in AIM outnumbered men (Emmerich, 1991; NAPT, 1999). However, leadership positions in the American Indian Movement remained mostly in the hands of men.

My research has revealed that during the 1990s, a new era of resistance in Canada began. These events were limited mostly to localized communities such as Oka, Burnt Church, Ipperwash, Gustafson Lake, and Caledonia, to name a few (see Coates, 2000; DeVries, 2011; Fleras, 2011:14-21; Edwards, 2001; Furniss, 1999; Obomsawin, 1993, 2002). What was significant about Oka and these other Canadian events starting in the 1990s were the changes in how people acted in resistance. In these cases, the Original people acting in resistance made attempts to avoid violent confrontations with the Settler population and government officials (Obamaswin, 1993, 2002; Welsh, 1994). This is not to say that previous resistances were planned and conducted in such a manner that the people were prepared for and expected the probability of violent outcomes. This was made evident to me by several of my participants through our conversations, and from individuals who participated in resistance events in the 1970s and early 1980s. Additionally, in the time period around the early 1990's, women began to be more visible and began taking leadership roles in acts of resistance. A notable female leader was Ellen Gabriel who led her people through the Oka Crisis and continues to occupy important leadership roles for Canada's Original women today (see AFN, nd., Obamsawin, 1993). During the Burnt Church

Crisis, women were also taking part in defending the rights of the people to access the resources, and actively participated in the events that took place on the Miramichi (see Obamsawin, 2002).

The important points are that historically, men were in positions of leadership in earlier contemporary resistance events with women's participation being seen only as a supporting role. For this reason, in some cases, such as Pine Ridge, violence was a more likely outcome of these standoffs. Currently, Indigenous resistance is more often led by women, with grandmothers, mothers, and young women standing on the front lines in public spaces (see Alfred, 2005). The reason for this gendered change will be discussed in my data, and will show how this change is a decolonizing act that seeks to return to the pre-contact gender roles, responsibilities and positions of men, women, and warriors.

Idle No More can be understood as a resurgence of overt resistance activity of the Original peoples of Canada and their allies. This visible resistance was sparked by the Harper government's introduction of Bill C-45 that raised concerns about changes to the *Indian Act* and the loosening of the environmental protections of the majority of Canada's waterways (INM, 2012). Due to the fact that all Indigenous peoples in Canada share common concerns about the rights of the Original peoples and the sustainability of the water resources for future generations, this set the stage for a nationwide resistance. Moreover, the mainstream population in Canada also relies on access to clean, unpolluted water. Thus, this common concern created an opening for Indigenous and Settler peoples to ally together in resistance to threats to the Canadian waters.

UNIQUENESS OF THE MOVEMENT

In November 2012, four women (Sylvia McAdam, Sheelah McLean, Jessica Gordon, and Nina Wilson) in Saskatoon held a teach-in titled Idle No More. This teach-in, that took place in

Station 20 West, was held in response to the Harper government's Bill C-45, for the purpose of educating the public of the consequences to Canada's waterways and changes in the *Indian Act* that were implemented through this omnibus bill (Indian Act, 1985; Parliament of Canada, 2012). It ultimately was the catalyst for what is now known as Idle No More. By December 10, 2012, Idle No More became a nationwide movement (McMahon, 2012). The early resistance was highlighted by round dances in malls across Canada (McMahon, 2012). In these instances, people would show up with drums to sing songs as other actors performed round dances.

At the same time, Chief Theresa Spence began a hunger strike on Victoria Island in the Ottawa River (Chiefs of Ontario, 2012). While she supported the ideals of Idle No More, her efforts were focused on obtaining a meeting with then Governor General David Johnson in order to discuss the concerns of her community of Attawapiskat (AFN, 2012). That being said, those acting in resistance supported Chief Spence's cause and she supported the cause of Idle No More. These simultaneous actions resulted in a great amount of media attention for both causes, leading to a widening amount of support for INM both nationally and internationally. After Chief Spence's hunger strike ended on January 24, 2013, the media attention of INM waned but the movement continued (CTV, 2013).

Since the very beginning of Idle No More, it has been women on the front lines. Even in the face of violent resistance by the Canadian state, it is the women that are up front standing in resistance. For instance, when the Elisipogtog First Nation stood against SWN Resources' plans to use hydraulic fracking on their traditional lands, it was the women that stood at the front of the resistance (Annis, 2013). While there are men at sites of resistance, they are taking more traditional roles that conform to the teachings given to warriors.

Contemporary resistance is intentionally decentralized. This decentralization provides those involved with a voice and decision-making powers to attend to local concerns while simultaneously acting on issues that have broader implications (Alfred, 2005; Saysewahum, 2015). While having many voices can be problematic for a social movement, it can also have its benefits. In the case of INM, these voices have contributed to the retelling of the history of Canada from the Indigenous perspective (McLean, 2014). By employing the creative ideas and abilities of those involved, participants have used social and alternative media outlets in order to bypass mainstream media and get their perspectives and concerns out to larger audiences (Kinonnda-niimi, 2014). It has also allowed for the inclusion of ongoing Indigenous concerns, such as the missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, and the *First Nations Education Act* (Bill C-33) (Canada, 2014; INM, 2014a). What is important to note is that through the use of social media, the messages of INM continue to have a strong presence and influence for those involved. By using alternative forms of media with a decentralized structure, INM has maintained a cohesive message that retells the history of Canada in a manner that gains Non-Indigenous supporters to their cause. It also allows for those involved to control the narrative, where turning to mainstream media outlets gives outsiders control over what stories are being told.

INM is also unique because there is open conversation and participation in the following of spiritual laws and ceremonial traditions during resistance events. To be sure, I did not witness full discussion of the meanings of every aspect of these laws and traditions at each event. However, there were overriding themes discussed of the spiritual laws and how actions of resistance can also be understood as both resistance and ceremony simultaneously. These traits remove INM from standardized mainstream theories on social movements, and instead place it

within the theoretical construct of a revitalization movement. However, there are some differences that in my opinion must be attended to. For this reason, I think it is important that we include the perspective of Indigenous academics.

In mainstream society, youth hold little power or credit for having useful knowledge to contribute to their communities. However, according to my participants, Indigenous people value the insight and input of the youth in their communities. This is because every generation holds knowledge that previous generations do not have. For this reason, when the youth speak, they are listened to and their voices carry weight. The youth of today are the eighth generation, and according to prophecy, the eighth generation is the first generation with the knowledge of healing. The knowledge of healing that they hold encompasses how to heal their communities from the traumas of colonization. These traumas, according to my participants, include all of the assimilationist practices and policies of the colonizing agencies, to include: the residential school system, land loss, denial of the right to conduct ceremonies, participation in cultural practices, loss of language, and the right to self-governance and self-determination. Eleanor Leacock (1992) tells us that the missionaries used a strategy of instructing Indigenous men to beat their wives into submission in order to Christianize the Indigenous peoples of North America. This practice removed women, who were the traditional leaders of the community, from their positions of power (Leacock, 1992). It also took away women's ownership of the products of their labour (Leacock, 1992). As such, this process introduced domestic violence into Indigenous communities, which was later instilled into them through the residential school system. Because of the prophecy told to me, the youth of today are held up as the ones with the knowledge and ability to heal these social ills in their communities.

Within INM, Indigenous youth play a pivotal role in the movement. Those of my participants that identified themselves as being members of the seventh generation shared that they must recognize their responsibility in providing a platform for the youth to lead their communities into the healing process. Participants shared that Indigenous youth are taking steps to return their communities to their traditional teachings by learning their languages, teachings, and ceremonies from their elders. They are also participating in the planning and organizing of INM events. Their commitment is so strong that in some cases, they have organized walks from their home communities to Ottawa to bring their concerns to Parliament. One case is the six Nishiyuu youth who walked approximately 1600 kilometers from their home community of Whapmasgoostui to Ottawa in order to raise awareness to the problems being faced by First Nations communities across Canada (CTV, 2013d). Locally, in the early days of INM, it was a young woman in my local community that led events such as the flash mob round dances and solidarity hunger strike.

The importance of reclaiming the language of the people is very prevalent within INM. Included in these discussions are how language is important to understanding the spiritual laws, history, ceremonies, and peoples' connection to and understanding of their lands. According to Alfred (2005), Indigenous languages contain important knowledge and ways of understanding the land, spiritual history, and ceremonies. For this reason, when listening to speakers at INM events, the retelling of the stories of Indigenous people in Canada contains usage of the original languages of North America.

The most widely known aspect of Idle No More is the connection of the movement to people's idea of the land. Their connection to the land goes far beyond the connection discussed during the Oka crisis of 1990 (Alfred, 1998, 2005). During this crisis, it was the protection of the

burial site of the people's ancestors that was at the centre of the resistance (Obamaswin, 1993). During the Burnt Church crisis, the central contention of those acting in resistance was the Indigenous peoples' right to use the resources of the land and water as they traditionally did to sustain themselves (Coleman, 2009; Marshall, 1999; Obamaswin, 2000.). Conversely, INM discourses about the land and water encompass gender, spiritual laws, language, culture, environmentalism, ceremony, sovereignty, the political relationship with the Canadian government, and the relationship between Settlers and the Original people.

Overall, INM can be seen as a revitalization movement culturally, spiritually, and politically. It in some ways supports Pan Indigenism in the sense that there are shared expressions of Indigenous identity by those acting in the resistance. However, as Alfred (2005) explains in *Wasasé*, there is no amalgamated sense of Indigenous identity. Among the Indigenous people in North America, there are shared values. Yet this should not be mistaken as Indigenous people having a unified identity. Indigenous peoples' cultures, values, ceremonial cycle, political organization, and so on, varies greatly. With this in mind, INM has shown that they do share common concerns and goals to overcome the effects of colonization on North American people and the lands. Thus, although those acting in resistance may not agree on everything, they have followed in the footsteps of the leaders of the Original people in the United States (Mankiller, 1994). During the time that Wilma Mankiller was the principal Chief of the Western Cherokee Nation, leaders from the nations in the US decided to work together on the issues that they could agree on, while setting aside the matters they did not (Mankiller, 1994). According to Mankiller (1994), this allowed all Nations to make progress in improving the lives of their people in lieu of continuing to distract themselves by arguing over the issues that they could not agree on. Although, from watching an AFN meeting, it seemed to me that the *Indian*

Act Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) are continuing to argue amongst themselves on issues that they cannot agree on. From my perspective, those at the grassroots level are showing a tendency to focus on the issues that can be agreed upon.

Finally, as technology has advanced, so has people's ability to communicate with each other. Historically in Canada, the reserve system and residential schools were used to separate Indigenous people and limit their ability to communicate with each other (Laird Christie, personal communication). In today's technological environment, people that are separated from each other geographically can instantaneously communicate using smartphones and other internet sources of social media. This strategy was initially employed by the children of Attawapiskat to bring to public attention the educational conditions that they face when attempting to gain an education equal to mainstream students (McCrossin, 2012). Myeengun Henry, during our work together in this research, made it clear that "each generation holds knowledge that no other generation has". This means it is important, from the Original peoples' perspective, to listen to the youth in seeking knowledge of how to move forward when resisting governmental control and bridging the divide between the Original peoples and the Settler population. INM has followed the lead of the children of Attawapiskat and the youth involved in the movement by using social media to communicate, and thus it allowed the movement to quickly gain widespread support and involvement. Furthermore, according to my participants, this strategy has allowed for the building of relationships between both different Indigenous groups as well as between Settler and the Original peoples. By using social media, the people can make connections with each other and Settler peoples that they may have not been able to do before, and discussions can take place between people that colonizers have in the past been able to keep divided. But, most importantly, many of my participants believe that the people of INM

have been able to better control the narrative and subvert some of the outside attempts to define their resistance and what their message is. To be sure, according to Jan, this approach takes longer because it requires ongoing communication, the building of relationships that did not previously exist, and a collective re-imagining of the future by both the Original peoples and Settler allies.

This thesis argues that Idle No More (INM) in Canada represents an Indigenous resurgence that can be explained by the revitalization of Indigenous peoples' cultural practices, beliefs, and spiritual sense of responsibility to protect their lands, sovereignty, the right to live their lives without pressure to assimilate, and right to their own unique identity. They hope to accomplish the widespread recognition of Indigenous peoples' sovereign rights as a people, as well as the Original peoples' ability to regain their right to socially and politically determine their own existences without interference. This does not mean that they want to cease having a relationship with Settler peoples in Canada. However, their desire is to live together in a relationship of mutual respect and understanding of common concerns; recognition that each brings beneficial contributions that can improve the land that is shared by both groups. Finally, it is necessary to employ Indigenous theories and methodologies when conducting research with Indigenous people in order to more accurately understand their perspectives. This is not to say that mainstream theories cannot be useful in research. Rather, we must acknowledge that attempting to fit collected data on Indigenous peoples into current mainstream theories results in the continuation of misrepresenting Indigenous people and negatively impacts the mainstream population's understanding of how they act in the world.

Purpose of Study

This study was conducted for three important reasons. First, I had a desire to understand why INM appeared to be significantly different to me from other Indigenous resistance events that have taken place in recent history. For instance, from my perspective, there seems to be a shift in leadership that indicates a return to more traditional gender roles among those participating in INM. Additionally, there is an overall goal of decolonizing the everyday lives of the participants in this resistance. This is sociologically significant because those I have spoken to are challenging the social norms of Canadian society, to include: relationships between Indigenous peoples and Settlers, gendered roles and responsibilities, along with the right of individual groups to determine access to and control over education, access and use of resources, and the relationship between the government and First Nations peoples. Second, I wanted to conduct research with First Nations people involved in this resistance in order to gain their perspective on resistance in contemporary Canada. Because I was raised outside of Canada, my experiences have been vastly different from my participants that have lived under the Canadian colonial system, Thus, even though I have and continue to actively stand with my participants, my perceptions of their resistance actions may not reflect theirs. Third, I wanted to test the viability of the existing theory of revitalization movements in understanding modern Indigenous resistance ⁶(see Aberle, 1966; Bean, 1978; Brown, 2004; Carroll, 1975; Champagne, 1983; Kehoe, 1989; Klein, 2005; Lanternari, 1963; Orr, 2003; Pratt, 2005; Thorton, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1993; Twesigye, 2010; Volkes, 2007; Wallace, 1956; Willow, 2010; Worsley, 1968).

Since the time of global colonization, explorers and researchers have endeavoured to study and understand Indigenous people who live in the areas that Europeans sought to colonize

⁶ Revitalization theories in this study are to be understood under the rubric of Revitalization, Millennial, and Messianic movements.

(see Boas, 1911; Comte, 1844 (1856); Evans-Prichard, 1937, 1940; Malinowski 1913, 1922, 1923, 1926; Mauss, 1990 (1922); Morgan, 1877; Tyler, 1920). Although their reasons for seeking this knowledge may have varied, there was a universal problem at the core of how they sought to accomplish their goal. This problem resides in the fact that Europeans sought to understand those they saw as ‘primitive’ within a European perspective (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Holm et al, 2003; Smith, 2002). As a consequence, mainstream academic methods and theories have resulted in the production of knowledge that marginalizes the people within the researchers' gaze economically, culturally, spiritually, sociologically, and politically (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Alfred, 2005; Smith, 2002). For instance, early theories of social evolution informed the production of policies that justified the subjugation of people considered to be less evolved than those of European descent (see Dieckmann, 2007:37; Morgan, 1877; Thong, 2014:107-132; Tyler, 1920). Therefore, a primary goal in this research is to give voice and recognition to the participants for their knowledge and efforts in this collaborative project. In doing so, this research seeks to produce an ethnography that explains INM and those involved in a manner that gives priority to how the participants see themselves within this resistance.

Jean Becker expressed concern about academics conducting research on Indigenous people because she experienced firsthand how the researcher's perspective does not capture the worldviews of those within the research (personal communication). She comes from a community that hosted several Non-Indigenous researchers in her younger life. Each time the community read the resulting reports, articles, and ethnographic accounts of these researchers, the community could not recognize anything about themselves (Jean Becker, personal communication). Other individuals also expressed hesitation about being involved in research, again due to the fact that when reading the final articles, reports, etc. from these studies, they

also could not recognize themselves in the work. When research participants do not even recognize themselves in written accounts of their lives, what are we really learning about the people we are studying? Does this not tell us that there is something intrinsically wrong with how we are analyzing and understanding the data that we are collecting in the field? Although academics have brought these questions to light and challenged the use of outsider perspectives when studying those who do not share the same worldview, this, in my experience, still continues to be a concern for Indigenous peoples when participating in research projects (see Alfred, 2005; Chilisa, 2012:103; Kirby & McKenna, 1987; Smith, 2002).

Another goal of this research is to give credit to the knowledge holders for their contributions to this project. Often in the past when researchers conducted research with marginalized groups, the participants' knowledge has been taken by the researcher and presented as his/her own expertise in academic writings, presentations, and so on (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002). Admittedly in the past, researchers were bound by research methodologies that required them to maintain the standards of confidentiality and anonymity of their participants, which can contribute to the problem of casting outsider researchers as experts. However, it is my opinion that through the writing of their reports, researchers still could have given their participants credit for the knowledge that they contributed. In the case of this study, not all of my participants wanted their real names used in my reports yet I still reported my findings in a manner that credits my participants' contribution to the production of knowledge in my study. Thus, continuing to withhold credit to participants for their contribution to the production of knowledge further marginalizes Indigenous people and supports the paternalistic attitudes of Canada towards them (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002). Myeengun Henry, a core participant in this study, expressed surprise and appreciation upon discovering that the

knowledge he shared with me would be attributed to him in any of my writings or presentations covering this research project. While not every participant in this study wanted to be identified and given recognition for the knowledge that they provided, many did. By crediting the participants for their input and expertise in research, researchers can overcome past marginalizing practices and openly recognize these contributions and their impact on the production of knowledge in academia (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). In doing so, participants are shown as co-producers of knowledge, rather than as research subjects. This shift in thinking about those we conduct research with moves away from dehumanizing participants because they are no longer looked upon as something to be understood. Although there have been challenges to researchers wanting to conduct research within what is envisioned as their own cultural group, Indigenous researchers tend to occupy both insider and outsider positions in their field research (See Corbin & Buckle, 2009; Innis, 2009; Kanuha, 2000; Serrant-Green, 2002; Smith, 2002). This position as both insider and outsider will be discussed further later in this thesis. By changing our (researchers') relationships with those within our gaze, we create a relationship of mutual respect and understanding that works to highlight the value of the knowledge held by Indigenous people in a manner that shares cultural differences for the benefit of all involved in the research.

By conducting research in participation with those in the study, we as researchers learn to shed our own worldviews and gain insight into the ways of understanding the world held by those within this study. Thus, by conducting participatory research with those acting locally in the INM resistance, we will together produce a more comprehensive knowledge base on those involved in this study and understand their motivations and the meanings produced for them by their participation in the movement. Moreover, because my participants will also be reviewing

the written reports from this research, misrepresentation will be avoided as they will be able to clarify any misconceptions of their words and actions that I may develop. Furthermore, by employing mainstream theories of revitalization such as Volkes (2007) and Willow (2010), a collaborative research methodology (Kirby & McKenna, 1987; Smith, 2002), Alfred's theory of Indigenous resurgence set out in Wasasé (2005), and the Peoplehood Matrix (Holm et al., 2002), I will be able to bridge the existing gap in social science's understandings of Indigenous people and their resistance to colonization. Currently, there are several Indigenous academics⁷ working to produce knowledge that better understands Non-Western people and their cosmological understandings of the world (see Alfred, 1995, 2001, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Awekotuku & Maori, 1991; Bishop, 1996; Holm et al., 2003; Hall, 2003; Martin-Hill, 2013; Paul, 2006; Said, 1978, 1998; Spivak, 1998; Thomas, 1990; Trask, 1999). Unfortunately, because their works have challenged existing ideas of Indigenous people and how academia conducts research with them, these works have not been as influential in the production of knowledge as the authors had hoped they would be (see Alatas, 2003; Deloria, 1998; Lander, 2010; Mignolo, 1993; Shih, 2010; Smith, 2002; Smith, 2006; Summer, 2008; Warrior, 1992). It has been my experience that the majority of students exposed to their works are those enrolled in Indigenous or Native Studies courses. This lack of educational inclusion for Indigenous academics has led to a dearth in cross-cultural knowledge and understandings for all of academia. The result of this exclusion is the further marginalization of Indigenous peoples, both in and outside of academia. Historically, the works of academics have influenced governmental policies that have produced devastating results for Indigenous and colonized people (see King,

⁷ The term Indigenous Academic is to be understood as Non-White academics that are writing from the perspective or an academic Indigenous to the group they are speaking for or with. For example Awekotuku and Maori in their research and writings speak about the Maori people of New Zealand.

2012; Memmi, 1991; Morgan, 1887; Niezen, 2003; Paul, 2006; Said, 1978). For this reason, it is my intention to try to bridge mainstream theories and methodologies and Indigenous theories and methodologies to create a more accurate representation of those participating in what is understood as the INM resistance. It is my hope that by using this approach, my representations of those I have worked with will not suffer the same academic marginalization as many have in the past.

The Research Questions

My first question that I am seeking to answer is, what is it that those involved in INM are attempting to accomplish? From the INM origins as a small teach-in at Station 20 West in Saskatoon, this Indigenous resurgence grew almost instantaneously into a nationwide resistance. Despite the public outcry by those involved with INM, on December 12, 2012, the House of Commons passed Bill C-45. This Bill made changes in the *Indian Act* allowing the government to make decisions for bands concerning the sale and use of reserve lands for resource extraction, and also changed the environmental laws protecting the majority of the waterways in Canada (Parliament of Canada, 2012). The changes concerning the protection of Canada's waterways dissolved the *Navigable Waters Protection Act* and created the *Navigation Protection Act*. This shifted protections away from the environmental protection of the waterways to the protection of travel on or over the waterways in Canada (see Parliament of Canada, 2012). Furthermore, many may argue that INM continued because of Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike and eventually died out when she finished it. While it is true that the visible aspects of the resistance slowed considerably after Chief Spence ended her strike, this was because the use of large public acts of resistance slowed considerably, affecting the amount of media coverage the movement was getting as well. However, this in no way ended the everyday hard work of those involved.

Rather, strategies shifted to other forms of getting their message out. It is in these events that I discovered the complexity of what their messages are and the true goals of the movement.

With my second question, I investigate the usefulness of using mainstream theories and methodologies of investigation in understanding Indigenous people and their resistance. I will explore Wallace's theory of revitalization, which seeks to understand the resurgence⁸ of Indigenous spirituality and cultural identity as a form of resistance to colonial impositions on the lives of Indigenous people (Wallace, 1956). It is my assertion the mainstream theory of revitalization can prove useful to an extent in understanding Indigenous resurgences. However, this theory needs to be more flexible and accommodating to the uniqueness of the people in the study in order to more accurately gain an understanding of resistance within an Indigenous perspective. Similarly, while Willow (2010) acknowledged that the people of Grassy Narrows had a different definition of revitalization in her work, she struggled to rectify the gap between academic understandings of revitalization and Indigenous people's ways of envisioning it. Moreover, she did not explore the use of theories produced by First Nations and/or Native American scholars to assist in bridging this gap in understanding. In fact, she admits to her rootedness in anthropological theory and ways of understanding the world with this statement: "No matter how empathetic I try to be, no matter how hard I struggle to present the versions and visions of others, my descriptions of cultural revitalization will remain, by definition, anthropological in nature" (Willow, 2010:56). This statement shows the resistance in academia towards altering existing theories and practices of analysis even when the researcher acknowledges that there are disconnects in ways of understanding the data collected. By

⁸ Resurgence can be explained by the resistance acts of Indigenous people (in this case) that seek to re-establish and/or re-create cultural norms and traditions in an effort to ease social pressures on a group.

acknowledging these gaps in understanding the “Other” and continuing to practice research within an already established Western paradigm, we are continuing to support a system that marginalizes and forces assimilationist ideals upon those we are conducting research with (see Said, 1978; Tekin, 2010).

How Does this Research Add to the Discipline of Sociology?

While it could be argued that sociologists have studied Indigenous peoples since the early days of the discipline with Durkheim, the study of Indigenous peoples remained primarily within the discipline of Anthropology until recently. With the rise of globalization, transnationalism, shifting international power dynamics, and increased international migrations in the late 1970s and early 1980s, sociologists shifted their focus to include Indigenous peoples. Postmodernism also brought about a period of self-criticism for social scientists. During these criticisms, changes in research methodologies and theories were challenged and rethought. For this reason, Geertz (1973a&b) introduced the use of ‘thick descriptions’ in ethnographic writing styles. James Clifford (1986) brought to light that we all have our own personal biases that are socialized into our perceptions of our world, thus everything we write will be incomplete and merely a ‘partial truth’ of our observations. Methodologically, academics such as Kirby and McKenna (1989) began to gain better understandings of Indigenous peoples through our methodological choices. Due to the influences of the previously mentioned academics as well as many others, sociologists added qualitative methodologies and theoretical assumptions into their inquiries of those who are ‘othered’ in society. Even though this transition began over 30 years ago, it, from my observations, continues to be a work-in-progress. During my coursework when I began my graduate work, it was quickly evident that quantitative inquiries and methods continue to be favoured in the discipline, leading to misunderstandings in what methods are used in qualitative

research. For this reason, the inclusion of qualitative research with the Original people of Canada within the discipline of sociology continues to require academic self-critique and cross-discipline collaboration.

Within this department, we have an advantage because we have, to my knowledge, at least two staff members that are trained in anthropological theories and methodologies. Due to their extended involvement with this department, they are also well-versed in sociological theories and methodologies. This affords graduate students that want to conduct research with minority populations amazing resources to access in order to learn and blend theories and methodological choices when conducting our research. Unfortunately, there is also another resource that this institution has that is not used, which are the academics in the Anthropology department. I am not sure why these two departments do not work more closely together, as I would like to point out that this is not the case at other institutions. Anthropologists and Sociologists across North America are working together in increasing numbers and these collaborations have begun to shrink the methodological and theoretical gaps between the two disciplines (Hulm & Toye, 2006; Jacobs & Frickel, 2009; Leavy, 2014:726; Manthei & Isler, 2011).

Historically, it may have been taboo for a sociologist to study a social movement using revitalization theory. However, even with the Harper government's cut backs in funding sociological research, social scientists such as sociologists tend to be among the first hired to study the Original people in Canada (Haider, 2014). As such, we are morally and ethically obligated to avoid repeating the mistakes of past academics (see Lewis, 1998; Morgan, 1876; Spencer, 1860; Tyler, 1920; Weikart, 2004). Although one may argue that these harmful theories have been disproven decades ago, there is no denying that the effects of these theories continue

to have negative consequences for the people who were written about. An example of this is, the *Indian Act*, which was based on theories of social evolution, and continues to impact the Original people of Canada today (Whitt, 2011:206).

As sociologists, we investigate inequality and marginalization based on social class, ethnicity, race, gender, and ableism. Consequently, we must be forever cognizant of how our research can impact those within our gaze, especially when we misrepresent them. For this reason, this study creatively blends my knowledge of sociological, Indigenous and anthropological theories, methods, and practices in order to inspire a discussion on how to best conduct research with the Original people of Canada, with focus on assisting them in improving their outcomes politically, economically, physically, and spiritually.

This study adds to the production of knowledge within the social sciences in several ways. First, this has been a collaborative research project that has produced original research data that can be examined and compared to previous works on Indigenous resistance. Although generalized conclusions cannot be drawn from this study, it does support other authors such as Sylvia McAdam Saysewahum, (2013, 2015), The Kino-nda-niimi Collective (2014), Taiaiake Alfred (1995, 2001, 2005, & 2009), and Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel (2005) and their findings. By testing the use of established mainstream theories, my participants and I have provided evidence that questions the use of mainstream theories when trying to understand Indigenous peoples in academic research. It is our hope that by revealing the past harmful effects of misrepresentation that future academics will work collaboratively with any Indigenous peoples that they conduct research with: that they will provide participants with a voice to speak for themselves, and that researchers will give participants credit for their part in the production of knowledge.

Chapter 2

METHODS

This study employed a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach in order to give voice to those involved in the INM movement. PAR uses conventional qualitative research methodologies, such as participant observation, as well as semi-structured and open-ended interviews (Kirby & McKenna, 1999; Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Smith, 2002). However, PAR takes these methods a step further. The PAR research method requires a collaborative research design that takes into account what the participants want to discover through the research process (Kirby & McKenna, 1999). For this reason, PAR research not only benefits researchers in their desire to gain knowledge, but also provides benefits for the participants as well. This research was designed to give voice to the participants to tell their own stories of their involvement in INM so that they can be more accurately represented than they have been in the media. To date, mainstream media accounts of INM have focused on the people's desire to protect the resources in Canada, the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada, suggested potential for violent confrontations, and issues of First Nations sovereignty (See Annis, 2013; Baker, 2015; CBC, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c; CTV, 2013b, 2013c; Coppin & Brach, 2014; DePape, 2012; Denis, 2012; Donkin, 2013; Galloway & Moore, 2013; Globe & Mail, 2012; Hahn, 2013; Hoang, 2013; Ling, 2013, 2014; MacLellan, 2013; McMahan, 2013; National Post, 2013; Noik, 2013; Pedwell, 2013; Schartz, 2013; Shingler, 2014; Sinclair, 2014; Sunnewsvideo, 2013a, 2013b; Vowel, 2013; Wilson, 2014; Wingrove, 2013a, 2013b). John, a speaker in Ottawa who works for a national

media outlet, took some time to explain how stories are chosen and how people can improve their chances of having their stories covered by the media. His description gives insight into why only certain parts of a story get told. His explanation was that the media can only give so much time and/or space to a news story, thus the longest story should take no more than five minutes to tell or read (preferably less), and in that time frame you have to get your major points across. When considering spirituality, it is not possible to tell that part of a peoples' story in such a short time or within a highly limited word count. Thus outside of entire shows that go in depth about a certain topic, like CBC's *The 8th Fire*, media has difficulty providing in-depth details about any story. Furthermore, academic writings on INM focus on similar aspects of the movement to what the media is covering (see Dalisey, 2014:656-658; Singh, 2009; Tupper, 2015:46-52). There are, however, a few academics that write on the subject of contemporary Canadian Indigenous resistance that do expose the spiritual aspects of resistance for the Original peoples of Canada (See Alfred, 1999, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Coulthard & Alfred, 2014, Wortherspoon & Hanson, 2013). My goal is to increase knowledge production that will provide a more holistic understanding of the current resistance in Canada that is often referred to as Idle No More. Therefore, this project will add to the existing literature on Indigenous resistance by providing an emic point of view on INM.

In order to assist me in producing knowledge that provides a more accurate understanding of contemporary resistance of the Original peoples of Canada, I chose to use a participatory action research (PAR) approach in this study. PAR seeks to understand society while simultaneously attempting to promote changes in it (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). This methodology is based on the principle that research should be conducted with people rather than

on or for them (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002). Therefore, it recognizes human agency by placing the participants in an active collaborative position with the researcher.

PAR is a collaborative process between researcher and participants. Therefore, the foundation of this relationship will be a shared understanding of the research goals and objectives (TCPS, 2010). By taking this approach with my participants, I am able to give them credit for the knowledge that they shared with me. This has allowed me to collaboratively produce knowledge with them that has historically been overlooked and undervalued in academic research (see Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Smith, 2002). By employing this methodology when studying INM, the data will increase knowledge about Indigenous collective actions through the process of revealing the participants' perspectives and understandings of their own lived experiences.

The data collection methods in this study varied according to the events that took place during my field research. My initial research included accessing publically available documents, such as media reports, information shared on social media, literature produced by those involved in INM, videos and images shared by INM participants on the internet, and listening to online INM town hall meetings. By accessing videos and documents produced by those involved in the movement, I was better able to understand how they share their reality with the outside world without overly intruding on their daily activities (Creswell, 2009:180).

However, in order to achieve the collection of data that would provide an in-depth comprehensive understanding of the meanings and motives of those involved in INM, I conducted field research that included participant observation and in-depth interviews with my participants. Furthermore, due to the nature of Indigenous resistance, the field for this study was

multi-sited. Although INM is a worldwide phenomenon⁹, the field in this study was limited to Ontario, Canada for the purpose of obtaining localized understandings of the resistance. Thus, conducting research in British Columbia or other locations in Canada would not assist in answering how meaning is produced for local participants.

The primary participants¹⁰ in this research included those involved in organizing resistance events such as teach-ins, flash mob¹¹ round dances, hunger strikes, and other public rallies. The ages (18 years and older), socio-economic backgrounds¹², and ethnic identities of those participating varied. However, my primary research participants are either status or non-status First Nations or Métis¹³. I actively sought to include people that represented various age groups and all genders in this study. It was my experience when I was in the field that more

⁹ INM is a grassroots movement by Indigenous peoples around the world that had its beginnings in Canada. The movement's manifesto is available at idlenomore.ca, where it is made clear that due to its grassroots nature, the movement can vary from standing in solidarity with each other to actively participating in resistance with each other. For instance, the Keystone pipeline runs through both Canada and the United States, so those acting in resistance to this pipeline are working together to stop the pipeline. On the other hand, there are solidarity events by allies whose participation may be only to show their support of Indigenous peoples and their causes. Among Indigenous people, their participation could very easily alternate between both solidarity and active participation. However, the parameters of this study are not to answer the question of solidarity, or active participation for worldwide events or even all events in Ontario. The scope of this study is only to answer the questions raised from the perspective of the people participating in this study.

¹⁰ There were two primary participants in this study. They are defined as such because we had the most interaction during my time in the field. This was due to the fact that they live in the same area as I do and have assisted me in meeting participants that lived in areas such as Ottawa and Toronto.

¹¹ Flash Mobs are understood in this study as round dances preformed at various locations, but primarily in shopping malls. During these events, those participating would quickly speak about what Idle No More was about, then drummers would play a few songs and other participants would dance the round dance, at time asking observers to join in the dance, and then finally spending some time talking with observers. The entire flash mob would last between 15- 30 minutes.

¹² Socio-economic class was determined in conversations about participants' education level and/or what jobs they have or had in their lives. This information was not sought out through standardized structured or semi-structured interview questions. For this reason, I cannot speak to each participant's socio-economic or educational background, nor which First Nation or Métis community the participants were affiliated with. The only question that was specifically asked was if the participant identified themselves as an Original person to Turtle Island. Since this study was a qualitative study, I was not seeking to produce quantitative data, and thus I did not ask such questions of my participants.

¹³ To my knowledge, none of my participants are Inuit. The sampling methods used made recruitment of anyone possible, but could not guarantee that a representative from every First Nation band would be participants in this study in the same way that the possibility of recruiting an Inuit person was not assured.

women than men were willing to participate in this study. This may have been due to the traditional roles of women and their responsibility to protect the water, which will be discussed at length later in this thesis.

Participant observation was primarily used during organizing meetings and public resistance actions¹⁴¹⁵. While attending organizational meetings I was never in a leadership position, however, I did assist in distributing information about upcoming events by sharing calls to action over social media. When interviewing participants, I employed semi-structured and open-ended interviews. The goal of open-ended interviews is to allow the participants to candidly express what is important to them, rather than adhering to the rigid closed and fixed responses of a structured interview (Sewell, 2013). This style of discussion also allowed those participating in the study to be able to share their perspective more freely than they would have in more formal closed-ended interviews.

Before conducting an interview, I obtained informed consent from my participants. I would first share an information sheet with prospective participants so that each participant would be clear on what he or she was consenting to. I also allowed each participant the opportunity to ask any questions or address any concerns that he/she may have. Once these conditions were satisfied, I would ask the participant to sign a consent form which allowed the participant to agree to or opt out of any interviews being recorded, and also decide if they wanted any information shared to be attributed directly to him/her or be reported anonymously. On two occasions, I was unable to obtain a signature. With one, I was able to get consent by email and

¹⁴ A public resistance event could range from rallies, flash mob round dances, teach-ins, candlelight vigils, hunger strikes, and workshops.

¹⁵ My time in the field lasted about 16 months.

the other was oral consent. Each of these participants are academics and are familiar with the implications of consenting to participating in research projects.

I conducted interviews with 28 participants and also recorded public speakers at resistance events. Most interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy. All recordings were kept on my laptop in an encrypted file until they could be transcribed. Once the recording was transcribed, the transcripts remained on my laptop in an encrypted file to ensure the security of the information. In some cases, I found that my participants became uneasy knowing they were being recorded. In these situations, I took field notes, and as soon as possible, transcribed as much information as I could remember. In all cases, I shared the transcripts and field notes with the participants to ensure their accuracy and allow for any changes or additions to be made. I also reviewed the transcripts to see if what my participants shared did not bring up any more questions on my part. On several occasions, I would follow up with my participants by asking for clarification or more in-depth information. I also used transcribed tapes of speakers at teach-ins and/or public rallies. This material was used both as data and as a source in interviews to gather more in-depth information about the topics that were brought up.

Participant observation was used extensively in this study. While this methodological choice can compromise the data collection process due to the researcher effect, this effect was minimized because of my ongoing relationship with my primary participants¹⁶ (Ferrara &

¹⁶ The local community is an urban community, thus when I refer to it I am discussing Indigenous people that live, work, attend school, and/or participate regularly in community activities. The people in this community represent a variety of Nations and Métis people that are both status and non-status. Because people in this community come from different traditions, teachings, and experiences, there is a palpable lack of cohesion among community members. This lack of cohesive unity in the local community, from what I have been told, has been a local reality since before my arrival in the area in 2007. While there are tensions in the community, this does not prevent people from coming together to accomplish important goals. It is also important to note that there are Indigenous people living in the region that are not actively involved in the community. Thus, when I claim that I am a member in the community, this indicates that I am known to people that are actively involved in the community, and at the beginning of this study I did consider myself to be equally integrated with the majority of people in the community.

Andreatta, 2010:108). I am a member of the local Indigenous community, therefore my presence in the field was not abnormal to my participants. This relationship also provided me with connections to those outside of the local community and assisted me in gaining access and trust among those in locations outside of the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

The sampling in this study combined judgement, convenience, and snowball sampling. Judgement sampling is a form of convenience sampling that seeks out participants that fit specific requirements for the study (Marshall, 1996:523). It was necessary to include participants in this research that were organizers of local INM events¹⁷. For this reason, judgement sampling was the most appropriate to use when recruiting participants. Other participants were recruited through snowball and convenience sampling. This method was especially useful because the target recruits are members of a difficult-to-access population¹⁸ (Blankenship, 2010:88). The benefit of using a snowball sampling method is that it allows for easier access to research participants who may need some degree of trust before consenting to becoming part of a study (Shaghaghi et al., 2011:89). Due to the history of misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in research, many Indigenous people feel that they cannot trust researchers to accurately represent them in their research (Becker, 2014, personal communication; see Smith, 2002). For this reason, using snowball sampling assisted me in building a rapport with participants in the community that I did not personally know.

Events that occurred towards the end of my study did create a distance between myself and some community members. However, at that time I was not actively seeking people to participate in my study.

¹⁷ “Local INM events” refers to the Waterloo Region of Ontario

¹⁸ When I refer to the participants as a difficult-to-access population, my point was that if I did not have connections with people that could introduce me to potential participants. Therefore, I may have had more difficulty recruiting participants because I would not have someone to vouch for me with people I did not know.

Outside of the local area, I also used convenience sampling when I did not have any local connections to those involved in INM. In these cases, I approached participants at events and asked them to participate in my research. The individuals I would approach varied between those who spoke and others that were in the audience. I tended to approach audience members more often because speakers were usually less accessible after they spoke¹⁹²⁰. This sampling method proved to be the most challenging due to the distrust many members of Indigenous communities have with researchers. Still, I was able to slowly build trust with some participants due to my casual conversations with them while in the field. By using this sampling method, I was able to gain access to a wider group of participants. These participants encompassed people ranging in age from young adults to community elders, and included individuals of different genders, educational backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. By choosing a broad cross-section of people to interview, I was able to reduce bias in the data collected (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009:151).

It is important to note that the sample used in this study is not representative of the wider population of those involved in INM resistance due to the techniques employed. However, this study was conducted to gain in-depth knowledge of the actors' understanding of the goals and meanings of their resistance in the region of Southern Ontario. Due to the fact that INM is an international phenomenon, it likely would be impossible to gain any generalizable understanding of the motivations and meanings of those involved in the movement. It is my belief that conducting a quantitative study to add a wider range of perspectives is possible, but it would

¹⁹ Typically speakers would be surrounded by audience members, so approaching them to participate was hindered as they were preoccupied.

²⁰ Because my goal in this research was to acquire the perspectives of the grassroots individuals, I did not include those who might be considered high-profile leaders in the movement as participants.

likely not produce the in-depth understanding of the people living in Southern Ontario that I am looking to understand. Moreover, it is not necessary to have a random sample of all movement participants for this study, as the research is designed as an exploratory study to reveal the experiences of people acting in the Southern Ontario region. As such, it is not meant to produce generalizable data. Rather, it is merely intended to add to the existing literature and gain insight into the generalizability of existing theories of Indigenous resistance²¹.

Participants in this study were given the right to decide if their contributions remained anonymous or if they would be identified by name for all of their contributions. This is a common practice in collaborative research as it gives those involved in the research credit for their knowledge (see Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Smith, 2002; TCPS, 2010, Chapter 9). Historically, Indigenous people have been spoken about and for by researchers (Minh-Ha, 1982, 1995; Smith, 2002). This has silenced their voices and overlooked their contributions to the production of knowledge (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Minh-Ha, 1982, 1995; Smith, 2002). One of the reasons that people are involved in INM is to gain a voice in determining outcomes in Canada for Indigenous people. Therefore, it was important for me to give participants credit for their knowledge and agency within my research (TCPS, 2010, Chapter 9).

Challenges in the Field

As a novice researcher, I experienced many learning opportunities when conducting my research. I will admit that there were occasions where I just wanted to kick myself as I knew not

²¹ When I refer to people in this study as being of different ethnicities, my reference refers to the different Indigenous people that were involved in the resistance events that I attended and participated in throughout this study. Thus it is important to understand that Indigenous people do not encompass one ethnicity.

to do some of the things that I did. Before entering the field in the summer of 2013, I had taken four methodology courses and read countless books and articles that all covered the mistakes that I was guilty of making. Before conducting my first interview, I had practiced mock interviews on many occasions. I had even read accounts by experienced researchers about their own experiences and mistakes in the field. Yet I still fell into the trap of thinking that I was fully prepared to conduct my field research without any problems. However, after committing a couple of faux pas, I stopped beating myself up and took them as learning opportunities.

My first lesson in the field revealed to me that no matter how prepared you may think that you are for conducting interviews, there is a large gap between theory and practice when it comes to interviewing techniques. One of my first interviews happened to be with an individual that had prior experience participating in research interviews. We chose to conduct the interview after a rally in Toronto. During this interview, I started with a list of semi-structured questions. Initially, everything seemed to be going fine; I was asking questions, she was answering, and so on. About half way through my list of questions, I noticed that she did not seem to appreciate some of the questions that I was posing. Initially she started shifting in the seat that she was sitting in, her answers started to get shorter, and she was making less eye contact with me. From her responses, I gathered that maybe the question would be problematic for my research. So when she paused, I asked a probing question. At this point, she informed me that I needed to slow down and allow her to answer my original question, and that she had only paused to consider how to move forward with her answer. Her voice was more forceful than I was accustomed to from an individual that I did not personally know. For this reason, I wanted to crawl away as quickly as possible. However, I did continue the interview after apologizing for not allowing her the time she needed to answer my previous question before moving on. After

that incident, I was always quite conscious of allowing more time when people paused before asking anything else. By learning to use pauses to my advantage, I was able to gain more in-depth responses from subsequent interviews.

My second lesson dealt with my interview style. In this case, I fell into a pattern of sharing a personal experience that I thought was related to what my participant was sharing to ensure that I was understanding their point accurately. In most cases, this proved to be a good strategy because if what I shared was unrelated, the participant would tell me so and further clarify their response. Several participants even mentioned that they enjoyed getting to know some things about me as it made sharing their personal stories more comfortable. Yet, there was an occasion that this strategy of clarifying information blew up in my face. In this case, my participant explained to me that the interview was not about me, it was about her. When she stated this, I quickly switched my style to one that was more professional, and then continued the interview.

The most challenging experience in conducting my fieldwork and discovering what was important to my participants rested in how my research was originally constructed. My original desire was to conduct my research with a grounded theory approach. This theory is based on allowing the data to develop the theory used in your research (see Charmaz, 2000, 2006, 2008, 2009; James, 2012; Martin & Turner, 1986). Using this approach also allows the researcher to change focus if the data suggests something in the field is more important. During the proposal phase of my research, although I wanted to use a grounded theory approach, I was directed to come up with research questions and a theoretical framework. These questions and the social movement theories that I was instructed to use are framed within a western understanding of research methods and theoretical conceptualizations of the world. However, in my research, it

quickly became apparent that understanding spiritual laws and ceremony were the driving force behind my participants' resistance. Therefore, without focusing on the spirituality of INM, none of my questions could have been accurately answered. However, when I would bring this important detail up, I was being steered away from looking at the spirituality of my participants by my advisor. After several months of being in the field and collecting data that would not fit into any existing mainstream sociological theory of social movements, I finally convinced my then advisor to allow me to use the peoplehood matrix (which I will discuss at length later in this thesis) to analyze the data I collected (see Holm et al., 2002; Alfred & Cornassel, 2005). Eventually this caused so much inner turmoil that I wanted to quit doing my research altogether. This was due to the fact that I felt that I would not be able to accurately represent the true concerns and motivations of my participants if I omitted this aspect of what they were telling me. Ultimately, if I had continued as I was being directed to by my advisor at the time, the resulting thesis would have misrepresented my participants. As such, I would have been committing the same academic misrepresentation that I was working against.

Researcher's Role

*Postmodernism emphasizes the importance of understanding researcher's context (gender, class, ethnicity, etc.) as part of narrative interpretation.
Angrosino 2005*

In any social science investigation, the role of the researcher impacts the data collection and the analysis of said data. Ethnographic research, due to the long-term relationship between the researcher and the participants, creates a more involved positioning of the researcher and his/her role in the research. For this reason, determining the researcher's role before entering the field, during the collection of data, and during the analysis of the data is more blurred than it is in other types of qualitative studies. The blurring is caused because as a researcher spends more and

more time in the field their role as insider and/or outside can shift. For instance, a researcher may enter the field as an outsider to the group within his/her gaze, but as time goes by, the researcher may begin to be seen by the research participants as an insider to the group. Therefore, it is ever more important for the researcher to be reflective when reporting his/her data so that potential biases can be revealed and readers of any report can determine for themselves how the conclusions of the study may have been impacted (Bryman & Teevan, 2005:18). This being said, how the researcher is positioned in relation to his/her participants can aid or hinder the research process.

As an insider to a part of the community under investigation, I was assisted in gaining access to the field due to the fact that I was already known by my participants. Indigenous communities are currently cautious when considering if they are going to work with a potential research project (TCPS, 2010, Article 19). In the past, Indigenous people have experienced misrepresentation in research that has greatly impacted them in negative ways. For this reason, many feel more comfortable working with researchers that share similar values and cultural understandings of the situations that they live with on a daily basis. Kanuha (2000:444) points out that although there are many ways being an insider researcher can increase and heighten the researcher's understanding of his/her participants in ways that may not be accessible to 'Non-Native' researchers, questions of objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity are raised. This is because it can be argued that the researcher may be too close to his/her participants and the project, that she knows too much, or that she may be too similar to those being studied (Kanuha, 2000:444). For this reason, Asselin (2003) advises researchers to keep their eyes open when collecting data by assuming that she knows nothing of the questions asked in the study. An additional concern researchers must take into account is that each culture has subcultures, thus

the researcher may not be aware of subtle differences in ways of seeing the world (Corbin & Buckle, 2009:55).

Conversely, Adler and Adler (1987) posit that researchers that are members of the culture under investigation gain legitimacy amongst potential participants. Corbin and Buckle (2009:58) state that when a researcher is an insider to the group, participants are typically more open with him/her, thus the data has more depth. When conducting research with Indigenous people, being an insider in many cases provides a level of trust and openness between the researcher and the participants that may not have been present otherwise (Corbin & Buckle, 2009:58). By having a starting point with participants, the researcher can more easily gain access to the field, and the participants may feel that the researcher will have the ability to better understand the feelings, concerns, and distinct realities of their participants.

Although in the early research process having an insider status can be beneficial, as the study progresses this position has the potential to hinder data collection. This status can lead to the assumption by participants that the researcher knows, understands, and shares the same experiences with his/her participants when this may not be the case. For this reason, Corbin and Buckle (2009) argue that as qualitative researchers, we are never truly an insider or outsider to the group within our gaze. As researchers we actually occupy both positions, and what is most important is our ability to be “open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one’s research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience” (Corbin & Buckle, 2009:59).

When conducting research, we must be reflective and take into consideration our relationships with our participants’. Glesne (1999) points out that there is a multitude of relationships a researcher can have when conducting qualitative research, thus it is important to

not hide ourselves behind the guise of distancing ourselves from our research. Fay (1996) claims that to consider ourselves to be an insider or outsider in our research, we must reference ourselves to other persons. Qualitative research requires us to develop an intimate connection with our participants, and for this reason, we are no longer true outsiders or insiders. Therefore, we as researchers occupy a space somewhere in between the two positions (Corbin & Buckle, 2009:61). This is due to the fact that no two individuals view the world and their actions within it in the exact same way.

While being an insider to my research participants, I do recognize that my participants come from various cultural backgrounds. For this reason, I am also an outsider because I do not necessarily share the same worldview of events. However, my Indigenous background and worldview does afford me an insight into the various understandings of Indigenous people in relation to their actions, beliefs, and experiences. Corbin and Buckle (2009:61) point out that although Indigenous researchers have faced critiques from “White” colleagues of bias in their research, “White” professionals do not face the same criticism when researching “white” or minority populations. In order to remove any potential bias, many feminist researchers advocate for a participatory model of research to remove bias, manipulation, and hierarchical separation in research (Corbin & Buckle, 2009:62). This structure also aides in removing bias and misinterpretation of the data because participants review reports and can make changes to clarify the meanings of data collected.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AS REVITALIZATIONS

Indigenous Revitalization Past, Present, and Future

Sociologists that study the sociology of religion when looking at Indigenous social movements have looked at these movements within the context of revitalization theory (see Aberle, 1955, 1962, 1966; Carroll, 1975; Nash, 1955, Volkes, 2007; Thurman, 1984; Thorton, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1993; Wallace, 1956, 1966, 1969, 1970, 1972, 2003; White, 2009; Willow, 2010; Worsley, 1968). These revitalization movements have been given various names or categories, such as millennial movements and aurora movements, but they still reflect and resemble Wallace's notion of a Revitalization Movement (see Lindholm & Zuquete, 2010; Worsley, 1968). In order to better conceptualize and understand current theories that focus on Indigenous forms of resistance, I will now turn focus to Wallace's theory of revitalization movements, and then the critiques and adjustments made to Wallace's theory by scholars that have used his theory in their research.

History of Theory

Resistance, resurgence, and revitalization are not new phenomenon among Indigenous peoples. This is because throughout the period of colonization, Indigenous people around the world have resisted their domination by colonizing forces. Although Indigenous groups did choose to adopt some European cultural goods and practices, I could find no evidence to support

that any Indigenous group chose to acculturate some European practices for the purpose of assimilation.

As an act of resistance, Indigenous peoples may choose to hold onto and/or rejuvenate their cultural traditions. Academics have envisioned these actions as revitalization movements, and have thereby made attempts to explain them (see Aberle, 1959, 1962, 1966; Barber, 1941; Carroll, 1975; Champagne, 1983; Jorgensen, 1972; Lanternari, 1963; Thornton, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1993; Wallace, 1956, 1972; Worsley, 1957). In North America, particular attention has been focused on Indigenous movements such as the Ghost Dance movement and the Handsome Lake movement (see Aberle, 1959; Bean & Vane, 1978; Hittman, 1973; Kehoe, 1989; Kroeber, 1904; Lesser, 1933; Nash, 1955[1937]; Spiers, 1935; Suttles, 1957; Thornton, 1986, 1993; Thurman, 1984). Moreover, explanations for these forms of resistance have focused on various types of deprivations, the stresses of colonization, loss of land, and the assimilationist policies and practices, such as residential schools (see Aberle, 1962; Barber, 1941; Hittman, 1973; Kehoe, 1989:103-111; Kroeber, 1904; Lanternari, 1963; Lesser, 1933; Thornton, 1986, 1993:361-362). While these historical theoretical models of investigating Indigenous acts of resistance and revitalization do give us insight into these movements, they do seem to lack the Indigenous actors' perspective of their own actions.

In 1956, Wallace published his first article that outlined what a revitalization movement was. This looked at how social stressors influence individuals and groups to alter their situations in order to relieve these stressors, thereby revitalizing their culture and changing their sociological circumstances (Wallace, 1956). Wallace (1956:265) argues that a revitalization movement is a “deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a

more satisfying culture”. In his description of how these movements occur, he provides a five-stage outline of a movement.

The first stage is understood as a period of generally satisfactory adaptation (Wallace, 1956). During this stage, although there are stressors, they do not rise to the level that overwhelms the group’s ability to adapt to the social and natural environment. The second stage reflects a period of increased stress experienced by a number of individuals within the group. During this stage, individuals may make attempts to initiate changes in order to better cope with their situations. However, these changes would be insignificant overall. The third stage is described by Wallace as a period of cultural distortion. In this stage, the changes in the group’s social or natural environment is intense enough to cause both individual and communal stress that begins to breakdown the social coping mechanisms (Wallace, 1956). Wallace (1956:269) says this breakdown can be determined by a significant increase in incidences of negative coping mechanisms, such as: extreme depression and passivity, substance abuse, and other mental health problems (see Willow, 2010:46). It is in this stage, according to Wallace (1956:269-270), that fractures develop between those who seek to change the existing status quo and those who do not, leading to group disharmony (see Orr, 2003:898). Those seeking change in turn tend to be labelled as problematic. The fourth stage of a revitalization movement is the period of revitalization. It is during this stage that the status quo is reformulated, communicated, and adapted to meet the needs of the group (Wallace, 1956:270-273). Moreover, the maze transformation becomes routinized, making the reformulation the standard cultural pattern for the group. Finally, the fifth stage of the movement once again reflects the first stage, where group adaptation to the new status quo is realized (Wallace, 1956).

Later academics have offered some critiques and alterations to Wallace's initial theory. For instance, Willow (2010) and Vokes (2007) argue that Wallace's model is premised on the outdated notion of cultures being bounded, static and ahistorical, limiting his argument and how he outlines what a revitalization movement is. Willow (2010:47) asserts that Western and non-Western societies are not "categorically different," and as such, "all societies incorporate elements of both tradition and modernity, both rootedness and mobility". By making this claim, she resolves the problematic notion of cultures as being bounded, static, and ahistorical. Willow (2010) exposes that changes in the cultural structures of a group do not indicate the death of a culture. Rather, they support the idea that cultures are dynamic entities that make adaptive adjustments in how a group interacts both within the group and with those outside of the group.

It is true that many people envision revitalization movements as primarily being the revitalization of religious beliefs in order to ensure the continuation of a culture. However, Wallace explains that there are both religious and secular paths to revitalization (Wallace, 1956). However, he clarified this by stating that "No revitalization movement can, by definition, be truly secular, but some can be relatively less religious than others, and movements can change in emphasis depending on changing circumstances" (Wallace, 1956:277). We can see these changes in the Idle No More movement, as it started with emphasis being placed on the passing of Bill C-45, and it then shifted to other Indigenous concerns, such as the missing and murdered women²², and Indigenous education (Kino-nda-niimi, 2014). Therefore, in this case, on the surface it would seem that the main focus of those involved in this resistance is political.

²² The missing and murdered women referred to here are the Indigenous women in Canada that have gone missing or have been murdered since the 1980. According to Amnesty International, Canada's Indigenous women go missing under suspicious circumstances or are murdered at a 4.5% higher rate than the rest of the Canadian population (AI, 2014).

However, throughout the movement, there have always been underlying themes of cultural revitalization and a return to the spiritual teachings handed down by the ancestors.

It is Wallace's emphasis being placed on the single individual (usually a charismatic leader) that creates problems with studying INM as a revitalization movement. A charismatic leader is, according to Weber, an individual that often arises during time of social crisis, and whose power is "legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities or the demonstration of extraordinary insight and accomplishment, which inspire loyalty and obedience from followers" (Kendall et al., 2000:438-439; Morrison, 2006:367). INM is a grassroots movement that began with a teach-in at Station 20 West in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and for this reason, it does not have one stand-alone charismatic leader (Kino-nda-niimi, 2014:21).

Wallace and most other researchers that have conducted studies on revitalization movements claimed that the status quo adjustment typically occurs to a single (often charismatic) person, who then becomes the leader of the movement (see Aberle, 1959, 1962, 1966; Brown, 2004; Carroll, 1975; Champagne, 1983; Harkin, 2004; Hittman, 1973; Jorgensen, 1982; Kehoe, 1989; Lanternari, 1963; Nash, 1955[1937]; Orr, 2003; Pratt, 2005; Schmidt, 2012; Suttles, 1957; Thornton, 1981, 1982; Thurman, 1984; Vokes, 2007; Wallace, 1956, 1966, 1969, 1970; Willow, 2012). However, as in the case of Idle No More, there is no one person that can be identified as that prophetic leader²³. I am sure that some people may argue that the four women that conducted the teach-in at Station 20 West were and continue to be the leaders of INM. While these women are leaders within and outside of their communities who fully support INM and are

²³ A Prophetic leader is a specific type of Charismatic leader whose authority derives from a prophetic dream or vision that has provided the leader with instructions on what needs to change in order to relieve the stress being experienced by the group.

important figures in the movement, they do not fulfill the role of charismatic leaders, nor do they seek to.

Searching for Meaning

Social movements have impacts and meanings to those involved in them. These meanings influence both the movement's ability to gain support from outsiders, and the participants' motivation to remain active in them. Wallace (1956) tells us that when the sustainability of a culture is threatened, those within it will act to revitalize it. These movements reinforce participants' sense of identity culturally, politically, and spiritually. However, Wallace's theory of revitalization does not attend to the specific meanings that are produced in any one given movement. By studying each movement individually, we can gain an understanding of the reasons that people are acting in resistance, what their goals are, how the movement creates a sustainable cultural identity separate from other cultures, and how this will meet the needs of the social group and the individuals within it.

Wallace's primary focus in his study of revitalization was the Handsome Lake movement. This movement began with a Seneca man by the name of Handsome Lake when he and his people experienced several cultural, environmental, and political stresses (Wallace, 1956). Like many of his contemporaries, Handsome Lake turned to negative stress-relieving coping mechanisms, such as gambling and alcohol. It was not until it seemed that Handsome Lake was on his deathbed in the spring of 1799, that he had a series of prophetic dreams or visions which directed him on what he and his people needed to do to in order to survive (Wallace, 1969, 1972). This dream instructed Handsome Lake that if he and his people chose not to follow these steps, then they would surely die out (Wallace, 1969, 1972). Handsome Lake, through his visions, was given a moral code called Gaihiwiyo (Good Word) which eventually

came to be known as The Code of Handsome Lake (Wallace, 1969, 1972). The code outlawed alcohol, sexual promiscuity, quarrelling, the abuse of women, and witchcraft (see Wallace, 1969, 1972). The code of Handsome Lake was a successful revitalization because it blended Euro-Christian values with Iroquoian traditions, thus allowing the Iroquois to keep their own unique identity (Wallace, 1969, 1972). It also adopted enough of the colonizers values that it was not threatening to the colonizers, as evidenced in a correspondence written to Handsome Lake by then President Thomas Jefferson endorsing Handsome Lake's Code. Wallace's study showed that not all revitalization movements seek to restore the traditional ways of the people involved, at least not entirely as the Seneca's adopted some of the Colonizers' values into their culture. Yet the central theme is that there was a single figure that led the movement, and that person was given instructions through a prophetic dream or vision.

Wallace never claimed that a revitalization movement must arise from a single leader or be completely religious in nature. Still, using his model as he first formulated it can make fitting INM into his theory of revitalization difficult. First, there is no charismatic leader, or even a clearly defined leader. Second, the movement did not begin because of a prophetic dream or vision. While it can be claimed that the teach-in at Station 20 West was the start of the movement, it could also be argued that it was not. However, from that teach-in, a new wave of resistance arose that created a phenomenon of Indigenous resurgence that is uniquely different from Canadian Indigenous resistance activities in the previous 30 years. Third, INM is an ongoing resistance. This is unique in the sense that in North America, Indigenous revitalization movements for the most part have been studied historically and separated from other acts of resistance. Staying with Wallace's original model is problematic as there is no way to show all

five stages from the first period of relative group satisfaction to a new period of group satisfaction.

Reframing Indigenous Revitalization: Defining Contemporary Indigenous Revitalization Movements

To reframe Wallace's conceptualization of a revitalization theory to fit in with Indigenous lived experiences, changes must be made to allow for an understanding of revitalizations in the context of Indigenous perspectives. Linton (1943:230) argued that revitalization movements "occur when cultures come in contact with other cultures," thereby producing threats to one group's cultural practices. In the previously discussed definition of Wallace's theory, focus was placed on the conscious efforts of actors to change the conditions imposed on them by outsiders. Furthermore, Wallace made it clear that all revitalizations must contain a spiritual aspect to them at some level (Wallace, 1956). However, in all early studies, the researchers conducting these studies belong solely to an outside group, creating an imbalance of information. To be sure, revitalizations do not occur in a vacuum. The Ghost Dance was envisioned by the colonizers as a violent movement resulting in the massacre at Wounded Knee (see Hittman, 1973; Kehoe, 1989; Korober, 1904; Lesser, 1933; Thornton, 1993, 1986, 1982, 1981). Cargo cult movements were also likely seen much differently by insiders to the movement than by outsiders. These outsider accounts and notions of the practices, thoughts, and motivations of 'others' in their efforts to revitalize their cultures, traditions, and beliefs, creates exoticized and romanticized notions of revitalization movements. In a worst case scenario, people involved in these movements can be seen as violent or militaristic (see White, 2009). For this reason, Jennifer Brown warns against continuing the practice of studying Indigenous movements under the contemporary rubric of the theory as it divorces the actions being taken

from the “dynamic historical and cultural processes....before, during, and after the rise” of the movement" (Brown, 2004:122).

Therefore, this theory must include post-colonial notions of how colonialism has disturbed Indigenous cultures, contributing to the frequency and increasing geographical distribution of revitalization movements (see Alfred 1995, 2001, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Hall, 2002; Holm et al., 2003; Said, 1978, 1998; Smith, 2002). It must also be recognized how technological innovations have influenced movements, allowing them to spread more rapidly and become more widespread than ever before (Kino-nda-niimi, 2014:25). These advances have provided the means and opportunity for movements to remain outside of the control and influence of those in political power. Consequently, the messages of those within the movement are now able to reach more people, clearing the way for actors to communicate to others their ideas of what needs to be changed and plan how it may occur. This lessens the ability of outsiders to frame the actors from a perspective other than their own. As such, it is imperative that researchers work more diligently to understand and represent Indigenous resistances from the perspective of those involved in these movements.

Studying Revitalization Movements as they are Taking Place

In order to gain the perspective of those acting during periods of revitalization, it is important to study the movements as they are taking place. This allows the researcher the opportunity to collect data firsthand, reducing the potential of bias. To be sure, every researcher enters the field with their own personal biases (Bryman & Teevan, 2005:16-18). However, the researcher can critically examine and report their personal biases, thus providing readers with the ability to grasp how the researcher's personal experiences and background impact her

interpretation of data collected. While this strategy does not completely eliminate bias and ethnocentrism, it does expose them.

Conducting research on revitalizations as they are occurring allows for the voices of those involved to be reported and understood within their perspective. By using a collaborative research design, participants can explain for themselves their motivations for acting (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 1999). It also allows them to reveal the meanings of their motivations and actions from their point of view. In the case of this research, giving the people involved the power to voice their own views of their actions brought about a more comprehensive understanding of how they saw their actions, why they chose the strategies they did, and what these actions and strategies meant to them. The result has been developing an understanding of INM that is exponentially more comprehensive than what has been reported about it in the early days of the movement. To be sure, Wotherspoon and Hanson began to scratch the surface of the meanings of the movement. However, their account limited itself to the social exclusion experienced by First Nations people (Wotherspoon & Hanson, 2013).

In order to study revitalizations as they are occurring, we have to recognize the challenges that researchers will face in their attempts to accomplish this goal. Wallace's (1956) five stage model of revitalization will have to be rethought because once the fifth stage is realized, the movement will have ended. Therefore, it is more reasonable to conduct research during the third and fourth stages of the movement. The challenge here is being able to recognize a revitalization movement at these points. The Original peoples in Canada have been resisting European encroachment on their lands since early contact. There have been ebbs and flows in this resistance over time. However, it has been fairly continual. Volkes (2007:322) argues that

rather than envisioning revitalizations as periods of liminal change brought on by a specific stressor, we must take into account that cultural change brought on by colonization and “other transnational influences are in fact ongoing processes and always incomplete”. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I will hypothesize that the current revitalization began its third stage in the late 1980s to early 1990s. I am choosing this time because it is then that resistance outbreaks began to occur fairly regularly, at the same time remaining highly localized. While it is true that the communities involved did gain support from other Indigenous groups, the demonstrations remained, for the most part, localized (see Ciaccia, 2000; Coates, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2002; Furniss, 1999; King, 2014; Obamaswin, 1993, 2002; Paul, 2006; Swain, 2010; Willow, 2010). This era of resistance would most accurately reflect Wallace’s (1956) description of the third stage of a revitalization movement. In this case, individual communities, instead of individuals, were standing up and taking a stand against what they perceived to be threatening their well-being. Also during this time, those in communities outside of the area of conflict were involved in negative coping behaviours, such as: lateral and domestic violence, high suicide rates, heavy use of drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc. This is not to suggest that all Indigenous people had turned to these negative coping mechanisms.

Today, there continues to be widespread instances of lateral and domestic violence, high suicide rates, and addiction among the Original peoples in Canada (FNHA, 2013; PHAC, 2006). However, there are also signs of healing through more positive adaptive strategies by increasing numbers of Indigenous people (Dickerson, 2009; Martin-Hill, 2009; Yellowbird, 2014). Dickerson (2009), Martin-Hill (2009), and Yellowbird (2014) all point to the use of both traditional and integrated treatment models that follow a holistic healing model when addressing the needs of Indigenous patients. For instance, Dickerson (2009) promotes the use of drumming

when treating addictions in the Original peoples of Turtle Island. Additionally, Yellowbird (2014) promotes a way of decolonizing the mind through the increased use of ceremony to create a holistic treatment model. Moreover, through INM, we can also witness signs of Indigenous people working together to create positive changes for their communities, both on-reserve and off. This is indicative of a shift from the third stage of Wallace's revitalization model to the fourth stage. As described earlier, INM is a worldwide resistance that spread across North America in December of 2012, and those participating in resistance activities and events are not solely Indigenous peoples. This has created a movement where both Indigenous peoples and Settlers are standing together for the protection of the land and the rights of Indigenous peoples (see CTV, 2012d; INM, 2012b; Miller, 2015; PRNewswire, 2015; Reeder, 2015). Because these acts of resistance are no longer localized, it allows for higher rates of participation in the current resistance. In listening to discussions among Indigenous people acting in resistance, it is apparent that there is a creation of a new status quo being negotiated. There are also signs of implementing new ideas of existing into the everyday lives of the Original people in Canada. For instance, there are many people actively involved in reclaiming their traditional languages, ceremonies, learning their histories, and reconnecting with their lands.

CHAPTER 4

GAINING THE PERSPECTIVE OF THOSE ACTING IN RESISTENCE

Imagine for a moment living in a world that operates much differently than your own. Consider what it would be like to have others, from their perspective, define who you are and why you do the things that you do. Now, think about how you would react to reading something that is written about your community, your family, and even yourself, and what you read is unrecognizable to you. The reason what is written is unrecognizable is not because you do not understand the language of the author; nor is it because the language used is above your comprehension level. In fact, it is unrecognizable because what the author wrote is written from a perspective that is not your own.

Repeatedly, I have been told by the older participants²⁴ in this study that they have been the focus of social research in the past. While no one was sure if the researcher considered whether or not those in the study would ever read what was written about them, they did. Overwhelmingly, my participants²⁵ that have been a part of previous research told me that they never recognized themselves in what was written about them. A couple of my participants did tell me that they thought that the reason for this was because the researcher assumed that all people understand the world in the same way. If my participants were correct in their beliefs,

²⁴ Those I am describing as older participants are those over the age of 40; it is not meant to indicate that these participants are considered elderly or in any way old. It only indicates that they are considered to be a part of the 7th generation and not the 8th generation that is prophesized to have the knowledge of healing.

²⁵ Although I did not ask every one of my participants if they had previously been a part of a prior research project, five of my participants told me that they, or their community, had been part of a social research project at least once in their lives.

assumptions such as these are a very basic flaw when researchers are not prepared to consider that people look at the world in very different ways. Therefore, it is important to understand how others look at their own world when conducting research with them because that affects all of the data you will collect in the field.

As social scientists, we typically work in fields where we are often advocates for those who are marginalized in some way or another (see Bergeron, 2011; Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Rubin & Babbie, 2009:37). Unless we come from the exact same social group as those within our gaze, we likely have not lived the same existences that those we are researching have. For this reason, we do not see the world in the exact same ways as they do, meaning we do not know or understand their perspective. Thus, we must rely on them to tell us practically everything from the ground up.

After returning to University to gain a new degree, I was presented with a situation that shows that no matter how educated we are and how much we think we know, we do not understand another person's world. I am hearing impaired. I lost my hearing slowly over many years. Because I lost my hearing so slowly without being aware of it, I taught myself to read lips. Now someone with no hearing difficulties would think that an individual losing their hearing would realize that they were not hearing certain things at some point. However in reality, that is not the case at all. I do not understand the exact mechanics, but if I do have an idea of what someone's voice sounds like, when I cannot hear them, somehow my brain fills in the sound of their voice when I am reading their lips. So, I actually only learned the severity of my hearing loss about a decade ago after others complained about how loudly I would listen to the television.

In my second year back to university, I was enrolled in a course where the instructor spent most of her lecture facing the white board. I was registered with the disability services office at the school and had accommodations to help me with my hearing restrictions. One of these accommodations was that I was allowed to record the lectures so that I could later listen to them again at an amplified volume. This instructor, however, refused to allow me to record her lectures. She used the excuse that accommodating my disability by allowing me to record her lectures would violate her intellectual property rights, even though I was contracted to not share these recordings. In an effort to come to an amicable solution to the situation, I instead asked her if she would provide me with a copy of her lecture notes. Again, I was refused for the same reason. After these two attempts to have this instructor allow me to have the accommodations that by Ontario Law I am guaranteed, I requested that my disability coordinator step in and advocate with this instructor for me (see OHRC, 2015). Unfortunately, the instructor continued to refuse to allow me any accommodations in her classroom. I was later confronted by this same instructor in front of the class. During this confrontation, she made it clear that from her perspective, she annunciated very well and no matter what direction she was facing, I would still be able to hear her. Needless to say, I dropped the course and refused to take any courses with this person again. However, this instructor never faced any disciplinary actions by the university due to her privileged position as an instructor. I had asked to whom in the university I should file a complaint with, but was advised by my disability coordinator that if I did pursue making a complaint, that I would likely be labeled as a ‘trouble-maker’, and that would follow me through my undergraduate career. For that reason, I did not file a complaint. Even though I did not file a complaint with the school, I continued to face complications when asking to be allowed my accommodations in the classroom.

My point here is that hearing loss manifests itself in different ways. Also, unless you have the exact same hearing loss as the person you are communicating with, there is absolutely no way to fully understand what it is like to live with that form of hearing loss. In my case, I can only hear certain pitches, so if you talk in a pitch that I cannot hear, you can announce with the best of them but I still will not hear you. However, this one social scientist believed that she knew and understood my experience as someone with hearing loss. From this belief, she drew an erroneous assumption and then publically proclaimed it as a fact in front of several witnesses. Now, I am not certain who in that audience believed she was right in her assumptions or not, but considering the privileged position she held, it is likely many considered her argument to be valid.

In my case, the damage caused by what the instructor did was minimal. However, when research is conducted and published by those with university credentials, the damage can be widespread and can carry devastating impacts for those we conduct research with. For this reason, my research data will be presented to you from the perspective of the people I have spoken with and listened to in the field. In order to begin doing this, I will first introduce you to an outline provided to the academic world by Indigenous academics.

The Peoplehood Matrix

When studying people that originate from cultures other than our own, we must consider the usefulness of theories and methodologies used by academics when attempting to understand their social realities. Often times these people are expected to compartmentalize and prioritize aspects of their everyday lives in the same ways that those in the mainstream do. However, when people do not share the same worldview as the academics conducting research with them, we often find that those within our gaze do

not recognize themselves in our writings. This is due to the fact that these people do not envision their world and social life in the same ways that mainstream academics do. Anthropologist Ronald Niezen (2003), with his study *'Indigenism,'* attempted to overcome the deficiencies in mainstream theories and methodologies when studying and reporting on Indigenous social movements. Yet his work fell short of completely understanding Indigenous resistance at the grassroots level because he emphasized the colonial narratives of grievance and victimization (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:606). When focusing only on grievances and victimization in research, other aspects of Indigenous resurgence and revitalizations are missed by researchers. Alfred and Corntassel (2005:606) point out that Niezen over-simplified his explanation of Indigenous peoples' social movements by looking at their reasons for acting in resistance as something that could be generalized. While it is true that some Indigenous people identify themselves as victims of colonization and have grievances with state-level encroachment on their rights, it is incorrect to assume that these markers of identity are core to Indigenous peoples' understanding of themselves. Therefore, imposing an identity of Indigenous peoples as being victims of colonialism that are pre-occupied with grievances with the government removes any individual agency to create their own unique identities. By envisioning Indigenous peoples with generalized identity markers, researchers are limited in their efforts to truly understand the people they are conducting research with.

Historically, scholars such as Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte, and Lewis Henry Morgan promoted the thought that societies evolve through evolutionary stages from primitive societies towards civilized societies. Even though these theories have been heavily critiqued and in most cases not given any credence by contemporary academics,

they continue to permeate the public's consciousness. L. H. Morgan (1877), in *Ancient Society*, outlined his unilineal theory of the social evolution in his research with the Iroquois peoples in North America. Morgan's theory of social evolution set the stage for the political policies that govern the lives of First Nations people. When social scientists place human cultures on an evolutionary spectrum from primitive to civilized societies, it leads to understandings of those who are 'othered' as being lesser on many levels.

As mentioned previously, North American Indigenous people have suffered from governmental policies and practices that were informed by academics throughout history. However, policies such as the *Indian Act* that were informed by these theories continue to negatively impact that lives of those who are marginalized in our society (see Bartlett, 1988; McNeil, 1999). In sociology, there is a trend towards conducting research with quantitative methodologies. Two of my participants have training and experience conducting field research, and before agreeing to participate in this study, they wanted to confirm that my research used qualitative methods. Their reason for this was that they did not want to be a part of a study that used quantitative methods that sought to draw generalized conclusions. In North America, the Original people of the continent display a vast array of worldviews, cultural practices, languages, and spiritual beliefs. For this reason, when attempting to generalize these groups into a homogenized whole, the result is the rewriting of these groups' history, and also limiting them culturally, politically, and in their efforts to choose how to live their lives (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:606-607). For this reason, employing qualitative and collaborative research designs allow researchers to understand the uniqueness of each group from the other Indigenous people in Canada, and

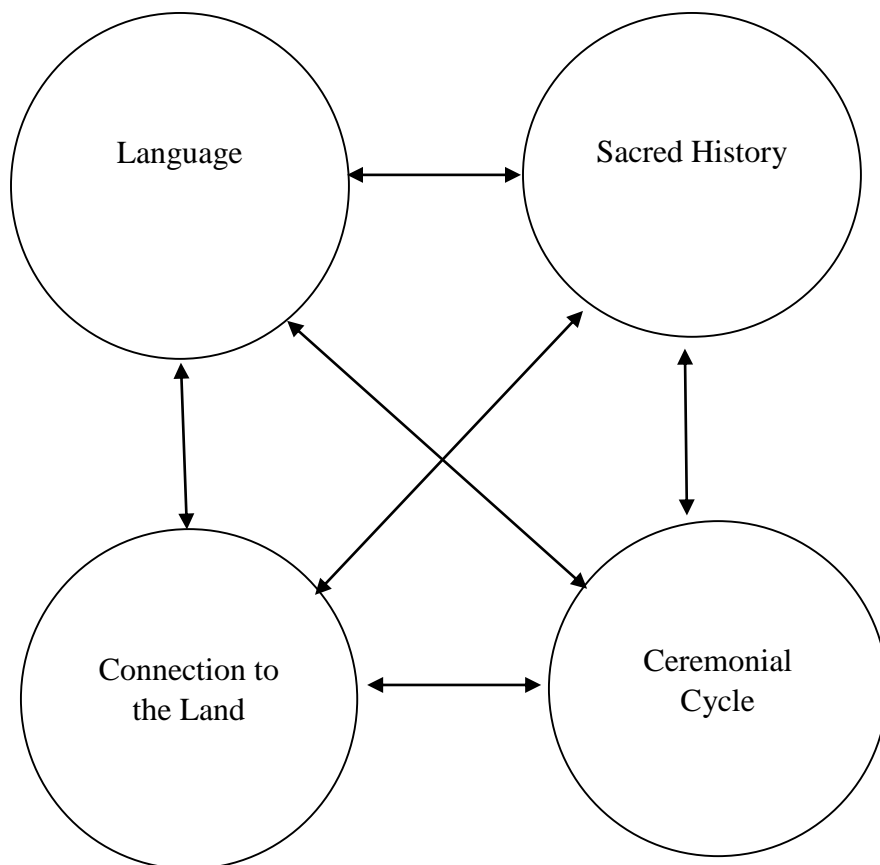
promote the people's ability to advocate for their rights culturally, and within the political arena.

However, when attempting to understand the resistance of Indigenous people when they act together, we once again are faced with methodological and theoretical quandaries. In this research, the participants originate from various backgrounds, with most being Status or non-Status First Nations; others are Métis and one person of European descent²⁶. However, this research will be using a qualitative research design and an Indigenous theoretical perspective in order to answer the research questions being investigated. This choice was made due to the limitations of existing mainstream theories in providing a framework to fully understand the answers provided by the data collected. As such, I will employ the peoplehood matrix to understand the participants' motivation to participate in INM and the goals that they hope to achieve through their participation.

The peoplehood matrix has its foundation in the work of Edward Spicer (1980) on 'enduring peoples'. Cherokee Anthropologist Robert K. Thomas, added "sacred history" to the matrix and argued that all four modules of the matrix are intertwined, interrelated, and dependant on one another (Holm et al., 2003:12; Spicer, 1980:576-578; Thomas, 1990:25-32).

²⁶ The term Status indicates First Nations peoples who are recognized as such by the Canadian or United States government. Thus being Status is a legal recognition by the State of an Indigenous Identity that was imposed on Indigenous peoples through colonization.

Peoplehood Matrix



Most importantly, the peoplehood matrix is useful in describing the distinctness of people without a state. Therefore, the matrix can be used to disconnect the thinking of Indigenous people as an ethnic group and categorize them separately from other minority groups in North America (Holm et al., 2003:11). Spicer and Thomas furthered the understanding of the matrix by revealing how the four components are equally important, and therefore are all necessary in personhood (Holm et al., 2003:12).

When studying the Original people of Canada, Alfred and Corntassel (2005:613) explain the peoples' connection to the land by arguing that for Indigenous people, 'land is life'. This is because the land is where Indigenous people draw their strength and sustenance to regenerate themselves (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:613; CBC, 2013). Even though over half of the Indigenous population in Canada live in urban areas, they continue to return to the land to rejuvenate themselves (see CBC, 2013). This connection to the land is more than just returning to see friends and families; it is the land that people are spiritually connected to. Furthermore, their relationship with the land is not only economic, as it is connected to Indigenous peoples' identity and heritage. Landmarks hold the stories of the people, which makes these places sacred to Indigenous people due to the place's connectedness to people's origins, migration, and the burial of ancestors (Holm et al., 2003:15).

It is nearly impossible for people to discuss one part of the matrix without including other parts as well. This is due to the fact that Indigenous people do not see any of these things as

being separate or independent of each other. Conversely, they see these things as being dependant on each other, creating a cosmology that does not compartmentalize or prioritize any one thing over another. The reason for this is if any one of these things is taken away, the consequences are devastating.

During the residential school era, one of the policies imposed upon the students was that they could not speak in their native tongue (Milloy, 1999). If the student did speak their language, they were in the majority of instances severely punished, to include: beatings, having food withheld, etc. (Haig-Brown, 1988; Milloy, 1999). Although many students resisted the rules forbidding them from speaking their Native languages, others had a fear of speaking their language instilled into them through the harsh punishments they received from the school staff if they did not speak English (see Haig-Brown, 1998; Milloy 1999). Stratton & Washburn (2008:59) contend that the severe punishments given to the residential school students for speaking their native languages caused a loss of language for many Indigenous people in Canada. Even though many of North America's Indigenous nations experienced this language loss, very few of these languages went completely extinct according to the elders I spoke with in this study. Currently the majority of Indigenous people are not fluent in their ancestral language (see Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). However, there are still those who are fluent and continue to work to pass this knowledge on to others (see Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Their reasoning for doing this is multifaceted. Alfred and Corntassel (2005:613) explain that our languages hold within them our traditional ways of knowing and relating to our world. This belief holds true to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which claims that language informs our thoughts, beliefs, and culture (Hojjer, 1954:92-105). For Indigenous people, language stores the knowledge of their history, sacred stories, their relationship to the environment and land, and their sacred

ceremonies (see Holm et al., 2003:13; Stratton & Washburn, 2008:59-60). Even though there has been significant language loss throughout North America of Indigenous languages, this does not diminish the fact that these languages continue to be of vital importance to those acting in resistance currently.

Ceremonial cycle can be defined in terms that adhere to the beliefs and customs of people outside of religion. In his work Thomas, employed the term ‘ceremonial cycle’ as a modification of the term ‘religion’ to aid in revealing a group’s relationship between the elements of the peoplehood matrix (Holm et al., 2003:15). For instance, a ceremonial cycle can be gleaned from secular society’s annual cycles of celebrations. These celebrations may or may not have had origins in religious observances, but they all work together to form a sense of identity among those observing these ceremonies. In Canada, the first of July is regularly celebrated as an observance of the nation’s birthday. This supports an ideology of nationalism that holds people of diverse backgrounds, classes, and belief systems together. Moreover, every year most Canadians observe Christmas, even though not all observing the holiday are Christian as some are of other religious denominations or are atheist. However, the important point here is that these two examples are widely practiced ceremonial observances that work to hold people together on many levels.

A group’s sacred history is multifaceted and holds within it the distinct culture, customs, political structures, and economic practices. Additionally, this history contains the common language of the group, appropriate behaviours of interacting with each other, and how the group is maintained through rituals (see Holm et al., 2003:14; Stratton & Washburn, 2008: 61). The sacred history of Indigenous groups in North America is where their spiritual laws originate.

These laws provide people with an understanding of their roles and responsibilities to each other, the land, and the animals around them.

The peoplehood matrix demonstrates “the futility of reductionist thought and that no single element is able to work without the aid of the others” (Holm et al., 2003:18). For this reason, it is important to use the matrix to understand the data collected in order to avoid misrepresentations of the participants in the study.

The matrix also requires that academics begin to think about international relations, colonialism, warfare, political sociology, domestic politics etc. (Holm et al., 2003:18). As many academic works provide the foundation for the policies that govern the lives of Indigenous peoples, it is thus an academic’s responsibility to accurately portray the groups that they conduct research with. The use of theories and methodologies that reflect the thoughts and understanding of the world through the perspective of the mainstream do not accurately provide us with a picture of how the world works for those who do not share the same cosmological views as those in positions of power in North America (Holm et al., 2003:20). Thomas’ model, however, provides us with a functional academic framework that “works with Native America’s knowledge and understanding of the world to create a model for understanding human behaviour” (Holm et al., 2003:20). Furthermore, this model will add to these new understandings when using the matrix to formulate both quantitative and qualitative research projects because it will allow for the production of data that will exhibit the cultural uniqueness of those involved in the research study (see Stratton & Washburn, 2008). Likewise, this model will allow academics to shed previous models of inquiry that painted Indigenous people as ahistorical and static. The peoplehood matrix allows researchers to use methods of inquiry that reveal the dynamic nature of the lives of Indigenous people in contemporary society. Alfred and

Corntassel (2005:609) argue that whenever any of these elements of identity are threatened, unified action can be taken to “revitalize and restore that part of the community by utilizing relationships, which are the spiritual and cultural foundations of Indigenous peoples”. Therefore, by studying INM within the framework of the peoplehood matrix, I will be able to show that those in this study are concerned with the threat to the elements laid out within the peoplehood matrix.

Discussion of the Data and Analysis

People involved in Idle No More may have diverse reasons for becoming involved in the movement. However, after speaking with and listening to event speakers and participants, as well as through looking at the writings of those involved in INM, several overriding themes came into focus(see CBC, 2011; Denis, 2012; Go Forth et al., 2014; INM, 2013; King, 2013; The Kino-nda-niimi Collective, 2014; Palmeter, 2013; Saysewahum, 2013, 2015). These themes, when put into context of the theories of Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel (2005), Tom Holm, Pearson, and Chavis (2003), and Billy Straton and Francis Washburn (2008), reveal some very interesting information that illustrates North American Indigenous peoples’ motivations in resistance.

During this discussion, I am writing using the format of the peoplehood matrix to give form to the data. However, when separating the data into the matrix format, it quickly becomes apparent that it is impossible to speak of one individual category of the matrix without also including other categories in the discussion. For this reason, these overlaps in categories are used to contextualize the conversations and topics being discussed by participants. Eliminating the cross-referencing of categories would overly compartmentalize the data to the point that meanings for the participants would be lost. Thus, by using the matrix in my data discussion, it is my intention to reveal to the reader

how those within this study perceive their world and understand their actions within these views. Those whom I spoke with perceive their world in the relationships that they have with their world. It is through these relationships that they are then connected to each other and everything else around them to include what is animate and inanimate, and what is visible and invisible.

Chapter 5

DATA AND DISCUSSION

Language

During conversations with my participants, it quickly became clear that language plays a significant role in how they see themselves in relation to the movement.²⁷ The use of Indigenous languages when speaking during resistance events shapes not only their sense of themselves, but how they interact with their world, each other, and their audiences²⁸.

Linguistic Choices

The Term Aboriginal

Data

Since the era of discovery, mainstream politics have claimed the authority to define Indigenous peoples in whatever way they see fit. Today in Canada, the term Aboriginal is used by the mainstream to define the Indigenous people of the land. However, during several resistance events, one repeated topic of conversation revolved around the use of the term ‘Aboriginal’ in defining the Original people of Canada. The following statements reflect a

²⁷ Although every conversation that I had with my participants is not reported in my data, I choose those that best represented what my participants shared with me. This allowed me to avoid constant repetition in my reporting of data. Therefore, when I report that my participants feel that language is important to them, each of them expressed this idea, however, to report exactly what was said would result in me repeating the same thing and only showing differences in how people worded similar sentiments. Because this study is not a linguistic study, to report every conversation I had with my participants on the same topic would be redundant.

²⁸ Although many speakers would begin their conversations using their Native language, they would also translate what they said for the audience to ensure that their listeners understood what they were saying. However, I was told that hearing our ancestors’ languages speaks to us at a subconscious level, producing different meanings than it does for us on a conscious level.

common theme among my participants concerning the term ‘Aboriginal’ and their understanding of it as a politically charged term imposed on them by the government of Canada.

Myeengun Henry stated that the term ‘Aboriginal’ is a highly politicized term that was imposed on Canada’s Original Peoples after the White Paper. This term is a generalizing word that determines that Indigenous people are “less than human”, according to a female elder that spoke in Toronto. For this reason, it is important that Non- Indigenous peoples allow the Original people of this land to redefine who they are and claim the authority to determine who they are and how they are to be identified (see Alfred, 2005).

During a discussion with Myeengun Henry, the topic over the confusion of what we call ourselves was highlighted. This was brought up when discussing what term people feel we should call ourselves. Because I come from the US, I am personally okay with Native or Native American. Typically in academic writing, I choose to use the term Indigenous. My reasoning for this is that it does not limit us to thinking that Idle No More is solely a Canadian or North American struggle of resistance. We are all Indigenous people to somewhere. Myeengun stated that for him, the most appropriate term that he would prefer we adopted is "Original people of the land", making us the Original people. This, he says, is preferable to the term Aboriginal.

According to Pauline Moon, the prefix “ab” communicates "away from". The term “Aboriginal” means from the land. However, if you look at other words with the prefix ‘ab’ the meaning is exactly opposite of what the same prefix is said to mean in the word “Aboriginal”. When looking at the use of the prefix “ab” in other words, such as *Abnormal* meaning "away from normal", *Abrogate* meaning "move away from a law" or "invalidate to prove something wrong making it legally without value”, *Abdicate* meaning "move away from responsibility" or “relinquish responsibility”, and *Abstract* meaning "thought to be apart from" or "expressing a

quality or characteristic away from any specific object or instance", we can see that the prefix 'ab' can bring about notions of being apart from original. Taking this into consideration, when we return back to the term 'Aboriginal', it is understandable to see how this term permeates the social imagination in a manner that indicates the opposite of what it is proposed to mean. Through this social imaginary of linguistic meaning, the term "Aboriginal", according to Pauline, removes Indigenous people from the land, justifying the taking control of the land and its resources away from its Original people to exploit it at will for the profit of the Settler population.

Analysis

The ability to define identity is overwhelmingly important to the people I personally spoke with, as well as the individuals I heard speaking at INM events. Memmi (1991:127) argues that when the colonized decide to remove themselves from their colonial situation, a central theme in their revolt will be to fight against the colonizer's ability to define them. He stated that the people will "revolt against being defined by the Settlers as 'aboriginal' and against the dispossession of our lands and heritage, and we will track our oppression to the source, which is the basic structure of the colonial state and society" (Memmi, 1991:127). Alfred and Corntassel (2005:598) add to Memmi's assertions by stating that an 'Aboriginal' identity is a state construction that "gradually subsumes Indigenous existences into its own constitutional system and body politic since Canadian independence.....that culminated with the emergence of a Canadian constitution in 1982". Alfred and Corntassel (2005:598) further explain that the term "aboriginal" is an assault on Indigenous identity by the colonizers because it justifies the separation of the Original people from their lands and control over its resources. This acceptance threatens Indigenous people's access to their cultural practices, spiritual power, and their

relationship with home communities, land, and ceremonial ways of life (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:599). While each participant did not articulate these exact sentiments, their statements did echo the concerns and arguments of Memmi, Alfred, and Corntassel. For them, the State's power to define them creates a policy of distraction for the Original peoples. Distraction policies are used for the purpose of diverting people's energies away from decolonizing practices that could serve to regenerate the well-being and rebuilding of communities in a fashion that benefits the Original people.

From my perspective of the views on the term Aboriginal that were shared with me, 'Aboriginal' is an identity marker placed on the Original peoples as a linguistic assault that is more effective than the use of arms by the colonial state. The power to define is the greatest power of the colonizer. By controlling definitions, the colonizer has the power to shape ideas, identities, understandings, and ultimately possess control over situations (Cast, 2003). In the past, the West has used terms like 'savage', 'primitive', and 'Aboriginal' for the purpose of dehumanizing Indigenous people. This has served as a justification for the taking of Indigenous lands, the taking of people as slaves, as well as acts of genocide. When looking at the term 'aboriginal', a quick look in the dictionary shows it means "the first inhabitants". Shertow (2008) argues that if this is what the dictionary says that this word means, it must be right. However, when looking at the root of the word, we find it actually would mean the opposite due to the fact that "ab-" the Latin prefix means "away from" or "not". Once Indigenous peoples are linguistically defined with a term that removes them from their lands, cultures, spirituality, and entire existences, the subsequent policies of assimilation and removal from their lands and resources are justified.

Indigenous Language Revitalization as Acts of Resistance

During my field study, I was witness to many speakers using their native languages. They would take the microphone or megaphone and introduce themselves, then speak in their native tongue for a few minutes before translating what they said into English. Moreover, when singing and drumming, the songs were all sung in Indigenous languages. During these events, many of the observers were Indigenous from many different nations, whereas others were Settlers. So, I had to ask myself why these people would be using a language that was not common to many of the people that they were speaking to.

Due to the fact that I am not able to speak fluently in my native tongue, I decided I should ask my participants why speaking in an Indigenous language was important. Mary Lou Smoke, an Ojibwa elder and one of the elders in residence for the Waterloo Aboriginal Education Centre, explains that as Indigenous people, we are born with blood memory. Blood memory, in its simplest explanation, are memories that we are born with that are passed down to us by our ancestors through our blood. This memory explains how we instinctively know where to go gather medicines on the land, even when we have never been there before. It also elucidates how we react to the spoken words of our Indigenous languages with an understanding of what is being said even when we have never heard them before. Amy Smoke spoke of a situation where her uncle was speaking to her in Mohawk before she had learned any of the language. In this instance, she reacted to what was being said to her even though on a conscious level she did not know what he was saying. During this event, Amy would bow her head when her uncle was confronting her for something that she was ashamed of. She also smiled and laughed when he was speaking of something amusing from her past. So, even though she would have told anyone witnessing this event that she had no idea what he was saying to her, this was

not entirely the case. According to her Uncle, she reacted to what he was saying because her blood memory allowed her to understand the words subconsciously.

Myeengun Henry also shared a story of how we are born with our languages. He explained that our language is always in us, even though we have never been taught it. Myeengun grew up speaking his language and held onto it despite the fact that it was forbidden for him to speak it in school. Now he is a highly respected elder and provides counsel to his people in times of need. For this reason, he has attended the bedside of many friends and community members as they prepared to take their journey into the spirit world. He shared that on several occasions, he would be sitting with a friend that he knew had never been taught their language. However, as he sat with them, they would start to speak to him and those around them in the language of the ancestors. These events provide evidence that our language is within us always, even when we do not speak it.

While the above-mentioned situations explain why Indigenous people can understand the spoken word of the language of their ancestors, it does not fully reveal why it is important for those participating in INM to use their ancestral languages. To answer this, I asked Myeengun Henry. Myeengun said that our language is our connection to the Creator. For this reason, it is not always important that we know the language that is being spoken, even when we are the ones speaking it. By using Indigenous languages when speaking or singing, it strengthens our connection to the Creator. By doing this, we understand what is being said at an emotional and spiritual level. Even when we are listening to words being spoken, these words also evoke feelings that connect us to our spiritual selves and create an understanding for us that goes beyond what our conscious minds can comprehend.

Myeengun went further in his description of how our language holds meaning for us. When doing this, he described how when he would play the drum, he did not always sing in Anishinaabemowin. However, the act of drumming connects him to the heartbeat of the earth, and the words he sings connect him and his spirit to the Creator. In doing this, communication is taking place that creates meanings not only for the singer of the songs, but also those who may be listening to the songs and drumming.

Amy Smoke, Myeengun Henry and Pauline Moon have told me that across North America, Indigenous people are working to revitalize their languages. Currently, there are courses being taught in immersion schools that are band-controlled as well as at universities, such as Trent University and McMaster University (FPHLCC, nd; GLCP, nd.). Bands and other Indigenous organizations are also involved in providing classroom and online instruction to those who want to learn their ancestors' language (FNSA, 2009; UBC, 2009)²⁹. Some people that are taking these courses are also working together to establish online dictionaries that can be accessed by the public (Glospe, 2015)³⁰. Many people that I spoke to have said that it is important to preserve our languages because these languages shape the way we exist in the world. Our languages connect us to the land, our spirituality, our ancestors, and even our ceremonies.

Amy Smoke is Mohawk from the Six Nations of the Grand First Nation, and she often speaks to classrooms of students and at other gatherings about the importance that knowing her language has for her. She begins her talks using the Anishinaabemowin language. She then

²⁹ A few of my participants have been involved in learning their ancestral languages and have shared that these courses were free to whomever wanted to take them.

³⁰ I am currently involved with a group of people that are involved in developing an online dictionary of the Cherokee language.

translates what she said into English. As she proceeds, she explains that Indigenous languages are action-based languages, unlike English which is based on naming and categorizing people, places, and things. For this reason, Indigenous languages hold different meanings than European languages. Additionally, Amy explains to her listeners that “knowledge is built right into the language. In an Indigenous language spoken in British Columbia, the word for ginger literally translates into ‘device for the heart’, which coincides with recent Eurocentric knowledge of ginger being good for your heart health. We have always known this, as it is built right into the language.” Taking this into consideration, “imagine the knowledge that we are losing if” our Indigenous languages become extinct? Amy further points out that Indigenous languages, unlike European languages, have held important knowledge since time immemorial, so to lose these languages will result in a loss of knowledge that is beneficial to both the Indigenous peoples and Settler populations as well. Therefore, for Indigenous peoples and Non-Indigenous people, it is important to retain their languages because it shapes their understanding of their world, how people live within it, and also contains important knowledge. Amy further explains that she was not taught her language when she was young, but rather she began learning it just recently. She first learned Anishaasemowin from an Ojibwa elder, then began to learn her ancestors’ language after meeting an elder from her home band of Six Nations.

When I was speaking with an elder in Ottawa, she revealed what being able to speak her ancestors’ language holds for her. Jan lived with her parents until she was five years old. At the age of five, she was taken to a residential school after the Indian agent ripped her from the arms of her mother. Until then, she only spoke Cree. Once she entered the school, she was no longer allowed to speak the only language she knew. It took her over a year to learn English. However, Jan told me it took her many years to fully grasp the actual meaning of the language. While in

the school, the girl that slept in the bed next to her became her friend. At night, they would whisper to each other in Cree. They knew if they were caught they would be severely punished, but it was important to them to continue to speak their language. As time went by, they started to secretly pray to the Creator in Cree. They did this because they felt that the Creator did not speak English, and thus would not understand their prayers for protection from the school staff if they did not pray in Cree.

As Jan and her friend grew older, they were assigned work in the school's garden. While they were working, the school staff did not watch them as closely. This allowed them more time to speak to each other in their Cree language. During this time, they would tell each other stories of the land that they were from. They would talk about the animals, plants, and ceremonies that their family would do out on the land. According to Jan, this was the only time when she and her friend would feel happy when they were at the school. Jan told me, "Looking back, I believe we felt happy because that was the only time we felt like we were truly Indian. We were able to talk, laugh, tell jokes, and feel good about who we were, 'Indian'". Jan's words had a profound impact on me when she spoke them. It was apparent that she and her friend's act of defiance of speaking Cree gave them a sense of pride in their identity as young Indigenous women; it gave them the strength to live through the abuse that they were suffering at the hands of the school staff and being away from their homes and families.

As Jan and I sat listening to the drumming and singing on Parliament Hill, she smiled as she looked at me. She leaned in and instructed me to look at the young women singing and drumming. She told me:

"those young women, they are strong like my friend and I were. They sing in our language, it gives them strength to continue to stand up to protect the water. The water needs these songs to heal. Our people need these songs that are sung in our

language to heal. If we lose these songs, we lose our ability to heal, to be strong, to be who we are”.

I asked her, “Do you think all of the young women singing understand the words they are singing?” Jan looked at me and responded, “When you sing the songs of your people, do you always know what you are saying?” I replied, “No, I can’t translate all of my people’s songs”. Jan again quietly smiled and waited for a bit to speak again. “When you sing those songs, does something in you change?” I replied, “Yes, I always feel better when I sing”. Jan quietly laughed and looked at me with a knowing look, then said:

“See you understand the song, it speaks to you, it speaks to your spirit, it lifts you up, tells you who you are, and makes you strong. Our songs connect us to who we are, to our land, to our Creator, to our people. They replenish us, heal us. So when we are singing our songs, we may be asking for healing of the land, the water, a loved one, a relationship, or whatever, but they heal us too. For me every song is a ceremony that strengthens me, heals me, and heals my lands and my people. We need to sing so we can heal, so we can heal our families, communities, and the water.”

Analysis

The use of ancestral languages is central in INM events. During my field research, I attended a myriad of events, to include: flash mob round dances, vigils, teach-ins, and hunger strikes. At each of these events, speakers and singers used the languages of the Original people of Turtle Island. After speaking with several of my participants, their use of their ancestors’ languages became clearer to me. For those of us brought up walking in both worlds like I did, their reasoning for speaking in their language may not have been clear. However, after listening to the stories shared with me, and after watching the reactions of people listening to the songs and speakers, it became apparent that revitalizing Native languages was central to the INM actors’ sense of identity and purpose. Smith (2002:148) tells us that many Indigenous languages are considered dead, and that the loss of language places the peoples’ culture and traditions into

crisis. For this reason, Indigenous people have developed strategies to revitalize the languages. These strategies include community efforts and allying with the media, educational institutions, researchers, governments, etc. to teach the young people their Indigenous languages (Smith, 2002). In turn, many of the children's parents are also learning their languages that were lost to them through the residential school system.

By learning their ancestral languages, those involved in INM are reclaiming their identities as Indigenous people. These actions, in turn, are reshaping their understandings of themselves and their people. However, through learning and speaking the language of their ancestors, they are also changing how they see themselves and their world. This is because “language is like a cloak which clothes, envelopes, and adorns the myriad of thoughts” that we have (Smith, 2002:188). Furthermore, with the distinct differences between European-based languages and the Indigenous languages of North America, the languages are also a way to decolonize the minds of the people speaking them. Alfred (2005:32) argues that European languages centre on the use of nouns because they are concerned with “naming things, ascribing traits, and making judgements”. Conversely, the ancestral languages of the people of North America are arranged around verbs, thus communication focuses on “descriptions of movement and activity” (Alfred, 2005:32). European languages focus on nouns, and shape people's understanding of their world through a highly “organized system of names and titles that formalize their being” (Alfred, 2005:32). This way of speaking stagnates and compartmentalizes the worldview of those speaking and shapes our understanding of the world in a way that disconnects the world and denies the interrelationships and interdependence of the people, plants, animals, etc. On the other hand, Indigenous people in North America focus on connections, relationships, and responsibilities that are symbolized in language through actions of doing

(Alfred, 2005:32). Thus, by speaking the language of their ancestors, the people are constantly reminded of their relationships and accountabilities to the world around them.

Due to the fact that Indigenous languages are based on actions and relationships, speakers see the world in vastly different ways than Settlers from Europe do. For instance, in English when we are parting ways with someone that we have been interacting with, we most often say “good-bye”. This term holds a sense of finality and symbolizes an end to the interaction with the person we are communicating and interacting with. However, in my native tongue Tsalagi, the equivalent term is “donadagvhoi”, to which the most accurate translation is ‘until we meet again’. In Anishaasemowin, the term would be “baamaapii”, which means “until later”. In both cases, the words do not indicate finality; they shape an understanding of fluidity and action. In English, ‘good-bye’ indicates an ending and closure to an interaction. Conversely, in the language of the Cherokee and Ojibwa, the words indicate more of a pause as there is no indication of a closure of the interaction or relationship because the speakers do not see themselves as completely separate individuals. Instead, they see themselves through their relationship with each other.

Therefore, by relearning and reclaiming the languages of the Indigenous people, they are reshaping their identities, thoughts, and worldviews in order to decolonize their way of looking at and acting in their lives. Although in many Indigenous communities’ languages are considered to be on the verge of becoming extinct, much work is being done to revitalize them through the young people (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). These young people do not have the fear of speaking their language instilled in them through the residential schools. Even though they have grown up with the effects of the schools, they have found the reclaiming of their ancestral languages as a healing mechanism that their communities need to overcome the negative effects of colonization.

For instance, Amy has used learning the languages as part of the healing she needs to overcome past traumas in her life. When she speaks, her facial expression changes to one that is more calm and relaxed. She holds her language with a sense of pride and understands her world in a way that does not hold the pain and conflict it once did.

By revitalizing the languages of the ancestors, those involved in this study have shown that they are decolonizing their minds by reshaping their understanding of the world through language. Alfred (2005:245) contends that traditional languages, songs, pictures, and ceremonies contain the vital knowledge of how to live an Indigenous life. While he openly admits that contemporary Indigenous languages differ from those of our ancient ancestors, they still contain the knowledge of our cultures, ceremonies, clans, stories, and so on (Alfred, 2005:245). Alfred (2005:246) further argues that language shapes “the way people see the world, believe, and live their lives”, and for that reason is “the only true source of distinctiveness among human group identities”. As such, for those involved in INM, language use is a way of reclaiming their way of being in the world and living an Indigenous existence free from the influence of the colonized worldview. According to Alfred (2005:248), by reclaiming our ancestors languages, Indigenous actors are perhaps engaging in the “most radical act” of anti-imperialism possible, because these languages “carry the specific insights of non-imperial ways of viewing and organizing our understanding of the world. In this sense, imposition of European languages on the Original people of Canada provided the colonizers with the ability to reshape Indigenous peoples’ way of seeing their world and themselves. By reclaiming their language, the people change their view of themselves, their world, and their culture in a way that removes the State’s ability to control their thoughts, values, identities, and beliefs. It is in this sense a crucial step towards decolonizing the minds of those acting in resistance.

Connections to the Land

Data

Many of my participants shared stories of what the land means to them, and how they are connected to the land in many ways. Listening to these stories, I was initially brought back to a scene in the classic movie “Gone with the Wind”, where Rhett Butler tells Scarlett O’Hara that it is the red earth of Tara that she draws her strength from. His words were very powerful indeed. They showed her connection to her home land and how it replenishes her soul, body, mind, and spirit. However, it falls short in revealing all of the history the land has for her, including how it informs her of who she is, and even how it spiritually nourishes her. It is these answers that are regularly discussed by Indigenous people in this study. For instance, when introducing themselves, each speaker at INM events began with telling their audience where they are from. During my visit to Ottawa, I had the chance to attend an INM workshop. A speaker named Jon began his discussion by introducing himself. However, unlike how Settlers who introduce themselves by simply saying their name, or they may identify themselves by their profession, Jon said, “Hi my name is Jon, I am a member of the Bear Clan from Wasauksing First Nation near Parry Sound, Ontario on the shores of the Georgian Bay.” Additionally, when I was speaking with participants and people attending INM events, other than my name, the first thing people wanted to know about me was where I am from and who my people are. Mary Lou Smoke explained in a teaching circle that she held that this information is important to Indigenous people. It identifies us to those we are speaking to, but also gives them a great amount of

information. For instance, in those few words, people can tell what tradition you come from. This is important because the Original people are not all the same; we have different beliefs, practices, traditions, and ways of interacting with each other and the world around us. So in listening to people tell who they are, where they are from, and the stories they tell, I was able to gain a much fuller understanding of how land is deeply connected to the people that come from it.

Today, mining, dam projects, pipelines, fracking, industry activities and other resource undertakings have damaged many lands and waterways that Indigenous peoples have relied on since time immemorial to sustain themselves. When speaking to a young man named Sam in Ottawa who is Mistassini Cree, he told me of the destruction of his traditional lands by the damming projects in Quebec. His father had passed these stories down to him. They told of how his grandparents would take his father, uncles, and aunts out on the land from September to April to hunt and live before the damming projects. They would go out on the land to hunt every other year, because this would allow the animals to replenish themselves. This ensured that they would be able to sustain their families for the next seven generations. Often, his father and grandparents would go out on other family members' traplines with them when they did not go to their own. For his family, this allowed them to maintain close family relationships, to do ceremonies together, and so on, while also allowing their trapline to rest and reproduce itself.

Sam, during his months off from school, will go with his father, aunts, uncles, and cousins out on the land. While out there, they observe the animals to learn in the same way that his ancestors would to decide which of the family members' traplines they could spend their winters on. If there were not many animals around, or if they were acting sick, they would not hunt on that trapline in order to allow the animals to get better. Sometimes, by watching the

animals actions, they would be able to predict what kind of winter they were going to have, or if there was an imbalance on the land that was negatively affecting the animals. Unfortunately, the land and waters have been severely affected from the damming projects. Often, there are not enough animals for his family to go out on the land to hunt for during the cold months.

“When the dams were built, many lands were flooded, and many animals died or left because they could not find food.” Sam remembers one winter when he was a young boy and he went out on the land with his parents. “I was walking to the river where my family had always hunted beaver with my father. He wanted to show me what the dams had done to the beaver that were still on the land. The beavers had built a dam, but I saw a few frozen in their dam. My father told me that the hydro dam made this happen. The beaver knows how to build his dam so that his family does not freeze. He [the beaver] knows how the water in the river rises and falls over the winter months. But he [the beaver] does not know how to build a dam to protect his family when people control the water in the river. So when he [the beaver] builds his dam to protect his family, he [the beaver] uses the knowledge that he [the beaver] got from his ancestors. But that knowledge does not teach him [the beaver] what men are doing to the water. So the men that built the hydroelectric dam and control the water made it so that the beaver cannot live here anymore. Very few beaver are still here, many died, many left. So we cannot hunt the beaver, we need to watch over them and help them when we can so they do not all die”.

Sam’s father later took him to another area close to the river that had been dammed. They were camping in the area and preparing to go into ceremony to thank the Creator for the warm weather and pray for the animals to be able to return to their traplines. When they were camping on their land, even as a young child, he was very aware that there were not many animals around. His father told him of all of the bears, ducks, beaver, deer and moose that used to live on the land. He then told him that after the dam was built, many of their people were moved, and that their houses, along with many trees and other plants, were now under the water. Sam explained:

My father told me that trees do not live in the water on our land, so they died. All the other plants that do not live under the water also died, many animals died too, and the land and water changed. Our people changed too. We could not hunt or fish, we were put in houses that were built very close together like the White man builds their houses. Our land and water got sick from the rotting plants and animals under the water. Many died, many left. Our people also became sick. We

had to live on the food the government gave us and it made us sick. We had to live very close together, and that too made us sick. Many of us that were children were taken away to schools by the government, and many never returned home. Those who came home did not remember their language. Their eyes were sad and sick.

I asked Sam, “Did the land and water heal?” Sam told me

No, not really. Many of our older people still go out on the land to watch over the land, water, plants, and animals. Some of our young people today are going with their grandparents out on the land to learn how to watch over the land, animals, and water. I do that sometimes when I am not in school. When I am in the bush, I do ceremonies with my father and grandmother to pray for the health of the land and water. I also pray for our people to be strong and healthy again. If our land and water are sick, then the animals are sick too. If they are sick, then we become sick. We lose our way, we lose who we are. I do not know much of my Cree language, but I do know the songs, I know the ceremonies, I know how it used to be, because I was told by my father and grandparents. I try to learn my teachings so hopefully I can help heal what has happened. But I also have to learn how to survive in this world the way that it is. I want to have a family. I want to be able to provide for them, like my father provided for us. It is hard sometimes, because I have to walk in two worlds to survive. But when I can go out in the bush, when I can hunt and eat our traditional foods, I feel better... I feel whole.

Many participants expressed that the land provides more than physical sustenance for them; it provides them with answers to some of the most basic questions of life. The land informs us of who we are. Sandy informed me, “Each of our creation stories connects us to our land, and they are specific to each of our people.” Here, the Haudenosaunee people are told about how Sky Woman came to Turtle Island by falling from the sky. Sandy told me:

Before humans lived on earth, they lived in the sky world. There they had everything that they needed, plants and animals of all kinds. There was also a tree called The Tree of Life; everyone was forbidden to touch it. The people knew the tree was at the entrance to the world below. This world had only water, so the only animals living there were animals of the water and air. One day a pregnant woman became curious about the Tree of Life. She went to her brother and convinced him to pull up the tree. When he did, a great hole appeared beneath where the tree was. The woman went over to the hole and looked through it to see what was there. As she was looking through the hole, she slipped and fell through the hole. She grabbed for the edge and only managed to grab a handful of earth before falling through. The birds of the new world saw her and quickly flew over and embraced her to break her fall. They carried her to the back of a sea turtle, where they set her down. The animals of the water worried for her because they

believed she needed land to be able to live there, so they tried one by one to gather some soil. They dove down to the bottom of the water to bring up some earth so she could have a place to live. Only the muskrat was successful in getting a small handful of earth and brought it up. He placed it on the back of the turtle where Sky Woman was, and Turtle Island began to grow. Sky Woman shortly after that gave birth to her daughter. Her daughter grew very fast but there were no men for her to marry. So the West Wind became her husband and she was soon pregnant, she soon gave birth to twins. The first twin was born naturally and is known as the right-handed twin. The second twin's birth, on the other hand, caused the death of Sky Woman's daughter and is known as the left-handed twin. When her daughter died, Sky Woman took the earth that she had grabbed as she fell and placed it on her daughter's grave. This earth contained special seeds of tobacco, sweetgrass, and strawberries. These are called the life givers by our people, because the earth over Sky Woman's daughter nourished the seeds and they grew abundantly. Meanwhile, the twins each had special powers. The right-handed twin created the hills, flowers, streams, butterflies, various plants, and earth formations. "The left-handed twin made snakes, thorny plants, thunder, lightning, and other unsettling elements of our world. Together they also created man. The right-handed twin believed in peace, diplomacy, and non-violent ways to solve conflicts. But the left-handed twin believed that disagreements should be solved by confrontation and violence. Both twins were very different from each other but together they created everything on the Earth. As Sky Woman came to the end of her life and died, the twins fought over her body. They tore her body apart and her head was thrown into the sky and became Grandmother Moon. It was obvious to the twins they could not live together, so the right-handed twin decided to live in the daylight, while the left-handed twin lived in the night. To this day they continue performing their individual responsibilities to the Earth which provides for all people that live here.

Sandy explained how our creation stories connect us to the land that we live on. She told of how Sky Woman brought with her the sacred seeds that provide medicines for the Original people of the land. These medicines nourish us and heal us when we become ill. She also told of how Sky Woman's grandchildren shaped the earth and created humans. Her grandchildren are our ancestors and their work shaping the landscape, creating the animal and plant life, and even crafting the elements that nourish the earth are all connected to the Original people of the land.

According to Sandy:

We have an impact on the land where we live. Just as our activities influence the land, the land influences us. In doing this, we and the land become interconnected. We rely on the land to sustain us physically, spiritually, and

emotionally. The land in turn relies on us as well. Because of this, we have a responsibility to protect it, not only for ourselves, but our future generations as well. Just as Sky Woman brought the seeds from the world above to sustain her, she also looked after those seeds and used them to provide for her future generations. In turn, her grandchildren added to her work with their creations. This story tells us of not only where we came from, but also our responsibilities to the land.

Sandy's story of Skywoman is supported in the stories told by many speakers at INM events. Joel in Toronto talked about how we lived before colonization. "There were people that were guided by teachings, they were guided by Spirit. They were guided by a sense of common sustainability; some kind of common sense that told us that we have to protect what's here for the next generation. And all that interconnectedness was really valuable to not only our survival, but also how we thrive in regions in this territory." Theresa McGregor, a woman of Mi'Kmaq descent living in my region who follows the teachings of the Midewiwin Lodge, added to the common conversation about the land and how connected Indigenous people are to it. For Theresa, it is vitally important that she return to the land to do ceremony and participate in her culture. It is while visiting the land that Theresa spends a great deal of her time in ceremony and participating in her culture at powwows. It is here that Theresa visits with friends and elders, learning teachings and historical stories of the people that came before her. For Theresa, it is important to return to the land to re-establish her connection to her traditions, the people, her ancestors, her ceremonies, and her teachings. So in this way, the land does not only sustain the physical self, but the emotional and spiritual self as well.

While speaking to people, I began to wonder if the land held knowledge for the Original people in the same way that language did. When speaking to Little Frog, he explained a story of how the land held medicines for the people and that knowledge was passed down through

families. I asked him to explain more about this to me. Little Frog started by telling me about how people learned what plants were good to eat and which ones were not.

Our ancestors would watch the animals on the land to see what they were eating. They did this because there are many plants that have berries in the spring, summer, and fall, but they are not all good for us. So they watched the animals and saw what they were eating. Then our ancestors would eat the berries and other plants that the animals ate, and leave the others alone. They did this because in the past, some of our ancestors got sick picking the wrong berries. Now we know which berries and plants we can eat, because the animals showed us which ones were safe.

I then asked him how we learned which plants were medicines that could help to heal us. Little Frog responded:

Well we learned that in many ways. Our creation stories tell us some of the plants that are good for healing. From this story, we know that strawberries are good for us. We later learned that they are good for our hearts. It is funny how nature works. You see strawberries are shaped like a heart and it is also good for the heart. Mother Earth did that so we can see that the strawberry is good for our heart. But there are other ways we learned to use different plants as medicines. For us, the bear is a powerful healer. Our ancestors, when they were watching the bear, they watched her stripping the bark off of the White Willow trees. She would strip it off in a way that was different than she would if she were just marking the tree to let other bears know she lived there. Sometimes when she took the bark off of the tree she would chew on it. So our ancestors tried it to see what it did. Eventually, someone did this when they had a headache and his headache went away. So the next time someone had a headache, someone brought some willow bark to them to chew. Sure enough, the person's headache went away. So after trying this many times, we knew that the bear was showing us that the bark of the willow tree was medicine.

When talking with Pauline Moon, she shared with me a story about her childhood and how they were taught to deny their "Native identity", while trying to hold on to their ceremonies and teachings. When Pauline was young, the children were still being taken from their homes and being put into the residential schools. Her stepfather was determined to protect her and her sisters from being taken away. He had been in the schools and suffered a great amount of abuse in them and feared this ever happening to them. Therefore, he moved them off of the reserve, and

he and her mother taught them to deny their ancestry. However, he also felt it was very important for them to learn their teachings and ceremonies. Pauline's stepfather, uncles, and aunts would take her oldest sister and her out to their family's camp to secretly teach them their teachings and ceremonies. "My mother never went with us because she was too afraid of being caught." When Pauline was young, the Potlatch laws had been rescinded, however, being caught doing ceremonies was still very dangerous because children could be identified and taken from their families. Therefore, those who practiced their ceremonies and passed on the teachings of the ancestors still did it in secret. For Pauline's stepfather, it was always important to pass on the knowledge of the ancestors to her and her sister. It gave Pauline a strong sense of who she is, and provided her with the warrior spirit that she has today to stand up for the land, the water, and her people.

Each INM event that I attended revealed more information to me about the importance of the land to its Original people. Many spoke of the responsibility they have to protect the land. They explained how the treaties were never intended to eliminate their right to be on their traditional lands. For this reason, they argue that recognition of their sovereignty is important, not only for themselves, but for the Settler population as well. As the Original people of the land, they are responsible for protecting the resources that the land provides. Through their teachings, they are told that they must protect the land and water so that the next seven generations will be able to use them. However, over the last seven generations, the colonizers have used the land to create profits from its resources. This activity, according to those involved in INM, has harmed the land and the waters. With the passing of Bill C-45, many of the waterways in Canada have become unprotected. Subsequently, with the passing of the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIMA) with China, the Original people of Canada believe that the lands

and waters will suffer even more. A young woman named Jenna from a Northern Ojibwa community, told me:

When I return home to visit my family, I cannot drink the water because it is poisoned from the mine that is close by. This is no way for anyone to live, but that is how my family lives. My mother sent me away to go to school so that I don't have to live that way. But there is a trade-off for me being gone. I don't get to see my family, I don't get to spend time out on the land. I don't get to be who I am completely. All of this because our government wants to sell our land and destroy it without asking us. They see dollar signs, where we see our people sick and dying, but the Harper government doesn't care. What Settlers need to know is once our land is dead, their land is next. Would the Settlers want to drink poisoned water? I doubt it. I also doubt that they would want to have to boil their water to be able to safely take a bath, but that is what is going to happen if we do not work together to stop it.

Jenna told me that she has made friends with many Settler students at school. They listen to her stories of home, and they are concerned about what the government is doing to Canada.

Jenna said:

It is important to me that they are listening. I told them that my elder back home said to me that we are the eighth generation. We are the generation that will heal what has happened to the land, our people, and our relationship. What is most important about what my Mishomis [Grandfather] taught me is that the eighth generation that is told in prophecy is not just our eighth generation, but the eighth generation of the Settlers. Our problem is getting people to listen to us. We are young and so many people think we do not have anything to offer. Either that or they do not want to make changes. Many of our people are still suffering from the schools [residential schools]. (Emphasis added) They are angry, they hurt themselves and our people because that is what was done to them. They need to heal but they do not know how. We lost the teachings given to us by our ancestors because they were trying to civilize us. But some of our people held on to those teachings, some of the Settlers wrote down teachings that were shared with them. So they are still with us. I believe this is where we will find some of the answers we need to heal.

I asked Jenna why she believed that what Settlers wrote could hold some of the answers for the healing our people need. She answered:

I don't believe all of the answers are there, but it is important to know what they saw, and what they were told. The schools and the laws that stopped us from being able to practice our ceremonies and our culture caused us to lose a lot of our

knowledge. I know that not everything the Settlers said about us is true. On the other hand, it is not all untrue. You see, if you look at a picture or video of women hunting, it is hard to say our women never hunted. If you see images of our Grandfathers caring for children, it is hard to say that men did not play a part in raising the children. So many people did write down what our ancestors did to protect the land, what plants we used for medicines and how we used them. This is important information for us because they wrote and documented many things. My Mishomis listened to me read some of the things I am being taught in school. She remembers some of these things from when she was very young, but she didn't remember the details. So for her, these writings filled in many of the blanks of what she saw and did when she was young, before the schools took it all away from her. So you see, we do need to work together to heal, because the knowledge needed comes from everyone that lives here.

Analysis

The stories shared by those participating in this study reveal how the Original people understand who they are, how they are connected to the land historically and presently, and how they are interconnected through the land. Smith (2002:149) tells us that creation stories not only link us to the land, but also to the wildlife and each other. According to Smith (2002:149), “to be connected is to be whole”. In Canadian history, the assimilationist practices of the colonizers sought to sever the Indigenous peoples’ connection to the land through the residential school system, Christianization, and the Potlatch laws that served to abolish their connection to their traditions (see Milloy, 2008; RCAP, 1996, Vol. 1, Chapter 9). The people I spoke with throughout my research are all seeking to reconnect themselves to their languages, traditions, lands, and histories. Smith (2002:149) argues that it is through reconnecting to traditions that people are also reconnected to their land. She further explains that for Western people, land is something to be divided, owned, controlled, and exploited for profit (Smith, 2002:51). Conversely, Indigenous people see land as something to be shared and not divided. Moreover, from the perspective of the Original people, because land existed before we were here, and will exist after we are gone, no one can own the land (see Cummins & Steckley, 2003). Thus, according to Sandy, “the land was given to us by Skywoman, and it [the land] and the animals to

provide for our needs. In turn, we must protect it [the land] and them [the animals] so that our needs will be provided for over the next seven generations”.

Furthermore, the words of those I listened to and spoke with at INM events resonated with the same discussions Wab Kinew had with several Original peoples about their connections to the land in *The 8th Fire* series. In the series on CBC, several speakers have also spoken of how we are interconnected with the land from time immemorial. “As an Indigenous person, I have to know where I came from, and where I came from less than 200 years ago is the land; the land and the people were so interconnected.” (CBC (Indigenous artist), 2011).

“What’s the core thing that the land gives them? The land gives them wholeness and completeness. Well, let's figure out a way to give them that experience. No one says that you have to pack up and move out to the bush, but you have to have a connection, you have to draw spiritual and psychological sustenance from that, and then you can go and continue on in the life that you have chosen for whatever reason in an urban environment.” (CBC (Taiiiake Alfred), 2011).

“That connection to the land is important to many, no matter how citified” (CTV (Wab Kenew), 2011). Even athletes feel the need to leave the big cities and return to their home communities during their off season.

“I always know that I have people that I can count on to understand me for Jordin, the kid that grew up here, not the hockey player that is living the high life. I definitely have a connection with nature. You’ve gotta respect the land. You know you really become a humble person. You appreciate what is given to you out there. Because down south, you know, everything is just so fast paced” (CBC (Jordin Tootoo), 2011).

“Ideally, I would be very close to the land in order to practice our traditions. Given that I am in the city, I obviously can’t do that. But, I still have a very close relationship with my Creator, and that is something that I believe I can do anywhere” (CBC (lawyer), 2011).

We all have a connection to the land. For some, that connection can be the resources that it provides. For others, it can be the heritage that it holds for the people that come from it (Holm et al., 2003:15). For the Original people of North America, this connection is rooted in more than

the resources provided to them by the land. It also carries the spirituality and culture of the people, such as what is found in their stories of origin, migration, and sacred sites (Holm et al., 2003:15). Jackson (1995) also argues that the land holds the knowledge of Indigenous people. For my participants, their stories of the land do hold their knowledge. For Sam, the stories passed on to him by his grandparents and father informed him of how to live, where to get food, and how to ensure that the food sources would be able to sustain future generations. Additionally, for Little Frog, the stories of the land show how the land holds knowledge for healing that is passed down through the generations.

For the Original people, the land holds knowledge that informs them of how to live, of who they are, and how they are connected to each other through the land. According to Alfred and Corntassel (2005:613), one of the mantras of Indigenous resurgence is “land is life”. This means that it is through their connection to the land that the Original people comprehend the teachings of their people, their histories, the values of their ancestors, and where they must go to rejuvenate their strength individually, and as a people, physically, emotionally, and spiritually (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005).

Through colonization, the Original people were dispossessed of their lands. The overall cost of this harmed them politically, socially, and economically, as the land is a source of their health and well-being (Alfred, 2005:278). According to Alfred (2005:279), the dispossession of the Original people from their lands and other policies of colonization led to the physical and social ills that we see today among the Original people, such as: lateral and domestic violence, abuse and disrespect of women, alcohol and substance abuse, suicide, diabetes, depression, and so on. For this reason, while INM outwardly seeks to protect the lands and waters of the traditional territories of the Original people, for those in this study, it inwardly is seeking to heal

the wounds of colonization by returning to the traditions of the ancestors in order to heal themselves. While Alfred (2005:279) argues that this personal and community healing must be done before a larger movement can be realized, it is believed by those that I have spoken with that these can, and must, be done simultaneously. My participants' reasoning for this approach is due to the environmental destruction being caused by the resource extraction taking place on their lands, including the poisoning of the water, and the harming the plants, animals, and peoples dependant on it.

Throughout the world, colonization has removed Indigenous people from their traditional lands to make way for colonizing agendas. For this reason, many Indigenous peoples now live in the cities and away from their homelands. According to Venkateswar et al. (2001:11), they still maintain a connection to their lands even if they do not have a desire to live there. In Canada, as in other areas of the world, many young people have grown up in the cities away from their lands, but they still need to visit them. Just as the individuals in the CBC production of *The 8th Fire* (2011) stated, although they live in the cities, they still need to return to the land for the ceremonies and the teachings that restore them; this is where they can reconnect with their teachings and communities and learn what it means to be Indigenous. Hughes (2001) speaks to this in her study with Nubian youth. In Sudan and Egypt, Indigenous peoples were removed from their lands and expected to assimilate into wider society (Hughes, 2001:113-114). However, just like in Canada, the people refused to assimilate and maintained their identities, yet many aspects of their existences were lost from dispossession. For the Nubians, many ceremonies were lost because they were connected to the land and waterways of their traditional homelands (Hughes, 2001:124). In Canada, this dispossession took place with the reserve system, residential schools, and potlatch laws (see York, 1999). Although according to Pauline Moon and elders that I have

heard telling stories about my people's history throughout my life, in order to keep the ceremonies alive, they were done secretly by many people; however, there were others that were afraid to continue these practices.

Today, according to my participants and based on my own observations from living in this area, many urban Indigenous people in Canada continue to return to their homeland to do ceremonies, reconnect with family and friends, and participate in cultural activities such as powwows and sharing of stories. For many of my participants, they will return home in the summer months for these activities, and others would join the powwow trail³¹ so that they could visit more friends and family members.

Ceremonial Cycle

Indigenous people acting in the INM resistance display a wide range of personalities, levels of assimilation to mainstream ideas and beliefs, and participation in their traditional cultures. In my opinion, the majority of those who agreed to participate in this study proved to lean towards a more traditional value system, despite walking in two worlds as urban Canadian Indigenous peoples. Many are post-secondary students or have a post-secondary education. However, their reasoning for obtaining higher levels of education are based in wanting to provide security for their families and a desire to be able to work in the field that will allow them to help their communities. For this reason, they are actively engaging in decolonizing themselves, and a part of that decolonization process is returning to traditional ceremonies, teachings, and ways of acting in the world.

³¹ The Powwow trail is an activity referred to by many of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island where they will travel every weekend or so to a powwow. Some will make regalia to participate in the dancing events, others might bring their drums to play music for the dancers, others might bring their crafts to sell, and others still might just go to spend time with friends and family.

For Indigenous people, there are many varieties of ceremony. There are ceremonies that may be done daily or several times a day, whereas some have monthly or annual cycles. Similarly, there are ceremonies for rites of passage, such as birthing ceremonies, naming ceremonies, and so on. Finally, there are ceremonies that are done whenever a need arises. To someone that is unfamiliar with North American Indigenous people and their practices, many of these ceremonies may not be recognized or could be overlooked. In a brief survey of my Non-Indigenous friends, I quickly discovered that they were unaware that many ceremonies I had done in front of them were sacred activities. Many would recognize that a sweat lodge was a place of ceremony, or that the Sundance is a ceremony. However, not all were cognizant of smudging being a ceremony, or that the Round Dance, which is a widely identifiable marker of INM, is in fact a ceremony.

Social scientists in the not-so-distant past believed that religion and spirituality would eventually cease to have an impact on the lives of people (Fleras, 2014, personal communication). The belief arose from the increased acceptance of the Western-modelled scientific method. Fleras (2014) explained to me that with the increased knowledge gained through science, religion and spirituality would have less of an impact on the lives of people. This is due to the fact that science would increasingly provide people with explanations for what was once a mystery to society. However, the reverse seems to be happening. People today are returning to their religious or spiritual beliefs in unprecedented numbers (Fleras, 2014). For the people I have spoken to and listened to throughout this study, the return to their ancestors' spirituality is a central focus to their resistance.

The young people that I saw and listened to that are acting in resistance have said that they worked in collaboration with their elders to return to practicing their ceremonies. They do

so in order to connect themselves to the land, to each other, and in order to provide themselves with a strong sense of who they are and how their identity informs them of their worth and roles as Original people. In Toronto, a speaker named Joel explained how the 7th and 8th generation's fear had subsided with the closures of the residential schools and the rescinding of the potlatch laws. Joel also explained how the generation that did not grow up with these restrictions became frustrated with the level of assimilation brought on by the fear and co-optation of the older generation:

It became really frustrating for this generation coming up, the 7th generation. Where they weren't gonna stand around and talk about it anymore. They wanted something. So we coordinated a number of events, and each one of those events was preceded by ceremonies, which is really important because ceremony is where our Spirit comes from. It's the one thing we've been denied for so many years, either through our own doing, or through the prohibition... celebrating our Spirit and understanding of Spirit through ceremony. But one thing we found once we started doing ceremony was that the guidance was there. We knew what we had to do. We knew where we had to be. Because we were so connected to this other world, the spirit world, that guided us and told us and know, and we knew what the right thing to do was.

Throughout the current resistance, the divisions between the younger generations and the older generation has become more apparent to outsiders. The speaker in Toronto, Joel, explained:

after January 11, ...was the meeting between Prime Minister Harper, and the Assembly of First Nations Executive... That was a really difficult week, during that week emotionally. In other words, we put a lot of work into coordinating a huge rally where we had almost 10,000 people show up, and we did a lot of ceremony. And then we saw a division, we saw a split between chiefs. And then shortly after that we saw a split between citizens and chiefs. We saw a split between Idle No More. We saw all these divisions and things goin' on where we're trying to define and understand what this movement was about. Some people thought it was strictly about shutting down the pipelines. Some people thought it was stopping Bill C-45, which is indirectly related to shutting down the pipelines through environmental protections. And some people thought it was simply to remove the Indian Act. Some people thought it was to remove all legislation. So there was a lot of confusion and nobody knew which way to go, kinda thing. So I coordinated an event called '100,000 Prayers Can't Be Ignored'

and that event has been an online event, and the intention in that event is to have everybody do something similar, ceremonial, at specific time frames: we had from dawn, to high noon, to dusk.

For Joel, this event brought people together in one mind. Even though many may be great distances from each other, this act of taking time to all pray together gave them a sense of unity in thought, mind, and spirit. Joel said, most importantly, it accomplished giving those involved a unified spirit to overcome the confusion about what their resistance was about.

Joel also addressed the breaks we see in Indigenous acts of resistance. He explained the process of getting tired emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Joel said that for those acting in resistance, we must remember that they still have their own personal lives to attend to, including: work, school, home life, families, paying bills, and dealing with basic necessities. Joel continued by telling that the people acting in resistance also face counter-resistance from those outside of the movement, such as: media, mainstream peoples, and maybe even their own family members. Without explaining why he needed a break, he did speak of his own need to take a step back from the activities of resistance.

So what I'm told through those breaks in time and space where the sun meets the night... that's when I speak of spirituality. So we did ceremony, and I don't know what anyone else's experience was, but I experienced that I had to do something that I don't know, but like I said I take things on blind faith sometimes, and shortly after that experience, I won't go into detail about it, I guess [I] was told, more or less, to take a step back. And what that meant for me was to be patient, to be patient and understanding, that there is a bigger picture here, to be patient and understanding that we all come from those generations that were affected by residential schools and colonialism, and we're all going to be confused at times.

Here Joel points to his own need to return to ceremony in order to reconnect with his own self and healing from the intergenerational trauma experienced by himself, his family, his community, and so on. He told how ceremony allowed him [Joel] to take that needed step back to rest, and to gain an understanding of the confusion being experienced both within and outside

of the resistance. For Joel, like other people I spoke with and listened to during INM events have suggested, ceremony heals the individual, the community, the water, and the land. It allows people to go both within and outside of themselves for healing, answers, and direction in their daily lives, and in their acts of resistance. According to my participants, ceremony allows them to understand and accept the diversity within their own communities, and better comprehend that each person is on their own path to healing from past traumas. Ceremony, according to those I spoke with and listened to, allows people acting in resistance the ability to come together despite their differences and accept that there are divisions in Indigenous communities.

The Round Dance

The origins of the round dance are unclear. Eight of my participants informed me that the round dance was brought to other First Nations people by the Cree. Three others told me that the dance was given to the people by the Anishinaabe. When researching the history of the dance, the literature that I found agrees with what Theresa McGregor told me, that the Assiniboine people were the first to dance the round dance (see Gooding, 1998; Kurath, 1953). Therefore, while it is still likely that the dance came from the Assiniboine people of the Plains, there seems to be no way that we can be absolutely certain which First Nations group shared the dance with other nations. My reason for stating this is because even though some may argue that oral histories are unreliable, or at least should be considered as parallel histories, the courts in *Delgamuukw* now consider oral histories to be valid evidence that is given the same legal consideration as written histories (see Cruickshank, 1992; *Delgamuukw*, 1997; Miller, 2011). What we can say for certain though is that the round dance has been used in various ceremonies, including the Ghost Dance, as a social dance at community gatherings and powwows, as well as it being danced by many Original peoples across Turtle Island.

The importance of the dance was openly apparent to me at INM events. While I was in the field, the round dance was danced at teach-ins, solidarity protests in parks, flash mobs, vigils, hunger strikes, and community bridging events. Those involved in Indigenous resurgence have told me that they have also danced the round dance with Non-Indigenous peoples at events such as social organization conferences, artistic gatherings, elder and youth conferences, community social gatherings, and lectures. During my field research, First Nations and Metis people were dancing it openly, sharing it with Settler peoples and inviting them to participate. What was even more surprising to me was that the Settlers were joining in the dance. They, the Settlers, were no longer standing on the sidelines watching it, looking upon it as if it were a cultural curiosity. Settlers were instead joining us in the dance and taking in the joy and happiness that the dance has given the Original people throughout history.

So as I and my participants listened to the beat of the drum and danced, smiling and laughing together, many questions came to mind. Why are we dancing? What is this dance? Why is this the one we are dancing? Why not others? The point is that, being Native American, I knew that the round dance had to hold specific meaning, but I had never been given the teachings behind the dance. Thus, I honestly did not know why the round dance was chosen for INM, or as Ryan McMahon (2014:98-101) calls it, “the Round Dance Revolution”.

Meaning of the Dance

When INM first came to public attention, it was the flash mobs taking place in shopping malls that people and the media were noticing (see CBC, 2014; Coates, 2015; CTV 2012, 2013c; Galloway & Oliver, 2013; Globe and Mail, 2012; Hahn, 2013; McMahan, 2013; Schartz, 2013; The Kino-nda-niimi Collective, 2014). Can you imagine walking into a mall to do your holiday shopping, only to discover that it has been taken over by First Nations people in regalia, playing

drums, and dancing? As an outsider, it could be difficult to decipher what was going on. From my perspective as a researcher, I immediately noticed that people were interested. They would stop, watch, and listen. However, in the early days of the movement, very few people would approach one of the people participating to ask what they were doing. If they did, from what I witnessed, they would typically approach the persons that looked phenotypically Non-Indigenous. The important thing from my perspective was that the Settler people were interested in knowing, and when someone that was participating in INM approached them, the Settler people were more at ease with asking questions and starting conversations. From what I personally witnessed, as time passed in the movement, more Settlers were openly engaging with the Indigenous people involved in INM. More Settlers were also joining in the dance. Stories were being shared between the Original peoples and Settlers. Friendships were being built. Additionally, Settlers were joining the INM resistance through these relationships.

I met a young woman named Gail from a community close to North Bay, Ontario, at an event in Toronto. I asked her why she thought the round dance was so important to the movement. Gail shared that, first and foremost, it is nearly impossible to be angry with people when you dance together. “Dancing is fun, it brings us joy and happiness. It brings people closer together.” I realized that she had a point with her words, but it still did not answer why dance the round dance in particular? So I asked her if she knew why the round dance was the one that was chosen. For Gail, the round dance was a way of sharing “our culture” with those watching; it (the round dance) invited Settlers in to join the Original peoples in conversations in a non-threatening way. According to Gail, “it goes back to a saying my Granny used to tell us when we were growing up. You catch more flies with honey than you do vinegar.” Then she continued:

Not too long ago, when our people would stand against how we were being treated, we were openly prepared to be violent. That scared people away and they stopped listening to what we wanted them to hear. Sure there were some so-called stand offs where Settlers stood with us or helped us, like the farmer that helped smuggle food in at Kanesatake [Oka]. But in most of those cases the Settlers already had a relationship with our people. Now we want to build relationships with the Settlers. We want to heal the relationship we have with them, and the round dance heals these relationships.

As Gail concluded, I asked her if the dance was a healing dance. Gail replied:

Of course it is. It is a ceremonial dance to heal. When we dance it we are asking the Creator to heal the water. We are asking the Creator to heal the land. We are also asking the Creator to help us heal our relationship with the Settlers. For so long now government policies have worked to keep Native people and Settlers away from each other. Native people were put on reservations far from where Settler people lived. We were sent to residential schools. We were denied citizenship rights until very recently. We were stereotyped by the government, media, and even academics. We can't blame Settlers for not knowing about us, because they were rarely told the truth about us. They were made to fear us. Or they were made to hate us. In some cases, they were made to believe we no longer existed. So we dance the dance to heal this relationship. We need to mend the divide between us and we begin to do that by dancing together. Then we can share our stories and get to know each other. That way the Settlers learn we're not the stereotypes they were made to believe we are. They will learn we have a lot more in common than they ever imagined. One of my goals is to be able to dance together with Settlers to heal not only the relationships we have with each other, but also heal the water together.

During my conversation with Gail, as with several of my other participants, I brought up that in the beginning there was a great amount of media attention given to the round dances taking place in the malls and on the streets. However, now the media does not seem to care that we are doing these dances and protesting. The majority of those who answered me, including Gail, explained that always being in the media was not the INM participants' intention. Gail said that they are fully aware that the media has "a short attention span" and when they do have media coverage, those acting in resistance cannot control the narrative. So in order to control the narrative, for the participants, it is more important to have the in-person and face-to-face conversations. In doing this, those involved in INM accomplish two things. First, they control

what messages are being given to Settlers, and even to each other. Second, it provides people the opportunity to ask questions and get their answers straight from the source without filters being placed on these messages. Those that I spoke with expressed that this approach takes longer because it is impossible to reach people in great numbers. However, according to Gail, while any single speaking event, single speech, single protest event, and single conversation will not rebuild the damage that has been done to the relationship between the Original and Settler peoples, it is a place to start. For my participants, relationships are built by establishing on-going conversations, and socializing together through many interactions. Therefore, according to Gail, when Settler people are asked to join protestors in the round dance, it is the starting point of healing the relationship; because the dance makes it easier for people to begin conversations that for some individuals may initially be difficult to have.

Smudging Ceremony

At every INM event that I attended, one ceremony was always available to the participants, and in most cases, also to those observing. In the early days of the resistance, I witnessed those outside of the movement joining INM participants in smudging ceremonies. There were even communities in which the police joined in the ceremony. In these cases, it was an opportunity to start conversations between law enforcement and the Original people, giving them an opportunity to rebuild relationships that in the past, according to my Indigenous friends and family, have been very troubled.

While I was in Ottawa, I met Rae Crawford, a PhD candidate at Carleton University. Rae is a Non-Status First Nations person who is involved in researching her family history to discover what Nation and Band her family is connected to. She is also conducting her research on the Original women of Canada's access to choice in their birthing practices. As we got to

know each other through our discussions on our research, we built a relationship that has become mutually supportive. Through building this relationship together, I was able to ask Rae to explain to me the smudging ceremony and why it is an important ceremony at INM events. Rae explained:

In the teachings I have received from elders and women in my community, smudging is a purification process by which we clear out the negative energies that we carry. To do this, we burn medicines given to us by the Creator: sage, sweetgrass, cedar, and tobacco. While most of the ceremonies I have taken part in have used all four medicines for smudging, I have attended several events, such as drum circles, sharing circles, and protests, where only sage has been used. Each of the four medicines has a purpose, and I have been taught that sage is the women's medicine that is used for healing. Sage is medicine we use to (re)ground ourselves, especially when we have negative experiences like trauma, violence, and abuse. We can also use sage to smudge our homes in order to make our spaces safe.

Rae continued on to explain why it is important to people to have smudging ceremonies at resistance events.

For me, smudging is an important practice at resistance events because it connects us to our roots and our ancestors, and gives us strength. Often at these events, we experience hostility and violence, which come in many forms. Physical violence directed towards us by police and the RCMP. Environmental violence towards Mother Earth via resource extraction, pipelines, and fracking. Colonial violence towards our women who have been murdered, or who are missing. Smudging enables us to remain strong through all of these struggles. It is a reminder of all that came before us, and all that will come after us, for our future generations that depend on us to fight.

Water Ceremony

First Nations people have many ceremonies through which they seek to heal themselves, others, or the elements. Central to the INM movement is the concern for the protection of the waters (see INM, 2013). The majority of people I spoke with and listened to expressed concern that the excessive mineral extraction activities being allowed by the Canadian government will

cause irreparable damage to the water that we all rely on for our survival. For this reason, according to my participants, at many resistance events a water ceremony was performed.

According to Pauline Moon, the traditional water ceremonies usually took place on the water.

They [the water ceremonies] always started off with prayers, then a song. Usually the song was the Cherokee Morning song. Then some people would go into the water with their drum and some would go into the water without their drum to splash, swirl, and slap the water. The splashing, swirling, and slapping of the water was done to heal the water. This allowed the persons splashing, swirling, and slapping to put their energy into the water. During this time, they [the ceremony participants] are singing healing water songs while they are splashing, swirling, and slapping the water. Then there are elders on the shore saying prayers with tobacco, while other elders are doing pipe ceremonies, saying prayers in all directions [East, South, West, and North]. This [part of the ceremony] would last about an hour, then after leaving the water, the men and women would carry the water³². Then the women would slowly distribute the water onto the land and plants they were walking past. The rest [of the people] would sing, pray, and drum. The people that were not drumming would have plastic garbage bags to pick up any litter along the water. Ideally, the people in the ceremony would walk along the water's edge, but if that was not possible then they would walk along a path close to the shoreline. Usually this ceremony would go from sunrise to sunset with the people participating in the ceremony walking miles along the water's edge. After the ceremony, the participants would go to a lodge for a big feast.

Pauline's people would try to conduct this ceremony on a monthly basis, except during the winter because then the water would be frozen. During the winter, the people would try to find a water source that was not frozen to do the ceremony with. Thus, they would usually do a water ceremony once or maybe twice during the winter months.

I asked Pauline to explain the purpose of the ceremony. Pauline told me that the ceremony is done to heal the waters from all types of pollution, acid rain, litter, and resource extraction activities. However, it also honours the water, because the water sustains all creatures

³² The water is usually carried in plastic containers

of the earth. Pauline explained: “Even when we fish, traditional people still offer the water tobacco to honour the animal and thank that water for providing for them”. Thus, according to Pauline, doing water ceremonies keeps the people connected to their land, traditions, and traditional teachings of their responsibilities to respect and care for the land and animals. “It reminds us of who we are, and that we are only borrowing the land and its resources from our children and grandchildren”.

Water ceremonies at INM events were shortened and altered to accommodate the space and time constraints that may limit the ability of the participants to conduct a more complete ceremony. Many of events that I attended took place in cities, parks, malls, lecture halls, and conference venues. As such, the people were not always near a natural water source that they could enter into. In these cases, someone would bring water with them to conduct a ceremony, or fountains were used. Prayers and songs were always sung to heal the water. On all occasions that I personally witnessed, there were also drummers playing their drums and singing songs to honour the water. Although people were limited in their ability to enter into the water to drum, sing, and pray for the water, when possible, they would still put their hands into the water to stir it around, or splash it.

When I was in Ottawa, there was a rally in front of the Parliament buildings around the Centennial Flame. The flame is located near the Queen’s Gate in front of the steps to the Peace Tower and Centre Block. There is a fountain surrounding the flame, and because the flame is above the water, it keeps the water warm enough that the water never freezes. During the rally, as the women were drumming and singing, other women were sitting on the edge of the fountain, placing their hands in the water, swirling it around, and praying. This drew my attention because it was so cold out the night that this particular rally took place, and to put your bare hands in the

water was potentially painful. I asked one of the women, Anna, who lived in Ottawa but was originally from the North Coast of British Columbia, to explain why she was doing the ceremony when the weather was so cold. Her response was:

The government is allowing companies like SWN to frack, unsustainably extract resources to the point it is damaging the water, and create pipelines which can fracture and release poisonous contaminants into our waterways. Our water is sicker now than it ever has been. So, it is important for us to sing our songs, pray our prayers, drum, and connect with the water even if it is not comfortable for us to do it. Our waters need to be protected, but damage has already been done, so it also needs to be healed. It [the water] sustains us and if we [all people on Turtle Island] do not heal and stop poisoning the water, we won't survive.

Analysis

Ceremony for the Indigenous people I spoke with is an integral part of their lives. As Alfred (2005:249) explains, beyond the languages of the Original people, their stories, ceremonies, and rituals are used to regenerate their existences as Indigenous people. By participating in ceremonies individually and communally, the people in this study expressed that they gain a sense of wholeness that strengthens their connections to each other, the land, and animals, and builds new relationships. Furthermore, stories shared with me by my participants also reflect the statements shared in previous writings and reports by other Indigenous academics³³. Ceremonies also keep people connected to their past, they preserve memories, they remind them of their responsibilities, and when facing persecution, it reiterates that the “underlying force of the universe is love” (Alfred, 2005:249). Perhaps most importantly to those involved in the INM resistance in this study, ceremonies remind participants of the power and

³³ In order to avoid constantly repeating myself that my participants have shared the same sentiments as the academics I am citing, let it be understood that I am not using any academic thoughts that were not expressed by my participants. Moreover, I am only discussing information that reflects underlying themes in the information shared by those participating in this study. If there was one person that gave information that opposed the themes, I would report it. Yet, the only disagreement reported to me was concerning the origins of the round dance.

beauty of nature and of our responsibility to protect it by living our lives in accordance to its laws (Alfred, 2005:249). Furthermore, participating in ceremonies reminds the participants of their self-identity, who they are as a people, how they refer to themselves, and how they form a unity among the people where in the past colonization had fractured it (Alfred, 2005:250-256). Finally, studies have shown that meditative ceremonies activate areas of the brain that produce serotonin and dopamine (Yellowbird, 2014).

By participating in ceremonies at resistance events, the hope of the people involved in this study was to heal not only the water by resisting the over-exploitation of the resources, but also to heal the relationships of all people living together on Turtle Island. The people involved in this study believe that through the dances and other ceremonies, doors are opening that have previously been closed between themselves and Settlers; the round dance is helping to start conversations that otherwise would not have taken place. For them, it is a way to start the reconciliation process put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC, 2012). In my own community, I have been witness to the beginnings of a transformation in the relationship between Settlers and the Original people of the area. While anyone in this study will admit that there is much more work to be done, the first steps are being taken in building a relationship and beginning to understand each other. Even the smudging ceremony has provided opportunities for people to talk to each other and to begin to understand each other. Furthermore, these acts of resistance, ceremony, and discussion about them demystifies these practices for outsiders and allows the Original people to explain and define for themselves what they are and the meanings behind them. Therefore, by standing together and participating in ceremonies at resistance events, Settlers and the Original people are becoming unified through mutual understandings of their identities and by common concerns for their responsibility to protect the resources (Alfred,

2005:249-256). As such, the mutual participation in ceremony has, from my participants' perspective, created some success for those involved in INM. This in their opinion is because the ceremonies are helping them to create bonds with Settlers, and to create their own sense of who they are and what it means to be an Original person. By sharing their identities, cultural practices, and concerns for the land, my participants are removing the power of the media and government to define them and their actions, and are reclaiming their power to define these for themselves.

Sacred History

Colonization has erased many Indigenous people's teachings from their lives and existences. According to my participants, traditionally the roles and responsibilities were handed down to Indigenous people through education. The family and clan members would teach children their history, their laws, how to hunt, grow food, and care for the land and animals. However, through the assimilationist practices of colonization, such as the residential schools, these practices were taken away for the purpose of instilling Euro-Canadian values and histories into the people (see Haig-Brown 1988; Milloy, 1999; TRC, 2015). The people that are seeking to heal their communities that I spoke with believe it is necessary to decolonize their understandings of their history both individually and communally so that they can begin to strengthen and restore their lives as the Original people.

Throughout my field research, I heard many stories of the history of the Original people of Canada. These stories included experiences such as: residential school attendance, individuals being instructed by their parents to hide their Indigenous identity, sneaking out into the bush to practice ceremonies, personal research of the treaties, wampums, and even involvement in past

resistance efforts. Through the telling of these stories, the story-tellers expressed their sadness, anger, frustration, pride, happiness, and their sense of personal strength. The stories were told to me by elders, youth, warriors, men, women, those returning to their traditions, and those who grew up with them. For this reason, and the fact that the people in this study originate from different nations, the perspectives within these stories varied to some extent but they also were threaded together by common themes of shared experiences and lived understandings. The telling of the stories seemed to me to be important to the resurgence of the Original people of Canada in this study. Smith (2002:144) argues that when conducting research with Indigenous peoples, the stories of the elders, the oral histories of the people, and the stories of the women are very important. Each story is powerful, contains information, contributes to the passing down of traditions and knowledge to the next generation, and creates links between the past and the future (Smith, 2002:144-145). Therefore, the entire Indigenous community “becomes a story that is a collection of individual stories, ever unfolding through the lives of the people who share the life of that community” (Bishop, 1996:24). Thus, when considering the stories of Urban Indigenous people, we as researchers, have to take into consideration that these stories are a synchronization of peoples’ stories that originate from diverse experiences, histories, and worldviews.

Residential Schools

Many elders I spoke with briefly discussed their or their parents’ experiences of attending residential schools. Younger people in this study also told stories of the harm that residential schools had on subsequent generations. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to listen to the residential school survivors who told of the difficulties that they faced in their attempts to lead ‘normal lives’. These stories included: addictions, suicidal thoughts and attempts, the loss of people close to them from suicide and substance-related deaths, not being able to show love to

those that they cared about, the inability to parent their children, childhood abuse, domestic violence, and so on.

When Justice Murray Sinclair spoke of the findings of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission), I found that the stories that I heard were consistent with those of other survivors and their families who had told their stories to the TRC investigators. The most striking piece of information to me was the discovery that the TRC has been solely funded by the survivors themselves and not the government (Murray Sinclair, private communication). Moreover, the monies awarded by the class action lawsuit brought by the survivors of the schools against the Canadian government was solely for the survivors, and no compensation has been given for the children and family members of the students despite overwhelming evidence of the intergenerational trauma that the schools have caused (Murray Sinclair, private communication). It is the belief of many that I spoke with that having to openly disclose the abuse endured by survivors has kept many from coming forward and telling their stories³⁴.

Although most of my participants expressed how the telling of the stories of the residential schools started a healing process within their families, it was clear that hearing these histories came with some pain as well.³⁵ The majority of my participants told me about the many family members that they have lost to alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, etc., because they were bearing the burden of the abuse that they had suffered in the residential schools. Others have shared that even though there are currently more Original people graduating high school and

³⁴ This belief has been shared with me by people both inside and outside of this study. When I have gone to listen to residential school survivors and/or TRC commissioners speak, I have witnessed many people leave the room because the information is so overwhelming for them. On one occasion, I stood silently outside with a friend just so she would know someone was there and understood her pain.

³⁵ What made their pain clear to me were incidents such as their voice cracking, the speaker turning away to cover their face and take a break, the speaker tearing up, and on a couple of occasions, the speaker saying, "I can't do this" and then proceeding to walk away.

post-secondary school than at any other time in Canadian history, their families and communities are still suffering from the long-term effects of the abuse imposed upon the residential school students. Furthermore, central to these stories is the intergenerational trauma that the residential school system has created within communities and families (see TRC, 2015).

In the United States, the schools that the children of the Original peoples were sent to were called Indian Boarding Schools. As a child, my Grandmother had told me that we did have ancestors that were placed in these schools. I was never told which schools they were placed in or even which of my ancestors had been sent to these schools. I always understood it as simply having been a very long time ago. In the past few years during my field research, I had the opportunity to go to a residential school, Mohawk Institute (also known as the Mush Hole). The first time I went was with Amy Smoke, one of my participants in this study and we were with a history class from the University that we attend. When we first drove onto the grounds, I immediately got an eerie feeling. As we entered the school, I could smell an odor that I had never encountered before. Most significantly, my stomach felt queasy, and as I went further into the school, I felt a pressure on my head increasing with every step. Needless to say I could not take being in there for longer than ten minutes. If I remember correctly, Amy lasted being in there about the same amount of time. As we sat outside of the school, Amy shared with me that there are days she cannot be in the school, and there are days she can go all of the way through it. It was at this time that she shared with me that her Grandfather had gone to that school. While we waited for the others to complete their tour, Amy took me around the grounds and showed me where the children's graves are that lost their lives there. When we returned to the front of the building, we smudged and offered tobacco to honour those who were students of the school. Before we were done with our ceremony, the history students came out from their tour. All of the

students were Non-Native, but some did know what smudging was and asked if they could smudge with us. Amy explained what we were doing to the other students, why we were doing it, and the importance of offering tobacco. All of the students and the professor wanted to join in the ceremony with us and to offer tobacco before leaving the school.

I have been to the Mohawk Institute three times since that first visit. My second time, I was with a group of Indigenous high school students. On this trip, I came prepared with my own medicine bundle.³⁶ This time I made it a little further into the school tour. On this occasion, my stomach remained settled, but I still felt the pressure like someone was pressing their hands on either side of my head. In the second room that the tour guide took us into, there was a board with the names of the students that attended the school. One of the students with us on the tour, who knew that her grandfather had attended the school, found his name and broke down. After she found his name, I noticed a name that was familiar to me. The second I saw this name, I felt a stabbing sensation in my stomach. My knees got weak, there was a pain in my heart of which I cannot explain the feeling, I started to experience a feeling of vertigo, and I almost dropped my medicine bundle. As soon as I could manage, I left the room and joined the girl that had already left and gone outside. Within a minute or so after I left the building, another young man left as well. He had found his grandmother's name on the board, and one of his Uncle's names. In his case, he did not know any of his relatives had ever been in a residential school. I am not sure how long we stood on the porch of the school, but the weather was snowy, windy and the wind chills were about -35 to -40C. I asked the others if they wanted to go back inside about the same time as two more people from the group came out. They instead decided that they wanted to do

³⁶ A medicine bundle is a smudge bowl, the four sacred medicines (tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass), matches, and a fan. Mine also includes tobacco ties, loose tobacco, and a small cloth to lay my medicines out on if need be. I call it my smudge-to-go kit.

ceremony, even though a couple of students had never done it before. After the ceremony was completed, each of us took tobacco and made offerings to our ancestors and the students that went to the school. On the bus back home, we sat together and discussed how the ceremony made us feel better, even though the sadness remained with us, but the ceremony did ease the pain.

I have been to the Mush Hole two more times since then, I have only made it completely through the tour once. Every time I enter into that school, I feel the pressure of someone pressing their hands on my head and squeezing, I can smell scents that I have smelled at no other place I have been to; in certain rooms I get overcome with complete fear and panic, but in other rooms I can sense laughter and joy.

I did find out from my Mother that she had known that one of our ancestors had gone to a residential school in the Great Lakes region, but never thought that it was important to tell me about it. For me, the knowing is painful, although it does explain for me someone some of the dysfunctionality of my family, like my Mother's denial of our heritage, or the stories from my Mother and Grandmother of the harshness of their parents' discipline of them. It even explains some of my Mother's own discipline choices, and her highly reserved ways of showing affection. To be completely honest, it may also explain my own hot and cold nature of expressing emotions and affection with those that are close to me.

I had often wondered what it must have been like for the residential school survivors to tell these stories, especially after keeping silent about their experiences for so long. I could only speculate what the process was like, what supports were given to those telling their stories, and what help was available to these people if the telling of these experiences became too much for them. In a brief conversation with a retired police officer that participated in the TRC interview

process, I learned some of the answers to these questions. Jim told me that unfortunately the answer is horrifying to anyone with any understanding of trauma and treatment. Many interviews were conducted over the phone, so there was no way of knowing how the interviewee was handling the experience. Those who told their stories in person often found the situation cold and impersonal, with interviewers that they had never met before sitting silently and checking off boxes on a sheet of paper while they revealed what was probably some of the most horrific experiences that the survivors have had in their lives. Jim said that he was not claiming that every person telling their residential school story had uncaring or inexperienced interviewers. However, not all victims had interviewers there that were trained in how to reduce the traumatic effect of telling their stories. Jim, a retired police officer, talked about how he and others with similar backgrounds of training for interviewing people that experienced traumatic events approached the interview process. The interviewers would give the interviewee time if they needed it, they were empathetic as to how hard the interview could be to the survivor, they were prepared with information for survivors to get help if they needed it, and in some cases they were even able to have elders who were experienced in talking with residential school survivors on hand for those who were telling their stories. Jim now often talks to groups about the reconciliation process, his experiences interviewing survivors, and how hearing these stories and seeing the pain that the survivors continue to experience has forever changed him. He is committed to helping to tell these stories, and share how this history has shaped the lives of those who experienced the schools, as well as the Original peoples and their communities.

Myeengun Henry and I had the opportunity to sit down and talk about these experiences and the requirement of survivors to tell their stories in order to obtain compensation for the abuses imposed on them by the staff at the schools. Below is the transcript of our conversation. I

have chosen not to alter this conversation in anyway because I felt to do so would take away from the impact of Myeengun's words. It is for that reason that I have chosen to use a reporting style employed by Taiaiake Alfred in *Wasasé* (2005). The conversation took place as I was discussing what I was finding from other participants about the residential schools and how people felt about healing from these stories being told. Myeengun and I would meet up and discuss what the data I had collected was telling me, and I would either get advice from him, or he would tell me stories that would add more context.

TC: With the residential schools, I really wrestled with the requirement of the survivors to tell the stories.

MH: If it was based on just money, that's how the government looked at it.

TC: No, I'm talking about from our perspective. I know there are a lot of people that didn't make an application, because they just couldn't bring themselves... But a lot of the people I talked to, even if it wasn't a survivor, rather family members, have said that the telling has created healing. This is because it has brought an understanding of where the survivors have come from for the family members.

MH: I can't blanket that though and say that is true among everybody.

TC: No, I wouldn't say it was true among everybody... I can also see some people being shunned ..., or being told that they aren't being believed. You know, like the people that did speak out during that era...

MH: ... There's consequences to that. It's painful, then you hide it through alcohol and drugs or whatever you do, or abusing other people. When the Prime Minister made the apology that was so evident. The reason I say that we can't do this as a blanket thing is because it is very individual to every single person that went to residential school, the degree of pain that they

suffered and hid. Some of them actually committed suicide after that [After the TRC disclosures]. Some of them went into more drug and alcohol abuse right after that. They didn't get help. And you are talking about the ones that didn't even identify as being abused, right, and they are still living... 'nobody knows what took place with me' you know. They're living through that too. There was no compensation for them.

TC: Like Justice Sinclair explained, the many times I have listened to him talk. It's only the students in the schools, which we can prove were in the schools... that's another thing we had to prove that they were there. That settlement doesn't take into account the intergenerational trauma... what's been done to the families... the harm that's been done to them, and how it keeps going. Then there is... I can't remember her name right now, the woman that is on the Commission... Wilson?

MH: Jody Wilson?

TC: Yeah! She said what was really striking to her is that the survivors that have spoken have taken ownership and responsibility for their bad acts. But nobody from the schools have taken ownership of their personal acts. You get this blanket apology from the churches or the government, but there are no specific apologies that really take ownership of what was actually done.

MH: No, because they didn't have to go through that process; all they had to do was say "I'm sorry". The survivors had to have a checklist to the degree of sexual assault in order to get a higher level of compensation. To me, when I sat through some of those hearings with elders, it was the most demeaning thing I ever seen in my life. They would check off if they heard a statement or if they said something which heightened that abuse then their compensation went

up. They didn't know that, [referring to the elders] they were just telling their story and those adjudicators were just checking it off. 'Oh, you mentioned this so you get another \$10,000'.

TC: I've talked to Jim a few times... He said he did it [survivor interviews] for two years. He said something like, "I don't know how I survived the two years and I didn't actually have to go through it".

MH: When you see elders cry...what do you do? You just feel so helpless.

I think I have seen my Dad cry once, that was at my brother's funeral. Right at the grave. He didn't make it obvious either... That was probably the first time I ever hugged him. It was probably the only time I ever hugged him. To him, hugging was sexual because that was what was imposed on him, right. So right from young, he didn't want to be sexual with his kids, so he avoided that. We didn't know, and that is what actually killed my Dad; because he finally opened up, all those years he defended residential schools. He said, I ate, I was warm, yeah, I had to fight, but everybody had to do that. So he always made me a hard worker. That was his story about residential school. It was at the last moment that he decided to do the application for compensation. He said if I'm going to get \$100,000, I'm going to go for it. So it was literally the last days that you could apply. My brother went with him, I didn't go. My brother said that coming home he [Myeengun's father] was different. He said something was wrong with him. That night he went to emergency 'cause he just got sick. He lived probably like six months and that is what triggered his demise I think... was the residential school hearing. 'Cause he was okay before that.

TC: Because it wasn't done in the right setting?

MH: No...well he just finally let it all out after all those years and then when they told him that he was going to get his cheque, that kind of livened him up a little bit, but he got his cheque on his dying bed. So he never got to spend any of it.

TC: When I am talking about how the families and the survivors were saying that the telling has been healing, I don't think they are talking about that... the hearings. I think that they are talking about how it allowed them to talk afterwards with their families. I think that the only purpose that served was as a catalyst.

MH: And that's what happened in some of the cases. I know in Randall's case, our elder, he actually went to his family after. He wrote it all down, let them all read it, then they all came together and talked about it. It wasn't easy, but they did it. That helped him, although he still has nightmares and stuff. I think he got that out of his system. It's like when you are dealing with cancer and diabetes, I always say, if you don't deal with the actual issue, it's not going to get resolved. You can hide behind the symptoms and treat the symptoms, but it is the actual cancer that you have to deal with. That's the cancer that is in your body when you are holding it back, and that's what's causing the ill health. But you need to have a structure that's going to do it properly, trust has to be built and in a lot of the adjudication hearings, there was no trust, you don't even know the person. How do you tell a person, a stranger, your most inner secrets?

TC: I know that Amy said when she got told about her Grandfather, I think it was her Grandfather, that it really improved their relationship.

MH: Because she understood him now. But see, we know that within our own communities. Residential school victimization is just part of how we live now. It's those that we teach in these courses that don't know anything about it; they've never heard about it, or they just watched a movie about it and think it is just a part of Canada. They don't realize the degree, until I actually

take them to a residential school sometimes, and I sit and talk with them about it before, they don't understand. They try to equate our atrocities to other worldly atrocities like the Holocaust or Rwanda and places like that. They don't want to hear more. In your own country, you want to be proud, you want to be patriotic, and when you hear things about your own country, you kind of just go "nah, it couldn't happen here".

Analysis

According to Smith, telling the stories of the past, even traumatic stories, allows all of us to remember the past so that a transformation can occur and healing can begin (2002:146). According to my participants, this telling of stories about the residential schools also celebrates the ways in which communities and individuals survived and resisted the oppression faced by those who endured these experiences. Alfred (2005:151) argues that the stories of residential school survival allow individuals and communities to embrace these struggles, which can then allow them to gain a sense of freedom from these experiences and begin a transformation from being a survivor to thriving. Therefore, in the instance of telling the stories of residential school experiences, the survivors and their families can gain a sense of strength and healing, which releases them from the shame that they had carried in their previous silence (see Shapiro, 1998). As several of the survivors told me in my research, although telling the stories was painful, it was like a weight had been lifted from them once they had. Similarly, when I was speaking to the younger generation, they expressed that hearing these stories helped them to heal as well. It gave the youth an understanding of why their parents or grandparents abused substances, people, and themselves. For this reason, it seems that it helped the families to heal and begin to move past this previously silenced history towards more positive futures. Cajete (1994:73) explains that by the telling of stories and spiritually sharing these journeys, people can begin to 'celebrate' this

history. For my participants, a renewed sense of pride in their identity as being among the Original people was repeatedly expressed. We still must question the actual personal impacts for survivors of having to tell their stories in non-therapeutic settings, as expressed by both Jim and Myeengun Henry, because from what they experienced, there was no follow-up to ensure the well-being of the survivors. We will never know how many people suffered negative responses after telling their stories, such as Myeengun's father experienced.

During the class action suit that brought some compensation for the survivors of the residential schools, the compensation monies were only given to the survivors. As stated earlier, no compensation was allowed for the families of survivors who also suffered as a result of the schools (TRC, 2012). Moreover, the money funding the TRC research was provided for by the survivors out of their settlements (TRC, 2012). In fact, in the TRC preliminary report, the commissioners reported the resistance of the government and churches to turn over documents, despite having court orders (TRC, 2012). To date, there have been no reports of any consequences being placed on the government or churches for their actions (Murray Sinclair, personal communication). It is, however, evident that the actions of the government and churches are greatly increasing the time needed to complete the TRC research and the cost of the TRC investigations due to having to repeatedly return to court to get access to these documents (Murray Sinclair, private communication). For this reason, because of the efforts to continue to hide information by the government and churches, it is questionable that we will ever completely understand the history of the residential schools and their impacts on the people effected by them.

Admittedly the TRC process has been fraught with difficulties, although the one thing that it has accomplished has been the un-silencing of a part of the history of Canada. I attended

very few events where the abuses in the residential schools were not spoken of. In fact, the only events that I attended in which these schools were not spoken of were the flash mob round dances that were taking place very early in the INM movement. These stories are educating both the Settler population and the youth of the Original people that have not been told these stories. As a result, the telling of these experiences subverts the traditional colonial institutions' power in trying to silence this one part of history that does not fit into the nationalist agenda of Canada as a multicultural and non-racist country.

Treaties and Wampums

Another theme in the stories told by those involved with INM in this study concerns the wampums and treaties. According to Myeengun Henry, a wampum is a beaded belt that carries meaning between peoples. On some occasions, they can be an invitation to a celebration, on others they can be an agreement between peoples, just like a treaty. The wampums that my participants of INM are concerned with are the treaty wampums. Myeengun Henry explained to me that before there were written treaties, the Original people of Turtle Island and the Europeans exchanged wampums. Myeengun told me that each wampum contains a story that explains the agreements made between the Original people and the Europeans. Through my discussions with Myeengun, it became clear that the wampums held, and continue to hold, different meanings for the Original people than they do for Europeans, both historically and in the present day. Therefore, I asked him to explain why he thought there are these differences in meanings and how they came about.

MH: To me, it's more of a psychological effect. When you go and learn how different people do things in the world and then you mimic that just to appease what you want out of them. I think that's what they use it as: a strategy more than the real heartfulness of what it's supposed to be.

These treaties to them [colonizers], these wampum belts, they [colonizers] looked at it as art; they looked at it as something other than the strength that it was supposed to be... So it gets diluted really to the fact that it is not what it is meant to be. Look at how much work went into a wampum belt. Probably today it took you almost \$5 for one little bead. So, you can't make a wampum belt because it will cost you how many thousands of dollars if you did it that way. That's how much work went into every single bead that they put together. They [the Europeans] learned how to mass produce that [the beads and wampum belts] in other places so they did it cheaper.

TC: Because they're not handmade?

MH: They aren't hand made. ... the stories that were put into ... [the wampums] was generations of what we're trying to present in that belt. Then we give it to people and that's the meaning: the time and effort it took to put that together. So when they own it, when they decide to mimic it [the wampum belts] ... the meaning's not there [for the colonizers]. It's just something that they can mass produce and they can appease us by our own art, and try to actually overtake our abilities. It really bothers me that way, because when the treaty of Niagara was taking place, when we adopted the Royal Proclamation, it was them [the Europeans] who brought the wampum belts to us. Sir William [Johnson] was the one who brought that wampum belt to us and asked us if we would honour that. So they tried to use our methods...

TC: Which belt was it?

MH: It was the 24 Nation Belt.

As established by many of the people whom I have spoken with and listened to during my field study, wampums were the original treaties on Turtle Island³⁷. The wampums were used

³⁷ Although this is not a quantitative study, the 'many' I refer to was between 30 and 35 event speakers that spoke of the wampums and treaties and the meanings that they hold for the Original peoples. I also had discussions with

between Indigenous peoples since time immemorial, according to the speakers that I listened to in this study. As Myeengun stated, when Europeans made contact with the Original people of this land, they quickly adopted the use of wampums to make agreements with the Original people. When listening to the people acting in resistance speaking, two wampum belts were frequently referred to: the Two Row Wampum, and the One Dish One Spoon Wampum. Currently, the courts have ruled that treaties should be understood and interpreted within the spirit and intent of all parties involved (*Delgamuukw v British Columbia*, 1997; *Minister of Canadian Heritage*, 2005). Thus, taking into consideration that the European colonizers understood that when presenting the Original people with the wampums they made, this constituted the equivalent of signing a treaty with them (see Dorsett & McLaren, 2014:117; Warry, 2009, Chapter 8). It is therefore the contention of those speaking and acting in resistance at the events that I attended that the exchange of wampums holds the same weight as the signing of a treaty.

The Two Row Wampum, according to the speakers at INM events that I attended, is an agreement originally made between the Dutch and the Iroquois Confederacy in the early 1600s. The wampum carries a design of two purple rows of wampum beads, with three white rows as a background. The two purple rows signify the water vessels of Europeans and the Original people of the land. For this reason, one row represents the European ships, and the other represents the canoes of the Original people, with both vessels travelling on a river side by side. They run parallel to each other without interfering with the other. This non-interference represents the mutual respect of each people's sovereignty and the agreement to not interfere with the other's

8 of my participants concerning the specific meanings of the wampums that the speakers had discussed. I choose to use Myeengun Henry's explanations in my report because what he said incorporated the things that others said about the wampums. Moreover, he is a wampum carrier, and for that reason has devoted himself to studying, learning, and sharing the stories and agreements that these wampums carry.

internal affairs, because neither will try to steer the other's vessels. Although the Dutch originally tried to define the relationship as one between father and son, the Confederacy redefined it as a relationship of brotherhood, where no one had superiority over the other before agreeing to the peace and friendship that is represented by the three white rows on the wampum. So for those that I have spoken to or listened to, the Two Row Wampum is an agreement of mutual respect and friendship to share the resources of the land without harming the other's ability to use the resources for their own benefit as well. Thus, the over-exploitation of the resources by one party is a violation of this agreement that was made to last as long as the sun shall rise in the east and set in the west.

It is important to note that although the original agreement was made with the Dutch people, the Europeans that have come after adopted this treaty as well (see Gehl, 2014). Today, according to Myeengun Henry, the Two Row Wampum is stored in Canada and has been used by Nations across Turtle Island to secure their rights in various court cases.

The One Dish One Spoon Wampum, on the other hand, is an agreement that was made between the Original people of this land. This belt is almost all white with a patch of purple at the centre of the belt, and within the purple patch is an oblong spot of white inside of it. I asked Myeengun Henry to explain the story and meaning behind this belt:

MH: That was an internal relationship with other First Nations that we can venture onto each other's territory and hunt and fish with no objections. That's really the basis of it. It's a picture of a beaver, that's what's in the centre of it, and the spoon is what we use to deliver food to each other. So it's all about being respectful of the land. We don't claim land to be owned, but our traditional territory is land that we are spiritually responsible for. So whatever takes place on the

land, which is basically our traditional territory ... [is] our responsibility. It doesn't matter if somebody else wrecks it [the land], we still are the ones who have got to answer to it [the land]. So if Toyota spills, or Shell spills, they can say that they did it, but we are the ones that have to be there at the end to be sure it's cleaned up properly. So that is why the belt was built, so that we would be respectful of each other's lands. We wouldn't over take their fish and their deer, but we will be respectful of it [the land and its resources]. So we won't starve.

TC: A lot of people bring it up with these rallies and everything that I've gone to. So if it's an internal relationship...how does that...work to establish the relationship with the Settlers?

MH: Well that's why it came to be that we had a man from our reserve fishing up around Tyendinaga, and the conservation officer stopped him and asked him for his status card. He looked at his status card and said 'You're not from this area, you're from around London area.' So they arrested him, 'You're out of your territory. Your status card allows you to fish in your own territory, but not outside of your territory'. So we were at the band office one time and these guys wanted to come down and talk about this. So, MNR [Ministry of Natural Resources] came and the conservation officer came and we had this conversation, and our lawyer came, Peter Bear, who knows about treaties and stuff. He's [Peter Bear] the one that brought up the Dish with One Spoon. He [Peter Bear] said if you talk to the people from that traditional territory, they would back the story up that we have a relationship with each other based on that wampum belt. So they [MNR] didn't know what to do. They [MNR] were saying 'I don't know anything about that, all I know is he was fishing on this territory, so we're still going to arrest him'. I said, okay you [MNR] decide to do that, then our Nations [Chippewas of the Thames and Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte] are going to bring this to court. We're [Chippewas of the Thames and Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte] not going to sit there and watch our band members be arrested for hunting

and fishing in a territory where they have permission to do it. So after all of that, they [MNR] left, we [Chippewas of the Thames] contacted the people from the Tyendinaga area [Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte]. We [Chippewas of the Thames and Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte] both agreed that was our agreement together. We [Chippewas of the Thames] took it to them [Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte] first, then MNR, and said we [Chippewas of the Thames and Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte] are taking you to court and they [MNR] dropped the charges. So that is how it has impact today. If the legal system doesn't recognize it or they don't know about it, then that's what they will proceed with... you know arrests and stuff like that. They [the government and their agents] can't impose their law over the law that we already had, and that's what they [MNR] were trying to do. It'll always be that way. We've got to be respectful of them [the people whose territory you are visiting]. We have to tell them that we are fishing in their [the traditional keepers of the land you are on] territory. In fact, if you go down to Moraviantown, they [the Delaware Nation] even have signs: 'if you are another First Nations please come and contact us before you fish. That way we [the Delaware Nation] at least know you're here'.

In order to understand how wampums and treaties hold similar meanings, I asked for more details from Myeengun. My concern centred on how I have been told that the Original people have tried to adhere to all of the agreements that they made with the European colonizers as they understood them when wampums were exchanged and treaties were signed. Conversely, there have been many court cases and accusations that the Colonizers have not held true to their commitments set out in these agreements.

TC: We were talking about the wampums and them not holding the same meanings for the Colonizers, but when they made the treaties with us it was pretty much the same thing. They [the Colonizers] expected us to adhere to what was agreed to, but they didn't necessarily do that...

MH: Well cessation treaties and stuff like that, they [the Colonizers] pushed us [the Original Peoples] into a corner to do that. Like here in Ontario, the *Longwoods Treaty* was the one that gave up all of London and south. That was with the Anishinaabe people down here accept [a] component where they [the Colonizers] put reserves. So, out of all those millions of acres, we [The Anishinaabe] never gave up our traditional title to those lands. It was just the use of the land [that the Original people agreed to in the treaty]. The funny thing is all those titles and treaties that we gave them use of the land to only went plow deep. So the resources are not theirs [the Settlers]. That's our [Chippewas of the Thames] argument. We are saying that was never part of the treaty; that was never part of the deal. You [Settlers and Colonizers] can have the surface and build and plant, but plow deep, anything else still was not a part of that [treaty agreement]. So as much as they [Colonizers] have been able to get that land back, we still say that is ours underneath it.

In a discussion with Myeengun Henry concerning the current resistance of his band against the plans of Enbridge to reverse the flow of the line 9 pipeline through their territory, he revealed how his people are employing the values set out in the Two Row Wampum to secure the best deal possible. Currently, Enbridge is seeking to reverse the flow in Line 9 and use this 40-year- old pipeline to transport bitumen. Myeengun and his band, the Chippewas of the Thames, are concerned with these plans and the impacts of reversing the flow, increasing the pressure in the pipeline, and what a potential spill of bitumen can have on their territory.

Myeengun and many people still enjoy their right to use the waterways to hunt and fish. These traditional activities are an important part of their lives, and also help provide for the nutritional needs of the people living on the reserve. On Myeengun's reserve, although it is very close to a metropolitan area, the people continue to live in poverty. For this reason, their ability to use the resources of the land to sustain themselves is imperative to their ability to meet their daily needs. Thus they [the band members] are concerned with protecting the environment not only because of their spiritual responsibility to do so, but for them if the water and land become poisoned by a spill, they may not be able to feed their families. In the following discussion, Myeengun shares how the current relationship is unequal and lacks mutual respect, as laid out in the Two Row Wampum agreement.

MH: (Looking at an email) The government is looking at different tactics for environmental control. They [Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC)] are showing that there are concerns with the water that is not ... important to this government, but the people. So "on behalf of the Ministries of Environment and Climate Change, Natural Resources, Forestry, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, I [email author] am pleased to inform you that Ontario has signed a Canada/ Ontario agreement on Great Lakes water quality and ecosystems health. Ontario recognizes First Nations communities as key partners in the restoration and protection in the conservation and protection of the Great Lakes. The new agreement contains a number of new provisions that strengthens and governs accountability measures as well as new annexes on engaging First Nations and Métis on climate change impacts. The new agreement provides a framework for the on-going cooperation between Ontario and Canada, [to] coordinate efforts to meet prospective and shared commitments to respect the Great Lakes. I [email author] will help

to implement the Ontario Great Lakes strategy as well as Canada's commitment under the Canadian/United States Great Lakes water quality agreement".

So we [Chippewas of the Thames] are being approached about these things now, of course they always do it before we get there [make the plans and decide what they are going to do]. This is what we've [government officials] done, we're [government officials] going to include you [Chippewas of the Thames] now, maybe. But see that's where we³⁸ haven't resolved what consultation really means yet. Consultation to them [the government] means a conversation, a call, a letter, because when... "We'll let you know later after it's done"³⁹. We had a meeting with the Department of Fisheries at our band office one time and I went down for that meeting and we [Chippewas of the Thames] had our lands department come down [to the] environment committee. He [the governmental representative] was telling us [Chippewas of the Thames] about what they found in the Thames River and what they [the government] were going to do about it. They [the governmental officials] were going to pass these laws to protect the waterways. I asked them [the governmental representatives] right off the bat, well what's our roll in this? Why are you coming here? Are you considering this some kind of consultation with us? Are you going to take this back and somehow say that you consulted with our First Nation so that you can now go ahead and pass your laws without our consent? We think that is wrong.

[Myeengun speaking to governmental representative]

He said 'well in my report I have to say that I came here to talk to you'. I said "well in my report it says that I was taken away from my job, I took my department away from their job, so we're going to charge you for the time that you spent here". We [the Chippewas of the Thames] have a

³⁸ Here Myeengun is referring to "we" in a general sense indicating First Nations peoples and the government of Canada.

³⁹ Myeengun referring to how the governmental representative speaks to the band council

process now, where before if they [the government] wanted to consult with us [Chippewas of the Thames] they [government representatives] would think that everybody [the Chippewas of the Thames band council] was going to just jump and go to their [the government] meetings. You see, he [the governmental representative] is getting paid for this meeting right? It's his job. You're [Myeengun speaking as if he were speaking to a governmental representative] pulling us away from our jobs because you want to have a meeting time with us, so this is the way we're [both the government and the Chippewas of the Thames]going to do it now. So we [The Chippewas of the Thames] charge everybody now.

TC: I don't blame you.

MH: That's the worst thing about the pipeline [Line 9]: they [Enbridge] stuck that thing in the ground 40 years ago without any consultation with us. They [Enbridge] have made billions of dollars on that pipeline all those 40 years. So, when we [Chippewas of the Thames band council] were up in Calgary, we said there is a little bit of back pay that you [Enbridge] owe our Nation. All these years that you've [Enbridge] made money on our territory [Chippewas of the Thames First Nation], you [Enbridge] never even approached us once to see if we wanted to be a part of it. So what we [Chippewas of the Thames] did was we hired an economist now, because you [general reference to people in general] can actually hide money now. So if you look at somebody and you know financials and stuff like that, money can hide. They [corporations] do it all the time. So we [Chippewas of the Thames] have an economist now that is determining how much money and worth that has actually come out of that line over the last forty years. Not setting aside the hidden money, we're [Chippewas of the Thames First Nation] putting it all back together now and saying we know what it [the value of Enbridge's use of the band's territory] is worth. We know what future travel of oil through our territory is worth. So we're not going to sit

back and take a little token chump change to keep us quiet. We're going to go after even a 1% of that total profit and you [Enbridge] are going to alleviate some of the poverty in our community if this is going to go through. So, we're going to play this roll. They [Enbridge] want us to stop the lawsuit and that's impeding them, that's the reason there is no oil flowing through that line right now; because of our lawsuit. So when we [Chippewas of the Thames] went to Calgary, they [Enbridge] thought that we were just going to beat them up and say we're not doing anything. We're thinking differently. I actually gave them a wampum belt... a Two Row. My lawyer was there.

TC: Is this the one [lawyer] that I met in Toronto?

MH: Yes, he was at the hearing. His eyes just got big because he didn't know I was going to do that. Then when we went and sat down, what he [the lawyer] said and what I said earlier was if you accept this... If your president accepts this Two Row wampum gift from us, it means you [Enbridge] are accepting the responsibility of that Two Row wampum, or you're being reminded of that. So if you [Enbridge] accept that, that means that you [Enbridge] adopt exactly what we are talking about in that Two Row wampum: that resources need to be shared and respected for the land. After our meeting, they [Enbridge] had accepted it and they were all happy, right. I had just given it to them in the proper manner and stuff. The lawyer pulled us aside and said that was ingenious because if we [Chippewas of the Thames and Enbridge] go to court on this and we [Chippewas of the Thames] have pictures of them [Enbridge] accepting it, he [the lawyer] said they [Enbridge] have accepted the responsibility that went into that treaty.

TC: So they [Enbridge] were looking at it as "oh, I just got this cool thing"?

MH: Yes, but they [Enbridge] weren't looking at what goes with that cool thing. So we have them that was...

TC: Did somebody film that?

MH: Well we got pictures of it.

TC: You don't have it filmed?

MH: No, the lawyer said that the pictures will work. When he [the lawyer] pulled us aside at the end of it, he said 'That was amazing'. We'll see how that goes because we still have that over them. So we do have control. We don't know all the economists, all the consultation people are saying that the pipeline is going to go. They said the government backs them [Enbridge] up, big money backs them [Enbridge] up. They [the lawyer and economist] said yeah your lawsuit is going to slow them [Enbridge] down a little bit, but it's [Line 9] going to go. So, what do you want to do? Do you want to just fight them [Enbridge] in court, spend all of your money, then at the end of it, you have no chance. They [Enbridge] are probably going to win it. Or, are you going to deal with them? Are you going to get what you can out of it? To me, that was hurtful words, I said...[Voice cracking, Myeengun taking a few breaths]

TC: That's hard to swallow.

MH: Very hard! I said, if I walk away from this without nothing either, then they [Enbridge] go ahead and proceed and they're making billions of dollars on our territory, what did we accomplish? Nothing. So, we're in the middle of negotiation with them. I'm not saying that we are giving up, but the fact is we're going to bring the best case scenario to the people [The members of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation]. We're going to say, we are still fighting the fight. We [The Chippewas of the Thames] don't want this diluted bitumen flowing through our territory. But on the other hand, if it does happen, we got the best deal out of it that we can. So this is what we [the band council] are going to take to the people, we're going to say it's up to you guys [the band members]. We [Chippewas of the Thames] can keep fighting, that's up to

you [band members], or we can go with the best deal that we can get out of them [Enbridge].

Which is it?

TC: Then if there is a breach in one of the pipes?

Myeengun continued on to explain that the Line 9 pipeline only has a lifetime expectancy of 40 years, and it is now at that 40 year mark. He also explained that the band paid scientists to examine the pipeline and give an expert opinion about the condition of the pipeline and the potential of a fracture in the pipeline in the near future. According to what Myeengun told me, the scientists have come to the conclusion that there is a 90% chance that the Line 9 Pipeline will experience a break within the next five years. Myeengun also told me that to date, Enbridge has no plan in place in the event of a break in the line.

MH: Well that'll be devastation too, but you're [general reference] going to dislodge that whole pipe, you're disrupting a lot of environmental factors that have been growing over the top of it for the past 40 years⁴⁰. So you are doing a lot more damage if you're going to do it that way.

We're [Chippewas of the Thames] thinking that if you [general reference] slid a pipe inside of the pipe and expanded it that way, or did something that way. There's other ways of dealing with it. You're talking about an 8 inch pipe, that's going to travel 60,000 more barrels of pressure through it. It's going to disrupt, it's going to break.

TC: ...That's what I was thinking. I keep thinking about what I heard at the hearings [National Energy Board hearing in Toronto, Ontario] about the pipes are only ¼ inch thick and the new pipes are 4 inches.

MH: Yeah but with a 40 year lifespan too, on that 40 year old pipe. They didn't tell you that at the hearing, but we've got that information. When they did put the pipe in, it was expected to last 40 years.

TC: And it's 40 years old?

MH: Yes its 40 years old now.

TC: I can very distinctly remember them talking about the leaks over in the Thousand Island area. As far as the environmental impact, that team, the lawyers for that section of the pipe [referring to the lawyers representing the First Nations bands that are in the Thousand Islands area] did a very good presentation on the environmental impact. Of course, they've [Thousand Islands ecosystem] got that very delicate ecosystem that they're dealing with as well. Not that other ones [ecosystems] aren't, but we're talking about that area having species that are only in that area.

MH: Well that's how it is with this. When we [Chippewa of the Thames band council] went down to Kalamazoo in the summertime, it showed that a length of 4 years that they weren't able to do anything to fix that land. It's still devastated⁴¹. When we brought that up to them, they of course were very apologetic. They [Enbridge] said that was the lowest level of our organization, in fact, the pipe that they took out of there, they have actually made rings out of it now, for all of their employees. Just to remind them of what can take place when somebody doesn't do their job. They [Enbridge] let on that was the most devastating thing that ever happened to their organization. They [Enbridge] said that every new employee has to know that took place, and they all get a ring made out of the metal that was that pipeline... just so they [the employees] remember.

⁴¹ Myeengun is speaking about an Enbridge pipeline break in Kalamazoo, Michigan on the Kalamazoo River

Analysis

The exchange of wampums and the signing of treaties is a recognition of the sovereignty of the parties involved in the agreements made through them (see UN, 1969). For the Original people acting in resistance in this study, these wampums and treaties indicate that they never gave up their sovereignty. Moreover, when they [the Original people in this study] speak of these agreements in their stories, they are expressing their goal of creating a future when these treaties and agreements made with the wampums are realized (Alfred, 2005:266). As Myeengun Henry explained in his story of the man from his reserve that was arrested for fishing near Tyendinaga, the One Dish One Spoon Wampum agreement still stands today between the Original people of the land.

The crux of the argument for sovereignty being brought forth by those acting in resistance [in this study] is that agreements were made between the Original peoples and the Colonizers in the form of wampums and treaties. According to Myeengun Henry and other speakers that I listened to in this study, the treaty process is continuing today with land claim agreements and so on. The United Nations set out laws and guidelines covering who can make treaties, and under what conditions they are valid or invalid (UN, 1969). The *Vienna Convention* clearly expresses that a treaty can only be made between sovereign peoples (UN, 1969, Article 1). Therefore, by entering into a treaty-making process with the Original people, Canada is recognizing their sovereignty as a separate and independent people. The *Vienna Convention* also goes into detail concerning the laws under which treaties can be deemed invalid. Within these guidelines, if one party commits fraud, employs corruption, or uses coercion to procure the signing of a treaty, then it is invalid (UN, 1969, Articles 46-53). Many people in this study have told stories of coercive tactics used by the Canadian government to procure the signatures of the

leaders of the Original people. Myeengun, for instance, when speaking of the *Longwoods Treaty*, told of how the people were “backed into a corner” during the treaty process. Throughout this study, event speakers have also spoken about the tactics being used by the government of Canada with regards to trying to get the *First Nations Education Act* passed. For example, Kenna from Six Nations of the Grand complained that educational funding has been withheld from many reserve school boards by the government until they consent to the *First Nations Education Act* (AANDC, 2015). This is similar to the current situation of the governmental demands on reserves to reveal the financial information of Chiefs and Band Councillors in the *First Nations Transparency Act*. In this case, the Chiefs and Band Councillors are required to publicly reveal all of their financial earnings, even income not related to their political duties for their bands (AANDC, 2014). If the band refuses to comply with this requirement, the Government will withhold funding necessary to the survival of the band members on the reserves (AANDC, 2014). The reporting required exceeds the mandatory financial reporting of Settler politicians, thus these actions by the Canadian government, in the eyes of the majority of my participants, is a violation of the treaty agreements made by the government of Canada, and are blatantly coercive.

According to Alfred, to resolve the issue of sovereignty, two things must occur. First, the Settlers must begin to move past their ethnocentric ideas of how people should act and relate to each other within the world, and accept more pluralistic worldviews (Alfred, 2005:266). Second, for the Original people, they must generate their own governing capacity through developing and maintaining economic self-sufficiency, as well as establishing internal social reforms to build stronger, healthier communities (Alfred, 2005:266). The majority of the participants in this study have argued that the key to realizing healing and sovereignty is by overcoming the economic

reliance on government monies. Myeengun Henry expressed this in our conversation about Enbridge and the Line 9 Pipeline. In this case, Myeengun revealed how fair compensation for use of his band's land was never required of Enbridge or other resource industries that have used their lands. This kept his band in a state of poverty, preventing them from being able to break the cycle of dependency and overcome the coercive State practices when negotiating agreements (Alfred, 2009; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Catellino, 2008). When looking south, the Seminole Tribe of Florida have, over the past 40 years, become economically self-sufficient (Catellino, 2008). This economic self-sufficiency has afforded them the ability to create internal social reforms, such as language revitalization, re-establishment of clan organizations, and so on (see Catellino, 2008). Thus, by removing the economic power structure that has worked to marginalize the Original people in their relationships with the government and Settler populations, the people in this study believe that they will be able to position themselves in a more equal relationship with the government of Canada. As Myeengun Henry once told me, it is difficult to be equal when one party is dependent on the other. However, in order to gain economic self-sufficiency, the people in many cases, are required to trade off traditional values, laws, and teachings in order to do so. For this reason, the people are faced with these difficult decisions like Myeengun Henry spoke about in order to gain a better foot-hold in realizing an unfettered form of sovereignty.

Conversely, Alfred (2005, 2009) cautions that economic independence is not the only factor needed for a true Indigenous resurgence. Even though in the past the Original people have realized victories in court cases, as well as economic development through land deals and casino profits, they still fail to create a complete transformation that revitalizes the spiritual and cultural aspects of life lost by the Original people through the processes of colonization (Alfred,

2005:23). Alfred (2001:49) argues that contemporary colonial agendas continue to make attempts to define the self-determination of Indigenous peoples within the context of the State rather than considering them as separate and autonomous peoples with global standing. This, according to the people in this study, is being done through the State's active attempts to erase Indigenous people's links to their traditional homelands through land seizures and land claims. However, it is the goal of those acting in resistance in this study for all people, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous alike, to adhere to the principles set out in the Two Row Wampum. These ideologies exemplify the respect and recognition of the universal connections of all peoples, while simultaneously valuing our differences and autonomy (Alfred, 2005:266). This respect and acknowledgement, according to those in this study, does not seek to remove Settler society from the lands of the Original people (Alfred, 2005:277; Myeengun Henry, 2014, personal communication). Rather, it pursues the return of the values outlined in the Two Row Wampum, where both peoples live together in harmony, respecting each other's independence and rights to equitably access the resources of the land without interference.

As stated earlier by the majority of participants in this study, the challenge for all people living in Canada at this point is going to be the process of decolonizing the hearts and minds of the people. Alfred (2005:84) claims that those resisting colonial oppression realize the importance of unity, not only in their collective existence, but spiritually as well. According to my Grandmother, our ancestors realized that no matter what disagreements we had amongst ourselves, it is imperative that we work together in resistance. Eight speakers at resistance events that I attended argued that we cannot allow our internal problems to separate us, because that is when we allow those who stand against us to defeat us. From what Myeengun Henry told me, the unity of the people is imperative to a successful resistance; however, this unity is not meant to be

considered as the unison of solely the Original people, but the unifying, building, and strengthening of the relationships between all people living on this land. It has been said many times to me throughout my time in the field that the government and corporations are destroying all of our futures. Therefore, we must stand together in constructing a relationship of unity developed through our common concerns. Additionally, throughout my life, elders have told me that ‘we [Settlers and Original people] have much more in common than we have differences’.

However, through the process of decolonizing our minds in the way in which peoples in this study spoke of, we must recognize the forces that have divided us. In this case, these divisions have occurred due to those in power erasing the history and identities of the Original people of the land (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:598). As such, for the people acting in resistance that I have spoken with, sharing the stories of history, experiences, ceremonies, and so on, is how they intend to begin the decolonization process in order to build relationships of mutual respect and cooperation between Settlers and the Original people.

Roles and Responsibilities of Gender

In the current resistance, women are front and centre in leading the resurgence of the people. As I already stated, INM was sparked by the teach-in organized by Jessica Gordon, Sylvia McAdam Sayswahhum, Nina Wilson, and Sheelah McClean. According to all of my participants, since its inception, women have remained the leaders of this contemporary resistance. This is not to say that men are not involved in the movement, but in most cases from what I have seen, they have been taking supporting roles. However, in the area that I live in, I have been witness to some contention over the leadership and it is my belief that this can explain the lack of activity in the Waterloo region.

Due to the impacts of colonization, Indigenous children were taught Settler society's idea of how women and men are supposed to act in the world (see Alfred, 2005, 2009; Haig-Brown, 1988; Milloy, 1999; Smith, 2002; TRC, 2015). For this reason, in this study, part of the decolonization process involves the telling of stories of the position of women and men in traditional societies. I had the opportunity to hear a musician in Ottawa speaking on how the colonial changes in the gendered structures of the Original peoples' societies have brought about the social illnesses that the people are experiencing today. According to Gerald, "once we return our women to their traditional positions of leadership and power within our communities, we will heal the high rates of drug use, suicide, and more importantly domestic violence". He continued by saying that when the Colonizers made us live like the Europeans, our women were made irrelevant in the political structure of our people. Thus our women [the Original women] lost their right to the homes that they built and the ownership of the products of their labour. The men were told by the Colonizers that women did not have value because they did not have the intelligence of a man, so only men were allowed any decision-making power within their communities and interactions between Indigenous communities and the European governmental representatives. The men were also told that women should be controlled by men. Moreover, men were instructed that they should do the farming, which was among Gerald's peoples' tradition the responsibility of women, and that they [the men] alone should make all the decisions for the community without input from women. Furthermore, domestic violence was introduced into the communities of the Original people by the colonizing agents, who instructed the men to beat their wives into submission if they refused to obey the men. Gerald also explained how the colonizing agents would hire the Original women to cook and clean in their homes. However, they also treated the Original women like chattel when taking country wives

either by consent or by force. They [Colonizers and Settlers] then would have sexual relations with these women, producing children. However, according to Gerald, ultimately these men would return to their European wives and homes, discarding their country wives and children like “trash”. These events created a great amount of pressure on the Original men to adopt these attitudes about women, and to give up their traditional roles and responsibilities as men and adopt European gendered roles. According to Gerald, these abrupt changes in the roles and responsibilities of the men greatly affected their sense of identity. The men were no longer able to gain a sense of worth through hunting and providing for their families. Gerald said that the Original men were not able to learn the principles and ways of warriors, which gave them pride in themselves and a value system that taught them about the importance of protecting and providing for their families. However, because the Original men were still being taught these traditional values, Gerald argued that they too suffered from these changes in roles and responsibilities. The Original men felt great shame because they were literally forced to beat their children and wives in order to control them under the direction of the Colonists. In conclusion, Gerald claimed that men now need to support the Original women in taking back their traditional roles and responsibilities in their communities. His argument centred on the idea that women are valuable members of the nations because they are the “backbone of the nation”. He related the term backbone to women because without a backbone, a person cannot stand up; if they try they will certainly fall. This emphasizes Gerald’s community’s teaching about the value and importance of women to all communities. Gerald further contended that men need to honour and respect the women because they are the “life-givers”, the teachers, the keepers of stories, and the “fabric that holds our nations together”. He concluded his talk by claiming that by rebuilding our [the nations of the Original peoples] nation’s ‘backbone’, many social

illnesses, such as domestic violence, lateral violence, addictions, and suicide, will cease to be a large problem in Indigenous communities. This is because “women will be valued and respected”; they will once again be able to take leadership roles and share the knowledge that they have to make our nations [nations of the Original peoples] strong again.

Gerald’s words were very powerful, and from what I witnessed in Ottawa, the men upheld those values and agree that this is the way to heal many community ills. Conversely, this valuing and respect of the women was not always present in other communities that I conducted my research in. In one city, I noticed that many men would speak in the same manner that Gerald had in Ottawa. However, I also observed several of these same men showing women disrespect by cutting them off when they were speaking, insulting their intelligence when they spoke in contradiction to what the men said, and using indirect threats of violence to impose their will on the women. In one instance, I was witness to a man spreading untrue rumours about a woman who spoke against the stories and history he was claiming as true⁴². Several participants that I spoke with about these circumstances attributed this lateral violence to the clash between the Original people that are colonized and those who are working towards decolonizing themselves.

In a discussion with Myeengun Henry about these circumstances, he brought up that from his perspective the women are healing from the colonial violence at a much faster rate than the Original men are. More specifically, he told me that it is the women that are completing their high school education and attending post-secondary school at higher rates than the men are. Over the past decade, I have also witnessed that women are participating in cultural events and

⁴² I believe that his statements made against this woman were not true, because several women publicly chastised this man for his behaviour.

practices more than the men have been. For instance, while men do participate in community feasts and powwows, they are greatly outnumbered by the women and children.

During my field research, I had the opportunity to speak with and learn from Shannon Thunderbird. She has devoted her life to advocating for the Original people of Canada, as well as for the well-being and status of all women. Shannon is Tsimshian from the Pacific Northwest. When she introduces herself, she tells people she is from the land of the totem poles. However, what comes to mind for me is that her people are from the land of the Spirit Bear⁴³. This for me is significant because the coastal Tsimshian people watch and protect the Spirit Bear, meaning the protection of both the land and animals is ingrained into the culture of the Tsimshian people's lives (see CBC, 2015; National Geographic, 2014). However, the people are now concerned about threats to the land, water, and Spirit Bears by Enbridge's plans to run pipelines through the territory to carry tar sands oil products from Alberta to the Pacific (see Spoil, 2011).

According to Shannon Thunderbird, most of the First Nations were matrilineal, but even in the nations that were patrilineal, women were highly respected and were often sought out for their advice and leadership. Shannon Thunderbird, through her research, has found that all of the Original nations practiced egalitarianism between the genders. Laughing, she pointed out how much time was saved from not endlessly having to discuss gender issues: "Everyone just did what they were good at in order to further and protect the community". She points out that sadly the Original women of Canada continue to be the most marginalized citizens in the country. She has great sorrow for her sisters that either by choice or force are subjected to the chaotic violence of men that seek to prevent them from coming into their own power. This drives her to continue

⁴³ The Spirit Bear is a Black Bear that has a recessive gene that makes the bear white instead of black. These bears are only found in the Great Bear Rainforest and are sacred to the people living in the rainforest.

her work to improve the quality of life of all Indigenous women. She has devoted herself to speaking to people of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds in her efforts to educate people on the importance of gender equality, and also acts as a leader in bridging the cultural divide between the Original people and Settler population.

Shannon Thunderbird speaks strongly to the ways in which colonization has negatively impacted the Original people, especially women. She often refers to the laws and policies set out by the federal government that work to keep the Original women marginalized. Many people are aware of the historical laws that had negative impacts on Indigenous women (see *Indian Act*, 1867, 1985). For instance, up until 1985, Status women who married a ‘Non-Native’ man lost their status (see *Indian Act*, 1867; RCAP, 1996:V. 1.300-302 & V. 4. 7-106). However, one law that many are not aware of that is still in effect is the law governing divorce on reserves. In these cases, according to Shannon Thunderbird, the woman is not entitled to the right to an equitable share in the division of property. In fact, Shannon states that it is not uncommon for the woman to be given nothing at all in the division of assets. This, according to Shannon, is because all rules and regulations concerning divorce on reserves are not covered under the Canadian or Provincial law, but by the *Indian Act*, which has no provisions for the division of marital property (*Indian Act*, 1867; Thunderbird, 2014). Shannon argues that this means that according to law outlined in the *Indian Act*, “a woman cannot possess or apply for a one half interest in on-reserve property for which her husband holds the certificate of possession” (Thunderbird, 2014). This law leaves a woman who lives on-reserve in a very precarious situation if she should choose to leave an abusive partner to protect both herself and her children.

For the above stated reasons, Shannon Thunderbird seeks the return of the traditional knowledge and practices of the Original people. When speaking and sharing her knowledge, she

shares that women are the life-givers, making them the heart of their nations. In her stories, women are described as the heartbeat of their nations because of their life-giving gift. Shannon explains that just as Mother Earth breathes life into all beings and provides the necessities to sustain life, women hold the power and knowledge to do the same for their children and communities. Therefore, according to Shannon, women's ability to give life and sustain it builds a strong connection between her [woman] and Mother Earth. Shannon asserts that through this connection, women are given the knowledge of the plants, roots, and seeds that were good to eat. This, Shannon argues, helped women to feed and care for their communities when food was scarce. Shannon went further to say that through women's connection to Mother Earth, they were taught lessons on how to live, and how to speak wisely and lead their people. Shannon told me that this is why women were the centre of tribal life: men, children, and even elders would seek out their wisdom and advice.

According to Shannon Thunderbird, traditionally, women had direct impact on all matters of community life. She explains that women determined when war or raids on other tribes were necessary, women also made the decision of when the community must move to new locations, and they were often left alone to care for the community while the men travelled to hunt or were away fighting to protect the people. Shannon asserts that this is why the women controlled the inner circle of community life. Shannon said that by being in charge of the inner circle of the community's life, women had the power to override the decisions of men if they felt it was in the best interest of the community to do so. In most nations, Shannon contends, it was the women who chose the Chiefs, and in the event that he did not act in the best interest of the community, then it was the women that removed him from his position. Shannon also told me that the women

acted as negotiators in disputes both within the community and between their community and others, as well as functioning as go-betweens in treaty negotiations.

According to Shannon Thunderbird, our relative Grandmother Moon controls the tides of the waters and cycles of women. Grandmother Moon, in the creation story mentioned earlier, is the ancestor of all the Original people, and thus a relative of all the women. This creates a strong connection between women and Grandmother Moon, thus creating a connection for the women to the waters. The female elders that I have spoken with during this study have told me that it is our connection to Grandmother Moon and the water that requires the Original women to take back their traditional roles and responsibilities to protect Mother Earth, the waters, and the communities' of the Original peoples from the damage caused by the over the exploitation of resources.

Even though I have heard claims that the traditional knowledge of the Original peoples was lost because of the assimilationist practices of the colonial government, Elder Thunderbird explained that this knowledge has always been within women. Shannon shares this story to reveal how women have this knowledge within them. "Grandmother Moon has stored all of this knowledge along with the memories of our ancestors. Since women are so strongly connected to Grandmother Moon, they are able to intuitively access this vital knowledge." Mother Earth, according to Shannon Thunderbird, also sent She Who Remembers to come and teach the Original people the stories that they have lost. Another Elder, Mary Lou Smoke, teaches that this innate knowledge is written in our blood memories. Another young woman named Jessica, from the East Coast of New Brunswick, told me about being able to find her great-great-grandmother's grave site, even though she had never been told her name.

During the late Summer and Fall of 2014, the Elder Thunderbird's Women's Big Drum group was invited to attend and play at a University Powwow. When the men's big drum groups that were invited heard that this had taken place, they strongly opposed the women being at the Powwow. Their argument for the exclusion of the women was based on 'tradition' and the need to respect the traditional people of the land's customs. I was invited to a meeting at the University to discuss rescinding the invitation of Shannon Thunderbird's Women's Big Drum group to the Powwow. Upon being informed of this meeting, I offered to research the history of the women playing the big drum for the organizer of the powwow. She agreed that this would be a good idea in a phone conversation between the two of us. After this conversation and before the meeting previously mentioned, I received another phone call from a man that plays with one of the local big drum groups. In this conversation, I was told that if I were to attend the upcoming meeting and share my research "they would make sure that I would never walk again". Although I tried to inform the powwow organizer before the meeting about the threats that were made to me, she refused to listen to my concerns. Surprisingly, when I made a report to the regional police, the threats against me were taken seriously. When the meeting took place, there were more reports that the men had made threats against the women and their drum if they were to attend the powwow. These reports originated from the meeting I was initially invited to attend. The report spoke of the men's disrespect to a woman elder in the meeting, and claim that the land that the University was on was their [the men's] traditional land, and therefore the women should be uninvited⁴⁴. During this meeting one of the members of the men's big drum group made a threat that "if she [Shannon Thunderbird] and her drum show up at the powwow, the men might forcibly remove her and her drum, or worse". This threat was made in front of two

⁴⁴ One man making the claim of the University land being traditional land is from the Blackfoot and Sioux nations. The other man making the claim is Ojibwa.

employees of the University, and neither did anything to stop the threats and disrespect towards the women. During the meeting, after the Ojibwa male drummer claimed that the big drums are played by men and the hand drums are played by women, one of the women in attendance questioned him. From the reports that I have been given by Erin about this meeting, the woman questioned the man by saying something to the effect of: 'If men can play the hand drum, why can't women play the big drum?' To this, Erin said that the man replied: "If a Cree man were here, he would punch you in the face." It was later determined by the University that the men's big drums that made these threats against the women would continue to participate in the powwow, but the women's big drum group was un-invited. This sparked a response protest by the Thunderbird Women's Big Drum Group for the exclusion of women being able to openly practice their culture on the campus. Moreover they were protesting the complacency of the University to the threats of violence to the women of the drum group and the drum itself.

I have seen written communications and listened to many elders teach on the current problem of people claiming knowledge and being a community elder, while simultaneously misrepresenting the values and customs of the Original people. Justice Murray Sinclair stated:

There are a lot of fake healers and elders out there and the Aboriginal community is not addressing this. The result is that our traditions and communities look foolish and seem complicit in these criminal acts and treachery. In the Navajo Nation, a person cannot call himself a Healer unless and until he has been granted permission to do so from a body of acknowledged traditional healers. This is so even in communities outside of the Navajo Nation. If someone in Canada calls himself a traditional healer, there's no one to check that with (Sinclair, 2014).

In a public statement, Justice Sinclair warned of how institutions hire individuals for positions such as elder-in-residence, and people use this as proof of being an elder, when in fact they do not possess the recognition or knowledge to fulfill such a role. In the case of the events surrounding the women and the big drum, it is my belief that this claim of having knowledge

when one does not is central to the violence imposed on the women who were invited to play the big drum at the University Powwow.

First, my research of women playing the big drums revealed that the claim of women not historically playing that big drum was disputed. Oral histories shared with me by my participants include stories of women warrior societies playing the big drum when the men went into battle. One battle in particular took place during the Pontiac Rebellion in 1763 at Fort Michilimackinac. The oral history relayed to me by Pauline Moon said that the Odawa and Sauk women played the big drum while the men played a lacrosse-type game to distract the soldiers at the fort. The women played the drum, hiding weapons under their skirts and shawls for when the men were ready to attack. As the men moved closer to the entrance of the fort, the women handed the men the weapons. Because the women positioned themselves next to the entrance of the fort, playing the drum and hiding the weapons from the soldiers, the people were victorious because the American soldiers were caught off guard.

As increasing numbers of women have claimed their right to play the drum, they have done their own research into this history. The Mankillers of California (2014) have shared that there is pictorial evidence (etchings) of Cree women's drumming societies from the early 1700s. This claim is backed up by Dr. Daniel Dickerson (2010) of UCLA in his research of the use of drumming in the treatment of addiction. Elder Shannon Thunderbird argues, "Prohibition of women playing big drums only began to insinuate itself into Native cultures in the 1970s, as more false prophets, setting themselves up as Elders, continued to rewrite history". She and her peers attribute the restriction of women's access to the healing power of the big drum as a result of the imposition of the patriarchy of colonialism onto the Original people (see Go Forth & Maxwell-Powell, 2014).

Shannon Thunderbird teaches that the drum was originally given to the women, and the women shared it with the men so that they could feel the heartbeat of Mother Earth. When the drum was shared with the men, this in no way was meant to indicate that the women were giving up the right to sit at the drum and play it. Shannon Thunderbird argues that Indigenous women around the world have played drums since time immemorial, and because the drum contains the life-giving heartbeat, it is female and is understood as our Grandmother. The drum stick, which she calls Grandmother's arm, represents the male, and it is only when the two are used together that the heartbeat can be created. For her, this represents the balance of all existence, because neither male nor female is more important to life. Each is necessary for our survival. Moreover, because the drum is women's female relative, no one has the right to deny women access to the drum.

Second, the men claimed that the land was traditionally Ojibwa territory. However, the University, when speaking and recognizing the people whose traditional territory the school is built on, have always stated that it was the Neutral First Nation that lived in that region. This is supported by the region, which has protected a site that lies within the Huron Nature Area where the remains of Neutral Longhouses have been found.⁴⁵The Neutral people, also known to the Iroquois people as the Atirhaguenrek, were Iroquoian, and shared traditions more closely related to other Iroquoian peoples than they did with Ojibwa peoples (White, 1913). The land that the Neutral people occupied stretched from areas in upstate New York into the Niagara Peninsula, and northwest towards London and Sarnia, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan (White, 1913). After the Iroquois Confederacy defeated the Huron, the Seneca turned their attention to the

⁴⁵ The site of the Neutral longhouses in the Huron Nature Area in the region of Waterloo is a restricted area that visitors can only enter and visit if they stay on the raised wooden pathways.

Atirhaguenrek (Neutral) people and their land (see White, 1913). Because the Seneca was a larger nation and had more warriors, they easily defeated the Neutral people. It is unclear what ultimately happened to the Atirhaguenrek people, but some have hypothesized that they moved west to Oklahoma (White, 1913). Others claim that they went extinct, or were incorporated into the Seneca Nation sometime in the mid-1600s (White, 1913). The oral history shared with me by Joe, an educator who is a member of the Six Nations of the Grand community, states that the Seneca adopted the survivors into their Nation, as was customary among the Iroquoian people during that time. He also told me that since the mid-1600s, the land in question was used and occupied by the Seneca until the Haldimand land grant of 1784.

The Haldimand Proclamation of 1784 is when the land was given to the Six Nations (Johnson, 1964:68-69). The land was then granted to Joseph Brant for the Original people that had fought on the side of the British during the US revolution. While it has been disputed as to what the intent of the Europeans was in the land grant, what is clear was the spirit and intent of Joseph Brant in the agreement that he forged with the Queen of England (see Johnson, 1964). In the written text of the proclamation, the Mohawk people are referred to as allies to the crown, and it states that the land was purchased and given to them in return for their loyalty to the English (Johnson, 1964: 50-51). This gives recognition that the Mississauga people did, in some fashion, use the land that the University stands on prior to the Haldimand Proclamation well over 200 years prior to the events of the powwow. Since that time, however, the territory is understood to be the territory of the Six Nations of the Grand.

During the entire conflict of whether or not Elder Thunderbird and her drum, Moonstone, would be allowed to play at the University Powwow, I found no evidence that anyone from the Six Nations of the Grand community was ever consulted on this matter. Ultimately, the events

further ruptured a community that many community members have claimed to be fractured for many years previous to the University Powwow⁴⁶. The University's stance on the matter was that they choose not to interfere with matters of spirituality, and thus allowed the Powwow to proceed as planned. The region's police, however, took the threats against the women not as a spiritual matter, but as a concern of gendered violence being perpetrated against the women. For this reason, they provided security for the women during their protest of the University Powwow.

During the events leading up to and after the powwow, there were people that chose to quietly support one side of the issue or the other, or those that decided not to get involved at all. Some of these community members called out for healing circles, which never took place. Others, like Myeengun Henry, wanted to start an open conversation about the issue of women playing the big drum. During one of his radio broadcasts, Myeengun spoke of the current changes in the gendered roles and responsibilities in Indigenous communities. He pointed out that, currently, the majority of Original people attending and obtaining post-secondary education are women. Myeengun further claimed that many men are, for this reason, staying home and caring for the children. He used this example to justify the re-examination of the community's prohibition of women playing the big drum, because other traditional gender roles have been altered, such as the men staying home to care for the family, while the women are working outside of the home financially providing for the family.

⁴⁶ There is no recognized accurate data that can provide information on the exact number of Original people that live in the Waterloo Region, so it would be impossible to provide any quantitative data on the number of people in the area that feel that the community is fractured. That being said, I have lived in this community for 8 years and from the time I first moved here, I have been repeatedly told by a large number of community members that this community is highly fractured. I unfortunately did not record the number of people that have told me this over the years since I have moved here. I can, however, report that the people who told me this do not all know each other; some are active community participants, and others are not. Those who are not told me that they choose not to be because of these fractures in the community and the harm it has caused them and/or their family members.

These events that I was witness to exemplify the divide between what some of the men are saying, and what they are actually doing. I have shared this story to reveal the ongoing struggles of Indigenous women to regain their rights that were lost through colonization. Furthermore, I do not want to romanticize the current resistance and continue to feed into images of the Noble Savage that, in many respects, still permeate the public's imagination of what the Original people of Canada are like (see King, 2012; Paul, 2006). Moreover, I also do not want to discount the many Original men that work tirelessly to stop the violence being perpetrated on the Original women of Canada. However, I feel it would be unfair to represent the Original people as an idealistic, homogenous whole that share the same cultural beliefs and values. It is my belief that to do so would do more to silence the Original women and their concerns of violence that is being perpetrated against them, both within and outside of their communities.

As Shannon Thunderbird has stated on the many occasions that I have listened to her speak, there is nothing in "Native" culture that speaks to voice removal. Most of the history of the Original peoples of Canada, however, has been silenced and erased (see Furniss, 1999). Only recently has the media given attention to Original girls and women that have been murdered, specifically the cases of Loretta Saunders and Tina Fontaine. As such, according to Shannon Thunderbird to silence the women who are speaking against the violence that is directed at them is counterproductive to what they are attempting to achieve in their resistance.

Analysis

The base message in the stories that I have relayed concerning the position, roles, and responsibilities of the Original women in this study speak to the reclamation of their traditional rights in their communities. Currently in Canada, the Original women are the most marginalized group in society (see Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Sterritt, 2007). They represent a

disproportionate number of the missing and murdered women in Canada. Indigenous women also make up 33.6% of federally incarcerated women, and experience high rates of poverty (Canada, 2013). The Government of Canada attributes these statistics to the following: the long-term effects of the residential school system; Original women's experiences with the Canadian child welfare or adoption system; the dislocation and dispossession of the Original peoples; a family and community history of suicide; substance abuse and victimization; the loss of their cultural and spiritual identity; the level of formal education obtained; their living conditions; and their exposure to violence, such as street gangs (Canada, 2013). This information coincides with the arguments of Indigenous academics and many in this study: that colonization has negatively impacted Indigenous women and their communities (Alfred, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Hughes, 2001; Smith, 2002; Sterritt, 2007). Smith (2002:151) contends that colonization has negatively affected gender relations, child-rearing practices, and the spirituality of Indigenous people. For this reason, women are now acting to restore their "traditional roles, rights, and responsibilities" (Smith, 2002:152).

Through the telling of stories, women pass down their culture to younger generations. Hughes (2001:114-115) points out that the Nubian women are the keepers of culture and that they pass down this knowledge through their stories. For instance, Wilma Mankiller (2008) recently shared via storytelling information on women's roles in traditional Cherokee society when she stated that:

women didn't have titled positions... women had the Women's Council. They had a lot of control. People forget that... the Iroquois chief was a man, but the women chose the chief, they nurtured him, they installed him. Women could [also] take him out.

Mankiller was the first contemporary female chief of the Western Cherokee. Before Mankiller became chief, women's influence in Cherokee society was marginalized. Through her words, we

can see how she was reintroducing the knowledge of women's positions in traditional society and the power that they held (see Mankiller, 2008). She also placed attention on their political roles and power within their communities (Mankiller, 2008). The act of story-telling is reintroducing the knowledge and practices of traditional culture through telling the history of the people (Anderson, 2000; Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Cruikshank, 2000, 2005).

When looking at the struggle of the Original women today, I have asked why there seems to be a conflict with traditional women's roles and responsibilities and the reality of their daily lives. Traditionally, it was the men that would hunt large game; men were the chiefs, and the men went off to battle enemies, according to Gerrard, the man I spoke with in Ottawa. However, Shannon Thunderbird explained that these roles did not necessarily exclude women from stepping into them. Traditionally, Pauline Moon told me, men kept the fire because they are related to the sun, which is fire. This made men responsible for building and maintaining the fire in the community. Yet, men still had to leave the community for various reasons, such as to hunt large game or when going to war. This, explained Pauline, left the women responsible for performing the duties of everyday life in the community. While I could find nothing to affirm that women made fires to cook and keep their homes warm while the men were away, I believe it is safe to say that they did. Now we can see the Original women taking positions of political leadership within their communities through their involvement as leaders in the INM resistance, and their increasing participation in politics, such as the roles taken by Wilma Mankiller and Theresa Spence. I also saw women warriors in the field of resistance. Alfred (1995) stated that to be an Original person is to be political; for him there is no separating the identity of being 'Indian' from political conflict. Therefore, we must consider that a warrior's struggle is inherent to all Original people, not just the men (Alfred, 2005:84). The stories shared with me certainly

attest to the involvement of women in acts of resistance throughout the history of contact. Alfred (2005:84) points out that today's battles are no longer primarily physical, and as such, there is a need to adopt "a new concept of the warrior that is freed from colonial gender constructions and articulated instead with reference to what really counts in our struggles: the qualities and actions of a person, man or woman, in battle". It is clear through what has been said by participants in this study that gender roles are changing, while simultaneously integrating traditional values and teachings into them. As Myeengun Henry stated, it is the women that are moving forward in the healing process as they are getting educated, and therefore are providing for the families while the men stay home. It stands to reason that basic shifts in responsibilities also change the roles and responsibilities of both genders, thus calling for a reconsideration of traditions to fit in with the alterations being made.

The question before the people today is how the future will look for the Original people. The women in this study want access to their sacred items that can help them to heal their lands, their people, and their communities. They feel that this responsibility has fallen on their shoulders. While the women admit there are men standing with them in their fight, there are also men (and women too) that either consciously or unconsciously are standing in their way of accomplishing this goal.

Roles and Responsibilities of Warriors

When someone utters the word warrior, the gender of the person that first comes to the majority of people's minds is male (see Brown, 2012:25-26; Valaskakis, 1994:61). When thinking of a warrior within the Original people's society, we either come up with images of a historical Plains male, sitting astride a horse and wearing a war bonnet, or the more contemporary image of a man in camouflage carrying an assault weapon (see King, 2012; Paul,

2006; Valaskakis, 1994). No matter how we envision a warrior, violence is almost always associated with the title. However, during my research, the warriors I encountered rarely wore camouflage and were rarely, if ever, violent. They also ranged in age from older teenagers to mature men and women. All warriors that I came across were soft-spoken and very humble people. This resulted in me having many questions, such as how were these warriors trained? Who trained them? What was their purpose? And finally, why were they showing emotions rather than remaining forever stoic?

My questions arose after a conversation with Ron in Ottawa. Ron told me that he was a fire keeper for Chief Spence during her fast on Victoria Island in the Ottawa River between December 2012 and January 2013. He started his training to become a fire keeper and warrior at an older age. He also struggled with the lingering trauma of the residential schools, and for a time, turned to intoxicants to dull the pain⁴⁷. For Ron, there was never any choice to become a warrior and fire keeper; this path was revealed to him after he returned to his traditions and teachings. It was there that he began to work with an elder to learn the history that had been kept from him, and “how to live in a good way”. Ron explained the difficulty that he initially faced when he first started to learn from the elder, which he claims ultimately saved his life. He described the process as leaving behind a life of darkness and chaos where he did not care if he lived or died, and walking into a life of gratitude, humility, discipline and purpose. As Ron learned from the elder that taught him, he came to understand where he “fit into this world”. As he learned the history of his relations and “the knowledge passed down” from his ancestors, he began to feel a peace that he had never experienced. For this reason, Ron felt a “hunger inside”

⁴⁷ Ron never specified whether he attended the residential schools or if his parents had. He only indicated that his life was traumatically impacted by the schools.

of himself to seek more knowledge and use it to live a life of service to his community and others.

I remember watching the news reports of the events taking place on Victoria Island while Chief Theresa Spence was staying there for her protest. The images showed all of the dignitaries visiting her, and men standing behind her. However, the focus remained on her, and the men did not speak or draw attention to themselves unless she had asked them to do so. They only walked quietly beside or behind her whenever the crowds were there.

I asked Ron to explain to me what the men's roles were while on the island, and what the experience was like for them. Ron first described the scene to me. The island sits in the Ottawa River, and because this all took place in December and January, it was very cold and snowy. On the Ottawa-side of the river is an escarpment that increases the wind velocity on the river, making it feel even colder. The sacred fire was outside and it had to be kept burning because of Chief Spence's ceremony. For this reason, the men took turns tending the fire throughout the night. When they were not attending to the fire, they would check up on Chief Spence to make sure she had everything that she needed. When the crowds were around, they would also make sure that people did not overwhelm her. For instance, they would stand beside her or behind her, they would watch her for signs indicating that she was getting too tired, and so on. If there was a problem, they would ask people to move aside so that she could return to the teepee that she was staying in for rest. They also made the fish broth and medicine teas she was drinking during her fast. Ron said that their responsibility was to ensure that she had the things that she needed, that she was doing okay (i.e. she was warm enough, she was not showing signs of ill health, she had plenty of liquids, and that other people did not harm her), and keeping the fire. The men also made sure that those visiting Chief Spence were safe. One of the most impactful things that Ron

shared with me was how upsetting it was for them that they could not protect Chief Spence from the attacks being directed towards her from media personalities, such as Ezra Levant of Sun News. Their inability to protect her from these negative media reports affected them so much that when it was night time, they would sit around the fire and cry and pray for the strength to help both her and themselves to endure these attacks. When I asked him why they would do this at night, his response revealed the discipline these men had. “Chief Spence did not need to see our pain, we had to be strong for her, and otherwise, she might have felt the need to take care of us”.

After the night in Ottawa speaking to Ron, I wanted to know more about the warriors acting in resistance. Not long after the events in Elisipogtog, New Brunswick, where the Mi’kmaq and their allies stood their ground to protect the environment from SWN’s fracking of their traditional territory, I had the chance to hear two warriors that were there speak. These warriors were traveling the country to tell their story of what took place between themselves and the RCMP. One warrior was a young man in his mid-20s, the other was a young woman about the same age. They both asked that I do not use any name when sharing their message, as they felt that to do so would draw attention away from the message that they were trying to get out about the women who stood against SWN. They also believed that the women were the true heroes, not the warriors.

The woman spoke to the people first, and she talked about the violence that was used against the people by the RCMP. She spoke about how the concept of a warrior among the Original people is changing. However, she made it clear that never in her people’s history was a warrior’s central responsibility intended to promote violence; their main responsibility was to ensure the safety and well-being of their community. This responsibility meant that the warrior is

to give priority to those in the community above taking care of their own needs. She gave this example: The place that the protests in Elisipogtog took place was on a rural two lane highway with farming fields on both sides. The land was basically flat, with little protection from the elements. The people were sleeping in tents and sleeping bags, and many did not have the clothes to keep them warm when the temperatures dropped at night. The warriors would often give their blankets to these people, and then work to get more blankets for the makeshift community the next day. She added that on many occasions, she witnessed the warriors giving their food to people when there was not enough to go around.

The young man spoke second. He first talked about how he became a warrior. He started learning the responsibilities of being a warrior when he was about eleven or twelve years old. He said that two different elders worked with him to prepare him to serve his people. It was his relationship with these elders that protected him from falling into a life of drug and alcohol abuse, and on one occasion prevented him from attempting suicide when his family life had overwhelmed him. In order to make sure that the people in the audience did not think of him as not having faults, he told them of the few times he did try drugs, and how the elders dealt with these slips. Unlike the turmoil of his home life where abuse was common, the elders reacted with love and forgiveness. They spoke to him with patience and kindness, and shared teachings with him. They also educated him on how the cycle of abuse and substance addiction came into their communities. Most importantly to him though were that the consequences that they gave him for his mistakes were always fair and designed to teach him to be a better person. Not once was he told by them that he was a bad person that he would not amount to anything, that he was stupid, or the vast variety of other things that some children are told when they do something that requires discipline. Because of the stark contrast between how the elders treated him and how he

was treated at home, he developed a desire to learn more, and spent more time with the elders. They taught him to be humble and realize that no matter how powerful he may become, he is nothing without his community. He also learned the importance of not becoming too prideful or looking to be the centre of attention. He came to desire a closer spiritual connection with the Creator and ancestors so that he could receive their guidance, knowledge, and understand his purpose in the world. Through all of this, he came to understand the importance of being there to support his people, even when he would have to sacrifice to do so. One lesson he struggled with was the importance of taking care of community members that exhibit all of the traits that are directly opposed to how he was taught to “live in a good way”.

In his later teen years, he lost many friends to suicide, substance abuse, and family and lateral violence. One death that affected him the most was when he lost a close friend to police violence. However, he said that the teaching and mentorship he received from the elders gave him the strength to continue on.

He shared stories of meeting other young men and women that had been traditionally trained to the responsibilities of a warrior. He met many of these young warriors by traveling around to various communities and learning from elders and other community leaders. It was during these times that he learned that his experience was not unique; many of his new peers shared the same path, faced the same home situations, and lost close friends and family members. However, the elders he spoke with all told him that although some of the young warriors they mentored were lost due to violence (typically in the family), none ever developed substance addictions or attempted suicide. For him, this message speaks to the need for young people to have elders and community leaders to mentor them. This, in his opinion, will initiate

the much needed healing in “the rez communities that experience high rates of substance abuse, suicide, and violence”.

He later went on to talk about how the warriors on the ground in Elisipogtog acted and reacted during the events that occurred when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) attacked the protestors. He said that many of the images sent out through social media and seen on news reports showed the women in the front facing the RCMP officers. The reason for this strategy was because the women were the leaders of the protest to protect the land and waters. Therefore, the warriors were taking direction from the women. They [the warriors] were also there to protect and care for them. He spoke of the many elders that were staying at the site in Elisipogtog and the warrior’s efforts to care for them and keep them comfortable. He showed pictures of the camp, and talked about how the warriors took shifts to maintain the fire, keep the cook tent clean, and check on the welfare of the people. He then explained that at 7am on October 17, 2013, when many of the people were just starting their day, sitting around the fire and having their first cup of coffee, the RCMP moved in. He had just gone to his tent to sleep because he had been up all night when the RCMP approached the camp.

Early in the standoff, the warriors stood behind the women before any violence erupted. This was done so that the warriors could act quickly in defense of the women if the need arose. When the RCMP started to shoot into the crowd, the warriors quickly positioned themselves between the RCMP officers and the women who were standing in resistance at Elisipogtog. He then joked that it was fortunate for them that the RCMP were only shooting bean bag guns and not actual bullets, but that they still hurt, and most of them [the warriors] had bruises for weeks afterwards. During the encounter with the RCMP, none of the warriors reacted to the attacks; they just stood in protection of the women. The decision not to fight back when this occurred

was because their role was to protect the women, which they had done. They felt that although the bean bags they were getting hit with “hurt like hell”, they did not pose a life threatening situation. However, he did point out that they did have a legal right to protect themselves as there were no threats of violence or aggressive actions being directed at the RCMP officers.

As the day moved on and news got out about the events taking place at the camp where the women were blocking the SWN vehicles from fracking on their traditional land, more and more people came out to the site to stand with those who were already there. He said that although the people at the site when the RCMP first showed up were all “Native”, as news got out, more “Non-Native” allies joined them. Some of the warriors walked to the place where people were parking to escort them safely back to the camp. When they did this, the RCMP made efforts to stop the people coming to stand with those already “on the front lines” from getting to the camp site where most of the action was taking place. He informed the audience that their efforts were effectively unsuccessful due to how the RCMP positioned themselves.

While all of the overt activities were taking place, the warriors also took note of RCMP snipers being present in the woods and fields between the parking area and campsite. He showed pictures of the RCMP snipers to let everyone know how poorly they had hidden themselves from the people. He did tell about how the warriors eventually started taking water bottles to the snipers, but did not say if this was an intimidation tactic on their part or out of concern for how long they had been in their positions. He later told me that his main point on relaying this information was to let the audience know that the weapons that the snipers had were real sniper rifles and not bean bag guns, and that they did pose a threat to the personal safety of the people at the site if the guns were discharged.

When an audience member inquired about the RCMP vehicles that were burned, he did say that he was not sure who set them on fire. He said, “I know some people [in the camp] were making Molotov cocktails, but there were officers standing around holding them too. So I am not sure who threw them.” He shared that he was not witness to anyone from the camp committing acts of violence, but he would not make the claim that they were innocent of all the accusations made against them because someone may have without his knowledge. However, he was very adamant in his claim that the violence was started by the RCMP and not the protestors.

When the warriors ended their talk with the people, they thanked everyone for coming. I took notice of the fact that unless asked a question specifically about what they were doing during the events that they were speaking about, they kept the focus of the story on what others were doing. They talked about the bravery, sacrifices, and heroic acts of others, and shied away from focusing on themselves and their actions.

Analysis

The media is credited with the development of our ideas of the Original people and their warriors (see King, 2012; Wilkes et al., 2010). It is through their lens that the ideology of Indigenous warriors being the “military masculine”, who are “criminalized through association with terrorism” comes from (Valaskakis, 1994:61). However, Valaskakis (1994:64) informs us that historically, warriors were peacekeepers who were trained and charged with policing threats to their communities. For Valaskakis, (1994), the conventional image of an Indigenous warrior is far removed from what she has witnessed in her own community. Valaskakis (1994:70) explained a situation where the Gitchedon warriors from her reserve in Wisconsin stood silently while Settler peoples shouted racist slurs and threw rocks at them as the people practiced their right to spear spawning fish in their traditional waterways. Although it may be intimidating to

witness warriors standing solemnly while others are yelling and throwing rocks at them, the association with warriors being violent is not there in Valaskakis' story. Edmund Carpenter (1970:57) explains how these associations can be manufactured when he discusses the social construction of those who are typically invisible in society instantly becoming visible; this sudden visibility makes them a threat in the public eye because they are unknown. Carpenter (1970:57) contends that when marginalized people became visible through media attention, they are constructed as being violent. By creating a discourse of Indigenous warriors being violent, the mainstream's responsibility in starting violence is relinquished when those who are marginalized claim their rights (see Carpenter, 1970).

Within the Nations and communities of the Original peoples, there is some controversy as to what exactly a warrior is and what their responsibilities are. This has led to many young people joining gangs and calling themselves warriors (HC, 2013). Louis Hall (n.d.:37) claims that Warrior Societies are charged with the protection of their people from the assimilationist policies of the federal government. These policies and practices are believed to be designed as a planned and deliberate ethnocide of the Original people through extermination of status and disavowing of their rights as a separate and unique people (Hall, n.d.:37; Valaskakis, 1994:68). For Hall (n.d.:37), the answer to these acts is to charge Warrior Societies with the task of protecting the "people from every act of aggression being waged against them".

There have been historical accounts of women warriors during the periods of early contact. Shoemaker (2012: 6) asserts that although being chiefs and warriors were typically male positions, there are historical written accounts of women occupying these roles. Oral history reveals that gender roles were not rigidly observed in the pre- and early contact periods of the North American Original peoples (see Shoemaker, 2012). Shoemaker (2012:6) uses the story of

a Crow woman named Pretty Shield who used to defiantly tell stories of her activities in battles. It was an uncommon practice for women and two-spirited individuals⁴⁸ in some Nations to participate in battle, as it was the individual's choice to decide if they would do so. However, as Pretty Shield stated in her stories, we will never hear the men talk about these women, although they were aware of them (Shoemaker, 2012:6). Conversely, when I was growing up, I was often told of the beloved women among the Cherokee.⁴⁹ Today women warriors are being acknowledged for their contributions to their communities (see Janda, 2007).

While the majority of people in this study acknowledge that there are different ideas among the Original people as to what a warrior is and what their responsibilities are, there was an overriding theme among those in this study which has been reported in my data. Alfred (2005:78) tells us that in the Mohawk language, the word for warrior literally translates into "carry the burden of peace". In his study, he discovered that the warriors of today blend the traditional teachings of the warrior given to them by elders and community leaders with the ideology of contemporary acts of resistance and resurgence (Alfred, 2005:78). In this study, the warriors exemplified this blending of the traditional teachings of the elders and the decolonizing ideology that places the battleground on two planes of existence. The first of these planes of existence being in their communities and at the sites of resistance, providing for and protecting the people. The second being the internal battleground of decolonization. This internal

⁴⁸ Two-spirited people in traditional Turtle Island nations indicate an individual that adopts the gender roles and dress of the opposite sex. The term two-spirited can also indicate someone who is homosexual. In either case, before European influence, two-spirited people are highly honoured and considered doubly blessed because they encompass both male and female knowledge and medicines.

⁴⁹ Among the Cherokee people, the term 'beloved woman' is used to indicate that the woman has the status of being a warrior and that she occupies a highly respected position within the community.

battleground, according to the warriors I listened to and spoke with, is the personal battle of resisting the assimilationist attacks of society. Ron told me in one of our discussions that:

As a Native man, I am presented with conflicting expectations. I am supposed to conform to White Settler society by dressing White, acting White, thinking White, and turning my back on my culture, history, teachings, and traditions. At the same time, I am supposed to conform to what society expects me to be as a Native man: stoic, drunk, noble savage standing at the edge of a polluted river with a tear in my eye, and violent savage that is scary and threatens civilized society. How can I be all of these at the same time?

This statement from Ron exposes the everyday control he is faced with to conform to an identity construction imposed on him by outsiders. Thus, it is through this internal battle of decolonization that the contemporary warriors in this study exposed the more subtle acts of resistance: maintaining and reclaiming their ancestors' languages; reviving ceremonies and using them in their everyday lives and during resistance events; retelling the history of Canada from the perspective of the Original peoples; and reconnecting themselves to the land and the teachings of their ancestors by standing up to protect their culture, identities, and the land.

According to Alfred (2005), to understand the roles and responsibilities of today's warrior, we as the Original peoples of this land must turn to the languages of our ancestors. For the Mohawk, the warriors of the people "live the values and principles of the Kainerekowa, the Great Law of Peace" (Alfred, 2005:78-79). Today's warriors, according to Alfred (2005:79), typically ascribe to one of two roles: those who only fight to defend the peace, and those who are the sacred protectors of the house. These sacred protectors are, according to Alfred (2005:79), akin to the Japanese Samurai; they are the shadow warriors, the sacred protectors who are anonymous. Thus it is through listening to the people acting in resistance that we see the consistency of modern ideas of the warrior and how they arise from ancient teachings embedded in language (Alfred, 2005:80).

The warriors that I had the opportunity to speak with originated from different traditions. However, I saw a commonality in what it meant to them to be a warrior. This commonality was also seen by Alfred (2005) in his research, and interestingly, I discovered that four of the warriors that I spoke to had carried his book *Wasasé* with them. For this reason, I cannot be certain if his book has been adopted as a guide to the warriors in this study, or as a part of their quest to gather more knowledge. The warriors learned their traditions, languages, and sense of self from their elders. They abstained from substance abuse. They sought spiritual connections to the Creator as well as to their ancestors for guidance in their daily lives, and shared these experiences with others. They continually sought out knowledge, as the majority of the warriors I spoke with and listened to speak were highly educated, either through the educational institutions or through independent study⁵⁰. The warriors committed themselves to serving their people even when this service meant that they would have to sacrifice to do so. Financial success was not a priority in their lives as much of their money was spent to serve their people (i.e. travel, providing for the needs of community members, providing for the nutritional needs of people at resistance sites). They followed the leadership of the women in the resistance. Finally, they showed humility when being singled out for their deeds, and actively made attempts to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

The above-mentioned traits reveal the return of traditional values and spirituality among the contemporary warriors that I spoke with and heard speaking, as outlined by Alfred (2005) in *Wasasé*. Alfred (2005:22) argued that the warriors understand the need to reconnect with the

⁵⁰ My determination that the warriors in this study are intelligent was based on their highly articulate speech and word choices when speaking. While such words as 'decolonization' are a part of the everyday speech used by the majority of Indigenous people that I know other words used by the warriors, such as 'cosmology' and 'discourse' are not used by the majority people in their everyday conversations. Another indicator that the warriors in this study are highly educated was their in-depth knowledge and understanding of Canadian policy, political system, legal cases, and their ease when discussing these topics in their conversations with people at resistance events.

spirituality, values, and ways of existing that were taken away from them during colonization. Through their education given by their elders, these warriors seek to make a stand against the erasure of their cultural, social, and political existences (Alfred, 2005:22). For this reason, the warriors first transformed themselves, shedding the co-option of capitalism and governmental control (see Alfred, 2005). Those in this study sought to share their new truths with the people. For them, these truths were discovered in their return to the life lessons and knowledge passed down through the ancestors (Alfred, 2005). As Alfred (2005:29) contended, warriors today find their battleground in the reawakening of the cultural freedom that their ancestors had by battling against state-level political manipulation. The warriors in this study exemplified these values put forth by Alfred. According to Alfred (2005), this is important for them as historically, the manipulation of colonialism taught the people lies. Thus, for warriors, the battle is spiritual and physical, because only then can they overcome the fears instilled in their people through colonialism that weaken the mind and promote complacency (Alfred & Cornthassel, 2005:603).

In this research, I saw that there was a connection to historical ideas and values of being a warrior, while simultaneously there was a forging of a redefinition of what a warrior is. Although historically warriors were typically male among many First Nations, today the battlefield has changed. First, as Myeengun Henry shared, more women are reclaiming their cultural traditions and are seeking to heal themselves through this reconnection to their identity as an Original person. Second, the women also represent the majority of Original people obtaining post-secondary education. These two things are putting women into more powerful leadership roles in their communities. Third, the battlefield has changed from the physically violent battles of the past, to a battlefield located in the hearts and minds of the people (see Alfred, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Carpenter, 1970; Ciaccia, 2000; Edwards, 2011; Furniss, 1999; Go Forth et al., 2014;

Howoritz, 2009; Johnson, 1994; King 2012; Klien, 2015; Martin-Hill, 2013, 2009, 1995; Obamaswin, 2002, 1993; Saysewahum, 2015, 2013; Shoemaker, 2012; Smith, 2002; The Kino-nda-niimi Collective, 2014; Valiskakis, 1994). This allows increasing numbers of women to take on the responsibilities of protecting their communities through the peaceful battles where the weapons used are words and education. However, it must be understood that the battlefield is not always public; it can be fought on an individual, family, community, or national level. It incorporates the gaining of new identities and understandings of the history of Canada. It also promotes the recognition of common concerns of the people inhabiting this land that rely on this territory to sustain them now and for generations to come.

CHAPTER 6

Ideology of Indigeneity in Research of Resistance

Gaining the Indigenous Perspective

In order to fully understand the perspective of Indigenous peoples acting in resistance, it is necessary to look at the data through an Indigenous lens. In his study with the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon Basin, Viveros de Castro (1998) argued that when studying people with different cosmological views from our own, we must first gain their perspective. From my experience in being taught how to do this, I discovered that this requires us to wipe our minds of everything we think that we know, and to begin our research as novices in the culture that we are studying. From my perspective after reading a multitude of academic books and articles written about the Original peoples of this land, I have discovered that very few academics are trained to develop this skill because a vast majority of what I have read more closely reflects the perspective of Non-Indigenous Western peoples⁵¹. In my case, I was fortunate enough to have a course in Amazonian Cosmologies and Ritual during my undergraduate education. For the first few weeks of the course, we [the students] struggled with letting go of our preconceived notions. We operated in a state of total confusion when attempting to comprehend the material being presented to us. This confusion arose from the fact that the nature/culture dichotomy was completely reversed in how Amazonian Indigenous peoples view the world (Viveros de Castro, 1998). In the people of the Amazonian Basin's case, everyone shares the same culture, but it is their natures that differ. Because of this, Viveros de Castro (1998) developed his theory of

⁵¹ While I do not know the exact number of books and articles that I have read about the Original peoples of North America over the last eight years, I can with certainty claim that the number easily exceeds 200, with the large majority having been written after the postmodernist period in academia of the 1980s and earlier 1990s.

perspectivism. Perspectivism explains how the Indigenous people of the Amazon can change their perspective easily when coming into contact with peccaries and jaguars while out in the jungle alone (Viveros de Castro, 1998). Once a person changes their perspective, they become the other. For instance, if a human takes the perspective of a peccary, they will see their friends and family as jaguars, because humans eat peccaries (Viveros de Castro, 1998). While this example is explained in its most simplistic form, the implications of perspectivism should be clear: if we cannot see the world through the eyes of our research participants, then we will draw erroneous conclusions from the data that we collect. Ultimately, all reports we make will misrepresent our participants.

In order to avoid repeating the past mistakes of historical academics, it is important to learn from the people within our gaze. As discussed earlier in the methods section, being an insider can assist researchers in understanding their participants. Even though Indigenous academics have been heavily criticized and accused of bias, they have provided us with a wealth of knowledge about the Indigenous people within their gaze. For this reason, I am now turning to the knowledge of Indigenous academics to provide an understanding of Indigenous resistance.

Re-storying: Unsilencing the Past

One major challenge to First Nations resistance in Canada is the result of oppressive policies and practices that have instilled fear into the Original people of Canada (see Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603; Memmi, 1991; Milloy, 1999; Oliver, 2004:58). The history of laws that have separated and suppressed the Original people in Canada extends back to the time of European settlement in this country (see Paul, 2006). When Europeans first ‘discovered’ the American continents, they justified the taking of lands from the Original peoples under the guise of *terra nullis*, even though they were well aware that the land was already occupied (Dickason,

2002:157). Missionaries were among the first agents of assimilation, and they participated in the civilizing process through their mission work (see Leacock, 1980; Paul, 2006). In some instances, the relationship between Canada's Original people and the missionaries may have been good. However, in many cases this was far from the situation. For instance, Leacock (1980) explains the Jesuit influence in the rise of domestic violence among the Cree people. In her ethnography, she explains that the Jesuit missionaries would direct the Cree men to beat their wives into submission for the purpose of having them convert to Christianity (Leacock, 1980). Milloy (1999) also argued that fear was instilled into Canada's Original people through the residential schools. This practice used several methods to gain compliance from the Original people, including imprisoning parents that refused to hand over their children, and corporal punishment of children for speaking their language or failing to fully submit to the authority of the school staff (see Milloy, 1999). The children suffered further abuse such as malnutrition, sexual violence, and lack of appropriate housing and health care for them in the residential school's charge (see Haig-Brown, 1988; Milloy, 1999). Furthermore, the Original people were removed from their lands, and often their family members, and placed on reserves (Milloy, 2008). Historically, it was illegal for the Original people to leave these reserves unless given permission by the government's Indian Agents, causing fractures in their social and family structures (Indian Act, 1867). Moreover, spiritual ceremonies were outlawed through Potlatch laws embedded in *The Indian Act* (1867), disrupting spiritual, cultural, economic, and political institutions in Indigenous societies. All of these laws, policies, and practices accomplished the instilling of fear into Canada's Original people, resulting in confusion over their true history, identity, and traditions (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603). This served to entrench complacency and a belief in their weakness as a people into the personal psyches of Canadian Original peoples

(Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603). While this outcome was the planned result of colonizers, it only served to eliminate a segment of the Indigenous population from acting in resistance throughout history (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603).

The above policies and practices are one of Canada's best kept secrets from the mainstream population, according to Justice Murray Sinclair. Due to the silencing of this part of Canada's history, there is a series of misinformation that is perpetuated in other representations of Canada's Original people (see King, 2012). Therefore, the mainstream population generally will rely on media representations of the Original people to develop their perception of who they are, how they live, and their customs, values and beliefs (King, 2012). Canada's educational institutions also add to the misrepresentation of its Original people in its promotion of the myths of nationalism found in our textbooks and the teaching mandates set out by the government (see Furniss, 1999). These myths eliminate the Original people and their part in Canada's history from the landscape, replacing it with the deeds of European Settlers (see Furniss, 1999). In some cases, taught histories take the crimes of colonizers and attribute them to the Original people (see Paul, 2006). For instance, the practice of scalping was instigated by British forces. Military leaders would pay a bounty to Settlers for every 'Indian' they killed (Paul, 2006). Due to the fact that carrying a dead body or several bodies was difficult and often impossible, the officers would instead require that the scalps of the dead be presented for payment (Paul, 2006:110-112). These myths and misrepresentations become an issue that those acting in resistance must confront.

When acting to confront the years of oppression by colonizing forces, as well as misrepresentations that stereotype and misinform the public about the Original people, there is yet another issue that social actors must address. This is the complacency and fear among their own people. Fanon (1963:307) argues that the most important strength of Indigenous people is

unity. However, this unity is constantly under attack by colonial powers that erase Indigenous people's histories, remove them from their lands, and instill ideas of capitalism and individuality (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603; Fanon, 1963:307). Thus while acting in resistance politically, Canada's Original peoples must also decolonize their minds.

Once divisions are created among Indigenous people, it is then easier for the federal and provincial governments to separate the people from their ancestral homelands (Alfred, 2001; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). This gives legitimacy to Settler society's occupation of unceded and non-treaty lands, thus allowing for the control over Indigenous outcomes to be in the hands of the government (Alfred, 2001:49; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603). Once the people are divided in conflict amongst themselves, the process of taking control of their lives is made easier for those seeking to do so. As such, in the case of INM and other recent acts of resistance by Canada's Original people in this study, resistance is a combination of both external and internal processes acting simultaneously. For them, decolonization is a goal for both the Settler population and the Original peoples of Canada. This, according to my participants, is accomplished by being physically present in public spaces, building bridges with Settler peoples, and sharing the stories of Canada's history from the Indigenous perspective. These stories work to decolonize both the Original peoples and the Settler population's minds. Sheelah McLean (2014:95) argues that "decolonization is a process that requires not only a re-storying of our shared history, but a reimagining of our relationship with each other based on respectful solidarity". This allows the movement to retell the history of Canada that has actively been silenced, minimized, and denied by colonizing agents (McLean, 2014). This has been done through the multiplicity of forums used by activists to inspire hope among Canada's Original people and promote social and political changes to the practices and policies of the government

(McLean, 2014:93). However, according to Justice Murray Sinclair (personal communication), decolonization is a difficult process for everyone involved. First, it requires that everyone openly listen to the stories being told. Second, there is a need to critically examine the myths of nationalism that have been instilled in us through socialization. Third, everyone must come to terms with their own participation in colonization, whether it has been done consciously or unconsciously.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been actively researching the impact of the residential school system on Indigenous communities in Canada. However, the Government of Canada has resisted in turning over documents to the TRC, causing them to have to spend monies for research in costly court battles (Alamenciak, 2014; Justice Murray Sinclair, personal communication). Furthermore, the Catholic Church has also refused to turn over residential school documents (Alamenciak, 2014). For this reason, the reports being disclosed by the TRC are incomplete due to a lack of cooperation from the institutions that operated the residential schools. This strategy serves to continue to silence the history of Canada's relationship with the Original peoples of this land. By silencing this history, Settlers are kept ignorant of their history and more readily buy into the myth of Canada's multicultural acceptance of all ethnicities (McAll, 1992:167). Furthermore, it assists in the separation of Settlers and the Original people through the stereotypes that control mainstream media representations, and education practices that deny the darkest part of history to the populous (Furniss, 1999; King, 2012). For this reason, the retelling of Canadian history by those in this study breaks this silence, and enlightens those listening to this history.

Revitalization as Indigenous Resurgence

Historically the processes of colonization such as the reserve system and residential school system has been effective in breaking down the spirit of the Original peoples of Canada and their will to resist assimilationist policies (see Alfred, 2009; Coates, 2000:61). However, over the last several decades, some of these policies have shifted, allowing some recognition of rights for the Original peoples of Canada (Fleras, personal communication). It is the assertion of Alfred and Corntassel (2005:605) and other Indigenous academics that this has opened up a doorway for resistance to become more unified among the Original people in Canada (see Anderson, 2000; Fanon, 1963; Memmi, 1991). As many representations of indigeneity, policies of control, and indifference to treaty agreements by the government become normalized, there is an upcoming generation that do not carry the same fears as their ancestors (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603-605). These warriors are not reacting to the State-level violence against them in the same ways as their ancestors did. Rather, these warriors are charged with awakening and enlivening ‘the truth’ and getting “people to invest belief and energy into that truth” (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603). They, according to my participants, turn to their history not as a source of pain, but of strength.

Today’s resistance actors in this study are working to restore their control over their lives and identity through peaceful struggles. For them and others that have participated in the studies of Alfred, Corntassel, and Anderson, the fight begins with rebuilding their communities, and reconnecting themselves to their traditions, language, lands, and spiritual understandings of their world (Alfred 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603-605; Anderson, 2000). Revitalizing traditional ways of being in the community becomes a refuge for its members, this is because it allows for individual re-strengthening so that a real decolonization can begin (see Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Moreover, they understand that assimilation equates to the

relinquishment of being Indigenous in any meaningful way (see Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Modern day warriors cleave to their spiritual training as Indigenous warriors, which explains that violent actions will not produce the result of transforming their communities from what they currently are to a “state of peaceful coexistence” with Settler society (Alfred, 2005:24-26). If they resort to violent acts of resistance, they will be further abused by the state with violent acts of retaliation that would only serve to repress them more (Alfred, 2005:24-26). Therefore, resorting to the use of violence, in the minds of my participants, would only frustrate those acting in resistance and lead them to failure in their political, spiritual, and cultural goals. Thus for my participants, the best approach to redefine their Indigenous existences as the Original peoples of this land is through non-violent actions.

Contemporary forms of social action must be formulated within the Original people’s spiritual teachings that revitalize the warrior traditions (see Alfred, 2005). This is for the purpose of working to inspire not only a political revolution, but a cultural and spiritual one for the Original people. Alfred (2005:27) argues that this ‘warrior’s dance’ is not a commitment to non-violence upholding pacifism, because there is a need to be prepared to defend against aggressive actions by the state. The warriors I spoke with in this study have upheld Alfred’s contention that their ultimate goal is to avoid violent interactions.⁵² However, the warriors I spoke with said that they are always prepared to react to violence directed towards them by the State to defend themselves and their people. This strategy by the warriors thereby generates reasons and incentives for mainstream society to negotiate a respectful and peaceful co-existence (Alfred, 2005:27). Thus, it is my participants’ and Alfred’s (2005:26) argument, that contemporary

⁵² I know that I spoke with four participants that openly identified themselves as warriors. I may have spoken with more people that identify with this title. However, one of the teachings of the warrior is humility, and for that reason, a warrior may choose not to identify as such in keeping with the teaching.

resistance is not seeking justice because it directs our gaze backwards, when the entire purpose of contemporary resistance of the Original people is to direct attention towards moving forward away from the past. In other words, we must direct our attention forward towards solutions. Alfred (2005:30) and my participants contend that land claims, self-governance, and economic development agreements have, to date, not demonstrated improved outcomes for Canada's Original people. However, according to Alfred (2005: 30-31), there is a small minority that have benefitted from these agreements, but the majority have not. Nevertheless, these agreements create new bureaucracies, opening the way for further government intrusion into the lives of the Original people, and re-creating the colonial and capitalistic models of control by mainstream society (Alfred, 2005:30). As such, what is being argued by Alfred (2005) is that land claims, as well as promises of self-governance and economic freedom, constitute empty promises for improvement in Indigenous outcomes. These consequently are seen by my participants as a continuation of the colonial agenda of assimilation, which will continue to keep Canada's Original people marginalized in relation to mainstream Canadian society. According to Leslie Varley (CTV, 2013), this is a very expensive endeavour for the Canadian state as it keeps Original people in a state of dependency, increasing judicial and social welfare costs. Varley (CTV, 2013) argues that it would be much less expensive to adhere to treaty agreements by closing educational gaps, improving on-reserve housing and infrastructure, and increasing social welfare programs for people living both on and off reserve. However, committing to a decolonization of Canada also holds the consequence of allowing the Original people to have control over their lands and the resources these lands contain for the government and Settlers.

Today under the Harper Conservative government, according to my participants, Canada's Original people are seeing their rights to self-determination and control over their lands

being systematically extinguished. Bill C-45 changes the *Indian Act*, giving the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) the right to step in and make decisions for bands concerning private property and corporations' ability to engage in resource extraction on their lands (see Canada, 2012). Furthermore, the First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act, Bill C-33, requires First Nations to comply with several mandates while withholding the monies for them to do so until after the next federal election in 2016 (see Canada, 2014). This Act, according to my participants and First Nations activists, serves to continue the assimilationist policies set out in the residential schools, and does nothing to give First Nations people control over the education of their children (see APTN, 2014). As such, the Original people in Canada, from the perspectives of my participants, are feeling pressured to act against these new policies that they see as eliminating their rights to making decisions for themselves about their own futures and the future of their next seven generations.

According to the United Nations (UN) Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNRIP) that guarantees the rights of Indigenous people, any changes in governmental policies and practices must not be done without consulting with the Indigenous people in question (UNRIP, 2008). However, First Nations people are asserting that there was no adequate consultation over the recent changes made in Bill C-33 and Bill C-45. In the case of Bill C-33, many chiefs have banded together to formally reject this legislation in spite of Chief Shawn Atleo's approval of the changes made (Garlow, 2014). INM was sparked with the passing of Bill C-45, but according to those I spoke with, it continues to fight other legislation and governmental actions, such as Bill C-33 and asking for inquiries into the missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada (see INM, 2013a). However, when looking at Indigenous resistance, we are currently seeing action being taken on many fronts and in many forms.

Those acting in resistance, from what I have observed, are acting with a traditional warrior's spirit. This spirit, according to Alfred and Corntassel (2005:603), is awakened when the lies of colonialism become "accepted and normal" in the hearts and minds of the people. The purpose of this awakening is to bring out the truth and inspire people to invest in that truth (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:603). For them, the battle is political, spiritual, and physical, inspiring people to resist their own fears and act to ensure that the years of complacency and weakness end and traditional ways of knowing and being are revitalized (see Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). The goal of such a resistance is to "reconnect" with the lands and to preserve Indigenous peoples' culture and "respectful ways of life" (Alfred, 2005:31). This is meant to commence an era of self-determination that begins in the minds and souls of those acting in resistance by denying colonial control and authority over the Original people (Alfred, 2005:32). Therefore, the changes in such a resistance start with the self by looking inward, as well as to the traditional histories, creating a spiritual revitalization of the teachings of the ancestors (see Alfred, 2005). It is believed that the self-government that is being offered to Canada's Original people is useless in their fight for survival as a people and is no threat to mainstream society and the government (Alfred, 2005: 37). According to Alfred (2005:37), the self-government being offered by the state will only serve to defeat the people in the same way as the residential schools, land dispossessions, and police oppression has, as it implies the suppression of the Original people and the legitimization of "White supremacy" over them. The youth of today see their cultures, rights, and identities as being under attack by a government which holds racist attitudes against them (Alfred, 2005:37). The people in this study also believe that to not fight will lead to the destruction of themselves as a people psychically, physically, economically, and spiritually. So rather than submit to the colonial forces that seek to control and

assimilate them, they choose to fight to avoid sacrificing themselves like many of their peers and family members have through means such as suicide, or becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol.

When looking at Alfred's (2005) theoretical construct of a formula for effective Indigenous resistance, we can see that those currently acting in resistance in this study are using the strategies he puts forth in *Wasasé*. For Alfred (2005), in order to be effective in resisting the colonial structures of the state, the Original people must first work to decolonize themselves mentally, physically, and spiritually. The act of decolonizing the self is rooted in reconnecting with the language, the land, the ceremonies, and the sacred laws set out in the history of the people's ancestors. Alfred (2005) argues that the resistance must be continuous, which all of my participants stated; since contact, resistance to colonial intrusion has been constant, even though it was not always public. Stories have been shared that although the government has passed laws and policies that prohibited the ceremonies, speaking their language, and denied the Original people the right to sovereign control over their lives, their resistance has remained constant. What has changed is that today those acting in resistance are being led by women, which Alfred (2005: 82) said is a requirement for Indigenous people's resistance to be effective. These resurgences also focus on defending the land, building strong self-sufficient communities, freedom from colonial control, unity of the people, and are also based on mutual support (Alfred, 2005:82). We can see this focus on unity and mutual support through the protest now being acted out on a national level rather than being limited to localized concerns. For instance, when the people of *Elsipogtog* were standing in resistance to SWN, unity protests spread across the entire nation, causing these concerns to be discussed on a broader level and subverting the ability of media and government to control the dialogue. This, according to my participants in this study, is due to the fact that while there was media coverage, people were able to go straight to the

‘horse’s mouth’ so to speak to get the unabridged story of what people were standing against. According to Jan, whom I spoke to in this study, this strategy, allows people to free themselves from the control of the government and media to tell their stories for themselves, thus removing the power to define from those [the media and government] who, in the past, controlled this aspect of their lives. This strategy, as previously discussed, may make it seem that the people are not constantly acting to resist colonial control over their existences as their activities are not always being broadcast by the mainstream media. However, for those in this study, conversations and activities are, in many instances, taking place outside of widespread view in order to remove outsiders’ ability to define them, their history, and their motives. It also allows resistance actors to privately work on their own personal activities of decolonization (see Alfred, 2005).

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this study, several themes arose during the speeches and conversations of those involved in the current resistance of Canada's Original people. Their message centered primarily on healing and how that can be accomplished. Their goal of healing centres on a decolonization of the minds of everyone. More specifically, it has been said that for any change to take place, it is not just the Original people that must decolonize themselves; the Settlers need to do so as well. The reason given for this is that it will take the entire Canadian population working together to realize this type of change is necessary⁵³. Otherwise, there is a risk that the status quo will continue because the voices of resistance will likely be dismissed by those that have the power to make changes. As such, the healing strategies spoken of, namely that of healing the land, healing themselves, and healing their relationship with the Settler population, are the initial steps of decolonization.

The healing of the water and the land, in their opinion will be accomplished through the following: physically blocking resource extraction activities, solidarity events to educate the public about the threats to the land and water, teach-ins, public and private conversations, and ceremonies. According to be people that I spoke with in this study, it is imperative that action is taken to protect the waters from further contamination, or else as Jan told me, "mother Earth will continue on, she will heal herself, it is the humans that will cease to exist, because we⁵⁴ will have caused our own extinction event. During my time in the field, a minimum of four pipelines burst, contaminating large areas of land and water (NEB, 2014). Although reported by the media, the

⁵³ When my participants explained that it will take the entire Canadian population, they were referring to the citizens'; they were not talking about the large corporations that are involved in resource extraction activities and the colonizing government.

⁵⁴ Human-beings

news stories did not last long, nor was the environmental impact the focus of the stories. Additionally, on August 4, 2014 in British Columbia, an Imperial Metals tailing pond was breached, spilling contaminated water into the local waterways (Coppin & Brach, 2014). In this case, the cities affected were enacting water bans. Simultaneously, Imperial Metals president Bryan Kynoch said he would drink the water that originated from the tailing ponds because it was safe (Coppin & Brach, 2014). In contradiction to these stories, during this same time period, a train car carrying oil derailed in Quebec and garnered extensive media coverage (CBC, 2013; CTV 2013). In this case, the environmental damage was limited, although it did take place in a populated area and caused some deaths (see CBC, 2013; CTV 2013). The point here is that although there were deaths in this train derailment, the story was also used to promote the idea that transporting oil by train was more environmentally detrimental than other options, such as pipelines. For these reasons, the people involved in this study of resistance are seeking to keep these stories alive and bring them into everyday public conversations.

Healing on personal and community levels is being accomplished by those in this study through personal growth activities, such as seeking and sharing their knowledge of the history, language revival, and ceremonies, as well as reconnecting themselves to the land. Indigenous academics contend that the languages need to be revitalized in order to restore an Indigenous understanding of their world and maintain the knowledge that is held within them (see Alfred, 1995, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Gehl, 2014; Smith 2002). The search for knowledge for my participants has been realized through networking with each other, both within communities and with other communities, in order to share knowledge of history, ceremonies, language, and what is threatening the land and water. According to my participants, younger people are connecting with their elders and seeking knowledge through the stories that they share. This is all

being done in an effort to decolonize themselves by reinstating the values and principles of their ancestors (see Alfred, 1995, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Gehl, 2014; Smith, 2002).

However, there are still questions being asked about what being decolonized will look like among those in this study, so for them, decolonization can be looked at as a work in progress.

Among those in this study, there is also a shift away from the ‘us-versus-them’ mentality in the relationship between the Original peoples and Settlers. The TRC has recommended that both Settlers and the Original people need to work together to heal past wounds that have harmed their relationships (TRC, 2012). However, a central aspect of the building of bridges for those in this study, specifically between the Original peoples and the Settlers, is based on their common concern of protecting the natural resources that they all rely on. For my participants, this has opened conversations that expose opportunities for further discussion of other topics, thus allowing for cross-cultural understandings that can demystify those who have been ‘othered’ in society, in turn making the exotic normalized.

The networking taking place between groups of Original people, as well as between the Original people and Settlers, is a more recent resistance strategy according to those in this study. To be sure, in the past there were some Non-Indigenous activists standing in resistance with the Original people, but their numbers were limited (see Alfred, 1995; Furniss, 1999; Obamsawin, 1993, 2002; Palmeter, 2013; Paul, 2006; Willow, 2010). However, we are now seeing increasing numbers of Settlers standing alongside the Original people. Smith (2002:157) points out that this activity is important in resistance for the following reasons: it allows for the transmission of information, it permits for the creation of relationships, it sanctions the education of individuals about the movement’s principles and goals, and it also consents to the gathering of information

for those involved in the resistance.

Much of the healing being sought out by those in this study is the restoration of parts of their culture and identity that they believe are being threatened. Smith (2002:155) explains that ‘restoring’ refers to the acts of reclaiming “spirituality, health, well-being, and restorative justice”. Locally, the people in this study are accomplishing this in their acts of resistance in both the private and public spheres of life. The people that I spoke with are seeking a holistic healing which is central in both Alfred’s and Smith’s arguments (Alfred, 2005; Smith, 2002:155). Additionally, the people in this study are seeking to reconnect themselves with their traditional lands not only for the purpose of restoring themselves spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally, but to also ameliorate the harm that has been done to their lands.

While there are men active in resistance, the resistance events that I was witness to involved significantly more women, who were the people taking the leadership roles in the resistance. At these events, the trend was for the women to do most of the public speaking and/or talking with any media that may have been present. There was one exception to this trend, and these were the events taking place in the area that I live in. Locally, at the beginning of INM, it was a young woman that took the initiative to organize several events. However, it tended to be the men taking centre stage and speaking at these events. I know that in one case when Myeengun Henry was doing the speaking, he was hesitant to take a space in the spotlight. Myeengun is well known to the media because he is a highly respected community leader. For this reason, the previously established relationship between the media personnel and Myeengun may have influenced that situation to some degree. However, Myeengun did openly acknowledge the young woman’s participation, and made overt efforts to focus the attention on her. However, this only explains the solidarity hunger strike and concurrent rally that this young

lady and Myeengun Henry participated in together. It does not explain the men taking centre stage at the flash mob round dances that she organized in the local malls, or subsequent events that I attended. This community's resistance to allow the women to have the public focus on them speaks to the dis-unity that is problematic among the Original people (Alfred, 2005:44).

Alfred (2005:44) stresses his concern on how an effective Indigenous resurgence can take place when there is a dis-unity among the people, with women continuing to be disrespected, people continuing to suffer mental and physical illnesses, and with dependency on government monies causing issues at both the individual and community-levels. He further claims that the people should seek employment that will provide them with opportunities to work in fields that will offer meaningful, self-determining indigenous ways of existing (Alfred, 2005:44). Over and over, I was told by people in this study that serious effort should be focused on overcoming the educational gaps between the Original people and the Settlers. Myeengun Henry agrees that this should be a central concern of all communities. He and elder Jean Becker also support assisting the young people to obtain post-secondary schooling in order to increase their employment opportunities. That being said, Myeengun does worry that by obtaining a mainstream post-secondary education, the goals of decolonization might be jeopardized, even with the current initiatives in place to support Indigenous students (see MTCU, 2011). Thus there may still need to be conversations on how to negotiate the trade-offs that may be necessary in order to achieve the healing being sought by those acting in resistance and the increased financial security that post-secondary education offers. My participants all agree that obtaining a mainstream post-secondary education helps to reduce poverty. In many cases, Indigenous peoples that obtain higher education use it to contribute towards improving conditions in their home communities (see Alfred, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Smith, 2002). Moreover, while

Alfred (2005) speaks strongly against the land claims process when discussing how it does nothing to increase self-determination for the Original people, Myeengun Henry does not necessarily agree. For Myeengun, this process creates a double-edged sword for band communities. First, he recognizes the power of those that are standing against land claims negotiations. Myeengun discussed the poverty on his reserve and how the band is using the money received from these land claims to help alleviate that need. So it is a trade-off; the community does not like submitting to the government or major corporations such as Enbridge. However, they are being told that although they can hold these forces back for a time, ultimately they will lose these claims by their legal representatives. Yet if they accept deals that they may not like, it will give the community the financial power to educate their youth, to work towards improving the social ills of the community, and allow them to invest so that the community will be financially secure and no longer depend on the government to fund the community's necessities. While both Alfred (2005) and Henry bring up good points on how we must proceed in the decolonization process, there are still some areas that need to be negotiated.

I did gain some insight in this study about the difficulty in the renegotiation of gender roles and responsibilities. I was constantly cautioned by women throughout my time in the field saying, "be careful of what the men are saying about restoring women to the traditional roles in the communities". There have been many transitions of the roles of women discussed in this study. First, there were the discourses that the women are the leaders of this resurgence, women are reclaiming their leadership roles that had been lost through colonization, women are healing themselves more than the men have been, and women make up the largest demographic in post-secondary institutions. Second, the women have faced resistance in their efforts to reinstate themselves into their traditional positions. For instance, the men in the AFN meetings that I

listened to had a tendency to disrespect the women at the meetings. It was not until a young man stood up and called them out on their treatment of the women that they changed their behavior. I have also witnessed men showing disrespect to women, and using threats of violence against women. To this end, I do feel that this is an area that needs further investigation.

Conclusion

In this study, I sought to understand the current resistance of the Original people of Canada. More specifically, I wanted to discover why the contemporary resistance efforts of the Original peoples of Canada are so widespread. I also wanted to understand what those acting in resistance were truly attempting to accomplish with their actions. Additionally, I wanted to explore the usefulness of existing mainstream theories when researching the resistance of the Original peoples of Canada.

Obtaining a concise answer to the first question is difficult because there was no cohesive reason given by the people in this study that could answer this question. However, most felt that the availability of social media and its use by those organizing events has been a contributing factor for how rapidly people were able to respond to and organize protests (see Corrigan & Wilkes, 2012; Wilkes et al., 2010). Another reason given was the fact that over the past few years, resource extractive activities have been more widespread and thus effecting communities across the country. The last reason given concerns sovereignty, namely the people's right to choose and participate in not only the decision-making process, but also the financial benefits of these activities. As Myeengun Henry explained in the past, no meaningful compensation has been given for the use of traditional unceded lands by the Colonizers and corporations using their lands. To be sure, there have been agreements that stated that the people from the community would benefit from jobs, but this has rarely been the reality (Saunders & Awashish, 2012). As

such, many feel that they must act as they have no other choice but to do so. Alfred (2005) has claimed that to be an Original person is in itself to be political. For those in this study, the threats to their rights, communities, and lands are under constant attack by the government and corporations. With the introduction and availability of social media, more people now understand that they have common goals and concerns. They are able to communicate with each other, spread news about imminent threats almost instantaneously, and co-ordinate quick, unified responses to these threats nationwide.

My second question that I was seeking to answer is the following: what is it that those involved in INM are attempting to accomplish? Gaining the answers to this question involved extensive time in the field listening to those who were publically speaking, as well as having on-going conversations with the people that I met at these events. The answer also goes far beyond what the media has focused on. The people that I spoke with are deeply concerned with reclaiming their traditions and cultural practices that were taken away from them through governmental policies of colonization. For them, this is their right as a sovereign people (see Holm et al., 2003).

The people in this study who are acting in resistance are claiming their sovereignty and no longer asking that the government recognize it. They are also expressing it through their actions, such as: reclaiming their languages; reconnecting themselves to the land to rejuvenate physically, spiritually, and emotionally; reviving their ceremonies and making them a part of their lived experiences; and sharing the stories passed down through the generations of their spiritual laws and their histories that have until recently been silenced (see Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000; Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Cattelino, 2008; Cruikshank, 2000, 2005; DeVries, 2011; Dickerson, 2010; Go Forth & Maxwell-Powell, 2014; Holm et al.,

2003; King, 2012; Kino-ndanlimi, 2014; Martin-Hill, 2013; McClean, 2014; Saysewahum, 2015; Shoemaker, 2012; Smith, 2002). This reawakening of those in this study is both spiritual and political because at its core, the loss of these traditional aspects of their existences results in a loss of their identity, while simultaneously they have a political agenda that seeks to protect their lands and sovereign rights (Alfred, 2005:63; Hughes, 2001:125). Alfred (2005:62) points out that the past uprisings of the Original peoples have failed due to the lack of structural capacities that afforded those acting in resistance to carry their revolutionary actions to the next level.

According to Alfred (2005:62), the Original people must obtain the power to realize a political advantage when negotiating with politicians and policy makers operating within the current colonial system. Alfred's argument reflects Myeengun Henry's explanation of the negotiations with Enbridge. His lawyer explained to the band that they would only be able to slow Enbridge's plans for Line 9 which runs through their territory, but ultimately they will not be able to stop it. So the band was left with a decision: they can fight a losing battle that will ultimately cost them large sums of money with no beneficial outcome; or they could choose to make the best deal that they possibly can and use the monies gained in the deal to leverage more power in the next battle that they face. Admittedly, Myeengun told me that this decision was a painful one to make, as he wants to protect the land from any future damage by the pipeline, but his hands are tied.

However, by making a deal that provides his band with financial resources to improve the lives of his people, he hopes that they will heal and be stronger in the near future.

Decolonizing Canada is an ultimate goal of the people participating in this study. For them, the struggle involves returning to practicing their ancestors' values and ways of seeing their world. According to Alfred and Corntassel (2005:612), decolonization begins with the self and moves outward to the "family, clan, community" and so on. It is accomplished by

reconnecting with their languages, land, teachings, and ceremonies. By reclaiming their languages, the Original people will change how they relate to the world and recover the knowledge that is built into them (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:612-614). By re-storying the history of the people, those acting in resistance in this study reclaim the “cultural, social, and political landscape” of their traditional lands (Alfred, 2005:22; McClean, 2014). Through the historical stories of their ancestors, those acting in resistance in this study uncover the silenced history of colonization, and simultaneously regain the knowledge of their lands, traditions, and ceremonies that bind them together (see Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Cruikshank, 2000, 2005; Kino-nda-niimi, 2014). Moreover, my participants believe that the songs, dances, and ceremonies provide the healing power to overcome the social ills experienced by many of the Original people and their communities (Alfred, 2005; Yellow Bird, 2014). This is reflected in many of the stories shared with me by participants that have overcome their lived experiences of abuse, addictions, and family traumas.

Those in this study have shown that healing is being realized for them by decolonizing themselves through the learning of their histories. They have also explained that by sharing the stories of their history, they are inviting the Settlers to also begin the healing process of realizing a more healthy relationship. As such, the healing for my participants begins with healing their spirit by refusing any disconnection to their lands, history, languages, and spiritual practices (Alfred, 2005; Yellow Bird, 2014). It is Alfred’s (2005) assertion that revolutions that did not have a spiritual revitalization at its core have failed. For this reason, even in the case of legalistic victories, the Original people will not experience a decolonized revolution without a spiritual resurgence (Alfred, 2005).

Participants in this study have expressed how fear has been instilled in the Original people through colonizing actions such as the residential schools, and denying the basic necessities of life to communities. However, it is by overcoming these fears and acting against colonial manipulations that the people believe they are going to realize freedom from colonial control of their lives (Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:612). For those in this study, fear can be conquered through a revitalization of the spiritual teachings and values of their ancestors (Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:612-614; Smith, 2002; Willow, 2010; Yellow Bird, 2014). However, they have also promoted the need to become self-sufficient in order to resist colonial co-optation (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005:612-614). Alfred & Corntassel (2005:612) argue that in order to accomplish this goal, much work still needs to be done on the individual and local levels of development; this was also explained to me through the stories of the warriors and elders with whom I spoke. For the warriors in this study, they transformed themselves by working with elders to learn the teachings of the traditional warriors. In other cases, transformative work has been accomplished through small teach-ins, ceremonies, and mentoring in educational settings. Through all of this transformative work, the struggle for those participating in this research, according to Alfred (2005:45), is to “restore connections severed by the colonial machine”. Of course, these small scale transformations need to be practiced widely by the Original people in order to achieve the goals of Wasasé, argues Alfred (2005).⁵⁵ This is because Wasasé will bring about a unity among the Original people that will allow for a more meaningful resurgence of traditional values and spirituality, which is ultimately necessary to begin a new decolonized relationship with each other and Settler peoples (Alfred, 2005:44, 59, 63,180). However, what I personally witnessed was an effort by the people to decolonize their

⁵⁵ Alfred’s (2005) Wasasé can be understood as a contemporary Indigenous social movement for change that is founded on the traditional philosophies and values of their ancestors.

existences through a spiritual revitalization, while simultaneously exerting their sovereignty as they attempt to make positive social changes and negotiate a new relationship with Settler society. This leads to the question of the ultimate necessity that Alfred puts forth that the decolonizing of the minds and spirits of the Original people needs to take place before taking steps towards making political changes. Alfred (2005:63) answers this question by explaining that resurgence can occur even “within unaltered mind frames”, yet he does not show much support that it will be effective. Nevertheless, this may be a recurring situation as theory is not necessarily something that can be applied precisely due to constantly changing political landscapes.

My final question was to seek out the usefulness of mainstream theories of social movements and methodologies of investigation when looking to understand the resistance of Indigenous people, or those who have worldviews that do not reflect Western academic notions of the world. At first glance, Wallace’s revitalization theory may seem adequate when taking into consideration the additions and alterations of subsequent researchers (see Volkes, 2007; Willow, 2010). However, the basic short-coming of his theory is that it is compartmentalized and seeks to understand Indigenous movements as having a definitive beginning and an ending that is easily identifiable (Wallace, 1956). As Vokes (2007:322) pointed out, revitalizations are not periods of liminal change, nor are they typically brought on by a specific stressor; rather, they are on-going processes that are reactions to the multitude of pressures brought on by colonization, and thus are always incomplete. For this reason, other academics argue that the rubric of revitalization theory needs to be re-imagined to take into account the ever-changing landscapes brought on by colonial pressures that give birth to the ebbs and flows of resistance (see Brown, 2004; Vokes, 2007; Willow, 2010). To study revitalization under its current rubric also “divorces” Indigenous

resistance from the “dynamic... processes” both within and outside of the group, that influence the ebbs and flows of acts of resistance and cultural resurgences (Brown, 2004:122).

Additionally, the issue with thinking of a revitalization movement by Indigenous actors of resistance as ending when they are no longer in the centre of the public eye is in itself problematic. This thought process reinforces the notion that Indigenous people have nothing else to do in their lives other than to participate in public acts of resistance (see King, 2012; Volkes, 2007; Willow, 2010). It also serves to continue the stereotypes of Indigenous people by reifying public notions that define them as products of history that do not have modern day concerns and responsibilities; this thus keeps them framed as bounded, ahistorical, and static artifacts of the past (Vokes, 2007; Willow, 2010). Furthermore, by framing Indigenous people in this light, we also deny them any agency and the self-awareness to choose their own actions and outcomes in life.

Alfred (2005) instead points out that Indigenous resurgences grow and change to meet the needs of those acting in resistance. His research has shown that recent mass movements of Indigenous resurgence share some common themes that we can currently see in today’s resistance of the Original peoples of Canada. According to Alfred (2005:82), Indigenous people’s resistance throughout the Americas share these common traits: “they depend on and are led by women, they protect communities and defend land, they seek freedom and self-sufficiency, they are founded on unity and mutual support, and they are continuous”. The data in this study shows each of these characteristics. Although some may criticize this conclusion as being inaccurate due to a lack of complete unity among the Original people, or that the Original people are not completely self-sufficient, we must remember that Alfred (2005) is talking about the principles of these movements. The women that I have spoken with in this study have all

discussed bringing back the traditional teachings and values to their communities, and a central theme in their discussions has been that women are the ones that hold together their nations. Consequently, it is believed by my participants that if women return to their traditional roles as leaders in their communities, they will once again unify their people. Furthermore, according to Myeengun Henry, Shannon Thunderbird, and others that I have spoken with, it is the women that constitute the vast majority of Original people obtaining post-secondary degrees, which in turn will help to build self-sufficiency and freedom from governmental control and manipulation of the people. The current resistance was sparked by four women whose desire is to protect their communities, the land, and the waters that have been endangered by the passing of omnibus bills, as well as limit and in some cases prevent the actions of resource extraction industries. Finally, at this point in time, these acts of resistance by the Original women of Canada and their Non-Indigenous sister allies show no signs of ceasing. Moreover, there is no identified beginning of Indigenous resistance in Canada, but it is said by those in this study to have started with the appearance of the first colonizers, thus it has been continuous.

By adjusting the framework of revitalization theory, we can create a more accurate picture of how and why this type of resistance occurs. Non-Indigenous academics were already questioning some aspects of the theory before Alfred and Corntassel (2005) began to look at contemporary resistance (see Brown, 2004. Volkes, 2007; Willow, 2010). Most importantly, what Alfred (1995, 2005) and other Indigenous academics added to the conversation was the Indigenous perspective (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000, Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Holm et al., 2003; Thomas, 1990). Admittedly, there are academics that have taken into consideration what Indigenous academics have said and the insights which they have added to understanding Indigenous people's lives and cosmological outlooks on their worlds (Viveiros de

Castros, 1998; Willow, 2010). Unfortunately, it is still a struggle for Indigenous academics to gain recognition for their contributions to the knowledge of Indigenous people (see Asselin, 2003; Corbin & Buckle, 2009:61-62; Kanuha, 2009; Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002).

Wallace (1956: 265) argues that all revitalization movements are “deliberate, organized, conscious effort[s] by members of a society to construct a more satisfying structure” (emphasis added). It is my belief that most academics would agree that INM satisfies these conditions outside of one point. Since INM and many other Indigenous resurgence movements are grassroots movements, some may argue that they are not organized. However, the term itself is problematic as it cannot be universally defined to fit into various cultural perspectives. For instance, INM is effective for various reasons, but an important factor in its success is that it does not require one central figure to make all the decisions. On the contrary, INM allows actors to make their own decisions on when to put out a call to action, how to define and structure these actions, and how to organize each action locally to fit the capabilities of local actors wishing to support the call to action (Kino-nda-niimi, 2014:25). Therefore, it is organized. However, this organization allows for the creative decision-making to be done in a manner that celebrates and reflects the diversity of the Original peoples of Canada. This being said, INM still has a central mandate which is available to everyone, as outlined on the official Idle No More website (INM, 2013).

Wallace (1956) further describes revitalization movements in stages. While I have previously disagreed with such a compartmentalization, we can use his second through fourth stages and reframe them in order to make them more fluid. As stated earlier, Indigenous resurgences experience ebbs and flows, and this type of movement reflects the emphasis on actions and relationships seen in the Original people’s languages. As Alfred (2005:82) has

already theorized, Indigenous resistance is continuous. Yet the people in this study are not always acting in resistance in ways that are always visible to the public eye. There are many levels of resistance according to the authors discussed in this study (Alfred, 1995, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000, Anderson & Lawrence, 2003; Martin-Hill, 1995). Additionally, the participants in this study have also duplicated in their conversations similar arguments to what these authors have said about the process of decolonization; it starts with the individual and grows outward (Alfred, 2005; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Anderson, 2000). This being said, Wallace (1956) did point out how “stressors” influence actions of resistance. He also asserted that through time, the people’s ability to cope with these stressors is compromised, influencing their reactions to it (Wallace, 1956). However, he saw this as a lineal progression from beginning to end or from a point A to a Point B. When adopting an Indigenous perspective, however, we can see this process as being constantly in motion; just as the tides of the ocean rise and fall constantly, so do the acts of resistance. So instead of those in this study stopping their resistance activities, they actually refocus their efforts. These shifts can be understood just as the changes of tides are, just as the waters redirect their path, so do those in this study. At times they are outside within the public gaze communicating their message, yet at other times they turn their focus inward towards an internal decolonization of the self. For my participants, both activities are equally important, and both are working towards a resurgence of their nations and strong, independent, sovereign nations that have a complete and strong sense of who they are and their purpose as a people. Alfred (2005) points out that the Original people have more to do in their lives than to constantly stand publically in resistance to state-level intrusion upon their lives. We must also consider that the State’s actions must be taken into account when judging the various ways in which people resist, as resistance does not happen when there is no intrusion in the lives

of those acting in resistance. For this reason, I postulate that we may see these three stages happen in cyclical patterns rather than as a unilineal progression.

During my time in the field participating in and observing this current period of resistance, public actions have continuously shifted in these three stages that Wallace describes.⁵⁶ In late 2012 through early 2013, everyone was outwardly unified, as there were almost daily protests, and those acting in resistance were highly visible to the public gaze. During this time, a public conversation began, and from what my participants have told me, this conversation was one of the goals of bringing the concerns of the Original peoples into the public discourse. Then by the Spring and Summer of 2013, my advisor questioned if INM was still “a thing”. However, I was still attending discussions and rallies that were not being covered by the media. During this time, the people with whom I spoke were not concerned about getting media attention because their focus was the one-on-one, face-to-face conversations between people in order to build relationships. Admittedly, during this time frame, people were also taking breaks from public protests in order to rejuvenate themselves through ceremony, to take care of their families, to work, and so on. However, according to those in this study, private discussions, community debates, and less visible forms of resistance continued. Then in the Fall of 2013, the resistance again became very public with the focus on Elsipogtog and SWNs fracking in New Brunswick, as well as with Enbridge’s plans to reverse the flow of Line 9 in Southern Ontario. People were back out in public spaces acting in solidarity to resist these threats to the land and the water, and also seeking to educate the wider public about these concerns. Again, the resistance became less visible as winter approached. During this time, the TRC commissioners began to talk about their

⁵⁶ The stages I am speaking of are stages two to four of Wallace’s model. In these stages, as the social stressors rise, people start to develop negative coping strategies. Initially those who seek change are seen as radicals to the majority of the group, however eventually these new ideas of resurgence are accepted and incorporated into the group.

initial findings in public forums. There were also people who told me that they were working to rebuild the fractured relationships between the Original people and Settlers. Moreover, local bands were speaking out to the National Energy Board against Enbridge's Line 9 plans. Calls for inquiries into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada became a central focus in the public conversations that I was included in, and local people protested the government's lack of action at looking into this problem. Then again in the Fall of 2014, more visible outbreaks of public actions were occurring, specifically the protesting of holding pond breaks in BC, planned pipelines cutting through unceded First Nations lands in Alberta and BC, and the Keystone pipeline. Again, as I am writing this, public resistance is less visible. Hence, in this short period of time, public forms of resistance have ebbed and flowed in the area within this study, but even outside of the public's gaze, they have never completely stopped. What is important to note here is that if one keeps decolonizing acts of resistance within their gaze, we can see movement between the stages that Wallace (1956) describes in his five-stage outline of revitalization. However, this movement is not a unilineal progression, as it is constantly shifting, and the decolonizing (or revitalizing) aspect of resistance is continuously being acted out and renegotiated.

Viveros De Castro (1998) argued that in order to understand people that have different worldviews than our own, we must first gain their perspective. We cannot frame their world within our own because in doing this, we only learn of our own perceptions of the 'other' (Viveiros De Castro, 1998). This explains why Jean Becker and others have not recognized themselves in the studies that past researchers have done "on them". Research must be conducted collaboratively within a framework that holds the researcher accountable for representing those participating in the study accurately (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002).

We as researchers must conform our ways of seeing the world to align with our research participants in order to be able to understand what they are trying to teach us. I have heard uncountable numbers of elders in my lifetime say ‘we know so much more about the White man than he will ever know about us’. Comments such as this hold true even in academic research, because in the past it was expected that Indigenous people reframe their world to fit into a Western understanding of it. Even within the academy, Indigenous academics are discounted because the current educational structure is based on privileging Whiteness and thus supporting the colonial and imperial control of those who are “othered” by White domination (see Campbell, 2010; Coram, 2009; Gutiérrez y Muhs, 2012). So when conducting research with the ‘other’, many important details are often overlooked or misinterpreted, causing a misrepresentation of those within the researcher’s gaze.

After finding the answers to my research questions, it is apparent that the resistance that is so often referred to as Idle No More is a revitalization or resurgence of the Original people’s cultural and spiritual traditions. These traditions outline their responsibilities to the land and waters, their right to create their own identity, and their claim of sovereignty rather than asking for it to be respected. Through their stories, those in this study have expressed their intention to determine their own existence, both politically and socially, without intrusion by colonizing agents. Their strategy in accomplishing this goal is to construct relationships with the Settler peoples of Canada that are built on mutual respect and understanding of their common concerns regarding the protection of the land and waters.

I have also shown that when studying the Original people and other Indigenous peoples, we must seek to understand their perspective in order to avoid the past mistakes of misrepresentation. This will require that we re-evaluate the use of existing mainstream theories

when seeking to understand those who are ‘othered’ in society. It also requires all researchers, including insiders, to conduct their research collaboratively with their participants in order to ensure that the participants’ knowledge and contributions are accurately represented (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Mihn-Ha, 1982, 1995; Smith, 2002). In this study, I employed and critiqued Wallace’s (1956) Theory of Revitalization as it most closely reflected the data that I collected. I took into consideration the critiques and alterations made to this theory by more contemporary academics (see Vokes, 2007; Willow, 2010). While these authors made useful adaptations to Wallace’s original theory, they still did not provide a structure that fully represented what I observed in my research. Therefore, I turned to Taiaiake Alfred (1995, 2005), as well as Alfred and Corntassel’s (2005) arguments of Indigenous resurgence, and I tested their theory against the data which was collected in this study. In this case, my data supported Alfred (1995 & 2005) and Alfred and Corntassel’s (2005) framework of Resurgence more accurately than it did revitalization theory. However, it is my contention that because Wallace’s (1956) theory of revitalization has historically only been used to study the resurgences of Indigenous peoples, that we should use Alfred’s *Wasasé* (2005) to assist in altering the theory in order to support researchers in truly gaining an Indigenous perspective and understanding of their acts of resistance and resurgence. Moreover, the Peoplehood Matrix provides a framework to flush out the information in the data collected through an Indigenous cosmological understanding of their world and actions within it (see Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Holm et al., 2003; Spicer, 1980; Thomas, 1990). Although some continue to argue that as insiders, Indigenous academics can only provide us with a biased understanding when researching those within their own cultural group, it is my contention that they provide us with an insight into the perspectives of those that do not share our worldviews (see Corbin & Buckle, 2009). For this reason, we should employ the

knowledge that they have shared with us in order to avoid misrepresenting those within our gaze. This is an ethnocentric mistake that many academics have committed in the past that has resulted in harming those that they studied when colonial policies were informed from their conclusions (see Memmi, 1991; Mignolo, 1993; Mihn Ha, 1982, 1995; Morgan, 1877; Palmetter, 2013; Preiswerk & Perrot, 1978). These misrepresentations also support the continued marginalization of the knowledge systems of those who are “othered”, ultimately reifying the continuation of the privileging of White domination over Indigenous peoples.

What I Would Do Differently

As a novice researcher, there are things that I would have done differently than I originally did in this project. First, I would resist the pressure that I submitted to when structuring my research proposal. Although I now have a thorough understanding of mainstream social movement theories that are more commonly used in Sociology, they ultimately proved not to be useful in this study. First, there is no social movement theory that is commonly used by sociologists, outside of those that I could find focused on the sociology of religion, which accounts for spirituality⁵⁷. For this reason, I was guided away from looking at the spirituality component in the current resistance which my participants feel is central to their actions. If I had continued on this path, I would have likely completed my research much sooner. However, I would have also been guilty of misrepresenting my participants, a mistake which I was determined to avoid.

Second, my research was intended to be a ground-up approach to research. According to grounded theory, the data develops the theory that the researcher ultimately uses (see Glaser &

⁵⁷ This claim is based on my personal experience in working with my original advisor who was completely unaware of revitalization theory, millennial theories, etc. that I discussed earlier in this thesis. However, when speaking with a department professor that had a research focus on the sociology of religion, he was both aware of these theories and advised that I use them.

Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). By attempting to use a grounded theory approach while simultaneously trying to satisfy the committee's desire to include a large amount of theory in my research proposal, this ultimately served to confuse me in my research direction. The result of this confusion was evident in my proposal and defense of it. It also affected my first interviews in the field, as my questions were directed towards a theoretical framework that did not reflect my participants' worldviews and understanding of their actions. It was not until I had spent more time in the field listening to speakers and my participants that I was able to refocus and alter my interviews to flush out how my participants' truly saw their actions and purpose in their resistance. Although I do understand that as researchers our initial interviews are generally not beneficial to answering our research questions, I do believe that the direction I was consistently being steered in added several months to my time in the field.

Third, I do feel that my research would have benefited from more time out in the field interacting with those acting in resistance. Unfortunately, this was limited in two ways. First, this study is a Master's research project, thus less time is afforded to students conducting field research at this level in their academic career. Second, the funding was not available for me to travel so that I could conduct more participant observation of resistant events, and interviews of those participating in these events. As such, the amount of data that I could collect was limited. Although I do feel that my data was approaching the point of saturation in some respects, it may not have. For this reason, the conclusions drawn in this study may be incomplete.

Fourth, I believe that my initial interviews would have been more fruitful if I had been afforded the opportunity to witness or participate in some field research with a more experienced qualitative researcher in the field. My reason for believing that this would have improved my research is due to the fact that it was during my initial interviews that I had the most problems.

This ultimately resulted in the data collected from these interviews being useless to my study. The data collected in these interviews, in my opinion, was unproductive for two reasons. I was influenced by the extensive literature that I was directed to utilize that included no academic articles by Indigenous academics at that point in time. Also, I had not yet developed the skill to flush out more in-depth information from my participants. I initially would start an interview with the list of semi-structured questions that were provided in my research proposal. By using these questions, my participants may have been influenced by them and possibly felt that I would not be interested in the things that were truly important to them.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study due to the simple fact that it is a qualitative study. Qualitative studies are not generalizable because they are designed to obtain in-depth and comprehensive information to assist in fully understanding the perspectives of those participating in the study (Blumer, 1969; Bryman & Teevan, 2005; Creswell, 2008; Glesne, 1999). Geertz (1973b) explains that the thick descriptions given by ethnologists provide us with more accurate depictions of the lived experiences of those within the researcher's gaze. Becker (1986:121-135), however, cautions that there is a basic flaw in this type of thinking and in the providing of thick descriptions as it is the responsibility of the researcher to pick out the pertinent aspects of what the researcher is told. Becker (1986:121-135) also asserts that it is the job of participants to answer the questions that are asked. In other words, it is important that we concentrate our descriptions solely on the information that will answer our questions. However, I do feel that it is necessary that we allow our participants to give information that they feel is important for us to know, as well as to answer the questions that are asked of them. If research participants only answered the questions that are posed to them, as researchers we may miss out on valuable

information as I did early in this study. Therefore, in my opinion as a qualitative researcher, there is a balance that we must find in our reporting of our data: we must provide thick descriptions, while also not allowing ourselves to over use these descriptions at the cost of convoluting the data.

As I have questioned previously, when conducting qualitative research on those who do not share our worldviews, how do we determine what information is important in answering our questions? Historically in North America, the Original people have suffered when outsiders have determined what was in their best interest (see Alfred 1995, 2001, 2005, 2009; Anderson, 2000; Deloria, 1998; King, 2012, 2013; Martin-Hill, 2013; Palmeter, 2011, 2013). In many cases, these paternalistic values of the colonizers originated in the research reports of academics that were influenced by their own ethnocentrism, thus resulting in the misrepresentation of the Original people as less evolved than European peoples (see Morgan, 1877; Hall, 2002; Said, 1978, 1998; Smith, 2002; TCPS, 2010, Article 19). This, in turn, justified the paternalistic policies and practices that caused great harm to the Original people (see Furniss, 1999; Haig-Brown, 1988; Milloy, 1999; TRC, 2012). For these reasons, the strength of this study is that it not only provides the reader with detailed descriptions, but I have also worked with my research participants to ensure that their views were both reported and interpreted accurately in order to avoid misrepresentation. Additionally, in the past, researchers have taken the knowledge shared with them by their research participants and claimed it as their own (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Smith, 2002). These actions have lowered those within the researcher's gaze to an imagined position as being childlike, which is harmful to a people who were already marginalized in society and in relation to said researcher. Thus, by attributing the knowledge shared with me to my participants, they are given credit for their knowledge, and therefore portrayed as the

intelligent, rational individuals that they are (see Kirby & McKenna, 1989). While qualitative researchers cannot draw generalizations with the data they collect, they do have the opportunity to use their collected data in such a manner that demystifies those who are ‘othered’ and marginalized in society, and thus this assists in shaping more positive public perceptions of them.

As I previously stated, I cannot be certain that I was able to collect enough data with which I can claim with certainty that I was able to achieve a point of saturation. However, I was afforded the opportunity to share my research and preliminary findings with my research participants and other Original people during open forums for discussions. This afforded people the opportunity to present me with information from my research that they may not agree with the findings of. This is evident in the transcripts shared in the Sacred History section of this report, when Myeengun Henry and I are discussing my preliminary findings about the TRC process. Before my discussion with Myeengun Henry, I would not have been able to report that this process was and continues to be problematic, and does not always bring about positive results for the residential school survivors. For this reason, I do believe that this research is only a first step in gaining an understanding of the contemporary resistance of the Original people in Canada.

Areas for further Study

This study focused on the motivations and reasons behind why the Original people in Southern Ontario choose to act in resistance. Moreover, this study was designed as an exploratory study based on a grounded theory approach. For that reason, the number of participants were limited in order to allow for the development of relationships between myself and my participants. Thus, this study could potentially be repeated in other areas of Canada, or

even in the same area again, for the purpose of testing the results of this study against other populations.

Another potential area of research that this study may inspire is for a researcher to embed him or herself into one of the communities in which I conducted my field research in order to gain an even more complete understanding of contemporary resistance among the Original people in Canada. If I were to undertake such a project, I would personally choose to conduct further and more in-depth research in Ottawa. My choice of Ottawa is based on my experience with that community as it proved to be more active than any other community that I conducted research in. The people in the community were also open to continuing an on-going relationship with me, allowing for more in-depth conversations after I returned to my home community. Moreover, there was a trait that the Ottawa community exhibited that I did not observe in any other community that could prove to be both a positive and a negative when conducting further research. My experience with the community in Ottawa is that they are much more unified than other Southern Ontarian communities. I am not suggesting that there are not disagreements in the community, because I have been told that there are. However, despite these differences, the community has shown a capacity to be able to overlook these differences and stand together in areas of common concern. So when seeking to conduct research in such a community, the results may not be reflective of all urban Original peoples communities. Still, the community could provide information on how they made choices to overcome divisions that other communities continue to face. For instance, I have been told by those in this study that both urban and reserve communities experience fractures in relationships that negatively affect the cohesiveness of the community. These fractures thereby have the potential to prevent the community's ability to achieve the unity necessary to effectively stand together in resistance.

Considering the fact that my research sample was so small and that I witnessed four people either carrying or talking about Taiaiake Alfred's (2005) book *Wasasé*, I would be remiss if I did not consider this as a potential research question. Also, at least two of the warriors in my study referred to Alfred's (2005) book when they were speaking. Nevertheless, it seems that *Wasasé* is being read by the Original people of Canada who are acting in resistance (2005). Because my field observations support much of what Alfred says in his book, it then leads to the question: 'is *Wasasé* impacting how the Original people are resisting'? Or 'do my observations support what Alfred (2005) is arguing'?

To test what Alfred (2005) is arguing in his book, we could look to other Indigenous groups to test his contention that other Indigenous resurgences share the same markers as INM. For instance, the Zapatista movement is led by women, it seeks to protect both their communities and land, they seek to obtain freedom through building self-sufficiency, at the movement's foundation is the commitment to unity and mutual support, and it is a continuous act of resistance (Alfred, 2005:82). Although Alfred argues throughout *Wasasé* that for Indigenous resistance to be successful, there is a need for a resurgence in culture, language, and spirituality for any political independence to be gained, he did not include this as one of the characteristics of contemporary Indigenous resurgences. As such, I would argue the need to include spiritual and cultural revitalization into inquiries of Indigenous resurgences.

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Appendix 1

Myeengun Henry

Before starting my discussion however, I feel the need to explain one participant that appears extensively in this research. At the beginning of my field research, I had three primary participants. One took a job out of town during my field research and could no longer devote any more time to participating in my research. There was also a young woman who was initially very active in my early research. Unfortunately, she met with a great amount of family resistance to her participation in Idle No More and this research project. For this reason she too had to discontinue her participation in this study.

For this reason, Myeengun Henry is given a great amount of prominence in this research. It was never Myeengun's intention or mine for that matter to be the focus of this research. I am sure he would have preferred that I was able to focus more on the young woman that worked tirelessly to get the local community involved in Idle No More. My purpose for saying this is due to his actions early in my research. Myeengun initially became involved in Idle No More to be a support person for the youth involved. However, when the young woman had to step back from her participation, there were no others that stepped up to take her place. From that point on, Myeengun and I continued to work together to help ensure that I was able to provide as complete of a picture of the lived realities of those acting in resistance in this area as possible. In doing so, Myeengun Henry and I would meet to discuss what my data was showing me, which directions it was taking me in, and so on. In return, Myeengun would give me insights into

information that we felt was pertinent to providing an in-depth understanding of the current struggles of the Original people, and how they are resisting the continued colonial structure of the Canadian landscape.

Myeengun Henry was able to provide a unique perspective on some current events due to his position as both an elder working as a support person for students in a post-secondary institution, and also a band counselor. We often hear in the media about the corruption of the *Indian Act* Band Councils, when in reality many of my participants did not feel negatively towards their band's officials. That said, I must report that many participants described their band councils as supportive of bringing back lost traditions, reviving their languages, and trying to resist the co-optive nature of the relationship between their Nations and the Canadian government. Moreover, Alfred discusses the problematic nature of the *Indian Act* Band Counsel system for realizing full sovereignty (2005).

Myeengun Henry, offers some insight into how those within the *Indian Act* governmental structure are making efforts to work for their people to improve the lives the people they represent. His discussions reveals the personal struggles and choices faced by band counselors that want to preserve the traditional values of their ancestors within the colonial confines of their lived existence. He also gives insight into the everyday choices every original person in Canada must make when attempting to balance decolonizing themselves while simultaneously trying to provide for themselves and their families.