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Leadership as Métissage:

Seeking to Indigenize Our Faculty of Education.

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Abstract

As a faculty of education, we have ethical, professional, and legal commitments that compel us to make meaningful and significant contributions to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This work is long overdue, justice has too long been denied, the ongoing legacies of colonization that play out through education need to be disrupted now. Yet this work must be done in a good way, decolonization is required, many complexities exist stemming from the past and present dominance of Eurocentric knowledge in our society, K-12, and post-secondary education systems. The authors of this paper made up all of the full-time staff members in a faculty of education. We used a collaborative scholarship of teaching and learning research project and a Métissage methodology to seek to collectively lead the Indigenization of learning, teaching, leadership, and scholarship in our faculty. In braided narrative vignettes, we situate ourselves in relationship to this work, explore tensions and complexities, wrestle with axiological considerations, reflect on practices we have engaged in, share how we have taken up this work with our students, colleagues, and school partners, identify questions and steps in front of us, and reflect on how Métissage has served as a shared leadership process to support the Indigenization of our faculty and our University as a whole. Our stories are situated in a Bachelor of Education after degree program that serves approximately 120 students located in the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda Nations.

Keywords: indigenization; scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL); post-secondary education; collective leadership; Métissage; collaboration; teacher education

Introduction

Chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRCC) Senator Murray Sinclair, pointedly summarized the Commission's findings regarding education: "It is precisely because education was the primary tool of oppression of Aboriginal people, and miseducation of all Canadians, that we have concluded that education holds the key to reconciliation" (Stromquist, 2015, n.p.). The TRCC is the latest in a long line of national reports to call on education to become more inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching, and learning (National Indian Assembly of First Nations, 1972; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; United Nations, 2007; Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2011). Precipitated, in part by these reports, Provincial Ministries and Deans of Education across Canada have developed policies intended to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students and to promote reconciliation (Council of Ministers of Education, 2018; Association of Canadian Deans of Education, 2010). In the Alberta context, the professional quality standard for teachers includes "Applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit" as one of six standards (Alberta Education, 2017).

While the ethical, professional, and legal mandates are clear and compelling, complexities exist stemming from the ongoing legacies of colonization and the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge in our k-12 and post-secondary education systems. Battiste (2013), pointedly frames the historical context: "for more than a century, Indigenous students have been part of a forced assimilation plan — their heritage and knowledge rejected and suppressed, and ignored by the education system" (p. 23). This historical legacy must be considered and reflected on in engaging in this work. Connected to this, the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge in education has contributed to what Donald (2009) describes as a "colonial divide" in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada are perceived as occupying separate realities of

"us" and "them". Donald (2014) found that most teachers, whatever their level of experience, "feel woefully unprepared to lead their students in meaningful consideration of Aboriginal perspectives" (p. 2). Donald concludes that teacher education programs need to help student teachers identify the ways in which colonial logics and structures continue to have tremendous influence over the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada and help them understand Indigenous philosophies to engage with Indigenous perspectives in qualitatively different ways. A significant challenge to fulfilling Donald's call lies in the reality that the post-secondary context itself is steeped in Eurocentric dominance. Furthermore, the research methodologies, curriculums, pedagogies, and very structures of the university have played significant roles in advancing the colonial project (Smith, 1999).

In this space of tension our faculty has been seeking to create an "ethical space" to include and promote Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and teaching in our faculty of education (Ermine, 2007). Willie Ermine's (2007) "ethical space" offers a construct for Eurocentric and Indigenous Knowledge systems to be brought together. Ermine provides that a necessary precursor to creating an ethical space is to interrogate the deeply embedded cultural interpretation of dominance of Eurocentric knowledge. Connected to this he suggests that the assumptions underlying each foundation knowledge must be considered and appropriate points of inclusion identified. Ermine envisions a trans-systemic space "in between worldviews", that reaches beyond two distinct systems of knowledge (p. 193). Elder Albert Marshall deems a bringing together of Indigenous and Eurocentric knowledge as "Two-eyed seeing" (Bartlett et al. 2015). Kimmerer (2013) offers the metaphor of braid which we draw on to support the organization of this chapter.

In this collaborative scholarship of teaching and learning Métissage, we engaged in a journey of seeking an ethical space to include Indigenous perspectives in our faculty of

education. The Métissage project itself offered a vehicle for us as a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty to collaboratively lead this work. We chronicle our journey in this chapter and proceed as follows: first, we situate this work on the Land and in our university; next, we describe the research approach of Métissage and the Medicine Wheel Protocol that guided our journey; and finally, through braided narrative vignettes, we situate ourselves in relationship to this work, explore tensions and complexities, wrestle with axiological considerations, reflect on practices we have engaged in, share how we have taken up this work with our students, colleagues, and school partners, identify questions and steps in front of us, and attend to how Métissage has served as a shared leadership process to support the Indigenization of our faculty and our university as a whole.

Métissage

Worley (2006) provides that Métissage is a critical pedagogical praxis well suited for education because of its commitment to diversity and polyphonic nature. We drew on Métissage as a protocol for shared leadership of Indigenization in our faculty. Métissage offered a framework for our diverse team to bring our unique perspectives, experiences, and histories to reflect on, (re)create, and renew practice (Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009). It provided a protocol for equal partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, a necessary design feature of decolonizing methodologies (Kovach, 2009). Métissage is a process of interpreting and braiding one's own and others' perspectives to enable a deeper understanding of the complex nature of relationships and foster more ethical terms for extending these relations (Donald, 2012). Co-creating an interpretive narrative provided us with a means for hearing each other's narrative and provoked reflexivity (Kovach, 2009). Through monthly co-writing meetings we used Métissage to engage in an iterative and cyclical process of listening, sharing, reflecting, and recreating our teaching and service work in the university.

Donald (2012) provides that Métissage does not prescribe methods but rather requires "*aokakio'ssin"* careful attention to the details of the research context (p. 544). To this end, we drew on Medicine Wheel Teachings as a framework for bringing forward and sharing our perspectives. The Medicine Wheel Teachings were gifted to author Kathryn Crawford from Elder Georgina Mercredi and deepened by Knowledge Keepers Carol Crowe and Doug Dokis. Each month we drew on the four directions of the Medicine Wheel to write, share, listen, and engage in dialogue (Mercredi, 2000-01; Crowe, 2020; Dokis, 2020). We have used the Medicine Wheel Directions to braid our voices in this chapter.

Donald (2012) highlights Métissages' ability to bring Indigenous perspectives to bear on policy discussions in educational contexts. In this chapter, we have curated our ongoing writing process with the aim of making our journey visible and opening up possibilities for others.

East-Who am I?

Kathryn

A few years ago I accompanied a group of preservice teachers to Niitsitapi Learning Centre, an early childhood through grade two school in Calgary, Alberta whose design and pedagogical approach is rooted in First Nation perspectives and experiences. As we sat in circle in the teepee space, our host asked us to share where we are from. I do not have a straightforward answer— the immediate thought that comes to mind is that I feel unrooted. I lived in numerous places when I was young, often away from my large extended family. Recently we have explored my mom's adoption, likely one of the Sixties Scoop adoptions, revealing families who are of both European descent and Dené and Metis. We have been adopted back into both families, and the teachings I receive are shaping my evolving sense of my place in my family, my work, and my response abilities (Haraway, 2016). Stories of identity exploration with

colleagues Josh Hill and Crystal Pelletier, peers, and preservice teachers that have occurred through relationships with Indigenous communities have been profoundly meaningful to my sense of self as an educator (see Crawford et al., 2022).

Crystal

I am grateful to my ancestors. Their struggles, hardships, and triumphs have laid the foundation for me to be here today. Here on the land, here as an educated Métis Woman, and here sharing my story… our story. Being the first of my family to complete graduate school, so many educational firsts, yet there is a distinct presence of loss and wonder. My paternal grandmother was the glue of our family, our gatherings, and our Métis traditions. It seems as if my learning and research has brought me back to the wonderful work the Métis women in our family have done. While I knew my Grandmother's stories, it was a gift to find out that she was included in Troupe's (2009) thesis on the social structure and political activism of Métis women in Saskatoon.

I have travelled to new communities with my husband and these opportunities have helped shape me into the educator I am now. Having the opportunity to return south, I feel more at home near the foothills and prairie. I don't always have words for that feeling of awe and connection to the land. It is a sense of homecoming.

Arch

My Chinese name has to do with a person of wisdom. I am a Malaysian Chinese Canadian who is 1.5 generation; that is to say, I was born overseas but grew up in Canada. I came to Canada as I began primary school and entered the public school system not understanding a word of English. As can be imagined, this brought with it a lot of cultural and identity complexities. One of these complexities was beginning to understand the dominant culture and where one belongs in that culture. For me, where this journey began might be a

strange place in that it did not start in school but the Chinese Canadian church. Even though Chinese immigrants have opportunities to take part in various kinds of ethnic organizations such as cultural clubs, language schools, and other religious groups, there are certain needs that only the Chinese church has been able to meet. In asking my parents why they sent their children to a Chinese church, even though they were moderately Confucius in their values, the answer came back clearly: to preserve Chinese culture, language, and identity.

Sherry

> Home: what you visit and abandon; too much forgotten/too much remembered. An asylum for your origins, your launchings, and departures, the derivations of your dream geographies; where you invented destinations/ Always and unrelentingly (home) after it is too late to be or to revert to (home), even after it pre/occupies the past tense. (van Herk, 1990)

As an educator interested in identity research, I position my own sense of self in multiple ways. My name is Sherry Lee Martens, daughter of Henry and Joan, born, raised, wandered and returned to live in Calgary. I am a descendent of immigrants on both sides of the family tree who came to Turtle Island with the promise of escaping persecution in their homelands not knowing that the land they would work for was gained through injustice. Although I have lived my life as a teacher on concrete and asphalt, I feel deeply connected and rooted in the Prairie landscapes of rolling hills whose crops fed five generations of my family. I wrestle with the juxtaposition of my identity against the story of Indigenous People in this country.

Christy

Early in life I had the desire to become a teacher and was encouraged by my family to pursue teaching. I sensed a calling to continue this path. I am a settler of European descent and

my family immigrated from England and France and when I reflect on my early teaching philosophy, I can see the influences of my family and culture. Much of my educational experiences were shaped by a western worldview so it is not surprising that my teaching practices and training have been largely influenced by dominant culture. I recall teaching the history of Canada and residential schools in a grade 10 social studies class. I connected with a friend who worked at the Native Center at the University of Calgary to find a guest speaker to share Indigenous knowledge with my students. At the time, I thought I was providing a great learning opportunity for my students, but it had not occurred to me that beyond this learning experience, I was doing little to dismantle the narrative of dominant culture or consider other pedagogical possibilities for my teaching practice.

Josh

"Hello, Mr. Wolfleg sir" I stammered, "I am a grade 7 teacher and I would like to include Indigenous Voice in my class but I am not sure how to do that well." "Would you consider guiding me?" I can still feel the pit of nervousness in my stomach so many years later. Reflecting on it now, I realize how these feelings were in part a product of 'us' and 'them' logic (Donald, 2009). When faced with a new social studies curriculum on Canadian history I knew the stories I had been told in school were inadequate. I knew the stereotypical language and attitudes I had encountered growing up on the Prairies were inappropriate. I knew I needed my students to have an opportunity to learn from Indigenous perspectives. Yet, I felt woefully unprepared to do so (Donald, 2012). My k-12 and post-secondary education had left me, a Metis person, unable to envision how to meaningfully include Indigenous Perspectives in my classroom. I recognize now how much this story of assimilation was by design. When I reflect on who I am in this work, I think of my commitment to disrupt this story. I think of being my Grandmother's grandson, seeking to reclaim, seeking to be a living testament to the resilience and strength of the Metis

people. I think of being my children's father, seeking an educational experience for them and their generation that includes Indigenous people. I think of being my future Grandchildren's Grandfather and envision more just relationships with all of creation.

South-Where have you been?

Kathryn

When I moved to a North Denésuline community to teach early in my career, I had taken a few books of Indigenous legends with me. I shared these stories with my students, excited to incorporate cultural stories into my practice. I was dismayed when they did not know any of the stories, believing their community had disregarded their own culture. That my first inclination was to place blame on the community, and not on myself, and my lack of awareness of the importance of place, invitation to receive local knowledge, and the rootedness of First Nation stories remind me of my situatedness in the western curriculum. As a young teacher, I had not learned "to think otherwise to bring thinking itself into question" (Findlay, 2011, p. xi). I had made assumptions from my own limited experience. I share this story with my preservice teachers to reveal the ignorance from which we often make teaching decisions as well as judgments of students, parents, and communities that are shaped through our own life histories and disconnection to places.

Crystal

Again, I return to gratitude, grateful for the opportunities I have been given through my work as a classroom teacher, an instructional coach, and as a collaborator. While I was raised not far from the homeland of Our People, I also had the opportunity to move to new places. Not nomadic, but with purpose, just like my ancestors did. While the colonized view was that Our People were nomadic, an Elder recently corrected me when I used that term. *I still have much to learn.*

After 16 years in Fort McMurray, I am back to the foothills and prairies, close to the mountains. I have travelled to new communities and these opportunities have helped shape me into the educator I am. Having the opportunity to return south, I feel more at home near the foothills and prairie. It is a gift to be connected to your community and to participate more fully in cultural practices and traditions. I don't always have words for that feeling of awe and connection to the land. It is a sense of homecoming and I am *grateful*.

Arch

A number of theoretical frameworks have been helpful to me moving forward in identity formation over the years that indicate where I have been and where I am going that provide a language to think about identity and culture. Ecological theory presumes that it is not imaginable to know a person's development in isolation apart from their social and historical contexts (Darling, 2007). This theory is able to describe the complexity of my immigrant minority experiences: a rich resource of Chinese history and culture that began in Malaysia, shifting to a new Canadian cultural context and the many changing environments and systems along my journey.

The concept of intersectionality from critical race theory allows for each individual to hold multiple identities simultaneously. Chinese Canadians have a complex identity that interlaces their culture, faith, gendered experiences, educational background, and immigration status into their lived experiences in Canada. Intersectionality "avoids essentializing a single analytical category of identity by attending to other interlocking categories" and also "enables us to ... include the impact of context and to pay attention to interlocking oppressions and privileges across various contexts" (Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008, p. 5).

Sherry

I have struggled to know where to begin this story of decolonization, teacher education, and my place within it. I began my teaching career in a remote Northern Metis settlement in 1987. It was for me, a year of many firsts- the first time I had lived away from home, the first time I had lived in a rural community, and the first time I had the opportunity to be in a relationship with Indigenous people. It was a challenging year for me on so many fronts notwithstanding a lack of knowledge and appreciation of the stories of Indigenous people in Canada despite my studies in Western Canadian history that I have only in recent years began to understand was shaped through a colonized and limited perspective. I am grateful to students, community members, and Elders that engaged with me as an outsider; came to my home and drank tea, took me out on the lake in worn canoes and on the land in the coldest of winter. While I professed that I was all about student interest and endeavored to find ways to engage them, it was still steeped in my Western perspective about the culture of school and the prioritizing of curriculum. I spoke with our school board chair, and Elder, Felix, who was also father to 13 kids- 6 of them in my classes. He helped to implement a Cree culture activity in our Art classes by coming and teaching wood carving. He supported all of the teachers by asking his children to respect us; I can see now what that cost him as a former student of residential schools- not that I knew anything about that at the time.

Christy

When I started teaching pre-service teachers at the post-secondary level, the government had introduced a new teacher quality standard and this included a standard where pre-service teachers are required to develop and apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit. This new standard served as a catalyst for my own journey of unlearning colonial approaches to teaching and learning. I am grateful for the experiences that I have had, while

limited, where Indigenous Knowledge was meaningfully included. I had the opportunity to participate with our faculty in land-based learning with Tsuut'ina elders Deanna and Bruce Starlight at the Brown Bear Center, and Blackfoot elder, Saa'kokoto and more recently at Dodginghorse Ranch with Sonya and Brent Dodginghorse. I've been inspired by these experiences and listening to the stories and teachings I find myself compelled to reflect on my own teaching practices and biases. I recall attending a chapel on campus where Holly Fortier was speaking and sharing her story and a film she produced about her mother's story and experience in residential schools titled *A Mother's Voice*. Holly challenged those of us there to consider not just learning about Indigenous people but to consider "How can we learn from Indigenous people?" I am realizing how important this is for me to engage in the work we are doing with our students around decolonizing our practice and in interrupting the dominant narrative and experience.

Josh

Descending from Nose Hill, students in front of me and the big, bright Alberta sky beyond I couldn't help but feel a sense of optimism. Student's spirits were high, conversations revealed possibility thinking, a genuine enthusiasm about the prospects of Indigenous land based learning. We had harvested Rose Hips to make tea, learned the names of plants, investigated animal stories, and engaged in forest play led by my four young children. Sharing Métis cultural ways of knowing with the next generation of teachers feels like a reclaiming, I find hope in moments like this. The next day in class students shared reflections on their experience. Some enthusiasm persisted yet much focus shifted to perceived barriers: weather, bussing, curriculum, student ability. I have come to realize that alongside Indigenizing experiences students need to learn to recognize and reflect on the perspectives they hold and help them interrogate the ways in which their experiences in the education system have perpetuated a monopoly of Eurocentric

knowledge. Without this decolonizing work, attempts at including Indigenous knowledges can become manifestations of tokenism. Without interrogating the singular western gaze, Indigenous land based learning at Nose Hill is seen as little more than an add on, a field trip.

West-Where am I going?

Kathryn

My identity is a continuously shifting evolution that depends on place, relationships, responsibilities, and knowledge sharing. My Elders are Nitsitapi, Nehiyawak, Métis, Denésuline, and Tsuut'ina. My Blackfoot name, Natooyiksistakyaki, was gifted to me and guides my responsibilities toward my relations. In recent conversations with Elders from Tsuut'ina, the Blackfoot Confederacy, and Onion Lake I asked for guidance in my role in Reconciliation. Each replied that they wanted educators to play a role in amplifying the truth of what has and continues to happen in First Nations communities. These conversations provoked further reflection and consideration on my engagement with all my relations and how I enact decolonizing knowledge and responsibilities in all aspects of my life. I have been taught that I am Nitsitapi, I am grounded in my communities and with that comes a sense of pride and a sense of answerability to disrupt our cultural memory.

Crystal

I am beginning to notice that in my learning I have been missing the Matriarchal voice. While her voice has always been, I know that with the loss of my grandmother many stories and traditions were lost. Thankfully, I have been able to revive some of the family practices of medicine gathering, berry picking, and beading. These gifts seem to be hidden when I was younger. More like taken for granted and just thought of as always there. I am now doing the work to build relationships with Métis Elders, Knowledge Keepers, with ceremony, and to bring that learning into our teaching and classrooms.

Oster and Lizee (2021) bring Métis women's stories to life with their new book. It offers Kookum stories of the past and how things were when they were growing up. It is a gift to learn from and be reminded of traditions and memories in their work. It makes me miss my Grandma! While I wish I had learned to bead with my Grandmother, her traditional practices of New Years Day celebrations with Boulet Soup have been revived. I hope that after the pandemic eases, I can grow that celebration as she did. I am listening to stories when possible and reading stories as I miss that time with the elders of our family.

I wonder how I can grow that hospitality into my classroom, my work, and our community?

Arch

The theories mentioned above, are a number of theoretical frameworks that have assisted me moving forward to understand better identity and culture. One of these identities is a teacher educator. My wonderment is about this: in what ways might an Indigenous framework around epistemology, ontology, and axiology continue to add to my construction of identity in which wisdom keepers and elders provide wisdom and direction to my teaching identity? hooks (2010) says that engaged pedagogy begins with the assumption that we learn best when there is an interactive relationship between student and teacher. It seems to me that this discovery happens only if teachers are willing to engage students beyond a surface level. Engaging in Indigenous ways of knowing in my own teaching has so far opened up a number of spaces and I would like to see where this goes and how this is helpful to me and my students.

Sherry

Entering the space of Advanced Education, I carried with me the stories of teaching and the excitement of possibility in the growth of a School of Education, including the work of adding several faculty members, increasing enrolment, and shaping a scope and sequence that meaningfully incorporated the Teaching Quality Standard (Alberta Education, 2020) into its core

content. Heeding the Calls to Action, the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and histories in the Teacher Quality Standard opened up another path that I had not expected to take- the unraveling of a story that I thought I knew about Indigenous people and my own understandings and beliefs. My initiation into this work occurred at the annual faculty retreat and our participation in a Blanket Exercise, led by two members of Arts and Science faculty. The experience shook me to my core, and I was left in disbelief of what I did not know about the history of Indigenous people in Canada. All at once, my emotions overwhelmed me, and I could not catch my breath. Tears began to flow, and I nervously wiped them away; not feeling comfortable in this room of new colleagues, strangers to me. I watched and listened to my colleagues in the room, wondering how others were impacted by the experience. For some, it elicited visceral reactions, for others, they were unmoved. There was a short debrief in the form of a sharing circle and then, we moved on to the next activity like nothing had happened. Driving home, I called a friend and began to unpack with her what had occurred. She wondered if an Elder had led the circle? No. Something was shifting in the storyline that I thought I knew.

Christy

Working collaboratively with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty has been helpful for me in continuing in this work has furthered my thinking about how I might decolonize my practice. Teaching two courses with a colleague, Josh, contributed to a deeper understanding around Indigenizing our course. We engaged in dialogue and reflection around creating an ethical space and how we might model decolonizing teaching practice to the pre-service teachers we were working with. Engaging in these kinds of discussions with colleagues and pre-service teachers has been challenging and has required me to be vulnerable but I recognize the necessity of this work in imagining a better future for everyone. We drew on Louie et al. (2017) article which informed our pedagogical decisions (e.g., storytelling, negotiating,

democratizing). This led to us co-authoring an article on our experiences in seeking to decolonize our teaching practices in this course and to share our learning journey with others. This was a humbling experience as I still do not feel equipped to even write about this but am willing to put it out there with the hope that it will be helpful to others who are in a similar journey.

Josh

Yet, confronting deeply seated biases and digging at the roots of Eurocentric dominance and white supremacy is tricky work. It can evoke disbelief, disengagement, anger, and sadness. It can result in student teachers becoming unable to get started for fear of doing the wrong thing. I am working towards creating a community that supports one another to attend to the emotional nature of this work and inspires reflexive action. I'm working on creating a safe space of trust. I am working on creating a decentralized classroom power dynamic. I am wrestling with the tensions of doing this work within university strictures and structures dominated by Eurocentric ways of being. I am working on recognizing and disrupting ways that my own thinking and practices are shaped by colonization.

North-What are my responsibilities?

Kathryn

Maracle (2015) states that "stories govern us" (p. 35), reminding me that we each embody our stories, our communities, and our histories. I feel a response-ability (Haraway, 2016) to the stories I carry. I am committed to sharing first-person stories to facilitate relationships and (re)storying education, curriculum, and identity formation. These threads are entwined with my reflections on where I have been, where I am going, and what rights and responsibilities I have to my communities and myself. In particular, I have been reflecting on and thinking forward on preservice teacher placements in First Nations community schools and the

importance of being in relation with the people, the language, and the knowledge of each place. The early formation of Ambrose's field experience partnership with two local First Nations was done through relationship building, storying, and meetings with the Band Council and Educational Authority, as well as to the schools. This has evolved to include community-led teachings that facilitate preservice teacher sense-making and draw their awareness to the importance of reflecting on who they are in that space in a critical way. I feel particularly responsible to frame their visits through a critically reflective lens of their own situatedness and relationship with the school community, teachers, students, and curriculum. I am troubled by the reproduction of colonizing practices in First Nations schools when preservice teachers go to schools to observe them, especially if they leave that experience without sensemaking the local traditions, curriculum, practices, and theories of learning.

Crystal

How I move forward is up to me. I believe that right relations, community participation, and social activism are my responsibilities. Not only to my profession which I view as a vocation, but to Our People. My grandmother worked tirelessly to support families that were going to be separated by family services. She was a case worker that facilitated detox care of Indigenous parents dealing with alcohol use disorder. While I was fortunate to not experience this as a child, it was because of my Grandmother and parents and the choices they were able to make. Many challenges can impact a child's life as they grow up. Who knew that while my parents and grandparents worked to shelter me from these things, I would grow up to be a teacher! Teachers are the frontline in a school to support students and work with families.

I had no idea when I graduated university with my teaching degree that one day I would be supporting students in the ways that we are called to do. I had no idea that one day we would work collaboratively to discuss how we might consider decolonization and the Calls to Action

from the TRCC. One of the ways I enact my responsibility to my ancestors is to provide mentorship and support to students who are exploring their Métis and Indigenous ancestry in adulthood. By connecting with the Métis community and inviting Knowledge Keepers to share our ways with our preservice teachers, I can create new learning opportunities and reach future generations of students. It is my hope that the racism my sister and I experienced as students will be disrupted and replaced with respect. I again, am grateful for this opportunity. We are not there yet. There is still work to be done. I am grateful to be here now, doing this work with these colleagues for the betterment of our profession.

Arch

Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall states that Two-Eyed Seeing is, "To see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing, and to see from the other eye with the strengths of Western ways of knowing, and to use both of these eyes together" (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 335). In using both eyes, I need to locate myself, and my students need to locate themselves in their own stories of identification in the classroom because this helps with the issues and history of self-identification. According to Anuik (2020), "Self-identification has an impact on teachers' practices, and understanding how people identify can help teachers to adapt learning environments to meet their needs" (p. 107). If one aspect of an Indigenous ways of knowing is about relationality, of building relationships of trust with my students, it requires of me to be vulnerable with my stories of the ways that I self-identify and the manner in which negative stereotypes or misinterpretations have been traumatizing to my self-identity. So, in voicing my stories of self-identity, I am hoping to create spaces for my students to accurately represent who they thought they were and will become, in order that we can have helpful conversations. This is risky business and messy, but honest.

How might I move this further with self- identification? Going back to Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall's concept of Two-Eyed Seeing has been a helpful way to reflect on my own teaching practices and course design. I wonder at times, if I need simultaneously a third-eye that has an Asian twist as well.

Sherry

There is an institutional story that continues to unfold alongside my own narrative and that of the faculty. I can only continue to be a voice through actions of reconciliation. The opportunity to learn alongside Elders and members of the community through invitation and informal gathering, continued activities with students, led by Indigenous people, land-based learning and assessments that reflected their own responsibilities in this work. Furthermore, I can step out as a leader for the rest of the University by taking on a greater responsibility that will lead to an authentic relationship with Indigenous communities as they assist us in the co-creation of a new story. I believe that I was called to this leadership role for many reasons and one of the most important was the opportunity for the work of decolonization to live authentically at Ambrose University as we continue to find our voices in the narrative that is still unfolding. I am grateful for the support of faculty who walk alongside me. This is difficult work but I choose, with humility and grace, to dig at my own roots so that something new can grow and thrive.

Christy

While I feel a sense of deep responsibility to decolonize my own teaching practice, I wrestle with my own readiness to lead this work in our teacher education program as a new faculty member. At the same time, I am compelled to move forward. I am hopeful about what is coming out of this work, as we are seeing our students incorporating Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into their teaching and learning designs. I am very humbled by my Indigenous colleagues and their generosity in leading in this work and whose work with faculty and our

students has guided us to learn more about how we might braid together the strengths of Indigenous and Western knowledge. All these experiences have shifted my thinking about not just including Indigenous knowledge but also drawing on Indigenous ways of knowing as pedagogical possibilities. I am only at the beginning of this journey but am hopeful that reimagining a better world and thinking of other pedagogical possibilities will make a way for all to flourish. I am so grateful for not being alone on this journey and am thankful for my colleagues and the opportunity to build relationships with others engaged in this work.

Josh

I have come to think of my role as creating the conditions for students, colleagues, and myself to listen to and share stories about who we are in relation to one another. I am noticing that in these conditions we come to tell new stories, new stories about Canada, about Indigenous People, about the Land, about teaching, about learning, about children, new stories about ourselves. I think of this as a collective (re)storying (Crawford et al., 2022). I reflect often on what responsibilities I hold in creating space for this deeply personal and relational storywork. How can I do this work in good ways? Yesterday in response to that question a Tsuu T'ina Elder told me “I can tell by how you are asking that question that you already know what to do, my role” he said, “is just to help you remember”. Perhaps in asking these questions of ourselves, listening intently to the answers of others, and sitting together to think deeply about our responsibilities we are engaging in a collective remembering.

Conclusion

This work is in its beginning stages; we know that our efforts to create an ethical space to include Indigenous Perspectives in our faculty need to be ongoing and we recognize that we must precipitate substantive and transformative change. Reflecting on our journey we believe

that Métissage provides us with a process to lead this work moving forward. We feel that the collaborative process of reflecting on, storying, listening, and acting has supported us to become more aware of and be more attentive to our positionalities and responsibilities in this work as individuals and collectively. Furthermore, this process has supported us to engage in new ways of working, new ways of being in relation to each other and our work. We believe that in engaging in new ways of being we are becoming something new, and through this we are engaging in a process of transformation of our faculty and of ourselves. Rosile et al. (2018) put forward qualities of leadership within an Indigenous world view as collectivist, relational, dynamic, and heterarchic. We believe that these qualities were present in our journey and we aspire to explore how we can further enact these qualities in learning, teaching, scholarship, and research in our faculty. We close in humble gratitude for one another and for this journey and to you for allowing us to share it with you.

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