

inca sənqsilx^w
(I AM ALL MY RELATIONS)

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

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inλ'aǎǎ λ'ǎap
inmistəm uƆ intúm

inca sənqsilx^w
(I AM ALL MY RELATIONS)

Abstract

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International boundary issues in the Northeast on the US/Canada line in Mohawk country are not the same as in the central Okanagan of the Pacific Northwest; while there are common issues, the complexities of individual communities get lost in a general approach to Northern border issues. To learn from and expand on previous research, I am specifically investigating the influence and interference of the 49th parallel demarcated international boundary line on the current preservation and complexities of identities, cultural and language revitalization/preservation/construction of northern and southern Okanagan people.

Using first-person narratives primarily through film, a personal website, and supporting text I will illustrate how individuals within our communities see and resist these impacts. Making visible specifics in the nsyilx^wcən (speakers/people of the Okanagan language) homelands and how the implications of assimilation, colonization, traditional migration, individual indigeneities, tourism, militarization, and local Indigenous economic development have and are impacting our views of ourselves and the labeling of the problems of the Northern boundary line as “not an issue” is a continued battle in this bi-national controlled Okanagan territory.

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nsyilx^wcən
(speakers/people of the Okanagan language)
homelands

The beliefs and assumptions that shape our present reality are 'true' only to the extent that they consciously shape our thoughts and actions to fit the framework desired by the state. They are the myths of the colonial mindset (Alfred 83).

Cutting into the intellectual and material space of “American Studies,” and the influence of colonial thinking in any of the fields of my interdisciplinary research, brings forth the glaring reality that any contemporary Okanagan experience material or otherwise is invisible in the academy. According to colonial myths “real Indians” are artifacts in museums and books. If you asked most people on our campus here at Washington State University where the Okanagan/Okanogan valley is they would not be able to tell you. Ironically enough our campus is located in the geographical region of the Plateau tribes/bands of the Pacific Northwest; and our Southern and Northern Okanagan people are one of many tribes/bands in the Plateau. We (nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x Okanagan peoples) are from what would be considered the northern part of the Plateau, in the state of Washington and the province of British Columbia. The Okanagan/Okanogan valley is cut by the 49th parallel, one of the US/Canadian international boundary lines, and is our traditional territory. The entire Plateau area encompasses regions of the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and the provinces of British Columbia, and Alberta. There are numerous Interior Salish/Plateau

Tribes/Bands/Communities/Cultures/Languages that are held together by a geographic area more than cultural similarity. There are nuances of many connections with respect to lifeway knowledges, land memories, languages, and laws from the foods, earth, water, and air. The multiple Plateau cultures/languages/peoples have long standing relationships and respect for differences that span thousands of years. Many multitudes of difference that are the basis for respect for other ways to view everything in multiplicity; traditionally there is not an assumption to try and be similar. Difference of other peoples' customs and ideas are to be respected wherever traveled upon earth/mother; in turn expectations of returned/renewed respect for one another's ways and differences are reciprocal.

Washington State University stands on the traditional lands of the Palúus people who were removed by the US government and divided up to reside on the Colville, Yakima, and Umatilla reservations. This land was taken from the Nez Perce people after they were "given" the land in a treaty to make the university with a specific agreement/stipulation in mind. The university was created and built on this land with the agreement/stipulation to all the Plateau tribes that it would work to help make western educational opportunities available to all our Plateau peoples. Especially to those who are US recognized and enrolled members in the Plateau tribes in this geographic region. The politics of being enrolled in the Plateau tribes on the other side of the 49th parallel,

in Canada when entering this space of Washington State University is a good example of how the colonial constructs of western “states” comes in direct conflict with many kinds of Aboriginal/Indigenous traditional geographic configurations. This complex example illustrates how the peoples I belong to and I are not included in this academic and geographical space. We have never been consulted as peoples about the appropriation of our traditional space and how we are labeled in it.

I belong to the Okanagan Plateau peoples and lands (nsyilx^wcən homelands). This material fact does not enter into the university system construct as it exists now materially or intellectually, I have to cut into it and make a path to stand in the field of “American Studies” and among other disciplines where my interdisciplinary studies take me. While this is not a unique reality, it is a glaring truth that many peoples face if they want to go to university and be reminded every day with every book or text “under represented populations” read, among other experiences, that many of us are not represented in this white supremacist patriarchal hetero-sexist capitalist colonial structure, and need to work to find examples of other scholars of color, political allies, and Indigeneities that can help us address the complex layered struggles colonialisms have created by contact with our “under represented” communities. These complex layered struggles are continual negotiations of multiple intellectual, material, and spiritual spaces in which Okanagan existences are partially visible and invisible.

The negotiated spaces of nsyilx^wcən (speakers/people of the Okanagan language) malleable existences are many and vary by individual, communities, and any combination of how individuals move in and out of our traditional homelands. The movement or constraint of movement of nsyilx^wcən peoples is a direct result of the international boundary line of the settler states, Canada and the US, on the 49th parallel. When these settler states were created they did not take into account many traditional Aboriginal/Indigenous lands that would be severed in half with their international boundary line on the 49th parallel.

Each settler state has different rules and constraints for any of our Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples to move across this international boundary line or any other line that they have created in the Americas and the Pacific. In order to move within, over, or around these international boundary lines within any of our peoples traditional lands we have to comply with all rules and regulations of each settler state simultaneously. If these stipulations cannot be met then you are forbidden to travel within your homelands or any other Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples' traditional lands. Daily we live the material reality that at any time we can be bared or

separated from part of our family at any time, getting trapped on either side of this colonial international boundary line.

For many Aboriginal peoples this can begin to be understood as a nullification of every kind of “Indianness.” This nullification translates to colonial definitions of what Aboriginal/Indigenous means. If your Indigeneity (ies) does not fit into part or any of the colonial constructs the nation states in north “America” or the Pacific have constructed for us then locally on this continent much of the world renders us invisible. This includes our own or other Indigenous peoples’ regulation and policing of “Indigeneity.” This invisibility has very material consequences that erase many individuals’ rights to their traditional lands, and services within the nation states of north “America,”/”Pacific” or their local communities, tribe, or band.

As Bonita Lawrence states in *“Real” Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood*,

White supremacist values must therefore be seen as “working” in numerous ways on the identities of urban Native people: devaluing the humanity and narrowing the options of the dark-skinned individuals and rendering “inauthentic” the Indianness of those with light skin (173–174).

This statement only begins to address the complexities and intersections of status, non-status, and Métis/Matee

existences in Canada, and the other definitions of “Indianness” in north “America.” These complexities are more layered and vast than any one definition can define. We need to build off the hard work of many Indigenous scholars to continue to make visible the implications of colonial definitions of what is Indigenous/Aboriginal/First Nations. How these incomplete definitions make material implications that rip at defining ourselves as Aboriginal peoples. Many of our communities have multiple identities as individuals and as groups of Indigenous peoples. The influence of western white supremacist patriarchal hetero-sexist capitalist systems along with the entitlement these systems take defining who is an “authentic” Native all have visibility consequences for many Indigenous peoples and nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) peoples in our homelands. Some examples of material invisibility are crossing the international boundary line without “Native” documentation that supports traditional movement across this line by our people, or being an Aboriginal nsyilx^wcən imagemaker/scholar trying to get a PhD at any university where the internal structure of the educational systems do not support our peoples’ land memories or cəpcaptík^wɬ (lessons/histories) as valid sources of information.

And so it is critical that I place my work within the context of our communities, traditions, language, lands, and families intersecting with fields of study in the academic world, and how these intersections produce glaring exclusions that render our people invisible in many ways. As Emma LaRocque states in her discussion about combating the contradictions and invisibilities of being an Indigenous scholar,

As a long-standing scholar in Native studies, I especially wish to bring to this discussion some of my reflections about what confronts those of us who are not only Native and women but are also intellectuals and researchers caught within the confines of ideologically rooted, Western-based canons, standard, and notions of objectivity and research. We are in extraordinary circumstances: not only do we study and teach colonial history, but we also walk in its shadow on a daily basis ourselves. What do we do with our knowledge as well as with practices of power in our lives, even in places of higher learning (398)?

In this contradictory context of the university I am cutting a space for contemporary nsyilx^wcən voices that are informed by different levels and kinds of Indigeneity, cultural knowledge, and tradition. Using first-person narratives primarily through film, a personal website, and supporting text I will illustrate how individuals within our communities see and resist colonial impacts upon their individual identities as wqna=qin-x/syilx

people, our nsyilx^wcən language, culture, and family ties.

Through the uses of these varied and complex types of media I will illustrate how interconnected our wqna=qin-x/nsyilx^wcən lifeway views/knowledges are, and that they are as varied and layered as each individual member of our communities.

These medias or texts speak to each other in a non-linear way flowing back and forth in a multi-voiced, multi-perspective way in each media or text; from each visual image, interview, language, and way of expression. There are an infinite number of ways each person, image, or written text can be interpreted by each reader, viewer, participant, community member; multiple meanings from the texts themselves and from those who come to view/read/interpret or participate within them. Allowing for more possibilities of meaning or views from the Okanagan to be heard. The topics within each text are so nuanced and complex that I was striving for a way to make an opening for multi-sylix/multi-Okanagan voices, places, and ideas, to be expressed and heard. Building upon the work of other Indigenous scholars I will contextualize the exclusions/invisibilities our nsyilx^wcən peoples face in academia and society in a series of themes: Indigenous Studies and Chicana/o Studies Revisited, International boundary lines on nsyilx^wcən homelands, and

Empowerment Through Action in a nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) homelands context.

Part 1: Introduction
“Native” and Chicana(o) Studies Revisited

As I sat down to hear the Plenary address before the luncheon on the first day of a Chicana/o Studies conference in the Pacific Northwest, I was feeling good about our group panel presentation on coalition building between many students, graduate and undergraduate, on standing up against anti-immigration demonstrations on our campus. This group activism crossed many boundaries between many communities that are too often defined as separate in many ways. These separations are based on colonial definitions of race, class, and gender. Such definitions are complicated by community definitions of “Indianness” that are informed and shaped by colonial influence, personal bias, and layered complex histories.

In our panel, *Building Bridges not Walls: Challenging Anti-Immigration Forces at Washington State University*, I was tying repeated patterns of colonization and the local Indigenous peoples’ connection to migrant work here on the Plateau as well as the costal areas in the Pacific Northwest. Thus I found it very ironic and horrifying when the plenary

speech on “Mexican-Origin” working class in the Pacific Northwest erased the lives of local Native/Indigenous people. The presenters Indigenous lands were “open” lands (devoid of brown/red peoples) ready for the “taking” by any immigrating peoples. Contrary to the ideas of the open western frontier, Manifest Destiny, and “civilized” expansion the lands of the Northwest were populated by other Aboriginal/Native peoples before any immigrant group traveled here, Indigenous or otherwise. It became clear to me that my idea about the conference as a site of building ties and strength between Indigenous/Aboriginal/First Nation and Chicana/o communities and scholars was not necessarily the aim of everyone participating. I began to wonder about the local Indigenous elders, women, children, and men who were missing from most of the narratives at the conference. There can be no regional or global ties without the local voices and the local experiences. Do we as a plethora of many different and distinct Indigenous peoples of the “Americas” or the world want to be colonizers in other peoples’ traditional homelands? If we erase the local voices and experiences from acknowledgement and respect then we are continuing and emulating the colonial layers of violence from the past and

present that many of our people still suffer from on multiple levels daily.

This layered debate about the politics of exclusion within “Indianness” as Natives and Chicana/os in parts of North America are very problematic and have been ongoing throughout colonization and continue as “colonial fallout.” The politics of who is included in any definition(s) of Indigeneity(ies) is always changing. Levels of colonial ideology mixed with community and individual bias and history influence these changing definitions of Indigenous identities. An email discussion on this subject called, “Footnoting Heresy: E-mail Dialogues,” Deborah A. Miranda and AnaLouise Keating discuss at length how these ways of excluding each other has been ongoing and how to problematize definitions of “Indianness” to include Chicana/o writers like Gloria Anzaldúa who actively work out bumps on the road of defining their own “Indianness” or Indigeneity (Miranda and Keating 202–208).

The foundation of this discussion needs to be intersectional to demonstrate how international boundary lines, militarization, and struggles to keep traditional connections across Indigenous peoples communities and homelands in multiple nation state regions make it necessary to be more inclusive of many Indigenisms or Aboriginalities

present and active. These forms of Aboriginalities look and do different work than those of Indigenous communities who do not have traditional lands that are crossed by international parallels or meridians. There is more than one state government interloper who requires constant negotiations with identity construction on individual, within or outside of collective communities, and legal definitions of “Indianness” that usually differ on each side of the international boundary line. This is true in North America on more than one international boundary line. The Canada/US (49th parallel and 140th longitude) and Mexico/US (26th–33rd parallel) borders are just two instances where the above-mentioned conflicts of differing “Indianness” or multiple differing Indigenisms collide. On a local level, in any one group of Indigenous peoples there are multiple Indigenisms that are not the same and are in conflict with each other. This is only magnified and multiplied when referring to any bi-national Indigenous communities, or intercultural relations between Indigenous groups.

At the Chicana/o Studies conference, I was sitting by two of my professors who do work in this discipline area, Chicana/o Studies, who try to make sure that their scholarship

does not become part of the colonial mindset¹. I was wondering what they (my professors) were thinking as we (our group who came to the conference) continued to listen to those who were forgetting to acknowledge where they were standing, and how what they were doing related to where they were standing on the ground; on mother. I continued to wonder about those Chicanas/os attending the conference, who on some level are aware there is an Indigenous component to their existence. Were they really aware, at that time and through those narratives of their mixed Indigenous ancestry? Were they aware of the rest of the Indigenous peoples on the other side of the southern US border? Were they aware of those who straddle or are crossed by the line like we are in my nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) homelands in the north? If there are this many layers of unawareness of Aboriginal communities and peoples that cross this northern international boundary line, then the questions of invisibility for my people and my work are even greater than I expected in the Americas. The amnesia

¹ *Colonial Mindset* - I use the term in relationship to supporting the myth making of the nation-states of Canada, US, and Mexico in North America. Specifically myth making research that support the erasure of Indigenous/Aboriginal peoples and our homelands. Even if it is by other Indigenous peoples, mixed-blood, or otherwise that would rather support ideals of assimilation in their research or place their ties to mother earth in a colonial way in lands that are traditionally not their homeland (ie. the Pacific Northwest without first recognizing the Aboriginal/Indigneous peoples lands they are standing/living on out of mutual respect as brown/red peoples) or priveledge themselves and their research or people over other fellow Indigenous groups for gain.

of our traditional trade routes and relationships before contact are buried deeper than I have imagined. I did not expect similar willful ignorance and amnesia on the part of some Chicana/o scholars like that of some American Indian/Native American scholars.

I know that many scholars in Native American Studies have amnesia about acknowledging the Indigenous peoples of Mexico and the rest of the Americas or Pacific, and write many Indigenous peoples out of the definition of “Native/Am. Indian/First Nations/Indigenous,” but they need to address this blindness and influence of colonization on our community relationships and intercultural communications. We² can’t

² In this Dissertation the terms *WE* and *OUR* are used in two main ways unless contextually designated differently.

1) *We/Our* as *nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x* Okanagan peoples in general with respect to individual ways, knowledges, Indigeneities/Native/Aboriginal views of family/self, communities, and ways to think about our Northern and Southern Okanagan language with regional/place differences that guide us as individuals in multiplicity. *WE/OUR* is a move to displace and interrupt the “western norm” voices that try to continually hold all places of *we/our*.

This use is interrupting the general *səma?* (western/white/settler worldviews) histories/voices/languages that dominate all forms of highly accessible texts in “North America,” the “Americas”/“Pacific” in general and the industrialized western world that exercise many forms of control over Indigenous/Native/Aboriginal/First Nations bodies, lands, minds, resources here in the “Americas”/“Pacific” and try to dominate the whole world.

There are many limitations trying to translate concepts and ideas of *nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x* lifeway knowledges that have multiple *WE/OUR/PEOPLE* concepts that English has limited terms for. For example: *inca sənqsilx^w* (*I AM ALL MY RELATIONS*) – title of this dissertation – has a fluid meaning of all generations connected, not separated through time, space, physical, or spiritual presence that is not interrupted by having a physical body now or in the past. A continued informed connection through energy, lifeway knowledges, and laws from the land, foods, water, and air maintained by continuous passing on of knowledges with

forget the peoples' knowledge about our trade routes and connections that went from the tip of South America to the Arctic (past "Canada" into "Russia" and the whole circle of the Arctic), and east to west across the entire continents of the "Americas," or the connections between all the people in the "Pacific" to those on the "mainland." This is old earth knowledge. That can influence renewed connections and alliances to fight the daily injustices of all our Indigenous peoples with the nation states in our traditional lands.

Bringing to the surface old traditional knowledge and making connections to similar western scientific ideas can remind the nation states that occupy our lands that we have always had knowledge, connections, and agreements between our peoples and that this old earth knowledge supports these connections. In our creation histories we have direct connections to western scientific ideas about how the landmasses were formed and what geologically happened here in the Americas and the Pacific thousands of years ago. For

enormous respect for those who came before us perpetuating our survival and connection to our *təmúlaʔx^w* – mother/earth and *k^wl'ncútən* – creator, and those who will come again, and those who are coming to continue our connections to our people(s), family, and ourselves all at the same time.

2) We/Our as Indigenous/Native/Aboriginal peoples from the "Americas" and "Pacific" in general and academia/scholarship/disciplines in multiplicity with respect and acknowledgement of complex intersected individual and group differences that are as numerous as there are people(s). See note on *Indigenous (isms)/Aboriginal (ities)*.

example, Snoqualmie Pass here in the Northwest has creation histories in many local Indigenous peoples knowledges' that support the western scientific geographical "facts" about rock and mountain formation in that specific pass. The knowledge of the nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) people of the Plateau in Washington and British Columbia is over 12,500³ years old.

Whenever western science calls our peoples' knowledge

³ There are many constructs of "time" and how all peoples of the world fit into these constructs, who has the privileged positions of defining "time" and how western science and the Gregorian calendar are held up with the ultimate rational ideas/constructs of "time." In the Okanagan there have been various estimates that we occupied our valleys from 15,000; 14,000; 12,500; 10,000; 8,000; 6,000; 4,000; in the entire Plateau area ranging from 12,000–30,000 years ago, and with "North American" estimates being as great as 70,000+; 50,000; 35,000 to as low as 15,000–11,000 years ago.

With all this said there are many debates about this in anthropology and archeology, but in the Northern or Southern Okanagan there was lots of destruction of traditional sites due to the expansion of colonization and building cities directly on top of old established village sites, for example the cities of Kelowna and Penticton. There are many dominate western voices trying to use this "concrete evidence" that our societies are younger then they are, or that we really don't have as long ties to our traditional homelands as we say we do.

A few examples of western science that are asking for more research to really have a more complete better idea of the "dates" of continuous living or valley occupation are (Baker, 29) and (Carlson, 163). The idea of continuous occupation is a bit problematic to begin with because we always had seasonal land occupation depending on the land and the weather, and following the laws set by the foods.

There are cəpcaptík^w4 (lessons) that are about the physical geographical formations of the areas we come from that have been passed down for thousands of years. For example the geological formation of *Snoqualmie Pass* and the *Cascade Mountains* dates back to over 2 million years ago from glacial retreat. The last *Cordilleran Ice Sheet* retreating between 10,000 to 12,000 thousand years ago, western science does not "date" us back to before the retreat of this last ice sheet, yet we have cəpcaptík^w4 (lessons) about the formation of the valleys in the greater Pacific North West that western science "date" back to over 2 million years ago; since *time immemorial*. Our traditional land memories are constantly under pressure of erasure.

See Jack D. Forbes well researched book *The American Discovery of Europe. The Invisible Sex: Uncovering the True Roles of Women in Prehistory* by Adovasio, Soffer, and Page. *New Histories for Old: Changing Perspective on Canada's Native Past*s. "New Evidence Puts Man In North America 50,000 Years Ago." *ScienceDaily* 18 November 2004. *Washington Post* Article (4/4/08), "Human Traces Found to Be Oldest in North America," by Marc Kaufman among many others.

“myth,” we need to write against it! If scholars in specific disciplines like Chicana/o or Native American Studies write with amnesia we need to write against it! We need to remember the old earth knowledge of the Americas before colonial contact and work together as a multiplicity of Indigenous peoples to strengthen our “under represented disciplines” in the academy. Not to see these pre-contact histories with blinders and utopian notions in our heads, but to critically examine the problems and strengths of these erased or invisible knowledges giving visibility to our peoples and ourselves.

Of course, there are many scholar’s works in these two disciplines that are helpful and ground breaking that we as the newest generation of scholars are building on, scholars like: Humishuma/Morning Dove/Christine Quintasket, Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Lee Maracle, Joy Harjo, Kim Anderson, Bonita Lawrence, Gloria Anzaldúa, Jeannette Armstrong, Anna Castillo, and Paula Gunn Allen who interrupt/appropriate English and Spanish for Indigenous use. Using colonizer languages with Indigenous purpose as we choose is key. This “Indigenous use” has many forms and voices that are infinite just like Indigenous/Aboriginal identity constructions and ways of being Aboriginal (Aboriginalities or Indigenisms). The

violence of being made invisible with layers of colonization by western histories and ones written by peoples of color needs to be interrupted, even if we are using the same tools (the same disciplines) to do it. How will later generations of students break down the stereotypes and misconceptions about many different Indigenous people if that violence is not interrupted? With my imagemaker and scholarly work I am taking action on using English mixed with Okanagan/nsyilx^wcən, traditional ideas of learning, and our traditional land memories of our nsyilx^wcən homelands to combat our invisibility in the academy.

In this text I will use as many Indigenous scholars as possible to contextualize my work and the nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) homelands to reemphasize the importance of Indigenous scholarship and how it is adding to “classic” western academic disciplines. Relevant western scholars in Canada, the US, and beyond will also support these Aboriginal scholars works when needed. This support will be minimized as much as possible to emphasize Aboriginal scholarship and the strengths it has from land memories that need to be given voice. This could be argued in the academy as being biased or having lack of objectivity.

In a conscious effort to write back to the academy and the western privileged texts and construction of space in the academic world where the multiplicity of Aboriginal voices are silenced, invisible, or mediated by western scholars for the most part it is imperative to cut space for many Indigenous voices and peoples who may never make it to this policed privileged space. As Tey Dianan Rebolledo states in *The Politics of Poetics: Or, What Am I, A Critic, Doing in This Text Anyway?*

We have talked so much about theory we never get to our conclusion nor focus on the texts...This priority of placing our literatures in a theoretical framework to "legitimize" it, if the theory overshadows it, in effect undermines our literature or even places it, once again, in a state of oblivion. Privileging the theoretical discourse de-privileges ourselves (348).

To make a conscious effort to prevent further silencing of Aboriginal voices and land memories I am pushing forward Aboriginal scholars voices to support my cut into this academic sphere where large amounts of time, energy, and space are given to western non-Indigenous scholars to legitimate our Indigenous voices which are compromised already. Our work as Indigenous peoples needs to be supported widely by non-Aboriginal scholars beyond our allies in order to be taken seriously as legitimate scholarship in the

academy. I would have an even harder time giving voice to the nsyilx^wcən peoples and my work/voice in particular in this policed academic space if there were not the constant resistance of Aboriginal voices since the turn of the 19th century. Hearing the land memory voices can only be possible by the generous teachings of many in the nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x homelands and beyond. I hope that I can do justice in continuing to fight for visibility and space of our nsyilx^wcən peoples and ideas in the academy. There needs to be many nsyilx^wcən voices in this academic space as well as many other Indigenous voices.

This can be further explained by a historical political action that was exercised by one of our past knowledge keepers that flowed between the nsyilx^wcən worlds and those of the settler populations. This series of political and creative actions that Humishuma/Morning Dove/Christine Quintasket worked to address the severing of our nsyilx^wcən lands was to travel among many of the different Plateau peoples and help write our histories/land memories/stories for future generations of nsyilx^wcən and other Plateau peoples including writing her own works that were to inspire and bridge the widening divide that involvement of settler nations brought to our lands. Mourning Dove who is also known as Christine Quintasket was the first Native

woman to publish a novel. She was a few Salishian bands, S. Okanagan, Lakes, and Nicola enrolled in the Colville Tribe in our traditional southern Okanagan territory. She was an interloper in the white society of the Okanagan/n^wsyilx^cən borderlands flowing between borders of tradition, countries, Native and non-Native/settler communities, and identity. Humishuma/Mourning Dove, claimed for her settler reader's sake to be half Scottish, but the records indicate that her father was Nicola (Miller xvi).

It is interesting she hid her identity of being a 'full-blood' Native to appeal to her white/newcomer audience and the interfering editors McWhorter and MacLean. The political economy of ideas in print had layered western and patriarchal meaning that hindered Quintasket's voice from being heard. She struggled with changes by her settler male editors that skewed the meaning of what she was trying to convey from our Okanagan and Plateau traditions and were inflected with their own opinions about "Indian" policy. This interruption of her voice that the western non-Native men felt they were entitled to make because Quintasket was a lower status raced woman in their settler society made it impossible in some of her publications to delineate her voice from theirs.

This had further implication for her trustworthiness during this time in history because of her perceived blood quantum. If she was a 'full-blood' Native who was educated and could write professionally in

our geographical area, she would have seemed suspicious to most of her tribal community, as well as the settler reading audience. This suspicion may have to do with the educated Natives in the past helping the Indian agents instead of the people; an assumption that is struggled with continuously depending on distance or layers of assimilation from the home communities. She maintained her 'otherness' to be able to have a traditional Okanagan life, and a professional life in western society to achieve her goals of providing a Native perspective on Native people for white/settler audiences (Garceau 110).

In her novel *Cogewea*, Mourning Dove has the heroine and hero be mixed-bloods. The main character, Cogewea, is a half-blood who confronts frontier settler men trying to steal her land from her through marriage and stereotypes. Mourning Dove's protagonist brings to the center the marginalized voices of Native women and mixed-bloods. In the end, Cogewea marries a mixed-blood from the community instead of the newcomer/settler. It is interesting to me that she revered the position of mixed-blood as best person who would be able to deal with frontier life. Walking between worlds was a talent she had. To be a mixed-blood, in her mind might have meant more acceptance in both the tribal and white society, part of both societies with the ability to flow between the two. In reality today it becomes a scraping of racism from both sides; part of the Native community will accept you and part of them will always see you as suspicious, mirroring the reaction from the

white/settler side. Although one racism is the product of power, and the other a defense against power, the affect both kinds of racism have are marginalizing individuals from fully belonging to either group.⁴ This was the beginning of an Okanagan worldview change of internalizing racist views of ourselves.

Humishuma's (Mourning Dove) significance to Indigenous studies and the Okanagan Homeland created a possibility for other Native women and people in general to be considered serious writers or professionals without being separated entirely from traditional culture. One of her contemporary distant relatives is the well-known Okanagan author/scholar Jeannette Armstrong. Another Native woman author, Ella Cara Deloria, that may have been encouraged by the anthropologist Franz Boas to write her story *Waterlily* after he knew about Morning Dove. Deloria's book was not published until well after her death in 1990. Boas worked in various places around the Plateau region recording traditional information from our Plateau peoples. He has published books about the Coeur D'Alene and Okanagan.

Other works related to the Okanagan which convey oral history as a tool to continue culture are: *Q'sapi: A History of Okanagan People as*

⁴ As Bonita Lawrence states in *"Real" Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood*, "However, no amount of Native pride can help white-looking Native people overcome the basic problem that racial identity in a racist society hinges to a tremendous extent on how you look...this works continually on their ideas about who they are and the validity of their Native identity, particularly in the face of the daily denials of Indianness that they face, both from Native people and from non-Natives" (181).

Told by Okanagan Families compiled by Shirley Louis, and *We Get Our Living Like Milk from the Land* edited by Armstrong, Derickson, Maracle, and Young-Ing. These works focus on daily life and living changing history that is our cultures in each Okanagan community, giving on the ground land memory examples by the peoples. These are land memories of lived experience in our changing traditional worlds that try to interrogate the affects of assimilation and colonization policy by the settler Canadian government.

The Queen's People, while written by, Peter Carstens, a settler anthropologist, focuses on one specific Okanagan community. It is the first book about Okanagans to apply a western theory of hegemony⁵ and its implications within our communities. He applies this concept to the people, outside looking in. Carstens's attempts to implicate hegemony are confusing and incomplete. Instead of trying to get at the affects of colonization and assimilation through this complex convoluted way, it would be good to hear about how these affects were thought of by our people, explained in our nsyilx^wcən knowledge base.

⁵ *Hegemony* – This version of the concept is theorizing away from the more complex ideas in Stuart Hall about Gramsci see 423–426 in Hall (cited in bibliography). This is how it is defined in *The Queen's People* and how it is theorized to apply to/on the Okanagan, Not by the Okanagan people ourselves. 17th C. English, the term 'hegemony' often conveyed the meaning of 'master principle.'...asymmetrical class relations or cultural imperialism. Hegemony might be understood as the general direction given to any complex societal situation by the dominant or potentially dominant group. In hegemonic situations the values and will of one group permeate the whole society and lead the way for eventual domination (Carsens' interpretation of Gramsci. See page 29 (note) of *The Queen's People* and pages 50–53 for process of hegemony within the Okanagan.

Part 2: International boundary lines and their multiple implications on nsyilx^wcən homelands

The nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) homelands¹ are border cultures that cross the 49th parallel between two Western countries, a province, a state, non-Native communities, Native communities, and the edge of the

¹ *nsyilx^wcən (Okanagan) homelands* - I am reclaiming this term from the 'state' and referring to the traditional lands specifically of my people and how our traditional territory crosses lines (state and country boundaries) made by Western governments. In my paper Homelands can be applied to any Indigenous group when referring to the people's traditional territory before contact with industrial, Western, European, or colonizer 'states' that are oppressing Indigenous people. Also, while North America is a colonizer term I am using it to refer to the land mass that encompasses the states of Mexico, U.S., and Canada. See Kathy Seton's discussion of "the Repressive State" and Nietschmann's definition of "State-building processes," in Seton and Seton's discussion of Nietschmann's definition of "nations" in Fourth World Theory. See Nietschmann for definition of "Nation cores of States."

See works in Fourth World Studies:

Seton, K. "Fourth World Nations in the Era of Globalisation An Introduction to Contemporary theorizing Posed by Indigenous Nations." *Fourth World Journal, Center for Indigenous Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1999). (digitally retrieved)

Nietschmann, B. "The Fourth World: Nations versus states," *Reordering the world: Geopolitical perspective on the twenty-first century*. Ed. G.J. Demko and W.B. Wood. Boulder: Westview Press. 225-242.

The Repressive State/State-building processes - "The 'theory of the repressive State' proposes that because no indigenous nation cedes its independence freely, State-building proceeds through "various military and legal mopping-up stages," many of which may exist simultaneously "creating a single historical geographic process."

nations - "Predate States, all States attempt to erase the histories and geographies of the nations they occupy, through programs commonly referred to as 'nation-building': programs which are "based on political, cultural and territorial integration and development and education."

Hegemony and how it acts is referred to as "Nation cores of States" see note 2 in *Part 1: Introduction* for definition and how it is theorized to be working within the Okanagan.

Nation cores of States - Most states have and are run by nation cores that become both the point of expansion and the hegemonic culture of the idealised nation-state, e.g., England/UK, Russia/USSR, Castile/Spain, Java/Indonesia, Han/China. *I would add to this list the privileged Western European Patriarchal Capitalist ideology in the U.S. and Canada.

In Table 1: Types of nations in terms relating to the State. Griggs and Nietschmann in Seton Fourth World Nations...

southern Okanagan blending/rubbing against the northern Okanagan.

There is a fluctuation between many cultural similarities and differences.

As Gloria Anzaldúa defines this kind of place:

Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants (3).

Although Anzaldúa is specifically speaking of the place between the U.S./Mexico, Texas/Arizona, mixed-race, sexual, and gender borders, this ambiguous reality is like the northern boarderlands where edges rub and blend, scratch and remain still. It is important to draw strength from our Indigenous similarities, but also more importantly we need to draw attention to the plethora of differences and importance of knowledge and experiences grounded to a specific place so that each lived reality of struggle is not decontextualized to an imaginary theoretical space. All the struggles to survive of each Indigenous group or person are lived realities that cannot be discretely separated from the ground to benefit theoretical gain. When post-colonial, post-modern, and "classic" scholarship in the academy use borderlands to only talk about theoretical space they are appropriating Indigenous realities at the expense of the peoples on the ground that are living a very real existence between many borders of access. Borders of survival to live and breathe everyday.

The over policing of these international boundary lines by US and Canadian border 'officials' makes many Aboriginal peoples' lives harder, endangers their lives, livelihoods, and generations. The flux and flow of the nsyilx^wcən peoples within our traditional homelands is regulated severely making it a common reality for individuals to get stuck on either side of the border or being banned from either country, in turn banning individuals from our families and parts of our traditional lands. There is a treaty that protects traditional migrations within the territory regardless of the nation states of Canada and the US, but the restrictions for proper documents and no legal charges on an individual's record in either the nation states of the US or Canada make it difficult for many peoples along the 49th parallel international boundary line to exercise these protected rights. Even with proper documentation and no record it is very difficult to maintain these traditional migrations from the winter lands in the north to the summer lands in the southern part of the valley. It is very common all along the 49th parallel from the east to the west coast for all the Aboriginal peoples to experience hardship, suffering, and sometimes death to maintain traditional movements within our many and various homelands.

One of the earliest lines drawn through the land came with the Jay Treaty of 1784 (Treaty of Amity)² which was 'negotiated' for Okanagan

² Canada in the Making – Aboriginals: Treaties & Relations
<http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/aboriginals/aboriginals4_e.html#jays>

and other Aboriginal people whose traditional Homelands cross the 49th parallel. This was originally negotiated between the crown of England and the US to promote fair dealings between Aboriginal peoples and England. Over the years the treaty was used to support the movement of Indigenous peoples in their traditional homelands with somewhat limited application. When the US government challenged the migrant travel and work of a Mohawk iron worker named Paul Diabo arresting, fining, and deporting him for violation of the 1924 immigration act which he chose to pursue legal action in US courts. He was trying to reinstate his traditional rights to travel, live, and work across the 49th parallel. Diabo won his case in court even after an appeal from the US immigration department was unsuccessful in 1928. Diabo's cases helped reinscribe the rights of "status indians" to continue these practices until current times. However, the continued embellishment of requirements for documentation and policing of residency in Canadian provinces and US states has made these rights inaccessible to many.

This imposed international boundary line makes it difficult to maintain traditional ties within the Homelands of many Aboriginal peoples. When you are from an area of imaginary lines that are enforced by arms, checkpoints, border crossings, and the recent influx of Minute Men then the similarities in the treatment of the northern and southern

and Reid, Gerald F. "Illegal Alien? The Immigration Case of Mohawk Ironworker Paul K. Diabo." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 151(1), March, 2007.

borderlands are a way and a space to promote Indigenisms.³ In spite of the continued efforts of the US government to continue to chip at and erase Indigenous traditional rights in both international boundary areas.

When thinking of the peoples' movements within our nsyilx^wcən lands as fluid which is a traditional mind set that has been engrained in our cultures for over 12,500 years it is impossible to swallow the implications of US and Canadian state governments enforcing stagnant and fixed positions instead of movement in nsyilx^wcən lands.

Indigenous links of struggle in both the northern and southern borderlands have begun to and have the potential to support local nationalisms, respect differences, and revive Indigenous traditional mutually beneficial relationships between Indigenous peoples in the

³ I use the term *Indigenous (isms)/Aboriginal (ities)* in this text to identify individuals and groups whose ancestors are original peoples of the Americas and Pacific, hemispherically and all other Indigenous groups of the world that are the original peoples of a traditional territory before any colonization enacted upon them. Specific to this dissertation I am referring to North American Indigene. "Indigenous" designates individuals and groups who self-identify as descendents of First Peoples, and who locate their social position in numerous configurations in relation to colonizer-colonized histories that are or have been politically and ideologically constructed to socially and economically privilege patriarchy, hegemony, liberalism, capitalism, and free-trade. Who may or may not consider personal intersecting conflicts with class, constructs of Indigenous/Native/"American" Indian/Aboriginal/First Nations, gender, internalized racism, colonization in many forms of violence, and militarization and how these intersections are working within our communities in and around us as we relate to one another and everything and everyone else in the world. "American" Indigenous walk on earth as those who, in self-determined ways, are keepers of their cultures, languages, traditions and sacred ceremonies in connection with and integrally connected to specific geographic spaces and places in the Americas and Pacific. North American (Canada, Mexico, United States) and Pacific Indigenes' identity and rootedness in Indigeneity is inextricably connected to 40,000+ years of belonging with these land masses and the authorship of Land Memories/oral histories linking them to specific regional land bases which transcend current geo-political, state or governmental boundaries, international borders, immigration and/or trade policies. In this text specifically, I may use "Native," "First Nations," "First Peoples," or "Indigenous" to represent an Indigenous person or community in North America or the Pacific. I also use the term *Indigenous* to refer to any original peoples of the world.

Americas and world wide by encouraging networks built out of struggle and support of each others' battles. For example in the current struggle of the Lipan Apache (Ndé) and the Jumano Apache (Ndé) communities of El Calaboz ranchería and El Polvo (Redford) village on the Texas–Mexico militarized border there have been networks of support between many intercontinental Indigenous peoples to support these Indigenous peoples struggle against the US government taking over and building the wall in their communities⁴. While this network is not perfect and does not get at every need of the Ndé (Apache) people who are affected, it is a start for networks like this one to continue to grow from if they are beneficial for the communities in need. Later these trust relationships built with allied groups can be called upon when one of the other members within the network needs help for the people in this capacity when dealing with militarized governments. In order to get at how these kinds of networks can be built connecting sights of struggle we need to respect the multiple ways each place manifests multiple Indigenisms. Without respect for multiplicity in the connections we have between allied groups there is less of a chance to make lasting bonds between communities. We need to be respectful of difference in all communities, and work out any impasses that may prevent connection. Need for respect of these

⁴ Investigating this problem from family and community positions in a very thorough way from Indigenous historical perspectives that begin with settler states contact to present. Margo Tamez – "NADASI'NE3' NDE' ISDZANE' BEGOZAAHI' SHIMAA SHINI' GOKAL GOWA GOSHJAA HA' ANA' IDLI TEXAS–NAKAIYE' GODESDZOG, trans. Returning Lipan Apache Women's Laws, Lands and Power in El Calaboz Rancheria, Texas–Mexico Border." PhD Diss. Washington State University, May 2010.

complex multiple differences can be seen in the variations between how these international boundary lines are defined within settler nations as well as in Aboriginal/Indigenous communities, and who has the power to define them.

Descriptions and definitions of international boundary lines and dependant sovereignty are interlocking concepts that are defined by the terms of settler nation states. This impaired power of Aboriginal or Indigenous rights is seen as more liberating for our peoples than it is on the ground. In many historical texts like the ones by settler historian J. R. Miller: *Sky Scrapers Hide the Heavens*, *Reflections on Native–Newcomer Relations*, and *Lethal Legacy* the continuously changing relationship between settler and Indigenous communities are described. In *Sky Scrapers Hide the Heavens* these relationships are misunderstood:

Many non–Indians do not understand how sovereign Indian nations within the country can operate in harmony with the existing system...This barrier to the full acceptance of Indian self–government is, in most cases, the product of a fundamental difference of political philosophy (Miller, 347).

Describing the relationship to sovereignty and the non–Native or settler population in Canada as a difference of political philosophy is an understatement. This statement, although well meaning, reinforces the problems with Native–settler relations and imposed non–traditional governmental structures, international boundary lines, or concepts like sovereignty that are then thought to be adequate for Native communities.

Taiaiake Alfred describes why the concept of sovereignty is

inadequate for our communities/peoples and why this non-Native concept is problematic when applied to the state of band/tribal governments within the context of Canada and the US. Alfred states,

In making a claim to sovereignty—even if they don't really mean it—they [Native politicians] are making a choice to accept the state as their model and to allow indigenous political goals to be framed and evaluated according to a 'statist' pattern (Alfred 56).

Since the power to exercise complete sovereign control over Band, First Nation, or Tribal affairs within a given Native community is checked by the 'state' through self-government regulations within the Indian Act or in the U.S. Indian Reorganization Act, Native communities are left with an inadequate way to govern its peoples and are like 'wards of the state' in the U.S. or 'wards of the crown' in Canada. The idea of sovereignty is a political philosophy in First Nations/Native communities and not a reality. The implications of internal struggles to maintain the status quo of First Nations and Tribal governments to be in accordance with the US or Canadian statist patterns complicates this further. There are many variations of factioning within any First Nation, Band, or Tribe. This factioning only helps the settler states control the Indigenous peoples more because they are too busy fighting with each other to truly challenge the settler governments.

To be completely sovereign any First Nation, Band, or Tribe would have to have control over its natural resources, water rights, road way access, economic development, cultural freedom, and form in which it

decided to govern itself completely. Now the federal government of Canada as an example is trying to delegate its responsibilities to the Indigenous people of the land to the provincial governments, ignoring the agreements made with First Nations peoples before the crown ceded control to the federal government of Canada in 1981, and ratifying the government in 1982. Although this promise to the First Nations became many words without action, there is a continued move through the Indian Act to further divorce First Nations people from their inherent land and treaty rights and make them further assimilate into the settler population adhering to all of the imposed state's ideology of citizenship and 'forget' that they are indigenous to the land. Alfred provides some insight here:

The state attempts to rewrite history in order to legitimize its exercise of power (sovereignty) over indigenous peoples. Native people struggle to resist the co-optation of their historical sense. But the fact remains in order to negotiate a withdrawal from the colonial relationship they must still interact with the state, which uses all kinds of incentives to prevent Native leaders from representing traditional understandings (Alfred 48).

To apply traditional forms of governance in Native communities the people need to deconstruct this relationship of dependency with the state. A few First Nations are re-establishing traditional governance in the face of the state's opposition, but still have interference of the Indian Act or limitations upon their status as having a land base with the same rights under the Indian Act. The Kanasatake Mohawk community, for example, is a First Nations people who are being pushed into being

somewhere inbetween a municipality/city and a First Nations land based community. They are forced to continue to share traditional lands that could be protected from development with the municipality/city of Oka, Quebec. Their power as a nation is being compromised or co-opted by the federal government for more freedom to exploit the people. This exploitation is happening in many ways. One example is they are being forced to give up or compromise traditional power for the benefit of the settler state and its "imagined community⁵" or "artificial creation" of a nation-state within.

The state needs to be willing to do half of the work, and compromise in power relations if we are going to live side by side in peace. Also inherent in traditional knowledge is a distinction between giving out power and the application of power. As Alfred states:

The alternative to state power offered by the indigenous tradition transforms our understanding of power's meaning and use. There are many potential benefits to such a

⁵ Anderson, B. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso. 1991.
Schlesinger, P. "Collective identity in social theory." *In Media, state, and nation: Political violence and collective identities*. Newbury Park: Sage. 1991: (152-175).
Benedict Anderson (6) defines a nation as a limited sovereign "imagined political community." It is imagined because it remains in the minds of those who belong to it, and although, these participants may never meet or barely know each other, they keep this mental construction together by idea. The "imagined community" is then a construction of this community and is reconfigured and constantly changing, as both Anderson (1991) and Schlesinger (172-174) suggest. It keeps being redefined by change over time through a continuous "project" that is never finished. In turn this continuous "project" should not be looked at as stagnate or still, like past events that have been established. Rather this "collective identity" should flex, expanding or contracting, in meaning and concept. The changing form of "collective identity" is nation and nationalism. The "collective identity" or "imagined community" is informed or defined by designating itself from a "significant other" (See Triandafyllidou) that poses a threat to the defined "imagined community." Nietschmann calls these imagined communities "artificial creations."

reorientation, not only within Native communities but as the foundation for building a post-colonial relationship with the state (49).

By reconfiguring the application of power in a traditional form of government in our communities we can better address the problematic relationships with the state, and decolonize the intellectual and moral premise of the colonial mindset.

Another way that some First Nations have attempted to remedy colonial land relationships in the Indian Act, which used gender discrimination to strip families of their title to the land, was to establish the First Nations Land Management Initiative (FNLMI) that redefined the 'state' or Canadian government control over Band or First Nations lands. This initiative gives the Bands or First Nations more control over how they want to manage their lands and attempts to sever the paternal government controls over Band or First Nations lands. This was enacted in parliament in 1999 by the initiative of 14 bands that demanded more control over their lands for development.

One important thing that could reinforce Band or First Nations governments move away from settler 'states' control reinforcing the FNLMI is the fault line or fissure in the Oregon Treaty of 1846. The lack of consideration or consultation with the Native peoples in this entire area and the change of the Constitution Act of 1982 in Canada to affirm Aboriginal and treaty rights could bring into question validity of the Canadian/US settler governments territorial rights. Especially if the

band/First Nation peoples did not enter into a treaty with these settler governments⁶. Our people north of the 49th parallel international boundary did not make any such agreement even though there were attempts by the settler 'state' of Canada to do so. We have an opportunity to contest occupation of our lands as nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x peoples. This is the opposite of how Aboriginal/Indigenous rights are negotiated in the settler 'state' of the US.

The band laws or codes could not be discriminatory on the basis of sex of individual land holdings like the Indian Act was, which has not been completely remedied by Bill C-31⁷. INAC (First Nations Land

⁶ As Kent McNeil discusses in his chapter, "Negotiated Sovereignty – Indian Treaties and the Acquisition of American and Canadian Territorial Rights in the Pacific Northwest." In the book The power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest. Ed. Alexandra Harmon, 2008. McNeil states, "While Canada's claim to British Columbia and the American claim to the Pacific Northwest south of the fourth-ninth parallel may meet the requirements for a prescriptive title in international law, the problems with the application of that law to the Indian nations remains unresolved. So although the exercise of sovereign authority in those territories by the Canadian and U.S. governments is an obvious fact, the legitimacy of that authority with respect to the Indian nations, especially those who have never entered into treaties, is questionable. Unless treaties are entered into whereby the Indian nations acknowledge the sovereignty of Canada and the United States, this cloud on Canadian and American claims to sovereignty will continue to cast a shadow on the validity of their territorial rights" (47).

Also see Harris, Cole. Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia. UBC Press (2002). Pages, xxvii, 15-16, and 120-121 in direct relation to Okanagan Peoples.

⁷ Green, Joyce. "Canaries in the Mines of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada." Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique XXXIV no. 4 (December/décembre 2001): 715-738. Joyce Green states, "Since 1869, the Canadian state has imposed its version of patriarchal social forms through the *Indian Act*. Until 1985, the Act identified status patrilineally: upon marriage, the status of Indian women was determined by that of their husbands. Marriage to anyone other than a status Indian caused these women to lose status and, with it, access to rights, programmes and to reserve residence: they were involuntarily excluded from their communities...any women marrying a status Indian man took her husband's status, resulting in a population of non-native women holding status. Following the 1985 amendments, bands could create their own membership

Management Act) is an attempt to remedy the stipulations and reforms that were not quite adapted in the Indian Act revisions of 1985 with Bill C-31. This potential progress of the FNLMI and the Lands Advisory Board are overshadowed by continued inequalities of the Indian Act, legal definitions of being Aboriginal/Indian, and band membership laws or policies that uphold the Indian Act's discrimination.

codes. Some bands chose to incorporate the pre-1985 sexist provisions as part of their codes, and contrary to the view of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, some added to this "blood quantum" criteria that are fundamentally racist."

****(For nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x peoples and other Indigenous groups that have their traditional territory across the 49th parallel international boundary line) Even if both parents are nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x, but one is from the US Southern Okanogan side and one is from one of the bands on the Canada Northern Okanogan side then their children will still be registered as ½ white, because the US or Canadian governments do not count Native ancestry from either side of the border.

Another example is if each parent is from any Tribes/Bands on either side of the US/Canada border regardless of traditional territories recognized by the Jay Treaty the children no matter if they are all Native, but more than one tribe, are NOT counted fully as Native. Whether they are enrolled on the US side or Canada side of the line, they can only "count" part of their ancestry. No matter the blood quantum requirements this policy ensures erasure of our peoples. There are also some tribes/bands that have put this criterion in their enrollment requirements willingly, being blind to the fact that they are helping the settler states erase us.

Another example of this is if you have two people of mixed blood, still over a typical criterion of ¼, but of different tribes, their children will "lose" some of their ancestry because only one tribal blood can be registered. In the Navajo Nation only Navajo/Diné blood is counted. So if one of the parents is not Diné and still all or part Native they will "erase/lose" that ancestry. My son is a good example of this. He is ½ Diné, ¼ nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x, about 1/32 Ojibwa from my mom who is mostly Irish. Registered as a Diné he is "only ½" Native. If I register him in Canada with my people (nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x) he may still only be listed as ½ Native as well because of them not recognizing US Native "blood" or "Status." Also because my mom was listed as "status" since she married my dad before 1985.

Ways to still impart assimilation policies, and blood quantum requirements that were instilled by both US and Canadian governments to "dissolve" or delete one's Native heritage. Still sneaking in homogenization of the Native population into the "mainstream" societies.

Also see Lawrence, Bonita. "Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview." *Hypatia* 18 no. 2 (Spring 2003): 3-31.

The Indian Act required 'status' Indian lands be held by men and in marriage if a 'status' Aboriginal woman married a non-registered Aboriginal man, or an outsider who was not Aboriginal they would lose their legal Indian 'status,' and could not pass this 'status' to their children. This act tried to further erase half the populations of 'status' bands/First Nations by also granting Indian 'status' to outsider women if they married into a band/First Nation. This could have been used to the advantage of 'status' Aboriginal peoples legally if the act did not take away Aboriginal women's 'status' concurrently with adding numbers to the 'status' bands/First Nations.

Settler non-Aboriginal women who are community outsiders should not gain 'status,' but their children should. Unless the bands want to work back against the policies of erasure, gaining members for enrollment absorbing part of the settler population into its flock. Taking reverse assimilation measures that could be empowering acts like traditionally when we as nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x adopted children or people we did not exclude them as part of the group or family even if they were səma? (white). As it stands now the children of these 'status' – non'status' relationships do have 'status' regardless if their father or mother is a 'status' Indian, but only after 1985 when the Indian Act was extensively reformed and when they meet the legal criteria of being defined as a 'status' Indian. This can be dependant on other factors of kinship, style of life, blood quantum, and belonging to a 'character type.'

So when the Indian Act was established in 1876 until 1985 it left many Aboriginal peoples, mixed or not off the records as being legally defined as Indian. This created many different legal definitions of being Aboriginal in Canada which are labeled as: status, non-status, treaty, non-treaty and Bill C-31 Indians/new status Indians which have further fragmented Aboriginal populations.⁸

What is important here is who had the power to define being Aboriginal in Canada and how these definitions have lasting continual fragmenting/seperating effects on all Aboriginal peoples. The Canadian 'state' has largely determined without consultation or input from Aboriginal peoples who is defined as Aboriginal perpetuating divisions and inequalities between different populations of Aboriginal peoples. These definitions are further complicated by different definitions of Native or Indian in the US. For Indigenous peoples who could be enrolled on either side of the US/Canada international boundary lines it gets more complex depending on what "proof" of blood quantum or "status" the US and Canadian governments will accept from one another. Unless these differences and inequalities are examined and remedied there is the possibility that there will be negative fissures between many Aboriginal populations continuously into the future, perpetuating the effects of

⁸ Wherrett, J. and D. Brown. "Introduction - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada." *Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*. 29 Oct 2004. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 12 Dec 2007 <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/rep/cha1_e.html>.

colonization, assimilation, and the colonial mindset across international boundary lines.

One Okanagan land memory explanation of negotiating personal, or group relationships with 'states' that are borderlands themselves speaks to the complexities of these continued negotiations. This Native narrative melds the past generations with the present, and the future connecting the 'Other'⁹ with the 'forbidden inhabitants' which are one in the same. A woman from our band, Jeannette Armstrong, has written about this continuation. She states,

A word in Okanagan, *xaxa?* refers to the meaningful essence of all creation. The word has been translated to mean 'the sacred aspect' of being. This word is applied to humans, as being with the power to acknowledge or act in ways which seek to maintain the principle of harmony with creation and yet continue to make new choices for survival (Cardinal 46).

As we pass to a place of survival that includes our images, our traditions, our discourses, and our people's education, we will truly be traveling the road in between, along, and through the barbed wire fence.

Walking along and through the barbed wire of relations with 'states' we can examine the theoretical aspects of Indigenous studies and its implications we need to pay close attention to how these constructions impact Native women in general and Okanagan women specifically.

⁹ "Othering." Triandafyllidou, A. "National identity and the 'other.'" *Racial and ethnic studies* 21 (1998): 593–612. This "significant other" is left outside of the shared memories, media, and public culture of the "imagined" nation. The threat of the "significant other" can be deemed as either an internal or external threat. The internal is a lesser threat to the construction of the "imagined community" that functions outside the established norms and ideals of the imagi-nation. The external threat or "other" is so different or taboo that it is rejected outright from the "imagined community" (594–600).

Without more complex ideas of gender, gender formations, and spirituality than the western white supremacist patriarchal hetero-sexist capitalist system provides we cannot understand why or how theoretical aspects of Indigenous studies and its implications are limited in understanding the complexities of gender formations, egalitarian relationships, traditional spirituality, and how these traditional constructs inform many actions of our peoples today when they maneuver between the multilayered worlds of our existences in simultaneous world orders that are nsyilx^wcən and western. Where the nsyilx^wcən worlds acknowledges the existence of the western world, but our nsyilx^wcən worlds are largely invisible in our own lands as well as in other multiple constructs of realities in the world. In an nsyilx^wcən homeland context these gender roles, constructs of realities, and western spiritual constructs of the western systems impair a more complex and nuanced understanding of our nsyilx^wcən societies and how gender or any other nsyilx^wcən system works here. A way to shift perceptions and gaze to begin to include nsyilx^wcən views would be to not assume anything about how social, traditional, economic, or any other nsyilx^wcən system works. A traditional example from the past would be when our peoples encountered other Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal peoples they would ask what

language they spoke, and suspend judgment about an individual or other group until they could make observations about their behavior and the language they spoke, not by appearance. Behavior, actions, and how people carry themselves were the determining factors of judgment or acceptance. We need to get back to this decolonial mindset and lifeway to really bring our people out of colonial ideologies about others and ourselves, undo the internalized racism.

Traditionally our communities would be considered egalitarian, splitting up jobs and tasks between men and women and regarding each gender's jobs equally important. Although there are not English words that are adequate to describe 3rd and 4th genders or "changing ones," these individuals were included however they placed themselves in the division of labor in our societies. We did not have problems with parts of our societies applying a western heteronormative gaze upon each other until effects of colonization and assimilation filtered into our ways of seeing the world consequently affecting gender relations, tolerance for difference, gender roles and expectations, and many traditional practices (Wright, Women's Lodge).

Now this is a very cumbersome battle that occurs within all of our nsyilx^wcən homelands and plagues many other Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples it is a process of decolonization of the mind that we will need to

continue until this heteronormative gaze is undone. So as I describe the egalitarian nsyilx^wcən ways I am including these 3rd and 4th genders or “changing ones” in each set of gendered jobs.

Elders and children are the most important people in our societies. Elder women are heads of the family as an unsaid rule, who have great influence upon each generation and the entire extended family. Grandpas also have great influence; but they also have a high regard for their wives, elder women. The Elders work together to maintain all the complex nuances and multiplicities of our cultures, language dialects, and stability of family connections in our nsyilx^wcən societies. They battle the effects of colonization and assimilation on us by maintaining these connections.

These effects that the elders and people battle are multiple manifestations of violence in our communities. They are direct results from the colonization and assimilationist efforts by the settler state governments to eradicate us from the land. The problem of editing traditional gender formations with a heteronormative gaze is only one of many manifestations of violence in our communities that is a direct result of colonization and assimilation by settler governments. Problems like these are exactly what some elders and people are fighting against, while other members of our communities reinforce this kind of colonial ‘fall out’ because they do not want to undo or let go of what they ‘learned’ at boarding school or with their individual interactions with settler

communities and structures. Like concrete forms of only two genders, heteronormative gender roles, and problematic repetitive cycles of domestic violence that punish the victims and hide the perpetrators.

Another example that speaks to the multiple violences that are effects of colonization and assimilationists efforts on Aboriginal/Indigenous communities intersected with international boundary lines is Andrea Smith's work: *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. This book gives multiple examples of generational oppressions on Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples within North America and parts of the Americas, but more specifically focus on examples in the US, which should be viewed as a glimpse of the complexities of these oppressions faced by many Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples of this hemisphere. The multiple oppressions faced by many complex individual groups and peoples is much more varied than any generalizations, but this will give you an idea of the severity of effects from colonization and assimilation in thousands of communities in North America and the rest of the Americas including the many nsyilx^wcən communities of the Okanagan. Antonia Castañeda and Andrea Smith are two strategic examples to give you an idea of the plethora of literature on colonial violence. They both look at the colonial implications of violence upon our Indigenous communities that started at contact and continues today.

The settler states of the US, Mexico, and Canada imposed bound communities called reservations, rancherias, reserves, and ejidos that have become sites of struggle and oppression entrenched in western patriarchal structure. In assimilationist efforts to fracture Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples further many were moved to urban centers where they are still struggling to survive, which have become other multiple sites of struggle for internalized and exercised oppressions upon Aboriginal/Indigenous bodies.

I am speaking specifically to the added intersections of policed lines or imposed borders in bi-national Aboriginal/Indigenous communities and homelands that aid the western patriarchal structure to fracture these traditional peoples further, never stopping colonization and assimilationists efforts to eradicate us from the land. This has greater implications to future populations of Native/Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples, destruction of our Mother Earth, and continuation of cyclical violence including but not limited to involuntary sterilization, rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, implications of venereal disease and its link to genocide of many First Nations at time of settler expansion. As Andrea Smith states,

It has been through sexual violence and through the imposition of European gender relationships on Native communities that Europeans were able to colonize Native peoples in the first place. If we maintain these patriarchal gender systems, we will be unable to decolonize and fully assert our sovereignty (139).

While these implications of western gender systems and how they worked to colonize many of our peoples, we need to simultaneously dismantle western notions of independence and government at the same time we deconstruct western gender systems or we are only deconstructing one part of patriarchal control over our peoples.

These ideas of western patriarchal gender systems are complicated further by questions of power, and how power of “subordinate” gendered bodies subvert and resist control within multiple western patriarchal structures. Antonia I. Castañeda interrogates these notions in her chapter, *Engendering the History of Alta California, 1769–1848: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family*. She states:

The construction of Amerindian and mestiza women’s subjectivities in Alta California...has historically been contested terrain. Most specifically, women’s sexual and social bodies, their sexuality, their procreation, and the control of it have been the province of the patriarchal family, church, and state. Some women resisted, defied, and subverted patriarchal control of their sexuality within the family and without. From differing positions of power, as well as from contradictory locations, they carved out spaces, took actions, and fashioned responses within the family, which was at once a primary place for resistance, power, authority, and conflict (251).

Like the Amerindian and mestiza women Castañeda discusses, nsyilx^wcən women resisted, continue to resist, and maintain powerful gender roles in our western influenced egalitarian contemporary societies. Our self-defining identities, behavior, and contributions show that many of the dormant lodge

ceremonies are still with us and influence our continued strength and resistance. As violence issues are addressed, research within and for our communities, especially revering women and children however they construct their individual gender, can be seen as a passage back to tradition. Like in the past concerted efforts to renew and bring back into balance female and male genders can revive generations of our peoples for the future. As Mary C. Wright discusses the significance of women's lodge ceremonies in Plateau culture, she states:

The birth lodge, the puberty rite lodge, the menstrual seclusion lodge, as well as the family dwelling built and owned by the women, show that previously the Plateau-built environment was almost exclusively under women's purview. Women's gender construction came from this space, but also from the life-cycle connection established there between the newborn, the pubescent girl, the mature women, and the elders. Their acquisition of spiritual power and their ritual practices were connected to their lodges' space and functions, as were societal honouring and male recognition of women's gender prerogatives (265).

As each new generation is born and there are various efforts among our nsyilx^wcən peoples to actively combat layers of colonial influence. There is a sense of renewed hope that we will continue to inform our contemporary existences with traditional ways of life, walking in many complex worlds at the same time surviving in spite of aggressive colonial actions to eradicate us from our traditional lands.

Part 3: Empowerment Through Action In a nsyilx^wcən homelands context

Empowerment through action in Aboriginal/Indigenous communities beyond the boundaries of the colonial constraints of reservations, rancherias, reserves, ejidos, and other separated Aboriginal communities happens on multiple fronts combating invisibility. Aboriginal/Indigenous youth, scholars, elders, communities, nations/tribes, and groups battle continued colonization, colonial mindset, and assimilation everyday whether they are working together or individually. The important fact is that whatever the configuration of these groups or individuals many Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples are working to decolonize our minds, bodies, and communities to face head on the continued efforts of erasure from the settler states.

These struggles with erasure on an individual or group level are affecting the peoples simultaneously – internally and externally. Internally this can be a personal battle with identity construction, healing from violence, loss of language and culture, fighting assimilationist efforts of systems at school or work to conform, and many other intersections of internal battles that are constant in our everyday lives. Internally can also mean within a specific group or community on a person-to-person, family to family, or small group to small group level within said group/community. The external

struggles of erasure are with settler governments, community to community, and displaced urban populations with home communities, group to group in urban centers, or with parts of the system in settler governments. This is a general map of how complex individual and group struggles can be for Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples. We face adversity everyday on multiple levels while still maintaining efforts to move forward in tradition and continue the peoples in spite of multiple threats of erasure.

Some very important ways complex examples of struggle against erasure that are empowerment through action can be found in scholarly, youth/community, and a specific nsyilx^{wcən} homeland complex. It is difficult to see the complexities of all these concurrent happenings in any one community without an attempt to illustrate these kinds of actions in other Indigenous places. My first example begins with another Indigenous scholar.

This scholarly action example takes notice of researcher Greg Sarris, Miwok and Pomo, of the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria. Sarris works to empower his ancestors and people by looking at the layered complexities of being an insider and outsider within his own community. He investigates

how we as Indigenous/Aboriginal researchers need to be critical of our own individual intentions as this researcher.

In his book, *Keeping Slug Woman Alive*, he works to investigate the very contradictions that doing this kind of research places on Aboriginal/Indigenous scholars while trying to at the same time do this work to benefit our ancestors and people. If we don't hold ourselves as Aboriginal/Indigenous scholars to the same standards and interrogations as our communities or our traditional grandmas, grandpas, and elders, then who will?

The complex intricate details of our cultures from multiple viewpoints can only be illuminated properly by ourselves, we as Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples need to do this work in our communities and encourage many others in our communities to do the same, or we will not ever fully make clear how complex living between more than one world is. This clarity is important to help our future generations fight the continued everyday erasures working on them and us to be consumed and assimilated by the western white supremacist patriarchal hetero-sexist capitalist systems that are enmeshed in the world regardless of country.

It is up for debate to what extent research findings of individual Aboriginal/Indigenous scholars should be made

public and published for all in the settler worlds to see. There are benefits for other Aboriginal/Indigenous communities to learn from each other, but there is always the continued danger of appropriation from outsider scholars, settler or otherwise, to take these intricate works out of context and use these disconnected examples against Aboriginal/Indigenous communities, individuals, and peoples. As Sarris states,

I learned a lesson. It was a lesson Mabel reminded me of again and again, every time we talked about her life stories. It was a simple lesson: things aren't always what they seem. Not the way I saw two women peeling potatoes. Not Mabel. As simple as this lesson is, it provokes and informs current critical discussion about literature and art and other elements of culture. It becomes particularly relevant as the critical discussion engages questions regarding reading in cross-cultural contexts (Sarris 3).

These simple lessons of praxis and learning through witnessing examples and participating in them are complex subtleties of many Aboriginal/Indigenous cultures that cannot be learned by reading them in colonial languages, or accessing them on a data base or in an archive. Disconnected experience is inadequate to fully understand the nuanced layered complexities these lessons have within the cultures of origin.

These cross-cultural contexts are magnified and multiplied by the international boundary lines that cross Aboriginal/Indigenous geographies and create fissures and

breaks in fluid continuous geographies, traditional lands, peoples, languages, and cultures. Creating constant negotiations of Indigenous(isms)/Aboriginal(ities) of any one bi-national people in multiple settler state borders, countries, communities, and system configurations. In spite of these colonizing assimilationist spaces and their effects on our own places we have fought to maintain Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples continue to do empowering action scholarship that supports simultaneous community or group empowering actions.

Talking back to the academy and settler states comes in many forms. Traditional community actions are an important way to reassert culture for our children and ourselves; reconnecting culture to place no matter what in this contemporary time is occupying the space. One such community action in these colonizing assimilationist spaces is discussed in Chadwick Allen's book, *Blood Narrative: Indigenous Identity in American Indian and Maori Literary and Activist Texts*. This example illustrates an empowering action done on a local level by two groups of Maori adolescents reframing the situation in the Maori community facility away from the tourist, immigrant, and settler crowd. Taking back Indigenous spaces on 'public' grounds. Allen states,

At the performance's conclusion, amid the bustle of moving chairs and the chatter of several European and Asian languages, the Maori school group unexpectedly reframed the 'text' of the concert...the school group's leader, a Maori man, stood up at the back of the room and began to whaikorero (deliver a speech) in response to the performers' efforts. His group...arranged themselves behind him to stand in support. The Maori man's voice rang out over the tourists' conversations...the performers were caught off guard, they quickly assessed the situation and lined up below the stage to listen...The tourist audience, was visibly confused...When the Maori man finished his speech, his group supported him by singing a waiata. In response, one of the male members of the concert troupe made a short speech in Maori; his group, performed a short waiata to support their speaker. Only now, after this exchange of korero and waiata between manuhiri (guests) and tangata whenua (hosts), was the concert considered complete (13-14).

The concert was reframed as an activist event, "a Maori ethno-nationalist discourse" (14). What is important about this action is the Indigenous population feeling empowered to speak the people's language, perform culture as the ancestors intended, and not feel the need to censor their actions because of foreign visitors or settler populations present. This example from Allen of the Maori adolescent's action in a 'public' space is an example of Cherrie Moraga's "theory in the flesh" and resistance to the settler state. What is most important about this example and how it ties to this tangible illustration to

theory is that the youth are echoing the ancestors and the Elders, rebirthing the culture in their language and action.

To rebirth needs a balanced formulation of women and men of color, the young women and young men in the action were acting together to witness the reemphasis of balance. Although Moraga's "theory in the flesh" speaks specifically to women of color with the multilayered effects of oppression, the youth both male and female have multiple layers of oppression working upon them, ageism, racism, occupation of homelands, construction of Western 'time' and 'space,' danger of sexual exploitation, and cultural assimilation (Bridge 23). The young women do have a few more layers of sexism and multiple constructions of gender to battle through, but in this specific context of youth and community empowerment action they are at a transitional borderlands disadvantage that is unique to youth of color and Aboriginal/Indigenous youth specifically that is more complex when they are from bi-national Aboriginal peoples that are under constant surveillance and fight the control of multiple settler states. They are on the cusp of change and they are sacred in this transition.

A local nsyilx^wcən homelands example of empowerment through action to combat the invisibility of our syilx^w people in our

servailed and severed lands is a practice of resistance through use of our nsyilx^wcən language while crossing the imposed bi-national boundary line of the US and Canada on the 49th parallel. When this specific syilx^w person goes to one of the checkpoints to cross this boundary line he uses only nsyilx^wcən words to describe where he is going. No matter how many times they ask him, or how long they delay him, he will only use our nsyilx^wcən land names. He is continuing a practice that I remember many elders doing, including my grandmother. I am sure that more of our nsyilx^wcən language teachers and people participate in this action against invisibility.

He places this practice further in land memories by reminding me what our ancestors and elders have done before and what I need to do. This syilx^w language teacher said, “Don’t use your corporate name when you are crossing that line, it only confirms their control over our land. I only give them my syilx^w name, and where I am going in our nsyilx^wcən language.”

These scholarly, youth/community, and negotiated spaces of nsyilx^wcən malleable existences are only a few in many examples of how Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples fight exclusion and invisibility in this western white supremacist patriarchal hetero-sexist capitalist system.

We must continue to empower our Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples and build off these fights against erasure creating and continuing new empowered strategies on all planes of existence letting fear go and remembering to believe in the spirit of the Creator and Mother Earth's guidance against this very invisibility and exclusion in our own lands. As Taiaiake Alfred states in his book *Wasase: indigenous pathways of action and freedom*:

...it is clear that movements for freedom and for social and political change in our time must develop new strategies and an action plan to seize free space, defining 'liberation' as the achievement of autonomy in social, political, cultural, and economic spheres. And rather than setting out to destroy or replace the state or eject the colonizer, the end goal should be formulated as the achievement in positive terms of the creation of a new society. This is liberation as transformation (2005, 281).

Transforming our Homelands into places where we are not prisoners, echoing our ancestors in times before contact, times for work, spirit, family, and rebirth; we must bridge contemporary Okanagan experiences with the many histories of our people in a visible way to continue to dismantle levels of colonization and assimilation in our nsyilx^wcən communities and heal these ruptures in our complex land histories/memories in bi-national traditional homelands.

By illuminating some of the glaring exclusions that render our nsyilx^wcən peoples invisible at the intersections of interdisciplinary study in academia I see my work/voice as only one in many within the context of our nsyilx^wcən communities, traditions, language dialects, lands, and families fighting invisibility and exclusion in any form to survive here in our traditional homelands where I was born and where my people have lived for over 12,500 years. To reinforce these land memories of our peoples we need to continue to look at the simultaneous complexities that I mapped out for you in this text. Manifesting on the ground as material, intellectual, and spiritual realities of exclusion.

Looking at colonial settler state constructions of “Indianness” and the implications of bi-national or international boundary lines and settler state policies that incite violence on multiple levels: materially, intellectually, and spiritually against many different Indigenous groups and communities in the Americas. I only begin to open the blinds on how multiple and complex each and every Indigenous/Aboriginal community is and the simultaneous battles of erasure each one of our communities and individuals face on a daily basis. With concerted efforts in academic disciplines to eradicate reinforcing and perpetuating colonial

erasure on each other as Indigenous/Aboriginal groups we can make more gains toward bridging and networking across our differences. Keeping in mind we respect and appreciate our multiplicity and complexities as Indigenous peoples in the Americas and the world. We can reinforce these networks with local actions of refusal, empowerment, and contestation of settler control over our lands, minds, bodies, spirits, and Indigenous/Aboriginal governments however impaired our rights may be in the eyes of the colonial states.

Malleable Okanagan (wqna=qin-x) Existences

This personal website as well as most of my visual work over the years calls into question constructions of “nation” and “America” to re-establish and acknowledge the Indigenous land-memories of the landmasses of North, Central, and South America. My work focuses on the Okanagan (wqna=qin-x) homelands, specifically as part of North America, Canada and the US in the 49th parallel bi-national boundary, Northern borderland area divided between Canada and the US in the state of Washington and province of British Columbia.

This website keeps in mind the two most interrelated generations in our communities: elders and youth by making them an integral part of my work processes as primary sources, molding my work by their voices. We cannot get at the heart of decolonizing without the involvement of the knowledge keepers, the elders, and the future, the youth. In this context, Manuhaia Barcham’s notion of “maintenance of prior identity” focuses our attention on change, living culture, and generational transition (137–139, 146–149). Barcham interrupts the static position of current western theories and praxis of Indigenous rights that do not represent living, changing Indigenous cultures, and identities.

This website uses, the tools of technology to empower these living, changing, breathing cultures. I speak back to re-interrupt the “vanishing primitive” myth, ahistorical placement of Indigenous peoples and cultures in the past, and push for malleable interpretations of identity for

Okanagan and mixed Indigenous people that are from a place, but also carry their indigeneities with them no matter where they are on earth.

Permanent Handle on WSU Research Exchange for Access to Website:

<http://hdl.handle.net/2376/2586>

nsyilxwɘn Indigeneities In a Bi-National Controlled Territory

Michelle Jack – snəmtítk^w Film

Color, 68 minutes

Notes to the Viewer

This film was made with help from the wqna=qin-x or syilx people, for our sənqsílx^w and the nxaʔxʔít. It is dedicated to all the people – sənqsílx^w to help us remember to stay awake/aware in this world where the səmaʔ wants us to forget who we are, where we came from, and where we are going.

When viewing this film please keep in mind the way each individual speaks is not interrupted, there is an introduction to the film about the different voices and individuals speaking in the film. The issues of concern about the 49th parallel international boundary within our traditional Okanagan territory and its effects on our people's language, and lifeways is discussed from each individual's point of view. Since this film is for the people the nsyilxwɘn spoken is not translated unless done by the speaker. Remembering and learning to listen with mind, spirit, and body is one of the intentions of not interrupting the speakers. Respect is in many forms and with every effort the imagemaker has tried to give the utmost respect to all the speakers who graciously contributed time, effort, and support to this project. When we learn cəpcaptík^wɘ (lessons) it is important to completely listen with all senses to the speaker.

Please do your best to listen to the cəpcaptík^wɘ being shared.

way' límləmt

Permanent Handle on WSU Research Exchange for Access to Film:

<http://hdl.handle.net/2376/2587>

nsyilxwɕən Indigeneities In a Bi-National Controlled Territory

The film opens with the sound of siwɬk^w (water) and a still image of two wqna=qin-x (Okanagan) youth at the edge of wqna=qin-x lake with elements of səmaʔ western development in the background. The youth looking at the camera has their hand up like that of a camera lens, looking back at the viewer. Then the camera swiftly pans in on a cliff face that is the image of one of our old ancestors watching over us and the wqna=qin-x valley. Images of the wqna=qin-x lake lead us to the titles and dedication sequence, which flows into a barred snake grass image with water behind it.

The order of these images is very deliberate and set up the intentions of the film. This film is made by a wqna=qin-x/syilx person for the sənqsiłx^w (one's people) and nxaʔxʔit (ancestors). The image of the youth looking back at the camera is setting up the idea that this will be our voices back to each other and the səmaʔ western world. Our voices expressed the way each individual chooses to speak about the 49th parallel international boundary line in the middle of our traditional territory, and its impacts on our people. The barred snake grass in front of the water represent the many and varied barriers our people deal with each day in our homelands, against our voices, our bodies, our nsyilxwɕən, and our culture.

The interview clips at the beginning introduce us to the topics of the film, to the speakers in the film, and the outside construction through

the news footage of how our issues of concern are seen by the səmaʔ world.

The transitions throughout the film between each speaker refer to the continuing work about border concerns myself as the imagemaker has had throughout my body of work over the last fifteen plus years, and the importance of elements like siwʔkʷ (water), sən'klíp (coyote), s'piʔm (bitterroot) to our people.

Each speaker interviewed discusses impacts of the 49th parallel international boundary line of Canada/US in their own way reflecting on how questions are answered traditionally whether in our language or in a səmaʔ language, the answers reflect the cyclical nature of cəpcaptíkʷʔ (lessons). The answers are many layered, nuanced reflections of the speaker and their individual indigeneity.

The visual and untranslated language barriers reflect on the continued flux back and forth between the struggles with occupation of our traditional space. Our people are pressed daily to deal with physical, mental, spiritual, and political layers of colonial constructions trying to erase us as wqna=qin-x/syilx people.

The use of the video camera as a tool to invigorate language, cultural, and traditional political preservation is an adaptive survival tactic pushing back against all the colonial constructions we combat each day in and outside our communities as wqna=qin-x or syilx people.

cəpcaptík^w‡ Continuation

...Aboriginal bodies were not merely symbolic capital in the processes of colonization and its subversion. They were also materially situated at the centre of cross-cultural interaction. The coming of Euro-Canadians, as settlers and missionaries, and the establishment of colonial relations between the provincial and federal governments and the First Nations altered Aboriginal lifestyles, and in so doing affected Aboriginal bodies (Kelm 174).

...try as they might, they could not erase the corporeal signs of Aboriginality, and so could never reach their goal of cultural homogenization. Aboriginal bodies themselves seemed to stand in the way of the assimilative agenda of church and government officials...But Aboriginal bodies were not just moulded by the conditions of colonization, for the First Nations contested these circumstances and the powers of colonization that created them (Kelm 174-175).

Survival, renewal, and cultural revival/preservation is decolonization in action. We are decolonizing our bodies, our voices, and our cultures in daily life in spite of modern colonial efforts to enslave us all in consumerism. First Nations/Aboriginal/Indigenous/Native ethnography, scholarship, and artistic production done by Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples and allies is pushing back or writing back to the academy, settler governments, and general a cultured normed misconceptions about Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples. We have been living in between, forcing the cracks open since settler colonial contact.

The implications of a non-linear dissertation using tools of multiple medias and inter-disciplinary research to address bi-national nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x Aboriginal/Indigenous material, intellectual, and

spiritual realities of exclusion makes it possible to give voice to the complexities of real, lived Indigenous realities.

The borders, boundaries, and barriers of all kinds that act upon us as resisting colonized bodies are looked at from many perspectives and indigeneities within this work. Pushing back against the grain making choices about translation of nsyilx^wcən language, visual barriers, layout in the web context, and formatting are active choices of resistance in this dissertation. They are choices of action by myself as an imagemaker/scholar against occupation of our traditional space as nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x peoples.

Being informed by first hand narratives and interactions with the people I belong to gives strength to my own voice as an Indigenous wqna=qin-x imagemaker/scholar. Without the direct involvement in every step of the process of this research of the sənqsilx^w uƚ nxaʔxʔit (the people and the elders/ancestors) I would be lost or ungrounded like some in the academy when they move too far away from their peoples, communities, and traditions without humility. We have to always check-in with ourselves during the processes of scholarship so that we stay on our path as Aboriginal/Indigenous/First Nations/Native researchers. Even in the case of many who do not have the privilege of knowing all they come from humility in these endeavors can keep us all going in a clean direction. Wherever we are located in the multitude of indigeneity, we all have a voice that is important to new directions in scholarship. We need

every voice; it is time that every Indigenous/Native/Aboriginal voice is heard through the silence and erasure of continued colonial pressures. Every voice should be heard embracing difference and disagreement to hear as many viewpoints within the multitude of our peoples. Our lived realities as Aboriginal/Indigenous/Native peoples is not post–anything. Post–colonial and post–modern are illusions to material Indigenous realities of exclusion.

In order to continue the learning and listening of “little brother” (settler populations)¹ then our blindness and self bias as Indigenous peoples needs to be addressed from our different indigeneities as individuals and as peoples. If we are going to continue to reawaken, rebuild, and resist in the face of intense erasure attempts of our peoples then we have to let go of the broken constructs the settler populations have given us to view, control, and silence our peoples. Blood quantum, impaired sovereignty, and non–traditional forms of chief and council without traditional forums for elders, children, and women are impaired tools that can only lead to more blindness and thievery of our physical and spiritual resources. We do not have to settle for the scraps at the

¹ There is a nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x cəpcaptík^wʔ (lessons) that tells of our “little brother” the səmaʔ (white man) who was sent away across the big water east to what is called Europe by sn’klíp (coyote) and k^wl’ncútən (creator) because he would not listen and follow laws set up for the people to ensure survival and least impact on our təmúlaʔx^w (mother/earth). It is said that when he comes back here to these lands what is called the Americas that it will be a time of him learning and listening. This is during the times way in the past when the glaciers here made the continental divide in “North America,” and other formations of the earth. Learned and cited by wqna=qin-x past elders Edna Jack (qáqnaʔ), Clara Jack (sk^wúk’iʔ), and discussions with nsyilx^wcən language teacher Delphine Derickson Armstrong.

table for survival anymore, we sit at our own tables that need to demand bridges of discussion about how all the resources are being distributed in this inter-cultural reality of each nation state in North America, and in the Americas as the corporate entities press ever harder for direct access to all resources in the “free” trade systems of oppression. Trying to continue and reinforce the systems of erasure in each Indigenous and bi-national Indigenous community.

Calling upon our allies within the settler states to help continue to resist these pressures of death upon our təmúlaʔx^w (mother/earth). We all need to live, and our children need to have the opportunity to grow and continue as generations without fear of death of the place we live, our təmúlaʔx^w. There can be economic development without complete erasure and impact on our lands, but it takes more time than making money wants to allow. Resist. Before making decisions that impact all of us, think of the animal people, the children, and the ancestors. Resist. I try very hard to humble myself to observe and ask what can I do to aid/help. What do we as nsyilx^wcən/wqna=qin-x peoples need? What can we do to help k^wl'ncútən (creator) uʔ təmúlaʔx^w uʔ nxaʔxʔít (elders/ancestors)?

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