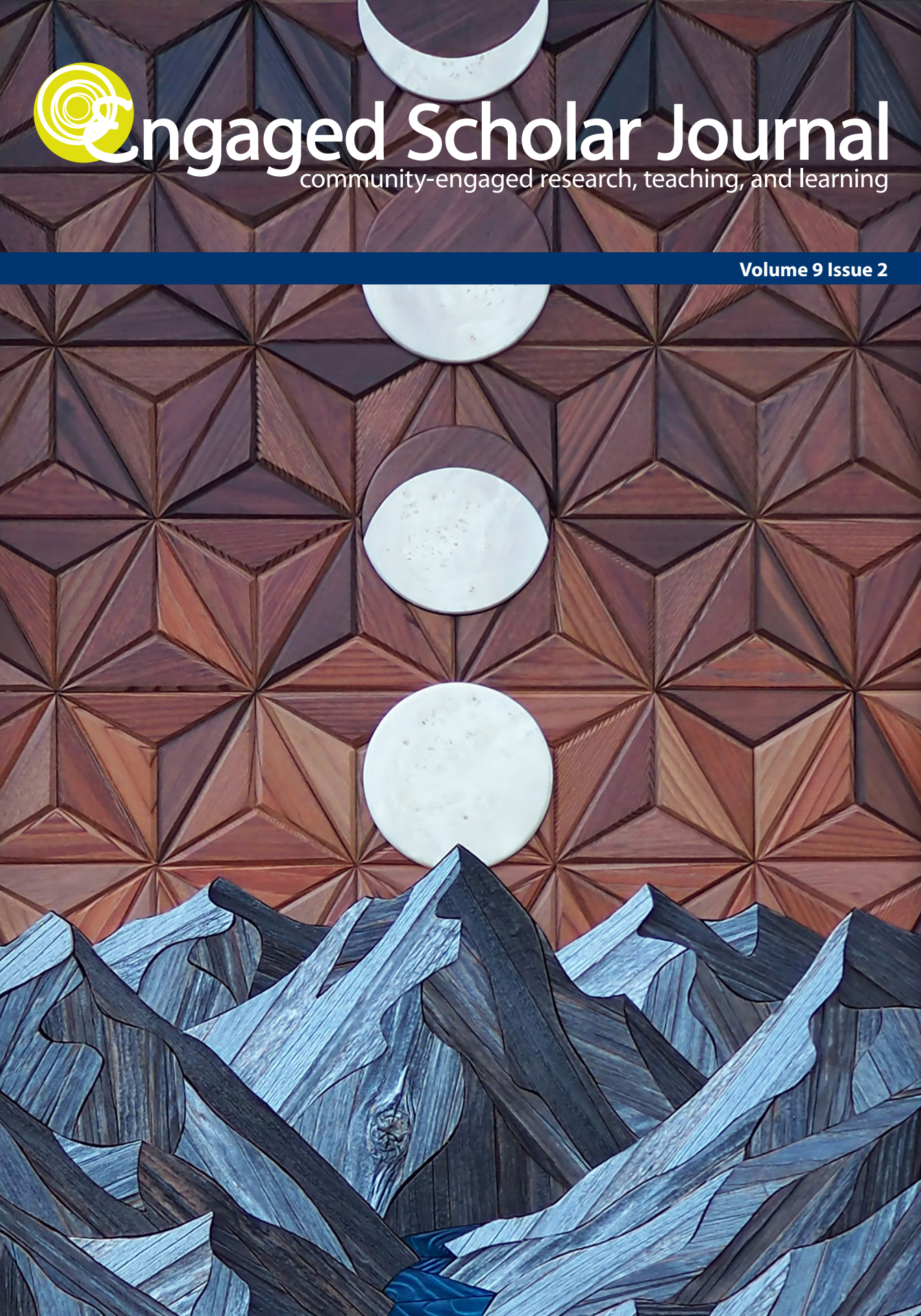

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Essays

The Haudenosaunee *Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen* Thanksgiving Address: Moving Beyond the Havoc of Land Acknowledgements

Jennifer Wemigwans and Lanna MacKay

Abstract This article offers a concrete example of how engagement with the Haudenosaunee *Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen* (Thanksgiving Address) provides foundational Indigenous knowledge education for elementary school age children at the Jackman Institute for Child Studies. We propose a critical rethinking of the practice of land acknowledgements by sharing the Thanksgiving Address as an Indigenous knowledge pedagogy. We provide a critical examination of institutionalized land acknowledgments and the inherent havoc they present, as well as a brief overview of the history and practice of the Thanksgiving Address. Our goal is to show how scaffolding Indigenous knowledge for elementary school children can be done in ways that are ethical, respectful, and careful. We also provide a broad theoretical engagement with the Thanksgiving Address as an ontological orientation that offers insight into land-based pedagogical approaches that take up Indigenous knowledge education.

KeyWords Indigenous knowledge education, *Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen* (Thanksgiving Address), Indigenous resurgence, land-based education, land acknowledgements

In an era of Indigenous resurgence, Indigenous knowledge and practices are being activated for the betterment of Indigenous communities, and in some cases for the betterment of the world. In many education spaces in what is colonially known as Canada, Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators and students are taking up the call to remember, centre, and learn with Indigenous education oriented in the politics of reconciliation. One way that many public education systems have responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action is by implementing land acknowledgements at assemblies and including them in morning announcements alongside the national anthem. As this specific practice has become more commonplace over the past two decades, the empty gestures of performative allyship (Blair, 2021, p. 54) reinforce the "settler colonial curricular project of replacement [that] is invested in settler futurity" (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 79). What has ensued reinforces settler colonial logics that are enacted through the "empty apologies, backlash,

appropriation of the other's pain and culture, and ambiguous relationships in the name of allyship" (Kouri, 2020, p. 61).

Considering the havoc that has been created by settlers through the institutionalization of land acknowledgements, we look to Indigenous knowledge systems and practices that teach the necessary ontological orientation of relationality through the practice of gratitude with the human and more-than-human world. We imagine this as a way of cultivating land-based education[1] that centres Indigenous knowledge that includes an unsettling of settler colonialism to support and honour the practice of land acknowledgements as it has always been intended. In this article, we provide a concrete example of how the praxis of Indigenous knowledge education, specifically through the Haudenosaunee *Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen* (Thanksgiving Address), shaped the learning of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at the Jackman Institute for Child Studies (JICS). Further, this learning also laid the foundation for grade six class's in-depth learning about colonial history that preceded their efforts to enact land acknowledgements. We share how students at JICS developed a relational orientation that is much more suited to the junior grades, while scaffolding ongoing and essential learning that includes historical and colonial practices is more appropriate for grade six students. This critical education is a requirement for enacting culturally reverent land acknowledgements. Our engagement with JICS has demonstrated that the Thanksgiving Address is foundational Indigenous knowledge that can support elementary school age children in developing the values and orientations to the interconnectedness of land that is central and essential to Indigenous knowledge education and practice. While this age group is the focus of this paper, we also acknowledge that learners of all ages can benefit from this Indigenous teaching and pedagogical approach if there is meaningful and personalized engagement.

When considering gratitude, we recognize that diverse Indigenous nations across the continent hold the practice of giving thanks that acknowledges the responsibilities to the web of relations that exist in the world and bring Indigenous peoples into community in a good way (Invert Media, 2006). We engage specifically with the Thanksgiving Address because it is Indigenous knowledge that has been generously shared with the public. Freida Jacques, Onondaga Clan Mother of the Onondaga Nation, refers to the Thanksgiving Address as "one of the most important parts of our culture that can be conveyed to the outside world" (Skä•noñh Great Law of Peace Center, 2016). Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013), Potawatomi scholar and writer, refers to the Thanksgiving Address as "a gift of the Haudenosaunee to the world" (p. 116). When Kimmerer (2013) asked Oren Lyons, Onondaga Faith Keeper, about sharing the Thanksgiving Address, he said, "[o]f course, you should write about it. It's supposed to be shared otherwise how can it work?" (p. 116). We consider this generosity an open invitation to activate and engage with this Indigenous Knowledge practice.

Educators can rely on many resources that share how to cultivate education spaces oriented to the practice of 'giving thanks' depending on context and local knowledge systems. In this

1 Here we are working with the understanding of land-based education as described by Tuck et al. (2014) that includes the "analysis of territoriality and settler colonialism" (p.3), and centers Indigenous realities and perspectives by identifying commonalities across global Indigenous Knowledge systems and land-based practices of relationality (p. 3).

paper we centre the Thanksgiving Address because of our relationship to the land we live, learn and work on, and our desire to offer an example of how Indigenous knowledge can be centred in education spaces. Our wonderings about the state of institutionalized land acknowledgements and the Thanksgiving Address have been supported by respected Knowledge Sharer, and former Hereditary Wolf Clan Chief – Kaliwahe (Matt Ireland) from Oneida Nations of the Thames, and Giidaakunadaad (Nancy Rowe), a valued Traditional Practitioner of Anishinabek lifeways from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This article and the learning that took place at JICS is also supported by the following resources:

1. Tom Porter's *And Grandma Said…Iroquois Teachings as passed down through oral tradition* (2008)
2. Mohawk's *A Seneca Greeting: Relationships Require Us to Be Thankful in Original Instructions: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future* (2008)
3. Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (2019)
4. Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweet Grass* (2013)
5. Michelle Corneau's *The Thanksgiving Address in Strong Stories Kanyen'keha:ka* (2016)

In offering the Thanksgiving Address as a way to remedy the havoc of land acknowledgements, we want to stress that there is an important distinction between respectfully referencing and citing Indigenous knowledge teachings, like the Thanksgiving Address, and doing ceremony. For non-Indigenous educators, please be mindful that when a Thanksgiving Address is offered by an Elder or an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper using sacred plant medicines in a smudge, or offering a fire, or a song and drumming, that practice is honored as ceremony. When a Thanksgiving Address created by a respected Indigenous educator, Elder or Knowledge Keeper is cited and referenced in a public space, like a school, that recitation is not the appropriation of the ceremony but a teachable moment that centres Indigenous knowledge education and practice.

Who We Are

Indigenous Educator Perspective – Jennifer Wemigwans

I am an Anishinaabe scholar and mother from Wikwemikong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. As an educator, I was trained in the field of adult literacy by Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Their instruction was transformational because their knowledge came from another paradigm informed by Indigenous knowledge, methodologies, and pedagogies. Indigenous approaches to learning require "many cups of tea"—an expression used by Elders that suggests we need to sit and *visit in conversation* over *time*, in a way that helps us look at ideas from many angles (Castleden et al., 2019). This introduction to Indigenous knowledge education began in the 1990s and has informed my research, pedagogy, and practice. Since then, I have continued to work with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders in the role of a Helper. A Helper is understood to facilitate and support and not usurp the knowledge or translate the knowledge that comes from Indigenous communities. In this way I work

very carefully with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to actively support the teachings they want to convey. I reject the word 'indigenizing' as a verb as it does not speak to the generous teachings offered by Elders and Knowledge Keepers. They do not 'indigenize.' They teach! Indigenizing for me is the addition of the proverbial feather to content where something is added superficially without careful consideration or even a reimagining of practice or pedagogy. Indigenous knowledge practice and pedagogy is transformative and represents a paradigm shift away from colonial public education content. In respect to the contributions by the Elders and Knowledge Keepers mentioned above, and in conversation with each other, Lanna and I have written this article as an introduction to the Thanksgiving Address as a way forward for respectful inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge education and practice into the curriculum.

Non-Indigenous Educator Perspective – Lanna MacKay

I am a non-Indigenous woman born and raised on the lands of the Anishinaabe peoples who have always and currently live along the shores of Lake Superior in Robinson Huron Treaty Territory #61. I began learning about colonialism and Indigenous knowledge systems in 1995 when I was a student and research assistant for Sami scholar Kaarina Kailo at Concordia University. In more recent years, I have been learning, unlearning and relearning (Toffler, as cited in Kenyon, 2022, p. 27) by engaging in community and education spaces like the *Fostering the Emergence of the Good Mind* program with Mohawk healer Diane Hill from Six Nations of the Grand River, and at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. These experiences have allowed me to support myself, students, educators, family, and community as we attempt to navigate this era of accountability and Indigenous resurgence with honour, dignity and respect. My professional practice has changed from one that includes Indigenous education, to one that centres Indigenous knowledge and settler colonialism. Becoming increasingly attuned to the "everyday acts of Indigenous resurgence [that] are taking place" (Simpson, 2017, p. 195) supports necessary change in all aspects of my life. Learning revealed through the activation of the Thanksgiving Address and the ongoing conversations with Jennifer and Kaliwahe have been integral to this learning process as I continue to move away from acknowledgement and the politics of recognition (Coulthard, 2014, pp. 27-42), towards fostering Indigenous resurgence and educator accountability in classroom spaces. Collaborating on this project has been a great honour.

The Problem with Land Acknowledgements

While it has always been understood by Indigenous peoples that land cannot be owned, there has also been an understanding that those who live on particular lands have a relationship and responsibility to the land that they call home (Asch et al., 2018; Kimmerer, 2013; Simpson, 2017). This relationship informs local land-based knowledge that is valued and respected by Indigenous visitors, who understand that kinship systems extend beyond people to the land upon which they live. For Indigenous peoples, land acknowledgements honour the territory of diverse communities by recognizing the *relationship* that exists between the people and land. They also illustrate the way that Indigenous communities practice values

of respect and etiquette when visiting a territory that is not their home. In addition, there may be wampum agreements[2] between them that honour historical peacemaking alliances, or protocols that are situated in longstanding relationships between communities like the Six Nations Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Conversely, the practice of institutionalized land acknowledgements that have become prevalent within settler contexts are "rhetorical devices that reference a mythical fabrication of Indigenousness that is consistent with settler dreams of benevolence and innocence" (Wark, 2021, p. 191). Asher et al. (2018) go on to state that "by removing their relational origins, institutionalized land acknowledgements have colonized cultural protocols to legitimate stolen land (as cited in Wark, 2021, p. 198). Deborah McGregor (2021), Anishinaabe scholar and Canada Research Chair from Whitefish River First Nation, conveys this sentiment precisely when she states that institutional Land Acknowledgements that reference the Dish with One Spoon create a false impression that this wampum covenant opened First Nation territories to *all* nations:

> The incorporation of the Dish with One Spoon blurred the territoriality of the message by suggesting that First Nations had agreed to share the land. In this way the environment took underlying precedence and everyone – even colonial settlers – had a stake in the territory.

In this way, through the appropriation of the Dish with One Spoon, governments have, in effect inserted themselves into a covenant agreement they were never invited to and in fact one that they broke centuries ago when they "came to dictate the terms [of] sharing land and resources" (Jacobs & Lytwyn, 2020, p. 199). Since 1796, settler governments have been enacting treaties where they have dictated the terms. Although there is a history of wampum agreements, for example the Two Row Wampum which represented peace, friendship and respect between Indigenous Nations and historical settler governments, the question remains: When was the last time a settler government attended a council fire to *polish the chain*[3] – a ceremonial gathering where they would reconstitute these wampum belt agreements?

Many settlers have no knowledge of these histories and practices and need to take time to educate themselves before proffering land acknowledgements in public. Scott Kouri (2020) admits "that settlers, including myself, are not guests or visitors on these territories but have illegally and violently made a home on Indigenous land" (p. 57). With respect to land acknowledgements, this act of self-location would be a good and honest place to start instead of "read[ing] and repeat[ing] prescriptive acknowledgement without variance [that] runs counter to the foundational values of acknowledgement" (Robinson et al., 2019, p. 21) and ends up

2 The Assembly of First Nations (2021) describes the complex wampum agreements between different Indigenous Nations that were established long before contact.

3 In the video Polishing the Chain: Treaty Relations in Toronto (2021), museum director Rick Hill, citizen of the Tuscarora Nation, residing on the Grand River Territory of the Six Nations, and Anishinaabe historian Alan Corbiere from M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island (2021), speak to the importance of wampum agreements requiring ritual meetings where these covenant agreements are acknowledged and spoken to in ways that honor the original agreements.

"erasing colonial violence and Indigenous presence, appropriating Indigenous culture, and refashioning histories of Indigenous habitation" (Jacobs & Lytwyn, 2020 p. 197). Wark (2021) provides an example to illustrate how this occurs when he shares the following account:

> The Toronto District School Board [TDSB] faced considerable resistance to their recognition of the Métis people as traditional peoples in their land acknowledgement statement. Métis historian Thistle (2016) argued that, while the Métis did have a historical presence in the Toronto area, they were not traditional inhabitants of the territory. To support his argument, he used historical documents and the understanding that Métis nationhood was based on having a distinctive language, culture, and territory, rather than mixed ancestry. Thistle recognized that Métis claims to territory were harmful to the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat peoples who were fighting for recognition of their land. (p. 198).

Giidaakunadaad furthers this critique when she explains how institutionalized Land Acknowledgements conflate historical understanding by becoming an exercise in equity and inclusion. She elaborates, "I get confused. I hear people acknowledge all kinds of people in these land acknowledgements... [she stresses] without reference to a period of time or even relationships" (personal communication, March 30, 2022). Giidaakunadaad also highlights the huge gaps in knowledge when settlers who recite land acknowledgements cannot even connect the Mississaugas of the New Credit to the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg and the larger Anishinaabe Nation. She goes on to say:

> If they understood our law, they would know this is not about land ownership. This is about Anishinaabe *Inaakonigewin* and fundamentally this means that my grandchildren, our grandchildren, all the grandchildren, are to receive the basic life sources in pristine condition...We never relinquished our rightful inheritance or our grand-children's entitlements. We need to have unfettered access to our inheritance. That's self-determination (personal communication, March 30, 2022).

Instead, what is centred in institutional land acknowledgements is a *rewriting of history*:

> Current land acknowledgements are devoid of the spiritual understandings of land that are the foundations of many Indigenous protocols (Smoke, 2019).… These factually incorrect acknowledgements cause confusion and undermine Indigenous land reclamation efforts (Thistle, 2016; Voth & Loyer (2020), as cited in Wark, 2021, p.198).

Ohen:ton Karihwatehkwen: Gratitude the Haudenosaunee Way

A Living Practice

The Thanksgiving Address is many things for many Haudenosaunee people. It is a "directive," a "summation," a "prayer," an "address," an "opening," an "offering," a "greeting," *Ganonhanyonh* (the words before all else), and much much more (*Skä•noñh* Great Law of Peace Center, 2016). It is traditionally spoken to greet the day, start a meeting, or before starting negotiations with other Nations. It can be "abbreviated, or long and loving" (Kimmerer, 2013, p. 110), and there is no wrong way to deliver it (Porter, 2008, p. 9) because it is an offering that comes from the heart of the individual who shares it. Tom Porter (2008), Mohawk scholar, Elder, and spiritual leader from Akwesasne, currently residing in Kanatsiohareke, describes the *action* of the address as "put[ting] our thankfulness one layer after another layer" and then "pick[ing] it up and... carry[ing] it with us" (p. 12). The Thanksgiving Address, in simple and yet profound terms, is the *living* practice of thanksgiving *every day* and giving thanks is part of the original instructions given by the Creator for the Haudenosaunee people. As previously stated, this practice of gratitude has been made public. According to Kaliwahe (2022), "the sharing of gratitude with all human beings at this time is also the *responsibility* of the Haudenosaunee people" (personal communication, December 30). The following is an example of a written Thanksgiving Address that has been offered by the Tyendinaga people of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (2019):

> *Everyone (the group) listen well for a short time.*
> *I will give thanks to the Creator for the things that go about on the earth.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the people.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to our mother the earth.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the waters.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the fish.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks for the roots.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks for the grasses.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the medicines.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the bugs.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks to the sustenance foods.*
> *Now our minds are one.*
> *We will make our minds one and give thanks for the fruit.*

Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for the animals.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for the trees.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for the birds.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for the four winds.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for our elder brother the sun.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for our grandmother moon.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for the stars.
Now our minds are one.
We will make our minds one and give thanks for our Creator for the good things we will continue to think peacefully about.
Now I have done all I can do, if there is anything I have forgotten, it's up to you to fix it.
That is all.

On the surface, the Thanksgiving Address is an offering of gratitude to the natural world which itself is a beautiful and impactful practice. Greetings and thanks are extended to people, earth, waters, fish, plants, animals, birds, bushes, trees, winds, sun, moon, stars, and Creator. When a Thanksgiving Address is offered, the unity that is possible between human beings is also emphasized through the coming together as 'one mind.' Other ways that 'one mind' is expressed include but are not limited to: "so be it our minds" (Mohawk, 2008); "and our mind is agreed" (Porter, 2008, pp. 8-26); "now our minds are one" (Kimmerer, 2013, p. 110), and 'one mind' (Kaliwahe, 2017, para. 1). Kaliwahe (2017) highlights the importance of this unity amongst the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and eventually the Tuscarora nations as expressed through the concept of 'one mind' in the Thanksgiving Address when he states:

> The history of Thanksgiving goes back to when we could achieve 'one mind' before going forward in any agreement. There is no date given as to when it was birthed, but 'one mind' is referenced in our Constitution, and many studies conclude that Iroquois Confederation took place in the 1140's AD… so it is certainly old (para. 1).

Each and every time the Thanksgiving Address is shared, and after each aspect of the living world is acknowledged, the speaker states: "now our minds are one," and listeners offer their affirmation aloud through expressions like *tho, huh, yes, yeah,* and *uh-huh* (Porter, 2008, p. 11) thus recognizing

the interconnectedness of the living world. This call and response strengthens the coming together of minds through the active participation from all in attendance. This participant response is not clearly illustrated in the available public resources, but is an essential aspect for Haudenosaunee gatherings as it delves into deeper layers of Indigenous Knowledge and practice.

Origins and Historical Contexts

According to Kanonhsyonne Janice C. Hill, Mohawk Turtle clan from Kenhtè:ke, and Associate Vice-Principal at Queen's University, the Thanksgiving Address is

> part of the original instructions [that] embrace our oral traditions passed down by our ancestors… received from the Creator [and] revolve around our duty and responsibility to respect and live in harmony with everything that has been provided for our use in the natural world here on Mother Earth (Robinson et al., 2019, p. 22).

Expanding upon the traditions that are passed on through the address, Susan M. Hill (2017), Wolf clan Mohawk scholar of Ohswe:ken (Grand River Territory), states that the 4 major elements of Haudenosaunee thought and philosophy are the "Creation Story, the *Kayeri Niyorihwa:ke* (Four Ceremonies), the *Kaianere'kó:wa* (Great Law of Peace), and the *Karihwiyo* (Good Message of Handsome Lake) which are all represented through the *Ohen:ton Karihwatehkwen* (p. 15) signaling to the significance and scope of giving thanks in Haudenosaunee communities.

There was a time when unity among the Six Nations was a lengthy process because there had been so much strife. In response, Creator sent the Great Peacemaker who was able to support the nations in achieving 'one mind' which was essential for the emergence of unity through the Great Law of Peace. This Great Law of Peace remains an important aspect of the Confederacy to this day (Porter, 2008, pp. 273-312). For the Six Nations, the process of becoming 'one mind' is integral to the Thanksgiving Address, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. In this way, the activation of becoming 'one mind' is a reminder of the agreements made because it reaffirms the Great Law of Peace and the Iroquois Constitution. Every time the Thanksgiving Address is spoken, the *living* aspect of the constitution is affirmed. It is "what we say before we do anything important" (Porter, 2008, p. 10), and by bringing minds together, serves to reaffirm what was created so long ago.

In more recent times, the Thanksgiving Address has been the focus of creating connections across divides and supporting Indigenous knowledge learning for Haudenosaunee youth. In the 1980s, Elders in Oneida Nation of the Thames, including the late Demus Elm and Venus Walker, observed that the connection between the Elders and youth was not strong, so they

> suggested that a "Thanksgiving" be made into written form to serve a variety of purposes. The Chiefs at the time like[d] this idea and encouraged the few younger [language] speakers to go out and learn about Thanksgiving (Kaliwahe, 2017, para. 4).

According to Kaliwahe (2023), Ray John Sr. was assigned to visit 13 other Haudenosaunee communities to research their Thanksgiving Address (personal communication, 28 January 2023). In 1988, he returned to Oneida of the Thames and shared his findings with his community. After his findings were put in writing and approved by Chiefs, written Thanksgiving Addresses began to appear in many Haudenosaunee communities (Kaliwahe, personal communication, 28 January 2023). The re-emergence of the Thanksgiving Address "brought a much-needed starting point for all conversations cultural and its manifestation in written form ensured literacy" (Kaliwahe, personal communication, January 28, 2023). Since then, the Address has been shared with many peoples across the globe and translated into many languages.

Indigenous Knowledge Education

Greeting and giving thanks to the natural world for the ways that it supports life on Earth is a common global practice amongst many Indigenous peoples. Porter (2008) suggests that many pre-colonial societies also lived in relationship with land, and engaged in reciprocal relationships with all aspects of the natural world where thanks was offered. He states that giving thanks

> is the spiritual key of the ceremonial world of the Iroquois: the Mohawk, and the Oneida, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, the Seneca, and the Tuscarora. And I would even dare to say further than that, of all the nations in North America and South America. If you want to step back a couple of thousand years, it is probably the same words that the Irish had one time. Africa has some of it yet. All the world's people used to have it. They call it the universal truth. *That's* what we have to get back to (pp. 25-26).

As we can see, centering gratitude through the Thanksgiving Address reignites an ontological worldview that has been lost for many.

Although each Thanksgiving Address is different and may contain all, less, or more of the living world than what is expressed above, the common threads between them include kinship with the natural world and an interconnectedness that focuses on land. The Thanksgiving Address then, activates orientations to gratitude and land that are central to Indigenous resurgence and decolonization (Mojica, 2012). Giving thanks is a practice that counters settler-colonial logics rooted in what Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Mississauga Nishnaabeg writer and scholar, refers to as a "hyperindividualism that negates relationality" (Simpson, 2017, p. 154) and supports human beings and land.

Activating a relational land-based practice like the Thanksgiving Address engenders a relational attunement to the natural world that is life-affirming and challenges settler colonial logics rooted in erasure, extraction, elimination, and 'recursive dispossession' (Nichols (2019) as cited in Maynard & Simpson, 2022, pp. 140-141). As Kimmerer (2013) states:

> while expressing gratitude seems innocent enough, it is a revolutionary idea. In a consumer society, contentment is a radical proposition. Recognizing abundance rather than scarcity undermines an economy that thrives by creating unmet desires (p. 111).

This Indigenous practice of gratitude is a challenge to colonial education systems, practices, and worldviews and can lead to change within the lives of individuals and perhaps a change in systems and institutions over time. The sharing of the Thanksgiving Address is an act of generosity that brings forth a whole lot of hope and invites us to share Indigenous knowledge and practice that can contribute to possibilities that centre Indigenous futurity. It is also an Indigenous foundational practice centering Indigenous knowledge that inherently circumvents and resists settler colonial logics of consumerism, capitalism, and greed.

Planting the seeds that foster gratitude through the activation of the Thanksgiving Address provides opportunities to connect with Indigenous knowledge that is "*practical* knowledge for survival, not some mystical training for transcendence" (Nelson, 2008, p. 13). In addition to the original instructions, through the address, land-centred teachings of reciprocity, interdependence, abundance, leadership, remembrance, generosity, responsibility, humility, and care abound (Kimmerer, 2013, pp. 103-117). This Indigenous Knowledge education and practice encourages embodied knowledge of the universal truth for minds to come to in their own way. The learning that arises from and through the Thanksgiving Address includes principles of respect, reciprocity, choice, and cooperation that can engender relationship to land and place and in turn, cultivates a foundation for Indigenous education and practice, changing what and how we learn so that relational contexts can begin to change (Simpson, 2017, p. 151).

The Thanksgiving address also emphasizes shared Indigenous teachings that speak to spirituality, place, relationality, and reciprocity (Anderson et al., 2017 as cited in Wemigwans, 2018, p. 8) that affirm the interconnectedness of all living beings. While it is always important to recognize that Indigenous knowledge ontologies and practices are diverse and vary from nation to nation, place is an integral aspect of life for most. It is in the air that is breathed, the water that is ingested, and the ground that is walked upon. Relationality is the way respect to that place is lived and extends to and includes all life that exists in that place. Reciprocity is shown through actions expressed through gratitude and kindness to all life and spirituality illuminates the truths that are learned. Please be mindful that this elaboration of the underlying principles of the Thanksgiving Address is brief and offered with great humility; it does not do justice to the profound teachings that are connected to these foundations.

The Politics of Reconciliation

Opportunities to do the right thing have been consistently thwarted through incompetence and an unwillingness to find the political will to create positive change in this country. Part 10 of the *Reconciliation as Relationship* framework from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (2015) states:

> Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society (p.161).

Within most institutions, reconciliation often negates truth and does not address the miseducation so rampant in this society nor the contributions of Indigenous peoples in the past and present. More often than not, reconciliation stops at the history of residential schools, disregards original wampum agreements and colonial treaty agreements, and often co-opts Indigenous knowledge and practices. We agree with Wark (2021) when he states:

> in their current form, land acknowledgements appear to be firmly embedded in reconciliation politics (Asher et al., 2018; CAUT, 2019; Daigle, 2019; Janzen, 2019; Marche, 2017; Shahzad, 2017), often citing ambiguous purposes like demonstrating respect for Indigenous peoples (CAUT, 2019; Fitzsimmons Frey, 2018; Janzen, 2019) or support for reconciliation (Asher et al., 2018). This shift has seen these practices being increasingly criticized for devolving into box-ticking exercises, strictly symbolic gestures and moves to settler innocence. They have also been accused of being lacking in critical thought regarding their purposes and as attempts to rewrite Indigenous and settler colonial history" (p. 195).

This co-opted practice has become a reconciliation bypass[4] that centres settler preoccupations with getting it 'right.' Without an understanding of the Indigenous *knowledge* that supports land acknowledgements, they will continue to remain "utterances or actions that benefit a performer but fail to produce, or even contribute to, meaningful effects" (Blair, 2021, p. 54), in other words, performative. Developing new practices of pedagogy and solidarity is sorely needed. Learning about treaties and wampum agreements, Indigenous nations on whose land we live, and being honest about positionality/one's location (Kovach, 2021), is a first step to breaking away from settler performativity.

Engaging with the Thanksgiving Address can take up the *empty gestures* of institutional land acknowledgements and the politics of reconciliation that have become "the performance of an utterance that is disingenuous or will have limited meaningful effects" (Blair, 2021, p. 54). However, when thinking of foundational values of acknowledgement, it could be argued that those values relate to the time immemorial Indigenous practice of gratitude, giving thanks and interconnectedness. And yet, like the land acknowledgement, the Thanksgiving Address also needs to be carefully scaffolded so that learners connect to the core teachings and meanings, so it

4 The notion of 'reconciliation bypass' has been adapted from the concept of the spiritual bypass coined by Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist John Welwood (2011). A 'reconciliation bypass' is a common practice amongst settlers and governments in this country when truth is overlooked and often suppressed resulting in performative acts of reconciliation that lack accountability.

is not reduced to a hollow performance. Learning to activate and engage with the relationality of the Thanksgiving Address can support the core values of Land Acknowledgments as seen at JICS.

The Jackman Institute for Child Study (JICS)—A Lab School

JICS is a research institute and laboratory school at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. It is a self-funded, inquiry-based nursery to grade 6 school where

> children work collaboratively to construct knowledge and to contribute their understanding to the class community. The school contributes on many levels to the academic work of the University by linking educational theory and practice for the benefit of teachers, researchers, educational policy makers, professional visitors, and in-service teachers (JICS, 2022).

Educators at JICS are engaged in innovative inquiry-based education practices that support the whole child. For the dedicated teachers at JICS, professional development is integral to their practice. Between 2012 and 2016 staff met weekly to learn about Indigenous education, history, perspectives, and knowledge. For many of the faculty, this knowledge was a new area of study, and many continue to engage with and learn from Indigenous knowledge. In 2012, Dr. Jennifer Wemigwans began to work informally with JICS when her child was admitted to their nursery school. Over the years, Wemigwans developed relationships with educators Ben Peebles (grade 4, 5 and 6 teacher for 16 years) and Krista Spence (teacher-librarian off and on for 14 years). On November 4, 2022, we had the pleasure of speaking with Peebles and Spence at JICS where they shared their experiences of engaging with Indigenous education at JICS, with a particular focus on land acknowledgements and the Thanksgiving Address. It is important to note that working with land acknowledgement education was formally introduced to students at all levels, whereas the practice of giving thanks and engagement with the Thanksgiving Address emerged over time and evolved into a formal practice during 2020-2021.

A grade six student from the Jackman Institute for Child Studies who was encouraged by Krista Spence "to think about what specific plants we might be grateful for, [and] what plants we might have a connection to. (Photo by Krista Spence)

Teaching and Learning from Indigenous Education through Land Acknowledgements

The re-education of faculty and staff at JICS began long before land acknowledgements were implemented by the University of Toronto. In 2012, land acknowledgements were formally introduced at JICS. In our conversation, Spence and Peebles recalled the different responses and insights shared from older and younger students when they began to "unpack" land acknowledgments. What was apparent was that scaffolding Indigenous knowledge was essential if students were to engage meaningfully with this education. They learned that younger students gravitate more towards gratitude where, with proper support and time, older students could process and trouble the realities of settler colonialism.

Spence further shared her experiences working with younger and older students, recalling that the younger grades recognized names like Haudenosaunee from land acknowledgements, but that they could not grasp context or significance. She said, "it really did help for them to learn the names of Nations, but they did not really understand what else was happening there." She went on to share that when she asked the grade two and four students what they thought should be included in a land acknowledgment, "they talked about the stones and the rocks, the water and they were more about the land. So, it was interesting that for them, that concrete element [land] was what they were thinking about in terms of a Land Acknowledgement." In contrast, when Spence worked with grade 6 students, she said they revealed that "they didn't really like the Land Acknowledgement [because]...it's always the same thing." She explained that there were many mixed feelings about "what it means," although students were able to recognize its significance. As they began to unpack land acknowledgments, one non-Indigenous student expressed their understanding when they said "This is your land. And now we took it" while another student made connections and comparisons: "It's like someone coming and sleeping on your couch. And then saying thanks for your couch and taking it." Recognizing both the remarkable insight of the students and, at the same time, the challenges they were facing, Spence worked with the feedback she received and adapted to the unique needs of each age group.

For the older students, Spence began by introducing them to land acknowledgements from colleges, universities, and boards of education. They studied what would be helpful, and what was not. Spence shared that the grade sixes realized that

> they would like to have a Land Acknowledgement that changes, so that people can learn different things [and they wanted] something that was more guided. [They suggested that] maybe there's one for all older kids and one for younger kids.

She shared that over time, students "ended up writing out one for the graduation and they really thought about what they wanted." Peebles explained that the heavy work that Spence did with the grade sixes was important because they were the graduating class of June 2019. The new grade six class coming in for the 2019-2020 school year would have picked up that work in their final year, as there were plans to write a new land acknowledgement for the school. However, the COVID pandemic hit, and all learning became virtual. People were in crisis mode, and the first year of navigating teaching online remotely was challenging for everyone. Peebles recalled

that when the students eventually returned to class, a lot changed and the comprehensive and supportive work with land acknowledgments that occurred with the Class of 2019, did not happen with the Class of 2020. The returning grade sixes and teachers were impacted by a very awkward arrangement of having the cohort of 24 students split into halves. He said:

> I would work with one half of my students all morning and the other half all afternoon. And this was in an effort to minimize contact between kids...all our assemblies were online, with everyone sitting around one screen, and then you know, I'll admit that we continued to use the Land Acknowledgement that had been written in previous years, but without bringing that meaningful work into it again.

Once classes resumed in person at JICS, land acknowledgments also continued. However, during the first in-person assembly, Peebles said the grade six decision to offer a land acknowledgement was approached as, "sort of an opportunity to talk in front of the group" but without "the understanding of the deep politics and meaning and history and everything that is embedded into those words." Peebles said that "they all had some experience doing it. But so, you know, that was becoming a pattern" and no longer meaningful. It was at that time that Wemigwans' son, who was in the grade six cohort expressed dismay and frustration with his peers uttering words that they clearly did not understand. Peebles recalled Wemigwans reaching out to him and how they discussed that if the children were going to be doing this, "that it might be more appropriate that they connect to the Thanksgiving Address, which is about the land, about nature, and about what we're thankful for." Peebles elaborated: "I don't think the message was like, don't do Land Acknowledgement anymore. But more like, that's something that takes the thought and knowledge and understanding of history and politics." The outcome of this conversation was the formal introduction of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address at JICS.

Teaching and Learning from Gratitude and the Thanksgiving Address

At the heart of this process was the influence of Indigenous educators and Knowledge Keepers, who brought gratitude and giving thanks into their work at JICS and the attunement of staff to the teachings and their students. This, combined with staff training and the insightful feedback shared by students giving thanks, allowed the Thanksgiving Address to become integral to the JICS community. Spence relayed the experience of Indigenous visitors like Anishinaabe writer, editor, and activist Niigaan Sinclair to the school: "He spoke here, and he talked about a Land Acknowledgement, and saying thank you to the animals and saying hello to your relatives…. saying hello to the plants and animals and things like that."

Peebles also recalled the many visits they had with Anishinaabe storyteller and traditional knowledge holder Isaac Murdoch: "I don't think he ever used the words Thanksgiving Address or anything like that…but I very strongly remember a big message that he gave to the kids

about being thankful, cognizant, giving recognition to aspects of the land that we may not think about all the time…talking a lot about water, the animals that depend upon the water."

They mentioned other Indigenous visitors from diverse Nations and how they all opened with a version of giving thanks. At first, the teachers could not specify what the practice was, but it became evident that gatherings with Indigenous visitors often began with this practice of giving thanks. And so, giving thanks became integral to the JICS community.

During the pandemic, JICS, like many schools, had to vacillate between online and in-person classes. Together, Peebles and Spence turned to Corneau's *Strong Stories Kanyen'keha:ka* (2016), to create a truly lovely recording of the children reciting the Thanksgiving Address. After this, Peebles notes that the Thanksgiving Address became more of the student's contribution to assemblies and that an adult would then give a land acknowledgement. Peebles also suggested that when staff did do a land acknowledgement

> it became kind of a more personal thing for the person who was saying it, so that, whoever it was, and sometimes it was Krista, sometimes Richard [school principal], would make more personal connections to the land, as they saw it from their perspective.

Beyond assemblies and gatherings, giving thanks also became an integral aspect of JICS. Spence shared how scaffolding the Thanksgiving Address with the work they were doing outdoors revealed the interconnectedness of all life. Through this process, they were able to consider the role of distinct aspects of nature, and how everything gets noticed and cared for. For her, this work aligned with

> the Thanksgiving Address and understanding how grateful we are for things and how everything is connected. And so, I would say that's the scaffolding that's happening. And it's partly done by the world, and then partly from us pointing it out. But then they have more understanding of the things that crawl because we're finding them - the slugs and everything like that. So, I think that that is kind of the scaffolding work that we are doing, which is outside on the land.

Speaking less to the scaffolding of knowledge and more to the teacher's preparation for working with the Thanksgiving Address, Spence also shared that she watched a series of sessions on *Polishing the Chain: Treaty Relations in Toronto* (Hill & Corbiere, 2021). She explained what was meant by the euphemism, polishing the chain when she stated:

> [it's] that sense of making agreements and coming back every year to kind of reconnect and strengthen the relationship. I've used that with the students too. And I think that's really important as a way of understanding how to

> proceed with things. It's not just one direction that you go but a rechecking and building of relationships and things like that.

In thinking about how the Thanksgiving Address evolved in the school, Spence also shared how the Principal, Richard Messina, was very inspired by the chapter in Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* that specifically discusses the Thanksgiving Address. As part of staff professional development, the faculty were asked to read the book over the summer and use it as an inspiration at the beginning of staff meetings. Krista remembers, "One week somebody would have a mindfulness moment...So that was, I think another way that [gratitude] was kind of brought into our minds and our consciousness."

Land-based Pedagogies: Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Resurgence at Jackman Institute for Child Study

Much of what Spence and Peebles shared is an example of how to unsettle the havoc of institutionalized land acknowledgements through a relational land-based education practice. At JICS, land acknowledgements provided meaningful opportunities for learning about colonial history, state treaties, stolen lands, and contemporary structural realities. Over time, giving thanks for the natural world became an expansive practice rooted in Indigenous land ontologies that centre relationality.

When the Thanksgiving Address was introduced, it provided opportunities for students to learn about a specific Indigenous knowledge teaching and practice that engages with embodied learning about Indigenous values and principles that is particular to their local context. Through this example, it is evident that when time invested in the political work of unpacking settler colonialism, land acknowledgements can actually mean something within institutions. The experience at JICS also demonstrates that the Thanksgiving Address and the practice of giving thanks is a more appropriate way to begin a gathering when anti-colonial work has not been done and when younger children are involved in learning.

The keen perception of the grade 6 class that Spence worked with in 2018-2019 illuminates the hypocrisy of land acknowledgements that is rampant within our contemporary society. Their realization that there should be a different land acknowledgement for older students and younger students is critical and profound. The fact that these young people also wanted land acknowledgements to change, speaks to context and relationships, and is deeply insightful, and resonates with Indigenous practices of Land Acknowledgements. The challenges with the Class of 2020 also mirror the challenges with institutional land acknowledgments when time, care and meaningful engagement are not activated. Looking at how younger students responded to land acknowledgements, it is not surprising that they gravitated to the natural world because they have yet to be corrupted by the "hyper-individualism that negates [the] relationality" (Simpson, 2017, p. 154) of nature and instead remain attuned to it. Teaching young children the Thanksgiving Address and how to express gratitude, is not only an age-appropriate teaching but a foundational value of Indigenous knowledge education that supports Indigenous land-based education.

Conclusion

Working with the Thanksgiving Address in schools is an authentic practice that can initiate a land-based reconciliation that begins to foster the re-emergence of the original relationship: human being with Mother Earth. Cultivating the emergence and remembrance of the original relationship and the interconnectedness of all living beings is an age-appropriate intervention for elementary school children and creates the possibility for the resurgence of Indigenous Knowledges. The work of students and educators at JICS is an example of how the empty gestures of performative allyship (Blair, 2021, p. 54) can be unsettled within institutions. Across the country, education systems at all levels have been specifically tasked to provide Indigenous Education as identified in the TRC's Calls to Action #62-64 (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, pp. 179-180). Although some settler educators have shown reluctance, and governments have greatly interfered with this process[5], there are Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators committed to bringing Indigenous knowledge and practice into education systems. The inherent knowledge of the Thanksgiving Address activated by the respectful and collaborative approach of educators working with it at JICS demonstrate that with careful scaffolding and age-appropriate instruction, children can begin to learn important Indigenous foundational teachings. When instruction is properly guided and rooted in an ethic of care, students can provide public land acknowledgements that unpack settler colonialism in this broader perspective.

Giidaakunadaad asked, "How can we do things differently?" (personal communication, March 30, 2022). This question is key for educators and learners. Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy provide a way of being and learning about the world where the notion of truth relates to the ways in which we are all interconnected. It is that energy of the sky world, the rotation of the planet, the air we breathe, that brings us into a higher understanding, where truth, from an Indigenous perspective, leads us into the circle of natural laws. She explained:

> We understood things from up here. We have to grow our people back into that. We've got lots of work to do. And we've got to get it into our children, and we've got to get it into our grandchildren. And then we are going to see something different - in the future generations (personal communication, March 30, 2022).

While Giidaakunadaad is specifically referring to Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee children, her direction relates to what is possible for all children. Coalition building and solidarity are not easy prospects. Peebles echoes this when he speaks to how land acknowledgments and other practices are often approached:

> I think where we get stuck is when we don't think about these questions, when we don't continue the conversation, when we just sort of start to do something

5 Here we are referring to Premier Doug Ford's cancellation of the curriculum rewrite in 2018, (Crawley, 2018).

> as a thing to do and we stop doing the work of understanding it deeply and constantly you know, working with it. (personal communication, November 4, 2022)

This notion of doing the work and continuing the conversation is created through authentic relationship building and the commitment to address settler colonial school curriculums. Attempting to engage in reconciliation with uninformed and made-up land acknowledgements not only results in misunderstanding but is a dangerous erasure of Indigenous Nations, knowledge systems, and lands. Land acknowledgements require a deep commitment to educating oneself in land-based practices that trouble the history of settler colonialism and speak to the ways that history has created the colonial structures and realities that we live with today. Centering Indigenous knowledge teachings, like the Haudenosaunee *Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen* (Thanksgiving Address), offers a framework in which land-based education supports Indigenous resurgence and possibilities for reconciliation in the future. By creating space that respects the self-determination, sovereignty and pedagogies of diverse Indigenous peoples, settlers can begin to "find new ways of relating to Indigenous people and to one another" (Kouri, 2020, p. 61).

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Participatory, Multimodal Approaches to Child Rights Education in Global Contexts: Reflections on a Study with Schoolchildren in Uganda and Canada

Shelley Jones, Kathleen Manion

Abstract Although a child's prerogative to know their rights is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other documents such as the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child, child rights are rarely introduced to children as part of their formal learning experience in school. Children are deemed unable to understand the concepts of rights and responsibilities (Alderson, 2008; Jerome, 2018) and educators do not know how to integrate them into their teaching. This lack of child rights education means children do not possess the awareness and knowledge needed to claim and exercise their rights (Covell et al., 2017; Wabwile, 2016). Drawing on a case study conducted in Uganda and Canada, this paper explores ways that participatory, empowering, multimodal, and contextually responsive approaches to child rights education enables children and their teachers to meaningfully explore and learn about children's rights.

KeyWords child rights education; rights and responsibilities; child participation; multimodality; Uganda, Canada

Participatory Approaches and Children's Rights Education

Arguably, more than ever, children need to know their rights and exercise their voice. Current global, national, regional, and local crises (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic and related health and economic fallouts; war and systemic violence; mass migration, refugee encampments, and the climate crisis) expose and exacerbate historical global inequalities and violations of children's rights. This includes, but is not limited to, insufficient food and medical care, susceptibility to maltreatment and child labour, and unequal or insufficient access to education and educational resources (UNICEF, 2020). This is even more challenging for those living in disadvantaged contexts.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989), ratified by every country but the United States, and the more contextually-specific African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (the Charter) (1990) have vital provisions for children's participation in matters that impact them and for education on their rights. While the UNCRC laid the groundwork for children's foundational needs, the African Charter insists that this must be interpreted within the cultural and traditional values of the child (Oluwu, 2002). Article 11(d) of the Charter states that education includes "the preparation of the child

for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, tolerance, dialogue, mutual respect and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, tribal and religious groups." Article 29(d) of the Convention calls for a similar focus.[1] The interpretation of Article 29(d) was further articulated in General Comment 1 of the Convention that claims Article 29(1) provides a "foundation stone" for human rights education by recognizing that "the rights of the child have not always been given the prominence they require" and encouraging rights education to be "implemented in practice [and be a]… comprehensive, life-long process and start with the reflection of human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children" (2001). Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals further commits the global community to quality universal primary and secondary education (UN, 2022). This is augmented further within Africa by the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims to see flourishing human rights, gender equality, inclusion, quality education, and peace by 2063 (AU, 2015). Together these instruments promise human rights education through a comprehensive, life-long process that begins with learning and reflecting upon human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children. As engaged scholars committed to the ideals set out in these documents, we seek to integrate children's education with community development while also contributing to an academic discourse that advances child rights pedagogy. By partnering with educators in diverse contexts, we have gained deeper and more nuanced perspectives on culturally and geographically different interpretations and actualizations of children's rights. In this paper we discuss a participatory action research project where we introduced children's rights education in two distinct global settings – an urban city in Western Canada and a rural area in Southwest Uganda. We worked with classroom teachers to engage children in child rights-based activities and facilitated communication between the children. This paper will discuss our unique insights into participatory processes and cross-global perspectives on children's rights education.

Background: Implementing the Child Thrive Program in Uganda

To have effective child rights education, we believe it is necessary to include playful, participatory approaches that are engaging, balance rights and responsibilities, and share the democratic principles and citizenship skills of cooperation, critical thinking, tolerance, peaceful resolution, non-discrimination, and respect for human dignity (Friedmann, 2013; Manion & Jones, 2020; Ozturk & Dogan, 2017; UNICEF, 2007). The human rights corpus further promotes the importance of non-discrimination, participation, equality, and empowerment as furthered through legal norms. The Child Thrive program (CTP) was developed and run by the International Institute of Child Rights and Development (IICRD) for elementary school children in western Canada. In 2018, based on personal and professional connections, we introduced the CTP to schoolchildren and teachers in rural Uganda through our study.

In this paper, we demonstrate how young children can be actively, authentically, and meaningfully engaged in learning about their rights and responsibilities through age- and context-appropriate participatory multimodal learning activities. As teachers, researchers, and

1 The wording of Article 29(d) of the Convention reads, "the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples" (1990).

facilitators, we have taken this opportunity to reflect on this 2018 multimodal participatory action research (PAR) project that sought children's perspectives on their rights in primary school classrooms in Masaka, Uganda, and Victoria, Canada. The project was led by the research question: What do elementary children in Canada and Uganda believe they need to thrive, to be cared for, and to grow and develop? This paper focuses on the research process, where we outline engaging multimodal, participatory approaches to children's rights education and research and the ways in which it enabled authentic child participation. We did not frame this as a formal comparative study, as there were differences in the contexts, delivery, and previous exposure to child rights education; however, we saw value in considering how the children interpreted and expressed rights in these different contexts. We also included questions posed by the children in different contexts about the rights and responsibilities they hold, illustrating their interest in children's rights. Thus, we highlight the importance of acknowledging the unique circumstances and heterogeneities of childhoods (Smith, 2010) with respect to child rights to encourage a richer understanding of children's rights and a more nuanced approach to providing children's rights education.

Scope and Area of Study: Examining Childhoods and the Call for Child Rights Education

Children have a diversity of experiences, abilities, and interests. A myriad of micro, meso, and macro factors impact children's optimal development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986), particularly in early years (Allen & Kelly, 2015; Britto et al., 2017). Thus, it is critical that child rights education is appropriately contextualised. Vandenhole (2020) encourages reflection on both normative universal child rights and the local context (p.187). And as Liebel (2020) argues, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a "permanently changing learning system" (p.125) and is robust enough to incorporate the realities of children's lives in the global south, which challenge Eurocentric notions of childhoods as innocent and vulnerable. Bissell et al. (2011) encourage us to draw upon children's own contexts to develop "creative programs making use of cultural assets to promote children's rights and protection within the community" (p. 24). This includes providing children with resources in their mother tongue or home language. Mother tongue resources not only facilitate comprehension and participation but also contextualise ideas through familiar and localized societal and cultural representations (Stoop, 2017). This aligns with Hill et al. (2006), who argue that we need to acknowledge multiple perspectives and use relevant, contextually, and culturally responsive methods of teaching children about their rights.

Child rights education provides a platform for children to learn about the importance of rights in their and their peers' lives (Jones et al, 2019; Naser et al., 2020; Ruiz-Casares et al., 2017). However, there is a gap in the literature: there is little research that specifically investigates the roles of child rights education in the expansion of children's participatory opportunities and empowerment.

Likewise, child rights education is rarely included in formal educational curricula (Covell et al., 2017). Looking globally, Jerome et al. (2015) found that the majority of the 26 countries within their review demonstrated "no entitlement in the official curriculum for all children to

learn about children's rights" (p.8). Most primary and secondary school educators are unfamiliar with these instruments and have little experience teaching children about their rights. Their ability to provide human rights education is thwarted by a lack of knowledge, training, and resources, as well as the belief that teaching children their rights can challenge traditional and/or cultural beliefs and practices (Jerome, 2016).

There are many reasons children do not learn about their rights. These include educator's unfamiliarity with child rights (Covell et al., 2017) and their inability to access professional development that supports the effective implementation of rights-based education (Cheung, 2016); adults' belief that children are too young to comprehend rights-based concepts (Alderson, 2008; Jerome, 2018) and their fear that rights-focused education for children will undermine their authority (Covell et al., 2017; Jerome, 2018); and states' unwillingness to promote child rights in schools (Howe & Covell, 2013; Wabwile, 2016). In this paper we focus on overturning the assumption that children cannot understand rights and suggest that teachers—with awareness of children's rights and support for implementing child rights-based activities in engaging, meaningful ways—can effectively teach children's rights in age- and contextually appropriate ways.

Theoretical Framework, Methodology and Research Methods: Participatory, Multimodal Approaches to Child Rights Education

We conduct community engaged scholarship and are situated within an institute of higher learning that proposes to "explore, share, [and] advance… [by supporting] interdisciplinary research that pushes boundaries, removes barriers and finds solutions to today's critical issues [by engaging] communities locally, nationally and globally—leaning into partnerships, learning from others and warmly welcoming all people" (Royal Roads University, n.d.). We take this to heart and implement it in the research and community work we do. This allows us to focus on scholarship that works in partnership with participants but is also action-oriented (Reason & Bradbury, 2006; Small & Uttal, 2005), which is an essential component of engaged scholarship (Calleson et al., 2005). As a way of engaging children in meaningful and immersive learning, the teachers and researchers in our participatory action research case study used the CTP to teach five- to eight-year-old children in a classroom in Victoria, Canada and a classroom in Masaka, Uganda about rights and responsibilities, the difference between needs and wants, and the allied concept of empowerment. Although engaged scholarship has traditionally focused on post-secondary education, in linking our scholarship to that of the children we work with, we note the synergies that exist between multimodal participatory action research and engaged scholarship. They share values of learning from lived experience and ensuring participants take a physically and intellectually active role in both process and outcome. As Bryson (2014) contends, engaged scholarship has traditionally focused on higher education, but it has a place wherever engagement requires meaningful participation and a focus on leveraging real life experiences.

As workshop facilitators and researchers (herein referred to as researchers/facilitators), we chose these two contexts due to our personal and professional connections. Given the

distinct contexts and the material and cultural differences between Canada and Uganda, we actively and continuously reflected on our potential and actual biases. Drawing from a range of sources, including engaged scholarship and rights-based pedagogy, we emphasised processes that encouraged learners to be active participants in their own learning and interpretation but also partners in the discoveries about their lived experiences (Nel, 2017).

Children learn through play, inquiry, and activities that engage them in diverse ways—emotionally, visually, aurally, and physically (Kewalramani & Veresov, 2021; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Mackey & Shane, 2013; Newfield, 2011). They also benefit from activities that bridge home and school experiences and are relevant and accessible to the child. Play-based, creative, multimodal activities are therefore effective in fostering meaningful connections between the children's understanding of their rights and responsibilities and their identities and relationships within family, community, and school environments.

Within our study, we utilised the play-based learning materials developed for the CTP. It concentrates on creating environments that focus on child well-being, facilitate community and school-based education, build awareness of children's rights, and support children's leadership and learning opportunities (IICRD, n.d.). In 2018, through our study, the CTP was introduced to schoolchildren and teachers in rural Uganda. Jones has been conducting educational research in Uganda for almost twenty years, and the Ugandan educators with whom she has been collaborating expressed interest in, and the need for, child rights education in the Ugandan context. Thus, we sought to explore how a multimodal, participatory approach to child rights education could be implemented in Uganda, as well as to explore the similarities and differences between Ugandan and Canadian children's responses to child rights.

We are both Canadian researchers/facilitators who have worked and conducted research extensively in international contexts. Jones has taught secondary school in Uganda, designed and delivered teacher training programs in Uganda, and conducted research with primary and secondary school students, teachers, educational administrators, parents, and community members in Uganda. Manion has taught elementary school and conducted Child Thrive workshops in Canada for six years. Her research focuses on systems that allow children to thrive, including those affiliated with education.

To support the children's participation in the workshops, the researchers/facilitators used flexible, jargon-free, child-friendly communication. Child participants were asked to express their knowledge, experience, and ideas through drawings, small and large group discussions, play, and writing, providing a wide range of opportunities for participating in ways that felt comfortable to them. The lessons involved storytelling, puppets, artwork, games, and postcard-writing to key political figures (e.g., the Canadian Prime Minister and the Ugandan President). The Canadian and Ugandan children also exchanged letters. Games and activities were drawn from a range of sources, including Equitas' *Play it Fair!: Human Rights Education Toolkit for Children* (2008). These multimodal, participatory pedagogical approaches also served as methodological approaches that allowed the children to explore rights-based concepts in a range of ways and to understand their role as citizens in shaping and understanding their world, both within the classroom and beyond. The research drew on participatory action

research (Horgan, 2017; Reason & Bradbury, 2006) that matched the participative nature of the workshops and allowed us to centre the children's voices in the research processes and findings. We drew on observation, note-taking, analysis of children's artifacts (e.g., postcards and other artwork), and researcher/facilitator and teacher/facilitator discussions.

The children were asked which rights were most important to them, who was responsible for protecting their rights, what responsibilities emerged from different rights, and what the difference was between things they needed and things they merely wanted. As researchers/facilitators, we iteratively analysed the data to identify findings and themes (Cresswell, 2008). The first level of analysis focused on data pertaining to children's rights as identified by the participants in the class discussions, which were recorded by the researchers/facilitators. The rights identified by the children in Uganda and Canada were broadly compared while recognizing that each community and societal context was unique. Consideration of contextual differences (such as rural versus urban, differing environmental and geographic factors, differing welfare structures and access to resources, and differing educational policies and practices) were discussed with teachers and clarified through grey and academic literature.

The methodology and findings are elucidated further by Jones and Manion (2023) and Manion and Jones (2020), but the following sections outline reflections that emerged from this project in four areas: in exploring what meaningful participation is, how multimodality can support child rights education, the details of the participatory, multimodal activities in practice, and the reflections on the ideas students shared about child rights. Each area illustrates the role critical literacy plays in bolstering educators' ability to foster contextually relevant child rights education.

Meaningful Participation

Children's fundamental right to participate in decisions that affect their lives is enshrined in Article 12 of the UNCRC: "[children have] the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (1989). This makes it imperative that children are asked what they think their rights are and how they interpret these rights within their own lived experience. The continuum from adult consultative participation, through collaborative participation, to child-led participation is wide (Lansdown, 2009). Lundy (2007) suggests that to fully adhere to the spirit of Article 12 of the UNCRC, children need a safe space for their voices to be heard, support to have their voices heard, someone to actively hear (or see) their opinions and ideas, and advocates to ensure their ideas are acted upon and influence change. Adults often assume that it is too difficult to meaningfully bring children into decision-making processes, research, or co-created curriculum and may even feel that providing space for children to participate threatens existing familial or societal structures (Horgan, 2017). Poor to mediocre examples of participation can involve passive participation where a participant is asked to provide input, but the purpose of the activities is unclear. Hart (2007) produced an oft-quoted hierarchy of participation that moves from most collaborative to least: from child-initiated, shared decisions with adults to tokenism, decoration, and manipulation. We argue that children's education has

a vital role in creating healthy dialogue and active, engaged citizens, while also supporting their identity, belonging, and autonomy and potentially reducing levels of societal violence (Covell & Howe, 2012; Souto-Manning, 2017).

Participatory processes were built into the CTP workshops and into the participatory action research design to counter the fact that children are often disregarded within society (Jones et al, 2019). Adults often see children located on a spectrum between being individuals who are naive, vulnerable, and in need of protection to people with full rights and responsibilities who can make their own choices and whose rights must be asserted and upheld. Nixon (2002) suggests that adults often feel they know best for children, even though adults themselves have their own backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and biases and may have little understanding of a child's context or life experiences. Adult assumptions of 'knowing best' for children prevent them from truly knowing children's unique worlds, thoughts, and experiences and from working collaboratively to build on children's strengths, expertise, and abilities.

For example, in Uganda rights and duties are embedded within the household in traditional cultural practices (Seruwagi, 2017) and often require children to perform a wide range of challenging and time-intensive domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, herding animals, fetching water and firewood, washing clothes, farming, and looking after siblings. A Eurocentric perspective might view these multitudinous and intensive domestic activities as child labour, thereby clashing with children's rights. However, this fails to acknowledge the contextual and cultural underpinnings from whence these children's domestic responsibilities have emerged. Socioeconomic conditions often require that children contribute to the household so parents can provide the family's basic needs. In addition, meaningfully contributing to the household is an important part of socialisation, life skills training, and securing a sense of belonging in the family and community.

Discussions with children about their role or their level of agency within the household rarely make it into academic writing. We propose that play-based activities in elementary schools further support child rights education which is foundational to citizenship and democracy building as well as exploring locally and culturally bounded understandings of children's rights and responsibilities. There are variations on the idea of good citizenship that go beyond the scope of this paper, but within the context of this research project it is notable that rights-based education allows teachers and students to explore their interrelated commitments to one another within their classroom, their families, their communities, and beyond (Levine & Youniss, 2009). Exploring the concept of rights with children and allowing them to define what these rights mean in their specific contexts creates opportunities for empowerment.

Multimodality and Child's Rights Education

Participation offers both a theoretical grounding in understanding the impact of child rights education and an imperative for practice, which can be furthered through engaged multimodal and play-based approaches. In our study, play was used to teach children about their rights, engage them in sharing their thoughts about rights, and contribute to cross-context communication about children's rights.

Multimodality offers a fruitful and accessible way for children to explore their own meanings of child rights and integrate these meanings into their embodied understandings (Mackey & Shane, 2013; Newfield, 2011). In our project, children demonstrated openness to thinking about rights and responsibilities as they related to their contexts, lived realities, cultures, and languages. This openness was further illustrated when the children were allowed to express their ideas and discuss rights in multiple creative modes like images, play, text, and spoken word (Manion & Jones, 2020). The multimodal workshops and participatory action methodological approach allowed us to better engage students and to conduct research *with*, as opposed to *on*, the participants. We thereby privileged participants' inherent expertise regarding their lived realities, unique contexts, and specific local needs, including greater access to resources, information, and/or support (Beeman-Cadwaller et al., 2012).

Alongside multimodal approaches, participatory action processes also support active engagement and cyclical learning. Participatory action recognises that those living an experience are the most knowledgeable about that experience (Reason & Bradbury, 2006). This aligns with Article 12 of the UNCRC, which calls for young people's voices to be heard. Engaging children actively and meaningfully in participatory action requires that activities, concepts, questions, and topics are child-friendly, age- and context-appropriate, and support their ability to thrive. These all align well with multimodal approaches to inquiry and engaged learning. Multimodal educational strategies nurture meaning-making approaches to communication through gestures, images, sounds, and other material representations (Jewitt, 2008, p. 246; Kress, 2011; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

By extending inquiry and expression beyond formal modes of communication, a multimodal participatory action methodology can democratise communicative exchanges in ways that include and value the contributions of children and support their political stake in active and meaningful participation (Jones & Walker, 2011) through age-appropriate activities that provide children with the opportunity to reclaim spaces often occupied by adults (Biddle, 2017).

In this study, a multimodal participatory action methodological approach 1) enabled all participants to have opportunities to engage in creative interrogation of children's rights and associated responsibilities, 2) encouraged participants to express their thoughts on children's rights in diverse ways that were enjoyable and comfortable for them, and 3) democratised the research and course context through the children's participation in multimodal activities and sharing of their ideas about child rights and responsibilities.

Process and Findings: Participatory, Multimodal Activities in Practice via Child Thrive

Reflecting upon our study through the lens of engaged scholarship highlighted the research processes that allowed us to actively engage educators and children in participatory activities where they shared their ideas and experiences with respect to child rights. As such, the process and findings are discussed in tandem in this section to illustrate how findings were elicited.

While each CTP workshop is tailored to the class's age, grade, and current curriculum, the case study implemented similar workshops in both Uganda and Canada. In Uganda, the primary school is in the Masaka District in South Central Uganda. The workshop took place

in a Primary One (Grade One) class with 34 students. It was led by the school headteacher, the classroom teacher, and the researcher/facilitator. The Canadian Grade Two class was led by the classroom teacher, a CTP facilitator, and the researcher/facilitator and had 22 students. It was based in a suburban elementary school in Victoria, Canada. This school has hosted Child Thrive Workshops for several years. Each class included a workshop on children's rights, and the two classes were also invited to communicate with each other over subsequent months. The workshops themselves are facilitated by adults who introduce the sessions and the activities: they begin with adult-led activities, move onto child-led multimodal activities, and end with adult-child collaborative activities. The study included comparative elements but—given the differences between the two communities, the education systems, and children—it focused more on creating a dialogue on children's rights in different contexts.

Ethical considerations about research with children were prioritized. In both countries, ethical approvals from recognized Research Ethics Committees were obtained; consent to participate was gained from the school (and the school board in Canada), the parents, and the children at the outset of the study and during the workshops. The children's privacy and anonymity in knowledge products was maintained throughout. As the headteacher in Uganda felt there were significant rights violations for children and particularly for girls in her school and community, she was keen to participate in the workshops to help educate children about their rights. The teacher in Canada had participated in workshops in previous years and was committed to child rights education, but she was particularly interested in having an exchange with children in Uganda. The dialogue between the classes in the two communities also provided the opportunity to focus on curricular objectives in both settings, such as community advocacy and global citizenship.

To gain informed consent, parents were told about the research and workshops' purpose in the local language, either Luganda or English. According to teachers, Ugandan parents were initially hesitant about children learning about their rights, as this was perceived to undermine the parents' authority. However, after their questions were answered and their concerns allayed, verbal and written consent was provided for all students in both sites. The children were also asked for their verbal assent before participating and all assented. In Canada, there were two researchers/facilitators who were helped by the teacher. In Uganda, the researchers/facilitators and the teacher co-facilitated the workshop.

In both cases a brief introduction to the workshop was given, including a discussion on children's rights. In both sites a hand puppet was used to build multimodal approaches. In Canada, 'Giggles' and in Uganda, 'Nunu' introduced the special session on children's rights. Children in both countries expressed glee at seeing the puppets. Many of the Ugandan children were introduced to a puppet for the first time in their lives. In both countries the puppets were introduced as visiting from the Planet Zog and wanting to know more about children's rights on planet Earth. This introduced the ability to ask naïve questions to the children to spark dialogue.

In both sites, the facilitators and the research project between Canada and Uganda was introduced alongside the activities. The children were invited to consider children's rights and

responsibilities, as well as the similarities and differences of understandings, priorities, and experiences between Ugandan and Canadian children.

The sessions began with the facilitators noting that rights are things that the children need to survive and thrive and that every child is entitled to these rights regardless of where they live. To help this make sense, the facilitators further noted that rights are things you need as opposed to things you want or like. The facilitators further explained that children's rights are promised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Next, facilitators asked the children what they thought they needed to be healthy, safe, heard, and happy. Their answers have been transposed in Table 1.

Table 1. **Children's List of Rights in Uganda and Canada**

Uganda	Canada
• Good sleep and rest • Listened to • Properly handled • Good health (access to medication/ vaccinations) • Clothing • Good food • Good life • Good family • Ability to go to school (to have school fees paid by parents) • Good home • Being beautiful • Happiness • Parental love • Safety and security • Freedom from beatings • Freedom from poverty • Ability to move freely • Feeling free	• A room or a house (or shelter) • A family who loves them • Safety • Ability to write (and be listened to) • School • Healthy food • Water • Clean air

To help the children further understand what rights were, the facilitators asked the children what responsibilities came with these rights. The children noted several responsibilities that illustrated their understanding of rights and affiliated responsibilities. For instance, they shared that if they had the right to be cared for, they also needed to treat others well (for instance, their parents). The children listed several other responsibilities: sharing; being nice to one another; studying hard; cleaning the house or their room; helping their parents, family, friends, and teachers; wishing the best for others; valuing the love of family; doing chores; feeding animals; digging in the farm; looking after younger children; respecting others; and protecting others.

Figure 1. The Facilitator/Teacher Introducing Nunu the Puppet in Uganda.
Photo by Shelley Jones

Figure 2. Illustration of Children in Uganda Playing Fishing for Rights.
Photo by Shelley Jones

The facilitators further shared that in addition to students having rights, there were people responsible for protecting and upholding their rights. When the facilitators asked the Ugandan children who was responsible for protecting their rights, they stated their parents, their teachers, and themselves. In Canada, students suggested the list include mothers, fathers, siblings, other family, teachers, police officers, mayors, fire fighters, doctors, nurses, and each other.

After this initial discussion on rights, the facilitators with the puppet read the children the book *I Have the Right to be A Child* (2012) by author Alain Serres and illustrator Aurelia Fronty (see Figure 1). In Uganda, this included a translation of the book into Luganda with pictures more relevant to the Ugandan context. (The headteacher created this translated version of the book).

Following this reading, the facilitators asked the children about any rights that surprised them. In both classes, many of the children expressed that they liked the "right to play." Following this session, the children in Uganda had a break for lunch, while the children in Canada moved into interactive activities.

Next were a set of three activities. The class was divided into three groups, each of which engaged in an activity for about 20 minutes before rotating so all activities were undertaken by all students.

The first activity was called 'Fishing for Rights and Responsibilities' (based on Equitas, 2008), which focuses on children matching different rights and responsibilities (see Figure 2). Casting a fishing rod (made with a stick, string, and a magnet), the children catch a fish made of paper and a magnetised paperclip. The fish has either a right or a responsibility on it and the children identified which one it is. The next activity was called 'What Children Need.' Its purpose was to help children identify the things children believe they need to thrive and how this differs from the things they want but do not need. The children are asked to draw an outline of

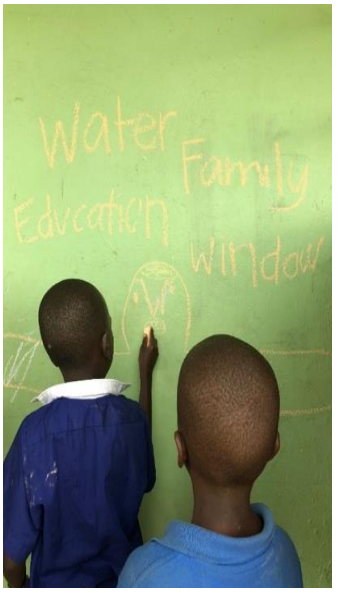

Figure 3. Students in Uganda Playing 'What Children Need'.
Photo by Shelley Jones

Figure 4. Students in Uganda Drawing Their Postcards. Photo by Shelley Jones

their body on the wall with chalk and then write or draw the things that they need and that they want and discuss them.

The third activity included writing postcards to their political leaders, either President Yoweri Museveni or Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. This allows students to express their right to a voice in matters that impact them (as outlined in Article 12 of the UNCRC). The postcard invited them to create and share a picture expressing a right that is important to them (based on Equitas, 2008). Students then wrote letters to children in the other class (See Figure 4). In keeping with the workshops, they were encouraged to add drawings depicting the rights they felt were most important to them. On the other side of their pictures, they wrote a letter based on the following template:

> Dear Friend in Canada/Uganda,
> This is me [activity in drawing].
> Please tell me about you.
> Sincerely,

Letters were collected and the children were told the letters would be sent to the children in the other country.

The closing activity involved the children and the facilitators standing in a circle holding hands. In Canada, the objective was to move a hula hoop around the circle without breaking the circle. In Uganda, the closing circle sang a song together. In either case, the focus was on cooperation, interconnectivity, and working together.

An additional session focused specifically on the connections between the Canadian and Ugandan students. It aimed at increasing the students' understanding about child rights, creating connections between different communities, and providing space to discuss the similarities and differences in their understandings of child rights. This session allowed the children to express their ideas to a new friend of a similar age, strengthen relationships with educators in both countries, and synthesize key points to analyze for a research paper and presentation.

Figure 5. A Selection of Four Pictures Created by Students (from Left to Right) in Uganda, Canada, Uganda, Canada. Photos by Shelley Jones

In the Canadian session, the facilitators recapped key ideas, including that all children had rights, that they had a role in protecting children's rights, and that there were four families of rights—to be yourself, to be safe, to be healthy, and to be heard. Children in all parts of the world have the same basic rights, so the facilitators invited the children to hear more about Uganda or Canada and the children in the other school (see Figure 6). In Canada, a researcher/facilitator shared a photo presentation about Uganda and Masaka (where the school is located). Then the researcher/facilitator shared questions the Ugandan students asked the Canadian children. Unfortunately, time did not permit for this process to be duplicated in Uganda. Students were provided with letters from the children to read. Based on this, they were asked what questions they would like to ask in return. Both sets of questions are noted in the following section.

To keep the session play-based, the facilitators then led a game called 'Rights Freeze.' First, the children were asked to think of a right that was important to them (like the right to nutritious food) and a way to represent the right with their body. The facilitators then played music and when the music stopped the children were meant to freeze in a way that represented the right they chose. There were three rounds to the game and it generated discussion about the different rights represented.

Figure 6. The Facilitator/Researcher and a Young Student Helper Sharing Information about the School and Community in Uganda with Students in Canada. Photo by Shelley Jones

Then the children were given time to develop their letters. They had several days to complete these, as shown in Figure 7. The session then closed with another circle where the children cooperated to move the hula hoop around the circle without breaking the link.

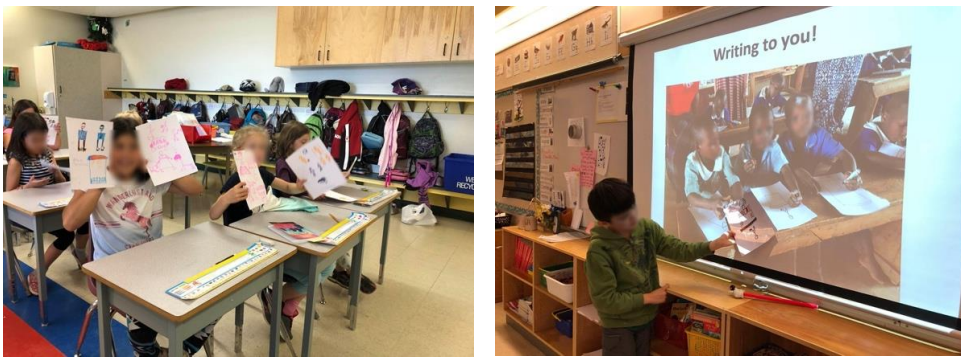

Figure 7. Children in Canada Showing Postcards Received from Students in Uganda and Looking at Pictures of Children Writing Postcards in Uganda. Photos by Shelley Jones

Process and Findings: Reflections on Student Ideas and Questions about Child Rights

When verbally asked to highlight specific rights, the Ugandan and Canadian children noted similar rights, such as the right to school, dance, healthy food, and a good home. In both places students also recognised the right to play (e.g., football) and expressed surprise this was a right. The Canadian children additionally noted the right to a room, house, or shelter; to a family who loves them; safety; to write (and be listened to); to school; and to healthy food, clean water, and clean air. The children were asked to draw pictures and write letters that highlighted specific rights or areas for rights. The researchers analysed the pictures and summarised one right per photo. The results are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. *Summary of Rights Depicted in Letters and Pictures by Children in Canada and Uganda*

Right	Uganda (n=34)		Canada (n=22)	
	Letters	**Pictures**	**Letters/Words**	**Pictures**
Play	29	30	17	11
Food	6	14	6	0
Education/school	5	9	2	1
Home	2	20	5	9
Friends	2	2	8	8
Family	1	1	1	5
Travel (bus)	0	5	0	0
Art (expression)			4	0
Clothes			1	1
Clean water			2	2
Love			1	1
Clean environment/ clean air			0	1

Of interest in Table 2 is that the Canadian children identified more diverse rights than the Ugandan children. Likewise, while both groups of students identified similar rights as being important to them, differences emerged because of their environmental context: in their pictures, the Ugandan children commonly noted milking a cow or playing football (soccer), while the Canadian children noted the right to clean air and water. And while all children highlighted the role of their family, their teachers, and themselves in protecting rights, children in Canada were more likely to additionally suggest professional support such as nurses, doctors, police officers, firefighters, and politicians.

Another matter of interest is that several of the Ugandan children's drawings featured a school bus. The researcher/facilitator had not noticed a bus on the school grounds, so followed

up on this with the headteacher who confirmed that the school did not have one. She added that "kids here move long distances of like 5km -10km, and cross locally made bridges as the place is surrounded by water, so to them getting a school bus to take them to school [would be] a big solution for their suffering." The children may have been indicating that along with their right to education was their right to *access* education. While discussions were had with the children on their own interpretation of their drawings, they were limited. If this project were replicated, a more thorough analysis with the children about their drawings could provide more detailed data.

As noted, after the original workshop, an exchange was set up between the two groups of students that included sharing letters; as well, additional sessions occurred over several months. The Ugandan children had follow-up questions for the Canadian children, which were sent via email by the teacher/facilitator. These read as follows:

1. Are children normally taught in school or home how to be open or straight when it comes to their rights?
2. Are jobs and responsibilities chosen for the kids and depending on gender?
3. How about home chores, are they done according to gender?
4. How about when children's rights are violated, how are kids helped and what happens to the culprit?

The children in Canada responded that they learned about their rights both in school and at home. However, initially, most agreed that they were taught about children's rights in school, while only a few agreed they were taught rights at home. In differentiating between school and home, students suggested they were directly taught about rights in schools, but rights were inferred at home through modelling or provision of basic needs. Examples of rights they mentioned were healthy food, clean water, safe shelter, safe harbour, access to medical care, and encouragement to go to school.

In response to the second and third questions, the Canadian students suggested that children had the same responsibilities and opportunities in school and at home. They also expressed that they had the same opportunities whether they were a boy or a girl. To further expand on this, the children noted that their teacher gave them jobs like helping in class, and their parents and family gave them jobs like cleaning their room or helping with cooking. Of note, these appeared to be similar to the Ugandan children's responses.

The Canadian students' discussion surrounding breaches of rights was more sensitive but also less clear. One student stated that if someone breached their rights, "they would get in trouble." Other students suggested that they would "tell someone," including an adult like a teacher, parent, or grandparent. The children appeared to struggle with interpreting this question. They paused before the teacher helped them think through an example where one student was not treating another with respect. The scenario depicted teachers and adults supporting the children to ensure that their needs were met, but also expecting the children to gain the skills to treat each other with respect and dignity. This was an interesting discussion.

The children in Canada were steered in the direction of considering the rights violation as bullying or school-based conflict and were able to contextualise it as such. The Canadian teacher later recounted that she was uncomfortable opening a discussion on child abuse and chose to redirect the discussion to bullying, a relevant topic within the school context.

However, the headteacher in Uganda interpreted the question as referring to fundamental rights breaches akin to serious and potentially life-threatening child abuse. She stated that "kids here suffer violence ranging from beating, starving, failure to be taken to school, early /forced marriage, child labour, etc. Some of these kids are victims of domestic violence by drunken parents, prostitutes, etc. So, some are small cases, others are criminal" (personal communication, 2018). This illustrates a significant difference in the lived realities of the two groups of children: while violence against children occurs in the Canadian context, it is less openly seen or discussed in schools.

The children in Canada also asked questions that were more focused on the environmental differences between the two communities. These included "how long does it take to travel there"; "do you write your last name first"; "what are the rules of football" and "are they different than soccer (why is the name different)"; "do you play baseball"; "how are your houses built"; "what kind of gift can we send you (e.g., something you do not have)"; "what age or grade does your school go to"; "what grade do you want to go to"; "when do you start working"; "do you have a tv and do you watch tv"; "do you have power (i.e., electricity)"; "how many kids are in your class"; "how do you get around, for instance to school (e.g., by bicycle)"; and "do you have cactus"? The emergent nature of these questions illustrates the burgeoning curiosity the children had about each other's contexts, particularly as the differences surfaced. While the school year ended and the dialogue was cut off, this added layer of multimodal engagement hinted at what could emerge with more time.

Conclusion: Participatory, Multimodal Approaches to Child Rights Education

The multimodal, participatory, and contextualised workshops provided a platform for these students to learn about child rights and responsibilities, make sense of them within their own context, and contrast them with children in a different context. Similarities and differences emerged when analyzing the findings from the two different contexts. The children's discussions revealed divergent interests, particularly around the environment, gender, and circles of protection. For instance, the right to clean air and clean water were identified by children in Victoria, but this was not a right that children in Uganda identified. Interestingly, while there was a discussion about the right to non-discrimination based on sex, colour, race, and ability in both contexts, the children did not initially identify this as a key right in their verbal discussions or in the drawings and letters. However, the additional questions about gender that the Ugandan children asked the Canadian children and the ensuing discussions the children had about gender raised interesting insights about perceived differences pertaining to gender roles and opportunities in each location. Gender inequality remains highly problematic in Uganda (Allen & Kelly, 2015; Bantebya et al., 2014; Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013; Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, 2007), and an

unfair distribution of domestic chores is a major impediment to girls' educational participation and, consequently, life opportunities (Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013). Furthermore, while both groups of students identified family, teachers, nurses, and themselves as being responsible for protecting their rights, the children in Canada also identified political figures and frontline service workers (e.g., firefighters), suggesting that they recognised a wider circle of protection within civic institutions. These highlighted how context matters in understanding rights, their relative importance, and their ability to be enacted.

Reflections based on the case study point towards the power and efficacy of multimodal play-based pedagogy to engage children in rights-based education. This project opened a dialogue between two disparately located groups of schoolchildren and the children in both Uganda and Canada expressed a keen interest in learning more about each other and about child rights. Anecdotally, the Child Thrive workshops and multimodal participatory research approaches have consistently demonstrated that children have an acute sense of the rights pertaining to survival, e.g., shelter, food, water, family, and clean air. The workshops have also demonstrated that children understand that rights and responsibilities are important to the social fabric of their families and communities and wish to see the rights for themselves, and for others, respected and upheld. The children in both schools expressed the importance of supporting the rights of others. The notion that rights are tied to responsibility is an important element to encourage (Byrne & Lundy, 2013; Covell & Howe, 2012; Jones & Walker, 2011). This supports the fundamental ethics and values—empathy, justice, love, support, and protection—that underscore children's rights. While children are often left out of discussions about issues that impact their welfare and are considered unable to understand concepts like rights (Bissell et al., 2011; Lundy, 2012), this project overturns these assumptions as simplistic and erroneous and illustrates that they do not appreciate and/or acknowledge children's genuine interest in, engagement with, and insights about rights and their ability to understand them within their own contexts. Ultimately, this project offers a platform for further research and dialogue on how to best embed multimodal, participatory, play-based, and cross-cultural child rights education in schools.

Children are entitled to be educated about their rights. They also have the right to be meaningfully involved in decisions about their life. However, many children do not know about the UNCRC or what it means to have rights and responsibilities. By exploring children's understanding of their rights with them, as well as supporting their education through rights-based play, we hope this research deepens our collective understanding of rights in context and encourages others to use this information to better target initiatives focused on rights-based education. Through this process, the children, teachers, and facilitators explored ways to help children meaningfully understand and incorporate the UNCRC into their lives and to encourage thriving children and healthy communities.

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Service-Learning As The Violence of Mercy After The 2010 Haitian Earthquake

Megan Snider Bailey

Abstract This article draws on Paul Farmer's ideas of accompaniment (2011) and "expert mercy" (2020, para. 2) and La Paperson's (2010) notion of the "violence of mercy" (p. 25) to demonstrate how the short-term, outsider service-learning response to the 2010 Haitian earthquake does not benefit community-identified needs. This is done by investigating the best practices of the Haiti Compact, a cohort of U.S. colleges and universities and an alternative break nonprofit operating short-term, outsider service-learning initiatives in post-earthquake Haiti in thoughtful ways intending to help with the recovery efforts while meaningfully contributing service via the routine presence of international volunteers. Despite good intentions, their material practices of service-learning risk harm for community partners and fail to meet established best practice goals. By examining the work of service-learning educators who commit to best practices, we can understand the limits of possibility for the pedagogy and point to alternatives that offer merciful responses to communities in crisis.

KeyWords Service-learning, alternative break, accompaniment, mercy, best practices, Haiti Compact

Short-term, outsider service in the wake of natural disasters often produces unintended consequences for communities affected, a phenomenon which Robert Merton (1936) refers to as "the unanticipated consequences of purposive social action" (p. 894). In the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster, the affected community often bands together out of collective duty and need. Once the immediate crisis passes, though, external forces spring to action, engaging in volunteerism as crisis response. Outside responders, be they military troops, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or service-learning classes, work to restore order by imposing external control over chaos.

Aaron Kuntz (2015) asks that we consider the effects of these outsiders' practices, which are intended to reestablish order in the wake of natural disasters. Attention to the efforts of short-term outsiders is necessary because their efforts carry heightened risk of "benevolent invasion" wherein attempts at assistance dictate how time and resources are invested and how a way forward from the crisis is defined and assessed (Illich, 1968, para. 8). In the wake of the 7.1 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, for example, Jonathan Katz (2013) notes that surplus international volunteer crews swarmed the ruins of the formerly

swanky Hotel Montana in Port-au-Prince, contributing to the successful rescue of twenty-one people and the recovery of deceased victims, most of whom were foreigners. While the value of the lives saved cannot be diminished, Katz (2013) notes that nearby communities, many of which faced more destruction and were nearer to the epicenter of the earthquake, received limited attention during the critical response phase. Because outsiders were unfamiliar with the local context and breadth and depth of community-identified needs, their efficacy was limited. While the effects of the unanticipated consequences of outside volunteers are often less momentous, the lack of context and clear understanding of community-identified needs risks a descent from natural disaster to man-made disaster. D.J. Van Hoving et al., (2010) provide a telling example in their account of post-earthquake medical service. They cared for victims in the days immediately following the earthquake only to later discover that other medical teams treated the same patients, leading to at least one known patient death from overtreatment. While an extreme example of the risk that short-term, outsider service can bring in the wake of natural disasters, it behooves volunteers and service-learning educators to consider the dangerous side effects of good intentions.

Short-term, outsider service-learning often amounts to what La Paperson (2010) calls a "violence of mercy" (p. 25) wherein unanticipated consequences to communities served outweigh the benefits of volunteers' presence. While the scope and scale of service-learning initiatives vary, short-term, outsider service-learning experiences, sometimes referred to as alternative breaks, last one to three weeks during which small groups of students participate in compact volunteer experiences outside their own communities with the aim of "contribut[ing] volunteer hours to communities in need through an asset-based approach and to positively influenc[ing] the life" of student participants both during and after the experience (Piacitelli, et al., 2013, p. 89). Jill Piacitelli et al., (2013) note that these experiences employ best practices and align themselves with critical service-learning pedagogy and social justice (e.g., Mitchell, 2007; Mitchell, 2013) with the hope of creating active citizens.

This article investigates the work of the Haiti Compact: Higher Ed with Haiti, a conglomerate of U.S. public four-year research universities and private liberal arts colleges, including American University, College of William & Mary, Eastern Michigan University, Indiana University, Loyola Marymount University, Middlebury College, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Maryland- College Park, as well as Break Away, the U.S.-based nonprofit specializing in alternative breaks and collegiate service.[1] After witnessing and participating in short-term service-learning's failures following Hurricane Katrina, a small group of U.S. service-learning educators partnered with Break Away to identify and develop best practices for post-natural disaster service-learning. Desiring to help in a way that did not perpetuate damage, Break Away and member institutions worked to envision post-disaster best practices for short-term, outsider service-learning. Those efforts were then acted upon in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.

1 Eastern Michigan University, Middlebury College, and the University of Connecticut joined the Haiti Compact after its founding, with the latter two ultimately withdrawing from the Compact. Indiana University initially participated in the Compact but withdrew before its four-year commitment expired (Brakeley et al., 2014).

The Haiti Compact pledges to be a source of job creation, capacity building, and economic growth for Haitians and a clearinghouse for best practices related to short-term, outsider service-learning trips for American college students serving in post-earthquake Haiti. In relying on best practices, the Haiti Compact believes that short-term, outsider service-learning might offer meaningful contributions to the recovery and rebuilding efforts while providing enriching learning experiences for collegians. In the four years following the earthquake and the creation of the Haiti Compact, 104 students participated in 16 service trips to Haiti, volunteering for a total of 1,380 hours and impacting 1,000 Haitian community members (Brakeley, et al., 2014). In 2014, the group committed to serving an additional four years in Haiti, but efforts fizzled out before 2018. Their commitment to best practices for short-term, outsider service-learning provides the ideal vehicle for a close reading of the possibility of service-learning in the wake of crises and the ways that best practices for short-term, outsider service-learning risk perpetuating violence cloaked as mercy.

Theoretical Framework

Martha Nussbaum (1993) notes that mercy extends beyond that which is expected; it is "gentleness going beyond due proportion" (p. 97). While mercy often concerns questions of punishment, we might think of mercy more broadly as an extension of relief. Mercy is a form a charity; it is an unanticipated dispensation of kindness rooted in a recognition of the self in the other. For the purposes of this article, mercy is an unanticipated social act that intervenes with the goal of improving material conditions for another person.

Paul Farmer, a physician and author known for his work with Partners in Health in Haiti, calls for "expert mercy" in responding to individuals affected by entrenched structural problems (para. 2). In the medical field, expert mercy represents wraparound, holistic care of patients. It requires the physician to go beyond pathology and treatment to understand the experience of and respond to the whole person. Key to this definition, though, is competency. Writing about the necessity of expert mercy at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Farmer argues, "when you're critically ill, expert mercy looks like expert nursing care. When you're coughing and short of breath, expert mercy is an oxygen mask or a mechanical ventilator" (Farmer, 2020, para. 10). Mercy requires more than a compassionate stance; an ability to couple compassion with effectiveness is needed.

Mercy distinguishes itself from other forms of charity in that it is meant to be a longitudinal commitment or means of approaching others. Nussbaum (1993) notes, "The merciful tradition stresses that merciful judgement can be given only when there is time to learn the whole complex history of the life in question and also inclination to do so in a sympathetic manner, without biases of class or race" (p. 117). Continuing to think with Farmer about the longitudinal requirement of mercy, we might understand this work as accompaniment. Farmer (2011) writes:

> To accompany someone is to go somewhere with him or her, to break bread together, to be present on a journey with a beginning and an end…. We're not

> sure exactly where the beginning might be, and we're almost never sure about the end. There's an element of mystery, of openness, in accompaniment: I'll go with you and support you on your journey wherever it leads. I'll keep you company and share your fate for a while. And by 'a while,' I don't mean a little while. Accompaniment is much more often about sticking with a task until it's deemed completed by the person or people being accompanied, rather than the *accompagnateur.* (para. 2, italics in original)

Accompaniment demands authentic relationship; it is a process of living and being together, of keeping company for the long haul. As an example of the depth of relationship that accompaniment demands, Farmer (2011) tells the story of a child cancer patient and her mother that moved into his faculty apartment for over a year while she underwent chemotherapy. They became a family as they lived life together, eating, joking, playing, and dealing with the strains of illness together. Thus accompaniment is friendship or partnership wherein roles or expectations are not clear; mercy abounds in this connection.

In contrast to Nussbaum's (1993) and Farmer's (2011) valuing of mercy, La Paperson (2010) asks us to reconsider mercy through a critical lens. Mercy attempts to respond to need; intervening in the chaos of plunder to alleviate with order. Despite its façade of helping grace, Paperson (2010) argues mercy is merely a shift in the logic and strategy of plunder. A merciful response to disorder sets conditions and frames possibilities. Writing about the state takeover of schools deemed failing in Oakland, California, Paperson (2010) suggests that outsider intervention into local communities is offered up as a saving grace (a lottery system to remove children from failing schools) but does not respond to local community needs or desires ("an offer met with laughter from parents. They perceived it as either a barefaced lie or a barefaced belief that colonial schooling was what befitted their children") (p. 25). Mercy offers a cover for plunder:

> "Now sufficiently abject, school communities like ours in Oakland are supposed to be grateful for any new regimen of test prep, the outsourcing of afterschool programs to private tutoring corporations, the placement of liberal and underprepared teachers in the 'hood, and so on" (Paperson, 2010, p. 26).

To Paperson and the students, teachers, parents, and community members he interviews, the breaking apart of a community school deemed failing does not meet a community-identified need or offer new possibilities of hope to the students affected. The closure of the school and random assignment of students to new schools appears to respond to needs but closes off possibilities for the community. The community no longer possesses a neighborhood school that they can invigorate, a cornerstone of their community ethos, or a space to cultivate their children. The closure of the school on the part of outsiders is meant as charity, drawing on best practices established by federal policy. The veneer of charity and respite on the part of outsiders amounts to a "false invitation to join the domain of justice" that ought be "recognize[d] as

violence" (Paperson, 2010, p. 26). Charity distributed out of mercy does not meet community-identified needs nor offer wanted change to structures.

Thinking with Paperson (2010), Tasha Parrish (2013) argues, "mercy is administered within the narrative and interpretation of the dominant group, and actually functions to fuel patronizing beliefs" (p. 18). Because of the damage that outsider control in the form of mercy allows, Paperson (2010) suggests we might think of it as Freirean (1968/1970) "false generosity" (p. 44). Freire argues that false generosity is charity offered on the part of the oppressors which does not address causes or structures of oppression. Because conditions remain unaffected:

> False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life,' to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands — whether of individuals or entire peoples — need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world (Freire, 1968/1970, p. 45).

Short-term, outsider service-learning in the wake of the Haiti earthquake needs to be read through this critical lens because best practices and actions are determined not by the community but by outsiders. Efforts to respond to the crisis are generous, but the effects amount to violence.

Short term, outsider service-learning relies on best practices as a guide given that true understanding of the community and its needs are distorted by temporal and geographical distance. While outsiders can do good, as Farmer's (2011) practices of expert mercy and accompaniment demonstrate, outsider presence in volunteer efforts, particularly in the wake of a crisis like the Haiti earthquake, risk a loss of community control and reliance on false generosity wherein volunteers offer a superficial or damaging response. This article will demonstrate the way that best practices for short-term, outsider service-learning manifest as the violence of mercy and seek to point to ways in which educators might practice a pedagogy of expert mercy and accompaniment instead.

Literature Review

Robert Bringle and Julie Hatcher (1996) define service-learning as an educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (p. 222). The pedagogy is practiced in both curricular and co-curricular contexts; the duration of service and types of assignments vary—from one-day volunteer projects as part of an introductory course to capstone projects solving a disciplinary problem (Jacoby, 2015). Responding to critiques of the pedagogy as one that reifies whiteness and inculcates a savior complex in students, some educators practice "critical service-learning," which prioritizes "social change," "redistribut[ion of] power," and "development of authentic relationships" (Mitchell, 2013, p. 263; see also, Sheffield, 2015). Mitchell (2007) argues that employing a critical lens

"generates responsible community participants working for a more just and equitable society" (p. 110). Mitchell (2007) recommends a longitudinal commitment that begins with students volunteering and thinking about their service experience and develops over the course of years into an engaged social action effort.

In the context of a crisis such as the Haiti earthquake, practicing service-learning takes on an added layer of complexity. Vernor Munoz (2010) argues that any attempt at aid in the wake of a crisis "should act with the affected rather than for them" (p. 13). This means that service-learning educators have the burden of understanding and responding to community-identified needs alongside community members who may have multiple, competing priorities and obligations in the wake of the crisis. One way service-learning has been utilized successfully is by students responding to disasters in their own educational communities. Stephen Yoder (2013), for example, implemented service-learning after a series of tornados ravaged much of Alabama, including neighborhoods in the vicinity of the university where he teaches. Yoder finds that even a "somewhat impromptu response to a disaster can be an effective service-learning experience" (p. 113) though he admits "inherent inefficiencies" in the response (p. 126). Importantly, though, these inefficiencies are mitigated by rootedness in the community served, given that both the instructor and the students participating in the service-learning experience were ingrained in the community context before the crisis.

Despite the layered difficulties of responses to crises, Yarimar Bonilla (2020) notes that outsider intervention can also be valuable. She describes the absence of outsider intervention after Hurricane Maria destroyed much of Puerto Rico in 2017. She notes that while Puerto Ricans experiencing the immediate aftermath of the hurricane anticipated a rapid response from the United States federal government and the aid industrial complex, this cavalry never appeared, leaving locals to stew in the crisis. Bonilla (2020) quotes a local schoolteacher who mused, "We are the protagonists of our recovery" (p. 8). The haunting absence of outsider response made possible "autogestion," or the self-determination of locals who responded to the crisis themselves, initiating a process of response and slowly moving into recovery in fits and spurts (p. 9). While empowering, Bonilla (2020) does not argue that autogestion ought to be the go-to response for communities experiencing disaster; she is critical of the absence of outsider intervention and notes that outsiders have an important role to play in response and recovery after crises. While Bonilla does not focus explicitly on service-learning, we might think with her in considering the role that student volunteers can play in assisting in effective, community-driven responses to crises and the practices that help build successful partnerships.

To ensure that service-learning efforts meet both community needs and student learning outcomes, many educators identify practices or standards that service-learning curricula ought to follow. These best practices vary but tend to include recommendations to prepare students for success, highlight and respond to community-identified needs, promote students and community members as sources of knowledge and expertise, make longitudinal commitments to partnerships, include reflection to make meaning of the service experience, strive for mutual reciprocity, and assess (e.g., Break Away, 2017; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Jacoby, 2015; Jenkins & Sheehey, 2012; Mitchell, 2007). Yet Dan Butin (2013) argues that research on

the effectiveness of these practices and others is largely absent. He argues that homing in on best practices constrains service-learning education by "privileg[ing] quantification and thus normalization" (p. 1687). Butin suggests that the push toward concretizing best practices for service-learning risks devaluing service-learning pedagogy as an alternative to the banking model of education. If educators prioritize meeting set standards, the focus cannot be on a liberatory, just education that humanizes community members and students alike.

Methodology & Methods

To investigate best practices for short-term, outsider service-learning, this article employs a documentary review of the Haiti Compact's materials. The Haiti Compact was chosen as the case because of its explicit, longitudinal commitment to alternative breaks and service-learning in post-earthquake Haiti. Member institutions, students, and their nonprofit partner, Break Away, produced a wealth of documents, including best practice guidelines, annual reports, community partner interviews, academic publications, student reflections, and YouTube videos, all of which offer insight into the ways that best practices actualize in the context of short-term, outsider service-learning. Because this research involved documentary analysis rather than direct work with human subjects, Institutional Review Board approval was unnecessary. Studying the Haiti Compact was appealing because its work is well-regarded in the field (e.g., Jacoby, 2015) and their use of best practices is based on a commitment to excellence in critical service-learning. Understanding whether best practices can work in such a difficult context and what the limitations of service-learning might be drew me to this case.

While I am not part of the Haiti Compact, I use community-based pedagogies in my classes and teach students to think about the limitations of service and aid by drawing on the example of the international response to Haiti in the wake of the earthquake. I am interested in this case because I participated in a short-term, outsider service-learning trip to Carrefour, Haiti, in August 2010. I spent the months leading up to service in Haiti studying volunteerism and social action and participating in advocacy efforts before travelling to Haiti to help remove rubble from a partially collapsed parsonage and paint a new dormitory to house future aid workers. Our co-curricular service-learning group partnered with United Methodist Volunteers in Mission in Port-au-Prince in this work and spent evenings reflecting on our service and usefulness in the relief effort. We had thoughtful teachers and learned from our community partners. The experience led me to higher education and community-engaged learning as a profession. That said, I left Haiti with a sense that the service I provided did not justify my presence, that my mercy and hopefulness in volunteering did not affect structures or benefit the community. While studying curriculum theory in graduate school, I began to develop the language to explore and interrogate that sense of discomfort. By then a service-learning educator myself, I began to wonder if a curriculum for this type of service-learning experience could be developed in ways that would benefit both students and communities. This inquiry led me to the Haiti Compact, an exemplar in the field for its intentionality in applying best practices to the complicated task of short-term, outsider service-learning in the wake of a crisis.

Because the Haiti Compact had largely completed its work but left a substantial documentary trail by the time I began my research, I decided to employ an hermeneutical analysis.

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1977) defines hermeneutics as "the art of clarifying and mediating by our own effort of interpretation what is said by persons we encounter in the tradition. Hermeneutics operates whenever what is said is not immediately intelligible" (p. 98). As a service-learning educator myself, I have spent years practicing and studying service-learning as pedagogy. Given that the Haiti Compact documents are written for service-learning educators, it would be reasonable to assume that the intentions and effects of the Haiti Compact's efforts might meet Gadamer's clarity standard. Yet I must also think with Melissa Freeman (2014) who reminds us that hermeneutics can aid scholars in recognizing "the hold tradition has on us" (p. 828). I am inclined to see the value in the Haiti Compact's efforts because I engage in similar practices in my own teaching.

Here, then, I think with Jeannie Kerr (2020) who reminds me of my positionality as a settler colonist benefitting from neocolonial structures. I include myself when I admit that service-learning educators can be enmeshed in deficit logics and the structures of neocolonialism that frame and inform our practices. Thus, I make an ethical commitment to honestly interrogate the work of the Haiti Compact—fellow educators in this messy labour of learning in community. We—the Haiti Compact and myself—are tangled in the contradictions of doing this work. Thus, I must look beyond the first narrative apparent in the texts to engage in a critical dialogue with the Haiti Compact given the "[neo]colonial context in which my inquiry is immersed" (Kerr, 2020, p. 545). Only in a close exploration of those contradictions can I demonstrate how powerful and encompassing the structures of neocolonialism guiding service-learning remain.

This hermeneutical analysis of the Haiti Compact, then, seeks to be a process of reading and reflecting with the Haiti Compact rather than a disembodied critique. In doing so, I work to resist the tendencies of researchers (and service-learners) to swoop in and comment without consideration of how research affects communities; instead, an ethical commitment to sitting with, thinking with, and improving with guides my efforts. This is important to me methodologically because the people of the Haiti Compact are my peers. They are fellow service-learning educators who share in a dream of affective service that engages learning in community.

Hermeneutics requires reading and re-reading the texts of the Haiti Compact to understand what and who are centered in their efforts and the ways that such decisions might affect practices. The strength of hermeneutical analysis is that it allows for a reading and thinking with varied source material to grapple with intentions and their effects (Freeman, 2011). One way that I try to think with the Haiti Compact is by reading the works that influence their efforts, including Katz (2013) and Farmer (2011). One theme that emerges from both texts is mercy, which became a code as I explored the Haiti Compact data. While the Haiti Compact does not use the phrase 'mercy' in their official materials, I was struck by the various ways that intent to help and relieve suffering are framed and began thinking of this framing in comparison to the ways that help manifests in Katz (2013) and Farmer (2011). I started

reading and thinking about the Haiti Compact through Paperson's (2010) violence of mercy. This phrase offers a powerful way to explore the phenomenon of assistance and service that produces unintended harm, and ultimately became the lens through which I read short-term, outsider service-learning.

Because I began researching the Haiti Compact after their work concluded, triangulation based on ethnographic fieldwork or longitudinal studies of participants' development and community partner attitudes was not possible. This research also depends on the work of Haiti Compact participants, including reports meant for external audiences. Some internal documents pertaining to their efforts were not available to me as an outsider researching their work after its completion. These are significant limitations of this study which would benefit from further inquiry.

Findings

The Haiti Compact (2011) notes that its purpose is "to collect, research, and recommend methods for colleges and universities to most effectively respond to the rebuilding process in post-earthquake Haiti" (p. 11) as part of a "process of creating new models and paradigms about service" (p. 41). From its initial trip to Haiti in June 2010, the Haiti Compact (2011) developed Principles and Practices for Alternative Breaks (pp. 12-16). Founded upon Break Away's (2017) "Eight Components of a Quality Alternative Break," the Haiti Compact tailors these best practices to post-disaster relief via short-term, outsider service-learning efforts in Haiti. The best practice guidelines comprise an effort to evaluate those issues and organizations "that are really making [service-learning educators] furrow our brows;" the intended outcome is "a tool to actually help us to be held back and a little more objective" (Piacitelli, as cited in Murphy, 2015, p. 133).

The Haiti Compact splits its eight best practices into three overarching categories, which might be referred to as commitments (strong direct service, full engagement, and diversity and social justice), practices (orientation, education, and training), and follow through (reflection and reorientation). These best practices were selected in response to problems with previous short-term, outsider service-learning projects in crises, but the Haiti Compact (2011) recognizes that many valuable actions on the part of service-learning educators, including horizontal decision-making and mutual reciprocity, do not make the list. Instead, they suggest that service-learning educators and programs tailor best practices to their students and partnerships. Ultimately, its goal is that use of these best practices during short-term, outsider service-learning projects will develop students as active citizens and allow for meaningful partnerships with Haitian organizations.

The Haiti Compact operationalizes these best practices by requiring students participate in service in Haiti as part of the recovery effort. This is critical to the success of their model wherein individual students participate in a service-learning project for one to two weeks because immersive service-learning is thought to mimic the learning outcomes in two to seven days that a semester-based service-learning course achieves over the course of eight to ten weeks (Bowman, Brandenberger, Mick, & Toms Smelley, 2010). Yet the Haiti Compact's model of routine service trips by new student groups demands that the Haitian communities perform the role of teacher

and cultural competency guide for each team of students desiring the experience of providing strong, direct service, leading to inefficiencies and risks. One volunteer coordinator expressed frustration that college student volunteers regularly ignore his efforts at risk management while another community partner noted that volunteer safety comprises the bulk of her duties whenever a Haiti Compact team is serving (Murphy, 2015). Another way in which the commitment to direct service might be a detriment to Haitians served is that the ongoing presence of short-term outsiders represents a constant reminder of the trauma of the earthquake and the loss of friends and family members (The Haiti Compact, 2011). For these reasons, the United States (United States) State Department warns outsiders against participating in direct service in Haiti and instead recommends "cash donations" as the most "culturally and environmentally appropriate response to the crisis" (U.S. State Department, 2011, as cited in Piacitelli et al., 2013, pp. 93-94), guidance that the Haiti Compact noted but did not heed.

The Haiti Compact also recommends the practice of full engagement as a guide for how students operate while volunteering. Full engagement indicates that the students adopt the norms and values of their host community. Break Away (2017) stipulates that on a practical level, a stance of full engagement in community means that students commit to institution-mandated safety standards while still getting a sense of Haitian culture. In practicing full engagement, Haiti Compact (2011) leaders emphasize that their students serve alongside Haitians:

> We strongly recommend that alternative breakers support local labor while in country, through program fees that pay salaries for cooks, drivers, guides, and translators. We also recommend partnering with organizations that help students develop relationships with Haitian mentors by paying a salary to a local worker who can help students learn how to complete their projects (p. 12).

By compensating supplemental staff and team leaders, the Haiti Compact hopes its efforts will not cause Haitians to lose jobs. The Haiti Compact also pledges that each volunteer will pay for a local labourer to work with them (Murphy, 2015). The intention is that short-term, outsider service-learning augments income in the community served. However, their projects often do not require expertise. One Haiti Compact service-learning project, for example, engaged students in packing bags of compost, meant to reforest Haiti, with the goal of stabilizing future flooding and erosion. In a single day, the students packaged 2,091 bags of compost, learning about deforestation and environmentalism in the process (William & Mary Haiti Compact, 2013). However, Porter (2013) reports that the Haiti Compact's community partner, Sonje Ayiti, received a grant from Haiti's Ministry of the Environment allowing the organization to pay Haitians to pack the compost bags in hope that the compost would nourish 200,000 new trees. This means that the 2,091 bags of compost packed by Haiti Compact represent 2,091 opportunities where a volunteer paid to serve, taking away opportunity for Haitians to earn payment for the same labour.

The third best practice that the Haiti Compact adopts to ground its efforts is a commitment to social justice education. They ask campuses to recruit and send "participants representing the

range of students present in the campus community" (Break Away, 2017, para. 3). They also stipulate that short-term, international service-learning trips should "engage participants in dialogue that furthers understanding of how systems of power, privilege, and oppression relate to social issues and service work in communities" (Break Away, 2017, para. 3). It is unclear based on documents available whether and how this commitment was actualized or assessed.

Next, the Haiti Compact (2011) recommends that participating students take part in a six-to-eight-week pre-trip experience wherein they learn the skills, competencies, and attitudes necessary for service in Haiti. The Haiti Compact (2011) believes students should learn about Haiti's social and cultural context and relationship with the U.S. and survey the issue they will address. One service-learning educator partnering with the Haiti Compact suggests that the efforts result in success:

> By the time we get to Haiti, [the students] are curious; [that] is a very good way to describe it.... In pre-trip meetings and education we try to expose them to as much as possible... to get that curiosity to come out.... We talk about myths, stigmas, stereotypes, you know, initial...surface level judgments or perceptions that people in our society or other societies may have of Haiti...and then talk about where...we think [they] come from. What do we think may not be true about those assumptions?... How can we... help to not perpetuate those assumptions during our trip?... I would say they are definitely very curious and ask just incredible questions. I think... that helps them engage in a [deeper] level of conversation and dialogue whereas if they were... just arriving... [and] just... hearing about some of these things, they may not... be open to (as cited in Murphy, 2015, p. 140).

In focusing on pre-trip teaching, the Haiti Compact hopes that students will be able to build capacity while in Haiti.

Continuous learning while in Haiti is encouraged as another best practice. Break Away (2017) argues, "powerful education should… include information to connect participants' personal life choices and experiences" (para. 5). A Haiti Compact student's reflection confirms this goal. The student wrote, "The time we spent in Haiti was thought-provoking, enlightening, rejuvenating, and I know it forever changed the way I think about international aid and development" (as cited in The Haiti Compact, 2012, para. 31). The focus here is on making the experience of service meaningful to students so they might become active citizens.

To prepare students for effective service despite differences in experience, the Haiti Compact (2011) insists that students should be equipped with knowledge of "survival Haitian Creole," "disaster relief and preparedness," and "culture shock and cross-cultural communication skills" (p. 26), as well as the service tasks the communities require. Unfortunately, a focus on training does not mean that students arrive equipped to employ their expertise successfully. Even when students possess unique skills related to their subject matter, these skills might not translate with an external audience. For example, one Haiti Compact team focused on maternal health

and nutrition. In advance of their time in Haiti, the students researched and prepared curricula concerning maternal health for rural Haitian women, including "nutrition during pregnancy, birth, birthing pains, [and] the moringa tree" (Johnson, 2014, para. 4). Moringa trees provide critical nutrients to pregnant and nursing mothers and have been called "the mother's best friend" (Chukwuebuka, 2015, p. 624). The students' task was to move to different Haitian communities to teach pregnant and nursing mothers how to best care for their health and the health of their babies while making use of newly planted moringa trees. However, the students soon learned that their research had been for naught. One student participant reflects:

> Gabie [the community partner] explained that the mothers hadn't taken good enough care to protect the moringa trees given to them, which was why goats could easily destroy them. We realized we should've reiterated that information even more so that they could be convinced to take better care of the trees. Gabie went on to explain that a lot of the information we had prepared was already well known and had been conveyed to locals by Haitian health workers (Johnson, 2014, para. 6).

The service-learning team concluded, "We could help by reiterating that information in order to build up the locals' confidence in their health workers' knowledge, thus building a better relationship of trust" (Johnson, 2014, para. 6). However, this experience undermines the argument that students can be trained in skills and knowledge that translate across contexts and community partnerships. While the students likely learned from the experience of realizing that the community held more knowledge via lived experience about a matter they had trained for, the same service provided by a local community partner rather than a group of short-term, outsider service-learning students would have a stronger impact on the community served.

Another best practice that the Haiti Compact endorses is reflection. The Haiti Compact (2011) recommends covering topics including, "root causes of poverty, power and privilege, activism and advocacy, U.S. involvement in Haiti" and "post-service activism" (p. 26). The Haiti Compact encourages the use of "What? So what? Now what?" reflection questions. However, prompts and rubrics for students to engage in reflection are not standardized beyond suggested topics, leaving faculty to develop individualized assessments. The danger of this is that students' interpretations and assumptions may not be critically engaged. Take for example, the reflection penned by one Haiti Compact short-term, international service-learning student about his travels:

> There I was, traveling through the busy marketplace in the passenger seat of a bleach white, fully packed, Adventure SUV. You know, the kind you'd imagine safariing [*sic*] through the Serengeti. My eyes glued to the window like a dog on its first car ride, the streets tossed us around from end to end while our diesel monster roared on, but nothing could have taken my eyes off of what lye [*sic*] outside. The country is hot and dilapidated, but that only serves to

> feed its people's charismatic rhythm. Street vendors, selling everything from fresh fruit to that missing lugnut [*sic*] on your motorbike waved on and yelled, while swarms of laughing children run along side [*sic*] the cars. While I looked on in awe, they too saw something inside of our jampacked [*sic*] tincan [*sic*], something their warm smiles seemed to enjoy. An alien in a foreign land, I was welcomed, unconditionally and with open arms. These are a happy people, and contrary to our horror novels, this land is rich in culture and in spirit. The circus rolled on, tossing smiles back and forth until we disembarked here, a pleasant home in the heart of Haiti's nutrient countryside. Currently, sitting, the sun well past his shift, with howling hounds and insomniac roosters crying into the night. I am humbled (Mondesir, 2015, para. 2).

This student reflection offers a descriptive account of the day without connecting experience to theory, course readings, or discussions. The student uses language that evokes the exotic and an Othering gaze without critically questioning his role or perception. This is a superficial reflection that does not meet Mitchell's (2007) standard of critical reflection that "encourages students to examine their own identities in relation to the larger social context of their service and the issues uncovered through the readings" (p. 109). While this is one example, it is typical of other student reflections in the document review, which tend to be student observations without a back-and-forth theoretical dialogue about the experience.

As the final best practice recommendation of the Haiti Compact, reorientation recognizes the critical learning that takes place when students return from short-term, international service-learning trips. The Haiti Compact (2011) prioritizes a stance of "advocacy and action as students return to their home communities" (p. 12). While short-term, outsider service-learning may serve as a "catalyst," the Haiti Compact (2011) argues that it cannot be the sole element of active citizenship (p. 12). Instead they argue that a best practice element of the Haiti Compact must be the translation of social concern to home communities and local issues students observe after the service-learning experience concludes. The Haiti Compact (2011) intends reorientation as a process of post-trip advocacy "engaging the campus community in education about Haiti" via the "production of educational and awareness materials and sessions" (p. 26). This might involve a "teach-in" or collaborative work done in conjunction with Haitian students (The Haiti Compact, 2011, p. 38). All these continued advocacy efforts post-service-learning are meant to be student-driven based on their impressions of Haitian needs during their time in country.

These best practices are meant to "provid[e] a practical way to subvert those one-sided practices and work toward truly reciprocal relationships where the community's voice is not only listened to, but it is the dominant voice in the discussion of how change can happen" (The Haiti Compact, 2011, p. 41). The communities served by Haiti Compact's short-term, international service-learning classes report mixed results despite the merciful intentions established in the Haiti Compact's best practice guidelines.

For some Haiti Compact community partners, the presence of short-term, international service-learning teams offers value. For instance, Gabriel Vincent, who represents Haiti Compact community partner Sonje Ayiti, said of the American students travelling to serve in Haiti:

> We want them. I mean, it's like a win-win situation. I'm learning from you. You're learning from them, and also give them the chance to appreciate who they are as human[s. And to learn that] life is not what they see right here in the US. As you see here, the world is more global than the local community. And also, what they take, what they learn from us in Haiti, they can take back with them in the U.S. and continue that fight in their backyard because they have also people struggling in the U.S. (Murphy, 2015, p. 137).

At other times, community partners communicate a dissatisfaction with the usefulness of short-term, outsider service-learning. A representative of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Haiti questions the work of short-term, international service-learning teams participating in Haiti Compact efforts: "Who is it for? I think a lot of Haitians would say, maybe there are some benefits but it feels like we are giving and providing and helping these people expand their universes, and expand their minds, and have these global experiences and we are left here...and we have to carry on" (Murphy, 2015, p. 128) . Another Haiti Compact community partner, Father Joseph Philippe of the Asosyasyon Peyizan Fondwa argues:

> We help American University to fulfill its objectives but not to fulfill our own objectives. Because, you know, for us, we want to enter into a partnership. It's a give and take. Now we are just a channel to help them fulfill their spring break program. That's the main thing, you know, to help them facilitate their spring break program. You know? But at the other hand, it is helpful in a certain sense because they pay for their fees and also they can take a small project, you know, like planting trees...but that's all. That's all. But we really want to enter into a real partnership, you know, where actually, you know, we need curriculum development...we need human capacity and we know that there are groups, even USAID in the U.S. where they can fund, finance...the collaboration between a U.S. university and a local university.... I have talked to Shoshanna [Sumka] a few times about that. I think that she is aware of that for two years. I want to do that but for two years nothing concrete has happened in terms of developing a real strong relationship (Murphy, 2015, pp. 171-172).

Despite a commitment to best practices meant to promote active citizenship via routinized short-term, outsider service-learning, two years into the partnership, a Haiti Compact community partner complained that the partnership remained superficial even as Haiti Compact administrators prided themselves on developing an equitable and long-lasting partnership rooted in best practices.

Discussion

The Haiti Compact's emphasis on best practice guidelines required of all participating schools and service-learning courses is in keeping with the assumption that service-learning needs scientific rigor to thrive in the academy (e.g., Steinke & Fitch, 2007). The goal of best practices in service-learning is standardization and replication, so that community partners and students can be assured of set and tested benefits associated with service-learning (e.g., Miller, et al., 2012). While the desire to ascertain reciprocity is notable, there is little that is predictable about learning in community — particularly when students are outsiders in a community responding to disaster. Yet in identifying certain practices as valuable, the Haiti Compact falls into a hierarchical trap of setting certain practices as gold standards, which belong in every service-learning practice, while allowing others — like mutuality of learning, "felt problems" (Sheffield, 2015, p. 113), asset-based community development, and placed learning — to fall by the wayside. In packaging best practices for the complicated work of learning in community, the Haiti Compact abandons the full potential of service-learning to that which can be standardized.

Furthermore the gap between stated best practice and its application in the field is vast, particularly in a community context as sensitive and dynamic as post-earthquake Haiti. Sara Grusky (2000) observes that short-term, outsider service-learning "can easily become small theaters that recreate historical cultural misunderstandings and simplistic stereotypes and replay, on a more intimate scale, the huge disparities in income and opportunity that characterize North-South relations today" (p. 858). Service-learning that is both short-term and done outside a community that students and educators are familiar with must rely too heavily on best practices because the context and relationships are not nested.

The problem with reliance on best practices to justify short-term, outsider service-learning in the wake of a crisis is two-fold. First, the students serving perpetuate the violence of mercy because their engagement is not accompaniment. The goal of short-term service-learning is for students' service to be a catalyst for them as individuals. The best practices are meant to shape individuals as active citizens in their own communities; Haiti and the post-disaster recovery and relief context are merely the setting for this individual change to take place. While the Haiti Compact's longitudinal commitment to Haiti attempts to mitigate the harm of short-term volunteerism, the students participating in the program rotate with each trip. Functionally this means that relationships must continuously be negotiated and restarted. We see this in the way that best practices of full engagement, diversity and social justice, training, and reflection manifest in less than idealized ways when implemented. The Haiti Compact utilizes the model of relationship between institutions, but institutions are not people and the true, authentic relationships of accompaniment cannot happen at an organizational level.

The second way that the Haiti Compact's efforts amount to the violence of mercy lies in the absent promise of expert mercy. Despite best practice guidelines that ensure student training in faculties needed for recovery and rebuilding, Haiti Compact students do not necessarily bring with them a unique skillset, nor does their service-learning routinely engage skills that are explicitly connected to student learning goals. As the output of the Haiti Compact shows,

short-term, outsider service-learning teams offer superficial responses to the crisis. These perfunctory services are often masked as meaningful efforts to engage, yet they perpetuate merciful violence because no meaningful change occurs and community-identified needs are not met in the best possible way.

Conclusion

Despite a thoughtful commitment to best practices meant to circumvent pitfalls in short-term, outsider service-learning, the Haiti Compact's efforts are not able to connect stated best practices with results. If a program as successful and well regarded as the Haiti Compact struggles with this work, is it possible to develop short-term, outsider service-learning programs that meet the standards of expert mercy and accompaniment? Can outsiders engaging in service-learning in the wake of a crisis avoid perpetuating the violence of mercy?

While Bonilla (2020) and Yoder (2013) remind us that there is a space for volunteers in the wake of a crisis, extensive preparation and education are necessary to ensure that students are effective and merciful volunteers. One way that this might be done is by utilizing a pre-service education model wherein students read and learn about citizenship, cosmopolitanism, obligation, and aid while practicing service in their local community. Helping students think through structures and ideologies which affect and exacerbate crises like the Haiti earthquake while also asking them to practice citizenship in their communities would prime students to critically question and reflect upon their role as outsiders in future service-learning experiences.

Yoder's (2013) model of engaging local students in crisis response might also be a merciful approach. Local students have a vested interest in their community, understand community-identified needs better than outsiders, and are able to practice accompaniment more so than external volunteers. Schools, colleges, and universities in local communities should lead service-learning efforts responding to needs in their communities, rather than external groups. Students interested in investing in problems and community needs external to their local community might consider semester or yearlong study abroad or exchange programs with service and community-engaged components as a means of accompaniment in community.

Finally, service-learning educators ought to pay careful attention to the 'expert' requirement of expert mercy. Service-learning should be assigned whenever it is the best way of both meeting community-identified needs and student learning outcomes. In a context as volatile as a post-disaster situation, students should have robust knowledge that directly benefits a community-identified need and critical awareness of how to best utilize that knowledge. This might involve foreign language students translating materials for other first responders, engineering students helping develop building plans which are disaster resistant, or biology students testing water samples for quality assurance. Students apply their disciplinary and subject matter knowledge in a way that benefits the community served while making meaning of skills and theories learned in the classroom. In this way, students contribute their unique, burgeoning expertise and engage mercifully in community.

While the Haiti Compact names best practices meant to ensure the success of short-term, outsider service-learning in a post-disaster context, their efforts do not translate into consistently

valuable practices. The result is too often a violence of mercy wherein good intentions negatively affect or do not benefit community-identified needs. Aligning practices with the intent of critical service-learning means that students practice accompaniment and engage in expert mercy. Thus, service-learning educators ought to rethink plans for short-term, outsider service-learning trips, particularly those responding to crisis situations like the Haiti earthquake.

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Report from the Field

Leading in Extraordinary Times: Documenting Pandemic Stories Through Graphic Recording

Catherine Etmanski

Abstract This field report documents—through the use of graphic recordings—the "Leading in Extraordinary Times" webinar series that ran throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Hosted by a team in the School of Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University in British Columbia, Canada, this series was notable for its use of a graphic recorder who joined each webinar and produced an image drawn in real time. We felt it was essential to document stories from this historical moment, not only through words and audio-visual recordings, but also through images. Following the webinar, each image was shared with participants, along with the video recording. At that time, free special topic webinars open to the public were still relatively novel. The success of this webinar series demonstrated that people were yearning for meaningful ways to connect online to reduce isolation and continue learning as wave after wave of the pandemic hit. We, therefore, saw a role we could play in both engaging and building community while hosting relevant, helpful, and timely dialogues throughout the pandemic. A summary of each webinar topic, together with the graphics and links to webinar recordings, are included in the report.

KeyWords Graphic facilitation; online engagement; COVID-19 pandemic; webinar; leadership

In March 2020, three colleagues (Sherry Richards, Emara Angus, and Selena Kunar) and I were faced with a tough decision. For over two years, we—together with colleagues from Royal Roads University (RRU), including Cheryl Heykoop and Kathy Bishop—had been planning to launch a "Leading in Extraordinary Times" conference in April 2020 as part of the School of Leadership Studies' (the School) biennial conference schedule. The theme derived from the School's newly articulated mission of "[f]ostering the imagination, capacity, and courage to lead in extraordinary times." The conference aimed to bring together alumni, leadership scholars, and practitioners to discuss this topic. However, the pandemic disrupted our plans. Like many others who were hosting events at that time, we chose to salvage what we could of our conference and move some of it—the keynote speakers at least—online. We now know we were not alone in this decision as people around the globe were facing the same dilemma in millions of small and monumental ways.

On April 24, 2020, we hosted a virtual keynote address on the conference theme of "Leading in Extraordinary Times." We invited all registered conference participants and also opened the virtual keynote address to the wider community. Not only did it attract approximately 700 participants, but it also demonstrated that people were yearning for meaningful ways to connect online to reduce isolation and continue learning as wave after wave of the pandemic hit. This realization about the role we could play in building community and hosting relevant, helpful, and timely dialogue launched the subsequent webinar series documented here.

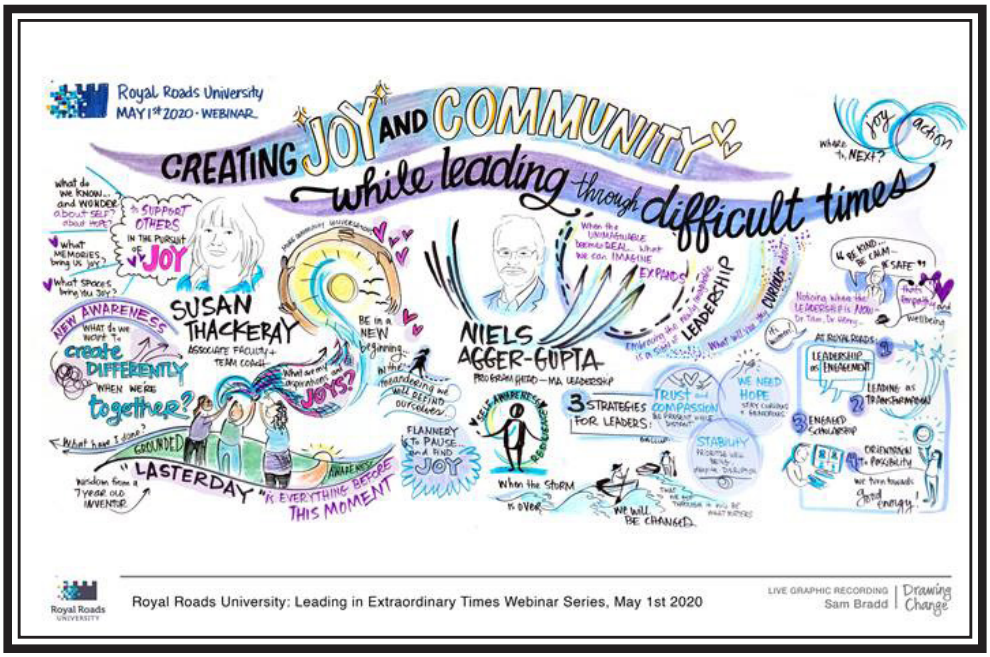
It may be difficult to imagine now, but at that time, special topic webinars that were free and open to the public were still relatively novel—at least for our team RRU. As a result, we (like many others) upgraded our Zoom capacity and brainstormed ideas for a more engaging and interactive event with the keynote speakers, Julian Norris and Gloria Burgess. Julian and Gloria are both leadership scholars who draw upon arts- and nature-based experiential learning, teaching, and research practices, and I recall it was Julian who offered the idea to include a graphic recorder. With that suggestion, I reached out to Sam Bradd of Drawing Change.

As a gifted graphic recorder, facilitator, and illustrator, Sam sees his role as listening deeply so he can translate speakers' ideas into visuals and help people create connection and belonging through better meetings. Drawing Change works with clients across sectors to solve complex problems and distill big ideas—and they prioritize social impact work. Sam believes that his clients make the world a better place and his job is to amplify their work by transforming complex information and meetings into something joyful. His tag line is, "Together, we're Drawing Change." We were honoured that Sam agreed to serve as a graphic recorder for the "Leading in Extraordinary Times" webinar series. Sam specifically identified the importance of documenting stories from the pandemic through images as well as words. A graphic recorder joined each webinar and produced an image drawn in real time that, along with the video recording, was shared with participants after the webinar.

As Sherry Richards observed, "from the comments participants shared, especially early on in the series, it was evident how unique, special, and impactful it was to have a graphic recorder present and capturing key ideas in the moment." Now, to share these graphically captured pandemic stories more widely, we are documenting them in this report from the field. Each graphic is accompanied with a title, date, overview, and link to the webinar recording. Although we include a brief description of each webinar, we invite readers to focus on—indeed to *read*—the graphics. As such, this is an arts-based graphic report, where images provide the main content and text serves to support the images. We invite readers to consider what messages, emotions, or lessons are evoked through the images and whether they have any new or different insights from this approach to documenting ideas. Links to each webinar are included as follow-up resources for readers interested in learning more.

Creating Joy and Community While Leading Through Difficult Times (May 1, 2020)
Webinar overview: On a daily basis, we can see how leaders in Canada and elsewhere are addressing the unique challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Some leaders are thriving and succeeding in bringing their communities together as they lead through these difficult times. In this webinar, leadership educators Susan Thackeray and Niels Agger-Gupta share insights on how leaders can cultivate joy, community, and hope, and maintain an orientation to possibility through appreciative practices. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

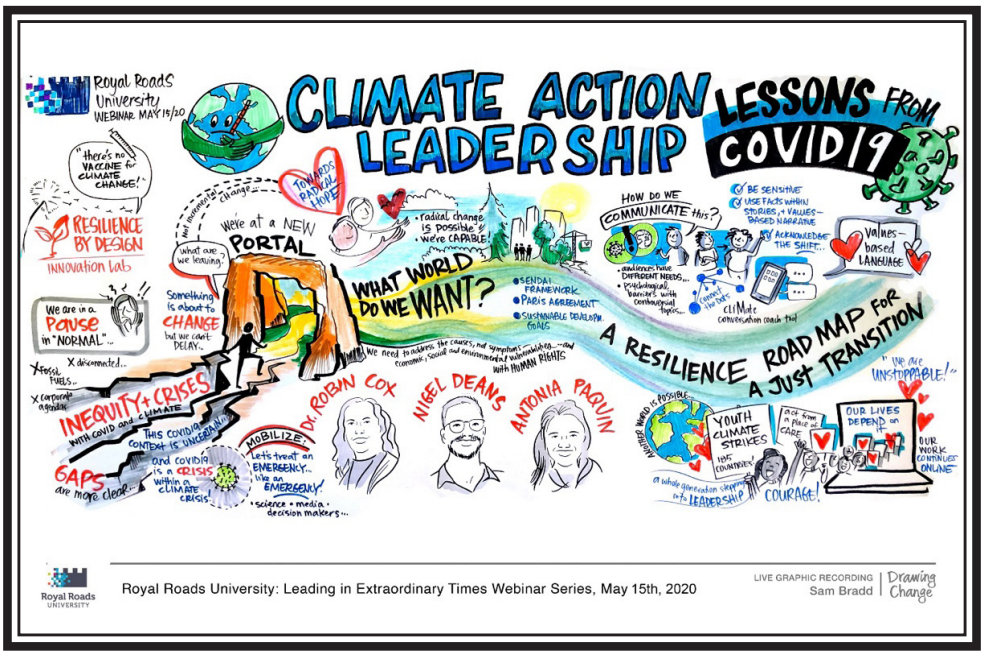
Figure 1. *Creating Joy and Community While Leading Through Difficult Times*



Note. Speakers: Susan Thackeray and Niels Agger-Gupta. Graphic recorder: Sam Bradd.

Climate Action Leadership: Lessons From COVID-19 (May 15, 2020)
Webinar overview: Reduced CO_2 emissions, leatherback sea turtles nesting in Thailand, and conversations about renewable energy: these are among the many silver linings from COVID-19 quarantine measures. In this webinar, you can join the Resilience by Design (RbD) Lab Team—a group of researchers who inspire climate action through research, innovation, and connections—as they explore what it could mean if we took the climate crisis as seriously as this global pandemic. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

Figure 2. *Climate Action Leadership: Lessons From COVID-19*



Note. Speakers: Robin Cox, Antonia Pacquin, and Nigel Deans. Graphic recorder: Sam Bradd.

Essential Mindfulness Practices for Leaders (May 29, 2020)

Webinar overview: In stressful times when the ground beneath us is shifting, one of the most important competencies a leader can have is self-awareness. And what brings forth that awareness better than anything else? Mindfulness. Everything we do, or fail to do, begins in the mind. Training the mind to pay attention and be in the present moment allows us to build our inner resources. Healthy minds create healthy organizations. With nearly two decades of mindfulness meditation experience and a certified MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) instructor, Patricia Galaczy shares her vast experience in this webinar. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

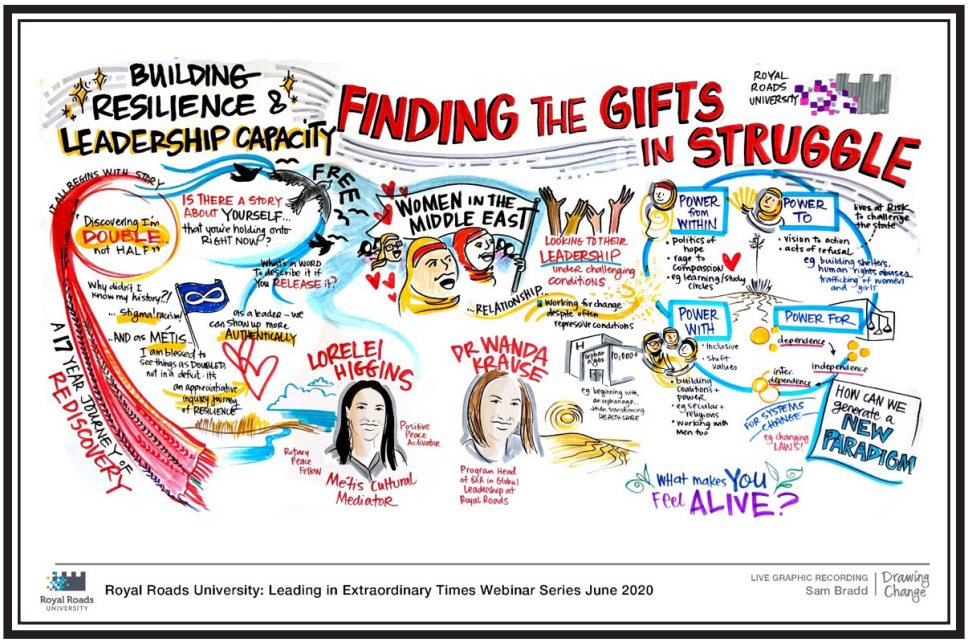
Figure 3. *Essential Mindfulness Practices for Leaders*

Note. Speaker: Patricia Galaczy. Graphic recorder: Adriana Contreras.

Building Resilience and Leadership Capacity: Finding the Gifts in Struggle (June 12, 2020)

Webinar overview: People at the epicentre of socio-political turmoil have a great deal of practice in navigating and overcoming extraordinary challenges. Without romanticizing the experience of struggle, our two featured speakers seek to expand consciousness for leadership. Métis speaker Lorelei Higgins shares her personal leadership story of learning from two worlds. In so doing, she invites us to shift our lens and look at the world as "double" versus "half." Political scientist Wanda Krause offers a case study on women in the Middle East, whom she has worked with over several decades. With resiliency and adaptability at the core of their being and seeing, these women demonstrate the leadership capacities developed through collective struggle. Both speakers share strategies for addressing the complexities of our current collective challenge(s) and for the turbulent times ahead. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click the image below.

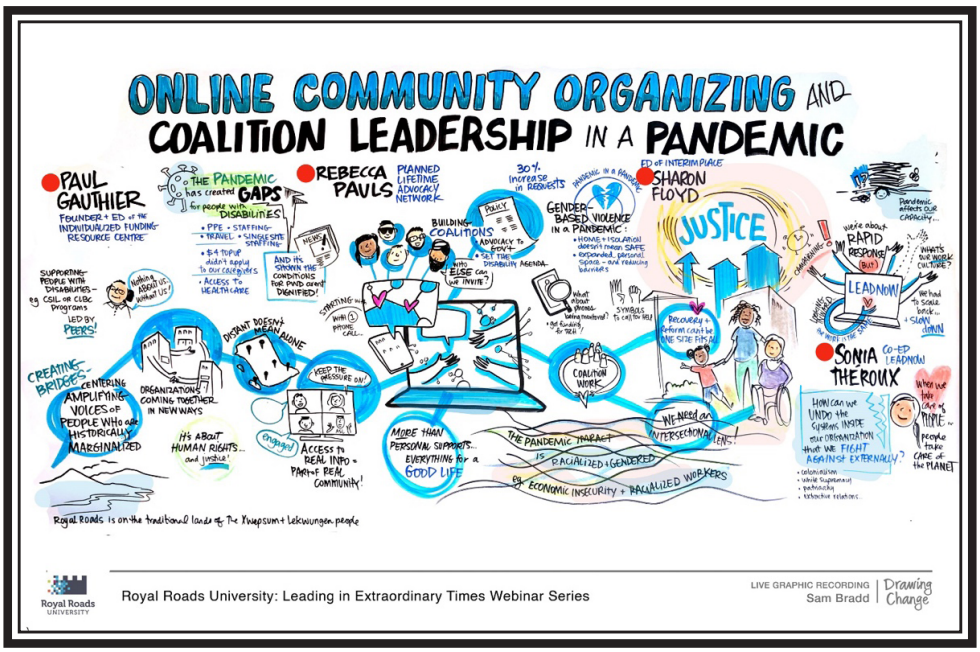
Figure 4.*Building Resilience and Leadership Capacity: Finding the Gifts in Struggle*



Note. Speakers: Wanda Krause and Lorelei Higgins. Graphic Recorder: Sam Bradd.

Online Community Organizing and Coalition Leadership in a Pandemic (June 26, 2020) Webinar overview: The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on multiple local and global injustices based on racism, ableism, sexism, classism, and more. Even in a rich country such as Canada, we see significant inequities in support and access to basic necessities such as food, personal safety, education, safe housing, and health care. The common phrase "we're all in this together" means that we may all be experiencing a pandemic, yet our experiences of this pandemic are vastly different and depend on our level of privilege. For the past few months, community organizers and self-advocates have been building coalitions and promoting progressive policy change on the issues of equality and housing, as well as guaranteeing access to treatment for people with disabilities and ending gender-based violence. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. *Online Community Organizing and Coalition Leadership in a Pandemic*



Note. Speakers: Rebecca Pauls, Paul Gauthier, Sharon Floyd, and Sonia Théroux. Graphic Recorder: Sam Bradd. ASL interpreters: Jessica Siegers and Jen Jahnke.

Bold Organizations Mobilizing for the Climate Emergency (January 22, 2021)
Webinar overview: The year 2020 has become defined by the COVID-19 global pandemic. Yet the climate crisis poses an ongoing existential threat of similar if not greater magnitude. Just as the pandemic exacerbates the fractures inherent in our socio-economic systems, so too does the impact of climate change. What will it take for us to collectively recognize and address the climate emergency? How can we advance existing social and economic innovations that account for finite resources and a changing climate? Courageous leaders are needed to reimagine the culture of our organizations, the norms we live by, and our understanding of what constitutes a good life.

This webinar examines how we can learn from the past to take action in the present and plan for the future: it showcases how and why leadership matters when bold organizations are taking action for the climate emergency. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

Figure 6. *Bold Organizations Mobilizing for the Climate Emergency*

Note. Speakers: Seth Klein, Jess Housty, Joanna Kerr, and Philip Steenkamp with Program Head Kathy Bishop. Graphic recorder: Carina Nilsson.

Building Global Resilience: The Role of Social Purpose Organizations (February 5, 2021) Webinar overview: COVID-19 offered organizations the opportunity to pivot quickly to support their employees and volunteers and to serve their clients and communities with greater purpose and relevancy. Yet while the words "purpose" and "resilience" are widely used, they are poorly understood. In reality, organizations have struggled with how to build that resilience and support while simultaneously learning to be resilient, adaptable, and strong themselves. A year and a half after the start of the pandemic, they continue to grapple with how to have impact in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) world, while questioning their own relevancy and sustainability. Building resiliency is not enough for surviving the new era: a global imperative for supporting health and wellbeing is also needed. COVID-19 has shed light on the urgent and pivotal role non-profit organizations, registered charities, co-ops, social enterprises, and other organizations designed to fulfill a social purpose (for which we are using the umbrella term social purpose organizations) playplay in the immediate issues the crisis has brought, as well as in our ability to survive and thrive into the future. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click the image below.

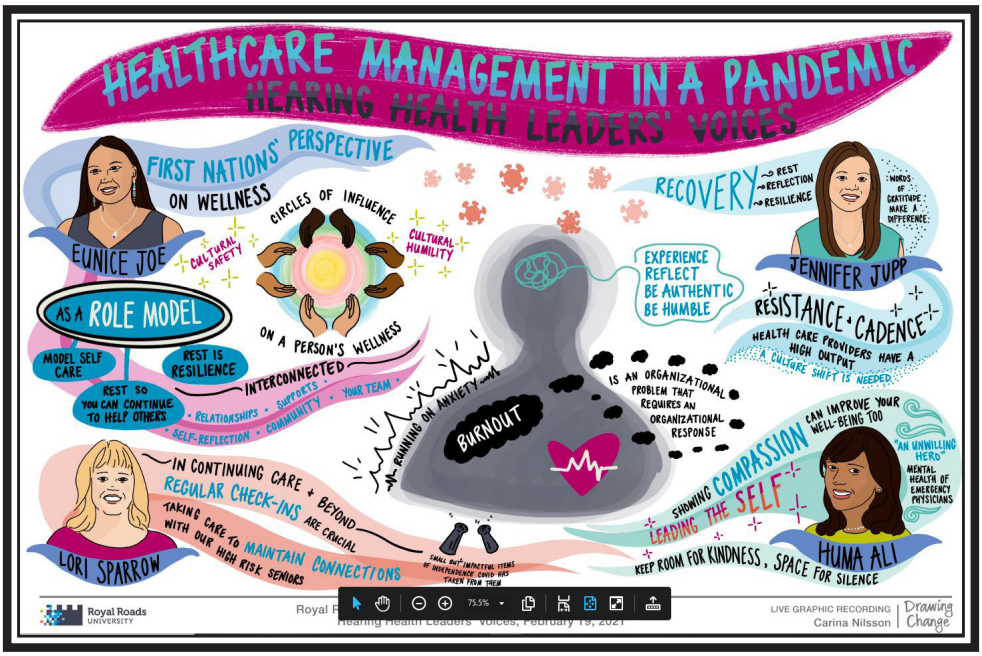
Figure 7. *Building Global Resilience: The Role of Social Purpose Organizations*

Note. Speakers: Eliane Ubalijoro, Nitya Sriram, and Pablo Chamorro with Program Head Wanda Krause and Program Coordinator Lisa Corak. Graphic recorder: Carina Nilsson.

Healthcare Management in a Pandemic: Hearing Health Leaders' Voices (February 19, 2021)

Webinar overview: The panel features four female healthcare leaders who are graduates of the MA Leadership program at Royal Roads University. Their are bound to inspire and educate on being a leader during this global health crisis. Use the words and images in the graphic below to reflect on your own experience with health care or the media stories and images you received throughout the pandemic. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

Figure 8. *Healthcare Management in a Pandemic: Hearing Health Leaders' Voices*



Note. Speakers: Eunice Joe, Jennifer Jupp, Lori Sparrow, and Huma Ali with Program Head Cheryl Heykoop. Graphic recorder: Carina Nilsson.

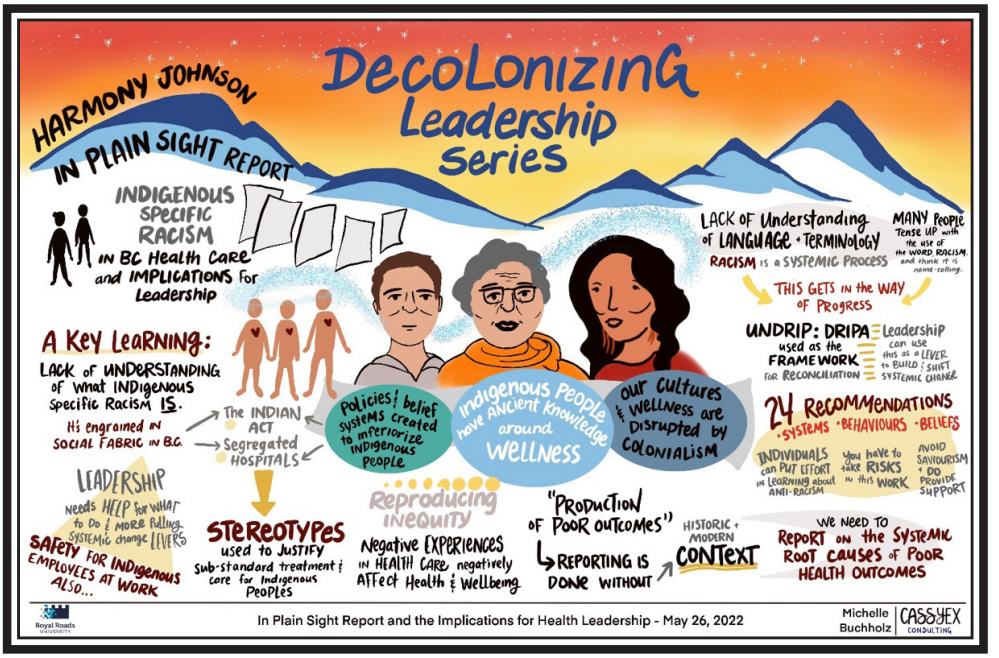
Decolonizing Leadership Series

In 2022, our team, together with Cheryl Heykoop, offered a follow-up series entitled "Decolonizing Leadership," which included three webinars (the graphic recorders for this series were not affiliated with Drawing Change). All webinar recordings from this series are available **here**.

Episode 1 - Exploring the *In Plain Sight Report* and the Implications for Health Leadership with Harmony Johnson (May 26, 2022)

In this webinar, Tla'amin (Coast Salish) health and wellness researcher and author Harmony Johnson reflects on the *In Plain Sight Report: Addressing Indigenous-Specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care* nearly two years after its release. She explores key meta-findings from the report and considers their implications for the human beings and leaders working in the health sector. Although the *In Plain Sight Report* focuses on the B.C. health care system, its lessons about the ongoing impact of colonization and institutional racism, as well as the necessity for trauma-informed approaches, are relevant and applicable for all leaders working in Canada. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

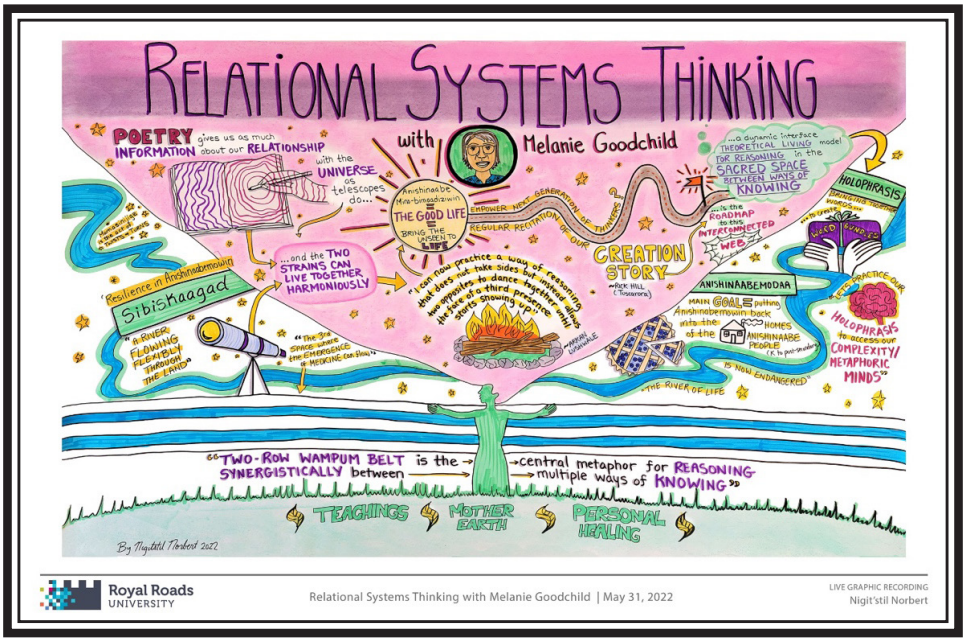
Figure 9. *Exploring the* In Plain Sight Report *and the Implications for Health Leadership*



Note. Speaker: Harmony Johnson. Graphic recorder: Michelle Buchholz.

Episode 2 - Relational Systems Thinking with Melanie Goodchild (May 31, 2022)
Over the past few decades, systems theory, systems thinking, and systems change have become popular topics in the field of Leadership Studies. However, many of these approaches rely on principles derived from ancient wisdom and from Indigenous cultures worldwide. Drawing upon her 2021 and 2022 articles on relational systems thinking, as well as her doctoral work with Haudenosaunee Elders and Western systems thinkers, Anishinaabe (Ojibway) systems thinking and complexity scholar Melanie Goodchild identifies doorways to healing, transformation, and spiritual understanding through considering meanings embedded in the syntax of language and finding a middle ground between cultures. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

Figure 10. *Relational Systems Thinking*



Note. Speaker: Melanie Goodchild. Graphic recorder: Nigit'stil Norbert.

Episode 3 - A Trauma-Informed Approach to Cultural Safety With Harley Eagle (June 20, 2022)

This webinar explores Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) through a trauma-informed lens, including how to create respectful environments that acknowledge systemic injustices due to racism and colonization and encouraging self-reflection and cultural humility by those in positions of power. ICS and anti-racism educator Harley Eagle offers foundational understandings and insights into:

- Indigenous Cultural Safety, including a description of trauma and a cultural safety learning journey
- Indigenous perspectives on the colonial history of Canada
- Systemic racism and its connection to colonization
- Actions to address systemic racism at the personal, intra-personal, classroom, and institutional levels

This webinar was influenced by several discussions between Harley and the School of Leadership Studies, as well as a training he conducted in the winter of 2021. Watch the webinar recording **here** or click on the image below.

Figure 11. *A Trauma-Informed Approach to Cultural Safety With Harley Eagle*

Note. Speaker: Harley Eagle. Graphic recorder: Mo Dawson.

In Closing

We would like to thank all the speakers, graphic recorders, ASL interpreters, tech hosts, and many other behind-the-scene supporters who generously gave their time, passion, and expertise to these webinars. This was a team effort and together we ignited ideas, joy, purpose, and connection throughout some of the darkest days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Acknowledgements
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The "Decolonizing Leadership" series (co-hosted with Cheryl Heykoop) was funded by the Exploring New Ways grant, which supports curriculum innovations to increase Indigeneity and understanding. Graphic recording for this series was funded by a BC Ministry of Health Institutional Grant awarded to Catherine Etmanski, Cheryl Heykoop, and Asma-na-hi Antoine.

Thanks to Andrea Torres Lopez, Karina Monsalve, Anne Dale, and Chris Ling for their inspiration with pre-pandemic webinars.

Many people supported these webinars—too many to name. In particular, I would like to acknowledge key members of the team: co-lead on the series Sherry Richards as School Manager, Emara Angus as Marketing Specialist, Selena Kunar as Education Specialist, and Sam Brad as lead Graphic Recorder. Members of the School of Leadership Studies Administration Team and many other people provided support at different points of the series, and we simply could not have run this as a series without the individuals named here. Our deepest gratitude to all.

About the Author

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Exchanges

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In Exchanges, we present conversations with scholars and practitioners of community engagement, responses to previously published material, and other reflections on various aspects of community-engaged scholarship meant to provoke further dialogue and discussion. In this section, we invite our readers to offer their thoughts and ideas on the meanings and understandings of engaged scholarship, as practiced in local or faraway communities, diverse cultural settings, and in various disciplinary contexts. We especially welcome community-based scholars' views and opinions on their collaborations with university-based partners in particular and engaged scholarship in general.

In this issue, *ESJ's* managing editor Penelope Sanz converses with Dr. Natalia Khanenko-Friesen, the founding editor of ESJ and now the director of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CUIS) at the University of Alberta, about engaged scholarship in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. When this exchange started in Spring 2023, the Israel-Palestine war the world is witnessing now was farthest from their minds. ESJ keeps in mind the peer reviewers and authors from these two countries, who submitted and/or evaluated articles on community-university engagements to the journal.

Canadian Engaged Scholarship and the Russian War against Ukraine

Penny – I come from the island of Mindanao in Southern Philippines. It has a long history of armed conflicts due to inter-ethnic differences and rebellions that are secessionist, ideological, or terroristic in nature. Since Mindanao, an island slightly bigger than Singapore, is far from the national geo-body, the rest of the Philippines is concerned when they hear about deaths and armed conflicts that erupt among warring parties: usually between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and government's Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) or between the communist New Peoples' Army and the AFP. Personally, even when I'm here in Canada, whenever I hear a helicopter flying above, I still associate it with *gyera*, or war in English, happening somewhere in the island. Here I go again. Remember how we did not even notice when discussing the ESJ work that we inserted Filipino and Ukrainian words and phrases in our sentences? We think that it's because both of us are non-native English speakers and when we talk to each other something in our brain switches.

I reached out to you because just a few months ago in February, we marked the first year of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with tanks rolling in and bombing following. From my experience back home, over the long haul, the general public—especially those who are located in Northern and Central Philippines—get desensitized to war and it becomes business as usual. On the ground, there's massive displacement of

people, lives being disrupted or snuffed out, and livelihoods wiped out and yet nobody seems to care. Do you perceive any public fatigue towards the Russian invasion of Ukraine in Canada right now?

Natalia – I appreciate your awareness and your positionality when it comes to reflecting on Russia's renewed invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022. By now, (in the fall of 2023, it has grown into a global conflict, but we should not forget that we are speaking of the war launched even earlier, in 2014, when Russian troops rolled into Crimea and soon after it was illegally annexed to the Russian Federation. And we remember that the war in the Donbas area also started in 2014, with Russian direct military intervention and logistical support to local insurgents. I appreciate your saying that by now, one year after the full-scale invasion began, many in Canada may have already gotten used to and perhaps even forgotten about this war, and moved on to other global affairs and challenges. Certainly, it's a signal of fatigue to which you referred. Of course, in my line of work, as the Director of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, I am quite embedded in war-related research and knowledge production, through discussions in academic venues as well as in the community, so in my immediate milieu I don't see much evidence that the world has forgotten about this war. But intellectually I am quite aware of this of course. There are times when I am asked by my Canadian friends whether the war is still going, whether I know personally anyone who has been killed (I have already lost many friends and colleagues to this war), and so on.

Penny – Why should the West care about the conflict in Ukraine?

Natalia – First, it is important to realize that describing this war as a "conflict in Ukraine" is inappropriate. It is the war initiated by an aggressor state against its neighbour, the Russian Federation, a successor of the USSR, wanting to regain and control a neighbouring independent state that was once a member of the Soviet Union. In other words, we are dealing here with the neo-imperial and neo-colonial ambition of the direct successor of the USSR and its aggressive efforts to expand its control over a neighbouring state and its territory to restore the previous status quo. The Soviet Union consisted of 15 federal republics combined into one union, a political federation under a communist rule that de facto was controlled from the Soviet capital of Moscow, also a capital of the Russian Federation back then and now. So, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) dissolved, 15 independent states emerged. One of them was Russia, others were Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia etc. During these three decades, all 15 states have long been recognized as legitimate independent countries. But for various reasons, in Russia under the authoritarian rule of Putin who came to power twenty-two years ago, anti-democratic and harmful ideas on how a country can maintain its dominance on the global scene evolved.

The Russian president, a former officer of the Soviet Security Services, the infamous KGB agency, has long adopted old Soviet practices of dictatorial ruling trying to restore the former 'glory' of his country. Chasing his neo-imperial and neo-colonial dreams of powerful and dominant Russia, Putin and his regime have been long meddling in the affairs of neighbouring states to establish there political regimes loyal to Russia. In several cases, this meant a military invasion on some nearby states, for example, as was the case with the Russian occupation of parts of Georgia in 2008.

Russia has also fuelled other wars on Soviet territories, which were resolved differently for different political reasons. The two Chechen wars in the 1990s and 2000s are another example of how the Russian state suppressed a pro-independent republic within the Russian Federation. Then in 2014, when in neighbouring state of Ukraine the majority of citizens resisted the authoritarian pro-Russian government and participated in a national resistance movement that later became known as the Revolution of Dignity, it was Ukraine's turn. During these protests, as soon as Putin wrapped up the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russian troops swiftly occupied Crimea. Even though that the international community did not recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, some folk around the world bought the Russian Federation's interpretation of events, that the takeover of Crimea was an outcome of some internal to Ukraine 'conflict'. It was not. The takeover was Russia's direct, forceful and illegal occupation of Crimea.

Penny – Yes, Crimea was taken over and the former Ukrainian president fled to Russia when there was a massive protest after he decided not to sign an agreement that would bring Ukraine closer to Europe.

Natalia – Ukraine has been facing an external threat since 2014 when Crimea was illegally occupied, without much bloodshed. The Russian troops went into the peninsula cleverly without insignia on their uniforms that would easily be spotted on journalist video and photo footage as Russian troops' insignia. Thus, we have a case of one state engaging in a military takeover of another sovereign nation-state. Within a couple of weeks, a fake referendum was staged, and 97 percent of the residents of that peninsula purportedly voted in favour of Crimean independence from Ukraine. Two days later Crimea was formally annexed to Russia. That is, the independence, for which all presumably voted, was over. Tell me, in what parts of the world have we seen cases where a couple of weeks after a takeover, 83 percent of the population would come to the polling stations and 97 percent of those would vote in favour of cession and immediately for a "reunification" with another foreign state? These statistics claimed by the Russian state are widely doubted in the democratic world. This was a crafted referendum that made it appear that Russia did something legitimate here, which they did not.

In February 2022, on the other hand, we saw a more conventional war, with troops and tanks rolling into Ukraine and attempting to seize the capital in the first three days. This phase of the war is spoken about in terms of being a full-scale invasion. Ukraine has been resisting it as much as it can since then.

Penny – The history of Ukrainian/Russian relations goes further than that, right? So, is it only about Ukraine's territorial integrity? What is at stake?

Natalia - The history of Ukrainian/Russian relations spans many centuries. Russia for example seeks its historic roots in the state of Kyivan Rus, a very powerful political entity founded in 862 with Kyiv as its capital. There is obvious territorial, religious and cultural continuity between this state and contemporary Ukraine. Moscow-the-city was founded much later, in 1147, followed by the emergence of the future state of Moscovy that eventually grew into a large Russian empire as we know it from the textbooks. And then in 1654, in the context of an ongoing war involving a number of warring sides an agreement was signed between the Russian tsar and Ukrainian Cossacks, as representatives of the Ukrainian Cossack state. That agreement was understood differently by both sides. In some ways, it reminds me of the treaties that were signed between the expansionist and colonial British Crown and the First Nations of Canada. On the British side, the treaties were interpreted as an invitation to full takeover, while the other side felt betrayed and colonized. In the case of the tsarist-Cossack agreement, the Russian Empire followed with steady repressive and administrative measures designed to subjugate Ukraine and make it an inseparable and integral part of the Russian Empire.

As we remember the current war began in 2014, with Ukraine's effort to align itself with Europe and to apply for membership in the European Union. This was perceived by Russia as a threat to its position of power and influence that the Russian state attempted to maintain in the region of its immediate neighbours. Thus, the war is not only about the territorial integrity of Ukrainians, and the Ukrainian effort to defend itself. It is about a young, pro-western democracy trying to enter a larger network of democratic states and live in accordance with the principles and values of democracy, human rights, the rights to territorial integrity, and rights to international law. All of these have been violated.

Penny – So what's Russia's real agenda?

Natalia – The Russian war in Ukraine, some call it the "Russo-Ukrainian war," has roots in this colonial memory and nostalgia I just touched upon. Half a year before it began Putin

Note: In August 2023, Natalia joined the expedition of the Museum of Revolution of Dignity (Kyiv, Ukraine), which was focused on documenting the damage to cultural properties and religious temples of Ukraine caused by Russian bombing and shelling. With them, Natalia did the fieldwork in deoccupied territories of Kyiv oblast, Ukraine. The photos shown in this article were all taken in Village Peremoha in Ukraine.

wrote an essay on Ukraine explaining to the Russian citizens that Ukraine has no history and Ukrainians are just Russians. This was a strategic manifesto designed to prepare his country to accept what would come soon and to justify the war on Ukraine. Russian troops have come to Ukraine not simply wanting to take territory, but they were killing Ukrainian patriotic civilians, destroying Ukrainian heritage sites, museums, archives, and burning Ukrainian books. Ukraine of course has its own language, long history, strong cultural legacy and heritage. Since it gained independence in 1991, it has built schools, developed its own history curricula based on Ukrainian culture and history and raised at least two generations of Ukrainian citizens. But now, Russian teachers are being brought into the occupied territories of Ukraine to teach Ukrainian kids the history of the Russian empire, glorifying its past in accordance with the Russian view of the world history, in which Russia occupies the leading role and in which there is no Ukraine.

Documenting damage caused by Russian shelling in the village of Peremoha, Kyiv Region. Maidan Museum expedition, August 2023. Photo Khanenko-Friesen.

The Russian official view on Ukraine insists that Ukraine ought to belong to the Russian state; that it has always been part of Russia; that what was an overwhelming vote for Ukrainian independence in the 1991 referendum was a historical mistake. We're talking about a genocidal war, about the killing and horrendous torture of civilians, raping of women and removing children from Ukraine or re-educating them in the occupied territories. It is an agenda that systematically denies Ukrainians their own identity, their own history, their own language, and their own right to existence. It's as big as that. The world has witnessed earlier similar efforts at exterminating people and their cultures. We all remember the Holocaust and the place in history that the Nazi Germany assigned to the Jewish people and the Roma people, back in times of the World War II. We remember Rwanda and the massacre in Srebrenica in Bosnia and Hercegovina. We know too well in Canada, at least I hope we know well, what the removal of Indigenous children did to the Indigenous communities in Canada. This current Russian war in Ukraine is genocidal and is happening right on the doorsteps of the European Union. There are so many reasons why this is not a small war and why Canadians need to care.[1]

1 The authors also note that the ongoing Israel-Hamas war also has historical roots and far reaching implications not only on the civilians in Gaza, but also the geo-political dynamics in the area. The war has led to a dire humanitarian crisis that continues to imperil civilian lives. It also threatens the regional stability, and nuclear security in the Middle East that

Penny – What do you think about these talks that Ukraine should just give up, considering the costs of war, its toll on people and economy, and that everyone will be at peace if the war stops?

Natalia – Giving up this fight for its territorial integrity and for the very right to exist as a sovereign state, is seen by many as a recipe for disaster. Giving up Ukrainian territory means to Ukrainians giving up a part of themselves, their nationality, identity, history, independence, and the right to sovereignty and political agency. Ukrainians are well aware of what might come next because, since 2014, the frozen war has been affecting people, their livelihood, sense of security, and the economy. It is of course a stretch to compare this situation with an abusive household in which an abusive family member keeps all others in fear. But I oftentimes return to thinking about the power disbalances and sense of hopelessness that becomes a living environment in which abused family members live under the same roof with the abuser. This is the situation for many Ukrainians now living in the Russia-occupied territories. Freezing this war will not introduce lasting peace. If you partition Ukraine by giving some of its parts up, it's going to be just another major geopolitical risk that could erupt again and rather soon.

Local librarian shares the story about murdered and tortured local youth (pic with the phone), Village of Peremoha. Photo by Natalia Khanenko-Friesen.

Penny – I remember that when you were still *ESJ*'s editor and teaching at St. Thomas More College, you run the Study Abroad program where you took students to Ukraine during the Spring Term. I also know that you continue to engage with several communities in Ukraine through research and in various capacities. So, what was it like for you when you learned that Russia was invading Ukraine last year? What was the first thing that came to mind?

Natalia – The first thing was to pick up the phone. My first month or two or three, Penny, was spent on the phone. I had all my gadgets on 24/7; talking to my colleagues in Ukraine, who were fleeing with their children from eastern cities where shelling and bombing were happening. One of my colleagues is a mother to then a five-year-old daughter. I remember very painfully trying to convince her to leave her Eastern Ukrainian city which was severely shelled. She was traumatized and disoriented. She took cover in a bathtub with her small child while the bombing was going on, trying to survive and figure out what to do. To leave or not? I was trying to encourage her to consider leaving, though I knew how risky it would be. Do you remember seeing pictures of Kharkiv, where she lived? Kharkiv, a beautiful city in eastern Ukraine, an important cultural centre, already

laid in ruins within first few weeks of the invasion, like it once did in times of World War II. I remember seeing images of the train station where people with children were trying to squeeze into the trains.

Penny – Yes, I remember seeing those photos. It was heart-wrenching. I felt like I was looking at LIFE magazine's photos of World War II that my father used to collect when he could. He was quite a reader of war history.

Natalia – In my case, I have family in Ukraine still. I was trying to figure out how my family was doing. Looking back, for the first half a year, I don't remember sleeping. Especially for the first couple of months, we were frantically trying to figure out how to support people who were fleeing, and where to house them while they were on the run. Many colleagues were so disoriented. They didn't have resources. They just looked for rides, looked for escape cars in areas being bombed. At the same time, other colleagues immediately signed up for the army and territorial defence units, we began losing some to the war almost immediately. I remember communicating with a devastated colleague whose wife died in her apartment because it was bombed. I remember an emerging scholar losing a child. I have close friends whose sons signed up for the Army and went to the front. Then I remember calling around Universities in Ukraine, and in the West, trying to find out who can go where, what University can take what colleagues and students.

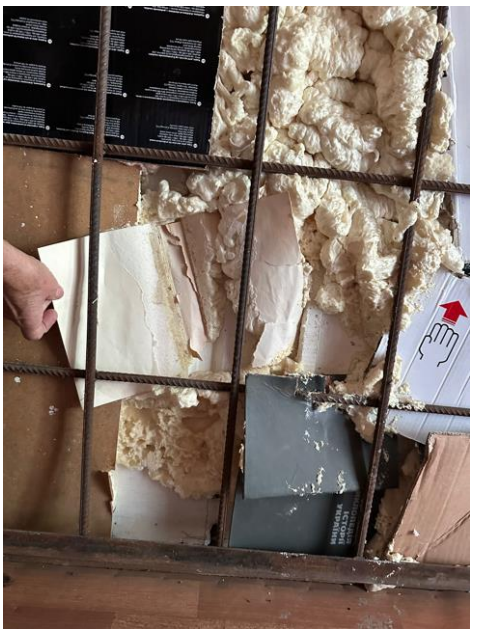
These were emotionally wrenching times. At the same time, we launched an initiative called U-ART, Ukraine Archives Rescue Team, called to help fleeing researchers to store their data for free on highly secure server. I was not allowed to speak about this project, to be honest, so not many people heard about this initiative yet. Once we were contacted by a researcher from the city of Mariupol that was bombed as severely by the Russians as the Chechen capital Grozny was bombed by the Russians in their war against Chechnia some twenty years ago. Others compare Mariupol to Aleppo, Syria, destroyed by Russia-Syria bombs. In any case, the gentleman, a researcher from the regional museum who was fleeing the war zone, contacted us, asking to arrange a data transfer from his research computer, but we have never heard back from him again. Having interviewed many people who had to flee from the occupied territories and from Mariupol, I now can only imagine what may have happened to him on his way out of the city. I pray that he is alive somewhere though.

Penny – When the war in Ukraine broke out, you were in your second year as director of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS). What was it like for your institute? But first, can you tell us a little bit about your organization?

Natalia – CIUS is Canada's largest and most impactful research institute focusing on Ukrainian Studies. We pride ourselves on being global leaders in the field. The institute was founded in 1976, and its growth benefited directly from the support of the Ukrainian Canadian

community that continues to donate and support our research projects financially and in many other ways. We are a large organization. We have some 40 people employed and working in two countries, Canada and Ukraine on campuses of the University of Alberta, the University of Toronto, and Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine. We are a 'commonwealth' of 11 research centers and programs all housed under the umbrella of the institute. There is the Ukrainian Language Education Center, Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre, Petro Jacyk Centre for Historical Research, Holodomor Research and Education Consortium and other programs. These are large and reputable institutions in their own right. Ukrainians in Canada have witnessed many upheavals and pivotal points in the history of Ukraine and the work of our institute has been to offer critical analytical perspective on those.

Local librarian shows where exactly Russian troops removed books and where they were taken to mould the wall. Village of Peremoha, Kyiv Region. Photo by Natalia Khanenko-Friesen.



Russian troops used Ukrainian library books as construction material to plaster walls in the destroyed Village Culture Club, Village of Peremoha, Kyiv Region. Photo Khanenko-Friesen.

Penny – Before you answer my question about how your institute coped with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, can we digress for a bit and can you tell us what these historical events were?

Natalia – The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 is one such pivotal historical event, because it led to the establishment of independent Ukraine. Before that, the Soviet regime in Ukraine resulted in a number of devastating developments. In 1932-1933 there was the Holodomor, when the Soviet political leadership and Stalin in particular deliberately starved the Ukrainian countryside for the Ukrainian peasants did not want to become workers of soviet farms that were being created on the basis of their personal land holdings and cattle. This mass famine has been recognized as genocide against the Ukrainians. Close to four million Ukrainian villagers perished, which accounted for about 13 percent of the entire population of Ukraine. And there was World War II, when the Soviet troops occupied Western Ukraine,

persecuted, exiled or executed its intelligentsia, clergy, and political leaders who resisted that foreign takeover. After the war, there was another mass famine in 1947. Later, Soviet regime continually repressed the Ukrainian intellectuals, through as late as the 1970s and 1980s. These events and the overall repressive Soviet regime are an important backdrop of the 2022 Russia-Ukraine War.

Coming back to your question about what we did as an institute after February 24, 2022, we had to reconfigure everything, now with the war going on. Our efforts were directed at figuring out how we could lead and provide a proper intellectual response to the war, support scholars at risk, mobilize new research, and seek funding that would support all new initiatives that we undertook. And for a period of time, we had to become a humanitarian aid centre. CIUS became a mobilization centre as we tried to figure out how we could support our colleagues in war-torn Ukraine.

Penny – Was it just anyone in Ukraine or were there also initiatives supporting scholars, researchers, writers—the Intelligentsia? I asked this because you mentioned that Ukrainian books and literature are being burned: to erase a culture is to also to target the intellectuals, the cultural workers. etc.

Natalia – Soon after the full-scale invasion started, we began focusing on Ukrainian students both here and in Ukraine. We set up the Disrupted Ukrainian Students and Scholars (DUSS) initiative. Together with other faculties and departments, we pulled more than $600,000 to support such individuals. We worked hard and around the clock identifying those in need, responding to numerous queries, matching scholars with programs and the other way around and so on. We've been looking around for ways to mobilize university resources and to bring disrupted and displaced scholars to places where they can work, meaning also but not necessarily to the University of Alberta. So that's why I insisted on settling on the term 'disrupted' rather than 'displaced', because some colleagues of ours were not allowed to leave. You may remember that the Ukrainian government had instituted the bylaw stipulating that males from the age of 18 to 60 are not allowed to leave, which covers the entire adult male working population. In an overwhelming number of cases, our male colleagues could not leave Ukraine.

Penny – are all your colleagues accounted for?

Natalia – We lost track of some. We couldn't find them or did not know what was going on because their territories were occupied. Some were able to flee and thankfully, we were able to reconnect. But we've lost many literally, as I mentioned earlier, some were killed in the line of duty. We had some very moving stories back from the early days. Colleagues were serving in the army and still lecturing their students online while on the frontline, imagine that. They were able to work with their students and serve in the Army oftentimes lecturing

between military action. And even if we've lived through all of this in a sort of second-hand way, vicariously participating in all these unfolding traumas if you wish, experiencing all this was and still is very painful.

Penny – Yes, I also know what it is like to lose colleagues and close friends who were also killed while doing their jobs as photojournalists… peace educators. So, there was immediately a shift in the Institute's focus?

Natalia - Yes, our efforts were part of what we called an academic rapid response to the war, to support colleagues and find funds for them to reengage with their work once they fled the war. At this point, we have brought over 48 scholars to the University of Alberta.

Penny – Scholars? Are these students only? Or also senior scholars? Back home in times of armed conflict, the youth are very resilient and provide the much-needed energy to organize and gather data. Have you tapped and mobilized young scholars?

Natalia – Both, scholars and students. Young or emerging scholars reaching Canada are now in the category of displaced persons. Now, they want to document their story. And I'm very lucky to have met a couple of scholars and have them engaged in the documentation project I initiated a year ago, "Making Home in Times of Peace and War: Oral History of Ukrainian Displaced Persons in Canada Post-2022". There were visiting fellows who we brought over, or who came with their families and were accepted to the university. Tuition fees were waived for a year for the Ukrainian displaced students at the University of Alberta, so this would be a great help to them.

This is our university's response to the war. It's a costly response amounting to about CA$ 1.5 million I heard that the university has allocated for displaced Ukrainian students during the first year.

Penny - What other academic activities has the Institute continued to engage in since the invasion?

Natalia – We introduced an international lecture series "Historians and the War: Rethinking the Future." These were initially biweekly seminars profiling internationally renowned experts in global history lecturing and explaining to our audiences what's going on with this war on Ukraine. We also created a short video interview series "Did You Know? CIUS Answers" that addressed questions of interest to the general public, for example, why would Ukrainians fight back in this war? Why this war is not an ethnic conflict? What's the difference between Russian and Ukrainian cultures, languages, history, and peoples? And so on. Then, there's also the Canadian side to this war aftermath.

Penny – When you say the Canadian side what do you mean?

Natalia –There is a 'Canadian side' to these developments, as not only have academics started reaching our University, but many other Ukrainian displaced persons have begun to arrive in Canada. With the war in full swing, about 15 million Ukrainians were displaced at some point. Some eight million more were displaced outside of Ukraine. We're talking about one-third of the entire Ukrainian population being displaced most in the first half of 2022. The population of Ukraine before the war was about 43 million, and currently, Ukraine has an estimated population of 36 million people. That's the drop; right now. The demography institute in Kyiv is very hesitant to issue any official numbers, these are the estimates. There are 8 million Ukrainians who ended up being abroad, and this displacement has been very rapid. If you look back at the Syrian war, the number of displaced Syrians amounted to about 11 million. But this displacement shaped over the course of 10 years. I'm not saying one situation is better than the other. I'm simply pointing out the chronological dimensions of this displacement. Governments, NGOs, and countries where displaced Ukrainians are showing up must figure out how to handle this major humanitarian crisis, with the accelerated speed at which these transformations are happening, in a short period. Europe faced these challenges first, but Canada followed soon thereafter.

Penny – Canada opened its doors to Ukrainians almost immediately, right?

Natalia – Canada has been supportive of Ukrainians, like many other democratic countries within Europe and around the world. What many in Canada don't recognize though is that the Canadian government did not extend the framework of refugee protection to fleeing Ukrainians as it had to the Afghans or Syrians. I think there have been about 35,000 Syrians who have come to Canada, since 2014. Do you remember when you and I were editing some academic contributions on Syrian newcomers in Saskatoon?

Penny – Yes, I do remember. Your students in oral history class were interviewing them as well.

Natalia – Yes, Syrian displaced persons had just arrived from Syria, and still lived in the hotels when my students were conducting oral history interviews with them. We also have had about 45,000 Afghans who arrived in Canada. Both groups came here as refugees, and they've been channelled, accepted, and supported by a very important, elaborate, and well-financed refugee framework, which exists in Canada. But Ukrainians have not been afforded that very status.

Penny – Would you mind enlightening me why Ukrainians do not have that status? What does it mean then when it comes to supporting the newly arrived Ukrainians?

Natalia – Ukrainians fleeing the war are not considered refugees: they were not given refugee status but work visas to come to Canada for three years. This means that Ukrainians fleeing the war came to Canada without extended financial support, and without the help of

refugee-receiving agencies, which have the know-how, experience, and without government funding to accept them as refugees and help them settle. Canada's settlement and refugee agencies have been involved in the situation but on more of an ad hoc basis rather than in a concerted or systemic federally supported way. Canada granted emergency visas CUAET (Canada-Ukraine Authorisation for Emergency Travel) to displaced Ukrainians and started providing them with $3,000 per adult and $ 1,500 per child. Now (in mid-November 2023) we're talking about more than 198,000 Ukrainians who have arrived.

We technically cannot even call the arrival of displaced Ukrainians 'immigration'; instead, they are termed 'temporary asylum seekers'. These people are coming to Canada with some hopes of going back to Ukraine in the future and figuring out how to live their lives again. But that's a separate conversation. That's what researchers should be looking into.

Penny – How are newly arrived Ukrainians coping with this situation of not having enough support from the government?

Natalia - That's where our communities and volunteer organizations, be they Ukrainian or non-Ukrainian, have come forward and are actively working, be it in Saskatchewan and Alberta or elsewhere in Canada. It is phenomenally stressful, but also rewarding I might add, because this engagement gives volunteers a degree of satisfaction and pride to be able to help others in times of need. Of course, there is a much work and ongoing effort that goes into receiving and supporting newcomers. Alberta alone received 33,000 Ukrainians over the last six weeks, and on average 1,500 people arrive here weekly. We would have a clearer and more exact number of such arrivals if the Ukrainians were coming in as refugees via established channels: the federal and provincial governments would have known the demographics, the breakdown, and the overall situation.

Penny – How do Ukrainians arrive here, by the way? Are they being flown here on a chartered flight?

Natalia - They are coming on their own. Initially in the spring of 2022, there have been some charter planes taking early displaced persons on to Canada but that practice did not last. This overwhelming flow of people brings much work to community volunteers who mobilized to help but usually without much expertise in how to do this effectively; volunteers also have been struggling to identify and find arriving Ukrainians. There has been a huge mismatch in the early months in terms of needs and assistance available. You have this influx of people, and then you have unprepared volunteer groups trying to help them. So, that was the nature of Canada's community support of DPs from Ukraine.

Penny – How can academics help resolve some of the challenges in addressing these issues and move forward?

Natalia – In response to both the scope of needs and the influx of people, I had to refocus the entire conference devoted to Ukrainian immigration to Canada which I have been planning for a year. My previous plan for the conference was to focus on post-independent immigration from Ukraine to Canada (1991-2021). But then, of course, this all got hijacked. We needed to create space to include conversations and reflections focusing on post-2022 arrivals. There have already been efforts in the academia and the community to give all this a valid and informed perspective, but many changes continue taking place on the ground every day. All in all itt was important to change the focus of our conference to incorporate early academic efforts to account for the CUAET arrivals and what it means to Canada. As a result, at the conference, we heard about projects taking place in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and elsewhere. New initiatives have been evolving as well. Thus, Dalhousie University initiated a project that focuses on youth arriving from Ukraine. I have also launched a project "Making Home" that I described earlier.

Penny – Is it also an oral history project?

Natalia – Yes, it is. My team and I are interviewing displaced Ukrainians about their aspirations, hopes, and efforts to recreate a sense of normalcy amidst the ongoing trauma. This war caused much trauma and loss for so many citizens of Ukraine. It is important to go into the field and document the experience of displacement and how people address its challenges. At the same time, I am interested in the interviewees' reflections on what is next for them.

This brings me back to an important observation. Ukrainians coming to Canada themselves prefer not to be labelled as refugees. This is an identity-focused matter for them, it's challenging for them to apply the term to themselves. Therefore, we should be careful about doing so ourselves. On the other end, the ethnic Ukrainian community in Canada is itself being 'symbolically' displaced, if you wish. Let me explain. Ukrainian Canadians are accustomed to describing their history in terms of four or so immigration waves. These waves frame their understanding of their community and its historical developments. The largest immigration wave of Ukrainians was the first one, it amounted to some 170,000 individuals back in 1891-1914. The current arrivals already toppled this number, currently sitting at 198,000, and it took just one year for this large number of people to arrive in Canada. The representatives and descendants of the pre-existing immigration waves will soon begin to grapple with many identity questions of their own while welcoming current newcomers.

Penny – That's a gripping reflection/observation you have there about labels and identity, Natalia. It reminds me of how the Filipinos here in Saskatchewan and generally across Canada would refer to the first wave as nurses in the 1950s, in Saskatchewan's case seamstresses and nurses, caregivers in the 1990s, then nurses again in the first decade of the millennium. The Ukrainian community here in Saskatchewan and Alberta has a far longer history of immigrating to Canada over several waves of immigration. Certainly, the

Russian war in Ukraine is also disrupting the pre-existing chronological categories that scholars and the public have regarding Ukrainian migration. By the way, do you know how many visas have been given?

Natalia – And there are now more than a million visas that were approved and issued. Some of them may or may not come at all. With this number, it is a tsunami, not a wave. We are amid a major tsunami, which is going to redraw the map and the meanings of what the Ukrainian ethnic community in Canada is about. It will affect the overall layout of Canada's multi-cultural ethnic society in some dramatic ways as well.

Some people may have applied for CUAET visa for an opportunity to have the option of settling in Canada permanently. Others may come here for just a couple of months or years, to sit and wait to see what happens in the war. But if children go to school and families are settling down, if life improves for them in economic terms I suspect many newcomers will stay. Still, we should be very careful not to label these people as immigrants or refugees.

Penny – How about the term 'asylum seekers'? Is it appropriate?

Natalia – I think it is appropriate in a commonsensical way, though conversationally 'displaced persons' is probably the best designator that we can apply to this group. We just need to remember that for the Ukrainians coming under the CUAET visa to Canada *asylum seekers* or *displaced persons* are difficult labels to apply to themselves. There are also economic factors to this influx of people. Though we do not have studies conducted on the topic, one can speculate that those, who were able to reach Canada, with Canada providing very little support, are those who had some resources to come here. Those who were able to come here, have gotten enough funds to afford the plane tickets. Some of them most likely have networks outside of Ukraine to rely on. But not all of those who were granted visas will come here. Thus, we now have an intellectually dazzling, complex, and brand-new displacement pattern in the 21st century, to which different governments have been responding differently. The Canadian government's response to this displacement is unique. Issuing a work visa is not what others have done. It is a unique response to this massive inflow of Ukrainians to Canada.

Penny – As an engaged scholar, do you have stories you want to share that strike you?

Natalia – Recently, I hosted a very important round table involving five leaders from across Alberta, who have spoken of their experiences in helping and assisting Ukrainians fleeing the war. Their stories were heartbreaking and they are stories about goodness and kindness too. For example, we have an individual, not a Ukrainian, who opened his house to newly arrived Ukrainians. He has already hosted 100 families in his house and counting.

Displaced individuals and entire families would come in and live at his house for a couple weeks or longer, and then move on to own residences. Then he would welcome another family into his home. And he is not the only one who has been doing this of course.

CIUS has been in close connection with local communities and settlement agencies. Our responsibilities are multi-fold. We are keen to document the unfolding trauma, the unfolding humanitarian crisis. We should be sharing the resources as academics we have on the ground with communities. We should be including community responses to this Ukrainian DP crisis on various platforms and podiums, like the series of conferences we organized, and therefore amplifying their voices and making them broadly available to other audiences. Within our academic strategies and methodologies reflecting on the war-driven displacement, we need to incorporate community-placed reflections and practices of UDP accommodation and settlement. Then we will be better positioned to offer comprehensive view on what the Russian war in Ukraine has done to Ukrainian civilians how settling in Canada.

Penny – Listening to you reminded me of my own fieldwork where I encountered the trauma of a whole town caught in a bloody siege where many of their neighbours were killed or were used as hostages or body shields by a secessionist group. A simple question of *kamusta*? (how are you?) would open an emotional floodgate for a community member and for me as well. It was then that I realized the importance of storytelling and healing, to listen closely and hear what they were saying and just being present. Most of the time, they caught me off guard. They always find me just sitting and, writing down on my notebook, or just spacing out under a tree or a waiting shed. Looking back, I realize that they also had this kind of disposition—a readiness—to tell their stories when they sought me out.

Natalia – I was just about to tell you that exactly. That would've been my point. If I can say, one of our jobs as oral historians, anthropologists, and social scientists is to let people tell their stories. I needed to recruit newly arrived researchers who wanted to document the war experiences. I have recognized quickly enough that projects would be set up immediately after the full-scale invasion, and teams would be getting organized to document testimonies about the ongoing war. But what has been lacking is a sustained and focused academic discussion on how to do this work in highly ethical ways, in times of war, in times of crisis. So, a month into the war, I reached out to various colleagues in Europe and mobilized a team of oral historians to host a Witnessing the War in Ukraine Summer Institute on interview-based research. Our summer institute met in June 2022 in Krakow, Poland, which is close to Ukraine, to talk about the methodological hurdles and challenges involved in doing this work during the war. We've invited speakers who reflected on experiences of war in the Balkans, Sudan, Somalia, and other countries that experienced the war. We've had speakers who personally survived the genocide, and we also spoke about the oral historical projects that were done in Bosnia. Alessandro Parelli, one of the founding fathers of oral history was amongst our keynotes. I'm so proud of what we have done, we've helped the entire field of

war oral history research in Ukraine to be reshaped and mobilized. I continue coordinating research in this field and supporting Ukrainian teams still. Recently, I was elected as the co-president of the Ukrainian Oral History Association, an association that revived its work in September 2023, based on the work and networks that our Krakow summer institute built and continues to support.

Penny – If someone, for instance a conventional academic who wants to step out of the proverbial "ivory tower," or anyone else, is moved by the plight of the Ukrainians and wants to help out, to support and/or volunteer for the first time, what would you advise them?

Natalia — It is a good question to address. And as it is with any other calamity or disaster, how do we find more room in our hearts to accept and process one more trauma, one more pain? If you are an academic, consider recruiting displaced Ukrainian talent for your projects. Or invite them to study under you. Ukraine is a highly educated country and many people who ended up in Canada are professionals to their core. Even if their language skills are lagging behind. See if you can welcome those who you meet into your homes and lives. People need emotional support, even if it may appear that addressing financial needs is their priority. Then there are opportunities to donate to various causes, to support the wounded, those who have lost houses, orphans, people with disabilities and other groups that have suffered the most.

Importantly, I strongly advise Canadians to read only trustworthy media sources and maintain vigilance when consuming unverified media reports covering the war, especially if these reports originate or seem to originate in the Russian Federation. Contemporary wars are hybrid wars and are fought as much in media spaces as on the battlefield. With the former Soviet KGB officer as the Russian president, the aggressor state continues to utilize the same rhetorics and means that the Soviet Union and its KGB security services did in the past to undermine Western democracies and destabilize societies. The same tactics are actively applied to undermine today's democratic societies that are currently supporting Ukraine. This is being done in Canada as we speak and in various sophisticated ways. Staying vigilant and not falling prey to Russian propaganda is important. A simple way to verify information that is being actively disseminated online is to track the source and then look for reports coming from other sources, and compare the messages. Daily on my FB account, I receive requests for FB friendships. If the requester's profile is bare, brand new or suspicious in other ways, I decline and I advise others to be careful as well in their social media activities.

Penny – One last question, did you get to convince your family to leave Ukraine?

Natalia – Oh, I was trying to bring them over. They didn't want to leave Ukraine, each for their reasons. Someone had a bedridden spouse. Someone had a boyfriend or husband who

could not leave. My home town has not been occupied but it is regularly shelled and I am of course worried about their wellbeing.

Penny – Thank you, Natalia, for this conversation and for spending an hour of your time with ESJ. I wish you and your family well.

Natalia Dear Penny, it is always a pleasure to return to ESJ and work with you and your team.

About the Authors

Natalia Khanenko-Friesen is a professor and Huculak Chair in Ukrainian Culture and Ethnography, Department of Modern languages and Cultural Studies, and the Director of Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada. Her research focuses on oral history and testimony work, postsocialism in Europe and Ukraine, diasporic identities, labour migration, and Ukrainian Canadian culture. Her book projects include three co-edited collections of essays or oral history and two monographs—Ukrainian Otherlands: Diaspora, Homeland and Folk Imagination in the 20th Century (University of Wisconsin Press, 2015) and The Other World or Ethnicity in Action: Canadian Ukrainianness at the end of 20th Century //Inshyj svit abo etnichist u dii: kanads'ka ukrainskist kintsia 20 stolittia (Smoloskyp Press, 2011). Dr. Khanenko-Friesen served as the Director of the Prairie Center for the Study of Ukrainian Heritage at the University of Saskatchewan and was a Founding Editor of the Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching and Learning, Canada's leading academic journal on collaborative scholarship and community engagement.
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About the Artwork

Phases to Falls by Jynae Bergeron (2022)

Jynae Bergeron, the creator behind Art and Airplanes, is a Canadian wood-based visual artist who specializes in pyrography and woodworking. Born to the flatlands of Southern Saskatchewan, it wasn not until her late 20's that she saw an opportunity to collect (with permission) the heavily weathered barn wood off of century-old buildings that spread across the open fields. These old structures are often intended to be pushed into a pile and burnt away by the farmers that own them, but instead she takes that beautifully textured wood and turns it into art that represents quite the opposite landscape that it came from.

Jynae focuses on Pacific Northwest landscapes and animals because her love for the west quickly became abundant ever since visiting the mountain-scapes of Northern America as a child. After graduating high school, she immediately moved to British Columbia, however her journey did not stop there. For the next decade, she prioritized travelling to as many places around the world as her savings would allow. That is where the name 'Art and Airplanes' came from. Jynae chose the name as a means of sharing her creations and her travels, but once she did become a full-time artist, 'Art and Airplanes' seemed to stick. It is now dedicated to her creative journey instead of her physical ones.

Most would refer to Jynae as a solo entrepreneur, but she has had an abundance of help and guidance from her father—a retired carpenter who has taught her everything she knows about woodworking. Her skill in pyrography has been self-taught, however. She has been practicing woodburning for over 12 years, mainly using a Razertip Pyrography kit.

Jynae's artistic style mirrors her life: a cohesive balance between intricate and simple, fluid and calculated, chaos and patterns. Her intentions are to express, reciprocate, and instill a sense of love and gratitude for the natural world and the abundance of gifts it provides to us. She wants to inspire others to explore—through their own creative expression, or out into the great wilderness that surrounds us all.

Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning is Canada's online, peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary journal committed to profiling best practices in 'engaged scholarship' informed by community-academic partnerships in research, teaching and learning.

Our Mission

- to promote and support reciprocal and meaningful co-creation of knowledge among scholars, educators, professionals and community leaders, in Canada and worldwide
- to inspire and promote productive dialogue between practice and theory of engaged scholarship
- to critically reflect on engaged scholarship, research, and pedagogy pursued by various university and community partners, working locally, nationally and internationally, across various academic disciplines and areas of application
- to serve as a forum of constructive debate on the meanings and applications of engaged scholarship among partners and communities

The Journal invites previously unpublished original reflective essays and research articles, review articles, reports from the field, testimonies, multimedia contributions and book reviews focusing on community-engaged scholarship.

We welcome contributions from community and academic partners, educators, researchers and scholars who pursue their work in collaboration with various communities in Canada and the world. For submission guidelines visit http://esj.usask.ca/index.php/esj/information/authors.

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