

ADITAWAZI NISODITADIWIN: RECONCILIATION, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND (RE)CREATING RELATIONS
A Student-Centred Conference hosted by Carleton University's Centre for Indigenous Research,
Culture, Language and Education (CIRCLE) & the Word Warrior's Society
March 19th, 2016, Ojigkwanong (228 Paterson Hall)

ABSTRACTS

SESSION IA: EXPLORING INDIGENOUS MASCULINITIES

"Imprisonment as Settler Colonial Violence: Situating Aboriginal Over-Representation in the Criminal Justice System in its Appropriate Context," Kanatase Horn, Carleton University

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action represents an ambitious set of principles and strategies that seek to address the legacies of the residential school system, including a series of recommendations that are meant to address the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system. While the proposals related to over-representation are multifaceted, it is still crucial to interrogate the normative assumptions underlying these Calls to Action. Simply put, this paper will suggest that these policy-oriented recommendations underappreciate the crucial role the criminal justice system has in perpetuating colonial violence, and maintaining gendered settler colonial relations.

More precisely, this paper will argue that the criminal justice system is a crucial site for 'Othering' Indigenous people, and thus (re)establishing the binary distinctions between the colonizer and the colonized. Furthermore, this paper will explore the consequences of when these binaries are spatially muddled via the urbanization of the Indigenous population, arguing the state's increased use of (urban) surveillance and incarceration strategies are the materialization of historically rooted desires to cleanse the 'civilized'/urban social body. With that said, this paper will explore over-representation by examining the experience of Indigenous men, which is not an attempt to deny or circumvent the violence that Indigenous women and Two-Spirited individuals experience. Rather, it is to emphasize the role of Indigenous men in perpetuating violence in (urban) Indigenous communities, which attracts the state's violent gaze, and perpetuates the cycle of over-representation. Ultimately, this paper seeks to problematize common-sense policy-oriented approaches to over-representation by situating over-representation at the intersections of urbanization, surveillance, and violence that is enacted by both the state and the gendered 'Other'.

"Mohawk Midnight Runners' and Undisciplining Indigenous Masculinities," Charlotte Hoelke, Carleton University

In this presentation, I use a queer/Indigenous/feminist approach, to examine how Zoe Hopkins' 2013 film, "Mohawk Midnight Runners" constructs and deconstructs Indigenous masculinities. I demonstrate 1) the potentially fatal consequences of fostering and accepting certain colonial masculinities, "...focused around the rational achievement of mind over body and were tied to 'power and strength'" (Hokowhitu 2012, 38) and, 2) how a representation of cis-gender heterosexual Indigenous men may nevertheless unsettle and disrupt eurocentric masculinity. Based on my analysis, I question if, and if so how, the field of "Indigenous Masculinities" (if it excludes Queer and Feminist approaches to gender and power) may, in subtle and unintentional ways, potentially reify heteronormative and homonormative forms of masculinity.

"1 GRRL 5 Bears," film screening, Howard Adler, Independent filmmaker

"1 GRRL 5 Bears" spoofs the television show "1 Girl 5 Gays". It features the fabulous two-spirited Bear in drag, Rhonda Darling, who hosts a reality-TV style show. Darling poses 10 questions for her 5 "bear" guests to answer, challenging them to discuss everything from body image, promiscuity, relationships, and pornography. Instead of focusing on the stereotype of gay men as young, thin, and vain, this film highlights 5 gay men that are older, full-figured, and that define themselves as "bears". The bears featured in this film are all members of the "Ours Ottawa Bears" community in Ottawa, Canada, and was shot on location at Ottawa's gay bar, Centretown Pub. This film is not made for television, and is an independent production.

SESSION IB: CHALLENGING DEVELOPMENT
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“A Tale of Two Reconciliations in Environmental Planning: The Right to Say No to Development and the Enticement of a ‘Politics of Recognition,’” Carolyn Laude, Carleton University

How do we reconcile the Supreme Court of Canada’s ruling in *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia* on Aboriginal title with environmental planning? In *Tsilhqot’in Nation* the Court ruled that even where title exists, ‘justifiable infringements’ in the national interest can occur despite an evolving process of reconciliation that recognizes Aboriginal access and benefit to land and resources, and the need to achieve consent prior to encroachment on title land (*Tsilhqot’in v. British Columbia*, 2014). The ruling conflicts with environmental planning, which privileges economic development over Indigenous rights, entitlements and ‘ways of living’ on the land (Lane 2001; Sandercock 1998; Hibbard et al 2008; Gough 2014). A tension therefore exists between legal recognition of Aboriginal title and dominant ideas of land as a rationalized space for economic development. Addressing this tension through a political economy approach attentive to the insights of de-coloniality and legal geography, the paper examines the legal and spatial constructions of Aboriginal title and the environmental planning review around the Pacific Northwest Liquid Natural Gas Export Terminal project. I argue that ‘justifiable infringements’ of Aboriginal title undermines any meaningful attempt at legal reconciliation and decolonization in the Canadian context of settler-colonial capitalism.

“Bewitching Continuities of Settler Colonialism: Philemon Wright, the Westeinde Brothers, and Dispossessing the Algonquin Nation,” William Felepchuk, Carleton University

This paper examines how the Akikodjiwan (Chaudiere Falls) site along the Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River) has, since 1800, been an epicenter of settler colonialism in what would become the capital of Canada. A particularly potent site for Algonquin assertions of nationhood and a place of sacred significance to the Algonquin nation, the falls have also been a place coveted by settlers for their industrial potential. My two case studies consist of the first and the latest white settler projects around the site: that of Philemon Wright’s settlement founded in 1800, and that of Windmill Developments’ current condominium and retail development. This paper examines how beginning with Wright, Akikodjiwan has been a site where settler businesspeople mobilize discourses that are inclusive of some Indigenous voices in order to legitimize economic development initiatives that ultimately push Indigenous nationhood to the margins. Drawing on two texts, one being Philemon Wright’s 19th century account of his first encounter with Algonquin diplomats, the other the public statements of Windmill Developments regarding the Algonquin nation in 2015, I will analyze how white settlers have sought to include, in carefully delineated and circumscribed ways, certain Algonquin people in their projects, while excluding those Algonquin people that contest their plans. I argue that Windmill’s co-owners, the Westeinde brothers, are latter-day Philemon Wrights; both they and Wright use similar discursive strategies to attempt to include and exclude Algonquin people from an Algonquin sacred space.

“Systems Action Learning Research Findings,” Ruston Fellows, Carleton University

The transformation of the land surrounding the Chaudiere Falls represents a microcosm of a global challenge regarding Reconciliation, Responsibilities and (Re)Creating Relationships. Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples are rising above a conflicted past based on a paradigm of colonialism to emerge a new paradigm of learning, creating, and sharing together in friendship. This presentation shares the findings of systems action research applied to the development of Zibi as a case study. The stories of the historical and spiritual significance of the Chaudiere Falls area have generated conflicting narratives about the meaning, impact, choices and ecosystem of relationships implicated in Zibi emerging as a 21st century OnePlanetLiving model of community and land development. In response to these complex dynamics, our research attends to how Indigenous voice, culture and heritage is influencing the creation of a future of environmental and social sustainability in the context of private urban land and community development. The research focuses on relationships; (Re)claiming & (Re)storying & (Re)defining respectful land development; relational community governance and gender; and empowerment through knowledge. The systems action research reveals the stories of dilemmas, creative tensions, and breakthroughs along the journey. Indigenous and nonindigenous expressions of knowledge and practice regarding transformational learning, empathy/nonviolent communication, narrative conflict evolution, and social innovation came to life as ways of transformation throughout the research process that can inform present and future action.

SESSION IIA: IDENTITY AND (FEMALE) EMBODIMENT

“Meaningful Engagement: Women, Water and Infrastructure in a First Nations Community,” Jo-Anne Lawless, Carleton University

Despite growing public awareness of the issues surrounding water and wastewater infrastructure on First Nations, there is a decided lack of Indigenous autonomy in the decision-making process. Stakeholders abound: from government officials setting and maintaining policy to community members hoping for potable water. An aspect of water treatment that has been consistently ignored in this process is an Indigenous view of water as a sacred entity, deserving of rights and respect. Women play a central role in promoting the rights of water, through sacred water walks, such as those undertaken by Elder Josephine Mandamin, and through the creation of organizations like the Sacred Water Circle in the Peterborough area, which brings together Native and non-Native activists to promote awareness of the need to protect the water.

This presentation of my recent co-authored paper, *Meaningful Engagement: Women, Diverse Identities and Indigenous Water and Wastewater Responsibilities*, considers the ramifications of a collaboration amongst Indigenous researchers, non-Native engineering students, and community Elders and activists—all women—in the quest for autonomy in decisions around the ways water is viewed and treated in Curve Lake First Nation. The presentation discusses concepts of ally-ship and explores the means by which women from diverse backgrounds come together to support the inclusion of traditional thought and practice in a complex and technical process.

“Theorizing Violence Against Aboriginal Women,” Gail Gallagher, University of Alberta

This paper addresses violence against Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit and Metis) women, particularly racialized and or sexualized violence, that is violence perpetrated against Aboriginal because of their gender and Aboriginal identity. In particular, this thesis focuses on the ways that Aboriginal activism has a positive impact on raising awareness in the elimination of the sexual exploitation and marginalization of Aboriginal women in Canada. Christie Belcourt’s use of art in the ‘Walking With Our Sister’s’ artistic display is just one example of First Nation activism that brings more awareness to the issue of our missing and murdered Aboriginal sisters and will be the focus of this research. What role does Indigenous feminist theories play in reducing the effects of sexual exploitation and marginalization of Aboriginal women?

My research is relevant as Aboriginal women and girls face three times the rates of violence compared with non-Aboriginal women in Canada, and according to RCMP reports, there is a current crisis of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls of 1,181, of which 164 are missing and 1,017 are murders. Despite calls for a national inquiry from various groups, individual and international groups to investigate this pressing issue, the former federal government refused to conduct a national inquiry into this serious issue affecting the Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

“(In)visible Bodies and (de)contextualization: A Critique of the Independent Review of Cathedral Valley Group Home,” Sheila Grantham, Carleton University

The *Report on the Independent Review of Cathedral Valley Group Home* (Tuckett, 2010) was commissioned by the Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs due to allegations by the former Indigenous residents, who claimed that various forms of exploitation had occurred. The home was operational in the 1970’s and early 1980’s in Manitoba, and although non-Indigenous children and youth resided in the home, the majority of its residents were Indigenous. Although the report was an attempt to evaluate the treatment of the residents that stayed at the group home, the *Report on the Independent Review of Cathedral Valley Group Home* instead further marginalizes the voices of those Indigenous residences through narratives that de-race, decontextualize and privilege the non-Indigenous voice.

SESSION IIB: INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND WELLNESS
“First Nation Seniors using Wheeled Mobility: An Exploration of Cultural Participation and Health,” Lindsay Croxall, University of Ottawa

I recently completed an undergraduate degree in “Honours and Specialization in Psychology”. I am now working on a Masters in Health Science in the area of Assistive Technology. My research is a work in progress. Over the last few years I’ve learned a great deal about Canada’s aging population. I’ve learned about it at school, and via several media outlets. I’ve heard about the worry and the planning for how Canada will deal with the number of old people compared to the number of young. We read about what the progression of these statistics and asked questions like: how will we make older people live independently for longer, and how will we make things more accessible for them? I’m glad that I have learned about Canada’s aging population and I agree that is a very important issue and topic. I care about our aging population. But what I find interesting is that not all Canadian populations have this senior to young ratio, and many do not have the opportunities to live independently now. Aboriginal seniors in Canada’s make up a much lower proportion of the total aboriginal population. In fact Aboriginal Seniors are Canada’s most vulnerable population. I decided to combine my research efforts on the topic of assistive technology in order to learn more about wheeled mobility use among Canada’s most vulnerable population. Specifically to learn about experiences, facilitators and barriers to cultural participation and how they feel that using wheeled mobility impacts their individual health and the health of their communities. Its important to learn about these experiences in order to create social and health practices that can encourage and make available cultural participation among First nation seniors. First Nation seniors are afterall the key to healing efforts. My study is a qualitative phenomenological study. I am new to research and would like to gain as much knowledge as possible in the areas of (re) defining, (re) storytelling, (re) claiming, sacred spaces and meeting places, and very importantly Gatekeeping-knowledge sharing practices.

“Tuberculosis in the 21st century: will a new relationship provide a solution,” Ginette Thomas, Carleton University

It seems like a simple question: why do the rates of tuberculosis continue to rise in First Nations and Inuit communities at a time when the rates in Canada are among the lowest in the world. The answer, however, is not a simple one. Sir William Osler’s statement in 1902, “Tuberculosis is a social disease with a medical aspect”, is still true today.

This paper is based on archival research into the values, assumptions and beliefs that have shaped public policy, politics, and the place in society that the government has attributed to Indigenous peoples. The management of the persistent elevated rates of tuberculosis is used as a case study because when the disease re-emerged as a public health issue in the 1990s, it specifically targeted First Nations and Inuit communities where the rates remain 10 times higher than the national average, in spite of federal health policy and funding initiatives. The health-based approach ignores the growing recognition that the solutions lie beyond the health care system. There is increased concern that the health and social inequalities that are at the root cause are not being addressed within the existing policy approach. This paper looks at whether the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be a catalyst to bring about changes to the values, assumptions and beliefs that have influenced the government-Indigenous relationship and have shaped public policy.

“Considering reconciliation through Indigenous peoples’ physical activity and health,” Tricia McGuire-Adams, University of Ottawa

This presentation will address the conference theme (Re)defining, (Re)storying, & (Re)claiming through reflection on how the physical activity and health of Indigenous peoples is considered through the lens of reconciliation. I will explore how the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal People’s envisioned physical activity and health, to then provide a comparative analyse to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ (TRC) key recommendations on physical activity and health. I will use Coulthard’s (2015) theory of *resurgent politics of recognition*, which is premised on “self actualization, direct action, and the resurgence of cultural practices” (p. 24) to challenge settler colonialism, to guide my comparative analysis. Further, I will contextualize the comparative analysis by highlighting key findings from my interviews (to date) with Anishinaabe women to illuminate a community understanding of physical activity and health, which may also provide an alternative view to reconciliation.

SINGING PRESENTATION: "Singing as a Decolonizing Tool to the beat of Mother Earth," Laura Gagnon, Carleton University

I will perform two drum songs. The first song is called the "Aim Song" and it began its roots in the 1970's along with the American Indian Movement and the Civil Rights movement. These movements were vital to the changes that First Nations and people from minority groups expected with regards to social justice and equality. Just as reconciliation takes time for healing and relationship building, this song represents the continued strength and ferocious speed of the movements. The drum beat begins slowly and then continues to pick up speed closer to the end. The second song is called "Ani Kuni" and this is a Huron-Wendat song. The story behind this song is that a community is faced with predators that want to overtake their land. The people are forced to leave their homelands only to realize that they have become happier in the new location they moved to. This relates to the themes of re-creating relationships because as Indigenous peoples we have always been forced to adapt to new surroundings. Regardless of displacements of lands and dismantling of traditional livelihoods, we continue to live our lives resiliently. I believe these powerful songs would contribute to the themes in addition to creating a beat that we are all familiar with.

KEYNOTE: "State Wounds": Billy Ray Belcourt, University of Alberta

This paper is about the happenings of the sometimes, when we're left in the thick of things, struggling to fend for ourselves, but not by ourselves. In other words, it tells a story of rather dramatized and high-stakes injury: when the settler state is wrenched or wrenches itself into the space of victim or sufferer and is forced to pick up the pieces, as it were. These are episodes of catastrophe, ones that dream up the liberal subject and its worlds, worlds to which we thought we already belonged, but ones that we instead create in the wake of epistemological and material loss. This paper is thus organized around the lopsided violences of 9/11, the Elsipogtog anti-fracking protests, and the death of Constable Daniel Woodall to offer developments in how we make sense of affect, indigeneity, police power, and sovereignty in the space-time of settler states. In sum, it asks: how do we remain tethered to an ordinary that might still kill us?

SESSION IIIA: CHALLENGES AND NEW DIRECTIONS

“Indigenous Matters: Approaches and Ethics of Two Religious Studies Perspectives,” Stacie Swain, University of Ottawa

At this juncture in time, it would be hard to deny the historical connection between the colonial era and the academy, particularly when it comes to research of, for, and with Indigenous communities. The study of religion has been inextricably tied to that history, with the category of “religion” now interrogated as a discursive product of mainly Christian thought and a category used to legitimize colonial ideologies. This paper analyzes two approaches used within the discipline of religious studies, (a) phenomenology, and (b) critical religion, in order to discuss the role of the scholar in the creation, selection, and treatment of data, and the ethical dimensions of using religion and/or spirituality as analytic categories in reference to Indigenous peoples. This presentation is an implicit auto-ethnography, a necessary ethical reflection, as I pursue graduate studies within a Religious Studies department as a non-Indigenous scholar working on Indigenous matters in Canada.

“Redefining and Reclaiming Indigenous Identity,” Chad Kicknosway, Indigenous Legal and Political Sociologist

Who gets to be involved in the constructing Indigenous identity? In light of this conference’s themes; it is important to ask who gets to be involved in this important process. We need to be careful and critical of who gets to contribute and how and where those contributions are coming from. Should non-Indigenous theorists be allowed to contribute to this process and if so, how much should they contribute? And what about an Indigenous perspective that is influenced by western thought? Is there a danger in an Indigenous person advocating western thought into the discussion on identity? Lastly, we must also be conscious of reconciling a definition of Indigenous identity with Canadian law.

Who better to define themselves than the ones who are trying to be defined? When Indigenous people are asked who should be responsible for defining who Indigenous people are; two responses are generally provided: The first one is a personal response; how that particular individual sees their self. The second response is a collective one which suggests a consensus amongst Indigenous groups. It is rare to find (or perhaps even hear) Indigenous people suggest that the State (or government) should be responsible for constructing a definition. Generally, what can be agreed upon by Indigenous people is that no one other than Indigenous people should be responsible for constructing a definition.

“Hearing the Reverberations of Coloniality, Seeing the Violence, Engaging in a Social Healing Praxis: Movements of an Aural Settler Theology,” Joelle Morgan, Saint Paul University

*“The challenge lies in how, in the present, interdependent peoples restory.”
~Jean Paul Lederach~*

Coloniality, names the ongoing economic and racialized legacy of colonialism in the Americas (Anibal Quijano). In turn, decolonization of mental spaces requires a conscientisation of this reality and calls for “epistemic disobedience” (Walther Dignolo). In naming coloniality, one becomes conscious of the power dynamics in daily life, as well as in epistemological consciousness.

Jean-Paul Lederach begs the question of how interdependent peoples in contact zones “restory” their relations. Restorying interplays the need for story-telling in the attempt to restore or re-engage in just relations between peoples. Restorying is nurtured by the experiences of the two sides of speaking and hearing, and ultimately is about social healing rooted in praxis working toward just relations between peoples.

A settler theology of liberation requires an engagement to un-settle patterns of dominance that have shaped and continue to shape the relationships between the Indigenous peoples and settlers. Drawing on notions from Indigenous liberation theologies such as “standing against oppression” and not simply with the marginalized (Andrea Smith) and understanding liberation as healing (George Tinker), I develop a “theology of aurality” that demands deep listening and engaged praxis on the part of settler peoples. The shift toward a principle of healing and listening can open avenues toward a *conscientisation* that offers tools for restorying relations in, on and with this land.

SESSION IIIB: POSSIBILITIES OF REVITALIZATION THROUGH LANGUAGE AND VOICE

“(Re)claiming Space for Indigenous Voice in Research: Learning to Teach-in-Relation, the Medicine Wheel and Reconciliation,” Desiree Streit, University of Ottawa

What does (re)claiming an Indigenous voice in research look like? For me, this meant including who I am as an Indigenous person regardless of my research topic. My initial attempts at including my voice was met with resistance, however, my experience in graduate school taught me that reconciliation for me and my family means pushing back to make space for our voice in academia. As a graduate student, my interest in the notion of learning led me to do a phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of five teacher candidates engaged in a community service learning project. The phenomenon of learning to teach-in-relation was investigated using a relational, Indigenous framework as expressed through the medicine wheel. Guided by van Manen’s (1997) phenomenological approach to researching lived experience along with the philosophical underpinnings of the medicine wheel, the experiences and perceptions of the teacher candidates were analyzed. The theme structure within the medicine wheel, vision, relationship, knowledge, and action, provided a way to organize the significant moments that began to emerge within this research. Initially the choice to use the medicine wheel was to have this relational perspective. However, the more I worked within this relational framework, the more I felt it working on me. Thus a space emerged, in the form of a prologue and epilogue that could be included in my final thesis. Reconciliation takes on many forms, and for me it was finding a space for my Indigenous voice in academia.

“Indigenous Language Revitalization as the Base of Indigenous Resurgence,” Ash Courchene, Carleton University

In this presentation, I will showcase my exploratory research paper on why Indigenous language revitalization must be at the base of all Indigenous resurgent activities. By exploring the worldview embedded in Anishinaabemowin, I will demonstrate how the language can help us rediscover the relationship we have with the lands, waters, and other living things around us, therefore becoming the foundational aspect the larger decolonization process. This is key to breaking away from colonial structures within our communities that have only perpetuated violence against our people and lands.

This paper uses the canonical works of Indigenous scholars, language speakers, and knowledge keepers such as Taiaiake Alfred, Leanne Simpson, John Borrows, and Basil Johnston to build a fledging theory on language revitalization as the base of Indigenous resurgent activities that realigns our relationship with the world around us. Then the presentation tests the model using a case study of my community, Sagkeeng First Nations in Manitoba, to illustrate how focusing solely on economic development is not enough to build vibrant, healthy communities.

“One Inuit Language Writing System in Canada,” Heather Ochalski, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Our organization will discuss the process leading to a landmark recommendation by Inuit language experts, elders and political leaders in August 2015 to develop a single writing system for Inuktitut, the Inuit language. We will also present on the implementation plan for an Inuit writing system rooted in a unified form of roman orthography.

In 2011 ITK released *First Canadians, Canadians First: the National Strategy on Inuit Education* (www.amaujaq.ca), the first-ever national effort focused on improving outcomes in Inuit Education. One of the recommendations of the National Strategy was to explore the introduction of a unified Inuit writing system. Existing writing systems for Inuktitut were imposed on Inuit by missionaries, resulting in nine scripts currently used in Canada. This makes it difficult for Canada's 60,000 Inuit to share resources, especially teaching and learning materials. Research has shown that being taught in their Indigenous language through immersion and instruction is a significant factor in improving outcomes for Indigenous learners in all subject areas (Fontaine, 2012).

In June 2015 the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada released their Calls to Action. Of its 94 recommendations, several dealt with the importance of strengthening language and culture in the context of reconciliation and Indigenous rights. This paper will discuss why preservation, revitalizing and strengthening the Inuit language is a necessary step in the reconciliation journey.

SESSION IV: RECONCILIATION, DECOLONIZATION, AND RESURGENCE

“The Risks of Reconciling: Coming to Understand Idle No More, Indigenous Resurgence, and the Possibilities of Reconciliation,” Steve McLeod, Carleton University

How do I, as a settler scholar, understand the Idle No More movement? How do I conceive of how related theories and practices of Indigenous resurgence challenge the legitimacy of the Canadian state? Do western academic discourses limit my perception of these challenges?

In *The Winter We Danced*, members of The Kino-ndamiimi Collective highlight how through social media, round dance flash mobs, and social gatherings, Idle No More is “re-storying Canada” (93). Building on Habermas’s theories of the public sphere, Nancy Fraser and Michael Warner elaborate how social movements mobilize as counterpublics in order to challenge how public discourse excludes the voices minoritized groups. But what if theories of critical publicity, emancipatory as they are for some, presume the sovereign power of the state? Does thinking about Idle No More and Indigenous resurgence as counterpublic discourses risk conceptually containing efforts to decolonize the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the settler state? Indeed, Leanne Simpson (Anishnaabe), Taiaiake Alfred (Mohawk), and Glen Coulthard (Dene) intervene in how liberal democratic institutions exclude Indigenous understandings and practices of nationhood and relationality.

My presentation would share with attendees my developing understanding of the challenge of Idle No More and Indigenous Resurgence. I would share my struggle to identify and work through academic discourses that risk “marginalizing and regulating Indigenous knowledges and identity.” In particular, I hope to shed light on how attempts to “reconcile” Idle No More with liberal democratic theories run the risk of obfuscating challenges to state sovereignty and the “(Re)defining, (Re)storying, & (Re)claiming” of the terms of the Indigenous-non-Indigenous relationship.

“Indigenous Erotica and the Reconciliation of Anti-Colonial Relationality,” Geraldine King, University of Victoria

Through the process of interweaving academic inquiry with creative output, this presentation demonstrates the importance of erotic narratives in decentering heteronormative logics of settler colonialism, therein fostering the (re)creation of Indigenous relationality. This presentation seeks to reconcile Indigenous erotica with resurgent mobilizations against capitalism, forced monogamy, and heteronormativity. By engaging with Indigenous feminist and queer theories, an emphasis is placed on the intellectual importance of Indigenous erotica; however, I intend to share my own literary erotica to illustrate how theory and praxis must necessarily intersect to mobilize the empowerment of Indigenous bodies, genders, sexes and sexualities.

While erotica disrupts codified heteronormative values and ethics, it also functions as a catalyst to creating renewed, culturally safe spaces free from heteronormative antagonism and harm. In order to occupy the land, settler colonialism requires that our bodies be punished, corralled, disciplined and controlled. Indigenous erotica empowers our bodies and psyches and therefore threatens the very essence of settler colonial existence. This presentation is as much about decolonial politics as it is about suggesting pragmatic ways for Indigenous peoples to rise up against corporeal coloniality.