

Bridging the Social Distance between Indigenous
and Newcomer Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic:
An Exploration of Identities and Relationship Building
through Online and Arts-based Methods

by

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ABSTRACT

Despite ongoing relationship building efforts at the community level, Indigenous and immigrant and refugee newcomer communities in Canada continue to experience a fractured relationship characterized by misperceptions, misunderstandings and tension. One of the predominant reasons for this ongoing fractured relationship is the lack of community-driven, decolonial information that each community receives about the other. This project sought to respond to this reality, by exploring the experience of an online relationship building Talking Circle and video-making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth reflected on their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples and the possibilities for transformed relationships between both communities. The video that was created then went on to be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations within Winnipeg and was posted free online, becoming a potential community-driven, decolonial relationship building resource for community members to access. This project was guided by an Indigenous research paradigm, as well as the visiting way, storytelling and arts-based methodologies. Overall, this project found an imbalance in perceptions between both communities, alongside relationship building possibilities within increasing opportunities for community-driven, decolonial information to be transferred, shared minority experiences and cultural strengths, and the need for both formal and informal relationship building opportunities. Several key implications for social work practice are discussed and recommendations for bridging relations between Indigenous and newcomer communities are proposed.

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“See that man over there?”

“Yes”

“Well, I hate him”

“But you don’t know him”

“That’s why I hate him”

Parable (Allport, 1958, p. 265)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose, Objectives and Rationale

This thesis project emerged from a desire to enhance the amount of community-driven, decolonial information Indigenous and newcomer communities receive about each other, with hopes of contributing to strengthened relationships between these two broad communities. More specifically, this project explored the experience of an online relationship building Talking Circle and video-making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth reflected on a. their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples and b. the possibilities for transformed relationships between both communities. The video that was created then went on to be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations within Winnipeg and was posted free online¹, becoming a potential relationship building resource for community members to access. It is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic² hit Manitoba five days before the data collection phase of this project was set to begin, and this project needed to shift rapidly from being an in-person to an online project. While this limited some aspects of the initial projected scope of this project, the flexible and enthusiastic participation of the youth participants served as a testament to their desire to reduce the ‘social distance’ felt between their two broad communities, even as we launched into the new realities brought upon by a physically distant world.

There were several rationales behind my desire to explore this area of research for my thesis. The first is the persistent reality that there has been, and continues to be, high levels of segregation, mistrust, misperceptions and tension between newcomer and

¹ Bridging Social Distance During COVID-19: Indigenous and Newcomer Youth Relationship Building Project: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kubvp_Ef2m4

² COVID-19 is a global health pandemic, drastically affecting the health and economies of nations across the world (UNDP, 2020)

Indigenous communities (Adam, 2015; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, Walker & Garcea, 2014; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). While shared lower socio-economic and geographical spaces, as well as forced competition over scarce resources contributes to this fractured relationship, tension is exacerbated by the lack of community-driven, decolonial information each broad community receives about the other (Alidina, Morton & Wirch, 2020; Chung, 2012; Ghorayshi, 2010; Wong & Fong, 2012). Rather than receiving valuable information about one another from one another, communities instead receive limited (mis)information about the other community from dominant systems and mainstream society, which are still broadly informed by problematic euro-colonial ideologies (Ghorayshi, 2010; Khan et al., 2015; Yu, 2011).

It is from the realization that a lack of decolonial information is having dire impacts on the relationship between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities that my thesis project emerged. The hope of my thesis project is to, in a small way, contribute to the creation and sharing of community-driven, decolonial information about Indigenous and newcomer identities and relationship building, and open the door wider for possibilities of transformed relationships to occur between these two broad communities. In spaces that have been so historically colonized, such as the newcomer settlement system and the Canadian education system, producing decolonized, community-driven materials is vital (Lykes & Nicholson, 2018). It has also been my intention to decolonize as much of this research project as possible, reversing traditional western research paradigms which place the researcher as the holder of power and knowledge, and instead honouring the youth participants as the knowledge keepers of this project.

Another rational for this area of exploration in my research project is the recognition of the vast potential that lies in transformed relationships between Indigenous

and newcomer communities. In our current neo-colonial and capitalist systems, there is an ongoing and arguably increasing unequal distribution of wealth, privilege and resource distribution between those in power, and those who are not. If groups that are oppressed by these current systems remain fragmented, it is difficult to fight for the systemic change that is needed to receive a more equal distribution of power, wealth and resources.

From a pessimistic (or perhaps realistic) perspective, there is a further recognition that from the outlook of those in power (namely in this context, provincial and federal governments) there is not much that is advantageous about strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. The majority of newcomer people to Canada and Indigenous peoples face many of the same barriers in Canada: racism, ongoing impacts of colonization, low socio-economic status, poor housing conditions and low employment levels (Chung, 2012; Gyepi-Garbrah, Walker & Garcea, 2014; Khan et al, 2015; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). These factors, alongside many similar cultural realities and experiences with colonization, provide much potential common ground on which to stand. In fact, as Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) outlines, “the Marginality or Minority Solidarity Hypothesis predicts that members of minority groups will demonstrate empathy and solidarity with one another, because of their common experiences of having been oppressed” (p. 37).

This, in many ways, is not a beneficial hypothesis for neo-colonial governments to breathe life into, as increased solidarity between Indigenous and newcomer peoples could lead to more effective mobilization and advocacy for change to the dominant systems that continue to oppress Indigenous and newcomer peoples. By maintaining conditions where marginalized groups are frustrated at each other, instead of at the government, the Canadian government is able to maintain the ‘status quo,’ and consequently the domination, control and power that it has held for hundreds of years on

these lands. It is from this reality (which may also provide insight into why updated citizenship materials have been in process for over three years) that this project also emerges, as I recognize the need for educational resources to emerge from outside of state controlled, dominant systems.

My thesis project is also seeking to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (2015), and in particular Call to Action #93, which calls for an updating of the information kit for newcomers to Canada and citizenship materials to, “reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools” (p.10-11).

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) initially responded to this Call to Action by claiming that they are in the process of updating the citizenship guide after closely partnering with the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Metis National Council and Indigenous historians (IRCC, 2020). This acknowledgement and response in it of itself is a positive step, in that the Canadian government has apparently listened to the TRC Calls to Action and is responding with appropriate consultation.

Having said that, this process has now been ongoing for over three years, with the last consultative round table having occurred in October, 2017 (IRCC, 2020). While there are likely numerous Indigenous leaders and historians who would gladly work to get these new updated materials out in a relative hurry, they continue to sit in development. It is not the purpose of this thesis to investigate why these critical updates continue to sit on the shelf, but it goes without saying that this timeline is stretching on far too long, and these updates must be given the priority befitting their importance. As the government continues to deprioritize the dissemination of these updated settlement materials, it is critical for community members, organizations and academics within Canada to instead

take up the spirit of this call, and create opportunities for community-driven, decolonial information to be shared.

My rationale for localizing this project within the experiences of Indigenous and newcomer youth is two-fold. The first reason stems from the ongoing reality that tension between Indigenous and newcomer communities often occurs between youth, as schools and community programs are one of the only places Indigenous and newcomer peoples come into contact, and consequently can serve as ‘flash points’ for tension. As Gyepi-Garbrah et al. (2014) affirm, “(Indigenous and newcomer youth) are beginning their co-existence, mostly in inner-city neighbourhoods, with low levels of interaction, misunderstanding, misperceptions, segregation and tension among youth in high schools” (p. 1795).

The second rationale is that my professional career has been and will continue to be focused on supporting vulnerable Indigenous and newcomer youth. I have planted this research project firmly where my experience and my heart lies, trusting that this will contribute to a more meaningful research process. Furthermore, I have heard repeatedly from the Indigenous and newcomer youth I have supported that they often do not feel like their experiences are taken seriously, or that they have control or agency over decisions in their lives. For vulnerable Indigenous youth, it is often through being involved in various systems – the most common being the child welfare and criminal justice systems - that strip youth of their sense of agency and control. For vulnerable newcomer youth, it is often the experience of being forced to move from their home country to a foreign land (with new languages, new cultural and peer norms etc.) that contributes to this loss of agency and control. My desire has been for this research project to provide the youth participants with a platform to gain an experience of empowerment and agency, as well

as the opportunity to express their experiences, identities and thoughts on relationship building in their own words, for all who watch to see.

Self-Location

From an Indigenous paradigm in which this project is grounded, locating oneself in the research is an important practice. As Kovach (2009) explains “self-location anchors knowledge within experiences, and these experiences greatly influence interpretations” (p.111). By self-locating, I am being transparent and honest with regards to the knowledge, experiences and realities that have created a relationship between myself and this research topic. With regards to my own self-location, there are several aspects of my identity that contributed to my desire to engage in this research project. The first aspect is my identity as a member of the Red River Metis³ nation. I grew up in Selkirk, Manitoba, and was connected to aspects of the Metis culture mainly through my grandmother, who is an Elder in the Red River Metis nation and has made many important historical contributions for the Red River Metis people. Her dad, Frank Walters, was one of the last speakers of the Bungee dialect – which flourished in the end of the 19th century in the Red River Settlement and contained elements of Cree, French, Gaelic and Scots English (Blain, 1989, p. ix). My grandmother taught us many history lessons growing up, and we grew up knowing about our ancestors from England, France and Scotland, as well as the Swampy Cree women in our family (namely my Grandma would talk about our ancestors Titameg, Sally Cree Trout and Charlotte Phillips) who were from the Norway House area. We also grew up with some Metis cultural elements:

³ In this thesis, the term Metis is written without an acute accent over the “e,” to ensure that the French aspect of the Metis identity is not privileged, especially as many Metis people do not possess French ancestry. The unaccented word is instead intended to “encompass all of those who were part of the historic Metis nation and their descendants” (Macdougall, 2017, p. 5).

attending Rendezvous, eating bannock, and receiving items like beading, moccasins and dream catchers from my grandma and great aunty.

However, colonization also played a heavy role in much of my family's life and expression. While I was growing up, part of what was tacitly passed onto me was a sort of 'secret-ness' around the Indigenous part of our identity. There wasn't yet a point of pride in claiming our Metis heritage, but instead a deep knowing of the racist, assimilation oriented view that much of Canada held towards Indigenous peoples. While my grandma does show a quiet pride in being Metis and having connection to parts of the 'old ways', she also is devoutly Catholic, and my family was not raised to participate in Indigenous ceremonies.

Oddly enough, it was through my Mom's connection with the United Church of Canada that we attended a smudge and sharing circle for the first time as a family together when I was sixteen, after my mom was diagnosed with cancer. This experience was transformative for me. I connected to spirit in a different way, and it was an experience that firmly planted itself into me. After graduating with my undergrad degree, I received the opportunity to work with the Transition Education Resources for Females (TERF) program of New Directions.⁴ There, I had the amazing opportunity to journey alongside the youth on a (re)connection to culture. Power differentials were equalized as we journeyed together - we sweat together, attended ceremony, and learned from Elders. I received my spirit name while at working for TERF, which is Shinoguizigodon, or Ringing Voice of Creator. I am from the Eagle clan, and my spirit colours are rainbow.

⁴ The TERF program of New Directions is a transition and healing program for children, youth and adults who have been exploited through the sex trade (see <https://newdirections.mb.ca/training-education-programs/terf-transition-education-resources-for-females/>)

Receiving my spirit colours were particularly affirming for me, as I received them the year that I came out to the people in my life as a lesbian woman.

Since working at TERF I have continued my journey connecting to all facets of my identity as a Metis woman – I have been learning from my grandma, connecting vocationally and on my own in the community. This past year I was an Action Therapist⁵ which provided an incredible opportunity to connect and walk alongside Indigenous youth as we connected to Indigenous events and initiatives in the city, as well as ceremony, and I was able to attend my first Sundance. Outside of work, and in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, I joined the Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights in the spring of 2017, which was a 600km walk from Kitchener to Ottawa. The purpose of the walk was to raise awareness for Bill C-262, a bill that would have ensured the implementation and adoption of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*, as the framework for reconciliation in Canada.

My journey as a Metis person is one I am increasingly learning how to walk well. I often struggle to claim my Metis identity, as I have white skin and have not had to face the overt and continued impacts of colonization, racism and discrimination that visibly Indigenous people in Canada have to face. Furthermore, while my family did lose much of our Metis culture due to colonization and ongoing prejudice, the majority of our extended family has been shielded from much of the ongoing intergenerational trauma that has resulted from the horrendous legacy of Indian residential schools. These factors can give me pause when claiming my Metis identity in particular settings, as I do not want to take up space that could be occupied by Indigenous peoples who have been

⁵ Action Therapy is rooted in relational, cultural and land-based therapy models, and provides wrap around support, counselling and critical intervention to Indigenous youth in the care of Child and Family Services (see <https://www.mitchbourbonniere.com/action-therapy.html>).

impacted on a deeper level by the on-going impacts of colonization. Having said that, I am coming to more peace with my identity and still feel a deep call to connect to what it means to be a Metis woman.

I am learning to live into the common Metis experience of “walking in two worlds.” I walk in both settler worlds, and Indigenous worlds. I also walk in a heterosexual world, as a gay woman. Now, through my work, I also walk in spaces filled with recent newcomers to Canada, as someone whose family has both been host, and newcomer to these lands. Bartlett et al. (2002) describes this experience, and the opportunities it brings, as “Two-Eyed Seeing.” Two-Eyed Seeing was originally articulated in 2004 by Albert Marshall, an Elder from the Mi’kmaw nation, as:

the gift of multiple perspective treasured by many Aboriginal peoples and explains that it refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing, and to using both these eyes together, for the benefit of all” (as quoted in Bartlett et al., p. 334).

While experiences related to Two-Eyed Seeing can bring internal tensions, it also brings vast opportunities. In the context of this research project, personal experiences related to walking in two worlds and Two-Eyed Seeing connected me in a personal way to this work, as I explored ways to bridge the relationship between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities. My Metis identity embodies the merging, or relationship, of the host and the newcomer. My hope for my research project was to do the same, to create a space where transformative relationships have the opportunity be built between the hosts of Turtle Island, and those who are new to these lands.

As alluded to above, my recent path has taken me in the direction of supporting newcomer youth – both supporting refugee youth prior to their arrival in Canada, and

supporting newcomer youth post arrival in a newcomer youth wellness program. My undergraduate degree was in International Development Studies, and while I went into it believing I wanted to advocate for equity abroad, I quickly realized how much important social justice work there was to engage in ‘in my own backyard.’ The roles that I currently occupy merge my desire to contribute to addressing global injustice, while embodying the learning I have received regarding the importance of making my home community a more just and equitable place.

My professional roles of providing pre-arrival support for refugee youth, as well as supporting Indigenous and newcomer youth here in Winnipeg, are what led me to the realization of how a lack of robust, community-driven and decolonial information are leading to a fractured relationship between Indigenous and newcomer communities. From working in pre-arrival services with Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA), a joint program between the YMCA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and going through the process of being asked to edit one of the IOM’s pre-arrival books, I realized very quickly how colonial and inaccurate the information is that newcomer people receive about Indigenous people prior to their arrival in Canada. In much of the pre-arrival materials, there is barely a mention of Indigenous people outside of basic definitions and the history of Canada that is provided is an entirely colonial version. To be honest, I was genuinely appalled when I began the editing process of the International Organization for Migration pre-arrival book for adults.

In line with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) Call to Action #93, I advocated for changes to the book and a consultation with Elders. I was unfortunately told that we did not have much time or resources, so an official consultation would not be able to occur, and that I should stick to a more “straight forward” edit. What was forefront on my mind, seemed to not be forefront on the minds of my supervisors, as they

sought to prioritize updates on education, housing, language and employment. I pushed back, and was given the ability to create *one* page on Indigenous peoples, and suggest edits on the history section. It took me awhile to decide what to emphasize in the small space I was given, but decided to begin to tell the story of residential schools, and present the TRC findings (including the Calls to Action) alongside a call for all Canadians (and Permanent Residents) to join into reconciliation efforts. In the history section, I changed violent language and included a historical section on treaties and their significance. Essentially, I did what I felt like I could, while feeling constrained by time and the lack of priority given to these critical changes. I have yet to see the final document and do not know if my edits made the cut, but it is my fervent hope that they did.

In my current professional role supporting newcomer youth, I have witnessed first-hand how the lack of information, and misinformation that newcomers receive in the pre-arrival, settlement and citizenship process can decrease empathy by newcomer people for Indigenous people, as they simply do not have the information to understand why many Indigenous people continue to face the struggles that they do. I have also seen how through engaging in sessions that discuss the impacts of colonization over centuries, that an entirely new empathy and understanding can be created. Conversely, for some of the Indigenous youth that I support, I have often heard a sentiment regarding refugee peoples of, “Why is the government bringing in people to take care of when they aren’t even taking care of us?” I have always understood the heart of this sentiment, which is frustration towards the Canadian government for centuries of oppressive colonial policies and ongoing broken promises. However, placing this frustration onto newcomer peoples is unfortunately misguided and can also be changed by the sharing of accurate information about newcomer realities.

All of these factors that I have experienced through my work have led in me a desire to foster spaces for transformative relationships between Indigenous and newcomer peoples. I strongly believe that there are so many connecting points between Indigenous and newcomer communities that can serve as a platform for transformed relationships to occur. Furthermore, I believe to properly challenge our neo-colonial and capitalist systems, traditionally marginalized groups of people cannot be fractured, but must stand united. From a united front, policy and systemic changes that can positively affect both communities can be advocated for, and structural change has the potential to occur.

Research Question

It was the initial aim of my research project to explore the experience of an in-person relationship building Talking Circle and video-making process, whereby Indigenous and newcomer youth reflected on a. their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples and b. the possibilities for transformed relationships between both communities. Consequently, my initial research question was as follows: “What is the relationship building experience of a Talking Circle and video-making process between Indigenous and newcomer youth, that explores Indigenous and newcomer identities and relationship building?” However, due to COVID-19, the entire research process moved online and shifted both the experience, as well as the context, of this project. Therefore, my revised research question became as follows: “How might an online relationship-building Talking Circle and video-making process between Indigenous and newcomer youth during the COVID-19 pandemic contribute to reduced ‘social distance’ between Indigenous and newcomer communities?”

Relevance to Social Work Practice

This project is highly relevant to social work practice, especially as Indigenous and newcomer communities continue to be two of the most marginalized and oppressed communities in Canada, and consequently are two of the communities most served by those in the social work profession (Khan et al., 2015). This thesis project first hopes to illuminate to social work practitioners and organizations the ways in which systemic oppression manifests itself within a neo-colonial and capitalist society, actively pitting marginalized communities against one another in competition over limited and scarce resources. The fractured relationship between Indigenous and newcomer communities is not a problem inherent within these two communities, but rather the creation of our current systems and structures.

Additionally, this project is intended to highlight the negative impact a lack of community-driven and decolonial information regarding Indigenous and newcomer communities is having on relations between these two communities, as well as on perceptions held by mainstream Canada. It is not only these two broad communities in need of greater access to community-driven, decolonial information but rather all peoples who live on Turtle Island. This (re)education of mainstream Canada is an area of direct relevance for future social work practice, as the social field must begin to shift its gaze outward, supporting not only communities oppressed by our current systems, but also those who hold power and privilege within our systems. It must become the role of social workers, who hold much power, to take on the work of transforming the ideologies and actions of those in power.

Furthermore, this project actively sought to decolonize itself, which is of crucial relevance to ongoing and future social work practice. Social work practitioners and organizations must deeply question the ways in which their practices are contributing to

ongoing oppression, be humble and vulnerable in accepting criticism and responsibility, and must centre traditionally marginalized voices as the leaders and shapers of new policy and practice. While not perfect, this project sought to shift the traditional research paradigm which places the researcher as the keeper of knowledge, to centering the youth participants as the knowledge keepers of this project. This project also provided a platform from which to amplify the voices of the youth participants – allowing their reflections to serve as a resource from which community members and organizations can learn from in the future.

Summary

This introductory chapter opened by providing an understanding of the purpose, objectives and rationale behind this research project, highlighting the fractured relationship currently experienced between Indigenous and newcomer communities and how this fractured relationship is exacerbated by a lack of decolonial, community-driven information each community receives about the other. An understanding of the desire of my thesis project to respond to this reality, and contribute to the creation of community-driven, decolonial resources was provided. This chapter then provided further rationale for this project, highlighting a desire to respond to the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, as well as an understanding of the possibilities that lie within transformed relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. This chapter then shifted into understanding my own self-location and how it relates to this project, discussing my professional roles of supporting Indigenous and newcomer youth, my experience working in pre-arrival settlement services, and how my identity as a Metis woman positions me in relation to this project. Finally, an overview of my research question was provided, alongside the relevance this project holds to social work practice.

With regards to the information covered in the following sections in this thesis, chapter two will provide a literature review, grounding this project within the current body of literature available with regards to Indigenous and newcomer relationship building. Chapter three will provide an overview of the research design of this project, providing a context of the guiding paradigms and methodologies of this project, as well as data collection methods, analysis, feedback and debriefing. Chapter four highlights the findings of this project, presenting five key themes that emerged from the reflections offered by the youth. A discussion of these findings follows in chapter five, connecting themes that emerged from the findings to the existing body of literature and unearthing new contributions these findings lend to emerging research and practice. Finally, this thesis closes with a conclusion provided in chapter six, presenting recommendations born out of the findings in this project, as well as a critical analysis of this project and the implications this project holds for social work practice. The following chapter presents a literature review conducted to examine and situate this project within the existing body of research available regarding current relations and relationship building efforts between Indigenous and newcomer communities in Canada.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature regarding current Indigenous and newcomer relations and relationship building in Canada. The information included within the literature review is broken down into two broad areas: 1.) understanding the rationale for the fractured relationship between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities in Winnipeg and 2.) examining promising areas for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. Finally, this literature review concludes with a summary of the areas examined as part of this review.

In terms of what is already known in the field, there has been relatively little peer reviewed research published specifically about relations between Indigenous and newcomer communities in Canada. There is of course an expansive body of literature written at this point on the European ‘newcomer’ relationship with Indigenous peoples, and how this relationship has been impacted by centuries of colonial control and attempted genocide. However, the complex and centuries old dynamics in the relationship between colonized and colonizer on Turtle Island does not bear much resemblance to the relationship dynamics that are present between current immigrant and refugee newcomers to Canada and Indigenous peoples (Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010). While the overall body of literature related to relationships between immigrant and refugee newcomers and Indigenous peoples across Canada remains limited, there has been increased community momentum and action coming from the Winnipeg community, which has the highest level of urban interaction between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities (Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2010). This community action has resulted in increasing levels of literature emerging

from Winnipeg over the past ten years and consequently, this literature review will focus primarily on the findings that have emerged out of Winnipeg over the past decade, while presenting the available literature from relationship building efforts across Canada wherever possible. With regards to the breadth of information covered, this literature review will begin with a comprehensive exploration of the rationale behind the current fractured relationship between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities within Winnipeg, before presenting promising areas for strengthening relationships between these two broad communities.

Rationale for Fractured Relationship between Broad Indigenous and Newcomer Communities in Winnipeg

Within the Winnipeg community, there has been increased effort and momentum by community members and several organizations to strengthen relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities over the past ten years (Alidina et al., 2020). However, the unfortunate reality largely remains that within Winnipeg, Indigenous and newcomer communities continue to begin their co-existence, largely in inner-city neighbourhoods, with low levels of interaction, misinformation, negative perceptions, misunderstandings and tension (Adam, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020; Chung, 2012; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). As this tense reality continues to persist, it is important to explore the underlying factors that are contributing to the ongoing fractured relationship between these two broad communities.

The first reality that cannot be ignored is that both Indigenous and newcomer communities in Winnipeg often occupy low socio-economic spaces, which places them into similar geographic regions of the city (Adam, 2015; Ghorayshi, 2010; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). These shared 'lower' socio-economic and geographical spaces are not inherently problematic with regards to forming positive relationships, but become

problematized by two main factors. The first complicating factor is that due to their often shared lower socio-economic and geographic spaces, both communities are forced into competition with each other over the limited and scarce resources that are available in a neo-colonial, neo-liberal, capitalist society. As a report by Circles for Reconciliation (2018) affirms, “a lasting impact of colonization is the creation of a stratified society that pits those most marginalized against one another, forcing them to compete for place, belonging and resources” (para.1).

These challenging socio-economic conditions and forced competition over scarce resources is only exacerbated for Indigenous communities, who have experienced hundreds of years of colonial oppression, and continue to not have basic treaty rights and human rights met (Alidina et al., 2020). Real, justified frustration exists with many Indigenous communities towards the continued lack of meaningful reconciliation efforts by governmental bodies, in particular when it comes to funding critical Indigenous community programs. This frustration towards governmental bodies regarding funding allocation can lead to what is known as the “scarcity mentality”, which is the “perception that more and more of the limited resources are being allocated to newcomers at the expense of resources allocated to Indigenous peoples” (Alidina et al., 2020, p.19).

Common sentiments related to resource scarcity are expressed by one research participant in a study completed by Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) in the following way, "why do we need to look after these people that are coming from different lands. We are not helping our own people in our own back yard first" (p. 96). It is important to note that scarcity related concerns by the Indigenous community are overall valid, due to actual disparities with regards to resource allocation for both communities (Alidina et al., 2020).

However, it is an unfortunate reality that is it often much easier (and more accessible) to take frustration out on the community receiving greater resource allocation, rather than

the systems that continue to underfund socio-economic programming for all marginalized communities.

This forced competition, alongside shared geographical and socio-economic spaces, is exacerbated by a second compounding factor, which is the fact that Indigenous and newcomer communities have little to no access to community-driven, decolonial information and knowledge about one another (Alidina et al., 2020; Chung, 2012; Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2015; Wong & Fong, 2012). Within the body of literature, it is made repeatedly clear that the lack of access to community-driven, decolonial information each community receives about the other is having detrimental impacts on relations between both communities. In fact, in one analysis of interviews with Indigenous and newcomer inner-city residents conducted by Ghorayshi (2010), the lack of information each community possesses about the other, and the resulting stereotyping, misinformation and isolation that come as a result, was found to be a larger problem with regards to maintaining positive relations than competition over housing, jobs and other resources. Therefore, not only are both communities placed into conditions which are rife for tension to occur, but this tension is exacerbated by the fact that each community receives no community-driven information about each other, from each other. Instead, both communities learn about one another through dominant, mainstream information sources, which are often permeated with colonial, racist and xenophobic perspectives of Indigenous and newcomer peoples (Adam 2015, Alidina et al., 2020; Ghorayshi, 2010).

For newcomers, this reality begins in the Canadian settlement system, as they are provided with an entirely colonial narrative of Canadian history, which misrepresents historical truths regarding the relationship between the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples, and glosses over the wide array of factors (residential schools, disregard for

treaty agreements, attempts at physical and cultural genocide etc.) that have created the difficult realities many Indigenous peoples continue to face today (Chung, 2012; Khan et al., 2015; Yu, 2011). One need not do more than skim the Canadian citizenship study guide, available free online⁶, to witness firsthand how direly colonial the current citizenship process is within Canada.

The colonial material found within the citizenship process closely mirrors that which is found in the pre-arrival and settlement documents prepared by the IRCC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which is an organization contracted by the IRCC to organize and implement the pre-arrival process to Canada for all refugees and many immigrants⁷. As this colonially shaped pre-arrival, settlement and citizenship materials form the basis for settlement programming within Canada, newcomers also do not often receive much, if any decolonial information regarding Canadian history or Indigenous identity. Instead, newcomers predominately receive information about Indigenous peoples through the media, social media, and other Canadians, whose opinions have often been shaped themselves by colonization and the ensuing racism that tends to go hand in hand with colonization (Adam, 2015; Chung, 2012; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009; Yu, 2011). As Henry Yu (2011) affirms:

[M]any new arrivals in Canada received very little information about the history of Aboriginal people and, in particular, of the devastating effects of governmental policies such as residential schooling; therefore, through no intention of their own, they [new immigrants] were often left only with stereotypes and the

⁶ Discover Canada: Canadian Citizenship Study Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/discover-canada/read-online.html>

⁷ Welcome to Canada: What you should know: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/welcome.pdf>

negative images of popular culture as the basis for their knowledge about Aboriginal people (p. 301).

This reflection points to the unfortunate reality that much of Canadian mainstream society continues to hold widespread colonial, paternalistic and racist views of Indigenous peoples, which get transferred to newcomers (Khan et al., 2015). As one participant interviewed by Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) affirms, “mainstream society basically carries strong racist stereotypes of Aboriginal People...the majority of them see them as lazy, not wanting to make progress, not wanting to take part in the economic benefits of this rich country and land” (p. 51).

Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) goes on to discuss a compounding factor to the adopted negative perception of Indigenous peoples by newcomer peoples, which is a fervent desire by many newcomers to rise in the racial hierarchical system in Canada and ‘get ahead’ socio-economically. As Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) explains:

Newcomers quickly realize that Aboriginals are trapped in a class with very few chances of moving up. For them, race and class intersect. Thus, Native People, in newcomers’ minds, are automatically associated with downward mobility. Through their yearning to be viewed in a more admirable light by dominant Canadians, refugees begin emulating the actions and beliefs of mainstream Canadians. Doing so, they believe, will allow them to achieve their aim of rising within the social class ladder (p.63).

This desired allyship by newcomers to Canada with dominant, mainstream Canadians to achieve upward mobilization makes sense, but can have unintended and dire consequences for Indigenous peoples. Khan (2015) expounds on these dire implications of newcomers moving into an allyship with the perspectives of dominant Canadian society, stating, “the most frightening realization is that by sustaining such oblivion

towards the rights and histories of Indigenous peoples, Canadian newcomers become active participants in promoting the colonizer agenda and ultimately become colonizers themselves” (p.149). This reflection perceptively explains the unfortunate and often unintended reality of a newcomer allyship with mainstream Canadian culture, which is the furthering of colonial oppression on Indigenous communities.

With regards to perceptions of newcomers held by Indigenous communities, it is an unfortunate but important reality to first name that we are living in a time where xenophobia, misinformation and racism towards immigrant and refugee peoples is on the rise globally (Landmann, Gaschler & Rohmann, 2019). This unfortunate reality is leading to increased negative perceptions of newcomers by many across the world. With that being said, with regards to Indigenous perceptions of newcomer peoples, the body of literature overall shows that Indigenous communities hold a mixed perception of newcomers (Adam, 2015; Chung, 2012; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). There certainly can be negative and xenophobic stereotypes that exist about newcomers from within Indigenous communities, but often perceptions are more nuanced as the term ‘newcomer’ refers to a vast number of people from many different countries and perceptions vary between different groups of people, from different places, under different conditions (Adam, 2015; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009). Depending on the situation, Indigenous peoples often demonstrate a more tolerant and accepting perspective towards newcomer peoples, understanding that newcomer peoples need support to adjust to life in Canada, and are often coming under stressful or dire circumstances (Adam, 2015; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009).

While the mixed perspectives of newcomers held by Indigenous peoples could point to more of an openness to form stronger relationships, Indigenous peoples tend to stay away from newcomers as they can have a well-founded fear of the ‘other’ and of the

'newcomer' in general (Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). Since Indigenous peoples have the experience of being taken advantage in the past by European newcomers to Canada, they are often rightly fearful to have the same experience occur again. This is further complicated by the fact that this exploitation that began in the past is still ongoing in the present, as persistent experiences of displacement, broken treaty rights, lack of meaningful reconciliation efforts and racism continue to impact Indigenous peoples today (Alidina et al., 2020). Therefore, as a result of past and current harms, Indigenous peoples have the tendency to stick to themselves and do not easily branch out to form new relationships with other communities. As Gyepi-Garbrah et al. (2014) affirm, "Even among those (Indigenous peoples) not new to Winnipeg, they had learned over time through persistent racism in the city, that it was best to interact only with Aboriginal peoples in their own neighbourhoods" (p. 1804). Ovide Mercredi (2015) provides a summary of the complex feelings many Indigenous peoples hold when it comes to forming relationships with newcomers in the following way:

In so far as the new Canadians are concerned – we've never had a dialogue with you yet. In part because we don't know where to begin. In part because we have not finished the old one. In part because we don't know where you will stand, with us or with the old conversation. That begs the question, if you are a new Canadian do you understand the history of this country or do you have a single understanding as you were taught by Canadians? Are you eager to understand our part of the history? So where do you stand on the issue of this relationship that is still outstanding? (p. 50).

This quote illuminates the real and well-founded fears many Indigenous peoples have regarding the information newcomers are learning about Canadian history and them as a

people - colonial or decolonial - and how that different learning directly impacts the ways in which they are treated.

Promising Areas for Strengthening Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Communities

With a base understanding of the compounding factors leading to the current fractured relationship between Indigenous and newcomer peoples, this literature review will now move into an overview of promising areas for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. To begin, the largest promising area cited within the body of literature for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities is enhancing the opportunities each community possesses to receive decolonial, community-driven information about the other community (Alidina et al., 2020; Chung, 2012; Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Khan et al. 2015; Wong & Fong, 2012).

One of the main ways cited in the body of literature to increase the level of community-driven information that newcomer communities receive about Indigenous peoples is for the settlement process to be decolonized, and for Indigenous communities to be given the opportunity to re-assert their position as hosts to these lands (Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). It is the unfortunate reality that even though Indigenous peoples were the original hosts to these lands, they have been entirely removed from this traditional role. Gyepi-Garbrah (2010) describes the implications of the removal of Indigenous peoples from this traditional role in the following way:

After subjecting Aboriginal peoples to colonial rule, the European Newcomers, now the mainstream society, have been managing Newcomer settlement agencies to assist new immigrants or present day Newcomers to integrate into Canadian

cities. In contrast, Aboriginal peoples are out of the scene here. Consequently, they rarely have an opportunity to interface with present-day Newcomers when Newcomers first arrive. The story of Canada, and Canadians, that Newcomers perceive, is not coming from the original receptor communities of this land (p.83). This process of re-entering the welcoming process to these lands has been named “territororientation” by Alidina et al. (2020), who affirm the importance of Indigenous re-entry into the settlement process, but recognize that this would take high levels of energy, leadership and resources (likely without appropriate funding) to meaningfully re-enter this space. Having said that, re-shifting the balance of power, so that Indigenous organizations have a defined and important role in the settlement process is presented as key way in which community-driven knowledge and understanding can be shared between both communities from the moment newcomers arrive on these lands, greatly enhancing possibilities for strengthened relationships (Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014).

Another way in which to increase the amount of community-driven information each community receives about each other, as well as provide opportunities for enhanced empathy and understanding to occur, is through engaging in Dialogue Circles, or Talking Circles, together (Alidina et al., 2020; Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Sutherland, 2012; Wong & Fong, 2012). As Suleman and Zuluaga (2011) explain, “a Dialogue Circle is a discussion group where interested participants get together to talk about a particular topic... a Dialogue Circle creates a safe space where participants can engage in honest discussion without feeling defensive or criticized” (p. 7). While it can take effort to ensure that Dialogue Circles truly are a safe space for all participants from each broad community to engage in, these spaces hold great possibilities for transforming relationships.

One of the main reasons for the possibilities of Dialogue Circles to enhance relationships lies in the fact that both broad communities share many similar experiences that can be unearthed within these spaces. The often-similar experiences of colonization, racism, prejudice, human rights violations, displacement and a complex relationship to 'home', socioeconomic challenges as well as shared cultural, traditional, and communal values can all serve as connecting points while engaging in dialogue together (Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2015; Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Sutherland, 2012). Furthermore, dialogue circles naturally draw out stories, which can be a powerful way to see each other's humanity and connect with one another. As Alidina et al. (2020) affirm, "Storytelling is a powerful method to communicate complex experiences and values across cultural groups. Considering that newcomers and Indigenous communities both have a rich oral history tradition through which values and culture are transmitted, opportunities exist to make connections" (p.13).

One of the most wide-scale uses of Dialogue Circles for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities occurred within the *Vancouver Dialogues: First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Immigrant Communities* project, which involved over two thousand participants over a nineteen-month period (Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011). Born out of the recognition that Indigenous and newcomer communities' understandings of one another in the wider Vancouver area were fueled by stereotypes and a lack of information, this project utilized Dialogue Circles, alongside cultural exchanges, to strengthen relationships between these two broad communities (Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Wong & Fong, 2012). The Dialogue Circles created space for ten to fifteen participants to share stories, experiences and perspectives together in an intimate setting and "over time, a bond of trust and communication developed between circle participants" (Wong & Fong, 2012, p.20). While this has been the largest scale use

of Dialogue Circles in a project, they have been utilized extensively within numerous community relationship building projects of varying sizes within the Winnipeg community over the past several years (Adam, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014).

Lastly, while the importance of formal educational and programmatic spaces to create opportunities for strengthened relationships is cited, a recognition of the need of informal spaces to transform relationships is also highlighted (Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Wong & Fong, 2012). This realization comes from the understanding that while formal spaces are necessary, the accompanying ‘stiffness’ that comes with formality can often permeate the space, creating an atmosphere where it is difficult for people to truly relax and open themselves up to new possibilities. Alidina et al. (2020) affirm the limitations of formal spaces, and the necessity of informal spaces in the following way:

The need for safe spaces where authentic experiences can form is of prime importance. Members of newcomer and Indigenous communities can come together in such spaces to learn about each other. At the present time, spaces supporting cross-cultural dialogue and interaction are for the most part generated by organizations. Even though these are valuable in their own right, these spaces created through programming offer a ‘controlled experience’ rather than an ‘authentic experience’ (p.12-13).

Furthermore, centering these informal spaces around sharing cultural elements: food, ceremonies, song and dance can all be ways in which to help people enter this relaxed ‘authentic’ space, while learning about one another and finding common ground (Adam, 2015; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Wong & Fong, 2012). While it takes much community-driven effort in order for these informal spaces to

emerge, there is no doubt that the relaxed atmosphere created offers many possibilities with regards to bridging relations between Indigenous and newcomer communities.

These promising relationship building areas cited within the body of literature hold many possibilities for transforming relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. However, it is important to note that while these are the most common themes cited throughout the body of literature, the report “Fostering Safe Spaces for Dialogue and Relationship-building Between Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples: Wise practices for the relationship-building process and recommendations for the development of an orientation toolkit” by Alidina et al. (2020), just released several months ago and available free online, offer ten wise practices for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer peoples. All of the wise practices outlined in that report that arose from meaningful and community-driven consultation within Winnipeg, all deserve attention and consideration when exploring the area of relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities.

Summary

This chapter opened by examining the rationale underlying the fractured relationship that exists between broad Indigenous and newcomer communities. It demonstrated that the low-socio economic and geographic spaces often shared by these two broad communities are problematized by forced competition over scarce resources and the lack of community-driven, decolonial information each community receives about the other. This chapter then moved into providing an overview of promising areas described in the body of literature with regards to strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. Enhancing opportunities each community possesses to receive decolonial, community-driven information about the other

community was first presented, with a decolonization of the settlement system and accompanying Indigenous territorientation highlighted as one key area in which this can occur. Secondly, the utilization of Dialogue Circles to enhance relationships was presented, highlighting their capacity to allow for the sharing of community-driven knowledge, stories and experiences as well as the possibilities of connection over shared experiences. Finally, the need for both formal and informal spaces to strengthen relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities was named, and attention was drawn to the resource “Fostering Safe Spaces for Dialogue and Relationship-building Between Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples: Wise practices for the relationship-building process and recommendations for the development of an orientation toolkit” by Alidina et al. (2020), for further connection into wise relationship building practices between these two broad communities.

The following chapter provides an overview of the research design of this project, outlining the theories, paradigm, methodologies and methods that guided this project, as well as the recruitment and data collection, data analysis, feedback and debriefing processes.

Chapter 3: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research design of this project, beginning by outlining the guiding theoretical frameworks and paradigms of this project, and describing the research methodologies of this project. This chapter then moves into a description of the research participants, alongside participant recruitment and compensation. Finally, this chapter will close with a presentation of data collection methods, as well as data analysis, feedback and debriefing and an overview of the ethics process during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Guiding Theoretical Frameworks and Paradigms

This research project is grounded in two theoretical frameworks: critical theory and decolonial theory. I have drawn on critical theory to help guide my research process as it offers an imaginative window into the possibilities that can emerge from deconstructing and reconstructing the ideologies, systems and structures that make up our current realities. Critical theory provides a foundation from which to question dominant discourses that, “might be seen as simply ‘common sense,’ or they might be the taken-for-granted assumptions which are a part of our cultural heritage or particular environment” (Fook, 2016, p. 120). As Fook (2016) explains, most of what enables discourses to continue to be dominant, is the extent to which they go unquestioned. Within the case of the current relationship between Indigenous and newcomer communities, critical theory provides an opportunity to shift our gaze away from the localized experiences of these two broad communities and out towards the dominant discourses that have contributed to this fractured relationship.

I have also chosen critical theory as one of the guiding theoretical frameworks for this project as I believe it is imperative for those in the social work field to engage in practice from a critical perspective. It is the practical reality that social workers are often hired into well-established systems, and can become pulled into normalized structural rhythms that can be oppressive in nature (Payne, 2005). Rather than seeking to critique and transform problematic hegemonic practices, many social workers can become complicit in their existence and proliferation. As Herz and Johansson (2012) affirm, “social work is deeply embedded in hegemonic practices, taken-for-grantedness and everyday-life commonsense views” (p. 528). As a result of the ease in which social work practice can slip into the enabling of oppressive structures, I believe it is a vital practice for those entering the social work field to adopt a critical lens, seeking opportunities to transform discourse, practice and systems in ways that create greater equity and justice for those oppressed.

With regards to decolonial theory, it is important to first note that I am intentionally using the term decolonial, rather than anti-colonial or post-colonial for the following reasons. First, I lean away from the term anti-colonial, as this term places the colonized in a permanent relationship to the colonizer, limiting the imaginative possibilities that exist outside of this relationship. I also turn away from the term post-colonial, as it is apparent from the continued active oppression of Indigenous peoples in Canada by the Canadian government (one stark example being the ongoing boil water advisories in over 100 First Nations communities) that colonization is still very much a present reality (The Council of Canadians Acting for Social Justice, 2019).

Decolonial theory is a critical theory that is fundamentally rooted in the confrontation and delinking from what has been popularly termed the “colonial matrix of power” (Mignolo, 2011, p.xv). Much like critical theory, decolonial theory operates

from the theoretical premise that since colonial ideologies, structures and realities have been constructed, they can also be deconstructed (Mignolo, 2011). However, decolonial theory is also based in relational care, casting its gaze to relations in the past, present and future (Mukavetz, 2018). It seeks to honour histories of colonization, the present realities of Indigenous peoples who are actively engaging in healing and the ongoing work of resistance and self-determination, as well as the lives of future generations. As Mukavetz (2018) affirms, “within decolonial frameworks, the ultimate goal is to create, sustain, and maintain a habitable space for present and future generations—practicing decolonial theory is a form of care and love for ancestors and relatives” (p. 126).

Tied to its call to deconstruct and reconstruct colonial realities, decolonial theory is also inherently an embodied and action-oriented theory. It is not enough to teach and theorize on paper, decolonial theory must be lived. As Driskill (2015) explains,

Learning happens through our bodies, through embodied practice, through doing. Acts of survivance are tangible, embodied, and material acts that continue our lifeways as Indigenous people. Decolonization is learned through embodied practices that restore cultural memory to our bodies and communities (p. 57).

The action that is embedded in decolonial theory guided my project as I imagined ways for the youth participants to create a tangible resource that would serve to contribute to past, present and future relationship building efforts. Furthermore, decolonial theory helped guide this project in imagining how it might contribute to the ongoing project of deconstructing colonial realities in Canada, while offering a window into new transformative possibilities that can come from strengthened relations between these two broad communities.

In terms of frameworks or paradigms that have guided this research project, I have approached this research project from an Indigenous paradigm, and have explored

what it means to be a Metis researcher within the context of this project. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), an Indigenous research agenda has four purposes: to decolonize, transform, mobilize and heal Indigenous communities from the effects of colonial oppression. Throughout the entirety of this research process, I have used these four purposes as guiding principles as I have worked to actively decolonize the project as much as possible, while seeking to contribute to the transformation and healing of relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities as a way for increased solidarity and mobilization to occur.

I also have kept relationality and reciprocity at the forefront of this project, which are both central aspects to an Indigenous research paradigm (Wilson, 2008). I embodied relational care through the visiting way methodology employed in this project, and sought to demonstrate the gratitude and value I have for each relationship with the research participants by being as trustworthy, honest, present and supportive as possible in my interactions with each youth. I honoured the knowledge each youth brought to this project, and sought to provide a safe space for this knowledge to emerge in its own way, recognizing that “knowledge is alive and dynamic” and that “Indigenous knowledges emerge and exist within a universe that is relational and responsive” (Restoule, McGregor & Johnston, 2018, p. 6).

I was hopeful to demonstrate reciprocity by offering food, bus tickets, a welcoming physical space and monetary compensation each day, but most of these aspects of the project shifted due to the online realities created by COVID-19. However, I was still able to offer an honorarium that demonstrated gratitude and reciprocity for the knowledge each youth gifted to this project, as well as to the Indigenous and newcomer Knowledge Keepers and the video editor. On a personal level, it was also important for me to ground myself in prayer and ceremony at different stages of the research project

(offering tobacco, smudging, feasting, receiving guidance from Knowledge Keepers), and also by locating myself firmly into my research. Lastly, I spent time reflecting on what it means to be a Metis researcher and how the experience of being Metis related to this research project, and those reflections are offered within my self-location section.

Research Methodologies

My research project was grounded in three methodologies: the visiting way (Gaudet, 2019), storytelling and arts-based. These methodologies supported a primary goal of mine, which was to decolonize as much of this research project as possible. To begin, Janice Cindy Gaudet (2019) articulated the visiting way methodology, which is based on her relationship with the Omushkego people, from Moose Cree First Nation during her doctoral research. This methodology places relationality at its core, recentres Metis and Cree ways of being, and “presents a practical and meaningful methodology that fosters *milo pimatisiwin*, living and being well in relation” (Gaudet, 2019, p. 47). From the Indigenous paradigm in which my research is grounded, this methodology draws on the relational forms of knowing, doing and being that are central to an Indigenous worldview.

Visiting, as Gaudet explains, happens in the ordinary, everyday experiences of being in relation to one another within a community. As Gaudet (2019) describes, “(visiting) creates and fortifies connections that unify and build community from the ground up. It is how humour, silence, news, concerns, pain, knowledge, ideas and arguments are disseminated at a grassroots/ground level” (Gaudet, 2019, p.53). The informal, safe atmosphere created when visiting provides opportunities to share and receive news, argue well with one another, and learn new insights and teachings – whether they be ordinary or profound. Furthermore, visiting, according to Nishnaabeg

scholar Leanne Simpson (2014) is “sharing of oneself through story, through principled and respectful consensual reciprocity with another living being” (p. 18). This storytelling aspect to visiting is foundational to an Indigenous worldview, which recognizes that humans learn best through stories, as our imaginations, memory and empathy all become activated in the storytelling process (Wilson, 2008).

The relaxed and safe atmosphere created by visiting, alongside its inherent capacity to invoke learning through storytelling, also holds great possibilities for resolving arguments and strengthening relationships. Gaudet (2019) discusses these possibilities as she highlights the forthcoming work of Métis scholar Anna Flaminio on ‘kinship visiting’, which is based on a Métis-Cree understanding of *Wahkohtowin* laws. These laws centre around shared responsibility to both human and non-human kinship relations and from an understanding based in *Wahkohtowin* laws, Flaminio explains that ‘kinship-visiting’ can “resolve disputes, renew relationships and foster safety” (as quoted in Gaudet, 2019, p.49). When visiting, a safe and generous space is created – one that allows people to let down their walls and open themselves to new learning. In this space, people are invited to argue well, to come to new understandings, and to receive deeper knowledge of one another in ways that can be transformative.

It would be remiss for me not to mention that the visiting way methodology articulated by Janice Gaudet (2019) also finds resonance in the work of Corrymeela in Northern Ireland, where my wife and I spent nine months volunteering. Corrymeela is Northern Ireland’s oldest peace and reconciliation centre, which was founded just before ‘The Troubles’ began in the 1970s (which signaled 30 years of armed conflict between Catholics and Protestants) and offered a safe, non-sectarian space for relationships between Catholics and Protestants to be transformed throughout the conflict (Tyler, 2015). Now, ‘The Troubles’ have officially ended, but sectarianism lives on and

therefore so does the work of Corrymeela in Northern Ireland, as it engages in sharing the wisdom it has learned from 50 years of transforming conflicted relationships to groups and organizations around the world.

A main component of the wisdom that Corrymeela has learned resonates with Janice Gaudet's articulation of the visiting way, and has fundamentally shaped the ways in which I understand conflict transformation. The Corrymeela Community, like Gaudet, has come to understand that the majority of relationship building happens through the informal spaces created by their foundational praxis of relational hospitality and welcome (Tyler, 2015). As affirmed on the Corrymeela (2019) reference website, "Through hospitality, welcome, and radical inclusion, our mission is to be a 'safe harbour' in which anxious or fractured communities are able to encounter each other in a transformative way" (p. 3). Over shared cups of tea, activities that induce humour and story-telling sessions that open up each other's humanity, all within a physical space that is welcoming, safe and calm, people are given the opportunity to open themselves up to transformative possibilities.

It was my hope to create a physical and programmatic space that embodied the hospitality, generosity and safety that allows for people to enter a relaxed space, where the transformative possibilities within the visiting way have room to emerge. While this was not possible in the end due to the online realities of COVID-19, I still made effort to create a relaxed space, conducive to visiting within the online group Talking Circle. I also chose to make a key methodological distinction as I moved into the six one-one-one recorded Zoom conversations that occurred with research participants, which was to approach my interactions with the youth as conversations, as opposed to interviews. This methodological shift is rooted in the *Conversational Method* as outlined by Kovach (2010). Kovach (2010) describes that the *Conversational Method* of data collection is

significant to Indigenous methodologies as “it is a method of gathering knowledge based on oral story telling tradition congruent with an Indigenous paradigm. It involves a dialogic participation that holds a deep purpose of sharing story as a means to assist others. It is relational at its core” (p. 40). Approaching these interactions through the *Conversational Method*, as opposed to as interviews, opened up myself and the research participants to a relational space that allowed us to embody the visiting way. The impact that approaching these online interactions through the *Conversational Method*, rather than interviews, had on this project will be discussed further in the critical evaluation section of my conclusion.

The visiting way methodology finds natural harmony with the second methodology that I employed, which is storytelling. Storytelling is a central focus of Indigenous epistemologies and research approaches. As Iseke (2013) explains, “story is a practice in Indigenous cultures that sustains communities, validates experiences and epistemologies, expresses experiences of Indigenous peoples, and nurtures relationships and the sharing of knowledge” (p. 559). Stories are relational and reciprocal, naturally drawing people in, and opening us up to our shared experience of being human. In hearing the stories of others, we find resonance and connection to our own stories and experiences. This creates space where preconceived ideas and misperceptions can be challenged and changed, and where relationships have the possibility to be changed as well.

Outside of its transformational potential, storytelling has been found to be a methodology that is “timely, accurate and culturally relevant for many Indigenous communities” (Datta, 2017). Rather than collecting data in ways that are narrow, or limit control over expression, seeking data through story allows the teller to have full autonomy over the telling of their experience. Through story, research participants

maintain full control and choice about what information is shared and most importantly, how it is shared. As Datta (2017) affirms, “through traditional storytelling, Indigenous peoples are empowered, and research becomes ‘ours’ rather than ‘theirs’ for ‘our own communities and reflects Indigenous knowledges and empowers ourselves” (p. 25).

Storytelling, besides being a culturally appropriate and relevant methodology for Indigenous peoples, is also a culturally safe and appropriate for newcomer peoples. As Scroggie (2009) explains, “storytelling is a traditional art form which has been practiced for thousands of years in every society and culture known to humankind” (p. 76). Every culture has particular storytelling traditions embedded into the fabric of that culture. Providing the space for research participants to access and share their realities through stories opens up space for these traditions to be honoured and accessed, while decolonizing the research process as control shifts from researcher, to research participants. Furthermore, in the context of my project it is my hope that not only will the participants learn from the stories of one another and the Knowledge Keepers, but that the impact their stories have on one another and the wider community might create space for a new, shared story to emerge.

The final methodology that guided this research project was an arts-based methodology. Arts-based research recognizes that forms of representation are both constrained and made possible by the form that is chosen. Rather than utilizing expression in forms that can be limiting, “arts-based research is an effort to extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable” (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 1). While there is no doubt that written art can be profound and transformative, art allows for research to be displayed in ways that extend outside of black and white ink on paper, and this can be liberating for both those creating the research, and those consuming the research.

Art can be embodied in many different formats, and in my thesis project, the ‘art’ that is being produced is the video project created from the reflections offered by the Indigenous and newcomer youth. The utilization of video within social research has been expanding in the past several years, as video production has essentially become free through the use of existing technological devices, and as video quality continues to improve (Jewitt, 2012). Furthermore, the use of video can provide strong possibilities for research projects as the video format allows for a detailed capturing of expression. As Jewitt (2012) explains, “the qualities of video differ from any other form of data (recording). It provides a fine-grained multimodal record of an event detailing gaze, expression, body posture, and gesture” (p. 2). With regards to this project, all of the elements of the video: the ways in which the youth choose to tell their stories, the non-verbal communication elements (facial expression, tone, energy), the music chosen and editing decisions, all hopefully contribute to a stimulating and impactful learning experience for viewers.

Outside of the varied learning opportunities provided for viewers within in a video format, the act of participating in a video project offers beneficial artistic learning experiences for the youth participants. As Cajete (1994) explains, “we are continuously engaged in the art of making meaning and creating our world through the unique processes of human learning” (p. 25). In this project, the youth are engaging in the art of meaning making in a visual format, gaining the experience of actively and tangibly creating the world they live in.

I am also drawn to art as a research methodology for the ways in which it can tell old and new stories, the ways that it can strengthen intersectionality, and for the ways it can express human realities while calling for change. As Flicker et al. (2013) affirm:

Arts-based research does not seek to find universal truths or uncomplicated solutions. On the contrary, the very strength of using arts inquiry is that it reveals multiplicities, strengthens intersectional identities, creates accessibility, and tells the stories of those who have often been unheard or whose stories have been erased. The power of art is in its evocation of meaning, and in its ability to heal, to provoke, and to stimulate change (p.29).

Art is not meant to be complacent. Art asks for a reaction, for change, for new realities to be unearthed. It is the hope of this project that the stories and experiences shared within this video both heal past hurts, while creating a desire for action.

Art also provides decolonizing possibilities for a research project, which contributes to the desire for my project to actively decolonize itself. Instead of historical western research methodologies where the researcher is viewed as the holder and distributor of knowledge, arts-based approaches can allow participants to “participate equally in the decision-making process; learn and share new skills; create counter narratives that make visible previously hidden or silenced aspects of their identity or experience; and build on or reclaim their cultural identities or cultural practices” (Flicker et al., 2013, p. 29). The ability for art to transfer knowledge and power to the research participants, allowing them to express silenced aspects of their identities and experiences in ways they choose, offers decolonizing and transformative possibilities for research projects.

Furthermore, the identities of Indigenous and newcomer peoples in Canada have historically been expressed to general public, and to each other, largely through a colonial lens. This project directly challenges this colonial representation, by fundamentally allowing Indigenous and newcomer youth to shape their own expression of their identities. It is critical to provide space for those who have been oppressed to gain

platforms to express their experiences and identities in ways they choose, and arts-based research provides this platform. Finally, inherent within art is the tangible creation of something new. It is my hope that the arts-based resource created can mirror the hope of a new relationship between Indigenous and newcomer communities.

It is important for me to express that I originally was hopeful for the youth to have full autonomy within the two-day workshop to fill the three sections of the video however they decided as a group. Unfortunately, the possibilities for full creative control lessened as the project moved rapidly online and communication logistics became challenging. Outside of the online Talking Circle, this project moved from more of a group project, to a one-on-one project with regards to the shooting of video footage. While possibilities for full creative expression may not have come to fruition due to COVID-19 realities, the youth were still able to maintain complete freedom to express their identities and experiences as either an Indigenous or a newcomer person, alongside their thoughts on relationship building, however they chose. Furthermore, I sought to ensure that the video clips stayed as intact as possible in the videos, in order to maintain the integrity of each reflection and story shared. I do believe that while creative possibilities did become more limited due to COVID-19, the arts-based nature of this project still contributed to a final project that was meaningful and holds transformative possibilities.

Research Participants

My research involved Indigenous and newcomer youth, between the ages of 16-24. With regards to inclusion and exclusion criteria, for Indigenous youth I decided that the only inclusion criteria should be that they self-identify as an Indigenous person⁸.

⁸ There are three distinct groups of Indigenous peoples in Canada: First Nations, Inuit and Metis (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2020).

Each Indigenous person in Canada has been impacted by colonization, racism, displacement, loss of culture, language and land, and as these are central connecting themes to the broad newcomer experience, there need to be no further inclusion criteria added. With regards to newcomer youth, the inclusion criteria included youth who self-identified as having either immigrant or refugee experience, recognizing that both groups of newcomers share many of the same barriers in Canada (including racism, displacement, colonization, language barriers, underemployment etc.) and it is these barriers that offer connection points to many of the realities Indigenous peoples face. As this was a video-making project, further inclusion criteria for youth from both communities was a willingness to have their image appear in a video that would enter the public domain. Therefore, the converse exclusion criteria for participation in this project were: youth who did not identify as Indigenous or having immigrant or refugee experience, youth who were outside of the age range of 16-24, and youth who were not comfortable with their image being including in a video that would enter the public domain.

As the term 'youth' encompasses a wide range of developmental stages and often ages, it is important to expound on what I mean when I say 'youth.' In 1985, The United Nations defined the age-range of 'youth' as 16-24, and this has remained a popular categorical definition (UNDESAY, 2019). Initially, I was going to narrow the age range from 16-24 to 18-24, in order to provide a platform for youth in a similar age and development range to engage in this project together. However, due to some difficulty recruiting enough Indigenous youth participants, I expanded the age range to be 16-24.

With regards to the number of youth involved in this research project, during the conceptualization of the in-person project I wanted to strike a balance between having enough youth to provide a robust knowledge base for the project, while keeping the

numbers at a small enough level that would allow for the possibility for relationships to be formed. Therefore, I sought to recruit 12 youth for my research project (six Indigenous and six newcomer), as that number seemed to provide a good balance between having enough experience and perspectives, while still being small enough to form relationships. It also allowed room for the project to still move ahead in case attrition occurred. Even though some of the original research participants were not able to participate in the online version of this project, I was fortunately still able to have 12 youth participate in the project. While the 12 youth did not end up having the opportunity to engage in a relationship building weekend together, this number of youth still ended up offering a good number of perspectives for inclusion in the video, as well as a strong amount of data. Lastly, I originally sought to have relative gender parity in the group; however, after realizing that two of the youth identified in ways that extended out of the western gender binary concept, and as the project shifted online and the gender dynamics became less relevant, I let go of having relative gender parity as a goal for this project. Having said that, there did end up being a wide range of gender identities included in this research project, which helped to offer varied perspectives and experiences.

Recruitment and Compensation

I recruited newcomer youth for the project specifically from the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg Community Action Network (YCAN) and Newcomer Youth Wellness Programs. As I am currently on a maternity leave from co-coordinating the Newcomer Youth Wellness Program, it was very important for me to outline my specific role as a researcher with the youth participants in these programs and how that role differs from my role in the program. Furthermore, it was critical for me to make explicit that there was no pressure for participation in this project, as well as no penalty for not

participating. There ended up being enthusiastic desire from many of the youth participants in these programs to participate, and consequently I did not have a difficult time recruiting newcomer youth for the project. With regards to Indigenous youth, I had a bit more of a challenge time finding youth who were willing and able to commit to the weekend project, and ended up casting a wide recruitment net from which to find enough participants. The Indigenous youth that ended up participating in this project came from connections through the following community programs: Spence Neighbourhood Association, Social Planning Council, the Indigenous Students Association at the University of Winnipeg, Action Therapy and the Eagle's Nest Program of Urban Circle.

I also recruited one Indigenous Knowledge Keeper⁹ from Social Planning Council - Immigration Partnership Winnipeg and one newcomer Knowledge Keeper from the Newcomer Department at the YMCA to join the online Talking Circle in this project, and share their wisdom, knowledge and experiences with the youth participants and myself. I became connected to the Indigenous Knowledge Keeper through staff connections at Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, and she generously offered support and guidance to this project, alongside connection to two of the youth project participants.

The co-coordinator of the program I was on maternity leave from at the YMCA connected me to the newcomer Knowledge Keeper that had been hired as an interpreter for the Newcomer Department at the YMCA since I had left. The newcomer Knowledge Keeper is connected into community development work within Winnipeg and brought a rich perspective to the online Talking Circle. I also recruited a video editor, who is a personal friend of mine, to edit the final video. He works in a professional capacity as an

⁹ Knowledge Keepers are the keepers of Indigenous knowledges that have been passed down from generation to generation since time immemorial (The Wicahitowin Conference Committee, 2017). This term is being used for the community member that offered their knowledge and wisdom to this project from both communities, recognizing that cultures around the world have Knowledge Keepers that pass down traditions, customs, laws, spirituality and knowledge from one generation to the next.

editor for the Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute in Winnipeg, and brought with him a wealth of editing experience to this project. I provided each of the Knowledge Keepers, as well as the video editor, with an honorarium that demonstrated my gratitude for their support of this project. Lastly, it is important to note that to ensure confidentiality within the entirety of the research process, I asked each of the Knowledge Keepers and the video editor to sign Oaths of Confidentiality (Appendix C), to ensure that the information and reflections they received from the youth participants were kept confidential

With regards to recruitment tools, I first created a youth-friendly research poster (Appendix A) that I sent out to numerous organizations online, alongside an email script for organization staff. Alongside the recruitment poster, I also created a recruitment email and in-person script (Appendix B) and presented my research project in person at the YMCA's Y-CAN and Newcomer Youth Wellness programs, to program staff at the Eagle's Nest program at Urban Circle, and at the quarter-annual Action Therapy meeting. With regards to reciprocity and compensation for the youth engaging in this project, the initial project was going to encompass one weekend (Saturday-Sunday), from 11-4pm each day. For that time commitment, I was going to provide the youth with \$25 per day, alongside bus tickets each day, snacks and lunch. However, due to the online shift due to COVID-19, I ended up providing each youth with a \$25 honorarium. For the youth who could join the Talking Circle, that honorarium was offered for their participation in the Talking Circle, alongside the accompanying self-filmed videos they sent me to include in the video project. For the youth who were not able to participate in the online Talking Circle, that \$25 honorarium was provided for their participation in either a video-recorded Zoom conversation online, or an audio-recorded phone conversation with accompanying self-filmed videos.

Data Collection Methods

For my research project, I collected the data required for the project in several different ways: through arts-based data collection, participant observation, audio-recording a pre-interview question as well as one conversation, a video-recorded online Zoom Talking Circle and one-on-one video-recorded Zoom conversations. To begin, it was a goal of mine to utilize arts-based data collection methods in this project, as they, “aim to create a more equal relationship between researchers and participants, in which the contents of the research (product) and its interpretation (process) belong to the participant and his or her community” (Flicker et al., 2014, p. 28). The ability of art creation to balance power between the researchers and participants, as well as its ability to provide a non-prescriptive freedom of expression has decolonizing potential, as it reverses the norms embedded within traditional western research, which posits the researcher as the holder and disseminator of knowledge.

In the context of this research project, the art created in this project is the video that was created out of the content and reflections provided by the youth. Initially, I was going to provide the overarching structure of three video sections, which the youth could fill with creative content however they wished. The original three sections were going to be: an exploration of the Indigenous youths’ expression of their identities as Indigenous peoples, an exploration of the newcomer youths’ expression of their identities as newcomer peoples, and an exploration of the potential for transformed relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. My original hope for this project was for the youth to possess high levels of creative freedom within those three sections, receiving the possibility to collaborate together, filling and editing those sections as they saw fit.

Unfortunately, due to the social distance difficulties imposed by COVID-19, as well as real time constraints with project timelines (five days to adjust and implement new data collection methods), this original plan had to be adjusted. Possibilities for full collaboration and creation just were not possible, and consequently I re-focused and narrowed down the three sections, within which the youth were still able to provide whatever content and reflections they wished to fill those sections. I ended up choosing the three sections: “What do you feel people misunderstand about you as an Indigenous or newcomer person?”, “What do you wish people knew about you as an Indigenous or newcomer person?” and “Why is it important to strengthen relationships between Indigenous and newcomer people?” as sections that would allow room for experiences and reflections based on identities, and relationship building in a short video format. Furthermore, my original hope for the project was to have one youth from each broad community edit the video alongside the video editor and myself. However, due to time sensitivities and logistical difficulties, I ended up sending relevant content to the video editor and having them edit the video alone. Having said that, I was able to send the video to the youth prior to its dissemination for their feedback and consent to release the video to the public, and received positive feedback from each of the youth.

While the creative possibilities for the youth to express themselves were more limited within the online iteration of this project, the reflections the youth offered that went on to shape the video were powerful and while of course held nuanced differences, also held many parallels to each other. This has provided a dynamic structure to the final video, as reflections from the youth from each community are offered interchangeably, and the viewer is able to see the direct parallels as well as unique differences within the reflections offered by the youth from both broad communities. Regardless of the creative and youth-driven limitations created by the quick move online, I was able to pull robust

data from the video content provided by each youth, as the video format allows for emotions, pauses, speech pacing, tone and facial expressions all to be captured intact. Furthermore, regarding the content that went into the final video, all of the above-mentioned dynamics also get transferred to the viewer of the video, which allows for a strong connection to the research participants reflections to occur.

This leads into my next data collection method, which was participant observation. Participant observation is inherently a qualitative research data collection methodology that is interactive and relatively unstructured, involving “the active engagement of the researcher with the members of the community that he or she wishes to study, typically as an equal member of the group” (Fine, 2015, p. 530). It is, as Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) explain, “in some ways the most natural and the most challenging of qualitative data collection methods” (p.7). As Guest et al. (2013) goes onto explain, this data collection method is natural in that it connects the researcher to the most basic human experiences, exploring the hows and whys of human behavior. However, as Guest et al. (2013) affirm, the challenge is that “when we are participant observers in a more formal sense, we must, at least a little, systematize and organize an inherently fluid process” (p. 2). It can be a balance and a challenge within participation observation to maintain a fully present energy, while analyzing behavior.

I did at points find it a balance to be fully engaged in conversations with the participants and the online Talking Circle (discussed further below), while at the same time analyzing verbal and non-verbal communication. However, I found participant observation offered strength to both the initial one-on-one meetings I engaged in with youth, as well as in the group online Zoom Talking Circle and one-on-one Zoom conversations. I found that engaging in empathetic participant observation helped me to be more in tune with the group and individual dynamics, especially when it came to

engaging with youth in the project. Several times it appeared clear that a youth was uncomfortable, or out of their comfort zone with a question that was asked and empathetic participant observation helped me to check in immediately to both verify their emotion, and ameliorate that which was difficult or uncomfortable for them. I had originally planned to keep a journal and write down observations within the context of the in-person group Talking Circles, and group collaborative video-process before verifying them with the youth later. However, the pared down online process created a context where it felt natural to check participant observations immediately, to better understand and verify the experiences of the youth as they occurred.

The next way in which I collected my data was through audio-recording. Prior to COVID-19, I planned to audio record the pre-interview question as well as the Talking Circles, but ended up only audio-recording the pre-interview questions as well as one conversation. With regards to the pre-interview question, while it was my hope to receive and explore the majority of my data in shared spaces (Talking Circles and collaborative video-making) where relationship building is prioritized, asking a pre-interview question was beneficial to my research. As Shawn Wilson (2008) explains, “interviews are focused discussions that allow the researcher to gather information directly from the point of view expressed by the research subject” (p. 41).

This focused information gathering was helpful in the context of my research for two reasons. The first is that asking a pre-interview question provides an opportunity to gauge a ‘starting point’ that each youth is coming into the process with regarding Indigenous and newcomer perceptions, before the experience of engaging in this project. The second reason is that the question that will be asked, which is, “What have you been heard (by the media, family, community, social media or the government) about newcomer/Indigenous peoples?” is inherently a sensitive question, and may not elicit

honest responses if asked in a larger group where both Indigenous and newcomer youth are present. For both of these reasons, including one focused pre-interview question was a valuable tool to aid in the robustness of my research data.

It is important to note that some of the youth participants that ended up participating in this project joined after COVID-19 restrictions began, and therefore we had no initial one-on-one meeting together. However, I still asked this question at the beginning of our one-on-one conversations and it still served as a helpful opening question to gauge initial perceptions of the other broad community. Lastly, one youth participant did not feel comfortable engaging in the group Talking Circle or on a video Zoom call with me, but still wanted to participate in the project. Therefore, I audio recorded a one-on-one phone conversation that we engaged in together, and she self-submitted film footage of herself for the video project.

The next way I collected data for this project was through video recording a group Talking Circle on the video conferencing website Zoom, receiving video-recordings from five youth participants for inclusion in the video, as well as video-recording individual one-on-one conversations with six youth participants. Initially, my hope was to have Talking Circles be a primary source of my data collection, as they are a space in which trust, connection respect and equality can all occur. As Greenwood (2005) explains, “while Circles vary somewhat in style and structure, they all seek to cultivate a climate of mutual respect and caring that is value-oriented and heart-based, that engages the emotions as well as the mind” (p. 2).

This quote rings true to me in terms of what makes Talking Circles so important. Talking Circles are a space where stories are shared, where pieces of our humanity and what makes us who we are, are shared. In Talking Circles, there is laughter, there are tears, there is active listening and connection, all of which contributes to our ability to

empathize and experience relationship with those in the circle. It is not a place where only the mind is active, but a place that is ‘heart-based’ and engages the emotions (Bintliff, 2018). As someone who is gay, and has had many discussions with people who are homophobic, it has only been through having dialogue that is story driven and heart-based instead of mind-based, that people have begun to see who I am, and my humanity, in a different light.

Furthermore, the Talking Circle can be an incredible space for youth who have been marginalized or felt a lack of control over their lives, to feel empowered. As Boyes-Watson (2002) affirms:

The circle process opens a space where young people are able to speak and be heard. The experience of being respectfully and fully listened to is one of the most profoundly meaningful elements of the circle process. In an adult-dominated world, young people are marginalized and voiceless; disadvantaged young people are especially “voiceless” at home, in school and in the wider community. The circle process offers an opportunity for participation as equals that does not exist in any other social context (p. 58).

The experience of being ‘voiceless’ that many youth feel, is only exacerbated for many Indigenous and newcomer youth who have been through many experiences that have been entirely outside of their control (e.g. Child and Family Services and justice involvement, changing homes, changing communities, leaving friends and family). Engaging in the circle process can provide a space where youth feel respected, listened to, and are offered an opportunity for their voice to be heard. For all of these reasons, alongside the importance of the congruence of Talking Circles with the principles embedded in the visiting way and storytelling methodologies, I wished to prioritize the Talking Circle process.

Fortunately, I did end up being able to have one group Talking Circle between two Indigenous and three newcomer youth participants, alongside a Knowledge Keeper from each broad community. While this was a significantly lower number than the initial twelve participants committed to the in-person project, the online Talking Circle was simply just not a possibility for some youth as several initial participants did not have access to the appropriate technological devices in order to join, and some participants were not interested or comfortable participating in the project for a variety of reasons once the project moved online. Therefore, I completed the group Talking Circle with five original project participants, had one original participant join me on a one-on-one phone call, and recruited six new participants the week following to participate in the adjusted one-on-one Zoom project format.

I was fortunate also to have one Indigenous and one newcomer Knowledge Keeper with connections to the Social Planning Council-Immigration Partnership Winnipeg and the YMCA Newcomer Department, join the video Talking Circle to offer wisdom, experience and support to the circle. Their presence grounded the Talking Circle and their insights offered profound connecting points for the youth to engage with, as they were able to hear experiences that resonated with them, or that they learned from anew. With regards to Talking Circle format, I opened the Talking Circle by welcoming every in and taking care of some “house-keeping” aspects: explaining the project and changes due to COVID-19, re-iterating informed consent and confidentiality, explaining the Talking Circle process and ways to enhance experiences of safety within the Circle. After that was completed, we moved into the Talking Circle questions. As there was a limited time to create understanding within the Talking Circle, and therefore alongside the visiting way methodology, I approached the questions within this Talking Circle foundationally from the storytelling methodological lens, asking questions that I hoped

would draw out the stories that have the potential to help us connect to our own experiences, and to one another.

Therefore, the initial question was a storytelling and experience-based question, from which to hopefully begin this process immediately of understanding oneself in relation. Furthermore, I wanted this opening question to be able to draw out not only the challenging experiences that can often serve as connecting points between the two broad communities, but also areas of family, community and cultural areas of resiliency and strength. Lastly, to note, the opening question/Talking Circle “round” and each round following asked two-part questions, as they were related questions and I wished to limit the amount of times we went around the online Talking Circle.

Consequently, the opening storytelling based questions were as following: “Let’s begin the circle by gaining an understanding of some of our experiences as Indigenous or newcomer people in Canada. What have been some of the challenges (if there have been any) that you, your family or your community have faced? Also, what are you proud of, or love, about your family, community or culture?” The next round of questioning moved into questions related to identities as Indigenous and newcomer people, and were: “As an Indigenous or newcomer person, what do you feel like people misunderstand about you, or your family or community? What do you wish people understood about you, your family or your community?” The last round of questioning centered around relationship building, and asked: “Why do you think that strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities is important? How do you think relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities could be strengthened?” I closed the Talking Circle by expressing gratitude for the experience, and going over the next steps for each of the youth participants, which primarily was completing and sending me self-filmed video footage.

With regards to this video footage, I asked the youth participants that participated in the online Talking Circle to video record an introduction of themselves, and then reflections on what they feel people misperceive about them as Indigenous or newcomer people, what they wish people knew about them as Indigenous or newcomer peoples, and why they feel strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities is important. The youth then sent these videos to my password protected Dropbox account, which is where my thesis data is being stored and is only accessible by me and my faculty advisor, Marlyn Bennett. Four out of the five youth wished to self-film themselves, alongside the youth participant that wished to engage in a one-on-one phone conversation with me instead of join the online group Talking Circle. The fifth youth wished to offer reflections in the same conversational format offered by the Zoom video chat experience, and completed the video footage in that way.

This video-recorded Talking Circle leads to the final way that data was collected for this project, which was through video-recording one-on-one Zoom video calls with the six new participants that were recruited into this project after COVID-19 realities began. It is important to note that with these youth, as I was unable to meet with them in-person, I completed an initial meeting with each of them over the phone. In this meeting I went over the project, over confidentiality and informed consent, and over the other salient parts of the informed consent form. Then, the youth had an opportunity to read the form over online, ask any further questions they had, and email me back responding that they consented to participating in the project. After receiving this consent, we set up a time for a recorded Zoom video call. In this Zoom video call, I moved through the same questions that were asked in the Talking Circle, as well as the initial 'pre-interview' question, and reflections from this Zoom video call were used for inclusion in the video that was created. These recorded video conversations ended up being a strong data

collection method, as the conversational space that was created allowed for the youth to almost forget that they were being recorded, leading to a reduction of the ‘stiffness’ that can sometimes come through in film and created very natural footage to include in the video. Having said that, I ensured to verify that the youth were OK with each reflection that ended up in the video, prior to its dissemination.

I am confident that the flexibility offered by the various data collecting methods in light of the COVID-19 pandemic constituted a person-centered, integrated research strategy. There were multiple data collection methods that ended up coming to fruition in this project, which provided as well-rounded and robust data as possible in an online context. Lastly, the choice provided with regards to data collection allowed the research participants to have control over their self-expression in the way that was most comfortable for them, in an evolving global situation that felt largely out of everyone’s control. I am confident that this respected and demonstrated gratitude for the knowledge offered by the youth, and contributed to an underlying goal of mine, which was to create a safe space from which the youth might be able to open themselves up to new possibilities.

Data Analysis, Feedback and Debriefing

I self-transcribed the data provided by the youth, ensuring as much as possible to transcribe the conversations in ways that accurately reflected the communication data. Accurate transcription is vital, as “misrepresentations of talk and interaction will lead to incorrect analytic observations” (Jenks, 2011, p. 9). Accurate transcription was incredibly important to me, both to maintain the integrity of the reflections offered by the youth, as well as to ensure correct analytic observations. Fortunately, the video-recording nature of the self-recorded videos and Zoom calls was incredibly beneficial

within the transcription process, as the added visual component of videos and ability to see non-verbal communication, helped ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions.

Potts and Brown (2005) describe that data is, “a gift that participants bestow and we work to respect those gifts and treat them ethically” (p. 269). I maintained this perspective throughout the entirety of the research process, and especially in the data analysis stage. I utilized the gifts given to me by the participants and utilized the six sequential stages for thematic data analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) to help guide the coding and analysis process. First, I familiarized myself with the data, both through the transcription process and then in the process of reading and re-reading the transcripts. I then began the coding process, which is a systematic process of identifying and labeling relevant features of the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I then searched for themes, joining together codes to create a possible map of key data patterns. Next, I reviewed the themes, ensuring none were missed and that each one was relevant to the coded data, and entire data set. After reviewing the themes, I defined and named the themes, selecting a theme name to ensure clarity and aid in the writing process. Finally, I wrote the findings section, writing and explaining themes and their relation to the existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

It is important to note that I also sought to embody data analysis principles outlined by Kovach (2009), who discusses the importance of staying true to Indigenous methodological principles such as kindness, gentleness, sustainability, and relationality. While utilizing coding techniques outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), I was careful to maintain as much of the integrity as possible within the reflections offered by the youth, recognizing that breaking down reflections into smaller parts can be counter to Indigenous ways of analyzing data (Kovach, 2009). Lastly, I ensured to validate my data by ‘member checking’, which is a technique used by researchers to help improve the

accuracy, credibility, validity and transferability of a study (Candela, 2019). I engaged in member checking by sending a condensed and youth-friendly overview of the themes that have been transcribed and coded to the youth, for their feedback and approval to ensure the validity of the themes and discussion that arose. By involving the research participants in the data verification process, I was able to ensure that the data I captured was trustworthy, valid and interpreted in a rigorous and respectful manner.

Research Instruments

I utilized several research instruments within this research project. For the recruitment process, I generated a youth-friendly and engaging recruitment poster (Appendix A), alongside an email and an in-person recruitment scripts (Appendix B). I created a robust informed consent form for participants who were 18-24 years old (Appendix D) and an assent form for participants 16-18 years old (Appendix E), alongside an accompanying guardian consent form (Appendix F) for their guardians to sign. Furthermore, I made an Oath of Confidentiality (Appendix C), for the Indigenous and newcomer Knowledge Keeper, alongside the video editor to create, to ensure the confidentiality of the information provided by the youth. Lastly, I created a video release waiver form (Appendix G), for the youth to sign after the video was completed, prior to its dissemination.

Ethics Process during COVID-19

I engaged with the University of Manitoba Ethics department consistently during the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that the changes that needed to occur within my project to meet the social distancing requirements were completed in the most ethical manner possible. Exceptions were granted by the Ethics department for youth to provide consent through electronic means, instead of hard copy signatures on forms and Knowledge Keepers and the video editor were permitted to sign the Oath of

Confidentialities electronically as well. Furthermore, the Ethics department allowed for the rapid shift of the majority of my data collection methods from in-person Talking Circles to utilizing the online Zoom platform in varied ways. A copy of my University of Manitoba Ethics approval certificate is included in Appendix H.

Summary

The methodologies, methods and research design as well as the data collection process and analysis provide a foundation on which to present the emergent themes and interpretations that resulted. The next chapter will reveal findings from the online Talking Circle, Zoom and audio recorded conversations, as the twelve youth participants shared their experiences and reflections on their identities as Indigenous or newcomer peoples as well as relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities. The structural and textual descriptions offered will convey on paper the essence of the youths' reflection, while recognizing that many of the reflections are also able to be viewed in their full expression within the final video project.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

In this chapter I identify and discuss the following elements of my findings: A. Participants and B. Themes that resulted from the online Talking Circle and Zoom conversations with the research participants. Five themes emerged from the data collected for this study. These themes are: 1. Initial Perceptions of the Other Broad Community; 2. Challenges and Misperceptions of Identities as an Indigenous or Newcomer Person; 3. Preferred Understandings of Identities as an Indigenous or Newcomer peoples; 4. Why it is Important to Build Stronger Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Communities; 5. How Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Communities can be Strengthened. I conclude with a summary of the findings as part of this chapter.

Participants

The recruitment process of this project went through two different phases, as the project shifted from being conceptualized as an in-person project, to an online project as a result of the physical distancing realities of COVID-19. For various factors, it was not possible for some of the youth who had initially signed up for this project to participate in the online version. I had prior work-related connections to five out of the six newcomer youth, and therefore knew most of them on varying levels, but had no prior connections to any of the Indigenous youth. Fortunately, I was able to get to know some of the Indigenous youth who participated in this project in an initial in-person meeting prior to COVID-19; however, others I only had the opportunity to get to know over one, one-on-one Zoom video call. Therefore, I will begin this findings section by expressing some of what I was able to learn about the identities of the participants in this project, recognizing

that due to constraints of COVID-19, the picture I'm able to paint more like a broad sketch. To be able to hear the project participants introduce themselves in their own words, please watch the Bridging Social Distance During COVID-19: Indigenous and Newcomer Youth Relationship Building Project video on YouTube.¹⁰

The six newcomer youth who participated in this project all had connections to either the YMCA's Y-CAN, or Newcomer Youth Wellness Program and ranged in age from 17-22 years old. Two of the youth are still in high school, one youth had just graduated high school and was currently working to saving up money for university, and the remaining three youth are students at the University of Winnipeg. All of the youth came originally from African countries, with two youth coming from Ethiopia, one from Eritrea but grew up in Sudan, two youth from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and one youth from Nigeria. The youth who had come most recently to Canada came three years ago with his family, but the remainder of the youth had all been here for at least five years. Within this group of youth, there was roughly even split of those who had originally come to Canada as refugees, and those who had come as immigrants.

With regards to the Indigenous youth who participated in this project, they all became connected to this project through different community programs connections. The programs the youth became connected to this project through were: Spence Neighbourhood Association, Social Planning Council, the Eagles Nest program at Urban Circle, Action Therapy and the Indigenous Students Association at the University of Winnipeg. The youth ranged in age from 17-21 and were either high school or university students, attending an employment program, or currently employed. While the project participants all currently lived in Winnipeg, the youth identified as coming from the

¹⁰ Bridging Social Distance During COVID-19: Indigenous and Newcomer Youth Relationship Building Project video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kubvp_Ef2m4

following home communities: Sandy Bay First Nation, Ilford Manitoba, Grassy Narrows First Nation, Roseau River First Nation and Pinaymootang First Nation.

With regards to identifying the youth in the following findings section, it is important to note that I will not be including gender as a specific identifier wherever possible. The rationale behind this choice is two-fold. First, as only some of the group was able to participate in the group online Talking Circle, and the rest engaged in one-on-one Zoom conversations with me, gender did not play a significant role in either of these contexts. Secondly, two of the youth who participated in this project identify in ways that extend out of the western gender binary, and in an effort to honour every person's identity, while simultaneously not 'outing' anyone in the findings section below, every participant will be referred to in the third person whenever possible. There are a few instances where gender is specifically included in a reflection given by a youth participant and in these cases, gender will be included out of a desire to maintain the integrity of the experience shared. I have chosen to code the youth participant reflections in the findings section. The coding structure is as follows: I stands for Indigenous youth, and N stands for newcomer youth and each of the youth have been randomly assigned a number between 1 and 6 that they maintain throughout the entire findings section. Therefore, a youth participant might be given the code I2, which describes that they are Indigenous and that they have been randomly assigned the number 2 for the entirety of the findings section. Furthermore, sentence pause fillers such as "uh" and "like" have been removed in the quotes for readability. Lastly, I have made the choice to place all reflections offered by the youth in "block quotation" format, in order to honour the sharing provided by each of the youth equally, regardless of length.

Theme 1: Initial Perceptions of the Other Broad Community

Prior to the group online Talking Circle, I asked each youth individually to reflect on what they had heard about the other broad community by either members of their own community, the media, social media, the education system or the government. For those who were unable to join the group online Talking Circle or joined the project after the online adjustments were made for COVID-19, I asked this question at the beginning of our Zoom conversation as a way to gauge a ‘starting point’ with regards to the perceptions that each youth had about members of the other broad community, as well as gain an understanding as to the sources of information informing the youths’ perceptions.

The findings in this area were somewhat surprising, as I presumed that negative perceptions would likely abound on both sides. However, this presumption proved to be false with regards to the perspectives shared by the Indigenous youth participants, as they possessed overall positive and empathetic perceptions of the broad newcomer community. There was a general sense from all Indigenous youth participants that to them, as well as to their families, newcomer people are just ‘normal’ people, no different than anyone in Canada, who are coming here often because of a distressed situation in their home country with hopes of living a better life. Several of the youth directly expressed sentiments of them believing that from their opinion, newcomers should be welcomed and accepted onto these lands. As the following three Indigenous youth articulated:

My opinion is they’re welcome here... I don’t mind them cause, they’re just trying to come here to live a better life and live safely... and my friends and family are welcoming too, they welcome them all the time (I4).

I just hear them on the news, that they are distressed where they come from, and they come here for peace and to live a better life, because where they are from is crazy (I1).

I just think of them as normal people who are coming to live here – they are the same as anybody else just coming from a different place in the world (I2).

While overall the youth noted that their perceptions, and their family's perceptions of newcomers were positive, the majority of Indigenous youth also explained that they did often encounter racist and xenophobic perceptions of newcomers on social media and cited this source as the area of greatest negativity they experienced with regards to perceptions of newcomer communities. The racism experienced on social media was described by one youth in the following way:

Social media is the worst cause there's always people (who) like to sit behind the screen and just pull the race card on them and get racist and as bad as they could and there's just mean comments on social media, that they're only here to, you know, change the way of life and stuff like that, so mostly all the negativity is on social media (I4).

Lastly, it is important to note that while this was not a common sub-theme expressed by the youth in this project, one youth had a reflection that finds resonance with wider "resource scarcity" realities often expressed by those in Indigenous communities. As they expressed:

My family is all pretty open and stuff, they're all pretty accepting of everyone, but from the Indigenous community I do hear a lot of racist remarks, saying like the prime minister is helping them with so much stuff and we don't get much help and stuff like that (I5).

Conversely, with regards to the initial perceptions that newcomer youth had regarding Indigenous communities, the overwhelming consensus was that they received no information prior to arriving in Canada or during the settlement process, and what they did learn from ‘authoritative’ body was through a basic, colonial-historical lens at school. As one youth explained:

Well, we learn them during history class, during high school... so we learn about the olden groups and how the settlements came about... but that’s the only way I learned about them, there was no other way, just that (N5).

As the newcomer youth in this project did not receive a robust understanding of Indigenous peoples from authoritative bodies, they expressed that they were left to learn about Indigenous peoples through members of their own communities, the wider Canadian society, the media and social media. It is an unfortunate, and sadly predictive reality, that the newcomer youth consequently heard from these sources a wide range of racist stereotypes, including that Indigenous people are violent, on social assistance, living in poverty and/or homeless, and have substance abuse issues. As one youth affirmed:

As a newcomer when I first came here I was taught that Indigenous people are people you should be scared of, because they’re all like either homeless, and they’re all willing to hurt people (N2).

Interestingly, one youth expressed how these negative perceptions provided to newcomer peoples about Indigenous peoples communicates that Indigenous peoples are on the “bottom” of society, which can lead to many newcomer youth feeling superior to Indigenous youth. When asked why they think this is, they explained:

Probably it’s because they come here and they see the way that the Indigenous youth are treated, which is different compared to how the government treats

newcomer youth. I think there was more resources in place for newcomer youth than there is for Indigenous youth and that right there just creates a barrier between them (N1).

However, it is important to note that each of the newcomer youth participant has had the opportunity to learn a more about Indigenous peoples, as well as a decolonial version of Canadian history, to various degrees through either after-school programming or organic friendships. Almost all of the youth specifically identified that these factors have changed the initial perceptions given to them about Indigenous peoples. As one youth articulated:

I know just by the community I've lived in they are presented to us as scary and bad and rude people because they are on drugs or alcohol and it sucks because they are just trying to cure their pain and I'm sorry if this is gonna offend anyone, but I also caught myself living in that fear towards them, till I met one of my close friends that is half Indigenous and meeting her and family has changed my mindset in a so many different ways. To be honest, they are the most pure, honest and loving people ever and I hope to meet more in the coming time (N3).

Overview of Theme One

This initial 'starting point' question elicited compelling responses, and while this project only covers a small sample size of youth, offer two key insights. The first is a recognition of power, and necessity, of both formal and informal spaces to provide opportunities for greater knowledge, understanding and empathy to emerge between both communities. It is clear from the reflections offered by the newcomer youth that both formal and informal learning opportunities were critical to their changing perceptions of Indigenous peoples and a deeper understanding of the realities Indigenous communities continue to face as a result of colonization. The second insight is the imbalance with

regards to initial perceptions/misperceptions of the other broad community, as the Indigenous youth all expressed initial positive perceptions of the newcomer community, and the newcomer youth all expressed negative initial perceptions of Indigenous peoples. Again, while this project only covers a small sample size of youth, this imbalance may point to the ongoing detrimental impacts of colonization on perceptions of Indigenous peoples, and a converse empathy towards newcomer realities. As perceptions hold palpable, real-world ramifications for both marginalized communities, this finding certainly deserves greater exploration.

Theme two: Challenges and Misperceptions of Identities as an Indigenous or Newcomer Person

Upon shifting this project online, I realized quickly that the possibilities for relationship building that would have existed over a two-day, in-person process were simply not going to be replicated in one, two-hour online Talking Circle. Regardless of the limitations created by a pared down online process, I was still hopeful for the possibilities of empathy and understanding to emerge between the youth from each broad community. In order to facilitate space for this empathy and understanding to occur, the Talking Circle began by asking the youth to each share a part of their experience, or story, as an Indigenous or newcomer person, by discussing both what have been challenges (if any) that they have experienced as a newcomer or Indigenous person, as well as things that they are either proud of or love about their community, or culture. This opening story-based question stems from both the visiting and storytelling methodologies guiding this project, recognizing that it is through sharing our own stories and experiences that we create the space for empathy and understanding to emerge.

Unfortunately, many of the youth were not able to participate in the Talking Circle and instead had an online one-on-one Zoom conversation with me. However, I

still found this opening question a helpful way to allow youth to 'settle in' to the conversation and become comfortable, as they were all easily able to name and discuss their own life experiences. Furthermore, it allowed for understanding to emerge between the youth participant and myself, which helped to create a comfortable and safe space for the remainder of the conversation. With regards to presenting the findings from this opening two-part question, the challenges named by the participants will be outlined in this theme, and the aspects of their community or culture that they are proud of, or love, will be outlined in theme three.

Part 1

With regards to the challenges faced by Indigenous youth, the overwhelming common sub-theme cited by each youth were experiences related to racism. As one youth aptly expressed:

The only challenges me and my family and community face is mostly poverty and racism. There's always racism going around, saying that we're just drunks, addicts, that we only live off the governments, and that hurts. They judge us before they even get to know us and that kind of really hurts (I4).

One youth explained how they knew that they were sheltered to racism by their Elders, who didn't want them to experienced what they had all experienced. As they explained:

In my experience, when I was growing up, I had a good childhood cause that's what my grandma and my aunties wanted me to have, I never really experienced racism myself. I was lucky for that, but my Elders have went through a lot more than I ever imagined (I1).

Another youth explained that she did not experience racism growing up, as she lived in a predominantly white community and as she does not have very dark skin, people did not assume she was Indigenous. However, she stated that other members of

her family and community experience poverty, and racism because of the poverty they experience. She went on to explain that as a result of their differing experiences, she has had a complex relationship with her own family and home community. She described her experience in the following way:

With the Indigenous community, I did kind of face racism, especially from my reserve, saying that oh, she's a white girl, she grew up here, she grew up in a white community, she acts white, whatever that means (I5).

Finally, one youth described their challenging experiences of being racially profiled in stores when they shop with their family. As they explained:

One challenge that me and my family face is kind of grocery shopping and stuff like that and shopping in general, going to any public space where there could be security guards. They would constantly make their short glances at us, and you know, check up on us constantly and if we were to go to different sections of the store and make sure we're not stealing or doing anything suspicious (I3).

For the newcomer youth participants, the common challenges cited were learning English, watching their parents struggle to gain employment and fitting into mainstream Canadian society and peer groups. The following three reflections express these common challenges as articulated by the majority of the newcomer participants:

When I came here, I think the hardest part was the language barrier and not only for me because I was young because I could pick up the language so that wasn't a problem for me, but seeing my parents struggle. Because like they left back home when they had really jobs, well-paying jobs, they were happy, to coming here, to sacrificing a lot to make us happy. If you don't know the language the only jobs you can get are maintenance and cleaning, and so they had to take those jobs and

that was hard to me to see because they gave up doing something they love and being with the people they love, to bringing me here for a better opportunity, and then like not living a happy life at work. Also not fitting in, I feel like when I came here my parents made sure they saved a lot of money so we moved to a good area, but then moving to a good area, I was like only like the second black kid in my school, so I was like trying so hard to fit in and everything like that, so you can feel like you're left out (N2).

Just seeing my dad have a really good job, my mom never worked really, seeing my dad work at a good place and getting good money to coming here and just starting here just from zero again, you know, and the language barrier was very hard, til now. Even though we've been here for so long, it's like, for them it's so hard for them to pick up (N3).

My mom and my dad had professions in Nigeria, and because it like doesn't really count in Winnipeg they had to redo it. So they had to go back to school, both of them at the same time, which kind of put a strain on everything... not having my parents around, working to pay for it... so that was difficult. I guess it's just the transitional, like when I was younger I had an accent and trying to integrate and just be part of other youth my age was kind of awkward. I was, for most of my high school, and my schooling I was like the only black kid, so I always kind of felt 'by myselfish'... I always felt different (N5).

Part 2

Potentially the most passionate and lengthy responses within our Talking Circle and one-on-one conversations centered around the participants' perceived misperceptions and misunderstandings of their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples. There

were some misunderstandings and misperceptions that related specifically to youth from each broad community, and some that extended to both communities. Consequently, the findings specific to each community will be presented first, before highlighting the findings common to youth from both communities. With regards to the misperceptions outlined by Indigenous youth, two common sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme is directly connected to the challenges experienced by the Indigenous youth, and centers around the racist stereotyping that they face on an ongoing basis as a result of being an Indigenous person. The common racist stereotypes and misperceptions highlighted by the youth were presumptions of being either: welfare recipients, uneducated, lazy, living in poverty and/or homeless, gang-affiliated, and addicted to drugs or alcohol. These misperceptions, rooted in the impacts of colonization and racism, are expressed in the reflections by the following three youth:

Stereotypes man... that I'm grubby, that I should be bumming and pan handling... that I don't go to school and stuff like that. (I2)

Stereotypes I've heard... our people are affiliated with gang members... or that we're bums or welfare recipients or stuff like that like, we hear that in the community, I've heard that quite a bit too – sometimes on the bus, it's kind of awful (I1).

They think that I would do drugs, or alcohol or different things, kind of stereotypes stuff, always drinking, and always drunk – and well I don't really do that (I3).

The other common sub-theme that emerged was a misperception around a presumed connection to their culture. Several youth identified the common misconception that just because they are Indigenous, they are immediately presumed to have a strong connection and understanding to their cultural practices, ceremonies,

teachings and language. While these youth also all identified that they did desire a stronger connection to their culture, they expressed that they either were just starting to connect to their culture, or that they did not have many opportunities to be able to connect to their culture. As two youth articulated:

People assume like I practice the culture religiously and stuff like that, and that I know the language... and in reality, I'm just starting to learn everything. I'm starting to learn my language now, I'm starting to go into ceremonies more and do medicine picking and stuff like that (I5).

I'd say that people think of me as someone who participates in lots of cultural activities, constantly and doing all that stuff like every day... people would say like, oh, are you going to go smudge, or something. Saying things like that are kind of racist and stuff that are stereotypical, and I don't do all that all too often... but I wish I could (I3).

The other related reflection is the misperception that because they are Indigenous, they are assumed to always be out rallying or protesting for different causes. As explained by one Indigenous youth:

Misunderstandings really happen when, especially Indigenous people lead a march, or a rally, or something. I feel like that's like our stereotypical misconceptions of Indigenous peoples, that we're always drumming or singing about something... but it's not like we are doing this just to do it, we're doing it because we believe in something, we're trying to fight for something that's important to us and important to everyone (I6).

With regards to misperceptions experienced by the newcomer youth, it is important to note that some of the common sub-themes that emerged stem inherently from the fact that all of the youth who participated in this project are black youth, from African countries.

While many of their reflections hold relevance to a wider common ‘newcomer’ experience, some of the major sub-themes in this section are particularly related to the race and continent of origin of these youth. The first major sub-theme that emerged regarding misperceptions these newcomer youth face is that, as black African youth, they were perceived to be angry, violent, aggressive, or gang-affiliated. As one newcomer youth expressed:

I think a lot of people, when they say black youth they think they are very angry and violent, like especially if we came from Africa say, they feel like because we’ve experienced a lot of war and a lot of crime that we’re going to implicate those same actions when we come here (N2).

Furthermore, one black female-identifying participant discussed the reality that as a black woman, she constantly faces the misperceptions that comes from the “angry black female” stereotype. She described the implications of this negative stereotype on her life in the following way:

It’s like they took away my right to be angry, if that makes sense – because if I’m upset, it’s like here we go, another black woman just blowing things out of proportion. Whatever I say, or whatever I’m mad at, is automatically belittled because I’m assumed to be overdramatic about something (N5).

The second common misperception stated by the youth was that, due to either their (or their parents’) lack of English proficiency, accent, or the fact that they dressed in ways not common to mainstream western society, they were automatically assumed to be uneducated. As explained by two newcomer youth:

And with the uneducated thing, for my parents especially, because my parents have a really thick accent, but my mom and my dad put themselves through

school, *twice*, and it's like they're not uneducated, don't speak to them like that (N5).

There's a certain way you have to look, to look like you're doing good – you know, it's like, when new people come. the way they speak to me and speak to them is so different, because of the way we look and the way we're dressed up and stuff (N3).

Furthermore, one youth described how the automatic misperceptions that exist regarding appearance and clothing for newcomers can have a detrimental impact on an ability to secure employment. As they expressed:

Being honest with you actually if, actually they don't even just go by your education, or your English, they just go by the way you look. If your hair is twist, or you're wearing a durag or bandana¹¹, or clothes or anything they don't care about your resume, just like the way you are outside, the way you look, they just take the idea, the stereotypic, just like “(*sarcastic*) drop your resume, we get it, and we're going to call you back (N4).

Overview of Theme Two

Lastly, within this theme it is important to highlight that while there were clearly nuanced and varied experiences between the Indigenous and newcomer youth with regards to their reflections on what is misunderstood, or misperceived about them, there also were many reflections that found common ground. Unfortunately, many of these common misperceptions that members from both broad communities are uneducated, lazy, welfare recipients, violent, gang members or criminals. The commonalities found

¹¹ A durag is a cap typically worn to accelerate the development of waves, braids or dreadlocks in the hair and is also used to keep wave patterns from shifting, but unfortunately has become a widely criminalized symbol (Josephs, 2017).

within these misperceptions, while rooted in harmful experiences related to racism, classism, and colonization, are an important finding in this section as they offer shared common ground from which the possibilities of solidarity, and strengthened relationships can take root.

Theme Three: Preferred Understandings of Identities as an Indigenous or Newcomer peoples

Reflections around this theme were prompted by two separate questions. One question centered around what the youth *wished* that people would understand about them, or their families or communities, as Indigenous peoples and the other question prompted reflections by the youth regarding aspects of their culture, or community, that they loved or were proud of. While again there are nuanced experiences related to the youth from either community, there was much common ground related to the aspects that all of the youth loved, or were proud of, regarding their cultural identities. Consequently, as in the previous theme, the findings specific to each broad community will be presented first, before highlighting the reflections common to the youth from both communities.

Two main sub-themes emerged with regards to the Indigenous youths' preferred understandings of their identities as Indigenous peoples. The first was a desire for people to understand that Indigenous peoples are resilient and trying to live good lives, but are still healing from the impacts of colonization. As the following three Indigenous youth expressed:

We are resilient, because of our histories, past and present, that still affect us today in different ways... we weren't really noticed and people used to step on us, now we're just like coming out and making it better for us, bringing back those traditions that were kind of lost (I1).

When they go out, they see that (substance abuse) happening and that's probably what they think, but some of us just want to live a happy life, clean sober life, to have a job and care for our families (I4).

I just wish that they understood that Indigenous people... are still healing, and our people, even some people haven't started the healing process. So there's a lot of Indigenous people, especially in Winnipeg that are out there, that struggle with substance use, some of our people just don't know how to you know, start that healing journey (I6).

The second sub-theme that emerged from the reflections of the Indigenous youth was a desire for people to know that Indigenous peoples are a spiritual people, and are connected (or are on a journey of reconnection) to nature, to the earth, to their languages and their culture. As expressed by one Indigenous youth:

We're a spiritual people, we're really close with the nature around us and it really connects us to know we are... and our languages to us are very important, they connect us to who we are as a people and where we come from as a people (I1).

With regards to the newcomer youths' preferred understandings of their identities as newcomer peoples, the following common sub-themes emerged from their reflections. The strongest sub-theme that emerged was an overarching desire for people to know that just because they came from a country in Africa, this did not automatically mean that they came from poverty, or an 'underprivileged' situation. As explained by the following two newcomer youth:

Not like everybody back home came from like a struggling family, or was like struggling with poverty and stuff. Every time someone, like assumes like oh, they moved here because they were struggling with life back home... like, yah I get we came here to get a better life, but that doesn't mean that where we were, like our

life was any worse. Some of us, like we had great lives, we were doing perfectly fine, it's just like opportunities to make our lives better came up and you can't turn that down (N6).

We don't come from poor or from a not enough place, it's not always like that. My dad had a great job where he provided more than he could provide here. I could say he was actually rich, than he is here, because the language barrier and everything else too. So it's not always coming from a poor place, not having enough (N4).

Furthermore, for those youth who did come from a difficult context, they wanted people to know that where they came from, and the circumstances from which they came, are not what defines who they are. As one youth expressed:

I'd wish that people would understand that I'm just a child, that I didn't decide where I was born, I just happened to be born in a very very crucial conditions of life... I shouldn't be judged, or seen differently because of that, because I didn't ask for any of it, and none of us ask for anything it just happens. As I grow into becoming me, the person I want to be... that's what people should be focusing on, but not where I came from and the things that I lived through (N1).

The other common sub-theme that arose was a desire for people to understand that just because they are black, African youth and many are youth who have come from places where war was a reality, that that does not mean that they are angry, aggressive or violent; but rather, that their life experience has contributed to a desire for peace. As one youth articulated:

I think a lot of people, when they say black youth they think they are very angry and violent, especially if we came from Africa say, they feel because we've experienced a lot of war and a lot of crime that we're going to implicate those

same actions when we come here. I think what people don't understand is like no – what we've seen has actually influenced us to do the opposite, because we never want to implicate what has been done to us or what we've seen on other people. I wish people can understand is that we're very sweet, we're very welcoming (N2).

With regards to what youth from each community loved or were proud of regarding their culture, there were overwhelming and powerful commonalities cited by almost every youth, regardless of the broad community from which they came. These profound commonalities centered around a desire for people to know how generous, welcoming and accepting their communities are, as well as how important gatherings, ceremonies and events are to the wellbeing and identities of their communities. The vast majority of the youth were passionate and excited to talk about their cultures' ceremonies, gatherings, and ways in which generosity and welcome is extended by their communities. This common sharing is highlighted in the reflections of the following three Indigenous and three newcomer youth:

I feel like, even though we may not be like blood related closely, we can always build like, a family and like a community and I just, I love that. Like, I was working with some Indigenous students at a high school, and they adopted me as their auntie, it was so so cute (I6).

What I'm proud about my culture is that we're very welcoming people. In Ethiopian culture we're very friendly and we want to make sure we don't leave people out... our culture is like, everything we do is done so our community stays together (N2).

What I'm proud of is that we're... generous... kind, loving, we're just there to support each other (I4).

Just how accepting we are, how happy we are. I know people can be happy, but when we're all together it's a different environment, we can randomly break out in beats, and singing and dancing... we're very lively people and that's something I'm really proud of" (N5).

I'm proud that my culture is very inclusive of everyone, and it kind of promotes positive relationships (I5).

(I love) how welcoming we are to whoever, it doesn't matter if they're a different race, or they come from a different community, like if they're not Congolese but they're from Kenya, Sudan, wherever - we're very welcoming and open to each and every person (N6).

Overview of Theme Three

While the previous theme highlighted similarities between both broad communities related to the historical and systemic oppression that continue to impact them as minority groups, the commonalities found in this section reflect similar positive, resiliency-based, cultural strengths. While shared experiences of oppression offer critical common ground for empathy and solidarity to emerge, it is also vital to highlight areas of cultural strengths that have potential to form stronger community-driven, authentic relationships between both broad communities. The common cultural ground found in this section underscores the reality that while efforts must certainly be made within formal channels to facilitate space for strengthened relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities, there must also be equal energy placed by appropriate community organizations to create spaces for 'informal, 'community-driven and culturally-based relationship building opportunities to occur.

Theme 4: Why it is Important to Build Stronger Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Communities

Youth are often not invited to the table to discuss their perspectives on ‘high-level’ topics, such as why it might be important to build relationships between two broad communities and how these relationships might best be strengthened. However, youth bring a critical and creative voice to this conversation, especially as it is often in the shared spaces of school and after-school programming where these two broad communities engage in much of their interaction (Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). The following two themes will outline the experience-based and highly perceptive reflections the youth participants had regarding their perspectives on relationship building between both broad communities. As there were strong commonalities found between the reflections of the youth from each broad community, the findings within both this theme and the final theme will be presented together.

There were three common sub-themes that emerged within the reflections from youth from both broad communities surrounding why relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities is important. The first sub-theme identified by the youth centers around a recognition of the harmful impacts of stereotyping, and the importance to understand people and communities as more than a collection of negative, shallow stereotypes. The youth expressed a desire for people to really *see* and understand them on a deeper, more nuanced level, and recognized that building stronger relationships was one way for that to happen. The following four reflections by Indigenous and newcomer youth showcase the expressed importance of understanding each other as more than just a collection of negative stereotypes:

Because, on both sides... Indigenous people don't know much about newcomers and visa versa, so like, if they can get to know... how it's like on each side, then

that could be better. Because, it's always like newcomers, they just automatically have this stereotype for Indigenous peoples, and then like it's the other way around too – so it's like, they don't really understand each other or really know anything about each other (N6).

So we have a basic understanding of who each other is, and that we're not - so there isn't so much tension and confusion and miscommunication between everybody (I2).

I think that strengthening between the newcomer and Indigenous peoples is important is because we've already had so many negative outlooks towards newcomers and Indigenous peoples because it's not like very good things said about either newcomers or Indigenous peoples, so the fact that we already have like those negative aspects turned around to us is bad enough, so I think us not getting along, I think that's just continuing to set that negative mindset on each other (N2).

I think specifically between the two they should be strengthened so they can have understanding of one another and having these stereotypes is something that isn't there when they interact with each other...and being able to recognize them as a person first, before you go on and believe those stereotypes (I3).

The second sub-theme that arose was a recognition that newcomer and Indigenous peoples share many similar experiences, and that these common experiences provide a foundation for understanding and meaningful relationships to emerge. One Indigenous youth described the commonalities that exist between the two broad communities in the following way:

We have a lot of things in common with them. There are like a lot of misconceptions about Indigenous peoples, and newcomer and we do have a lot in

common with them, and a lot of people also think that Indigenous peoples and newcomer youth, or newcomer people get like handouts and like a lot of free resources from the government and stuff like that and that is also a myth, so I think it would be good to strengthen relationships because Indigenous peoples and newcomers because they have a lot in common, they can be the same in different ways (I6).

One newcomer youth expounded on these shared commonalities as they discussed their experience being forced into a Christian school back in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and how that experience finds resonance with Indigenous experiences of Canadian residential schools. They described how this experience created an empathy and understanding for them regarding the realities Indigenous peoples have faced based in the following way:

I realized that there is a lot of similarities that a lot of Indigenous youth and newcomer groups went through and similar life situations, similar life brutalities, similar circumstances. It's like, 7 years ago I was in a school – they cut off my hair, I was being hit by teachers, I wasn't being fed properly... and yah, it's the exact same things that a lot of Indigenous youth and a lot of Indigenous people went through in Canada and once I realized that OK, we have been through similar things in life and we can all relate, and there's no point to have barriers (N1).

The commonalities outlined by the youth between the two broad communities, rooted largely in minority experiences, leads to the final reflection on why the youth felt like relationship building was important between Indigenous and newcomer communities, which was the importance of solidarity between minority groups. As the following Indigenous and newcomer youth powerfully described:

I think it's important for all minorities to build relationships together, because we're minorities and I think that we have a bond of being minorities that is that like unbreakable, because we all go through different things, but at the end of the day it's like, very similar at the same time, if that makes any sense and like you're stronger together, there's power in numbers (N5).

I feel like it's important for us to come together because we're both minorities and marginalized communities, and just for – we're stronger together and it's important for us to come together to build community with each other... (it) makes us stronger (I6).

Overview of Theme Four

All of the reflections offered by the youth within this theme come from deeply personal and community-based experience, as they described the harmful nature that stereotypes have had on their lives and how they wish that those could be reduced on all sides. Furthermore, the recognition that their shared experiences as minorities offer opportunities for solidarity together is a profound insight. Increased solidarity between minority groups certainly has the power to create more equitable change to the structures and systems within Canada, and the possibilities this reflection offers for grassroots social justice movements should be taken seriously by community actors and policy advocates in the future.

Theme 5: How Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Communities can be Strengthened

As with the previous theme, it was fascinating to witness that many of the reflections offered by youth from each community held direct parallels and commonalities to the reflections from youth from the other community. The first sub-theme that was identified by the youth was the necessity for increased opportunities to

learn about the other broad community within the education system, as that is where the majority of encounter between youth from both communities occurs. The majority of newcomer youth identified that as they had no opportunities to learn about Indigenous peoples in the settlement process, they hoped to learn more in the education system, but all they learned (if anything) was a colonial version of the role of Indigenous peoples in Canadian history. As one youth explained:

I think, one thing is that honestly in school, throughout my whole school years... since grade six 'til literally I finished high school, the only thing I learned about Indigenous people is just the history from like back back back in the days right, so it's like – it was never... like you know like something that was interesting. It was just things that was happening back in the days and it was never an honest, it was never something kids... not only kids but even teachers wanted to teach. It was like because they had to you know. I wish we could learn more about it in school (N3).

One newcomer youth identified that they did receive a bit more of an accurate version of Canadian history and Indigenous peoples in their school, in particular regarding experiences related to Residential Schools, but wanted the opportunity to learn more about current realities that Indigenous peoples were facing. As they expressed:

I think it comes down to the education system – in like elementary and high schools, I feel like programs need to be made, cause we do like Indigenous history and then I feel like learning that is important because then it helps us to understand what it is that Indigenous people have gone through, but I think also not only focusing on the past, but the present – the issues that people continue to face now, that would help us understand more as well, because just because everything has ended from residential schools and stuff doesn't mean that there's

not stuff that they don't face now. Like they mentioned, the murdered women, the missing women, stuff like that is important to understand because newcomers don't really understand that they go through struggles just like we do and they might even go through it worse here (N2).

Conversely, Indigenous youth described that in the education system they never really learned anything about immigrants and refugees and expressed that they wanted to learn more about the experiences of newcomers in school. One youth articulated this reality in the following way:

Ways to strengthen... like schools, that they would be more informative, because I never really heard anything about immigrants and what they're going through in like a classroom (I1).

With regards to how increased education in the school system should occur, one newcomer youth described what they thought would be the best way, which would be to invite members of different communities to be able to come in and share about their own histories and cultures. As they expressed:

If the community comes and shares about the culture and everything the students are going to listen and get educated... you know, when it came from them, you gonna get the idea straight from them, not from the teacher or from the book, so you gonna learn faster and you're going to see the culture and where the songs, the language, the culture so it's going to be so easy for you to learn about them (N4).

On a similar vein, one Indigenous youth shared that programs in schools that offered opportunities for members of each community to get to know each other on a personal level would be an important way to build stronger relationships. As they described:

I'd say it'd be more programs in school, because most of the youth are going to be with each other... getting them to get to know each other and make sure that their building relationships and getting to know each other before they get set on those stereotypes that they've heard about Indigenous people (I3).

Lastly, one newcomer youth highlighted that programming for youth from both communities, in both educational and after-school program spaces, should explicitly draw on the common experiences shared between them as a way to bring youth from the two communities together. As they articulated:

Also, creating programming that includes not only the newcomer youth, but also the Indigenous youth – the history behind things, like, if newcomer youth experienced colonization so did Indigenous youth...getting them to know the history behind it, not only what the society these days has had to tell them and how it is, because there is more to that and where it comes from. It goes deeper than just what we see (N1).

The second way that the youth identified relationships could be built was through informal, or more organic opportunities for both communities to interact together. There was a common sentiment from many youth that affirmed that formal opportunities were important ways to learn about each other, but that also informal opportunities were just as important, if not more important. Suggestions for these informal spaces included community events, gatherings, community BBQs and invitations to community and cultural ceremonies. As the following two Indigenous and two newcomer youth expressed:

By coming together, and having events to bring people together. By talking to them, and understanding their life stories and their histories and so, like

explaining to them our histories so they can understand that, and so we can just understand why each other is the way they are (I5).

We could have gatherings in different communities, they could have a few where Indigenous people and newcomers come and talk and learn about each other's cultures and stuff, you know just to understand each other (N6).

We can offer them tobacco, or something from our culture and share with them what we believe and also for them to do that to us, so we have a basic understanding of where we both come from (I2).

There's this thing we always do which is coffee, we are very known for our coffee... it's not just you getting coffee it's the whole ceremony of having coffee and it gets everyone together. I remember my mom making coffee for a friend, she's an Elder but she's Indigenous and she made her a coffee and it was a way of us showing her our culture (N3).

The final astute observation offered by two newcomer youth was related to the detrimental impact of having programs often serve *either* Indigenous or newcomer youth, rather than programs serving the two populations of youth together. These two youth spoke to the very real dynamic that due to funding requirements and varied intended organizational mandates, programs often exist in ways that keep both groups of youth in isolation from one another. Shifting this dynamic, as the following two youth point out, is one of the greatest ways in which relationships, in particular between the youth from each broad community, can be transformed. As they both expressed:

Creating programs that are more inclusive and not exclusive, not doing things separately but doing things together and being in the same room, same environment at the same time I think that would make, that makes a really huge difference than creating specific programs to specific youth. But having all of

them together, working together towards a specific goal, as individuals and not just because they come from this (program), I think this really makes a difference (N1).

I think that all the programs we have, they're not exclusive, but I feel like newcomer programs are just for newcomers or there's Indigenous programs are just for Indigenous people. I feel like if we had programs that wasn't "this isn't for you guys to mix," but just alternate programs that we could have a space that we can come together, and do the same thing we're doing, just in the same space, not so segregated (N5).

Overview of Theme Five

The fact that the youth from each broad community offered so many similar reflections throughout the entirety of this findings section, largely independent of one another, speaks to their many shared experiences, regardless of the broad community from which they come. These shared experiences, rooted often in minority experiences but also in being members of resilient and welcoming cultures, offer a strong foundation from which transformed relationships can emerge. Furthermore, the ideas offered by the youth regarding ways to strengthen relationships, namely increasing opportunities for formal and informal learning opportunities and creating programs that serve members from both communities, are incredibly perceptive and should serve as a call to action for organizations and systems within the Winnipeg community and across Canada. The youth that participated in this program are very clearly looking for more ways to intentionally connect with each other, recognizing that once people have the opportunity to get to know one another, misperceptions fade away and true understandings of identities and realities emerge. It is now up the settlement system, the education system and organizations across Winnipeg and beyond to take up this call.

Summary

These findings demonstrated a thematic summation of the youth participants' reflections in the online Talking Circle, as well as in the recorded Zoom and audio recorded conversations. These reflections offered profound insight into the experiences of the youth as Indigenous and newcomer peoples in Winnipeg and the accompanying challenges and misperceptions they have faced. These findings also illuminate the youths' preferred understandings of their identities as Indigenous and newcomer peoples, as well as the aspects of their cultures that they love and are proud of. Finally, these findings highlight the perceptive reflections from the youth regarding their thoughts on relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities – both why it is important, and how they believe relations can be strengthened.

The next chapter will delve deeper into several of the themes that emerged in the findings, discussing their relation to the existent body of literature and how they might contribute to emerging understandings with regards to strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

All of the reflections displayed in the findings section hold significance, as they provide a window into the challenges Indigenous and newcomer youth overcome on a daily basis as a result of prejudice, racism and resulting misperceptions and highlight how they want people to understand who they are as Indigenous or newcomer peoples. Furthermore, their insights into strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities – both why it is important, and how to best go about it – come from their lived experiences and consequently should hold weight when considering new paths forward for relationship building between these two broad communities. Having said that, there are several thematic findings that deserve further discussion, as they either bolster findings in the wider body of literature related to Indigenous and newcomer relations, or add new insights and potential further areas of exploration. This discussion section will first highlight the importance that emerged in the findings for both formal and informal spaces to contribute to relationship building, before moving into the relationship possibilities that exist within shared minority experiences as well as shared cultural strengths. Finally, this section will close with a discussion regarding the implications of the imbalanced initial perceptions that exist between each broad community.

Importance of both Formal and Informal Spaces for Relationship Building

The first discussion element that emerged from the findings in this project is the importance of both formal and informal opportunities for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. With regards to the newcomer youth participants, it was abundantly clear from their reflections that formal learning

opportunities were critical to their changing perceptions of Indigenous peoples. The newcomer youth described that, upon being given the opportunity to learn more about historical and current realities faced by Indigenous peoples, their perceptions of Indigenous peoples entirely changed as greater empathy and understanding emerged.

However, as evidenced in the reflections of the newcomer youth and within the body of literature, this crucial formalized learning is often left to community organizations who do not receive special funding to engage in this learning, while systems such as the education and settlement systems lag behind (Adam, 2015; Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2015; Yu; 2012). There have been some strides made within the education system in Manitoba, most notably of which is the University of Winnipeg mandating an Indigenous Course Requirement (ICR), whereby each student must take a course teaches about Indigenous histories, cultures worldviews and perspectives in order to graduate (University of Winnipeg, 2020). The Manitoba Department of Education has also developed and released various curricular support resources found under “Indigenous Education” on their website; however, each of these resources is complementary and voluntary to add to current curriculum (Manitoba Department of Education, 2020). Therefore, it is up to individual teachers to choose whether or not to implement the curricula and which pieces to implement, which is problematic in terms of ensuring that all Manitoba students are receiving a robust, decolonial understanding of Canadian history and Indigenous realities.

Furthermore, as evidenced in previous chapters, it is clear that the settlement system only provides a narrow and colonial understanding of Canadian history and Indigenous realities to newcomers, which is having dire consequences on newcomer perceptions of Indigenous peoples. Within the body of literature, there have been calls made to re-instate Indigenous peoples into the welcome and settlement process for

newcomers to Canada, honouring their role as original hosts to these lands (Alidina et al. 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). However, outside of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) Call's #93¹² and #94¹³, there has not been a robust push to actively decolonize the entire settlement and citizenship process. This must be addressed, and calls to decolonize the settlement system must be amplified.

With regards to Indigenous participants in the project, it is important to note that while their perceptions of newcomers were overall positive, they did not possess a wide breadth of knowledge about the realities facing many newcomers to Canada. While empathetic in nature, the initial perceptions offered by Indigenous youth regarding newcomer youth were rooted in narrow understandings of the dire home situations many newcomers face that force them to come to Canada. While this certainly is the case for some newcomers, this is not the case for all.

It is clear that these narrow understandings, as affirmed by the Indigenous youth participants, stem from the fact that they just have not received much opportunity to learn about newcomers to Canada. While there are other formalized channels from which Indigenous peoples learn about newcomer peoples, the largest system with the possibility to educate Indigenous peoples (and all Canadians) about newcomers is the education system. Unfortunately, while there are resources published for schools and teachers to better support newcomer students, there are not specific resources available for teachers to teach about newcomer realities in their classrooms. Students can opt to take a

¹² Call # 93: We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools (TRC, 2015).

¹³ Call #94: We call upon the Government of Canada to replace the Oath of Citizenship with the following: I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples, and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen (TRC, 2015).

voluntary “Global Issues” (or equivalent) class in high school, but there is no mandatory learning required regarding immigrant and refugee realities (Manitoba Department of Education, 2020). This is an area that must be addressed within the school system, as all students should receive the opportunity to receive a robust understanding of newcomer realities, especially in a time of increasing global xenophobia and anti-immigrant and refugee rhetoric (Landmann, Gaschler & Rohmann, 2019).

Fortunately, for both the Indigenous and newcomer participants in this project, many of the youth had received formal learning opportunities by after-school programs to learn about realities faced by the other community. This education is important work that community organizations continue to take on, in spite of often limited funding and staff members who are stretched thin. The settlement and education systems in Canada must begin to take some of this load off of community organizations, mandating the robust education about Indigenous and newcomer realities that is imperative both for improved relations between these two communities, as well for all Canadians to receive crucial decolonial and anti-racist learning.

Outside of formalized learning opportunities, the youth in this project identified informal experiences as profound for transforming their perceptions and relations towards members for the other broad community. While formal spaces are key to providing space for education and understanding to occur, they can often feel ‘controlled’ or stuffy (Alidina et al., 2020). This can create an atmosphere where members from either community are not easily able to relax, limiting the ability for people to open themselves up to new understandings and relationships. Therefore, having the opportunity to encounter one another in informal spaces such as community events, while volunteering, as members of the same sports teams, as classmates or as participants in the same

program, can provide the unstructured space from which relationships have the natural possibility to emerge.

For several of the youth participants, they received informal opportunities within the education system and within after-school programs to make spontaneous friendships with members of the other community, which they named as the key contributing factor to their changed perceptions. This experience finds resonance with the findings of Gyepi-Garbrah, et al. (2014), who found that the majority of interactions between Indigenous and newcomer communities occur between youth, as schools and after-school programs are two of the only spaces that bring these two communities together. While Gyepi-Garbrah et al. (2014) affirm that the youth from each broad community are still most often segregated from one another in these spaces, and that they can serve as flashpoints for tension, it is also clear that these shared spaces offer possibilities for spontaneous friendships to occur.

However, it is apparent that the education system and after-school programs do not currently provide enough shared informal spaces for these two communities to form meaningful relationships with one another. Within the school system, this is largely due to the fact that newcomer students spend much of their time in EAL classes, away from the remainder of the student body. While these classes are crucial for their adaptation to the learning required in the Canadian school system, they can limit possibilities for interactions with non-newcomer peers. For community organizations, it is the unfortunate reality that often due to funding requirements, most community programs do not serve both communities, but rather serve each community separately (Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010). This reality limits the amount that communities come into contact with one another, and consequently limits informal opportunities to build relationships. As opportunities for relationship building in both of these spaces are

currently limited, this reality must be addressed moving forward and opportunities for informal connections must be increased.

Outside of creating greater informal connecting opportunities within the education system and community organizations, there are great possibilities for informal spaces such as community BBQs and cultural exchanges to enhance relationships between these two communities. However, without the energy and resources offered by community organizations, these spaces are left to committed community members to organize, which asks much from community members who often already have much asked of them. There is potential room for organizations to use their capacity to open doors to informal experiences, while leaving as much control as possible over the experiences to community members. Certainly, the balance between controlled space and informal space is delicate; however, as these relaxed and informal spaces hold many possibilities for strengthening relationships, there must be greater effort placed towards their creation.

Relationship Building Possibilities within Shared Minority Experiences

Within the reflections offered on challenges and misperceptions experienced, as well as the rationale for building stronger relationships, a common theme emerged around the possibilities for shared minority experiences to strengthen relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. These shared minority experiences, and their possibilities for relationship building, find strong resonance within the body of literature (Chung, 2012; Ghorayshi, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, et al., 2014; Wong & Fong, 2012). Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) interviewed an Indigenous service provider who describes the similarities these two communities possess related to minority experiences in the following way:

Well, I think the similarity... would be that... Aboriginals feel very much like refugees in their own land, because the land was taken away from them... I think

for many of the African refugees, they've been displaced too. So there's a commonality there, you know... There's a history there of oppression, of racialized violence, of systemic discrimination and racism, and displacement and all of that's connected to what refugee (p. 72-73).

On one hand, it is unfortunate that commonalities should emerge within challenges and misperceptions minority communities experience related to histories of colonization, systemic oppression, racism and prejudice. Having said that, the challenging experiences that Indigenous and newcomer communities have faced as minorities, offer powerful connecting points that can contribute to strengthened relationships between both broad communities. It is critical to acknowledge here that experiences between these two broad communities, as well as within each broad community, are far from homogenous and it is important to not conflate minority experiences, but rather seek understandings of the nuanced experiences of oppression within each community context. While this seeking out of nuanced experience is vital, the experiences that do find common ground hold great possibility with regards to relations between these two broad communities.

One of the greatest possibilities that may exist within these shared minority experiences is the potential for Indigenous and newcomer people to come together to engage in collective action and solidarity over the common systemic inequalities and oppressions that continue to impact these two communities (Alidina et al., 2020). This is an important possibility to discuss further, as it is thus far underrepresented in the body of literature on Indigenous and newcomer relationships. Within the wider body of literature regarding social change, there are two main social change processes identified: one whereby minority groups act to change systems (collective action for social change) and one where majority and minority groups come together and improve relations, in order to

create social change (social cohesion route to social change) (Glasford & Johnson, 2018). Social change literature found within a Canadian context features the social cohesion route prominently, as this process has been key to the success of movements such as women's rights, labour and LGBTTQIA* equality movements (Glasford & Calcagno, 2012; O'Brien, 2014).

While there is no doubt that minority-majority partnerships bring great possibilities for change due to the access to power and influence possessed by majority groups, they can also have several detrimental impacts on the minority partner (Dixon et al., 2012). The first harmful impact comes in the 'wooing' process that is often necessary for minority groups to partner with majority groups, as they seek to mobilize the support of the majority. Often, the main message or goal of the movement has to be watered down and made palatable in order to make the majority group comfortable, especially when the movement involves a re-distributing of power away from the majority group (Politi, Gale & Staerklé, 2017). The second detrimental impact is that the majority group often retains power over the movement in the form of resource control, and can withdraw their critical support and influence at any point (Becker et al., 2013). Lastly, movements led by joint minority-majority groups can create a 'we're all in this together' atmosphere, which while not seemingly negative, can veil the fact that conditions experienced by each group are vastly different, and dilute the urgency for the majority to seek concrete change (Dixon et al., 2012; Subašić, Reynolds & Turner, 2008).

As the social cohesion method for social change can be problematic for minority communities, it is critical to further explore the collective action method for creating social change within a Canadian context, and understand what possibilities might exist if minority groups come together to work for collective change together. It is important to note that there is a fairly large body of literature related to collective action efforts

between members of the same broad community, especially with regards to different Indigenous communities coming together to seek change (Alcantara, 2010; Anderson, Campbell & Belcourt, 2018; Menke, 2019; Wilkes et al., 2010). However, possibilities for collective action between different minority groups in Canada continue to go underexplored in the wider body of literature. There are important minority solidarity, collective action and safe space groups emerging on the community level, such as QPOC Winnipeg, which is a group creating safer-space events and initiatives for Queer|Trans, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (QPOC, 2020). Furthermore, there are critical minority solidarity actions happening in the United States and across the world at the time of this thesis writing, in the wake of the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police (Al Jazeera, 2020). Groups such as QPOC, and movements such as Black Lives Matter, are spurring on vital collective action work between broad minority communities and consequently deserve exploration in the coming weeks and months, as their ongoing efforts offer profound possibilities for creating systemic change.

Relationship Building Possibilities within Shared Cultural Strengths

While possibilities for strengthened relationships, as well as solidarity and collective action, exist within shared minority experiences, there is also much ground for strengthened relationships to emerge between Indigenous and newcomer communities from within shared cultural strengths. Each of the youth participants, regardless of the broad community from which they were from, all shared profoundly similar commonalities regarding the aspects of their communities they were proud of or loved. Furthermore, youth became visibly animated and engaged as they shared about their cultures and the importance of the (re)connections they possessed to their cultures was palpable.

The importance of this (re)connection to culture for both broad communities is not surprising, as maintaining a connection to cultural traditions, ceremonies, worldviews and spiritualities has been prominent area of resiliency, resistance and resurgence throughout historical experiences of displacement and colonial violence (Alidina et al., 2020; Chung, 2012; Wong & Fong, 2012). Additionally, maintaining a connection to cultural activities, ceremonies and traditions, beyond being a way to resist enforced colonization, is also an ongoing expression of relationship. Engaging in cultural traditions connects communities to ancestors, to family members that might be far away, and to future generations. This relational aspect that is embedded in cultural practice holds natural possibilities for strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer peoples.

Cultural sharing can also be practical, as it allows communities that may speak different language to communicate in ways that transcend oral communication. As Alidina et al. (2020) affirm, “sharing cultural practices does not require words, translators or even facilitators, which can transcend language barriers and expose cross-cultural similarities” (p. 21). Lastly, while there certainly are formal elements to various cultural ceremonies, there is often an informality that comes with engaging in cultural activities, in particular through food song and dance, which can create a relaxed and joyous atmosphere that holds a natural ability to enhance connections between members of both communities (Adam, 2015; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Suleman & Zuluaga, 2011; Wong & Fong, 2012).

It is important to conclude this section by highlighting that minority communities are often viewed by the ‘majority’ mainstream society through either a deficits-based or a pitying lens. While minority communities continue to be resilient in the face of these problematic perceptions held by mainstream society, it is the unfortunate reality that

experiences such as internalized racism and internalized oppression can seep into one's psyche (Speight, 2007). Consequently, it is important to continue to amplify the cultural resiliency, resistance, resurgence and reconnection that continue to overcome colonial adversity. These areas, far from being deficits-based or inspiring pity, have the potential to transform internalized perceptions of self, as well perceptions held by mainstream society.

Imbalanced Initial Perceptions between Each Broad Community

The final significant finding to discuss further is the imbalance highlighted between the initial perceptions/misperceptions of the other broad community, as the newcomer youth in this project all expressed negative initial perceptions of Indigenous peoples, and the Indigenous youth all expressed initial positive perceptions of the newcomer community. This imbalance is echoed in studies completed by Adam (2015) and Madariaga-Vignudo (2009), who both found that Indigenous participants in their studies overall had mixed views of newcomer peoples, while newcomer participants had overall negative perceptions of Indigenous peoples. The 'mixed' and 'positive' Indigenous perceptions of newcomers found in these three studies, alongside the overall negative initial perceptions by newcomers towards Indigenous peoples, highlights an imbalance in initial perceptions between both broad communities and is an important finding to unpack further.

Why does an imbalance occur between initial perceptions, when both communities, broadly speaking, share many similarities rooted in minority experiences and cultural strengths? An answer to this question may best begin to be unearthed by moving away from the localized experiences of these two broad communities and travelling upstream, to perceptions held by mainstream Canada towards both broad communities, recognizing that it is mainstream culture that holds much of the power over

societal discourse, policy and actions. With regards to public opinion of immigrants and refugees, an Environics Institute survey conducted in 2019 found that Canadians continue to hold mixed, but overall positive views on immigration (Smith, 2019). While urban Indigenous people living in Winnipeg, the focus of these three studies, are intimately connected to and surrounded by mainstream Canada, it makes sense that their initial perceptions of the broad newcomer community are congruent with the overall positive perceptions found more broadly across Canada.

Conversely, as newcomers learn barely any robust, decolonial information about Indigenous peoples in the settlement or education systems, they are left to learn primarily from their community members, the media and social media – all of whom have been informed by the wider Canadian mainstream society. Unfortunately, what seems clear from the findings in these three relevant studies, alongside findings in the wider body of literature, is that Canadian mainstream society continues to hold colonial and racist perceptions of Indigenous peoples, which are being transferred to newcomer peoples when they arrive to these lands (Chung, 2012; Khan et al., 2015; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009; Yu, 2011). As evidenced by the work of Khan et al. (2015) and Madariaga-Vignudo (2009), this transferring of colonial, paternalistic, and racist perceptions of Indigenous peoples to newcomer peoples has one main effect: it recruits newcomer peoples into a colonial agenda, as they seek to emulate mainstream society in an effort to differentiate themselves from Indigenous peoples and achieve upward mobility. Newcomers to Canada witness mainstream Canadians degrading Indigenous peoples and therefore seek to do the same in order to fit in with the dominant group. As Madariaga-Vignudo (2009) affirms, “if mainstream Canadians can throw ‘dung’ on Aboriginals, and it is the mainstream group that holds power, immigrants will emulate them and throw ‘dung’ on the underprivileged group too” (p.64).

This finding is critical to address moving forward, as it has direct and dire continued effects on Indigenous peoples. Not only are Indigenous peoples in Canada continuing to experience the ongoing impacts of colonization in their daily lives, they also are experiencing prejudice and racism from both mainstream Canadian society as well as the newcomers these views are being transferred to. It is clear from this finding that alongside increased education for newcomers, mainstream Canadian society must receive greater education surrounding Indigenous history and historical and current realities, in order to gain the empathy and understanding required to change perceptions of Indigenous peoples for all Canadians.

Summary

This section discussed the implications of the key findings of this study for the ways in which they either bolstered findings within the wider body of literature, or for their contributions to new understandings and areas of exploration. More specifically, this chapter discussed the importance of both formal and informal spaces when engaging in relationship building, as well as the relationship possibilities that exist within shared minority experiences, as well as shared cultural strengths. Finally, this section closed by discussing implications of the imbalance in initial perceptions between members from each broad community.

The following chapter concludes by providing recommendations that have emerged from the reflections offered by the research participants, a critical analysis of the approach taken in this research process and implications for social work practice, before ending with my own concluding remarks.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Introduction

This final chapter is organized around the following areas: 1. Introduction; 2. recommendations; 3. critical analysis; 4. implications for social work practice and concludes with; and 5. closing remarks. This thesis project emerged from the recognition that alongside shared lower-socio-economic and geographic spaces and resulting competition over scarce resources, the lack of community-driven, decolonial information that Indigenous and newcomer communities receive about one another is having dire implications on relationships between these two broad communities. While I presumed initially that negative perceptions abounded on both sides, what I came to understand through engagement with the body of literature and the findings in this project, is that while perceptions by Indigenous peoples to newcomers overall are mixed or positive, reflecting dominant perspectives of Canadians towards newcomer peoples, newcomer perspectives also reflect dominant mainstream Canada, but instead are overall negative towards Indigenous peoples (Adam, 2015; Khan et al., 2015; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009; Smith, 2019).

The fact that other studies have found mixed views by Indigenous peoples towards newcomer peoples means of course that there a blend of positive and negative perceptions that exist. This ‘mixed’ reality demonstrates that there is a need for Indigenous peoples to receive more robust, community-driven information about newcomers as a way to create greater understanding, empathy and knowledge of newcomer realities and experiences. However, as the Indigenous participants in the two external studies, as well as the participants in this study, also hold positive perceptions of newcomers, this complicates understandings of why relations continue to be so fractured

between these two broad communities. One answer might lie in the fact that, outside of perceptions, relationship building for Indigenous communities is complicated by a well-founded fear of ‘the newcomer’, which unfortunately continues to be validated by the real-life impacts of newcomers receiving colonial and racist information about Indigenous peoples by mainstream Canada (Chung, 2012; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009; Mercredi, 2015; Yu, 2012).

Consequently, while it is critical to continue to provide opportunities for Indigenous communities, as well as all Canadians, to receive community-driven, decolonial information regarding newcomer communities to address negative perceptions as well as provide more robust and nuanced understandings, it is if not more important for newcomer communities, alongside mainstream Canada, to gain community-driven, decolonial information about Indigenous peoples. While issues of strengthening relationships are complex and there is no ‘one’ answer, it appears clear that if dominant perceptions by mainstream Canada regarding Indigenous peoples changed, perceptions by newcomers would have the ability to change alongside them and Indigenous communities might be able to stop living in fear of ‘the newcomer’.

Recommendations

This point leads into the recommendations prompted by the findings in this project, which attempt to respond to the need for enhanced opportunities for community-driven, decolonial knowledge, understanding and information sharing to occur between Indigenous and newcomer communities. The first recommendation is a response to both the reflections offered by the youth which outlined the importance of formal learning opportunities to change perceptions, as well as the recognition that it is critical to change perspectives of mainstream Canada. While there are meaningful relationship building practices that can and should occur between Indigenous and newcomer communities, it is

also important to cast our gaze outwards, addressing the root causes of the pervasive colonial and racist perceptions of Indigenous peoples that are being transferred to newcomers upon their arrival to these lands (Chung, 2012; Khan et al., 2015; Madariaga-Vignudo, 2009; Yu, 2011).

It is important to first note that a wide swath of the Canadian population, prior to several years ago, only received themselves a colonial version of Canadian history and Indigenous identities and realities in the education system, which has contributed to pervasive negative and racist views (Kempf, 2009). Therefore, it is clear that mainstream Canada must be provided the ability to learn a decolonial version of Canadian history, alongside a robust understanding of Indigenous identities and realities, in order to open the doors for new understandings to emerge. While there are many ways this learning could and should occur, this particular recommendation stems from the recognition that as many Canadians as possible should have the opportunity to receive at least some robust, decolonial information regarding Canadian history and Indigenous realities.

Therefore, I am recommending that the Canadian federal government implement an incentivized online workshop that can be completed by each Canadian citizen or permanent resident, which would provide an opportunity for all Canadians to learn a decolonial history of Canada, understand how colonization has impacted and continues to impact Indigenous peoples, as well as gain an opportunity to learn about Indigenous identities and worldviews. This online workshop would need to be created exclusively by Indigenous leaders across Canada and would be voluntary, but Canadians would be incentivized to partake in the workshop by receiving a tax break on their upcoming federal taxes. While this workshop is only one effort needed in the re-education of the Canadian mainstream regarding Canadian history and Indigenous realities, an

incentivized workshop has the potential to reach a wide number of Canadians, opening the door for new understandings to emerge.

The second recommendation is two-fold and again is targeted upstream, towards the federal government, and in this case Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The first part is not a recommendation, but rather a clear demand to follow through with the process of responding to the TRC's Call #93 and release the updated settlement and citizenship materials, which have been in limbo for over three years (IRCC, 2019). The release of these materials is a vital step in ensuring that those applying for Canadian citizenship receive a decolonial understanding of Canadian history and Indigenous identities, while providing pre-arrival and settlement agencies the tools they need to help share this knowledge to newcomers.

The second part of this recommendation responds to the reality named by the youth that it is critical to implement both formal and informal opportunities for relationship building to occur, and is a call for IRCC to mandate settlement agencies across Canada to partner with Indigenous organizations to support the welcome and settlement process of newcomers in their community. There should at least be one day of partnership in the settlement process to new communities with Indigenous organizations, although agencies would be encouraged to go beyond this. Furthermore, it is critical that Indigenous organizations receive funding for their participation in the settlement process.

As evidenced in the literature review, this process of "territorientation", or a restoring of a role as host to these lands, could be a critical step in bridging relations between Indigenous and newcomer communities (Alidina et al., 2020; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). Not only would this honour the traditional role of Indigenous peoples as the original occupants and hosts of these lands, but this would demonstrate welcome and generosity by Indigenous peoples to newcomers from the

moment they arrive in Canada, which could help lay the foundation for positive relationships to be built. Furthermore, territororientation would provide Indigenous communities with the ability to control their own narrative, expressing their identities, realities and histories in a way they deem fit. Lastly, a re-instating of a role as hosts to these lands could open the door for informal relationship building opportunities to occur, as Indigenous organizations and connected community members, alongside recent newcomers could share aspects of culture, ceremony and food together. The reciprocal learning inherent in cultural sharing, alongside the sharing of knowledge and welcome within the territororientation process, holds strong possibilities for strengthening relations between Indigenous and newcomer communities.

The final recommendation speaks to the importance named by the youth of both formal and informal learning opportunities for strengthening relationships, and is a direct amplification of the reflections offered by two youth participants, as they called for community organizations to serve *both* Indigenous and newcomer communities, and not just one or the other. It is important to recognize that there are some organizations, in particular within Winnipeg, that do offer programs to members of both communities. Having said that, the reality overall is that often due to particularities related to funding allocations and requirements, these two communities engage in programming in isolation of each other. Programs do not specifically need to be created around relationship building; but rather can center around topics important to both communities like employment services, educational support or mental wellness programming. Even though these are formal programs, providing space for Indigenous and newcomer communities to learn together can create room for the informal connections that are so key for relationship building to emerge.

Critical Analysis

My research question asked, “How might an online relationship-building Talking Circle and video-making process between Indigenous and newcomer youth during the COVID-19 pandemic contribute to reduced ‘social distance’ between Indigenous and newcomer communities?” The answer to this research question, after engaging in the research process with the youth participants alongside relevant literature, is multi-layered. To begin, while this project did not have as much direct relational engagement between the youth participants as originally hoped for in the in-person conceptualization, I am confident that both the online Talking Circle, as well as participating in the video process, were meaningful and empowering experiences for the youth. The youth received the opportunity to hear each other’s stories and reflections, both in the Talking Circle and the finished video project, which opens possibilities for greater empathy and understanding to emerge between these youth participants. Furthermore, the youth were able to gain access to a platform not often provided to youth, from which they were able to gain agency over the expression of their realities and experiences as Indigenous and newcomer peoples, while contributing to a community-driven relationship building resource. I do believe, especially in times where life has gotten increasingly shifted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing community-driven resource-sharing online is vital and can have great possibilities with regards to relationship building efforts.

With regards to rapidly shifting this project to an online iteration, it is important for me to analyze and express how my methodologies supported me in this process. Initially, it was my hope during the in-person iteration of this process to embody the visiting way methodology by creating an atmosphere that felt relaxed, safe, informal and lighthearted. I quickly had to shift and think through how to embody this methodology in through an online platform, especially as several of the original participants that I had

met in person were no longer able to do the project and I was now ‘meeting’ some of youth research participants for the first time on a recorded Zoom video call. It was important for me to imagine how these calls might be able to feel relaxed and calm, like we were sitting around a kitchen table visiting.

Therefore, I began to frame these interactions conceptually through the Conversation Method as outlined by Kovach (2010), approaching them as conversations, rather than what would typically be understood within a research context as interviews. Framing these interactions as conversations opened me up to embody the visiting way methodology and helped me, as well as the youth participant to enter a relaxed space, even as Zoom video chats at that point were a relatively new experience for all of us. For me personally, instead of feeling the need to embody what it meant to be an ‘interviewer’, and all of the professional associations that come alongside that title, I was freed to inhabit an honest, relaxed space rooted in the realities of my own life impacted by COVID-19. At the time, I had a seven-month old baby and no child care due to social distancing realities, and so our conversations involved him making noise in the background and slowly ‘eating’ pieces of bread (the only thing that would keep him quiet during the video recordings).

I also sought to embody the following reflection by Simpson (2014) as she outlines that “visiting is fun, enjoyable, nurturing of intimate connections and relationship building” (p.18). Even though the topics we were discussing brought up challenging experiences, I also shared lighthearted moments along with the youth as we chatted about ‘pandemic life,’ the TV shows that were helping us through long evenings, our lack of toilet paper and the different foods we were eating. I also sought to honour and express gratitude to the youth by being present and actively listening to all they shared – both light-hearted and serious – in hopes of providing an atmosphere where the

youth knew that their knowledge and experiences were respected. I still asked all of the ‘interview’ questions necessary, but embodying the visiting way through the *Conversational Method* created both a comfortable atmosphere, as well a relationship to form between two often relative strangers. Lastly, embodying the visiting way I believe led to strong video footage for the youth who participated in the one-on-one Zoom video calls, as the youth appear relaxed, while sharing profound reflections and experiences.

Limitations

While the visiting way and storytelling methodologies led to this project still moving forward in a positive manner even as it shifted rapidly online, there were also some limitations brought into this project brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the original project design. The first limitation is that, in the rush to move the project online, I did not think to implement a formal check-in between each individual youth participant and myself after the online Talking Circle was completed, to gain understanding of if and how this experience impacted them. This process was initially going to occur in a closing Talking Circle in the two-day in person project, but escaped me as this project moved online. While I was able to have informal check-ins with several of the youth and the two Knowledge Keepers and they all named that the Talking Circle was a positive experience for them, a formal check-in would have been beneficial in understanding the potential impact of the Talking Circle.

The second limitation has been named in various ways throughout this thesis, but should be stated once more, and is that unfortunately the possibilities for the youth in this project to form possible relationships and connections with youth from the other broad community was limited by moving this project online. Unfortunately, this project necessarily shifted to exploring how the video resource created by the youth participants might contribute to strengthened relations between both broad communities, rather than

also exploring the relationship building experience of the youth participants over the two day in-person project. Lastly, this project did include twelve youth, which was a beneficial number of youth initially to be large enough to receive enough data, while being small enough for in-person relationships to potentially form. However, having six Indigenous youth and six newcomer youth meant did end up meaning that community-specific data at points felt not as robust as it could have been. For example, it would have been helpful to gain a wider body of initial perceptions from Indigenous youth regarding newcomer youth, to see whether or not there were in fact more mixed perceptions, or whether or not all of the initial perceptions by the Indigenous youth remained positive.

Implications for Social Work Practice

It is my hope that this research has direct implications for social work practice. My first hope is that the findings in this project and within the body of literature encourage social work practitioners to widen their gaze, looking for ways to address the root causes of problems, rather than placing band aids over issues. In the case of Indigenous and newcomer relationships, it is vital to challenge the structures and systems that continue to oppress and pit marginalized communities against one another, rather than only seeking to improve relationships at the community level. More specifically, problematic perceptions held by mainstream Canada towards both Indigenous and newcomer communities must be challenged as they hold direct power and implications for both communities. Furthermore, important systems such as the education and settlement systems must be continuously challenged to include more community-driven and decolonial information regarding realities faced by minority groups and must immediately begin ensuring that the telling of Canadian history is decolonized. Lastly, it is important for social workers to engage in the often-difficult work of (re)educating the racist and prejudiced perspectives embedded into the psyche of

dominant Canadian society, recognizing that it is the role of those in power to educate those in power, not the role of minority communities who have much to lose and enough on their plates already. This necessity to engage in (re)education extends to the university bodies that train new social workers as well, recognizing that the prioritization of anti-racist and decolonial teaching is vital to ensuring that social workers are engaging in work that is fundamentally anti-oppressive in nature.

Closing Remarks

This project emerged out of a desire to enhance the amount of robust, community-driven and decolonial knowledge Indigenous and newcomer communities receive about one another, in order to strengthen relationships between these two broad communities. I engaged in the entirety of this research project through an Indigenous framework and through Indigenous methodologies, actively seeking to decolonize the project and honor the youth participants as the knowledge holders of this project. I sought to embody the action-oriented calls from within decolonial theory and an Indigenous research paradigm, by creating a tangible resource that will hopefully contribute to relationship building efforts in the future. This project also was able to provide a platform to the voices of youth, who are most affected by the fractured relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities and whose voices often are not amplified (Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). Lastly, this project actively recognizes the possibilities for Indigenous and newcomer communities to come together in solidarity and collective action, in hopes of creating systemic change. It is my hope that this project has made a meaningful contribution to an emerging body of decolonial and community-driven knowledge, offering possibilities with regards to bridging relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities, while providing encouragement and energy for others to continue on the journey.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT POSTER

ARE YOU AN INDIGENOUS OR NEWCOMER YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18-24?

*Are you interested in strengthening
relationships between Indigenous
and newcomer communities?*

If so, come be a part of this exciting research project that will explore Indigenous and newcomer identities and the potential for transformed relationships between both communities, through the creation of a video. This video will then be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential educational resource. The project will take place over one weekend (11am-4pm each day). You will receive \$25 for each session attended, as well as a meal and bus fare.

For more information contact:
Principal Investigator:
Kathleen Vitt
vittk3@
myumanitoba.ca

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT SCRIPTS

**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

EMAIL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Hello,

My name is Kathleen Vitt and I am a Social Work Masters student at the University of Manitoba. I am engaging in a research project that is exploring the relationship building experience of a video-making process, whereby Indigenous and newcomer youth jointly create a video that explores a) their identities as Indigenous or newcomer peoples and b) the potential for transformed relationships between both communities. Please forward the following message to any youth you know who might be interested in being a part of this exciting research project – thank you!

Are you an Indigenous or newcomer youth with refugee experience (aged 18-24) that is interested in strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities? Would you like to contribute to creating a video resource that will support the work of Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations in Winnipeg? If so, come be a part of this exciting research project that will explore Indigenous and newcomer identities and the potential of transformed relationships between both communities, through the creation of a video. This project will take place over one weekend (Saturday and Sunday, 11am-4pm each day). You will receive the opportunity to learn video editing skills, as well as lunch, bus fare and \$25 per session. For more information, contact researcher Kathleen Vitt at: vittk3@myumanitoba.ca or [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Kathleen Vitt



**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

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Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

IN-PERSON RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Information to be Shared with Prospective Participants During Initial Contact

Prospective participants will be told that they will have the opportunity to:

- **PARTICIPATE** in Talking Circles and share with each other experiences of related to their identities as Indigenous or newcomer youth, and explore the potential of relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities
- **FORM** new connections to youth from different communities than them, alongside an Indigenous elder and a newcomer knowledge keeper
- **COLLABORATE** with other youth research participants to jointly create a video that will explore their identities as Indigenous and newcomer youth and the potential of relationship building between Indigenous and newcomer communities
- **SKILL BUILD** as they learn how to shoot impactful film footage, and edit the video footage together on iMovie, if they elect to be a volunteer film editor
- **SHARE** this video with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential educational resource, and further have the opportunity to share the video in any other way they see fit.

During the initial contact with the workshop facilitator, potential participants will learn the purpose of the workshop and about what will be required of them. Prospective participants will be advised of the risks, benefits, and the time commitment and expectations around participating in the workshop, including the amount of the honorarium to be paid.

**EMAIL OR TEXTING
RECRUITMENT RESPONSE**

Hello,

Thank you so much for showing interest in this research project! If you are interested in being a research participant, the next step is to meet with me for a one-on-one meeting. In this meeting we will over the project in detail, and if you decide you are interested in being a research participant, we will go over further forms (including informed consent and confidentiality forms) and I will ask you one pre-interview question. If you are not interested in being a research participant after discussing the project in detail, that is completely fine! However, please know that there is no compensation provided for the initial one-on-one meeting. Please text, email, or call with times that work for you to meet for the on-one-on meeting. If you have any further questions prior to the meeting, please feel free to call me at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Kathleen Vitt

APPENDIX C: OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY



**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY FOR ASSISTANTS SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH PROJECT

The Possibilities for Transformed Relationships between
Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of Identities and Relationship
Building through Art-based Methods

(Check the following that apply)

I understand that as an:

Indigenous Knowledge Keeper

Newcomer Knowledge Keeper

Other *(Please specify)* _____

I will be involved in a study being conducted by _____, a
Master of Social Work Student with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba,
as part of her degree requirements and that confidential information will be made known
to me.

I agree to keep all information collected during this study confidential and will not
reveal by speaking, communicating or transmitting this information in written,
photographic, sound, electronic (disks, tapes, transcripts, email) or in any other way to
anyone outside the research team.

I will tell the researcher as soon as I discover that I know any participant either as a
family member, friend, or acquaintance or in any other way; so that the researcher can
take the appropriate steps to manage or minimize any conflicts of interest that might
occur because of any dual roles I may have.

I must follow the law, and if disclosures suggest that a child may be in need of
protection I, like all citizens of Manitoba, have an obligation under the law to report the
specific concern and the basis upon which they have formed the concern about a child in
need of protection.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness Name: _____ Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM, AGES 18-24

**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Experiences of Relationship Building between Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of Identities through Arts-based Research Methods

Principal Investigator and contact information: Kathleen Vitt, Master of Social Work student, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], vittk3@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information: Dr. Marlyn Bennett, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca

The consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It gives you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research project is responding to the reality that there has been, and continues to be, mistrust, misperceptions and tension between Indigenous and newcomer communities. One of the main reasons for this ongoing negative relationship is the lack of community-driven information that each community receives about the other. This project will seek to address the fact that the lack of community-driven information regarding Indigenous and newcomer identities is having negative impacts on the relationship between both communities. The objective of this study is to research the relationship building experience of a shared video making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth jointly create a video that explores both their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples as well as the potential for transformed relationships between both communities. This project will hope to, in a small way, contribute to the creation and sharing of community-driven information about newcomer and Indigenous identities, and open the door for an exploration of the potential for transformed relationships between both

communities. The video that is jointly created by youth research participants will be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a resource on Indigenous and newcomer identities and the potential for relationship building.

Risks and Discomforts

Fellow youth research participants will be asked to keep the information shared in the Talking Circles confidential; however, a potential social risk that might exist is for you is that information might be discussed outside the group by other participants and be traced back to them. To address this risk, I will thoroughly discuss Talking Circle expectations and procedures with you at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the start of each workshop day, and will ensure full everyone is aware of what confidentiality means in the context of Talking Circles.

Secondly, as newcomer and Indigenous communities often experience relationships characterized by misunderstandings and tension, there is a possibility of conflict emerging between research participants in the two-day workshop. The potential for conflict will be addressed in the following ways. First, I will go over the intent of the Talking Circle questions, and the ways to engage well in the Talking Circles at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the beginning of each workshop day. Secondly, research participants, alongside the researcher, will create a ‘group agreement’ for how we want to be together over the two-day workshop, and how to ensure that all participants feel safe and respected. We will follow all of the guidelines that we collaboratively create to make sure that everyone feels safe during the entire research project.

Lastly, storytelling is highly personal and can bring up emotions. It is possible that talking about your experiences and identity regarding being “Indigenous” or “newcomer” may bring difficult emotions to the surface. Please know that you do not need to answer any Talking Circle question you find makes you uncomfortable or is upsetting. You are also more than welcome to step outside of the Talking Circle if you need to at any point, and that a research aid will be there to assist you. The research aid and the principal counselor are not there to provide counselling; however, the following is a list of resources should you need any additional help or support. We will refer you to these follow support resources should you need additional support, or help you to find other counseling help.

Support and distress lines:

Crisis Chat Line

www.supportline.ca

Monday to Friday: 10am – 9pm

Klinik Crisis Line (24/7)

<http://klinik.mb.ca/crisis-support/>

Phone: (204) 786-8686

If you find yourself in crisis, wish to harm yourself, are severely depressed anytime during the talking circles, workshops, or any part of the research process please notify the researchers and they will ensure that they immediately connect you with one of the following resources or accompany you to the Emergency Mental Health Centre.

Manitoba Suicide Prevention & Support Line (24/7)

Toll free: 1-877-435-7170

www.reasontolive.ca

Klinic Crisis Line (24/7)
Phone: (204) 786-8686

Trafficking Hotline (24/7)
Toll free: 1-844-333-2211

Toll free: 1-888-322-3019

Sexual Assault Crisis Line (24/7)
Phone: (204) 786-8631
Toll free: 1-888-292-7565

Benefits

It is the hope of this project that you feel empowered during and after the process of sharing your voice, experiences and stories as you contribute to the creation of joint video regarding Indigenous and newcomer youth identities and the potential for relationship building between both communities. This video will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to be used as an educational resource, and involvement in this video could not only serve as a benefit to you, as you can add this to your resume to support future employment endeavors, but will also benefit the wider community. It is the further hope that you will have the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous or newcomer identities, build relationships with youth from different communities, and make connections to a local Indigenous elder and knowledge keeper.

This research may also indirectly benefit you, and other youth and adults from Indigenous and newcomer communities, as it could lead to increase conversations and action about learning more about each community and improving relationships. The potential of this video to help increase understandings has the potential to benefit the Winnipeg community, and communities across Canada as this video will be made public.

Costs

There is no cost to you to attend the talking discussion or art workshop.

Payment for participation

You will be given \$25 for each workshop day attended. Two bus tickets and a meal will also be provided for each day.

Participant Observation

One of the ways that data will be collected is through participant observation, which will occur while research participants engage in the workshop activities. The researcher is using participant observation to capture the non-verbal communication that will be present during the two-day workshop process. These observations will only serve to enhance the Talking Circles and video creation process, and will be brief in nature. The researcher will collect some of my observational findings quickly in a journal during the days, but will collect the majority of my observations immediately following the sessions. To ensure that the observations are correct, the researcher will be sending observational findings to relevant research participants before the thesis writing process begins for the participant's feedback.

Consent signatures for the workshop

- 1.) I understand what I will do in the two-day workshop
- 2.) I understand the risks and benefits of my participation in the workshop
- 3.) I understand how to receive extra support during or following the workshop, should I need

it

- 4.) I understand the compensation that I will receive for participating in the workshop
- 5.) I understand that the researcher will be engaging in participant observation, and will be taking notes to capture non-verbal communication that is present during the workshop and video making process.
- 6.) I understand that the researcher will send me any observational findings that concern me before she begins to write her thesis project.

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

The Pre-Interview Question

One of the data collecting methods of this research project is the inclusion of one pre-interview question, that will be asked in the first on-one-on meeting with the researcher, if you choose to participate in this research project.

A pre-interview question is being included in this research project for the following two reasons. The first reason is that the pre-interview question provides an opportunity to gauge a ‘starting point’ that each youth is coming into this research project with, regarding knowledge of Indigenous and newcomer identities. The second reason is that the responses to the pre-interview question could elicit responses that are sensitive in nature if asked in the Talking Circle format, where you are surrounded by both Indigenous and newcomer youth. Asking this question in this one-on-one format allows you the space to be honest, without potential repercussions of saying something that may hurt the feelings of another youth.

The pre-interview question is, “What have you been taught (by the media, family, community, social media) about newcomer/Indigenous peoples?”

Consent signatures for pre-interview question

- 1.) I understand that if this question makes me uncomfortable in any way, I have the right to decline to answer the question without penalty
- 2.) My participation involves being asked the question by the researcher, Kathleen Vitt. The interview will last approximately 5 minutes.
- 3.) With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded. If you do not consent to being recorded, the interviewer will take notes.
- 4.) I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in the written thesis that will use information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this follow up interview will remain secure. Further uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies, which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
- 5.) There is no incentive or compensation for answering this pre-interview question. I understand that I will not be paid for participating in this pre-interview.
- 6.) I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
- 7.) I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
 (day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

The Video Creation Process

Your participation in this research involves making a jointly-created video with the other youth research participants. You will shoot the film sections for the video, and will have the opportunity to contribute to editing the video afterwards if you choose. If you volunteer to edit the video, you will learn valuable iMovie editing skills that you can bring forward with you into your future. This is also an additional skill that you will be able to place on your resume to help with future employment opportunities. On the chance that there are no volunteer editors, the researcher will complete the editing process as directed by the youth participants.

This video will explore your identities as either an Indigenous or newcomer youth, as well as your thoughts on the potential for transformed relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. There will be Talking Circles throughout the two-day workshop that will provide opportunities to reflect on the questions that will inform the content of the video, as well as learn from the other youth who are participating in the Talking Circles. The video will involve three parts: an exploration of research participants' identities as Indigenous youth, research participant's identities as newcomer youth, and the possibilities for transformed relationships between both communities. Outside of this basic structure, and alongside the other youth, will have full control and ownership over how each one of those sections is created, including what information is included and how it is presented. The video that you will create will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential educational resource and will be made public on YouTube. Therefore, your image and your words in the video will not be kept confidential. However, you will have full control over what you want to say in the video, and how you want to say it. It is also your choice to have your name in the video, or not. It is the researcher's highest priority to ensure that you feel confident and comfortable with the final video that is created.

After the two-day workshop, the volunteer editors and the researcher will meet within the following two weeks to edit the video. Those who do not volunteer to edit can make sure to voice their desires for the editing process during the two-day workshop, or by contacting the researcher directly prior to the editing process occurring. Once editing is completed in the two weeks following the two-day workshop, the video will be sent to all research participants for feedback. After you receive the video, the researcher will meet with you to sign a video release consent and waiver form. This will serve as the final opportunity from which to withdraw your participation in the video. Please note that at this time, any solo footage of you would be able to be removed, but we would only be able to blur your face in any group footage that would appear of you.

Consent signatures for the video-making process:

- 1.) I understand the purpose of the video-making process
- 2.) I agree to have my image video-recorded for the purpose of a jointly created video between Indigenous and newcomer youth that will be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations within Winnipeg and on Youtube
- 3.) I understand that I will have an opportunity to view the final video before providing my consent and signing a waiver to share the video in the above mentioned ways

4.) I understand that once the video has eventually been released, it is not possible to retract

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

Confidentiality

The researcher, Kathleen Vitt, and her advisor, Dr. Marlyn Bennett, will be the only two people who will have access to all of the data besides the final video (pre-interview question, Talking Circle questions, participant observations). All information will be kept strictly confidential. Prior to transcription, the device used for audio recording will be kept in a secure location in Principal Investigator Kathleen Vitt's home, and the smartphone will be password protected. Following transcription, documents and audio recordings will be kept in a password protected Dropbox account, only accessible by Kathleen Vitt and Dr. Marlyn Bennett. All audio recordings, transcriptions and further documents associated with this research project will be shredded and/or deleted two years later, in June 2022. The researcher when transcribing interview and Talking Circle questions, will remove all personal identifiers. Data containing personal identifiers will be destroyed immediately after the research has finished.

During the Talking Circles and workshops we ask that all participants respect and maintain the confidentiality of the discussion; however, it is not possible for the researchers to guarantee that everyone will do so. Some people or groups may need to check the study records to make sure all the information is correct. All of these people have a professional responsibility to protect your privacy.

These people and groups are:

- Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba which is responsible for the protection of people in research and has reviewed this study for ethical acceptability.

All records will be kept in a locked secure area and only those persons identified will have access to these records. If any of your research records need to be copied to any of the above, your name and all identifying information will be removed. No information revealing any personal information such as your name, address or telephone number will leave the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus.

The Limits of Confidentiality

Researchers must follow the law, and if disclosures in the interviews or Talking Circles suggest that a child may be in need of protection the researchers, like all citizens of Manitoba, have an obligation under the law to report the specific concern and the basis upon which they have formed the concern about a child in need of protection.

Additionally, the research collected may be subjected to a lawful subpoena by a Court of lawful and relevant jurisdiction. Compliance with such a subpoena would always involve a consultation with the University's legal counsel by the Principal Investigator.

Finally, research data and recording keeping practices are subject to audit. There is a chance that through such a practice a member of an audit team may review study files for this study the purpose of such a review is to ensure standards of practice for researchers are being followed.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal from the Study

Your decision to take part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, or you may withdraw from the study at any time. However, due to the publication of the video and the thesis project the last day to withdraw your information from the project will be approximately two weeks following the workshop, once you receive the final copy of the video and meet with the researcher to sign the video release consent and waiver form.

Questions

If any questions come up during or after the study contact the Principal Investigator: Kathleen Vitt at vittk3@myumanitoba.ca, or directly at [REDACTED].

For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact The University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus Research Ethics Board Office at (204) 789-3389, or Dr. Marlyn Bennett at [REDACTED] or marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca.

Consent Signatures:

1. I have read all 9 pages of the consent form.
2. I have had a chance to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of my questions.
3. I understand that by signing this consent form I have not waived any of my legal rights as a participant in this study.
4. I understand that my records, which may include identifying information, may be reviewed by the research staff working with the Principal Investigators and the agencies and organizations listed in the Confidentiality section of this document.
5. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time and my data will be able to be withdrawn up to the time I receive the final copy of the video and meet with the researcher to sign the video release consent and waiver form.
6. I understand I will be provided with a copy of the consent form for my records.
7. I agree to participate in the study.

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

I, the undersigned, have fully explained the relevant details of this research study to the participant named above and believe that the participant has understood and has knowingly given their consent

Printed Name: _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Signature: _____

APPENDIX E: ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS 16-17 YEARS OF AGE



**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone [REDACTED]
Fax [REDACTED]
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

[REDACTED] PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND ASSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS 16-17 YEARS OF AGE

Research Project Title: Experiences of Relationship Building between Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of Identities through Arts-based Research Methods

Principal Investigator and contact information: Kathleen Vitt, Master of Social Work student, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], vittk3@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information: Dr. Marlyn Bennett, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca

1. Invitation for youth to Participate:

You are being invited to participate in a research project, which will explore the relationship building experience of a talking circle and video-making process between Indigenous and newcomer youth. This process will center on your identities as newcomer and Indigenous peoples, as well as your thoughts on the potential for strengthened relationships between both communities. It is the goal of this project to contribute in a small way to the amount of community-driven and good information that each community receives about the other, with the hope that this will create greater understanding between both communities.

2. Purpose of the Letter:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research.

3. Purpose of this Study:

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship building experience of a video-making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth co-create a video that explores both their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples as well as the potential for strengthened relationships between both communities.

4. Study Procedures:

If you decide to participate in this research project, you will be involved in a two-day workshop, that will take place over one weekend, March 21st-22nd, from 11am-4pm every day at the William Norrie Centre at 485 Selkirk Avenue, Winnipeg MB. You will receive two bus tickets per day, lunch and \$25 per day of attendance. You will be in a group of approximately 12 youth participants (6 newcomer youth, 6 Indigenous youth). At the start of the session everyone will be asked to respect the privacy of the other group members within the Talking Circles. All participants will be asked to not disclose anything said within the context of the Talking Circles, but it is important to understand there is a chance other people in the group with you may not keep all information private and confidential. You may introduce yourself by name during the Talking Circles. However, the transcriber will remove all names from the transcription for confidentiality.

Workshop Overview

Session 1 (Saturday, 11:00am – 4:00pm)

10:45-11:00am - Optional opening smudge and prayer, alongside any potential cultural grounding practice that the newcomer youth identify they wish to incorporate

11:00-11:30am – Welcome and introduction to research project

11:30am-12:00 am – Go over confidentiality and informed consent; collaborative group creation of “group agreement” for how we want to be in our time together

12:00pm – 12:30 pm: lunch

12:30 pm-2:00 pm: Talking Circle (and Indigenous elder and newcomer knowledge keeper will join us for this Talking Circle)

Talking circle questions: For Indigenous youth/knowledge keeper “What do you wish people knew about your identities as an Indigenous person? What do you think people misunderstand about your identities as an Indigenous person?”

For Newcomer youth/knowledge keeper: “What do you wish people knew about your identities as a newcomer person? What do you think people misunderstand about your identities as Newcomer person?”

Further Elder/knowledge keeper stories and thoughts about newcomer/Indigenous identity, misperceptions, and relationship building between newcomer and Indigenous peoples.

2:00-3:00pm: Write scripts and organize how they want to structure first part of video on Indigenous and newcomer identities. Potential guiding questions: Who are you as an

Indigenous/newcomer person? What are realities that you (or your family's) face as Indigenous/newcomer peoples? What are misperceptions about you as an Indigenous/newcomer person? What do you want people to know about your identities as an Indigenous/newcomer person?

3:00-4:00pm: Shooting film section on Indigenous and newcomer identities

Session Two: (Sunday, 11:00am – 4:00pm)

11:00-11:30am: Welcome, check-in

11:30-12:30pm: Talking Circle

Question: "It has been well researched that there is tension between Indigenous and newcomer communities. How do you think relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities could be strengthened?" Why do you think strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities important?

12:30pm- 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00pm- 1:45pm: Organize section and write script for newcomer/Indigenous relationships. Potential guiding questions: "How do you think relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities could be strengthened? Why is strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities important?"

1:45-2:30 pm: Shoot section on Indigenous and newcomer relationships.

2:30-3:00pm: Discuss editing choices with volunteer editors and researchers

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm: Closing talking circle questions, "What are you taking away from this process? What have you learned? How do you want this project shared? and certificate giving

Participant Observation

One of the ways that data will be collected is through participant observation, which will happen while research participants engage in the workshop activities. The researcher is using participant observation to capture the non-verbal communication that will be present during the two-day workshop process. The researcher will collect some of my observational findings quickly in a journal during the days, but will collect the majority of the observations immediately following the sessions. To ensure that the observations are correct, the researcher will be sending observational findings to relevant research participants before the thesis writing process begins for the participant's feedback.

Assent signatures for the workshop

- 7.) I understand what I will do in the two-day workshop
- 8.) I understand that the researcher will be engaging in participant observation, and will be taking notes to capture non-verbal communication that is present during the workshop and video making process.
- 9.) I understand that the researcher will send me any observational findings that concern me before she begins to write her thesis project.

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

The Pre-Interview Question

One of the data collecting methods of this research project is the inclusion of one pre-interview question, that will be asked in a second one-on-one meeting, after receiving guardian consent, if you choose to participate in this research project.

A pre-interview question is being included in this research project for the following two reasons. The first reason is that the pre-interview question provides an opportunity to gauge a ‘starting point’ that each youth is coming into this research project with, regarding knowledge of Indigenous and newcomer identities. The second reason is that the responses to the pre-interview question could elicit responses that are sensitive in nature if asked in the Talking Circle format, where you are surrounded by both Indigenous and newcomer youth. Asking this question in this one-on-one format allows you the space to be honest, without potential repercussions of saying something that may hurt the feelings of another youth.

The pre-interview question is, “What have you been taught (by the media, family, community, social media) about newcomer/Indigenous peoples?”

Assent signatures for pre-interview question

- 8.) I understand that if this question makes me uncomfortable in any way, I have the right to decline to answer the question without penalty
- 9.) My participation involves being asked the question by the researcher, Kathleen Vitt. The interview will last approximately 5 minutes.
- 10.) With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded. If you do not consent to being recorded, the interviewer will take notes.
- 11.) There is no incentive or compensation for answering this pre-interview question. I understand that I will not be paid for participating in this pre-interview.

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

The Video Creation Process

Your participation in this research involves making a jointly-created video with the other youth research participants. You will shoot the film sections for the video, and will have the opportunity to contribute to editing the video afterwards if you choose. If you volunteer to edit the video, you will learn valuable iMovie editing skills that you can bring forward with you into your future. This is also an additional skill that you will be able to place on your resume to help with future employment opportunities. On the chance that there are no volunteer editors, the researcher will complete the editing process as directed by the youth participants.

This video will explore your identities as either an Indigenous or newcomer youth, as well as your thoughts on the potential for transformed relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. There will be Talking Circles throughout the two-day workshop that will provide opportunities to reflect on the questions that will inform the content of the video, as well as learn from the other youth who are participating in the Talking Circles. Outside of a basic thematic structure, the youth participants will have full control and ownership over how each section is created, including what information is included and how it is presented. The video that you will create will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential educational resource and will be made public on YouTube. Therefore, your image and your words in the video will not be kept confidential. However, you will have full control over what you want to say in the video, and how you want to say it. It is also your choice to have your name in the video, or not. It is the researcher's highest priority to ensure that you feel confident and comfortable with the final video that is created.

After the two-day workshop, the volunteer editors and the researcher will meet within the following two weeks to edit the video. Those who do not volunteer to edit can make sure to voice their desires for the editing process during the two-day workshop, or by contacting the researcher directly prior to the editing process occurring. Once editing is completed in the two weeks following the two-day workshop, the video will be sent to all research participants for feedback. After you receive the video, the researcher will meet with you to sign a video release consent and waiver form. This will serve as the final opportunity from which to withdraw your participation in the video. Please note that at this time, any solo footage of you would be able to be removed, but we would only be able to blur your face in any group footage that would appear of you.

Assent signatures for the video-making process:

- 5.) I understand the purpose of the video-making process
- 6.) I agree to have my image video-recorded for the purpose of a jointly created video between Indigenous and newcomer youth that will be shared with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations within Winnipeg and on Youtube
- 7.) I understand that I will have an opportunity to view the final video before providing my consent and signing a waiver to share the video in the above mentioned ways
- 8.) I understand that once the video has eventually been released, it is not possible to retract

Participant printed name _____ **Date** _____
(day/month/year)

Participant signature: _____

5. Possible Risks and Harms

Fellow youth research participants will be asked to keep the information shared in the Talking Circles confidential; however, a potential social risk that might exist is for you is that information might be discussed outside the group by other participants and be traced back to them. To address this risk, I will thoroughly discuss Talking Circle expectations and procedures with you at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the start of each

workshop day, and will make sure everyone is aware of what confidentiality means in the context of Talking Circles.

Secondly, as there can be tension between newcomer and Indigenous communities, there is a possibility of conflict emerging between research participants in the two-day workshop. The potential for conflict will be addressed in the following ways. First, I will go over the purpose of the Talking Circle questions, and the ways to engage well in the Talking Circles at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the beginning of each workshop day. Secondly, research participants, alongside the researcher, will create a ‘group agreement’ for how we want to be together over the two-day workshop, and how to make sure that all participants feel safe and respected. We will follow all of the guidelines that we create together to make sure that everyone feels safe during the entire research project.

Lastly, storytelling is highly personal and can bring up emotions. It is possible that talking about your experiences and identities regarding being “Indigenous” or “newcomer” may bring difficult emotions to the surface. Please know that you do not need to answer any Talking Circle question you find makes you uncomfortable or is upsetting. You are also more than welcome to step outside of the Talking Circle if you need to at any point, and that a research aid will be there to assist you. The research aid and the principal counselor are not there to provide counselling; however, the following is a list of resources should you need any additional help or support. We will refer you to these follow support resources should you need additional support, or help you to find other counseling help.

Crisis Chat Line
www.supportline.ca
 Monday to Friday: 10am – 9pm

Klinic Crisis Line (24/7)
<http://klinik.mb.ca/crisis-support/>
 Phone: (204) 786-8686

If you find yourself in crisis, wish to harm yourself, are severely depressed anytime during the talking circles, workshops, or any part of the research process please notify the researchers and they will ensure that they immediately connect you with one of the following resources or accompany you to the Emergency Mental Health Centre.
 Support and distress lines:

Manitoba Suicide Prevention & Support Line (24/7)
 Toll free: 1-877-435-7170
www.reasonstolive.ca

Sexual Assault Crisis Line (24/7)
 Phone: (204) 786-8631
 Toll free: 1-888-292-7565

Klinic Crisis Line (24/7)
 Phone: (204) 786-8686
 Toll free: 1-888-322-3019

Trafficking Hotline (24/7)
 Toll free: 1-844-333-2211

6. Possible Benefits

It is the hope of this project that you feel empowered during and after the process of sharing your voice, experiences and stories as you contribute to the creation of joint video

regarding Indigenous and newcomer youth identities and the potential for relationship building between both communities. This video will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to be used as an educational resource, and involvement in this video could not only serve as a benefit to you, as you can add this to your resume to support future employment opportunities, but will also benefit the wider community. It is the further hope that you will have the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous or newcomer identities, build relationships with youth from different communities, and make connections to a local Indigenous Elder and newcomer knowledge keeper.

This research may also indirectly benefit you, and other youth and adults from Indigenous and newcomer communities, as it could lead to increase conversations and action about learning more about each community and improving relationships. The potential of this video to help increase understandings has the potential to benefit the Winnipeg community, and communities across Canada as this video will be made public.

7. Compensation

You will be given \$25 for each workshop day attended. Two bus tickets and a meal will also be provided for each day that you attend.

8. Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. You can choose to withdraw by verbally indicating to the researcher that you would like to end your participation, and do not have to provide any explanations.

9. Confidentiality

The researcher, Kathleen Vitt, and her advisor, Dr. Marlyn Bennett, will be the only two people who will have access to all of the data besides the final video (pre-interview question, Talking Circle questions, participant observations). All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Following transcription, documents and audio recordings will be kept in a password protected Dropbox account, only accessible by Kathleen Vitt and Dr. Marlyn Bennett. All audio recordings, transcriptions and further documents associated with this research project will be shredded and/or deleted two years later, in June 2022. The researcher when transcribing interview and Talking Circle questions, will remove all personal identifiers. Data containing personal identifiers will be destroyed immediately after the research has finished. During the Talking Circles and workshops we will ask that all participants respect and maintain the confidentiality of the discussion; however, it is not possible for the researcher to guarantee that everyone will do so.

The Limits of Confidentiality

Researchers must follow the law, and if disclosures in the interviews or Talking Circles suggest that a child may be in need of protection the researchers, like all citizens of Manitoba, have an obligation under the law to report the specific concern and the basis upon which they have formed the concern about a child in need of protection.

10. Contacts for further information

If any questions come up during or after the study contact the Principal Investigator:
Kathleen Vitt at vittk3@myumanitoba.ca, or directly at [REDACTED]

For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact The University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus Research Ethics Board Office at (204) 789-3389, or Dr. Marlyn Bennett at [REDACTED], or marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca

11. Assent

If you agree to participate in this research project and accept the conditions outlined above, please provide your initials next to the following statements, alongside your printed name and signature at the bottom.

I am 16+ years of age: _____

I have read the Letter of Information, and have had the nature of the study explained to me. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction: _____

I understand the risks and benefits of my participation in the workshop: _____

I understand how to receive extra support during or following the workshop, should I need it _____

I understand the compensation I will receive for participating in this workshop _____

I agree to participate in the study: _____

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

I confirm that I have explained the study to the participant to the extent compatible with the participants understanding, and that the participant has agreed to be in the study.

Principal Investigator (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F: GAURDIAN CONSENT FORM



Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Experiences of Relationship Building between Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of Identities through Arts-based Research Methods

Principal Investigator and contact information: Kathleen Vitt, Master of Social Work student, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], vittk3@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information: Dr. Marlyn Bennett, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca

1. Information for Guardians

Your child is being invited to participate in a research project, which is exploring the relationship building experience of a shared video making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth co-create a video that explores both their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples as well as the potential for strengthened relationships between both communities.

This project is responding to the reality that there has been, and continues to be, mistrust, misperceptions and tension between Indigenous and newcomer communities, and the fact that one of the main reasons for this ongoing negative relationship is the lack of community-driven information that each community receives about the other. This project will hope to, in a small way, contribute to the creation and sharing of community-driven information about newcomer and Indigenous identities, and open the door for an exploration of the potential for transformed relationships between both communities. The video that is jointly created by youth research participants will be shared on YouTube and with Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential resource on Indigenous and newcomer identities and the potential for relationship building.

2. Purpose of the Letter:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information required for you to make an informed decision regarding your child's participation in this research.

3. Purpose of this Study:

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship building experience of a video-making process, where Indigenous and newcomer youth co-create a video that explores both their identities as newcomer or Indigenous peoples as well as the potential for strengthened relationships between both communities.

4. Study Procedures:

If your child decides to participate in this research project, they will be involved in a two-day workshop, that will take place over one weekend, March 21st-22nd, from 11am-4pm every day at the William Norrie Centre at 485 Selkirk Avenue, Winnipeg MB. They will receive two bus tickets per day, lunch and \$25 per day of attendance. They will be in a group of approximately 12 youth participants (6 newcomer youth, 6 Indigenous youth). At the start of the session everyone will be asked to respect the privacy of the other group members within the Talking Circles. All participants will be asked to not disclose anything said within the context of the Talking Circles, but it is important to understand there is a chance other people in the group may not keep all information private and confidential. Your child may introduce yourself by name during the Talking Circles. However, the transcriber will remove all names from the transcription for confidentiality.

Workshop Overview

Session 1 (Saturday, 11:00am – 4:00pm)

10:45-11:00am - Optional opening smudge and prayer, alongside any potential cultural grounding practice that the newcomer youth identify they wish to incorporate

11:00-11:30am – Welcome and introduction to research project

11:30am-12:00 am – Go over confidentiality and informed consent; collaborative group creation of “group agreement” for how we want to be in our time together

12:00pm – 12:30 pm: lunch

12:30 pm-2:00 pm: Talking Circle (and Indigenous elder and newcomer knowledge keeper will join us for this Talking Circle) Talking circle questions: For Indigenous youth/knowledge keeper “What do you wish people knew about your identities as an Indigenous person? What do you think people misunderstand about your identities as an Indigenous person?” For Newcomer youth/knowledge keeper: “What do you wish people knew about your identities as a newcomer person? What do you think people misunderstand about your identities as Newcomer person?” Further Elder/knowledge keeper stories and thoughts about newcomer/Indigenous identity, misperceptions, and relationship building between newcomer and Indigenous peoples.

2:00-3:00pm: Write scripts and organize how they want to structure first part of video on Indigenous and newcomer identities. Potential guiding questions: Who are you as an Indigenous/newcomer person? What are realities that you (or your family’s) face as Indigenous/newcomer peoples? What are misperceptions about you as an Indigenous/newcomer person? What do you want people to know about your identities as an Indigenous/newcomer person?

3:00-4:00pm: Shooting film section on Indigenous and newcomer identities

Session Two: (Sunday, 11:00am – 4:00pm)

11:00-11:30am: Welcome, check-in

11:30-12:30pm: Talking Circle Question: “It has been well researched that there is tension between Indigenous and newcomer communities. How do you think relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities could be strengthened?” Why do you think strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities important?

12:30pm- 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00pm- 1:45pm: Organize section and write script for newcomer/Indigenous relationships. Potential guiding questions: “How do you think relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities could be strengthened? Why is strengthening relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities important?”

1:45-2:30 pm: Shoot section on Indigenous and newcomer relationships.

2:30-3:00pm: Discuss editing choices with volunteer editors and researchers

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm: Closing talking circle questions, “What are you taking away from this process? What have you learned? How do you want this project shared? and certificate giving 4

Participant Observation

One of the ways that data will be collected is through participant observation, which will happen while research participants engage in the workshop activities. The researcher is using participant observation to capture the non-verbal communication that will be present during the two-day workshop process. The researcher will collect some of their observational findings quickly in a journal during the days, but will collect the majority of the observations immediately following the sessions. To ensure that the observations are correct, the researcher will be sending observational findings to relevant research participants before the thesis writing process begins for the participant's feedback.

The Pre-Interview Question

One of the data collecting methods of this research project is the inclusion of one pre-interview question, that will be asked in a second one-on-one meeting, after receiving guardian consent, if your child chooses to participate in this research project.

A pre-interview question is being included in this research project for the following two reasons. The first reason is that the pre-interview question provides an opportunity to gauge a 'starting point' that each youth is coming into this research project with, regarding knowledge of Indigenous and newcomer identities. The second reason is that the responses to the pre-interview question could elicit responses that are sensitive in nature if asked in the Talking Circle format, where you are surrounded by both Indigenous and newcomer youth. Asking this question in this one-on-one format allows you the space to be honest, without potential repercussions of saying something that may hurt the feelings of another youth.

The pre-interview question is, "What have you been taught (by the media, family, community, social media) about newcomer/Indigenous peoples?"

The Video Creation Process

Your child's participation in this research involves making a jointly-created video with the other youth research participants. Your child will shoot the film sections for the video, and will have the opportunity to contribute to editing the video afterwards if your child chooses. If your child volunteers to edit the video, you will learn valuable iMovie editing skills that you can bring forward with you into your future. This is also an additional skill that you will be able to place on your resume to help with future employment opportunities. On the chance that there are no volunteer editors, the researcher will complete the editing process as directed by the youth participants.

This video will explore your child's identities as either an Indigenous or newcomer youth, as well as your child's thoughts on the potential for transformed relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities. There will be Talking Circles throughout the two-day workshop that will provide opportunities to reflect on the questions that will inform the content of the video, as well as learn from the other youth who are participating in the Talking Circles. Outside of a basic thematic structure, the youth participants will have full control and ownership over how each section is created, including what information is included and how it is presented. The video that your child will create will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to serve as a potential educational resource and will be made public on YouTube. Therefore, your child's image and your child's words in the video will not be kept confidential. However, you child will have full control over what They want to say in the video, and how they want to say it. It is also your child's choice to have their name in the video, or not. It is the researcher's highest priority to ensure that your child feels confident and comfortable with the final video that is created.

After the two-day workshop, the volunteer editors and the researcher will meet within the following two weeks to edit the video. Those who do not volunteer to edit can make sure to voice their desires for the editing process during the two-day workshop, or by contacting the researcher directly prior to the editing process occurring. Once editing is completed in the two weeks following the two-day workshop, the video will be sent to all research participants for feedback. After your child receives the video, the researcher will meet with your child to sign a video release consent and waiver form. This will serve as the final opportunity from which to withdraw your participation in the video. Please note that at this time, any solo footage of your child would be able to be removed, but we would only be able to blur your face in any group footage that would appear of them.

5. Possible Risks and Harms

Fellow youth research participants will be asked to keep the information shared in the Talking Circles confidential; however, a potential social risk that might exist is for your child is that information might be discussed outside the group by other participants and be traced back to them. To address this risk, I will thoroughly discuss Talking Circle expectations and procedures with your child at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the start of each workshop day, and will make sure everyone is aware of what confidentiality means in the context of Talking Circles.

Secondly, as there can be tension between newcomer and Indigenous communities, there is a possibility of conflict emerging between research participants in the two-day workshop. The potential for conflict will be addressed in the following ways. First, I will go over the purpose of the Talking Circle questions, and the ways to engage well in the Talking Circles at our one-on-one meeting, as well as at the beginning of each workshop day. Secondly, research participants, alongside the researcher, will create a 'group agreement' for how we want to be together over the two-day workshop, and how to make sure that all participants feel safe and respected. We will follow all of the guidelines that we create together to make sure that everyone feels safe during the entire research project.

Lastly, storytelling is highly personal and can bring up emotions. It is possible that talking about your experiences and identities regarding being "Indigenous" or "newcomer" may bring difficult

emotions to the surface. Please know that your child does not need to answer any Talking Circle question you find makes you uncomfortable or is upsetting. Your child is also more than welcome to step outside of the Talking Circle if they need to at any point, and that a research aid will be there to assist them. The research aid and the principal counselor are not there to provide counselling; however, they will be provided with a list of resources should child need any additional help or support. We will refer them to the support resources should they need additional support, or help them to find other counseling help.

6. Possible Benefits

It is the hope of this project that your child feels empowered during and after the process of sharing their voice, experiences and stories as you contribute to the creation of joint video regarding Indigenous and newcomer youth identities and the potential for relationship building between both communities. This video will be sent to Indigenous and newcomer serving organizations to be used as an educational resource, and involvement in this video could not only serve as a benefit to your child, as you can add this to their resume to support future employment opportunities, but will also benefit the wider community. It is the further hope that they will have the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous or newcomer identities, build relationships with youth from different communities, and make connections to local Indigenous and newcomer knowledge keepers.

This research may also indirectly benefit your child, and other youth and adults from Indigenous and newcomer communities, as it could lead to increase conversations and action about learning more about each community and improving relationships. The potential of this video to help increase understandings has the potential to benefit the Winnipeg community, and communities across Canada as this video will be made public.

7. Compensation

Your child will be given \$25 for each workshop day attended. Two bus tickets and a meal will also be provided for each day that they attend.

8. Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Your child can choose to withdraw by verbally indicating to the researcher that you would like to end your participation, and do not have to provide any explanations.

9. Confidentiality

The researcher, Kathleen Vitt, and her advisor, Dr. Marlyn Bennett, will be the only two people who will have access to all of the data besides the final video (pre-interview question, Talking Circle questions, participant observations). All information will be kept strictly confidential. Following transcription, documents and audio recordings will be kept in a password protected Dropbox account, only accessible by Kathleen Vitt and Dr. Marlyn Bennett. All audio recordings, transcriptions and further documents associated with this research project will be shredded and/or deleted two years later, in June 2022. The researcher when transcribing interview and Talking Circle questions, will remove all personal identifiers. Data containing personal identifiers will be destroyed immediately after the research has finished. During the

Talking Circles and workshops we will ask that all participants respect and maintain the confidentiality of the discussion; however, it is not possible for the researcher to guarantee that everyone will do so.

The Limits of Confidentiality

Researchers must follow the law, and if disclosures in the interviews or Talking Circles suggest that a child may be in need of protection the researchers, like all citizens of Manitoba, have an obligation under the law to report the specific concern and the basis upon which they have formed the concern about a child in need of protection.

10. Contacts for further information

If any questions come up before, during or after the research project contact the Principal Investigator: Kathleen Vitt at vittk3@myumanitoba.ca, or directly at [REDACTED].

11. Guardian Consent Signatures

- 1.) I have read all 7 pages of this consent form and understand what my child's participation in this project means.
- 2.) I agree to allow my child to participate in this research project.

Guardian printed name: _____

Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX G: VIDEO RELEASE CONSENT AND WAIVER FORM



**University
of Manitoba**

Faculty of Social Work

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Socialwk@umanitoba.ca

VIDEO RELEASE CONSENT AND WAIVER FORM

Research Project Title: The Possibilities for Transformed Relationships between Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of Identities and Relationship Building through Art-based Methods

Principal Investigator and contact information: Kathleen Vitt, Master of Social Work student, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], vittk3@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information: Dr. Marlyn Bennett, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, [REDACTED], marlyn.bennett@umanitoba.ca

This form is being shared with you now that the final video has been completed, in order to gain your consent to share it with newcomer and Indigenous serving organizations within Winnipeg, and onto YouTube. This is your last opportunity to ask for any of the content within the video to be changed, or to ask to have your image removed from the video. Please know that if you wish to have your image removed from the video, any image of you that appears within a group setting will only be able to be blurred out.

It is difficult to completely remove an image or recording from the internet once it has been published. As this video will be in the public domain, it will be able to be accessed by all members of the public, and you will not have control over who sees the video. This is why it is very important that you understand what might happen to your image or recording before you sign the consent and waiver.

Please provide your initial beside each of the following consent and waiver items.

I, _____ (print your name)

_____ consent to having this video shared with newcomer and Indigenous serving organizations, and on YouTube.

_____ understand that by signing this, I remove my rights to control the circulation of my own image and verbal contributions that exist in the produced video.

_____ understand that once this video is shared, it cannot be retracted.

_____ waive all copyright interest including moral rights and any rights to claim royalties, or any other form of compensation or interest arising from the researcher's use of my image or recording.

_____ forever release, discharge, indemnify and defend the researcher from and against any and all claims and demands arising out of, or in connection with, the use of my image or recording, including but not limited to, any claims for infringement of privacy, defamation, appropriation of personality, or copyright infringement.

Signature: _____

Date: _____
(day/month/year)

APPENDIX H: RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL



University
of Manitoba

Research Ethics and Compliance

Human Ethics - Fort Garry
208-194 Daloo Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2
T: 204 474 8872
humaneethics@umanitoba.ca

PROTOCOL APPROVAL

TO: Kathleen Vitt (Advisor: Marlyn Bennett)
Principal Investigator

FROM: Jonathan Marotta, Chair
Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB)

Re: Protocol #P2019:153 (HS23526)
"The Possibilities for Transformed Relationships
between Indigenous and Newcomer Youth: A Shared Exploration of
Identities and Relationship Building through Art-based Methods"

Effective: January 20, 2020

Expiry: January 20, 2021

Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB) has reviewed and approved the above research. PSREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted for the research and purposes described in the application only.
2. Any modification to the research or research materials must be submitted to PSREB for approval before implementation.
3. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to PSREB as soon as possible.
4. This approval is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
5. A Study Closure form must be submitted to PSREB when the research is complete or terminated.
6. The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

Funded Protocols:

- Please e-mail a copy of this Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer at researchgrants@umanitoba.ca