

**A Critical Discourse Analysis of**  
***Manitoba's K-8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes***

by

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## Abstract

Many provinces across Canada, including Manitoba, are undergoing reforms to their educational structures and systems. Included in these reforms is a mandate to introduce sweeping curricular changes which will impact which particular societal values are conveyed as well as the ways in which teachers will engage students with particular curricular content knowledge. Given the current Canadian context, it is crucial that proposed curricular reforms reflect the Calls to Action presented by Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015), findings from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2016), as well as anti-racism education. It is with this context that I have conducted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of *Manitoba's Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes* (2003). The purpose is to illustrate the ways in which the social studies curriculum document can uphold, and legitimizes structures of settler colonialism, further marginalizing diverse populations in Manitoba schools. I also explored the ways in which the curriculum uses language to impose settler narratives by privileging Eurocentric perspectives and stories. Furthermore, through this analysis, I examined the ways in which the curriculum neglects to acknowledge ongoing acts of settler colonialism within the larger society of Manitoba. My findings illustrated how the language, narratives and discourses of the curriculum include the "othering" of Indigenous perspectives, upholding prairie settler narratives and futurity, justifying colonization, and promoting a colonial construct of citizenship. The analysis also conveyed the ways in which the omission of specific events, places, people, perspectives, and stories reflect the ways in which Canada is a colonizing entity. Suggestions for curricular revisions include a more inclusive approach to recruiting curriculum writers and to authentically include Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies within the text. It is also recommended that educators and educational leaders

invest in opportunities to read and examine other curriculum documents through a critical lens and for professional development to focus specifically on truth and reconciliation.

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## **Land Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that this thesis was written on Treaty One Territory; the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe people, who entered treaty negotiations in good faith and with the intention to uphold the sacred relationship with the land. I acknowledge that Manitoba is also on the traditional lands of the Ininewak, Aniishinin, Dene and Dakota peoples, and that Manitoba, including Treaty One Territory is the birthplace and homeland of the Red River Métis. As a settler on this land, I respect the Treaties that were made on this territory by understanding that they were negotiated with the intention to be upheld as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows. I recognize that the land that I live and work on and the water that I consume are connected to the Treaties that were signed and therefore must be respected. I recognize the harms of the past and present, including Treaty promises that were broken and continue to be broken today. I dedicate myself to reconciliation and to move forward through education and in partnership with Indigenous peoples. I am grateful for the opportunity to live, work, teach, learn, and write on this land.

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## Introduction

In the summer of 2016, after coming home from a day of swimming, a group of Indigenous young adults, including Colten Boushie, drove onto a farm in the Canadian prairies. In search of help for a flat tire, they were instead faced with unimaginable tragedy as Boushie was killed by farmer, Gerald Stanley, who perceived the group as a threat to his farmland (Starblanket & Hunt, 2020). Stanley's subsequent acquittal and the media that followed the trial underscores the entrenched racial practices of Canadian law and justice. Stories like Boushie's have inspired me to work towards challenging the settler colonial discourses that uphold systems of inequity, racism, and injustice within Canadian society. With the purpose of further understanding and unpacking Canadian colonial discourses, this research aims to consider how settler colonialism resides in the Manitoba social studies curriculum. It also aims to highlight the ways in which legitimizing specific narratives and perspectives, while delegitimizing and omitting others contributes to ongoing acts of racism. Racism, as an imbedded structure within Canadian society, is upheld by systems of power and colonialism.

The creation of curriculum documents can be described as a complex, arduous process. It is one that elicits opinions and debate from content experts, community members, and educational stakeholders. Curriculum development teams are tasked with appeasing specific community groups as well as political leaders while, at the same time, creating a framework for teachers on specific topics that are deemed valuable. Ultimately, curriculum development reflects the quintessential questions that ask, "what knowledge is of most worth" as well as, "who gets to decide." These questions foster tensions that arise when curriculum documents are created. Since the early 1990s, North America has seen a rise in neoliberal ideals and the "relentless pursuit of accountability" (Tuck, 2013, p. 324) for the purposes of economic gain

while subsequently maintaining structures of systemic oppression and settler colonialism. Canadian provincial education systems, including Manitoba, have been shifting towards neoliberal, market-driven structures that have infiltrated into the public sector policy (Woolford & Curran, 2011). As a result, economic motivations have become prioritized over equity for diverse members of Canadian communities. Neoliberal, corporate, and capitalistic policies, which “extract the philosophies of the market and apply them to non-market entities” (Tuck, 2013, p. 334) weaken the public school system and deregulate the private sector (Samoukovic, 2013), which in turn, maintain structures of settler colonialism.

Therefore, the intention of this research project is to draw attention to the ways in which the Manitoba social studies curriculum maintains and upholds settler narratives that undermine movements towards truth and reconciliation. I believe it is a crucial time to conduct this research due to Manitoba's current political climate. Through this research, I aim to inform teachers, school leaders, education researchers, and curriculum writers of these narratives so that current curriculum can be considered more critically and that future documents will offer students opportunities for to engage in inclusive, decolonizing, and democratic critical engagement within Manitoban classrooms and ultimately, within the larger society.

The current structure of the Canadian school system is a direct reflection of market-driven policies that uphold capitalist and colonial ways of thinking (Battiste, 2013). Mi'kmaq scholar, Marie Battiste (2013) explains, “The key in designing meaningful education in Canada must begin with confronting the hidden standards of racism, colonialism, and cultural and linguistic imperialism in the modern curriculum and see the theoretical incoherence with a modern theory of society” (p. 29). As evidenced in the recently released Better Education Starts Today (“BEST”) report (Government of Manitoba, 2021) in Manitoba, as well as the proposed

and then retracted *Bill 64: The Public School Modernization Act*, the current Government of Manitoba is motivated to introduce sweeping changes to the public school system. These proposed changes call for an extensive curricular overhaul as well as policy and structural changes (Government of Manitoba, 2021) which ignore the specific needs of racialized and marginalized communities within Manitoba (Braul, 2021).

Aboriginal peoples, a term to encompass First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations in Canada was first used in 1982 when the Constitution Act passed. However, Indigenous peoples is an internationally recognized term. Joseph (2016) explains:

By recognizing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis as Indigenous Peoples, the government is acknowledging their internationally legal right to offer or withhold consent to development under the United Nations Declaration of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous population in Manitoba is amongst the fastest growing populations within Winnipeg (City of Winnipeg, 2018) and Canada (Ottmann & Pritchard, 2010). According to Ottmann and Pritchard (2010), despite these growths in population, Indigenous populations continue to experience ongoing racism and discrimination due to the systems of settler colonialism (p. 24). They underline the importance of the inclusion of Indigenous peoples within policy-making discussions, especially when it comes to education stating that, “for educational policy to be meaningful, Aboriginal people have to be involved in the process from the beginning; otherwise, programs and incentives will continue to fail” (p. 24). Their report, written in 2010, outlines the ways in which the Alberta social studies curriculum addresses the integration of Aboriginal perspectives and the ways in which teacher knowledge must play a role in implementing a deeper understanding of Aboriginal epistemologies. However, since this

report was written, subsequent Alberta governments have proposed new curricula that overlook and erase experiences and stories of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (Sharpe, 2021). Therefore, although Indigenous populations in Canada continue to grow, representation of their perspectives and histories within curriculum continues to shrink.

## **Positionality**

As a descendent of Ukrainian immigrants, I position myself as having a Eurocentric background. I grew up in Winnipeg surrounded by Ukrainian language, culture, and tradition. I am grateful for my family's perseverance in pursuing life in Canada. They sought an opportunity to create a better life for their children and the generations that followed. I also position myself as a settler: a displacer of Indigenous people. When my family had the opportunity to sow roots, Indigenous families became uprooted. As Ukrainian language and heritage became one of Canada's cultural domains, Indigenous culture and traditions were systematically and fundamentally dismantled.

Canada's history of Indigenous dispossession became fundamental in the realization of Canada's pursuit of a social capitalist society through the introduction of the Dominion Lands Act in 1872 (Toews, 2018, p. 53). With the allure of free land, offered specifically to white European farmers, Canada accomplished three major goals: labour for value that companies would benefit from (such as the railways); the creation of a manufacturing sector; and a populace who would uphold systems of "law and order," and patriarchal ideologies (Toews, 2018, p. 53). Due to the political climate in many European countries at the time, and an opportunity to escape persecution for an opportunity to own land, many groups, including Ukrainian emigrants were recruited to Canada and found its government's offers attractive.

In positioning myself as a descendent of settlers, I do not mean to trivialize the hardships that my family faced throughout different periods of history, nor do I wish to compare stories of suffering. I do, however, wish to provide context for the reasons my family held, and continues to hold on to language, culture, and tradition. I also recognize the ways in which modern Canadian society has systematically benefitted those who identify as white and from European origin. This privilege and point of view has subsequently bled into the settler stories told within the curriculum and the perspectives that became publicly prevalent. To understand why this occurred, one must understand Canada's history as positioning itself as a settler and colonized nation at the expense of Indigenous communities. To unpack this notion, I seek to engage reflexively with my own cultural roots.

Historically, Ukrainians escaped tyranny at the hands of oppressive governments during many different periods of time. In the 1890s, when my mother's side of the family immigrated to Canada, Ukrainian people sought an opportunity to build a new life, free to speak their own language, and own land. This was not without its challenges. Although recruited by the Canadian government, Ukrainian and other Eastern European settlers were initially viewed as "stalwart peasants [...] fit enough to work but not to enjoy full participation in the social, political and cultural life of the nation" (Toews, 2018, p. 78). It was expected that European immigrants develop the land and the Canadian government, subsequently, exploited their labour (Taras Shevchenko Museum, 2021). During the First World War, Ukrainians were positioned as "enemy aliens" by the Canadian government (Canadian War Museum, n.d.) and were consequently interned. Upon immigrating to Canada in the 1920s, my grandfather Tarasiuk and other like-minded individuals aimed to create Ukrainian cultural strongholds within their new country. This was something that they were unable to do in Ukraine. Realizing the possibilities

that awaited them in Canada, Ukrainian immigrants continued to flee the hardships of their homeland. This included my grandmother Tarasiuk (née Schudlo), who narrowly escaped death during the Second World War and was subsequently sent to a German displaced persons camp where she was forced into hard labour. Although yet unmarried, she was able to be sponsored by my grandfather and subsequently escaped to Canada.

In an attempt to retain culture and community, Ukrainians began to mobilize resources and gain influence within the prairie region of Canada (Toews, 2018, p. 116). This was something that they were unable to accomplish in Ukraine due to continuous persecution, which continues today, evidenced by Russia's most recent unprovoked invasion, beginning in 2014 and brutally escalating on February 24, 2022. Therefore, in Canada, following the Second World War and due to the strong diaspora that continued to grow, Ukrainians began to become more politically influential. Additional Ukrainian bilingual schools were opened, cultural centres were established, additional churches were built, and Ukrainian art and literature was celebrated (Library and Archives Canada, 2020). My family's traditions have been passed down from my grandparents to me, my brother, and my cousins as we continue to recognize the important connection that language and culture has to identity.

Ukrainian culture has maintained influence within Canada to the present day. Ukrainian bilingual schools continue to be accessible to those who wish to attend them across the province. It is at one of these schools that I attended as a child and where I was inspired to become a teacher. I was able to see myself reflected in my teachers through our shared identity, language, and community. This gave me an inherent sense of belonging. Relatives, including my father, were amongst the staff in the school that I attended. Therefore, when I began my post-secondary education, it did not take long for me to realize the path that I wanted to pursue. When I

graduated, I knew that there was a community that would welcome me into the teaching profession.

Shared community, language, and identity was closely tied to my upbringing as well as my success and I took this privilege for granted. I realize now that due to the ongoing systemic racism that as well as the deliberate separation of families and communities, Indigenous students did not have the same opportunities to see themselves reflected in their teachers or the school system. While my community flourished in Canada, Indigenous sovereignty and culture was actively being diminished by racist policies, broken treaties and the systematic removal of children to residential schools:

From 1867 to 1945, the Government of Canada continued to root its policies in forced assimilation and relied on missionaries such as the Roman Catholic Oblates and the Anglican Church to “raise Indians to the level of whites.” Much of the work involved both day schools and residential schools, largely using religious personnel belonging to various Christian orders and organizations across Canada. (Battiste, 2013, p. 53)

Residential schools resulted in intergenerational trauma that continues to effect Indigenous peoples and communities. Indigenous communities were essentially prohibited from establishing linguistic and cultural strongholds within a country that is their ancestral homeland. Papaschase Cree scholar Dwayne Donald (2011) explains, “the residential school policies forcefully removed Aboriginal children from their homes, housed them in harsh environments, unraveled their connections to their cultural values, identities, families, languages, and spiritual practices, and disrupted the functioning of family and cultural institutions” (p. 76). Therefore, while my family and other (predominantly white) European immigrants were eventually accepted into the “mosaic” and “multicultural fabric” of Canadian societal values, Indigenous families

experienced ongoing systemic oppression. Because of this dynamic, families such as mine were able to also carve out places within the professional workforce and political realm of Canada, which ultimately impacted opportunities and legislation which benefitted, and continues to benefit the settler populations.

### **The Impacts of Teacher Demographics in Canada**

Teaching is a profession that continues to be dominated by those who identify as white and female (Antonelli, et. al, 2009, p. 598). However, this demographic is not reflective of the communities in which Canadian teachers work and the students with whom they are working. Just as I was able to see myself represented in the teachers who taught me, it is important that all students have this experience. A teacher statistical analysis by Antonelli, Pollock, and Ryan (2009) identified a lack of teacher diversity in the workforce. Their research indicates that “in Canada the number of elementary and secondary teachers and school counsellors of colour have not kept pace with the phenomenal growth in the number of citizens of colour, and by extension, the number of students of colour” (p. 596). Unlike me, students who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Person of Colour) do not have the same opportunities to see themselves reflected within the school system and therefore, may not be encouraged to join the profession.

Consequently, the cycle that lacks teacher diversity, continues. In an opinion piece published by the CBC in 2020, Black educator Helen Vangool explains, “Being a teacher was not something I considered before because I never saw anyone who looked like me in a position of power in schools. I never felt like I fit in the school system, so I had no desire to teach in it” (Vangool, 2020).

Perspectives such as Vangool's (2020) motivate me to work towards a better understanding of the colonial and racial implications that exist within the school system, and



particularly the curriculum documents. It is my intention that this research engages an Indigenist, decolonizing approach, that honours the Calls to Action in Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). Battiste (2013) defines this approach as a commitment to working collaboratively "towards Indigenous peoples' goals for sovereignty, self-determination, and treaty and Aboriginal rights reconciliation with the provinces, territories, and the federal government" (p. 74). Canada's settler population must confront the past and recognize the present ongoing acts of violent colonialism as well as become introduced to the power of counter-storytelling (Madden, 2019) which allows opportunities for stories to be told from the perspectives of those who are dismissed by dominant narratives. Battiste (2013) underlines the importance of this type of collaboration, stating, "These [Indigenist movements] must not be an agenda for Indigenous peoples alone, as so many have been complicit in their subordination, and beneficiaries of the relationships that enabled lands to be used, bought, taken, or misused. Non-Indigenous allies must support these as well [...]" (p. 74). Therefore, in doing this work and exposing these narratives, I, as a white settler, intend to highlight the need for progressive curricular reforms that reflect a commitment to reconciliation.

By thinking reflexively, I am attempting to recognize my positionality as well as inherent biases that lie beneath the following myth: Canada is a multicultural mosaic, accepting of all cultures, races, and religions, and therefore public schools and curricula reflect those values. These myths influenced my own understanding of Canadian culture and was based on a desire to honour the history of my ancestors. However, promoting Canada as a nation built on multiculturalism and the celebration of immigration (of some, mostly white settlers), ignores and silences the racist colonization policies, the deeply-rooted impacts of colonialism, and the history of the land pre-Confederation. Métis scholar, from Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation, Verna

St. Denis (2012) explains, “public schools are defended as neutral multicultural spaces where all participants are equally positioned, irrespective of racism and colonialism” (p. 313). Therefore, in repositioning and explicitly valuing white and Eurocentric cultures under the veil of Canada’s multicultural mosaic, schools have “privileged other peoples’ stories” (Battiste, 2013, p. 17) over Indigenous perspectives and ultimately, “re-positioned [Indigenous stories] in the margins of knowledge and curriculum” (p. 23).

For decades, Indigenous advocates such as Mi’kmaq scholar, Marie Battiste, have been calling for educational reforms that unpack Canada’s relationships with Indigenous communities and prioritize Indigenous knowledge. However, little has been done to initiate these changes. Instead, Canadian provinces have prioritized colonial imperialism through neoliberal structures that continue to be implemented in public education systems (Tuck, 2013). This has resulted in the maintenance of white settler structures and perspectives under the guise of strong, economic gain. The maintenance of these structures are defined by Unangan scholar, Eve Tuck (2013) as an extension of settler colonialism and as an ongoing, systematic event.

### **The “So What?” of this Research: Objectives and Audience**

It has become politically popular to declare oneself as “committed to reconciliation.” However, without particular action, through policy reform or redress, such declarations are rendered meaningless. Thus, society finds itself in a “reconciliatory” holding pattern as governments and stakeholders proclaim their commitments to reconciliation without changing the ways in which they function, ultimately preserving the structures of colonialism. When meaningful gestures to promote reconciliation do materialize, sudden backlash exemplifies the entrenched racism that exists within the society at large. A recent example of this type of racial manifestation came with the announcement that involved the Hudson’s Bay Company building

in downtown Winnipeg. Once described as a “homage to British imperialism” by Anishinaabe scholar, Dr. Niigaan Sinclair (2022), it was recently announced that the Southern Chiefs’ organization would claim stewardship over the building in an act of reclamation towards advancing economic and social reconciliation (Southern Chiefs’ Organization, 2022). Sinclair (2022), who has written extensively on the Hudson’s Bay Company exploitation of Indigenous peoples and lands within Canada, described the building as a symbolic image of colonization: “extracting billions of dollars of profit from every inch of the territories it entered.” For years, the building was left a derelict, until “a Friday in late April [of 2022], more than 350 years since King Charles II pronounced Indigenous Peoples and lands don’t matter, Indigenous people offered to clean up the mess” (Sinclair, 2022). The announcement prompted swift backlash. Racism was rapidly spewed within comments sections and the Winnipeg Free Press’ Letters to the Editor section, illustrating the argument that we, as a society, are far from achieving reconciliation, rather, settler colonialism continues to endure and actively resists when it is threatened.

Settler colonialism is also evidenced in changes to curriculum that move further from reconciliation (Tuck, 2013). Across Canada, changes in curriculum have prioritized competition and “accountability” by overvaluing scores of standardized tests such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) as a “gold standard” of success (Kennedy, 2015). It is also important to note that in other provinces, newly formed curricular documents have prioritized white perspectives. For example, in Ontario, “modernization” to its public school system resulted in rollbacks to progressive sexual education programming as well as a reduction of teaching positions and the promotion of widespread online learning for high school students (Christou, 2019). Amongst many problematic concerns, these changes further disadvantage populations

who lack access to public health messaging as well as technology. In Alberta, newly released curricular documents prioritize Christian and white perspectives, and erased experiences and stories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (Sharpe, 2021), while also obfuscating climate change science in efforts to promote ongoing oil sands extraction (Seidel, 2021). Considering that the Government of Manitoba has also used “modernization” language and tactics (as proposed in The Education Modernization Act, 2021), it is worrisome that the curricular changes in Manitoba could follow in a similar manner. Should this occur, the ramifications of ongoing systemic racism and oppression will continue to influence and impact students in Manitoba. As Truth and Reconciliation commissioner, Senator Murray Sinclair famously declared, “Education is the key to reconciliation; education got us into this mess, and education will get us out of this mess” (The National Centre for Collaboration in Indigenous Education, 2020).

Therefore, this study aims to reach policy makers, curriculum writers, historical thinkers as well as educators. In conducting a critical discourse analysis on Manitoba's current social studies framework of outcomes, this study highlights the ways in which curriculum acts as catalyst in the maintenance of settler colonialism within Manitoba's education system and greater society. Furthermore, this research exposes the ways in which cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 1998) and curriculum language informs a certain way of thinking and promotes specific forms of knowledge. Defined by Battiste (1998), cognitive imperialism is a form of manipulation, which has been used to validate one source of knowledge over another. Systemically, cognitive imperialism has legitimized structures of settler colonialism and has undermined Indigenous languages and cultures, regarding them as inferior and illegitimate. The objective of looking at the curricular documents through a postcolonial lens is to foreground these underlying narratives.

Another objective of this research is to bring attention to the omissions that exist within the curricular documents, such as the lack of content regarding residential schools. The trauma of uncovering unmarked graves at former residential schools have recently become a recurring headline. These stories have opened wounds for residential school survivors and have exposed Canada's shame at an international level (Austin & Bilefsky, 2021). Therefore, the Calls to Action from Canada's 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), have begun to garner greater public attention. Within these Calls to Action exists recommendations to improve school curriculum by incorporating Indigenous languages, cultural teachings and Indigenous community involvement (p. 2). Considering the current period of reckoning, curriculum must reflect the Calls to Action as Canada and its citizens aim to work towards reconciliation.

### **Rationale, Purpose and Research Questions**

Manitoba's Kindergarten to Grade 8 social studies framework of outcomes was created in 2003 under the auspices of Manitoba Education and Youth and since then, this 20-year-old document has undergone very few changes. Meanwhile, the world that it is supposed to reflect has experienced dramatic historical events such as the Boushie tragedy, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls commission, Black Lives Matter, and the public movements to defund the police, the COVID-19 pandemic and more – all of which have exposed society's inequities as well as shifts in public attention towards social justice movements around the globe. Therefore, the curriculum finds itself nearing irrelevancy as it has remained stagnant within a world that has continued to evolve. Battiste (1998) emphasizes this perspective stating:

Although current educational literature speaks to the need for schools to encourage the full academic and human achievements of all students, the provincial governments in Canada that have been responsible for education in their provinces have not revamped

their curricula in the interests of the diverse groups they teach. Although over half of the Aboriginal students in Canada are in provincial schools, little has been done to develop a transformed curriculum. (p. 19)

The claims that Battiste made in 1998 ring true today and are evidence of a lack of effort towards equity and reconciliation on the part of provincial governments across Canada.

Implemented in 2003 meant that collaboration to create the social studies document began at the beginning of a new millennium. The tragic events of 9/11 were fresh in the minds of Canadians, Jean Chrétien was the Prime Minister of Canada, and the country was on the brink of legalizing same-sex marriage across the country. Therefore, the curriculum document was created before Canada's Truth and Reconciliation (2015) as well as the national focus on the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2016), meaning that the curricular implications of the finding from these inquiries are noticeably absent. However, this is not a justification for the lack of Indigenous content or knowledge, as documents such as the Indian Control of Indian Education by the Assembly of First Nations (1973), which emphasized the importance of Indigenous curriculum content, were already in existence.

Using a critical discourse analysis as a methodology and a postcolonial theoretical lens, this project explores the Manitoba to Grade 8 Social Studies Curriculum Framework of Outcomes (2003) guided by the following research questions:

- 1) In what ways does the social studies curriculum maintain structures of settler colonialism whilst justifying colonization?
- 2) In what ways does the curriculum promote Eurocentric narratives through a colonial lens?

3) In what ways does the curriculum promote the othering of Indigenous perspectives whilst endorsing prairie settler ideology as a dominant narrative?

4) How is the history of Indigenous peoples included and referenced in the curriculum? How are these stories related to those of colonialism?

5) In what ways does multiculturalism and various Canadian stereotypes delegitimize Indigenous perspectives within the curriculum?

The purpose of this research project is to: 1) engage in a critical discourse analysis of Manitoba's K-8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes; 2) explore the ways in which language empowers specific ways of thinking over others, with special attention to the ways in which colonial narratives and settler grammars are utilized; and 3) submit recommendations to stakeholders in order to inform future curriculum documents. Fourth, it is my intention that this research will be a means through which to inform educators of the importance of thinking critically and of using critical lenses when reading and implementing curriculum documents.

### **Theoretical Framework: Postcolonialism**

To guide the critical discourse analysis, I analyzed the *Manitoba K-8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes* (2003) curricular document through a postcolonial lens. I chose this theoretical lens as I wish to unpack my role as a white settler in a nation that was colonized by European settlers while displacing those who already occupied the land. Postcolonial theory infers that colonization has had global impacts that have shaped the ways in which languages, cultures, and perspectives have developed across the world. These global impacts continue to be enacted in colonized and non-colonized nations, and between people who were colonizers and those that were colonized (Burney, 2012, p. 174). Postcolonial theory analyses the ways in which

imperialism has created “the other,” fetishizing the colonized in a way that recognizes original peoples of the lands as “exotic” or “uncivilized.” Burney (2012) explains the ways in which “othering” in educational and curriculum documents can be examined through a postcolonial lens. Burney (2012) states that, “The processes of othering or marginalization (of the student, race, class, gender, minorities, natives, language, or culture, for instance) can also be applied as strategies for critical analysis in education” (p. 175). By analyzing Manitoba's social studies curriculum documents through a postcolonial lens, this project highlights the ways in which the discourses within the curriculum “normalizes” white-settler European cultures and perspectives, creating and fostering cognitive imperialism. Cognitive imperialism “denies many groups of people their language and cultural integrity and maintains legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference” (Battiste, 1998, p. 20). Therefore, by analyzing the curriculum through a postcolonial lens and by drawing on decolonizing and Indigenizing epistemologies, I will highlight the ways in which the discourses within Manitoba's social studies curriculum reflects and maintains discourses of settler colonialism.

### **Recognizing Colonialism within Curriculum**

Postcolonial theory draws attention to the ways in which “Western education [acts] as an emancipatory force and bring to the fore schooling's role in maintaining inequality and marginalising non-Western knowledges by emphasizing how in a postcolonial era education continues to be permeated by the imperial power/knowledge matrix” (Spina, 2018, p. 22). In investigating Canada's history books and curricula through a postcolonial lens, one can critique the celebratory and multicultural narratives that have long promoted an understanding of colonization through a heroic, white lens. For example, these narratives tell stories of “European explorers and traders in search for *new* lands” (Manitoba K-8 Social Studies Curriculum



Framework of Outcomes, 2003, p. 77). The use of the word “new” reflects the Latin term, *terra nullius*, which is used as a means for the justification of colonialism, by claiming the lands as unoccupied or belonging to no one. This discourse reflective of white settler ideology, is one that I embodied throughout my childhood. I spent my summers exploring Canada coast to coast, visiting historic forts and becoming interested in Canadian history at a young age. However, due to a Eurocentric education, I was unable to understand the implications of the romanticized bullet holes at the Batoche National Historic Site or the symbolism of the tall wooden walls that surround each fort that I visited. This symbolism is explained by Donald (2009), who compares the representations of life inside the walls of a fort (the white colonizers) to those represented on the outside of the walls (Indigenous peoples). He states, “Inside the walls was a more industrious place where newcomers laboured in the interests of civilizing a country and building a nation” (p. 2). This dichotomy was so entrenched in my worldview, that I was unable to see or understand perspectives beyond it.

Using a postcolonial lens to critically engage with the *K-8 Social Studies Curriculum* therefore allows me to unpack my own biases that have shaped me and many white settlers that call Canada home and who were integral to the project of colonization. The analysis will illustrate the legacy of colonialism in the present day. I aim to take responsibility for these perspectives in looking at curricular resources through a critical, postcolonial lens. As a white, female teacher with a Eurocentric background, I see this as a crucial responsibility and must confront these truths towards a path of reconciliation. Battiste (2013) points to an essay by Len Findlay (2000), entitled, “Always Indigenize! The Radical Humanities in the Postcolonial Canadian University.” In it, Findlay urges non-Indigenous scholars to include Indigenous issues within their academia to centre the ways in which settlers understand how colonialism has

infiltrated all aspects and structures of Canadian daily life. Furthermore, Findlay (2000) discusses the ways in which history books state or imply that Canada was once an “empty land,” barren, and “free of civilization” but that these notions are rooted in European settler ideology, solely for the purpose and profitability of their “civilization mission” (p. 310). This ideology is consistent with the language and structure found in Manitoba's *K-8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes* (2003). Poignantly, Findlay concludes his essay by discussing the colonial powers which the English language upholds and has been used as a tool for colonization. He calls on institutions such as universities to recognize this, urging:

an enhanced capacity for analytical and imaginative critique of the current (Amerocentric, neocolonial, capitalist) hegemony [...] in taking their lead from a new generation of Indigenous theorists and activists, Englishes and their critical promoters can contribute in highly practical ways to economic and social justice for all — for as long as the sun shines, the curriculum flows, and the text of treaties between the Crown and Canada's First Nations is not reduced to the rhetoric of entreaty. (p. 310)

Therefore, curriculum scholars such as Battiste, Tuck, Madden, Donald, and Findlay point out that those who identify as a white settler have a responsibility to educate themselves on the ways in which structures within Eurocentric societies have consistently worked to undermine Indigenous identity through ongoing acts of violence and systemic racism. I engage in this work by underlining the importance of exposing the ways in which discourse is used within the *Manitoba K-8 Social Studies Curriculum* (2003), and to explore how such discourse has contributed to maintaining and upholding settler narratives in the curriculum, the classroom, and subsequently, Canadian society.

In choosing postcolonial theory, I considered the ways in which my own education, upbringing, and positionality impacted my understandings of historical thinking and the way I interpreted and taught the social studies curriculum when I first became a teacher. By looking at the curriculum using a critical, postcolonial lens, I aim to understand the power dynamics that have shaped the values, stories, and knowledge that dominates classroom discourses. Young (in Viruru, 2005) discusses postcolonialism as the “recognition of the Western imperialist project and its complicated legacies, such as the appearance of decolonization as nations have attained freedom, juxtaposed with political and economic domination that seeks power over people’s identities and intellects” (p. 141). Therefore, my research recognizes the social studies curriculum as an imperialist and colonial project. Subsequently, this research does not aim to determine *if* the social studies curriculum reflects colonial logics, but rather aims to analyze *how* it does so. Furthermore, postcolonial theory aims to explore the ramifications of the colonized and the colonizer and their intertwined and complicated relationships. Lopez (in Viruru, 2005) points out that, “although those who have been subjected to colonization find it impossible to live without the languages and cultural practices of the colonizers, they cannot fully identify with them” (p. 142). Thus, Viruru (2005) explains that postcolonial theory grapples with analyzing the past while at the same time understanding the effect of outside rule on those who were colonized. By exploring the notion of discourse, power, and voice in the social studies curriculum through this lens, my project exposes the ways in which settler narratives have been imposed on students, teachers, and society at large, and the ways in which the social studies curriculum works as a tool that upholds those power dynamics.

### **The Implications of Postcolonial Theory**

In utilizing postcolonial theory as a lens to conduct my research, I recognize the inherent problem with the name of the theory itself, as “post” colonial theory implies that society has moved *past* colonialism. Many historical scholars critique the use of the theory and the implications that surround the name. McClintock (in Xie, 1997), “objects to the term ‘postcolonial’ for its premature celebration of the pastness of colonialism” (p. 7). Xie (1997) points out that:

critics reject the term ‘postcolonial’ primarily for its dismaying implication of ‘after the demise of colonialism.’ Their objections to the concept of postcoloniality arise from the recognition of the increasing presence of neocolonialism. To these critics, it is a logical impossibility to assign postcolonialism and neocolonialism to the same temporality. (p. 8)

Although the use of postcolonial theory may imply the chronological movement beyond colonialism, I want to make clear that its impacts, including ongoing acts of violence are very much present within the Canadian context today. Rather, I will rely on the definition of postcolonial theory by Mi’kmaq scholar, Marie Battiste, who in 2004 discussed the implications of postcolonial theory, stating:

‘Postcolonial’ is not a time after colonialism, but rather for me it represents more of an aspiration, a hope, not yet achieved. It constructs a strategy that responds to experience of colonization and imperialism. As a critique, it is about rethinking the conceptual, institutional, cultural, legal, and other boundaries that are taken for granted and assumed universal, but act as a structural barrier to many, including Aboriginal people, women, visible minorities, and others. [...] Postcolonial is not about the criticism and deconstruction of colonization and domination, but also about the reconstruction and transformation, operating as a form of liberation from colonial imposition. (p. 1)

Battiste (2004) continues this discussion by pointing out that she views postcolonial theory as a catalyst for transformation, rather than a commentary on the past. Therefore, Battiste's (2004) definition of postcolonial theory has guided my thinking throughout this project.

## **Literature Review: Settler Colonial Narratives in Curriculum**

There is considerable research that explores how settler narratives dominate curriculum within North American societies and their ongoing experiences of colonialism. Much of this writing points to the ways in which curriculum has maintained structures of settler colonialism (Battiste, 1998; Battiste, 2013; Calderon, 2014; Donald, 2009; Findlay, 2000; Madden, 2019; St. Denis, 2012; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013) as well as the ways in which structural racism has influenced the worldview of students and teachers (Marom, 2019; Sleeter, 2017; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). Furthermore, Indigenous scholars have discussed the ways that curriculum, through the empowerment of Indigenous populations within the education system, can push back on the systems that continue to marginalize First Nations, Inuit, and Métis populations within the Canadian society (Battiste, 1998; Battiste, 2013; Madden, 2019; Makokis, 2008; Tuck & Yang, 2014). These scholars discuss the ways Indigenist perspectives are realized through self-determination, counter-stories, governance, and a reclamation of culture. I have chosen to rely on curriculum scholars to guide this study, rather than social studies scholars to attend to the inherent whiteness within the writings of traditional historical thinkers. In an interview with the Harvard Gazette (2020), historian Donald Yacovone discusses the ways in which American textbooks were deliberately written to teach white supremacy and, therefore, urges much needed changes to the ways curriculum is taught to all students as a way to combat contemporary forms of racism and violence. Anderson (2017) discusses this notion within the Canadian context in her analysis on Canada's national narratives and the ways they influence pedagogy, stating, "simplified understandings of history that produce binary notions of insiders/outside, and promote state visions that exclude or silence particular individual or group identities" (p. 5). Anderson also discusses the consequences of certain ways of thinking

historically by referencing Gadamer who, “believes that when individuals look at the past, they cannot avoid doing so through the kaleidoscope of their influences, conditioning, and historical moment—they are perpetually restricted by the lens of their current place and time” (Gadamer in Anderson, 2017, p. 9). Anderson therefore points out that history and historical consciousness is not static, but changes over time through differing perspectives and lenses. Additionally, Samantha Cutrara (2018) warns of the reliance of historical thinking to shape social studies curricula, arguing that, “historical thinking has an intolerance for the type of work needed to decolonize history education and Indigenize our understanding of the Canadian past” (p. 255). It is with this notion in mind, and through thinking reflexively, that I frame this project through curriculum scholars who specialize in decolonizing and Indigenist ways of thinking rather than solely relying on social studies scholars and/or historical thinkers.

### **Neoliberal Narratives within Curriculum**

It is necessary to look at the research regarding the uprising of neoliberal ideology in westernized countries such as the United States and Canada in order to understand the ways which curriculum acts as a catalyst in maintaining colonial structures. Tuck (2013) describes this as “the emergence of neoliberal logic, especially as an extension of settler colonial sensibilities” (p. 334). She argues that settler colonization is “not a fixed event in time, but a structure that continues to contour the lives of Indigenous people, settlers, and all other subjects of the settler colonial nation-state” (p. 326). Woolford & Curran (2011) explore the ramifications of this ideology within the non-profit sector of Manitoba's context stating:

This neoliberal shift in Canada and Manitoba is felt in the non-profit field and it is evident in both pre-reflective and reflective strategizing off agents working within this

field. These agents adapt their practices to a structured set of conditions in hopes of advancing agency goals. (p. 590)

Woolford and Curran (2011) also argue that participating in this type of neoliberal restructuring, has resulted in increased competition between agencies as well as “increased pressure on executive directors of social service agencies to become more business-minded” (p. 590). This type of ideology is directly related to the ways in which Manitoba's current government hopes to restructure the public education system. The recently proposed then retracted Education Modernization Act (2021) would have undermined the public education system through increased teacher accountability, including a restructuring of funding based on standardized-test performance and corporate-based modelling within schools. An example of this shift towards corporate-based modelling was evidenced by the intention to separate principals from the Manitoba Teachers' Society, as well as curricular restructuring that threatens to rely on standardization and test-based accountability (The Education Modernization Act, 2021). These shifts to neoliberal logics are, in effect, a threat to a public education system that is the cornerstone of democracy.

### **Threats to Democratic Education**

One can look to the United States to understand the dangers of neoliberal standards-based curriculum in further increasing the equity gap due to policies such as “No Child Left Behind” as well as the “Common Core Standards” that embed high-stakes testing into all facets of the American curriculum, including social studies. In an article that aims to understand the implications of these policies, entitled, “Social Studies Education and Standards-Based Education Reforms in North America: Curriculum Standardization, High-Stakes Testing, and Resistance,” authors, Ross, Mathison and Vinson (2014) acknowledge the role that social studies



sets out to achieve as well as the controversy it incites through “intellectual battles” which have made the subject an “ideological battleground” (p. 20-21). Ross et al. (2014) highlight the ways in which social studies curricula has been influenced by various attempts at reaching “world-class” prominence and competition within the global standardized testing systems. This fixation and over-reliance on global competition for economic gain is what Kennedy (2015) refers to as, “the power of PISA” (p. 7). However, as Ross et al. (2014) point out, “social studies teaching should not be reduced to an exercise in implementing a set of activities pre-defined by policy makers, textbook companies, or a high-stakes test” (p. 40). By very definition, social studies should examine society in context, enrich critical thinking skills, and demonstrate an ability to adapt to ever-changing social constructs and narratives within communities and societies at large.

### **The Role of Citizenship within Curriculum**

Social studies is not a static concept, and neither is citizenship, as Bergen and McLean (2014) point out as they examine the role that schools play in engaging with concepts such as citizenship education and democracy. In their analysis of the Saskatchewan social studies documents (2014), these authors investigate the ways in which the concept of citizenship is represented. In approaching their study using a critical discourse methodology through a critical constructivist lens, Bergen and McLean (2014) aim to examine the contributions of curriculum to endorse “effective citizenship education” (p. 1). They indicate, that according to Saskatchewan’s social studies documents, a “good” citizen includes being “deliberative;” questioning authority and engaging in public debate as well as having a “social justice orientation” which aims to teach students to “recognize injustices and feel empowered to take action to resolve them” (p. 19). However, they state that although references to Indigenous perspectives were mentioned in the

documents, there is a lack of emphasis placed on cultural practices, language, or self-determination in education (Deer, as cited in Bergen & McLean, 2014, p. 18), which are focuses within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015).

In another study by Spina (2018), the meaning of citizenship within the Ontario social studies curriculum is examined using critical discourse analysis, through a postcolonial lens. Spina examines the ways in which the concept of citizenship reinforces Canada's national identity as white and imperial (p. ii). Spina's (2018) findings indicate that the curricular documents create discourses that centre "self," "community," and "other" and is shaped by ideologies such as multiculturalism, internationalism, and globalisation. Spina states, "by normalizing certain sensibilities, attitudes and disposition in certain bodies while constantly presenting the others as an outsider, it has become a means to constantly refabricate the modern white self" (p. 177). Spina argues that the curriculum maintains the white-settler narrative as status quo, normalizing the "us versus them" dichotomy. Therefore, this discourse upholds the "Europeans as knowledge producers" ideology, contrasted with the "erroneous knowledge of the Other" (p. 182). Spina suggests moving away from the modernist trappings of progressive education that has shaped Canadian curricula as well as disrupting white, Western pedagogies, stating, "The move to challenge the white subject's autonomy to see the 'others-among-us' as 'another-one-of-us' would be a powerful gesture in that it would disrupt white autonomy and the ability to recognize and know the other, and in the process, render the white subject an affectable one" (p. 194). The disruption that Spina suggests would allow for a shift of perspectives within the Canadian curricula, making way for a decolonizing approach to teaching specific historical subject matter, as well as current societal issues.

Similarly, this study illustrates the ways in which Manitoba’s curriculum upholds the “Othering” narrative, as Spina (2018) defines as “a global non-citizen” (p. ii) as well as the narrative that Indigenous peoples are depicted as “outsiders-within,” and therefore, threatened by genocide as well as cultural annihilation (p. 8).

Also important to consider within this research are the ways in which citizenship has been defined in Canada throughout the last century. Maryam Nabavi (2010) discusses this notion in her article entitled, *Constructing the “citizen” in Citizenship Education*, where she analyzes the evolution of citizenship though the educational context beginning in 1890s and its four distinct shifts:

**Figure 1.** Development of Canadian Citizen Education

<b>Substantive Citizenship Elitist</b>	→	→	<b>Social Citizenship Activist</b>
Informed by Confederation 1867	Informed by Citizenship Act 1947	Informed by Multiculturalism Policy 1971	Informed by social, political, economic, cultural globalization 1990s onward
Focus on nation-building	Focus on democracy	Focus on diversity (soft multiculturalism)	Focus on social cohesion (simplifies emergent tensions of diversity)

*Maryam Nabavi, 2010, p. 3*

It is important to note these shifts in narrative, as Anderson (2017) would define as a “national narrative [that are] discursive devices that combine history, collective memory, and myth into teleological communications of a nation’s past, present, and future” (p. 4). These narratives and subsequent “shifts” give important context to the creation of social studies curriculum documents.

## The Canadian Multicultural Context

As pointed out by Maryam Nabavi (2010), a shift towards the use of “multiculturalism” was a significant influence in the Canadian identity beginning in the early 1970s, cemented by

the introduction of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 which sought to eliminate discrimination of the settler population within Canada. Although multiculturalism and the act that was subsequently introduced in 1988 became a point of national pride, and promoted the identity that Canada was a “nation of immigrants” it acted as another form of erasure for Indigenous populations. Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) define multiculturalism as “the most widespread response to white supremacy in the curriculum” (p. 81). St. Denis (2012) also explores this notion, explaining, “by inciting multiculturalism, public schools effectively limit meaningful incorporation of Aboriginal content and perspectives into public schools” (p 307). St. Denis (2012) continues this explanation by exploring the ways in which multiculturalism “encourages social division” (p. 308) as well as “other” racialized groups. St. Denis (2012) argues that multiculturalism, promoted by white settler discourses, reduces Indigenous sovereignty and rights to a relic of the past, pre-contact, while, simultaneously perpetuating multiculturalism and whiteness as the present, or what is deemed normal and natural (p. 308-309). Therefore, when multicultural celebrations are planned within schools and public spaces, they may often be seen as “in response” to Indigenous cultural practices, which must be viewed as the norm within the public realm. If multicultural practices are used in a reactionary way, such as stating, “but there are other children here” (St. Denis, 2012), Indigenous language, culture, and ways of knowing continue to be erased. Using a postcolonial lens to critically examine the use of multiculturalism in Manitoba's social studies curriculum documents helps to unpack my Eurocentric biases in relation to the settler narratives which dominate Manitoba society.

### **Curriculum's Preservation of Settler Colonialism**

There has also been significant literature concerning the ways in which social studies curriculum influences the maintenance of settler colonialism in other contexts such as the United

States (Calderon, 2014a; Calderon, 2014b; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). Calderon (2014b) pays particular attention to the ways in which settler grammar influences curriculum by discussing “Indigenous absence” and “Indigenous presence” (p. 318). Calderon connects this idea to that of Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) who discuss the language of “settler replacement” (p. 75) and the ways in which it is manifested in American curriculum documents. Calderon (2014b) also discusses the role of “citizenship” and the implications of the word. Pearson (in Calderon, 2014b) states, “In settler nations, narratives of immigration are central to constructions of citizenship because colonization is directly constitutive of such states, and subsequent mass settlement secured majority presences as they literally swamped the Indigenous populations the dispossessed” (p. 320). Calderon (2014b) also argues that through colonial domination, it became necessary to eliminate Indigenous culture and peoples, to establish economic and political control over the land (p. 320). What Calderon (2014b) describes is a mirror image of the ongoing acts of violent colonization that have been occurring within Canada for hundreds of years. Her analysis of the American social studies curriculum as well as American social studies textbooks is reflective of the narratives within *Manitoba's K-8 Social Studies Curriculum*, and she challenges teachers to “collectively confront settler grammars and begin to move away from metaphors and into concrete anti-settler practice” (p. 332). Calderon (2014a) points to land resistance movements as a way to educate students about the implications of settler colonialism.

At a moment in time when Canadian society is grappling with the use of language to describe Canadian atrocities, as evidenced by the ongoing debate surrounding the use of the word, *genocide* (Stefanovich, 2021) to describe the legacy of Canada's Residential School System, it is crucial to understand how language impacts discourses within the curriculum

documents. Woolford & Benvenuto (2015) discuss the dichotomy of Canadian attempts at reconciliation stating:

[Indigenous populations] see the Canadian government with one hand offer reconciliation and reparation, while with the other it violates historic and contemporary treaty and Aboriginal rights, intensifies extractive activities that threaten life in Indigenous territories, ignores the plight of missing and murdered Indigenous women, creates minimum sentencing laws that are only likely to increase Indigenous over-incarceration, continues to try to impose private property regimes on Indigenous communities and is the source of many other ongoing Indigenous grievances. (p. 382)

Therefore, it is evident that Canadian society has come to a crossroads and it is clear that Canada is in danger of choosing to continue down a path of colonial and neoliberal policies, further increasing the equity gap, ignoring Indigenous perspectives and moving further from, instead of towards, reconciliation. Medina & Whitla (2019) argue:

On one hand, Canada needs to come to terms with the very structures of colonization which continue to disproportionately benefit specific sectors of the Euro-Canadian population. On the other hand, Canada will also have to confront its multicultural façade which claims that official multiculturalism celebrates diversity without prejudice when in fact it actually excludes those who do not fit the dominant/normative Euro-Canadian frame. (p. 19)

Thus, Canadian curriculum must also confront the narratives that uphold Euro-Canadian perspectives, which includes understanding the ways in which multicultural celebrations and teachings in schools can negatively impact the work of decolonization.

In another study, conducted by Schaepli, Godlewska, and Rose (2018), the epistemologies of ignorance were studied in the 2003-2015 Ontario Canadian and World Studies Curriculum. The authors define an epistemology of ignorance as the unwillingness to address inequities faced by Indigenous peoples within Canada regarding systems of power relations that include health, education, land claims, and child welfare (p. 475). Their study found that “content related to Indigenous peoples is consistently framed as optional and historical, a dynamic that works to centre settler subjectivity while deflecting attention away from Indigenous knowledge, experiences, and critical perspectives” (p. 479) and that the curricular documents and textbooks associated with the Ontario curriculum from 2003-2015 imply that Indigenous people only exist in the past tense (p. 486). Similarly, in her Master’s thesis which analyzed hip hop culture within Métis communities, Métis scholar, Dr. Lucy Fowler (2017) discusses the problematic discourse that Indigenous communities in Canada are portrayed as “frozen in time” (p. i) which ultimately leads to the creation of educational spaces that are unresponsive to the ways in which Indigenous students see themselves (p. 9).

In engaging meaningfully with the Calls to Action from Canada’s TRC (2015), I am compelled to use a postcolonial lens to critically examine Manitoba’s social studies curriculum documents by drawing on Indigenous scholars as well as decolonizing and Indigenizing theories. Currently, there is a lack of critical engagement with the existing Manitoba social studies curriculum documents. Consequently, the current curriculum upholds systemic racism and white-settler narratives within Manitoba; a community that includes a significant and growing Indigenous population. My research project was motivated by the knowledge of Indigenous, decolonizing, and postcolonial scholars. By using a postcolonial theoretical lens, I seek to understand the complicity of the white settler discourses that continue to control systems that

influence public knowledge and narratives. Prior to this research, a critical discourse analysis of the K-8 social studies curriculum in Manitoba did not exist. Therefore, the goal of this project is to highlight the need to review curriculum documents with a critical lens to draw attention to how the curriculum upholds structures of colonialism.



## **Methodology: Critical Discourse Analysis**

This project's purpose was to understand the ways in which the *Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Curriculum* (2003) legitimizes and endorses settler colonial narratives. This project underlines the ways in which the curriculum privileges Western ways of thinking and epistemologies, while at the same time, delegitimizing others by employing particular discourses and discursive strategies, such as omission and language use. By using critical discourse analysis as the methodology, I uncovered how particular uses of language, grammar, and narratives influence the meaning-making that occurs within the social studies curriculum, and ultimately, in the classroom. By doing so, I was able to demonstrate the ways in which the curriculum upholds settler colonial narratives as well as cognitive imperialism and highlight the ways in which the curricular text legitimizes Western epistemologies. Luke (as cited in Rogers, 2011) defines discourse as, "systematic clusters of themes, statements, ideas and ideologies [that] come into play in the text" (p. 132). Therefore, this critical discourse analysis enables me to "put on display what is normally invisible" (S. Moore, personal communication, May 4, 2022), as these themes and ideas have become normalized within the colonial society that we live in. Within the social studies curriculum, colonial narratives are pervasive, normalized and subsequently become the stories and the content that students learn and come to understand as "truth." Therefore, this project analyzed the curriculum in order to document the specific discourses of settler colonialism in order to critically consider the potential impacts on students' understandings of content within the social studies curriculum (Manitoba Education and Training, 2003).

As Rogers (2011) points out, critical discourse analysis (CDA) brings together "social theories into dialogue with theories of language to answer particular research questions" (p. 3).

Rogers (2011) theorizes the ways in which CDA analysis takes into consideration structures of power, political contexts, and language to explain how society is impacted by these structures. In considering narrative when conducting a critical discourse analysis, Rogers (2011) highlights the importance of understanding language as power and its role within meaning-making (p. 5).

Therefore, the language used in provincially mandated curriculum texts can influence (or can be influential in) the ways in which teachers, students, and the society at large privileges and comes to understand particular narratives. Such narratives have wide-reaching implications and impact how society views historical and current political and social circumstances. When narratives become dominant, they can influence how biases are constructed and opinions are formed.

Fairclough (2014) explains CDA as a “normative critique of discourse, leading to explanatory critique of relations between discourse and other social elements of the existing social reality, as a basis for action to change reality for the better” (p. 48). Fairclough (2014) notes that CDA is a critique on contemporary social change, however, at the same time, is a historical analysis that “gives prominence to the dynamics and transformations of capitalism in its critique, on the grounds that they are dialectically related to processes and changes in the existing social reality at all levels and all areas of social life” (p. 49). Therefore, this project, which analyzed the ways in which the Manitoba social studies curriculum maintains settler colonial narratives and upholds Western ways of thinking, employed a CDA methodology with a postcolonial lens that exposes the historical and political contexts as well as power dynamics that impact the curriculum's language, values, and narratives.

### **Limitations of CDA**

Rogers (2011) points out limitations that exist within the CDA methodology.

Historically, CDA was created and developed by Western theorists and scholars, such as Norman

Fairclough, born in the United Kingdom. As such, CDA has “been exacerbated by the predominance of English-based journals, research universities and conferences that have shaped and continue to shape the field” (p. 9). Because of this, Rogers (2011) argues, there is a danger of promoting “monocultural values and perspectives.” However, as Rogers (2011) discusses, it is important to understand CDA as beyond the Western ideology, “I think therefore I am,” and instead focus on “I am because we are” which centers community rather than self (p. 9). I recognize my work as having ramifications that extend directly to the community in which I live.

Therefore, in understanding this project as one which impacts my community rather than myself, I aim to move beyond the westernized approaches to CDA. By conducting the CDA through a postcolonial lens, while drawing on decolonizing and Indigenizing theories, I relied upon Marie Battiste's (2004) definition of postcolonial theory as “a strategy that responds to colonialism and imperialism” (p. 1), as well as a recognition that *postcolonialism* is an aspiration, not yet achieved. Furthermore, I recognize my project as a political project, just as I recognize the act of teaching as inherently political. As Jørgensen and Phillips (2018) discuss, “critical discourse does not understand itself as politically neutral (as objectivist social science does), but as a critical approach which is politically committed to social change” (p. 5). In drawing from Jørgensen and Phillips (2018), I do not view political subjectivity as a shortcoming or limitation within this work, as I aim to uncover how specific language maintains unequal power relations. I believe that in doing so, there is possibility in igniting political social change.

## **Methods and Procedures**

This project incorporated Rogers (2011) methodology which links CDA to the field of education while integrating Fairclough's (2015) notion of language and power. This critical discourse analysis drew on Fairclough's three-tiered approach and is similar to the ways in which

Lana Parker (2019) conducted a critical discourse analysis of Ontario's assessment policy. Similar to Parker (2019), I looked closely at the political climate, including external documents, such as newspaper articles to understand the policies and decisions that were made in the creation of the Manitoba social studies curriculum. This allowed me to better understand the context during that period. This also helped me shape my analytical framework when I began to analyze the curriculum.

In conducting my analysis, I used a postcolonial theoretical lens to describe the ways in which the Manitoba K-8 Social Studies Curriculum upholds colonial narratives, legitimizes Western and colonial ways of thinking, while simultaneously delegitimizing certain knowledge systems. Using a postcolonial lens for the analysis allowed me to construct an analytical framework to explain the ways in which the Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum uses language, narrative, and discourse that reflect and uphold colonial narratives. The themes that I explored highlighted the language, narratives, and discourses of the curriculum include the "othering" of Indigenous perspectives, upholding prairie settler narratives and futurity, justifying colonization, and promoting a colonial construct of citizenship. Also analyzed is the omission of specific events, places, people, perspectives, and stories that demonstrate that Canada is a colonizing entity.

### **Postcolonial Theory as an Analytical Framework**

As explicated in the previous chapter, postcolonial theory focuses on the impacts of those who were colonized and is concerned with understanding the ways in which the colonizer continues to benefit from structures that were subsequently established. At its simplest form, colonialism can be described as "the conquest and control of other people's lands and goods" (Loomba, p. 2). In establishing this control, colonizers within Canada constructed westernized

knowledge systems that are utilized within the current curricular documents, thus reinforcing the established dynamics of power. Therefore, in choosing to analyze the curriculum using a postcolonial lens, this project highlights the narratives that continue to delegitimize Indigenous epistemologies and give power to European colonial knowledge systems.

In framing my analysis, I focused on five specific themes to explain the ways in which the social studies curriculum is a colonial artefact which continues to uphold settler colonial narratives, benefiting the colonizer by maintaining systems of power. A description of how I arrived at these themes appears later in the chapter. The themes that emerged from my analysis were:

- 1) *othering*, specifically of Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies;
- 2) *settler futurity*, and its implications within the curricular text
- 3) *prairie settler colonialism*, and its specific characteristics within the Manitoba context;
- 4) *the justification of colonization*; and
- 5) *the respectful citizen*, in which aspects of the “kind/polite Canadian,” as well as the implications of multiculturalism within Canada, are explored.

In arriving at these themes, I conducted an analysis which involved a line-by-line coding process which allowed me to categorize each specific learning outcome (SLO). I also carefully documented my observations in an analysis journal that allowed me to understand the patterns of language and the ways in which the document upholds settler colonial narratives, cognitive imperialism, and Western ways of thinking. Below I will describe and define each theme to illustrate the analytical framework which was developed during my analysis.

### ***Othering***

To “other” a group of people or a person is to create a dichotomy of “us versus them” within a social construct or through a historical narrative. The concept of “we/us” is constructed through a dominant narrative, which are also constructed by those deemed “we/us.” Cutrara (2020) describes the concept of the dominant narrative within curricular texts, labelling it as “a grand narrative;” a hollowed-out version of complex stories that do not explore “the power and privilege embedded in the past” (p. 23). Cutrara (2020), drawing on Derrida (1978), argues that text, including those used within history and social studies classrooms have “many voices, voices that are acknowledged, validated, and amplified and voices that are excluded, disavowed, and actively silenced” (p. 23). The “we/us” is a dominant narrative, which consequently perpetuates the notion of othering through the construct of “them.” This construct is woven within the perspectives of curricular texts and is perpetuated by racism. Racism, as discussed by Battiste (2013), is also a social construct. She states:

Race is not something that resides in the blood or genes of a group of people as characterized in biology. It has no biological source, like the colour of the eyes. Race is created in the social attitudes and beliefs of society. (p. 131)

Therefore, the social construct of race “remains the theory, while intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination remain its integral practice” (Battiste, 2013, p. 132). When a group of people are “othered,” racism is able to thrive, and dominant narratives are maintained.

The “us versus them” dynamic of othering is significant in understanding Canada’s complex relationship with “diversity.” As Cutrara (2020) points out:

Celebrating food and festivals may occur on an international stage, but many non-Indigenous Canadians are uncomfortable engaging in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures on an individual level. Canadian colonial history is fraught with so much

discomfort and silence that Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians have no shared understanding for reconciling and speaking through the violence of the past. Many Canadians still see Indigenous peoples as the shadowy Others on the edges of terra nullius, with federal governments modelling discomfort by failing to embrace colonial history in all its messy complexity. (p. 48)

As an example, the curriculum describes Canada as a “prosperous, peaceful and democratic country” (p. 9), while at the same time ignoring ongoing acts of violence through colonization. Therefore, the curriculum *others* Indigenous peoples and actively silences Indigenous perspectives. Othering perpetuates the dominant narrative that Canada is a wonderful place for everyone to live, with equal opportunity for all. The perspective that Canada is built on a system of racism which has and continues to treat people unfairly is not seen as legitimate, is not given equal value, and is dismissed as being a “minority grievance,” a term coined by former University of Winnipeg President, Lloyd Axworthy while referring to alternative perspectives in approaching Canada Day celebrations (Rollason, 2022).

### ***Settler Futurity***

In exploring settler futurity within the social studies curriculum, I drew on Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández's (2013) definition, which is a key element of prairie settler colonialism. Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández state that settler futurity is “ensured through an understanding of Native-European relations as a thing of the past, and the inclusion of Native history as past upon which a white future is ensured” (p. 79). Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) describe settler colonialism's overarching intent as the erasure of Indigenous peoples which happens through “commonplace tendency of appropriation and commercialization of Indigeneity, but also specifically, through the removal of Indigenous bodies and the occupation of tracts of land by

settler bodies” (p. 79). That is, for settler futurity to thrive and be maintained, Indigenous perspectives, historical narratives, and physical spaces must be expunged.

Settler futurity ensures the existence of settler narratives through the telling and retelling of historical stories, using a settler lens, and through the ways in which settlers are perceived through texts as persevering to “build a nation.” By using a postcolonial lens, settler futurity is a significant feature in understanding the ways in which colonized peoples continue to be impacted by colonialism in the present day. Tuck and Gorlewski (2016) explain the implication of settler futurity on the modern-day school system, stating, “White, primarily middle-class norms of language and culture, are consistently privileged in institutions of public education, regardless of the presence of teachers and students of colour” (p. 200). They continue, “Curriculum, like policy, is socially constructed, and unless interrupted, schooling works to reinforce existing power relations” (p. 203). Therefore, curricular texts provide space for dominant, white, settler narratives to be upheld through the systematic erasure of Indigenous voices and stories, which ultimately promote settler futurity as a structural norm. In looking at the ways in which the curriculum endorses settler futurity, I drew specific attention to the language used in describing settler achievements, such as “nation building” and the hardships that settlers overcame, which position the narrative of settler futurity as one that benefitted and continues to benefit Canadian nationhood.

### ***Prairie Settler Colonialism***

Prairie settler colonialism is tied closely to – and overlaps with - settler futurity, and embodies specific characteristics within the prairie provinces of Canada, including Manitoba, as well as its capital city, Winnipeg. Prairie settler colonialism embodies a “mutually supportive relationship between neoliberalism and settler colonialism” (Toews, 2018, p. 17) where specific



land and property opportunities are prioritized through racial capitalist endeavours. Toews (2018) explains:

As Winnipeg's past and present demonstrate, racist thinking is used to excuse capitalist inequality in many different ways, from straight-up vilification of oppressed groups to more cunning ways of feeling that promote the sense that oppressed groups, perhaps through no fault of their own, are not quite ready to enjoy self-determination or a humane standard of living. (p. 18)

Prairie settler colonialism and racial capitalism are closely tied to the notion of property and land rights, which enables settler futurity. The Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum (2003) discusses property rights through a settler colonial and patriarchal lens, through the language of "rights" and "respect" whilst ignoring Indigenous epistemologies and Treaty agreements. This underscores the disconnect between Indigenous peoples and settlers and sets the stage for colonization to be an ongoing event. Anishinabe scholar, Aimée Craft (2013) explains that in Anishinabe culture, land and property is not owned, rather, we, as humans, "are made of it" (p. 94). Craft explains:

The Anishinabe dependence on the land and reverence for *Nimaamaa Aki* (Mother Earth) affected how they understood their responsibilities to the land and their ability to enter into negotiations about it with outsiders. The Anishinabe were bound by obligations of care toward the land, thanksgiving to the land for its bounty, and understanding that the Creator had assigned individuals to the land. They were created of the land and belonged to it. (p. 95)

Prairie settler colonialism, therefore, normalizes property ownership as an inherent right of the white settler. This concept was put under the microscope during the 2016 trial of Gerald Stanley,

a farmer, who shot dead Colten Boushie, a 22-year-old Indigenous Cree, for driving on to the Saskatchewan farm in search for assistance with a flat tire (Starblanket & Hunt, 2020). Stanley was acquitted. The trial, steeped in racism, portrayed Stanley “as a human being [...] but it felt like throughout the entire proceedings, despite being the victim, Colten was not allowed to be seen as a human being” (Starblanket & Hunt, 2020, p. 11). This is one example of the ways in which prairie settler colonialism is tied to racial capitalism.

Moreover, the prairies have a deeply rooted history of over-criminalizing Indigenous peoples, a practice which continues today. Comack (2019) explains:

Historically, the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) played a key part in creating a white settler society. In contemporary times, this role is nowhere more evident than in the policing of the racialized spaces of inner-city communities on the Canadian Prairies. (p. 175)

Prairie settler colonialism also embodies extractivist thinking. Extractivism, which is the extracting of natural materials from the Earth for the purpose of economic gain, also has racial foundations. Preston (2017) explains:

Land use and European liberal ideologies of property not only motivated the “resourcification” of Indigenous territories then and now, but also informed the racialization of Indigenous peoples as wasteful, lazy and unable to be productive in the economy or in white settler society more generally. (p. 358)

In creating this dominant narrative, extractivism ensures “white access to land, cheap labour and capital change over time and in relation to regional politics and histories, the systemic channelling of assets to ‘exalted subjects’ of white settler states remains uninterrupted” (Preston, 2017, p. 360).

While “settler colonialism is distinguished by the fact that the colonizing force does not leave but rather seeks to replace Indigenous society with settler colonial society,” (Dorries, 2019, p. 27), prairie settler colonialism is defined by the aspects of racial capitalism to ensure settler futurity. It also promotes extractivism of the land whilst over-criminalizing Indigenous peoples on the land that has been made property of the settlers.

### ***Justification of Colonization***

In understanding the ways in which colonialization is justified within the curricular texts (2003), I drew on Rowe and Tuck's (2017) definition of settler colonialism, which reads:

[Settler colonialism is] the pursuit of land, not just labour or resources. Settler colonialism is a persistent societal structure, not just an historical event or origin story for a nation-state. Settler colonialism has meant genocide of Indigenous peoples, [and] the reconfiguring of Indigenous land into settler property. (p. 4)

Through a white-settler lens, colonization is justified through the stories of settler struggles and the necessity of their migration, from undemocratic nations to land that needed to be developed to ensure a “better, brighter future.” Through the justification of colonization, stories of Indigenous governance and systems are ignored, and *terra nullius* (land belonging to “no one”) is evoked. By justifying colonization, racism is endorsed, and Indigenous peoples are positioned as “uncivilized” or “in need of education.” Battiste (2013) addresses this notion within Canada by arguing:

First Nations humanities are not synonymous with ethnic and class elitism, although they have been associated with versions of “barbarian” or savage in order to authenticate and privilege Eurocentrism. By this characterization – and its pseudo-civilizing mission – First Nations humanities seem a contradiction in terms. By this categorization, too, the

socially contrived primitive or uncivilized Indigene could not credibly lay claim to such knowledge in earlier centuries, and they may only do so now via imitation and assimilation because of the continuing misguided perception that there is no such thing as Indigenous knowledge and nothing to be learned from Indigenous peoples. (p. 114-115)

In justifying colonization, settler colonialism is seen as an act that is necessary for a nation's progress. In the case of Canada, colonization is justified as it is seen as achieving democracy and multiculturalism. However, "it has racialized Aboriginal peoples' identity, marginalized and delegitimated their knowledge and languages, and exploited their powerlessness in taking their lands" (Battiste, 2013, p. 106).

An example of the way in which the social studies curriculum justifies colonization occurs when it asks students to "appreciate the achievements of previous generations whose efforts contributed to the building of Canada" (p. 3). In doing so, students learn that colonization was necessary in "building" the country of Canada to achieve "democracy, including social justice, federalism, bilingualism, and pluralism" (p. 3). Applying a postcolonial lens to the curriculum (2003) allowed me to demonstrate the ways in which colonization functions as an ongoing system and is justified through the stories within the texts, as well as the topics that are presented to students that look at the ways in which colonization has been justified within Canada and in other places around the world.

### ***The Respectful Citizen***

A well-known Canadian stereotype proclaims Canadian citizens to be kind, inclusive, and polite. Canadian curricular texts boast a thriving democracy that was built upon a pillar of multiculturalism and pluralism (Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum Framework of Outcomes, 2003, p. 3). Spina's (2018) thesis, which challenges the making of the "global citizen" in

Ontario's social studies curriculum using a postcolonial lens, deconstructs the notion of the respectful, global citizen and reframes it as a project of imperialism. Spina, who draws on Gorman (2006) and Hall (2002) states that:

Postcolonial theory points to the continuity of the identity of the citizen in imperial times and in the current "globalized" world that defines settler societies such as Canada. In the globalization discourse, the lives and identity of citizens have become more cosmopolitan. But a cosmopolitan ideal was at the core of the imperial project as well. "Imperial citizenship," although not a legal status, was one of the most important identities in settler societies. If empire built a sense of community among settler nations, it had, therefore, a cosmopolitan edge, based on internationalist and humanitarian principles. It gave settlers across the globe a transnational identity and a sense of community with an origin and a future goal – that of establishing the liberal capitalist order and the liberal peace around the globe. (p. 7)

In establishing an imperial, cosmopolitan identity, Canada envisions itself as a beacon of democracy, imposing itself on the global stage as an example of an ethical nation-state with a moral compass that other, "less-developed" countries must look to for inspiration. Spina (2018) points to the theory of ethical liberalism in establishing this Canadian identity. She refers to Manzer's (1994) definition of ethical liberalism as:

A society founded on the principle of universal human development, in which all persons have equal opportunities to develop fully their special abilities and participate freely in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of their community. (p. 32)

Canadian curricular texts promote national identity as ethically liberal, respectful, peaceful, multicultural and tolerant, with equitable opportunity for all. However, Cutrara (2020) points out

that this notion shields students from exploring “how colonial practices and legislation, exploitative labour policies for immigrants, and restrictive rules related to migration and cultural expression have been built into Canadian law and society” (p. 21), and furthermore, the ways in which colonization has created deep racial disparities within Canada’s culture, undermining the façade that Canada’s citizenship is tolerant, respectful and open-minded towards diversity. As Nabavi (2010) points, out, “in Canada, citizenship education is closely connected with multiculturalism” (p. 4). However:

a combination of factors including the relationships between the multiculturalism policy and the conceptually progressive yet practically disjointed and patch-work approach to citizenship education has led citizenship theorists to the conclusion that development and implementation of citizenship education in Canada is cause for concern and arguably in a state of crisis. (Sears & Hughes, 2006, in Nabavi, p. 5)

Nabavi (2010) argues that citizenship education in Canada is used as a tool to instil nationalism, while attempting to “cover up neoliberal policies and programs” that “strengthen the concept of nation rather than the individuals who are members of the nation” (p. 5-6).

I drew on Spina’s (2018) understanding of the ways in which citizenship education in Canada connects its identity to the theory of ethical liberalism, as well as Nabavi’s (2010) notion that citizenship education is used to promote Canadian nationalism, to understand the concept of the respectful citizen and how it manifests in the curricular text. I also connected Cutrara’s (2020) notion that Canadian citizenship education ignores systematic racism and structural marginalization which continues to disadvantage specific populations within Canadian society, through the act of ongoing colonialism. As an example, the curriculum (2003) lists “active democratic citizenship” as tied closely to behaviour, through a Western lens. The curriculum

(2003) states, “active democratic citizenship does not apply solely within the confines of the classroom: certain social studies outcomes refer to student behaviour in groups and communities beyond the school” (p. 7). Therefore, the curriculum (2003) promotes good citizenship as following rules, being respectful and living up to the stereotype of the polite and kind Canadian.

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

In this section I will outline how I collected data from the *Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (2003) to analyze the ways in which the document upholds settler colonial perspectives as well as Western ways of thinking. This section will explain in detail the process of my analyses and the tools that I used to complete it. However, I will begin by providing readers an opportunity to understand the structure of the curricular text.

### ***Document Structure Outline***

To understand the way in which the *Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (2003) document is structured, I have provided an outline below. The document was created in 2003 by Manitoba Education and Youth, under the auspices of the Government of Manitoba, represented by the Minister of Education. The document is 150 pages in length and the structure is as follows:

1. Acknowledgements (p. iii-vi): Description of personnel involved in the document's creation.
2. Table of Contents (p. vii-ix).
3. Introduction (p. 1-2): A brief explanation about the document's purpose, background and content.

4. Overview (p. 3-7): An explanation that discusses how teachers and students should use the document and the roles teachers and students play within a social studies classroom as well as the general goals of social studies as a subject area.
5. Citizenship As a Core Concept in Social Studies (p. 9-10): A brief explanation that underlines the importance of citizenship to the framework.
6. General Learning Outcomes (p. 11-13): Six outcomes that influenced the specific learning outcomes for each grade level.
  - a. Identity, Culture and Community
  - b. The Land: Places and People
  - c. Historical Connections
  - d. Global Interdependence
  - e. Power and Authority
  - f. Economics and Resources
7. Social Studies Skills (p.15): An overview of four categories that influenced specific skills for each grade level.
  - a. Skills for Active Democratic Citizenship
  - b. Skills for Managing Ideas and Information
  - c. Critical and Creative Thinking Skills
  - d. Communication Skills
8. Framework Components and Structure (p. 17-19): An explanation of the document's key components as well as its structure. Includes a guide to reading the learning outcome codes.



9. Social Studies skill categories and cluster tiles (p. 20): A chart that outlines the broad goals of the four “skill” areas identified.
  - a. Active Democratic Citizenship
  - b. Managing Information and Ideas
  - c. Critical and Creative Thinking
  - d. Communication
10. Guide to Reading the Learning Outcome Code (p. 21-22): An explanation of the learning outcome numerical system.
11. Student learning outcomes (p. 26-115): The grade-levelled specific learning outcomes.
12. Cumulative skills charts (p. 121-127): An overview of the skills and values as defined by the curricular document (2003) which include the categories: “Active Democratic Citizenship,” “Managing Information and Ideas,” “Critical and Creative Thinking,” and “Communication.”
13. Glossary (p. 141-143): Identification of what the writers highlighted as key terms and the ways in which they were defined.
14. Bibliography (p. 147-150): resources and scholarly citations that influenced the document’s content and epistemologies.

Except for the table of contents, I analyzed each section to better understand the framework, beginning with who was involved in the curriculum writing process; the discourses, implications and omissions of each grade level through the use of language within each outcome as well as the specific terms that were highlighted and defined in the glossary. I also analyzed the

bibliography, which ultimately is a reflection of the curriculum writers' influences, thereby inferring their perspectives and values.

### ***Process of Analysis***

Through multiple readings and subsequent analysis of the curricular text, I used the theoretical framework of postcolonialism and the five specific themes (othering, settler futurity, prairie settler colonialism, the justification of colonization, and the respectful citizen) to analyze and document the ways in which the document upholds, endorses, and legitimizes colonial narratives while delegitimizing Indigenous peoples, histories, and perspectives through omission. First, I read the entire document with the purpose of a content overview and highlighted the areas that stood out to me with the specific themes in mind. I documented these themes in my analysis journal by recording the specific sections that these discourses were present. During the second reading of the document, I looked specifically at the learning outcomes that dealt with Indigenous content. During this reading, I also documented my observations in my analysis journal and noticed the ways in which the language "others" and delegitimizes Indigenous perspectives and looked at the specific ways the document frames Indigenous peoples in relation to citizenship as well as settler stories. In the third reading, I analyzed the text to consider omissions that further minimize and delegitimize Indigenous content throughout the document. In a fourth reading of the document, I engaged in line-by-line coding, by assigning a particular label (code) to each specific learning outcome (SLO) which concisely summated the idea of the individual SLO. The codes allowed me to form the four major themes that informed the analytical framework. After which, I transferred the codes on to a grade specific chart (Appendix A), which allowed me to visualize the data and solidified the overarching narratives that are

present within the document. From there, I was able to zero in on outcomes that underline the themes from my analytical framework.

In addition to coding each SLO, I also analyzed the *Acknowledgements* section of the document (p. iii–vi), the *Introduction* (p. 1–22), the *Glossary* (p. 141–143), and the “Bibliography” (p. 147–149). In doing so, I was able further analyze the context and influences behind the framework (2003). Rogers (2011) explains, “Meanings are always embedded within social, historical, political and ideological contexts and, meanings are motivated [...], and thus the ways in which meanings get chained together have consequences for privilege, status, the distribution of resources, and solidarity” (p. 5). Therefore, I aim to explain the discourses of the language within the curriculum document, including their implications on society, structure, and education, and will then illustrate the connections between language, power, and ideology.

The purpose of the analysis journal was to keep track of the different phenomena I explored through multiple readings of the curricular document and to keep track of the specific discourses related to the themes in my analytical framework. Throughout these readings, the analysis journal assisted me in organizing my thinking and creating tools, such as the SLO codes chart to understand underlying goals and narratives more clearly within the text. Through a reiterative process of line-by-line coding, and reading text, I generated the five specific themes: othering, settler futurity, prairie settler colonialism, the justification of colonization, and the respectful citizen. The analysis journal also allowed me to document and organize my thinking in a way that provided clarity in understanding my next steps.

As I began to investigate the content areas of the document, I started to realize specific structural elements that influenced the ways in which I approached subsequent readings. For example, I quickly realized that within grade-level content area existed specific learning

outcomes (SLOs) exclusively “made for” Aboriginal students and teachers, seemingly those who live and work in First Nations-controlled communities outside of urban centres. These separate SLOs are titled, “Distinctive Learning Outcomes” (DLOs). Looking directly at the DLOs lead me to focus on omissions within the text and to uncover the ways in which the document maintains prairie settler narratives and us/them ideologies. As I was coding the SLOs, I noticed patterns in language and the ways in which the document upholds prairie settler narratives, as well as how it privileges Western ways of thinking. Through these patterns, I was able to determine the specific dominant narratives that permeate the text as well as generate its five specific themes, which I will explain more fully in the next chapter.

## Findings and Analysis: Discourses of Settler Colonialism

This chapter will detail my findings and explain the ways in which the *Manitoba K-8 Social Studies Framework of Outcomes* (2003) document endorses, upholds, and legitimizes colonial narratives while simultaneously delegitimizing Indigenous perspectives. To guide my explanation, I have used Fairclough's (2015) three-tiered approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which involves describing, interpreting, and explaining. Therefore, I will begin by *describing* the text through an exploration of the context through a critical reading that explores the political influence of the document's curricular content and structure. This critical reading uncovers the tone of the curricular document as well as puts into context the political environment that existed when the document was written. Next, I will *interpret* the discourses that exist within the text, by expanding further on the five themes developed through my analytical framework (i.e., othering, settler futurity, prairie settler colonialism, the justification of colonization, and the respectful citizen). Finally, I will use my research questions to *explain* the ways in which the document endorses and upholds colonial perspectives. My analysis will begin the first sections of the curriculum, including the *Acknowledgements* and *Introduction* sections (p. iii-2), which communicate the political and contextual influences that shaped the document.

I will begin by addressing the "front and back matter" of the document which includes the *Acknowledgements* and *Introduction* sections (p. iii-2), the *Overview* section (p. 3-7), the *Citizen as a Core Concept in Social Studies* section (p. 9-10), the *General Learning Outcomes* (p. 11-13), as well as the *Glossary* (p. 141-143), and the *Bibliography* (p. 147-149). For these sections, I have provided a critical reading to look closely at the tone, inspiration behind, and vision of the curricular document, and to contextualize the reasons that the grade-levelled specific learning outcomes were written with certain perspectives, stories, and narratives at the

forefront. The critical reading will provide an examination of *who* was included in the document's creation, which then gives context to *why* the document privileges specific narratives, as well as *what* the overall intention of the specific learning outcomes are. The critical reading examines the document's structure and purpose, while weaving in the five specific themes that were included in the analytical framework as a basis for my analysis of the specific learning outcomes. This follows Fairclough's (2015) approach to critical discourse analysis, as he emphasizes the importance of highlighting the structure of the text in question as well as "the relationship between *texts*, *interactions*, and *contexts*" (p. 58). Fairclough continues, "What one 'sees' in a text, what one regards as worth describing, and what one chooses to emphasize in a description, are all dependent on how one interprets a text" (p. 59). With Fairclough's process in mind, I felt it important to provide a critical reading of the document's introductory section as well as its references and definitions to lay the groundwork and to provide context for the thematic analysis of the specific learning outcomes.

### **Acknowledgements and Introduction: Who is (not) included?**

In the first section of the curriculum is the *Acknowledgements* section which is organized into the teams and committees of advisors and curriculum writers. There are 25 Kindergarten to grade twelve representatives on the "Framework Development Team" from school divisions across Manitoba as well as five academic advisors from Manitoba's universities and a "Steering Committee" of 14 additional representatives from Manitoba school divisions. Also listed is a Cultural Advisory Team, comprised of 15 cultural representatives by name from across the province representing various multicultural institutions such as the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural Centre, Manitoba Teachers of German, Manitoba Multicultural Resource Centre, Manitoba Teachers of Ukrainian, B'nai Brith Canada, and Black Educators Association of Manitoba, to

name a few. Although many cultural groups are represented, there appears to be no representation from Indigenous organizations on the “Cultural Advisory Team” (p. v). Also missing is any explicit representation on these teams and committees from leadership from First Nations communities or the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC), an organization which provides leadership in supporting First Nations schools, curriculum, language and cultural practices in educational settings. Included in the “Academic Advisors” (p. iv) section is Robin Brownlie, Professor in the History Department at the University of Manitoba, who has published works which discuss decolonization and broken treaties from a historical perspective. Now identifying as Jarvis Brownlie, he is a settler Canadian who has written extensively on colonialism within Canada, including injustices to Indigenous populations, such as land rights, exploitation, and lack of representation within academia. Although Dr. Brownlie is well-versed in Indigenous history and postcolonial perspectives within Canada, there are no individuals listed who are affiliated with specific Indigenous organizations or groups listed within the *Acknowledgements* section.

Separately from the *Acknowledgements*, the *Introduction* section mentions involvement from “Aboriginal Teachers and Consultants” (p. 1) but does not indicate who specifically was involved by name, nor does it explain the capacity of that involvement included. Mentioned later within the *Introduction* section is a brief explanation:

The Framework was reviewed by the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre and the Manitoba Métis Federation. The Framework was also reviewed by a Cultural Advisory Team, including representatives of ethnocultural communities and groups in Manitoba, and the Social Studies Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from Manitoba educational organizations. (p. 1)

By mentioning Indigenous partnership separately and not within the *Acknowledgements* section indicates the process was not conducted in a collaborative or meaningful way. Therefore, Indigenous perspectives are “re-positioned into the margins of knowledge and curriculum” which speaks to a “distrust of Indigenous knowledge systems [...] and affirms how the false assumption of settler superiority positioned Aboriginal students as inherently inferior” (Battiste, 2013, p. 24-26). The first few pages of the curricular text, therefore, physically positions whose perspectives and included and valued and whose were omitted and delegitimized.

### **Background: Political Context and Influence**

In the 1990s, Manitoba was led by the Progressive Conservative party and the Premier at the time was Gary Filmon. In 1992, the Minister of Education was Rosemary Vodrey, and in 1993, the education portfolio was overtaken by Clayton Manness. Throughout the 1990s, Gary Filmon's government was responsible for a systematic educational review which eventually involved the amalgamation of several school divisions within Manitoba. During the 1990s, Manitoba saw funding cuts to the public sector and policies which came to be known as “Filmon Fridays,” which mandated reductions in work weeks and pay (Greenslade, 2017). In an alternative budget, written by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in 2001, equity issues faced throughout the 1990s by the Filmon government are highlighted:

Over the past decade, a set of interconnected ideas has risen to the point of overwhelming influence. For example, the idea that government debt is too high and we have to pay it off at all costs; that the debt was caused by spending on social programs; that income taxes are simply bad. This set of ideas found a safe home in Manitoba under the Gary Filmon government. (p. 2)



Therefore, when this curriculum was created, neoliberal ideals under the Filmon government of the 1990s were used in the justification which called for educational reform. In the context of current educational reform efforts in Manitoba, similar language and tactics are being used by the conservative Pallister/Stefanson government, for example, through the government's efforts to "improve student outcomes," "develop a stronger sense of accountability," and to develop a "sustainable fiscal framework" (Government of Manitoba, n.d.).

In another analysis, examining the educational reforms within Manitoba in the 1990s, Young and Graham (2000) explain the ways in which the educational review's proposed revolutions lacked substantiated reasons for the changes:

A striking feature of the Manitoba reform documents is the lack of ideological justifications for the substantial changes that they called for. Nevertheless, the central theme of these documents is that the school system generally is not adequately meeting the challenge of graduating students ready to take on the requirements of citizenship in the twenty-first century, in particular, the academic competencies deemed necessary for the province's and for the nation's economic well-being. Without a discussion of which students are underachieving and with no clear statement on the significance of issues such as race, culture, class, and gender to school achievement or to the competing visions of what qualities might in fact be deemed appropriate for successful citizenship, these shortcomings of the public school system were seen as stemming primarily from: a lack of uniformly applied definition of basic education/essential learning; a lack of rigour and relevance within the existing curriculum; and a lack of accountability within the system for student achievement. (p. 145)

This is another example that highlights the motivations for educational reform which are being used by Manitoba's current government with little ideological justifications or direction other than cost-cutting measures to the public sector, creating a crisis in public education.

As Manitoba currently finds itself within another period of calls for educational reform as illustrated through the now retracted *Bill 64: The Education Modernization Act* (2021) and the remaining *Better Education Starts Today* (2021) document, it is impossible to notice the strikingly similar rhetoric that began with the election of the Progressive Conservative government in 2017 under the leadership of Brian Pallister. Similar calls for decreases of spending for public services, cuts to education, and the threat of the return of policies such as "Filmon Fridays" (Greenslade, 2017) as well as an educational review occurred swiftly after the Pallister majority win in 2017. Following the re-election of the Progressive Conservative government, the Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade Twelve Education was formed in January of 2019. The chair of the commission was named as Clayton Manness, former Minister of Education during the Filmon era (Government of Manitoba, n.d.). The commission's mandate stated:

The Commission will carry out an independent review of the K-12 education system to improve outcomes for students, ensure long-term sustainability and enhance public confidence. The Commission will:

- propose a renewed vision for K-12 education.
- make bold recommendations to ignite change within existing systems, structures and programs which inspire excellence in teaching and learning;

- consider the continuum of early learning, post-secondary education and labour market needs as part of an integrated lifelong learning approach.

The review will be informed through extensive and transparent public consultations, supported by research and best practices. The Commission will seek the input of students, parents, educators, school boards, academics, Indigenous organizations, *la francophonie*, municipal councils, professional organizations, the business community and members of the public. (Government of Manitoba, n.d.)

Despite conducting public forums, surveys, and a report that included initiatives to increase student equity within Manitoba (*Report of the Commission on K to 12 Education*, 2020), legislation was introduced entitled *Bill 64: The Education Modernization Act*, which largely ignored many commission recommendations and prompted widespread community backlash. Among the backlash was a statement from one of the appointed commissioners who called the Manitoba government's decisions "a bit of a mystery" (Macintosh, 2021). The pervasive criticism ultimately ended in the bill's demise when it was removed in October of 2021 (Bergen, 2021). Therefore, similarly to the political influence in the 1990s, present day Manitoba's proposed reforms proved unpopular for numerous reasons, including that some felt they were aimed at centralizing and defunding the public sector without focusing on initiatives that would address child poverty or change the systems that fundamentally disadvantage specific populations. As Young and Graham (2000) argue, Clayton Manness' 1994 reforms were not ideologically justified (p. 145). Therefore, echoes of a similar rhetoric emerged in my analysis of the *Background* section of the curriculum to today's calls for curriculum reform. This indicates that Manitoba is headed down a path towards upholding and maintaining the status quo which

benefits and legitimizes specific (white) perspectives while at the same time delegitimizes Indigenous perspectives within the curriculum, as well as infuses neoliberal ideals into the curricular text, and ultimately, into classrooms.

This brief historical recounting illustrates that education policy, including the creation of curriculum, is inherently political. Determining whose motivations, opinions or ideas become a priority in the classroom can also be partisan. Battiste (2005) points out that there are political benefits when educational institutions classify decolonization and Indigenous knowledge as priorities, however, until postcolonial frameworks are introduced into the curriculum, achieving these goals are not possible (Battiste, 2005, p. 224). Therefore, it is important for educators and community members to understand that teaching is an inherently political act, and that learning from the past creates opportunity for mistakes to not be repeated as well as the prospect of a better future.

## **The Overview**

The *Overview* section (p. 3-7) of the social studies curriculum defines social studies as, “the study of people in relation to each other and to the world in which they live” (p. 3). In its *Vision Statement*, the document underlines its intentions to be inclusive of many diverse voices of the past and present including Aboriginal, Francophone, and other diverse cultural perspectives (p. 3). Included in the *Goals of Social Studies* paragraph, these topics are highlighted: 1) *Canada* 2) *The World* 3) *The Environment* 4) *Democracy*, and 5) *General Skills and Competencies*. Each of these themes and their corresponding goals are then discussed briefly in the *Overview* section and outline the document's goals. The overview sets the tone for the document and highlights the specific topics and themes that will be explored within the grade-

levelled specific learning outcomes. I have summarised each topic that is outlined within the overview and provided a short analysis of each below.

### ***1) Canada***

The intentions of this topic are to have students learn about Canadian history and geography; to “appreciate the achievements of previous generations whose efforts contributed to the building of Canada” (p. 3); as well as to understand the Canadian political system, the responsibilities of Canadian citizens, and the importance of Canadian democracy, bilingualism, and community that contribute to the sense of belonging within Canada (p. 3). This topic endorses and justifies the maintenance of Canadian colonial structures by stating that the “building of Canada” (p. 3) was undertaken by European settlers who eventually created the political system that Canada follows today. The use of the verb “building” suggests that before settlers arrived in Canada, structures and systems were non-existent. However, as illustrated by Aimée Craft (2013), “Prior to the arrival of Europeans on Turtle Island, the Anishinabe had longstanding diplomatic relationships among different groups (or tribes) within their nation” (p. 23). Therefore, there were already existent agreements, treaties, and relationships between the Indigenous communities on Turtle Island. These systems that were in place prior to European arrival, are overlooked and not discussed within the curriculum document. Also highlighted is also the importance of bilingualism, namely, English, and French as Canada’s official languages, which reflects the languages of the colonizing nations of Canada and the primacy of these languages in Canadian historic and contemporary culture. The document omits recognizing Indigenous languages or other communications systems that were in use and had been established pre-European contact.

## ***2) The World***

The stated intention of this topic is to enable learners to understand world history and geography and to develop an awareness of global events, as well as an appreciation of the world's peoples and cultures. This topic also suggests students will become aware of human rights issues around the world and develop a "commitment to social justice and quality of life for all the world's peoples" (p. 4). This section asks students to "examine global issues" (p. 4) implying that students should look outside of Canada to understand issues of human rights. Another goal asks students to "respect the world's peoples and cultures through a commitment to human rights, equity, and the dignity of all persons" (p. 4). However, in learning about human rights violations in places on a global scale, the curriculum minimizes the atrocities that have been committed within Canada through the Indian Act, such as the Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop, which continues to impact families today. It also omits ongoing poverty concerns within Manitoba and Canada. By ignoring the injustices and inequities that people within Manitoba and Canada face, the curriculum upholds the perspective that Canada is a country free from human rights injustices, and that these violations only occur in the "global other." This approach that the curriculum takes is what Samantha Cutrara (2020) describes as a "Canada-first knowledge package designed to prevent greater complexity from entering the grand narrative" (p. 143), which, as Cutrara points out, prevents white-washed Canadian historical events from being challenged by diverse perspectives. This also endorses othering by highlighting human rights violations in non-Westernized countries, which, promotes the justification of colonization as these countries are then looked upon as needed to be "saved" by Western organizations and/or governments.

### ***3) The Environment***

This theme outlines the importance of geographic skills and knowledge. This theme also promises that students will assess the impacts of human life on the environment and the importance of stewardship and sustainability. This paragraph is the shortest of the listed objectives for the purpose of social studies and does not include any notion of Indigenous epistemologies that could contribute to meaningful learning about environmental stewardship and respect for the Earth. Within this theme is an opportunity to weave in Indigenous knowledge and perspectives and connect learning to topics in science. It also presents an opportunity to look critically at the ways in which Canada is committed to protecting the environment and how the country is reaching or falling short of its goals. Instead, this topic endorses settler futurity by encouraging the maintenance of systems of power by focusing on geography and mapping from a post-contact perspective, and by looking at the environment as resources to be used rather than preserved. This maintains settler futurity as it upholds the belief that the land was in need of development and ignores Indigenous ways of knowing or prior claim to the land.

### ***4) Democracy***

The purpose of this theme is to look critically at “history, nature and implications of democracy” (p. 4) and promises that students will look at “alternatives to democracy” (p. 4) to understand the ways in which democracy is important to the history of Canada. This category also promises a close look at the ways in which municipal and federal systems of government work. A goal within this theme is for students to “demonstrate a commitment to democratic ideals and principles” (p. 4). It also encourages students to think of ways in which democracy could be improved in Canada. This concept also asks students to “critically understand the role of various institutions in civil society,” (p. 4), suggesting a look at the non-governmental

organizations that have influence over the structures of society within Canada. As Marie Battiste (2013) states, “colonialism as a theory of relationships is embedded in power, voice, and legitimacy” (p 106). Therefore, this concept within the curriculum has the most potential to uncover the governmental and non-governmental structures that hold power in the “imperialistic system of knowledge that is considered the mainstream” (Battiste, 2013, p. 106-107). Instead, however, the specific learning outcomes in the curricular text highlight the ways in which colonial structures of power work within the current Canadian society. Topics such as researching past and present Prime Ministers, the dates that they held power, and their achievements (p. 100-102), are examples of the curriculum's focus within the “democracy” theme. Therefore, this topic upholds the document's definition of a “respectful citizen” by endorsing certain facts, narratives, and stories that all Canadians “should know” rather than challenging students to look critically at these structures or leaders who created systematic inequities that continue to be felt across generations of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada.

### ***5) General Skills and Competencies***

The final section of the overview lists several goals to be gained through social studies learning. This section promises that students will become engaged in inquiry and critical thinking and underlines the importance of working collaboratively with others as well as the importance of hearing differing opinions and perspectives. The objective of this section also encourages students to think “historically and geographically” (p. 5) and to develop strong communication skills. Although thinking historically and geographically sounds beneficial, one might ask: *From whose perspective will students be thinking historically? From whose perspectives are we learning about the history of the land?* For example, might Treaty maps be included in the



lessons, or will students simply be learning the history of Confederation from a Eurocentric perspective?

In summation, the goals listed within the document's *Overview* section set the tone for the curricular content. This section gives a rough outline of the overarching "big ideas" that the curriculum will explore. The *Overview* uses a Euro-centric epistemology and lens that sets the stage for the imperialistic specific learning outcomes which are manifested in grade-specific sections. The *Overview* obscures Indigenous knowledge and perspectives and does not include them as topics or themes to be explored.

### **Citizenship as a Core Concept in Social Studies**

The *Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (2003) identifies citizenship as a core concept in social studies and outlines the role of citizenship, the rationale of citizenship education and touches on the importance of active democratic citizenship in Canada (p. 9). The document endorses specific knowledge that all Canadian citizens "should know," and it is taught through a white lens, offering little opportunity to question the ways in which history is presented. The document states that "citizenship education is fundamental to living in a democratic society" (p. 9) and touches on the important qualities Canadian citizens must possess, such as "knowledge of Canadian history and geography," "involvement in public affairs," and a "commitment to freedom, equality and social justice" (p. 9). This section of the document also addresses Canada's human rights violations, stating: "Throughout much of history, citizenship has been exclusionary, class-based, racist and sexist. In Canada, for instance, First Nations parents were forced to send their children to residential schools in the *interests of citizenship*." (p. 9, italics added). This sentence is the only

occurrence where residential schools are mentioned within the entire 150-page document. Instead of the atrocity being addressed within the grade-levelled content pages, it is merely an annotation within the document's "Overview" section (p. 8). Furthermore, it is justified within the document as an "interest of citizenship." This type of minimization is discussed by Battiste (2013) who emphasizes the impact of glossing over atrocities within Canada:

I ask you to imagine for a moment the experience of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Imagine that for hundreds of years your peoples' most formative achievements and traumas, their daily suffering and pain, the abuse they live through, the terror they live with, are ignored and silenced. Their compelling voices and stories, largely cast in in romance novels or on television in stereotypes for the public, are occasionally brought forward, used to sanction some programmatic innovation, or to support some theory of opposition or resistance and then re-positioned in the margins of knowledge and curriculum. (p. 23)

The fact that Residential Schools are mentioned once throughout the entire document and justified in terms of the "interests of citizenship" speaks to the foundation of colonial perspectives that permeate the document. By justifying residential schools as an "act of citizenship" the document highlights the ways in which Canada's colonial history is one of denial and contradiction. By choosing to focus on Canada's commitment to multiculturalism, but denying motivations behind residential schools, as well as omitting this topic in the grade-levelled specific learning outcomes, the document does not challenge the narrative and myth that Canada is a diverse, inclusive, caring, and accepting nation. However, the document instead pushes the narrative that:

[Canada] is a bilingual and multicultural country committed to pluralism, human rights, and democracy. Canada is regarded as one of the most prosperous, peaceful and democratic countries in the world, although it still has its share of economic and social injustices and inequities (p. 8).

Prioritizing Canadian atrocities as a narrative within the curriculum would also challenge the myth that structural racism does not exist in Canada. Therefore, through the reduction and justification of explaining residential schools in one sentence, it becomes clear that the curriculum's authors wanted to maintain the narrative that glorifies Canada as a multicultural, and racism-free nation. Instead of confronting the history of racism within Canada head-on, the document refuses to engage in these topics in meaningful ways. As a result:

Many Canadians still see Indigenous peoples as the shadowy Others on the edges of terra nullius, with federal governments modelling discomfort by failing to embrace colonial history in all its messy complexity.” (Cutrara, 2020, p. 48)

Therefore, the social studies curriculum models the discomfort of Canada's history of racism to teachers and students in Manitoba. By doing so, students are unable to learn the truth behind Canada's colonial structures before pursuing reconciliation.

### **General Learning Outcomes**

The introductory pages of the document also contain a subsection that identifies six general learning outcomes (GLOs) that influence the subject matter of the specific learning outcomes (SLOs) within each grade level (p. 11). GLOs are defined as general topics that students should learn whereas SLOs are the specific facts and particulars students should

understand after learning about a topic. In the following section within the overview, a short summary is presented for the purpose of defining each GLO. In what follows, I will identify the general learning outcome and then provide my analysis.

1. Identity culture and community: *Students will explore concepts of identity, culture and community in relation to individuals, societies and nations.*

This general learning outcome addresses the values and beliefs that Canada embraces. Within this outcome, Canadian symbols are highlighted as well as multicultural expression and diversity. The specific learning outcomes in this category are geared towards upholding Canada as a beacon of democracy, diversity, and inclusion. It endorses the “respectful citizen” as one who is open to learning about multiculturalism and diversity. It also posits Canada as a land of opportunity for everyone, regardless of culture or ethnicity. However, this perspective ignores the policies and institutions that have systematically disadvantaged Indigenous peoples such as the *Indian Act*. As Battiste (2013) states, “There is danger in Canada’s thinking of itself as a fair and just society” (p. 135). The danger, Battiste explains, is upholding perspective that Canadians, regardless of race or culture, can earn privilege through hard work and perseverance.

2. The Land: Places and People: *Students will explore the dynamic relationships of people with the land, places, and environments.*

This general learning outcome encompasses geography, mapping, and relationships to the land in terms of natural resources and economic gain. The specific learning outcomes in this section are influenced by connections and relationships to the land. The outcomes state that they will consider students’ connection to the land and their responsibility and role in environmental

stewardship. However, this section is absent of any SLOs that include Indigenous epistemologies, and instead, maintains settler futurity by endorsing white systems of power and omitting Indigenous claims to land. Instead of digging into a deep understanding of the impacts of human life on Earth, the SLOs in this category focus on the geography of the land as well as the locations of political borders within Canada and around the world. Maps and borders are focused on as illustrated in the grade three (p. 51 & 55), grade four (p.61 & 62), grade five (p. 74 & 79), grade six (p. 86), grade seven (p. 97, 98, & 100) and grade eight (p. 108). These SLOs teach mapping skills, memorization of capital cities as well as political borders, which are the result of political colonial policies. Analyzing this general learning outcome through a postcolonial lens uncovers the document's purpose of maintaining status quo when considering environmental stewardship, as it does not provide opportunities for students to understand the detrimental impacts of an economy-driven, nor does it focus on the complexity of Canadian history that impacted colonial borders and maps. Cutrara (2020) speaks of the complexity of Canadian history as the "multiplicity of experiences in the past and present, taught with instruction that requires students to think about how the world is open to interpretation, not a superficial with a definitive beginning and end" (p. 84). Therefore, by having students think about the land, its places, and its people in a linear way (i.e., with colonial maps and dates, or a focus on geography without context behind environmental issues such as resource exploitation) provides little opportunity to question, interpret, and understand the complexity of Canadian history.

3. Historical Connections: *Students will explore how people, events and ideas of the past shape the present and influence the future.*

This general learning outcome refers to historical and critical thinking and its role in active democratic citizenship. The SLOs in this section aim to focus on chronological events in Canadian history and require students to “appreciate the past, to understand the present, and to live with regard for the future” (p. 12). The focus is on chronological thinking, dates, and events that shaped systems within Canada. The curriculum presents Canadian history through a white, settler lens and teaches students that good Canadian citizens must memorize specific events that justify colonization and promote a settler narrative. As Cutrara (2020) describes, “historical thinking places far too great an emphasis on the discipline of history and far too little on personal explorations of historical narratives” (p. 57). Cutrara describes a shift in the ways in which historical thinking permeated Canadian social studies curriculums in the 1990s and early 2000s. She states that although language such as “critical thinking” and “inquiry” were used to describe aims of new social studies curricula during this time period, texts such as the *Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* (1999), lacked emphasis on historical thinking or critical inquiry skills within the overall text. Similar to the Manitoba, the Atlantic Canada social studies curriculum asks students to “gather information and draw conclusions about events from the past” (Cutrara, 2020, p. 56). Considering that the Manitoba curricular text defines critical thinking as “[involving] the use of criteria and evidence to make reasoned judgements” (p. 15), students are taught what Cutrara (2020) describes as a “skills-based disciplinary focus” that is “attractive to provincial governments” who look to instill skills in students that will ultimately drive the economy, furthering a neoliberal agenda (p. 58).

Currently, Manitoba is seeing a shift to an economy-driven performance-based approach to funding universities. This approach, which is a widespread practice for schools of all levels in the United States, is based on a model from Tennessee (Froese, 2022). This tactic, should it be

enacted, would require universities to provide data on graduates “ready” to take on the labour market. This would push a skills-based agenda which would undoubtedly trickle into elementary, middle, and senior years curricula, spurring a need to teach “skills” rather than instilling a foundation of critical thinking or reasoning.

4. Global Interdependence: *Students will explore the global interdependence of people, communities, nations, and environments.*

This GLO highlights the ways in which Canada is connected to the wider world, and the influence that Canadian values have abroad. SLOs in this section highlight the global community and the ways in which nations, people, and the economies around the world are fundamentally linked. Specific learning outcomes in this category also highlight the human rights issues of countries around the world and global environmental concerns that are impacting life in other continents.

These SLOs omit any references to human rights issues within Canada and instead points to “Asia, Africa, or Australasia” (p. 20, 96, 97, 103, 107, and 115), as illustrated in SLO 7-KH-030, “Identify historical events that continue to affect a society of Asia, Africa, or Australasia. *Examples: colonization, slavery, wars, disasters...*” (p. 103). Therefore, the document promotes the global other by having students explore issues of colonization, slavery, and human rights atrocities in places other than Canada, whilst promoting stereotypes of those regions that are considered to be “developing” by the Western world, and in need of Western saviours. This GLO others Indigenous perspectives through the omission of human rights violations within Canada.

5. Power and Authority: *Students will explore the processes and structures of power and authority, and their implications for individuals, relationships, communities, and nations.*

This General Learning Outcome encourages students to learn about power dynamics through the examination of political structures as well as systems within community. This GLO is closely tied to the document's definition of citizenship, as the ways in which power is achieved through democracy. The document posits Canadian systems as being fair and equitable and "committed to democracy" (p. 9), but neglect to question the ways in which structures are an advantage to some and pose a disadvantage to others. Manitoba's social studies curriculum defines citizenship skills as "[enabling] students to work in cooperative ways toward achieving common goals, and to collaborate with others for the well-being of their communities" (p. 28) and cites citizenship skills as "consider others' needs when working and playing together;" "interact fairly and respectfully with others;" and, "make decisions that reflect, care, concern, and responsibility for the environment" (p. 28). SLOs within this section include concepts that deal with "political structures and decision making, governance, justice, rules and laws, conflict and conflict resolution" Although this category states an intention to challenge systems of structural and systemic racism, many of the outcomes focus on following rules, obeying authority, and becoming a "responsible citizen," endorsing prairie settler ideology. Examples in the document include describing the importance of the formation of the North West Mounted Police (p. 88) as well as the importance of upholding law and order. (p. 30 & 40). These SLOs also emphasize the importance of working together through cooperation (p. 28). While noble in theory, this approach is discussed by Cutrara (2020) as being "one-dimensional" (p. 5), as it ignores the realities of many students who come to the classroom with diverse perspectives, all impacted by colonialism in different ways. While there is an importance in developing interpersonal skills



within students, the Manitoba curriculum fails to explore citizenship as a complex construct beyond “getting along with others” or following rules. According to the document, a “good citizen” participates in democracy, is agreeable, and follows rules in school and the community without question. These SLOs fail to encourage students to question the systems of power and authority as well as ponder the ways in which democratic systems may be inaccessible to members of society.

6. Economics and Resources: *Students will explore the distribution of resources and wealth in relation to individuals, communities and nations.*

This general learning outcome includes SLOs that teach students about the importance of economy and commerce. Students learn that there are places around the world that do not have a fair distribution of wealth or resources. This upholds the curriculum's narrative that justifies colonization as it compares Canada to other nations and points out deficits such as “access to food, water, shelter, a secure environment, fair and equal treatment...” (p. 55). The SLOs in this category teach students that they are lucky to live within Canada, a wealthy nation that meets the needs of all people. Examples of SLOs from this general outcome category include, “Appreciate the rights afforded by Canadian citizenship;” “Appreciate the importance of immigration in the development of Canada;” “Appreciate the efforts of people living in early Canada to overcome environmental hardships” and, “Appreciate the importance of agriculture in the development of Canada” (p. 89). Within this category of learning outcomes, SLOs that deal with injustices within Canada, such as lack of access to clean drinking water on many First Nations communities, are noticeably absent. By doing so, Indigenous perspectives are omitted and othered.

Instead, the trope of “pulling up one’s bootstraps” and working hard will lead to success and economic prosperity are upheld. This trope ignores the institutional racism that has benefited specific communities and disadvantaged others. Battiste (2013) argues that racism “justified policies, practices, and outcomes that Canadians have come to accept as neutral and even just” (p. 130). By ignoring that the foundations of structures in Canada and its policies are rooted in racism and were designed to benefit white populations, the document upholds the notion that all Canadian citizens have equal access to economic gain and comfortable livelihood so long as they work hard for it, discrediting lived experiences of populations who are faced with many barriers in accessing the “ideal” Canadian lifestyle.

The six categories of the overarching GLOs, dictate the grade-specific SLOs that are designed to teach the overall goals of the curriculum document. By reinforcing Canadian stereotypes, ignoring inequitable systems and structures as well as encouraging status quo, it becomes clear that the GLOs aim to protect Canada’s image as a multicultural and inclusive society. In doing so, they omit Indigenous epistemologies, injustices within Canadian society as well as discourses that could alter the ways in which students learn about life and political and cultural structures within Manitoba and Canada. These discourses, therefore, continue uphold systems of inequity and racism.

### **Analyzing the Glossary and Bibliography**

There are 29 words or phrases that are defined in the glossary within the Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Curriculum document (2003). Some of these definitions are defined by the curriculum writers while others cite government institutions.

Out of the 29 key terms within the glossary, nine (or approximately 31%) are specifically related to Indigenous terminology. The curriculum (2003) defines “indigenous peoples” as “a term used worldwide to identify the original people of all countries, such as Aboriginal peoples in Canada (p. 142). It is widely acknowledged that the term, “Indigenous Peoples” should be capitalized. Citing the University of Manitoba website, “The argument for capitalization is that the terms, although encompassing a broad range of diverse cultures and nations, should still be treated as comparable to other words referring to nations and cultures such as Canadian and European” (University of Manitoba, 2020).

The term, First Nations, is defined as:

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word ‘Indian,’ which many people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term ‘First Nations peoples’ refers to the Indian people in Canada, both Status and non-Status. Many Indian people have also adopted the term ‘First Nation’ to replace the word ‘band’ in the name of their community. (p. 141)

The definition is cited as being from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Problematically, the description both discourages and normalizes the use of the word ‘Indian’ within the same sentence. It states that “many people found [Indian] offensive.” Not only offensive, the use of that term is also widely acknowledged as outdated and was only attributed due to incorrect origin (Joseph, 2016). Furthermore, the definition in the curriculum document’s (2003) glossary defines First Nations as a replacement for ‘Indian’ but does not offer any context to the meaning behind it, and why it cannot be used interchangeably with the term, Indigenous. The definition also references Status and Non-Status but fails to explain the legality and implications behind those

terms. Therefore, the glossary's definition (p. 141) is inadequate in its explanation of First Nations.

The words and phrases that are directly linked to Indigenous terminology cite Indian and Northern Affairs Canada as a resource. The issue that this evokes is that it is a federal department within the colonial parliamentary system of Canada. Therefore, by referencing the federal department, the curriculum relies on a colonial definition of the terms. A more inclusive practice would have been to consult directly with First Nations, Elders, or people within Indigenous communities. Furthermore, these terms could have been integrated more purposefully within the document, including its learning outcomes, so that teachers and students would have a better understanding of specific language and not have to rely on a glossary that uses a colonial lens.

The Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Curriculum Framework's (2003) bibliography (p. 147-149) indicates where the curriculum writers looked to regarding inspiration, pedagogy, and content. "Alberta Learning," is referenced several times, which is the former name of Alberta's curriculum resource portal. Other Canadian references include the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, Association Canadienne d'éducation de langue Française, Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canadian Council for Geographic Information, Manitoba Education and Training, Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment and the Western Canadian Protocol (listed as: Protocole de collaboration concernant l'éducation de base dans l'Ouest canadien). There are two Indigenous references:

- The Grant Council of the Crees (2002), "Who Are the World's Indigenous Peoples?"
- Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment:
  - Dene Kede K-6: Education: A Dene Perspective (1993).

- Elementary Social Studies 1-6 (1993).
- Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective (1996).
- Junior Secondary Social Studies 7-9: Draft for Field Validation (1993).

Additional references highlight international influences such as the California Department of Education: *History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools*, National Geographic Society, New Zealand Ministry of Education, the National Center for History in the Schools, *National Standards for History* (Los Angeles, California), and The National Council for Social Studies, *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* (Washington, DC).

Important to note is the word, “standards,” which appears eight times within the referenced documents, suggesting that the curriculum writers looked to specific models of standardized curricular documents when writing Manitoba’s social studies curriculum. Eve Tuck (2014) discusses the ways in which standardized teaching and testing has led to a “relentless pursuit of accountability” (p 324) within the realm of the education system and how these types of neoliberal ideals have led to “an extension of/the most recent iteration of (settler) colonialism” (p. 325).

Additionally, the curriculum writers chose to gather inspiration from authors, most of whom identify as white and male. A list of authors and their accolades can be found in Appendix B. Although the intent to include scholarly authors is beneficial for curriculum creation, one must question the lack of diversity within the authors chosen. I was unable to find any references to BIPOC scholars within the document’s bibliography which would have diversified content knowledge as well as pedagogy when the document was initially created. This lost opportunity can explain many of the curriculum’s shortcomings, including perspectives from diverse lenses.

### **Analyzing the Specific Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

This section will contain analysis of the Specific Learning Outcomes (SLOs). SLOs are one or two sentences that appear in the “clusters” (i.e., units of study) for each grade. The SLOs provide teachers with a framework and a perspective for shaping their lessons as well as dictate the content and knowledge that the teacher will communicate to their students. The SLOs encompass the bulk of my critical discourse analysis. In analyzing the SLOs, I relied on my analysis journal for observations while reading the document. From there, I coded the curriculum and transferred the codes on a grade specific chart which can be found in Appendix A. I was then able to identify five central themes that are prevalent throughout the curriculum. Using postcolonial theory, I will illustrate the ways in which the Manitoba social studies curriculum delegitimizes Indigenous perspectives and privileges European colonial knowledge systems.

### **Othering**

As described in the analytical framework, “othering” constructs a “we/us” dominant narrative, which consequently perpetuates the construct of “them.” In doing so, dominant and/or mainstream narratives permeate the curriculum and, ultimately, societal values. Othering systematically delegitimizes perspectives that challenge the narrative of the status quo. The function of “othering” also works to uphold the virtuous narrative of multiculturalism at the expense of Indigenous epistemologies and perspectives.

The “we/us” versus “them” dynamic is significant in understanding Canada’s complex relationship with “diversity” as well as “multiculturalism.” In describing Canada as a “prosperous, peaceful and democratic country” (p. 9) with “historical roots of [a] multicultural nature” (p. 81), while at the same time ignoring ongoing acts of violence through colonization, the curriculum (2003) others Indigenous peoples and actively silences Indigenous perspectives.

The curriculum repeatedly emphasizes notions that Canada is a beacon of diversity and asks students to “identify historical reasons for bilingual and multicultural policies in Canada” (p. 91).

The curriculum also uses structure to other Indigenous perspectives and content. Specific learning outcomes are designated exclusively for Indigenous students and teachers (called “Distinctive Learning Outcomes”), and they separate specific knowledge within the text. They are found within the SLOs for each grade levels, usually underneath a similar SLO, written for the “general” population. The language of the “regular” SLO in comparison to the “Distinctive Learning Outcome” is altered. Many examples of othering Indigenous perspectives can be found within the pages of the content-level curriculum, particularly with the use of “Distinctive Learning Outcomes” for Indigenous students and teachers. On page 66, two consecutive learning outcomes are listed as follows:

- 4-KI-006: Give examples of diverse artistic and cultural achievements of Manitobans. *Include Aboriginal and francophone cultural achievements.*
- 4-KI-006A: Give examples of Aboriginal artistic and cultural achievements and organizations in Manitoba.

These two outcomes give teachers the same goals, therefore, I question the purpose of creating separate outcomes. If the goal is to research First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and/or francophone cultural achievements, it should be listed as such, without the separation of Indigenous perspectives.

Therefore, the “Distinctive Learning Outcomes” dissuade non-Indigenous teachers from covering the content in their classrooms. The curriculum states that the “Distinctive Learning Outcomes” should be taught within a locally controlled First Nations school, implying that these distinctive learning outcomes were intended for students living or attending schools controlled

by First Nations. However, many people who identify as First Nations (or Métis or Inuit) do not live in these areas. According to the Government of Canada, out of 164,289 people who are registered as First Nations in Manitoba, 57.1% live on a reserve (Government of Canada, 2021) which means that a large proportion live in a setting that is not controlled by a First Nation, and likely, urban. Therefore, many schools and classrooms within Manitoba have students who identify as First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis. By stating that, "it is advisable that teachers selected to address the distinctive learning outcomes have a background in Aboriginal culture" (p. 19), non-Indigenous teachers in non-First Nations-controlled schools are encouraged to overlook the outcomes. Furthermore, the social studies document (2003) describes Canada "as a culturally diverse, bilingual and democratic society" (p. 84). The social studies document (2003) uses the word "diversity" on 44 different pages and over 70 times, in contrast to the word "Aboriginal" which is used 28 times in its specific learning outcomes (not including the "distinctive learning outcomes"). Battiste (2013) discusses this form of othering, stating:

Difference marks Indigenous peoples as largely historical and local, but not contemporary and global, and their knowledge systems become minimized to local value. Thus, teachers and institutions can easily ignore Indigenous knowledge, peoples, and histories, rationalizing that there are too few Indigenous students in their class to make any reasonable effort for inclusion, and far more immigrant students whose cultures need to be included. (p. 103)

In marking Indigenous learning outcomes as "distinct" (or "different"), the curriculum document others Indigenous perspectives as well as separates them from mandated outcomes and furthermore, dismisses them. Instead, teachers are encouraged to teach curriculum that promotes multiculturalism and diversity, dismissing Indigenous epistemologies, which is a concept



discussed by St. Denis (2012). In her article entitled, "Silencing Aboriginal Curricular Content and Perspectives Through Multiculturalism: "There Are Other Children Here," St. Denis explores the ways in which multiculturalism encourages teachers and schools to dismiss Indigenous stories and perspectives under the guise of diversity and inclusion. She argues that "public schools are defended as neutral multicultural spaces where all participants are equally positioned, irrespective of racism and colonialism" (p. 313). St. Denis also points out that creating a blanket of neutrality dismisses Indigenous rights and sovereignty as well as "defends public schools against the need to respond to Aboriginal education" (p. 312) and that:

The experiences of Aboriginal teachers teach us that just as the Canadian national space is not neutral, so are school spaces not neutral. Dominant cultures regard efforts to address inequality and diversity as a rejection of, and even an intrusion into, broad understandings of self and nation, and so they therefore resist and resent Aboriginal knowledges and history. (p. 315)

Therefore, St. Denis (2012) illustrates a Canadian public school system and curriculum that in embracing "multicultural" values overrides Indigenous perspectives. Cutrara (2020) states, "while multiculturalism is a codified way for us to understand and respect diversity in Canada, it can unwittingly (re)affirm principles that keep ideas about "us" and "them" more stable than intended" (p. 20). The social studies curriculum (2003) positions multiculturalism as the result of the development of "contemporary Canada" (p. 85), brushing over Indigenous perspectives, stating, "students also study developments regarding Aboriginal rights and the evolution of Canada as a bilingual and multicultural nation" (p. 85). This example, found in the grade six section of SLOs, does not mention treaty rights, instead asks students to "identify historical

reasons for bilingual and multicultural policies in Canada” and to “identify changes and developments regarding Aboriginal rights in Canada from 1867 to the present” (p. 91).

One can also look to Donald's (2009) fort analogy to understand the separation between “official” versions of history versus those who are positioned as on the outside, looking in. In discussing Indigenous content and knowledge with reference to curriculum and classrooms, Donald (2009) further explains this approach, stating, “attempts at the so-called inclusion of Indigenous perspectives have usually meant that an anachronistic study of Aboriginal peoples is offered as a possibility in classrooms if there is time and only if people are interested” (p. 5). By classifying these SLOs “intended for First Nations, Inuit, or Métis students and teachers,” (p. 19), the curriculum dissuades the non-Indigenous reader to ignore specific Indigenous-focused content.

The Manitoba social studies curricular text (2003) pushes Indigenous perspectives to “the margins of knowledge and curriculum” (Battiste, 2013, p. 23), structurally and within its content pages. The curriculum uses the virtue of multiculturalism at the expense of Indigenous epistemologies and viewpoints which upholds Eurocentric thinking and narratives. By othering Indigenous perspectives, the curriculum upholds and promotes the dominant “we/us” narrative, delegitimizing those that challenge it. Consequently, students are not provided with opportunity to understand alternative perspectives and Indigenous peoples and communities remain positioned as “the other.” This creates a discourse inside classrooms that is in danger of harming and/or delegitimizing students within it.

### **Settler Futurity**

Settler futurity is the maintenance of a white future by understanding “Native-European relations as a thing of the past” (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 79). Settler futurity

ensures that a white lens is applied to the ways in which society understands events and circumstances and white-washes historical thinking to maintain systems of privilege.

Therefore, the use of a settler lens in the curriculum (2003), ensures that stories are told through a Eurocentric perspective and positions Indigenous perspectives as historical, in the past and no longer existent. Settler futurity erases Indigenous peoples as Canada's "nation builders" while justifying colonization through the curricular text.

Examples of settler futurity can be seen within the grade six section of the curriculum (2003) in particular. The introductory overview of the grade six section describes Canada's "nation building" period from 1867 (the year of Confederation) to 1914 (p. 85). The text states that students will be asked to "explore the expansion of Canada through the addition of new provinces and territories" and "focus on the entry of Manitoba into Confederation, establishment of treaties and reserves, building of railroads, role of the North West Mounted Police, the 1885 Resistance, and the gold rushes." The overview also states:

Students consider the impact of immigration and hardships faced by new settlers. They also study cultural diversity, including the evolving relationships between First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and the Canadian government, and relationships between anglophones and francophones. (p. 85)

Students, therefore, are made to understand that the nation of Canada was built on the backs of settlers, who faced hardships, but who contributed to the multicultural and diverse country we enjoy today. Although the overview mentions treaty relations, only one specific learning outcome in the grade six section addresses it, stating:

Give reasons for the establishment of treaties and reserves and describe their impact on individuals, families, and communities. *Examples: indigenous rights, no right to vote, permission needed to leave a reserve...* (p. 88)

The specific learning outcomes fail to mention the Treaties that were agreed upon within Manitoba, which include Treaties one to five, from 1871 to 1875, which mean they were all signed post-Confederation and within the time period that the grade six section addresses. Therefore, by ignoring Treaty education within the text, the curriculum omits significant Indigenous contributions to the formation of Canada as well as the atrocities that were committed to Indigenous populations through harmful legislation. In doing so, this time period is white-washed within the curriculum and it solidifies settlers as those who “built” Canada as a dominant narrative.

The final “cluster” of the grade six section emphasizes governance, democracy, and the cultural identity of Canada. It is titled, “Canada Today: Democracy, Diversity, and the Influence of the Past.” In this cluster, students explore the different levels of government within Canada, the virtues of the electoral system as well as the ways in which arts and culture impact Canada’s identity. Canadian ideals through a white settler lens exist in the following SLOs on page 93:

- Appreciate the struggles and achievements of past generations in shaping Canada.
- Appreciate the benefits of living in Canada. *Examples: freedoms, education, health, safety...*

Both SLOs omit Indigenous perspectives and do not address the health, education, or clean water crises that are ongoing in Indigenous communities within Manitoba and Canada. Therefore, when students are asked to “appreciate the benefits of living in Canada,” the lens is decidedly

white and promotes settler futurity as the structural norm as it does not challenge the narrative that Canada is a democratic haven, that is good and equitable for all its residents.

To title the time period of 1867 to 1914 as “Building a Nation” implies that a nation or systems did not exist prior to Confederation. However, this time period highlights when many settlers arrived in Canada and infrastructure such as railroads were built. The title dismisses the established structures pre-Confederation and applies a distinct settler lens to the events that occurred post-Confederation. Aimée Craft (2013) explains,

Prior to the arrival of Europeans on Turtle Island, the Anishinabe had longstanding diplomatic relationships among the different groups (or tribes) within their nation, as well as with other Indigenous peoples. These relationships persist to this day and are the foundational indicators of Anishinabe diplomacy; they illustrate Indigenous principles of normative ordering that were applied to the making of the peace treaties. (p. 23)

The grade six section then titles the time period of 1914 to 1945 as “An Emerging Nation” (p. 85) which examines Canada’s role in the World Wars as well as the economic events that occurred including the Winnipeg General Strike and women’s suffrage. Although important events in Manitoba’s history, the curriculum fails to acknowledge the racial undertones of those events, and instead highlight the heroism of Nellie McClung. Cutrara (2020) discusses the perspective of the McClung legacy and the importance of looking at her story through a different lens:

Nellie McClung and the Persons Case could be added to a timeline of the early twentieth century as a way of acknowledging the feminist actions during this period. But simply adding her to the timeline fails to explore the complexities of McClung’s racist beliefs,

which resulted in the forced sterilization of many poor, and mostly Indigenous, women in Alberta. It also fails to imagine the relationships between her fight for Personhood and other contested legislation during this time, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923, which ended the Chinese head tax but barred any further immigration from China. (p. 169)

Therefore, by asking students to “Describe the struggle for and identify individuals involved in women’s suffrage in Manitoba and Canada” (p. 90), the curriculum (2003) “helps support a vision of Canada’s continued progress” (Cutrara, 2020, p. 169), but fails to acknowledge the context behind the creation of specific legislation and the white supremacy that motivated the changes. By failing to acknowledge racism, settler futurity is maintained as Nellie McClung, the white hero, is protected by being seen as a feminist, and Canada champions her and itself as one of the first in a Western democracy to give women the right to vote, ignoring the fact that Indigenous and Asian men and women were not granted the right to vote until after the Second World War.

The curriculum maintains settler futurity by white-washing Canadian history and by protecting specific stories by omitting the racial undertones that motivated certain actions and/or events. In doing so, the curriculum does not provide opportunity or direction for students to understand the history of Canada in a way that is truthful or well-rounded. By maintaining settler futurity, Canada is kept innocent of the harms of colonialism, and because of that, these harms continue today as the truth remains unfronted.

### **Prairie Settler Colonialism**

Prairie settler colonialism speaks to a unique phenomenon that occurs within the prairie provinces of Canada, including Manitoba. While settler colonialism in Canada involves the

displacement of Indigenous peoples with (mostly European) immigrants for the purpose of land cultivation, while prairie settler colonialism also includes the notion of racial capitalism, positioning Indigenous peoples as unable to claim land ownership, due to discriminatory stereotyping and systemic racism. As seen in the Gerald Stanley trial of 2016, prairie settler colonialism normalizes property ownership as the inherent right of the white settler, which, during Stanley's trial, vilified Boushie, even though he was the victim in the tragedy. Prairie settler colonialism also embodies the legacy of over-criminalizing Indigenous peoples. Citing a report by Statistics Canada in 2016-2017, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs state that although Indigenous youth represent eight percent of the total Canadian population, they represent 46% of incarcerations in Canada. This number is even greater within Manitoba. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (2018) explain:

In Manitoba, that number jumps to 81% for Indigenous boys and 82% for Indigenous girls. The numbers for Indigenous adults are similar. Indigenous men represent 15% of Manitoba's population but represent 74% of those incarcerated. Indigenous women are currently the fastest-rising prison population.

Furthermore, prairie settler colonialism encompasses extractivist thinking, allowing for the extraction of natural materials for purpose economic gain, whilst ignoring treaty agreements or environmental concerns.

The curriculum (2003) engages discourses of prairie settler colonialism in a number of ways. The curriculum often refers to concepts related to land ownership and repeatedly emphasizes "respecting own and others' property," "respect public and private property," "recognize the need to care for personal property" and to "use examples to distinguish between public and private property" (p. 30, p. 40, and p. 65). The curriculum also asks students to

“respect neighbourhood and community places and landmarks” (p. 39) and to “treat places and objects of historical significance with respect” (p. 74). The phenomenon of protecting settler land rights and landmarks is a principle of prairie settler colonialism which, ultimately, protects the control of the land to those in power, while displacing Indigenous peoples.

In addition to the emphasis on respect for public and private property within the curriculum, the text asks students to explore the “significance of the British North America Act,” (p. 88) which united provinces into a dominion of Canada as well as asks students to “Describe the role of the North West Mounted Police” (p. 88). Omitted is any mention of the Indian Act, which was signed shortly after Confederation, which aimed to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the Eurocentric Canadian society and is the cause of the generational traumas that we see today, including the legacy of residential schools, as well as a denial of language and cultural practices.

With regards to extractivism, the curricular text asks students to “name natural resources in their local community” (p. 46) but does little to emphasize the need to safeguard or protect them. There are also subtle changes in language between mainstream SLOs and those that are designated for Indigenous students as seen below (p. 56):

- Value the land for what it provides for communities.
- Appreciate the sacredness of living on and with the land.

These SLOs are found next to each other in the curricular text, however, the mainstream outcome emphasizes what the land “provides” to the population while the Indigenous-designated outcome asks students to “appreciate” the land. These subtle changes in language encompass the prairie settler colonial mentality; non-Indigenous peoples own land and prosper from what it provides, while Indigenous peoples appreciate it, but do not own it or prosper from it. According to the curriculum (2003), resources are also seen as integral to building Canada:



- Appreciate the significance of the land and natural resources in the development of Canada. (p. 79)

Resources are also seen as vital to the economy, contributing to a “global quality of life,” stating, “Students examine the role of international agencies and global cooperation, the relationship between wealth, resources, and power, as well as the impact of their personal actions on quality of life for people in other places” (p. 97).

Prairie settler colonialism is distinct theme throughout the curriculum (2003) as the text's narratives are told through a white, colonial lens as the specific learning outcomes embody its key features: land ownership and the rights of non-Indigenous Canadians to it, the celebration of historical events such as the British North America Act and the formation of the North West Mounted Police (disregarding the harms of this legislation or of the Indian Act), as well as the ways in which resources are regarded as essential to the economic needs of Canada with little emphasis on their protection. Therefore, this discourse upholds the societal value that settler land rights must be maintained and protected as well as be profitable. This goes against calls for Indigenous resurgence and movements such “Land Back” or “Idle No More” that call for the return of Indigenous control of land and/or environmental protections to be put in place.

### **Justification of Colonization**

The justification of colonization allows dominant, white, colonial discourses to be maintained. Colonization is seen as necessary for progress to occur and explorers as well as conquests are told through a heroic lens.

Using a white-settler lens, stories of settler struggles, and the necessity of their migration are told, and their stories are a credit to the development of Canada. The grade six section of SLOs ask students to “consider the impact of immigration and hardships faced by new settlers” (p. 88)

as well as to “appreciate the importance of immigration in the development of Canada” (p. 89). Therefore, the curriculum justifies colonization by crediting settlers’ hard work to build the country that Canada is today.

Stories of Indigenous governance and systems are omitted, and *terra nullius* (the land belonging to “no one”) is used in the justification. An example of *terra nullius* can be seen in the grade five section of the curricular text:

- Relate stories of European explorers and traders in their search for new lands or the Northwest Passage. *Examples: Leif Eriksson, Giovanni Caboto, Henry Hudson, Jacques Carter, Martin Frobisher, David Thompson...* (p. 77)

When Indigenous perspectives are mentioned, tragedies, such as smallpox and tuberculosis epidemics, which decimated many Indigenous populations during the fur trade are brushed over, and the factors that influenced the fur trade, justified:

- Give examples of the impact of interactions between First Peoples and European traders and settlers. *Examples: shared technologies, cultural change, spread of disease...* (p. 79).
- Identify global factors that influenced the fur trade in Canada. *Examples: European fashion, wars in Europe...* (p. 79).
- Appreciate the contributions of various groups involved in the fur trade to the historical development of Canada (p. 79).

The curriculum (2003) justifies colonization as an act that was necessary for progress in achieving the democratic, tolerant, multicultural nation that is called Canada. Therefore, by undermining Indigenous knowledge systems, through racism, Canadian colonizers justify their actions as unavoidable in the creation of Canada.

Colonization is also justified in the curriculum by exploring ancient conquests that lead to the evolution of humanities in the areas of art, science, technology, and politics. Through the study of ancient civilizations and the conquests of the Roman and Greek Empires, colonization is seen as necessary to achieve advancements in technology, language, society, arts, culture, and democratic institutions:

- Describe the rise of democracy in ancient Greece (p. 112).
- Compare criteria for citizenship and participation in government in ancient Greece and in contemporary Canada (p. 112).
- Appreciate the enduring qualities of the arts, architecture, science, and ideas of ancient Greece and Rome (p. 112).
- Appreciate the benefits of citizenship within a democracy (p. 112).
- Give examples of achievements in art, architecture, literature, and science in diverse societies from the fifth to fifteenth centuries (p. 113).
- Describe the impact of technological developments from the fifth to fifteenth centuries.  
*Examples: wind power, gunpowder, stirrups, catapults, longbows, armour...*(p. 113).
- Appreciate the enduring qualities of art, architecture, literature, and science of the fifth to fifteenth centuries (p. 114).

In using the examples of the Greek and Roman Empires, and the colonization in Europe and around the world, the curriculum (2003) justifies colonization as a necessary act, as it created advancements in human life including technology, architecture, arts, culture, and democracy.

This opens the door for the same narrative to be used within Canada: colonization and the conquest of Indigenous peoples was necessary to achieve the advanced, democratic society we enjoy today.

By highlighting conquests and specific explorers through a heroic lens, the curriculum justifies colonization as events that were necessary in the formation of Canada. The curriculum draws on other countries as examples from where colonization produced art, language, technology, and democracy. This approach omits opportunity for critical thinking regarding the consequences of colonization, the human cost, and the harms that continue today because of it. Therefore, Canada is preserved as innocent of human rights atrocities, and the notion that Europeans “discovered” Canada is maintained.

### **The Respectful Citizen**

The respectful citizen is one who embodies the Canadian stereotypes of kindness, inclusivity, and humanitarianism. While these concepts are noble in theory, they lack the opportunity for students to understand the structures, systems, and histories of Canada from a critical lens. Rather, this concept glamourizes Canada's reputation. The respectful citizen concept teaches children that they must maintain the status quo, rather than challenge it.

According to the curriculum, the stereotype that Canadians are respectful, kind, and inclusive citizens, admired around the world, is a core value within the Manitoba social studies curriculum (2001). Within the curricular text, respectful citizen participates fully in democracy (p. 3, 4, 93) by making informed and ethical choices (p. 3, 5, 6), welcomes newcomers to Canadian lands with open arms (p. 80, 84, 85, 88, 89), works well with others by negotiating fairly (p. 62, 74, 86, 98, 108, 121, 130, 131), appreciates environmental stewardship (p. 4, 66, 98, 108, 131), promotes community well-being (p. 15, 28, 34, 36, 44, 52, 62, 72, 86, 98, 108), follows rules (p. 13, 27, 30, 35, 40, 65), and respects public and private property (p. 30, 40, 65). These core values ensure students become respectful citizens of the future as they learn about “their responsibilities and rights as members of communities” (p. 40).

The First and Second World Wars are highlighted in the curriculum's grade six section, as part of the cluster entitled, "An Emerging Nation" (p. 85). Canada's involvement in these wars contribute to the ways in which the curriculum defines Canada's development as a leader on the world stage. Paired with specific learning outcomes that ask students to "describe Canada's involvement in the First and Second World Wars and identify its impact on Canadian individuals and communities" (p. 90), the curriculum asks students to also "Value the contributions of various groups to the development of Canada. *Examples: suffragettes, trade unions...*" (p. 90), to "appreciate the struggles of past generations in achieving the rights that people in Canada enjoy today" (p. 90), and to "appreciate the sacrifices that soldiers and other Canadians made during the World Wars" (p. 90). The grade six section then goes on to highlight Canada's contributions as a world leader, asking students to "Give examples of global events and forces that have affected Canadians from 1945 to the present. *Examples: international cooperation, relief efforts, disease, environmental changes, famine, refugee movement...*" (p. 91), to "Give examples of Canada's participation in the United Nations and other international organizations. *Examples: urbanization, transportation, communication, education...*" (p. 91) and to "Give examples of inventions and technologies created in Canada. *Examples: kayaks, snowmobiles, Canadarm, insulin, canola...*" (p. 91).

Omitted within the specific learning outcomes are values that address a commitment to social justice, advocacy, as well as a critical look at the systems that have caused some groups of people to benefit and others to endure generational cycles of poverty and injustice. Samantha Cutrara (2020) explains,

Canadian history education often reaffirms a vision of Canada as a nation developed through European settlement and commercial trade, with growth based on making

progress through the wilderness, gaining independence and freedom through military involvement, and developing a tolerance for multiculturalism. This version of Canada leaves out the violent history of colonialism, the state's perpetration of continuous racial injustice, and the desire (and actions taken) to make, and keep, Canada white. (p. 5)

Cuttrara's explanation of Canadian history education is a blueprint for the way in which Manitoba's social studies curriculum is developed. A European settler lens is applied to its content and narratives, multiculturalism is emphasized and the importance of military involvement to achieve freedom, as well as the normalization of war, and to "promote selective and triumphalist historical narratives in school textbooks in order to create loyal citizens with a shared national identity" (Pennell, 2016, p. 40). The Manitoba social studies curriculum features Remembrance Day as a specific learning outcome in each grade from kindergarten to seventh. Although Remembrance Day is not explicitly featured within the eighth-grade outcomes, it is not without a focus on war as the content shifts to ancient conquests.

Therefore, the curriculum (2003) promotes the heroic narrative of global Canadian contributions, for the purpose of educating future citizens to be considerate, rule-following, welcoming, and proud of its accomplishments. The document highlights wartime achievements and Canada's accomplishments on the world stage but omits its own injustices. The document also promotes multiculturalism and diversity but does not acknowledge the system racism that has marginalized certain communities. In doing so, stereotypical Canadian narratives remain unchallenged, and the document is upheld as a colonial artefact.

### **Summary of Analysis**

My analysis highlights the ways in which the *Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Framework of Outcomes* (2003) legitimizes, maintains, and endorses settler

colonial narratives. There is no evidence that Indigenous communities, knowledge keepers, Elders, or Indigenous organizations (such as the Manitoba First Nations Educational Resource Centre or the Manitoba Métis Federation) were meaningfully included in its creation. The bibliography lists few Indigenous references and shows a lack of diversity amongst the scholarly titles and authors.

Within its content pages and specific learning outcomes, the curriculum framework is a void of Indigenous epistemologies. For example, topics that deal with sustainability or the environment prioritizes Westernized capitalist and neoliberal thinking. The omissions and biases of the ways in which the history of Canada and Manitoba are presented are problematic. Two significant examples stand out: the virtual omission of residential schools and the minimization of Louis Riel's story of resistance and contributions to the formation of Manitoba. Through omission and minimization, the curriculum delegitimizes the important stories and narratives of important topics such as residential schools and the Red River Métis.

Other absences from the document include Treaty knowledge, lessons on the Indian Act and subsequently, its harmful repercussions both historically and contemporarily, as well as the explicit teaching of the history of Canada as a colonial nation. Without these significant pieces of knowledge, Canadian students are taught white settler colonial narratives of Canada, of its societal structure, and how these were/are built upon racial inequity. This obstructs any movement towards reconciliation in the future. Without the knowledge on Treaties or their purposes, students will not understand how to honour or defend them. Without understanding Métis history and the impact or influence of Louis Riel, students receive an incomplete and a settler-colonial biased understanding of Manitoba's formation. Rather, students are taught to

view Manitoba through the lens of settler perspectives, privileging narratives of domination, heroism, and capitalism.

White settler perspectives are consistently centred while Indigenous perspectives are omitted. When Indigenous perspectives or stories are touched upon, or Treaties are mentioned, the curriculum references them as artefacts of the past. Furthermore, Indigenous perspectives are consistently othered, through “distinctive learning outcomes.” When injustices such as lack of clean water or access to food or health care are described, through the context of human rights, they are taught as a foreign or faraway issue instead of in Canada’s backyard.

Roman and Greek conquests are glorified within the curriculum and used to justify colonization as necessary for the development of technology and the growth of the world’s economy. Therefore, in “re-positioning [Indigenous stories and perspectives] in the margins of knowledge and curriculum” (Battiste, 2013, p. 23), *Manitoba’s Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies* curriculum was written to be a “Eurocentric framework that privileged other peoples’ stories” as well as acts as a project of “forced assimilation” (Battiste, 2013, p. 17-23). In moving forward towards reconciliation, curriculum writers must do better to promote full truths and historical narratives through a postcolonial and decolonizing lens.

Canadian students must be prepared to confront the painful legacy of Canada’s racist societal structures that continue to impact people within our communities today. The current curriculum does not do an adequate job at this. However, there is hope for the future as there is an initiative amongst policy makers and stakeholders to revamp the curricular documents. With the Truth and Reconciliation’s (2015) recommendations publicly available and many other resources easily accessible, as well as grassroots and political will towards reconciliation, I am optimistic that curriculum writers will be held accountable when reforming curricular texts.



## Discussion: Rethinking Curricular Discourses

Following Fairclough's (2015) three-tiered framework, I will now explain the ways in which the curricular document endorses and upholds colonial perspectives. In this section, I will revisit my thesis questions and contextualize the implications of *Manitoba's Kindergarten to Grade Eight Social Studies Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (2003) as it currently reads. I will also provide considerations and suggestions that support the ways we must rethink curricula that promotes equity, justice, and is committed to reconciliation. I believe that a commitment to reconciliation must begin at a grassroots level, in schools and classrooms, and that all children, from kindergarten to senior years should be critically engaged in learning about topics that impact the structures of our communities. Yet, what this analysis demonstrates is that we still have a long way to go to reach this goal. The curriculum, as it stands, reinforces white settler narratives and colonial discourses. Instead of challenging the status quo and encouraging students to think about Canadian history and systems through a critical lens, it maintains it. Consequently, students' views are shaped through a lens that reinforces ideas of prairie settler colonialism, the justification of colonization, othering, settler futurity, and the "goodness" of Canadian citizens and Canada on the world stage.

Marie Battiste (2013) discusses the integration of Indigenous knowledge into curriculum as integral to reconciliation, as well as a Treaty right that must be fulfilled. She states,

It is clear, however, that the exclusive use of Eurocentric knowledge in education has failed First Nations children. Indigenous knowledge is now seen as an educational remedy that will empower Aboriginal students if applications of their Indigenous knowledge, heritage, and languages are integrated into the Canadian educational system. (p. 87)

Neglecting to meaningfully integrate Indigenous epistemologies into curricula will continue to fail First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children and will further contribute to the erasure of Indigenous culture, language, and knowledge in Canadian society, structures, and narratives. Canada has a moral obligation to ensure that this does not continue to occur. Stated in the findings of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015) are Calls to Action directly related to the creation of appropriate curricula as well as additional initiatives for education that include a commitment to improving resources and better involvement of Indigenous families and communities within the educational system (TRC, Calls to Action, 2015). Unfortunately, across Canada, these initiatives have yet to be implemented in meaningful ways, including in educational policies, and within curriculum.

Instead, curricular reforms have instead focused on neoliberal ideals that promote economic objectives rather than address Canadian injustices or initiatives that would endorse critical thinking or commitments to healing and understanding. An example can be found in British Columbia, who in 2010 committed to reforming curriculum to specifically respond to the TRC's Calls to Action (2015), but instead fell short in reaching their goals in meaningful and authentic ways (Miles, 2021). In his study of British Columbia's social studies curricular reforms, James Miles (2021) discusses the problematic approaches that the curriculum takes in addressing "historical wrongs" and "Indigenous histories and perspectives," concluding that the curriculum "reinforces the notion that Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada occupy separate realities" (p. 48). Therefore, although political will to adopt the TRC's Calls to Action (2015) seemed to exist, Miles' (2021) assessment of the British Columbia curricular reforms was that its initiatives were largely symbolic.

Miles' (2021) findings of the British Columbia curriculum largely echo the structures of Manitoba's current studies curriculum. The notion that "Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples occupy separate realities" (Miles, 2021, p. 48) is also present within the pages and structure of Manitoba's document beginning with the separation of specific learning outcomes. Entitled "distinctive learning outcomes," these outcomes literally and figuratively separate content for students and teachers who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. The Manitoba kindergarten to grade eight social studies curriculum (2003) also omits specific information on past and present Canadian historical injustices, such as residential schools. Additionally, the curriculum (2003) fails to meaningfully teach the formation of Manitoba as a province as it neglects the role of Louis Riel and disregards Indigenous epistemologies, treaty education or any significant Indigenous language knowledge. Rather, the Manitoba social studies curriculum (2003), highlights and upholds Eurocentric perspectives and white voices, as evidenced in its content-based sections (p. 25-116) as well as its Bibliography (p. 147-149). This is evidence of the legacy of whiteness in places of power that works to maintain colonialism in our society to the present day. This legacy of whiteness and imperialism was built upon broken Treaties and injustices in the name of colonization and its subsequent imbalance of power, and marginalization and erasure of Indigenous communities through acts of genocide and denials of language and culture.

### **Reflecting on the Research Questions**

My project critically examined the discourses within the social studies curriculum and subsequently what gets taught within classrooms. I wanted to highlight whose stories, perspectives, and voices are prioritized and upheld and to what end. I wanted to find out the ways in which the curriculum encourages disciplinary thinking that maintains structures of white

settler colonialism while at the same time, delegitimizes Indigenous perspectives through omission. I also wanted to understand the ways in which the curriculum endorsed Eurocentric perspectives and narratives. To investigate these questions, I used a postcolonial lens and conducted four readings of the text to guide my critical discourse analysis. These readings allowed me to closely examine the content, look at the ways in which pronouns, grammar, and language are used and allowed me to carefully take note of the text's omissions. I also used Fairclough's three-tiered approach (2001) to critical discourse analysis which included: 1) description of power relations, exploring government legislation and mandated policies that helped shape the context of my analysis; 2) an interpretation stage which focused on a narrow analysis of the document's (2003) content and, 3) an explanation of my findings using my research questions as a guide.

As I reflect on this work, as a teacher who identifies as a white, female settler, I believe that it is important for all teachers to understand the inherent biases they carry with them into the classroom and the ways in which these biases translate into what we teach; whose stories get told, whose get ignored, and who decides. I acknowledge that in doing this work, and in teaching in the Canadian school system, it is impossible to remain apolitical. Writing and determining curriculum is a political act - as is teaching and determining which knowledge gets privileged – and which knowledge is ignored.

In doing this work, I have determined that the *Manitoba kindergarten to grade eight social studies curriculum framework* (2003) upholds, legitimizes, and privileges Western ways of thinking, amplifies Eurocentric and white voices, while at the same time “others” and delegitimizes Indigenous perspectives. By excluding the Indigenous perspectives and maintaining unproblematic narratives of colonization, Eurocentric perspectives are amplified.

When Indigenous narratives are included, they are separate from mainstream specific learning outcomes or glossed over, tokenized, and/or minimized.

Discourses that reinforce othering, settler futurity, prairie settler colonialism, the stereotype of the respectful citizen as well as the promotion and celebration of colonization can be seen in recent local newsworthy events. On July first, 2021, Winnipeg saw a protest in honour of the hundreds of children being uncovered in unmarked graves at the sites of residential schools. The protest, which included a walk down Portage Avenue, ended at the Manitoba Legislature. While there, protesters toppled a Queen Victoria statue, as it was seen as an ongoing reminder of colonial violence (CBC News, 2021). The response in Winnipeg over the toppling of the statue was divisive, with some residents expressing outrage over the statue's demise, citing vandalism and the disrespect of property as the source of their anger. Some called it a "major setback in reconciliation." Manitoba premiere, Brian Pallister, vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice. However, Dr. Niigaan Sinclair (2021), connected another Winnipeg historical event (which is celebrated in the social studies curriculum), to explain the irony and the racial undertones that contributed to the outrage:

All seem to have forgotten that vandalism is always based in perspective. In fact, Winnipeg's most iconic moment as a city, the overturning of a streetcar during the 1919 General Strike, is commemorated in a sculpture on Main Street. During that act of vandalism, protesters pushed the streetcar off its tracks, shattered its windows, slashed its seats and set it on fire. Two people were killed in clashes with police in what became known as "Bloody Saturday." On Canada Day, no one was hurt when the statues came down. In fact, a whole lot of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across this province felt vindicated. Heard. Seen.

Celebrating the destruction of property in one incident and then condemning it in another is a strong example of the ways in which prairie settler colonialism manifests within Manitoba, as it is steeped in racism and discrimination.

Discourses such as the lack of access to healthcare and education within many Indigenous communities within Canada are omitted from the text. A local example of this injustice is the Shoal Lake water crisis. In 2021, Shoal Lake, a community that straddles the Manitoba and Ontario border, saw their boil water advisory lift for the first time in 24 years. This First Nations community is, ironically, where Winnipeg gets their drinking water from (Keele, 2021). Many First Nations communities in Canada continue to live with boil water advisories today. Education and health care in First Nations communities are also inequitable. In the First Nation community of Pukatawagan, school was unable to open in September 2022 due to limited resources in dealing with the aftermath of a wildfire that damaged the building (Grabish, 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, First Nations people accounted for 25% of hospitalizations (Monkman, 2022). These are not isolated incidents. They are the results of inequitable access to the resources and supports that are made readily available for non-Indigenous communities throughout Manitoba.

The curriculum also omits meaningful integration of Indigenous knowledge systems. Without authentic Indigenous epistemology, the curriculum encourages teachers to rely on events that promote cultural tokenization. Marie Battiste (2013) discusses this “band-aid” approach, stating:

The institutions must move beyond the mere ‘culture’ discourses tools for both analyzing problems and offering solutions, for in these discourses culture gets attached to an othering strategy when institutions do not want to acknowledge the dominant cultural

traditions that draw from cultural attitudes, values, and presumptions and how these are applied to notions of culture of Indigenous peoples in the forms of 'difference.' [...]

Difference marks Indigenous peoples as largely historical and local, but not contemporary and global, and their knowledge systems become minimized to local value. Thus teachers, and institutions can easily ignore Indigenous knowledge, peoples, and histories, rationalizing that there are too few or no Indigenous students in their class to make any reasonable effort for inclusion, and far more immigrant students whose cultures need to be included. (p. 103)

By creating a "cultural advisory committee" without including Indigenous voices, by promoting Canada as a beacon of multiculturalism and diversity, whilst ignoring its own wrong-doings and by othering Indigenous perspectives through the separation of content and outcomes, the Manitoba kindergarten to grade eight social studies curriculum framework echoes Battiste's (2013) comments about othering Indigenous perspectives. The curriculum effectively positions Canada as a country of immigration and of settlers who discovered "new lands" rather than a country of colonization who forcefully occupied the land with disregard for the peoples who were there before and the systems that had already been in existence.

## **Recommendations**

Tragedies such as the unwarranted killing of Colten Boushie are a direct result of the ongoing colonial structures that perpetuate racism in Canada. These structures are preserved through the narratives that are told through curricula – not just what stories get told, but also who tells these stories and how, as well as whose stories get omitted. Therefore, in this current context of truth and reconciliation, it is important that we critically consider our curriculums, their purposes, content, structures, and effects (even if unintended).

In September 2021, an advisory panel was announced with the intention to meet on a regular basis and present a new framework in June of 2022 (Hempel, 2021). According to the Government of Manitoba press release (2021), the panel consists of individuals who are “recognized and respected in their sector groups/organizations (e.g., Indigenous people, francophones, newcomers, industry/business).” I question the use of the word “business” as it does not clarify if this means personnel who own a local business or if they are business leaders and/or directors within the province. I also question the motivation to include the business sector within the curriculum writing process. My interpretation is that involving the business sector in writing new curriculum is a sign of neoliberalism infiltrating the public school system, which, as Eve Tuck (2014) explains as an “aim to extract the philosophies of the market and apply them to non-market entities” (p. 336). To move beyond the trappings of neoliberalism in hopes of creating a curriculum that would honour Truth and Reconciliation, I have included recommendations for 1) Policy makers and curriculum writers; 2) Teachers, teacher candidates, and educational leaders; and 3) Teacher educators.

### ***Recommendations for policy makers and curriculum writers***

The current K-8 social studies curriculum, as it stands, consists of a pedagogy that is “fact-based,” meaning, that it focuses on people, places, and stories, without challenging teachers or students to uncover the nuances, perspectives, and purposes of these narratives. This approach does not invite the educator to “push beyond” the chronology of its text or to critically assess the information provided. Furthermore, subject areas in Manitoba are taught and assessed in isolation, even though the world in which we live is interconnected, and its knowledge systems, intertwined. Therefore, I urge curriculum committee(s) to rethink the ways in which curriculum is written, including its content, structure, and perspectives; to bridge subject areas (such as



social studies and science) in a way that marries the knowledge, rather than separates it.

Therefore, I recommend that the new Manitoba curriculum be written with interdisciplinary ways of thinking, that includes an orientation that centres Indigenous perspectives. For example, implementing a land-based approach, that values environmentalism, sustainability, and eco-justice could decenter white-colonial narratives, prioritize an Indigenous worldview, and would also center Indigenous knowledge as flourishing, rather than as a thing of the past. Rethinking curriculum in this way must also meaningfully involve Indigenous leaders, Elders, scholars, students, and educators. Curriculum writers should ground the curriculum in the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and be committed to unlearning and relearning the ways in which colonial narratives have shaped Canadian discourse and have ultimately perpetuated structures that are permeated by racism and marginalization.

The prairie provinces are rich with knowledge keepers, scholars, and educators who would bring to the table the perspectives that are needed to stimulate significant changes. I would recommend involving Mi'kmaq scholar, Dr. Marie Battiste, currently based in Saskatchewan, who has written extensively on the steps that need to be taken to bring knowledge systems together in an authentic way for the benefit of all Canadian students, or Papaschase Cree scholar, Dr. Dwayne Donald, based in Alberta, whose comprehensive work discusses the consequences of othering Indigenous communities and is an expert in curriculum and pedagogy. I would also recommend involving prominent local voices such as Anishinaabe scholar, Dr. Niigaanwewidam (Niigaan) Sinclair, who is a professor at the University of Manitoba and consistently writes in the Winnipeg Free Press about the tangible and concrete steps we can all take towards reconciliation; Dr. Frank Deer, a Kanienkeha'ka scholar at the University of Manitoba who promotes the affirmation of Indigenous learners in primary and secondary levels; and Dr. Lucy Fowler, a

Métis scholar and expert in Métis identity and Indigenous education. However, we cannot rely on Indigenous scholars or knowledge keepers alone to do the challenging work that must occur. Non-Indigenous community members must also do the work of learning about settler colonialism if truth and reconciliation is to be realized.

Battiste (2013) outlines the various ways that curricular content resists and dismisses the integration of Indigenous epistemologies. She argues:

Eurocentric knowledge operates as if it is a depoliticized process of intellectual refinement, whereas Indigenous knowledge is treated as if it is a by-product of domestic politics among Aboriginal peoples, such as the history of treaties, constitutional issues, politics and policies of Indian Affairs, and continuing struggles Aboriginal people have with white settlers [...] In 'mainstream' or conventional schooling, teachers use approved cultural content and books, including resources and speakers from communities, but often do so without having to consider the power dynamics involved or their lack of agency in repeating the serious past omissions. (p. 105-106)

Therefore, it is crucial that the new Manitoba curriculum moves beyond recounting only Indigenous stories and narratives in relation to colonialism, rather, it must emphasize the ways in which Indigenous ways of knowing and cultural practices are the fabric of Manitoba as "We Are All Treaty People."

***Recommendations for teachers, teacher candidates, and educational leaders***

Teachers and schools have the unique opportunity to shape the ways in which knowledge is presented, interpreted, understood, and deciphered. Therefore, this research displays the immense responsibility teachers have, to cultivate specific ways of knowing and values within their students. Teachers and educational leaders must be willing to engage critically with

curriculum documents, and speak out against neoliberal impositions to curriculum, policy, and assessment practices. In recent history, Manitoba's teachers and educational leadership came together to oppose Bill 64: The Education Modernization Act (Government of Manitoba, 2021), which aimed to centralize, and ultimately defund, Manitoba's public education system.

Manitoba's teachers and educational leaders began to advocate against this bill through educational campaigns. This resulted in the public becoming aware of the consequences of the bill, which proved to be highly unpopular, and the bill was eventually scrapped. This recent example of community-based advocacy, led by teachers, demonstrates the importance of speaking up and out against reforms that will further marginalize specific communities and students.

To further truth in pursual of reconciliation, teachers and educational leaders must be willing to "push beyond" the facts and narratives in the current curriculum. For this to occur, engagement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015) in meaningful ways is necessary, as is committing to professional development and investing in time to discuss our individual and collective responsibilities to the Calls to Action. It is also important to establish relationships with Indigenous communities and community members and to ensure staff are hired who identify as Indigenous. To guarantee this process, partnerships such as the Community-Based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (CATEP) must be invested in. Schools must also promote and normalize cultural practices such as smudging. Initiatives such as Pow Wow dance instruction should hold the same weight as a music or physical education class and take place during school hours. Schools should also ensure that students are hearing Indigenous languages on a daily basis, as language is a key feature in the preservation of culture.

Having an Elder come to speak once in classrooms is simply not enough. Completing and moving on from unit or lesson that discusses treaties, or the Seven Sacred Teachings is simply not enough. Having an Indigenous artist visit a school on one day of the year is simply not enough. The changes and integration of specific knowledge must be systematic, and it must change the ways in which educators teach and interpret curriculum texts. These changes must also be grounded in relationships and relationship building. Furthermore, all families, students, and teachers must engage in learning about Canada's historic and contemporary colonial and racist policies, legislation, and practices. Noticeably, this is absent from Manitoba's current curricular documents.

Unfortunately, we, as teachers may not be able to rely solely on the reformation of curriculum to change the ways in which Canadian history is told, or to amplify voices that have been historically dismissed. Therefore, it is important for all educators to take the time to read the Calls to Action (2015), to learn about the injustices committed within Canada, and to critically approach all government-mandated educational documents, curriculum included. School leaders must commit to integrating Indigenous perspectives in meaningful ways into their school planning, as well as professional development, and encourage staff to think critically about their approaches to pedagogy and assessment.

In her book, *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty: An Anishinaabe Understanding of Treaty One*, Aimée Craft (2013) discusses the original purpose of treaties which was to promote understanding amongst different peoples as well as "to create relationships, not to cede land" (p. 114). Craft (2013) points to an Anishinaabe prophecy that predicts environmental disaster, due to the neglect of principles that treaties were signed to protect. Although stark, the prophecy is also

hopeful that change will come. I, like Craft, hope these changes can be made. I intend to advocate for them within the schools that I work in and the community that I live in.

### ***Recommendations for teacher educators***

Teacher educators play an important role in forming the pedagogy and practices of the teachers of tomorrow. Therefore, teacher educators must also instill the importance of looking at curricula with a critical lens in their students. It is my recommendation that teacher educators assign their students with critical reading projects that deconstruct and/or analyse current curricular documents. These projects should encourage future teachers to seek out problematic narratives that hinder truth and reconciliation. Teacher educators should also underscore the purposes of education, understanding that the ways in which content is taught, influences students' understandings of the world. It must be emphasized that, "the point of education is not that students learn, but that they learn *something*, that they learn it for particular *reasons*, and that they learn it *from someone*" (Biesta, 2014, p. 234). Biesta (2014) states that education functions through "domains of purpose," arguing,

we have been able to indicate what it is we seek to achieve through our educational activities and endeavours, that we can make decisions about appropriate content students should engage with. (p. 234)

Teacher candidates must be well-informed about the ways in which the curriculum impacts the broader picture of society, to engage critically with it, and always with the greater purpose of education in mind.

## Conclusion

In working on this project, I have become more reflective on the ways in which I teach and more critical of the content that I have prioritized within my classroom and in my role as a learning support teacher. I have also realized the importance of social studies topics within the classroom environment, and the implications of the narratives that are taught as well as the language that is used. However, social studies are often overshadowed by the primacy of mathematics and literacy, which are often at the forefront when reporting on how students across Canada are performing academically. Yet, critical thinking skills, analysis, and an ability to comprehend topics that require deeper-level thinking and inquiry skills are ignored and undervalued in a day and age that operates on instant information and attention-grabbing tweets or headlines. By merely underscoring student performance in mathematics and literacy skills, as isolated subjects, society ignores the essential topics that well-rounded, independent thinkers need to thrive in a world that rapidly presents new challenges towards the preservation of democracy and the perseverance of social justice. Therefore, we witness a world who refuses to reverse course on catastrophic environmental ruin, who watches as poverty and gross inequities persist in Canada and around the world, and who turns a blind eye to the ongoing aggressive acts of war, hate speech and prejudice.

At the local level, it is important to understand the discourses that have led to attitudes and perspectives within our present situation. It is important to understand the ways in which power dynamics have wielded certain communities to thrive while others have struggled. It is important to understand that the gentrification of our lands and communities have bestowed wealth on some and poverty upon others. It is also important to understand that present-day Manitoba was formed upon racist policies and acts of genocide which include the atrocity of

residential schools. Colonialism is not static, or an event of the past. It is ongoing today. Therefore, we continue to see the scales tipped in favour of non-Indigenous communities. To illustrate this inequity, I point to the statistics of children in the system of foster care. Indigenous children make up 90% of those within the care of Manitoba Child and Family Services (CBC News, 2020). Witnessing this disparity first-hand as an educator has led me towards uncovering the discourses that exist within Manitoba's curriculum as I believe that education and the structures of the educational system have a direct correlation in these types of statistics. In speaking to these concepts on a local Winnipeg level, Toews (2018), explains, "Dispossession, captivity, and genocide are still with us; the task is to figure out how they've survived in new times, what exactly they have become, and what they are doing now" (p. 19). Therefore, by continuing to ignore the underlying racial discourses that exist within the Manitoba curriculum, the further we perpetuate colonialism within modern-day society.

I approach this work humbly, conducting my research from the perspective of a descendent of Ukrainian settlers. My family empathizes with the desire to keep heritage, language, and culture alive in their homeland. Recent events only reaffirm this struggle, as Russia has once again sought to invade Ukraine and eliminate the Ukrainian language, culture, and its people. Coming from this perspective, I am motivated to do everything I can to avoid playing a role in the ongoing marginalization of Indigenous communities that exists within Canadian society today. Instead, I want to work to be a part of the movement towards reconciliation and for that to occur, I realize that this must begin with truth and with education. As an educator, I have a unique opportunity to positively influence the children who enter the school I work at and to ensure they understand the full picture of Canadian history. I acknowledge that I have a great opportunity to build relationships that are built on trust with

Indigenous and non-Indigenous families alike. I also have the opportunity to come to work each day to directly impact my community in a constructive way. I acknowledge, however, that I still have much learning to do. Nevertheless, this research project has allowed me to critically examine the impact of discourse within a government-mandated document. The skills that I have acquired from conducting this analysis will allow me to look critically at future documents that I am required to read and implement. This is a crucial step towards understanding my role as an educator on a more profound level as I strive towards the betterment of my own practice.



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[574052602.html?fbclid=IwAR3YkisGwwLr38puR91XVUsQvN\\_ZJbr6jjUtS4ovN9WENIKWMifIO2yk58E](https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/provinces-school-board-decision-bit-of-a-mystery-commissioner-says-574052602.html?fbclid=IwAR3YkisGwwLr38puR91XVUsQvN_ZJbr6jjUtS4ovN9WENIKWMifIO2yk58E)

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### SLO Codes by grade

General code	/ Distinctive Indigenous content /	Distinctive Francophone content /	Indigenous content for everyone/Franc. content for everyone
Kindergarten	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Stories of the past</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Landmarks</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Canada's Language</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Consequence</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• War</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Indigenous identity</li><li>• Francophone identity</li><li>• Identity and culture</li><li>• Multiculturalism</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Canada's language</li><li>• Indigenous languages</li><li>• Patriotism</li><li>• Canada's language</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Human Needs</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Indigenous landmarks</li><li>• Francophone landmarks</li><li>• Non-Indigenous relationship with environment</li><li>• Indigenous relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geography</li><li>• Study an Aboriginal community</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Community</li><li>• War</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Multiculturalism</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Indigenous community</li><li>• Multiculturalism</li><li>• Indigenous culture</li><li>• Francophone culture</li><li>• Natural resources</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Indigenous community</li><li>• Francophone community</li><li>• Leadership</li><li>• Conflict</li><li>• Community</li><li>• Indigenous community</li><li>• Power</li><li>• Conflict</li><li>• Community</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geography</li><li>• Multicultural</li><li>• Global</li><li>• community exploration</li><li>• Global</li><li>• Indigenous community exploration</li><li>• Patriotism</li><li>• War</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Research</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Citizenship</li><li>• Patriotism</li><li>• Canada's Languages</li><li>• War</li><li>• Multicultural</li><li>• Indigenous community</li><li>• Francophone community</li><li>• Power</li><li>• Conflict</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Rules</li><li>• Global concerns</li><li>• Equity</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Global concerns</li><li>• Global concerns</li><li>• Human needs</li></ul>
		</	



General code / Distinctive Indigenous content / Distinctive Francophone content / Indigenous content for everyone / Franc. content for everyone

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Indigenous knowledge</li> <li>• Landmarks</li> <li>• Global connections</li> <li>• Global concerns</li> <li>• Multicultural</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Indigenous spirituality</li> <li>• Global connections</li> <li>• Multicultural</li> <li>• Indigenous contributions</li> <li>• Indigenous identity</li> <li>• Francophone contributions</li> <li>• Francophone identity</li> <li>• Settlers</li> <li>• Settler interactions with Indigenous peoples</li> <li>• Manitoba history</li> <li>• Settler interactions with Indigenous peoples</li> <li>• Manitoba history</li> <li>• Valuing history</li> <li>• Valuing history</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous culture before settlers</li> <li>• Indigenous culture before settlers</li> <li>• Indigenous culture before settlers</li> <li>• Indigenous leadership</li> <li>• Indigenous culture before settlers</li> <li>• Indigenous culture before settlers</li> <li>• Power</li> <li>• Settler experiences (British and French)</li> <li>• Settler experiences (French)</li> <li>• Settler geography</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Settler experiences (terra nullius)</li> <li>• Settler interactions with Indigenous peoples</li> <li>• War</li> <li>• Settler interactions with Indigenous peoples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research/ communication</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• power</li> <li>• Treaty impact on Indigenous peoples only</li> <li>• Settler struggle</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Immigration: Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Settler struggle</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Settler geography</li> <li>• Formation of Manitoba (Métis included)</li> <li>• Francophone leadership</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Power</li> <li>• Resources, power</li> <li>• Resources, power</li> <li>• Indigenous leadership</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research, bias</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research, bias</li> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research/ communication</li> <li>• Communicate</li> <li>• Communicate</li> <li>• Mapping skills</li> <li>• Mapping skills</li> <li>• Global demographics</li> <li>• French colonization</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Mapping skills</li> <li>• Western worldview</li> <li>• Western worldview</li> <li>• Economy and resources</li> <li>• Compare and contrast Canada with the global "other"</li> <li>• Compare and contrast Canada with the global "other"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research, bias</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research, bias</li> <li>• Prejudice in media</li> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research/ communication</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Worldview</li> <li>• Society vs. civilization</li> <li>• Reasons for societal change</li> <li>• Power in society</li> <li>• Theories of the origin of human life</li> <li>• Hunter-gatherer vs. agrarian</li> </ul>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous contributions</li> <li>• Indigenous culture</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• Geographical colonialism</li> <li>• Indigenous culture</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Northern lifestyle</li> <li>• Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• War</li> <li>• Colonization</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Justification of colonization</li> <li>• Justification of colonization</li> <li>• Power</li> <li>• Compare Indigenous and European ways of life</li> <li>• Indigenous contributions of colonial Canada</li> <li>• Colonial contributions</li> <li>• Settler and Indigenous experiences</li> <li>• Colonization of resources</li> <li>• Fur trade experiences</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Geography and fur trade experiences</li> <li>• Fur trade impact</li> <li>• Fur trade impact</li> <li>• Experience of European fur traders</li> <li>• Colonial landmarks</li> <li>• Landmarks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration of colonization</li> <li>• Resources, power</li> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• Justification of colonization</li> <li>• Settler struggle</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• "Settler moves to innocence"</li> <li>• Resources, power</li> <li>• War</li> <li>• Positioning of Indigenous peoples in relation to colonization</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Celebration of colonization</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Canada's war effort</li> <li>• Canada's war effort</li> <li>• Canada's war effort</li> <li>• Canada's war effort</li> <li>• Consolidation of power</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Settler contributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast Canada with the global "other"</li> <li>• Canadian responsibility</li> <li>• Canadian war effort/ saviour</li> <li>• Global "other" lifestyle</li> <li>• Recognize racism</li> <li>• Identity</li> <li>• Global events</li> <li>• Settler experiences</li> <li>• Global connections</li> <li>• Global organizations</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• Canadian saviour</li> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> <li>• Recognize racism</li> <li>• Power and leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunter-gatherer vs. agrarian</li> <li>• Impact of societal development</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Appreciate sustainability</li> <li>• Ancient society people</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society geography</li> <li>• Ancient society people</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society characteristic</li> <li>• Ancient society power</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> <li>• Ancient society contributions</li> </ul>



General code / Distinctive Indigenous content / Distinctive Francophone content / Indigenous content for everyone / Franc. content for everyone

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Settler interactions with Indigenous peoples</li> <li>European and settler impacts</li> <li>Settler challenges</li> <li>Indigenous contributions to colonial Canada</li> <li>Settler economy</li> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>Justification of resource colonization</li> <li>Citizenship</li> <li>Citizenship and racism</li> <li>Citizenship</li> <li>Settler experiences</li> <li>Settler racism</li> <li>Colonial life</li> <li>Formation of Canada</li> <li>Colonization of Métis</li> <li>Settler experiences</li> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>War</li> <li>Formation of Canada</li> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>Men involved in formation of Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebration of colonization</li> <li>Canada's war effort</li> <li>Celebration of colonization</li> <li>Multicultural, power</li> <li>Control of Indigenous peoples</li> <li>Francophone perspectives</li> <li>Colonial geography</li> <li>Celebration of colonization</li> <li>Canada's war effort</li> <li>Global connections</li> <li>Celebrations of democracy</li> <li>Economy</li> <li>Resources, economy</li> <li>Multicultural (SMTI)</li> <li>Valuing Indigenous culture</li> <li>Valuing Francophone culture</li> <li>Multicultural (SMTI)</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Canadian legislation</li> <li>Citizenship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine western worldview</li> <li>Global commodities</li> <li>Global "other" lifestyle</li> <li>Westernization in the global other</li> <li>Global "other" poverty</li> <li>Global "other" geography</li> <li>Global "other" economy and resources</li> <li>Global "other" power and leadership</li> <li>Global "other" economy and resources</li> <li>Impacts of Westernization on Indigenous peoples around world</li> <li>Impacts of westernization</li> <li>Global "other" economy and resources</li> <li>Global knowledge</li> <li>Multicultural global knowledge</li> <li>Global "other" quality of life</li> <li>Decline of Indigenous culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life in Ancient Greece</li> <li>Power in Ancient Greece</li> <li>Comparing Ancient Greece and Canada</li> <li>Comparing Ancient Greece and Rome</li> <li>Greek culture</li> <li>Religious influence</li> <li>Empire expansion</li> <li>Life in Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Contribution of Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Ancient society characteristic</li> <li>Rise/ Decline of Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Power in Ancient Rome</li> <li>Empire expansion</li> <li>War</li> <li>Roman economy</li> </ul>
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>Rules</li> <li>Rules</li> <li>Colonization as identity</li> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>Multicultural</li> <li>Justification of colonization</li> <li>Impact of colonization in present day</li> <li>Global connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrating Canadian identity</li> <li>Francophone influence</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Canadian legislation</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Multicultural identity</li> <li>Indigenous leadership</li> <li>Francophone leadership</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Resources</li> <li>Indigenous identity</li> <li>Global connections</li> <li>Indigenous leadership</li> <li>Power</li> <li>Electoral power</li> <li>Division of power</li> <li>Indigenous leadership</li> <li>Inequity</li> <li>Democratic responsibility</li> <li>Indigenous democratic responsibility</li> <li>Settler struggle</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> <li>Celebrating Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global mapping skills</li> <li>Global westernization</li> <li>Human impact</li> <li>Human impact</li> <li>Economy and resources</li> <li>Human impact</li> <li>Power and resources</li> <li>Power and economy</li> <li>Human impact in urban centres</li> <li>Global "other" human impact in urban centres</li> <li>Global "other" human impact</li> <li>Global "other" human impact</li> <li>Student willingness to take action</li> <li>Student understanding of responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution of Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Contribution of Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Contribution of Ancient Greece &amp; Rome</li> <li>Respect opinions</li> <li>Contribution of Ancient societies</li> <li>Citizenship</li> <li>Islamic contribution in Middle Ages</li> <li>Chinese contribution in Middle Ages</li> <li>Fall of Roman Empire</li> <li>Crusade motivations</li> <li>Medieval Europe</li> <li>Historical events in the Middle Ages</li> <li>Contribution of Middle Ages</li> <li>Contribution of Middle Ages</li> <li>Middle Ages conquests</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources, economy</li> <li>Respecting nature</li> <li>Global economic connections</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Middle Ages conquests</li> <li>Middle Ages conquests</li> <li>Middle Ages influence of religion</li> <li>Middle Ages conquests</li> <li>Life in Middle Ages</li> <li>Middle Ages contribution</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Contribution of Middle Ages</li> <li>Historical importance</li> <li>Origins of law</li> <li>Renaissance contributions</li> <li>Interactions between conquerors and Indigenous peoples</li> <li>European explorer geography</li> <li>Renaissance contributions</li> <li>Religious influence</li> <li>Historical events 15-18<sup>th</sup> century</li> <li>Justification of territorial expansion</li> </ul>
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution of Renaissance</li> <li>Contribution of Industrial Revolution</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Appreciate rule of law</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> <li>Contribution of past societies</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

Authors from the curriculum's Bibliography (p. 147-194):

- Edward de Bono: a Maltese philosopher who coined the term, “Lateral Thinking” (de Bono, n.d.).
- Howard Gardner: American psychologist who defined the “nine multiple intelligences” (Gardner, 2022).
- Michael W. Apple: American educational theorist and professor (National Education Policy Center, n.d.).
- James A. Beane, American professor and school reform coach as well as writer of “Curriculum Integration” (Heinemann, 2022).
- Will Kymlicka: Canadian professor of philosophy who is best known for his work on multiculturalism and animal ethics (Queen's University, n.d.).
- John S. Kendall: American psychology professor, who is an “internationally recognized expert in the development and improvement of standards for education” (Sage Publishing, 2022).
- Robert J. Marzano (referenced in the Bibliography twice): an American educational speaker, trainer and author, specializing in assessment (Marzano Resources, n.d.).
- Ron Brandt: the former editor of the journal, *Educational Leadership* (ASCD, 2022).
- John J. Cogan: American professor, specializing in social studies education (Kent State University, 2021).
- Ray Derricott: Director for the Centre of Continuing Education in Liverpool, UK (Taylor & Francis Group, n.d.).

- Charles Taylor: Canadian philosopher, specializing in theories of identity and “known for his examination of the modern self” (Britannica, n.d.).
- Grant Wiggins: an American former president of educational consulting company, Authentic Education (ASCD, n.d.).
- Jay McTighe: an American educational author and speaker (McTighe & Associates Consulting, n.d.).
- Ian Wright: Professor Emeritus of curriculum studies in the faculty of education at the University of British Columbia (University of British Columbia, 2022).
- Alan Sears: Canadian professor who specializes in educational policy, including reform (Academia, 2022).