

Macalester College

DigitalCommons@Macalester College

American Studies Honors Projects

American Studies Department

Spring 5-15-2022

Ginanaandawi'idizomin: Anishinaabe Intergenerational Healing Models of Resistance

Zoe V. Allen

Macalester College, zallen@macalester.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/amst_honors



Part of the American Studies Commons, Community-Based Research Commons, Indigenous Studies Commons, Native American Studies Commons, Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons, Race and Ethnicity Commons, and the Rural Sociology Commons

Recommended Citation

Allen, Zoe V., "Ginanaandawi'idizomin: Anishinaabe Intergenerational Healing Models of Resistance" (2022). *American Studies Honors Projects*. 17.

https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/amst_honors/17

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by the American Studies Department at DigitalCommons@Macalester College. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Studies Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Macalester College. For more information, please contact scholarpub@macalester.edu.

Ginanaandawi'idizomin:

Anishinaabe Intergenerational Healing Models of Resistance

Zoe Allen

Spring 2022

American Studies Honors Thesis

Advisors: Duchess Harris and Kirisitina Saliata

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Acknowledgments	4
Introduction Maajise: It Begins	6
Research Design	9
Roadmap	11
Chapter 1 Wenji-inaapined: Reason S/he is Sick	12
White Earth History	12
Opioids and Addiction	17
Creation of Tribal Wellness Courts	23
Indian Health Services	25
Chapter 2 Izhichigewin: A Certain Way of Doing Something; a Method	28
Honoring the IRB	30
Survivance and Ethnographic Refusal	33
Preventing Damage Centered Research	34
Contextualizing “Youth”	36
Anishinaabe Conceptualizations of “Youth”	37
Indigenous Oral Histories in Practice	39
Aanawenjigewin: s/he rejects things; Refusal	42
Inawendiwin: Friendship; Kinship; Relationality	47
Azhe-Anishinaabe-Izhitwaawin: Resurgence	53
Evoking Sovereignty Through Culture	55
Body Sovereignty	57
Revitalizing Anishinaabe society through Family Structures	60
Prescription Opioid Abuse and Anishinaabe Families	62
Indian Child Welfare Act	63
Chapter 3 Ganoonidiwag: They Speak to, Address, Call Each Other	66
Eugene Sommers	66
Brenda Weaver	77
Penny Kagigebi	87

Conclusion Boodawe: She/he Builds a Fire	101
Ginanaandawi'idizomin: Modeling Intergenerational Healing	101
Oshki-Filmmakers	104
Powwow X	105
Giiwitaashkaa: S/he Goes Around in a Circle	106
Appendix	108
Bibliography	109
Oral History Interviews	114

Acknowledgments

This is a love letter to my community, to the people that raised me, and to the lands that took care of me. I make this acknowledgment to admit that I owe everything to you.

I come both from the Anishinaabe of Gaa-waabaabiganikaag (White Earth) and the Sicangu Oyate or Rosebud Nation. Raised partly in the lands of the Mdewakanton in Mni Sota Makoce, my early years were spent in Dakota culture. At the age of nine, I moved to the White Earth Nation where I lived until I was 18. Growing up in both Dakota and Anishinaabe cultures has given me the cultural grounding to be able to approach a project like this from a place of community, culture, and care. While academia often asks Native peoples to assimilate our knowledge into something identifiable and legitimized by western institutions, this project is an act of refusal to do so. While this project centers around my home community of White Earth there are many things that community members shared with me that must be kept away from the colonial gaze of academia.

Rather than try to make the stories shared with me fit into academia I have tried to use the tools of academia to document the voices of my relatives as they are in all their beauty and complexity¹. This work does not hold all the answers to the problems we face, rather it is an act of invoking relationality through exchanging stories of who we are as Anishinaabe peoples. Through sharing the stories of five White Earth community members this work models how intergenerational healing can provide answers for the issues of addiction, grief, loss, and colonialism that Indigenous people continue to face

¹ Relatives is used broadly here suggesting kinship ties to one another over biological relatedness.

across the world. Bringing all the pieces of myself into this work has also taught me so many lessons on how to be a better ancestor and relative.

I want to extend a *chi-miigwech* to all the relatives that were a part of bringing this project together over the last four years. To my family: Rebecca Dallinger, Joseph Allen, and Sadie Allen—you held me up when I didn't believe I could do this work. Your unconditional love and support are what empowered me to embark on a project this ambitious and see it all the way through. To my friends: Erica Meyer, Ayana Smith-Kooiman, Muriel Ambrus, Tonantzin Cabrera, Zaryn Prussia, and William Enin thank you for taking care of me when I couldn't. I wouldn't have been able to finish this if it weren't for the incredible generosity, care, and love you all offered to me throughout this process.

To the scholars and professors who guided me on this journey: Kiri Saliata, Duchess Harris, Amy Sullivan, and Karin Vélez *miigwech* for all the late-night emails, flexibility, grace, and support you gave me. I look up to all that you are and will always remember this as one of the most loving and kind experiences I had at Macalester. To my interviewees: Eugene Sommers, Penny Kagigebi, Dana Trickey, Kim Anderson, and Brenda Weaver this project wouldn't exist if it weren't for your stories. I hope I can make you proud and someday be as good of an ancestor as you all have been to me.

Introduction Maajise: It Begins

The opioid epidemic has been a crisis in Indian country since the early 2000s. The CDC declared the epidemic a public health emergency in 2011 and within the same year the White Earth Nation held its first Harm Reduction Summit to combat increasing overdose rates.² Becoming a national leader in how tribal nations approach the opioid epidemic the White Earth Nation continues to foster radical responses to substance use disorder through culturally grounded treatment and community-based healing models. It would take another six years before the United States Department of Health and Human Services would declare a national public health emergency after the overdose casualty rate exceeded 42,000 deaths in 2016 alone.³ There are complicating factors in data reporting regarding American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) opioid fatalities.

Recently, a 2022 study published offered deeper insight into how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected overdose rates among 10th graders across the United States.⁴ According to the study overdose rates among youth (referred to as “adolescents” in the report) doubled from 2019 to 2020.⁵ In 2019, 492 overdoses were recorded for teens and in 2020 that number spiked to 954—a 94% increase. The highest rates of overdose were found among Native American and Alaskan Native teens. For Native Nations—including

² Sullivan, Amy. *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss and Redemption in the Rehab State*. University of Minnesota Press. (2021). 5, 9.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Friedman, Joseph, et. al. “Trends in Drug Overdose Deaths among Us Adolescents, January 2010 to June 2021.” *Jama* 327, no. 14. (2022).

⁵ Ibid.

the White Earth Nation these results represent a fraction of the pain they continue to endure from losing youth to addiction.

Behind the data are people with lives, and stories of their own. Living within the White Earth Nation for the last fourteen years I have come to know some of these stories. Knowing the weight of the pain my people face often makes it hard to not internalize the narratives that are built from reducing my relatives to statistics. This work has helped me deconstruct those narratives to replace them with compassionate and loving approaches to healing through Anishinaabe traditions. Growing up in the Twin Cities and then in White Earth, I witnessed the changes across my community across two very different scales. This research project emerged from my observations, grief, and reckoning with this epidemic as a young Sicangu Oyate Anishinaabekwe. The opioid epidemic has irrevocably shaped the lives of all Anishinaabe relatives including my family. Guided by my experiences, this research project is specifically centered on youth-work professionals across White Earth (WE). Their efforts to be collective-building resistors, educators, caregivers, and mentors generate opportunities for our youth to have access to multiple forms of intergenerational healing.

Using the oral history narratives of five WE youth workers, leaders, and advocates, this project centers on Anishinaabe approaches to substance use disorder. This work also centers on the opioid epidemic as a public health crisis, WE community members' insights into intergenerational wellness, and healing as resistance. My research is guided by the following questions: What are the cultural frameworks and practices that inform and shape substance abuse interventions? What prevention and harm reduction protocols are offered specifically for Indigenous youth? How are Indigenous peoples

across Turtle Island fostering culturally informed practices that produce forms of intergenerational healing? How have the Anishinaabe of White Earth become leaders in harm reduction and opioid prevention?

As I researched the opioid epidemic, I wanted to learn and engage with broader movements across Turtle Island around activism, harm reduction, and intergenerational healing. Centering culturally grounded approaches and community responses is critical to how we as Anishinaabe heal from colonial wounds collectively. Three major paradigms have influenced how I understand both the opioid epidemic more broadly and Anishinaabe intergenerational models of healing. These three frameworks are refusal, relationality, and resurgence. Through conversations with my interviewees, a larger model of intergenerational healing emerged. I argue that *Ginanaandawi'idizomin* is a definitive cultural framework helping to guide radical care for all our young relatives in White Earth. *Ginanaandawi'idizomin* translates to healing in circles; we heal each other, and it is the core of this work as the Anishinaabe of White Earth have continued to heal one another through forms of resistance. Indigenous

Refusal, relationality, and resurgence –three of the central tenets of this work—are reflections of the resistance of the Ojibwe people of White Earth. Refusal, in this case, refers to rejecting colonial narratives that perpetuate cycles of oppression. Relationality is our interconnectedness to our traditions, Indigenous selves, and all our relatives that surround us. Resurgence is how we sustain our healing work through reviving Anishinaabe ways of being, thinking, and speaking. These frameworks inform my approach as a young Indigenous researcher and scholar. The teachings I have received here will also carry over into my future work as a youth program leader in the Twin

Cities as well as in White Earth—whenever I decide to return. As the original people—the Anishinaabe—of Turtle Island, we must protect and care for the land. I, along with my interviewees, argue that we must have access to our radical healing practices while also having the freedom to generate new traditions that recognize the depth of our pain.

Honoring our ancestral commitments also means honoring all that we are now, including those of us with substance use disorder. To receive this healing, we must return to the land and to ourselves, creating spaces of unconditional love and community in the process. While I have entered this research through the lens of addiction, I now recognize it as a way of coping with inherited and ongoing trauma. Our ability to heal ourselves is urgent. Rooted in my service and commitment to my community in White Earth, MN I conducted interviews with five respected Anishinaabe youth workers doing various forms of harm reduction work within our tribal nation. From these interviews, I worked to develop an intergenerational healing model rooted in Anishinaabe epistemologies and language. Prefacing each section of this work in an Ojibwe word, Anishinaabe philosophy has directed the design, methods, theorizing, and words of each interviewee encompassed in this project.

Research Design

Over the winter of 2022, I received approval from the White Earth Institutional Review Board (IRB) to interview citizens of the White Earth Nation. I then contacted five Anishinaabe professionals and asked if they would be interested in participating in my research project on intergenerational healing. All five people responded and agreed to an interview. I conducted the oral history sessions over three consecutive weeks. Before applying to both the Macalester College IRB and the White Earth IRB I had drafted my

interview questions and outlined my interview methods precisely. Once I started conducting interviews my procedure became more refined as I had all the interviewees sign informed consent forms and made sure to inform them about all the associated risks beforehand. I also asked for written consent to use their names in this research. All of them agreed and we began our interviews. The first three interviews I conducted in person. They occurred at the end of January 2022 when I was still at home in Ogema, Minnesota—within the White Earth Nation. The last two interviews were held over a video conference at the beginning of the 2022 spring semester. The five participants I contacted were selected due to my relationships with them.

All participants were close family friends that I had known for many years. I intentionally collaborated with people I had established relationships with to start the interviews from a foundation of trust that had been built over many years before this project. During the interviews, I asked around fourteen questions.⁶ The interview questions ranged from prompting interviewees about their childhood experiences to having them explain how they situate themselves in our community. Lastly, I asked each of the five WE community members how they saw the future of healing in the White Earth Nation. For each interview, I recorded audio of the conversations solely to transcribe the conversations afterward. After the interviews concluded I sent each participant a follow-up survey. In each survey I requested basic feedback how interviewees felt during the interview process and if they had any advice for me as the interviewer.⁷ I also asked each interviewee to send me a short message on how they

⁶ See Appendix #2 for interview questions.

⁷ See Appendix #1 for post-interview follow-up questions.

would like to be introduced to my research paper. Once all the interviews were concluded I secured the audio files and put them into a subscription AI transcribing service. From there I edited and corrected the automatically generated transcriptions so that they were accurate. The transcripts served as the primary source material for this research. The themes that I wrote about were all distilled from the interviews I conducted. To fulfill the commitments, I outlined in my IRB proposals I have also sent each interviewee a copy of their transcript for their record and have had them look over the drafted segments that reference their stories. I am also giving the White Earth IRB a draft of the essay to approve as well as a final copy to keep in the tribal nation's archive.

Roadmap

In Chapter 1, I offer a broad background on the formation of the White Earth Nation, Indian Health Services, and community services such as the WE Healing to Wellness Court. Within the same chapter, I give a general overview of the opioid epidemic across the nation and in the state of Minnesota. In Chapter 2, I bring together academic scholarship and conversations with two of my five interviewees to define my theoretical frameworks of relationality, refusal, and resurgence. I also provide a clear snapshot of my research design and methods including the selection of interviewees and my interview practice. In Chapter 3, I provide an in-depth engagement with three of my five interviews. I conclude with a contribution of my own, my experience working with White Earth youth in August 2021 running a film and media arts camp and at Macalester College, co-organizing *Powwow X: Expanded Cinema* with Proud Indigenous Peoples for Education (PIPE). These programs focused on Indigenous youth and intergenerational healing from trauma and demonstrated the praxis of this work.

Chapter 1 Wenji-inaapined: Reason S/he is Sick

White Earth History

The beginning of the Anishinaabe migration story, from the eastern coast to northern Minnesota, starts with the Seven Fires Prophecy—long before European contact. The Seven Fires Prophecies were given to the Anishinaabe in seven different periods. The third prophecy foretold a place where the “food grows upon the waters.”⁸ Partly due to ongoing conflict with the Iroquois Nation over fur-trading with the French, the Anishinaabe set out to migrate and search for new homelands. Led by the third prophecy, the Anishinaabe were guided by “the Sacred Megis Shell” to the lands where “food grew above the water” otherwise known as “Manoomin” or Wild Rice.⁹ After 500 years of Anishinaabe migration ended in what is now known as Madeline Island, WI.¹¹ The migration included seven different stopping points, some of which were Niagara Falls; Duluth, MN; and Sault Ste. Marie, MI.¹² Many Anishinaabe still live in the upper northeast region of Midwest America due to the route of the migration. Years later, the Anishinaabe settled upon their new lands and carried on with their lives as they had before. Anishinaabe scholar and Ojibwe language teacher Anton Treuer writes in *Ojibwe*

⁸ Benton-Banai, Edward. *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*. First University of Minnesota Pressed. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. (2010). A51.

⁹ The Sacred Megis Shell rose out of the water when the Anishinaabe began their migration, and it led the way to what is now Minnesota. Megis Shells have great significance to the Anishinaabe and were used in both trade and ceremonies such as Midewiwin. From Benton-Banai, Edward. *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*. (2010). A47.

¹⁰ Ibid. A51.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. A49.

in Minnesota that after many years occupying what were previously Dakota homelands, the Anishinaabe re-established themselves in the French fur-trading industry.¹³ From 1640 to 1820 the Ojibwe were the central tribe within the fur-trading industry as their access to technological advancements from trading with both the French and the British helped them strengthen their military powers.¹⁴ Due to the amount of trade Ojibwe conducted with British and French forces Ojibwemowin “became the lingua franca of the fur trade.”¹⁵ Treuer says that because of Ojibwe influence among colonial powers Ojibwe names are still used when referring to surrounding lands of the Great Lakes.¹⁶

Regardless of their trading relationship with the French and British the Anishinaabe still faced extreme land loss and eventual cultural, spiritual, and physical genocide along with the Dakota. Many Anishinaabe leaders arose that wanted to fight against the US government; Chief Bagone-giizhig or Hole in the Day was one of the most well-known. Chief Bagone-giizhig wished to rally both Anishinaabe and Dakota warriors against the United States and supported the Dakota during the Dakota War.¹⁷ In 1862 the retaliation from the American government after the war resulted in President Abraham Lincoln ordering 38 Dakota men to be hanged in the largest mass hanging to ever be recorded in the United States.¹⁸ From 1863 to 1864—after the mass hanging in 1862—the Dakota people were forced to starve in concentration camps at Fort Snelling, Minnesota,

¹³ Treuer, Anton. *Ojibwe in Minnesota*. The People of Minnesota. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press. (2010). 13.

¹⁴ Treuer, Anton. *Ojibwe in Minnesota*. The People of Minnesota. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press. (2010). 11-13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 14

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Treuer, Anton. *The Assassination of Hole in the Day*. St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books, 2011. 119

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 118.

and were later exiled from their homelands.¹⁹ Within the same period from 1854 to 1867, the Anishinaabe underwent severe land cessations and in 1850 had endured a massacre at Sandy Lake.²⁰

Ravaged by white encroachment on Ojibwe land, the Anishinaabe of Minnesota had fewer and fewer places to go. Resettled on reservation lands throughout Minnesota—with a continued lack of access to food, shelter, and medicine—many Anishinaabe were forced to live in what is now the White Earth Nation. After seventy-three years of treaties between the U.S. government and Native Americans, an 1867 treaty between the Mississippi Band of Anishinaabe and the U.S government, established the White Earth Reservation. Created due to an exorbitant amount of land cession treaties from 1854-1867 White Earth was the reservation that many Ojibwe were pushed to relocate to.²¹ Article 1 of the treaty states, “The Chippewas of the Mississippi hereby cede to the United States all their lands in the State of Minnesota, secured to them by the second article of their treaty of March 20, 1865.”²² The land the Ojibwe had lived on and knew was taken from them forcing them to move to a much smaller plot of 990,000 acres ceding an estimated two million acres, to the United States.²³ Since then, the White Earth Nation has gone down in size to 829,440 acres.²⁴

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The sandy lake massacre (1850) occurred when the Federal Government drew in Ojibwe people from all over Minnesota, promising treaty payments. However, when the Anishinaabe arrived the government refused to give them their money and as result hundreds of Anishinaabe people contracted diseases and died of starvation. Ibid. 27-28.

²¹ Ibid. 28-9.

²² Kappler, Charles Joseph. *Indian Treaties, 1778-1883*. New York: Interland Publishing, (1972). 974.

²³ Ibid. 975.

²⁴ Minnesota Indian Affairs Committee. "Gaa-Waabaabiganikaag/White Earth Nation." [cited 2022]. Available from <https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/whiteearth-iac.html>.

To make up for the loss of two million acres, “the United States agreed to pay the following sums” of \$145,000, to the Ojibwe, in the form of goods that were to be paid out over ten years.²⁵ According to the treaty, each tribal member was to be allotted 160 acres and encouraged to farm. Interestingly, Anishinaabe traditional methods of hunting and gathering were more bountiful than European farming practices. The treaty also didn’t allow for mixed-blood Ojibwe people to be allotted land unless they lived on reservation land. As with every treaty made between Native nations and the U.S government, the Treaty with the Chippewa of the Mississippi, 1867 was broken again and again as the government continued to rework the legislation to their benefit promoting the erasure and assimilation of Anishinaabe peoples in the process. Assimilationist policies went into full effect in the late nineteenth century with the advent of Native American boarding schools sanctioned by the U.S. government.²⁶ Reverberations of boarding school violence are still felt today, adding to our collective trauma as Anishinaabe peoples. Currently, the White Earth Nation comprises seven major communities located 225 miles northwest of Minneapolis/St. Paul.²⁷ These communities include—the White Earth Village, Pine Point, Naytahwaush, Pine Point, Mahnomen, Elbow Lake, Rice Lake, Callaway, Ogema, and Waubun.

Another major implication of this legislation was the deforestation of reservation land. For instance, the Weyerhaeuser logging company illegally logged acres upon acres of forests within the White Earth Nation.²⁸ Macalester College has continued to profit off

²⁵ Kappler, Charles Joseph. *Indian Treaties, 1778-1883*. 974.

²⁶ Ibis

²⁷ Minnesota Indian Affairs Committee. "Gaa-Waabaabiganikaag/White Earth Nation." [cited 2022].

²⁸ LaDuke, Winona. *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press. (1999). 118.

the deforestation of White Earth lands. The Weyerhaeuser family donated part of this wealth to Macalester College and to this day has a campus building named in their honor. Furthermore, the timber that was stolen by Frederick Weyerhaeuser was brought to Saint Paul and used to build mansions across Minneapolis.²⁹ Relatedly, the first president of Macalester College—Edward Neill was not only a fervent white supremacist but also stole sacred objects from Dakota burial Mounds, the same mounds that Saint Paul was built on top of—desecrating my ancestors resting sites in the process.³⁰ Therefore, stories of displacement, genocide, and land exploitation must continue to be told.

As far away as they may seem most, if not all institutions of higher learning are connected to anti-Indigenous and anti-Black practices of land theft, labor exploitation, and discrimination. One example of this issue is illustrated in the 2020 resolution release the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) issued to the University of Minnesota.³¹ The resolution calls for the University of Minnesota to comply with a “30-year-old federal law requiring it to return the stolen Native American remains” to repatriate them to the appropriate tribe.³² MIAC is also provoking the university to repair relations with all 11 federally recognized tribes in Minnesota.³³ Accordingly, institutions of higher learning—including private liberal arts schools such as Macalester College—are entangled in massive webs of settler colonialism and ongoing land exploitation. From contributing

²⁹ LaDuke, Winona. “Remembering Marvin Manypenny – a Champion” *The Circle Newspaper Website*. (2020). Available from <https://thecirclenews.org/cover-story/remembering-marvin-manypenny-a-champion/>

³⁰ McMahan, Liam. “Who was Edward Duffield Neill?” *The Mac Weekly: Colonial Macalester*. (2019).

³¹ Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. *MIAC U of M Resolutions Release*. (2020). Available from <https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/documents/MIAC%20U%20of%20M%20Resolutions%20Release%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

to the deforestation of Indigenous lands to being funded by the companies who created the opioid epidemic, academia has much to reckon with when it comes to repatriating and reconciling with the harms committed against Indigenous peoples globally.

Opioids and Addiction

While the CDC declared the epidemic a public health emergency back in 2011 opioid addiction has challenged Native Americans and other communities of color for many years before the CDC's announcement.³⁴ Opium has a long history with colonialism that is linked to the abuse of Indigenous bodies.³⁵ Interestingly, Sociologist Julie Netherland and Anthropologist Helena Hansen contend that whiteness has been the focus of research on the opioid crisis: within the western medical industry, whiteness has solidified itself so deeply that it is not only the blueprint— It is the only print.³⁶ Not only is whiteness held as the standard in medical fields and law-making drug policies, Netherland and Hansen argue that

The seeming inevitability and naturalness of whiteness allows those within the category 'White' to be unmarked, to think of themselves as simply human and without race, while those who fall outside the bounds of whiteness are the racialized 'Other.'³⁷

³⁴ Sullivan, Amy. *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss and Redemption in the Rehab State*. University of Minnesota Press. (2021). 5, 9.

³⁵ Known as 'biocolonialism,' the act of colonial appropriation and distribution of natural resources to make capital gain continues to occur through the dispossession of Indigenous lands via oil pipeline routes, gentrification, and control over freshwater sources. With the advent of drugs within Indigenous communities, 'biocolonialism' has shifted sites from using Indigenous lands to using Indigenous bodies for drug testing. Jay Hammond contributes to the discussion surrounding the ownership of opium and its connections to settler colonialism through the British opium trade and through 20th and 21st advertising discourse for drugs such as Oxycontin. Hammond outlines the shift from white drug pushers using "Indianness" as a means of selling drugs through the commodification of "exotic" or "othered" identities to the active displacement of cultural identities through "structural elimination".

³⁶ Netherland, Julie, and Helena B. Hansen. "The War on Drugs that Wasn't: Wasted Whiteness, "Dirty Doctors," and Race in Media Coverage of Prescription Opioid Misuse." *Culture, medicine, and psychiatry* 40, no. 4 (2016): 664-686. 2.

³⁷ Netherland, Julie, and Helen Hansen. "White Opioids: Pharmaceutical race and the war on drugs that wasn't". *BioSocieties*. 12.2. (2017). 2.

What the world has come to know as the opioid epidemic is thinly veiled as the “less examined” ‘White Drug War.’³⁸ Harm-reduction practices that were once considered taboo such as Naloxone training are now becoming more widely distributed as ways to prevent overdoses whereas prior, they were not paid attention to by mainstream media or society. Nancy Campbell elaborates on this in *OD: Naloxone and the Politics of Overdose* by stating that the opioid epidemic in rural white America overshadowed the drug endemics that urban populations have faced since the late 1950s.³⁹⁴⁰ Calling naloxone the “technology of solidarity” Campbell argues that the life-saving drug signals a radical shift in public acceptance of harm reduction because it has been moved out of the rigid walls of licensed medical professionals and now is widely distributed to and administered by anyone.⁴¹

Campbell argues that failing to look at the circumstances surrounding overdoses plays a major role in the rise of overdose rates even with the advent of Naloxone. When people use drugs in unfamiliar spaces or unfamiliar ways, they are more likely to overdose even when they have built a tolerance for the substance—a phenomenon she calls ‘situational plasticity.’⁴² Accounting for situational plasticity can also inform how overdose deaths are reported. According to reports from White Earth Nation’s Sixth Annual Reduction Summit in 2017, White Earth citizens have long questioned federal

³⁸ The White Drug War refers to the less punitive and more medicalized version of drug use-intervention that whites benefit from as their race and social class allow them to not face criminalization and to have their social privilege preserved.

³⁹ Campbell also adds that epidemics always outweigh endemics. Campbell, Nancy D. *OD: Naloxone and the Politics of Overdose*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. (2020). 5

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid, 283

⁴² Campbell, Nancy. *OD: Naloxone and the Politics of Overdose*. (2020). 14

and state statistics on overdose deaths.⁴³ Oral historian and scholar Amy Sullivan noted in her book *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss and Redemption in the Rehab State* that during the summit, a public health epidemiologist presented “Indian country overdose data” and was met with intense scrutiny from White Earth members in attendance. Sullivan states that the Anishinaabe women and elders “. . . were certain that some of the deaths he was claiming as suicides were not in fact suicides but overdoses.”⁴⁴ They knew for a fact that those deaths were not intentional because they knew the deceased as sons and daughters.

In Minnesota, American Indians are seven times as likely to die from a drug overdose as whites, and African Americans are twice as likely to die from a drug overdose as whites.

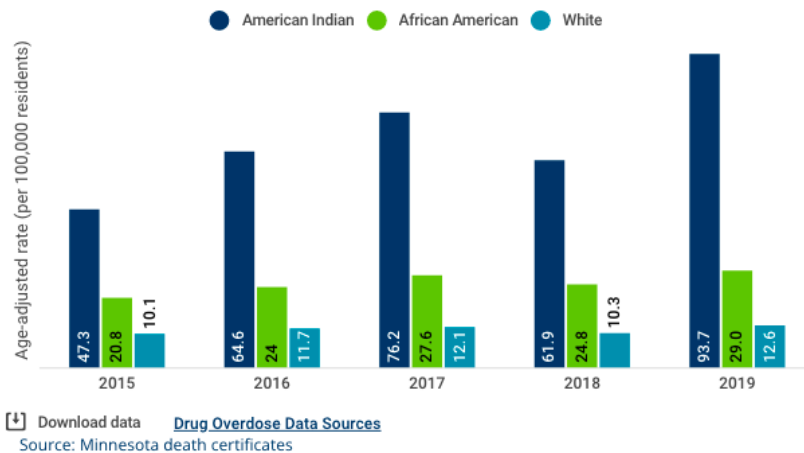


Figure 1 via the Minnesota Department of Health Opioid Drug Overdose Dashboard⁴⁵

According to Minnesota Department of Health data from 2020 Native Americans “are seven times as likely to die from a drug overdose as whites” in comparison to African Americans who are twice as likely.⁴⁶ As mentioned previously these numbers are

⁴³ Sullivan, Amy. *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss and Redemption in the Rehab State*. (2021). 170

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Minnesota Department of Health. “Indicator Dashboards Opioid Dashboard.” 2020. [cited 2022]. Available from <https://www.health.state.mn.us/opioiddashboard>

⁴⁶ Minnesota Department of Health. *Graphic #3 Data taken from Minnesota Death Certificates*. “Drug Overdose Dashboard”. (2019). Available from <https://www.health.state.mn.us/opioiddashboard>

not wholly inclusive of overdose deaths because overdose deaths are reported by the state via coroner or medical examiners—often overdose deaths of Native Americans are ruled as suicides. Carl Hart—a neuroscientist, drug user, and professor of psychology and psychiatry at Columbia University—delves deeper to uncover the ways opioid deaths are reported and misreported in his radical 2021 book *Drug Use for Grown-Ups*.⁴⁷ Hart elaborates on the skepticism that the Anishinaabe elders and women exhibited at the White Earth Harm Reduction Summit by exposing the inner workings of death-certificate data. To better understand how overdose deaths are reported, Hart first differentiates between medical examiners and coroners stating that medical examiners are medical professionals that specialize in forensic pathology while in many states coroners are not expected to have licensed medical training.⁴⁸

However, unlike many other states, Minnesotans do elect coroners for four-year terms and the state requires coroners to be “licensed physicians with training in a medical-legal death investigation.”⁴⁹ Regardless, even with medically trained coroners and medical examiners, there are still massive oversights when it comes to reporting overdose deaths as oftentimes drug concentrations are not recorded therefore it is hard to know which single drug contributed to the overdose.⁵⁰ Overdose death reporting becomes even more complicated when you add in a racial hierarchy and long-standing medical racism between white medical practitioners/law enforcement and Black and Indigenous communities. For instance, Netherland and Hansen in another article published in 2016

⁴⁷ Hart, Dr. Carl. *Drug Use for Grown-Ups: Chasing Liberty in the Land of Fear*. New York: Penguin Press (2021). 64

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid. Appendix #1. 256

⁵⁰ Ibid. 64.

explain that due to medical racism Black and brown peoples are less likely to be offered treatment for substance use disorder.⁵¹ When Black and brown people do receive the treatment it is via methadone clinics—which are surveilled by the DEA. In contrast, white people receive buprenorphine for treatment which can be “prescribed in a doctor's office taken at home.”⁵²

The medical and legal system in America was never made to service Black and Indigenous peoples instead it greatly contributed to our collective oppression and resulting trauma. Examples of this include the forced sterilization of both Black and Indigenous women, relying on archaic and racist medical concepts like eugenics to determine health interventions, and using unreliable survey data that results in “discrepancies between an individual’s self-identification and their official record.”⁵³ Historically, These systems of violence inform how Black and Indigenous peoples move in this country every day and also create and contribute to an elaborate cycle of coping through drug abuse with no assurance of long-lasting treatment.

Often labeled as “drunk Indians” or “addicts” I have had first-hand experience listening to local law enforcement’s racist tirades about how Native Americans are “not worth the trouble” when it comes to truly knowing how a relative has passed. Nevertheless, with Native Americans making up 2% of the population the amount of Native American opioid overdoses has created insurmountable losses in Indigenous

⁵¹ Netherland, Julie, and Helena B. Hansen. "The War on Drugs that Wasn't: Wasted Whiteness, "Dirty Doctors," and Race in Media Coverage of Prescription Opioid Misuse." *Culture, medicine and psychiatry* 40, no. 4 (2016): 5.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Gartner, Danielle R., Rachel E. Wilbur, and Meredith L. McCoy. "'American Indian' as a Racial Category in Public Health: Implications for Communities and Practice." *American Journal of Public Health* 111, no. 11 (2021). 1971.

communities across the United States. Locating where pain has emerged within the White Earth community and how it is often treated by opioids includes an in-depth understanding of the manifestations, causes, and potential remedies of historical trauma. Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, the physician that conceptualized Historical Trauma in the 1980s, defines it as “collective emotional and psychological injury both over the life span and across generations, resulting from a cataclysmic history of Genocide.”⁵⁴ The effects of which can sometimes lead to “unsettled emotional trauma, depression, high mortality rates, high rates of alcohol abuse, significant problems of child abuse and domestic violence.”⁵⁵

Pain is not only physical in this context but also historical. As the trauma inflicted by colonialism upon the Ojibwe continues to be passed down and reproduced through oppressive institutions many Anishinaabe peoples are not healed from the pain of their ancestors. As the interviews I have conducted through this research will illustrate later—the Anishinaabe of White Earth refuse to let their pain define them as “victims.” As the interviews demonstrate, Anishinaabe peoples—like all oppressed peoples—are vibrantly resilient and continue to foster the tools to heal themselves and mend their communities back into sites of resistance, care, and above all love. For instance, the creation of Wellness Courts or Drug-Court has shifted how drug use is treated legally by moving to a more holistic approach to meet the needs of relatives in recovery from substance use disorder.

⁵⁴Chavez, Nora. “Shouldering Grief: Validating Native American Historical Trauma.” (2021). Available from https://hsc.unm.edu/programs/nmcareshd/docs/story_heart.pdf

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Creation of Tribal Wellness Courts

Wellness courts in Minnesota were created from a massive influx of opioid overdoses. White Earth (WE) decided to establish their Tribal and Mahnomen County Healing to Wellness Drug Court as a response to the 320 drug cases that were filed from 2014 to 2018.⁵⁶ No longer able to afford to put people struggling with addiction in jail, the state loosened its policy and allowed tribal courts to create a new system to curb the effects of the epidemic. While the nationwide movement for “drug courts” began in the 1980s, Wellness courts were not federally funded programs until 1999 when the first federally funded publication on Wellness courts, entitled “Tribal Mentor Courts” was created.⁵⁷ White Earth would not have its own Healing to Wellness Court until 2018.⁵⁸

The White Earth Healing to Wellness Court aims to improve,

the participant's quality of life through clean sober independent, and productive living; with the option of voluntary exposure to the best-practices principles of an Anishinaabe. The Mino-Bimaadiziwin (The Good Life) traditional/cultural model of living life in a good way including the seven teachings (Love, Respect, Courage, Honesty, Wisdom, Humility, and Truth).⁵⁹

Although the Healing to Wellness Court is funded by federal grants it is still a less-punitive method of drug prevention and management. Due to the historically paternalistic relationship between the federal government and Native Nations, Wellness Courts also offer another way for Indigenous peoples to determine how to heal their people.

⁵⁶ Enger, John. "Drug Court Approved on White Earth Indian Reservation." (2018). [cited 2022]. <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/02/22/drug-court-approved-on-white-earth-indian-reservation>.

⁵⁷ Tribal Law and Policy Institute. “Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts the Key Components.” (2003). vii

⁵⁸ Enger, John. "Drug Court Approved on White Earth Indian Reservation." (2018).

⁵⁹ White Earth Nation. "White Earth Nation Judicial Services: White Earth/Mahnomen County Healing to Wellness Drug Court." Available from <https://whiteearth.com/divisions/judicial/services>.

Under the jurisdiction of the U.S Department of Justice Wellness Courts are another extension of the Nation-to-Nation agreements between tribes and the federal government.⁶⁰ Wellness courts take a restorative justice approach by looking at how to fulfill the needs of a person rather than take punitive measures. Abolitionist and Black educator Mariame Kaba in defining restorative justice says that,

Restorative justice is people with, say, a set of ideas, ideologies, visions of the world that determine the ways in which we will interact with each other when harm occurs. That's kind of like very general view of what we mean by restorative justice. It means that people that were harmed are centered in terms of their harm being seen and valued and addressed. It means that bystanders are called to be part of encircling that person and it means that the person who has harmed is also called in to take accountability for what they've done.⁶¹

Therefore, White Earth's Healing to Wellness Court has components of restorative justice because it works to heal relatives struggling with substance use disorder by holding them accountable and by helping to meet their needs. Although Wellness Courts are much more open to interpretation and allow for Indigenous traditional models of healing, as a federally funded program they still have many strings attached. While interviewing White Earth Tribal Judge David Degroat, he stated that the Wellness courts' holistic approach works better than simply jailing people, there is still a large lack of funding that limits the number of people that can be helped.⁶² Degroat also noted that due to the lack of funding Wellness Court is not as effective as it could be as the most effective element of any treatment is consistency and broad access to resources.⁶³ Lack of funding is a common

⁶⁰ Bureau of Indian Affairs. "Office of Indian Affairs." Available from <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois>.

⁶¹ Hayes, Chris. "Thinking about how to Abolish Prisons with Mariame Kaba: Podcast & Transcript." (2019). Available from <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/thinking-about-how-abolish-prisons-mariame-kaba-podcast-transcript-ncna992721>.

⁶² Degroat, David. "Interview on White Earth Healing to Wellness Court." Oral History. Phone Call Interview. May 25, 2020.

⁶³ Ibid.

theme amongst federally-funded services for Native Americans. To elaborate on how formalized systems such as legal and medical institutions do not hold all the answers in helping Indigenous people heal from substance use disorder, it is essential to understand how Indian Health Services fits into the picture.

Indian Health Services

Indian Health Services (IHS) was established by Congress in 1955 to uphold a government-to-government agreement between the Native Nations and the federal government.⁶⁴ While IHS provides a service that is a necessity for Tribal Nations it is another form of federal paternalism as Tribes rely on a federally funded institution to ensure tribal citizens' health and wellbeing. Serving 2.2 million patients, IHS has 117 federally run facilities in 19 states across the country as well as contracts with care facilities in 17 other states.⁶⁵ According to the National Congress of American Indians, 574 federally recognized tribes in the U.S. and many more are not federally recognized.⁶⁶ Therefore, the 117 IHS facilities often fail to service over 574 Tribal Nations. Due to the severe lack of funding from the federal government, IHS facilities are not as effective as they could be and are consistently overwhelmed by the amount of AI/AN people they serve.⁶⁷ The ineptitude of IHS is directly linked to the rise of opioid addiction among Native Nations.

⁶⁴ Tipps, Robin T, Gregory T Buzzard, and John A McDougall. "The Opioid Epidemic in Indian Country." *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics: A Journal of the American Society of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 46, no. 2 (2018). 427.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ National Congress of American Indians. *Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction*. Washington, D.C. (2020).

⁶⁷ Tipps, Robin T, Gregory T Buzzard, and John A McDougall. "The Opioid Epidemic in Indian Country." (2018). 426.

Without the proper amount of funding to meet the needs of 574 federally recognized tribes, not including all the tribes who are not federally recognized and therefore receive no federal healthcare, IHS is not equipped to resolve the opioid crisis let alone meet tribal citizens' basic health needs. Following IHS's history of being underfunded, there is also a long list of crimes committed by federal officers holding medical positions in IHS.⁶⁸ IHS has a dark history of sexual abuse, forced sterilization, and child endangerment. Native Americans foster a deep mistrust of the medical services offered through IHS.⁶⁹ Therefore, already vulnerable to predators and criminal victimization, Native American peoples are less likely to pursue the health services they need.⁷⁰ Western medical interventions are linked to a long history of trauma and pain for Indigenous peoples. Without working to reform these western-colonial systems and acknowledge the pain they have created Native peoples cannot rely on federal institutions like IHS to fulfill their needs. Contrastingly, the White Earth Nation continues to be at the forefront of addressing addiction, especially addiction to opioids.

In an interview with the Detroit Lakes Newspaper, Carson Gardner—a physician with the White Earth Tribal Health Department—powerfully stated that

Many of our programs are considered model pilot programs by state agency leaders. White Earth was recently invited to the National Senate Indian Affairs Committee to talk about what we've done around opioid treatment. One of the most important things that can happen is to stop being paternalistic and thinking tribes don't have the capacity or ability to do it best.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Deer, Sarah. "Federal Indian Law and Violent Crime: Native Women and Children at the Mercy of the State." *Social Justice* 31, no. 4 (98) (2004): 23.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 24.

⁷¹ Bowe, Nathan. "Fight of their Lives: White Earth Leads Way in Opioid Battle." *Detroit Lakes Online* (2018). Available from <https://www.dl-online.com/news/fight-of-their-lives-white-earth-leads-way-in-opioid-battle>.

White Earth’s yearly Harm Reduction Summits—which began in 2011—gather state officials, tribal members, public health providers, harm reduction specialists, and law enforcement to update each other on the state of addiction throughout Minnesota tribal communities.⁷² Tribal nations working toward solutions do not need more criminalization of opioids or blanket policies from the federal government that constricts their work. Rather, they need to be heard and noticed for the work they are already doing. While the implementation of these solutions is underway and the results have proved to be positive, what the White Earth Nation now needs is more unrestricted funding to sustain this groundbreaking work. For the federal government to direct its attention to the real needs of tribal nations—as they determine what is needed themselves—it would also have to reckon with the colonial position of power and oppression it has occupied and forced upon Native nations throughout the history of the US. Thus, by creating community-based solutions to address issues Native peoples face Indigenous communities are beginning to heal themselves through reconnecting with their traditional culture and medicine.

⁷² Sullivan, Amy. *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss and Redemption in the Rehab State*. 2021. 170.

Chapter 2 Izhichigewin: A Certain Way of Doing Something; a Method

This is my literature review chapter. Decolonial methodologies, Tribal IRB processes, oral history methods, and Anishinaabe epistemologies constitute the methods guiding this work. I argue that the theory of survivance, ethnographic refusal, and rejecting research that focuses on the damage done to Indigenous communities are important frames that help to unpack these oral histories/interviews. Within this chapter, I define my research methodology in conversation first with scholarship around decolonial methodologies. From there I move on to narratives of refusal. Lastly, I speak about the importance of Indigenous oral histories and methodological approaches rooted in Anishinaabe ways of being. These are all critical aspects of my research design process in generating dynamic engagement with these frameworks rather than mapping them onto the participants.

The main methodological approach of this project is grounded in decolonial models of research as outlined in Linda Tuhiwai Smith's 1999 book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*⁷³. Within her work, Smith created a detailed list of how to conduct oneself as an Indigenous researcher within one's community. Her framework emphasizes sharing knowledge, confronting colonial biases, showing up for your community, and creating relationships with the people included in the research. Drawing from Smith's Indigenous researcher guidelines when including the stories of each interviewee I created a method of analysis that fit with what each person

⁷³ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Seconded. London: Zed Books, (2012).

spoke about—otherwise known as “Grounded Theory.”⁷⁴ Grounded Theory originated with sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in 1965 as a way to theorize from data.⁷⁵ This method of research is rooted in a “general method of comparative analysis.”⁷⁶ The consequent sections of this chapter—refusal, relationality, and resurgence are the theoretical frameworks I derived from my interviews by employing grounded theory.

In creating my methods for this project, I also worked to honor myself within my work. Honoring myself as a researcher included understanding my boundaries and limits and taking breaks to conduct this work when I was in a positive mindset. Knowing all the interviewees involved deeply and having loved many people with substance use disorder it was paramount that I take care of myself just as I took care of the stories I was offered. This was critical to my method because I wanted to challenge western research methods that often ask to prioritize the research over your wellbeing. I wanted to also practice being gentle with myself because this work is sacred. Creating spaces of unconditional positive regard—a practice used amongst psychologists with their clients—I wanted each interviewee to feel comfortable and that they could say whatever came to them regardless of its relevance or length.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Glaser, Barney G, Anselm L Strauss, and Anselm L Strauss. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Observations. Chicago: Aldine Publishing. (1967). 3.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 1.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Unconditional Positive Regard is a psychological concept first formulated by Stanly Standal in 1954 and later popularized by Carl Rogers in 1956. This psychological technique prioritizes being caring and accepting regardless of what someone shares with you. Rogers believed that it is a fundamental human need that is essential to healthy development. From the American Psychological Association. “APA Dictionary of Psychology.” [cited 2022]. Available from <https://dictionary.apa.org/>.

From my self-reflective praxis when engaging with my interviewees I was careful to not “trample over the mana [spirit/life-force] of people.”⁷⁸ I used a gentle and transparent method when conducting my interviews. I entered the interviewing process with caution and was surprised at the generosity in what the interviewees shared. Within my interview method, I also incorporated relationality.⁷⁹ I only wanted to interview people within my community that I already had deep, established relationships with. By evoking this relationality, I shared with interviewees there was reciprocity in what we shared, and the work began with a foundation of trust having already been built. Due to this approach, the interviewing process was comfortable both for me and for the interviewees. I also collected follow-up data via post-interview surveys. Within the surveys, I asked for feedback on how they felt the interviews went, specifically asking if they felt comfortable during the interviews and if there was anywhere that I could improve my interview methods.

Honoring the IRB

Another element of my methodological approach was ethically obtaining access to White Earth citizens to be able to conduct interviews through the White Earth IRB.⁸⁰ However, White Earth was not the first nation to create its IRB. Before the White Earth Nations’ IRB, the Navajo Nation adopted its own tribal IRB. Doug Brugge and Mariam Missaghian in their 2006 article “Protecting the Navajo People through Tribal Regulation

⁷⁸ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. (1999). 124.

⁷⁹ Relationality used as a method refers to interconnection between interviewer and interviewee. This differs from many western ethnographic research methods that purposefully select interviewees who have no relationship to the researcher to get ‘objective’ data.

⁸⁰ IRB stands for Institutional Review Board

of Research” write about the long history between Diné peoples and exploitative research practices.⁸¹ Although Brugge and Missaghian speak specifically about the Navajo Nation their argument is generalizable as all Indigenous peoples have been severely over-researched and exploited by academia. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith states in *Decolonizing Methodologies* “. . . ‘research’, is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary.”⁸² Their research significantly contextualizes the Navajo Nation as the first Native Nation to establish its own Institutional Review Board (IRBs).⁸³ To protect the White Earth Nation from further academic exploitation, they have also created their own IRB board.

For this research project, I applied and was approved by the Macalester College IRB and the White Earth IRB. While applying to the White Earth IRB I had to ensure the board that I had been formally trained as a student of sociology to conduct ethical research. Like the Navajo Nation IRB, the White Earth IRB also has the power to review and approve research approvals, negotiate procedures and methodology, request outside expertise, and coordinate with other boards. Therefore, before submitting this thesis I also submitted a de-identified draft to the White Earth IRB for their approval before continuing with this work. By working with the White Earth IRB this work has gone through multiple levels of community approval both from the White Earth IRB and from the interviewees involved.

⁸¹ Brugge, Doug, and Mariam Missaghian. “Protecting the Navajo People through Tribal Regulation of Research.” *Science and Engineering Ethics*. 12, no. 3 (2006). 491.

⁸² Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies*. (1999). 30.

⁸³ Brugge, Doug, and Mariam Missaghian. “Protecting the Navajo People through Tribal Regulation of Research.” (2006). 491.

Brugge and Missaghian's article includes guidelines for researchers under the name participatory action research (PAR).⁸⁴ The scholars place a heavy emphasis on the importance of researchers working with the community, "rather than impose their research protocols on them" in this way "the research becomes a project of the community as well."⁸⁵ Therefore, I also took influence from PAR in conducting this research to blend Indigenous scholarship with community centered Anishinaabe pedagogies. Respect, equity, and informed consent make up the foundation of the PAR framework. While these three concepts may seem obvious to do any work within a community, they are three crucial concepts that have been missing from research on Indigenous peoples for hundreds of years.⁸⁶ Throughout the planning, conducting, and analyzing the interviews I have engaged in critical reflection on how to best protect the stories that the interviewees shared especially regarding their cultural knowledge, beliefs, and resources.

Like all Native Nations, the Navajo or Diné have specifically "strived to honor their ancestors in attempting to preserve their traditions and way of life" but Brugge and Missaghian are highly attuned to the trauma and disrespect Native Americans have faced at the hands of researchers and greater acts of colonialism.⁸⁷ With this history in mind, the two scholars provide a deeper comprehensive guide on the Navajo Nation, its relationship with the federal government through institutions such as Indian Health Services as well as the changes they have made since assuming the responsibility of the

⁸⁴ Ibid. 492.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid. 494. And Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies*. (1999). 32.

⁸⁷ Brugge, Doug, and Mariam Missaghian. "Protecting the Navajo People through Tribal Regulation of Research." (2006). 497.

IRB. White Earth's IRB is also representative of a movement among many Indigenous communities across the world to regain control over their intellectual, and cultural knowledge as well as represent themselves as sovereign peoples.⁸⁸ Another key tenet of this research design was the theoretical framework of survivance.

Survivance and Ethnographic Refusal

Gerald Vizenor—a renowned Anishinaabe writer and scholar from White Earth—in his book *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, defines survivance as the active assertion of presence and continuance of Native legacies and cultural knowledge that renounces narratives of victimhood.⁸⁹ Therefore, the scholarship of Brugge and Missaghian along with Smith's work to influence and uplift more stories of Indigenous survivance provide one of the methodological frameworks used in this project to challenge colonial narratives and imposition upon Indigenous rights and sovereignty. Survivance as an active assertion of presence centers on resilient and generative narratives that Indigenous peoples create for themselves—both an act of decolonization and refusal. Anthropologist and Mohawk scholar of Native American and Indigenous studies, Audra Simpson has written extensively about ethnographic methods and academic knowledge production.⁹⁰ Simpson has also contributed greatly to the scholarly

⁸⁸ White Earth Reservation Business Committee. *Restructured/Codified White Earth Nation Research Review Board Policy/Procedure*. (2018)

⁸⁹ Vizenor, Gerald. *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. (2008). 1.

⁹⁰ Simpson, Audra. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press. (2014). 34.

conversation on how tribes decide to have control over what cultural knowledge is shared outside of their communities through her theorizing of “ethnographic refusal.”⁹¹

Audra Simpson in her 2014 book *Mohawk Interruptus* defines refusal as

. . . a mode of sovereign authority over the presentation of ethnographic data, and so does not present ‘everything’. This is for the express purpose of protecting the concerns of the community.⁹²

Through exercising ethnographic refusal Indigenous communities can protect their language, culture, traditions, legal rights, and ceremonies. Refusal, therefore, is also an embodiment of sovereignty. Connecting to Dené Indigenous Studies and Political Science scholar Glen Coulthard’s argument that the “politics of recognition” are a part of the colonial mission as they aim to legitimize Indigenous claims of sovereignty through colonial institutions. Ethnographic refusal is a central tenet informing this Honors research project—including refusal, relationality, and resurgence. As a category of refusal, ethnographic refusal provided a theoretical framework and method that I utilized to not overshare sacred information that is only for other Anishinaabe community members to know—like the processes of tribal IRBs.

Preventing Damage Centered Research

My research methods are also informed by Unanga scholar Eve Tuck’s letter calling out “Damage Centered Research”. Tuck proposes that many of the ways in which Indigenous peoples are researched are “Damage Centered” she states that,

This kind of research [Damage-centered research] operates with a flawed theory of change: it is often used to leverage reparations or resources for marginalized

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid. 105.

communities yet simultaneously reinforces and reinscribes a one-dimensional notion of these people as depleted, ruined, and hopeless.⁹³

Tuck suggests that instead of only acknowledging the struggles that Indigenous communities face, Indigenous scholars must also focus on Indigenous people's desire to make conditions better for the present as well as for future generations.⁹⁴ To not create more “damage-centered research” I focused my interview questions on how the interviewees viewed their community, how they diagnosed the issues we face, and ultimately what they envision for the future of our community—especially in regards to our youth. In theorizing solutions to “Damage Centered Research” Tuck extends an offering to Indigenous scholars,

I invite you to join me in re-visioning research in our communities not only to recognize the need to document the effects of oppression on our communities but also to consider the long-term repercussions of thinking of ourselves as broken.⁹⁵

Tuck alludes here to an inferiority complex. Hundreds of years of hearing that Native American peoples are backward, primitive, lazy, etc. all boil down and place itself in all minds that Native American people are naturally inferior.⁹⁶ I worked against these colonial narratives by rooting my methodologies in the strength, power, and beauty of my community. Due to this practice, I was able to find healing through this research as well as reconfigure my understanding of addiction, healing, and youth.

⁹³ Tuck, Eve. 2009. “Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities,” 409.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 417.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 409.

⁹⁶ I use the term “Native American” here to clarify that I am speaking directly about the racial stereotypes Indigenous people in the U.S. have faced. Historically, Native Americans have been stereotyped as “backward” or “primitive” due to our different ways of living compared to European society. Using the term “lazy” in reference to Native Americans often stems from misconceptions that we receive “payouts” from tribal casinos so that we don’t have to work—while many Native peoples do receive money from tribal casinos just as many do not.

Contextualizing “Youth”

Drawing from Anishinaabe understandings of place, community, and relationality also provided context to the methods used here. Because this work is oriented around White Earth professionals who engage in various forms of youth work, understanding methodological approaches to researching youth have also been also critical to my research. Although I did not interview any actual youth, I used frameworks rooted in Indigenous epistemologies on youth to reorient understandings of youth through an Anishinaabe worldview.⁹⁷ In 1989 the United Nations made a universal definition of a “Child” as someone under the age of 18.⁹⁸ Childhood and youth are culturally contingent understandings. How we view ourselves is dependent on intersections and engagements with our environments, broader society, and the reflexivity of our internal selves.⁹⁹ Therefore, understanding how Anishinaabe views youth—pre colonially and presently—is essential to being able to write about them in a decolonial way. In colonial-western societies, adulthood, and ideas of who has citizenship and/or rights are established through the process of aging instead of achievement or life experience.¹⁰⁰ In juxtaposition to western ideals of youth, Anishinaabe's understanding of youth centers on the four hills of life.

⁹⁷ I chose to not interview Anishinaabe youth as a means of protecting their lived experiences from any methods of inquiry because they are a vulnerable group. Above all I did not want to make them speak about their trauma for the sake of research.

⁹⁸ James, Allison, and Adrian James. *Key Concepts in Childhood Studies*. Los Angeles: Sage. 2012. 2.

⁹⁹ Liebenberg, Linda, Darlene Wall, Michele Wood, and Daphne Hutt-MacLeod. “Spaces & Places: Understanding Sense of Belonging and Cultural Engagement among Indigenous Youth.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 18 (2019): 160940691984054–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919840547>. 2.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 8.

Anishinaabe Conceptualizations of “Youth”

For the Anishinaabe, the four hills of life are represented through seasons—infancy and childhood Ziigwan (spring), adolescence is Niibin (summer), adulthood is Dagwaagin (fall), and old age is Biboon (winter). This knowledge comes from the book *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom* by Thomas Peacock and Marlene Wisuri.¹⁰¹ Peacock and Wisuri work to recover traditional Anishinaabe understandings of age and maturity. In traditional Ojibwe society, babies and small children were represented by Ziigwan (spring) because the first hill they must overcome is illness so they can make it to Niibin.¹⁰² Instead of measuring maturity by age, Anishinaabe measured maturity by how many hills a person has accomplished. Peacock and Wisuri write that “the challenges we face and responsibilities we accept along the way are called hills. This is old and beautiful teaching about the sacred journey of life and its purpose.”¹⁰³ Infancy and childhood are also represented by spring because in Anishinaabe cultures it is considered the first season. When children pass into the next hill, they become youth and “enter the summer of our lives.”¹⁰⁴

When the third hill of life, autumn begins it signals adulthood as many people would become parents in fall. Lastly, in winter as the snow falls and things get quieter, we enter being elders and having survived so many seasons we have accumulated wisdom and lessons that we pass on to the next generation. Elders also, “become the

¹⁰¹ Peacock, Thomas, Marlene Wisuri, and Marlene Wisuri. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*. 1st ed. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, 2006. 10.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 9

¹⁰³ Peacock, Thomas, and Marlene Wisuri. 2006. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*. 9.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 10.

tellers of the story and the guides to all those who follow us on the sacred journey.”¹⁰⁵

The way Peacock and Wisuri speak about life is circular—things are born, they grow, then they return to the earth.¹⁰⁶ To make it through all four seasons is the ultimate gift.¹⁰⁷

Garnering this understanding of maturity and age in Anishinaabe traditional society informs how we as Anishinaabe people have our epistemologies, pedagogies, and methods for life. Reviving these understandings is a method that we will continue to work on throughout all the hills of our lives. Another traditional Anishinaabe method of knowledge exchange is through oral story-telling and oral histories.

Oral histories are a central practice in Anishinaabe society. Therefore, I made oral histories the focal point of this project to honor Anishinaabe peoples and culture. Oral histories within Indigenous cultures are paramount to the continuation and resilience of communities. Passing on our history through stories is an intergenerational act, one that keeps our traditions, culture, and language alive. By sharing things orally, they can be passed down continually and adapt to the needs of the people as we evolve. Storytellers create interconnected narratives of the past, present, and future which challenge the linearity of western society.¹⁰⁸ Although each storyteller may share a traditional or personal story differently, our stories often synchronize and illuminate communal visions of who we are.

Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor in her essay on oral histories compares Samoan Indigenous storytelling methods to western discourses around the land.¹⁰⁹ She argues that

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 14.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies*. 1999. 242.

¹⁰⁹ Lilomaiava-Doktor, Sa'iliemanu. 2020. “Oral Traditions, Cultural Significance of Storytelling, and Samoan Understandings of Place or Fanua” 121

scholarly attention is continually entrenched only in the economics of land. Doktor suggests that the western ideal of ownership over land is a method of inquiry that is too finite to encapsulate the complexity and beauty of Indigenous people's relationship to their lands.¹¹⁰ Doktor goes on to say that culture is highly important when conducting research.¹¹¹ Linda Tuhiwai Smith also speaks to this point by saying that she believes our continued existence as Indigenous people is predicated on having to know our environments well enough to ensure our survival.¹¹² Therefore, land and our relationship to it also inform Anishinaabe research methods as it is often one of our first teachers. Stories of the land as well as all Anishinaabe stories and histories are passed down from one generation to the next and they shift to the needs of each generation. During each interview, every interviewee spoke almost exclusively through storytelling. While everyone had different stories to tell, the way they wove them was rooted in our shared cultural teachings. Now, I will expand upon the importance of oral histories.

For each interview I did not have a time limit because to limit a story by time would be to not honor the fullness and life that each takes on.

Indigenous Oral Histories in Practice

For each interview I did not have a time limit because to limit a story by time would be to not honor the fullness and life that each takes on. This project is also guided by the teachings of Indigenous communities from the Pacific Islands who engage in story

¹¹⁰Ibid.121-122.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Seconded. London: Zed Books, (2012).

dialogue called “talanoa”. According to Tecun, et al in “Talanoa: Tongan Epistemology and Indigenous Research Method,” talanoa can be broken down into two main concepts: the balance/equilibrium (noa) of story/talk (tala).¹¹³ In conducting my interview with my aunt I tried to ground the conversation in what Tecun et al. write.¹¹⁴

We the writers are our ancestors, who are embodied in us, this is why we are Tapu or sacred. This relation sets us apart as unique descendants of our ancestors. What we as researchers and writers refer to here is that one of the reasons we are set apart or set ourselves apart (Tapu) is because we are not alone as individuals, for the dead are within us.¹¹⁵

As an Indigenous researcher, I aim to center on the ancestors that walk with me as well as the communities that created me within every aspect of my research.¹¹⁶ Honoring Indigenous epistemologies in academia is an act of refusal against western research tactics that reproduce colonial harm. Implementing talanoa requires holding space for dynamic conversation. Rejecting notions of objectivity by instead focusing on “closeness rather than distance” reconfigures the relationship between researcher and participant.¹¹⁷ Intentionally fostering care and trust as the basis for a researcher to participant relationship indigenizes research, as their interactions are not extractive but nurtured before, during, and after the project, has concluded.

To practice talanoa, I interviewed my paternal aunt in the fall of 2021 for a course assignment on Indigenous childhood. From my interview with my aunt, I began to

¹¹³ Hernandez, David, Arcia Tecun, “Inoke Hafoka, Lavinia ‘Ulu‘ave, and Moana ‘Ulu‘ave-Hafoka. 2018. “Talanoa: Tongan Epistemology and Indigenous Research Method.” *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14. 159.

¹¹⁴ Allen, Martha. “Interview on Indigenous Childhood.” Oral History. Online Video Interview. November 1st, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 156.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 158.

analyze what is required to conduct generative interviews.¹¹⁸ She reminded me how to listen like Native elders listen “in between the words”—an important element of talanoa.¹¹⁹ To circumvent the extractive nature of western academic research wherein you listen to prove or make points, I had to consciously remember to not interrupt when interviewees spoke. The rhythm of Indigenous research is slow but fruitful. This practice actively transgresses what we are taught through western practices. Indigenous peoples do not limit their dialogue by the linearity of time. Rather, the practice of talanoa embodies the living and breathing nature of the stories Indigenous peoples weave. Each conversation I held was an act of reciprocity, giving community members the space to reflect on their lives and to distill what they want for the future embodied Anishinaabe ways of reciprocity and relationality. We did not limit our time. They shared their stories as they came to them, and I listened. Using Indigenous methodologies in making this research come to life has also been an act of refusal.

Referencing Doktor’s essay once again she also argues that because Indigenous epistemologies are what sustains us as a people and sustain the lands we nurture, centering these Indigenous methodologies is essential to bring Indigenous philosophies into academia to honor the communities being researched.¹²⁰ Anishinaabe scholar, historian, and Ojibwemowin speaker Anton Treuer also highlights how he has found “agreement” between generations of Indigenous leaders by mapping Indigenous oral histories “across space and time.”¹²¹ Simply put—for far too long Indigenous peoples

¹¹⁸ Allen, Zoe. Interview with Martha Allen. Oral History. Online Video Interview. November 1st, 2021.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Lilomaiva-Doktor, Sa’iliemanu. “Oral Traditions, Cultural Significance of Storytelling, and Samoan Understandings of Place or Fanua”. (2020). 122.

¹²¹ Treuer, Anton. *The Assassination of Hole in the Day*. St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books, 2011. Xiv.

have been studied through a colonial, western, heteropatriarchal, white supremacist lens and now it is time for us as Indigenous scholars to refuse these narratives by fostering our own. Refusal—both in its generalized form as well as an ethnographic refusal—is a central element on the path to collectively and intergenerationally healing trauma as it continues to manifest through substance use disorder. In summary, these methodological approaches matter for urgent reasons. I now turn to an extended literary analysis of the three tenets of this research: refusal, relationality, and resurgence.

Aanawenjigewin: s/he rejects things; Refusal

I now want to return to how refusal is framed in Audra Simpson’s theory of “ethnographic refusal” as previously mentioned in the methods section.¹²² Simpson elaborates on the term refusal by theorizing from her own interviews for *Mohawk Interruptus*. The accounts Simpson’s interviewees shared with her she states were generative acts of refusal.¹²³ Dana’s interview illustrates how necessary refusal is in the process of collectively healing our “Soul Wound”—also known as historical trauma.¹²⁴ Refusal within Indigenous epistemologies encapsulates the urgency of needing to reject colonial narratives and instead center on Indigenous ways of being—both as a means of protest and as a demonstration of resiliency.

¹²² Simpson, Audra. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. (2014). 34.

¹²³ Ibid. 113.

¹²⁴ Duran, Eduardo, Bonnie Duran, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart et. al. “Healing the American Indian Soul Wound”. (1998). 341.

Dana Trickey's story encapsulates various forms of refusing colonial narratives of erasure. Dana works for the University of Minnesota in their 4H department.¹²⁵ She is not only a youth worker but also an artist, a single mother, and a community builder. Dana is a long-time family friend who lives and works in White Earth where she recently purchased her first house and raises her two teenage boys. Working for the last five years building the White Earth 4-H program, Dana takes a lot of pride in the work she has accomplished so far. Introducing herself Dana

Mashkiki Mikinaakikwe nindizhinikaaz, migizi indoodem, my spirit name is medicine turtle woman and I'm Eagle clan. My English name is Dana Trickey. There's so much about a person, right? I'm an Ojibwe descendent, but I'm not enrolled. My dad's family comes from over by the Wisconsin, St. Croix area. But I've lived around here in White Earth for most of my life, but especially the last 20 years. My awen'enh is from here also. I've received a lot of gifts from the community and teachings that I still carry forward to this day. In the last five years, I've been fortunate enough to be able to run the White Earth tribal 4H program and give back to the community in that way. So, I'm employed by the University of Minnesota, out of the St. Paul campus in the Twin Cities, specifically Coffee Hall. So, a lot of other 4-H programs are out of counties. My program is unique because It's the only program of its kind in the state of Minnesota.

Throughout our interview the theme of refusal was present. Centering our conversation on Dana's youth work we spoke about the stereotyping imposed upon our youth and how it affects them in ways people often don't see. When talking about systemic oppression and how federal funds are allocated to help 'youth of color', Dana also spoke about how kids are conditioned to act in ways that feed into racial stereotypes. In trying to find ways to change that she said,

I think it really starts with our attitude about kids. If we look at them as delinquents, and we keep telling them they're going to be delinquents, guess what—they're probably going to fulfill that prophecy we're creating for them. They

¹²⁵ 4H is an extracurricular program for youth k-12, the central focus of the program is to offer rural youth opportunities in science, photography, agriculture, healthy living, and civic engagement.

will have to be one hell of a strong, unique person to defy that. If that's the message we're sending, the whole time they're growing up. That's pretty f'd-up on our part. And I know that because I was one of those kids that people expected a lot of bad things from, I know exactly what that feels like.¹²⁶

Dana elaborates on how she relates to the kids she works with by recollecting that she was also told that she would never be able to achieve her ambitions. Now, having a higher level of education than many of the people that doubted her, she credits her stubborn mentality as her source of motivation to overcome the narrative imposed upon her. At the same time, Dana also recognizes that the youth she works with have differing levels of trauma that are exhibited uniquely. Usually, she says that kids hide their pain by “putting their walls up”. By being vulnerable to youth, Dana has been able to erode some of these walls and instead offer youth support and guidance with whatever they are going through. How does this fit into a framework of refusal? By seeing the trauma in the children, she works with and refusing to let them feel alone in it Dana evokes refusal by challenging the colonial narratives youth are conditioned to believe about themselves. This is supported by the work of Linda Liebenberg and Darlene Wall et.al. in their scholarship reflecting on how Indigenous youth understand themselves belonging to their communities.¹²⁷ In connection to Dana’s remarks on how youth put up walls when trying to protect themselves from further harm, Liebenberg, and Wall et. al state that:

when community structures and the systems underpinning them [youth], intentionally or unintentionally marginalize youth, failing to provide appropriate spaces for engagement in community life and culture, youth will seek alternative ways of establishing a sense of value and community.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Trickey, Dana. “Oral History Interview #3”. Oral History. Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 58:51.

¹²⁷ Liebenberg, Linda, Darlene Wall, et. al. “Spaces & Places: Understanding Sense of Belonging and Cultural Engagement among Indigenous Youth.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 18. (2019).1.

¹²⁸ Ibid. 2.

Because of this phenomenon, Anishinaabe youth seek out ways to relieve the pain of the trauma they endure. Not having access to opportunities that will positively help them navigate the issues they face; they often turn inward and internalize the narratives that are built to hurt them. They might turn to substances—whether that be using, selling, or a combination of the two. They may enter abusive relationships that can result in teen pregnancy. When unresolved trauma manifests in youth via substance use disorder it creates a domino effect within small communities. White Earth is especially impacted by youth drug use due to the compounded trauma our youth carry with them and because they usually do not have positive outlets to cope with what they struggle with. Since drug use is often a social activity many youths are introduced to drug use through friends and/or family.

Prevention narratives from the era of the *War on Drugs* continue to shape how youth understand anti-drug use policies.¹²⁹ These methods of prevention are not useful as the two extremes teens are faced with—complete sobriety or addiction—leave them with limited options and implicate them in systems of shame that are difficult to recover from. Refusing archaic anti-drug campaigns and instead advocating for balance and neutrality could be a source of relief for our youth. Instead of promoting the essentialist narratives that youth are predisposed to two outcomes when it comes to drugs, we could teach safe-use practices and elaborate on forms of harm reduction/prevention to also encapsulate youth programming, cultural teachings, and Ojibwe language. Dana’s philosophy takes all of these challenges into account and works to find ways to meet kids where they are currently. She puts in efforts every day to help youth thrive by building spaces where

¹²⁹ Beck, Jerome. “100 years of ‘just say no’ versus ‘just say know.’” *Evaluation review* 22, no. 1:15-45. (1998). 23.

they can be themselves unapologetically. Allowing kids to be themselves without judgment also helps to take some of their walls down and make room for new opportunities like acting, photography, college exploration, and learning about their Anishinaabe culture. Like the work of Thomas Peacock and Marlene Wisuri in their book *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*, Dana also speaks about the hills of life in reference to Anishinaabe youth when she states,

And they're struggling in their teen years—that hill of life is just so challenging, right? It's so it's the worst time I would not wish it on anybody. Like if you asked me if I want to go back: No way. Thinking of my teenagers, and it's just so hard to figure things out. And so, it's really an honor to get to work with our teenagers. Whenever they allow me. You know the space to sit with them a little bit. And really, they allow it because a teenager will very quickly tell you to "go to hell", yeah. They don't care. They'll see through you if you're being phony or fake or whatever, or not consistent. But that's one of the coolest things about them, right? They're sorting it out, but in their own unique, uncomfortable way, they're true to themselves.¹³⁰¹³¹

In another iteration of refusal, Dana refuses to let Anishinaabe teens fall through the cracks. She roots her work in the truth of being Anishinaabe and actively fights to deconstruct and decolonize Western institutions such as the nuclear family, the criminal justice system, and the child protective services system because she knows they all work to oppress who we are as Anishinaabe people. Dana demonstrates refusal by modeling what it looks like to walk in a good way—Bimaadiziwiin—and to be honest about the path it took for her to get here. She also centers on the Anishinaabe value of the “gift of choice” by providing youth access to a range of opportunities and helping them develop their emotional intelligence.

¹³⁰ Peacock, Thomas, and Marlene Wisuri. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*. 1st ed. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, (2006). 9.

¹³¹ Trickey, Dana. “Oral History Interview #3”. Oral History. Minnesota. January 17, 2022. (9:31)

Reflecting on the gift of choice Dana states, “That's [gift of choice] the first gift that we were given from Creator afterlife.”¹³² Historically, Native peoples had the gift of choice stolen from them, despite this truth there are critical ways in which our ancestors were able to transgress western colonial missions of erasure. Whether it was practicing traditional ceremony songs in the church or holding on tight to our languages so that we could have them help heal our soul wounds, our ancestors love us so much we cannot begin to understand how much they have given us. Being a good relative for us now may seem different but the tenets remain the same of passing on traditions, language, culture, and values generously and without expectations that they will look the same once the next generation holds them. The gift of choice also means that the next generation has the ability to adapt and evolve what has been passed down and to honor these teachings in a way that ensures their continued survival but also gives them the adaptability to continue to be sites of connection, healing and love regardless of what a generation is up against.

Inawendiwin: Friendship; Kinship; Relationality

Relationality entails being in a relationship with every being we share the earth with. Aileen Moreton-Robinson—an Indigenous Australian activist and scholar—further explains relationality as “. . .one experiences the self as a part of others and that others are part of the self.”¹³³ Relationality is exhibited in all interviews but in this section, I will be focusing on both Dana Trickey and Kim Anderson’s stories and how they intersect.

¹³² Ibid.(1:06:11)

¹³³ Keddie, Amanda. “Indigenous Representation and Alternative Schooling: Prioritizing an Epistemology of Relationality.” *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 18, no. 1 (2014). 6.

Kim Anderson is a language speaker, a volunteer firefighter, an educator, and above all a loving mother to two girls—Josie and Nen.

Biidaabanikwe indigo Makwa nindoodem mii omaa Gaa-waabaabiganikaag nindoonjibaa gaye anokii omaa Naytahwaush gikinoo'amaadig. My name is Kim Anderson and in English, my Ojibwe name is Biidaaban-ikwe, which means the Spirit who prepares the earth for the sunrise. I come from the Bear Clan and reside here on White Earth. I work at the Naytahwaush school. And I have two children. Makwodaanis (bears daughter) and Niizhwewidamook - Nenookaasi (she speaks two languages). So, I'm happy that my life is here.¹³⁴

Kim works to educate youth on how to speak Ojibwemowin at the Naytahwaush Charter school in White Earth. Kim's interview focused heavily on the philosophy and interconnectedness or relationality of Ojibwe. According to Kim,

We have the strength of our ancestors that was also passed through us. It's not just a historical trauma, it's not just the, you know, the ills of everything. It's also a strength. It's also the beauty of everything. It's also the knowledge of everything. And so we have that very thing also running through our veins. So, what do we want to give more power to?¹³⁵

Honoring this truth of our ancestors also means understanding the strength that they had by recovering their histories and being grounded in our connections to land, animal, and plant relatives. Kim spoke about this as “cultural realignment” through learning Ojibwemowin. She also spoke of the challenges of trying to teach adults Ojibwe because they worry more about making mistakes than the youth—who collectively embrace the language. This anxiety can also be soothed by having networks of support that help prevent any shame that may arise in people from not knowing their native language. This idea is echoed in the writings of Robin Wall Kimmerer when she says, “if time is a turning circle, there is a place where history and prophecy converge—the footprints of

¹³⁴ Anderson, Kim. “Oral History Interview #4”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 20, 2022. 00:19

¹³⁵ Ibid. 1:06:02

First Man lie on the path behind us and on the path ahead.”¹³⁶ As previously mentioned in *the Four Hills of Life*, Peacock and Wisuri emphasize the criticalness of circles within Anishinaabe traditions by explaining that spiritually the Ojibwe believe in the immortality of souls.¹³⁷ Thus, Anishinaabe’s traditional thought stresses how circles represent all cycles of life through stages of birth, growth, and death. Imploring circular ways of thinking, our traditions tell us that nothing ends but continues in different forms.¹³⁸ In conversation with one another Kimmerer, Peacock and Wisuri, and Anderson situate relationality as a circular embodiment of interconnectedness, knowledge, healing, care for the land, and love.

Fostering relationality is also a critical step in reaching conscientization. In his canonical work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Brazilian Paulo Freire defines conscientization as “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality.”¹³⁹ The work of these interviewees contributes to helping youth reach conscientization through collective consciousness-raising whether that be through working to ensure that youth are protected, educated, given new opportunities, cared for through various caregivers, accessing spiritual teachings, and/or through learning Ojibwemowin. Linda Tuhiwai Smith credits Paulo Freire for his contributions to critical pedagogies concerning conscientization remarking that “Paulo Freire’s model of change argues that conscientization leads to action or struggle, when people learn to read the word (of injustice) and read the world

¹³⁶ Kimmerer, Robin. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions (2013). 251.

¹³⁷ Peacock, Thomas, Marlene Wisuri, and Marlene Wisuri. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*. 1st ed. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, (2006). 18.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Freire Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press, 1970. 35.

(of injustice) they will act against injustice.”¹⁴⁰ The possibilities of consciousness-raising are illuminated when we connect across generations to learn. The echoes of these collective teachings emit farther outward from their source as everyone in the circles of learning carries these lessons forward in their lives. To do this liberatory work, we must create concerted efforts to deconstruct our own colonized mindsets.

In creating relationality Leanne Simpson reminds us that we must also recognize when we are feeding into Christianized narratives and unknowingly perpetuating colonial harm. She states that

I believe my ancestors and the spiritual beings I am in a relationship with are brilliant and complex, and they are not going to strike me down because I didn't follow a 'rule' about how I should approach them—this to me is how Christianity works, not Nishnaabewin.¹⁴¹

Here Simpson speaks about the depths of Christian influence in Anishinaabe communities. Due to the high numbers of Anishinaabe children forcibly removed and placed into boarding schools, the trauma our people endured manifests through an incredibly diverse array of issues. It is hard to differentiate between what is traditional and Anishinaabe and what is a Christianized version of our traditions. Due to this phenomenon, many of our ceremonial circles are not as welcoming as they should be. Although Indigenous interventions into churches can also be sites of liberation, for many Anishinaabe peoples Christianity has traumatized many into adopting binary thinking that can often lead to punitive responses.

¹⁴⁰ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second ed. London: Zed Books. (1999). 200.

¹⁴¹ Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Indigenous Americas. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. 122.

For instance, many in our community place judgment on our relatives with substance use disorder and shame them like how nuns and priests would shame Native children through the logic of morality. Boarding school violence lives on in the bodies of all Anishinaabe peoples but especially within the older generations who experienced the violence firsthand. This same sentiment can be applied in engaging with relatives struggling with addiction. Although major strides have been made to correct and improve the way we handle addiction in White Earth, adjustments and re-invention always need to be co-occurring. In knowing this our addicted relatives may feel too ashamed to participate in healing ceremonies they could benefit from greatly. Ceremonies are sites of relationship building. Therefore, potentially not feeling like they are welcome to access these sacred spaces, our relatives who struggle with drug use do not get to participate in traditional paths of healing with the community.

In their essay “Afterword: Meeting The Land(s) Where They Are At” Erin Konsmo (Urban Cree) and Karyn Recollet (Métis) Indigenize harm reduction and opioid prevention by arguing that all relatives deserve to “make it to the water.”¹⁴² Konsmo and Recollet extend understanding of harm reduction from the conception that both legal and illegal drug use is a part of our communities and that there are steps we can take to reduce their harmful effects to harm reduction “has and will continue to provide life for our people”—which evokes relationality.¹⁴³ According to these two Indigenous scholars, harm reduction can look like picking medicines in sites where they may not survive.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Konsmo, Marie and Karyn Recollet. “Afterword: Meeting the Land(s) Where they are at”. In *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*. Edited by Eve Tuck, Wayne Yang and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 1st ed. NY: Routledge. (2019). 241.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 242.

Through expanding on notions of harm reduction, Koonsmo and Recollet elicit the practice of relationality because they incorporate all beings and relatives into their theorizing. By situating our addicted relatives along with our medicines that are at risk to be harmed the scholars also allude to the medicine that our addicted relatives still hold in them no matter where they stand with their usage. This pushes back on the narrative that implies that drug usage is immoral and that users are inferior to non-users.¹⁴⁵ Engaging with Koonsmo and Recollet's work allows us to re-imagine futures for our addicted relatives that center on all three tenets of refusal, relationality, and resurgence. Within imagining the future of relationality in regard to drug use and youth, creating sustained networks of peer and elder support has the potential to envelop many more relatives in healing circles. Placing the power to overcome this epidemic through kinship networks of support made by community members can also ease some of the strain on our medical and mental health services. Law enforcement agencies are another oppressive force that cannot be a part of how our youth heal due to the amounts of trauma they have from their engagements with the juvenile justice system and rehabilitation centers—where they can also face sexual, physical, and mental abuse. Because Naloxone is a reactive and not preventative, we must pour more energy into helping our youth before they enter into addiction while also not leaving behind those who are struggling with usage.¹⁴⁶ Centering Ojibwe practices and lifeways are both acts of refusal—as we continue to fight back against white supremacy through rebuilding our traditional Ojibwe society—as well as acts of resurgence.

¹⁴⁵ Hart, Carl. *Drug Use for Grown Ups*. (2021). 61.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 69.

Azhe-Anishinaabe-Izhitwaawin: Resurgence

Leanne Simpson defines resurgence as a means of revitalizing “our own ways of being” as Indigenous peoples.¹⁴⁷ Simpson argues that resurgence includes remembering our traditional forms of thought and governance including how we would enact justice, and recovering our language, spiritual selves, and our artistic ways.¹⁴⁸ Expanding on this notion of resurgence within this section I want to put both Kim Anderson and Dana Trickey in conversation with each other as well as with Indigenous scholarship on political, cultural, and body sovereignty. Putting Indigenous scholars Glen Coulthard and Leanne Simpson into conversation with Kim and Dana extends rigid understandings of sovereignty outward. To continually adapt how we resist the settler state, we must continue to nurture relationships between scholarship on Indigenous peoples and the voices of Indigenous community members. Coulthard argues in his 2014 book *Red Skin, White Masks* that the politics of recognition in, “. . . its contemporary liberal form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples’ demand for recognition have historically sought to transcend.”¹⁴⁹ Coming from the field of political science, Coulthard's work focuses on rejecting settler-colonial frameworks of governance because he argues that reconciliation cannot occur through using the “master's tools.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Pub. (2011). 17-18.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Coulthard, Glen Sean. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (2014). 3.

¹⁵⁰ Lorde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." In *Sister Outsider*. Edited by Audre Lorde. United States: Ten Speed Press. (2007). 110-113.

As stated at the beginning of this section, Leanne Simpson adds to Coulthard's theorizing by defining sovereignty through the framework of resurgence. In the conclusion of his 2014 book, Coulthard draws on Simpson's position that the state sees Indigenous sovereignty to be one that "neutralizes the legitimacy of Indigenous justice claims" so that they can use performative acts of regret—through land acknowledgments, public apologies, etc.—to placate Indigenous demands.¹⁵¹ Kim and Dana theorize about what we need in White Earth to succeed as a nation. Their philosophies can also be interpreted as how we can establish new forms of sovereignty that do not depend on the "politics of recognition" that Indigenous scholars like Coulthard argue are continued forms of colonialism. In locating what we need as a nation to thrive Kim and Dana say,

We have everything that every other place has, I suppose. But it's how we can help ourselves as Anishinaabe people and know that we do not really need the government to do that for us. Because we have that ability and knowledge to do it. Sometimes we just do not have not the resources or the people to help, I suppose there are lots of people to help but we need more relatives that are helpful in ways that are more geared towards Ceremony and geared towards spirituality. And in a good way too. There are some people that can lead us down in more of an egotistical way, right? Instead of a humble way.¹⁵²

. . .we really need to be able to walk in two worlds. We need to be able to be connected to our Anishinaabe identity, culturally rich, and proud of who we are in a humble way. Our kids need to know that and feel that inside out and backward.¹⁵³

Both Kim and Dana speak of how we can reconnect as a people. Kim cites the lack of resources and people versed in Anishinaabe cultural ways as a common obstacle that gets

¹⁵¹ Coulthard, Glen Sean. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. (2014). 155.

¹⁵² Anderson, Kim. "Oral History Interview #4". Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 20, 2022. (40:09)

¹⁵³ Trickey, Dana. "Oral History Interview #3". Oral History. Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:49:23

in the way of our community being able to fully heal and thrive. Dana speaks of walking in two worlds—a statement often associated with Two-Spirit relatives—but here she implies that as Anishinaabe we need to be able to walk both in the western world and in our Anishinaabe community. When it comes to how our addicted relatives and youth fit into these frameworks they are often left out. Both Dana and Kim understand the complexities behind addiction just like relatively every White Earth citizen. Expanding further on their words or ‘reading in between the lines’ I argue they articulate an urgency to adapt how we define sovereignty to include the needs of our relatives that struggle with substance use. While they do not hold all the answers to how we accomplish these goals they do both state that we need to do this work humbly and “in a good way.” Through their insights along with the theorizing of Simpson and Coulthard, all four of their voices come together delivering one united message—tribal sovereignty and cultural resurgence are deeply intertwined.

Evoking Sovereignty Through Culture

Expanding on Anishinaabe notions of sovereignty and resurgence, another intervention against the settler-state is the revitalization of our Ojibwe language. Returning to my conversation with Kim Anderson having taught Ojibwemowin to all ages, she currently expresses her form of resurgence through teaching youth Ojibwe at the Naytahwaush Charter School. In reflecting on her work with youth Kim says,

I may be making a small dent here and thereby trying to plant that seed for the kids to know who they are right? Because I can't force them into, 'alright, I want to learn the language.' I mean, I can assert my authority in the classroom. However, in the end, they have to really decide if they're gonna keep pursuing the language or not, but what my job is, is to plant that seed and to make them

comfortable with it. And hopefully, they'll be carrying that on into the future with them and maybe that seed will grow in them someday and they will say, 'Alright, I need to really learn this language because of something Biidaabanikwe or Kim said or our other language teacher said.

So that's a big part of my job is how I see it. If I can help one or two people—and I have done that—but if I can help people that are inspired to become a language learner and pursue the language and then teach it, then I've really completed my mission. Right? I've really, and hopefully, I can get more to do that. Because look at my, my position as—so if I could teach teachers that, then there will be teaching more and more people, right. So it'll be spreading exponentially. Just like I talked about in the language, I say, 'Well, if you learn this pattern, and then you learn this pattern with five different words, and then you learn another pattern with five words, you're growing your language exponentially.' And then if you teach five people that, then you're growing a nation, you're rebuilding your nation.¹⁵⁴

Kim evokes sovereignty here through reconnecting kids to their culture and Ojibwemowin as it was one of the first things that colonizers tried to take away from us. By revitalizing Ojibwemowin Kim isn't only teaching Anishinaabe youth their language she is also teaching them about the philosophy and roots of who we are as a people. Kim reminded me throughout the interview that the English language is limiting and can never fully articulate Anishinaabe ways of thinking and being. She establishes that she cannot force children to learn their language. Instead, she must “plant that seed” and see what grows for each child to come to it on their own—as she did years ago. Although Kim does not say the word consent when she talks about her work with Youth, she speaks of how her role as an educator is to plant seeds of knowledge and not judge or control what youth end up doing with them. By framing her work this way and talking about the philosophy of the Ojibwe language I theorize that one of the unspoken values of Ojibwe is consent.

¹⁵⁴Anderson, Kim. “Oral History Interview #4”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 20, 2022. 58:56

While many Anishinaabe peoples within the White Earth community do not use the word consent and may opt for more familiar terms of respect it is still a core piece of who we are. For instance, one of our everyday practices—when we pick medicines, pray, give offerings, and take care of the land—is to ask for permission first by offering tobacco. This practice of asking for consent is also extended to our engagements with each other when we ask for guidance from elders, spiritual leaders, and language speakers we also offer them tobacco. I modeled this practice in the interviews I conducted for this project by first giving tobacco to interviewees/interviewees before they shared their stories with me. Connecting back to Dana’s interview, specifically her words on the Anishinaabe value of “gift of choice” strengthens theorizing on Anishinaabe models of consent as essential in Anishinaabe culture. However, we have struggled to honor our teachings that model consent/respect for all beings as our youth, women, and men continue to be predated on and experience sexual trauma at exorbitant rates. Complicating matters further, provided data on the rates of sexual abuse, assault, etc. within Indigenous communities is unreliable because most cases are not reported.

Body Sovereignty

Continuing to map pathways of resurgence that can shape the future of Anishinaabe people in White Earth also includes difficult conversations on the sexual trauma our relatives have experienced and/or have perpetuated. Lately, much more national focus has been directed to raising awareness for the movement for Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit peoples (MMIWG2S). While this attention is extremely overdue, now that Indigenous peoples have created a larger platform to speak on issues of inter-community sexual and gender-related violence we

also must begin to make more space for reckoning with instances of intra-community sexual and gendered abuse—an issue addressed more deeply in Brenda and Penny’s interviews in Chapter 2. Leanne Simpson calls out the lack of dialogue surrounding intra-community sexual violence by stating that,

It is within our reach to stop degrading and devaluing the lives of children, Indigenous women, and 2SQ [Two-Spirit and Queer relatives] people right now and to collectively commit to this as a radical resurgence project.¹⁵⁵

In traditional Anishinaabe society Two-Spirit, women, and children were treated as leaders of communities. Simpson provides more insight into the roles and positions that Two-Spirit relatives held in traditional Anishinaabe society through analyzing the autobiography of Ma-Nee Chacaby—a lesbian Ojibwe-Cree elder.¹⁵⁶

Chacaby explains that growing up as a “*Niizhin Ojijaak*” (her community’s word for Two-Spirit) she was taught that “*Niizhin Ojijaak*” people could marry whoever they wanted or not marry at all.¹⁵⁷ “*Niizhin Ojijaak*” couples would also adopt children who lost parents. According to Chacaby, *Niizhin Ojijaak* could also have special responsibilities in healing and times of ceremony. It has also been well-known in Anishinaabe culture that women held incredibly important leadership roles as *ogimaakwe* or headwoman and could even become chiefs—of which were usually lesbian women.¹⁵⁸ Anton Treuer also writes about Anishinaabe Two-Spirit relatives and the terminology associated with them when he explains that men who “functioned as women” were called

¹⁵⁵ Simpson Leanne. *As we have always done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (2017). 52.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 126.

¹⁵⁷ Simpson Leanne. *As we have always done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (2017). 126.

¹⁵⁸ Treuer, Anton. *The Assassination of Hole in the Day*. St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books. (2010). 26.

“*Ikwekaazo(wag)*.”¹⁵⁹ Women who “functioned as men” were called

“*Ininiikaazo(wag)*.”¹⁶⁰ According to Treuer both Two-Spirit identities were thought of as spiritually strong and were celebrated especially during times of ceremony; these roles were sacred due to their ability to have important dreams and visions.¹⁶¹

Reconnecting to these pre-colonial truths it is disparaging to see how colonialism has ravaged our communities not only through the taking of land, culture, and language but also through the complete erasure and dispossession of our social contracts. In the face of colonial violence the work of elder activists such as Madonna Thunder-Hawk—one of the women who founded W.A.R.N—continues to recreate pathways that restore Indigenous women in their traditional leadership roles.¹⁶²¹⁶³ Thunderhawk and many of the women of her generation—the AIM generation—have fought for Indigenous women’s reproductive health and advocated for MMIWG women.¹⁶⁴ Through this work Thunderhawk has modeled Indigenous women's leadership via her activism and in the process she has opened pathways for the next generation to carry on the work. With the new generation of Two-Spirit/Queer activists simultaneously fighting against pipelines and gender/sexual violence, radical shifts are co-occurring which present many threats to “settler sovereignty.”¹⁶⁵ Simpson also calls for making body sovereignty just as important

¹⁵⁹ Treuer, Anton. *The Assassination of Hole in the Day*. St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books. (2010). 27.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² W.A.R.N stands for Women of All Red Nations which is an Indigenous women's organization started by Lorelei DeCora Means, Madonna Thunderhawk, Phyllis Young, Janet McCloud, and others that advocated for the reproductive health and safety of Indigenous women especially calling out forced sterilizations. From Castle, Elizabeth A. “WARN & Nazo.” (2020). [cited 2022]. Available from <https://www.warriorwomen.org/blog/2020/3/14/warn-and-nazo>.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Simpson Leanne. *As we have always done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (2017). 127.

as political sovereignty. Not honoring body sovereignty—also known as body autonomy—also contributes greatly to the layers of trauma that lead our relatives to use drugs in unsafe ways. Body sovereignty includes teaching youth how to build healthy relationships, offering all relatives a comprehensive sexual-health curriculum, framing consent as a fundamental part of Ojibwe culture, and expansive kinship/family networks that are trained and work to prevent/reduce harm.

Revitalizing Anishinaabe society through Family Structures

Recovering more traditional elements of Anishinaabe society, Dana Trickey talks about the need to revitalize traditional Anishinaabe family structures. She speaks about how in her own life she has had to take a step back from raising her teenagers alone and let them spend time with their grandparents and other elders who gave them other spiritual and cultural teachings. Dana reflected on how our ancestors raised our children in traditional ways explaining how and why she stated,

They [Anishinaabe ancestors] knew that parents and kids were too close. That's why it was really important to have time with grandparents and aunts and uncles to mentor kids and even parent the kids. The parents were the workers traditionally. We're supposed to be working making money—well, at the time it wasn't money it was bringing food in it was making moccasins it was building a lodge it was harvesting all the food. It was doing all that stuff. The grandparents were the teachers, they were the holders of wisdom and then the aunts and uncles taught the rules and the discipline—teaching the kids right from wrong and through storytelling and those types of things.¹⁶⁶

Returning to Anishinaabe models of expansive kinship not only decolonizes our family structures but also an assertion of tribal sovereignty. In western society, we are taught that we must do things alone. We must succeed in life through fostering our own

¹⁶⁶ Trickey, Dana. “Oral History Interview #3”. Oral History. Minnesota. January 17, 2022. (1:23:2)

opportunities, tools, and resources. In comparison, Anishinaabe society (as with most Indigenous communities) emphasizes doing everything collectively via our ties to one another. When Dana speaks of allowing her children to learn from grandparents and other elders, she embodies resurgence by knowing that she cannot be the sole teacher and caregiver for her boys.

Extended family models are already the central family structure within White Earth. Connecting back to the *Four Hills of Life* Peacock and Wisuri explain that in traditional Ojibwe society married couples would live with their wife's family and grandparents would help raise children.¹⁶⁷ Within Anishinaabe communities, Mishoomis (the grandfathers) would help raise gwiwizens (the boys) and Nokomis (the grandmothers) would help raise ikwezans (the girls).¹⁶⁸ While they do not speak about who helped raise Two-Spirit youth specifically, one can deduce that they were raised with guidance from Two-Spirit elders as well as both their Mishoomis and Nokomis. The authors also go on to explain that Anishinaabe children were encouraged to imagine and play.¹⁶⁹ When disciplining children, grandparents would tell children cautionary tales to teach them right from wrong.¹⁷⁰ In contemporary Anishinaabe communities, some families have three to four generations all living under the same roof. Although this mirrors old ways of raising children, due to the systemic violence of colonialism, and hetero-patriarchy Anishinaabe families now face obstacles that can get in the way of raising their children in a “beloved” community.

¹⁶⁷ Peacock, Thomas and Marlene Wisuri. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe Wisdom*. (2006). 47.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 47-48.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 49.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 50-51.

Prescription Opioid Abuse and Anishinaabe Families

Through this, we can make the path to traditional Anishinaabe family structures more clear and more accessible for all. Anishinaabe family structures also become a mode of harm reduction and prevention because in a village model of living there are more guardians to watch and protect children and more adults for youth to turn to when they are struggling. Mathijs De Vaan and Toby Stuart recently argued that “intra-household contagion”¹⁷¹ and use of prescription opioids within family households are key culprits in the rising rates of opioid use disorder.¹⁷² Applying their argument to Native households unveils another layer of how addiction is sometimes spread throughout extended family structures. De Vaan and Stuart also argue that observation and continued reinforcement of behaviors associated with an addiction adds to the learning environment youth are exposed to at home.¹⁷³ While the environments youth grow up in are critical to their growth, the reasons why Indigenous youth grow up in unstable households are structural. Often when youth are displaced from their families by child protective services or other authority figures they are placed in the foster-care system.

There have been extremely high rates of abuse against Indigenous youth—whether it is physical, financial, emotional, or sexual—that occur within the foster care system. Indigenous youth may also engage with nuclear family models for the first time when in foster families--therefore, their association with nuclear family styles may be marked by prior experiences of abuse. Nuclear family models are isolating and can be trauma-filled

¹⁷¹ De Vaan and Mathijs define ‘intra-household contagion’ as the proliferation of substance use disorder within a family due to youth being influenced by the actions of those around them who use substances.

¹⁷² De Vaan, Mathijs and Toby Stuart. “Does Intra-household Contagion Cause an Increase in Prescription Opioid Use?” *American Sociological Review* 84(4). (2019). 577.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* 580-1.

because all the weight of responsibility that comes with raising children is placed on two people—or in many cases on a single parent. Anishinaabe traditional family structures are abundant and extensive as each family member takes on different roles and the weight of raising children is spread throughout a larger network of loving caregivers, teachers, and spiritual leaders.

Indian Child Welfare Act

To push back against western, nuclear family models as a tribal nation we must make more resources and housing available to extended family models—and allow for more open housing for relatives at all levels of addiction. Too many people living under one roof can also be a deciding factor in removing Indigenous youth from their homes. According to a report from the National Indian Child Welfare Association—published in October of 2021—Minnesota has the highest disproportionality rate of Native American children in the foster care system in the United States.¹⁷⁴ While disproportionality of other minority groups has gone down over time, for Native American children the rates have continued to rise.¹⁷⁵ The same report states that implicit bias is a potential determinant behind these numbers—this claim is substantiated in the interview I conducted with Eugene Sommers in chapter 3. Sommers spoke with me about the implicit bias he has witnessed while working alongside non-native caseworkers in White Earth stating,

. . .our workers that are non-native or they're not from the reservation—I'd go on a call with them and they'll see the conditions of some of these houses, and they're

¹⁷⁴ National Indian Child Welfare Association. *Disproportionality in Child Welfare: Fact Sheet*. 2021. Available from https://www.nicwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NICWA_11_2021-Disproportionality-Fact-Sheet.pdf

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

like, ‘Oh, my God, I need to remove these kids right away.’ It's like, no, that's kind of how government housing is here. You know?¹⁷⁶ Not understanding the nuances of Native American households and the conditions under which our Native youth live, child protection services has historically been an institution that has robbed Native youth of their culture by displacing them from their families.¹⁷⁷

The passing of the Indian Child Welfare Act in 1978 marked an effort at the federal level to protect Native children from being displaced and sent to non-Native families.¹⁷⁸ The act also actively supports family reunification.¹⁷⁹ Many advocates for ICWA have stated one of the major oversights of the policy is that it only protects children that are enrolled in a tribal nation.¹⁸⁰ In an article written by Jessica Washington on the Minnesota foster care system, she interviews Native American mothers and their experiences with CPS and foster care services.¹⁸¹ One mother she spoke with, Shana King, talked about her fight to regain custody of her two children during her three-year struggle to overcome her substance use disorder.¹⁸² CPS took her children from her after she overdosed in a public park and from that point on she felt “demonized by her white social worker.”¹⁸³

¹⁷⁶ Sommers, Eugene. “Oral History Interview #1”. Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, (2022). 16:11

¹⁷⁷ Washington, Jessica. “Minnesota’s Foster Care System Perpetuates the Legacy of Racist Boarding Schools, Native Mothers and Experts Say.” (2021). [cited 2022]. Available from <https://centerforhealthjournalism.org/fellowships/projects/minnesota-s-foster-care-system-perpetuates-legacy-racist-boarding-schools>.

¹⁷⁸ National Indian Child Welfare Association. *Disproportionality in Child Welfare: Fact Sheet*. 2021.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Washington, Jessica. “Minnesota’s Foster Care System Perpetuates the Legacy of Racist Boarding Schools, Native Mothers and Experts Say.” (2021).

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Washington, Jessica. “Minnesota’s Foster Care System Perpetuates the Legacy of Racist Boarding Schools, Native Mothers and Experts Say.” (2021).

¹⁸³ Ibid.

Once King was able to get her children back, she worked to wean her son off of the thirty-three medications he had been prescribed for his recently diagnosed cerebral palsy.¹⁸⁴ Unfortunately, King's son passed December 2021 from reactions to his medications. Knowing the effects of substance use disorder personally, King still advocated that addiction is never a justifiable reason to remove children.¹⁸⁵ Not being able to see one's children is often a major contributing factor to why relatives who struggle with substance use continue to seek drugs to cope. To find other ways of helping families stay together King offers the solution of creating spaces in Indigenous communities for "family treatment centers, where we can still eat dinner together and get the support we need."¹⁸⁶ First, we must reckon with the historical impacts of CPS and how we can disassemble structures that actively oppress Indigenous Youth by stripping them of their own autonomy.

Tying back to Sommers statements on non-Native social workers, Washington also highlights how institutions such as CPS, social services, and foster care reinforce colonial practices of Indigenous erasure. Sommers illustrated the implicit bias non-Native social workers can showcase as they fail to look beyond the material conditions an Indigenous child lives in to see if they are having their basic needs met.¹⁸⁷ Washington speaks to how fatal these western systems often are as Native American children continue to fall through the cracks at alarming rates.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, many Native American youth

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Sommers, Eugene. "Oral History Interview #1". Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, (2022). 16:11

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

advocates are calling for the abolishment of the system altogether.¹⁸⁹ By calling for the end of CPS and affiliated institutions we can begin to envision a future where our children remain with their families. Revitalizing our Anishinaabe traditional family structures is one step we can take towards building autonomy from colonial institutions that perpetuate harm against our Indigenous youth.

Chapter 3 Ganoonidiwag: They Speak to, Address, Call Each Other

Eugene Sommers

On January 14th, 2022, I pulled up to the RTC building to meet with Eugene Sommers. As I am signing in, Eugene and the receptionist are discussing the recent passing of American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Clyde Bellecourt. As I follow Eugene down the hall I wonder aloud about Clyde's funeral. "No, the wake is here today" he replies. As Clyde begins his journey to another world, where the spirits will recognize him as Neegawnwayweedun, the "Thunder before the storm." I think about his legacy specifically as an internationally renowned Indigenous activist with proud roots and humble beginnings in White Earth. The actions and demands of the AIM and WARN generation for greater access to public health resources and protections across the Indian country are the foundations for the White Earth public health response to the opioid epidemic.

As Eugene and I head into the conference room bright streams of sunshine radiate through the floor-to-ceiling windows. Soft-spoken and laid-back Eugene's calm

¹⁸⁹ Washington, Jessica. "Minnesota's Foster Care System Perpetuates the Legacy of Racist Boarding Schools, Native Mothers and Experts Say." (2021).

demeanor signal that this is just another day. Regardless, I am glad to know he seems eager to talk to me about his life. Reorienting myself to a shared Anishinaabe truth that not everything has to be said, I sit back, listen, and let Eugene set the pace of our conversation. Eugene Sommers also known as Ogimaa Binesi formally introduces himself as the Director of Economic Development for the White Earth Nation. He qualifies this work by stating it is the “professional work” he does—implying that it is only one of the many roles he currently holds. When asked about what other jobs he has held in the last couple of years he goes into a lengthy timeline of working in virtually every section of employment the tribe has to offer from the Casino to ICW¹⁹⁰. Prior to his current work with the tribe, Eugene was a high school teacher and has also led youth programming.

I’ve known Eugene since I was 12 or so. The first job my father had on the White Earth Rez was at the school as a paraprofessional who helped make sure students were staying on track with their online courses. Due to the small size of our community, Waubun had a unique layout because the school held both a middle school and a high school under one roof. During the in-between class times, I would hang out in my dad’s classroom, and often Eugene would be in there joking around with friends. It wasn’t until much more recently, that we began to reconnect and become friends.

More recently, I reconnected with Eugene around his cultural LLC—1855 Supply, where he has designed a program that works with Indigenous youth and adults to teach them how to do traditional Ojibwe practices such as harvesting Wild Rice. Having not harvested since I was 9 or 10 years old, I reached out to Eugene to see if I could harvest

¹⁹⁰ ICW stands for the Indian Child Welfare

with him and his brother. In the fall of 2020, we went out early one morning and gathered rice—I remember the quiet morning felt especially sacred as the birds sang above the water and the sun rose slowly over the horizon. In the last few years, Eugene transitioned from being a high school Anishinaabe Culture educator to his current position in the tribal offices for the White Earth Nation. Through his various positions, I wanted to learn from Eugene as someone deeply committed to our community who works to reconnect/learn traditional pathways.

He is also a well-known positive, sober, male role model for our Anishinaabe youth, especially among our young men. One of the highlights of his youth-mentorship work includes the boxing gym he’s run for the last 10 years in the Naytahwaush village. As one of the youngest people to hold a director position within the WE tribal government Eugene is excited about the future projects he has coming up. In reminiscing about his past, he speaks with an air of nostalgia but also with a deep appreciation for where he now is in life. “I started with youth work, and I’m still involved in youth work.”¹⁹¹ In his new role, Eugene is firmly committed to bringing youth perspectives back into meeting with the WE Tribal Council members.

Over the course of our discussion, Sommers weaves a trail of stories that encompass his thoughts on tribal governance, youth work, and challenges in the community—including the opioid epidemic. He also reflects on the lack of access to resources for White Earth citizens and how systems are being improved upon. Throughout our interview the more I listen to Eugene it becomes clearer how

¹⁹¹ Sommers, Eugene. “Oral History Interview #1”. Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 1:15

Anishinaabe values guide his life and work. The traditional Anishinaabe values that are most taught include Minwaadendamowin (respect), Debwewin (truth), Aakodewewin (bravery), Nibwaakawin (wisdom), Zaagidiwin (love), Gizhewaadiziwin (generosity), and Dibaadendiziwin (humility). While modeling all the values, the themes of truth, wisdom, and humility are especially present when Eugene speaks. As an educator, he speaks of the barriers Native teachers face in trying to educate youth truthfully about their history and culture.

As our conversation progressed, I was given more insight into Eugene's philosophy I received especially when it came to modeling the value of Gizhaawaso. Gizhaawaso translates to protector of the young, Eugene's experiences demonstrate this value through how he honors, protects, and cares for Anishinaabe youth. Coincidentally, Gizhaawaso is also the name of a program Eugene previously worked on that provided services to White Earth families in need to aid in minimizing the rates of children being taken away from their homes due to financial instability. For Sommers, his youth work centers predominantly around young men. As a community deeply affected by incarceration, addiction, and abuse many Anishinaabe men are not in the position to mentor young men as their entanglements within systems of oppression create massive barriers to healing. Sommers does not shy away from calling attention to this reality; but he sees the remedies to these issues through the intersections of youth work, tribal governance, and the resurgence of Anishinaabe seasonal teachings. As a current employee of the Reservation Tribal Office Eugene currently splits his time between his day job in tribal administration and fulfills his passion for youth work by coaching young men in his boxing gym located in Naytahwaush, MN.

Talking with Eugene reminds me of what is and what can be. He acknowledges our struggles as a people, but he also continuously brings in stories of the past, present, and what he hopes will come in the future. It's very clear who has taught him and helped guide him into becoming a community leader. He credits his many teachers often for the person he has become. Having studied the history of our people Ogimaa Binesi speaks of relationality, humility, and commitment to his community when thinking about how he got to where he sits now. However, he is not idealistic by any means, acknowledging the harms committed against the Anishinaabe while also highlighting how institutions of power and oppression have been imposed and now self-perpetuate. Reflecting on the lessons of his life thus far Eugene's stories provide the context to the values he now works to embody. Situating his life and work inside the White Earth community when asked what that means to him Sommers reflects on times prior to when drugs entered the community altering everything in their path.

I can still remember when there was a time when everyone kind of talked to each other, and we were able to go to each other's houses. It was pretty much an open-door community.¹⁹²

Eugene went on to explain that when he was growing up in Naytahwaush he could go to anyone's house to simply grab a drink of water and could run around the village with friends unsupervised. Now, times have changed drastically due to the onset of the opioid epidemic to the point where Eugene knows his younger siblings, nephews, and nieces never got to experience the "open door community" he had growing up. He continues

¹⁹² Sommers, Eugene. "Oral History Interview #1". Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 20:36

elaborating that now the community supports each other at a distance, not in the close-knit ways he had been nurtured as an adolescent.

Sommers remembers 2004 or 2005 as the height of the opioid epidemic. Harm Reduction or overdose prevention was an idea Eugene remembers as being extremely radical when he was younger.

I think when the opioid epidemic was at its worst, there was a lot of pushback on prevention services, such as Narcan distribution.¹⁹³

Less than two decades later and now all tribal officers carry Narcan on them and are trained on how to administer the life-saving drug. Narcan training is held often, and the drug is distributed widely throughout the community. Sommers locates the deep historical trauma our people must cope with as the root of addiction.

So like, with harm reduction there was a lot of pushback in the beginning because it's like, "these are your choices" and "why are you doing this?" and a lot of people weren't informed about historical trauma and how people cope. And so at one point in time, people would cope by seeking out people in the community. But when the doors started shutting, they weren't able to cope. And the new thing was "there are these pills now. And you can take them to make you feel better", and that transitioned into "now those pills are really expensive, but there's this other derivative that you can get for a lot cheaper". And then it became laced with fentanyl. And people started dying.¹⁹⁴

For Eugene one of the greatest solutions in remedying the intergenerational pain underlying addiction is returning to traditional pathways including Anishinaabe ceremonies, seasonal traditions such as harvesting, and traditional forms of governance. In illustrating why these remedies are critical Sommers touches on his own experience, crediting the mentors that have helped him stay on "Bimaadiziwin" or "the good path."

¹⁹³ Ibid. 22:07

¹⁹⁴ Sommers, Eugene. "Oral History Interview #1". Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 22:48.

Eugene speaks of the guidance and conversations he received from his mentors that highlight the reciprocity at the heart of Anishinaabe culture.

And I would say like, the biggest mentor would have been my coach Terry Roy—he ran the boxing program. And I remember seeing the progression of what we had, of what we built.¹⁹⁵

Coach Roy taught Eugene how to protect himself whilst also teaching about the importance of discipline and consistency.

We used to have, like this, this little homemade chest that we keep all of our boxing equipment in, and I remember, we had to take the equipment down when we were done. And we put it in the corner of the sports complex, and, but we used to—when we'd have practice, Terry would get a ladder, and then help them hook up the chain to the basketball hoop. And that would be our punching bag. I'd run around the sports complex a couple of times, and he would hit mitts with me and that was our, that was our gym.¹⁹⁶

Eugene's reflections on his work with youth resemble the commitment that Coach Roy modeled in the boxing gym. Now a part of the Reservation Business Committee (RBC) as the head of economic development, the formal title has been an adjustment for him as he is a community person first—therefore his work with youth is often what grounds him in why he is deeply committed to improving conditions for younger and future generations. Working with youth continues to challenge Eugene's understanding of how much more effort there needs to be put into reconnecting youth with their traditions. In one instance, Eugene remembers a time when he took youth Wild-Ricing and his astonishment when he realized the youth didn't know about the traditional uses of the plants surrounding them.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. 28:32

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Wild-Ricing is the act of harvesting Wild Rice as it grows in lakes across northern Minnesota.

But we would go to a village and say “Kids, let's go ricing, I got everything you need, just jump in the pickup and drive to Lake and we go ricing all day” like, how do you do it—you just give them a little low down and send them out. And that was the first year I did it. It was like, wow, like, I can't believe there are so many kids that don't know how to rice. Then after that, I was like, “Wow, how many kids don't know how to hunt?” Then you're hunting and it's like I pick some sumac and just start sucking on it. And they're like, “what are you doing?”, I said “What? It's just sumac. It's like candy.” And then he's like, ‘I didn't know, you could eat those things I was like, “how many of you kids don't know about your medicines?”’¹⁹⁸

In the canonical book of White Earth history through women’s eyes—*Night Flying Woman*, Ignatia Broker also talks about how nowadays “kids know the songs on the radio but not the songs for the drum.”¹⁹⁹ Knowing that assimilation has affected our community deeply, how can we teach our children to acknowledge it without uncoiling their worldviews to the point of absolute pessimism? Kindly and gently community leaders like Eugene Sommer are working to introduce Anishinaabe youth to the effects of colonization while also bringing in cultural, spiritual, and seasonal teachings of Anishinaabe pathways. Having lived in White Earth most of his life, Eugene has first-hand memory of how the community has shifted. In becoming a good ancestor, he is passing on traditions and Anishinaabe ways of life to the next generation as a means of healing the historical and current pain our people cope with. Although for Sommers the healing does not just extend to the youth, it also needs to extend to the adults currently in power through how we govern ourselves.

One of the continued issues White Earth faces is the complexity of our system of governance. Eugene is forthcoming and transparent about the path that lies ahead to

¹⁹⁸ Sommers, Eugene. “Oral History Interview #1”. Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 1:05:36

¹⁹⁹ Broker, Ignatia. *Night Flying Woman: An Ojibway Narrative*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press. (1983). Xxiii.

educate more White Earth citizens about the function, power, and impact of tribal governance. During the 2016 tribal elections, Eugene began to become interested in tribal politics. He remembers one elder speaker whose words stuck with him the most.

Marvin Manypenny. I remember him and everything that he was talking about—like about being a sovereign nation. What does it mean? And he's talking about ‘well, is our police department legitimate?’ And, it was really interesting to think about the agreements that we made, and whether our tribal government is overreaching.²⁰⁰

This influential elder, Marvin Manypenny was a White Earth activist who was known for his work on land reclamation through a series of court cases.²⁰¹ Manypenny passed in 2020 at the age of 73—leaving a massive legacy of grassroots leadership and radical Indigenous action to be remembered for years to come. Sommers’ storytelling and influence by elders like Marvin Manypenny embodies Cree scholar Craig Womack’s statement that “politics, land, and story are deeply intertwined entities.”²⁰² To Sommers, some of the ways we can shift away from colonial systems of governance are by recovering our histories of traditional forms of governance and decolonizing how we interact with each other. White Earth citizen and scholar Giniwgiizhig or Henry Flocken recovers how chiefs were chosen pre-colonially in Ojibwe society in his dissertation on traditional forms of Ojibwe chiefdom.²⁰³ He states that “Traditional Ojibwe civil chief

²⁰⁰ Sommers, Eugene. “Oral History Interview #1”. Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 47:55

²⁰¹ LaDuke, Winona. “Remembering Marvin Manypenny – a Champion” *The Circle Newspaper*. 2020. [Cited 2022] Available from: <https://thecirclenews.org/cover-story/remembering-marvin-manypenny-a-champion/>

²⁰² Womack, Craig S. *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (1999). 58.

²⁰³ Flocken, Henry. "An Analysis of Traditional Ojibwe Civil Chief Leadership." Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota. (2013). 1-184.

leadership was emergent, symbolic, and value-driven.²⁰⁴ Ogimaag (civil chiefs) were chosen by how they lived their lives and served their communities.”²⁰⁵

In the position I'm in now, I have to fill positions where you need a four-year degree and it's hard to come by around here, especially when our college does not offer one. But . . . I'll take experience working with our people and working with harm reduction programs.²⁰⁶

Sommers goes on to say that people who live and work within our unique community have valuable expertise and experience on par with white outsiders with higher education degrees. In *Red on Red*, Craig Womack also highlights the importance of community over western knowledge stating that

When I am back home (that is, in Indian communities in Oklahoma), I am always amazed when I encounter individuals who are encyclopedic in their knowledge of their own tribe—they sort of put me in a state of awe.²⁰⁷

Musing over more of Manypenny's views Sommers recalls that Marvin “. . .was more about preservation and rebuilding. He had a lot of radical ideas like, “let's fire all these non-natives and hire all our own people.”²⁰⁸ To Womack and Sommers, no amount of academic understanding can compare to the breadth of collective histories Indigenous community members hold and continue to pass down from generation to generation.

The Indigenous radicalism of Manypenny's generation reverberates throughout current Indigenous scholarship and how we now understand tribal sovereignty. Scholars such as Glen Coulthard challenge us to reconsider how we—as modern Indigenous peoples—want to define sovereignty. Coulthard argues in his 2014 book *Red Skin, White*

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 2.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Sommers, Eugene. “Oral History Interview #1”. Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022. 48:30.

²⁰⁷ Womack, Craig S. *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*. (1999). 9.

²⁰⁸ Sommers, Eugene, “Oral History Interview #1”. January 14, 2022. 48:30

Masks that the politics of recognition in “. . .its contemporary liberal form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples’ demand for recognition have historically sought to transcend.”²⁰⁹ Taking Coulthard's argument into account it is easy to see the connection between each generation represented by Manypenny (age 73), Womack (62), Coulthard (57), and Sommers (27) as they all share intergenerational struggles of fighting against colonial-created systems of tribal governance and have worked to raise the consciousness of tribal citizens.

Therefore, the more we can collectively support and distill what we need to thrive as Anishinaabe people the sooner we can reconnect to our spiritual guidance and reestablish our relationships with non-human beings. For example, the radical reimagining of our community I analyzed from Eugene’s story includes restoring forms of Anishinaabe traditional governance, advocating for food sovereignty, economic autonomy, and gentle parenting/mentorship that centers on love above all. Some of the things on the horizon for him that he is excited about with his new position are powerful acts of bringing our Anishinaabe youth back into how we govern. Although he still faces some pushback as many people are stuck in old ways of doing things Eugene is extremely hopeful about the plans, he's creating to make youth feel more knowledgeable and empowered when it comes to how their nation is run. In stating what he hopes for the future of our youth he said,

I always remember, when I first started in the government, they were like, ‘bring Eugene in—he's young. You know, what do these kids want? What do they want? What do you think's a good idea, we are gonna take your input, cuz we think this

²⁰⁹ Coulthard, Glen Sean. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. University of Minnesota Press. (2014). 3.

is it? What do you think?’ Whatever my response was, they were like, ‘Well, we will just keep playing with this.’ Like, my big thing is—why are we asking each other what youth want? Why don’t we just bring them in, like we used to do? Let’s ask them. So we are working on reinstating our youth councils and talking about summer internships, where they work with us and we need them to understand the work that we do so they can take over someday. So we can pass the torch.²¹⁰

Although Eugene is incredibly humble, and he hopes to “pass the torch” in the future, he is already doing the work to ensure that our community will be better for incoming generations. He is a good ancestor already and it shows through how many young men and women look up to him and seek him out for guidance. Since our interview, Eugene has decided to run for tribal office again. Radical change is brewing, and the younger generation has started to step up. I am excited to see where he goes with his life. Eugene isn’t alone in his efforts like so many other Anishinaabe women, men and two-spirited folks are also paving new paths for younger generations to thrive.

Brenda Weaver

Speaking with Brenda Weaver I was consistently reminded of how strong, fierce, and humorous our Anishinaabe women are. Established in her age and an Ikwe in the community, Brenda takes on so many roles it's hard to keep track of where her personal life and work differ from each other—as is often the case for Indigenous professionals. Like Eugene, Brenda is also committed to helping Anishinaabe youth. As a mother, who has been on this earth longer than Sommers she takes on different roles and views within the community. Working as a youth worker for most of her adult life Brenda ran programming at the White Earth Boys and Girls Club for many years—a program that was

²¹⁰ Sommers, Eugene, “Oral History Interview #1”. January 14, 2022. 1:21:28

just recently granted 1.25 million dollars.²¹¹ A major part of Brenda’s life is raising foster children –now that all her kids are grown up and out of the house. A large part of our interview is spent on her approach to parenting and taking care of youth, especially how her methods have evolved throughout her life. Therefore, the central tenet of our conversation revolves around Minogi’aawaso, or “she/he raises children in a good way.” Brenda is extremely reflexive when she speaks about how she has changed her views on how to raise Native children to be happy, healthy, and thriving.

Having grown up mostly in Northside Minneapolis Brenda moved to the city from WE when she was 5 years old and returned to, WE at 23. Her Urban-Indian upbringing shines through during our talk as she says things as they are—raw and honest. Brenda attended a public school in North Side but then transferred to the newly created charter school Heart of the Earth Survival School /Oh-Day-Aki founded by AIM.²¹² Incidentally, Brenda speaks about her frustration attending Heart of the Earth- she says she didn’t learn much. It was Weaver's tenacity that propelled her to become an A student once she returned to public school and had a lot of catching up to do. Due to her hard work, Brenda now passes on the value of education to her children, grandchildren, and foster children she raises as well as the youth and young adults she works within her current position as a Supplemental Youth Employment Coordinator at the White Earth Nation

²¹¹ Monk, Jim. “White Earth Nation Receives \$1.25 Million for Boys & Girls Clubs”. *KVVR Local News*. 2022. [Cited 2022] Available from https://www.kvrr.com/2022/03/18/white-earth-nation-receives-1-25-million-for-boys-girls-clubs/?fbclid=IwAR1VINdXDU0KZE6LUJqk5zbZHMbhDcq6svMEQ8jXH_f6lFGY4_UboYfVRYE

²¹² Heart of the Earth Survival School /Oh-Day-Aki began in 1972 and was run until 2008.

Workforce Center. Her position entails helping community members of all ages obtain jobs and “help them with whatever they may need to stay employed.”²¹³

Although “Beloved Child” is a concept most referenced in Dakota culture, Brenda's worldview revitalizes old Ojibwe conceptions of the “Beloved Child” as well. Beloved child refers to raising Indigenous children in ways that instill within them that they are sacred, honored, and loved. Ignatia Broker in her book *Night flying Woman* validates this claim by mentioning that “the children of the Ojibway are the beloved.”²¹⁴ Part of healing intergenerational trauma is through raising children with incredible amounts of love. Our next generation is currently being brought into the world. Therefore, we must continue to pass on the necessary teachings to their parents so that they can raise their children in a good way. In modeling *minogi'aawaso* Brenda is raising children in a sober household where they all feel safe, have access to clean water and nutritious food, can play outside safely, and can talk to her about anything.²¹⁵ Raised by the boarding school generation—who were stolen from their families and put under the care of violent nuns and priests—Brenda has had to radically reconsider the way she parents. As Anishinaabe peoples, we have survived all efforts to erase our spiritual, traditional, and relational connections through assimilationist boarding school violence. We—along with all Indigenous people who faced erasure—continue to make meaning of our trauma and find the fractures we must heal to stand fully in who we are.

²¹³ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022. 1:49

²¹⁴ Broker, Ignatia. 1983. *Night Flying Woman*. 57.

²¹⁵ *Minogi'aawaso* translates to “she/he raises children in a good way”

Applying Dian Million’s “Felt Theory” she sees “. . . the lasting effects of colonialism as a ‘felt, affective relationship’ that is ‘intuited as well as thought’”.²¹⁶²¹⁷ Million’s understanding of trauma as an “affective relationship” connects to how Weaver speaks about her relationship to the pain she carries with her.²¹⁸ Brenda personifies this when she speaks of how every generation has withheld a piece of violence—to not pass it down to their children. Remembering the abuse her mother suffered when her father was struggling with alcohol use Brenda speaks about how healing from that pain has allowed her to see what he did not pass down. Although her father was physically abusive toward her mother, he was not abusive toward Brenda or her siblings. Brenda views this as an act of intergenerational healing through breaking cycles of abuse.

I think that they [the older generation] all suffered [from boarding schools], but he [Brenda's father] was really abusive and I think we—my family, our generation—decided that the abusiveness had to end, we changed that. I know that because my brother would spank his children who got a little rough, but I know that along the line, he changed and took away that abusiveness. We took that away from our children. I know that we didn't molest our children. I know our children have been pretty safe from all that. My dad took that away from us. He could have done that with his family. But he was abusive. To us, we can chip away that sexual abuse—he didn't pass that on. So we're not passing on this abusive behavior either. And my children are turning everything around. They want to be so good to their children.²¹⁹

Reflecting on this sentiment, it can be difficult to see where the abuse ends, and healing begins. Brenda was able to raise her children in a home where they all felt safe and where they didn’t witness abuse in their living environment. There are multitudinous ways in which Native people continue to resist, persist, heal, and thrive. While it is a tough truth

²¹⁶ Affective here means an action that produces an effect upon something else.

²¹⁷ Baldy, Cutcha Risling Baldy. 2018. *We Are Dancing for You*. University of Washington Press.127.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022. 1:07:16

that Brenda shares about her life, it is also a recognition of imperfect but present acts of intergenerational healing that have occurred within her family. Her ability to assign meaning, value, and nuance to painful memories demonstrates her autonomy over her experiences. Brenda sets the narrative of her life—a radical practice as she evokes a form of sovereignty through establishing her power over her story. The lesson she leaves me with from this segment of our conversation is that with each generation we grow more connected, more whole, and more healed as a people.

Brenda goes on to explain that while she feels that she did not tell her children she loved them enough, and was stern when parenting, now she looks at parenting differently.

I know that with my own children. They were adults before I learned what I needed to learn [parenting]. I didn't have a whole lot of people to give me advice, to look up to, and even now I still feel like I don't. But I think going through a lot of ceremonies helped me see things—it opened up my eyes a little bit more.²²⁰

Because of her new approach—being gentler to her adopted and foster children, Brenda has begun to heal the wounds boarding school inflicted on her family. These wounds impacted how she was parented but she is now working to end cycles of abuse. Foraging a new way of how she connects with her children has not been an easy task, but she recognizes how important the parenting changes are especially when it comes to how she has raised foster children.

A lot of it changed when I got foster children. I realized things were so much easier when I was just a consistent parent—just to stay on track, do not allow them to sway you one way or another.²²¹

²²⁰ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. January 25, 2022. 8:49

²²¹ Ibid. 20:54.

Consistency and patience are now the central tenets of how Brenda approaches parenting which for many Native children is extremely comforting compared to the turbulence that often comes with growing up in marginalized communities. Changing her approach to parenting was also a radical act because it allowed Brenda to break a cycle of trauma in her life. For her intergenerational healing is about breaking cycles within each generation so that they are not passed down to the next.

Not having a lot of positive models of parenting to learn from Brenda changed how she raised children from what she watched on TV as well as from reconnecting to ceremonial ways. “And people think I'm crazy when I say this, but I watched “Supernanny” on TV. I used to watch it, like, all the time.”²²² Although it may sound out of the ordinary to receive parenting advice from reality TV, it is often a tool for many Native American parents to learn different forms of parenting as they often only know what is passed down to them. Regardless of how Weaver has received new lessons on how to raise her children she now embodies the Anishinaabe value of Minogi’aawaso as she loves her children unconditionally and tries to meet the needs of all youth that live with her regardless of where they are at. Deeply believing in people's capacity to change Brenda does not shy away from the challenges that youth work entails. “So absolutely, you can change and absolutely, you can get people to understand and listen to get them out of old ways of thinking.”²²³ It is critical to highlight that Brenda states that it is

²²² *Supernanny* was a British reality TV Show that ran five seasons from 2004-2011 and centered on Nanny Jo Frost—a British woman who traveled around to different families to teach parents how to improve their relationships with their children through working on child behavior and discipline. Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. January 25, 2022. 6:03.

²²³ *Ibid.* 26:06

possible to get people to shift “old ways of thinking” as it is often those old ways that hinder us from healing the most.

Adding to Brenda’s experiences of rekindling unconditional love in her family Anishinaabe Scholar Leanne Simpson speaks similarly of her belief that “. . .our ancestors love us unconditionally and are willing to work with us so no Indigenous bodies feel the pain and hurt of exclusion, shame, or outright violence in our most intimate spaces.”²²⁴ Bringing that teaching forward in her own life, by creating a household of abundant love, understanding, structure, and care Brenda shares how many of the youth she has housed end up wanting to come back to live with her even after they are able to be reunited with their parents.

They say to me, “we are ready to come back now” because their home life isn't bad or anything, but it doesn't have consistency. Things like, “well, my mom doesn't make me clean.” Or “we don't have to sit down at the table and eat” –just the little bitty things.²²⁵

Lack of consistency and structure within Native families is an often-overlooked effect of colonialism. Connecting back to boarding schools and the violence our elders experienced at the hands of nuns and priests, parents in our community have not only inherited those historical truths but also now must contend with substance abuse and how it ripples throughout families—leaving a blazing path of pain in its wake.

Resmaa Manakem, a psychotherapist who specializes in the effects of trauma on the body says that “unhealed trauma acts like a rock thrown into a pond; it causes ripples

²²⁴ Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. University of Minnesota Press. (2017). 122.

²²⁵ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022. 32:48.

that move outward, affecting many other bodies over time.”²²⁶ The ripples of the trauma Native peoples face now resonate in our youth as the burden continues to get heavier. Brenda speaks of how many of the young women that she provides a home to have experienced sexual assault either within their families or social circles.

Now that I have these teenage girls, and I'm hearing some stories from them, they tell me everything, and the things that they have had to deal with. I have four of them. So three, two of them, I know for sure. Because they talk openly to me, and they tell me their stories, whom I know for sure, have been sexually abused. Not just for a little while but for a long while from people they knew, right there. And, one of them was in a foster home and it was happening.²²⁷

Manakem sheds light on the interactions of layered trauma stating that “as these traumas compound each other, or as each new or recent traumatic experience triggers the energy of older experiences, they can create ever-increasing damage to human lives and human bodies”²²⁸ These compounded traumas snowball and become hidden under youth attempts to cope with a pain so deep they often don’t realize how far the roots of it extend. Therefore, many young Anishinaabe peoples try to mitigate the harm they experience through substance use, entering unhealthy relationships, and engaging in potentially damaging sexual behavior. The weight and subsequent manifestations of all this trauma are repeatedly mistaken for “negative attitudes,” “ungratefulness,” and intentionally harming caregivers out of spite. Breaking down the defensive walls youth employ as a means of protection, caregivers like Brenda have come to understand that

²²⁶ Manakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies*. (2017). 40.

²²⁷ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022. 30:14

²²⁸ Manakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies*. (2017). 45.

what our youth need is the very things they will often run away from out of fear of the unknown—healthy love and trust.

Returning to the discussion of her career Brenda speaks of longing to help guide and support the next generation of parents through her work.

That was what I was so hoping to try and get involved in, you know, that was kind of what I wanted to do with my next step in life—to help young mothers and young people. Even if I had to teach them how to just clean a bathroom or anything—that's what I wanted to do.²²⁹

Modeling her form of intergenerational healing work Brenda has many ideas on how to help the next generation so that they do not have to struggle in the same ways that she did. For instance, she wants more programming for young parents and women to learn how to break generational cycles of abusive parenting and instead foster new tools to uplift themselves and their children. While Brenda wants to help young parents model healthy parenting, obstacles as simple as not having a reliable way to disseminate information to tribal members often stand in the way of organizing programs. Lack of proper communication between tribal entities and tribal members gets in the way of creating consistency in programming and making sure that members know what services are available to them—especially programming for Anishinaabe youth. Not only seeing things through the lens of what is challenging but also having unwavering faith in the potential for change, Brenda speaks of her dreams for the future of her community.

One of Brenda's biggest hopes for White Earth's future centers around the land the tribe recently bought back from a Christian retreat. Her dream for the newly returned land is simple—to create.

²²⁹ Weaver, Brenda. "Oral History Interview #5". Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022. 34:47.

But they're saying all these buildings that are there are not usable? Well, let's, you know, if we've got all of these buildings—let's fix them up, let's start creating—in my opinion, there should be a safe haven like that in every community, where people can go and they can just take this big place and build a whole bunch of little bitty houses in the summertime.

So we can start creating—creating gardens, creating families, creating new things, because to me that is what it [bringing the community together] needs to be about. And I say that needs to be in every one of our communities where we start that and just keep building up and building up and pulling in more people. And you know, till pretty soon the whole community, the whole natural community of Naytahwaush, or White Earth, and everybody's getting it, you know?²³⁰

Here Brenda speaks not only of community building but of Indigenous futurity. Mvskoke scholar, geographer, and methodologist Laura Harjo defines Indigenous Futurity as

the enactment of theories and practices that activate our ancestor's unrealized possibilities, the act of living out the futures we wish for a contemporary moment, and the creation of the conditions for these futures.²³¹

Brenda evokes futurity by desiring a community built by her people for her people. She “activates her ancestors' unrealized possibilities” through wanting to reclaim ancestral spaces to make circles of care and creation.” When speaking of these future sites of creation Brenda’s vision also honors the structure of traditional Anishinaabe society.

Within Indigenous communities is it easy to only look at the ongoing crises and hardships we experience, therefore, it's challenging to make space to contemplate where we are headed and what we can make for ourselves.

In Leanne Simpson's ground-breaking essay “Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation,” she speaks of a fictionalized character named Kwezens. While Kwezens may be a fictionalized character she is representative of all

²³⁰ Weaver, Brenda. “Oral History Interview #5”. Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022.

²³¹ Harjo, Laura. 2019. *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke tools of Futurity*. University of Arizona Press. 5

young Anishinaabekwe. In reflecting on the story of Kwezens as Simpson has learned it, she says the story is her favorite “because nothing violent happens in it.”²³² That is a hope that sustained me when I reflected on Brenda’s words—that someday our Kwezens and Anishinaabekwe will only have stories where ‘nothing violent’ happens in them. In Kwezens story she is continually met with “core Nishinaabeg values” which Simpson categorizes as “love, compassion, and understanding.”²³³ Kwezens, “centers her day around her own freedom and joy.”²³⁴ In radically imagining this future for our youth the paths we create will set the tone for how they continue the work after we leave. There are small glimpses of light that people like Brenda Weaver provide which generate a feeling that maybe this future isn’t so out of reach after all. Also, an Anishinaabekwe—Penny Kagigebi also shares glimpses of light through our discussion of spirituality, Two-Spirit identity, and making spaces for our relatives struggling with drug use to access ceremonies. Penny, like Brenda, also shares her journey of reconnecting to her traditional Anishinaabe pathways.

Penny Kagigebi

I pull into the Kagigebi driveway wearing my ribbon skirt with a small pouch of tobacco in tow. Walking into Penny’s house I am welcomed by her and her partner, who hands me a cup of homemade mocha and has me try some porridge on the stove. Truly a bountiful house, there are hints of the many projects related to art, medicines, and

²³² Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2014. “Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation”. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*. Vol. 3, No.3. 6.

²³³ Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2014. “Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation”. 6.

²³⁴ Ibid.

ceremony in the living spaces, centered in the middle of it all sits their immaculate kitchen. The large metal stove, reminiscent of the 1950s, shines as the heated coils warm up steel-cut oats in a pot. Penny and I chat for a bit and then enter a guest bedroom off the kitchen which is set up for the interview. Situating myself in a comfortable spot for the duration of the interview I ask Penny when a good time is to give her the tobacco—my offering for the knowledge she is about to share with me. She asks what my intentions are with this tobacco, and I reply, “To hear any stories you are comfortable sharing, and to better understand your insight into substance use, healing—anything really.” She sits with that for a moment and then we begin.

Waabishkii-binesiik or Penny Kagigebi is the daughter of Aandegoons or Susanna Bellecourt and Pat Paulson. Her doodem or clan is ajijaak/crane clan. She has called Gaawaabaabiganikaag (White Earth) home for most of her life. She currently lives in Detroit Lakes and has worked for Becker County Human Services since 1989. In a few years, she hopes to be living in the woods, making art with her husband Rick, surrounded by family, friends, and her community. I have known Penny for many years. A close family friend and traditional Ogichidaaikwe Penny and her husband Rick have continued to be a present force in my life and whom I often seek out for spiritual guidance, Anishinaabe teachings, and the occasional TV recommendations. The couple are big fans of Hayao Miyazaki’s films—movies that I grew up enjoying with my family as well. We bond not only through our culture but also through our shared love of anime. Not only do Penny and Rick work hard to be on “Bimaadiziwin” (the good path) they also are artists who create a wide range of Anishinaabe traditional art forms such as quillwork.²³⁵

²³⁵ Quillwork is a Anishinaabe art form consisting of harvesting, drying and coloring Porcupine quills in order to make designs with them on Birchbark similar to beadwork.

While talking with Penny sitting in the guest bedroom of her sweet house, I was struck by the generosity of what she shared. As stated before, I have known Penny for many years but this time with her is a special, sacred space and when I leave, I feel like I know her in new ways—an opportunity I am incredibly grateful for. We sit together discussing her life and as she talks, I feel the incredible energy of her thoughts reverberating around us. Drinking the most delicious mocha her partner Rick made the love, trust, and laughter in the room immeasurable. As she shares with me the themes of respect, Two-Spirit identity, Anishinaabe spirituality, honoring ancestors, and spirit guides all constitute the path our talanoa—or in Ojibwe, gaganoonidiwag (they talk to each other)—takes us on.²³⁶

As the threads of our conversation are pulled in countless directions Penny continues to come back to the importance of offering tobacco to all relatives—human, animal, plant, and spirit. Reviewing her journey Penny speaks of some of the medicines that have continued to heal and teach her: spirituality, Midewiwin, Ojibwemowin, the life she has built for herself with Rick. Hearing her life trajectory and how she views issues faced from addiction to the impacts of Christian boarding schools within our ceremonies, Penny has a gift for seeing how contradicting elements can come together. This hybridity she holds comes from being Two-Spirit she says. We speak of relationality and how to build more kinship with all beings, but Penny also does not shy away from speaking truthfully about the struggles she has endured. She shares the lessons of her life so far as

²³⁶ As mentioned in the methods section talanoa is a Pacific epistemological method of sharing stories, experiences, and thoughts between people—it is a form of conversation that does not have a foreseen end point or beginning it takes on its own lifeform. Hernandez, David, Arcia Tecun, ‘Inoke Hafoka, Lavinia ‘Ulu‘ave, and Moana ‘Ulu‘ave-Hafoka. 2018. "Talanoa: Tongan Epistemology and Indigenous Research Method." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14.

a way of guiding the generations that come after her. Intergenerationally, we exchange pieces of our journeys and although Penny has had more time on earth than me she listens to what I have learned during my time and we both come away from the conversation with new understandings.

I set up my iPhone and turned the audio recording on. Penny starts the interview by introducing herself in Ojibwe with both her Anishinaabe and English-given names. Holding the tobacco in her hands for the duration of the interview Penny first speaks about her family, thoughtfully illustrating the struggles of growing up under the shadow and legacy of assimilationist laws against Native Americans. Growing up on the White Earth reservation, Penny remarked that she was taught throughout her childhood that being Native American was shameful and that to succeed one must embrace whiteness. One of twelve children, Penny grew up on a small farm just outside of the White Earth Village.

My grandmother had planted three cedar trees in the yard and I didn't understand till so many years later that while she was a midwife, yes, she needed cedar, okay. I often wonder if those cedar trees are still there. So, um, I grew up where my mom was Native and my dad was not. I'm beginning to understand more and more about the pressure on my mom and my grandparents, even my great grandparents to adapt and embrace non-native stuff so that their kids wouldn't starve to death. Like, quite literally my mom went to residential boarding school at White Earth from the age of seven to twelve.²³⁷

Penny remarks on her upbringing and how her mother belonged to the boarding school generation which heavily informed how she conceptualized what being Native meant.

As I was growing up there was all this push in my family to graduate from high school, move away from the reservation, graduate high school, avoid the

²³⁷ Kagigebi, Penny. "Oral History Interview #2". Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:07:01

reservation—get away from here, get away from here, there's nothing here for you, but death. It was like, "get away."²³⁸

Penny goes on to explain how growing up Anishinaabe was not always a source of pride as her Native mother often faced the brunt of racial stereotyping. Compared to her father, a white man, Penny recalls her mother being regarded as stupid and her father was known as the “smart one”.

Coupled with that my mom was the dumb Indian. "Dumb Indians" was the literal phrase. And so if there was anything—if any of my siblings struggled in school, they took after my mom, if they didn't, if they were smart, if they were, you know, high achieving, they took after my dad, that was kind of the common conversation.²³⁹

However, Penny also remarks that after her father passed her mother moved into elder housing in White Earth and started working on obtaining her GED—she would go on to become the oldest person to graduate from the program at 63 years old. In speaking about the concealed brilliance of her mother Penny she recites words from her friend—K. Olivia Janis, MA, LPCC, EMDRIA Certified Therapist. Moving on from her relationship with her mother to her relationship with one of her sisters Penny connects Janis’ work to her own familial trauma. Repeating something Olivia teaches in workshops, she states,

Again, I'm going to go back to K. Olivia Janis. And when she talks about that moment of violence, that creates historic trauma in Native people, also creates historic trauma in the perpetrator, like that moment of violence sticks in the DNA of both parties. So and the reason I'm bringing this up is one of my sisters. My sister was 14 years older than me, she had moved away. And then she came back when my mom got sick in the early 80s. And she married a guy from down by Dent so you know, that's south of Perham but a little bit north of Fergus Falls - Super redneck neighborhood, you know, no natives down there. And that guy, he hated natives. He would rather have his daughter not get her anti-depression medication—because she wasn't on Medical Assistance—he didn't want her going to

²³⁸ Ibid. 1:09:48

²³⁹ Ibid. 1:10:16

Indian Health Service to get the medicine because he didn't want her to be involved with the Native clinic.²⁴⁰

In connection with the words of K. Olivia Janis, fellow psychotherapist Resmaa Manakem says that “. . . trauma also routinely spreads *between* bodies, like a contagious disease.”²⁴¹ The lines of trauma that have been passed through her family are very clear to Penny—from boarding schools to her mother and white father to all 11 of her siblings. However, she reached a point where she chose to embrace and honor her Indigeneity instead of repressing it to wear a white mask.²⁴²

Although she doesn't express it in these words Penny speaks candidly about the 'inferiority complex' Native people often internalize and how she has worked hard to break cycles of assimilation. Decolonial scholar, revolutionary and Algerian writer Franz Fanon describes the inferiority complex between Black peoples and white peoples as firstly economic and secondly an “internalization or rather epidermalization of this inferiority.”²⁴³ Internalizing white supremacist narratives of anti-Blackness—or in Penny's family's case anti-Indigeneity—looks like negating non-white identities out of fear of facing violence and instead of assimilating/striving for the unreachable pinnacle of whiteness. For Indigenous peoples similar (however incredibly different) to Black peoples being indoctrinated by white supremacy into trying to obtain this pinnacle of whiteness is dependent on the complete erasure and obliteration of what makes them who they are—their Indigeneity and/or their Blackness. However, Penny was able to find

²⁴⁰ Kagigebi, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:13:30

²⁴¹ Manakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands*. (2017). 37.

²⁴² Franz Fanon first wrote about racial dynamics between Black and white people by using the metaphor of the “white mask”. From Fanon Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, (1952).

²⁴³ Ibid. Xiv-xv.

refuge from her assimilationist upbringing through reconnecting to her Anishinaabe spiritual self which then led her to uncover her Ogichidaakwe/Two-Spirit gifts.

Upon reflecting on her own spiritual and cultural journey Penny remarks, “what brought me to walking in a cultural way living this life is that I was not doing well. I mean, I've been going to a therapist since I was 17” she goes on to say,

I had many repeating cycles of violence and, you know, just stuff going on and on and on. And a relative of mine had gotten out of prison. And I learned from them²⁴⁴ that while they were in Stillwater, Reuben Goggeye gave him an Indian name. And they went to the sweat lodge that was held at Stillwater Prison—they were going regularly to Sweat Lodge.²⁴⁵²⁴⁶

Penny's relative since leaving prison started walking on their own traditional path within the WE community. While her relative was able to find healing by reconnecting to their Anishinaabe spirituality they have had a roller-coaster life and still struggle with their own trauma as it manifests through substance use disorder. However, coming out of Stillwater prison many years ago Penny remembers the state of her relative.

They changed so much. Like they were so different. And it was like, Well, okay, I tried so many things. I tried church. I tried therapy. Yeah, and my relative? – Okay, I'll try that. Because, you know, I'm willing to try shit. So I called the Anishinaabe Center here in town. And I got a hold of my cousin Leslie Fain. I told her, "I want to learn about culture and traditions and stuff like that." And she was like, Ah, why don't you come to the language class as an adult language class. We meet weekly at the Anishinaabe Center. So I showed up because my relative told me to pass tobacco.²⁴⁷

She lets out a laugh remembering the first time she passed tobacco to the instructor,

²⁴⁴ Penny's relative has been de-identified for anonymity purposes.

²⁴⁵ Kagigebe, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:15:47

²⁴⁶ Kagigebe, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:15:47

²⁴⁷ Kagigebe, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 1:16:37

I went and bought a pack of tobacco and I just handed her the whole pack. She's like, well, "somebody taught you something, but not everything." And so then I started going to the weekly language class. And then just within a few months, I started going to a ceremony and getting my Indian name and going to receive the healing that allowed me to get off medications that were making me sick.²⁴⁸

Now knowing about the importance of tobacco Penny speaks to how it is critical when asking for anything from spirit, animal, plant, and human relatives. Henry Flocken elaborates on the role of tobacco in Anishinaabe society when he tells us that as a people, we were given two rules by Creator to live by– “. . .(a) respect all of creation, and (b) use tobacco offerings to show that respect.”²⁴⁹ Therefore, tobacco is an essential part of healing especially when it comes to asking for guidance during addiction.

While Penny's spiritual journey is unique to her it is also a story that is crucial to share to demystify any notions that everyone who is traditional has always been that way—she also has known addiction closely. It took her relative reconnecting first for her to be able to open the door to her own healing. Focusing back on her relationship with her relative, however, Penny has had to take some space from them as they continue to struggle with substance use disorder.

My relative was doing a lot of work, helping people and leading cultural camps, and being very open and sharing cultural teachings with people. And there's always this piece, right, where I knew that they were not taking care of stuff. I knew that they had issues with childhood trauma. And I'm hoping—I've been seeing some stuff they've been posting and it's like, I miss them. I received spiritual direction through dreams that I've had that I just have to step away, like, I can't—and you know what I'm starting to see is our enmeshed ness—I'm causing problems for them and he's causing problems for me, we're continuing cycles that we've had going on since we were both very small. So it's like they gotta find what they got to find. And it doesn't fit with what people generally see as being family takes care of family.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹Flocken, Henry. "An Analysis of Traditional Ojibwe Civil Chief Leadership." Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota. (2013). 159.

²⁵⁰ Kagigebi, Penny. "Oral History Interview #2". Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 8:23

So I've been feeling some criticism for that. But there's also, it's also an Ojibwe value that everybody receives their own specific spiritual direction. And it's important for me to do what I know—what I've been instructed to do—this is guidance that I've received. And if other people don't understand it, and that's the other thing about it, we don't really know what's going on with somebody.²⁵¹

Connecting back to Manakem's conception of how unhealed trauma spreads to people like an illness Penny frames it instead as 'enmeshed ness' when talking about her relative.²⁵² 'Enmeshedness' with her relative was a cycle Penny had to break—one that is very common within our community. Sometimes referred to as "crabs in a barrel" Penny had to realize that the only option she had left in trying to help her relative was to not engage with them. She states that this was no easy choice to make, however, it is a choice that people often must make when they have relatives struggling with addiction. Being judged for this decision is also not unique.

Living in a small community can sometimes be suffocating when everyone knows everyone else's business and shares it freely. For relatives struggling with substance use disorder—whether they use opioids, meth, or heroin—this phenomenon is even more extreme. Marie Konsmo and Karyn Recollet in their article on harm reduction speak about how purity narratives have been imposed upon Indigenous communities.²⁵³ In dealing with addiction these purity narratives show up when people characterize a relative struggling with substance abuse as all bad or all good. Due to this lack of nuance, many people are not able to receive the help they need. At the root of all addiction is

²⁵¹ Ibid. 10:14.

²⁵² Manakem, Resmaa. 2017. 37.

²⁵³ Konsmo, Marie and Karyn Recollet. "Afterword: Meeting the Land(s) Where they are at" In *Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education: mapping the long view*. Edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Eve Tuck et. al. New York, NY: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor Francis Group. (2019). 243.

trauma.²⁵⁴ To bring more care into the ways we speak of our addicted relatives, Konsmo and Recollet state,

For me, harm reduction has and will continue to provide life for our people, before we even make it to the water, so that we can make it to the water.

It is also about helping keep each other safe under colonialism. If we are really committed to protecting life, then we need to take care of our people in all the fluid forms of resurgence.²⁵⁵

For Konsmo and Recollet—in line with Indigenous philosophies—returning to the water symbolizes a site of healing that should be accessible to all relatives. Harm reduction is a loving, life-giving, radical act.²⁵⁶ Therefore, community members like Penny who understand this are helping to shift how we—as a community—treat our struggling relatives. When Penny brings up the Anishinaabe value that everyone receives their own spiritual direction she also acknowledges the path of her relative as one that only they can walk and when they are ready to “come back to the water” she will be there to help. However, making spaces that are welcoming and safe for our relatives to turn to when they are ready to receive healing is another step, we must take in continuing the work of intergenerational healing. These spaces cannot function in the ways they need to until we continue the work of reckoning with colonized mentalities that force us to categorize our relatives before truly listening to what they need.

Penny goes on to explain that in becoming closer to Anishinaabe cultural teachings she has been reminded to be less “judgy” of others. In sharing this lesson with me we spoke about how appearances usually veil other truths—even in ceremonial spaces.

²⁵⁴ Hart, Dr. Carl. *Drug Use for Grown-Ups: Chasing Liberty in the Land of Fear*. New York: Penguin Press (2021). 12.

²⁵⁵ Konsmo, Marie and Karyn Recollet. “Afterword: Meeting the Land(s) Where they are at”. (2019). 241

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Although Penny is critical of ceremony spaces she has been in, it is for good reason. We discuss ceremonial events that are open to the whole community such as Big Drum and how there is never any idea of who will come. Penny is not exclusionary nor is she trying to gate-keep traditional teachings from her own people, rather she worries about certain community members who have committed harm to their relatives entering sites of ceremony which has made other people feel unwelcome or unsafe. Tying back to my discussion with Brenda, Penny also lightly mentions the effects of sexual abuse against children and how that trauma “causes ripples that move outward.”²⁵⁷ While she does not speak as directly about the issue Penny alludes to the unsettling reality of how many of our relatives have been affected by sexual trauma. Penny speaks about how the reverberations of this trauma have further affected and warped how community members see Two-Spirit peoples as there have been perpetrators that hold this identity as well.

And what I've seen is that there's a big prejudice against Two-Spirited people within the Native community, because of Christianity, entirely because of Christianity.²⁵⁸

I feel like sometimes the prejudices are just as deeply ingrained in us as traumas are, like, there's gotta be something to pull those out.

I reply “Yeah, because they are connected” to which Penny responds,

Yeah. Good one. Okay, that makes sense to me. So some of it [relatively recent acceptance of Two-Spirited people] is lip service, and you still get that, you still have that feeling. You know, what does that feel like? And there are so many people that talk about, like, what's the trauma around being told that you're not the right person—that who you are is not correct. You know, so then we have people who are behaving badly and they become predators. And now we have the Two-Spirited person that everybody's got to stay away from because, "Oh, my God, did you hear the story about this? And you hear the story about that?" You know, and it's like, quite often—well, I'm not going to say quite often, but I can think of two

²⁵⁷ Manakem, Resmaa. 2017. 40.

²⁵⁸ Kagigebi, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 36:31

examples here on White Earth, where the perpetrators are people who are Two-Spirited in some way or another, you know, and I've got to feel like that's driven back to their trauma, you know, not being able to be who they are.²⁵⁹

Acknowledging the complexity of navigating spaces where people who have perpetuated harm are present Penny—like Brenda and Eugene—is not afraid to unveil harsh realities that lie beneath the surface. However, Penny's Two-Spirit identity adds intersectional identity²⁶⁰ as she is an openly queer Anishinaabe woman. The issue of predation in Indigenous communities is endemic globally.²⁶¹ Further complicated by the intersections of addiction, homophobia, childhood sexual abuse, and racism these lived experiences can create the perfect storm for violent behavior. While every generation carries its own trauma, our Anishinaabe youth face the brunt of unresolved pain—especially our youth with intersectional identities. Youth that are queer, brown, femme, low-income, disabled, and/or suffer from substance use disorder all struggle to find safe spaces where they can be themselves and thrive. Penny brings up a current case in the Fond du Lac Nation wherein Indigenous foster children were being abused by their foster parents. She also remembers a case where a Minnesota family locked their son in their basement until he “stopped being gay.” As a person working at a Human Services agency, Penny speaks of these instances of child neglect and abuse through the lens of her work but also through her role as an Ogichidaaikwe (Warrior Woman). She speaks of the lack of autonomy

²⁵⁹ Ibid. 37:42.

²⁶⁰ Intersectionality was first coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. The term refers to the ways systems of oppression that discriminate on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class etc. intersect making an interconnected web of various causes and effects. From the Center for Intersectional Justice. "What is Intersectionality?" Available from <https://www.intersectionaljustice.org/what-is-intersectionality>.

²⁶¹ National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. *Reclaiming Power and Place the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*. National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, (2019). 4.

children have in settler society—unlike the freedom Kwezens has in Leanne Simpson's work.

So kids have to rely on everybody else for everything else. And so now they're living in a home where it's not safe to be themselves because they could lose the ability to be alive, right? They could lose their housing, lose everything. So the stakes are so much higher for kids. And also for Two-Spirited kids, because you know, there are Native families that are just trying to get by and that extra level of a marginalized identity—and if they're still trapped in the repressive church environment, you know there's been some movement towards cultural understanding, towards traditional ceremonies, towards walking away from churches, but it's not, it's not everybody, and especially not everybody on White Earth, you know, I still feel like White Earth is 95% Christianized.²⁶²

With our youth not in full control of their own lives due to rigid systems of colonial family models, they often do not feel empowered enough to ask for what they truly need to feel safe. Not only should our youth feel safe in their homes, have their basic needs met, and be able to obtain the education they want, but they should be able to enjoy their childhood and adolescence. In pre-colonial Anishinaabe society, our children were honored, and they also had leadership roles. Penny also envisions a future for our youth that is loving and open to all.

So the healing of a community is so huge. I feel like the gift of Two-Spirited people is that we're possibly more open, if we're healthy within ourselves, we're able to receive that spiritual direction. Maybe more empathy for others because of our ability to understand things more.²⁶³

I just want to go do Quillwork - my fantasy life. Yeah, in my fantasy life, I have this idea that I can find a space in White Earth, where from four to seven or four to eight, every Monday evening, I can sit and do cool work. And people who want to come in and learn can show up or not show up, you know what I mean? That kind of drop-in. And I got a hardcore 12 Step education from my 20s. So it's like, the doors have to be open every week without fail.²⁶⁴

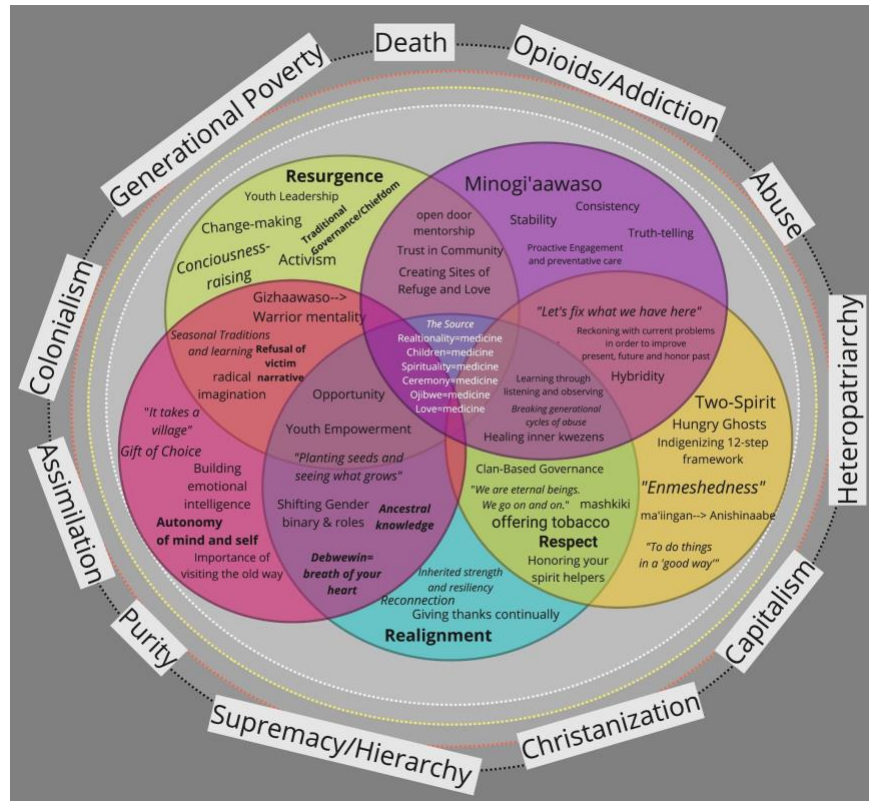
²⁶² Kagigebi, Penny. "Oral History Interview #2". Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 44:05

²⁶³ Ibid. 38:46

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 15:10

The connections between Eugene, Brenda, and Penny are clear when they talk about our collective future in White Earth. They all want an open-door community where youth, adults, and elders can come and go as they please no matter what they struggle with. A community where people can grow gardens in rich soil. A community where any child can walk up to a house and ask for a glass of water. A community where our youth feel safe, embraced, empowered, and educated. Everything they want for our youth is well within reach—speaking to each other about this and realizing that many of our community members feel similarly more so than disagree is but another step in actualizing Anishinaabe futurity.

Conclusion Boodawe: She/he Builds a Fire



Ginanaandawi'idizomin: Models of Intergenerational Healing and Co-Resistance.
Allen. 2022.

Ginanaandawi'idizomin: Modeling Intergenerational Healing

From the discussions I held with all five co-creators I was awakened to insights that have helped me to further theorize on how the Anishinaabe of White Earth will continue to embody different forms of Ginanaandawi'idizomin (we heal in circles; we heal together). Figure 2 represents the healing model I synthesized from my interviews. As shown in figure 2 each interview overlapped with each other. At the source of all their intersections is the heart of Anishinaabe healing or “The Source.” The center of healing includes the three tenets of this

work, refusal, relationality, and resurgence as they are demonstrated through cultural medicines, our youth, spirituality, ceremony, Ojibwemowin, and unconditional spaces of love and belonging.

Each interview is color-coded with the corresponding themes from them placed within their circle of knowledge. Eugene's circle is green, Brenda's is purple, Penny's is yellow, Kim's is blue, and Dana's is pink. Rippling out of the five interlaced circles are the medicine wheel colors: White, yellow, red, and black. These lines of reverberation symbolize how the healing work of each co-creator has a chain effect as their healing practices echo outward to all Anishinaabe community members. These reverberations simultaneously work to deconstruct the ills our people continue to face—as symbolized through the words on the outside of the healing circle such as colonialism, white supremacy, etc. The healing that occurs within the circle creates a protective energy field around all members involved as they continue to deepen their relationality collectively. The role models of intergenerational healing—in this case, the co-creators I worked with also create pathways and foster forms of mentorship for our youth, addicted relatives, elders, and all community members. These circles of healing aim to guide our Anishinaabe relatives on their own healing journeys gently and calmly through observation and kinship ties/relationality.

To return to who we are we must first acknowledge and refute the narratives and systems colonialism tries to trap us in. Dana Trickey spoke of the cruciality of refusing colonial narratives especially in regard to Anishinaabe youth. Dana reminded me of the Ojibwe value of gift of choice and how it is one of the greatest attributes Creator bestowed us with. Following in the footsteps of our ancestors we have the ability to adapt what is necessary to ensure not only our continued survival but also our ability to thrive and create. Kim Anderson spoke to this value

encouraging Anishinaabe relatives to reconnect to their language as a means of “cultural realignment”. In traditional society, no one was left behind. Returning to clan-based governance styles is how we can continually connect to Bimaadiziwiin as alluded to in Eugene’s interview. Eugene also highlighted the importance of bringing youth leadership back as a fundamental aspect of tribal governance.

Two-spirit peoples can hold contradictory information and make sense of it as it comes together—a gift critical to our continued survival as Anishinaabe peoples. Penny Kagigebi talked deeply about how Two-Spirit peoples hold many of the spiritual answers we have been neglecting for centuries. Her interview also demonstrated how addiction can be approached with love in all its iterations. After further analysis of Penny’s claims, her words are connected to harm reduction through the act of taking care of all our relatives by uncovering and honoring their unique gifts. Therefore, harm reduction is not only enacted through creating more needle exchanges, drug-testing sites and Narcan training, it is also born out of grounding ourselves in our Anishinaabe ways of being.²⁶⁵ As Anishinaabe, our role in this world is sacred. Reconnecting to what our roles have meant in the past, what they mean now, and what we envision for the future is how we will continue to create ourselves in the image of our spirit guides layout for us. Doing this work has allowed me to reflect on the spaces where I have felt the youth leading our communities into new spaces and places. For instance, I had the opportunity to work with youth myself over the summer of 2021 under the Oshki-filmmakers project with Honor the Earth.

²⁶⁵ Hart, Dr. Carl. *Drug Use for Grown-Ups: Chasing Liberty in the Land of Fear*. New York: Penguin Press (2021). 60.

Oshki-Filmmakers

The Oshki-Filmmakers camp was designed to teach Indigenous youth about the key elements of filmmaking. This pilot filmmaking camp ran from August 16th, 2021, until August 25th, 2021. All the staff, artists, and youth involved were Indigenous and mostly hailing from White Earth, MN. The filmmaking camp addressed the need for media-based youth programs which are nonexistent in the White Earth Nation. The camp served as an arts-based experiential program providing youth—between the ages of twelve and seventeen—with 1:1 mentoring and training to develop their artistic and filmmaking skills. The camp was based at the Gizhiigin Arts Incubator in Mahnomen, MN. Six youth began the project with four completing the camp. Each young filmmaker created their own video.

Working closely with White Earth 4-H, participants were selected for their level of interest and availability. It was critical to keep the group small due to the primary goal for youth to build relationships with content and grow through 1:1 mentoring training with professional filmmakers. All students were also able to learn and experiment with acting, scriptwriting, filming, editing, and voiceovers. Each day Oshki Film Maker's Camp was structured around a different aspect of film by an Indigenous filmmaker and a larger discourse around how it represents Indigenous peoples. Youth learned the practice of storytelling with two on-site Native mentors as well as being part of larger meeting groups with guest filmmakers through zoom/virtual. In each step of the filmmaking process, each student had a chance to gain skills through hands-on practice creating a story, shooting, and reshooting to work to develop a 'short.' Some topics that were raised at the camp were the effects of colonialism, boarding schools, and how Indigenous people have been historically represented in filmmaking from Disney's *Pocahontas* to James Cameron's *Avatar*. Youth also learned about local and international

Indigenous filmmakers and their work through daily discussions and prompts, such as Taika Waititi, Chris Eyre, and Minnesota-based filmmaker Missy Whiteman.

The Oshki student Filmmakers showed deep skill and personal development. Two of the children were extremely shy at first and did not talk much when prompted. With the progression of each day, they became more comfortable working through activities themselves at their own pace. At the end of the camp, all four youth were joking around with mentors and each other while editing their videos and making extra ‘blooper’ reels from footage they didn’t use in their project videos. Each was encouraged to be as creative as they wanted with their final product. Although they all shot footage in the same locations, each completed a unique video that showcased their viewpoints.

To emphasize the importance of cultivating spaces and sites of youth art/creativity I have observed first-hand the incredible development of youth empowerment built when they feel free to create. Youth arts is a form of harm reduction and prevention because it gives youth alternative routes to express themselves to create healthy mechanisms for coping with their experiences.

Powwow X

Following the Summer 2021 filmmaking camp, I was part of efforts to host Powwow X in the fall of 2021 at Macalester College. The Indigenous student's organization at Macalester—Proud Indigenous Peoples for Education or PIPE—worked with local Indigenous artists to re-envision Powwows. Headed by Arapaho Filmmaker, Missy Whiteman, and in collaboration with the Department of Multicultural Life at Macalester, the program was a beautiful celebration of Indigenous culture, language, struggle, and ceremony. Around 150 people attended the event from the Macalester and greater Twin Cities Indigenous communities with over 15 performers

representing diverse backgrounds and Native Nations. The line-up included Sacramento Knox's Detroit-based hip-hop blending the struggles of the Flint water crisis with the story of Nanaboozhoo to Yung Kitto (Rueben Stately, Santee Sioux, and Red Lake Band of Ojibwe) rapping about his wishes for his future son, the performances highlighted the depth and sacredness of Indigenous peoples as we navigate and make places for ourselves in a westernized world.

Singer and songwriter Jada Lynn—Anishinaabe from Mille Lacs—sang her truth and her words of ceremony reverberated throughout the space. Native Sun, AKA Austin Owen, brought so much energy to the stage that youth went up front and danced. In my opening remarks, I made sure to acknowledge that the event was also a space for Black students and other BIPOC folks to garner healing and space to rest. Following the event, PIPE received messages from multiple students of color expressing how the event was healing and fun for them. Most of the night was focused on the performances, including a video montage of Missy's films accompanied by live sound mixing from Sacramento Knox and Native Sun. This event challenged the format of heritage months as they can solely focus on rigid notions of cultures and communities that are always evolving. During Native American heritage month, the showcase displayed the diversity and beauty of Native peoples in 2021. Each performer came from a different place, a Native nation, and a mixture of races. The event was an amazing display of cultural inclusivity and Black and Indigenous solidarity. The event started with a healing dance led by three jingle-dress dancers and ended with a round dance closing it out.

Giiwitaashkaa: S/he Goes Around in a Circle

Engaging in so many spaces of healing throughout this project has led me to reflect on how reflexive and adaptive healing practices across Turtle Island need to be. Through this

reflexivity—as a Nation and a community—we can continue to bring in all Indigenous relatives while being welcoming of all identities, levels of sobriety, and ages. This work has taught me that to promote Anishinaabe forms of intergenerational healing we must have relatives that model our pathways first, from then we learn how to reconfigure those paths to provide the healing that is unique to each of us. Ignatia Broker reflects these notions by connecting Anishinaabe ancestral wisdom with futurity stating,

It is important that you learn the past and act accordingly, for that will assure us that we will always be people of the earth. They have said that there will be five generations of Ojibway who will make a circle. The first people will start the circle and the others will move from the Ojibway ways. There will be those who will ask questions and those who remember, and the last generation will again act as the Ojibway have acted in years before. Then the circle will be closed.²⁶⁶

She continues to say that she is unsure which generation we are currently in—as am I. However, in concluding this project I now know that incredible work is being done in my home community to ensure that the circle closes and that Ginanaandawi'idizomin continues long after us. To quote Penny Kagigebi, “we are an eternal being having this temporary moment in this form. Because everything about our essence has no end and has no beginning we just go on and on. . .”²⁶⁷ As Anishinaabe; the original people; the star people; the eternal beings we will continue to heal and recreate regardless of all odds.

²⁶⁶ Broker, Ignatia. *Night Flying Woman: An Ojibway Narrative*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press. (1983). 8.

²⁶⁷ Kagigebi, Penny. “Oral History Interview #2”. Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022. 56:31.

Appendix

#1. Follow-up Survey Questionnaire

1. Was there any aspect of this interview that was uncomfortable for you? Please elaborate if so.
2. Did any of the questions asked need further clarification?
3. Was there an area of discussion that you felt was overlooked in this interview?
4. Do you have any further advice or questions for the interviewer?
5. Is there anything you would like to add to your interview?

#2. Interview Questions

1. How do you describe yourself and the type of work you do?
 - a. How do those two aspects of your life influence each other?
2. How would you describe the community of White Earth?
 - a. How is that description informed by the work that you do?
3. Where did you grow up?
 - a. Were there foundational community people or programs you were a part of that helped shape your trajectory to where you are today and if there weren't why was that?
4. How do you diagnose some of the issues that we face in our community?
 - a. How do you see them being addressed by your occupation?
5. What are some of the joys and challenges of the work you do and of living in White Earth?
6. How are Anishinaabe values and teachings present in your work and/or in your personal life?
7. How do you understand the concept of “intergenerational healing” in the context of our community?
8. Are there systems in place that you would change and how?
9. What programs/ events/ organizations do you see advocating for healing in our community?
10. How do you envision the future of our community especially when it comes to our children?

Bibliography

- (ASPA), Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs. What is the U.S. Opioid Epidemic? in <https://plus.google.com/+HHS> [database online]. 2021 [cited Apr 11, 2022]. Available from <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/about-the-epidemic/index.html>.
- American Psychological Association. *APA Dictionary of Psychology*. [cited Apr 23, 2022]. Available from <https://dictionary.apa.org/>.
- Ashcroft, John, Daniels, Deborah, and Nedelkoff, Richard. 2003. *Tribal Wellness to Healing Courts*. Bureau of Justice Assistance.
- Bachman, Ronet, et al. 2008. *Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and the Criminal Justice Response: What Is Known*. U.S. Department of Justice.
- Beck, Jerome. 1998. "100 years of 'just say no' versus 'just say know.'" *Evaluation Review* 22, no. 1:15-45.
- Benton-Banai Edward. 2010. *The Mishomis book: the voice of the Ojibway*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bowe, Nathan. 2018. "Fight of their lives: White Earth leads way in opioid battle". *Detroit Lakes Online* [cited Apr 11, 2022]. Available from <https://www.dl-online.com/news/fight-of-their-lives-white-earth-leads-way-in-opioid-battle>.
- Broker Ignatia. 1983. *Night Flying Woman: an Ojibway narrative*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press.
- Brugge Doug. 2006. "Protecting the Navajo people through tribal regulation of research." *Science and Engineering Ethics* 12, no. 3:491-507.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs. "Office of Indian Affairs." Available from <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois>.
- Campbell Nancy, D. 2020. *OD: Naloxone and the Politics of Overdose*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Castle, Elizabeth A. "WARN & Nazo. 2020". *Warrior Women Website*. [cited Apr 25, 2022]. Available from <https://www.warriorwomen.org/blog/2020/3/14/warn-and-nazo>.
- Chavez, Nora. 2021. *Shouldering Grief: Validating Native American Historical Trauma*.

- Coulthard Glen Sean. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- De Vaan, Mathijs, and Toby Stuart. 2019. "Does Intra-household Contagion Cause an Increase in Prescription Opioid Use?" *American Sociological Review* 84, no. 4:577-608.
- Deer, Sarah. 2004. "Federal Indian Law and Violent Crime: Native Women and Children at the Mercy of the State." *Social Justice* 31, no. 4 (98):17-30.
- Duran, Eduardo, Duran, Bonnie, Heart, Maria Yellow Horse Brave, and Horse-Davis, Susan Y. 1998. "Healing the American Indian Soul Wound". *In the International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*. Boston, MA: Springer US.
- Enger, John. "Drug court approved on White Earth Indian reservation." *MPR News*. 2018 [cited Apr 11, 2022]. Available from <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/02/22/drug-court-approved-on-white-earth-indian-reservation>.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, Inc.
- Flocken, Henry. 2013. "An Analysis of Traditional Ojibwe Civil Chief Leadership." *Ph.D. diss*, University of Minnesota. 1-184.
- Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Friedman, Joseph, et al. 2022. *Trends in Drug Overdose Deaths Among US Adolescents*. January 2010 to June 2021. *JAMA* 327, no. 14:1398-1400.
- Gartner, Danielle R., Rachel E. Wilbur, and Meredith L. McCoy. 2021. "American Indian" as a Racial Category in Public Health: Implications for Communities and Practice. *American Journal of Public Health* 111, no. 11:1969-1975.
- Glaser, Barney, G. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
- Hammond, Jay. 2011. "Speaking of Opium: Ownership and (Settler) Colonial Dispossession." *Swinburne University of Technology*, 2011.
- Harjo, Laura. 2019. *Spiral to the stars: Mvskoke tools of futurity*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

- Hart, Carl L. 2021. *Drug Use for Grown-ups: Chasing Liberty in the Land of Fear*. New York: Penguin Press.
- Hayes, Chris. (2019). "Thinking about how to Abolish Prisons with Mariame Kaba: Podcast & Transcript." Available from <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/thinking-about-how-abolish-prisons-mariame-kaba-podcast-transcript-ncna992721>.
- James, Allison. 2012. *Key concepts in childhood studies*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Kappler, Charles Joseph. 1972. *Indian treaties, 1778-1883*. New York: Interland Publishing.
- Keddie, Amanda. 2014. *Indigenous representation and alternative schooling: prioritizing an epistemology of relationality*. *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 18, no. 1:55-71.
- Kimmerer, Robin. 2013. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions.
- Konsmo, Erin M., and Recolett, Karyn, eds. 2018. "Afterword: Meeting the Land(s) Where they are at" In *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*. Edited by Eve Tuck, Wayne Yang, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 1st ed. NY: Routledge. 238-251.
- LaDuke, Winona. 1999. *All our relations: native struggles for land and life*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press
- LaDuke, Winona. 2020. *Remembering Marvin Manypenny – a Champion*. *The Circle News*. Available from <https://thecirclenews.org/cover-story/remembering-marvin-manypenny-a-champion/>
- Liebenberg Linda. 2019. "Spaces Places: Understanding Sense of Belonging and Cultural Engagement Among Indigenous Youth." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 18.
- Liebenberg, Linda, Darlene Wall, Michele Wood, and Daphne Hutt-MacLeod. 2019. "Spaces & Places: Understanding Sense of Belonging and Cultural Engagement Among Indigenous Youth." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 18, 1609406919840547.
- Lilomaiava-Doktor Sailiemanu. 2020. "Oral Traditions, Cultural Significance of Storytelling, and Samoan Understandings of Place or Fanua." *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 7, no. 1:121-151.

- Lorde, Audre. 2007. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." In *Sister Outsider*. Edited by Audre Lorde. United States: Ten Speed Press. 110-113.
- McMahon, Liam. 2019. "Who was Edward Duffield Neill?". *The Mac Weekly: Colonial Macalester*.
- Menakem Resmaa. 2017. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies*. Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press.
- Million, Dian. 2009. "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2:53-76.
- Minnesota Department of Health. "Drug Overdose Dashboard". 2021 [cited Apr 11, 2022]. Available from <https://www.health.state.mn.us/opioiddashboard>.
- Minnesota Department of Health. Drug Overdose Dashboard: Graphic #3. 2019.
- Minnesota Indian Affairs Committee. "Gaa-waabaabiganikaag / White Earth Nation." [cited April 24, 2022]. Available from <https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/whiteearth-iac.html>.
- Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. 2020. "MIAC U of M Resolutions Release." Available from <https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/documents/MIAC%20U%20of%20M%20Resolutions%20Release%20-%20FI>
- Monk, Jim. 2022. "White Earth Nation receives \$1.25 million for Boys & Girls Clubs." *KVVR Local News Website*. [Cited 2022] Available from https://www.kvrr.com/2022/03/18/white-earth-nation-receives-1-25-million-for-boys-girls-clubs/?fbclid=IwAR1VINdXDU0KZE6LUJqk5zbZHMbhDcq6svMEQ8jXH_f6lFGY4_UboYfVRYE
- National Indian Child Welfare Association. 2021. "Disproportionality in Child Welfare: Fact Sheet. Available from https://www.nicwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NICWA_11_2021-Disproportionality-Fact-Sheet.pdf
- National Indian Health Board. "Addressing the Opioid Epidemic in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities." [cited 04/11/ 2022]. Available from <https://www.nihb.org/docs/09182017/Opioids%20One%20pager.PDF>.

- National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. 2019. *Reclaiming power and place the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*. Gatineau: National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,
- National Congress of American Indians. NCAI Opioid Initiative. [cited 04/11/ 2022]. Available from <https://www.ncai.org/initiatives/partnerships-initiatives/ncai-opioid-initiative>.
- Netherland, Julie, and Helena Hansen. 2017. "White opioids: Pharmaceutical race and the war on drugs that wasn't." *BioSocieties* 12, no. 2:217-238.
- Netherland, Julie, and Helena B. Hansen. 2016. "The War on Drugs That Wasn't: Wasted Whiteness, "Dirty Doctors," and Race in Media Coverage of Prescription Opioid Misuse." *Culture, medicine and psychiatry* 40, no. 4:664-686.
- Peacock, Thomas. 2006. *The Four Hills of Life: Ojibwe wisdom*. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press.
- Baldy, Cutcha Risling. 2018. *We are dancing for you: native feminisms and the revitalization of women's coming-of-age ceremonies*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Simpson, Audra. 2014. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Simpson, Leanne. 2017. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2011. *Dancing on our turtle's back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Pub.
- Simpson, Leanne B. 2014. "Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious Transformation." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society* 3, no. 3:1-25.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, 2012. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Seconded. London: Zed Books.
- Sullivan, Amy, C. 2021. *Opioid Reckoning: Love, Loss, and Redemption in the Rehab State*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Tecun, (Daniel Hernandez), Arcia, ‘Inoke Hafoka, Lavinia ‘Ulu‘ave, and Moana ‘Ulu‘ave-Hafoka. 2018. “Talanoa: Tongan epistemology and Indigenous research method.” *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 2:156-163.
- Tipps, Robin, T. 2018. “The Opioid Epidemic in Indian Country.” *The Journal of law, medicine ethics: a journal of the American Society of Law, Medicine Ethics* 46, no. 2:422-436.
- Treuer, Anton. 2011. *The assassination of Hole in the Day*. St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books.
- Treuer Anton. 2010. *Ojibwe in Minnesota*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press.
- Tribal Law and Policy Institute. 2003. *Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts The Key Components*.
- Tuck, Eve. 2009. “Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities”. *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 3:409-427.
- Vizenor, Gerald. 2008. *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Washington, Jessica. 2021. “Minnesota’s Foster Care System Perpetuates the Legacy of Racist Boarding Schools, Native Mothers and Experts Say.” [cited Apr 25, 2022]. Available from <https://centerforhealthjournalism.org/fellowships/projects/minnesota-s-foster-care-system-perpetuates-legacy-racist-boarding-schools>.
- White Earth Reservation Business Committee. 2018. *Restructured/Codified White Earth Nation Research Review Board Policy/Procedure*.
- White Earth Nation. "White Earth Nation Judicial Services: White Earth/Mahnomen County Healing to Wellness Drug Court ." Available from <https://whiteearth.com/divisions/judicial/services>.
- Womack Craig, S. 1999. *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Oral History Interviews

All oral histories were conducted by Zoe Allen

Allen, Martha. "Interview on Indigenous Childhood." Oral History. Online Video Interview. November 1st, 2021.

Anderson, Kim. "Oral History Interview #4". Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 20, 2022.

Degroat, David. "Interview on White Earth Healing to Wellness Court." Oral History. Phone Call Interview. May 25, 2020.

Kagigebi, Penny. "Oral History Interview #2". Oral History. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. January 17, 2022.

Sommers, Eugene. "Oral History Interview #1". Oral History. White Earth Nation, Minnesota. January 14, 2022.

Trickey, Dana. "Oral History Interview #3". Oral History. Minnesota. January 17, 2022.

Weaver, Brenda. "Oral History Interview #5". Oral History. Online Video Interview. January 25, 2022.