“The only thing Mohawk in the classroom was the students”: A Narrative Inquiry into Physical Health Education Teacher Education in Canada

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Abstract

This article introduces a narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013) into Physical Health Education Teacher Education (PHETE) that was crafted alongside two Indigenous knowledge holders from the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk First Nation near Montréal, Québec, Canada. Both knowledge holders possess extensive expertise on community-health and wellness theories and programming owing to their prolonged engagement with local health, wellness, and physical education initiatives in Kahnawà:ke. Our inquiry focused on the prospective incorporation of Mohawk knowledges into PHETE in Canada—a genre of teacher training that has been historically dismissive of Indigenous peoples (Halas, 2014). Three key threads emerged from our inquiry. Mohawk voices and viewpoints surrounding PHETE: are diverse, multifaceted, and complex; locally rooted; and, therefore, must be incorporated into PHETE with sensitivity to the first two threads. We conclude by highlighting the knowledge holders’ call for embracing the integration of Mohawk knowledges in PHETE as an ongoing and collaborative relationship with Mohawk peoples, rather than as the fabrication of prescribed content.

Keywords: *Indigenous Knowledges; Narrative Inquiry; Physical Health Education Pedagogies; Teacher Education.*

> *The teacher will say, "This is the way the world is," and I'm thinking, "Not in my world [laughter]." It could be that way in your world, in the world across the bridge, across the river, but not in my world. My world is not like that. (Philip, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 10/17/17)*

Introduction

Multiple scholars, pedagogues, and Indigenous community leaders have drawn attention to the need for research and teacher training methods that place a primacy on Indigenous voices and ways of knowing across academic contexts (Battiste, 2017; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Kovach, 2015; Madden, 2015; Smith, 2016; Smith, 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The most common justifications driving such appeals includes: the prospective advancement of students’ understanding of social justice issues (Hill et al., 2018; Ovens et al., 2018); improved student knowledge of settler-colonial histories (Battiste, 2017; Cannon, 2013; Kovach, 2015); the broadening of students’ worldviews (Felis-Anaya, Martos-Garcia, and Devís-Devís 2017; Tinning, Philpot & Cameron,

2016); and the enhancement of student health and wellbeing (Robinson, Barrett & Robinson, 2016; Halas, J., McRae, H., & Carpenter, A., 2013). Furthermore, Renae Acton, Peta Salter, Max Lenoy and Robert Stevenson (2017) outlined a range of educational strategies and benefits associated with the successful infusion of Indigenous voices, knowledges, and pedagogies within school curricula.[1] Despite such observations, Indigenous perspectives remain heavily marginalized within virtually all levels of school curricula in Canada (Battiste, 2017; Smith, 2016).

This article presents a narrative inquiry into the experiences and perspectives of two Mohawk knowledge holders from the Kahnawà:ke [2] Mohawk First Nation—an Indigenous community located near the City of Montréal in the Eastern Canadian province of Québec. Our inquiry sought to engage Indigenous knowledge holders through storytelling as a means to better understand how Indigenous knowledges might be more ethically, and, incorporated into Physical Health Education Teacher Education (PHETE) in Canada. PHETE has been critiqued for habitually privileging scientific discourses about the body, athletic performance, and physical literacy over social justice issues (Tinning, 2004; Tinning, Macadonald, Wright and Hickey, 2006) for insulating Physical and Health Education (PHE) students from thinking critically about their craft and/or linking their teaching to broader settler-colonial histories in Canada; and for its largely tokenistic efforts to fold Indigenous content within broader cultural activities modules (e.g., traditional dances, songs, or Indigenous games modules), as opposed to altering current frameworks and/or offering standalone courses that take seriously the merits of Indigenous peoples, pedagogies, and histories (Halas et al., 2013; Hill et al., 2018; Philpot; 2016; Robinson, et al., 2016; Whatman, Quennerstedt, & McLaughlin, 2017). Brenda Kalyn (2006) and Dan Robinson et al., (2016) both argued that the routine reliance on 'one-off' lessons within PHETE for disseminating Indigenous content has deprived students and teachers of much needed opportunities to engage with Indigenous ways of knowing.

The two Mohawk knowledge holders, Amelia and Philip, both came to this research having deeply personal and embodied investments in community-health and wellness theories and programming in Kahnawà:ke. The title 'knowledge holder' is an honorary and community-specific title bestowed upon certain individuals from Kahnawà:ke whom are believed to be gifted with multigenerational knowledge. Our collaborative inquiry into both Amelia and Philip's personal narratives was, thus, seen as a culturally salient strategy through which to engage broader questions about the prospective incorporation of Mohawk knowledges into PHETE. While our inquiry was necessarily broad in scope, it was ultimately revealing of three key threads. Mohawk knowledges and viewpoints surrounding PHETE: are diverse, multifaceted, and complex in nature; locally rooted in community landscapes, histories, and physical cultural practices; and, therefore, must be incorporated into PHETE with sensitivity to the first two threads. In other words, our findings revealed that, when it comes to 'Indigenizing' PHETE, there can be no substitute to the forging of meaningful and sustained relationships with local Mohawk peoples whose knowledges cannot be commodified or simply replicated by non-Indigenous pedagogues within prefabricated course modules—a stipulation that stands in complication to dominant models of PHETE that privilege the development and application of scalable modules for province-wide curricula. The article, thus, concludes by outlining both Amelia and Philip's recommendations for understanding PHETE as an ongoing and collaborative *relationship* with Mohawk peoples.

1. Some of the benefits the authors highlighted included: Inclusive experiential collaborative learning opportunities, the development of intercultural and critical analysis skills, and the expansion of students' understanding of differing perspectives and cultures (see Acton, Salter, Lenoy & Stevenson, 2017).

2. Pronounced [gahna' wa:ge] "the place on the rapids."

Indigenous Education in Canada

This research is informed by the cultural stories, histories, and context of the Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation—a Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) community of approximately 7,200 whose lands and shorelines run along the St. Lawrence River approximately 15 kilometers south west of the City of Montréal. Kahnawà:ke is one of six First Nations that together comprise the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) Confederacy—a historical alliance between the Kanien'kehá:ka, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora First Nations that was forged in 1570 to establish peace between Haudenosaunee Nations who had long been at war with each other. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is one of the world's oldest participatory democracies and has been credited with providing the philosophical underpinnings of the United States Constitution (Freeman, 2015). Kahnawà:ke also remains a leader in civil and political rights nationally and internationally due to its core and governing principles of collective thinking, shared responsibility, listening to others, accounting for future generations, consensus decision-making, as well as its ongoing advocacy for embracing a holistic view of health and wellness (Tremblay, Martin, McComber, McGregor & Macaulay, 2018).

In terms of education, the passing of the Indian Act[3] in 1876 and the subsequent formation of the Indian Residential and Day School systems had a profound impact on Kahnawà:ke and virtually all Indigenous peoples across Canada. A total of 11 different Indian Day Schools operated in Kahnawà:ke from 1868 to 1988—the effects from which continue to reverberate throughout the community on a variety of trajectories (Deer, 2019). Both Day and Residential Schools were government-sponsored religious institutions which had as their core objective the assimilation of Indigenous youth into settler society by way of a forced attendance policy (Bombay, Matheson & Anisman, 2014; Miller, 1996; Milloy, 1999). However, the key difference between Residential and Day Schools was the fact that the Day Schools were located on-reserve and, therefore, youth had the ability to return home to their families at the end of the school day. An estimated total of 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth attended Residential Schools in Canada from 1883 until the last one closed in 1996, with even more youth having attended Day Schools with approximately 200,000 youth having attended Day Schools (Government of Canada, 2019). Christian missionaries of various denominations were charged with running both school-types in the earliest days with limited financial backing from the federal government, thus contributing to rudimentary learning facilities, deplorable living/studying conditions, and generally poor standards of education (Miller, 1996). High rates of suicide, death, and disease were also pervasive in both Residential and Day Schools as an inevitable by-product of the physical, psychological, and sexual abuses suffered by Indigenous pupils.[4]

In 2005, over 86,000 Survivors of the Residential School system filed the largest class action lawsuit in Canadian history against the federal government for its role in the development and administration of an education system that facilitated the "cultural genocide" of Indigenous peoples (TRC, 2015, p. 1). The lawsuit led to the eventual negotiation of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement which, in addition to financial compensation totalling close to two

3. The Indian Act is the principal statute through which the federal government legislates Indigenous rights in Canada. It has been amended over 70 times since its inception in 1876 and has also been widely criticized for having never wavered from its original intent to assimilate Indigenous peoples in the image of the settler (Frideres, 1999).

4. Survivors of Day Schools have reported similar experiences of abuse as those who attended Residential Schools due to their forced engagement in a poorly supervised system that sought to sever them from their traditional cultures and beliefs (Bombay, Matheson & Anisman, 2014; Deiter, 1999; Friesen & Friesen, 2002).

billion dollars, mandated that a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) be established in order to document and preserve the stories of Residential School Survivors. However, Day School Survivors were excluded from the initial settlement agreement due to the fact that the two school systems had operated separately from one another. It was not until August 2019 that the Federal Court of Canada ruled to compensate Day School survivors for the trauma they endured as youth (Deer, 2019).[5]

In 2015, the TRC's three appointed Commissioners issued a total of 94 Calls to Action that were intended to help nurture reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. These Calls to Action ranged in focus from child welfare reforms, to greater equity for Indigenous people in the legal system, to more balanced media coverage, to various other targets and strategies for building reconciliation in Canada. Among them, though, four Calls to Action (numbers 16, 24, 28 and 65) targeted post-secondary institutions directly, with numerous others targeting education more generally. The TRC made clear the potentially powerful role that education must play in restoring the country's broader goal of reconciliation—a role, however, that is certainly fraught with complications considering the historically tenuous relationship that exists between academic institutions and Indigenous communities in Canada. As the TRC's Lead Commissioner, Murray Sinclair, explained, "Education is what got us into this mess—the use of education at least in terms of residential schools—but education is the key to reconciliation" (Watters, 2015).

However, the ethical implementation of the Commissioners' Calls to Actions remains a slow, delicate, and varied process across post-secondary institutions in Canada. Marie Battiste (2017) and Margaret Kovach (2015) have both argued that Indigenous peoples and ways of knowing remain heavily marginalized within today's academic institutions. Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz (2018) have also highlighted concern among Indigenous academics and allied scholars that current reconciliation policies may simply represent a change in institutional rhetoric as opposed to offering-up meaningful structural changes. In the context of PHETE, Joannie Halas (2014) argued that the exclusion of Indigenous peoples and ways of knowing from virtually all of its programming mirrors broader trends in contemporary education that maintain only a fleeting commitment to Indigenous peoples. Halas (2014) thus called for a shift in PHETE programming away from an emphasis upon basic technocratic skills and toward social justice initiatives rooted in culturally relevant Indigenous pedagogies and worldviews. Halas et al. (2013) have further called for more culturally safe physical activity promotion and programs (Halas et al., 2013), while others have also highlighted the overarching health and wellness benefits that exposure to Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies can generate for students and teachers of all academic and cultural backgrounds (Halas et al., 2007; Halas et al., 2013; Halas et al., 2012; Kalyn, 2006). However, given the complexity of the situation, Canadian physical education teachers and scholars require guidance around how to practically teach physical education in culturally relevant ways (Halas, McRae, & Petherick, 2012; Robinson, Barret, & Robinson, 2016).

At a local level, it is important to point out that community members in Kahnawà:ke have long resisted and pushed back against the forced suppression of Mohawk cultures and pedagogies within school curricula (Morison, 2017). For example, Wahéshshon Shiann Whitebean profiled numerous acts of resistance to Day Schools in her research on child-targeted assimilation through

5. The details of the settlement included compensation ranging between $10,000 and $200,000, depending on the severity of abuse. An additional $200 million-dollar legacy fund has also been awarded for education, wellness, and healing initiatives.

Day Schools in Kahnawà:ke (cited in Deer, 2019). Kahnawá:ke was also among the first Indigenous communities in Canada to establish in 1972 an Indigenous controlled high school (the Indian Way School) that operated outside the constraints of the federal government (Morison, 2017)—a development that further prompted the Canadian government to implement the *Indian Control of Indian Education Policy* in 1973.

The two participants and co-authors of this paper, Amelia and Philip, were both instrumental in orchestrating many of the educational changes in Kahnawà:ke outlined above. Amelia has served for nearly three decades as a member of the Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee, which has long fought to gain and maintain parental sovereignty over children's education in Kahnawà:ke. Philip has similarly collaborated with the Combined Schools Committee on various educational initiatives, including the creation of the Kahnawà:ke Survival School in 1978.[6] Philip was also an original Co-Administrator of the Indian Way School in Kahnawà:ke and is presently involved in the development of a new teacher-training program intended to support project-based education locally. Both individuals continue to offer consultation on a wide range of education initiatives across Canada.

Methodology

Narrative inquiry is a methodology that conceptualizes lived experience as "the fundamental ontological category from which all inquiry—narrative or otherwise—proceeds" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 38). Narrative inquiry is grounded in the work of John Dewey—an American philosopher and progressive educational theorist, who is widely credited with being one of the founders of classical pragmatism. Our study places a primacy on Dewey's pragmatic ontology which conceptualizes human experience as a continuous and interactive process in which all knowledge resides. In other words, for Dewey, an individual's knowledge base is constituted by the culmination of their different life experiences. By extension, a person's experiences and knowledge base are constantly being shaped by the world around them, and also by that person's own actions and expriences. In this paper, we use Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) narrative inquiry as a way to better understand Amelia and Philip's lived experiences in the areas of community health and wellness in the hopes of shedding light upon the development of more culturally grounded PHETE programming.

Narrative inquiry was also a well-suited methodology for our study for three additional reasons: First, Amelia and Philip both viewed narrative inquiry as a culturally appropriate research approach in Kahnawà:ke due to the fact that narrative inquiry prioritizes storytelling as a way to transfer knowledge between individuals. Secondly, by valuing stories as a way to understand community health and wellness, we refrained from analyzing data in a way that generalized the stories being told to entire populations (which was a difficult task considering our secondary objective noted above). Instead, we focused on the rich contextual and complex nature of each of the stories and experiences being shared. Therefore conversations were not guided by a set of pre-determined questions, but rather grew organically within a space that promoted interaction about a wide range of health and wellness issues in Kahnawà:ke (Clandinin, 2013). Finally, narrative inquiry allowed us to work from a pragmatic ontology which situated the participants as knowledge holders and positioned their experiences as something to be valued (Clandinin, 2013).

6. The Kahnawà:ke Survival School was established in 1978 in protest of Bill 101 in Québec which had declared French the official language of the provincial government and, thus, inhibited Indigenous language sovereignty.

Following Clandinin (2013), we were attentive to how both Amelia and Philip's stories about health and wellness revolved around certain cultural plotlines (e.g., beliefs & behaviours), institutional plotlines (e.g., school & work), as well as how our own personal/social plotlines interacted with all of this. We also remained attentive to what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) described as the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry—a metaphorical space that invites the researcher to continually reflect upon how a person's lived experiences are linked by *temporality* (past, present, and future experiences), *sociality* (the personal and social conditions of an individual's experience), and also by *place* (the concrete, physical, and topological landscape in which an individual's lived experiences occur). Collectively, these three dimensions of human experience are to be weaved throughout a study's entirety. The three-dimensional space, thus, reinforces the researcher's emphasis upon the "social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals' experiences are constituted, expressed, shaped, and enacted" (Clandidin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 42-43). Therefore, the three-dimensional space inherently highlights the relational ethics and the conception of living alongside one another throughout the process of understanding complex experiences within rich contextual environments (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018).

This particular narrative inquiry was forged in collaboration with the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KSDPP) on the unceded territory of the Haudenosaunee people. KSDPP is an organization and research group that consists primarily of Indigenous scholars, health practitioners, and educational professionals. It was established in 1994 to promote healthy eating and active lifestyles among school-aged youth in Kahnawà:ke, and also within the broader community (Tremblay et al., 2018). The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is essential to KSDPP and oversees all health-related research within Kahnawà:ke. It consists of 22 local volunteers from varying sectors of the community. The KSDPP CAB holds monthly meetings to monitor various research projects and community health initiatives, and also to ensure that any research that takes place remains ethically grounded and within the interest of the community. The first author (Derek) invested substantial time and energy building relationships within the community, volunteering with local health and wellness initiatives, and working closely with KSDPP by attending monthly research and CAB meetings for a approximately two years. All aspects of this research were, thus, crafted alongside local stakeholders and carefully vetted through the KSDPP's CAB in accordance with local protocols and the KSDPP Code of Research Ethics.[7]

As noted above, the two participants in this study, Amelia and Philip, are considered knowledge holders in Kahnawà:ke with extensive expertise in community-health and wellness theories and programming. Our commitment to conducting research in a relationally ethical way prompted Derek to volunteer with a broad range of local health and wellness initiatives in Kahnawà:ke in an attempt to nurture community relationships alongside Amelia and Philip. Relational ethics can be described as a "deep experiential process that lives at the heart of the relationships the researcher and participant negotiate" (Clandinin, Downey & Schaefer, 2014, p. 48)—a process that was central to our study as evidenced by our continued and ongoing commitment to working collaboratively with KSDPP as volunteers.

A total of four "official" in-person conversations[8] were conducted with each participant over a 5-month timespan. The conversations all took place in Kahnawà:ke and ranged in length

7. The KSDPP Code of Research Ethics is a guiding document that outlines the obligations, principles, and procedures to be followed by all researchers and partners conducting research in Kahnawà:ke.

8. The rationale behind our using a conversational (as opposed to a semi-structured interview) approach was because we wanted to avoid appearing as an authoritative presence within the community. We further felt this approach enabled a more natural flow of conversation to occur (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

from 2-4 hours. All 'official' conversations were audio-recorded and transcribed. In *Conversation 1*, for example, Amelia and Philip were invited to develop a timeline outlining various personal experiences connected to health and wellness throughout their lives. For *Conversation 2*, they were each invited to bring an artifact that they felt may help them to speak succinctly about the role that culture plays with regard to health and wellness. In *Conversation 3*, the researcher and participant inquired deeper into the locally held cultural beliefs that underpinned health, wellness, and physical activity programming in Kahnawà:ke. Finally, *Conversation 4* invited Amelia and Philip to reflect openly about how PHETE programming might be better developed to reflect locally held cultural beliefs, knowledges, practices, and pedagogies. It is important to note that, while all of these conversations began from the same place, they inevitably strayed from their original tasks/starting points, which allowed us to delve deeper into the various personal and collective meanings that Amelia and Philip considered central to health and wellness in Kahnawà:ke. We attempt to illustrate this richness and complexity throughout our analysis.

Finally, a series of field texts were collected by Derek during the narrative inquiry process to supplement the four "official" conversations, which included: photos, videos, audio reflections, and personal journal entries. Our analysis followed a four-phase process. Phase one consisted of Derek analyzing the various field texts and organizing the four different conversations into two narrative accounts, one for each participant. A hard copy of each narrative account was then provided to Amelia and Philip for their review. Phase two of the inquiry consisted of face-to-face meetings between Derek, Amelia, and Philip with the aim of inquiring into the narratives' accuracy. Thus, both narrative accounts were co-composed alongside each participant, which ensured that the content, interpretation and overall account was consistent with their viewpoints. Phase three of the inquiry involved subjecting each narrative account to a process of fluid reading—i.e., the "dynamic reading and rereading of a set of field texts" (Christensen, 2013, p. 76)—in an attempt to extrapolate broader social significance from the experiences being expressed (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The fourth and final phase of our analysis focused on the relational ethics underpinning this work. We vetted various iterations of this article through the KSDPP's CAB, and also received instruction from their research team on how to present the final narratives shown below.

"Everyone is Different"

> Everyone is different. You can't paint them all the same color or with the same brush because they're so diverse. Mohawk students are different from Cree students. Cree students are different from Seneca students. So, you really have to take that all into consideration [when thinking about physical and health education]. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/16/18)

For Amelia, there exists multiple stories across Indigenous communities. Indigenous physical culture cannot be conceptualized in the singular or characterized as homogenous across these communities. Instead, Amelia emphasized the distinctive nature of Indigenous health and wellness. In the context of PHETE, for example, a common misconception is that the teachings of the Medicine Wheel are universally transferable across Indigenous peoples, and can be readily used in school curricula across Canada to infuse Indigenous content—a strategy that may be useful for encouraging culturally responsive pedagogy in some communities (see Halas et al., 2012; Kalyn, 2014), but may also be alienating for others and risks fetishizing Indigenous knowledges. Philip

jokingly asked at one point during our inquiry if the purpose of our research was to create a Haudenosaunee version of the Medicine Wheel: "a glorified Medicine Wheel with a feather on it?" (Philip, Field Notes, 10/27/17). Both Philip and Amelia challenged the pan-indigenizing tendencies present in today's PHETE curricula and cautioned us against adopting a "one size fits all" model for teaching Indigenous health and wellness. Philip spoke of the sheer diversity that exists between and amongst Indigenous populations as a strength that was further demonstrative of the breadth of Indigenous knowledges linked to health and wellness. The fact that researchers and school teachers have long tried to fold this complexity into a tidy lesson plan was, in his view, emblematic of a broader colonial pattern that is insistent upon classifying, interrogating, and justifying the inferiority of Indigenous knowledges:

> We're often defined as a collective. But live in this community [Kahnawà:ke] for a year or two, and if you don't notice that this is a highly individualist community, okay, you're not paying attention. You must be sleeping. There is more individualism in this community than there is in Montréal, okay? Absolutely. Guaranteed. So, we're high collectivism, high individualism. (Philip, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 10/27/17)

Philip's words challenge the curricular tendency to conceptualize Indigenous communities as tidy ethnic enclaves. His emphasis upon "individualism," moreover, was not intended as an insult, or meant to serve as evidence of the lack of community cohesion or social bonds in Kahnawà:ke. Philip later clarified this point by noting that Kahnawà:ke is an incredibly tightknit community in which people look out for one another.

Amelia further emphasized this point during our inquiry when she noted that Mohawk knowledges tend to manifest themselves within the everyday lives and living patterns of community members, and that they resist being summed-up by a scientific definition:

> There are different ways of doing things and of understanding the world, you know? We're circle people, and, in the world out there, a lot of people are linear, you know? Everybody thinks that something has got to be scientifically proven for that something to be true or to really know what it is, right? (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/16/18).

Amelia also explained how ceremonial protocols tend to differ across Indigenous groups:

> Because for us, we follow the Earth's rotation, so we go counter-clockwise when we do ceremonies. You go out west, and they practice following the Sun, so they follow the clock. They go clockwise. For us, here [in Kahnawà:ke], we follow our mother's lineage. Out west, they follow their father's lineage. See, we're very different, but yet not different in one way, because they're following their own traditions. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 12/15/17)

Amelia's words shed light upon the subtle differences that exist amongst distinct Indigenous groups in this aspect of ceremony, yet she was careful to not dismiss the commonalities that potentially bond Indigenous groups across different regions. She explained that the directional differences between East and West communities practiced in ceremony is connected to the divergent histories of these groups: "where we live, our language, and our culture. All of this is linked to our existence as a people." Amelia further explained over the course of our inquiry that you

must first honour and value the worldviews of others before you can truly appreciate your own worldview. When Derek asked Amelia how she could possibly forgive and be empathetic towards a worldview that actively sought to suppress Indigenous knowledges through both Indian Residential and Day Schools, she shared the Haudenosaunee Creation Story: "We have basic ways of conducting ourselves, in our tradition, and in our culture. And the Creator gave us original instructions. We can't forget our original instructions" (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/16/18). Amelia explained that the traditional Haudenosaunee principles of love, generosity, mindfulness, and respect for others has enabled her to forgive a lot of the different things she has endured in her lifetime. However, she further noted that respect for others is never achieved through force, but must rather be exercised through an open-hearted nature and a sincere inquiry into differing worldviews:

> We don't impose our culture on you, unless you ask. That's the whole idea. If you don't have your own way of learning your own culture, traditions, language, whatever, then you may ask and say, "Can I come here and learn something about how I get back on-track and follow a better path?" You may want to accept or adopt some of the traditions and ways that we have [here in Kahnawà:ke], and there's nothing wrong with that. Just like if you have something that we like, then we could follow something that you're doing. The conflict comes when you impose. That's where we have issues. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/16/18)

Amelia's words emphasize the dynamism of culture in Kahnawà:ke —a dynamism that refutes previous efforts to cast 'Indigeneity' as a static and measurable entity within school curricula. She explained how curiosity, rather than competition, can be a driving force for knowledge production: "we could follow something that you're doing" to strengthen our own wellbeing. Both Amelia and Philip's reflections resonate with current literature in PHETE which states that Canadian PHE teachers require guidance on how to practically teach culturally relevant materials (Halas, McRae, & Petherick, 2012; Robinson, Barret, & Robinson, 2016). For Amelia and Philip, though, that guidance begins once we adopt an open-heart and a curious mind about the sheer breadth of Indigenous knowledges in our classrooms.

"Our Ancestors are Buried Here"

> For me, it comes right down to the basics of our ancestors. Our ancestors are buried here. Our ancestors before us have given us everything we have. As far as we're concerned, they're still walking this landscape. We don't see them because we've been trained not to believe that they're there, but they're there. Trust me. I know. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 11/17/17)

Amelia and Philip often referred to the traditional tenets of Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen (Words Before All Else), Kayanaren'kó:wa (The Great Law), and the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum) during our conversations. They further noted that these tenets were all firmly rooted in both the territory and the people of Kahnawà:ke: "Water is our blood. Rivers are our blood. It's what we are made of" (Amelia, Field Notes, 12/1517). According to both Amelia and Philip, we are positioned to appreciate the wholistic nature of Haudenosaunee health and wellness only once we understand and value these tenets, and when we acknowledge their

interconnectedness with the land, water, sky, and other natural elements. Health and wellness were not considered to exist in isolation from our natural and ancestral surroundings, but were rather seen as constituted by our environment, our relationships, and also by our belief systems. In this sense, health and wellness are not passively acquired by the Haudenosaunee; they are part of a life-long journey that drives one closer to their natural elements, and, ultimately, to their true selves.

Amelia and Philip continually emphasized the significance of several core Haudenosaunee principles that have been orally translated across generations in Kahnawà:ke to enhance health and wellness. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, for example, also known as the Thanksgiving Address or "Words Before All Else," is the central address of the Haudenosaunee and reflects the dialectical relationship between all living things, Mother Earth, and the cosmos. Philip explained that the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen teaches us that, although life forms may differ, we remain equal, interdependent, and deserving of respect:

> We understand that we share our time here with many different forms of life. From the smallest micro-organisms and the insects that live in the body of our Mother Earth, it is your responsibility to keep the body of our Mother healthy and strong. It is your duty to fight the effects of pollution. We know your task is great at this time because of the demands we, the two-legged, place upon you. And yet, despite this, you continue to struggle with the weight of the burden we place upon you. You fight to carry out your responsibilities and to fulfil your obligations in accordance with the original instructions. Because of this, the cycle continues. And so it is. We turn our minds to you. We acknowledge you and we give thanks. So be it in our minds. (Philip, Passage from Artifact, Thanksgiving Address)

Central to the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen passage noted above is the belief in Sha'tetionkwathe (we are all the same height) which illustrates the Haudenosaunee's commitment to equality, generosity, and the consideration that all life is gifted and valuable. Sha'tetionkwathe encourages us to be respectful of all creation, and most importantly, to act as stewards of our environment:

> Our belief system is that she [Mother Nature] provides for everything. She cares for everybody. Nobody's different. White people are not any different than the Native people that live there. The only difference is that you have to remember the word "balance." She [Mother Nature] only takes care of the balance between you [and your surroundings]. That's all she does. She doesn't take sides. She doesn't pull one side against the other. She just keeps the balance. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/18/18)

Amelia and Philip were unwavering in their beliefs that the health and wellbeing of the Haudenosaunee people and culture, and of all living creatures, is intimately tied to our natural and ancestral surroundings. 'Balance' featured prominently in their narrative accounts, which they also saw as crucial to the health and wellbeing of all living things. Environmental health was framed as the great equalizer of all living creatures: "[Mother nature] doesn't take sides." This, again, points to the egalitarian virtues that underpin Haudenosaunee philosophy, as well as to its characterization of health and wellness as existing beyond the individual.

We also observed during the course of our inquiry that both Amelia and Philip continually tried to establish connections between Haudenosaunee beliefs and the environment in which Derek

grew up (i.e., a small town in rural Saskatchewan): "it's like your culture," or "it's similar to how you grew up." Both Amelia and Philip regularly asked questions about the physical environment that supported Derek's health and wellness, while also probing for insight into the social and familial relationships that were generated through his relationship with the land; e.g., the memories that he created through hunting, fishing, and camping trips, and that he had developed through countless hours he spent skating with family and friends on backyard hockey rinks. In so doing, they theorized *place* not as a mere venue for healthful practices, but rather as a conduit for a range of physical activities and relationships that were essential to living a "balanced" life—as a "politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, and local" axis of health and wellness (Rodman, 1992, p. 641). Amelia and Philip encouraged us to metaphorically 'drink from places' (Basso, 1996), to pay attention to how local knowledges are rooted in the land, water, and in the other elements that surround us, and to value all of these as critical teachings that are ultimately generative of a healthy people and culture.

Finally, Amelia and Philip emphasized how their personal and collective health and wellness were also historically informed by the dislocating effects of colonialism. The failure to recognize this history and its ongoing legacy was one of their main concerns about education generally, and about PHETE specifically:

> The only thing Mohawk in the classroom was the students. The students were Mohawk and that's about it. There was really nothing and they had no intentions of incorporating Mohawk [culture] in fact. Canadian policy was to eliminate Indigenous whatever. And it was true in the day schools as well as it was in the boarding schools. It wasn't just the policy of the residential schools. It was policy of all the schools. All the federal schools. (Philip, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 10/27/17)

Philip also expressed the fact that it is difficult to pinpoint oppressive and colonial behaviour within education as these constructs are still present: "The reason I say we don't have an answer to it is because it's going on right now, all the time, all around us. It wasn't just in the 1950s." (Philip, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 10/17/17)

Investing in Relationships

> Derek, regarding the written analysis of what we talked about and how you related it to your work outside of your workplace is very respectful and shows how much you understood what we talked about. I am proud to be working 'with' you because you understand how we are as Onkwehón:we. Walk your talk, talk your voice. It's not about the end of the journey as much as it is about the process. (Amelia, Personal Note, May 15th, 2018)

Both Amelia and Philip emphasized the significance of building meaningful and sustained relationships with others as a core component of ethical research, and also as a key ingredient of health and wellness. Nurturing relationships as part of the research process, and in turn, as part of the pedagogical process, was considered an important step toward the development of culturally relevant PHETE programs. The dominant narrative of academia, of course, has habitually restricted teaching and learning to the classroom, and framed researching as a practice that must remain free from relationships so as to maintain 'objectivity' in our analyses. However, Amelia and Philip argued that nurturing relationships was fundamental to researching Indigenous health and

wellness, and also for learning how to discuss the complexities associated with PHETE. Their narratives further revealed that both teaching and learning must extend beyond the classroom to include the fostering of relationships with our outdoor and natural environments. The building of relationships—both personal and environmental—not only promotes better research, but also alerts us to the multiple axis of knowledge that surround us and that contribute to our health and wellness.

We know firsthand that this work is time consuming and potentially disruptive of dominant trends in PHETE. However, PHETE programs can avoid simplistic and generalized models of teaching Indigenous health and wellness by placing a primacy on our relationships with local Indigenous peoples, and by including Indigenous voices in our curricula (Acton et al., 2017; Salter & Maxwell, 2015). One strategy that both Amelia and Philip encouraged as a "first step" toward nurturing culturally relevant pedagogy was building relationships with local knowledge holders, and inviting them to teach our students:

> I would bring in, if it was possible, I'd bring in somebody like (local Elder) to talk about certain processes … a local person that really could talk about the tradition, you know? [Someone who could answer], whatever questions you want to ask. (Philip, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 12/15/17)

Following Amelia and Philip, we believe resources should be made available to support relationships with local knowledge holders, and to ensure that pre-service students will not only learn from them, but will also become privy to how such relationships were built.

Finally, Amelia reflected upon how many researchers have misused her stories. In so doing, she noted how those exposed to such research have misunderstood her teachings:

> I go back to KSDPP, where we've had that helicopter concept. Where researchers have come in and we've shared stories and then have gone. And where does that story go? Where does that research project end up? It ends up in a book. It ends up on a research, medical report out there. Then what happens is that when it comes back to us. It's attached to another research project, which is not exactly accurate information of the community. It's a negative concept, or it stigmatizes the community into a different direction. (Amelia, Transcribed Personal Conversation, 1/17/17)

As Amelia pointed out, there exists a historically tenuous relationship between the academy and Indigenous communities—a relationship that has also drawn critical attention in the academic literature (Battiste, 2017; Flicker et al., 2015; Smith, 1999). Amelia's words reiterate the importance of understanding how our work as both researchers and pedagogues must exhibit a relational commitment to ethics, and not simply fulfill the mandate of a research ethics board. The paradigmatic underpinnings of this research helped us to slow down and be attentive to a process built on trust; in which storytelling was valued; and where Derek's investment in nurturing personal and community relationships was methodologically imperative. Living alongside Philip and Amelia, as narrative inquirers say, also allowed Derek to better understand how Philip and Amelia practiced their values in everyday life; in their relationships with families and friends; and through their own teachings about health and wellness.

Concluding Remarks

In this article, we explored how current trends in PHETE might be improved by drawing upon the insights and expertise of two Mohawk knowledge holders in the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Nation near present-day Montréal, Québec. We came away with more questions than answers; yet, our inquiry revealed the following key threads: 1) that Mohawk voices and viewpoints surrounding PHETE are diverse, multifaceted, and complex; 2) that they are locally-rooted; and, 3) that PHETE programming can be enhanced by expressing sensitivity to the first two threads. In particular, Amelia and Philip cautioned us that viewing Indigenous knowledges and physical cultures in the singular, as static entities, and/or by trapping it within a limited range of pre-colonial sports and physical activity units was to misunderstand the dynamic and generative nature of health and wellness, and ignored the centrality of relationships in Kahnawà:ke. This finding challenged what Kalyn (2006), Robinson et al., (2013) and Lorusso et al. (2019) described as the mainstream tendency to restrict the conceptualization and teaching of Indigenous content within segregated course modules (such as traditional dances, songs, or games lessons) without first properly attending to the particular social, historical, and cultural contexts out of which such content has emerged and continually evolves.

This study further highlighted the importance of shifting the conversation in PHETE from simply including Indigenous knowledge to thinking more critically about the peoples, places, and land on which post-secondary institutions are situated. Researchers and school administrators looking to incorporate Indigenous knowledges into PHETE will need to make a concerted effort to establish meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities in their region. Forging a bedrock of strong and sustained relationships with local Indigenous peoples may allow for PHETE programs to better understand the cultural, familial, political, and geographical underpinnings of Indigenous health and wellness, and, subsequently, to better emphasize such issues within PHETE. It may also open-up valuable opportunities for exchange with Indigenous peoples that will help us to move beyond basic coursework and lecture-based models. Indeed, pre-service PHETE students could benefit greatly from open, guided, and Indigenous-led dialogue, and certainly from courses linked to community consultation as a means to further understand the deeply contextual, locally rooted, and relational tenets of Indigenous health and wellness. We envision this work as a continual and ongoing process and look forward to nurturing our relationship with Kahnawà:ke in the years ahead.

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