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Confronting Erasure:
Educational Challenges and Interventions that Empower Intertribal Youth in the Bay Area

By

DANIEL I. CORNEJO-WARNER
DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Native American Studies

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

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Committee in Charge

2022

Dedicated to my beautiful wife and children

Lil Milagro, Neto, and Amada.

I love you more than words can express.

Abstract:

Native American education in the United States has historically been a tool for the missionization, assimilation, and erasure of Native Americans. Due to the policies of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 that vast majority of Native American people in the United States currently reside within urban centers. This has produced a demographic reality wherein the majority of Native American people in the U.S. reside within urban centers yet constitute a demographic minority. As such, Native Americans are experiencing multiple forms of erasure which serve as a driving factor in poor educational outcomes for students. At the same time urban Native American educators have constructed multifaceted holistic pedagogical approaches to serve urban Native youth coming from a multitude of diverse backgrounds, based on traditional Indigenous practices that have been adapted to urban Native environments to recreate an Indigenized relationship to urban landscapes. These holistic Indigenous forms of education have served as an important platform for combating epistemicide both historically and in the present. This study seeks to examine the major educational challenges of urban Indigenous education in the U.S., California, and the Oakland Bay Area; as well as the Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches and interventions utilized by Native American people to resist erasure, epistemicide, and miseducation within urban centers. Through interviews with constituents of the American Indian Child Resource Center, the Intertribal Friendship House, and the Native American Health Center based in Oakland California, I have conducted 30 interviews with Native American educators, parents, students, and Elders that address the major educational challenges as well as the major educational interventions for urban Native youth in Oakland. This study highlights the historical/present centrality of urban Native hubs as well as the importance that these spaces play in the education of urban Native American students, the priority of establishing strong educational relationships within and with urban Native American communities, the impact of implementing culturally sustaining pedagogies, and the need for incorporating traditional Indigenous knowledge systems into the education of urban Native American students. Finally, this study discusses the educational implications of these findings for urban Native and non-Native educational communities, teacher training, and educational policy.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

On October 29, 1969, the first American Indian Center (AIC) in San Francisco burnt to the ground. The fire constituted a material erasure of the central Native American Hub in San Francisco as well as the destruction of the material support offered by the center including job counseling, social work, health programs, and food distribution. Dr. Renya Ramirez (2007) discusses the centrality and importance of the Native Hub within the urban context defining it as:

> …a geographical concept. Hubs can represent actual places. Gathering sites or hubs include cultural events, such as powwows and sweat lodge ceremonies, as well as social and political activities, such as meetings and family gatherings…the hub suggests how landless Native Americans maintain a sense of connection to their tribal homelands and urban spaces through participation in cultural circuits and maintenance of social networks, as well as shared activity with other Native Americans in the city and on the reservation (p. 3).

The fire delt a devastating blow to a Native Hub that offered connection, affirmation, visibility, and support to an urban Native American community whose members often experienced invisibility after relocating from Native American reservations throughout the U.S.

April McGill, the current director of the American Indian Cultural Center in San Francisco, stated that the fire at the American Indian Center in San Francisco served as "the spark that ignited the Alcatraz Movement." Many books and dissertations substantiate the correlation between the fire at AIC and the occupation of Alcatraz Island including Johnson's (1996) *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island,* Blansett's (2018) *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oaks, Alcatraz and the Red Power Movement,* Warrior and Smith's (1997) *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee,* and Kelly's (2009) dissertation entitled *The Rhetoric of Red Power and the American Indian Occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971).* These works document how the fire at the AIC on October 29, 1969 occurred at a time when Third World Liberation Movements were proliferating in the Bay Area, producing a sense of

urgency within the urban Native American community that inspired the sustained occupation of Alcatraz Island on November 20, 1969. An urban Intertribal group, named the Indians of All Tribes led the Alcatraz occupation seeking the establishment of an American Indian cultural center, American Indian Museum, and American Indian university (Johnson 1996) through the reclamation of illegally occupied Native American lands, the reclamation of traditional Indigenous lifeways, and the education of Native American youth (Indians of All Tribes 1969). The fire at AIC constituted the physical erasure of a central institution that supported the urban Native American community of San Francisco while the occupation of Alcatraz powerfully disrupted the void left by the fire in a way that reverberates across generations. This example is one of many historical and contemporary events that illustrate the interplay of urban Native American erasure and urban Native American resistance in the Bay Area and how that tension defines the terrain of urban Native education in the present.

Fifty years later, a contemporary example of an urban Native American educational experience that employed Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches to empower students and bring visibility to Native American issues in the Bay Area occurred in the early morning hours of Indigenous Peoples Day October 14, 2019. On this day an intertribal flotilla of over a dozen canoes comprised by members of Native American nations from Southern California to the Pacific Northwest, circa navigated Alcatraz Island in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Alcatraz occupation and the legacy of reclamation and education inherent to the Alcatraz movement. Urban Native American youth and educators, guided by Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) from the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) in Oakland California took part in the event. Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) began planning and preparing for the event in 2018 guiding and supporting students in building a plank canoe using a

boat design gifted to them by a Hawaiian Elder for the purpose of the canoe journey to Alcatraz. The purpose and intent of the journey was to help students remember the importance of canoeing for Indigenous cultures while honoring the 50th anniversary of the Alcatraz occupation through educational experiences that emphasized cultural preservation and visibility (Personal Communication, Manny Lieras).

Building the canoe and participating in the canoe journey were infused with important teachings imparted to youth through engagement with Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches. Native American holistic pedagogical approaches are qualitatively different than the commodified "holism" within the U.S. which seeks to sell wholefoods, holistic health practices, and "alternative" medicine and other healthy lifestyles to middle and upper class, pre-dominantly white consumers who are gentrifying places like Oakland. Instead, the holistic Indigenous pedagogical approaches employed during the canoe journey provided a tangible and embodied educational experience rooted in the mutualistic praxis of a respectful relationship to land, community interdependence, community belonging, urban Native American Bay Area history, and the ongoing pedagogical connection of mind-body-heart-spirit (Archibald 2008).

Building the canoe required an understanding of the oral history of the Hawaiian origins of the canoe design as well as the kinesthetic knowledge of turning a canoe design into a canoe structure. Travelling in a canoe vs. travelling on a mechanical boat demands a different relation to the waterways of the Bay Area including a deeper attentiveness to tides and wind which determine the safest time to travel. Rowing a canoe in unison provides and embodied sense of interdependence and belonging with the other humans on the canoe as well as the Bay Area waterways. This understanding of interdependence and belonging is not conveyed through the verbal definition of these concepts but through the practice of the principles. Upon arriving at

Alcatraz Island students encountered powerful speeches and ceremony to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the Alcatraz occupation.

After the event, AICRC students spoke to Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) communicating how the canoe journey was one of the most powerful educational events that they had experienced (Personal Communication, Manny Lieras). The canoe journey spoke to student's hearts, minds, and spirits, positioning them as part of an intergenerational legacy of urban Native American resistance, reclamation, and education in the Bay Area. This holistic pedagogical approach helped students develop more profound understandings of themselves-in-relation[1] to a broader urban Intertribal historical legacy as well as a deeper knowledge/relationship to the Ohlone territory where they reside. The year-long process of Native American educators envisioning the canoe journey, Native American students building the canoe, and Native American educators/students participating in the canoe journey to Alcatraz was both explicitly educational and firmly rooted in Indigenized holistic pedagogical praxis. The story connecting the American Indian Center fire, the occupation of Alcatraz, and the canoe journey of 2019 speaks to the importance of disrupting urban Native American invisibility through the employment of Indigenous holistic pedagogical practices in service of urban Native American youth.

Systemic erasure of urban Native American communities is a root cause of poor educational outcomes for urban Native American Youth in the Oakland Bay Area. Historically, this erasure has occurred through the assimilative process that was inherent to the urban relocation of Native American people to the Oakland Bay Area. Relocation, however had the

[1] Styres (2017) commonly employs the term "self-in-relation" over the more westernized understanding of "self-as-individual." Through the Indigenized framing of self-in-relation, the individual is continuously connected to the broader family, community, natural world, ancestral teachings, and cosmos and never seen as separate or disconnected from these elements.

unintended consequence of forging powerful Intertribal coalitions. These coalitions would produce a wide array of social and educational movements as well as Native American hubs which served to counter Native American assimilation within dominant educational institutions. The historical pattern of the systemic erasure of urban Native American communities persists in the present forging web of dysfunction within dominant educational settings that purport to serve urban Native American youth in the Oakland Bay Area. This web of dysfunction entrenched in erasure serves as a root cause for poor educational outcomes for urban Native American students in the Bay Area's present.

The erasure of urban Native American people must be confronted-within and removed-from the U.S. educational system. Historically Native American erasure has occurred through missionization, genocide, residential schools, racist legislation, urban relocation, and other similar projects. In the Bay Area's present Native American erasure occurs through the marginalization of Native American knowledge systems, the absence of culturally sustaining pedagogy, and demographic erasure and invisibilization. While this assertion seems painfully obvious, the perpetuation of Native American erasure endures within educational institutions in the present. From the historical legacies of residential schools and urban relocation to the contemporary practices of demographic and curricular invisibilization, Native American erasure exists and persists within educational institutions producing adverse educational outcomes for urban Native American students. To confront the erasure of urban Native American communities we must understand the educational challenges that sustain erasure as well as the effective educational interventions employed by urban Native American educators that promote empowerment. My study argues that that the systemic erasure of urban Native American communities is a root cause of poor educational outcomes for urban Native American Youth in

the Oakland Bay Area[2] while the interactions between healthy educational and community relationships, culturally sustaining pedagogies, and the incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems designed to serve urban Native American youth serve as powerful educational interventions for confronting erasure. These educational interventions should be understood and supported within school districts, within teacher education programs, and through California educational policy that impact urban Native American youth.

At the same time, the historical tradition of Native American educational resistance persists in the present. Native American educators in the Oakland Bay Area have identified and implemented three foundational pedagogical approaches that serve the educational needs or urban Native American students. The first foundational approach in service to urban Native American Youth in the Oakland Bay Area is the establishment of healthy relationships and responsible relationality between students and educators built upon an ongoing interaction between accountability, reciprocity, integrity, trust, & safety. The second foundational pedagogical approach in service to urban Native American Youth in the Oakland Bay Area is a culturally sustaining pedagogy which builds solidarity across identity and tradition, collectively creating educational experiences with urban Native American youth, and incorporating circle pedagogies in ethical and responsive ways. The third foundational pedagogical approach in service to urban Native American Youth in the Oakland Bay Area is the ethical incorporation of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems which support urban Native American youth through providing ceremonial access, rites of passage, frameworks for youth leadership, and education on traditional ecological knowledge systems. Both educational erasure and

[2] I have chosen to use the term "Oakland Bay Area" as opposed to the more commonly used term "San Francisco Bay Area." I made this choice because the Oakland Native American community is at the center of my study, however, the urban Native American community of the broader Bay Area is also present.

educational efficacy hold important implications for urban Native American communities, for teacher education programs/non-Native educators who serve urban Native American students, for the implementation of Ethnic Studies curricula at the K-12 through university levels, and for Ethnic Studies policy at the California state level.

II. Urban Indigeneity, Native American Pedagogy, and Urban Education

My study is positioned within the fields of urban Indigeneity, Native American education/ pedagogy, and urban education within the Bay Area. Two primary works inform my understandings of the urban Native American experience in the Bay Area. The first is Susan Lobo (2002) who through her work as a coordinating editor of the community history project for the Intertribal Friendship House produced a collection of oral histories entitled *Urban Voices: The Bay Area American Indian Community.* Centering oral history this text addresses the origins of Intertribal presence in the Bay Area, the relocation era, how the Intertribal community grew, the era of social movement in the 1960s and 70s, and the importance of an Intertribal community for future generations. This text is deeply important in contextualizing urban Native American Bay Area history through the voices of urban Native American people yet does not center education and pedagogy. The second is Renya Ramirez's (2007) work which provides an account of the presence of Native Hubs in the Bay Area focusing on defining the Native Hub, examining the relocation experience, the Muwekma Ohlone hub making process, *Pueblos Originarios* and Native Hubs, and the role of Native American youth in Native Hubs. Ramirez's work is seminal in understanding the concept and purpose of the Native Hub but does not explicitly focus on the educational endeavors undertaken by Hubs. Through focusing on the educational challenges experienced by urban Native youth as well as the educational

interventions carried out within urban Native Hubs my study seeks to build upon the foundation established by Lobo and Ramirez.

The body of literature that addresses contemporary Native American/Native Canadian education/pedagogy is present in books such as *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought* (Grande 2004), and in edited volumes such as *Indigenous Philosophies and Critical Education: A Reader* (edited by Sefa Dei 2011), *Indigenous Education: New Directions in Theory and Practice* (edited by Tomlins-Jahnke, Styres, Lilley & Zinga, 2019), and *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View* (edited by Smith, Tuck, & Yang 2019). Sandy Grande's *Red Pedagogy* (2004) advances a comprehensive pedagogical approach in service to Native American students through an exploration of an intellectual exchange between critical theory and Native American education including the critical engagement with Marxist pedagogies and whitestream feminist[3] approaches to education. While many of the pedagogical tactics advanced through the pedagogical approaches in *Red Pedagogy* are useful in the education of urban Native American youth, they are neither informed by urban Native American educators nor designed for the unique realities of urban Intertribal youth. My study is both rooted in the tradition of *Red Pedagogy* in that it seeks an intellectual exchange between the fields of Native American education, urban education, and culturally sustaining pedagogy, and builds upon the foundation established by *Red Pedagogy* through an explicit focus on urban Native American education, the erasure of urban Intertribal communities, and Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches.

[3] Grande (2004) states that "The historical divide between white and subaltern women suggests that what has long passed as "mainstream" feminism is actually whitestream feminism, that is, a feminist discourse that is not only dominated by white women but also principally structured on the basis of white, middle-class experience, serving their ethnopolitical interests and capital investments (p. 125)." Grande continues writing that "Other characteristics of whitestream feminism include a heavy dependence on postmodern/post-structuralist theories, a privileging of "academic feminism" over the feminist political project, and an undertheorizing of patriarchy as the universal oppression of all women (p. 156)."

A broad body of literature addresses Native American education in the present without centering urban Indigeneity. Sefa Dei's (2011) edited volume entitled *Indigenous Philosophies and Critical Education: A Reader* focuses on a wide variety of critical issues regarding global Indigeneities and Indigenous educational theory including the implications of decolonization, representation and Indigenous knowledge production, Indigenous knowledge and development discourse, Indigenous knowledge and western science, and the challenges of centering Spiritual ways of knowing within western educational institutions. In a similar vein Tomlins-Jahnke, Styres, Lilley & Zinga's (2019) edited volume entitled *Indigenous Education: New Directions in Theory and Practice* addresses theoretical approaches to Indigenous education, the negotiation of contested spaces between Indigenous and western educational institutions, practice/pedagogy, and new directions in Indigenous education centering the Native Canadian, Maori, and U.S. reservation contexts. While urban Indigeneity and urban Intertribal education are at times alluded to throughout both volumes it is rarely centered as a site of particular inquiry and theorization. My study draws heavily from both collections while simultaneously extending their scope through the centering of urban Indigeneity and Intertribal education during the formative K-12 years.

Smith, Tuck, & Yang's (2019) edited volume grapples with the critical issues of land-based literacy, decolonizing Indigenous education, and Indigenous futures in education drawing from the Native Canadian, Maori, and Native American reservation context. Two chapters in this volume explicitly deal with urban Intertribal education. The first is Mays & Whalen's (2019) "Decolonizing Indigenous Education in the Postwar City: Native Women's Activism from Southern California to the Motor City" which articulates the fundamental role played by urban Native American feminists in Detroit's Indian Education and Cultural Center and

contemporary education within the Sherman Institute. This chapter offers important insight into the roles of Native American women in the establishment of urban Native American educational hubs, however, does not explicitly grapple with the unique educational realities of the Oakland Bay Area. The second is a conversation between Erin Marie Konsmo (Métis) and Karyn Recollet (Urban Cree) in the "Afterword" which engages disability discourse to theorize the urban Intertribal relationship with city landscapes. This piece offers important insight in grappling with the question of Indigenized relationships to urban landscapes within the Native Canadian context but does not grapple with issues of urban Intertribal education within the U.S. Native American context. While these important works center urban Indigeneity, my study seeks to both draw-from and extend the discourse presented in these works centering erasure/resistance and Indigenous holistic pedagogies as frameworks of analysis and theorization within the Oakland Bay Area which presents different set of challenges and possibilities to the context of Detroit, Riverside, and urban Canada. My study seeks to contribute to the emerging discourse on urban Intertribal education through centering the tension of erasure/resistance as a root cause of urban Intertribal educational challenges while positioning the mutualistic interaction of healthy community relationships, culturally sustaining pedagogies, and the incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge as viable, community driven educational interventions.

Finally, a broad body of literature which addresses urban social justice education/pedagogy for low-income students of color in the Bay Area exists that does not center urban Native American educational issues. It focuses on the more visible racial/ethnic groups within the Bay Area including Latina(o) Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans with minimal attention given to the educational realities of urban Native Americans. The

important topics addressed by scholars who focus on urban students of color, Ethnic Studies, and social justice education/pedagogy in the Bay Area include moving from theory to practice in urban schools (Duncan-Andrade & Morell 2008), teaching autoethnography (Camangian 2009), hope and healing in urban education (Ginwright 2015), community responsive literacies (Tintiangco-Cubales et. al. 2016), youth participatory action research (Akom et. al. 2016), and many other topics. While all of these topics are empowering and necessary within the fields of Ethnic Studies and urban education, and at times hold important implications for urban Intertribal communities, they do not explicitly address the intersection of urban Indigeneity and education, missing both a central tenant of Ethnic Studies education (i.e., Native American Studies) as well as a major Native American population (i.e. urban Native American people).

III. Urban Native Hubs in Oakland California

Postwar Native American relocation to urban areas like Oakland CA, was coupled with postwar "white flight" and the suburbanification of the United States. Self (2003) describes the sharp demographic shift that occurred in Oakland CA between 1945 and 1970 where the inward migration of African Americans and other people of color was coupled with the exodus of Oakland's industrial base as well as white residents to the suburban areas of San Leandro, Hayward, etc. Additionally, the "white flight" and weakening of Oakland's economic industrial base was paired with the systemic erosion of public institutions and services, specifically public schools which went from being amongst the most highly funded in the nation to being in the bottom quarter of educational funding. This de-funding of public K-12 education in California existed in unison with the de-funding of other social programs such as infrastructure, public libraries, public parks, and the elimination of a tuition-free college and university system.

During this same period funding to the prison-industrial complex increased (Schrag 1999). The Bay Area social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, including the Third World Liberation Front, the Black Panther Party, and the Red Power Movement, were born in response to these changing social contexts and realities.

Oakland's present is a reflection of its past. The legacy of white flight and de-industrialization is reflected in the extreme wealth inequality within the city. Amidst great wealth are some of the poorest schools in the nation. The de-funding of public K-12 education as well as other social programs disproportionally impacts poor and working-class communities of color. Liberatory organizations established between the 1960's and 1970's as well as in the present have continued to challenge social inequity in its many forms. And Oakland's three primary Native Hubs – the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC), the Intertribal Friendship House (IFH), and the Native American Health Center (NAHC) - established during the relocation and Red Power eras, continue to serve the urban Native American community in Oakland.

The American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) founded in 1974 by the Indian Nurses of California Inc. is located across from Lake Merritt in the heart of Oakland California. Lake Merritt is the central public space in Oakland where people come to gather, shop, exercise, dance, protest and install pop-up businesses. The neighborhood made national news in 2018 with the story of "BBQ Becky/Permit Patty," a white woman who called the police to report a Black family for not having a permit to barbeque by the lake on the weekend. The community responded by creating the annual "BBQ'n While Black" event as a joyful form of protest that asserted community control over the city's common spaces. The neighborhood is a microcosm of Oakland's wealth disparities and inequalities as it is both firmly middle/upper class while

encampments for the unhoused proliferate throughout the area. AICRC is housed in a beautiful and welcoming two-story home with a spacious ground floor consisting of a large common room, a medium sized computer lab/study space, a smaller meeting room/study space, and a kitchen. The upper floor holds staff offices and counseling spaces. One of the original founding members of AICRC Mary Ann Greycloud (Sisseton Sioux) helped establish, AICRC in service of the thousands of relocated urban Native American people who were often skeptical of government services due to long legacies of child removal through residential schools and foster care services. AICRC provided a stable Native Hub for young parents who were disoriented by relocation, lacking extended familial kinship networks within the city, experiencing the stressors of parenthood, as well as the trials of an urban life (i.e. unemployment, cultural and social isolation, substandard housing, etc.) (Greycloud, U.S. Senate Testimony 1979). AICRC continues this legacy in the present offering youth educational services, counseling services, and family support services.

Miles away, the Intertribal Friendship House (IFH) is located in the East Lake region of the Lake Merritt neighborhood. IFH was founded in 1955 by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to serve Native American people who were displaced by the Relocation Act (Elias, 2017). It serves as one of the first urban Native American organizations in the U.S. providing summer youth programs, Elders programs, social service counseling, educational programs, and social events for urban Native people as well as providing a model for other urban Native organizations to follow (Lobo, 2002; Lobo, 1998). Oakland's Intertribal Friendship House grew in tandem with other urban Native American organizations including the San Francisco Indian Center and the San Jose Indian Center (Boyer 1998). The Friendship House has two large gathering rooms where events are held as well as a kitchen, office space, and an

outdoor garden/green house. In the present IFH serves as a Native hub that provides social services, educational services and holds a wide variety of cultural events, social gatherings, and ceremonies. While IFH is not at the center of my study, many of the urban Native American community members that I interviewed either currently or at one time worked at the Intertribal Friendship House.

Heading down International Boulevard into East Oakland one soon enters the Fruitvale neighborhood where the Native American Health Center (NAHC) is located. Fruitvale is known as the area of Oakland where recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America as well as Chicana(o) communities have established themselves both historically and in the present. Given the relatively “lower” cost of housing of the area, Fruitvale is also a neighborhood where many relocated Native Americans have come to reside. This area of Oakland came to be known nationally through the tragic police shooting of Oscar Grant in January 2009 as well as the devastating Ghost Ship warehouse fire in December 2016. Fruitvale is a working/middle class neighborhood where beauty and tension is found in the intersection of racial/class disparities, immigration status, and environmental determinants of health. The Native American Health Center was originally envisioned by a group of Alcatraz participants who helped establish systems of community care and free dental services on the Island (Penny 2015), becoming fully established in Oakland by 1975 (Fleer 2007). Martin “Marty” Waukazoo (Lakota) became CEO in 1982 establishing organizational structures that allowed for incremental growth throughout the 1980’s and becoming a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in 1990. Presently the Native American Health Center offers a wide variety of health-related services including medical, dental, behavioral health, school-based health centers, women’s health, children’s health, and

community wellness programs. While NAHC is not my central site of inquiry, many of the participants in my study worked at the NAHC providing educational services.

IV. Methodology

My study is grounded in a mixed methodological approach collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. My primary sources of qualitative data were the interviews of urban Native American community members, and notes taken after teaching a language reclamation and revitalization class at the American Indian Child Resource Center. My primary sources of quantitative data included the data gathered through the administration of the Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) survey, and the data gathered through online Kahoot surveys. Engaging a mixed methodology helped me elaborate upon the complexity, specificity, and nuance of both Oakland/Bay Area Intertribal community as well as the specific context of the lives of Native American students participating in educational programing at the American Indian Child Resource Center. The TEN survey data provided a set of 10 teacher qualities that are valued by the urban Native youth at the American Indian Childhood Resource Center (AICRC). The Kahoot surveys asked students questions such as: 1. Did you have a good day at school today? 2. Did you feel respected by your teachers today? 3. Did you feel respected by your classmates today? These questions were asked at intermittent intervals throughout various lessons. As empirical data is highly valued by many aspects of the Western academy, engagement with this data also serves the strategic role of validating an Indigenized study through the parameters of the western academy.

Early Stages of Study: Negotiating Entry, Building Relationships, and Initial Findings

As an Oakland resident and educator, involved with various Indigenous circles in Oakland CA, I was aware of the three primary Native American Hubs present in the city, namely the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC), the Intertribal Friendship House, and the Native American Health Center. As an Ópata/Pichunche/Xicano/Chileno person who grew up in an urban environment within the US that was both disconnected from many of my Indigenous traditions and who's schooling system was complicit in the erasure of Indigeneity, I held a profound empathy for the educational erasure experienced by the students at AICRC. Additionally, my participation in Indigenous reclamation work as a young adult and into the present provided me with a set of skills that allowed me to facilitate similar processes for Intertribal middle school students. During the fall quarter of 2014, my first year as a Ph.D. student in the Native American Studies Department at UC Davis, I met with the director Mary Trimble Norris and Title VII coordinator Corrina Gould of the American Indian Child Resource Center to discuss ways in which my dissertation might serve the needs of AICRC. We agreed that the collaboration was a good fit and they asked me to begin volunteering as a tutor. Over the course of the year, we met on multiple occasions to discuss strategies for conducting a needs assessment for the AICRC utilizing the Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) platform (10teaching.net) that I co-designed as a part of my M.A. Thesis. The TEN platform consolidated a wide array of scholarship on urban teacher quality and efficacy into 51 teacher qualities organized within the domains of Relevance, Relationships, and Responsibility. These qualities were placed on a user-friendly survey which then allowed community members to determine the top 10 teacher qualities that they wanted educators to prioritize. In August of 2015 AICRC asked me to roll out the TEN platform to begin to determine what teacher qualities were most

valued by the community at AICRC. I discuss the TEN data throughout the study as it is pertinent to the topic of each chapter.

In November of 2015 I began volunteering as a tutor at AICRC, meeting with staff, cultivating relationships, and conducting preliminary interviews. Beyond building a rapport I was interested in understanding: 1) What staff at the American Indian Childhood Resource Center saw as the largest educational issues facing Native American students in Oakland? and 2) How staff at the American Indian Child Resource Center defined academic achievement? Title VI Indian Education Coordinator Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone) was gracious with her time and gave me important insight with regard to the educational terrain for urban Native American youth in Oakland CA. I was provided information about the "unofficial pipeline" of Native American students moving through OUSD, what schools had larger concentrations of Native students, and ways in which my dissertation research could complement the work that was already being done at AICRC. Most notably she discussed the lack of in-school Indigenized curricular support for students, and the need to provide on-campus support for Native American students. This planted the seed that led me to pursue designing and conducting a Native American Literature course to serve Native American youth in Oakland.

The primary patterns that emerged from this initial round of interviews and observations included a student dislike of school due to a wide variety of educational factors including, strict and unfair discipline practices, the erasure and invisibilization of Indigeneity, challenges in practicing a traditional way of life, and challenges in establishing a healthy relationship with educators. Students in the AICRC after school program expressed, without exception, a general dislike for school ranging from a dislike of certain classes and/or teachers/staff to hating the school as a whole. The students in the initial round of interviews and observations

overwhelmingly characterized discipline policies as “too strict” or “unfair” revealing a disturbing pattern of unofficial and official discipline policies that adversely impact urban Native American students in schools. Furthermore, erasure and invisibilization of Indigeneity, both demographically and in terms of curriculum, was an endemic pattern in the initial phase of the study. During the initial phases of my field work I noticed that the level of engagement of Native students at AICRC was often mis-read by classroom teachers who experienced challenges in establishing meaningful relationships often concluding that students were not interested in academics or in fostering a meaningful relationship.

Designing a Native American Studies Course for the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC)

My primary consideration when designing a Native American Studies Unit for AICRC was creating an Indigenized curriculum that is responsive to the interests and needs of the students as well as supporting them in sustaining aspects of their heritage. I had to give special consideration to the existing educational culture at AICRC in order to ensure that any activities that I introduced would be harmonious with what they were currently doing. At AICRC students were typically picked up between 3pm and 4pm from their schools, driven to the center, given a snack, taken outside to play until 5pm, given a structured activity in which to participate from 5pm-6pm, then given tutoring until they were taken home. The frame of mind adopted by students in an afterschool-program vs. an in-school program is centered in the reality that school is over, they can relax, and the academic stakes are not as high. They understand that they will not be receiving grades or credits, that they are under no obligation to complete assignments, and that homework is not a requirement. From a curricular and pedagogical standpoint this means

that the curriculum must be highly engaging, relevant, and responsive, de-centering the lecture based format, while simultaneously minimizing reading materials, homework, and other school-based activities. Finally, the space at AICRC is a shared community space with practices and protocols, and not my own autonomous classroom. In other words, I had to adhere and adapt to the existing patterns and norms at AICRC vs. having students entering a classroom adhere and adapt to the patterns and norms that we have created as a classroom community.

Through ongoing discussions with program coordinators at AICRC we decided that it would be best if I provided my class to the middle school students, allowing high school students to attend if they chose to do so. Ultimately, this proved to be a successful structure as certain high school students would join our class during moments that the class was particularly interesting or pertinent to them. When I first met with students we sat in a circle and introduced ourselves to one another. I then did a brief presentation discussing all of the potential units that we could study, requesting student feedback with regard to their primary areas of interest. The units were:

Unit 1: Autoethography,
Unit 2: Introduction to California Native History,
Unit 3: Introduction to Natural Law and Environment,
Unit 4: Introduction to Language Reclamation and Revitalization,
Unit 5: Introduction to Indigenous Epistemology,
Unit 6: Colonialism and Nationalism in the Americas,
Unit 7: Introduction to Race and Indigeneity,
Unit 8: Introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Indigeniety, and
Unit 9: An Introduction to Indigenous Futurities, Science Fiction, and Fantasy

Based on this intitial discussion we chose to focus on unit 4 during the fall of 2019. Due to COVID restrictions prevented completing the other units.

Conducting Interviews

For this study twenty-eight interview sessions were conducted, using various formats such as individual face-to-face interviews, phone interviews, and group interviews. During these interview sessions I spoke with different groups of urban Intertribal community members including fifteen urban Native American youth, fifteen urban Native American educators (ten who are also parents), and six urban Native American community members (three who are also parents). All interviews were recorded and transcribed to ensure the accurate representation of the responses. My interview approach consisted of asking three primary questions:

1. What are the major educational and social challenges faced by urban Native Youth in the Oakland Bay Area? Why have these challenges been salient?
2. What are the major educational interventions and teacher qualities that have supported urban Native Youth in the Oakland/Bay Area? Why have these educational interventions and teacher qualities been effective?
3. What are Indigenized conceptions of achievement within the urban Native community of the Oakland/Bay Area? How are these conceptions of achievement different from western conceptions of achievement?

After they finished answering these questions, I would ask them to elaborate on key aspects of their answer that were particularly thoughtful or interesting. I asked all adults in the study to introduce themselves in whatever way that they felt comfortable. Most adults in the study introduced themselves by stating their name, their tribal affiliation/affiliations, and their profession. At the end of the interview, I asked the adult participants if they would like me to use their actual name in the study to appropriately credit them for their ideas, or if they preferred a pseudonym. All adults interviewed for this project were either interviewed face-to face in a place of their convenience, or they were interviewed over the phone. This approach allowed me to navigate complex schedules and ensure that all participants felt comfortable while answering interview questions.

For the youth in the study, I attained parental consent as well as consent from the youth prior to conducting the interview. All interviews except for one were conducted at the American Indian Child Resource Center. These interviews took place in one of their three major classroom spaces on the main floor of their building. I began by conducting individual interviews with young people and conducted five interviews in this way. AICRC teachers were present in the classroom space during all individual interviews but were not directly engaged with the interview process. While many young people gave excellent solo interviews, I learned early on that certain youth gave more in-depth responses in the group setting. This was due to many factors including the ability to discuss shared educational experiences with friends and the ability to bounce ideas off one another. I conducted three group interviews with eight young people utilizing this approach. AICRC teachers were present for all group interviews supporting students in thinking through the questions. Finally, I was able to conduct one combined parent/student interview where both the parent and student discussed their educational experiences. All youth participants in this study were given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

V. *Confronting Erasure*: Chapter Overview

To appropriately contextualize urban Native American educational challenges and interventions in the Oakland Bay Area it is important to first understand the histories that produced urban Indigeneity and urban Native educational hubs in the Bay Area. Chapter 2 of this study entitled "Huichin (Oakland CA): A Regional History of Intertribal Transnational Hubs" argues that urban Native American communities in the Bay Area have consistently worked to extend the educational safety zone for urban Native American youth through urban Native hubs. Extending the educational safety zone has increased visibility and consciousness

around Native American issues within the urban Native American community as well as in the broader Bay Area community. Chapter 2 pulls from a combination of secondary and archival sources to provide a foundation for understanding the primary socio-economic and historical factors that produced the scope and breadth of present-day urban Bay Area Native American landscapes. Historicizing the region in this way, provides the appropriate context to discuss urban Native American educational challenges and interventions within a community that comes from a wide variety of places and are impacted by a wide variety of histories.

Building upon the Intertribal historical context established in Chapter 2, Chapter 3, entitled "An Educational Dystopia: Native American Educational Challenges in the Oakland Bay Area's Present" draws on interviews from the urban Native American community, quantitative data, and the science of dysbiosis to argue that various forms of educational erasure lie at the root of the educational challenges faced by urban Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area's present. The primary forms of educational erasure include demographic erasure, curricular erasure, the erasure of Native American identity, invisibilization, the marginalization of Indigenous knowledges, and the challenges of establishing culturally responsive pedagogical approaches. These forms of erasure exacerbate, support, and extend one another to produce an educational web of dysfunction that I call *educational dysbiosis.*

Once a foundation for educational challenges faced by urban Native American communities has been established, my study begins to address impactful educational interventions that confront erasure while serving the specific needs of urban Native American communities. The first educational intervention is the establishment of meaningful educational relationships that form the foundation of transformative pedagogical practices in service to urban Native American communities in the Oakland Bay Area. Chapter 4, entitled "Building

Responsible Relationality: Indigenizing Achievement, Cultivating Accountability, and Practicing Reciprocity" engages the fields of Indigenous holistic pedagogy, the science of *mutualism*, and the situated knowledges of Bay Area Native American communities to argue that the first foundational component of any educational intervention in service to urban Native American Youth is building healthy educational relationships between student and teacher. This responsible relationality among Native American students and educators must be based on a *mutualistic* relationship rooted in the four interrelated components of accountability, reciprocity, integrity, and trust. In this way *educational mutualism* is a useful framework for understanding Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches from an urban Intertribal perspective.

Chapter 5 entitled, "Engaging Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy to Build Solidarity and Co-Create Educational Experiences" argues that the second foundational component of confronting erasure and implementing educational interventions in service to urban Native American Youth is implementing a "culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Paris & Alim 2017). Urban Native educational spaces apply culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches consistently in ways that fundamentally restructure the traditional classroom through *mutualistically* building solidarity across experience and tradition, collectively creating educational experiences with urban Native American youth, and incorporating circle pedagogies in ethical and responsive ways. This chapter concludes by asserting that despite an active engagement with culturally sustaining pedagogies, the teaching approaches discussed in this study extend the parameters of this framework producing culturally revitalizing pedagogies (Lee & McCarty 2017).

Chapter 6 entitled "Always With Permission, Always with Respect: The Ethical Incorporation of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Service to Urban Native American Youth" applies the frameworks of culturally revitalizing pedagogy and educational

mutualism to argue that the third foundational component of confronting erasure and implementing educational interventions in service to urban Native American youth is the ethical incorporation of traditional Native American knowledge systems. The incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems supports urban Native American youth through providing ceremonial access, rites of passage, frameworks for youth leadership, and education on traditional ecological knowledge systems. The abundance of evidence supporting a pedagogical praxis that confronts the erasure of urban Native American communities and promotes the incorporation of Indigenized pedagogical approaches holds critical implications for the future of urban Native American education in California.

In Chapter 7 "Conclusion: Implications for Urban Native Educational Communities, Public Schooling, Teacher Training, and Educational Policy" I examine the implications of the study's findings on urban Native American communities, teacher education programs and non-Native Educators, public schooling at the administrative and district level, and California educational policy as it pertains to Ethnic Studies and Native American Studies. With these implications in mind this chapter provides concrete and actionable educational and policy based interventions for building strong educational relationships with urban Native American communities which are rooted in accountability, trust, visibility, and care; for the cultivation and maintenance of culturally sustaining pedagogical practices in service of urban Native American communities; and for the ethical incorporation of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge systems into the education of urban Native American youth. These actionable educational interventions are targeted towards the needs of urban Native American communities, urban school districts, and teacher training, while providing clear guidelines for educational policy in California.

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Chapter 2 – Extending the Educational Safety Zone:
A Brief History of Educational Empowerment Within Urban Native Hubs

The [Native] hub offers a mechanism to support Native notions of culture, community, identity, and belonging away from tribal land bases…Like a hub on a wheel…urban Indians occupy the center, connected to their tribal communities by social networks represented by the wheel's spokes.

- Renya Ramirez

…the "zone of safety" describes a co-constructed social and intellectual space in which Native teachers, often working with elders, are free to interrogate their own education histories and conventional teaching methods; this critical inquiry process becomes the basis for new pedagogies that Indigenize the curriculum and open possibilities for radical school change.

- Tsianina Lomawaima & Teresa L. McCarty

In the Bay Area urban Native hubs have historically offered educational safety zones where identity can be expressed, a sense of belonging away from tribal land bases can be felt, conventional teaching methods can be interrogated, and Indigenized pedagogical approaches and curriculum can be developed. The network of hubs within the Oakland Bay Area - including the Intertribal Friendship House (IFH), the Native American Health Center (NAHC), and the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC)- produce of a web of support that extends the educational safety zone for urban Native American students. Historically this educational zone of safety has stood in stark contrast to an assimilative educational system that actively promoted the erasure of Indigeneity within urban Native American students.

This chapter argues that urban Native American communities in the Bay Area and the Sacramento Valley have historically worked to extend the educational zone of safety for urban Native American youth through urban Native hubs. Extending the educational zone of safety has increased visibility and consciousness around Native American issues within the urban Native American community as well as in the broader Bay Area community. The echoes of these

historical legacies of resistance reverberate in the present helping extend the educational zone of safety for future generations.

II. Safety Zone Theory and Educational Dynamics Within Urban Native Hubs

Lomawaima & McCarty's (2006) safety zone theory (SZT) is central in understanding the historical interplay between "allowable Indianess" within dominant educational institutions and educational empowerment in Indigenized educational spaces. Safety zone theory, was developed to understand the dynamic of western educational oppression and Native American resistance within dominant educational settings such as boarding schools and public schools. Within these contexts negotiations of Indigeneity were allowable based on the hegemony of a given historical era. SZT seeks more complex and nuanced understandings of the ideology of erase-and-replace assimilation as it relates historically to Native American education in the U.S. It argues that federal agencies coupled with on- and off-reservation day and boarding schools and church missions were created to erase Indianess, "Americanize," assimilate, punish, abuse, and remove Native American children from their families. At the same time some of these assimilative educational spaces provided a new generation of students who disrupted simplistic erase-and-replace narratives and found agency within oppressive educational contexts. Safety zone theory was developed to explore the ongoing "tug-of-war" between tribal and federal educational interests and "safe" (i.e. allowable or controlled) and "dangerous" difference. The safety zone is thus simultaneously a method for domesticating Indianness and a disruption of dominant conceptions of U.S. national identity. Indianness is domesticated and deemed "safe" through deficit narratives rooted in the civilization/savagery binary which includes a traditionalism ill-equipped to exist within modernity, economic incompetence which produces intergenerational

poverty, and anti-capitalistic communalism. Native American resistance is also inherent to Safety zone theory through Native American subversion of the safety zone boundaries which includes the ongoing assertion of identity, culture, and sovereignty. The subversion of the safety zone has served to continually extend the parameters of "allowable Indianess" to produce more empowering spaces for Native American communities. In this chapter I will focus exclusively on the ways that Native hubs in the Bay Area have worked to extend the educational safety zone for urban Intertribal communities.

Three key authors have provided scholarship that extends the parameters of Lomawaima & McCarty's (2006) safety zone theory. Benally (2014) engages safety zone theory to discuss the passage of educational policy in Arizona which required the instruction of Native American History. She argues that the legislative proposal advanced by former Navajo Nation president (1995-1998) and Arizona state senator (2004-2017) Albert Hale requiring instruction on Native American sovereignty, culture, and history within public schools, extended the educational safety zone within the state of Arizona, eventually leading to a mandate that required Native American history within public school instruction. San Pedro (2014) extends the parameters of safety zone theory examining the internal/environmental safety zones experienced by Native American high school students who navigate two conflicting classroom environments (Native American literature vs. "American" history") while trying to process their identities, knowledges, and lived experiences. While the Native American literature course, centered in an Indigenized pedagogy of critical reflection, contributes to transformational educational experiences, the "American" history course, rooted in settler colonial discourses silenced the lived experiences of students. Finally, Lansing (2014) focuses on how teaching safety zone theory within teacher education

courses in tribal colleges, supports Native American educators in more effectively responding to the needs of the communities that they serve, through culturally relevant/responsive education.

This chapter contributes to the growing body of scholarship that engages safety zone theory examining how urban Native American communities have extended the parameters of Native American education through the emergence of Native American hubs and Red Power. More specifically, I discuss the historical factors that produced Intertribal urbanization that resulted in urban Intertribal solidarity, the creation of urban Native hubs, and the emergence of Red Power. Red Power emerged from urban Native hubs while also helping expand the educational safety zone through a wide variety of tactics which included the consolidation of support networks for urban Native communities and the implementation of Indigenized and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches.

III. Historical Factors and Outcomes of Intertribal Urbanization

Simon Ortiz (2002), the Acoma Pueblo writer and poet who is a seminal contributor to the Native American literary renaissance of the 1960s describes how Acoma men and boys were travelling to California to look for work as early as 1910. This migration was partially due to the steel railroad tracks laid down through the Acoma homeland which prevented farmers from following traditional agricultural lifeways. As a result, many Acoma men and boys began working for the railroad and ended up creating a community in Richmond, California, where the railroad ended and a worker colony was located. Blansett (2018) elaborates on the long-term presence of Intertribal communities in the Bay Area writing that:

> From the early 1920s, San Francisco was home to a vibrant and politically active Intertribal community. Over the next several decades, the Bay Area Indian population doubled, and it eventually tripled in size by the 1970s. This twentieth-century mass

> exodus from reservations and rural communities to western cities represented one of the greatest per capita internal migrations of a people in the United States. (p. 76)

Several key factors produced Intertribal urban migration to the Bay Area including the need for jobs, military service during WWII, controversial relocation programs, and destructive termination policies. In the Bay Area urban Native people experienced intense discrimination, unemployment, police brutality, substandard public housing, and isolation as a result of relocation which contributed to assimilative/acculturative erasure. At the same time community organizations focused on political, economic, and social empowerment were created to address the challenges encountered by urban Native American communities (Blansett 2018). The demographic shift in the population of Native American people in urban areas, the cultivation of an Intertribal identity, and the development of hubs to serve the urban Native community in the Oakland Bay Area produced a process of urbanization where urban Native communities applied their agency to produce educational zones of safety in the form of urban Native Hubs.

The socio-economic impacts of the Great Depression were magnified on reservations while the socio-economic programs initiated during this era fell apart as WWII approached (Merriam Survey 1928). When WWII began, young Native American men and women who had been drafted often went to Fort Ord or Camp Pendleton in California for basic training before shipping out from the ports of San Diego or Oakland (Ortiz 2002). At the same time WWII created an abundance of jobs both in defense plants in within the military which drew thousands of Native American people away from the reservations and towards urban areas increasing the trend of Native American outward migration from reservations to cities (Neils, 1969). After WWII, young Native people returning to the reservation were met with no jobs and no money to replace the relative financial prosperity that they had experienced during the war (Merriam

Survey). The decades following WWII had perhaps the most drastic impact on the policies that would urbanize Native Americans.

A major stimulus for this outward migration were the Relocation Programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs which were designed to help Native Americans adjustment to urban life, as well as to mediate (to varying degrees) the sense of abandonment felt by Native Americans leaving home (Snyder, 1979). These programs were primarily promoted by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dillon S. Myer (1950-53) who sought to end government services for Native people, gradually transfer these responsibilities to other governmental agencies, and promote Native economic "self-sufficiency." One of the major programs of this era was the Voluntary Relocation Program (later called the Employment Assistance Program) which started in 1952, providing field relocation offices in key urban centers throughout the country (Minniapolis, Denver, Los Angeles, the Bay Area) as well as transportation, financial assistance, initial living expenses, guidance for finding housing, and menial employment, etc. (Ablon 1965, Churchill & Morris 1992). Despite these "benevolent intentions" the BIA's relocation programs segregated Native peoples throughout the Bay Area coercing Native peoples from their Tribal communities sending them to distant cities (Blansett 2018). Finally, the Relocation Act (1956) financed the relocation of individual Native peoples and families to certain urban areas and provided funding for the establishment of job training centers. Simon Ortiz (2002) describes the "employment assistance" as a combination of on-the-job training, direct job placement, and a limited orientation to urban life. Many of these policies were driven by the findings in the "Survey Report on the BIA" (1954) which claimed overpopulation and poverty on reservations as justification for relocation to cities. According to the government report the primary impact of

this process would be two-fold simultaneously decreasing governmental responsibility for Native peoples while increasing level of Indigenous assimilation (Lobo, 2002).

Termination policies that sought to end the "special" relationship between the federal government and tribes became the primary policy direction between 1945-65 (Merriam Survey). The Termination Act (1953) unilaterally dissolved specific Native nations suspending federal services in order to end federal recognition. Public Law 280 (1954) placed Indigenous nations in California, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington, Alaska and Minnesota under state jurisdictions actively reducing the number of unterminated nations. Termination and relocation policies worked hand in hand to remove Tribal governments and to sever ties between Native American people and their Tribal communities (Blansett 2018). While several Indigenous nations were directly victimized by termination policies, the protest and response by Tribes was strong and the impacts of termination were detrimental, ultimately leading to the abandonment of Termination Policies (Frazier, 1993).

A study entitled "Relocated American Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area: Social Interaction and Indian Identity" published by Joan Ablon in 1964 offers many important insights into the post-relocation Native American Bay Area. According to Ablon, the population of Native American people in the Bay Area in 1964 hovered around 10,000 representing over one hundred tribal groups. This positioned California as "the state with the largest American Indian population in the country and the most Native people living in cities" by the 1960's (Horton, 2017, p. 415). When voluntary relocation began nearly 75% of relocated Native people returned home, however, by the mid-sixties that return figure was reduced to 35%. The Bureau of Indian Affairs housing policy for Native peoples during relocation was to "further the goal of assimilation" (p. 3), and in Oakland most relocates lived in working-class neighborhoods or low-

rent housing projects. Most relocates reported that the absence of employment was their primary reason for relocating, and most would return home if provided with adequate employment. These city-based employment opportunities were often not dramatically better than the reservation as relocated Native people had to report to the BIA employment office, and would suffer the termination of their temporary financial assistance if they missed an appointment (Kelly, 2009).

For Ablon the "social, religious, and political" Native American organizations of the Bay Area served as the primary centers of Indigenous community interaction centered in 16 organizations in Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, and the broader Bay Area. The assertion of a Native American identity through stories of one's home reservation became increasingly important within the urban Bay Area, becoming central in the forging of a more Intertribal identity formation. Blansett (2018) explicitly connects the "failed experiment of urban migration" through relocation with the "new cultural and political vision [of] Intertribalism" (p. 76).

This Intertribal identity, which also allowed for more nuanced tribal affiliation, became an important anti-assimilative force within the urban Indigenous Bay Area of the early 60's. Kelly (2009) writes about the connection between relocation and the radicalization of the Bay Area Native community moving away from "piecemeal reform, passive resistance, and patience," and moving towards the more militant and confrontational tactics of the Red Power movement. This more militant youth ethos is best exemplified by the formation of groups like the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) in Gallup, New Mexico, which framed white society as parasitic and supported direct confrontation and action against the BIA. Horton (2017), describes how the intersection of Indigenous migration, urbanization, and activism, along with

organizations such as the Intertribal Council of California and the California Indian Education Association (CIEA), which received funding from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) provided the foundation for what would eventually be known as the Red Power movement of the late 1960s. In this sense urban Native peoples thrived within the urban environment creating Intertribal institutions within an Intertribal community that would permanently alter their political relationship with the U.S. government (Blansett 2018).

With the increased urbanization of Native peoples and the development of urban Native centers, a need for a platform to discuss challenges and issues faced by off-reservation Native peoples became immediately apparent. One of the primary issues identified by urban Native leadership became the lack of adequate housing for Indigenous peoples (Frazier, 1993). Another primary issue identified became Indigenous education within urban areas leading to the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (1975). This act requires Indigenous inclusion in the staffing of federally mandated programs aimed at Native peoples, re-affirms U.S. authority over Indigenous affairs, and re-affirms "education" as the ideal vehicle for assimilation into U.S. values. In practice however, the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act operated more as a self-administration act, putting Native American people in place to bureaucratically implement Euro-American administrative standards (Edmunds, 2002).

IV. Red Power in the Bay Area

Red Power was and is an Intertribal movement, rooted in a *Native Nationalism*, which connects "Native nations, communities, families, spaces, places, and peoples together" recognizing and Indigenous sovereignty and existence that is not dependent on federal recognition or colonial power. With a foundation in self-determination Red Power calls for "the restoration of treaty

lands, lifeways, and Indigenous human rights (Blansett 2018, p. 4). The actions taken by Red Power movement in the Bay Area during the late 1960s through the 1970s including the use of Native hubs for the organization of social and political actions, the formation of Ethnic Studies/Native American Studies, the occupation of Alcatraz and the social movements that it inspired, and the emergence of a Native run school, fundamentally reshaped the educational landscape for urban Native people extending the educational zone of safety in the region.

The Native American population increase contributed to a nearly threefold increase in religious, social, and political programs serving Native people by 1964 (Kelly 2014). This increase in population as well as social and political programs serving urban Native communities through urban Native hubs occurred in tandem with young Native activists learning from the civil rights movement, aggressively pursuing Native American rights, and learning to navigate media to attain these ends. The hubs provided gathering places for urban Native American people where traditional beliefs were reinforced, pride in Native heritage was maintained, and political actions such as the occupation of Alcatraz were planned (Johnson 1996). It is within this context that local Native American organizations began discussing the use of Alcatraz Island as an "Indian education and cultural center" (Kelly 2014, 78). Activists prepared using the legal premise of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty which gave Sioux peoples the right to occupy abandoned federal buildings. On March 9, 1964, the first occupation of Alcatraz Island took place led my members of a Sioux club and employing legal documents in defense of their land claim. The issue with "the legal and procedural approach to converting Alcatraz for Indian use was that such efforts worked within white power structures that did not sympathize with American Indian causes" (Kelly, 79), however this attempt captivated the imagination of young Native activists laying the groundwork for the second occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1969.

In 1969 education and activism came together with the emergence of Ethnic Studies Departments at SFSU and UC Berkeley (Johnson, 1996; Johnson & Fixico, 2008; Goldstein, 2011). The Third World Liberation strikes at UC Berkeley, which involved direct confrontations with national guard troops, forced the administration to create an Ethnic Studies Department which included African-American, Chicano, Asian, and American Indian Studies (Kelly 2009). Richard Oakes took the lead in establishing the American Indian Studies Department across the Bay at San Francisco State University. Courses in Native American Studies provided the "intellectual framework for the rise of American Indian activism" as well as contributing to "a renaissance in American Indian philosophy, literature, culture, and political thought (Ibid, 70).

While the occupation of Alcatraz was originally planned for the summer of 1970, the aforementioned fire that decimated the San Francisco Indian Center on October 10, 1969 produced a sense of urgency to move the occupation up to November of 1969. On November 9, 1969 the second short lived occupation of Alcatraz Island occurred when Richard Oaks and a small group of supporters chartered a boat to circle and "symbolically" reclaim the island, jumped off the boat and swam to the island, and spent the night before being removed by law enforcement. In contrast to the first attempt to occupy Alcatraz this group was made up of members from multiple tribes, who were mostly college students and were not dissuaded by the "legality" of the occupation. On Novemeber 20, 1969 the historic occupation of Alcatraz Island began organized by eighty-nine Native Americans calling themselves the Indians of All Tribes (IAT). LaNada Means and Richard Oakes, one woman and one man, emerged as the leaders of the occupation (McKay-Want 2002) which lasted for 19 months.

At the start of the occupation the American Indian Movement (AIM), founded in Minniapolis Minnesota in 1968, sent a delegation to Alcatraz to learn more about the takeover,

which included Dennis Banks (Leech Lake Anishanaabe), Clyde Bellecourt (White Earth Anishniaabe), George Mitchell (Leech Lake Anishinaabe), and Lehman Brightman (Sioux). AIM offered assistance to IAT in offering security, working in the kitchen, writing proposals, and general organization that was needed on the island (Johnson 1996). AIM attempted to assert their leadership over the occupation but were denied by Richard Oakes, and promptly left the island (Blansett 2018). The brief visit to Alcatraz Island helped AIM understand the possibility and potential of the seizure and occupation of federal facilities. This would become a central tactic for the AIM movement throughout the 1970s.

While dominant media outlets at the time depicted Native American activists at Alcatraz as "inactive, politically ineffectual, and invisible" reproducing tired, dated, and stereotypical tropes while highlighting contention, arrests and dysfunction (Bayor 1996; Wetzel 2012), activists such as Madonna Gilbert helped establish a school on the island to serve young children. In her case, as for many other activists, participation in the occupation would lead to a lifetime of activism through the eventual co-founding of many organizations rooted in Red Power such as Women of All Red Nations (WARN) and the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) (Ska Win 2002). Poet John Trudell (Santee Dakota/Mexican) became the spokesperson for the takeover as well as a counternarrative voice broadcasting as *Radio Free Alcatraz*. This counternarrative inspired increased visibility and support for the occupation. While the visibility, and support from celebrities during the initial stages of the Alcatraz occupation prevented the Nixon administration from violently removing Native American activists from the island in order to avoid negative optics, as the occupation continued popular support and participation slowly waned, until the final occupiers were removed by FBI agents, federal marshals, and special forces police on June 11, 1971.

Despite the end of the occupation, historian Kent Blansett (2018) writes that “The 1969 occupation of Alcatraz by the Indians of All Tribes served as the catalyst for the Red Power movement” (p. 2) inspiring and eventually leading to a series of AIM sponsored protests and occupations throughout the 1970’s including the takeover of BIA headquarters in 1972, the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973, and the stand off with FBI agents at Pine Ridge South Dakota in 1975 (Johnson 1994). The occupation also strengthened urban Intertribal communities engergizing young people to join the Red Power movement (Straus & Vlentino 2001). Wilma Mankiller, former chief the Cherokee Nation who was a resident of San Francisco during the Alcatraz occupation, and active participant with the Intertribal Friendship house in Oakland said that when the Alcatraz occupation ended in 1971 many of the participants settled in East Oakland bringing their “idealism, humor,…sense of community, and…belief that anything was possible” (Mankiller 2002, xv). Indeed, from the 1970’s to the present Alcatraz has remained a strong symbol of Red Power and Native American resistance serving as the starting point for the “Longest Walk” to Washington DC in February of 1978, the “Walk for Justice” for Leonard Peltier in February of 1994, and annual Thanksgiving day commemorations of Indigenous resistance among other events (Johnson 1994; Lobo et. al. 2002).

V. The Intertribal Friendship House

Oakland’s Intertribal Friendship House (IFH) is one of the oldest urban Native American organizations still operating in the U.S. Founded in 1955 as a result of the demographic shift of Native American people to urban areas, the Intertribal Friendship House is a multipurpose organization providing social services, recreational programs, summer youth programs, Elders programs, holiday dinners, social service counseling, and educational activities (Lobo 2002,

Antoine 2002). Wilma Mankiller (2002) describes the Friendship Houses as “more than an organization” and “the heart of a vibrant tribal community” providing recently arrived families with a sanctuary to help them adapt to urban living (p. xv). The establishment of the Intertribal Friendship House and its ongoing collaboration with other Native Hubs and movements in the region served to extend the educational zone of safety for urban Native American students in the Bay Area through providing a space for young Native American people to gather and connect, providing Indigenized educational programing for all ages, and advocating for Oakland’s urban Native American Community through influencing educational policy.

The predecessor to the Intertribal Friendship House was the Four Winds Club. Four Winds was started in 1924 at the Oakland YMCA as a place for young Native American women and men who were part of “outing programs” to socialize. “Outing programs” provided young Native American women and men from residential schools with low paying jobs either working in the homes of affluent Oaklanders or doing manual labor. Young Native women who were part of the outing programs were given Thursdays off and would socialize at the Four Winds Club. As a result, Four Winds became a central gathering place for Oakland’s urban Intertribal Community. The club lasted through WWII, eventually outgrowing itself as the urban Native American population grew during the relocation era of the 1950s. It was during this time that the Four Winds Club evolved into what is now known as the Intertribal Friendship House (Patterson, 2002).

The Intertribal Friendship House administered a wide array of educational programing that provided an Indigenized alternative to the erasure that Native American communities experienced through the public school system. A school was established in the recreation room of Oakland’s Intertribal Friendship House. This American Indian Preschool, which by 1986

would be named Hintil Kuu Caa Development Center provided one morning class and one afternoon class, with one teacher and 25 students, as well as four parents per class. The preschool was funded by the Oakland Unified School District for the first three years (American Indian Children's Center Report 1978). The name for the Preschool came from Essie Parrish, a Pomo spiritual leader from the Kashia Rancheria, and it means "House of Little People" (Shirley Guevara (Dunlap Band of Mono Indians), Personal Communication, March 1, 2022). Parent participation often took the form of weekly workshops which focused on cooking, beading, weaving, and pottery and other activities that would become central components of the curriculum (Lobo 1986). Having Hintel Kuu Ca located at the Intertribal Friendship House was only meant to be temporary and negotiations with the schoolboard ensued to have the preschool moved to an autonomous location (American Indian Children's Center 1978). Beyond the establishment of the preschool the Intertribal Friendship House also administered an adult education program focusing on helping adults attain their GED, find employment, find housing, fight alchololism/drug abuse, etc (Report by Office of Indian Education 1975). Ultimately, all of these educational interventions expanded the educational safety zone for the Oakland's urban Native American community through providing an Indigenized space to gather as well as teaching using Indigenized pedagogical approaches.

In 1990 Oakland's Intertribal Friendship House sent a representative to testify before the joint sessions of Congress on the state of urban Native American education, the impact of losing a sense of Native American identity within the urban context, the low levels of funding for the center as a result of being off-reservation, the lack of Native American mentors, and the challenges of serving large urban areas with widely dispersed Native American communities. The invisibilization and erasure of Native American people/issues in the curricula of OUSD

particularly within the broader context of multicultural educational discourse, the demographic erasure of Native American students within the district, the challenges of establishing partnership with OUSD, and issues about the involvement of Native American youth in urban gangs were also discussed during this congressional testimony. This testimony not only demonstrates the intergenerational prevalence of Native American erasure but also foreshadows how these issues continue to inform the educational landscape experienced by urban Native American people in Oakland in the present.

VI. Hintil Kuu Ca Preschool

The establishment of Hintil Kuu Ca preschool in 1986 served to extend the educational zone of safety for urban Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area through parental organization against educational alienation and erasure and the establishment of culturally enriching curriculum that instilled pride in urban Native American students. In 1971 a group of Native American parents formed an organization called the Concerned Parents of Oakland at Hawthorne Elementary School which had high Native American enrollment as well as the only Native American teacher in the district (Lobo 1986). The group was formed as a result of the distrust and alienation that Native American parents felt for the public school system. This distrust was premised in part on negative experiences with assimilative and abusive residential schooling (Chang 1993). Concerned Parents of Oakland was formed to learn about and shift the Oakland public school system through active collaboration with the superintendent of the district to address the maintenance of Indigenous values in the classroom as well as educational challenges such as the high Native American drop-out/push-out rate. The efforts of the Concerned Parents of Oakland led to the establishment of an American Indian liaison position

with the OUSD as well as a three-year Title III ESEA grant for the establishment of an American Indian Pre-School which would eventually become Hintel Kuu Ca Preschool (American Indian Children's Center 1978).

The parents who founded the school believed that the curriculum should be culturally enriching and should give children a positive self-image of their Native American identity before they entered a kindergarten classroom with non-Native students and teachers (Lobo et. al. 2002). The school was also seen as a space where Native American parents and students could be introduced the educational system in Oakland, while establishing a community of support and advice. Parents and grandparents were also encouraged to actively participate in the classroom on a regular basis providing cultural teachings, food, or financial contributions (Chang 1993). The establishment of Hintil Kuu Ca was systemically supported by the broader Third World Liberation activist movements in the Bay Area which had previously established Chinese and Chicano pre-schools in the area. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Act of 1975 further supported the efforts of establishing Hintel Kuu Ca in Oakland (Deetz 2019). In 1977 the search for a site for the Native American pre-school in Oakland was ongoing and by 1978 the bureaucratic battle to establish a site for the Native American preschool continued gaining, and then losing access-to a site called the Lincoln Child Center due to neighbor complaints about the lack of an access road (American Indian Children's Center 1978).

In 1986 Oakland's Urban American Indian Preschool now called Híntil Children's Center, had established a more stable home base at a beautiful campus in the Oakland Hills by Mills College. Shirley Guevara, who was an early occupier on Alcatraz Island, became the director of the Hintil Kuu Ca Child Development Center on their new campus (Deetz 2019). In addition, an unofficial Native American educational pipeline had emerged with a cohort of

Native students attending Carl B. Munk Elementary School and Skyline Highschool in the Oakland Hills. By this time a clear disparity had emerged between the Native American Students in Oakland who had received culturally responsive/sustaining educational support through the Híntíl Children's Center and the unofficial Native American educational pipeline, and those who had not (Lobo 1986). This disparity was attributed in part to the challenges that urban Native American students faced in finding community and familial supports that instilled a strong sense of Native American identity and pride, which helped students navigate the divide between school and home (Chang 1993).

By the early 1990s Hintil Ku Caa was serving more than 110 children representing 60 different tribal groups through both their preschool program as well as an after-school program for older students. The preschool promoted school readiness through academics (i.e. learning colors, shapes, and numbers), through instilling important Intertribal values (i.e. respect for elders), as well as an Indigenized curricula which included singing Native American songs in various tribal languages. Parental participation and contributions continued to be an important aspect of Hintil Kuu Ca in terms of providing mentorship as well as lowering the adult-child ratios in the classroom. One third of the teachers at Hintel were Native American selected by consensus through an interview process which involved parents, staff and the school supervisor. While having a majority Native American staff was the ideal, non-Native staff was well versed in Native American protocols and willing to learn more about the Intertribal community represented at the school. Criteria for hiring teachers included expertise in child development, an understanding of Native American culture and Oakland urban Native community. By 1993 Hintel had been operating for nearly two decades, children who had passed through the program were attending the various universities, and the preschool along with other organizations focused

on urban Native American education in the Bay Area had significantly impacted the educational outcomes of students (Chang 1993).

VII. The Native American Health Center

The Native American Health Center (NAHC) in Oakland California was envisioned by a group of Alcatraz participants including Dr. Greg Goddard who helped establish systems of community care and free dental services on the Island (Penny 2015). From this standpoint the creation of the Native American Health Center was seen as form of cultural resilience grounded in the principals of Red Power in response to Federal Indian relocation policy. The establishment of the Native American Health Center served to extend the educational zone of safety for urban Native American communities in the Bay Area through establishing a community rooted holistic approach to medicine that supported relocated Native people in adapting to city life, through offering youth educational programs, and through establishing school-based health clinics.

The Native American Health Center (NAHC), originally called the Urban Indian Health Board was opened at its first location in San Francisco's Mission District in 1972. The primary work of the NAHC during its formative years was to become community rooted, financially sustainable, and legally viable within a for-profit health care system (Penny 2015). These national, state-level, and local events helped consolidate an urban Intertribal ethos which supported Native people in adapting to city life, in maintaining social networks, in strengthening cultural resolve, and in promoting a common yet pluralistic urban Native idenitity (Hirabayashi, et. al. 1972).

The Native American Health Center moved to Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood in the 1980s where they purchased a building and set up a clinic. At the new site the Native American

Health Center continued building its reputation and identity with the community, despite Reagan era cuts to social service programs. Martin "Marty" Waukazoo (Lakota) became CEO in 1982 establishing organizational structures that allowed for incremental growth throughout the 1980's and into the present. Throughout the decade the Native Health Center struggled with financial stability receiving 90% of its funding through the Federal Indian Health Service (IHS), at times struggling to pay its staff on time. NAHC became a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in 1990 and the financial scarcity of the 1980's diminished significantly. The Center became a $4 million organization by 1995, hiring more staff, purchasing insurance for the Center, and creating a reserve account (Penny 2015).

In 2006 the Native American Health Center purchased land to build the Seven Directions Healthcare Facility which was completed in 2008, providing the urban Native American community with a medical and dental care clinic as well as with 36 affordable family housing units. By 2011 NAHC was nationally recognized as one of the oldest and largest urban Native American health centers grounded in an approach to medicine rooted in the intersection of Indigenous cultural interventions and Western medicine (King 2011). The center provided a holistic system of care which was not only attentive to behavioral health and disease prevention but also sought to address social issues such as substance abuse, homelessness, poverty, crime, historical trauma, family dysfunction, and spiritual imbalance. These interventions led to statistically significant reductions in social and medical ailments (Nebalkopf & Wright, 2011).

VIII. The American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC)

The Urban Indian Child Resource Center founded in Oakland California, later renamed to the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) opened in 1974. AICRC was opened by the

Indian Nurses of California Inc. to provide mental health services to Native communities in Alameda County, San Francisco, and Sonoma (Fields 1979). During its early years AICRC received funding from the Office of Child Development through the National Center on child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) to conduct a 3-year pilot project for the welfare and protection of Native American children in the Bay Area. The American Indian Child Resource served to extend the educational zone of safety for urban Native American students in the Bay Area through serving thousands of relocated Native American people both socially and financially, providing culturally responsive service, influencing important legislation that impacted Native American children, and providing after school educational services to Native American families.

One of the founding members of AICRC was Mary Ann Greycloud (Sisseton Sioux) who was a second generation self-described "urban Indian" and registered nurse. Greycloud provided congressional testimony in 1979 describing AICRC as:

> "…an Indian-child-centered community mental health program offering a comprehensive array of mental health services, with the primary focus on the child's well-being through keeping Indian families intact, strengthening family ties, assisting in returning families to economic self-sufficiency; teaching parenting skills and providing personal adjustment and counseling services with a focus on prevention of juvenile delinquency, and information referral services, crisis intervention respites services in family crises, foster placement, child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention and other mental health services. In existence for three years, UICRC's program is national in significance in the model it has provided for Indian child abuse prevention and intervention-centered services, through utilization of a predominantly Indian community support network for urban Indian families and providing linkage between reservation, rural and urban areas for these Indian families." (US Senate Testimony 1979)

Greycloud helped establish AICRC in service of the thousands of relocated urban Native American people who were often skeptical of government services due to long legacies of child removal through residential schools and foster care services. AICRC provided a stable Native Hub for young parents who were disoriented by relocation, lacking extended familial kinship

networks within the city, experiencing the stressors of parenthood, as well as the trials of an urban life (i.e. unemployment, cultural and social isolation, substandard housing, etc.) (Greycloud, U.S. Senate Testimony 1979).

Betty Newbreast, another early member of the American Indian Child Resource Center described the founding members of AICRC as a "tough core of city Indians who didn't return to the reservation,…were educated in the school of hard knocks," and provided strong leadership in the urban Native American Community of the mid- 1970's (Fields 1979). Newbreast was a strong proponent of the ability for Native American staff to provide culturally sustaining care for Native American children and families grounded in relationships. In a congressional testimony Newbreast stated:

> The program uses Native American staff in service delivery. We have promised to have very positive results. One reason is the relationship between client and the worker has been easier to establish because of the worker having the Native American sensitivity and understanding of tribal, cultural, and tradition of the Native American child and their family. This has been difficult for public and private agencies to obtain this kind of relationship. (US Senate Testimony 1979).

From the initial pilot program AICRC sought to provide culturally sensitive services from Native American staff that were attentive to the cultural traditions of a diverse urban Native community. They sought to fill a gap in the services provided to urban Native people and provide an alternative that was culturally grounded. Executive director Omie Brown discussed AICRC as a model program for similar Native American serving centers around the country.

> I really see this program as a model program as it has been demonstrated and as other Indian tribes throughout the Nation such as Boston Indian Center, Southern California Tribes, Northern California Tribes, have been coming to us asking for technical assistance, helping to assist them in getting their programs off the ground. (U.S. Senate Testimony. 1979)

Through the establishment of a successful program the women from the Indian Nurses of California laid the foundation for an organization that would serve the Oakland Native American community for the next 47 years.

Founding members of the American Indian Child Resource Center in Oakland, including Jacquiline Arrowsmith, employed their expertise in serving urban Native American communities through working with the writers of the *Indian Child Welfare Act* of 1978 (personal communication, Trimble-Norris 2021). This legislation sought to address crisis of large numbers of Native American children being separated from their parents, extended families, and communities by adoption agencies. Ultimately the *Indian Child Welfare Act* of 1978 provided a legal premise for protecting the interests of Native American children while promoting the stability of Native American communities. The legislation's ability to protect the unique status of Native people, consider the importance of Native cultures, and keep children with relatives whenever safe and possible has made the *Indian Child Welfare Act* a model within the field of child welfare (nicwa.org).

In 1979 the founders of AICRC appealed to the U.S. Senate in congressional testimony for funding to expand upon the successes of the 3-year AICRC pilot program. Mary Ann Greycloud testified:

> Serving close to 1500 people from 50 different American Indian tribes in the three years of its existence, the Urban Indian Child Resource Center has provided the means whereby 215 Indian families representing 1,500 Indians have received services ranging from suicide prevention to employment assistance. In that time, (on demand from Indian communities) the scope of our program has expanded from child abuse and neglect to that of a children's center offering a wider and more comprehensive array of human services. (U.S. Senate 1979)

Greycloud's testimony as well as the testimony from other founders would lead to the continued funding of AICRC as well as the incremental expansion of the services offered to the urban Native community of the Oakland Bay Area.

The American Indian Child Resource Center expanded its scope in the early 1980's becoming a foster care agency that focused on finding Native American homes for Native American children, actively disrupting longstanding foster care and adoption patterns that placed Native American children with non-Native foster parents. By the end of the decade AICRC expanded the scope of its services once again adding afterschool care and educational services through funding from the Office of Indian Education (personal communication, Trimble-Norris 2021). These educational services would grow to include culturally grounded educational activities such as growing and cooking traditional foods, beading, canoe making, after school tutoring and event planning.

IX. Conclusion

While erasure was at the heart of the educational dysfunction historically impacting urban Native American communities in the Bay Area, Intertribal communities have consistently resisted this erasure using urban Native Hubs to extend educational safety zones. These hubs, including the Intertribal Friendship House, Hintil Kuu Ca Preschool, the Native American Health Center, and the American Indian Child Resource Center have extended the educational safety zone through providing spaces where Native American identities could be expressed, a sense of belonging away from tribal land bases could be established, dominant teaching methods could be interrogated, and Indigenized approaches to education could be developed. These hub spaces nurtured the emergence of the Red Power movement in the Bay Area which

would in turn contribute to the creation of more urban Native hub spaces. While the educational challenges have shifted from the 1960s and 1970s to the present, the central theme of erasure (and resistance to said erasure) is still prevalent in the present. Similar challenges such as demographic erasure, curricular erasure, the erasure of Native American identity, invisibilization, the marginalization of Indigenous knowledges, and the challenges of establishing culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches continue to disrupt the educational experiences of urban Intertribal students in the Bay Area. To begin to address these challenges, we must first understand them from the perspectives of urban Native American teachers, students, and family members in the present.

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Chapter 3 - An Educational Dystopia: Native American Educational Challenges in the Oakland Bay Area's Present

Educating the whole child is impossible if s/he is understood as divorced from a particular socio-cultural (and we might add environmental) context. Looking toward critical approaches in education, Indigenous approaches and knowledges are key to solving the "impossible" challenges facing educators today.

- George J. Sefa Dei

To provide holistic education to urban Native American students we must first understand their socio-cultural and environmental context experienced by students. In the Oakland Bay Area this context is rooted in the systematic erasure of urban Indigeneity. To confront the systematic erasure of urban Native American students within public education systems we must first understand how erasure persists in the present producing poor educational outcomes. Drawing from the science of dysbiosis, interviews from the urban Native American community, and quantitative data I argue that various forms of educational erasure lie at the root of the educational challenges faced by urban Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area's present including demographic erasure, curricular erasure, the erasure of Native American identity, invisibilization, the marginalization of Indigenous knowledges, and the challenges of establishing culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches. These forms of erasure exacerbate, support, and extend one another to produce an educational web of dysfunction that I call *educational dysbiosis.*

To establish educational dysbiosis as a meaningful framework for examining the web of erasure and educational dysfunction experienced by urban Native American students, I first examine the science of dysbiosis paying particular attention to the breakdown of mutualism, the disruption of homeostasis, the loss of biodiversity, and the connection to disease, drawing explicit linkages to the systematic educational dysfunction experienced by urban Native American Youth. This chapter then engages community interviews and data to elaborate on the

multiple aspects of educational dysbiosis including demographic erasure within schools, the marginalization of Native American knowledges/privileging of colonial worldviews, and the challenges of establishing culturally sustaining pedagogies for urban Native American youth. Through a discussion urban Native American erasure and educational dysbiosis a web of educational dysfunction experienced by urban Native American communities in the Oakland Bay Area will be contextualized. Establishing this context will allow for the discussion of empowering, community-generated, and Indigenized pedagogical approaches in future chapters.

II. Dysbiosis in the Microbiome and its Parallels to Systematic Educational Erasure and Dysfunction

To understand systemic educational erasure and dysfunction and how it impacts urban Native American communities in the Oakland Bay Area we must look inward, and I do not mean in an abstract spiritual sense. The ecosystems that exist within our bodies, or the microbiome defined as the entirety of microorganisms that inhabit the human body (Levy et. al. 2017) hold important lessons for educational advocates seeking to understand the impact of systematic educational erasure and dysfunction on urban Native American students. The participants in this study centered erasure as the root cause of the educational dysfunction that they experienced describing an *educational dysbiosis* or a harmful interdependence between a dysfunctional educational system which upholds Native American erasure and adverse educational outcomes for urban Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area.

In order to understand the concept of educational dysbiosis and its impact on the systematic erasure of Native American students within school systems, we must first develop an understanding of how the term is used in the field of microbiology which broadly defines

“dysbiosis” as an imbalance or chronic disequilibrium associated with disease in the microbial community present in the gut. This imbalance comes as a result of the breakdown of mutualism or the disruption of the symbiotic relationship that benefits the various actors of the microbial community within the gut (Curtis 2016). This imbalance, or loss of homeostasis (Hooks & O’Malley 2017), can produce weaker immune responses within the microbiome creating a wide variety of health consequences which can include metabolic disorders such as type II diabetes and obesity (Weiss & Hennet 2017), high blood pressure and hypertension (Yang et. al. 2015), autoimmune disorders, and neoplastic and neurogenerative diseases (Levy et. al. 2017), etc. The loss of homeostasis is also directly connected to the decrease in microbial biodiversity which is not only a key to the stability of the microbiome but also a key to the balance and health of human beings (Hooks & O’Malley 2017, Levy et. al. 2017, Weiss & Hennet 2017).

When the concept of dysbiosis is applied to the field of education as a theoretical framework for understanding the erasure of Indigeneity, ineffective and/or destructive educational practices are not viewed in isolation but are seen as mutually detrimental factors which fundamentally disrupt balanced and empowering educational ecosystems. Additionally, these mutually detrimental ineffective and destructive educational practices can weaken a Native American student’s immunity and resiliency in facing the realities of erasure over the course of a student’s K-12 experience. When ineffective and/or destructive educational practices work in tandem with one another, weak pedagogical dysbiotic relationships are forged which have adverse educational impacts on urban Native American students. In nature dysbiotic relationships in the microbial gut culture are associated with disease and form the foundation imbalanced ecosystems. In the classroom educational dysbiosis forms the foundation for weak and imbalanced educational ecosystems which produce dis-ease in urban Native American

students who experience erasure. Finally, the lack of biodiversity in the microbiome is a key factor in producing dysbiosis and disease. In the classroom, the lack of pedagogical diversity that is culturally responsive/sustaining to urban Native American students with diverse backgrounds and needs produces a dis-ease in the classroom ecosystem which can be antithetical to positive educational experiences and learning outcomes.

Consider the diagram below which displays three of the major factors that impact the systematic erasure of urban Native American students within schools.

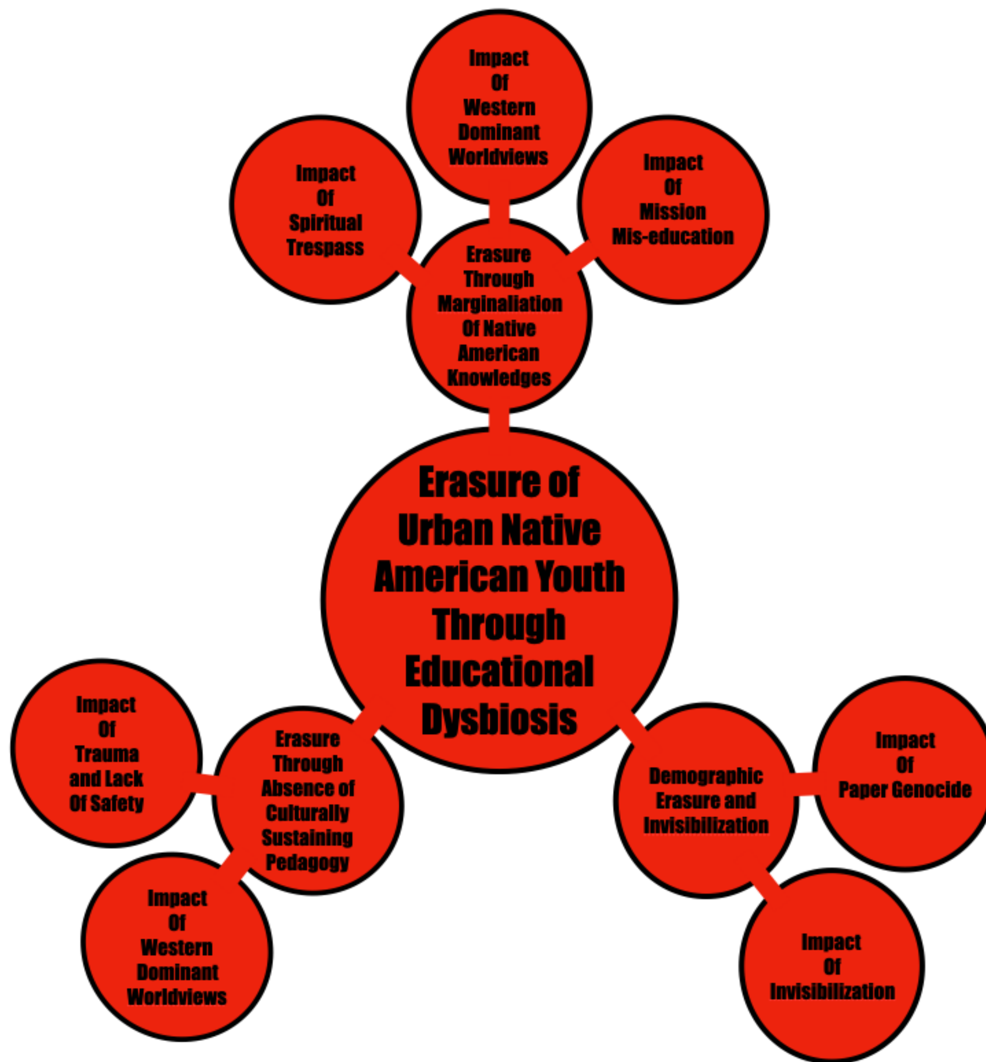

Figure 3.1- Erasure of urban Native American youth through educational dysbiosis

Many educationally dysbiotic relations exist among the traits displayed in the diagram above relating to the educational erasure of Native American students. For example, the demographic erasure of Native American students through school student number counts directly impacts the invisibilization of Native people and Native issues within school curricula, the marginalization of Native American knowledges within schools is intimately related to the inability of educators to practice culturally sustaining pedagogies in service of Native American students, and these factors in tandem (among many others) establish erasure as a central tenant of the Native American educational experience in the Oakland Bay Area. A dysbiotic relationship exists between these educational elements in which they are mutually destructive to one another, exacerbate and reinforce one another in dysfunctional ways, and cultivate dis-ease within a dis-harmonious and imbalanced educational ecosystem. The diagram above is by no means exhaustive as the erasure of urban Native American youth through educational dysbiosis is consistently evolving, transforming, and changing based on the contextualized dysfunctional educational elements that are present within an educational community. The erasure of urban Native American students through educational dysbiosis is engaged as an analytical framework throughout this chapter to examine the ways in which educational dysfunction have an adverse and destructive impact on educational ecosystems.

III. Demographic Erasure and Invisibilization of Urban Native American Youth in the Oakland Bay Area

Two of the major components of educational erasure and educational dysbiosis in schools are demographic erasure, articulated in this study as "paper genocide," and the invisibilization of Native American students within schools. *Paper genocide* refers to the bueacratic processes that invisibilize and or erase the Indigeneity of Native American students through demographic

misrepresentation resulting in lower numbers of Native American students and fewer resources allocated to their education. A dysbiotic relation exists between demographic erasure and the invisibilization of urban Native American youth within schools that fails to accurately represent Native Americans producing feelings of alienation, disengagement and nihilism.

"Paper Genocide:" Demographic Erasure and its Impacts

Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawai'ian/Mescalero Apache), the Director of Youth Services at the Native American Health Center in Oakland California, discussed who was demographically classified and counted as Native American and Indigenous within the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). She called demographic erasure "forms of paper genocide," articulating that the institutions responsible for demographic appraisals within the Oakland Unified School District are "killing us with paper." Crystal's concept of "paper genocide" is particularly pertinent given the long history of the use of bureaucratic processes (i.e. broken treaties, land allotment, certificates of Native American blood, etc.) to erase and/or invisibilize Indigenous presence in the United States. In the case of urban Indigenous demographic erasure, community members who not only self-identify but often practice their Indigenous traditions and speak their Indigenous language often self-categorize or get miscategorized into larger, strategically essentialized (Spivak 1995) racial groups such as Latinos, African Americans, or Whites, particularly if the student is bi-racial/multi-racial. This results in a demographic erasure which in turn impacts the support and funding of educational programing for urban Native Youth.

Eric Aleman, the after-school program coordinator at the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) spoke to this point stating:

> …one of the things that I've seen at the afterschool program is being counted. It's a huge issue, especially with the title VI program. Really having accurate numbers on how

> many Native youth are in the district, specifically in Oakland. Tied to that is housing displacement and gentrification. Many of the youth that we worked with in the past have had to move farther out east which hinders the overall services that we are able to provide. Title VI is one of the ways that we get money to provide cultural services, academic support, and these kinds of things negatively affect that.
> If we can't get an accurate count on, how many students we have in the district, it becomes a little bit difficult to justify having specific programming for Native youth which is no doubt essential. (Eric Aleman, Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

In this statement Eric elaborates not only on the importance of getting an accurate count of Native American students, but the connection between accurate counts and receiving Title VI funding. Title VI is allocated through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to ensure that:

> No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights)

Title VI funding presents an interesting quagmire for Native American people in the Oakland Bay Area. On the one hand the funding is in place to ensure that racial discrimination does not take place, and on the other hand erasure and/or invisibilization are one of the primary ways that Native American communities experience discrimination in the United States. In other words, existing racial categorizations and standards that often mis-count Native American peoples, produce racial discrimination through erasure/invisibilization. This reality creates the circumstances where more accurate racial categorizations and counts are needed.

The less "formal" form of demographic erasure occurs when urban Native youth are among the only Indigenous students at a school site. Within this context school sites often see little benefit in accurately representing Native Americans often resulting in forms of erasure/invisibility. Cara Little (Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), an alcohol and drug prevention expert who worked at the Native American Health Center as well as a mother of three, makes this point clearly stating:

> It's hard…my kids make up three kids who are Native out of the whole school. Is that enough to make a change? It should be. It should be no matter what right? The whole school [should be able to see] how Natives are [mis]represented in Halloween stores [and] school costumes right? (Cara Little(Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), Personal Interview, 17 July 2019).

Because Cara's children are a demographic minority (i.e. the only Native children at the school) the school either benevolently neglects, does not have the capacity to address, or actively invisibilizes Native American and Indigenous issues. Cara however alludes to the point that Native American being a numeric minority, should not preclude any school site from addressing Native histories and issues in responsible and ethical ways.

Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), the nationally renowned Native American author of the New York Times best seller *There, There*, who grew up in Oakland California, discusses not being seen as a Native student within his classroom environment.

> I was definitely not paid attention to. I was usually the only Native kid in my classes. Pretty much exclusively but for a case or two. I was the only Native kid, and I definitely wasn't seen as being a Native kid, but I also was in a lot of diverse classrooms. I definitely didn't feel seen at all in school. (Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), Personal Interview, 17 November 2019).

In the case of Tommy Orange, despite being one of the only Native American students present throughout his entire educational experience, he was neither paid attention to nor identified as a Native American person which contributed to the sentiment of not feeling seen at school. Tommy also shared that he was not considered a "good student" during his K-12 experience. Given these realities it is easy to see the dysbiotic relationship between the lack of Native American visibility in schools and the connection between adverse educational outcomes.

The impact of demographic erasure on urban Native American and Indigenous students is also prevalent at the University level. Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), a full-time instructor at Chabot College with extensive experience in speech

communication, discusses the demographic erasure/invisibilization of Native American and Indigenous students at the University level.

> [Native American and Indigenous youth] are just left out of the conversation. The educators and the administration who are in power now aren't considering them [and do not] understand them. (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

Part of this erasure/invisibilization is due to a lack of knowledge with regard to Native American issues as a result of a lack of education around Native American realities, particularly within the urban context.

> When I weigh that there are 406 students at Chabot who claimed [Indigenous status] on their paperwork (out of 13,145 students or roughly 4% of the student population) when they entered Chabot, people are surprised. They're surprised to know the cultural differences that they might [see]. The main thing [is that] we are left out of the conversation [about our] education. And then of course that lends [itself] to what happens as an administrator [where Indigenous students] are not included in the plans. (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

In this circumstance erasure and invisibilization of urban Indigenous communities is happening despite a numerically significant and quantifiable self-identified Indigenous population of students attending the university.

While the demographic data justifies resource allocation to Native American and Indigenous communities within the university, a lack of understanding around Indigenous issues and realities serves as a contributing factor preventing the funding of Native and Indigenous educational initiatives. Veronica attributes this reality to a corporate business model that dehumanizes Native American and Indigenous peoples.

> I get frustrated with them when they treat it as a business. It's complicated and I get that. But at the same time, in terms of humanity, it's not complicated. The argument that they provide is that [Native American and Indigenous students] are a comparatively smaller population, but it's still people. Even if you look at it from a business perspective, [the University] shouldn't [just] be programming for the students at Chabot, but that we

> should be programing or planning for the [broader] community. In terms of the whole community there's a lot [of Indigenous peoples].
> (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

For Veronica, the business calculus associated with the count of Native American and Indigenous students, dehumanizes Indigenous lives as well as limiting the business potential of the University for attracting more Native American and Indigenous students within the East Bay. This example further illustrates the complicated terrain faced by urban Native communities where low number counts are used to justify funding, dehumanizing Native lives, and contributing to demographic erasure.

The Invisibilization of Urban Native American Youth Within Schools

While demographic erasure/invisibilization, mis-representation of Indigeneity, and school administrative erasure were common threads of inquiry within this study, the lack of representation within schools, the survival mechanism of keeping one's Indigeneity a secret in order to avoid unneeded conflict and bullying within the school, as well as feelings of alienation, disengagement, and nihilism emerged as salient forms of Native American erasure/invisibilization through the community interviews. Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche), the Title VI Indian Education Coordinator at the American Indian Child Resource Center, frames this educational reality stating that:

> The school systems have never ever been designed for our people. The first schools in the Americas were to enslave people and teach them foreign language, foreign religion, and impose those things as absolute truths in our cultures and in our societies. (Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

Connected to Manny's statement are the words of Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone), co-founder of the Segorea Te Land Trust, who said that "The school district … [doesn't] really have Native American people on their radar. It's a non-issue for them."

The lack of Native American representation within schools in the Oakland Bay Area included educational programs that don't focus on Native American students or histories, the lack of Indigenous imagery and holidays, and rendering the Native American experience homogenous through a lack of recognition of Indigenous pluralities. Janeen Antoine (Sicangu Lakota), the San Francisco Office Manager at the International Indian Treaty Council and co-host of Bay Native Circle on KPFA, discusses issues of Native American invisibility in the following way:

> Once they are in school, they also have to deal with the visibility factor of not having any programs that really focus on Native students and having a high profile or any visible recognition of Native people within the school system or Native history. (Janeen Antoine (Sicangu Lakota), Personal Interview, 7 December 2018).

By not having programs that reflect Native American realities, self-images, or histories students are disincentivized from accountability to the course material. This dis-incentivization becomes particularly potent when, public education based on boutique multiculturalism seeks to honor communities of color and historically marginzalized groups while continuing to invisibilize Native Americans.

The quantitative data collected for this study demonstrates the lack of visible recognition of Native American people.

Questions	Yes	No	Once or Twice	# of Students
Have any of your teachers discussed Indigenous Peoples Day and the issues with "Columbus Day?"	16%	34%	50%	12
Is the "Thanksgiving" story that is told at your school accurate?	0%	100%	0%	12
Has your school ever shown an interest in your Native culture and/or language?	0%	67%	33%	12

Table 3.1 Table of curricular visibility of Native American issues for AICRC students fall 2019

According to the data only 16% of students reported a meaningful and affirmative curricular engagement with a Native American issue, between 50% reported a minimal or cursory engagement with a Native American issue. And depending on the issue being discussed between 34% and 100% reported no curricular engagement with the Native American issue. Particularly striking, was students reporting 100% inaccuracy of how the "Thanksgiving" story is taught, and 67% dis-interest in a student's Native culture and/or language. These statistics demonstrate the students' critical consciousness of the "Thanksgiving" story, and the misalignment between the student understanding and the dominant narrative. The statistics also show that the overwhelming majority of urban Native students who participated in this study either felt minimally seen, or not seen at all by their school.

Another important component of the erasure/invisibilization of Native American students are the survival mechanisms that students themselves use when navigating dysfunctional educational environments. One of these tactics is to avoid the public presentation of Indigineity opting instead to keep it secret. Anne Hurley (Hoopa Valley/Piaute/Yurok/Karuk/Washo), a cultural arts teacher at the American Indian Child Resource Center, discussed her experience with making the informed decision to camouflage her Indigeneity in order to avoid harmful interactions with educators.

> I kinda want[ed] to keep it [my Indigeneity] a secret because some teachers don't really accept some answers. I've had teachers tell me that I'm not just Native American. And they're like, what are you mixed up with? Then I'm like myself, nothing else. And they're like, well, that's impossible. It just kind of makes it a deterrent to not even say it at all really. Sometimes I've had people assume that I'm Hispanic or Latino and I don't even correct them. It's kind of a problem. (Personal Communication, Anne Hurley (Hoopa Valley/Piaute/Yurok/Karuk/Washo), November 5, 2019)

Anne's experience is also parallel to the experience of many other interviewees for this study who experienced unsolicited and undesired ethic/racial mis-categorization. In Anne's case however this mis-categorization came from an educator exacerbating an already tenuous teacher/student power dynamic within schools. This power dynamic coupled with the difficult socio-emotional realities of adolescence, help produce a context where avoiding conflict becomes a desired outcome. Anne elaborated on her statement sharing that conflict avoidance through the camouflaging of identity was a fairly common practice at her middle school in Alameda California, a more affluent and less diverse town next to Oakland.

> Some of those things happened, not from OUSD but [when] I went to middle school in Alameda. Not many of the other Native American kids that went there told people they were Native American. I was still trying to find my identity, so I often wore my hair in braids to school and I've done my beadwork and cultural arts stuff throughout my whole life so I would wear my own beaded earrings that I am super proud of making, or my choker, and I would get made fun of and people would pull my braids. It's just overall unacceptance. I felt like, for me especially, getting in a conflict with other students…they're ganging up on me, like it was my fault that I got picked on or

> something. I’ve always took that [avoidance of conflict] and used it to protect myself and avoid the whole thing. (Personal Communication, Anne Hurley (Hoopa Valley/Piaute/Yurok/Karuk/Washo), November 5, 2019)

For Anne, the outward expression of her cultural pride through wearing jewelry that she had personally designed, produced a situation in which she was targeted by bullies. In this scenario the survival mechanism of camouflaging her Indigenous identity served as a mechanism by which she could avoid being bullied. Even though, Anne’s desire to display her cultural pride was present, the school culture that both erased/invisibilized Indigeneity and allowed for the bullying of Native students created a circumstance where Anne chose not to display her cultural pride in order to avoid conflict.

The quantitative data collected for this study supports Anne’s point showing that 83% of AICRC student participants felt bullied in school and 100% did not feel respected by classmates.

Questions	Yes	No	# of Students
Have you experienced bullying at school?	83%	17%	12
Did you feel respected by your classmates today?	0%	100%	12

Table 3.2 Table of peer-to-peer bullying and respect of AICRC students fall 2019

Ultimately, high levels of peer-to-peer bullying of AICRC students and low levels of peer-to-peer respect produce an incredibly challenging social environment for students to navigate. Indeed, 66% of AICRC students reported that their social life was the hardest part about school while 33% reported academics.

One of the primary impacts of educational programs that erase/invisibilize Native American students, that do not focus on Native American issues and histories, that lack of Native representation, and that produce circumstances where Native students feel both isolated and unsafe to express cultural pride, is educational alienation and disengagement. When asked if

Native American issues were addressed at their high school a former AICRC student of Oglala Lakota descent told me:

> No not really. I'm one of the only Natives there. We're a very small part of the population. They push us to the side like you don't matter. [It makes me feel] kind of like an outsider. They always talk about Black problems, Hispanic problems, Asian problems, and I have Native problems. (Student A, Personal Interview, 6 November 2019).

This student's commentary not only points to the feelings of "outsiderness" experienced by Native American students who are "pushed to the side" like they don't matter, but it echoes a concern brought forward by other interviewees that even in school districts like OUSD that seek proximity to "progressiveness," and "culturally responsiveness," and where issues of other racialized groups (i.e. African American, Latinx, AAPI) are actively addressed (albiet often in deeply problematic ways), Native American issues continue to be deprioritized or ignored.

Anne Hurley (Hoopa Valley/Piaute/Yurok/Karuk/Washo) further elaborates on the experience of alienation and disengagement stating that "There's definitely a bit of feeling like an outcast when people find our you're Native American." This feeling of being an "outcast" is reinforced by the words of Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), a former counselor at AICRC who states:

> A large part of what I hear from the youth pretty consistently is that their experience is really nowhere. Their experience is nowhere and what they're taught about their "Native experience" is very inaccurate and often hurtful. A lot of them will disassociate and be like, "Oh, I don't even remember that." I hear, in particular around the topics of history through middle and high school – that they're not absorbing the information. They're totally checked out. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

Native student "disassociation" and being "totally checked out" are key attributes of educational alienation and disengagement that have a dysbiotic relationship to Indigenous

erasure/invisibilization. Educational alienation and disengagement have devastating impacts on the educational outcomes of Native American and Indigenous students.

The final aspect of the educational alienation and disengagement experienced by Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area was nihilism. Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), a program assistant and gardening educator at the American Indian Child Resource Center, expressed this educational challenge in the following way.

> …the next biggest obstacle, to use a European political term, is nihilism. Nothing. I do nothing. Even when I try to do the right thing, it doesn't work out so what's the point? I see [nihilism in] kids, parents, adults, [and] grandparents. I see that everywhere. (Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), Personal Interview, 20 September 2018).

The culmination of educational alienation and disengagement is to ask oneself "what is the point?" This question can lead to higher drop-out rates, lower college attendance rates, and lower educational engagement overall. While nihilism can be an understandable response to years of educational erasure/invisibilization it is also deeply disempowering for Native American and Indigenous students. Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) described nihilism and disempowerment in the following way.

> There's things that are understandable [and] you have compassion, but [nihilism] is still such an impediment. It's such a controlling force in what you do and what you are able to do. It's so disempowering of your own agency. [The impact of nihilism is] recognizing an issue, recognizing a reality, but not having the inner strength to move beyond that. I'm not the type of person to say anyone can just be a great person regardless of your situation, circumstance, or what your opportunities are. But there's a balance and whether we like it or not, whether we got an easy time figuring it out or not, we've got to figure it out. (Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), Personal Interview, 20 September 2018).

In this quote Ben calls for educators that serve Native American to recognize the impact that nihilism has on Native students as well as the histories of erasure/invisibilization that produce the outcome, while simultaneously cultivating educational interventions to empower students.

IV. On the Margins: Marginalizing Indigenous Knowledges, Privileging Colonial Worldviews, and Urban Native American Miseducation in the Oakland

> In my education there was no discussion of [Indigenous issues]. I am talking K-12. When I got to college one of the first days of my history class at Cal State Hayward – it was on California history and thank goodness he started with the Indigenous [Californians] – the instructor comes in, went up to the board and said, "we're going to brainstorm all of the wonderful things that Native Americans got from the mission system." I looked around the room and [the class] started to brainstorm. He [began to write] things like, "they got new ways [of] art," "they got new music," [and] "they got new religion." I was really shy and quiet at the time, so I didn't say anything right away. I just thought "what's going on here?" I quietly raised my hand and said "are you saying that this [missionization] was a good thing? Even though I hadn't had the education and that my family didn't talk about [missionization] a lot, I still knew this was not the right conversation. I must have triggered something, I'm not sure what was going on with him, but he instantly raised his volume and said "yes, it's a myth that [missionization] was a bad thing. If it was now I would have had more to say but at the time I just said "okay." That [memory] has stuck with me. [I was] not only worried that that's what everyone was learning in college, [but] he was also a K-12 teacher.
>
> Dani Cornejo: In that situation did you end up staying in the class?
>
> I did, and [I was] doing what everyone else did, which is just regurgitating the information you're given.
>
> - Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American):

Veronica's anecdote brings forward a wide variety of issues that relate to the marginalizing of Indigenous knowledges and the privileging of colonial worldviews through education in the Oakland Bay Area. First, is her teacher's romanticization of the mission system as benevolent, erasing the violence committed on Native Californian peoples and privileging the "wonderful" benefits the mission system brought Native peoples. Second, is the inherent danger of an education based on a revisionist and white-washed history that this teacher likely fostered on K-12 and university students. Third, when Veronica pushed back on her teacher she was promptly silenced, instead of the educator using dissent as a learning opportunity. Ultimately, Veronica's

knowledge of the violent mission experience of the Amah-Mustun Ohlone people was marginalized, colonial worldviews were priviledged, and students were miseducated.

Mission Miseducation: The Importance of Deco-Mission[ing] the Mission Unit

One of the most salient examples of marginalizing Native American experiences through anti-Indigenous curriculum in the state of California is the "Mission Unit" which teaches and taught California 4th graders a romanticized version of California's mission history, virtually erasing any meaningful or substantive discussion of Indigenous enslavement, missionization and genocide in the State. This curriculum has been institutionalized in California since the 1960's. Some of the ways in which this institutionalization has occurred includes the 21 missions across the state have become one of the state's biggest tourist attractions, businesses devoted to selling Mission model kits and other "memorabilia" from the era, the architectural approaches in the state that are influenced by the mission era, curricula such as Harcourt School Publisher's *California: A Changing State* (Miranda, 2013).

Native American and Chicano resistance to the Mission Unit was immediate and ongoing through contests over textbook adaptations, lawsuits, etc. This resistance led to the creation of new teaching standards by 2010, which did not eliminate the unit per se, but "sought to avoid debate by offering teachers and parents a range of possible interpretations from romanticization to victimization" (Gutreund, 2010, p. 194) seeking to provide more historical complexity of the era but still allowing for the romanticized and inaccurate depictions of the mission era. In 2017 the State Board of Education of California adopted a new K-12 curriculum that dropped the romanticized mission project as a recommended teaching tool focusing more on the everyday life of missions, adopting a wider view of history, and emphasizing harm to Native Californian

peoples. Despite the elimination of the romanticized mission unit as a recommended teaching tool, the unit with over 50 years of history in California, continued to be practiced as evidenced by online purchases of teacher kits (Imbler 2019) and testimonies from Native American parents still grappling with the violence inherent to the unit (Personal communitcation, Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawai'ian/Mescalero Apache).

Historically, community support was a central component in supporting parents in conducting educational interventions on the Mission Unit. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) describes having to involve the American Indian Movement in order to protect her nephews and sons from the racism of the Mission Unit in the 1970's. This approach ensured that she was not facing the educational institution as an individual but as part of a collective.

> I protected [my nephews] and my son's in the school because of racism. I had the American Indian Movement come in there over an incident. In the fourth grade they were going to teach [students] about the missions and they were all excited about [it]. They [got] a book on missions. I had a fit about it. We called AIM in and the staff [at the school] was so upset. When AIM left the teacher thanked me for teaching them the things that they were taught. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

Carol Wapepah describes her nephews and sons as reporting an "excitement" for the Mission Unit. This excitement no doubt stems from their teacher presenting the unit, based in a romanticized history that erases the violence against Native peoples, in an engaging and exciting way. Instead of taking a stand against the racist and violent curriculum on her own, Carol called in the support of her colleagues and comrades from the American Indian Movement to come into the school and teach students a more accurate history. By engaging community support Carol was not only able to intervene upon racist curriculum but was likely able to shift the perspectives of some of the teachers who witnessed the event. Additionally, she was able to exert more influence that she would have been able to exert as an individual. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake

Ojibwe) describes the romantic depictions and problematics in the ways that schools address this historical era stating "In the missions the priests and [the Natives] were [depicted] as such good friends. This is garbage." For Carol the mission unit worked to erase the violence of this historical era, replacing it with a narrative of Christian benevolence.

In the present, despite the Mission Unit being dropped as a recommended teaching tool since 2017, Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawai'ian/Mescalero Apache) discusses the ways in which the Mission Unit is still being taught.

> There's still teachers that are pushing it with students cause I get notices from parents asking for guidance on how to speak to the school about it. One kid made a mission and they had just a big cemetery, and then they get dinged. Our kids get dinged for telling the truth. It's about how teachers need to check their egos, you know. Sometimes children actually know more than them in certain areas especially when it comes to cultural upbringing or historical traumas and stuff like that. (Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache), Personal Interview, 3 November 2018).

Due to the ongoing prevalence of the unit, Crystal Salas must continue to support parents in intervening with schools that have not dropped the Mission Unit. This reality places unnecessary emotional labor on both Crystal as well as the parents that she supports. Beyond the pattern of unnecessary labor that Native parents must adopt in order to ensure that their children can safely navigate western educational systems, a pattern of labor where Indigenous educational advocates must perpetually *talk back* to Western educational dominance as opposed to devoting their labor towards *talking and walking forward* towards more Indigenized pedagogical approaches. In addition, when Native students demonstrate empowered resistance to the Mission Unit, that is grounded in their cultural upbringing and accurate histories, they are punished by receiving lower grades.

Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaki/Zapotec), the director of a nonprofit called the Indigenous Youth Foundation, developed a structural analysis of the ways anti-Indigenous

western dominant worldviews have become normalized throughout the school year through curriculum that addresses various holiday celebrations

> You start out the year with Columbus day, you have Thanksgiving, there's another good one. You have President's Day, [and] the mission unit. So those are the four main ones and they're all very anti-Indigenous. They all perpetuate myths, and they all have very racist curriculum that goes with them. Even if you have a teacher that wants to do something better, if they try to do it on their own even the information online is very limited and can be very misconstrued and mythical. I think it creates angry students. How could you have respect for a teacher when they're saying things that you know, aren't true or that are racist, you know what I mean? (Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaki/Zapotec), Personal Interview, 19 December 2018).

In this quote, Monique not only describes the prevalence of anti-Indigenous curricula but also the lack of information and structural support for educators who want to move away and beyond anti-Indigenous educational tactics. Additionally, due to the structural nature of anti-Indigenous curricular approaches, educators who do seek to move beyond these tactics must often donate their time, energy, and expertise towards creating curricula and educational approaches that better represent the Native American reality of the United States.

The racist reality of the Mission Unit and other similar curricula produce a situation in which Native parents must take steps to intervene on behalf of their children. Like any process, learning to intervene takes time and his highly contextual. Cara Little (Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota) describes how this process unfolded for herself and her children in the relatively recent past.

> When my first son was nine years old he was in the fourth grade. That's when they started doing the mission projects. I was kind of distant, I wasn't involved in the [Native American] community. I was out here by myself. So, the fourth grade mission project, we just did it. (Cara Little(Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), Personal Interview, 17 July 2019).

In this quote Cara discusses not being involved with the urban Native community in the region and how that distance impacted her ability to respond to the mission unit. Given these circumstances Cara opted to do the mission project and move on with the school year.

As Cara's involvement and connection to the urban Native community in the Bay Area got stronger so did her ability to intervene with the school on behalf of her children. Below Cara describes one of her first attempts to intervene with the school on behalf of her children. Once Cara was educated on the issue of missions in California, she was able to properly contextualize the assignment for her children.

> With my youngest two [children, when the mission unit came up] I was educated in the issue, and we talked about it. We talked about the tribes [that were impacted]. He was going to be graded on it. We did the mission project, but we made sure that the project said, "In remembrance to the Natives who lost their lives in the making of this mission," you know the tribes that were there. We wrote it as a remembrance to honor the Indigenous people in that area. That was a tough one. (Cara Little(Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), Personal Interview, 17 July 2019).

In this case Cara opted to contextualize the content for her children and support them in completing the assignment so that their grades would not be adversely impacted. Providing this type of educational support, which explicitly grapples with the violence of missionization and colonization, can be emotionally exhausting, and should not explicitly fall on Native parents.

Spiritual Trespass: Marginalizing Native American Spirit Centered Worldviews

Another way in which Native American worldviews are marginalized through the educational is system is through a process that I call *spiritual trespass.* The term *spiritual trespass* is a variation on psychotherapist John Welwood's (2002) concept of *spiritual bypass*

where spiritual ideas and practices are engaged "to sidestep personal, emotional 'unfinished business,' to shore up a shaky sense of self, or to belittle basic needs, feelings, and developmental tasks" (Raab 2019, p. 1) I will use the term *spiritual trespass* to describe a process where schools engage western dominant worldviews to disrupt, write off, ridicule and negate traditional Native American worldviews which are land based and often centered around concepts of Spirit, Creator, and/or and animating force which creates life on earth. Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) exemplifies the concept of *spiritual trespass* stating:

> I've also found that even in the last year speaking to a parent who was raised on the reservation and has two sons and a public school in Oakland, that he has found it frustrating to continue to try to talk to the teachers about traditional ways and things that his sons have taboos against their tribe. Where he wouldn't have to think about that if he was on the reservation raising his sons because they would know that. But even in trying to explain that to the teachers and the teachers really brushing it aside like it was no big deal or treating it as if it was some kind of superstition. I think those are difficult things that we have to overcome. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

In the case outlined by Corrina traditional Native American ways of being are simply not understood by the public school and as a result, aspects of traditional teachings are disrupted, written of, ridiculed, and negated. While traditional Native American worldviews are normalized, acknowledged, and respected within the reservation context, secular forms of Christian cultural dominance, worldviews informed by neoliberal/capitalist economic models and/or Western empiricism hold a form of spiritual currency in the colonial school. This produces a circumstance in which any worldview that does not adhere to the hegemonic parameters of Christian/Capitalist/Western worldview is deemed inherently inferior and written off as "superstition."

Another element of spiritual trespass and how it relates to the education of urban Native youth is the western conception of the separation of church and state and how that concept does

not relate to Native American holistic forms of education and knowledge creation. Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), an educator with 40 years of experience working with dozens of North American tribes in the areas of early childhood education and language revitalization, discusses how her Indigenous conception of the sacred within daily life gets disrupted by colonial education.

> I grew up in an environment where ceremony and prayer are part of daily life. I really found that in the western world...prayer is absolutely forbidden in our public schools. The idea of Creator is laughed at. My daughter said in college in New Mexico she was absolutely upset by that lack of respect for Spirit and for Creator. There, cultural anthropology was her major, but what was being taught was so disrespectful. Most of the Navajos in the class walked out of class when the anthropology professor said that all religion and all spirituality is superstition and there's no value in it and that Indigenous people in particular are superstitious and come from a fear-based worldview. She left that class and I'm glad. (Mary Anne (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020)

In many Native communities the sacred/secular binary that is a central tenant to western education is not present. This produces yet another circumstance in which, Native American and Indigenous students who are practitioners of traditional ways being, must leave key elements of their humanity at the door when they enter the colonial classroom. While it is not legal to pray in schools and the topic of Christianity is not often discussed, the misrepresentation and indeed the demonization of traditional Indigenous ways of being can be brought into the college classroom under the guise of colonial education.

This misrepresentation and demonization of Native American Spirit centered worldviews often stems from an ignorance of Native American ways of knowledge production and of viewing the world. Mary Anne Doan discusses the disconnect between Native worldviews and knowledge production and westernized forms of knowledge production.

> One of the things that I really feel gets discounted for a lot of our students is that they do have ways of knowing that aren't the ways that other people see things. We often have dreams that tell us something, we are so perceptive about nature and those signs, and sometimes we just know something, and it can even come down when we are doing some work in a project, in a classroom, whatever. We may not be able to tell them how we know, but we know. I think that's a really frustrating thing for students because they really don't have the [frameworks to say] here's the proof of why I know what I know. Whether it's something about biology or something else it's about the natural world or something, that you have this knowing inside and its related to your psychology class or whatever. That's frustrating because it discounts that we have our own cultural way of being in the world and that there's a knowledge base that they don't have that we do have, but it's just completely discounted. If we say we have intuition or a gut feeling it is discounted. (Mary Anne (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020)

Native American holistic knowledge systems view knowledge production as mutualistic stemming from land based, intellectual, embodied, spiritual, heart based, knowledge sources that often go well beyond the brain centered approach of westernized knowledge production. Mary Anne Doane describes the educational challenge faced by Native students who are raised with Indigenous worldviews, but do not necessarily have the lexicon to discuss these worldviews in Western academic terms. More importantly, Mary Anne Doane eludes to the inability of Western educational institutions to support students in cultivating non-brain-centered forms of knowledge.

An Indigenized "Double Consciousness:" Native American Students Navigating Two Worlds

As a result of the myriad educational challenges described in this chapter Native American students must often adopt what W.E.B. Dubois (1903) called the "double consciousness" where they must learn how to successfully navigate two different worldviews, the western and the Indigenous. Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation) described the need to adopt a double consciousness during her formative years.

> I was unaware of that contrast of being in two worlds until I was about 11. Prior to that, I was living with my non-Native grandparents for a very long time. I see that a lot in our youth. I see the complexity of being in two-worlds, of being mixed racial identities, of mixed cultural identities, be it their spiritual or other. (Therrien, Jill (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018)

For Jill the need to adopt a double consciousness coincided with no longer living with her non-Native grandparents and entering more Indigenized spaces as well as entering the identify formation inherent to adolescence. In addition, her analysis of "double-consciousness" for Native students moves beyond a simplified binary analysis and towards a more Indigenized holistic perspective incorporating worldview, racial identity, cultural identity, and spiritual identity factors. Each one of these factors was expressed in greater depth by other study participants.

Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) discussed the educational challenges that Native students face when seeking to reconcile traditional Indigenous value systems with western materialism.

> That makes it difficult when you want to fit in. When our traditional values are teaching about giving and then you're in this materialistic world about taking and making only for yourself. It's hard to deal with those trying to continue to be that voice of how we are as traditional people. It's not about only getting for yourself. It's about how do you give to the community. There's a whole bunch of things that are wrong with the education system and why our kids don't succeed. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

For Corrina, Native American value systems around giving and communal sensibilities are often diametrically opposed to westernized conceptions of materialism and rugged individualism. This stark opposition of worldview is particularly challenging for Native adolescents seeking connection and acceptance within peer groups whose worldview is often immersed within western materialism and individualism.

Learning to navigate multiple worldviews is not confined to the educational realm but can also happen within one's home. Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma) describes having to navigate multiple religious/spiritual worldviews within his household.

> My mom at the time was trying to raise us evangelical Christian and my dad was part of the Native American Church. Both of them [believed that] the most important thing was that I have a relationship to God. (Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), Personal Interview, 17 November 2019).

Christianity's non-monolithic long and complex history of religious wars, "witch" burnings, torture, genocide, forced missionization, enslavement, etc. towards the non-Christian and Indigenous world, coupled with more contemporary histories of Black and Brown liberation theologies as well as Indigenous synergistic traditions with Christian worldviews (i.e. the Native American Church), produce an incredibly challenging terrain for Native American and Indigenous youth to navigate. Despite having to navigate multiple religious/spiritual worldviews within his home, Tommy's parents were able to agree about the importance of "a relationship to God" allowing Tommy to choose if, when, and how to develop that relationship. This example demonstrates the importance of supporting young people in finding parallels between traditions which superficially may seem diametrically opposed.

The educational challenge of having to navigate two worldviews, that are often diametrically opposed produces a sense of distrust within urban Native students. Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma) describes this distrust in the following way.

> I think there's an inherent distrust [in western education] when you realize. I grew up hearing a massacre narrative in my house and my dad, being who he is, telling us about what it means to be Native and what it's meant in history. When the institution that is teaching you teaches a lie, it's hard to trust that system as a whole. All the history bullshit that I heard in school, made me distrust the whole institution. (Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), Personal Interview, 17 November 2019).

When the navigation of two diametrically opposed worldviews produces distrust in educational institutions, engagement-with and success-within those institutions becomes more challenging.

V. Challenges of Establishing Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies for Urban Native American Youth in Oakland

> I remember in seventh grade I moved around middle schools a lot. I remember this teacher around Thanksgiving time. We were talking about Christopher Columbus. [The teacher] mostly stuck to the book. The book basically says that Christopher Columbus came here, and he found America. I ended up getting pretty upset. I [said] "you're not really saying what actually happened. He wasn't even looking for [what would become "America"], he was going the wrong way. He wasn't discovering anything. People already lived here." [The teacher] didn't like to be told history. [As a result of this incident] I got kicked out and I wasn't able to participate in lessons anymore. But I literally told everyone, "she's pretty much lying to you guys. I know that she's not saying this stuff from herself. The textbook isn't telling the whole truth." [The students in the class were] like, "we know that this isn't real, but this is all we've been taught." And I was kind of just like "well it's kind of stupid to sit in school [when] you already know something and someone's lying to you."
>
> - Maria Cabral (Lakota/Mexican)

Maria's story is common and widespread for urban Native American students. As a seventh grader she identified a widely accepted falsehood in relation to the dominant historical narrative, articulated her disapproval of the narrative, and was disciplined for it. These false historical narratives addressing Native issues within dominant western educational institutions constitute a form of curricular erasure that connect dysbiotically to the lack of culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy. Instead of engaging this opportunity as a teachable moment for promoting critical thinking through the exploration of dominant and non-dominant historical narratives, this educator made the choice to stick to the curriculum, discipline the student, and continue to mis-educate. As a result, Maria understood that the teacher was lying to her, that her knowledge base was not being honored, and that the school was not to be trusted. With incidents such as this it is

easy to see how westernized curricula and pedagogical approaches are often irrelevant, non-responsive, and unsustainable for urban Native American students. The community interviews in this study demonstrate that the lack of culturally sustaining pedagogies in service of urban Native American communities produce deficit understandings about Native American communities and traumatize students. The dysbiotic interaction of the lack of culturally sustaining pedagogies, deficit understandings, and student trauma work in tandem to produce adverse educational outcomes.

Irrelevant, Non-Responsive, and Unsustainable: The Inability of Western Educational Institutions to be Culturally Sustainable for Native Americans

The lack of culturally responsive practices with regard to urban Native youth emerges with deficit thinking about Indigenous children from a young age. This deficit thinking is often standardized through culturally inappropriate aptitude tests that draw from normative whitestream knowledge bases. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) describes how the "whitestream" (Grande 2004) standardized assessments justified the deficit thinking about urban Native students in Oakland.

> I remember in kindergarten back then; they did a test to see if [students were] ready for kindergarten. They showed them pictures of things like a necktie and [Native students] didn't know what the name of that was things like that were not culturally appropriate. It's the way that the school district approached it [like there] was something wrong with the kids because they didn't know those things. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

In this example Carol describes the way that dominant whitestream knowledge bases are the standard by which the aptitude of urban Native American students is measured. It is unreasonable to assume that urban Native students possess a whitestream knowledge base, if they were not raised within a cultural framework where that knowledge base was normalized.

Whitestream standardized assessments that justify deficit thinking about urban Native students also have a long-term impact on their educational outcomes. In this sense, an educational dysbiosis occurs where a lack of culturally sustaining assessment approaches in service of Native students directly impacts deficit depictions of urban Native people, producing and sustaining a dysfunctional educational environment. Mary Anne Doane (Cherokee/Cree) discusses how deficit thinking impacts the ways that Native students are perceived and then tracked. This results in a disproportionate number of Native students being mis-tracked into special education.

> What would happen is students that were in preschool, when they reached the school system would get sent to special education. The school district said they had speech and language problems, or they thought [the students] were developmentally delayed. I had been observing those children in their Indian Head Start classrooms, [where] it was a family-like environment. Those teachers were part of their community. The children did talk, they were just very aware of the honor that is for the adult, with the elders, to learn through listening. We have an oral tradition that's very common. You memorize a lot of things so that later you can tell them to other people. There is a lot of discrimination in the public school system with Native children. They are being massively put into special education. (Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020).

In this example Mary Anne Doane describes the way that whitestream inability to understand Native American child/adult relations, oral traditions/histories, and the emphasis on learning through listening, results in deficit thinking about Native students. This ultimately results in both the pathologization of Native students that contribute to adverse, long-term educational implications through tracking Native students into special education.

The deficit thinking that results in the pathologizing of Native students also gets applied to Native families when socio-economic issues such as hunger, get mis-categorized as parental neglect. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) describes this phenomenon in the following way.

> If a child is hungry in the morning and goes to school then the school district may see it as being their parents neglecting their child. How do you help [the child]? Feed them. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

In this case, structural inequalities which contribute to socio-economic hardships (i.e. hunger), get reframed as urban Native deficit and pathology. This type of pathologizing approach can have a devastating impact when it comes to historical and present State intervention into breaking up Native American families through social services. Educational dysbiosis occurs through the relationship between socio-economic hardships, the patholigization of urban Native families based on these hardships, and State intervention that breaks up Native families. Ultimately, the structural inequalities (i.e. urban poverty) that produce social outcomes (i.e. hunger) must be the primary focus when grappling with urban Native American educational challenges.

Given these circumstances this study demonstrates an immense need for culturally sustaining pedagogies for urban Native American communities within the Oakland Bay Area. Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) articulates this need in the following way.

> I think there's no support mechanisms within the schools for American Indian students to feel good about themselves, to be resilient in that kind of way. I think that the education system needs to be revamped when it looks at American Indian students, both in the curriculum but also as students that we see in an urban setting. Our students don't look like the typical Plains Indian or Navajo students that are on the reservation. Our students, because of relocation, have changed what they look like. Our students look like every other population [in the Oakland Bay Area] but still have ties that are very strong to their culture and the traditions. The teachers that come into schools don't recognize those things. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

For Corrina the existing educational system is disempowering to urban Native American students and thus must be "revamped" to address the specific needs of urban Native communities which, due to the history of relocation, are often different from the needs of reservation communities.

Another aspect of urban Native experience that demonstrates the need for culturally sustaining pedagogical practices is that even when schools seek to incorporate Native American aspects to their curriculum they often do so in ways that are demeaning and de-humanizing. In describing her work within an urban high school in Oakland Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) described the following incidents:

> When I was up at [the high school] doing a youth club, there was a lot of negative things that happened up there. They had a lacrosse team. In the student paper, they wrote that lacrosse was a game that came from Native Americans fighting and killing each other. My youth group was right there and they showed me the paper. They confronted the [editor] then wrote an article to tell the truth about it. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

In this scenario, the student newspaper's attempt to incorporate Native American content ended up dehumanizing Native people. This example demonstrates the need for culturally responsive/sustainable educational experiences for both Native and non-Native students, and the importance of incorporating meaningful Native American Studies curricula within state mandated Ethnic Studies frameworks. When non-Native students are given the opportunity to engage with Native American issues in a meaningful way, the potential of producing a more inclusive environment for urban Native students as well as supporting non-Native students in becoming more conscientious adults is enhanced. Inversely, if non-Native students are not provided with a meaningful means by which to learn about Native American issues, it is more likely that non-Native adults will continue to perpetuate dehumanizing beliefs towards Native peoples.

Trauma and Lack of Safety for Native American Students Within Classrooms

Given the abundance of educational challenges faced by urban Native communities, it is easy to see how urban Native students do not feel safe in school and indeed experience trauma. This is

not surprising given the wide array of studies that discuss the presence and impact of trauma on urban students of color, both in Oakland (See Duncan-Andrade & Morrel 2008, Ginwright 2015, etc.) and nationally (See Noguera 2006, Camangian 2021). While urban Native American students often experience many of the same factors that contribute to feeling unsafe and to trauma (i.e. neighborhood violence, harsh discipline policies, poverty) many factors are particular/unique to Native American youth. In this section I will discuss some of the ways that trauma shows up in the lives of urban Native American students, how trauma can be triggered within classrooms, and the importance of creating empowering spaces for Native American youth to address these challenges.

The wide array of social and educational challenges discussed in this chapter have a psychological impact on urban Native American students in the Oakland Bay Area. Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation) describes the physiological impact on the nervous system that comes from communities where a sense of safety is not present.

> It is very hard for me to separate out where our nervous systems allow us to actually retain information on a physiological level. If you're in a community that has a lot of violence going on, or if you're in a school where you don't feel safe, you actually, as a human being can hardly retain [information] because it's interfering with long-term memory and deep cognitive patterns. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

The impact of traumatic events on long term memory and deep cognitive patterns as well as the undeniable impact that these events have on urban Native American educational attainment and outcomes must be factored in when examining dysfunctional educational ecosystems and educational dysbiosis. In other words, a clear dysbiotic correlation exists between violence within a community, collective and individual trauma, a student's feeling of safety, and the impact on educational outcomes for urban Native American students.

Jill Therrien further describes the embodied and ongoing impact of trauma on Native American students as well as the challenge of overcoming traumatic events.

> I'll start with how [trauma] shows up, what it looks like, and what are some major themes. Trauma is one of those really complicated energies. It doesn't erase itself. It's held in your nervous system. Even if you learn coping skills that help regulate yourself, if you're constantly revisiting or in an environment that revisits trauma, in whatever shape it forms, it's pretty difficult to overcome it in the way of high-functioning, fully-regulated human. Even as an adult I still have a hard time with some of my triggers. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

The perpetual presence of trauma within the nervous system of students as well as the threat of triggers poses a particularly complicated challenge to educators seeking to support urban Native American students who have experienced trauma. If trauma is a challenge for adults who have learned coping and self-regulation skills, the challenge for students who do not possess those skills and are grappling complex issues of identity formation only get magnified. For Jill Therrien, trauma within urban Native American students tends to manifest itself as "more subtle pieces of withdrawn energy or over activated energy," producing behavioral extremes. These behavioral extremes can be regulated when urban Native American students feel safe and when "the environment is a calming [to the] nervous-system."

Instead of experiencing safe educational environments that are calming to the nervous system Urban Native American and Indigenous students often experience classroom environments that are traumatizing. Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota/Costa Rican), an educator at the American Indian Child Resource Center as well as a former student of the center, describes the impact of a traumatic classroom experience in the following passage.

> It was really hard to stay focused and stay wanting to be in a classroom. I had to leave sometimes just to protect my own emotions, my spirit because it'd weigh down on you,

> you know? There's one experience where we were learning about the Dakota 38, one of the largest mass hangings in US history. I had never learned about that before. Hearing about it and just sitting in a classroom knowing that people are staring at you. We're learning about this really horrible situation and everybody's looking at you like "these are your people" and you're just sinking in your chair right? (Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican), Personal Interview, 17 October 2019).

For a moment imagine the intense pressure and psychological impact of being the only Native American student in a classroom, learning about a traumatic event in Native American History, and being starred at, pitied, and/or viewed as the sole Native representative of this traumatic event. In this context it is easy to see why a student would withdraw, have trouble focusing, or just leave a classroom completely out of a sense of self preservation. It is important to note that this example occurred within a classroom in which the teacher most likely had "good intentions" and was seeking to shed light upon one of the most devastating Native American massacres in U.S. history. Devina's testimony serves as an important reminder that "good intentions" are not enough when seeking to provide critical and empowering educational experiences to urban Native American students.

In Devina's case the psychological impact of a traumatic event within the classroom is further compounded by a general ignorance within dominant culture about Native American issues. With regard to the event above Devina describes:

> One comment that was said was, "you should be grateful he didn't kill more of you because it could have been worse." At that point I walked out. I left the class, I didn't turn in my assignment, I just went to my house and I cried. That was one of many experiences that I had in the classroom. Not being able to handle it and not being able to take it and just focusing on my mental health before my education because, how do you balance that? I just had to step away at some points, and it did affect my grades. (Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican), Personal Interview, 17 October 2019).

Here we see a clear example of how ignorance within classroom environment can directly traumatize a student or exacerbate and existing trauma. While it is important to teach the hard realities of history within the classroom, it must be done in a way that is attentive to the impact of these histories on targeted communities. Moreover, this chapter has demonstrated that these events do not occur in isolation but occur frequently throughout the K-12 experience of urban Native American students aggravating and triggering survival mechanisms such as withdrawal or overactivation. Finally, this example demonstrates a clear educational dysbiotic relationship between the inability of westernized education to grapple with Native American issues in a meaningful way, the general ignorance of the student population with regard to Native issues, trauma experienced by urban Native students in the classroom, withdrawal from the classroom environment, and the adverse impact on educational outcomes.

The wide array of educational challenges experienced by urban Native students in the Oakland Bay Area speak to the importance of creating and reinforcing safe and empowering spaces for urban Native and Indigenous youth. Jill Therrian (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation) speaks to the importance of fostering these types of spaces.

> The quiet kid in the room is usually the one I worry about more, because that means they're not even expressing hardly anything. That means they might not have safety. I think with the young ladies in the group that I do, we do a lot of calming and relaxation stuff. We spend a lot of time in nature. It's good. It's good medicine for them. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

For Jill the creation of "safe spaces" or "sacred truth spaces" (San Pedro 2017), with environments and exercises that are designed to promote and encourage relaxation, is particularly important for urban Native youth who demonstrate a quiet and withdrawn energy. While a common inclination may be to create an icebreaking activity to break a student out of

her/his/their "shell," it is important to note that the "shell" has often been created as a survival mechanism, and through fostering safe and welcoming environments students are encouraged to step out of their shell on their own timeline.

VI. Talking and Walking Forward Towards More Indigenized Pedagogical Approaches

This chapter has demonstrated that systemic erasure of Native American youth is a root cause for poor educational outcomes in the Oakland Bay Area. Moreover, demographic erasure, curricular erasure, the erasure of Native American identity, invisibilization, the marginalization of Indigenous knowledges, and the challenges of establishing culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches interact dysbiotically to form a web of educational dysfunction that contributes to the continuation of systemic erasure. This context of educational erasure and educational dysbiosis demands that educational advocates *talk back* to western educational dominance while simultaneously *talking and walking forward* towards more Indigenized pedagogical approaches. Building on the theoretical, methodological, and historical foundation addressed in the study thus far, as well as through a direct engagement with the dysbiotic educational challenges addressed by the scholarship and the urban Native American situated knowledges presented in this chapter, the remainder of the study will focus on mutualistic educational interventions in service to the urban Native American community in the Bay Area. The foundation of cultivating mutualistic educational approaches rooted in the situated knowledges of members of Oakland's Native American community is building strong educational relationships rooted in accountability, trust, safety, visibility, and care.

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Chapter 4 - Building Responsible Relationality: Indigenizing Achievement, Cultivating Accountability, and Practicing Reciprocity

The findings of this study indicate that the first foundational aspect of confronting erasure within urban Native American communities is building responsible educational relationships with urban Native American youth. At the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC), where my fieldwork was conducted, practices of responsible relationality between students and educators are institutionalized through a wide array of educational practices including its counseling services, gardening programs, cooking classes, young men's/women's circles, etc. The most pronounced and immediate way that responsible relationality is practiced is through their opening circle. When students arrive from their middle schools throughout Oakland, they form a circle. The lead teacher briefly makes announcements, explains the agenda for the day, and introduces any visitors who have entered the space. A student then lights sage, smudges, and passes the smudge around the circle. Students can choose to smudge or not smudge based on the nation specific protocols/traditions that they practice. If a visitor is present, students introduce themselves stating their name and their tribal affiliation/background. The visitors are prompted to do the same also stating the purpose of their visit.

Circle practices such as this are relatively common within urban Native American Hub spaces in the Bay Area and serve a wide variety of important purposes. First, the circle allows students to transition from highly stressful, dysfunctional, and often unsafe school sites into an Indigenized educational space where they will be seen, acknowledged, and respected. Secondly, educators within the circle demonstrate accountability to the students ensuring that they have a clear vision and direction for the day and that all visitors to the space reciprocate the sharing from the students through sharing aspects of their own background as well as their purpose for

visiting the center. Finally, the institutionalization of the opening circle within AICRC through consistent practice ensures that students know what to expect upon entering the space. When students know what to expect upon entering an educational space, they are provided with a sense of safety. These practices and many more constitute a fundamental redefinition of the westernized educational relations that most Native American students experience in dominant educational settings.

The quantitative data gathered for this study indicated that 69% of the Native American survey participants including students, teachers, and parents/guardians agreed that creating a supportive academic culture was the most important quality that a teacher of Native American students should possess. This data line is coupled the fact that most students and teachers surveyed in this study prioritized the use of effective teaching and learning strategies in service to urban Native American youth. While "creating a supportive academic culture" through the use of "effective teaching and learning strategies" are vague statements on their surface, the interviews conducted with students, teachers, and family members indicated that creating a supportive academic culture through the use of effective teaching and learning strategies means fostering healthy educational relationships between students and teachers, practicing culturally sustaining pedagogies, and actively incorporating traditional Indigenous knowledge systems in the education of urban Native American youth. In this chapter I engage the fields of Indigenous holistic pedagogy, the science of symbiosis and mutualism, quantitative survey data, and the situated knowledges of Bay Area Native American communities to demonstrate that Indigenizing the concept of "achievement" means fostering responsible relationality among Native American students and educators must be based on a *mutualistic* relationship rooted in the three interrelated components of accountability, reciprocity, and trust. In this way *educational*

mutualism is a useful framework for understanding Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches from an urban Intertribal perspective.

II. Indigenous Holistic Education and Educational Mutualism

Indigenous holistic understandings-of and approaches-to education have been present in the western hemisphere prior to settler understandings and approaches and provide the primary analytical grounding for the following three chapters. In this section I discuss the three primary Indigenous holistic educational frameworks that inform this study which are Archibald's "Indigenous Storywork," Styre's "Land Based Pedagogy," and my personal grounding in *Mexicayotl* epistemologies. Building upon these Indigenous holistic educational frameworks I then introduce the concept of *educational mutualism* as a model for understanding the contextual, iterative, evolving, and holistic educational practices that impact urban Native American communities.

In 2008 Jo-Ann Archibald (Sto:lo First Nation) wrote the seminal text *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* which positions holism as a central component of Indigenous education based in storywork, respect, reverence, responsibility, reciprocity, interrelatedness, and synergy. This work centers holism within Indigenized approaches to education defining it as:

> …the interrelatedness between the intellectual, spiritual (metaphysical values and beliefs and the Creator), emotional, and physical (body and behaviour/action) realms to form a whole healthy person. The development of holism extends to and is mutually influenced by one's family, community, band, and nation. The image of a circle is used by many First Nations peoples to symbolize wholeness, completeness, and ultimately wellness. The never-ending circle also forms concentric circles to show both the synergistic influence of and our responsibility towards the generations of ancestors, the generations of today, and the generations yet to come. The animal/human kingdoms, the elements of nature/land, and the Spirit World are an intergral part of the concentric circles (p. 11).

This interrelatedness of the knowledges within ourselves (mind, spirit, heart, body) in relation to the external elements of family, community, band, nation, ancestry, future generations, the natural world, and the Spirit World, form the foundation on which Indigenous knowledges have been cultivated and refined over thousands of years. As such, any discussion of urban Indigenous education in the present must be firmly grounded in Indigenized holistic understandings. For Archibald Indigenous storywork both educates and heals "the heart, mind, body and spirit, weaving new synergies of transformational change through deep interrelational understanding of story, people and place."

Sandra Styres (Mohawk, English, French) has also grounded her studies on Indigenous education within an Indigenized holistic framework based in her situated and place-based knowledge living on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Ontario Canada. This framework is expressed through her 2017 text entitled *Pathways for Remembering and Recognizing Indigenous Thought in Education: Philosophies of Iethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha (Land*). Styre's framework recognizes a knowledge system in relation to the four cardinal directions, medicinal plants representative of each direction, key teachings related to each direction, as well as the learning modality (Spiritual, Emotive, Cognitive, Physical) associated with each direction. While Styre's holistic framework aesthetically differs from Archibald's the underlying principles of interrelatedness, the interaction of mind-body-heart-spirit, the connection to place-based knowledges, and ancestry are all present.

In entering a scholarly dialogue with Archibald and Styres it is important for me to discuss the holistic teachings of the *Mexicayotl* medicine wheel in which my understandings of Indigenous holistic education are grounded. As a practicioner of the *Mexicayotl* tradition for nearly two decades I have developed a holistic relationship with this framework centered in

spiritual, embodied, cognitive, and heart-based knowledge. As a result of this holistic emersion within the *Mexicayotl* tradition, I engage my situated knowledge of the medicine wheel for understanding and analyzing the topic of urban Native American holistic education within the Oakland Bay Area. The *Mexicayotl* espistemology as it is practiced in the present, is rooted in the concept of *Ometeotl*[4] (Divine Duality) expressing the *inamic*[5] supreme harmonic balance between forces creating a complete whole. Within the *Mexicayotl* epistemology all community members have “a place in the circle however similar or different we might be” (Young, 291). There is a place for men, women, the gender spectrum, children, and elders, living in reciprocal, interdependent, and synergistic relation with one another. The people exist in reciprocal/interdependent relation to the divine duality of sky and earth (i.e. the natural world including animal and plant relations) which provide the environments that make life on earth possible. Finally, the *Mexicayotl* epistemology cosmology embraces individual knowledge and self-expression always in-relation, in-reciprocity, and interdependent with the broader cosmos.

While all three of these Indigenous holistic educational frameworks are deeply informative, meaningful, and relevant to Sto:lo, Mohawk, and Mexicayotl communities, and hold important lessons for urban Intertribal communities, they are not explicitly designed to serve the unique educational challenges confronted by diverse urban Native American Intertribal communities. Through a firm rootedness in the study of Indigenous holistic pedagogical approaches as well as holistic epistemological understandings from the *Mexicayotl* tradition I have developed a framework for understanding urban Intertribal holistic education through

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[4] The term *Ometeotl* breaks down into “*Ome” (Two) and “Teotl” (Divine/Sacred).* This term is commonly used by contemporary practicioners of the *Mexicayotl* tradition, however did not appear in writing until Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl’s “History of the Chichimeca Nation” written in the 17th century.

[5] The term *inamic* is defined as “1. Union or connectedness. 2. To meet or encounter. 3. To join two things. 4. For two things to be intrinsically tied together to form a complete whole. 5. Balance. 6. Harmony.” (Young, p. 483)

conceptualizing Native American educational efficacy as inextricably symbiotic and *mutualistic*. In other words, the effective practices of cultivating meaningful educational relationships, practicing culturally sustaining pedagogies, and ethically incorporating elements of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems are fundamentally interrelated supporting, uplifting, and enhancing one another in providing healthy educational ecosystems for urban Native American youth.

To understand how effective educational practices in service to urban Native American youth are intrinsically symbiotic and mutualistic we must first understand how these terms are engaged within biological discourse. In the field of biology, which is rooted in the laws of nature, symbiosis is typically defined as an association between two or more different species of organisms which can be permanent or long lasting (Camisao & Pedroso 2012). The association between organisms can be beneficial, harmful, or neutral and is present throughout the biological world in the form of bacteria, fungi, plants, animals, humans, etc. *Mutualism* is a category of symbiosis used to describe intraspecies cooperative behavior where both participants benefit from the relationship, typically through an exchange of nutrition or protection, as well as through persistent contact over the course of their life cycles (Paracer & Ahmadjian 2000, Douglas 2015). This phenomenon occurs throughout the natural world from the cellular level through the level of ecosystems impacting rainforests, deserts, tundras, and oceans (Bronstien 2015). Finally, mutualism is rooted in a practice of reciprocal interactions between organisms often contribute to the mutual evolution of both participants (Douglas 2015).

When the concept of *mutualism* is applied to the field of education as a theoretical framework, effective educational practices can be seen as mutually beneficial to one another in a way that advantageously serves educational communities. Within this framework classrooms are

viewed as educational micro-ecosystems where effective educational practices do not occur in isolation from one another but often in tandem with other effective educational practices. When effective educational practices work in tandem with one another strong pedagogical mutualistic relationships are forged. In nature mutualistic relationships form the foundation for strong, resilient, reciprocal, and harmonious ecosystems. In the classroom *educational mutualism* forms the foundation for strong, resilient, reciprocal, and harmonious educational ecosystems. Consider for example the diagram below which displays some of the effective educational practices within the field of urban Native American education.

Figure 4.1- Overview of the traits of educational mutualism practiced by urban Intertribal communities in the Bay Area.

A wide variety of educationally mutualistic relations exist among the traits displayed above. For example, by establishing educational practices that center strong educational relations, engagement with culturally sustaining pedagogies and the ethical incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems is facilitated. Additionally, within the realm of building strong educational relationships, an educational mutualism exists between educators demonstrating accountability to urban Native American communities, reciprocity that is forged through accountable relations, and the trust that is built through educational accountability and reciprocity. A mutualistic relationship exists between these traits in which the traits are mutually beneficial to one another, advantageously serve educational communities, break-down an isolative analysis of effective educational praxis and foster harmonious educational ecosystems. The framework for educational mutualism is consistently evolving, transforming and changing based on the contextualized educational needs as well as the situated knowledges of communities. Educational mutualism will be engaged as an analytical framework throughout this study to examine the relationship, interdependence, and reciprocity that exists among effective holistic educational practices that serve urban Native American youth in Oakland, California.

III. Indigenizing Achievement Through Re-defining Educational Relationships

One of the primary questions I asked the participants in this study was "What are Indigenized conceptions of achievement within the urban Native community of the Oakland/Bay Area? How are these conceptions of achievement different from western conceptions of achievement? The participants offered two primary approaches for re-defining educational relationships and Indigenizing conceptions of educational "achievement" and "success." The first approach was

prioritizing becoming a kind, well-rounded person, who is both fulfilled and happy over more westernized measures of academic success. The second measure was centering the the importance being a responsible relative within the urban Intertribal community. This redefinition provides important insight into the ways that urban Intertribal communities can begin to understand empowering educational relationships outside of westernized educational paradigms.

Study participants characterized indigenized measures of academic "success" and "achievement" with regard to the establishment of healthy relationships in terms of becoming a kind, well-rounded person, who is fulfilled and happy. Mary Anne Doan, a Cherokee/Cree educator with 40 years of experience working with dozens of North American tribes in the areas of early childhood education and language revitalization said that:

> The thing we need to value the most is the person you become, not what grades you get…the social emotional, and I would say spiritual…are the most important things you bring out of any learning experience into the world. (Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020).

In prioritizing a student's character as well as mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being over neoliberal measures of academic output, a student's humanity is held in higher regard to a student's academic production. This type of re-framing of academic success moves a student from being viewed as a data set that needs to be "driven" in a particular direction, to being a whole and complete human being whose existence cannot be quantified. This redefinition of "success" and "acheivment" is a central tenant to fostering healthy educational relationships with urban Native American students.

In pondering the question of Indigenized academic success Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican), framed Indigenized achievement as attaining fulfillment and happiness by posing the rhetorical question "am I living life and enjoying my life?" She followed by expressing the

importance of re-framing and Indigenizing the concept of “success” stating that “with success, that word, you’re always thinking…in future terms [while you should] be here now [and] live life as it is.” For Devina, fulfillment and happiness are at the center of Indigenized academic “success” allowing students to stay present and grounded in the moment. This is an important re-framing of academic “success,” as academic fulfillment and happiness are not merely framed as addendums to the academic quantifiers that define academic success (i.e. economic success, job status, professional notoriety, etc.) in the western world but are central components to success in the present.

In a similar vein Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawai’ian/Mescalero Apache), the Director of Youth Services at the Native American Health Center in Oakland confirmed the need to Indigenize westernized concepts of “success” and “achievement” highlighting the importance of “happiness” and “well-being” as central components for reframing the concepts. In order to Indigenize the concepts of academic “success” and “achievement” more emphasis must be placed on ensuring that students are kind, well-rounded, fulfilled, happy, emotionally and spiritually well, and grounded in the present instead of soley focused on future academic outcomes. Cultivating responsible educational relationships with urban Native American students is a necessary pre-requisite in supporting the immersed socio-emotional learning articulated by the study participants.

Another critical component in Indigenizing the concepts of “achievement” and “success” was the importance of being a responsible relative. In referring to her work at the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) in Oakland California, Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican) said “…this is my home, it’s my community, these are my relatives, this is more than just a workplace.” Understanding one’s workplace in this way, enables educators to move

beyond a commodified, extractive and transactional relationship to their workplace, instead creating workspaces that are relational and reciprocal. It is important to note that dysfunctional schools and workplaces at times engages in the superficial and unsubstantial rhetoric of “community” and “family” as a tactic to inspire increased productivity from their workers. What Devina is expressing however, goes beyond the superficial and unsubstantial rhetoric of “community” and “family” embracing a workplace that is genuinely grounded in responsible relationality and extended kinship networks. When educational workplaces reflect the principals of relationality and reciprocity, these principles become central tenants in serving urban Native American youth.

Nicole Atchley (Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point), a student at Chabot Community College receiving her medical degree in order to support women and children break the cycles of addiction, described Indigenized “success” within the context of being a responsible relative.

> As long as we can all help each other as best we can on this journey to finding oneself, that’s a success for me. I volunteer with a lot of women and children in recovery, and I feel like success is helping somebody achieve their best results in a good way.”

For Nicole, success constitutes supporting others in breaking destructive habits and is unique to each person. In this sense Indigenized success constitutes aspects of service and reciprocity (i.e. giving back) but also relationality that meets people where they are and helps them achieve results. Expanding upon the importance of relationality and reciprocity Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee / Cree) discusses the importance of demonstrating accountability and responsibility to one’s community.

> …if you’re going to claim that you’re part of this [Indigenous] community, what is it that you’ve done for that community? How have you supported them? Who supported you? You know, it’s like the giveaway…when people honor students and students honor them…one of the things that they do in that ceremony is they talk about…this person gave me this and this person gave me this…we are totally about reciprocity. So, what are they then going to bring back to that [Indigenous] community is really important…If

> you're going to claim it, then you have to live in it in some way, you know? (Nicole Atchley (Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point), Personal Interview, 3 May 2019).

For Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree) being in relation and reciprocity with a community constitutes being responsible and accountable to the community that you are from and to the teachings that you have received. In the realm of urban Native American education this can mean returning to the communities that you are accountable too, in order to serve and give back in a meaningful way. Indigenized success and achievement means beginning a non-formulaic practice of responsible relations where educators demonstrate reciprocity, relationality, service, responsibility, and accountability to the communities, as well as supporting students in understanding and practicing these principles.

IV. Demonstrating Accountability: Visibility, Building Trust, and Material Support

The findings in this study demonstrate that accountability towards urban Native American students is fostered through seeing students and being seen by students, building trust, and providing material support. A mutualistic relation exists among these factors of accountability where visibility helps build trust laying the foundation for providing material support to students helping students graduate from high school in order to successfully navigate the university and/or the job market.

The first major component for building strong accountable relationships within education is students feeling like they are being seen by educators, and educators being seen by students as active participants within urban Native American community events. Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American) discussed the impact and importance of being seen as a capable student by an educator.

> Even when I [thought] back to my favorite elementary school teacher, who was [my] fifth grade teacher, I don't remember how he taught. I just remember he saw me. It was one of the first moments where I felt, "Oh you see me as a student." It wasn't just a classroom to him. (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

Veronica emphasizes the point that being seen, and being humanized through that process, was more memorable than the pedagogical approaches employed by her fifth-grade teacher. Through implementing this practice Veronica's teacher began fostering a healthy learning community that moved beyond structure of a "typical" classroom producing an environment where Veronica could trust her teacher. In this sense seeing students and humanizing them through that process not only disrupts erasure but is a necessary pre-requisite for establishing a trusting educational relationship.

Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) expands upon Veronica's point discussing the importance of non-Native educators seeing and humanizing students through direct participation in the urban Native American community in order to build a sense of accountability.

> Mr. Yamakura (pseudonym) is a Japanese teacher up there at the middle school. What I always liked about him [is that] he built a relationship with the community and with the parents. Seeing the positive things that the kids knew, he involved himself. We used to have a Native camp when I worked at AICRC. We would go to Mollusk Bay for four days and do cultural camp. He would volunteer and come there and help. He really got to know the kids and the parents in a different way than he would have in the classroom. That was really good of him. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

Carol Wapepah's description of Mr. Yamakura demonstrates the importance and potential of non-Native educators taking an active role in cultivating and fostering relationships with urban Native communities through direct and consistent support and participation in community events. This degree of consistent participation allows educators to cultivate and sustain relationships of accountability and trust with urban Native communities beyond what would be possible solely within the classroom context.

Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone) adds nuance to Carol's testimony discussing the importance of educators being seen at community events by their students.

> I think that our kids, when they grew up here in Oakland seeing their teachers at those places, at community events, at funerals for families, at weddings, at births. It was very different. There was that community built inside of it. That is really important for students. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

For Corrina the community accountability demonstrated by educators through their presence at community events produced a reality wherein the binary of classroom/home was disrupted, and educators become humanized members of a community. Seeing and humanizing students in the classroom as well as being seen by students during community events outside of the classroom builds trust and accountability amongst students, educators, and the broader community.

The second method for building accountability within urban Native American educational spaces was to lay the foundations for trusting and safe relationships. My Tlatli (uncle) David Atekpathzin Young (Apache/Chicano/Pueblo), an elder in our community, once told me that integrity and trust are both precious and fragile. We can spend an entire lifetime cultivating our integrity and/or building trust with people and one misstep or mistake can shatter the integrity we have cultivated or the trust that we have built. For this reason, engaging our integrity to build trusting and safe relationships with students and community is an incredibly precious, fragile, and sacred responsibility. The quantitative data supported this teaching showing that 66% of study participants prioritize the pedagogical practice of build trusting relationships with students.

Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), a full-time instructor at Chabot College with extensive experience in speech communication elaborates on the importance of cultivating trust within an educational environment.

> All the teachers that had an impact on me are the ones where there was a trust level. I wasn't a person who responded to a lot of group work, but I did like big classroom discussion and I liked the Q and A part of it. Underlying all of that, regardless of how you're taught was trust. (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

For Veronica "trust" and the sense of safety that comes with trust was the necessary pre-requisite for a meaningful educational experience regardless of pedagogical approach. The practice of establishing a meaningful sense of trust in the classroom must happen before a meaningful education can occur.

Veronica further elaborates on the topic of trust and safety, discussing specific approaches that she has used to build trust with urban Indigenous students.

> These students, the first time we got them together a couple of years ago, they had tears in their eyes when they came in the room because they had never sat in a space with a room that looked like them. I was so touched by that. It wasn't about anything we did; it was about creating a safe space for them to come together. That was it. (Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), Personal Interview, 5 February 2020).

In this example, the act of fostering an Indigenized space for urban Native American youth to come together, be seen, and feel safe, within an educational context that has perpetually ignored or erased Indigenous existence, created a foundation where students trusted the space enough to share their tears. When students trust a space enough to share their tears this vulnerability and heart knowledge (a.k.a. emotional literacy) must be honored and uplifted. In my experience, when a student exemplifies heart knowledge and vulnerability within a classroom through sharing tears, this opens up space for other students to do the same. The result is often a classroom culture based in a sense of mutual trust and safety which provides an ideal learning environment.

The third way that accountability to urban Native American youth was discussed by the study participants is through the support provided through preparing students to graduate high school and enter the job market. While graduation from high school and college is indeed a western measure of educational achievement and success, it remains a critical gatekeeping point with regard to strategically navigating the western world, providing urban Native students with a broader array of life options. Educational relationships that support urban Native American students in strategically navigating the critical gatekeeping points in the western world such as high school graduation is a fundamental form that educators demonstrate accountability to urban Native American communities. The Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) survey data collected for this study demonstrates that 52% of the urban Native American community members surveyed prioritized the pedagogical practice of maintaining a balance between high educational expectations and the support to achieve those expectations. It also demonstrates that the majority of study participants valued educators who prepared students for college (62%) and for future employment (59%).

Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) elaborates on this this quality discussing the immense amount of support required in helping underserved urban Native students graduate from high school. The material support that Carol describes in the following passage would not be possible without first cultivating a foundation of accountability and trust with her students.

> Graduating high school takes a lot of support…not to give up on a person. I had a young man call me from Riverside, the Indian boarding schools. For some kids it has been a good situation. They call me and say, I can eat three times a day as much food as I want. We've had young girls that have graduated and called me after crossing the stage at Riverside [saying] "I did it Carol, I did it" you know, after being kicked out [of other schools] several times. I picked up a young man from Berkeley who'd been kicked out of high school several times, but we worked with him to be able to pass his math exams. Sometimes it takes an extreme amount, but that success is so important for the kids, for anybody. (Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Personal Interview, 5 December 2018).

Given the painful legacy of boarding schools (see Springer & Torres 2019; Lomawaima 1994 & 2006; Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc 2006) it can be difficult to see the ways in which Native American communities have repurposed these places as spaces for Native empowerment (see Mays & Whalen 2019). Carol Wapepah's statement demonstrates how the Sherman Indian High School in Riverside California, existing as a space of empowerment under cultural traditions leader Lorene Sisquoc (Mountain Cahuilla/Fort Sill Apache), has provided a sanctuary for certain underserved students and students with "discipline" issues.

Working with Native American students to help them graduate high school not only provides students with a sense of accomplishment but also positively impacts the life choices, opportunities, and income that Native students will have moving forward. Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) spoke to the accountability that the American Indian Child Resource Center holds in supporting student graduation:

> We [AICRC] are an Indian education center first and foremost. As an agency we want to make sure that our students are prepared to graduate from high school and to move into higher education. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

This quote speaks to the strategic importance of graduation while also providing support to urban Native students beyond high school. Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation) provides a more personal view of the impact of education and graduation within Native American families stating:

> I know in my family it had a lot to do with schooling and education, as a way of overcoming the "lacking-of" within the family. I think academic success in terms of even graduating high school can be a huge thing for some families. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

Jill articulates the importance of graduation within families that have not previously had high school graduates or are first generation college attendees. Within this context graduation takes on the significance of the ability to overcome inter-generational challenges.

V. Returning to Serve: The Mutualism of Indigenized Achievement, Accountability, and Reciprocity

In this study three key examples of the mutualism of Indigenized achievement, accountability, and reciprocity emerged. It is important not to view these measures in a lineal and/or ranked fashion, but instead to view them as a holistic approach for supporting Indigenized accountability and reciprocity. First, was the emphasis that community members at the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) placed on a student's ability to gain an education then returning to serve the community as a form of relational ethos which embodied Indigenized achievement, accountability and reciprocity. Second, was that the relational ethos extended beyond the American Indian Child Resource Center to the family level, the school level, and the broader community level. Finally, the Indigenized relationality rooted in accountability and reciprocity not only serves urban Native American communities in the present, but lays the foundation for supporting future generations.

A Relational Ethos of Indigenized Achievement, Accountability, and Reciprocity at AICRC

The participants in this study provided a nuanced understanding of the mutualism of accountability, reciprocity, and how it connects to Indigenized conceptions of achievement. Participants characterized reciprocity as a cyclical process of learning/receiving and reciprocating. Additionally, when one gives to community they build a sense of community, yet

a “quotient of giving a taking” (Ben Schleffar, personal communication) exists where one cannot give unless one is also receiving.

At the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC), the practice of students’ coming back to serve the Bay Area urban Native American community after attaining a higher education was commonplace. The type of participation tended to vary based on life circumstances from volunteering at the center to working at the center full time. Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation) described it in the following way.

> [At AICRC] Giving back is huge. I love hearing [that] the seniors in high school this year have mentioned several times, “When I graduate, I can’t wait to come back to CRC.” Some of them want to work here. Some of them want to give back via really empowering and beautiful workshops that have been held here. (Jill Therrien (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018).

Indeed, not only did many of the current students at AICRC express an interest in wanting to return to the center to serve the next generation of students, but at least three of the staff members that I interviewed at AICRC were former students in the program who had elected to return to AICRC after graduation (or while in college) to give back to the community that had served them when they were in middle and high school. This produced a beautiful dynamic in which an older student would kindly guide younger students by both exemplifying community norms and correcting students who would stray from community protocols.

Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone) characterized these practices of relationality, accountability, and reciprocity as a form of Indigenized achievement.

> When you see them [older youth] checking the younger kids about their behavior, that’s achievement. [W]hen they go to the community center and they volunteer, they say hello to their elders, they are able to do those kinds of things. [When] they go to work for someplace, that they continue to come back. So that’s, for me, that’s an achievement as a human being. They know that they have a place. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

The practice of older students supporting younger students also provides young people with a sense of place where older students step into the role of mentor, and younger students observe that they can one day become mentors if they choose to do so. In this way the accountable and reciprocal inter-generational transition of service becomes both normalized, institutionalized, desired and honored. In addition, the intergenerational transition of service provides current and former students with a sense of place and belonging within and urban environment that erases Indigeneity.

Maria Cabral (Lakota/Mexican) a college student, former AICRC student, and a volunteer at the center, discussed the mutualism of Indigenized success, accountability, and reciprocity in terms of feeling a sense of connection through the work that she does while simultaneously supporting people through that work.

> I don't want to be isolated in my little work corner. I want to be connected with people. Having a lot of connection, helping a lot of people and just feeling like I'm doing something. (Maria Cabral (Lakota/Mexican), Personal Interview, 5 November 2019).

In Maria's case reciprocity is connected to Indigenized success and a general sense of well-being, where the work that one does in life must be connected to a broader purpose. This broader purpose is grounded in a sense of reciprocity where one's work enriches the lives of community members while simultaneously providing a person with a livelihood and a sense of community.

Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota/Costa Rican), an educator at the American Indian Child Resource Center as well as a former student of the center, spoke about the mutualism of accountability and reciprocity as a cycle of learning, receiving and then reciprocating.

> This is what we work for. For students to come back and feed this full cycle, this full circle. To come to learn. To receive and to use. To come back and to reciprocate. Each day that passes I understand the cycle of things. My younger brothers are going here. Seeing them here and knowing that I was sitting in that seat, knowing that I was doing

> that same activity, going on that same field trip. I want to give them more of what I would have wanted when I was little. (Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican), Personal Interview, 17 October 2019).

For Devina the cycle of accountability and reciprocity not only includes learning, receiving, and reciprocating, but also a progression from the educational experience that she had. In other words, the cycle of reciprocity holds the possibility of creating a type of intergenerational evolution where the person who receives teachings has an opportunity to re-purpose or improve upon the teachings as they give them to the next generation.

Finally, Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), an educator at the American Indian Child Resource Center who focuses on food sovereignty and Indigenous cuisine, added an important dimension to the discussion of accountability and reciprocity, elaborating upon the importance of both giving and receiving in order to make working in service of the urban Native community in Oakland sustainable.

> I can't separate giving and taking. I have an understanding that I've generated through my work that you cannot give unless you're also receiving, there can't be this kind of selflessness. I tried to do this for a long time in really high stress environments and work 80 hours a week. [My mentality was] it doesn't matter about me or whether I'm getting enough sleep, or whether I'm getting the ability to process what I'm seeing. The important part [was that I was] doing this work. It's not sustainable, and in the end [it] is going to limit your ability to impact people because you're going to have to pull back emotionally. This is your quotient of giving and taking. How one can integrate that giving and taking, [that] sense of reciprocity, in a very natural and day to day situational level. (Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), Personal Interview, 20 September 2018).

In other words, in order to do meaningful and sustainable work in service to Oakland's urban Native American community one must make sure that they are practicing self-care. Giving, receiving, and reciprocity are connected, and one's "quotient of giving and taking" enables those who work in high stress community environments to more impactfully serve the communities in which they work. That said, both coming back to one's community to work in a way that

embodies reciprocity, holds the potential to build accountabilities with and towards larger Native American communities in the Bay Area in the U.S.

Relationality Beyond the Hub: Lessons in Serving the Broader Native American Community

The evidence in this study indicates that the practice of attaining a higher education or higher level of expertise in a given field, then returning to the urban Native American community to serve in some capacity extends beyond urban Native hubs like AICRC. This point helps illustrate the emergence of an Indigenous ethos (see Wallace-Adams 2008) where a practice is not merely carried out within institutions such as urban Native hubs, but is also emphasized at the family level, the school level, and the broader community level.

This ethos is best exemplified by community members like Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/ Hawaiian/Mexican), a community member who was born and raised in the Fruitvale district of Oakland, California, and grew up within institutions such as the Native American Health Center, the Intertribal Friendship House and the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) and currently works as a youth specialist for the Native American Health Center Youth Program. Hector discussed the frequency in which the importance of first finishing school and then returning to the urban Native community to serve is discussed stating "[you] hear that a lot. It's like, hey, you got to go to school, finish, [then] you do the work." Hector embodies this principle in his own life by emphasizing the importance of providing a good example to youth and implementing direct political actions.

> I believe in whatever gets the youth in, especially more culturally relevant things. I'm a community member first. [I] practice ceremonial ways. I don't drink, don't smoke and I'm a family man. I've got two kids and I really want them to live a good life. [I was] born and raised in Oakland. Last night I was just at city hall fighting for another building for our health center at 35th and Ashton Boulevard. It's a vacant lot right now. We want to transform that. My goal right now is to help us get our center so we can build more

> affordable housing. The new cultural center, the new center for our community. [Since I was] born and raised in the youth programs in Oakland [I] try to implement what I learned in Oakland youth programs into my San Francisco youth program. (Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/ Hawaiian/Mexican), Personal Interview, 1 February 2019).

By returning to the Bay Area Native American community and applying his knowledge, Hector both exemplifies a healthy lifestyle rooted in the practice of ceremonial ways and also actively works towards uplifting his community by direct political action. This serves as an example to the youth that he works with as well as having an impact on the community in which he resides.

This ethos begins within the home at the family level where the expectation to gain an education then return to serve the community, particularly the youth is present. Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian /Mescalero Apache) discussed this occurrence stating:

> My grandpa said "I want you kids to go out into the big world and do what you have to do. But when you learn what you learn, you come back to the community and give back to your people and to the youth." (Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache), Personal Interview, 3 November 2018).

When family members emphasize the importance of returning to one's community in order to serve, it is easy to see how a broader ethos of accountability and reciprocity exists within the urban Native community in Oakland, CA.

Cara Little (Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota) offers another layer to our understanding of accountability, reciprocity, and achievement within the family emphasizing the importance of teaching children culture and ensuring that they continue to foster strong bonds with relatives living on reservations. She frames this teaching as a message to her children.

> …if you do want to start a family, you guys gotta promise me you're going to get the kids into song and dance or get the kids into cultural activities. You're gonna take them to Arizona, promise me that. That's my little world of success, the little things I keep asking them, steering them in a certain way that is beautiful. I don't want to put pressure on them either, but you have a lot of hopes and dreams for them. (Cara Little (Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), Personal Interview, 17 July 2019).

Another key component to Cara's testimony is the ability to gently steer youth towards a beautiful way of walking in the world without applying stressful pressure on them. In this way youth make the choice to embrace cultural teachings and traditional ways of life. The ability to choose cultural teachings and traditional practices holds the potential of generating a stronger bond between youth and the practice of their traditional Indigenous lifeways. Beyond the family however the lessons on accountability, reciprocity, and their relation to Indigenized achievement must be emphasized at the school and community level.

Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaki/Zapotec) talked about emphasizing the importance of returning to serve the community from an early age within schools that serve urban Native American youth. She emphasized the importance of urban Native American students:

> Work[ing] in their communities or giving money back to their communities or family. Being an elementary school teacher, talking about that kind of stuff is really important and going back and teaching culture. (Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaki/Zapotec), Personal Interview, 19 December 2018).

This quote re-emphasizes the importance of urban Native American youth returning to serve in the communities that they are from to serve with a particular emphasis on bringing cultural teachings to the next generation.

The Indigenous ethos of returning to serve extends beyond urban Native hubs and educational institutions and is expressed at the broader community level as well. Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone) discussed the importance of cultivating educational spaces for urban Native American youth that foster a sense of accountability towards a larger community.

> …having that one-on-one connection with the kids so that they know that even outside of these doors, they're accountable to a larger community. That's important for young

> adults to know that they're accountable to a larger community. That's achievement. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

In this quote Corrina elaborates on the mutualistic relation between healthy relationships, accountability, and Indigenized achievement emphasizing the ways that one-on-one connections within the AICRC programs and accountability to a larger community outside of the program, both constitute forms of Indigenized achievement.

Another example of the importance of returning to one's community to serve after attaining an education was articulated by Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree) who discussed her work with the Pueblo people.

> I was working with Pueblos and one of the highest honored positions for a male in that tribe, what they thought of as very prestigious for the men, was teaching in those Head Start classrooms or being a director. I admit, we don't have many male directors in early childhood, but in the tribes, there's lots of male directors in early childhood. The mindset has to be what are the values that we hold near and dear in Indigenous societies. They are taking care of the people, taking care of your community, taking care of your children, making sure that you are treating everything with respect, not just people [but] every single aspect of creation with respect. (Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020).

Mary Anne exemplifies her accountability towards a larger Native American community through her work with the Pueblo people while sharing a beautiful example of accountability, reciprocity, and their connection to Indigenized achievement practiced by the Pueblo people. This Puebloan framework demonstrates the importance of uplifting the Indigenous values of care of the people, the community, and the children, in relation to broader creation while fundamentally disrupting narratives of escapism and "brain drain" which are often present in underserved Native American communities. Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree) reminds us that accountability to community includes a bigger responsibility for all Native people.

> I didn't know how to just help with my own tribes. I felt even a bigger responsibility…to do this for all Native people. I need to not just do it for my own tribes. That's the bigger piece of it. (Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020).

Building accountability to one's own people makes it easier to see the shared struggles and commonalities with others. Once we are able to see these shared struggles it is easier to envision and eventual build movements of solidarity with Indigenous peoples worldwide. This type of solidarity disrupts Western tactics of silo-ing, compartmentalizing, and divide and conquer that have been historically leveraged to weaken Indigenous communities. In order to build solidarity amongst Indigenous communities, we must have educational systems that support students in building stronger relations with one another. By honoring community members that prioritize using their education in service to Native American communities, future generations of students are encouraged to do the same and the cycle regenerates.

Serving Future Generations

Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree) bases her conception of Indigenized success on accountability and reciprocity, where a person is both accountable to the teachings they have received over the course of a lifetime and must regenerate the knowledge back to community through teaching younger generations.

> Success is about how do I reciprocate. What's been given to me, how do I either pay it forward or bring it back to the community. I mean, I think it goes both ways, but it's what I've learned in this particular environment and has shaped me to also be able to pay back to that environment. That's definitely not a western concept. (Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), Personal Interview, 19 February 2020).

For Mary Anne Doan reciprocity within a community is akin to reciprocity with land from an Indigenized perspective. The teachings received from within a community must eventually cycle back to uplift the community from which they emerged. In the same vein water, plant or animal, taken from a particular landscape must be replaced through careful and ongoing land stewardship, that allows what has been taken from the landscape to regenerate. The ultimate

goal is to create an intergenerational, evolutionary, and regenerative knowledge cylces where each subsequent generation builds on the knowledge of the past.

Meaningful relationships with urban Native American students must be based in an ethic of accountability which seeks to acknowledge the knowledge that has been passed down, pass forward knowledge and teachings to future generations, and build communities of accountability in the present. Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache) elaborated on this point stating that:

> …kids are like a business, what you give is what you get out of them. We have to invest in each other. We have to invest in our next generation. The whole philosophy of the seven generations is to make sure you're paving the way for that seventh generation. It means that you're prepping it. And it means that someone did it for me, you know, so sometimes it's not about just giving to your children, it's about giving to the community as a whole. (Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache), Personal Interview, 3 November 2018).

The philosophy of seven generations acknowledges and applies the knowledge of the previous seven generations while planning ahead and planting the seeds of knowledge for the next seven generations. This philosophy also recognizes that as human beings we are accountable to the teachings of a cycle of seven generations which includes our great grandparents, our grandparents, our parents, ourselves, our children, our grandchildren, and our great grandchildren. As educators, this means that every student that we teach comes from a cycle of seven generations that informs how they show up, while also holding the potential to inform their own cycle of seven generations moving forward in a meaningful and accountable way.

Corrina Gould (Chochenyo and Karkin Ohlone) elaborates upon the ways that community resiliency and accountability in the present hold the potential to positively impact the seven generational cycle.

> You see resiliency [in students] because they keep coming back, because they keep seeing folks that are part of their lives, that they're accountable to, not just their parents,

> not just their grandparents and aunties, but these educators as well, these folks that become part of their lives, they are also accountable not only in the classroom but outside of the classroom. (Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone), Personal Interview, 24 October 2018).

As educators demonstrate accountability to students and become a part of their lives and their community, we are able to begin weaving a tapestry of an extended kinship network, even within the context of urban living. By demonstrating accountability to students, we exemplify accountability in our practice and way of life. This in turn provides students with a model of accountability beyond their nuclear family, supporting them in both giving to and receiving from an extended urban Indigenous kinship network.

VI. Conclusion

Confronting erasure within urban Native American communities requires a strong foundation in responsible relationality. To understand responsible relationality as it relates to serving urban Native American youth, we must first understand urban Native American education holistically through the framework of *educational mutualism.* From this premise the concept of educational "achievement" can be Indigenized to better reflect an Indigenous relational ethos. Within this relational ethos accountability is demonstrated to urban Native American students through the mutualistic interaction of visibility, trust, and material support. Within this context students are expected to reciprocate the teachings they have received by returning to serve the urban Native American communities that they have come from in a way that both maintains the integrity and builds-upon the teachings of the past while remaining accountable to future generations. With foundational educational relations in place we can now turn our focus towards the second foundational component of confronting erasure which is implementing a "culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Paris & Alim 2017). Urban Native educational spaces apply culturally sustaining

pedagogical approaches consistently in ways that fundamentally restructure the traditional classroom through *mutualistically* building solidarity across experience and tradition, collectively creating educational experiences with urban Native American youth, and incorporating circle pedagogies in ethical and responsive ways.

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Chapter 5 - **Engaging Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy to Co-Create Educational Experiences, Engage Circle Pedagogies, and Honor Students' Sacred Timelines**

The second foundational component of confronting erasure and implementing educational interventions in service to urban Native American youth in Oakland CA is practicing a "culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Paris & Alim 2017). A Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) survey found that 59% of the community members prioritized connecting learning to the cultures of students and families. Urban Native educational spaces in the Oakland Bay Area apply culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches consistently in ways that fundamentally restructure the traditional classroom through *mutualistic* and Indigenized conceptions of pedagogy, collectively creating educational experiences with urban Native American youth, incorporating circle pedagogies in ethical and responsive ways, and recognizing that urban Native American students are on their own educational timelines that are not always aligned-with or complimentary-to the educational timelines of dominant society. Culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches focus on the strengths brought to the classroom by urban Intertribal students responding to the colonial project, sustaining community lifeways, teaching a dynamic cultural dexterity, helping students remain whole, enriching student strengths, and de-centering whiteness (Paris & Alim 2017). The following example demonstrates the culturally sustaining pedagogical approach that I brought to the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) as a way of introducing the culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches adopted by the broader community of urban Native American educators in the Oakland Bay Area.

In August of 2019 I began teaching a Native American Studies class to a group of Intertribal middle schoolers at the American Indian Child Resource Center. They received me into their circle as we passed the smudge around introducing ourselves to one another. Because

this class was part of an after-school program, I sought to ensure maximum student engagement, providing students with a wide array of topics from which to choose, including Introduction to California Native History, Introduction to Natural Law and Environment, Introduction to Language Reclamation and Revitalization, and many more. This approach centered student agency and ensured high levels of engagement with the selected topic. The students overwhelmingly chose to focus on language reclamation and revitalization. The primary reason that students gave for favoring the language reclamation and revitalization unit was a general interest in learning more about their peoples' language and/or previously having no access or minimal access to Native American language learning experiences.

Three primary purposes and learning goals drove the language reclamation and revitalization unit. First, was to introduce Native American languages and language learning to urban Native American middle school students, without placing pressure upon them to attain fluency or mastery. The unit sought to plant the seed of language curiosity that would hopefully lead to future study and inquiry down the road. Second, the unit provided explicit direction and resources for future language learning including websites, vocabulary packets, and student-generated board games designed for language learning. The student-generated board game was the final deliverable of the unit, providing students with a tangible tool to practice their language basics including colors, numbers, animals, plants, place names etc. Third, the unit was designed to provide a deeper context for Intertribal solidarity rooted in the shared struggle of language learning. Because I taught an Intertribal group, students learned the basics of each other's languages building a solidarity of experience and making connections across language groups.

In designing this language learning curriculum for urban Native American youth, I drew from my own history of language learning which included ESOL, Portuguese as an adult, and the

basics of Nahuatl through participation in the Mexicayotl tradition. I also drew heavily from a course that I took in the Native American Studies Department at UC Davis entitled NAS 107 Topics in Native American Languages. This course, designed by Dr. Martha Macri (Yocha Dehe) and taught by Dr. Justin Spence was created to support students in exploring and researching their own Native language or a Native language of interest. NAS 107 gave me the opportunity to immerse myself in the study of my maternal language of Tegüïma Ópata. Finally, I drew from a Nahuatl study group that I co-facilitated with my colleague Cuautemoc Quintero Lule (Pascua Yaqui) where we sought to teach the grammar and usage of classical Nahuatl situated within a Mexicayotl epistemological worldview. These experiences taught me that language is intimately intertwined with place and culture. To teach language effectively from an Indigenized perspective it must be appropriately situated within a broader cultural context. By contrast, to teach language usage and grammar devoid of cultural context is to center whitestream and extractive pedagogical approaches ultimately leading to a less enriching educational experience.

To teach myself the basics of the Tegüïma Ópata language through NAS 107, I used a grammar created by the missionary Father Natal Lombardo for the express purpose of assimilating, missionizing, and enslaving my people. While engagement with this grammar was painful, the vocabulary in the grammar paired with the situated knowledges of my Ópatan community created the premise for a board game that I use to teach myself and my children the basics of our language. *Niguat Tegüïma* or "Tegüïma Tongue" is built on a map of our peoples' territory known as the *Ópateria.*

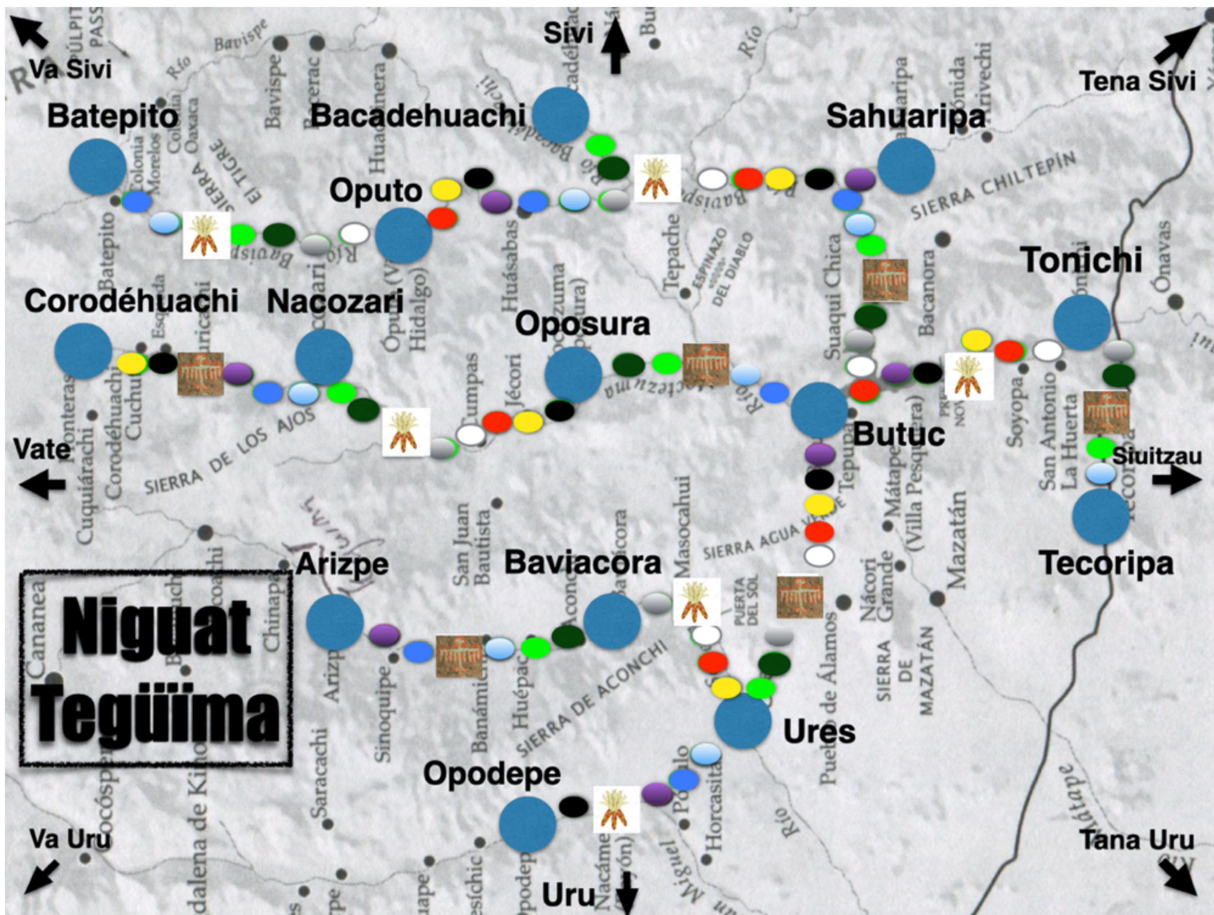

Figure 5.1- Niguat Tegüïma "Tegüïma Tongue" board game

Niguat Tegüïma combines lessons on epistemology, oral history, and language. The map's orientation is east up, following a hemispheric Indigenous ethos rooted in natural law, where the top of the world is where the sun rises. This orientation disrupts colonial map making practices that often center Europe and place the global north on top of the global south. When game players arrive at each village, they share the news of the eminent arrival of the missionaries, organize the villagers to resist, and trade in goods such as *Opo* (iron wood), *Gipe* (palm mats), *Biy* (ceremonial tabacco), or *Teuuria* (huipiles). Each village has a story and each good has a historical purpose and connection to the *Opateria.* My children use dice to navigate the gameboard counting out the Tegüïma numbers as they go (*se, gode, vaide, nago, mariqui*, etc./ one, two, three, four, five, etc.). Each space on the gameboard has a color, which my children

must name in the Tegüïma language when they land. Finally, certain spaces have a corn icon and an eagle icon. When my children land on these icons they are allowed to pick a plant medicine or an animal relative from the Ópateria to accompany them on their journey. As with every aspect of the game, each plant medicine and animal relative has a story and a teaching associated with them. Not only do my children adore this game, and request to play it often, but it gives us an opportunity to connect with one another around linguistic, historical, and epistemological teachings. I used this game as a model for the games designed by the middle school students at the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC).

To implement a language learning curriculum that was also culturally sustaining within an Intertribal context, I had to know the Indigenous Nations of the students that I was serving as well as their level of language competency. There were twelve Native American nations represented within the middle school students at ACRC at the time including Lakota (Standing Rock, Oglala, Cheyenne River), Hopi, Klamath, Mohawk, Comanche, Paiute etc. All the students were beginning language learners. From that knowledge base I was able to design and implement introductory language lessons for each Tribe that was represented within the classroom. The first part of each lesson incorporated a discussion of the ancestral territory of the Tribe, a short history of the Tribe, as well as a creation story told by an Elder. This approach helped root Native American language learning within a particular place, territory, and worldview. The lesson opening also included a discussion of the language family (i.e. Uto-Aztecan, Athabaskan, Salishan, Siouan, etc.). The discussion of language family was important because it fostered solidarity within the class helping students understand linguistic relations across nations.

The second part of each lesson was focused on Tribally specific grammar and usage. In this portion of the lesson we reviewed basic greetings, pronunciation, and vocabulary focusing on numbers, colors, plants, and animals. Each lesson sought to engage as many modalities of learning as possible (visual, oral, kinesthetic). Each student had a packet of the grammar and terms, and the language was reviewed orally using a visual presentation. Frequent reviews of vocabulary were incorporated using Kahoot quizzes where students would use their phones to complete mini quizzes to review vocabulary. These mini quizzes were not utilized as an assessment tool but were used to engage the kinesthetic modality of learning.

The third step was to help students design board games on top of maps of their ancestral territories. When I first entered the American Indian Child Center (AICRC), I noticed that students loved playing board games, especially *Uno*, *Sorry*, and *The Game of Life*. I asked students to draw from their love of board games, their creation stories, the history of their territory, and their knowledge of vocabulary to develop a board game that they would enjoy playing. To complete this task, I brought a wide array of art materials and game pieces. The students produced a wide variety of games ranging from card games like *Uno*, to boardgames like *Sorry*. Each game was responsive to the history, territory, and language of their people. I began to understand the success of this unit when I observed students working on their boardgames outside of the allotted class time solely for their own interest.

The fourth step was to have students play each other's games. Working in groups of three to four, students walked their classmates through the rules of their game, provided classmates with the materials to play the game, and then facilitated the game for their classmates. Since the focus of each board game was language, I begin hearing various Native American languages spoken while students were playing their games. This helped break the isolation of

language learning and build solidarity, as students understood that it was okay to be a beginning language learner and that most of the other students in the class were also just beginning to learn their language. Finally, students were asked to take their board games home and play them with their families, particularly with their younger siblings.

Within the American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC) our primary language of communication is English, due to a long history of colonization, assimilation, missionization, and genocide. This unit actively responded to this colonial reality providing students with an introduction to their Native American language in a way that was historically and epistemologically situated. This introduction planted a seed for the love of language learning which hopefully will lead to further and more in-depth study over the course of a lifetime. Cultural dexterity was emphasized in the ways that students were asked to learn each other's languages, play each other's games, and build solidarity through the language learning process. An Indigenous holistic educational approach was emphasized through a maintenance of the connection between culture, history, and language as well as through a multi-modality approach to education. Finally, throughout the unit whiteness was decentered through both the course content and the pedagogical approach. In these ways the language reclamation and revitalization unit was an example of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Thankfully, every educator at AICRC as well as the structure of the educational programing worked hard to implement sound, culturally sustaining pedagogical practices. These practices included the canoeing curriculum discussed in chapter 1, the gardening curriculum that emphasized growing Native plants, the cooking curriculum which emphasized preparing healthy Native foods, and student participation in the annual AICRC Pow Wow. The practices already implemented at AICRC complimented the language revitalization curriculum and vice versa. The frameworks of culturally sustaining

pedagogies and educational mutualism worked interdependently to foster an empowering educational ecosystem for urban Native American youth.

II. Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, Educational Mutualism, and Urban Native American Education

In Paris and Alim's (2017) seminal text the term "culturally sustaining pedagogy" is framed as only meaningful based on "the ideas behind it and the enactments that it engenders (p. 13). While naming is always important, the field of education is awash with buzz words and educational trends that circulate throughout school sites and districts on an annual basis, without having a meaningful impact on the educational outcomes of students. This often produces an innovation fatigue, in which veteran educators see the educational trend coming, attend the professional development, and then continue to educate students in the ways that they already know to be effective. The ideas and practices on which the concept *culturally sustaining pedagogy* as well as similar concepts that go by different names including *culturally relevant pedagogy* (Ladson-Billings 1994)*, culturally responsive pedagogy* (Gay 2001)*, cultural modeling* (Lee 2001)*,* and *funds of knowledge* (Moll, Amanti, & Gonzalez 2005) are founded, remain a central tenant in the effective education of underserved communities of color. These concepts remain central tenants in effective education because they are asset pedagogies which recognize and leverage the strengths of underserved students for the purpose of more profound educational outcomes. In the tradition of asset-based pedagogies *culturally sustaining pedagogy* builds upon the asset based pedagogical traditions that came before to serve students in increasingly profound and precise ways.

Paris & Alim's (2017) culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) was specifically designed with pluralistic societies within the present-day U.S. in mind. This chapter narrows the scope of culturally sustaining pedagogy focusing on the aspects of CSP that emerged through the situated knowledges and educational practices implemented by the urban Native American educators interviewed for this study. Five important traits of CSP are highlighted throughout this chapter.

1. CSP serves as an educational response and intervention to the colonial project. In the case of urban Native American communities in the Bay Area the colonial educational project has historically sought to erase Native American students through a wide assortment of pedagogical approaches and curricula implemented by dominant educational institutions.
2. CSP serves to disrupt the anti-Indigeneity, anti-Blackness, and anti-Browness (from Latinidad to Islamophobia) within educational systems. For the urban Native American communities of the Bay Area, this type of anti-oppressive educational framework is a central tenant in offering an empowering educational experience.
3. CSP decenters whiteness reframing issues of access and equity beyond the limited parameters of the "white gaze." The Indigenized approaches to education offered by the participants in this study perpetually decentered whiteness and moved beyond the parameters of the "white gaze."
4. CSP positions education as a site for sustaining cultural ways of being as well as honoring and valuing the "rich and varied practices of communities of color" (p. 6). This study also positions education as a site for sustaining cultural ways of being, however it focuses of the "rich and varied practices" of Intertribal communities.

5. CSP holds dynamic and fluid understandings of culture with an emphasis on youth experience. While the educational practices discussed in this chapter are firmly rooted in Native American traditions, they are also deeply attentive to youth culture and experience.

Three chapters in *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies* (2017) explicitly address Native American educational issues. Lee & McCarty's (2017) chapter argues that:

> …tribal sovereignty must include education sovereignty. Regardless of whether schools operate on or off tribal lands, in the same way that schools are accountable to state and federal governments, so too are they accountable to the Native American nations whose children they serve (p. 61).

Lee & McCarty's chapter is rooted in ethnographic work conducted at two Indigenous serving schools in the U.S. Southwest focusing on how educators employ culturally sustaining pedagogy to disrupt dominant educational policy through operating under the radar. Both school sites are off-reservation and urban operating out of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Flagstaff, Arizona. The second chapter grapples with culturally sustaining pedagogy in relation to "sacred truth spaces[6]" within a Native American Literature course located on an off-reservation high school (San Pedro 2017). The third chapter examines the intersection of culturally sustaining pedagogy, funds of knowledge held by elders, and relational pedagogy through the immersed teachings of Rosalie Little Thunder (Sicangu Lakota) from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota (Holmes & Gonzalez 2017). Building on the work of Lee & McCarty, San Pedro, and Holmes & Gonzalez this chapter focuses on educational mutualism in relation to culturally sustaining education within urban Native hubs in the Oakland Bay Area. I will focus on four primary topics that extend the work of Lee & McCarty, San Pedro, and Holmes & Gonzalez by

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[6] San Pedro (2017) builds this concept off of the work of Garcia & Shirley (2012) who discuss "sacred spaces" as places within schools for students to "be vocal, active, and reflective about ways to counter inequality in their communities instead of passively accepting such circumstances." (p. 83-84).

highlighting urban Indigenized conceptions of culturally sustaining pedagogy, the collective creation of educational experiences with students, the application of circle pedagogies, and Indigenizing success through honoring students timelines.

Through an engagement with the frameworks of culturally sustaining pedagogy in relation to the experiences of urban Native American communities in the Bay Area, four key pedagogical practices emerged that will be explored throughout this chapter. These practices interact mutualistically providing healthy and empowering educational ecosystems for urban Native American youth.

Figure 5.2 - Educational mutualism and engaging culturally sustaining pedagogy with urban Native American youth.

First, is the importance of Indigenizing conceptions of culturally sustaining praxis in relation to urban Intertribal communities. In this study Indigenizing culturally sustaining praxis meant

understanding the mutualistic relationship between establishing a strong connection to land within and beyond urban spaces, promoting Native American visibility to explicitly disrupt narratives of erasure, recognizing the deep connections across Tribes in order to build Intertribal solidarity, explicitly teaching students to navigate multiple worldviews, and the importance of Native American educators serving Native American youth. Second, is the importance of the collective creation of educational experiences with Native American students. The strategies examined the collective co-creation of educational experiences with students providing youth with opportunities to collectively participate in their education, ensuring that pedagogical approaches not only relate to Tribal contexts but the urban context as well, and creating autonomous student spaces. Third, is the centrality of circle pedagogies and the impact of these practices on urban Native American youth. In this study circle pedagogies were engaged to (re)acquaint students to Native American traditions while providing students with a sense of comfort belonging and safety, to hold young women and young men's circles, and to create more democratized and participatory educational spaces. Finally, is the value of Indigenizing success through honoring students' timelines. The participants in this study framed this type of Indigenized success as supporting students in creating their own timelines for success, helping "at-risk" students understand that dominant society's academic timeline is not the only timeline, showing students that there are multiple opportunities and pathways for success, and supporting students on the path that they choose.

III. Urban Indigenized Conceptions of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Culturally sustaining pedagogy is responsive to the contexts in which it is practiced. Within the urban Native American context in the Oakland Bay Area, the culturally sustaining pedagogy

practiced by the study participants adopted four important Indigenized and contextualized traits. These traits were the importance of establishing a strong connection to land within and beyond urban spaces, promoting Native American visibility to explicitly disrupt narratives of erasure, recognizing the deep connections across Tribes to build Intertribal solidarity, explicitly teaching students to navigate multiple worldviews, and the importance of Native American educators serving Native American youth.

Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche), the Title VI Indian Education Coordinator at the American Indian Child Resource Center, talks about the importance of honoring the Chochenyo and Karkin Ohlone territory on which Oakland is built, while simultaneously discussing a hemispheric Indigenous ethos of communal land tenure and stewardship.

> One of the things we do here (AICRC) is we acknowledge the land we're on. We acknowledge the fact that we're in the village of Huichin in Ohlone traditional territories. Yet we also talk about the fact that land "ownership" across tribes [throughout] the nation and internationally was never an individual ownership. Land was and is still very communal, divine-given opportunity to steward, to access, and to participate in and on. We are always doing our due diligence to talk about that stuff as well.

By centering a relationship to land within an urban environment Manny and his colleagues are incorporating an Indigenized ethos into their culturally sustaining pedagogical praxis. The honoring of Native American land within urban landscapes was addressed through other aspects of the curriculum as AICRC as well. Ben Shleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet), a program assistant and garden educator at AICRC, seeks to nurture the relationship between students and land through urban gardening programs growing Native foods, through city walks that help students identify edible and medicinal plants, and through field trips that take students out of the city and provide them access to natural environments. Jill Therrian (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), a former counselor at the American Indian Child Resource center, elaborated on the impact of

Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogical practices stating that through these practices youth are reminded that:

> …they are more than their [traumatic] experiences, that their experiences do not define them, [and] that their experiences are not inevitable. There are ways to sustain life within an urban environment. [These pedagogical practices seek to] raise consciousness and raise resilience simultaneously.

For Manny, Ben, and Jill Indigenized and culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches are important because they decenter the white gaze which holds a commodified relationship to land and use educational spaces to sustain Native American cultural ways maintaining reciprocal relationship with land.

Another important strategy in Indigenizing culturally sustaining pedagogical practices that disrupt erasure is promoting urban Native American visibility that both situates Native communities as active participants in the present and connects Native communities to ancestral traditions. Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) talks about the importance of urban Native American visibility that is connected to present city life and traditional lifeways.

> Visibility is something that I think is really important. Understanding that you are seen as you are and not through someone else's expectations. For example, I do a lot of presentations at schools to other cultural groups. This is cross-cultural work. I always make it a point to dress in ordinary street clothes, while my wife and kids are in their full-on dance regalia. I want to paint the picture that Native folks don't have to have feathers in our hair to be Native, especially in the eyes of other people who are viewing us.

In the Oakland Bay Area, which is one of the most racially diverse areas in the nation, cross cultural work is a central aspect of generating visibility for urban Native American communities. This visibility disrupts erasure while ethically presenting urban Native communities as important contributors to multicultural discourses in the present as well as presenting them as traditionally grounded in ancestral lifeways. Manny and his family embody this reality in the ways that they show up in cross cultural spaces without explicitly having to teach about Native American

connections to the present and to the past. Presenting Native American visibility in this way fundamentally disrupts the colonial gaze which ascribes stereotypical traits to Native communities, situating the school site as a place where cultural ways of being can be sustained, and honoring the varied practices of Native American communities.

A parallel pedagogical project to expand the visibility of urban Native American communities is recognizing the deep veins of connection across Tribal traditions in order to build Intertribal solidarity. This Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogical approach has a profound legacy in the Bay Area stemming from the first Native American's who moved to the area, through the Red Power movement, and into the present. Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) discusses teaching Intertribal solidarity in the following way.

> I believe that there are some [Native American] themes that are overarching [across nations] like reciprocity, gratitude, and understanding that everything is connected and related. Then there are the cause-and-effect laws, the natural laws like fire is hot and ice is cold. Those are the types of things that you can teach from a Native pedagogical or Native ideological perspective, or even from my own [Navajo/Comanche] point of view. I can [share for example] a Navajo or a Comanche ideology and cultural fundamentals that will bridge some of these tribal differences, whether it is based on language or other topics.

By identifying overarching themes across Nations, as well as shared themes rooted in natural law Manny establishes an Intertribal cultural foundation from which to build solidarity across Nations. It is important to note that establishing an Intertribal cultural foundation by no means dilutes the teachings of any Tribe, but instead provides a collective Intertribal knowledge base which directly confronts, disrupts, and resists erasure. While drawing on Intertribal veins of connection and solidarity is meaningful and necessary, it is also fundamentally important for each Tribe's teachings to maintain their integrity and to stay intact. From this base of knowledge, students and teachers can research and explore Tribally specific knowledges and share the knowledge collectively when appropriate. Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) echoes

Manny's sentiment regarding overarching themes across Nations elaborating upon the need to synthesize key teachings.

> I think that there's such deep veins of connection between all traditions that it's not hard to synthesize the key teachings. It's an underlying ethos perhaps. I think the most successful way that I have seen that done, and it's also something that for better or for worse is "in vogue" right now, is farm and garden education. You can't have a successful farm garden education without having an understanding of cycles, circles, and stages, along with rites of passage and ceremony.

For Ben the "deep veins of connection" and "underlying ethos" across Native American traditions is rooted in the laws of nature. Thus, working directly with the natural world through gardening provides a meaningful conduit for synthesizing key teachings and presenting them to students in a way that is accessible and applicable. Using culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches to build Intertribal solidarity disrupts anti-Indigeneity and decenters whiteness, while honoring, valuing, and centering Native American knowledge in the education of urban Native American students.

Beyond building Intertribal solidarity, is the culturally sustaining practice of effectively teaching Native American students to strategically navigate multiple worldviews. Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) describes the importance of teaching urban Native students how to navigate two diametrically opposed world views in the following way.

> There is a way to teach children [where one expresses] "Hey, this [western knowledge] is not your traditional way of knowing. This is not the end all be all. This is not what determines whether you're a good person, smart person, dumb person, bad person. But it is important in the world we live in. It's something that you need to focus on, [that] you need to get through. You might need specific support through that and we're all living with that [western] reality, you know. That [approach] is absolutely possible."

Within the present-day urban context there is an educational necessity for providing urban Native students with strategies for simultaneously engaging traditional ways of knowing while strategically navigating the educational and professional institutions of the western world. The

possibilities for comparing and contrasting diametrically opposed world views while learning to navigate both spaces provide ample opportunity for teaching critical thinking skills as well as applied knowledge. According to the data collected through the Teaching Excellence Network 59% of the community members surveyed prioritized the development of critical thinking skills as fundamental for urban Native American students.

Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/ Hawaiian/Mexican), a youth specialist working for the Native American Health Center, emphasizes the importance of teaching financial literacy to urban Native American students as a strategy for navigating the western world.

> My younger sister, she works 20 hours per week while in high school. She doesn't have bills so it's not like she can spend it on anything. She's saving and that what I wish we could teach. More financial literacy. I was never taught that. They never taught how to budget or save even though money is tight, and things are getting more expensive. It is important to show students that if you have financial literacy you won't need to struggle as much.

While existing financial systems in the U.S. are capitalistic and not grounded in Indigenized worldviews, the need for financial literacy to strategically navigate the western world is a fundamental skill set that must be taught to urban Native American students. In this sense a fine pedagogical line must be navigated between teaching the maintenance of a Native American relational ethos rooted in the needs of community, and strategically engaging capitalistic systems through financial literacy. Ultimately, teaching students to navigate multiple worldviews decenters the anti-Indigenous white colonial gaze that seeks to assimilate Native American people into capitalistic economic system, while remaining self-reflective of the importance of successfully engaging capitalism regarding financial stability.

Urban Native American communities experience navigation of multiple worldviews differently from other BIPOC communities due to a wide array of factors including Tribal status, legal status based on treaty law, proximity to traditional lifeways, legacies of genocide/colonization, and legacies of erasure to name a few. Because of the unique ways that urban Native American communities experience multiple worldviews it is important to have skilled Native American teachers who have experienced this complex navigation, to support urban Native American students through the implementation of Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogies. This is not to say that non-Native educators do not possess the skill set to effectively serve Native students, but to say instead that the lived experience of urban Native American educators is integral in providing an Indigenized culturally sustaining education. Ben Shleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) explains this complex negotiation within the context of the Sons of Tradition group which seeks to guide young Native American men from multiple Tribal backgrounds in connecting with traditional lifeways.

> When I give an introduction for Sons of Tradition, it's about understanding how to apply Native values and Native traditions in a world that does not recognize and in a lot of ways is oppositional to those values. That is a hard thing for any kid to understand especially if they do not have content and lack context.

The pedagogical approach that Ben is advancing seeks to first produce the content and context for understanding Native values and traditions from an Intertribal perspective, and then to teach students to apply those values to be empowered and resilient within their navigation of the western world. By any metric this is a complex pedagogical endeavor, particularly if one does not possess the situated knowledge of navigating the western world through applying Native American values and traditions.

Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian /Mescalero Apache) emphasizes the importance of Native American communities in Native American education:

> I am an avid believer that our education system is actually just a supplement for our kids and that we should be the main educators of our children's cultural knowledge.

For Crystal the dominant educational system has already demonstrated its inability to be responsive to the cultural needs of Native American students and posits that it is the responsibility of Native families and Native communities to be the primary educators regarding cultural knowledge. While this places a disproportionate burden on Native American families and communities, it is unrealistic to believe that non-Native educators will have the capacity or knowledge base to teach traditional Native American cultural knowledges.

Another aspect of the importance of Native American communities educating Native American students is supporting them in being resilient when confronted with the discursive violence of dominant educational institutions. Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache) discusses the importance of building a sense of pride in Native American students that helps students remain resilient when confronted with educational misinformation in the school system.

> It is important to build a sense of pride in our students so that it is high enough that when they are inundated with information that isn't true, or is misconstrued, that it won't affect them in a negative way. They should be able to hold their own in a conversation with their teacher, where it doesn't seem like they're challenging them, but maybe helping them with information. Teaching your kids how to defend themselves in the educational system in a way where they're not getting sent to the principal. Teaching them to have the language or the ability to start the conversation with their teacher. This is not fair, but it ends up happening.

Through teaching urban Native American students how to strategically navigate western educational institutions in a respectful way that allows them to maintain their pride and defend

themselves, Crystal is providing fundamental life skills to urban Native American students who must consistently navigate two opposing worldviews. Erasure is a lived reality for urban Native American communities, thus urban Native American students must be equipped with the tools to make their needs and interests visible.

Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota / Costa Rican) elaborates on the importance of having Native American educators who serve Native American students emphasizing the importance of receiving an Indigenized culturally sustaining education from Native American educators from an early age.

> I've had the privilege of growing up in Oakland's urban Native community from an early age. Not a lot of people had an early start figuring out who they are through their cultural identity. Growing up I went to Hintil, and that was my first experience being around other Native youth. We did cultural arts, heard stories, and heard songs from our elders. It allowed me to understand where my people are from as well as where other Native students were from.

Devina discusses how establishing a cultural identity as a Native American person from an early age through the program at Hintil Kuu Ca, while being surrounded by Native American youth provided an important foundation for connecting with Native students Intertribally. From this shared educational experience, it becomes easier to build urban Intertribal solidarity. Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches that emphasize the importance of Native American educators serving urban Native American students centers Indigenized worldviews producing educational environments that sustain and honor Native American cultural ways of being.

IV. Collectively Creating Educational Experiences with Urban Native American Students

Paolo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* positioned education as the practice of liberation through the cultivation of critical consciousness. This liberatory pedagogy disrupted the "banking model" of education which emphasized a teacher/lecture driven pedagogical style where the educator is the bestower of knowledge while the student is an empty receptacle waiting to be filled. The banking model and similar dictatorial pedagogical approaches are antithetical to student agency and still widely practiced in public schools throughout the Oakland Bay Area. The participants in this study identified three Indigenized strategies for collectively creating culturally sustaining educational experiences with urban Native American youth. These strategies included providing students with opportunities to collectively participate in their education, ensuring that pedagogical approaches not only relate to Tribal contexts but the urban context as well, as well as the importance creating autonomous youth spaces. These strategies require humility and self-reflection from educators, a quality valued and prioritized by 55% of the community members who took the Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) survey.

Janeen Antoine (Sicangu Lakota), the San Francisco Office Manager at the International Indian Treaty Council and co-host of Bay Native Circle on KPFA, discussed the importance of including students in a collective process of curriculum development as well as providing more experiential and applied educational experiences.

> I think important aspects of curriculum would be [providing] opportunities for students to participate in a collective process, rather than a dogmatic or dictatorial one. This means exploring different aspects of the curriculum to be able to do it collectively. Also, to be able to go out and explore, like do field trips. That's very important depending on what the subject matter is, but for students to be able to go in the field, makes a much bigger impact than being lectured to. It's important for students to have opportunities to participate in designing some of the curriculum themselves in terms of when they start to explore a specific area of history, to be able to focus on the aspects that are of interest or important to them, I think will be much more important in engaging them.

Moving away from a dogmatic and dictatorial process for creating curriculum and towards a collective process allows students to gain agency in their educational experience, explore curiosities, and ultimately learn to be self-driven learners. Moreover, applied experiential learning allows for deeper exploration and more memorable educational experiences where theoretical principles can be applied to real world contexts. Janeen expands upon her statement explaining the importance of reciprocity in the process of collectively creating culturally sustaining curricula with students.

> I think that teacher qualities that are important for Native Youth is a willingness to share information, to be receptive to information, and to be responsive to students. This means being sympathetic rather than dogmatic encouraging youth to explore areas of interest that they have in a personal academic setting.

In this quote Janeen expresses that a key component to being responsive to the needs to students both sharing and receiving knowledge in a reciprocal way. This process necessitates a sympathy for the perspectives of students while simultaneously challenging engrained and dogmatic beliefs that the teacher may hold.

Crystal Salas (Lakota/ Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache) echoes the importance of addressing multiple modalities of learning, disrupting the banking model, and collaborating on the creation of curriculum with youth. She also highlights the importance of including community members in the collaborative creation of curriculum.

> Hands on projects and visual learning. Not just the teacher talking. Bringing in community to help with the curriculum. Having the youth be able to contribute to the curriculum. The kids have so many questions, needs, and things that they have to offer. We open it up to them to share, to contribute to the creation of the curriculum. At the end it’s a collaborative curriculum.

Crystal talks about an educational mutualism between multiple modality learning, avoiding the banking model, community engagement, and youth collaboration in the creation of curriculum.

This educational mutualism contributes to a more Indigenized culturally sustainable pedagogy which helps shift the power dynamic within the classroom while normalizing teacher self-reflection through a collaborative process.

Another important aspect to an Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogy in service of urban Native American youth is ensuring that the curriculum is responsive to the Tribal specificity of youth as well as the urban Indigeneity of youth. 52% of the community members surveyed using the Teaching Excellence Network (TEN) platform prioritized the incorporation of youth culture into the education of urban Native American students. Anne Hurley (Hoopa Valley/Piaute/Yurok/Karuk/Washo), a cultural arts teacher at the American Indian Child Resource Center, talks about using cultural arts to foster a family dynamic, to support students in teaching other students, and to engage Tribal specificity and urban Indigeneity in practicing culturally sustaining pedagogy.

> Students relate to how young I am, and I definitely try to stay on their page [even though] I am not as young as they are anymore. We have created a family dynamic at AICRC. The kids call it our Tribe. We all pass knowledge to each other. My older students take it upon themselves to help me out with the younger students and help teach our traditions. Especially if I've taught them something specific about their own tribe and they find out another youth comes in and they're of a similar tribe. I find it very useful working with all of them, keeping them engaged. It's not hard when you make it personal to them. This has to do with your region or make it a part of what they are living with, especially to make it urban. I definitely take that as an aspect because culture arts can fall into a "back in the day we did this" mentality. My approach is that we used to do this and maybe we can switch it up and do it like this. We still have all the same traditions, but we are making it our own urban thing.

The familial sensibility fostered at AICRC allows students and educators to share knowledge with one another and teach traditions. When Anne makes the teachings Tribally specific the knowledge becomes more personal to the students, and they are better equipped to pass it on to younger students. Anne's ability to engage students through cultural arts, remain attentive to tribal specificity, but also help students make the art "urban" is a powerful way of using

culturally sustaining pedagogy for connecting the historical with the contemporary. This approach honors the traditional artforms of the past while re-purposing them for the present making it relevant to youth culture.

V. Circle Pedagogies

The practice of circle pedagogies is common within urban Native American communities in the Oakland Bay Area. Circles are employed ceremonially, for meetings, for educational purposes, etc. The participants in this study identified three key purposes for engaging circle pedagogies in providing culturally sustaining educational experiences to urban Native American students. The first purpose was engaging circle pedagogies to (re)acquaint students to Native American traditions while providing students with a sense of comfort, belonging, and safety. The second purpose was to use circle pedagogies to hold young women and young men's circles. Finally, circle pedagogies were used to create more democratized and participatory educational spaces.

Veronica Martinez (Amah-Mutsun Ohlone/Mexican American), an instructor in the Department of Communication Studies at Chabot College, talks about the way that she engages circle pedagogies with urban Native American community college students.

> Working with students in my classes or in the Indigenous Peoples Education Association (IPEA) there are certain things that we are realizing together. We had ceremony last fall, came together, sat in a circle, shared a tobacco ceremony, and then we shared a meal. There are certain things that I am realizing are either familiar for our students or there is an internal knowledge around those things even though some of them have lost a lot of their culture.

Engaging urban Native American community college students through circle pedagogies and ceremony helped (re)acquaint students with traditional ways of being that felt familiar despite the loss of culture endemic to erasure. In this sense (re)acquainting students to traditional ways

of being through circle pedagogies is a direct confrontation of erasure that also helps build community among urban Native students who may not have experienced this pedagogical approach in other educational settings. Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/ Hawaiian/Mexican), discusses his experience transferring from an Oakland Public high school that did not employ culturally sustaining pedagogies to Street Academy, a high school that practiced culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches in service of urban Native students and was part of the informal urban Native American educational pipeline in Oakland.

> [When I transferred high schools] that's where I felt the big disproportion on how things were run. [At Street Academy] the school revolved around [urban Native American students] which was pretty cool. I started in the winter quarter. The first day I showed up we got in a circle, had a prayer circle, where everyone was smudging. I was like "yes, that's tight!" [Before] I just had that feeling, like you would be made fun of [for circling up and smudging]. At the Street Academy I felt more at ease and more community vibe feeling even from the students.

For Hector, it would have been difficult to participate in Indigenized culturally sustaining practices such as circling up and smudging within a high school that was complicit in the invisibilization and erasure of urban Native American students. Participating in these types of practices would open up the possibility of ridicule and bullying. On the other hand, being a part of a high school that prioritized Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogies in service to urban Native American students provided him with a sense of community that was drastically different from his previous high school. While circles are pedagogically used in cultures throughout the world, Street Academy adopted circle pedagogies that were familiar to the Intertribal students that attended the school, providing an environment where urban Native students felt comfortable, safe, and at ease.

Another primary purpose for the application of circle pedagogies articulated by the study participants was to facilitate young women's and young men's circles. At the American Indian

Child Resource Center (AICRC) these circles were used to support adolescent youth through the physical and emotional shifts of puberty providing a forum to share stories, ask questions, and connect across experience. Jill Therrian (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottowa) discussed the importance of holding these spaces for young women at the center.

> I can say that from the second I landed here at AICRC the way we come to circle and smudge, the way we talk about medicine, is a starting point to our time together. I love it. Sometimes girls will come up and say "I'm really having a hard time, can I get a smudge." They have learned that this is a way to center, ground, focus, and bring it all in when they're feeling negative.

By centering and institutionalizing circle pedagogies at AICRC, young women have access to an Indigenized culturally sustaining practice that helps them decompress from difficult experiences, ground themselves, and re-center within an educational space that recognizes their full humanity. Having circle pedagogies normalized within AICRC helps educators employ these pedagogical approaches to engage young people in deeper conversations that support them through the transitions of adolescence.

> During the girls check in time, we talk about sacred women's time. We hold a talking circle where girls can share their stories, share their experiences, feeling safe to do so, and knowing that it's directly tied into our tradition. Whether we are teaching them about the directions or teaching them about medicines they're excited and curious. Some of them may or may not have any connection to [those teachings] at home. Some of them do. They are sharing with their peers and it gives me a chance to just hold space for all of that and be in connection with it too. The community values leadership and helping each other. It's so infused in our program and students understand that there's always a place for you here. When the circle is held, even when people aren't present, they're present. We also know that our ancestors are present. I always bring that in. We start with smudge, we end with smudge, we thank our ancestors. (Jill Therrian (Annishanabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), Personal Interview, 20 December 2018)

Holding circle in this way frames a women's natural monthly cycle as "sacred" and tied to centuries of Indigenous tradition, fundamentally disrupting dominant patriarchal narratives that stigmatize, ridicule, and hide the moon cycles experienced by young women during puberty. In

this sense the educational spaces created by AICRC sustain, honor, and value Native American ways of being. Moreover, through framing and discussing a women's natural monthly cycle within the context of centuries of Native American tradition and ancestry, anti-Indigeneity is disrupted, students are exposed to teachings they may not receive at home, excitement and curiosity is generated, shared experiences are explored, and a sense of belonging is established.

The young men's circles at AICRC served a similar and parallel purpose to the young women's circles, providing young men with a forum to share stories, ask questions, and connect across experience. The focus of the circle was to provide a space for young men to share about their experiences as adolescents and to discuss those experiences in relation to the experiences of the male mentors/educators within the group as well as in relation to traditional rites of passage across Tribal traditions and the responsibilities associated with those rites of passage. In addition, within these circles young men were taught of the sanctity of the moon cycle, and how best to honor young women during this important rite of passage. Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) described his approach to teaching young men to be supportive of young women during their sacred women's time.

> [We try] to stray away from that authoritative "you gotta do it this way," but just understanding that there's differences there between the masculine and the feminine as well. What us as men can do to support and be supportive and learn to grow, even though we're not participating in that ceremony.

Through having non-authoritative discussions with young men about how to be supportive of young women during their rite of passage ceremony, Manny is disrupting the westernized stigma that adversely impacts young women during puberty, while guiding young men towards a role that supports young women during their transition. Guiding young men in this way is one small step towards guiding them away from the colonial practices of toxic masculinity.

I also had the honor and privilege of participating directly in the young men's circle once a week for one hour over during November and December of 2019. One interesting anecdote that I can share in this chapter is a discussion that we had about young men's voices cracking and the connection between this event and rites of passage in certain Native American traditions. Whereas the cracking of a young man's voice is cause for teasing and ridicule within dominant educational environments, this same occurrence is cause for celebration within many Native American traditions. On one occasion the men in the circle shared funny and embarrassing stories about our voices cracking during inopportune moments in school or during other public events. These stories infused humor into the circle, allowed the men in the circle to model vulnerability, and provided students with permission to share about their experiences. Discussing rites of passage in this way disrupted worldviews that ridicule young men during their most awkward adolescent transformation/transition. In this way, AICRC became an educational site for sustaining cultural ways of being.

The participants in this study discussed circle pedagogies that employed Indigenized and culturally sustaining educational approaches to create more democratized and participatory educational spaces. Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota/Costa Rican) discusses how setting up a classroom in a circular formation disrupts the hierarchy inherent to setting up a classroom in rows and columns.

> In a lot of my Native American Studies classes, we would not set up in a normal classroom setting or rows of tables. Instead, we would circle up our tables so that we're all looking at each other, we're all talking. There was just a natural flow of things rather than just talking to one person, one teacher in the front, and then not turning back to look at the person behind you. Eye contact and hearing is really important in the circle. Across Tribes and traditions circles are very important.

The row and column classroom set-up places a default priority on the teacher as well as on the students in the front row of the class. Within this context the teacher is the bestower of

knowledge, while the students in the front row can hear better, can see better, are more likely to be called on, have less opportunity to drift off, and as a result remain more engaged in the content. Configuring the classroom in a circular formation produces a dynamic where every student as well as the teacher is in the front row, and active engagement is structured into the configuration of the class. With active engagement structured into the classroom configuration it is not surprising that a circular configuration produces more democratized and participatory educational spaces.

Nichole Achtley (Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point) discusses taking my ETHN 25 Indigenous Peoples' History course at Chabot Community College where I employed a circular configuration for the desks.

> This was the first Indigenous Studies class I have taken. I'm going to say that it has been an incredible experience to sit in circle and to introduce ourselves and just say where we are from and what our intentions are. To be open with each other in an Indigenous setting is really special. And also, how you introduced your medicine before you passed it around. It's really important to introduce those things. I really felt positive, comfortable, at home, and at peace. We were able to speak our minds. It's not just a history class.

Nicole has echoed a sentiment that I have heard frequently over my last twelve years of teaching at various universities. This sentiment is that university courses are often not configured in circular formations either due to class size, space constraints, or adherence to westernized row-and-column classroom configurations. Circular classroom configurations, when possible, allow for increased connection, openness, and comfort amongst students and educators as well as providing for a more amicable forum where students can speak their minds. All these factors contribute to more democratized and participatory educational spaces.

Finally, a circular configuration within the classroom provides students who are more observant, quiet, and less participatory with an option, forum, and space by which to contribute

to classroom discussions. Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree) discusses this dynamic in the following way.

> We didn't just sit at desks, but we really brought people into the circle. I've used things like talking sticks because that's something they're familiar with. That gives everybody a chance to talk in the room because sometimes Native people are much more likely to sit back and reflect. They are of the mentality that "I'm going to observe and see what's going on in here," not I'm going to raise my hand and have the right answer. Having those kinds of circle discussions allows them to have their turn to talk, and they really understand that.

Giving every student a marked chance and space to talk, whether they choose to share or not, is an important tactic that supports more quiet and observant students while encouraging the handful of deeply enthusiastic and participatory students to be more reflective about the way they participate. This approach is particularly important within Native American contexts where circle pedagogies are widely practiced and understood within community settings.

VI. Indigenizing Success Through Honoring Students' Sacred Timelines

Indigenized "success" and "achievement" looks different for each student, and as educators we must understand and honor student's academic timeline, remind students that where they are now is not where they will be when they are older, and that alternative pathways to success and fulfillment (beyond attending the university) exist. The participants in this study discussed four primary approaches to Indigenizing concepts of "success" through applying the culturally sustaining pedagogy of honoring students' sacred timelines. The four approaches articulated by the study participants were supporting students in creating their own timelines for success, helping "at-risk" students understand that dominant society's academic timeline is not the only timeline, showing students that there are multiple opportunities and pathways for success, and supporting students on the path that they choose.

The dominant western educational timeline is tied to a middle/upper class, white, heterosexual, and male sensibility that assumes the economic means and social priviledge for enrolling in college as well as the time to devote to study. Jill Therrien (Anishinaabe Chippewa/Ottawa Nation), talked about the importance of disrupting the dominant western educational timeline instead creating one's own timeline for success.

> …something I try to remind youth when I'm working with them is that everything unfolds in its own timing in nature. You are no different a lot of times. Because of the way I present, there [are] assumptions that I was very regimented in my schooling, and I always remind [students] that I had to learn for myself by being the other, by not going to school, by choosing to go to school [the university] at age 21. For me that wasn't a failure. I had to take care of my family at the time and that was more important, and I felt pride around it. Where people projected a lacking, I felt pride. So, reconciling with those contrasts I think can be a huge measure of success, that you are on your own sacred time, your gifts will unfold how they do.

When educator's view their students as both connected to natural law and on their "own sacred time," they are able to imagine educational possibilities for students that exist outside of the rigid confines of whitestream education, school schedules, curricular scope and sequence, and the ageist/capitalist western understandings of where one should be at a particular stage of life. In this way educational access, equity, and power are reframed and educational timelines that prevent Native American educational attainment are disrupted.

Expanding the realm of educational possibility beyond western educational timelines, is particularly relevant to students' who "fall through the cracks," are seen as troublemakers, are "underserved," "at-risk," or who otherwise do not resonate with the rigidity of the westernized educational system. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Executive Director of the Intertribal Friendship House in Oakland CA, elaborates upon this point saying:

> To me success is even just getting a person to want to do something with their education, because you have every [type of student] from someone who just doesn't have the high school diploma or dropped out/kicked out. [We need to] be able to show them that there's hope. I loved when I've took youth to UC Berkeley…and had college students talk

> about…how they get into Berkeley. One guy said he was kicked out of high school five times. Another woman, who just got her Ph.D. that was in this community, got kicked out of high school, finally got her GED, got her AA, got training to work in surgery in the hospital, got into Berkeley and got her BA, and now has a Ph.D. Young people need to know that [where you are] today is not [where you're] going to be when you're 20 or 30 years old.

Carol Wapepah's (Leech Lake Ojibwe) interview demonstrates that underserved and at risk urban Native students can benefit and build hope from hearing the testimonies of similar students who have experienced educational success despite not adhering to the "traditional" western educational timeline, and that alternative pathways to attending the university or achieving success exist. This approach decenters dominant narratives of educational achievement while helping urban Native American students envision broader educational possibilities.

A culturally sustainable conception of Indigenized success and achievement must demonstrate that viable paths exist for students beyond the university. Cara Little (Navajo/Zuni/Oglala Lakota), an alcohol and drug prevention expert who worked at the Native American Health Center in Oakland California said:

> I really hope that [my children] have the same opportunity as everyone else if they want to or if they don't want to go to school. I have my oldest [who] doesn't want to go to a [University]. He's not motivated with classroom style schooling. So, let him have an opportunity to maybe learn something else and do something. That's all, that's all I hope, [that my children] have the same opportunities given to [them].

Cara understands that multiple modalities of learning exist and that the pathway to educational achievement and success through the university is not an appropriate or available path for every student. Indigenized culturally sustaining conceptions of achievement and success recognize this reality, provide multiple opportunities for success, and uplift multiple pathways towards the achievement of urban Native students beyond the more dominant college route.

Connected to the recognition that Indigenized culturally sustaining conceptions of success and achievement honor multiple pathways to fulfillment beyond the university, is the

importance of supporting students in experiencing success on the path that they choose. Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone), co-founder of the Segorea Te Land Trust said, "What we'd like to see is that our students are able to find a job that they can [use to] help support their families or that they're able to follow the things that they want to do." Within this statement Corrina demonstrates the importance of finding a steady job where students can support their families and is simultaneously aligned with a student's chosen field or area of interest. Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/Hawaiian/Mexican), elaborated on this point stating: "I think [Indigenized success and achievement] varies depending on the person…honestly it is to go to school and become successful in whatever choice they make." For Hector Indigenized success is both specific to each person and based on choice, not formulaic and/or necessarily based on a westernized educational trajectory. Student A at the American Indian Child Resource Center described a culturally sustaining Indigenized success as "when you feel comfortable with the job because it makes sense" and you are successful at the job. For Student A, Indigenized success is connected to both comfort and sensibility, while being rooted in choice. Finally, Nicole Atchley (Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point) reminds us that a culturally sustaining Indigenized success means "First…hav[ing] a set of goals, hopes and dreams. Reach[ing] for that in a good way…not hurt[ing] anybody on the way, not step[ing] on anybody's toes…and not hurt[ing] myself…". For Nicole, to experience Indigenized success, one must make the choice to change their life, make a plan to reach goals, and then implement their plan without adversely impact themselves or those around them.

VII. From Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy to Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy

The application of Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches is the second foundational component for confronting the erasure of urban Native American youth in the Oakland Bay Area. The participants in this study have engaged their situated knowledges to apply Indigenized culturally responsive pedagogical approaches through the *mutualistic* interaction of collectively creating educational experiences with urban Native American youth, incorporating circle pedagogies in ethical and responsive ways, and recognizing that urban Native American students are on their own sacred timeline when it comes to educational outcomes. Engagement-with and implementation-of Indigenized culturally sustaining pedagogies is the first step towards a more immersive culturally revitalizing pedagogy. The third foundational component of confronting erasure is the implementation of a culturally revitalizing pedagogy through the ethical incorporation of traditional Native American knowledge systems in service to urban Native American students. The incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems supports urban Native American youth through providing ceremonial access, rites of passage, frameworks for youth leadership, and education on traditional ecological knowledge systems.

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Chapter 6 - The Ethnical Incorporation of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Service to Urban Native American Youth

I did not grow up with access to ceremonial lifeways. Instead, I encountered the *Mexicayotl* tradition in my early 20's. Having access to the *Mexicayotl* tradition and the teachings rooted in traditional Indigenous knowledge systems saved my life. I do not mean this metaphorically but literally. Prior to encountering the *Mexicayotl* tradition, I was immersed in a wide array of self-destructive practices including addiction and internalized self-hatred. The community of support inherent to the practice of the *Mexicayotl* tradition which included ceremonial Danza, the temscalli (sweat lodge), and elements of curanderismo provided me with an Indigenized structure, discipline, and guidance during a time in my life that I most needed it. Important pedagogical approaches are imbedded within the tradition which include showing up for community, holistically immersing yourself in a ceremonial way of life, doing the work that needs to be done, learning through doing, being asked to lead ceremony, passing the teachings on to those who want to learn, etc. This reciprocal process of showing up, learning, then eventually teaching constitute the foundation of intergenerational revitalization work. My lived experience within the *Mexicayotl* tradition serves as a testament to the ways that access to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems transforms lives. Many of the participants in this study articulated similar insights discussing the importance of the ethnical incorporation of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems in service to the urban Intertribal youth of the Oakland Bay Area.

This chapter applies the frameworks of culturally revitalizing pedagogy and educational mutualism to argue that the third foundational component of confronting erasure and implementing educational interventions in service to urban Native American youth is the ethical incorporation of traditional Native American knowledge systems. My findings demonstrate that five elements of culturally revitalizing pedagogy that incorporate traditional Native American

knowledge systems interact *mutualistically* to create empowering educational ecosystems for urban Native American youth in the Oakland Bay Area. These elements are Indigenizing achievement through learning aspects of traditional Native American knowledge systems, using Native American knowledge systems to promote youth leadership, engaging traditional ecological knowledge in the education of urban Native American youth, honoring urban Native youth during times of transition through practicing rites of passage, and providing ceremonial access to youth who request it. Culturally revitalizing pedagogies that incorporate traditional Native American knowledge systems are important in serving urban Native youth because they support students in adopting a more expansive worldview, helps students navigate the western world more effectively, empowers students to be more resilient, and guides students to develop their own relationship to tradition.

II. Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy, Educational Mutualism, and Urban Native American Youth

Culturally revitalizing pedagogies adopt four key attributes of culturally sustaining pedagogies. Both pedagogical approaches emphasize dynamic cultural dexterity, emphasize additive and holistic education, enrich student strengths vs. replacing student deficits, and de-center whiteness. Since culturally sustaining pedagogy was created with a pluralistic U.S. society and schooling system in mind, it is focused on addressing the needs of a pluralistic student body. As a result, certain key attributes that pertain to the unique educational experience of Native American students fall outside of the parameters of CSP's pedagogical approach and are addressed through the framework of culturally revitalizing pedagogies (McCarty & Lee 2017).

Culturally revitalizing pedagogies extend two key aspects of culturally sustaining pedagogies demonstrating the mutualistic relationship that exists between both approaches. First, while CSP seeks to "sustain" culture, CRP seeks to "revitalize" culture. Although "sustaining" and "revitalizing" culture are part of the same decolonial project, "sustaining" pertains to the maintenance of culture as it exists in the present, while "revitalizing" pertains to cultural reclamation in response to erasure. Second, while culturally sustaining pedagogies are a response to the colonial project, culturally revitalizing pedagogies address unjust power relations to transform legacies of colonization. The key distinction between the two is that CSP seeks to "respond to" the colonial project while CRP seeks to "transform" the colonial project through addressing unjust power dynamics. "Responding to" the colonial project is akin to talking back to colonialism through offering a counternarrative, while "transforming legacies of colonization" is akin to talking back, advancing an alternative vision, and fundamentally transforming/Indigenizing colonial approaches to education.

Finally, the culturally revitalizing pedagogical approach Indigenizes the culturally sustaining pedagogical approach in two key ways. First, CRP addresses the sociohistorical and contemporary context of Native schooling. While certain parallels exist between minoritized communities of color and Native American communities the differences between these histories and present contexts must continue to be acknowledged and recognized in order to effectively serve Native American communities. Second, CRP explicitly adopts the Indigenized practices of providing education that is centered in community and based in accountability, respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relationality. The mutualistic praxis of the principles of accountability, reciprocity, responsibility, and relationality have been discussed at length by Indigenous scholars such as Archibald (2008), Grande (2008), Styres (2017), Tuck (2019), etc.

While both approaches remain inextricably intertwined, *culturally revitalizing pedagogy* is better adapted to certain aspects of the unique educational conditions experienced by urban Native American youth. The following chart provides a summary of the points of alignment between CSP and CRP, the points where CRP extends CSP, and the points where CRP Indigenizes CSP.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Traits Shared by Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1. Teaches dynamic cultural dexterity.
2. Emphasizes additive and holistic education.
3. Enriches and strengthens students' skill sets vs. replacing deficits
4. De-centers whiteness</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy Extends Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy</th></tr>
<tr><td>Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy

1. Addresses unjust power relations to transform legacies of colonization.
2. Seeks to reclaim and revitalize what has been disrupted by colonization.</td><td>Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

1. Pedagogical response to the colonial project.
2. Sustains community lifeways.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy Indigenizing Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1. Addresses sociohistorical and contemporary context of Native Schooling.
2. Centered in community-based accountability, respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relationality.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 6.1 - Summary of the similarities and differences between culturally sustaining pedagogy and culturally revitalizing pedagogy

The pedagogical approaches discussed in this chapter are examples of culturally revitalizing pedagogy within the urban Native American context of the Oakland Bay Area. Five pedagogical approaches were addressed by the participants in this study. First was Indigenizing achievement through learning aspects of traditional Native American knowledge systems. Second was engaging traditional Native American knowledge systems to provide frameworks for Native American youth leadership. Third,was a pedagogical use of traditional ecological knowledge systems. Fourth was the importance of rites of passage for urban Native American youth. Finally, was the impact of providing urban Native American students with ceremonial access. All of these elements interact *mutualistically* to provide an empowering educational ecosystem for urban Intertribal youth rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems.

Figure 6.1 - Educational mutualism through the ethical incorporation of traditional Native American knowledge systems in service to urban Intertribal youth

The findings in this chapter extend the work of McCarty & Lee (2017) both in terms of context and topic. The context of the Intertribal Oakland Bay Area is different from the urban off-reservation schools discussed by McCarty & Lee thus requiring a different set of educational interventions. Regarding topic, while McCarty & Lee (2017) focus their analysis of culturally revitalizing pedagogy on destabilizing dominant policy discourses, my analysis focuses on educational mutualism and the ethical incorporation of traditional Native American knowledge systems. Through extending the work of McCarty & Lee (2017) I demonstrate that *culturally revitalizing pedagogy* is directly applicable to the Intertribal context of the Oakland Bay Area.

III. Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the Education of Urban Native American Youth

The systemic erasure of traditional Native American knowledge systems from educational environments both historically and in the present has produced the need to justify the ethical incorporation of these knowledge systems in service to urban Native American students. The three reasons provided by study participants were to develop a more expansive worldview that helps students navigate the western world more effectively, empower students to be more resilient, and guide students to develop their own relationship to tradition.

Janeen Antoine (Sicangu Lakota) works for the International Indian Treaty Council and has actively worked in designing curriculum for Native students throughout California. She discusses the importance of incorporating traditional Native American values into the education of urban Native students.

> I think that if the students have some understanding in what traditional values are, that they would be able to be a lot more successful in school because a lot of times they may not have the academic standing that they need, to keep up to certain test scores or grade point averages or whatever. It's hard to see the value of that when you're immersed in the system and there's nothing in that system that really relates to you.

By grounding students in traditional Native American value systems, patterns of erasure and alienation are disrupted, and Native American students can begin to see themselves reflected within the educational systems that serve them. Janeen expresses how incorporating traditional knowledges into the education of urban Native students has a direct impact in school success.

> I think if the students are more grounded in traditional values, they're able to see a bigger picture of their role within society and their responsibilities and have a better appreciation of the need to be educated in certain areas. Then also to be motivated to do that. I think that's a really important thing. It seems like students who are involved in their communities are probably more motivated to do well, to express an interest in different areas, and that they're not just out there, trying to survive on their own.

For Janeen, groundedness fosters an educational community that breaks patterns of silo-ing and isolation that are common in the western world. This educational community based in traditional Native American values holds the potential of offering students support, connection, and motivation. In this sense educational programs grounded in traditional Native American knowledge systems can counterbalance societal dysfunctions which have historically and disproportionately impacted urban Native communities. Janeen speaks to this point, outlining the transformational impact of practicing traditional Native American values.

> I do know if the youth are identified, if youth are worked with and brought along in educating them in traditional values, and they become involved in that area, it really does transform their life. They have different ways of seeing the world and different options in front of them and recognize that they don't have to make bad choices and get involved with kids that are doing the wrong thing or get involved with drugs. They can work for meaning.

Through offering pathways to success that are rooted in traditional Native American values, urban Native students are empowered with a foundation that supports them in navigating the western world in more effective and strategic ways.

The educational success of supporting urban Native students through access to curriculum that is rooted in traditional Native American knowledge and value systems was further demonstrated through the testimony of Native American college students.   Supporting Native American students in cultivating a more profound relationship with the traditional knowledges that are part of their cultural heritage helps build resiliency and empowerment. Nicole Atchley (Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point), a university student who also works supporting women and children break the cycles of addiction, speaks to the impact of the practice of traditional Native American knowledges in her own life.

> I'm still dealing with this [recovery from addiction], but I'm on the spiritual aspect of this [recovery]. Not only has recovery brought me everything, but the perspective that I can experience today to maneuver through this world with whatever's going on, the changes,

> government, all these things that are going on, I'm just going to continue to break the cycle and to get back into my culture. My people have been calling me. I could feel the dance, I could feel the songs. I could feel my grandparents, I could feel the strengths. I want that. You know, I want that for myself because that's what gives me peace now. That's what carries me through. I don't feel like using a drink and I'm grateful for that.

Nicole's description of her spiritual practice, and the way that this practice has supported her throughout her recovery process demonstrates the ways in which cultivating a foundation in Native American knowledge systems builds resiliency in people, helping them more effectively navigate the challenges of the western world. Additionally, Nicole describes the ways in which developing a foundation of traditional Native American knowledge systems have brought her closer to her heritage through dance, song, and a deeper understanding of ancestry. Building this foundation is not however without its challenges. In the following passage, Nicole elaborates upon some of the barriers that prevented her from engaging with the traditions of her people.

> I stayed away from that [my people's traditions] for a long time. I have elders and aunts and uncles that tried to get me up to the reservation to dance in our original roundhouse at Stewards Point. I never went. I never went because I had resentments of what I saw with my mom and my family. That was what I held onto. I got blinded by my own behaviors and actions. Coming back into the culture is so important for us Indigenous people and for people in society in general to know where we come from and what helps us, especially in a learning environment.

In this passage Nicole describes some of the complex ways that she associated the shortcomings of her family to the traditions of her people, and how that association prevented her from actively participating in the healing traditions of her people. Ultimately however, overcoming that "negative" association and returning to her traditional values and practices not only empowered her in understanding where she comes from, but empowered her in the ways that she walks in the world, including within the educational system.

Students' relationship to traditional Native American knowledge systems and practices varies widely, and not surprisingly, does not follow a reified or linear narrative. Dakota Target

(Diné/Sioux), a student at Chabot College who grew up in the Bay Area, describes her own circuitous relationship:

> When I was younger, I was really into the whole dance scene and pow wows and stuff. As I got older, throughout my teen years, it kind of faded away. I wasn't into it at all. And then as I started getting older, after high school, I started getting more into it, realizing how important my culture is [and the importance of knowing] more about it. See[ing] where I come from. That's why I took this class [Indigenous Peoples History], to know more because I don't. When my dad died, we had a medicine man to our house, and he did a whole ceremony for him to cleanse the house. It was beautiful. I didn't grow up doing the whole ceremony thing, but I know my family back on the reservation certainly did. I've seen some with weddings and stuff or butchering a sheep, which wasn't my favorite. I've seen that and never participated because I can't do that, but it's still unique, to see all of it. I do want to get more into it for sure.

Dakota's words demonstrate that when the seeds of traditional Native American knowledge systems and practices are planted at an early age, the impact of those teachings often remains with young people throughout their adolescence and into adulthood, even if it waxes and wanes. This passage also highlights the reality that when traditions are taught, they should never be "forced" onto young people. Instead, young people are guided towards developing their own relationship with tradition. Ideally this relationship to tradition will empower young people as they walk through life helping them feel pride in their Native identities and encouraging them to learn more about where they come from and their people's traditions. The practices of teaching and serving urban Native youth must thus be attentive to the incorporation of traditional Native American knowledges and practices presented in a way that are accessible and impactful, yet flexible in the ways in which youth are encouraged to participate.

IV. Indigenizing Achievement

Westernized educational systems often measure achievement through numerically quantifiable measures including test scores, graduation rates, college entry rates, and drop out/push out rates.

These measures have a direct correlation to a student's ability to be financially stable or successful within a capitalistic society. While these measures are important in that they have a direct impact on the ability of urban Intertribal students to strategically navigate the parameters of the western educational system, participants in this study discussed an Indigenized achievement that existed beyond of the quantifiable measures discussed above. Indigenized success and achievement involved learning aspects of traditional Native American knowledge systems specifically regarding learning aspects of culture, language, and ceremony.

Kristin Smith and Dominic Smith (Choctaw/African American) are a mother/son duo who provided a collaborative interview where they built upon each other's answers. Kristin is an employment lawyer in the Bay Area and Dominic was a high school student at the time of the interview. Kristin and Dominic explicitly connected learning about their heritage to Indigenized success. Dominic Smith (Choctaw/African American) stated: "I've talked to my mom about learning more about our heritage…I want to make sure that I learn things about my heritage." Kristin Smith (Choctaw/African American) elaborated on her son's point stating that: "I want to make sure that he as an individual, when everything else fades away, that at the end of the day you know who you are, where you're from, [and] what language our people spoke." At the center of this interaction between mother and son is the profound desire to remain grounded in place, tradition, and language.

In a similar way to Kristin and Dominic Smith, Dakota Target (Diné/Sioux) discusses an Indigenized success emphasizing the lens of language reclamation and revitalization.

> Success for me would be learning the language. It would be a great thing to [learn] music and songs. I love hearing drummers, you know, especially at pow wows and know what kind of drummers they are, where they come from, what tribe they are, what they're talking about you know? I know for me [success] would be…learning about different tribes or their language.

For Dakota (Diné/Sioux) learning Native American languages and the oral histories inherent therein, through the medium of Pow Wow music, is an integral step in exemplifying Indigenized success. Beyond learning a language Dakota (Diné/Sioux) expresses Indigenized success as the importance of having an Intertribal comprehension of language to be able to form a deeper understanding what different tribes are communicating through the oral traditions of song. In this example Indigenized success is framed through the *mutualistic* relationship between language learning, obtaining cultural knowledge, and Intertribal solidarity. In this case, Dakota expresses the desire for a *culturally revitalizing pedagogy* that incorporates language revitalization and a deeper connection to cultural knowledge that contributes to Intertribal solidarity.

Erick Aleman (Salvadoran American), the afterschool program coordinator for the American Indian Child Resource Center with six years of experience in the position, discussed the simultaneous difficulty of articulating the concept of Indigenized academic success while providing concrete examples of what Indigenized academic success looks like in the AICRC after school programs.

> I think honestly that's something that's difficult for me to even grasp because I've come in with western ideas of academia and what not. Through collaborating with my coworkers, [who] have different kinds of knowledge bases, I see it whether through our cooking internship that focuses on Indigenous food sources and how to cook, the identification of such foods as well as our gardening program [where the] students are learning traditional gardening techniques you can see the positive effects of these types of activities with the students, whether it's high levels of engagement, or just [that] their demeanor completely changes when they participate.

For Erick the most successful programs at AICRC promote Indigenized knowledges such as participation in growing and preparing Indigenous foods. In this sense, Indigenized academic success is firmly rooted in an educator's ability to provide Indigenized curriculum with regard to both topic and pedagogical approach.

Beyond an Indigenized achievement defined through the parameters of language and culture, certain study participants discussed an Indigenized achievement rooted in the knowledge gained through ceremonial participation. Mary Anne Doan (Cherokee/Cree), an educator with 40 years of experience working with dozens of North American tribes in the areas of early childhood education and language revitalization, discussed Indigenized success within the contexts of learning aspects of culture through cultivating ceremonial knowledge.

> It's kind of like the vision quest which I've done. I have a strong medicine background. When you do that, what happens is you go in with a lot of questions and you don't know who you are. If you come out the other side, you really can define who you are, and your identity feels really solid. You know what you've achieved along the way and what you've learned along the way. That really is success. That's what happens when you come out of that sweat lodge or out of the wilderness journey or whatever is your process. You've wrestled with some things and you've grown. Here's how I've grown, here's how I've learned, here's how this is going to help me become a man or a woman in the world, you know?

For Mary Anne Doane (Cherokee/Cree), going through the ceremony of sitting on the hill provides a context for Indigenized success through the *mutualistic* cultivation of ceremonial knowledge and deep self-reflection. In this case Indigenized success is expressed through the direct participation in an Indigenous ceremonial tradition, and "measured" through the knowledge and insight gained through that participation.

Finally, Corrina Gould (Chochenyo Ohlone/Karkin Ohlone), co-founder of the Segorea Te Land Trust, discusses Indigenized academic success through the *mutualistic* relationship of exposing students to a world outside of the city, providing spaces for the cultivation of ceremonial knowledges, and instilling Native pride in students.

> I think giving them [students] different experiences, exposing them to new ideas and new places outside of the city [and] making sure that they have access to ceremony if that's what they and their family would like to do. Trying to instill the cultural ethics and values of Native traditions while they're at the program and talk about that. Instill pride and try to talk about those kinds of things.

When indigenized academic success is framed as expanding one's worldview, embracing Indigenous ceremonial knowledge and cultivating a sense of pride through that process, it is easy to see the *mutualistic* connection between teaching Native culture and language, connecting to land/place, and fostering a sense of empowerment amongst urban Native students.

V. Native American Knowledges and Urban Intertribal Youth Leadership

Preparing the next generation to step into leadership roles is a central tenant for any pedagogical approach. Indigenized culturally revitalizing pedagogical approaches seek to develop youth leadership that is firmly grounded in traditional Native American knowledge systems. The participants in this study discussed three culturally revitalizing pedagogical approaches based in traditional Native American knowledge systems that support urban Intertribal youth for leadership roles with historic examples, mentorship, and ceremonial practice.

Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaqui/Zapotec) advocates for providing Native American students with clear examples of Native heroes who have demonstrated leadership through the way that they walk in the world.

> How do we show achievement and what you can be against all odds? I pulled out Native American heroes. I started with sports people like Jim Thorp and did a PowerPoint on him, his education, and what he did. [I also did] Winona LaDuke and how to start your own nonprofit and her environmental work. I did between ten and twelve [Native American] leaders and talked about what their background was, whether they had an education or not, and what leadership and success really means.

To step into a leadership role, one must first be able to see themselves as a leader. For urban Native American students, that means seeing Native leaders who have come from similar places and have overcome similar obstacles. Having Native leaders serve as examples to urban Native youth provides potential frameworks and models that students can pull from as they navigate the world. Given the long legacy of Native American erasure in the U.S. merely exposing students

to an in-depth curriculum on Native American heroes not only serves as a disruption to educational erasure, but constitutes an example of *culturally revitalizing curricula.* Despite the importance of teaching students about Native leaders, it is also important to ensure that urban Native students have models of leadership in their own lives.

One excellent way of ensuring that Native American students have access to Native leaders is to create mentorship programs, that pair students with Native American mentors that are working in a student's field of interest. The pedagogical approach of mentorship/apprenticeship is rooted in traditional Indigenous value systems (see Young 2020) and has served as an important pedagogical approach for thousands of years. Given this legacy of mentorship rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems, crafting Indigenized pedagogical structures that allow for mentorship/apprenticeship constitutes an example of *culturally revitalizing pedagogy*. Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), the nationally renowned Native American author of the New York Times best seller *There, There* talks about how mentorship can be rooted in "an Indigenous point of view" and serves as an important strategy for supporting up-and-coming Native authors in navigating the world of publishing.

> I think my ability to help my community is success and my ability to be able to mentor other Native writers, to me is success. I think that's very much an Indigenous point of view. I've been teaching…[and] I'll be taking on four students this spring. Ever since I've been teaching, I've been sending student work to my agency and helping them have access to the publishing world.

For Tommy Orange, it is important to share his success through mentoring other Native American authors. This mentorship not only includes teaching and learning the craft of writing and providing tactics for navigating the publishing world, but it also includes providing mentees with access to the social capital that he has been able to attain through his literary success.

Providing students with access to pedagogical approaches and curriculum that are rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems, supports urban Native students in eventually stepping into leadership roles within their communities. Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/Hawaiian/Mexican) grew up in Oakland, had access to urban Native hubs that grounded his formation in an Indigenized worldview, and he eventually stepped into a leadership role in the community. His leadership role is both programmatic and ceremonial. In the following quote he discusses some of the considerations and logistics he must take into account through his ceremonial leadership role.

> Leadership was probably the main thing. Even conducting ceremonies. It's harder than just conducting regular events cause then you don't wanna mess up. Ceremonies are harder than coping with regular events. Facilitation and coordination makes it easier. I think just logistically and financially figure[ing] out a coming-of-age ceremony. Let's [plan for] four days and get all of these speakers. I see a lot of leadership [in this type of event].

By stepping into a leadership role to coordinate a four-day coming of age ceremony, Hector Padi exemplifies the impact of leadership rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems, that engage the logistical realities of running a program within the western world while simultaneously being hyper attentive to the ceremonial protocols expected to facilitate a coming-of-age ceremony. This type of Indigenized leadership is needed in both being able to navigate the western world as an urban Native person, and to carry forward traditions for future generations.

VI. Traditional Ecological Knowledges and the Education of Urban Native American Youth

Traditional ecological knowledges (TEK) are a central component to Indigenous lifeways throughout the hemisphere, thus must serve as a central component to *culturally revitalizing pedagogies* in service to urban Intertribal youth. The participants in this study discussed three

primary considerations for engaging traditional ecological knowledges in service to urban Intertribal youth. First, educators must be able to teach traditional ecological knowledges while still navigating the realities of westernized educational systems. Next, lessons rooted in traditional ecological knowledges can be taught at every educational level. Finally, traditional ecological knowledges provide an important opportunity for teaching elements of responsible land stewardship and land tenure.

Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaqui/Zapotec) discussed pedagogical approaches that incorporate TEK in service to urban Intertribal youth. One approach is to design curricula that:

> Creat[es] this love for the plants, animals, and the environment. I think that [this] is how we do it. [Create] a new earth-based curriculum, that will just naturally have the spirituality and responsibility in it.

This holistic and Indigenized educational approach is particularly intriguing because it normalizes an Indigenous environmental perspective that love for the earth is intrinsically connected to human responsibility and the human spirit. This approach intervenes upon westernized divisions between earth, humanity, and the beings with which we share the planet, positing a more Indigenized perspective where human beings are integrated, symbiotic, mutualistic, and reciprocal relatives within the earth's ecosystems. Monique expands upon this point by explaining ways in which she has incorporated elements of TEK in teaching Native students about the methodology and benefits of ceremonial burning for California Native people.

> One of [the lessons] was on traditional fire burning. The Yuroks just started doing traditional fire burning on a large scale, basket weavers were doing it. I wrote about what traditional burning means and how to do it. You want to do it respectfully to remind the kids, you don't want a bunch of arson, but you want them to understand that traditionally we burned to make this stick stronger, to make the medicine stronger, to make sure there's enough grasses and stuff for the animals, that kind of stuff.

Given the ever-expanding annual wildfires in California, that are a direct result of non-Native mismanagement of land, as well as the ominous threat of human-driven global climate change, *culturally revitalizing* curriculum that addresses the use of fire for responsible land stewardship could not be more relevant at the present moment.

Elements of traditional ecological knowledge can be taught to students at every level. For example, Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaqui/Zapotec) also elaborated on a curriculum that she designed for young children which taught them about a Yurok creation story and how it connected to the land, environment, animal relatives, and waterways on Yurok territory.

> The kid[s] do a lot of mobiles. [For example] I did a mobile with a [creation story] in it. I did a big rock because that's what that being [was] sitting on, and then hanging down with everything that they created at that moment, the fish, the sturgeon, the frog. They're doing the art to reinforce the story. Then they take it home. [Their parents/guardians might ask] "Oh, what did you make?" [When they respond] they will reinforce that traditional story, that child remembering the story and how things are made because most of the kids that are Native and all the tribes there have that. It just keeps reinforcing the cultural traditional aspects of [how] everything's created, we're all equal, we have responsibilities, all that kind of stuff. [The curriculum] is laid out like the story, the questions, the conversation, the wordlists, the activity that they do, the art that they do, and then going home and sharing it.

This pedagogical approach addresses the aural, kinesthetic, and verbal modalities of learning allowing students to listen to creation stories, physically build a mobile, and then verbally recount the story to their parents. Beyond the modalities of learning, assignments such as these support student memory while conveying and reinforcing important cultural knowledge that is critical to the Yurok people of Northern California. Moreover, this lesson reinforces important Indigenized principles such as equality and responsibility, while meeting the literacy standards of westernized education be it reading, critical analysis through answering questions, or spelling and grammar through wordlists.

Delving deeper into Indigenized educational approaches that address traditional Native American knowledge systems and the relationship to traditional ecological knowledges, both Monique Sanoquie (Chumash/Apache/Yaki/Zapotec) and Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) discussed the potential in developing curriculum around sustainable deer hunting and Native American land tenure. Monique Sanoquie's approach was the development of an art project designed to support Native students, who have some familiarity with hunting, in both understanding traditional survival skills as well as developing knowledge around the uses of every part of the deer.

> As part of the art project, I wanted to do a deer course, but I wanted it to be part of the traditional survival skills. So, I did a deer [image] and I did all the cuts that you would do like a butcher cut on it. There's a back strap and this is for stew, the sinews used for cord, the whole entrepreneurship. [The curriculum] was piecing apart the deer. I went to my boss and I was like, "is this a little bit more than expected?" [She responded] "no this is perfect!" Our kids, most of them are familiar with this, but they haven't really got to cut up a deer. So now they're learning what all that is about.

This pedagogical approach not only holds the potential of addressing visual, aural, and kinesthetic modalities of learning but also teaches important lessons about sustainable entrepreneurship in understanding the multiple uses for every part of the deer while avoiding wastefulness that is often present in westernized hunting approaches. While it is understandable, that learning to butcher a deer, sustainably or not, may sound deeply unappealing from a westernized educational perspective, it is important to remember that sustainable forms of hunting were and are important aspects of traditional Native American diets, which in turn have important impacts on Native health outcomes (see Nelson 2008). In addition, sustainable land stewardship and tenure as it relates to the protection and sustainable harvesting of Native plant and animal species has thousands of years of history on the "American" continent (see Mann 2005).

A curriculum designed around sustainable deer hunting holds tremendous potential in supporting students in developing understandings around their connection to food as well as around broader concepts of Native American land tenure. Ben Schleffar (Pikáni Blackfeet) discussed current and ineffective approaches to the overpopulation of deer in Northern California in establishing the need for a curriculum that addresses this important issue. Ben states that current westernized approaches to dealing with the overpopulation of deer demonstrate:

> …a fundamental lack of understanding of how the earth is best tended [and] how animals are best tended. It was six, seven years ago, they had someone from a helicopter in Point Reyes just shoot like 400 deer, cause there was an overpopulation because we killed off the mountain lions, we killed off the bears. We don't let people hunt the same way as they used too, and elk are an attraction in that area. They want to keep the grazing area for the elk. That makes no sense. There [are] so many Pomo reservations in the area that would have loved to take that meat. Instead, it all got burnt.

The scenario outlined in this quote demonstrates the slippery slope of shortsighted environmental planning approaches and the need for curricular interventions that support students in understanding land tenure from a more Indigenized holistic perspective. The removal of keystone species such as the mountain lion, to promote ranching and farming, impacts the overpopulation of deer and elk which is then promoted as a tourist attraction. When the environmental impact of the overpopulation of deer and elk becomes unsustainable, drastic measures such as shooting deer from a helicopter and disposing of the carcasses become normalized, despite very practical solutions to these issues. Ben continues stating:

> …this is how we make a safe haven for the animals. We'll do it in a respectful way. We do it in a way that nourishes the earth, nourishes our bodies, and is reciprocal. And that knowledge, it's so powerful. In the way I was taught, you don't kill an animal, you don't hunt an animal. The animal "gives away" to you. In every Native tradition I've ever studied, there's been stories of the beginning of time when people were hungry and an animal that gave away, an animal that specifically stayed to face the hunter.

Using principles of TEK to develop pedagogical approaches that support students in understanding how to create a safe haven for animals and promotes health that demonstrates

reciprocity with the earth is indeed a powerful educational proposition. Not only does it address multiple modalities of learning, but it holds tremendous potential for incorporating Indigenized literacy (both oral and written), while being culturally responsive to Native students, and supporting Native communities in reconnecting with aspects of food sovereignty.

VII. Honoring Rites of Passage

An important educational intervention that is firmly rooted in cultural revitalization and traditional Native American knowledge systems is honoring the rites of passage of adolescents. If Intertribal adolescents are not honored through rites of passage rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems, the risk of youth creating their own rites of passage (i.e. drug use, gang membership, unprotected sex, etc.) exponentially rises. The participants in this study discussed the importance of rites of passage in counteracting the pitfalls of urban life through reminding youth of how precious they are, acknowledging/honoring stages of growth to help build youth resiliency, as well as concrete strategies for operationalizing, practicing, and institutionalizing rites of passage within Intertribal urban communities.

Crystal Salas (Lakota/Hawaiian/Mescalero Apache), the Director of Youth Services at the Native American Health Center in Oakland California, discusses the toxic environments inherent to cities, and the need for rites of passage rooted in traditional Native American value systems to counteract the impact of these environments.

> Our young people don't know where they fit in the world and even in their family. We have these toxic environments that are coming into our homes and stealing our children in a whole different way. [The toxic environments] give you drugs and alcohol, through gangs, through sexual trafficking. Our kids are falling prey to this because they're susceptible because they don't have that strong foundation of culture or of their place in the world or how important they really are. I see the lack of it [rites of passage] in and outside of the Native community. From my experience, I attribute a lot of the dysfunction to the lack of [rites of passage]. It's scary.

For Crystal Salas rites of passage grounded in traditional Native American knowledge systems remind students of how precious they are within their community, despite living in a world that degrades their humanity, providing them with a sense of place and a sense of purpose. Rites of passage hold the potential of serving as a necessary counterbalance to the toxic environments of urban areas, which hold the danger of "stealing our children in a whole different way." Additionally, Crystal Salas reminds us that rites of passage are not only important in the lives of urban Native youth but hold importance for youth outside of the Native community who may be experiencing similar issues.

Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) pondered the potential impact of re-establishing rite of passage ceremonies, saying:

> There were traditional ways of becoming an adult, coming into yourself, stages of growth that were acknowledged. Those stages of growth aren't acknowledged anymore. How do we do that? It's almost easier to do it with girls than it is for boys, because girls, their body changes and something happens. They began to menstruate, and they have those things in their ceremonies that definitely tie into that. Boys in an urban setting, what do they do? How is it that we begin to bring those traditions back to them? I think that when they feel like they're a part of something like that, it builds up self-esteem. It gives them a place to be in the community. It gives them responsibilities. So really trying to figure that kind of stuff out as well. How do we? I think those are important things to build resiliency. I think that having those ceremonies helps to build resiliency for our students.

Corrina Gould poses and important question when she states "How do we acknowledge" stages of growth to establish rites of passage for urban Intertribal youth? This can be particularly challenging when working with Native youth who come from multiple Nations and traditions, with varying access and knowledge of traditional practices, and who require gender specific rites of passage. This reality requires that ethical establishment of an Intertribal ethos, where rite of passage norms across nations can be recognized and honored in a good way. Corrina Gould nevertheless emphasizes the importance of rites of passage in supporting Native youth in feeling

like they are a part of something, in building self-esteem, in helping them understand their place and responsibilities within a broader community, and in helping them build resiliency.

Manny Lieras (Navajo/Comanche) provided a series of important insights pertaining to urban Native youth and rites of passage. Many of Manny's insights deepen our understanding of how to operationalize, practice, and institutionalize rites of passage within urban Native hubs that serve urban Intertribal youth. One of the tactics that he discusses is aligning AICRC rites of passage with an engrained K-12 rite of passage, the transition from middle school to high school.

> Some of the things we've done here is we really emphasize that middle school transition because that's been the rite of passage. I think that is just more acceptable within our society. So really honoring that transition from middle school to high school and what that means. We have our annual recognition night, where we gift give and we talk about that this is a transition where you are entering into adulthood. Granted the youth are often times a little bit older than that 12, 13 mark. That's one way we do it.

By aligning one of the AICRC rites of passage with an important K-12 transition, AICRC is demonstrating flexibility in adapting an Indigenized rite of passage practice to a Westernized K-12 academic calendar timeframe. By integrating this practice to the academic calendar AICRC is Indigenizing and bringing culturally revitalizing rite of passage designed to build resiliency, into an academic transition that can often feel unnerving or scary to young students. Another aspect of rites of passage, that Manny Lieras discussed was encouraging and empowering students to demonstrate responsibility in carrying out community activities.

> We don't do everything for them. It's like, you want to have a Christmas party? You got to haul those boxes up. You know what I mean? You all do the work. You sweep, you clean, you do everything. Traditionally our tribal societies function as big teams. Everybody moving and shaking, having fun together. And that's how it has to be because if you just have everything done for you, you create this sense of entitlement. When you feel like I'm part of this team you create buy-in, you create a sense of belonging. A sense of - not necessarily ownership in the form that "this is mine" - but ownership in the sense of "I belong," I have a vital role, I have a responsibility. Those are things that we've provided here so that it's not like, oh, everything's just being given to you and done for you. It's like, "no, we're all doing this together."

Rites of passage based on the values of traditional Tribal societies where every community member plays a pivotal role in the broader "team," nurture and cultivate a sense of belonging and responsibility for community while minimizing a sense of egocentric entitlement. This produces a collective educational sensibility where more meaningful accomplishments can be executed through teamwork than through individual exceptionalism, serving as an active educational intervention for Americanized myths of meritocracy, rugged individualism, and so-called "bootstrap" exceptionalism.

VIII. Access to Ceremony

Access to ceremony saves lives. Ceremony holds the potential to support young people through challenging transitions within adolescence. Providing ceremonial access to urban Native American youth is a pedagogical strategy which highlights youth agency in that a young person can choose whether or not to participate in ceremony and to what degree, reinforces a sense of belonging, serves as a deterrent to substance abuse, and provides important life skills.

Hector Padi (Muskogee Creek/ Hawaiian/Mexican) discusses the importance of providing access to ceremony stating:

> One [important factor] is access to being able to learn [ceremony]. There's a big need for [ceremony] because I mean, at some point, each kid no matter where they are gets depressed. There's that one moment where, you know, [a] teenager, whatever, they're depressed. I think now there is more awareness around it. I still think access to cultural ceremonies [is] a big thing. It's one thing that helped me and many of the people I know that are [currently] succeeding.

In this quote Hector connects the emotional hardships that are inherent to adolescence to the importance of providing access to ceremony that supports teens in intervening on those hardships. Within this framework there is a recognition of the physiological and psychological

obstacles encountered by most adolescents' as well as a culturally rooted responsive, and revitalizing ceremonial/pedagogical intervention.

Tommy Orange (Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma), who grew up in Oakland discussed the impact of growing up in a household where access to ceremony was available.

> I learned a lot in ceremony from between when I was 18 to maybe like when I was 30. I was going to ceremonies off and on. My dad very much wanted to pass on a certain fireplace to me, but it's not really my way, but I definitely got a lot from it.

In this quote Tommy Orange demonstrates the importance of having ceremony available to him as well as the importance of having choice to engage with ceremony in his own way. Having the agency to engage with ceremony in his own way allowed Tommy to arrive to certain insight that would support him along his life journey. For this reason, it is important to remember that while ceremony can offer important insight and teachings to young people, these teachings must come from a place of youth agency.

Ceremonial interventions can be very powerful for urban Native American youth grappling with issues of belonging, identity, and connection to a "higher power." Devina Miller (Oglala Lakota/Costa Rican), an educator at the American Indian Child Resource Center as well as a former student of the center, discusses her introduction to ceremony and the ways that ceremony supported her in understanding her Native American heritage. She also discusses the ways that ceremony supported her connection to community and helped her disrupt damaging narratives referring to Native identity.

> It came to a point where I found ceremony and I went to my first sweat lodge. I started and internship at the Native American Health Center. I think that's when I first started questioning, "I know I'm an urban Indian, but what are my traditions? What are some of my ceremonies? [What are] my stories from my people? With some of my coworkers there, I got to ask a lot of questions and learn and participate in ceremony. That really helped me stay grounded and sustain, keep[ing] my mind in a positive direction instead of listening to all the kind of stereotypical booming mess.

In this quote Devina begins to outline the pedagogical implications of ceremonial participation. For Devina, participation in ceremony supported her in opening an avenue of critical inquiry where she started asking about her traditions, ceremonies, and stories. Additionally, the communal aspect of ceremony allowed for a learning environment where she began to receive guidance on her journey in answering her questions. The pedagogy of ceremony also serves as a decolonial intervention to Christian cultural dominance and indoctrination. An example of this process was expressed when Devina discussed the ways in which ceremony supported her in reclaiming an Indigenized relationship to prayer and the sacred.

> I think having a community to fall back on has been really important throughout my experiences in academics, but also just my personal life. Like being forced to go to church and not totally agreeing with what they're trying to push on me. For a while I stopped praying. It wasn't until two summers ago where the kids and my mentors where like "you need to reclaim that." A lot of things that I had lost in my life or that brought me down, my community gave back to me or helped me recover.

Communal ceremonial participation and the pedagogical strategies that they employ not only support the critical examination of westernized structures of dominance but hold the potential of supporting urban Native communities in recovering from the impacts of these structures of dominance.

Access to ceremony can serve as a powerful deterrent to substance abuse, both supporting youth in avoiding harmful practices and providing youth with a caring atmosphere. The following exchange explicitly demonstrates the ways in which a ceremonial lifestyle can deter substance abuse, while also providing young people with historical knowledge about the ways in which alcohol has been weaponized against Native communities.

> Dani: What impact has the ceremonial lifestyle had on you?
>
> Student A: Well, one thing is I never done drugs so I've never drunken beer. Everyone else I know does it and I don't do it because it's not part of the culture. That's what kept me sober.

> Dani: Why have you chosen to make that choice? I know it can be hard to make that choice as a young person sometimes.
>
> Student A: I know back in the day real traditional people didn't drink or anything like that. That was part of our people. I don't want to do it because it wasn't part of our people. It was brought in by white men.
>
> Dani: What about in terms of traditional ways? How was achievement valued by your people?
>
> Student A: Just learning your tradition. A lot of people don't know our tradition. Out of all the people I know there are kids who are Native and that's a small percent. In that small percent there are kids who actually are traditional. A lot of them are Christians, Catholics, and stuff.

Student A has a clear understanding that alcohol and drug addiction are not part of traditional Native American cultural practice, as well as an understanding of the ways in which alcohol abuse became weaponized within Native American communities with the arrival of settler colonialism. Additionally, Student A explicitly characterizes the importance of learning one's tradition to Indigenized conceptions of achievement, outlining the small percentage of Native youth that carry forward tradition and comparing these carriers of knowledge to an increasing number of Native youth who have adopted western religious traditions. This assertion reinforces the importance of providing urban Native youth with access to ceremony, as well as the need for understanding ceremony as a critical pedagogical intervention for urban Native American youth.

Finally, traditional Native American understandings of the world cultivated through ceremonial participation can provide important life skills that help Native American students navigate the world more effectively. Carol Wapepah (Leech Lake Ojibwe) describes some of these ceremonial educational interventions in the following passage.

> The younger ones are taught to give thanks. And also, to call anybody of a certain age and above to be elder, their grandma, grandpa. We have Richard Moose Camp come here. He does ceremonies here. That's a great way of teaching. We've had honoring of elders [and] honoring of children ceremonies. It's such a different atmosphere than the

> one outside these doors, you know, everybody [is] really supportive of each other and teaching, not making fun because [you] don't know something.

While many of these pedagogical interventions are common practices within Native communities, within urban spaces where these practices are often not normalized, the practices of giving thanks, honoring elders, etc. take on an added significance for urban Intertribal youth. All of these testimonies demonstrate the importance of expanding ceremonial access in order to provide the teachings inherent to ceremonial experiences to Intertribal youth, of developing approaches to help westernized educational institutions understand the significance and importance of providing ceremonial access to urban Native students, and the need for tactics that Native American educators can employ to infuse traditional values inherent to ceremony into everyday learning experiences.

IX. Conclusion

Culturally revitalizing pedagogical approaches rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems serve as a primary educational intervention for confronting the erasure experienced by urban Intertribal youth in the Oakland Bay Area. These culturally revitalizing approaches are important because they support Native youth in developing expansive worldviews, help students navigate the western world more effectively, empower students to be more resilient, and guide students to develop their own relationship to tradition. The five primary aspects of culturally revitalizing pedagogy rooted in traditional Native American knowledge systems where an Indigenized achievement grounded in learning Native American language and culture, the use of traditional knowledge systems to encourage Native American youth leadership, the engagement with traditional ecological knowleges, the incorporation of rites of passage for urban Native youth, and the importance of providing Intertribal youth with access to ceremony. All five of

these aspects interact *mutualistically* to produce educational ecosystems that are empowering to urban Intertribal youth.

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Chapter 7 - Walking Forward While Looking Back:
Implications for Urban Native Educational Communities, Teacher Education, Public Schooling, and Educational Policy

In my early 20's I began to learn aspects of the oral history rooted in the *Danza Mexicayotl* tradition. I learned that *Danzas* are not just *Danzas* but instead are living histories depicted through the medium of ceremonial dance. Every dance tells a story, every step is a chapter within that story, and our bodies become archives for the embodied knowledges that the stories convey. When I understood the oral history behind the *danza* I was able to understand the deeper teachings contained therein. These teachings are deeply impactful in ways that have informed my scholarship in the present. The danza that has most informed my scholarship is *La Danza de Tonantzin Tlalli Coatlique* or The Dance of Our Revered Mother Earth with The Skirt of Serpents. This *danza* as well as the oral history behind each step of the *danza* was taught to me by Beto Maestas, a younger *danzante* who had grown up in the *Danza Mexicayotl* tradition, and therefore had a lot of knowledge to share.

While the oral history contained in this *danza* is another project, one step contained within this *danza* is pertinent to the theme of the chapter. The step contains three key parts that help convey the underlying teaching. In the first part the *danzante* steps forward with his left foot, faces forward, and gestures forward with his arm, while keeping his right foot grounded. For the second part, the *danzante* steps backwards with the left foot, crosses the left leg behind the right leg, and follows the motion of the left leg with his head and with both arms. Finally, the *danzante* takes two steps forward with both legs while continuing to look and motion backwards. The entire step takes four seconds and is repeated four times first moving to the left and then moving to the right. The teaching behind this step is the importance of walking forward while looking back. Any steps that we take forward must be informed by the histories and

legacies of struggle of those who came before us. We stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, honor their teachings, and preserve the integrity of those teachings while allowing them to guide our current trajectory. Simultaneously, we repurpose ancestral teachings for our current contexts carrying the knowledge forward towards future generations.

With the hard-fought victories in establishing Ethnic Studies as a general education requirement for high school students through AB-101 and for college students through AB-1460 comes important opportunities to confront the erasure of urban Native American students legislatively, through educational leadership, and through teacher education. Urban Intertribal communities are ideally situated to support the ethical roll-out of Ethnic Studies curricula through AB-101 and AB-1460 as it pertains to urban Intertribal experiences. To the confront erasure of urban Intertribal communities' state and local government in California must invest resources in urban Native hubs both to ensure that the hubs continue to effectively serve urban Native communities and to provide compensation to hub employees to support the ethical roll-out of AB-101 and AB-1460.

II. Implications for Educational Policy in California

This study holds important implications for Ethnic Studies related policy in California including AB-101 designed to ensure that Ethnic Studies is offered at the high school level during the 2025-26 school year, AB-1460 which has created Ethnic Studies as a general education requirement at each of the California State University campuses, the core competencies for this legislation, and the breadth requirements for transferring from community college. Policy creation that begins to address the dysbiotic structural inequalities of erasure of Native Americans through general educational requirements is a fundamental component of extending

the safety zone for Native students, however there is often a sharp learning curve that exists between policy creation in Sacramento and policy implementation in the rest of California.

On the one hand the formal struggle to establish Ethnic Studies as a general education requirement has lasted the better part of a decade starting on January 14, 2014, with the establishment of the Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies and culminating with the approval of AB-1460 in November of 2020 (Ethnic Studies Requirement Development Timeline). This prolonged legislative struggle came on the back of a prolonged movement based and academic struggle stemming from the Third World Liberation protests of 1968. For these reasons and many more, the strategic and academic importance of AB-1460 and AB-101 cannot be understated. At its best, when the new general education requirements are taught to students by highly qualified educators, the implementation holds the potential to produce liberatory and emancipatory educational spaces that uplift and support students of all backgrounds, ultimately extending the educational safety zone for urban Native American Students. The core competencies for Ethnic Studies adopted through California Education Code 89032c are strong calling for the analysis and articulation of key concepts (i.e., racism, equity, white supremacy, etc.), the application of theory and knowledge produced by historically marginalized racial groups, the critical analysis of intersectionality, a focus on liberatory movements, and an active engagement with anti-racist/anti-colonial issues (AS-3460-20/AA Core Competencies). These core competencies have set the precedent for Ethnic Studies education in California moving forward.

Assembly Bill 1460 (AB-1460) was the first legislation passed addressing the Ethnic Studies general education requirement, thus holding important legal precedent for all future legislation. This legislation requires California State Universities to provide Ethnic Studies

courses at each of its campuses, clearly and effectively defines the parameters of Ethnic Studies as a field, cites studies on the benefits of Ethnic Studies for students of color and for white students, and describes how an Ethnic Studies education plays an important role in helping build an inclusive multicultural democracy in California. Students who graduate in the 2024-25 academic year will be required to take one 3-unit Ethnic Studies course as a requirement for a BA (Assembly Bill 1460). At the same time legislation has received substantial resistance from right wing groups such as the "Californians for Equal Rights Foundation" who have invested substantial resources in arguing that "anti-racist initiatives are racially divisive," that Ethnic studies seeks to indoctrinate students, and that students of color are victimized while white students are labeled as oppressors (Taketa 2022, p. 1). Ultimately, any policy discussion regarding AB-1460 and other similar legislation must be situated-within and strategically respond-to the conflictual and at times absurdist political landscape of the post-Trump era.

The current language in the existing legislation allows space for the ongoing minimization, invisibilization, and even erasure of Native American communities, requiring ongoing vigilance over the implementation of the Ethnic Studies curriculum, and future refinement to the legislative language. The primary limitation of AB-1460 with regard to Native American Studies and Native American issues is that students can take a course in any of the four primary Ethnic Studies fields (i.e. Asian American Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, African American Studies, Native American Studies) in order to fulfill the requirement. While student choice is an important component of any productive educational experience, the requirement does not require that all four fields within Ethnic Studies be addressed. As a result, students are not required to take a Native American Studies course or even a Comparative Ethnic Studies course that would address Native American topics/issues. The legislation as currently

constructed still allows for the erasure of Native Americans, or indeed any of the other three primary Ethnic Studies fields. While the 3-unit 1-semester Ethnic Studies requirement is an important first step, it is insufficient to fully explore the richness of experience expressed through the field of Ethnic Studies. To confront erasure, the requirement should be, at minimum, 6-units over two semesters and include an Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies course paired with a course of the students choosing in one of the subfields of Ethnic Studies. In this way, students will at minimum be exposed to all four fields within Ethnic Studies.

Assembly Bill 101 (AB-101) requires that the Instructional Quality Commission and State Board of Education adopt, modify, or revise a model curriculum in Ethnic Studies. High Schools must begin offering one semester courses in Ethnic Studies by the 2025-26 school year. While high schools are required to offer at least one semester they can choose to offer one full year of Ethnic Studies instruction. The course must be based on the model curriculum, an existing Ethnic Studies course at the school, an Ethnic Studies course that meets the A-6 requirements of UC/CSU, or a locally developed Ethnic Studies course approved by the governing board of the school district or charter school. The course must be firmly rooted in the field of Ethnic Studies and the state of California is required to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the State (Assembly Bill 101).

AB-101 does not explicitly specify what constitutes the field of Ethnic Studies, thus the parameters of the field as set by AB-1460 provide the legal precedent. These parameters include a "special focus on four historically defined racialized core groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina and Latino Americans" (AB 1460, Section I). As with AB-1460 the potential for Native American erasure still exists with the implementation of AB-101 in that students can take a course in any of the four primary Ethnic Studies fields (i.e. Asian

American Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, African American Studies, Native American Studies) in order to fulfill the requirement. This means that students can fulfill the Ethnic Studies requirement without having to learn about Native American people. As such, the high schools seeking to fulfill the parameters of AB-101 while simultaneously avoiding Native American erasure should offer, at minimum, a Comparative Ethnic Studies course which addresses the four core fields of Ethnic Studies. Even within the scope of a high school class on Comparative Ethnic Studies, the danger of minimization of the Native American experience still exists if educators are not well versed in Native American Studies.

Care is needed for the teaching of California and National Native American history. Ultimately, urban Native American communities must remain vigilant on the implementation of AB-1460 and AB-101 recognizing both the potential of the legislation to extend the educational safety zone for urban Native Students, as well as the real possibility for continued erasure of Native American communities despite the new legislation. Engaging with policy is one of many important steps in creating more empowering educational environments for urban Native American youth, however it is up to urban Native communities and urban educator allies to continue to extend the safety zone for urban Native youth through educational strategies that go beyond the realm of policy, with the broader goal in mind of making Ethnic Studies available for K-12 students.

III. Implications for School Leadership and School Districts

With the passing of AB-1460 and AB-101 in the state of California school leadership and school districts should feel more empowered to engage and infuse their curricula and pedagogical approaches with elements of Ethnic Studies. Ethically incorporating Native American Studies

into the Ethnic Studies curriculum is an important step in disrupting the curricular erasure and misrepresentation of Native American people. For non-Native peoples this will likely be the first educational exposure that they have to Native American issues, thus it is incredibly important that the curriculum be implemented ethically and effectively to ensure maximum impact. A major challenge that the roll out of Ethnic Studies faces at the high school level is the reality that most U.S. educators have not had the opportunity to learn about Native American communities through the lens of Native American Studies. This reality will undoubtedly impact an educator's comfort level and ability to roll out a Native American Studies curriculum. The ethnical incorporation of Native American Studies should include the hiring of multiple district level experts in Native American Studies to circulate throughout the district providing teacher trainings and teaching classes when necessary. Ethical and reciprocal engagement with urban Native American hubs, who have been doing intergenerational work on the ethical incorporation of Native American issues into school curriculum, should be highlighted throughout the curriculum roll-out process. This is important given the history of curricular erasure around Native American issues, the intense workload that urban educators experience, and the potential for "innovation fatigue." All these factors point towards the need for additional support in ethically, effectively, and impactfully rolling out a Native American Studies curriculum at the high school level. Ultimately, Ethnic Studies courses serving high school students should adopt certain aspects of culturally sustaining pedagogies elaborated upon in this study including the collective creation of educational experiences, non-appropriative circle pedagogies, and honoring the timelines of students.

In addition, the sections of AB-1460 and AB-101 that allow for localized adaptations to the Ethnic Studies curriculum present important opportunities for school sites with larger urban

Native American populations to delve more deeply into the realm of Native American Studies. At the district level this could include the creation of an urban Native educational pipeline, where urban Native students have access to a culturally sustaining and culturally revitalizing pedagogy from preschool through their senior year of high school. In Oakland, an informal Native American pipeline already exists that can serve as a model for a formalized, institutionalized, supported, and funded urban Native American educational pipeline. Under this model schools like Hintil Kuu Ca, West Lake Middle School, and Street Academy, Skyline Highschool would become Native American serving institutions providing, at minimum, one class per semester rooted in an Indigenized culturally sustaining and/or culturally revitalizing pedagogy. This would include many of the educational approaches that are currently being carried out within Oakland's Native Hubs including learning aspects of traditional Native American knowledge systems, providing Indigenized frameworks for Native American youth leadership, education of traditional ecological knowledge systems, the explicit use of Indigenized rites of passage, and providing ceremonial access to Native youth. Engaging Oakland's urban Native Hubs in ethical and reciprocal ways and honoring their intergenerational knowledge base in working with urban Native American communities, is a fundamental aspect of effectively implementing an urban Native American educational pipeline.

IV. Implications for Urban Teacher Education Programs and Non-Native Urban Educators

Regarding curriculum, the first step in confronting erasure is understanding the historical legacies within the U.S. that have actively promoted and upheld the practice of Native American erasure whether it's missionization, assimilation, residential schooling, genocide, etc. Understanding these historical realities and the impact that they have on urban Intertribal youth

in the present can allow non-Native urban educators to begin the process of using their classroom space to extend the safety zone for urban Native youth. Extending the safety zone for urban Native youth has broader implications for non-Native underserved students and students of color. By extending the educational safety zone for one group educators extend the safety zone for other groups within the classroom. Just like feminism is for everbody (hooks 2014), anti-racsim is for everybody (Kendi 2019), and Ethnic Studies is for everybody, Native American Studies and the teachings therein hold important educational implications for the broader student population. Incorporating Native American Studies into the general education curriculum in an ethical and meaningful way not only brings visibility to Native issues but allows for more meaningful cross-cultural dialogue which holds the potential for cultivating more meaningful cross-cultural solidarities.

Urban teacher education programs and non-Native urban educators should have, at minimum, a basic yet evolving knowledge of the Native American territory/territories on which the cities where they teach are located. This knowledge must go beyond the parameters of a performative land acknowledgement, however, understanding and honoring the Native American territory in which one resides, is an important first step in educating oneself and one's students on the original peoples of a region. In addition, urban educators should have a working knowledge of the Native American Hubs that serve their community, the histories of those hubs, as well as the resources and services that the hubs provide. This knowledge is important in understanding urban Native regional history, supporting urban Native American students in your classroom, and seeking guidance, direction, and resources when necessary. It is important to note that seeking guidance, direction, and resources from urban Native hubs, urban educators should be willing and able to contribute to the hub in a reciprocal way. This relational

reciprocity is also important within the classroom to disrupt the often-transactional nature of westernized educational approaches.

Non-Native urban educators, who do not possess knowledge of traditional Native American knowledge systems or Native American languages, should not engage with culturally revitalizing pedagogies regarding urban Native American students. In other words, one should not teach what one does not know, one should understand the limitations of their knowledge base, and one should seek external support where needed. That said, non-Native urban educators should be equipped to help students connect with teachers within their culturally specific traditions. Moreover, non-Native urban educators should seek to cultivate reciprocal relationships with keepers of Native American knowledge systems and traditional ecological knowledges for the purpose of inviting the speakers with greater levels of expertise into the classroom.

Finally, with the incorporation of Ethnic Studies into the general education requirements for high schools through the passage of AB-101, urban high school educators will be on the front line of rolling out the new Ethnic Studies curriculum. Teacher education programs must begin/continue to prepare educators to effectively teach Ethnic Studies guided through collaborations with Ethnic Studies Departments, offering Ethnic Studies courses, and providing educators with mentorship opportunities within Ethnic Studies high school classrooms. High school teachers planning to teach Ethnic Studies must be explicitly trained in the four primary subfields of Ethnic Studies (Native American Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Latina/Latino Studies) to prepare them to teach a Comparative Ethnic Studies course and/or an in-depth course in one of the subfields. Urban high school educators already working in the field, who are being asked to teach Ethnic Studies must either have a degree in

Ethnic Studies or must undergo the appropriate training to teach Ethnic Studies in a way that is well compensated, sustainable, and will allow the teacher to have success in the classroom.

V. Implications for Urban Intertribal Communities

Investment in Urban Native Hubs is the ideal place to continue to expand the educational safety zone for urban Native American students. Beyond serving the purpose of expanding the educational safety zone historically and in the present, urban Native hubs hold immense potential for helping expand the educational safety zone into the future. Many important tactics exist for growing the safety zone including increasing visibility through more public community events that are organized and put on by urban Native hubs, formalizing and institutionalizing an urban Native American student pipeline within large school districts like OUSD and continuing to build new Native American hubs. Important opportunities exist with the emergence of AB-101, the law requiring that high schools offer an Ethnic Studies course by 2025 and requiring Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement by 2029. Urban Native Hubs with a long history of offering Indigenized culturally sustaining curriculum are in an ideal position to impact, influence, and guide the curriculum for these new requirements. Schools, districts, and policy makers should not only be seeking the guidance of Native American community leaders within urban Native Hubs, but they should be adequately compensating community leaders for their participation, expertise, and time regarding the implementation of the Ethnic Studies high school graduation requirement. This type of guidance is particularly important given AB-101's sections that allow for the local development of Ethnic Studies curriculum. In the Bay Area, this should address Ohlone histories and contemporary experiences as well as broader urban Intertribal histories and contemporary experiences.

Legislation like AB-1460 and AB-101 which has made Ethnic Studies a graduation requirement for CSU's and high schools allows for every non-Native student in California to have some (albeit limited) exposure to Native American Studies during their formative years. This legislation will also require that non-Native educators who may or may not be qualified to teach Native American Studies will be teaching about Native issues. The Bay Area's urban Native American communities and their allies need resources to remain involved and engaged in the design and implementation of the curriculum and the ways that teachers are trained in the curriculum as well as vigilant over the ways in which the curriculum is rolled out. Given the long history and contemporary context of Native American misrepresentation and erasure within the field of education in the Bay Area, there will likely be a sharp learning curve with regard to non-Native educators teaching about Native American issues. Indeed, the sharp learning curve is part and parcel to the roll-out of any new curriculum. This limitation presents another important justification to remain involved and engaged in the design and implementation of the curriculum as well as vigilant over the ways in which the curriculum is rolled out. Ultimately the roll-out of the Ethnic Studies curriculum at the high school and university level must be viewed through an intergenerational lens where consistent and ongoing stewardship of the pedagogy and curriculum will evolve the pedagogical praxis over time and across generations.

V. Future Areas of Inquiry and Concluding Thoughts

Studies often produce more questions than they do answers. While this study has produced a wide array of questions, three primary points of inquiry have emerged which will guide my scholarship in the future. First, is the importance of examining erasure, educational challenges, and educational interventions experienced and employed by urban *Pueblo Originario*

communities in California. Next, is the need to examine the challenges and impact of teaching Native American Studies to non-Native students, within the context of rolling out California's general education requirements for Ethnic Studies at the high school and university level. Finally, is the urgency for a deeper examination of the intersection of traditional ecological knowledge, environmental science, and Ethnic Studies in supporting young people to establish a sense of climate resiliency in an age of global climate change.

The first area of inquiry is confronting the erasure of urban *Pueblo Originario* communities and examining Indigenized and community situated educational interventions to this issue. *Pueblos Originarios,* are among the most numerous Indigenous communities in California today (Ramirez 2007). Indigenous groups such as the Mam, Maya Yucateco, Zapoteco, and Mixteco communities experience intense levels of erasure as well as often being absorbed-within or viewed-as part of the broader Latinx community. Despite *Pueblo Originario* communities often coming from places like Guatemala and Southern Mexico, not always speaking Spanish in addition to their Indigenous language, actively practicing their traditional knowledge systems, and maintaining strong ties to their ancestral communities and territories, within the U.S. educational context they are classified and educated as Latinos. The erasure of *Pueblos Originarios* within the educational system in both their nations of origin as well as the U.S., both historically and in the present should be examined in greater depth. The impact of immigration, citizenship status, living in low-income urban communities, assimilation, political terrains that are hostile to Indigenous peoples' and immigrants, and the impact on education must be understood more clearly. Developing more profound understandings of healthy educational relationships with *Pueblo Originario* communities, urban *Pueblo Originario* conceptions of educational success and achievement, culturally sustaining pedagogies that support *Pueblo*

Originario youth, and the employment of Indigenous knowledge systems for the empowerment of *Pueblo Originario* youth are all important components to better serving *Pueblo Originario* communities. This type of study could eventually lay the groundwork for comparative educational studies of urban Native American communities and urban *Pueblo Originario* communities in places like the Bay Area and Los Angeles where both communities co-exist, examining the parallels and distinctions in experience as well as potential points of solidarity.

The second area of inquiry is conducting an in-depth study of the impact of Native American Studies on non-Native students. As an Instructor of Native American Studies over the past eight years at the University of California Davis as well as at Chabot College I have witnessed the transformative impact that Native American Studies has had on non-Native students. During those eight years the vast majority of students that have taken my class are non-Native presenting an important opportunity to understand the challenges, impact, and importance of allyship. Often my class provides students with their first in-depth examination of Native American literature, history, culture, epistemologies, etc. making it an important intervention in disrupting the ongoing erasure of Native American and Indigenous peoples. Moreover, the roll out of Ethnic Studies as a general education requirement in California at the high school and university level presents an important opportunity to examine the educational challenges and opportunities inherent in rolling out Native American Studies curriculum across multiple university and high school sites. In addition, this type of study could be extended to examine the impact of Comparative Ethnic Studies as a general education requirement at the high school and university level.

Finally, the aspects of this study that focus on education and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and land stewardship, paired with the urgency of the climate crisis and the

need to educate youth on climate resiliency, have produced the need for a more in-depth examination of the educational intersection of TEK, Environmental Studies, and Ethnic Studies. Bay Area organizations such as the Sagorea Te Land Trust, Mycelium Youth Network, and Planting Justice have already created curriculum and educational programming that help youth navigate climate change, climate anxiety, and environmental racism while teaching youth about climate resilience through an intersectional study of traditional ecological knowledge, Environmental Studies, and Ethnic Studies. Given the realities of the global climate crisis, the need for this type of educational programing will only grow. I hope to continue to use my scholarship and advocacy in supporting organizations such as Sagorea Te, Mycelium Youth Network, and Planting Justice in examining the challenges and efficacies of their educational programing as well as supporting them in expanding their reach to support more students.

Since learning *La Danza de Tonantzin Tlalli Coatlique* I have learned many more *danzas,* countless songs, and I have learned to run ceremony incorporating elements of these teachings into my pedagogical praxis. Looking back, learning from, building upon, and re-purposing ancestral teachings has been a central component of my work as an educator and my work as a scholar. We learn by doing refining our pedagogical process as we go in order to be of better service to future generations. When we walk forward while looking back we allow the lessons of the past to guide our steps in the present, we recognize the historical patterns that inform current legacies, and we envision more empowering and enriching paths forward.

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