UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Kumeyaay Mental Health: Healing, Trauma, and Resistance

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by

Annika Britt Stone

Committee in charge:

Professor Janis H. Jenkins, Chair
Professor Thomas J. Csordas
Professor David FitzGerald
Professor Victoria D. Ojeda
Professor Steven Parish

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The Dissertation of Annika Britt Stone is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the Kumeyaay/Kumiai/Kumiay people. Yay ‘ehaan!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CRM	Cultural Resource Management
HFIT	Health Frontiers in Tijuana
IHC	Indian Health Council
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KCC	Kumeyaay Community College
KCRC	Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SDSU	San Diego State University
SIHC	Southern Indian Health Council
UCSD	University of California San Diego
WHO	World Health Organization

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Chapters 1-7 may be reprinted in the future as publications. The dissertation author will be the primary investigator and author of this future paper or book.

VITA

2008 Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, San Francisco State University

2015 Master of Arts in Anthropology, San Diego State University

2024 Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology, University of California San Diego

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Annika Britt Stone

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Professor Janis Jenkins, Chair

As a transnational indigenous group in the borderlands, the Kumeyaay people rely on a variety of health modalities, including biomedical and indigenous medicine, to improve their wellbeing and mental health. In this dissertation, I examine ceremonies and gatherings as healing spaces for some Kumeyaay people that provide experiences of unity based on ancestral traditions and values. My dissertation demonstrates how critical intertribal exchanges happen between

Kumeyaay communities in the U.S. and Mexico related to language, ceremonies, and cultural knowledge. I argue that intertribal relationships have been significant to the restoration of dormant cultural practices and act as a community network to enhance the lives of indigenous peoples. Intertribal exchanges promote indigenous healing and allow for the co-creation of therapeutic processes which could lead to beneficial health outcomes. Positioned at the intersection of medical anthropology, global mental health, and indigenous studies, this research sheds light on the intricate dynamics between health, politics, and cultural knowledge production for transnational Native communities. This project amplifies the voices of indigenous community leaders and focuses on the contributions of indigenous knowledge for community-led healing.

Chapter 1 Introduction: Stewards of the Borderlands

The Kumeyaay people are the stewards of the lands that exist between San Diego County, California and Baja California, Mexico, 150 miles south, and have been for thousands of years, since long before those names came to be. As a transnational indigenous group split by the border, they face structural obstacles to their ability to gather, celebrate, mourn, and connect. This dissertation is an ethnographic investigation of how some Kumeyaay individuals, including community leaders who are supporters of the pan-indigenous and substance abuse recovery movements, rely on a range of indigenous practices to improve their mental health. These practices are used to aid healing from the challenges rooted in the longstanding effects of settler colonialism, structural violence, and psychological trauma.

My ethnographic research was conducted with six primary interlocutors with whom I used semi-structured, open-ended interviews. I met with three of these interlocutors exclusively over Zoom. Initially intended as a transnational ethnographic investigation, this study faced challenges due to COVID-19 restrictions. My fieldwork was affected by reduced responsiveness from potential participants and those who engaged as interlocutors demonstrated a preference for online interviews due to the pandemic. Over the course of two and a half years (January 2020-July 2022), I was able to complete only a limited set of participant-observation, at events that included the Warrior Spirit conference, a funeral, and two powwows. Additionally, I attended online events focusing on the Kumeyaay community and on indigenous issues such as repatriation, the Kumeyaay Nation flag, and healing practices.

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the Kumeyaay people and summarize my key dissertation arguments, as well as other research on transnational indigenous people affected by

border separation. Throughout my dissertation, I investigate how select Kumeyaay community members rely on indigenous knowledge and healing practices to improve their mental health and wellness. The cultivation of mental health and spiritual traditions from various indigenous sources constitutes what I refer to as intertribal practices, which can offer therapeutic possibilities and promote collective healing. Drawing on the existing literature on indigenous cultural revitalization efforts, I consider Kumeyaay experiences of ceremonies, gatherings, and the revival of dormant practices as acts of resistance. Finally, I argue that intertribal exchanges are an essential component for many indigenous peoples throughout North America by encouraging healing on individual, family, and community levels.

There have been very few ethnographic works documenting the medical beliefs and practices of the indigenous Kumeyaay communities of San Diego County, California, and Baja California, Mexico (Fleuriet 2003, 2007, 2009; Longstreth and Wilken-Roberston 2010). There are several reasons for this gap in the literature, including the Kumeyaay people's historical marginalization, which has resulted in a lack of awareness of their culture and lived experiences. Still, while the harm of settler colonialism is still ongoing (Byrd 2019; Kashyap 2019; Montgomery 2022; Proulx and Crane 2019), there are specific Kumeyaay individuals who are working to improve the wellness of their community, through efforts to revitalize dormant practices and resist any further construction of the U.S.-Mexico border wall. My dissertation highlights community efforts to generate unity, healing, and hope among the Kumeyaay people. Despite these perceived successes, the interlocutors' narratives make clear the harm that has been inflicted on everyday lived experience by cultural oppression, trauma, and addiction.

The Native American nation of the Kumeyaay—interpreted to mean "those who face the water from a cliff" (Couro and Hutcheson 1973:26)—originally occupied areas in northern Baja

California, Mexico, as well as parts of southern San Diego and Imperial counties, in California, USA (Toffelmier and Luomala 2006 [1936]). Over time, researchers have referred to this indigenous community by a few names, including Diegueño, Kamia, as well as Ipai and Tipai (Hedges 1975). The term "Diegueño" originates in the tribe's complicated historical relationship with the San Diego Mission (Connolly Miskwish 2007; Gamble and Wilken-Robertson 2008; Hedges 1975; Shipek 1982; White and Fitt 1998). "Kumeyaay" (English), "Kumiai" (Spanish), and "Kumiay" (Spanish) are currently used by the larger community to describe themselves, with an acknowledgment of linguistic and cultural differences between the two subgroups of Ipai and Tipai (Field 2012; Hedges 1975; Langdon 1975; Shackley 1998, 2004; Shipek 1982). The broader Kumeyaay Nation is separated by the U.S.-Mexico border, with bands currently living on both sides of the boundary. Approximately 4,623 Kumeyaay people live throughout the U.S. and Mexico (Connolly Miskwish 2016; Rodriguez 2020)

In the U.S., there are twelve federally recognized reservations for the Kumeyaay people: Barona, Campo, Ewiiaapaayp, Inaja-Cosmit, Jamul, La Posta, Manzanita, Mesa Grande, San Pasqual, Santa Ysabel, Sycuan, and Viejas (Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians 2018). With federal recognition comes access to resources, the potential for tribal gaming, and tribal sovereignty. In Mexico, there are six main Kumeyaay communities and although they have been acknowledged by the Mexican government as an indigenous community, these communities do not have tribal sovereignty or land rights. Despite being part of the larger Kumeyaay Nation, members in Mexico are not considered "American Indian" by the U.S. government, and therefore they are unable to maintain tribal sovereignty or access the same resources as their peers north of the border (DeLugan 2010). This significant legal difference between Kumeyaay members in the U.S. and Mexico deeply affects their respective healthcare systems and practices.

Transnational indigenous people separated by boundaries face notable challenges as heightened border security measures make cross-border contact between tribal members exceedingly burdensome (Anaya 2012; United Nations 2015). Brenden W. Rensink articulates the harsh duality that transnational Natives face, given that "indigenous people could be viewed as refugees or illegal immigrants" (2018:9). This is because tribal sovereignty does not extend across the border due to national security policies, and this disrupts the abilities of tribal members to travel freely as their ancestors did. As a tribe of the borderlands, ancestral grounds and sacred sites are constantly under threat and have been desecrated by border construction and border patrol security measures (Winkley 2020).

The U.S.-Mexico border fractures transnational indigenous peoples' sovereignty and divides their communities. Their indigeneity is shaped, in part, by the compounded trauma of separation and the irreparable harm created by the border construction. I use the concept of "indigeneity" to refer to particular subjectivities, to historically and culturally specific conceptualizations, and to local expressions of what it means to be indigenous (Cattelino and Simpson 2022; DeLugan 2010; Friedman 2008; Merlan 2009). This perspective emphasizes an examination of the lived experiences of indigenous people, including conditions that effected change, triggered contestation, and forced assimilation. As such, "to comprehensively understand contemporary indigeneity is, then, to acknowledge political claims of territorial sovereignty and self-governance as well as demands for nation-states, international systems, and others to recognize distinct cultural orientations" (DeLugan 2010:84). National borders sever the political authority of transnational tribes and influence their cultural identity as a community.

For the Kumeyaay Nation, the border has a direct relationship to their indigeneity because it has significantly reshaped their cultural and political structures. Sovereignty, access to

resources, and representation are all factors that determine how transnational indigenous people can navigate governmental obstacles and discriminatory legislation. The separation caused by the border contributes to narratives of intergenerational trauma for the Kumeyaay individuals I interviewed, while the ongoing construction of a border wall on sacred land continues to generate distress. To combat these challenges, the border has also become a site of resistance for Kumeyaay people, who protest and fight for the protection of their ancestors and sacred places (Winkley 2020).

Indigenous Resistance

The connection between indigenous cultural revitalization efforts and indigenous resistance was first discussed by Fenelon and Hall (2004, 2005, 2008). In their analysis, they position indigenous resistance as a response to neoliberalism, globalization, and historical political processes (2008). Forms of symbolic resistance, such as protests against the use of Native American images as sports mascots and national movements against the renaming of indigenous places, are also included in their definition of resistance (Fenelon 1998; Fenelon and Hall 2008). For many indigenous groups, such as the Zapotecs and Zapatista-led Maya in Mexico, acts of resistance are related to broader social movements and are made in the name of sovereignty and anti-globalization (Fenelon and Hall 2008). There are complex linkages between global indigenous movements for resistance and indigenous struggles for land and water rights, tribal sovereignty, and cultural revitalization.

Indigenous resistance is an inherently political process that should be investigated within each instance's unique cultural and local context. Fenelon and Hall argue, "Indigenous peoples are sharing their respective histories and situations in many global networks that are producing

new sites of resistance, new forms of cultural survival, new types of indigeneity, and continued social change" (2008:1895). Examples of an emergent indigenous people's resistance can be found in North America, Latin America, Southern Asia, and the South Pacific (Fenelon and Hall 2008:1895). It has manifested in political representation at the local and global levels via community empowerment and the election of indigenous people to national leadership positions. In this dissertation, I focus on Kumeyaay intertribal healing practices and examine how individual lives are shaped by politics, indigeneity, mental health, and acts of resistance.

While resistance can sometimes be violent, there are important types of long-term collective action that are nonviolent and rooted in conceptualizations of injustice (Droogendyk and Wright 2017). The revival of indigenous languages is considered a decolonial process according to Droogendyk and Wright (2017) and other academics (Thiong'o 1993; Chandler and Lalonde 1998). Learning to speak an indigenous language allows for the reemergence of an indigenous worldview and the expansion of cultural knowledge (Droogendyk and Wright 2017). Collective action to embrace indigenous languages and support linguistic education has the potential for long-lasting benefits (Combs and Penfield 2012). While funding and language endangerment continue to be uphill battles, positive effects can happen on physical and communal health happen when an indigenous community decides to revive its linguistic traditions (Whalen, Moss, and Baldwin 2016; Whalen et al. 2022). For the Kumeyaay people, this is occurring at Kumeyaay Community College (KCC) through language classes and within tribal leadership as meetings are conducted in the Kumeyaay dialect of Tipai/Tiipay.

Marginalized individuals and movements also modify racial identities through everyday acts of resistance and collective political struggle (Brown and Jones 2015; Omi and Winant 1994, 2014). This includes, but is not limited to, the protection of land resources, challenges to

Eurocentric ideologies, language revival, urban tribal resource centers, the concealment and protection of indigenous traditions, and cultural pride (Steinman 2016). Many of these forms of indigenous resistance are often ignored or disregarded within academic social science research (Steinman 2016). As sociologist Erich Steinman contends, these actions must be examined in relation to settler colonialism, and academics need to focus more on decolonizing actions (2016:220). In his two decades of work on indigenous issues, Steinman has called attention to "indigeneity as lived resistance to the political and cognitive foundations of North American settler societies" (2016:231). Indigenous resistance to ongoing settler colonialism takes many forms, and can be found in collective actions, everyday forms of resistance, and conceptual practices. Throughout this dissertation, I describe different types of resistance enacted by Kumeyaay individuals, focusing on healing traditions, political actions, and historical narratives.

Other transnational tribes who have used the border for opportunities to resist persecution include Arizona Yaquis, Montana Crees, and Chippewas (Rensink 2018). While this has not been the case for all indigenous groups separated by borders, their examples offer crucial insights into how borders affect cultures and how cultures affect borders. Transnational indigenous people worldwide often form networks that have been essential to increasing activism, resistance, and political power, and which often rely on pan-indigenous identities (Harris and Wasilewski 2004; Kearney 2010; Pieck 2006). In defiance of the trauma of national borders, indigenous people continue to find ways to oppose, contest, and maneuver around the barriers of structural violence. Structural violence is a concept that has been associated with the work of Paul Farmer (2004) on health disparities and other forms of harm such as lack of access to community healthcare (Farmer 1997, 2003; Farmer et al. 2006). The term has come to represent many forms of oppression and inequities caused by governments, legislation,

racialization, and white supremacy. In response to these challenges, transborder tribes often engage in resistance against the encroachment of borders and structural harm. Activism may take various forms, including legal challenges, protests, grassroots movements, and advocacy for the recognition of indigenous rights.

Whether an everyday practice or part of a larger collective action, indigenous resistance counteracts the harm from structural violence, trauma, and cultural oppression. The resistance of my Kumeyaay interlocutors emerged from networks of indigenous communities, and through participation in ceremonies, gatherings, and the revival of dormant practices. These intertribal experiences helped shape their understandings of mental health and wellness.

Intertribal Exchanges of Healing, Ceremonies, and Traditions

While "pan-indigenous" or "pan-Indian" are popular terms to describe similar phenomena, events, or knowledge within Native communities, these phrases are fraught with generalizations and distortions. These terms are relevant to the Red Power movement of the 1960 and 70s; however, the discourse surrounding Native American identity has evolved to reflect more diversity and complexity. "Pan-indigenous" implies a uniformity that does not exist among indigenous groups worldwide and can therefore homogenize unique Native experiences (Froń 2002; Flynn 2011).

Cultural exchange is a fluid and dynamic concept that fosters social cohesion, but which requires a nuanced understanding of hegemony (Tutt et al. 2021). The term "intertribal" focuses on the interactions between two or more tribal groups (Tutt et al. 2021). One of the fundamental reasons I chose to use the term "intertribal" rather than "pan-indigenous" in my own work is because the former is used by the Kumeyaay community in public ceremonial spaces. This

preference for "intertribal" was discussed by anthropologist Lindy-Lou Flynn (2011), who found the term expressed regularly by Canadian First Nations tribal groups, specifically in reference to dances and exchanges at powwows. Instead of implying, as "pan-indigenous" does, a broad generalization about all indigenous people globally or even within North America, "intertribal" emphasizes how small-scale exchanges can create reciprocal relationships. I believe that "intertribal" is a more representative concept that describes the diverse interactions that produce shared knowledge and practices between many North American indigenous groups.

For some members of the Kumeyaay community, intertribal exchanges regularly occur between local tribal bands, within the larger transborder community, and among indigenous groups throughout North America. This dissertation focuses on individuals within a broader social context, and it is important to acknowledge that there are indigenous community members who do not participate in these types of interactions and prefer to rely on their own intratribal cultural traditions and familial knowledge rather than drawing on other tribal practices. Nevertheless, intertribal interactions can foster positive and complex interrelations that engage with expansive indigenous epistemologies. One of the key positive potentialities of intertribal exchange is the renewal or revitalization of dormant practices.

The revitalization of indigenous traditions has been the subject of much anthropological interest (Baldy 2018; Harkin 2004; Kehoe 2006; Nagel 1996; Wallace 1956; White 2006). Revitalization offers dynamic and challenging opportunities to use indigenous epistemologies to adapt, modify, and reimagine practices and traditions. The complexities surrounding revitalization call into question the authenticity of revitalized traditions and the power dynamics involved in determining what cultural practices should be revived and by whom. In my findings, revitalization can include experiences of co-creation between indigenous members, as well as

contested forms of cultural renewal by members who are opposed to revival. Indigenous people who are in opposition question the rationale, meaning, and authenticity of the revitalization process.

Revitalization was originally conceived of by anthropologists as a "culture change phenomenon" based on dissatisfaction and systems organization (Wallace 1956:265). This perspective was deeply rooted in ethnocentrism and failed to fully grasp the dynamic nature of culture as a constantly ratified co-construction between members. More recently, revitalization has come to be interpreted as "an optimistic view that not only draws on a perceived need for change but also inspires its achievement. It is a forward-looking vision that aims to ensure a better life for future generations" (Willow 2010:43). Rather than accepting the loss of cultural traditions and religious ceremonies, revitalization is an attempt by Native people to have more agency in self-representation and identity (Willow 2010). Cultural revitalization is incited by "cross-cultural exchange" (Willow 2010:54) and the revival of indigenous epistemologies.

Wolfgang Jilek (1978) used the term "indigenous therapeutic ceremonialism" to describe Navajo, Haudenosaunee, and Dakota Sioux ceremonial experiences of healing. Jilek states the "persistence and revival of indigenous Amerindian healing" can be explained by an ongoing need for an indigenous and holistic approach (1978:144). In this dissertation, I build upon his concept of "therapeutic ceremonialism" to demonstrate how a variety of indigenous practices related to spirituality, Pan-Indianism, and cultural revitalization are invoked by some of my interlocutors, who use them for healing and improving their mental health. Emerging from these invocations is the increased potentiality of therapeutic possibilities based on the influx of indigenous knowledge and practices from intertribal exchanges.

The dynamic relationships between bands, clans, and broader ‘Iipay and Tiipay groups demonstrate that intertribal exchanges between Kumeyaay and local indigenous groups have been ongoing throughout their history (Field 2012; Hedges 1975; Landon 1975; Shipek 1978, 1982). Previous research on Kumeyaay healing and perceptions of health was conducted by Fleuriet (2003, 2007, 2009) and focused on Kumeyaay people in rural Baja California, Mexico. Building on this work, my research seeks to illuminate the ways Kumeyaay intertribal exchanges influence mental health practices and emotional wellbeing for my interlocutors in San Diego County.

Research Claims

This dissertation illustrates how some transnational indigenous individuals experience healing, trauma, and resistance through intertribal exchanges and the revival of dormant practices. My research study makes three major claims: 1) in Chapter 4, I argue intertribal exchanges have been beneficial for particular Kumeyaay individuals in developing their mental health rituals and ceremonial practices; 2) in Chapters 4 and 5, I contend therapeutic ceremonialism encompasses the individual, the family, and the community in processes of healing; 3) in Chapter 6, I assert the border is a site of both harm and resistance for the Kumeyaay Nation.

Theoretical Orientations

This section synthesizes theoretical frameworks and influences that provide the conceptual foundation for my research. Although the Kumeyaay people have been researched by anthropologists since the beginning of the 20th century, very little has been written about their

subjective experiences or their understandings of mental health and wellness. This dissertation draws on studies of subjectivity (Biehl, Good, and Kleinman 2007; Jenkins 2015a; Luhrmann 2006; Ortner 2005) and intersubjectivity (Csordas 2008; Duranti 2010; Parish 2008), to situate my research within the context of my interlocutors' lived experience and to frame my own reflexivity.

I have chosen to use the concept of "wellness" (Stoewen 2017) within my research because it aligns with indigenous understandings of health (Gone 2006; Martin-Hill 2009; Thiessen et al. 2020). Indigenous knowledge frameworks position the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social realms as central to wellness (Martin-Hill 2009) and this holistic conceptualization was expressed by my interlocutors. My dissertation project focuses on the extraordinary conditions (Jenkins 2015a) that affect the mental health of my Kumeyaay interlocutors. In her work addressing the subjective experience of people living with mental illness, Jenkins (2015a) emphasizes struggle over symptoms. By analyzing everyday engagements with mental health practices, in the context of significant challenges stemming from trauma, loss, and addiction, I show how my interlocutors use therapeutic possibilities to navigate different health modalities.

I argue that the U.S.-Mexico border enacts ongoing trauma that is pervasive among transnational indigenous peoples and contributes to their precarity (Jenkins 2015a). I employ anthropologist Janis H. Jenkins' term "precarity" rather than "vulnerability" to emphasize a "person's immediate experience" and to assert "that the afflicted live precariously on the edge of experience" (2015a:29). The historical patterns of precariousness (Jenkins 2015a, 2015b) experienced by the Kumeyaay people are discussed in Chapter 2, particularly in reference to the autobiography of Delfina Cuero, as framed by anthropologist Florence Shipek (1991). The ever-

growing police state at the border reinforces ideologies of colonialism, promotes the separation of indigenous families, and permits the desecration of sacred sites as well as the burial grounds of ancestors. Living in the borderlands has lasting impacts on the well-being, cultural knowledge exchange, and self-determination of the Kumeyaay people.

Political ethos, as defined by Jenkins (1991), refers to the "culturally standardized organization of feeling and sentiment pertaining to the social domains of power and interest" (140). Through her exploration of the experiences of Salvadoran refugees, Jenkins shows how fear and anxiety are embodied through the long-lasting effects that come from experiences of economic hardship and violence known as *la situación*. Her emphasis on the relationship between the political and personal is critical when considering the experiences of transnational indigenous tribes whose tribal sovereignty is carved up by national boundaries, security measures, and border construction. This approach will allow me to maintain an awareness of how political conditions shape cultural understandings of mental health knowledge and wellness.

Additionally, I contend that the concepts of "endurance" (Kleinman 2015) and the "capacity for struggle," which was first set out by Jenkins (2015a), better frame mental health challenges and the effects of compounded trauma stemming from structural violence and colonization. Based on Jenkins' research (2015a), the capacity for struggle describes the persistent battle for well-being and healing that occurs while enduring the human experience. The capacity for struggle was also explored in Jenkins and Csordas' (2020) work as a "fundamental human process of vigorously engaging possibility" (7). This conceptualization of struggle underscores the continuous effort of people to feel better and to find strategies to improve their mental health. My dissertation research documents how certain Kumeyaay

individuals endure trauma and incorporate a variety of healing modalities to enhance their therapeutic possibilities.

In the last decade, research on the Kumeyaay has focused primarily on linguistic variation and identity (Field and Cuero 2012; Field 2012) and ethnobotany (Wilken-Robertson 2018). Other newly published work in Spanish examines Kumiai symbolic cartography (Garduño 2017). These projects exemplify the importance to the Kumeyaay people of oral traditions such as "Bird songs", which tell their creation story. Bird songs which "were sung for centuries are still celebrated today, the sound reverberating in the places where the ancestors once danced and sang" (Gamble and Wilken-Robertson 2008:147). Song cycles, particularly Bird songs, are an important form of intergenerational transmission of knowledge for Kumeyaay cultural traditions (Field and Cuero 2012). One of the purposes of song cycles and other oral traditions is to teach children and adolescents embedded cultural values (Field and Cuero 2012). In Chapter 5, Bird songs are discussed as one of the ways that Kumeyaay people are reviving dormant traditions and creating community experiences of healing.

Hauntology

Hauntology explores the relationship between trauma, violence, resistance, and things unspoken (Good 2019; Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022). Hauntology emerges from Derrida's (1994) work and has influenced a theoretical orientation towards ghosts, hauntings, and spectrality within ethnographic anthropology. In his interpretation of hauntology, Good connects historical memory, structural violence, and ancestral ghosts as key aspects of psychological processes (2019). He states, "hauntology is precisely a language for exploring ways of simultaneously knowing and not knowing, of the politics, suppressions, and ghostly

appearances of contested memory" (2019:419). Hauntology acknowledges contested narratives and complex memory processes that can alter, forget, misremember, and reimagine experiences. The stories surrounding ancestors are often marked with unknowing and hidden knowledge. As part of my analysis, I employ hauntology to examine themes related to ancestors, homelands, and traditions.

Using hauntology as an analytical tool emphasizes issues of ancestral guidance, cultural revitalization, and the violation of sacred sites. The knowledge and values of ancestors and "old ones" were discussed frequently by my interlocutors. This was woven into discourse about reviving dormant cultural practices and the hauntings that can come from performing a ceremony incorrectly. Hauntology offers insights into the meaning of protecting ancestors from thousands of years ago and illuminates how those acts of resistance are tied to violence, colonization, and the unknown. In my dissertation, hauntology acts as a framework to better understand the connection between Kumeyaay people and their ancestors, as well as to discuss the politics surrounding hidden histories, sacred traditions, and trauma.

Trauma and Healing

Trauma has been a subject of anthropological study for decades (Das 1990, 2003; Good 2013; Gone 2013; Jenkins and Csordas 2020; Kleinman 1973, 1977, 1987; Lester 2013; Young 1997). The collective trauma of cultural groups, the complexity of traumatic experiences, mental health conditions related to traumatic events, and the evolving concept of trauma itself have been the focus of many works (Gone 2013; Kirmayer, Lemelson, and Barad 2007; Lester 2013; Robben and Suárez-Orozco 2000). Traumatic experiences can happen at an individual level (e.g. via a physical accident) or collective level (e.g. during a natural disaster or war) and usually

involve threats of harm, including death or serious injury, to self or an associated person (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009). A wide range of life events are associated with trauma, including, but not limited to, military service, violence, abuse, terrorism, and major accidents (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009). Trauma can, but does not always, lead to conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, substance and alcohol abuse, and illness comorbidity (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009).

In her review of anthropology's relationship with trauma, Rebecca Lester reminds us that at the heart of these academic discussions are actual suffering and endurance. And sometimes, transcendence. Humans can experience this transcendence by existing, healing, and reflecting on what happened to them. She states, it is not only through conflict resolution that people continue to live, "but through ongoing, iterative, continuous processes of meaning-making that emerge in relationship with others, across a variety of levels and contexts, and through time" (Lester 2013:754). In this dissertation I conceive of healing from complex trauma as a dynamic process that involves interpersonal relationships, therapeutic ceremonialism, and reflexivity.

Complex trauma, particularly when experienced during childhood, can have lasting effects on someone's biology, affect regulation, attachment, behavior, cognition, and selfhood (Cook et al. 2005). One of the key issues being discussed by my Kumeyaay interlocutors is the effect of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) stemming from childhood, historical, and intergenerational trauma. ACEs refer to ten specified forms of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction that can occur during childhood, and which have been associated with dangerous health outcomes (Radford et al. 2022). As discussed in the review by Radford and colleagues, ACEs may be one conceptual model for understanding harmful childhood experiences, but it needs to be more thoroughly investigated because it has only been used with indigenous

populations since 2006. In addition, Radford and colleagues suggest that "culturally-embedded protective factors" could potentially guard against ACEs and other detrimental health outcomes (2022:418).

For indigenous people, intergenerational and childhood trauma can also be compounded by the effects of settler colonialism and historical trauma. Intergenerational trauma describes how traumatic experiences can be passed on through parenting, epigenetics, and the long-term effects of processes like colonization (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009). For example, Bombay, Matheson, and Anisman (2009) investigate how repeated childhood maltreatment, especially when combined with traumatic stressors and structural violence such as poverty, can contribute to negative outcomes such as suicide, poor mental health, and other negative health conditions.

Historical trauma, also referred to as the "soul wound", has been examined by many researchers as a contributing factor to indigenous wellness and mental health (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009; Brave Heart 1998, 2003; Duran and Duran 1995; Duran et al. 1998; Gone and Kirmayer 2020; Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses 2014). The definition of historical trauma is the "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences" (Brave Heart 2003:7). In this context, historical trauma refers to the collective experiences of complex trauma which can be inflicted on a particular group over generations, based on their culture, identity, or nationality (Brave Heart 1999). Stemming from historical trauma, and other related traumas, cultural groups may suffer from mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, PSTD, and alcohol and substance abuse (Brave Heart et al. 2011; Duran and Duran 1995).

Anthropologist Joseph Gone argues that studies of historical trauma often generalize indigenous experiences and focus too much on human fragility (2021). He questions how the framework of historical trauma reimagines indigenous identity "as fundamentally wounded by history and to remake Indigenous selfhood as damaged, disordered, or disabled (or, at least, vulnerable and 'at risk')" (2021:3). Much like Tuck's (2009) call for desire-based research, Gone is concerned with how indigenous people are demeaned by research that concentrates only on how these hardships have negatively affected their communities. Instead, he suggests that research should focus on narratives of empowerment, agency, and triumph (2021). One possible way to achieve this is by adapting and modifying a Plains Indian tradition, the coup tale which celebrates "mastery and survivance" (2021:9). This is another example of how intertribal exchanges of knowledge can be used to better frame indigenous mental health issues.

All the Kumeyaay interlocutors in this dissertation spoke about the experience and effects of different forms of trauma, including childhood, intergenerational, and historical trauma. These concepts were salient for their healing journeys and the meaning-making process of understanding their lived experiences. Although they acknowledged the impacts of these traumas, they emphasized how they used forms of therapeutic ceremonialism and their network of indigenous community members as part of their ongoing healing process. By combining different forms of healing practices, they were able to determine what worked best for their specific journey. Each of their healthcare systems involved multiple modalities, a practice known as medical pluralism, to improve their health and wellness.

Medical Pluralism

Arthur Kleinman (1978) describes most healthcare systems as being comprised of three social arenas: popular, professional, and folk. The popular arena consists of "the family context of sickness and care, also includes social network and community activities" (1978:86). Most of the world's population manages illness in this popular manner (Kleinman 1978). Biomedical science, along with professionalized healing practices (e.g., Chinese medicine and chiropractic), make up the professional arena. Folk medicine refers to the use of non-professional healers. The use of multiple health systems is called medical pluralism (Leslie 1980). Terms like traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine have also been used in recent publications to describe the World Health Organization's (WHO) global strategy regarding cultural medical practices (Fink 2002; WHO 2002).

The Kumeyaay interlocutors in this dissertation relied on multiple forms of healthcare systems for their mental health and wellness. They often framed their conceptualizations of mental health as holistic and relating to other systems of health, including their physical and spiritual wellness. For example, one of my interlocutors discussed the use of professionalized therapy along with forms of indigenous healing to cope with the loss of his wife following a long battle with cancer. Intertribal exchanges help provide more therapeutic forms of healing, thereby increasing the plurality of medical options available for indigenous people to utilize. Medical plurality effectively represents the modalities that my interlocutors use, especially when considering the positive effects of popular forms of healing like ceremonies and gatherings that are based on social networks.

Questions Surrounding Native American and Indigenous Research

The relationship between anthropology and Native Americans is fraught with legacies of settler colonialism and ethnocentrism (Kirmayer, Brass, and Tait 2000; Phillips 2014 [1975]; Wolfe 1999). Beginning with the flawed typologies of Native Americans produced by Ruth Benedict (1928, 1932, 1934), anthropologists have attempted to classify and categorize indigenous peoples (Waldram 2004). Even though Wright (1988) called for more indigenous advocacy, it would take years before anthropologists embraced a more refined understanding of indigenous identities and transformative self-representation (DeLugan 2010). Recently, there has been a movement away from "damage-centered" research which focuses on primarily the negative aspects of Native American life (Tuck 2009). More work is being published by indigenous people, offering intimate and sophisticated insights into their lived experience without the colonial gaze (Bernardin 2015; Gansworth 2008; Miranda 2013).

James B. Waldram (2004) examines the production of knowledge about indigenous people by scholars and researchers. He traces how, during the first half of the 20th century, researchers were captivated by "the personality of *the* American Indian" (2004:42) and often portrayed indigenous people as savage, aggressive, violent, superstitious, and deranged. According to Waldram, for over a century the mental health discourse surrounding Native Americans showcased how "the Barbaric Aboriginal presents as an inherently pathological, childlike individual, made so by a characteristically pathological and simplistic culture" (2004:105). Central to this ethnocentric viewpoint was the idea that all indigenous cultures were relatively homogenous and concordant in terms of tribal ideologies.

Belief in spirits and magic was seen by scholars and medical clinicians during the early 20th century as a sign of mental illness caused by psychopathology (Ackerknecht 1943;

Crapanzano 1981 [1973]; Crapanzano and Garrison 1977; Csordas 1987; Field 1960; Lewis 1971). For instance, indigenous beliefs were categorized as evidence of imbalance and developmental immaturity by social scientists (Jenness 1933; Saindon 1933). Alfred Kroeber's belief of "magic as the pathology of culture" (cited in Bentley and Cowdry 1934:350) is critiqued by Waldram as being illustrative of the deep prejudice of anthropologists at the time. "This idea has been so tenacious that 'magical thinking' characteristic of 'primitive' people, children, and schizophrenics entered into the DSM-III in 1980 as a sign of mental disorder and remains today in varied form in DSM-IV-TR" (2004:109). Indigenous communities worldwide have been criticized and disparaged, even criminalized, for their religious beliefs. This has forced certain ceremonies and traditions into dormancy through the effects of anti-indigenous policies and colonization. My research shows how important Kumeyaay ceremonial traditions, such as the Karuk mourning ceremony (Banegas 2023), have been impacted by cultural oppression and forced assimilation.

In addition to harmful beliefs about the "pathology" of indigenous religion, other troublesome tropes within indigenous research include the "Alcoholic Aboriginal" (May 1977, 1982; Westermeyer 1974), the "Depressed Aboriginal" (Devereux 1969), and the "Traumatized Aboriginal" (Manson et al. 1996). Waldram (2004) devotes a chapter to each of these characterizations and demonstrates how the research produced on these topics illustrates more about how anthropologists and other researchers distorted notions about indigeneity than it does about the actual experiences of Native peoples. For example, "when operationalizing 'traditional Aboriginal healing' in a contemporary context, little attention has been paid to comprehending precisely what 'Aboriginal', 'traditional,' and 'healing' actually mean" (Waldram 2004:271-2). In his work, Waldram questions the constructed dichotomy between Euro-American and

indigenous thought. He argues it is a fallacy that ignores the complexity of cultural exchange and the fluidity of ideologies.

One major issue within the literature on Native Americans is the use of "damage-centered" research, meaning work which centers on indigenous peoples' pain and suffering, to force those in power to take responsibility for their oppression (Tuck 2009). Indigenous scholar and activist Eve Tuck recognizes that most researchers are attempting to show the long-lasting detrimental effects of colonization by focusing on the trauma of indigenous people and communities. However, she warns they are also contributing to a narrative that is damaging to the people they are trying to help. She states, "our evidence of ongoing colonization by research—absent a context in which we acknowledge that colonization—is relegated to our own bodies, our own families, our own social networks, our own leadership. After the research team leaves, after the town meeting, after the news cameras have gone away, all we are left with is the damage" (Tuck 2009:415). Research on indigenous peoples must look beyond the damage to also encompass positive and restorative community endeavors.

Tuck acknowledges a need to examine the "uninhabitable, and inhumane conditions in which people lived and continue to live" (2009:415), however, she calls for a new approach: desire-centered research. "Desire-based research frameworks are concerned with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives" (Tuck 2009:416). This framework is built upon poststructuralist theories, along with decolonizing and depathologizing studies. Desire-centered research focuses on Gordon's (1997) concept of complex personhood and mutually beneficial relationships between researchers and community members.

My work juxtaposes themes of hope and harm within the narratives of selected Kumeyaay interlocutors, to show the intricacies of their lived experiences and healing journeys.

The theme of harm characterizes their struggles with addiction, trauma, and the lasting effects of cultural oppression. Drawing on Tuck's work, I intend to show how community projects co-create healing spaces and generate therapeutic possibilities represent the hope, endurance, and determination of indigenous people. In my findings, there are community contestations regarding revitalization of dormant practices. My interlocutors spoke about what they envision in their communities' future and the contributions they are making to help shape what lies ahead. This included acts of resistance, intertribal exchanges, and the revival of dormant ceremonial practices to connect to their ancestral ways and move forward despite the ongoing trauma of settler colonialism.

My Positionality as a Non-Indigenous Person

As a non-indigenous person researching indigenous people's lived experience, there are clear issues regarding my positionality. Anthropologists and ethnographers have committed significant harm against indigenous people since before the discipline's founding. White supremacy and settler colonialism continue to inflict structural violence and other harmful effects on indigenous people every day. It was not my intention to add to the compounded harm in any way, but my positionality marks me as a person who benefits from those racialized policies and actions. As a person living in San Diego, I am also a settler on Kumeyaay land. As an academic and researcher, my position is marked with embedded histories of marginalization, exclusion, and racism. It has been my goal to discuss my positionality with my interlocutors and within my interpretations, in the framework of intersubjectivity.

I specifically chose not to write about certain sacred elements that were discussed with me, because this information could potentially be used by future audiences in a manner that the

interlocutors had not agreed to. Additionally, there were questions that went intentionally unasked and/or unanswered to protect the sacredness of ceremonial practices. I wrote this dissertation with great respect for the Kumeyaay people I worked with and the intention that "knowledge for knowledge's sake" cannot be justified at the cost of being intrusive regarding an indigenous person's ideological beliefs.

I must also note that since this dissertation aims to embody what Tuck (2009) advocates as a "desire-centered" based project, I attended to themes of hope and the needs of the Kumeyaay people that I interviewed. I have spent much time contemplating Tuck's (2009) call to focus on what *is* working for this community and what constitutes the desires of these people. A Kumeyaay healing center, continued intertribal exchanges, language revitalization, and more bird singers are the main Kumeyaay desires that were articulated to me. It is important to show how indigenous communities have relied on each other for strength and for the rebuilding of their cultural knowledge. My goal is to amplify indigenous voices and to point to specific policies and actions that can be taken to further support Native communities.

There are many ethical concerns to consider when conducting research with an indigenous group as a white woman scholar, particularly while experiencing a global pandemic. There were numerous times during the pandemic when I questioned this project and what it could potentially offer. I spoke with my interlocutors about these quandaries and asked what they thought of my project. I was reassured that the issues I was researching, such as wellness, mental health, healing, and trauma are important to the community.

Dissertation Chapter Overview

In Chapter 2, I discuss the historical background of the Kumeyaay people and situate my work within the context of previous anthropological studies. This chapter serves to investigate the potential sources of historical and intergenerational trauma in my interlocutors' lives. There is a lack of records written by Kumeyaay people because they have historically transmitted knowledge through oral traditions, rather than a written language. Therefore, sources like the autobiography of Delfina Cuero, a Kumeyaay woman born at the turn of the 20th century, offer critical insight into how the creation of the border forcibly removed Kumeyaay people from their lands and caused displacement. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize my research alongside other Kumeyaay studies and to demonstrate how historical events have influenced the lives of my interlocutors in terms of their culture, location, and tribal sovereignty.

My methods, including patchwork anthropology, are explored in Chapter 3. Patchwork anthropology is an ethnographic approach that emphasizes the uneven process of fieldwork, and which challenges the boundaries between the professional and personal to show how subjective experiences occur even when we are living in the field (Günel, Varma, and Watanabe 2020). Chapter 3 also discusses the trajectory of this dissertation and the challenges I encountered due to COVID-19. Additionally, I address the effects of selection bias on my project, including its influence on my arguments.

Chapter 4, "Intertribal Practices of Healing and Wellness", emphasizes the importance of ceremonies, gatherings, powwows, and other indigenous interactions for the wellness of Kumeyaay communities. I consider how therapeutic ceremonialism and intertribal exchanges can generate healing, unity, and love between members. The creation of a healing center, emerging from intertribal exchanges and utilizing a combination of Western and indigenous health

modalities, offers opportunities to promote mental health and cultural competency. In addition, I analyze the concept of "capacity for struggle" (Jenkins 2015a; Jenkins and Csordas 2020) as a potentially apt framing for experiences of settler colonialism and trauma.

In Chapter 5, "Spirituality, Bird Songs, and the Revival of Dormant Practices", I build on my previous discussion of intertribal exchanges to show how my interlocutors engage with spirituality, cultural traditions, and the revival of dormant practices. By investigating how intertribal practices allow for the co-creation of healing spaces for the Kumeyaay people, I show the significance of ancestral guidance, land stewardship, and the continuation of land repatriation for indigenous people. Examining the revival of bird singing and the Karuk mourning ceremony offers nuanced insights into the role that revitalization plays in hauntological and ancestral conceptualizations.

The border as a site of ongoing trauma is scrutinized in Chapter 6, "In the Borderlands of Injustice and Resistance". In this chapter I illuminate experiences of transnational indigenous people in North America to show how their tribal sovereignty is threatened by ongoing border construction and the destruction of sacred sites. The forced separation of the border has lasting effects on the language, culture, and identity of the Kumeyaay people. Despite this, it is also a place of contestation and resistance. The Kumeyaay people have actively protested border regulations and construction for decades. While many Kumeyaay people have accepted the border as an unchangeable reality, it still enacts trauma as a persistent form of colonization and displacement.

Chapter 7, the conclusion, contains my reflections on this dissertation research's contributions to indigenous studies, global mental health, and psychological and medical anthropology. Additionally, I examine the limitations of my research and make suggestions for

future work in collaboration with the Kumeyaay people and other transnational indigenous groups.

Chapter 2 The Historical Legacy of the Kumeyaay

Kumeyaay Historical Background (C. 10,000 Years Ago and Earlier-Late 18th Century)

Prehistoric archaeological evidence found along the Pacific coastline and in the Imperial-Mexicali Valley suggests that people have been living in the area for over 20 thousand years (Shackley 2004; White and Fitt 1998; Willey 1966). Additional evidence of big game hunting and fishing from approximately ten thousand years ago was most likely left by the Kumeyaay's ancestors (White and Fitt 1998). Around 1000 B.C., the people of the desert made contact with Yuman speakers who inhabited the Colorado River Valley (Luomala 1978; White and Fitt 1998). This combined group would later become the Tipai-Ipai, though recorded evidence of them is limited until the arrival of the Spanish in the 1540s (White and Fitt 1998).

The Kumeyaay hunted and gathered throughout their territory of what is now San Diego County, Imperial County, and Baja California (Luomala 1978). "'Iipay bands for the most part traditionally were and still are located north of the San Diego River;" whereas, "Tiipay bands are all located south of the San Diego River" (Field 2012:563). They lived a semi-nomadic hunting life, subsisting on wild game animals such as rabbits, deer, and quail, in addition to seasonally-collected acorns and sage (Toffelmier and Luomala 2006 [1936]:216). Kumeyaay members also traded pinole for supplemental foods such as dried fish and grapes from the Yuman tribe (Toffelmier and Luomala 2006 [1936]). Kumeyaay society was divided into multiple *shimulhs* (clans) that intersected with bands running east to west (Carrico 1997; Field 2012; Shipek 1982). Bands were usually around thirty people (Banegas 2012). They also intermarried with other tribal groups (Spier 2004 [1923]), including the Cupeño and Luiseño and, in Baja, with the Kiliwa, Paipai, Quechan, and Cocopa (Hill and Nolasquez 1973).

There are sparse records of the tribe dating back to 1775, written by Spanish missionary and explorer Francisco Garcés (Coues 1900; Hedges 1975). In the early 20th century, "salvage" ethnographers like Thomas T. Waterman (1910) and Leslie Spier (1923) wrote about their Diegueño informants. Anthropologist Lowell John Bean argues that most pre-contact native California cosmologies were based on a hierarchical social universe divided into lower, middle, and upper worlds (Bean 1975). Bean's generalized cosmologies, however, are contradicted by much of what Waterman (1910) described in his ethnography of the Diegueño. Waterman states, "in religious matters the Diegueño seem to stand almost alone. They have little in common, for instance, with the Mohave, who are their nearest blood-kin in California" (2004 [1910]:273). His work illustrates the differences between Luiseño and the Diegueño rites, and emphasizes the supernatural aspects of Diegueño beliefs.

It wasn't until anthropologist Edward Winslow Gifford published *Clans and Moieties in Southern California* (1918) that the Kumeyaay received a more detailed description in the academic literature (also see Gifford 1931 and 1933). After Gifford, Kroeber (1976 [1925]) expands the anthropological knowledge of the Kumeyaay, whom he refers to as Diegueño. According to Kroeber, they lived in "exogamous patrilineal clans" that were non-totemic (1976 [1925]:719). This societal structure was also confirmed by anthropologists Gertrude Toffelmier and Katharine Luomala in the 1930s (2006 [1936]), and meant that "women did not necessarily have to marry out of their band but joined their husbands' family and *shimulh* when they married, at least traditionally" (Field 2012:563). The establishment of Spanish missions in California profoundly impacted these structures, along with other aspects of Kumeyaay socio-political organization.

Resistance to Missionization (1769-1830s)

On July 16, 1769, the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá was founded by Spanish friar Junípero Serra, marking the beginning of the Mission period (1769-1833) (Luomala 1978). The first Franciscan mission in the Californias, it was built on Kumeyaay land in present-day San Diego. In addition to appropriating their land, the Spanish also tried to convert the Kumeyaay people to Christianity and force them to work building missions (White and Fitt 1998). To irrigate the land needed to feed the mission's neophytes, they "seized instead a few Ipais to convert while they lived and worked at the mission, released them, and captured others" (White and Fitt 1998:259). This pattern of capture and forced work led to the slow conversion of the Kumeyaay during the mission's first decade (White and Fitt 1998).

It is important to note that the Kumeyaay resisted Catholic attempts at proselytizing. Kroeber discusses Kumeyaay opposition to conversion in his *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1976 [1925]). He remarks, "they are described as proud, rancorous, boastful, covetous, given to jests and quarrels, passionately devoted to the customs of their fathers and hard to handle. In short, they possessed their share of resoluteness" (1976 [1925]:711). Phillip M. White and Stephen D. Fitt (1998) add to this picture of "resoluteness": "of all mission tribes in the Californias, Tipais and Ipais most stubbornly and violently resisted Franciscan or Dominican control" (259).

In November 1775, the tensions between the Kumeyaay people and the Catholic Church erupted, with almost 800 Kumeyaay uniting to burn the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá, and resulting in the killing of three Spaniards, including a priest (Carrico 1997; Kroeber 1976 [1925]; White and Fitt 1998). The priest was "the only Franciscan to meet martyrdom at Indian hands in the entire history of the California missions" (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:712). This

successful, yet temporary, revolt stemmed directly from the Kumeyaay's aversion to Catholic conversion (Carrico 1997; Kroeber 1976 [1925]; White and Fitt 1998). It also was a response to multiple atrocities: rapes of indigenous women, theft, disease, as well as forced imprisonment and slavery (Carrico 1997).

The devastation of missionization can be seen in population statistics and historical records. Based on baptismal records, Kroeber approximates that the combined population of the Diegueño and the Kamia was around 3,000 people before the Mission period (1976 [1925]:712). Other researchers, including Luomala (1978), argue that this represents an underestimate and claim the pre-Mission Kumeyaay population was likely closer to 6,000-9,000. Shipek (1978) increases the estimate further, to 16,000-19,000 Kumeyaay members. So, we do not currently know exactly how many Kumeyaay existed before the Mission period; what we do know is that their numbers had fallen to 700-800 by 1925 (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:712). Despite this extreme loss of Kumeyaay life, Kroeber notes that "this is a higher percentage of survival than is enjoyed by any other missioned group of California" and ascribes their endurance to deep-rooted notions of resistance and independence (1976 [1925]:712).

The Kumeyaay way of life was further transformed after Mexico secularized the missions in 1834 (White and Fitt 1998). In theory, Native Americans were permitted to farm half of a mission's herd animals and half of its lands if they agreed to work on community projects (White and Fitt 1998). However, while secularization was supposed to return the land to the Natives, the majority of those who received land soon lost it at the hands of secular administrators who acted like "feudal lords" (White and Fitt 1998:259). Instead of recovering their homelands, "Ipais and Tipais became serfs, trespassers on ancestral lands, rebels, or mountain fugitives" (White and Fitt 1998:259). Most Kumeyaay members were forced into hard labor on ranchos or joined other

tribes further east. This forced displacement was also experienced by neighboring tribes, including the Luiseños (Haas 2011). Tribal member Pablo Tac created a written form of Luiseño to document his experience with Spanish colonialism (Haas 2011). This important historical narrative provides a rare glimpse into indigenous people's subjugation to a barrage of traumas, including newly introduced diseases, such as dysentery, syphilis, and influenza, which decimated indigenous Californian families while Mexico and the U.S. fought over their ancestral lands (Haas 2011).

Kumeyaay Removal: The Border Crossed Us (1840s-1870s)

From the beginning, the location of the U.S.-Mexico border was a point of contention (Griswold del Castillo 1990). In fact, the Mexican War (1846-1848) started over a border dispute and ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty resulted in a lengthy, controversial process to map the U.S.-Mexico border, between 1849 and 1855. The Kumeyaay were promised land by General Stephen Watts Kearny because they fought with the Americans at the Battle of San Pasqual (Hoffman and Gamble 2006). When it came time to mark the arbitrary border in 1848, however, officials failed to acknowledge the Kumeyaay tribe that had lived throughout the territory for thousands of years. "The boundary in California would be a line drawn eastward starting one marine league south of the bay of San Diego" (Griswold del Castillo 1990:55). The U.S.-Mexico border split the tribe into two groups and exacerbated the hardships of tribal members on both sides.

Following the creation of the border, new anti-indigenous legislation was enacted. The 1850 Act for the Government and Protection of Indians effectively removed Native California Indians from their homelands and forced Indian children and adults into involuntary indentured

servitude (also referred to as "apprenticing") (Johnston-Dodds 2002). This act also punished "vagrant" Indians by selling them at auction to the highest bidder if they could not provide bail or bond (Johnston-Dodds 2002). Soon after, federal agents pressured 22 leaders of "the nation of Diegueno Indians" into signing the 1852 Treaty of Santa Ysabel (Connolly Miskwish 2007; Kappler 1929). Although the State of California refused to honor this agreement, or the 17 treaties it negotiated with other tribes, it still set aside almost 7.5 million acres to combine several tribes into one large Southern California reservation (Hoffman and Gamble 2006).

White settlers moved onto Kumeyaay lands in droves because of the discovery of gold during 1870 in Julian, California, and the emergence of a booming economy after the Civil War. Despite the Kumeyaay's persistent attempts to gain legal titles to their land, negotiations failed in both the U.S. and Mexico (White and Fitt 1998). "After Ipais had already been forced off the best lands where the more acculturated were successful ranchers, an executive order in 1875 established the first Tipai-Ipai reservations, mainly where native villages still existed" (White and Fitt 1998:260). This loss of ancestral land happened to almost all California Indians following the Mexican-American War. It had devastating consequences for the cultural and religious traditions of the Kumeyaay people, whose self-understanding is deeply rooted in a relationship with the land.

1883 Religious Crime Code and the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre

The Religious Crime Code of 1883 allowed Congress to ban all forms of indigenous dancing and ceremony. This included traditions like the Sun Dance, potlatches, and medicinal practices (Native Americans in Philanthropy and Candid 2021). The bans granted so-called Indian agents the right to use any form of force or imprisonment deemed necessary to stop any

cultural ceremonies. The legislation was passed under the guise of assimilation, but the reality was that practices like potlatch, which redistributed wealth, were a direct threat to the capitalistic ideology that the U.S. was embracing at this time. The 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre was arguably instigated by U.S. officials' attempts to suppress the Sioux Ghost Dance ritual, and was rooted in broader disputes over indigenous rights to ceremonial, religious, and cultural freedom.

Worsening living conditions, assimilation policies, and land disputes meant that tensions between the Sioux Nation and the encroaching U.S. government were at an all-time high leading up to Wounded Knee (Roscigno et al. 2015). Responding to threats to their religious and culture, large numbers of Sioux people started to practice a revitalized version of the Ghost Dance during the fall of 1890 (Lesser 1933; Moses 1985; Roscigno et al. 2015). This version of the dance symbolized resistance against oppression because it continued in defiance of reservation agents' attempts to quash it, and other unique cultural elements involved (Roscigno et al. 2015). It was classified as a sign of rebellion in the local newspapers and therefore developed threatening associations in white public discourse. President Benjamin Harrison ordered more than 1 thousand troops to quell what was assumed to be an impeding uprising (Roscigno et al. 2015). This led to the Sioux Massacre at Wounded Knee which "would leave hundreds of Sioux men, women, and children dead, and would forever be etched as a pivotal moment in American and Native American history" (Roscigno et al. 2015:21). Not one of the soldiers, commanders, or generals was ever found guilty of any wrongdoings associated with that horrific event (Roscigno et al. 2015).

The militarized response to the Ghost Dance demonstrated the potential costs to Native people who continued to practice indigenous ceremonies in this period. This cost could be the lives of their family and their tribal community. This fear of violent repression partially led to

many ceremonies, including the Kumeyaay Karuk mourning ceremony, falling dormant in the early 20th century. The Commission of Indian Affairs continued to issue anti-ceremonial notifications into the 1920s (Native Americans in Philanthropy and Candid 2021). The religious criminalization of indigenous ceremonies and dances had devastating consequences and has created lasting gaps in indigenous religions across the U.S. and Canada. It wasn't until 1978 with the passing of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act that indigenous people were granted the freedom to practice their ceremonies and dances under the protection of the law.

Ramona and Kumeyaay Displacement (Late 19th Century-Early 20th Century)

In the late nineteenth century, special federal agent and writer, Helen Hunt Jackson, sought to bring attention to the mistreatment of California Indians through her book *Ramona* (1884). The book was widely read, and despite the author's seemingly good intentions, it was "also partially responsible for creating and spreading the image of the California Indian as docile, helpless, and passive" (Phillips 2014 [1975]:6). The only tangible result from Jackson's recommendations was the Indian Bureau's authorization to use military tactics to remove squatters (White and Fitt 1998). However, these efforts were countered by the settlers' ability to call the Justice of the Peace on any Indian living on land owned by whites (Hoffman and Gamble 2006).

The Kumeyaay who lived along the Pacific coast were most severely impacted by both hostile government policy and a lack of reservation land (White and Fitt 1998). As a result, many coastal Kumeyaay members were driven to a life of desolate poverty in San Diego or the surrounding hills (Cuero 1991). "In San Diego County the isolated mountain bands that were always outside mission and reservation systems continued like others to live within protohistoric

boundaries, but less traumatically, and preserved more of the old culture longer" (White and Fitt 1998:260). By hiding in the mountains, these bands could retain their cultural practices. By the end of the 19th century, a significant portion of the Kumeyaay people who were not able to hide or be sheltered by tribal communities worked for inferior wages on ranches, mines, and in towns (White and Fitt 1998).

Following the settlement of more Euro-American and Chinese settlers in San Diego County in the early 1900s, many of the Kumeyaay members who remained in the area were pushed further south into Baja California, in search of food and a place to live (Cuero 1991). Those who stayed in San Diego and thus on the U.S. side of the border were forced onto five reservations, where they relied on hunting and gathering, small farming, and government rations to survive (Toffelmier and Luomala 2006 [1936]). The Kumeyaay people faced starvation, illness, and psychosocial difficulties due to the displacement they suffered with the arrival of this new wave of settlers (Cuero 1991). Additionally, "venereal disease, smallpox, intermarriage with white, Mexican and Negro populations and a high infant mortality have reduced their numbers from the 3,000 of 25 years ago to about 220" (Toffelmier and Luomala 2006 [1936]:216). These numbers go some way to quantify the devastation experienced by the Kumeyaay people, and to demonstrate the horrifying effects of colonialism.

Resistance to El Capitan Act (1919-Mid-20th Century)

In 1919, Congress passed the El Capitan Act to force the removal of the El Capitan Grande people from their homelands, to enable the construction of a dam and the development of water resources for a growing San Diego (Thorne 2010). The Kumeyaay people had previously requested assistance to deal with the flooding of their homes, and Congress responded by

promoting the sale of their land and water rights to San Diego. The financial settlement offered ($361,420) would only cover the needs of one band at El Capitan and would not be enough to assist all the indigenous people who lived in the affected area. The Act called for the consent of the indigenous people it intended to relocate off the watershed (Thorne 2010). After many negotiations, the Commissioner promised some El Capitan Grande people that they could pick a local property for their relocation (Thorne 2010). This was problematic because it did not consider the inhabitants of the Conejos village nor those among the El Capitan Grande who strongly opposed land transfer (Thorne 2010:45).

The Kumeyaay at El Capitan Grande fought legal battles for over a decade and continued to resist encroachment from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the government. Ultimately, the Capitan Grande indigenous people moved in the 1930s and received compensation to build two reservations. Some moved to Barona in 1932, while others joined in the purchase of property in the Viejas Valley (Thorne 2010:46). This forever altered the trajectory of many Kumeyaay families' lives and band affiliations. Thorne states, "the resistance of this small group of Capitan Grande Indians in the early 1930s is arguably a defining moment with long-term consequences for San Diego County's political and economic landscape" (2010:44). Due to their resistance, they were successful in creating two new reservations and securing the rights to the 14,000 acres at El Capitan Grande. It is important to note that while it has no inhabitants, there is still a reservation for the Kumeyaay at El Capitan Grande.

Kumeyaay leaders such as Ramon Ames and Ventura Paipa were critical to the survival of many Kumeyaay people (Banegas 2017). Ventura Paipa was a Capital Grande leader and a vocal opponent of the dam and relocation. He continued to fight against encroaching anti-indigenous policies and advocated for the Baron Long purchase for Viejas. Ramon Ames

believed removal was unavoidable and encouraged local groups of Kumeyaay to help acquire the Barona property. Both Ames and Paipa used political pressure to secure properties and turn the situation to their advantage (Thorne 2010). These leaders employed different methods to resist the BIA but, ultimately, they assisted their people in one of the most difficult transitions any group can make while being displaced from their homelands.

Although Native Californians were granted citizenship rights in 1917, it wasn't until the 1928 Lea Act (also known as California Indian Jurisdictional Act) that descendants were able to make land claims against the government (Hoffman and Gamble 2006). By this time, countless settlers had moved onto traditional tribal lands and refused to leave. The U.S. government's failure to honor their 18 treaties, including the Treaty of Santa Ysabel, caused the majority of Native Californians to lose their homelands in addition to access to spiritual locations and the natural resources of their ancestors. Osuna, a Santa Ysabel tribal member was quoted saying, "I want my home back...When the treaty was made my grandfather was given that place and they have chased me away from there"[1]. This loss had lasting consequences, exemplifying the ongoing intergenerational trauma that indigenous people face as a result of their ancestors' removal from part or all of their homelands.

Other difficulties arose in the 1930s, when the Mission Indian Federation resisted federal authority and created its own self-sufficient government (White and Fitt 1998). Kumeyaay support was divided between the Federation—a grassroots organization founded in 1919 that relied upon small donations to lobby for repatriations for Southern California indigenous peoples' losses—and a counter group known as the Southern Mission Indians (Thorne 2010; White and Fitt 1998). "As then, factionalism has contrarily fostered tribalism, aboriginally absent or nascent" (White and Fitt 1998:260). The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 tried to

strengthen the Native American governments. In theory, the act intended to return land and mineral rights to the Native people; in practice, however, the results were mixed. While the act temporarily shielded some Native tribes from the Depression, it also imposed democratic ideologies on others (Schwartz 1994).

Boarding School Generation and Historical Trauma (1870s-1970s)

Along with removal, Kumeyaay people were also subjugated to mistreatment in boarding schools. The U.S. boarding school system began in the 1870s and disastrously affected the lives of thousands of Native American children through the enforcement of American assimilation. San Diego Native children were forcibly taken from their homes and separated from their parents in boarding schools such as the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, CA, the Perris School in Perris, CA, and St. Johns Indian Mission in Arizona (Hoffman and Gamble 2006). The detrimental outcomes of boarding schools have been well-documented in scholarship that reveals the system's brutality (Adams 1995; Brave Heart and DeBruyn 1998; Unger 1977). Students were subject to corporal discipline, physical and sexual abuse, solitary confinement, and starvation (Evans 2022; Gone 2013). In addition, the schools were often characterized by poor conditions, including rotting food, insufficient teaching supplies, and inadequately trained administrators and staff (Dawson 2012).

Even though Native American children were granted the right to attend public schools due to the Johnson O'Malley Act of 1934, many boarding schools continued into the 1970s. The Sherman Indian School, the closest in proximity to San Diego, eventually became a trade school with the purpose of training Indian children for vocational careers (Hoffman and Gamble 2006). Boarding schools still bring great pain and sorrow to Native American people because of the

devastating assault on their culture, language, family members, and ancestors. Around five hundred indigenous children were murdered in boarding schools in the U.S. through neglect and abuse, with many still left uncounted as the investigation continues (Evans 2022). These numbers illustrate the lack of care shown to indigenous children while they were under the government's custody.

All these experiences contribute to the Kumeyaay people's intergenerational and historical trauma. This history of removal, racism, and loss plays a role in contemporary indigenous activism, including in movements such as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW). According to their website, MMIW reports that 86% of indigenous women are "affected by historical trauma" (Red Road Institute 2022). Historical trauma can affect mental health and we know that indigenous people suffer greatly from the results of colonization and genocide (Gone 2013). The creation of the U.S.-Mexico border initiated an onslaught of detrimental consequences for Kumeyaay peoples' lives.

By tracing the history of the border and its effects on the Kumeyaay people, I have attempted to elucidate the rapid cultural and political changes to indigenous ways of life in the newly formed American California and Mexican Baja California between the 1850s and the middle of the 20th century. While historical records, governmental and state policies, and statistics give us broad insights into these changes, it is often the lived experience that reveals a more detailed and genuine account. In the next section, I will show how intergenerational trauma stemming from the border's creation is embodied in the legacy of Delfina Cuero, a Kumeyaay woman who experienced these difficulties firsthand.

The Legacy of Delfina Cuero

The autobiography of Delfina Cuero (1991) illustrates many of the struggles faced by the Kumeyaay in the early 1900s. Cuero's life story was told to anthropologist Florence Shipek and interpreted by Campo member Rosalie Pinto Robertson. The patterns of precariousness (Jenkins 2015a, 2015b) endured by Cuero and her family members are documented as representative of intergenerational and historical trauma for Kumeyaay members. The creation and enforcement of the U.S.-Mexico border drastically changed the lives of the Kumeyaay in ways that cannot be overstated.

> "The Indians had no formal education, knew nothing of non-Indian laws… They knew nothing of an international border which cut their territory through the middle. They knew only that Indian existence was still continuing in the southern portion of their territory. During interviews with Indians from both sides of the border, it became apparent that only in the last twenty years have the majority of unschooled, non-reservation Indians become conscious of the border and felt restriction on their freedom of movement within Diegueño territory as they visited relatives, attended ceremonies, gathered acorns and pine nuts, and even changed their residence in either direction" (Shipek 1991:11).

Cuero, born around 1900, describes her family's move from Mission Valley in San Diego to Baja California, and the changes to their subsistence gathering lifestyle. One of Cuero's biggest regrets was that she was not given a Kumeyaay initiation ceremony, during which she would have learned "to be a good wife and how to have babies" (1991:43). That knowledge was passed on to young women by their grandmothers as they were reaching maturity. "Nobody just talked about these things ever. It was all in the songs and myths that belonged to the ceremony" (1991:43). This stresses the importance of oral traditions, such as ceremonial songs, to the transmission of cultural knowledge. Cuero discussed how that knowledge faded as the songs and ceremonies were outlawed and fell out of practice, and the negative effect that this had on her own experience.

In the early twentieth century Native American religious practices, including initiation ceremonies, were illegal, outlawed by the Religious Crime Code of 1883 and Circular 1665 in 1921 (Ellis 2001). This diminished the ability of elders to teach their youth the educational, moral, and gendered cultural customs ingrained in these traditional ceremonies. It wasn't until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act was passed in 1978 that Native peoples were given the legal right to their own religious practices. Cuero's narrative illuminates how many cultural practices that were once essential to the Kumeyaay way of life were outlawed because of colonialism.

Patterns of abandonment, separation, and trauma are also evident in Cuero's lived experience. Following the death of her first husband, Cuero struggled to have enough food for her children and was forced to sell her eldest son to another couple for one month's food. This took an extreme toll on her; her son was abused and starved by the couple for almost four years before he ran away. Cuero reflects, "the terrible things I went through trying to keep my children together and fed, I can't begin to tell. Then, I didn't succeed after all. I feel like crying when I think of that time. My children were hungry and cold so many times" (1991:62). Cuero's daughters also suffered abusive marriages and severe hardships. Still, despite these painful struggles, Cuero maintained hope for the future.

The main reason Cuero recorded her autobiography was her deep desire to one day return to her family's homeland in San Diego. Shipek, among others, aided Cuero with her case to move back across the U.S.-Mexico border. At the end of her autobiography, Cuero says, "I pray that something will work out so that my children and grandchildren can come back with me to where I was born. That I can have a home to come to with my children when I get too old to work" (1911:67). Cuero went on to live with her translator, Rosalie Robertson on the Campo

Indian Reservation until her death in 1972, supported by her pension and the royalties from her autobiography. Although Cuero was eventually legally allowed to return to her homelands in San Diego, there have been hundreds, if not thousands, of Kumeyaay members who have been permanently separated by the border.

Delfina Cuero's life story and the historically documented removal of the Kumeyaay people are fundamental to my understanding of the contemporary conditions experienced by Kumeyaay tribal members. This historical background situates the Kumeyaay experience within a political ethos (Jenkins 1991). In her work with Salvadoran refugees, Jenkins weaves emotions and sentiments with power and politics. As a transborder indigenous tribe, the Kumeyaay are precariously refugees in a complicated political sphere (Rensink 2018). The purpose of this comparison of Kumeyaay people as refugees is to call attention to the impediments to tribal sovereignty regarding their traditional territory, in addition to the federally enacted structural violence against their people that causes them to be in what Cattelino (2010) refers to as a double bind. Like the Salvadoran refugees that were ethnographically interviewed by Jenkins, the Kumeyaay have been subjected to "constructed affects of fear and anxiety" (Jenkins 1991:146) that are part of both their intergenerational trauma and their cultural community. The mistrust, disillusionment, and resentment that many indigenous communities have for governmental agencies and white supremacy are valid outcomes of their ancestors' and their own lived experiences. It is necessary to recognize how extreme cultural, personal, and familial loss can impact well-being and long-term community health outcomes.

Conclusion: Missing Pieces and Broken Treaties

The Kumeyaay people and their ancestors have been stewards of their homeland for over ten thousand years. Although their land has been split by the border and corrupted by settler colonialism, the Kumeyaay people are still active in their care of the borderlands. They do this through their fight against border construction, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, and their continued dedication to the land, plant life, and their ancestors. While the border has significantly altered their cultural traditions, the Kumeyaay people continue to pave a path forward in the hope of renewal and future generational change.

The profound socio-political changes that happened to the Kumeyaay Nation during the late 19th century and early 20th century had clear ramifications for members' nationality, tribal sovereignty, and access to resources. The level of structural violence endured by the ancestors of my interlocutors cannot be ignored or minimized. From the very beginning of colonization, indigenous people faced threats from white supremacy and cultural assimilation. This was further exacerbated by attacks on their religious freedoms and ceremonial traditions. The Kumeyaay have survived genocide, removal, displacement, and continued racism against their community. Through broken treaties and unspeakable loss, they fought for their sovereignty and continue to invest in decolonized ways of being.

Delfina Cuero's autobiography is a remarkable life history that demonstrates how the border's creation changed the trajectory of the Kumeyaay tribe forever. Cuero was among the Kumeyaay ancestors that my interlocutors spoke about. Her story is well-known in the community and her autobiography was a frequent point of conversation and referenced as a suggestion for my research. Her voice stands for many unheard and unknown life stories of Kumeyaay people who endured far more than they should have.

One of the most salient aspects of Cuero's lived experience is how the loss of ceremonies and traditions affected her ability to become a culturally competent member. She felt something was missing in her journey to womanhood and motherhood. Cuero speaks of the knowledge that is embedded within songs and ceremonies, and this is part of what Kumeyaay members today hope to revive. The complicated process of reviving dormant traditions will be explored in the rest of this dissertation. We can trace the loss of sacred knowledge to the formation of the border and the forcible removal of the Kumeyaay people to the outskirts of their homelands. This is why I argue that the border has caused, and continues to cause, irreparable harm to the Kumeyaay people and other transnational tribes.

The works of Gifford (1918, 1931, and 1933) and Kroeber (1976 [1925]) show the long-standing research interest of anthropologists in learning more about this community and serve as important reminders about unbalanced power relationship previous ethnographers had with Kumeyaay members. Ethnographers have previously worked against the wishes of indigenous communities and have misinterpreted numerous cultural practices. These actions have had lasting consequences and have generated feelings of mistrust between the Kumeyaay people and anthropologists. Like broken treaties, broken promises also have detrimental outcomes. Anthropologists who work with the Kumeyaay in the future need to be aware of this history and continue to advocate for more decolonized work.

Despite this long history of loss and oppression, examples such as the Ghost Dance illustrate how indigenous people have used ceremonies as an act of resistance. The Sioux people gave their lives for the right to dance and practice their religion. This is representative of the historical fight of many indigenous people, who used subversive actions, revitalized practices, and physical resistance in the face of cultural oppression. The Kumeyaay people may not have

received as much scholarly attention as other indigenous groups, but that does not diminish the importance of their struggles. More research needs to be done to highlight indigenous voices in the telling of colonial history.

Chapter Notes:

1. Osuna (of Santa Ysabel which is near Julian) quoted in "survey into the Condition of Indians of the United states," senate subcommittee Pursuant to senate resolution 79, 70th Congress, 2nd session (1928-1944), [Microfilm], 17304.

Chapter 3 Research Methods

Research Setting

I conducted fieldwork with Kumeyaay interlocutors in San Diego County, California, over two and half years (between January 2020 and July 2022). Due to COVID-19 restrictions, my project relied on patchwork anthropology (Günel, Varma, and Watanabe 2020) as a theoretical and methodological orientation. The focus of my dissertation changed to reflect a person-centered ethnographic research approach (Hollan 2001, 2005; Parish 2008; Levy and Hollan 1998) with interlocutor interviews and participant-observation fieldwork completed mostly online. Zoom, phone, and email interviews were conducted to minimize the risks posed by the pandemic and to accommodate my interlocutors. When pandemic restrictions lessened, in-person ethnographic research occurred in the cities of San Diego, Santee, and Lakeside, as well as at three Kumeyaay reservations. As examples of in-person events, I attended Powwows at Barona Park on the Barona reservation and at Balboa Park, San Diego, in addition to the Warrior Spirit Conference at SDSU. I also conducted fieldwork with the imagined community online (Kavoura 2014) by attending events related to indigenous activism issues. Online imagined communities refer to those with shared common beliefs, language, and characteristics (Kavoura 2014). Examples of online Zoom events include the Kumeyaay Flag Raising at SDSU, the NAGPRA ancestors workshop by UCSD, Critical Mission Studies conference, and the Kumeyaay Land Defenders panel.

Figure 1.1: Kumeyaay Lands Map 1769-2000. Map © 2000 Michael Connolly Miskwish

This map illustrates the Kumeyaay homelands from 1769 to 2000 in San Diego and Imperial Counties, California, U.S., and Baja California, Mexico. The shaded section represents traditional Kumeyaay homelands prior to the creations of the border and their subsequent removal. The twelve Kumeyaay tribes that are currently federally recognized in the U.S. are noted, along with major communities in Mexico. The map was created by Kumeyaay member Michael Connolly Miskwish. It clearly demonstrates the drastic changes that have been inflicted on the Kumeyaay people's territory and tribal sovereignty since the eighteenth century.

Methodological Orientations

To ground my research within ethnographic data, my methodology is guided by an anthropological paradigm of subjectivity, as formulated through the works of João Biehl, Byron Good, and Arthur Kleinman (2007); Janis H. Jenkins (2015a); Steven Parish (2008); and Tanya Marie Luhrmann (2006). According to Luhrmann, "'subjectivity' is a term loosely used by

anthropologists to refer to the shared inner life of the subject, to the way subjects feel, respond, experience" (2006:345). By focusing on the subjective experience, I attend to how mental health practices influence daily life for Kumeyaay community members.

Utilizing a person-centered approach and methodology, as developed by Robert I. Levy, allows an ethnographer to use the data collected from open-ended interviews to make important observations about subjective experience (Hollan 2001, 2005; Parish 2008; Levy and Hollan 1998). The objective of person-centered ethnography is to use "well chosen and timed questions to explore the presence or absence of certain thoughts and feelings and the ways in which they were expressed (directly or indirectly), suppressed, denied, or hidden in other ways" (Hollan 2005:464). This approach informed my understanding of my interlocutors' relationships with their ancestors and the difficulties they experienced during the pandemic.

Utilizing participant-observation and fieldnotes, I employed the ethnographic guidelines set by Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw (1995), including open jotting. My role as a researcher and my interview techniques were informed by the work of Charles L. Briggs (1986). Briggs emphasized the value of open-ended interviews in addition to the significance of communicating with elders and children within a community. A sample of my semi-structured open-ended interview questions can be found in the Appendix.

I elicited desire-based narratives (Tuck 2009) to avoid falling into the paradigm of damage-centered research. In her letter about indigenous research, Tuck critiques the focus on the suffering and agony of indigenous people. To counter these harmful narratives, Tuck suggests that researchers emphasize the positive aspects of what is working within communities to uplift and generate joy. The work of Wood, Kamper, and Swanson (2018) demonstrates the utility of employing this framework when discussing Kumeyaay perspectives. The authors

explore Kumeyaay adolescents' positive experiences of, and attachments to, reservations in San Diego, to show how reservations can be wellness spaces, meaning places that heal and empower community members. The desire-centered approach illuminates culturally meaningful experiences for Kumeyaay people and attends to their hope and dreams.

Interviews conducted for this project were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed. All interviews and instances of participant-observation were qualitatively analyzed via open- and focused-coding (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995) using NVIVO software and extensive notes. This allowed me to comprehensively codify the collected data in a manner that allows the central themes to emerge during analysis. Themes that emerged from my data collected from Kumeyaay members included spirituality, trauma, healing, and Pan-Indianism.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted in person, on Zoom, on the phone, and over email. My ethnographic interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. During COVID-19, I exchanged many emails back and forth with potential interlocutors before we were able to meet. There were additional Kumeyaay members who agreed to be interviewed, but our discussions never moved forward for a variety of reasons. COVID-19 impacted my ability to meet in person for a significant portion of my fieldwork. Therefore, Zoom, phone, and email became the optimal forms of communication. One interview was not recorded due to the preference of my interlocutor. While I was able to take written notes, this interview did not produce the rich data that emerged from the recorded interviews.

Participant-Observation

Participant-observation was greatly impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no in-person events for most of 2020. During this period, I attended online events on Zoom, but many planned meetings and events were canceled completely due to the pandemic. Things began to gradually open back up for the public in 2021, which allowed me to attend more in-person events, including two local Powwows. By 2022, I was able to conduct interviews in person and attend in-person events. Participant-observation also occurred while I lived my everyday life on Kumeyaay land in San Diego and took notes on local community references to the Kumeyaay people at libraries, parks, zoos, universities, and other public spaces.

The Beginning of this Project

Arguably, the first threads for this project began over a decade ago during my Master's degree in anthropology at San Diego State University (SDSU). I was taking a course in anthropological linguistics called Oral Traditions with Dr. Margaret Field, a Professor of American Indian Studies at SDSU. Field's research is on indigenous languages, including Tiipay and 'Iipay. She has been working with the Kumeyaay community in Baja California for almost two decades and has long-standing relationships with individuals there. In one memorable class, Jon Meza Cuero visited and sang Bird songs. That was my first time hearing Kumeyaay cyclical songs, and I will never forget the rhythm of his rattle or the timbre of his voice. I was moved by the experience and I feel fortunate to speak about the importance of Bird songs for healing in this dissertation. While at SDSU, I worked as a teaching assistant for American Indian Studies classes and conducted fieldwork with indigenous peoples in Oaxaca, Mexico. Those experiences

framed my orientation toward indigenous research and helped build part of the foundation of this dissertation.

This project emerged more formally during discussions with Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Field as my research interests became more focused on indigenous and mental health issues. When I expressed interest in potentially conducting my dissertation research on the Kumeyaay, Dr. Field offered to introduce me to some people she believed would be interested in discussing these issues with me. COVID-19 closed many doors to me, because people did not want to add another virtual meeting to their schedule or take on extra work during a global pandemic. Because of Dr. Field, I was able to contact particular Kumeyaay people that would otherwise potentially be unwilling to participate if I was simply emailing them cold. This proved to be both an advantage and a limitation, because it shaped who I interviewed and who permitted me access, as discussed below in the Selection Bias section.

Human Subjects Approval and Informed Consent

This dissertation research (#182076) received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the University of California San Diego (UCSD) on December 17, 2019. The interlocutors in this study provided their oral consent to participate. To protect confidentiality, IRB permissions required that interlocutors be given pseudonyms and that descriptive data related to their identity was obscured. During the course of the research, I offered interlocutors the option of selecting their own pseudonym.

COVID-19 Setbacks and Adjustments

Following IRB approval, I began to formally conduct my research by reaching out to select Kumeyaay members in January 2020 through emails and phone calls. In early March 2020, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) was reporting COVID-19 cases across several U.S. States (CDC 2022). By mid-March 2020, California was in "shutdown," and COVID-19 was declared a nationwide emergency. Shortly after, the U.S.-Mexico border closed, and the University of California administration paused non-essential research. With the onset of a global pandemic and the suspension of all non-essential research, I wasn't sure what I would do with my project or how it would continue. During this same period, I personally faced significant health issues with a high-risk pregnancy, which resulted in my son being born 6 weeks prematurely and spending 22 days in the NICU in May 2020. Additionally, I was balancing an official lecturer position at SDSU and a teaching assistantship at UCSD during Spring 2020. In all, the official start of this project was fraught with many unknowns and the fear surrounding a global pandemic.

The impacts of COVID-19 are still being debated on a global scale and we are yet to learn all of its long-term effects. There have been more than 1.11 million deaths in the U.S. due to COVID-19 and related illnesses (NYT 2023). The mental health fallout from a world pandemic, isolation, and threat of illness is combined with potential grief from the loss of a loved one and the effects of long-term COVID-19 experienced by "long haulers." According to the CDC, the pandemic interrupted or impeded critical mental health services in 93% of countries worldwide, particularly impacting marginalized elders and adolescents (Brunier and Drysdale 2020). COVID-19 was a period of great cultural upheaval and reflection for both my interlocutors and me.

During the early months of the pandemic, I had a lot of time to think about this project and how I wanted to proceed. In the end, I decided to move away from my focus on adolescents for three main reasons. First, I did not want to add to their stress or intense online schedule. As school moved online, many teens faced unexpected isolation and burnout from Zoom classes. Second, I did not feel that it was appropriate to discuss general mental health issues with teens who could potentially be in crisis, given that "according to the new data, in 2021, more than a third (37%) of high school students reported they experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 44% reported they persistently felt sad or hopeless during the past year" (CDC 2022). As a psychological and medical anthropologist, I am aware that raising mental health issues can be triggering, and I am not medically trained to provide the help that may be needed in this situation. While I can suggest potential mental health resources, there are significant limitations to the help I can refer people to, and this was especially true during the height of the pandemic, which exacerbated the existing strain on the mental health care community worldwide (Brunier and Drysdale 2020; Kumar and Nayar 2021).

As an example of this strain, an interlocutor informed me that tribal services for mental health, such as Indian Health Council (IHC) and Southern Indian Health Council (SIHC), was unable to keep up with the demands of COVID-19. Under non-pandemic circumstances, IHC or SIHC would be my primary recommendation for a Kumeyaay member who was experiencing mental health struggles because they provide free access to care and are located close to Kumeyaay reservations. Given the significant impacts on mental health resulting from the pandemic and the possible barriers to accessing care, I did my best to adjust my research goals to responsibly engage with the community. I adhere to the "Do No Harm" principle and the best course of action seemed to be a project that didn't center on adolescent experiences during a

global pandemic, because I was not prepared for that level of instability and unknown harm. Third, my project evolved significantly after I interviewed Daniel for the first time, and he discussed how the younger generations were helping to lead the path forward. He was referring to people in their 30s to 50s, who became a new focus of this project. Ethnographic research with adolescents is still necessary and is a critical part of understanding the different perspectives on Kumeyaay mental health. I hope in the future to be able to conduct more research with Kumeyaay teenagers and learn about their experiences.

I still have not met every one of my interlocutors in person because two of them preferred to interact over Zoom. Videoconferencing provided safety for myself and my interlocutors, especially at the height of the pandemic when meeting in person was not worth the risk of spreading COVID-19. As a white woman, I was aware that spreading an infectious disease to my indigenous interlocutors to serve my own project would be ethically abhorrent and reproduce colonial models of research that go directly against my personal values and methodological orientations. Therefore, I exchanged emails, phone calls, and Zoom sessions with my interlocutors until they were comfortable meeting in person or we concluded our virtual time together. While not ideal, Zoom offered safety based on ethical considerations, so was the best interview method at numerous stages throughout this project.

I was also denied access to the SIHC because of COVID-19 protocols. During late 2019 and early 2020, I was in dialogue with an IRB representative from SIHC clinics about the possibility of conducting research there. For months I worked on my application and navigated the process of getting IRB approval from the clinic and the tribal council representatives. It was a lengthy undertaking, and it all came to an end with the COVID-19 shutdown. The SIHC decided

not to allow any new non-essential research to be conducted. Therefore, my project continued to adapt and find new avenues to address Kumeyaay mental health.

COVID-19 disrupted many aspects of daily life for people across the globe. My personal experience is tied to my high-risk pregnancy, my son's premature birth, his NICU stay, and to being his main caregiver for the months that followed. I could never have imagined I would be facing a global pandemic during my fieldwork or how this context would change everything. I didn't anticipate becoming a mother during fieldwork in a global pandemic either. The combination of these two experiences was sometimes overwhelming and certainly impacted my ability to conduct research. It brought up significant questions about the boundary between the professional and personal, which I discuss in the conclusion about patchwork anthropology. I had to schedule interviews around available childcare and sometimes during my son's naps. I watched indigenous and Kumeyaay events over Zoom while caring for my son. The resulting dissertation is reflective of those considerable challenges and unique perspectives. While this dissertation may not be as extensive as I had wanted, it certainly was developed with care and thoughtful regard to how to be present with people during a global pandemic.

Kumeyaay Tribal Membership

For this project, participants' Kumeyaay membership was established by self-identification. While it is possible to ask for tribal identification cards for interlocutors in the U.S., this is not a necessary or ethical request. There are many cultural considerations that affect tribal membership, whether an individual is a member is not always a straightforward question. That being said, my U.S. interlocutors are all well-known Kumeyaay community members.

Tribal membership is a contested issue within indigenous communities because of its ties to colonization and white supremacy. Before colonization, indigenous kinship in the Americas was based on lineal descent systems for each cultural group (Schmidt 2011). Blood quantum laws emerged from the Allotment Period (1887-1934) and the Dawes Act of 1887. The Dawes Act was an attempt by the U.S. government to disband and disrupt tribal groups through land grants and blood requirements. It required that, to be considered Native American, individuals must have at least one full-blooded indigenous grandparent, or ¼ blood quantum. The ¼ Native American blood requirement disenfranchised countless indigenous people, ignored the horrors of widespread sexual abuse by white settlers, and infringed on cultural lineal descent traditions.

In 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act, also known as the Howard-Wheeler Act, was passed. This effectively created three categories for understanding Native American blood quantum (Schmidt 2011). Those who were descendants of federally recognized tribal members, those who were descendants and living on reservation lands, and those who had ½ or more Native American ancestry (Hagan 1985). The Howard-Wheeler Act pressured tribes to create membership rolls, forcing many tribal groups to adopt this colonial definition of membership based on blood and residency, supplanting traditional kinship and cultural forms of identity.

The U.S. government eventually changed tribal membership policies, allowing each federally recognized tribe to implement their own criteria. The damage, however, had been done and the legacy of blood quantum has left countless individuals unenrolled and unrecognized by their tribal group. There is a significant proportion of tribal groups today that still rely on blood quantum to divide those who are part of the community from those who are considered outside of the culture. Waves of self-identified Native Americans have only further complicated these issues surrounding enrollment.

There is no uniformity when it comes to tribal policies on how to officially become an Kumeyaay member. Each federally recognized tribe has different criteria to determine who is part of their official tribal group. For the 12 recognized tribes in the U.S., enrollment comes with potential federal and tribal benefits. Gaming tribes provide per capita income checks and subsidies. To be eligible for these benefits, Barona asks for 1/8 minimum blood quantum to be enrolled, while Sycuan and Viejas use a system where membership is recognized for those who are a direct descendant of a previous tribal member (Banegas 2017).

Of my six interlocutors, only one is not a registered Kumeyaay member. She is an indigenous woman who believes that she has Kumeyaay ancestry in Mexico but could not prove this with certainty. For members in the U.S., there are more available records of Kumeyaay families, as an outcome of official tribal enrollment and benefits. This is an important consideration to note because it likely means many people of Kumeyaay descent, particularly on the Mexican side of the border, cannot prove their ancestry due to displacement, marginalization, and the threat of death. Delfina Cuero's story demonstrates how difficult it can be to prove lineage.

Recruitment for the Study

Recruitment of my U.S. interlocutors for this study began with cold emailing based on recommendations from professors and interlocutors through snowball sampling. At first, Dr. Margaret Field and Dr. Ross Frank provided the email contacts of Kumeyaay members who they thought would be interested in participating in my research. I sent an email describing my project and asking if the potential interviewee would be interested in meeting on Zoom, on the phone, or in person (in-person interviews only happened after I was vaccinated and it was safe to do so).

After a few emails back and forth, an interview was scheduled. At the end of the interview, I asked the interviewee if they knew of any other community members that would be interested in participating in my research.

Many of the Kumeyaay people I contacted did not respond to my emails, and some initially agreed but never moved forward with the process. This is a common occurrence in ethnographic research; however, it was exacerbated by COVID-19. People were overwhelmed by the sheer volume of screen time they were experiencing and were not interested in participating in more Zoom sessions. On the other hand, Zoom interviews may have also appealed to certain participants who did not want to travel for an interview or those who preferred online interviews. This research project demonstrates that ethnographic research is possible during global pandemics, but it is also true that great changes needed to be made to my research plan and methods.

Sample and Demographics

Based on U.S. census data from 2021, there are 4,039 Kumeyaay members who are part of tribal groupings. 2,067 are male and 1,972 are female, with an overall median age of 29.7.

The total number of interlocutors involved in this research is six (N=6). Interlocutors were interviewed 1 to 4 times over the course of fieldwork. Four interlocutors were interviewed more than once. Interviews were conducted in person, on the phone, on Zoom, and via email. Overall, I interviewed five Kumeyaay interlocutors and one indigenous healer with possible Kumeyaay ancestry. I interviewed five male and two female participants.

The overlapping social characteristics of my Kumeyaay interlocutors (N=5) is that they were all involved in forms of Pan-Indianism, supported recovery narratives, and maintained

prominent leadership roles within their communities. For example, I interviewed one tribal leader and one tribal elder. These leadership roles allowed them to actively participate in indigenous networking at events and tribal government workshops. The potential for selection bias in this dissertation is discussed later in this chapter and within the Limitations section of the conclusion.

Online Fieldwork

Online methods are likely to produce valuable data (Arnout et al. 2020), although they did create some additional challenges between myself and my interlocutors. Online research like Zoom interviews offers visual and audio connection but still has limitations when it comes to emulating in-person human interactions, as direct eye contact isn't possible. Arnout and colleagues (2020) refer to this form of research as "online ethnography or netnography" and argue that ethnographers should interact with people and capture their experiences regardless of the medium. When in-person ethnographic research is not possible, online ethnographies should be used to document lived experience and continue anthropological data collection. This method is ethical and safe in the case of continuing global pandemic restrictions.

Online ethnographies are a new and interesting method for conducting ethnographic research and offer many benefits during global crises. This method allowed me to protect my interlocutors, and myself, from contracting COVID-19 during the interview process. It poses no more harm than in-person ethnographic research. Additionally, internet interviews may provide insights into how people are dealing with mental health issues created or increased by the pandemic, such as loneliness and sadness, because Zoom became one of the main sources for human interaction outside of the home. More research is needed to understand how ethnographic

research during the pandemic influenced methodologies and changed interview modalities. Patchwork anthropology is one framework for conceptualizing the uneven data collection process necessitated by a global pandemic.

Selection Bias

Selection bias is a known issue within ethnographic research (Desmond 2014) and this dissertation is no exception. The small sample of U.S. Kumeyaay members included in this study does not represent the full diversity of Kumeyaay people. As was pointed out to me by a Kumeyaay member during a presentation of these findings, my interlocutors are all involved in the Pan-Indianism movement and support recovery narratives. They noted that many Kumeyaay people do not participate in or agree with Pan Indianism, or suffer from drug and alcohol addiction. Therefore, this dissertation only represents a selection of the community who follow this particular path to intertribal healing.

Additionally, the revitalization efforts for the Kumeyaay language are undoubtedly embedded within my study because of Dr. Field's contacts and the effects snowball sampling. While she recommended some people who are not proficient Kumeyaay speakers, certain people were connected to her because of her research on the Kumeyaay language. This may influence discussions of language revitalization within this dissertation.

Ethical Considerations

One of the largest concerns of my project related to the representation of the Kumeyaay people and their mental health. When I originally planned this project, I did not anticipate that I would be conducting research in a pandemic. Therefore, many adjustments and concessions had

to be made to find new ways to engage ethically with an indigenous community during a time of crisis. It was extremely important for me to follow my interlocutors' lead for the pacing of our discussions and for building of trust between us. There were times when my interlocutors expressed great personal difficulties that have not been shared in full detail here, out of respect for their privacy. As an ethnographer working during a pandemic, I gained a new perspective on how to conduct fieldwork online and in the context of serious health considerations. This discussion is continued further in the concluding chapter of my dissertation, where I reflect on my positionality and the methodological limitations of this project.

I intended to be as collaborative as possible with my interlocutors. For four of my interlocutors (Daniel, Sarah, Takook, and Julia), this meant focusing on our intersubjectivity and discussing what was significant to them in terms of indigenous mental health issues. Two interlocutors wanted final right of approval over what I wrote specifically about them. I have respected my interlocutors' wishes and taken their considerations into account. Regrettably, there will always be room for error given that I am a non-indigenous person who is conducting research on indigenous issues. Within anthropology and qualitative research, both Native and non-indigenous scholars face significant challenges when it comes to representing communities. One way to decolonize projects is through community-based research with indigenous communities, which fosters collaborative relationships and centers indigenous epistemologies (Bourassa et al. 2020). Moreover, I must stress that, of course, this research cannot speak on behalf of the entire Kumeyaay community because I interviewed less than 1% of all Kumeyaay people (N=5 of 4,623). In addition, as cultures and communities are constantly in flux, this dissertation can only represent a small period in their history. The community's desires and

wishes may change and Kumeyaay members may only be briefly invested in those represented in this dissertation.

Conclusion: Patchwork Anthropology

In this chapter, I have discussed the ethnographic methods I used to conduct fieldwork in San Diego County, including interviews and participant-observation. There are many lessons to be gleaned from ethnographic research during an unexpected global pandemic. A patchwork anthropology approach and attentiveness to (inter)subjectivity framed this research project and informed my methodologies due to COVID-19 conditions.

Patchwork anthropology refers to "ethnographic processes and protocols designed around short-term field visits, using fragmentary yet rigorous data, and other innovations that resist the fixity, holism, and certainty demanded in the publication process" (Günel, Varma, and Watanabe 2020:3). It emerges from questions about the viability of long-term fieldwork and ideas about "fieldwork truisms." Günel, Varma, and Watanabe examine how COVID-19 has impacted ethnographic practices regarding fieldwork and the role of online methodologies. Their resulting framework delves into the quandary of contexts in which "home" is the "field."

As someone who conducted a significant portion of fieldwork about Kumeyaay people online, while living on Kumeyaay traditional homelands, patchwork anthropology offered insights into how I was analyzing my "field" visits while at "home." Patchwork anthropology focuses on how an ethnographer's personal, political, and financial constraints may impact their fieldwork. For me, the considerable changes that I went through having a premature newborn during my fieldwork, all against the backdrop of a global pandemic, influenced the kind of research I was interested in and able to commit to. This approach also attends to the challenges

that emerge when an ethnographer is unable to conduct the research they planned to. My dissertation research plan originally involved visiting rural communities in Baja California, Mexico, but because of the pandemic and associated border closures, I could not physically enter Mexico.

My research has a number of patchwork elements, including those arising from pandemic restrictions and the navigation of online modalities. As the project went on, I felt that I had many different pieces of an ethnographic project, but I wasn't sure how they all fit together. Günel, Varma, and Watanabe contend, "patchwork ethnography does not react to the externalities of the world by demanding more productivity. Instead, it seeks to remake that world by erasing pre-given categories and boundaries between our personal and professional lives" (2020:5). My professional and personal lives have never had more overlap than they did during this dissertation.

COVID-19 interrupted and greatly changed the course of this dissertation. While I had to adjust my research plan, I also encountered new opportunities for ethnographic investigations on the internet. My dissertation project navigated multiple modalities, including in-person, Zoom, phone, and email, to focus on the lived experience of select Kumeyaay members during a pandemic.[1]

[1] This project was funded by a Critical Mission Studies Grant ($3,000) and UCSD's Anthropology Field Research Fellowship ($2,250). This funding was used to support fieldwork conducted between 2020 and 2022. These two grants were the main source of funding for this research and I am greatly appreciative of their support.

Chapter 4 Intertribal Practices of Healing and Wellness

For Kumeyaay members, intertribal exchanges can occur between bands, with the Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay community, and with other indigenous groups. My Kumeyaay interlocutors expressed how intertribal exchanges provide experiences of restoration and community healing through social networking. These exchanges encompass a wide variety of events, including ceremonies, gatherings, powwows, informal visits between indigenous people, and the exchange of cultural knowledge. My interlocutors spoke about interacting with other indigenous people and families across the U.S. to find comradery and solidarity.

While not every Kumeyaay member supports Pan-Indianism or participates in intertribal exchanges, they may still be affected by ripple effects from this influx of knowledge into the community. Intertribal exchanges offer new therapeutic possibilities, and younger generations will now have more indigenous practices available for them to employ. Community and intertribal events such as gatherings and ceremonies are healing spaces that promote overall tribal wellness and unity. One salient characteristic of intertribal exchanges is that, though they can happen on an individual or familial level, they usually have an impact on the community overall. Kleinman (1988) argues that an illness has both a personal and a social meaning because, although one person may suffer from the disease, the larger community that surrounds them influences their illness narrative and meaning-making process. Likewise, the meaning of healing is co-constructed by family members, community networks, and the medical community.

In this chapter, I illustrate how my interlocutors rely on a community network of indigenous people and traditions to co-create healing spaces and therapeutic possibilities. Using the lens of hauntology, I investigate how my interlocutors, Daniel, Takook, and Julia, maintain

and invoke ancestral relationships during therapeutic ceremonialism. In addition, I argue that ceremonies and gatherings are healing spaces, which provide experiences of unity based on ancestral traditions. To contextualize these analyses, I will first discuss how my interlocutors described their understandings of mental health and Kumeyaay mental health services.

Mental Health Conceptualizations and Services

For my interlocutors, there was a clear connection between mental health and the maintenance of what was perceived as "good" or "healthy" habits. When describing "good mental health," my interlocutors focused on the balance between the spiritual, the mental, and the physical. They discussed improving their quality of life through diet, sleep, exercise, and social interactions. My interlocutors have access to health services, including mental healthcare, through IHC and SIHC.

During my fieldwork, I witnessed IHC and SIHC advertise many sponsored wellness events on topics such as addiction, indigenous healing, and trauma. In addition to these non-profit clinics, Kumeyaay members whose federally recognized tribe participates in tribal gaming have access to privatized healthcare insurance. The profits from tribal gaming, along with federal government appropriations from Indian Health Services, funds these clinics and provides care for Kumeyaay members.

SIHC serves Barona, Campo, Ewiiaapaayp, Jamul, La Posta, Manzanita, and Viejas. Their website states SIHC began in the early 1980s as a satellite operation in Pauma Valley and evolved into a permanent facility in Alpine in 1987 after the Board of Directors secured 10 acres of private land. "We own wellness" is their motto. In terms of mental health support, the organization employs a licensed marriage and family therapist as the "Behavior Health

Director". They offer telehealth therapy appointments and provide services, support, and advocacy for victims of violence (SIHC 2021).

IHC provides services for nine tribes, including for Kumeyaay reservations: Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, and Inaja-Cosmit Band of Indians. IHC opened in the 1970s and grew into a non-profit that occupies two Health Centers in Rincon and Santa Ysabel. On their website, they advertise "behavioral health" services, which includes "individual therapy, group therapy, medication management, and psychological assessments" (IHC 2023). It specifically mentions, "the team works collaboratively to provide personalized care incorporating traditional healing practices such as ceremony, smudging, and talking circles alongside evidence-based treatments" (IHC 2023). The use of traditional healing practices was essential to my interlocutors' mental health practices in their everyday life.

My interlocutors pointed to the significance of mental health and self-care practices, highlighting prayer and ceremony as pivotal components. One Kumeyaay member remarked, "ceremonies [are] like the number one thing that a person should do for their mental health." Those who engaged in daily rituals described the connection between these spiritual practices and their mental health. A spiritual connection to the land and ancestors was frequently mentioned by my Kumeyaay interlocutors. The importance of self-acceptance was emphasized by one Kumeyaay interlocutor. They said, "A person who loves themselves, once we do that, it's almost a natural step into loving our neighbor, being a brother and sister's keeper, loving our environment, and being mentally and emotionally transported to a place of who we were." Music was also discussed as an outlet for connecting to the self and for improving mental health.

Overall, good mental health was linked to physical habits, spirituality, balance, social networks, and the absence of substance abuse.

Mental health issues were also linked to the long-term intergenerational effects caused by harmful experiences in boarding schools and other forms of cultural oppression. A Kumeyaay interlocutor stated, "[My mom] was in a boarding school. And so mental health was a little bit different. It was kind of like a suck it up, be strong, overcome all, don't be weak. And for the most part, they all did that." This was a common description of the boarding school generation and their lack of expressive emotionality. When asked if my interviewees learned about mental health from their grandparents, the overwhelming majority said they did not discuss those issues with their older family members. Additionally, my interlocutors spoke about having family members and friends who suffered from difficulties with substance abuse and trauma. One interlocutor said, "But in my family history, I've seen individuals succumb who were not the 'strong', who weren't able to overcome. They didn't have good methods to overcome. One tried to take his life. I've had others fall into substance abuse, things like that."

My interlocutors framed their descriptions of mental health with discussions of what practices worked best for them at the time of our interviews and highlighted how they had maintained certain methods over time. These discussions featured a strong emphasis on the role of community and the importance of spiritual beliefs, along with everyday health habits. Their focus on developing different beneficial coping habits demonstrates the need for multiple forms of healing and mental health support. Ceremonies, gatherings, and other intertribal exchanges offer indigenous people the opportunity to co-create community spaces for healing and wellness. My interlocutors shared how their initial introduction to ceremonial indigenous culture stemmed from their participation in the powwow circuit and the influence of Pan-Indianism.

Red Power and The Pan-Indian Movement

Early Pan-Indianism has been attributed to Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief, and his brother, Tenskwatawa, who began the Native American Confederacy to promote intertribal issues (Sugden 1986). The formal Pan-Indian Movement began with the establishment of the Society of American Indians (SAI) in 1911 (Lomawaima 2013). Most notably, SAI grappled with the complexities of Indian citizenship and was a key part of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 (Lomawaima 2013). Following the Indian Termination Policies, the movement became much more active during the 1960s and 70s and was led by the American Indian Movement (AIM) organization, which began in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Smith and Warrior 1996).

The best known protest by AIM was the Occupation of Alcatraz Island, initiated by Native American students at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley. Many other Pan-Indian groups, including Indians of All Tribes, participated in the occupation, which lasted from November 1969 to June 1971 (Smith and Warrior 1996). The occupation ended following the death of leader Richard Oakes' young daughter and due to increasing tensions with U.S. government officials. The Native American grassroot movement continued, in protests such as the Trail of Broken Treaties in Washington, D.C., and the Longest Walk, a march across the country.

The profound impact of the Pan-Indian movement has created a visible space for the Native American community; a space for both representation and political action. Pan-Indianism also fostered cultural exchange, which led to more generalized indigenous practices becoming normalized within Native communities. For the Kumeyaay, powwow culture was brought to the reservations in the 1970s at Barona and mostly featured ceremonies from the Great Plains tribal

groups. Kumeyaay member Banegas explains, “Though the annual pow wow was my favorite time of year, I spent my whole life identifying with a culture that was not my own” (2023:40). As he was growing up, Banegas recognized that the indigenous cultures being celebrated during powwows were not his own Kumeyaay traditions. However, as he states, “From my perspective it did not necessarily matter if we were borrowing culture, the effects of experiencing any Native culture were deeply fulfilling” (2023:36). While the powwow was a short, limited experience during the summer, it also acted as an intertribal exchange that enabled many forms of therapeutic ceremonialism.

Therapeutic possibilities are embedded within intertribal exchanges that focus on mental health, spirituality, and unity. Wellness practices like sweat lodges, talking circles, and the use of tobacco and sage, among others, become part of the foundation of Pan-Indianism. The significance of these practices is arguably rooted in the influence of some of the larger tribal groups, particularly “Lakota, Dakota, Kiowa, Pawnee, and Comanche,” but they are also easily adaptable practices that have strong foundations in traditional ceremonies (Banegas 2023:9). According to Banegas, “there was no one holding sweat lodge ceremonies or other ceremonies on my reservation on a regular basis. To experience any kind of Native culture would take a great effort and I would have to travel miles from my homeland to celebrate something that was not my own” (2023:40). Indigenous groups across North America have experienced a devastating loss of culture at the hands of colonial oppression. To address the seemingly insurmountable number of dormant practices, Pan-Indianism, and intertribal exchanges provide hope and opportunities for adaptation and revitalization.

Intertribal Collaborations and Cultural Exchanges

Powwows and gatherings are intertribal exchanges that encourage the performance of indigenous dancing, music, and storytelling. Lita Matthews (1999) writes, "powwows are Native American celebrations that bring together Indian people for the purpose of renewing tribal traditions, customs, and beliefs. A powwow demonstrates Indian identity" (5). Powwows are meeting grounds for indigenous people to get to know each other, share cultural knowledge, and discuss collective concerns (Herle 1994:57). For historical and political reasons, Pan-Indianism and the powwow circuit tend to favor Plains culture (Herle 1994).

Based on her work in Vancouver, Lindy-Lou Flynn (2011) discussed the importance of intertribal exchanges for indigenous healing. She found that grassroots leaders used intertribal symbols, such as the Plains drum, to promote unity within a diverse group of urban indigenous people. The embedded egalitarian culture of the Plains people and the spread of their shared traditions through the powwow circuit creates a common ground for those within the indigenous community to empower themselves (Flynn 2011). Flynn writes, "If I were forced to choose one symbol that characterizes the recovery, power, strength, and unification of inter-tribal Native people in that city, it would be the Plains Indian ground drum—the single most important cross-cutting institution being the drum group, and as an extension of it, the Plains powwow" (2011:234). The symbolic communalism of the drums helps indigenous people who are new to the area to find their place within the community as well as reminding them of shared traditions and history. In this sense, the drum helps indigenous people heal and strengthens their identity within an intertribal community.

Experiences like drumming, dancing, and singing are psychologically embodied processes because they are part of ritual healing. As Csordas (1999) discusses, ritual healing intersects political identities on collective and personal levels that influence interpretations and meaning making. The multicultural First Nations group described by Flynn looks for commonalities as potential sources of unity, within what Csordas identifies as "a personal politics of collective identity" (1999:20). Psychologically embodied shared experiences that are built upon shared culture and collective identities can facilitate positive group dynamics and foster well-being.

I use the phrase "intertribal exchanges" to illustrate the dynamic interactions between the Kumeyaay federally recognized tribal bands, Ipai and Tipai cultures, the U.S. and Mexican Kumeyaay communities, as well as other indigenous nations. Each of the twelve federally recognized Kumeyaay bands in the U.S. has its own reservation and tribal government. Populations differ greatly between bands, from an estimated 7 members (Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians) to 1,097 members (San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of California) (U.S. Census Bureau 2021). Depending on the band, they could have access to tribal gaming funds or other resources. Some bands still use "Mission Indians" in their name, while others have dropped this colonial association completely. While all twelve bands are considered part of the "Kumeyaay Nation," there are considerable differences in their population, reservation size, revenue, and tribal government. My use of the term "intertribal exchanges" is meant to accentuate how these bands interface with each other and with the broader indigenous community.

Each one of the twelve federally recognized bands is associated with either Ipai or Tipai, or both, depending on their history and location. Ipai and Tipai are cultural and linguistic

differentiations that existed prior to colonization and are still relevant to Kumeyaay people today. For my research, these distinctions were salient only when discussing language revitalization. Most of these efforts are focused on encouraging more Kumeyaay people in the U.S. to become Tipaay speakers because there are more Tipaay-speaking elders available in Mexico than there are 'Iipay speakers (Field and Cuero 2012). To continue language revitalization in the U.S., Tipaay speakers are brought across the U.S.-Mexico border to act as linguistic educators. Therefore, intertribal language exchanges amongst Kumeyaay people are affected by challenging border policies.

The Kumeyaay Nation is fractured by the border, leaving Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay members with significantly different experiences than their peers in the U.S. Intertribal exchanges that traverse the border usually center on issues related to language, bird singing, and resources. Kumeyaay members in the U.S. travel to Baja California, Mexico to provide outreach to impoverished and rural Kumiai/Kumiay families. This outreach is enacted by Kumeyaay nonprofit organizations, such as Tipey Joa Native Warriors, which distribute donated educational toys, food, and clothes. Additionally, there are significant efforts by KCC and linguistic anthropologists to bring Tipaay speakers from Mexico across the border to improve language knowledge and revitalization.

In addition to exchanges within the Kumeyaay community, there are also intertribal interactions between Kumeyaay people and the broader indigenous global community. This will be illustrated in my discussion of the Warrior Spirit conference later in this chapter. It is also a feature of my interlocutors' discussions of their indigenous networks and experiences. While not all Kumeyaay people engage in indigenous networks, those who participate in tribal government, powwows, and other indigenous events have opportunities to connect to, and form relationships

with, indigenous people throughout North America. For example, one of my interlocutors travelled across the country to speak to other indigenous groups about their communities and the challenges they experienced. During his journey he was gifted many different indigenous ceremonial items, which he brought back to the Kumeyaay community as part of his own spiritual practice. Every time he was called on to provide a spiritual blessing, he used white sage and tobacco in combination with several unique ceremonial items he had been given during his travels.

Cedar-sage-tobacco-sweetgrass is a well-recognized and significant pan-Indian complex (Rosoff 1998; Waldram 1997). Several Californian indigenous groups use a specific type of sage, known as white sage (*Salvia apiana* Jepson), for food, medicine, and ceremonial purposes according to the United States Department of Agriculture (2000). In this dissertation, I discuss the use of white sage by Kumeyaay people as a contribution to intertribal exchanges and show how these interactions foster reciprocity. Kumeyaay practices with, and harvesting of, white sage—one of their local, sacred plants—has impacted the broader indigenous community in North America. During my fieldwork, white sage was foundational to all the spiritual cleansings and blessings I witnessed. White sage serves as both a ritual tool and medicinal plant, providing multifaceted benefits and constituting an indispensable element of Pan-Indian practices.

Pan-Indianism is a wide-sweeping movement that has had lasting impacts on indigenous communities throughout North America. Indeed, my use of the term "intertribal" comes from the language used within the powwow circuit and the Pan-Indian movement. My interlocutors participated in Pan-Indianism in a variety of ways, through their engagement of indigenous networks, powwows, gatherings, and spiritual practices. While Pan-Indianism is certainly relevant for examining the overarching characteristics of my interlocutors, it does not fully

represent the connections and relationships that I am describing as "intertribal exchanges." Instead, Pan-Indianism depicts how many Kumeyaay people first became familiar with indigenous cultural practices, dances, and ceremonies through networking, spirituality, and ritual performance. Today, Kumeyaay community members are crafting new gatherings that offer opportunities for intertribal ceremonial practices and indigenous healing, such as the Warrior Spirit Conference.

The Warrior Spirit Family: Promoting the Wellness of Native People

The bi-annual Warrior Spirit Conference is a significant event within the U.S. Kumeyaay community that is organized to promote indigenous knowledge and practices. It comprises an inter-tribal movement and planning committee, and bridges communities by bringing Native American people together to share their expertise on trauma and healing. The first conference was April 2018 in Sacaton, Arizona, on the Gila River Indian reservation. The next was at Viejas, California (October 2018) and was followed by a third conference in Window Rock, Arizona, hosted by the Navajo Nation (April 2019). The fourth event was the California Genocide Conference at SDSU in October 2019. There were plans for another event in 2020, but it was canceled due to COVID-19. I was fortunate to attend the Warrior Spirit Conference held at SDSU on April 16, 2022. The theme of that conference was "Decolonizing Social Work through Empowerment," and it was designed to aid social workers working with indigenous communities.

At the 2022 conference, decolonizing efforts included privileging indigenous voices, incorporating Kumeyaay and intertribal ceremonial practices, the use of bird singing and dance as a healing modality, and conversations about decolonizing social work experiences. The

beginning of the conference included a fire ceremony ignited from a pouch of ashes given by the Cherokee to one of my interlocutors, Walking Stick. These ashes were said to come from the last fires the Cherokee had before forced removal. The ceremonial fire was started at SDSU in November 2019 during a prior Warrior Spirit Conference on genocide. The fire is intended for future generations and each participant was invited to spread tobacco or cedar over the flames as a blessing.

Next to the fire was an intertribal altar created by the many gifts given to Walking Stick while he traveled to tribal groups all over the U.S. and spoke about the issues facing their communities, particularly those related to substance abuse. The altar had eagle feathers, flags of the earth, a depiction of an indigenous man and a wolf, bear and other animal furs, rattles and gourds, tobacco offerings, sage, and other items. Walking Stick said these had been gifted to him and that he presented them all at the altar to help promote healing. This altar demonstrates the positive networking experiences and intertribal connection that exists among indigenous people. There was pride and sacredness in these objects that was demonstrated in their display, so much so that organizers asked people not to walk in front of it. The altar and fire together helped create a space of healing and began the conference with indigenous traditions that focused on acknowledging ancestors and desires for future generations to come.

A guest speaker at the 2022 conference discussed the differences between "Western knowledge and medicine" and "traditional knowledge and healing," highlighting the spiritual, holistic, and ceremonial aspects of the latter. Another contrast between the two forms of knowledge was how indigenous communities employ "unconditional acceptance," rather than requiring "evidence-based" approaches. Additionally, the community driven aspect of "traditional knowledge" was promoted as a key benefit over "Western" medicine. According to

the guest speaker, "the Warrior Spirit is a universal unwavering duty and responsibility to meet the needs and ensure the wellness of Native people and Mother Earth as defined by the Great Spirit from the beginning of time, to today, and in the future." There was an emphasis on self-respect, unity, and righteousness. These values are intrinsic to tribal communities and represent the strength and power that can be cultivated by people who follow indigenous pedagogies and leadership.

Over the years, the "Warrior Spirit" conferences have centered on the damaging outcomes of historical, childhood, and intergenerational trauma. "The overarching goal of the Warrior Spirit Movement is to construct a healing model that affects individuals through systemic change within Native communities" (Keyes and White Jr. 2021:350). The purpose is to bring awareness to compounded trauma and to understand that each tribal group has a different approach to dealing with these issues. When speaking to me about these conferences, one of my interlocutors emphasized that there isn't a "cookie cutter approach" to trauma within indigenous groups because each tribal entity has its own specific and difficult history with colonization and genocide.

While indigenous people share similar experiences of boarding schools, racism, and marginalization, each tribal group has a distinct historical narrative and way of making meaning from those traumatic events. Thus, while therapy and Native American cultural practices may be widely used to help indigenous folks heal, the details of those modalities are different for each group. This emphasis on tribal diversity was strongly echoed by the Warrior Spirit Movement. "Therefore, when the founders of the Warrior Spirit Movement collaborate with tribes and Native communities, they utilize a trauma-informed model that acknowledges the importance of

buy-in and support from the tribal leaders and council in order to address trauma within the community" (Keyes and White Jr. 2021:357).

During early Warrior Spirit conferences, organizers used questionnaires to ask participants which issues they wanted to work on and what outcomes they desired. The responses overwhelmingly favored a focus on culture. In addition, parents in particular wanted their children to feel empowered. One of my interlocutors stated, "We were able to get government leaders in San Diego County, state of California, and on the national level, to have an audience with these young students where the students then could voice what their priorities were." The point was to offer the children agency by allowing them to discuss their concerns and hopes. These 9th through 12th graders were provided the infrastructure by adults, but they made the major decisions themselves. Before COVID-19, these meetings with the young adults had occurred three or four times. My interlocutor assured me there was a plan in place to restart this program when the pandemic had receded.

The Warrior Spirit Conference is an innovative and community-led event that has focused on Kumeyaay healing and trauma. It is a successful example of intertribal collaboration that is leading to bigger community projects like the proposed Kumeyaay Healing Center, the plan for which was unveiled during the Warrior Spirit Conference. Through an incorporation of holistic and Pan-Indigenous cultural traditions, the community will one day have a dedicated space for healing.

Kumeyaay Healing Center: Envisioning an Indigenous Space for Wellness

A healing center for indigenous people called the Kumeyaay Institute for Holistic Healing was suggested by a guest speaker from another indigenous group during the April 2022

Warrior Spirit Conference. They argued that a space could be built for the Kumeyaay people that combined "Western medicine services" with "traditional healing from an indigenous, holistic perspective to address trauma." This center would provide access to services for multigenerational groups (children, adults, and elders) and promotes familial healing. The purpose would be to "recognize Native traditional healing as a bona-fide, integral service along with modern medicine." Health and wellness services would be available to individuals and families at tribal and urban locations.

The main goal of this health center would be to incorporate healing circle and inter-indigenous traditions, such as: circular and culturally sensitive architectural designs, sweat lodges, talking circles, traditional tribal structure, tipi grounds, a shade house, and a fire pit. Other features include a community garden, conference meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, bathroom and shower facilities, and a campground. An image of the potential healing center was shown, and it contained design components that privilege indigenous ontologies. The guest speaker explained that the healing circle elements could be exchanged for ones more relevant to the Kumeyaay people and that, conceptually, it was a work in progress. Often, conferences don't have tangible goals for participants to support and it was inspiring to see what could be possible within San Diego for the Kumeyaay community with more resources and support.

Federal recognition, gaming revenue, and the IHC have created more resources for U.S. Kumeyaay people and have enabled access to health care. While there are structural improvements, this does not lessen the effects of intergenerational, historical, and childhood trauma that are rampant within Kumeyaay communities. There needs to be a serious commitment from local leaders and federal institutions to help provide access to healing modalities and therapeutic processes. The creation of a Kumeyaay Healing Center would certainly allow for

more access to indigenous healing practices and would attend to their wellbeing in a decolonized space. There is an art in healing and caregiving that addresses nuances in conceptualizations based on elders' knowledge, spirituality, and ancestral acknowledgment. One way the Kumeyaay Healing Center could incorporate additional indigenous therapeutic possibilities would be by inviting elders who rely on syncretic traditions and indigenous knowledge to promote mental health practices.

Daniel, A Tribal Elder

Daniel, a Kumeyaay male, is a tribal elder in his community and grew up on the reservation about a mile from where he currently lives today. While his childhood was difficult because of the absence of his father, he felt a deep sense of love from his extended family and community. "I was told by one of my aunts that when I was a toddler growing up, that my feet never touched the ground because all my aunts, third cousins, second cousins, first cousins, would carry me all the time or everybody was carrying me." The connection to another human being through touch and shared breath was fundamental to his own conceptions of kinship. With a smile, he says, "See, I always felt a part of the community, and I look back at it now to my childhood, there was always a place for me."

Daniel's genuine appreciation for his people and his regard for community was apparent in all our discussions. His parents and their peers often struggled with poverty, alcoholism, premature death, and mental illness. But Daniel assured me there was also "gladness" when they got together to chat over games of cards or dice, while their kids played nearby. During his childhood, the adults still spoke Kumeyaay but that would change with his generation. He says that no one in his generation was taught to speak Kumeyaay because of the boarding schools and

the compounded trauma from those experiences. Though unable to speak his people's language, Daniel discovered other ways to connect with his cultural identity.

The reservation was a safe place for Daniel and his peers compared to the surrounding larger San Diego County area. It was fun, familiar, and did not feature the racist bullying that they experienced outside the reservation. Daniel reflected, "Once we stepped off the reservation then became insecure, unknown. Am I going to get hurt? Am I going to get humiliated again?" He described the reservation as a place of protection for him because it offered commonality and community. When it came to the culture outside of the reservation, he told me, "I have no concern or worry about [us] becoming too Americanized. I do [worry about] becoming too colonized. I see Native American people living here, blue hair, that's okay. It's what the values that they carry is what's important." The ideologies of colonialism, individualism, and capitalism troubled him the most. He said, "capitalism is almost like oil and water, it's too difficult to live in that modern place without the capitalism. Our prestige is limited, our self-esteem is limited, which dominates our mental health."

When he was a high schooler, Daniel wanted to be an architect. Instead of pursuing this dream, he was drafted into the army and went to war. Following his service, he struggled with PTSD and more than three decades of alcoholism. He told me that he didn't really have any lofty ambitions following his service. His success as a tribal leader for more than two decades is attributed to his passion and commitment to his community. Daniel has a talent for public speaking and connecting with his audience. Every time I've seen him speak at an event has been truly remarkable; there is something magical that happens in the audience when he tells his stories. It is widely accepted that anthropologists love storytelling, and Daniel is a master of the craft.

His journey to tribal leader began when he was a child sitting in on meetings. He would listen for hours because "there was nothing else to do around here." The adults attended the meetings, and so went along even if he couldn't vote yet. They would ask him his opinion and he would be scared to answer. He often would say he didn't know, but in time, he found his voice among his community. To this day, one of the strengths of Daniel's leadership is his ability to delegate and trust the people he works within his community. If he doesn't know the answer, he will find the person who does. He once told me, "People want a hero and for me, they'll often times talk to me as if I'm the hero and I tell them, I'm not." Instead, he argues his success comes from the people he's worked with and the help he's received. When asked to acknowledge his contributions during and after his time as a tribal leader, Daniel said it was the work of his community—not him. He refused to take full credit, instead emphasizing how he always had help and how it wouldn't be possible without his community. Daniel learns by example, a strategy he picked up from his uncle, whom he credits as his mentor.

Daniel's legacy of leadership is one of the reasons he was selected as an interviewee for this dissertation. After being introduced over email by Dr. Field, Daniel and I exchanged emails and text messages until we agreed to a phone interview. When I first interviewed Daniel, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from meeting in person because he was a senior citizen, and he was also caregiving for his wife who was terminally ill at the time. Although I tried to encourage him to Zoom with me, Daniel was not interested in using that technology. Instead, he preferred the phone, so that was how we conducted the first interview. I was not able to see Daniel or interpret his body language when we spoke. Instead, I paid attention to his tone and cadence as indicators of his attitudes and implicit feelings. We were able to meet in person once COVID-19 vaccinations were introduced, which allowed me to gain much more understanding

of who he was as a person. That said, our phone conversations and texts allowed us to build genuine rapport while the pandemic was at its height.

There were times over the course of my fieldwork when Daniel wouldn't be able to speak with me because he was caregiving for his wife at the end of her life. She passed away after a struggle with cancer and is remembered for her kindness and dedication to healing. One of the things that Daniel and his wife shared was their enthusiasm for community-building and indigenous healing. During a powwow, Daniel and his wife meet two shamans from Peru. They would eventually travel to Peru to participate in ceremonial and healing practices there. He described how a shaman knew a woman was suffering from addiction to prescription medicine. Daniel felt the shamans were "holy" and "powerful" in their abilities to divine what was wrong and to help people heal. Daniel and his wife drew on what they learned in Peru, along with Mexican and Kumeyaay traditions, to create their own syncretic fire ceremony which is a form of intertribal exchange. He described how,

> I studied Native American medicine practices in Peru for about four or five years. Not as a practitioner, just as somebody that is curious to see where they are at. I believe that they are real and so, integrating both of those, the Western medicine and the Native American healing practices, I think, is the way of our future.

To deal with his grief over the loss of his wife, Daniel enrolled in bereavement therapy and, at the time of our interview, had plans to engage in an indigenous mourning ceremony. In this way, he combined indigenous healing practices from the Americas with biomedical knowledge to form a holistic medical approach that embodied medical pluralism (Leslie 1980). While Daniel was the only one of my interlocutors actively participating in a form of therapy, each of them supported psychotherapy and mental health services as therapeutic options. Most often, they

relied on indigenous practices in their everyday experiences and found spiritual leaders in their local communities for support with specific traditions, like healing rituals and Bird songs.

Takook, A Bird Singer

Kumeyaay people are known for their use of Bird songs and gourd drums during ritual healing (Field and Cuero 2012). The gourd drum is sacred to tribal groups throughout Southern California and can be seen as a unifying intertribal aspect of their ceremonial traditions (Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed 2020; Keeling 1992). The gourd is an important object within Southern Californian indigenous cultures because of its many uses and its durability. Bird singers play a prominent and influential role within the Kumeyaay community because they are tasked with performing music during ceremonial events and creating connections to their ancestors. "The song cycles are performed at the all-night wakes which constitute the native funerary rites, as well as at celebrations, where performances typically consist of a row of (usually male) singers playing gourd rattles and facing one or more rows of female dancers" (Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed 2020:224). Bird songs were a common thread through many of the spiritual ceremonies and events that I participated in, demonstrating their central role in Kumeyaay cultural life.

One of my interlocutors was a singer within his community. Takook, a middle-aged Kumeyaay man, identified himself first as a traditional bird singer and cultural teacher, and then as an educator and cultural resource management (CRM) monitor. More recently, Takook was asked to bird sing and lead ceremonies as his main occupation. His parents were in their 70s at the time of our interview and are very well-respected members of their community. Takook considered his mother, who was in tribal leadership for decades, a spiritual and cultural leader.

Despite her spending her childhood in a boarding school, Takook said she was "traditionally trained" in cultural practices and "chosen by the leaders of her era" as a future leader. Takook described his father as well-read and self-educated. During one interview, Takook discussed being invited to stay with other indigenous groups throughout the U.S., including with the Shinnecock, whose lands are in the Hamptons, on Long Island, New York. Takook has also traveled to stay with the White Mountain Apache, the Sioux, the Lakota, the Cree, the Navajo Nation, the Hopi, the Seminoles, and the Cherokee Nation people. Takook explained that they exchange songs and stories during his visits. They also find similarities in their experiences and "indigenous mindset" as Takook called it. He described how,

> We want to see each other's culture, the beauty besides culture. So, I sing Bird songs. So, people want to see the Bird songs, experience it, and so they'll call me in and say, "Hey, can, would you be willing to travel this way into our community and share some of your Bird songs?" And for me, I like to travel. So, I'll say, "yeah, let me bring some people we'll be out there, and we'll travel out." They'll take us in. Generally, it's the indigenous way, native way to feed the people you bring in, show them around, you know, introducing some of your elders and the youth. And so, they can get understanding who your people are. You share songs, story, food, good times, laughter, conversation. And then when I go home, or when I'm there, usually I'll say, if you ever come to my home in San Diego. Please reach out and we'll take you in.

While talking about his visits to other communities, Takook emphasized the connections that he forms with other indigenous groups. He labeled it a "family connection." While he was growing up, Takook had Maori people from New Zealand and Canadian Cree living with his family. All these exchanges shaped Takook's understanding of what it means to be indigenous, and he remarked that he found many similarities in their lives, including in their experiences of marginalization. Events like powwows, ceremonies, and gatherings help facilitate these intertribal exchanges between indigenous people. These social events can result in beneficial

emotional and spiritual connections. Intertribal exchanges about Bird songs and cultural traditions allowed Takook to meet elders and tribal leaders across America.

Elder vs. Older: A Critical Distinction

Each cultural community has their own conceptualizations of aging, seniority, and elderhood. So, who is considered a Kumeyaay elder? What defines an "elder"? I quickly found answers to these questions from Takook, who described how the meaning of "elder" has changed significantly over time, due to both cultural oppression and increasing life expectancies. He noted that,

> There's the elders and the olders, that's for sure. Like, you would say she's a good elder, he's a good elder, what that usually meant is that they spoke the language. And if they spoke the language they knew the traditional ways, that they were a part of the community and they were old. So, age was a part of it, but it was more important is that they knew all these other things that were an attribute to the tribe as a whole. Nowadays, people get old and they're like 'I'm an elder, I'm an elder" and it is like, yeah you are an elder, but are you?' We don't consider them the same as somebody who has the language, is cultural, who is all of these traditional things or who has been part of our nation like that. And so, you will actually see what I would like to call junior elders, young elders who are in their fifties even, not very old but they have been there, and they've done that. So, they are, they are that elder class. So, there's a connection that we tie between our culture and being, and what an elder is. So, I always consider and elder being someone that's connected to our culture. As opposed to someone that's older, and older people are seniors, they, it's not that they don't matter, or they don't have a benefit to have around, it is not that they don't help or can't help, it's just a different classification. They're not like the old ones.

A key distinction here lies in the difference between "olders" and "elders." "Olders" are defined as people in their senior years who are Kumeyaay but most likely do not speak the language and are not cultural practitioners. This represents a significant rupture from the experience of previous generations, caused by the decline of cultural knowledge during the boarding school generation. Prior to the cultural oppression of the boarding schools, indigenous elders were

revered because they were community leaders and knowledgeable about cultural traditions. Through the mid-20th century, boarding schools punished and brutalized indigenous children who fought assimilation. This caused some people of the boarding school generation to fear the repercussions of retaining their indigenous language and cultural practices. Furthermore, many indigenous people throughout North America hesitated to pass this knowledge onto their children, fearful of how it might be used against them and illustrating the intense trauma associated with cultural oppression.

Kumeyaay life expectancy was greatly impacted by trauma and the horrors of the boarding school. Five interlocutors shared with me their feelings about the fact that, until recently, the average age of a Kumeyaay person at death was around 40 years. At Viejas, "Tombstones that were first erected on the reservation between 1946 and 2016 show the average age of tribal citizens at the time of death was 40.7 years" (Webb 2021). The data is shocking and demonstrates how few Kumeyaay members have been able to enjoy old age and the ability to become an elder. Fortunately, the statistics are shifting as Kumeyaay members are growing older thanks to increasing access to health resources.

Now, elders are only recognized as such when they are community leaders, Kumeyaay language speakers, and/or cultural practitioners. Age is no longer the main qualifier; instead, being able to meaningfully connect with Kumeyaay culture and be active in the community is. This has created a subcategory of elders, which Takook refers to as "Junior Elders," who are in their 50s, but are considered elders because they have been so important to the cultural community. This sentiment was also echoed by Daniel, who frequently told me it was his son's generation that was leading the community because they were interested in reviving the language and dormant practices. Many of the senior Kumeyaay members do not speak the language

because of the fallout from the use of boarding schools and other racist policies. Therefore, to enable language revitalization, it is up to the younger generations to learn to speak Kumeyaay from other proficient language speakers or institutions like KCC.

Despite the significance placed on language knowledge, it is possible to be considered an elder without speaking Kumeyaay. Daniel is one of the people who lamented about his lack of language ability but is still recognized as an elder because of his leadership and commitment to Kumeyaay cultural preservation. There is clearly nuance regarding who is considered an elder or older, and personal relationships may also be at play. It is an important distinction for the community and demonstrates the high value placed on cultural practitioners and language speakers. The younger elder generation, the junior elders, are changing the trajectory of their communities through their revitalization efforts. Daniel stated that,

> Where we are today, re-learning our ancient philosophy. Where we grew up, like myself, spent my whole life within settler colonialism. And then, being taught, not like before, like we were taught by our elders. Today, in my opinion, we are being taught by our younger generation. Who came from two different groups of people so to speak. One is the educated that you are dealing with every day of the Kumeyaay who have learned through academics. And then we have another group of people, like my son… and his peers in Southern California Indian reservations have been taught by our elders and from the most traditional, just the godmother and godfather who has since passed on. Who is part of this movement where these two intertribal organizations of Kumeyaay become a Kumeyaay Land Conservatory group and repatriation association are now conducting their meetings integrating the English language and Kumeyaay. I'm most proud of [that]. Because I can see at this beginning of developing back to our original language where we and I can see it right now, our tribal meetings eventually, maybe I'm talking in another twenty-five years, will be in Kumeyaay. And it's such a sadness for someone like me who never learned our language because my mother's experience with the boarding schools where they taught my brother that it was best for us, it was best for her to abandon our language because it would be a disadvantage. It was bad to live in both worlds. Linguistically, anyway. So, my parents never spoke our language in our home and I'm not resentful of this or anything like that, but it prevents me, in my opinion, without my language, from having insight into the way our people thought.

Daniel explained how his mother chose not to teach him Kumeyaay because of her experience in the boarding school and the cultural oppression she endured. The denial of his indigenous language had a profound effect on Daniel, and he often expressed his desire to learn more about ideological values embedded in Kumeyaay languages by previous elders and ancestors. The goal is to help future generations have more opportunities to use Tiipay in public and community settings, such as tribal meetings and gatherings. Uncovering the knowledge of elders can help shape linguistic and cultural revitalization approaches and allow members to have more therapeutic possibilities. Holding the status of an elder within the community is esteemed, as elders offer crucial support and serve as valuable sources of consultation. The difference between elders and olders is also reflected in Takook's discussion about ancestors and "old ones".

Ancestors, Old Ones, and Ghosts

When asked about the difference between ghosts, ancestors, and "old ones", Takook discussed Kumeyaay religious views about spirits and the afterlife. He told me Kumeyaay people didn't necessarily believe in ghosts, because "in our worldview, we have different words to express those things." Spirits better describe the interconnection that makes up the many elements of people, animals, plants, and inanimate objects like rocks. Takook said everything has a spirit and that you can feel the energy and effects from that spiritual presence. He explained,

> When you think of ghosts and spirits and all these things, we do have spirits. It might be the spirit of an animal or innate object. We are very active in that spirituality. We understand and acknowledge that we are spirits. That spirit continues on. That understanding of time and space is not one that correlates with Western time and space. It's timeless. We can pray to the spirits. We understand the spirits will guide us and influence us. It's more interactive than that.

A spirit could be felt during a cremation ceremony. It could be a spirit coming to carry that person to the other side or the spirit coming out. Takook elaborated, “We have beliefs when we burn our clothes, when the smoke doesn’t rise, there might be more trouble to come or death to come. A reminder that we need to do things in a better way.” The direction the wind blows to carry the smoke can inform them about the spirit and how it was received. If the smoke goes straight up, they know it was done correctly and the spirit was able to travel. Takook described it as a bridge to the other side and it needed the community to work together to travel straight. Another way that spirit could be felt would be in certain places. There were places they did not live by or “venture very carefully because the spirit in that area is very strong.”

Ancestors referred to those who lived a long time ago and all the people in Takook’s family who had passed on. While the phrase “old ones” specifically indicated ancestors who were mentors and cultural knowledge practitioners. Takook stated, “The old ones refer to select persons within who are teachers and guides, who are usually the elders who are tasked with learning and using. The practitioners. The continuation of that process, they are the teachers.” Old ones have a special role within an ancestral ontological view because they are the holders of significant cultural knowledge. Their ability to pass on that knowledge as teachers and leaders is recognized as fundamental to the continuation of the Kumeyaay community. Any formerly living Kumeyaay person could become an ancestor, but only those who were good teachers were considered by Takook as worthy of being an “old one”. Some of the “old ones” that Takook is referring to participated in medicinal and spiritual ceremonies, which have come to be described as doctorings, which incorporate indigenous healing, ceremonial, and wellness practices.

Doctorings, *Kuseyaays*, and Healing

Doctoring broadly refers to indigenous healing practices conducted by a medicine person (shaman or healer) who heals, or is said to heal, a patient with ceremony and usually with herbal medicine (Jilek 1978; Wendt and Gone 2011). The spiritual and embodied aspect of indigenous healing was described by Takook when he spoke about doctoring:

> In the western sense of things you get sick or you have an ailment you go to the doctor and someone comes in with a clipboard and talks to you for ten minutes and they leave. They give you some prescription. Or something like that, but what the doctoring it's a whole different thing, you know, because the ailments that people have they're not always… again, this is the difference between western and eastern. Western medicine and our native ways is that a lot of the ailments we have are not just one thing. They overlap and to the different parts of health so if someone is having a problem with their physical health the big contributor to that might be something mentally that they're experiencing, or something spiritual that they are experiencing. For some reason they're having issues with their spirituality and they have to do with their physical, their physical thing, their physical health or their mental health or you know… they all overlap. So, the doctoring, people will come and they have all kinds of ailments and there's medicines for those things. Most things that heal us can be found in ourselves, or in nature and so everything is made out of the same foundation building blocks. All of our creation stories tell us this.

In Tiipay, a *kuseyaay* is a person who administers health and provides services to the community. Traditionally, they would use practices such as astronomy to predict crop yields or weather patterns. *Kuseyaays* were knowledgeable about plants and medicinal healing, so they could reset broken bones and help with other physical issues. Takook proposed that his parents and Daniel are *kuseyaays*. He explained, "They're more than just old, they have this knowledge that is very old, that they carry forward and so, it's up to us and their families to learn that from our elder or our family." They are elders in the truest sense because they are dedicated to improving the lives of their communities and using indigenous knowledge to help promote wellness. Takook noted,

> The Doctorings started to become more than just like 'I'm going to give a tea, or this plant, or this whatever, this cactus, whatever needs to be done.' But it becomes a telling

> of the spirituality, so it becomes a connection to the creator and our grandfathers to the ones who are gone, the spirits. They're still within us and around us, and we are still able to tap into that. That's kind of a hard thing to explain, how that works but it, it… I've seen it, felt it, experienced it. The spiritual side of it and then also the mental side of it. What it is, is you have to, you create a relationship with the person. Because you can't just doctor anybody with anything. They have to want it, they have to have that connection. They have to really believe in it. And they have to follow what is being told to them. Otherwise, it's not going to work anyways.

Takook's insistence that healing can be found within an individual demonstrates his own ideas about how recovery is possible. Takook emphasize how, to have a successful doctoring, a sick person must be connected to themselves and to the person who is attempting to heal them. This illustrates the co-creation of therapeutic spaces based on authentic relationships, shared cultural beliefs, and ceremonialism.

My use of the term "co-creation" relates to how indigenous people collectively contribute to the experience of gatherings, ceremonies, and other spiritual traditions. I aim to draw attention to how indigenous people "collaborate to shape their own experiences, processes, and outcomes, rather than have a decision or solution imposed upon them" (Ho-Tassone et al. 2023:S96). Academic work on "co-creation" has focused largely on the relationship between researchers, stakeholders, and participants (Ho-Tassone et al. 2023; Mauser et al. 2013; Ramaswamy and Gouillart 2010). I purposefully employ co-creation to accentuate the co-production of knowledge by Kumeyaay interlocutors and their community. These collaborative events are often decolonized spaces meant for exchanges, communication, and healing. The co-creation of doctoring was a focal point for Takook as he explained the process involved the healer, the person being healed, and ancestral spirits to be successful. Additionally, Takook claimed the person being healed needed to be spiritual and emotional healthy as well.

During our interviews, Takook told me a story about someone with diabetes, a common condition among indigenous people—including the Kumeyaay—due to colonization's dramatic impact on traditional diet and lifestyle (Ferreira and Lang 2006; Fleuriet 2003, 2009; Longstreth and Wilken-Robertson 2010; Smith-Morris 2006). Takook explained how, if someone with diabetes came to be doctored, the indigenous medical traditions wouldn't work if that person was not also willing to change their way of life. The doctoring could help, but it needed to be in combination with healthy eating and exercise to effect change. As Takook said, "the medicine only takes them so far, they need to work on their spirituality." The larger healing happens within the individual, rooted in their psychology and their spiritual connection. Doctoring can provide some temporary relief, but a person must be willing to commit to healing the underlying causes of their ailment. Takook explained,

> So, nowadays, I hear people say 'oh, this good medicine, the songs is medicine' it is but it's not like you just sing a song and you… everything is healed. You might feel good in that moment, you might dance and feel good in that moment, but the dance is medicine and if you do another then you'll actually get in shape, and your body feels stronger, you straighten yourself. The medicine of the songs and the dancing, yeah that stuff is medicine in that if you do enough of it, or you believe it, or you enjoy yourself around it, over a long period of time it will increase and help your mindset. You'll feel good. You feel good all of the time, it pulls you out of that depression, and you can start to self-help yourself and you start to feel better psychologically, so that you can go out and take on the world and make your way a little bit better or out of the rut, and climb out of it. So, all of these things are components to this healing health and the medicine. And to understand all of those components into… and really to administer them, because that can be dangerous to administer something that could have a potential harm to somebody.

As a prominent bird singer within his community, Takook understands the power of song and dance and referred to them as "medicine." Participation in ceremonies can be healing, however, Takook argued that it takes continual work with sacred songs and dancing for them to be transformative. By engaging in everyday therapeutic practices and having a strong commitment to wellness, one is more likely to find beneficial long-term outcomes. For the

Kumeyaay people I interviewed, participation in ceremonial spaces and gatherings is crucial to their mental rejuvenation and their connection to the sacred. Accordingly, indigenous practices such as Bird songs and dancing are therapeutic activities and healing modalities. Therapeutic ceremonialism has endured the pressures of colonial laws, racism, and acculturation (Jilek 1978). Ceremonies conducted by indigenous healers remain salient for communities because they facilitate spirituality, healing, and connection.

Julia, A *Curandera*

During my fieldwork, I interviewed Julia, a *curandera* (Spanish for "healer") who worked with some Kumeyaay members and practiced intertribal ceremonial healing. Julia was in her 60s and living in Arizona at the time of our interview. She identified as Yaqui, Mexican, and Chicana, and told me that it was also very likely she is related to the Kumeyaay people. She was not raised in a Kumeyaay community, however, and couldn't officially prove her ancestry. As Julia put it, she is a "practitioner of *curanderismo* and I teach about cultural ways, specifically, Chicano cultural ways, the intertribal system of healing that we know is *curanderismo*." She practices rituals upon waking, throughout her day, and before going to bed. Her work is rooted in social justice, indigeneity, and therapeutic ceremonialism.

Though hotly debated, syncretism has become a well-recognized way to describe the hybridization of cultural knowledge engendered by colonialism (Stewart 1999). Julia blends her familial indigenous and Mexican traditions, along with the intertribal practices she has picked up from medicinal mentors throughout her life, to create her own form of professional and spiritual healing. The syncretic traditions that she weaves together are based on the teachings passed down from her aunts, indigenous ceremonial traditions involving plants, and her meditative

practices. Additionally, Julia fully supported the use of "ceremony plus medication," referring to a medically pluralistic combination of psychopharmacology, talk therapy, and therapeutic ceremonialism for those who struggled with mental illness.

Julia spoke about how her Kumeyaay clients sometimes expect her to perform more "New Age" healing. New Age medicine often involves a mixture of different forms of indigenous or "traditional" healing that may be problematically culturally appropriative. Julia has found that people will come to her expecting "luminous mind," or they've read Michael Harner's *The Way of the Shaman: A Guide to Power and Healing* (1980) and anticipate something like the practices described there. These individuals' ideas about neo-shamanism might be influenced by Peruvian ontologies and alternative medicine content on YouTube. Julia argues they are not prepared for a traditional healer who is going to be an ally during the healing work. They might also have difficulties because they were raised Christian and were told to view this type of healing as witchcraft. On the other side of the border, her Mexican clients may be used to a *curandera* who uses an egg to purify. That is "sort of witchy" (Julia) but they are used to it, so it doesn't bother them as much:

> But once I get really into what I consider, like really the native, which means that I use my bear grease, I use my voice, I sing, I might use my rattle, maybe. Depends, but I become something else. I could become one of the animals' allies that are healer power, you know, they're working through me. And so, my appearance and my voice changes and it scares them and they don't understand that that is traditional healing. That is part of our native ways.

There were notable elements of hauntology in what Julia told me. Hauntology considers the relationship between trauma, violence, resistance, and silence (Good 2019; Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022; Hollan 2019). As Julia embodies the animal ally, she is calling upon the land, the wildlife that lives there, and her ancestors for guidance. She walks the line between the living

and the other side through her spiritual practices. The embodiment of her animal ally includes many aspects, including the smell of the bear grease, the sounds of her voice, and the shake of the rattle. She said that occasionally her clients become frightened because they are unaccustomed to traditional healing practices and the embodied aspects of her transformation.

Settler colonialism has separated many indigenous people from the ways of their ancestors. Therefore, Julia encounters some apprehension when she attempts to use methods belonging to her indigenous ancestors with Native clients. The unknowing of these practices has had a detrimental outcome for many indigenous people because they have become separated from knowledge that belongs to them. The reintroduction of indigenous spiritual practices can evoke feelings of discomfort and fear that stem from colonization, not necessarily from the animal that Julia is embodying. The layered complications are part of what Julia is unweaving and helping people to process with her work. Julia's healing work is focused not only on childhood trauma, but on the compounded effects of historical and intergenerational trauma that most indigenous people struggle with.

Julia's healings are transformative for both her as the healer and for her clients. She can embody animal allies that help her clients battle their inner demons. While she agrees with and supports psychotherapy, which she refers to as "Western therapy," her healing goes beyond what they can offer. As a traditional healer, she is not bound by their legalese and restrictive physical professional boundaries. For example, if a client wished to be held more while they were a child, Julia could choose to engage in holding them if she felt guided to do so. She has had grown adults sit in her lap and she has embraced them as if she were their mother. This form of therapy allows her clients to engage in a moment of nurturing that wasn't part of their childhood experience. The healing offered by Julia is representative of how people are using the cultural

knowledge of the "old ways," combined with contemporary understandings of care and emotion, to help people move on from loss and other difficulties. Julia practices her syncretic healing in indigenous communities throughout North America and drew on this experience to highlight how the U.S. would benefit from the creation of healing lodges.

The Ottawa Healing Lodges: Promoting Indigenous Knowledge

During our interview, Julia explained that she and her husband have been invited for multiple years to be "Elders-in-Residence" at the Iskotew Lodge and the Kumik Lodge, both in Ottawa, Canada. In 2002, the Iskotew (meaning "the fire within" in Cree) Healing Lodge was opened in Ottawa. The lodge is a healing and wellness center created for indigenous peoples and non-indigenous employees of Health Canada and other federal employees. The lodge uses indigenous cultural knowledge and practices to manage cultural differences and stress in the workplace.

The Kiche Anishnabe Kumik (Kumik) lodge was created in 1990 on the unceded Algonquin territory because of the problematic working environments experienced by indigenous employees following the Oka crisis. The Oka crisis, also known as Kanesatake Resistance, was a conflict between the Mohawk people and the town of Oka, Quebec. The issue emerged because of an approved development proposal for an extended golf course and condominiums that was opposed by local Mohawk people. The crisis ended with two fatalities, including that of a Mohawk elder, and the cancellation of the golf course expansion. Today, Kumik Lodge offers National Capital Region federal employees the opportunity to receive counseling and guidance from indigenous elders. Julia described how,

> The government there actually has spaces for indigenous people and their employees to meet and go talk to elders and ask for healing. So, they bring traditional healers every

> month or every couple of weeks, and you're the elder-in-residence for those two weeks or those four weeks… We go to Canada twice a year, and we stay up there a month each time too."

Julia and her husband had not visited the lodges since 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic but hoped to return soon. The Kumik and Iskotew Lodges were still closed as of November 2022.

Both lodges are healing centers that are run by and created for indigenous people. Iskotew focuses on the use of sweat for healing and emphasizes holistic medicine. These institutions also act as diversity and cultural awareness training centers. They allow indigenous traditions, such as the sweat lodge or arts and crafts workshops, to provide a common space for healing. Throughout the year, there are services such as individual and group sessions with elders, ceremonies, and speaker events. The Kumik seeks elders who are healers, medicine people, seers, storytellers, or traditionalists. The concept of "Elders-in-Residence" prioritizes the voices of indigenous people and a revolving door of respected members from their tribal communities.

Indigenous healing lodges are a relatively new concept that combines indigenous and biomedical approaches to health (Gone 2011; Wendt and Gone 2012). The non-indigenous modalities consist of "grief exercises, anger discharge, inner child work, genogram mapping, neurolinguistic programming," and the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps program, along with other techniques from complementary and alternative medicine (Wendt and Gone 2012:11). These practices were chosen because they have a spiritual component or could be "appropriated" to have an indigenous focus. The use of tobacco, fasting, sweat lodges, smudging with sage, talking circles, and pipe ceremonies are the main indigenous modalities used in the lodges (Wendt and Gone 2012:11). Regardless of a foundation in indigenous healing, Wendt and Gone

(2012) found that Western biomedical discourse, particularly global therapy culture, was implicit within the various therapeutic approaches.

Julia believes that the U.S. could greatly benefit from establishing something like these lodges for the indigenous communities:

> I would love to see what Canada has been doing, done, and I've been trying to plant seeds wherever I go about this, is that the government needs to work with tribal entities, tribal nations to establish healing centers that are native-run, native-led where there's traditional native healers offering their services. So, it's like the Iskotew Lodge, the Kumik Lodge, the Wabeno Lodge in Canada. All these places are beautiful, they're huge, and it's the center of learning and culture for all native people. Though I see little bits and pieces here and there, but nothing on that scale where you've got three or four-story buildings. One whole floor is dedicated to well woman care and women's medicine. There's another one for men, there's one for elders, there's a sweat lodge. And they have elders come in every week to offer teachings, to offer guidance. Sycuan Cultural Center has a little bit of it, but it needs the other pieces. I would love to see that everywhere because then we're really—You're making it accessible to all Native peoples, not just on the reservation, but also in an urban setting.

Healing centers offer an opportunity to use intertribal practices to promote healing, cultural awareness, and help repair the damage inflicted by historical trauma. Boarding schools were institutions that had devastating and long-lasting effects on the indigenous population of in Canada and the U.S., in terms of both their cultural traditions and languages. Those institutions were used to torture, embarrass, and strip indigenous people of their dignity and cultural identity. It would be remarkable to use different kinds of institutions to better serve indigenous communities and their healing modalities. Indigenous healing lodges and the proposed Kumeyaay Healing Center potentially offer hope and indigenous knowledge to their communities as hubs for intertribal exchanges, healthcare, and serve the greater purpose of restoring dormant indigenous traditions and ceremonies.

Therapeutic Ceremonialism: The Dance is Medicine

My interlocutors described ceremonies and gatherings as some of the most important forms of healing within the Kumeyaay community. Takook expressed this sentiment, saying, "We view the songs of our ceremonies, the stories of our ceremonies, the ceremony itself, all of it as medicine. It's all medicine given to us by our creator." These cultural events provide an opportunity to join socially, emotionally, spiritually, and physically with other community members and maintain good mental health. They are a bridge between the ancestors and those who are currently walking the earth. Ceremonies offer a space of unity, positivity, and connection. They are co-created experiences of replenishment, healing, strength, and purification. Takook explained,

> "With ceremony traditions that's what I feel, a connection to the Creator, connection to my ancestry, to the land, and then ultimately, a connection to myself and the people around me, so my family, my tribe, and so, that has a huge impact because, what it does it really starts to create your self-esteem and some purpose, starts to make you feel strong and powerful, you start to understand that you are such a small piece of the universe, so it keeps you very humble."

Because ceremonies are handed down through the generations from ancestors who crafted them into what they are today, they are considered sacred. According to Takook, the purpose of ceremonies is to heal and replenish. There are different types of ceremony and some are intended to strengthen participants' overall physical and mental health. For instance, Takook went through a ceremony that involved not eating, drinking, or speaking. The objective was to build a "strong mindset" (Takook) and improve his mental health so he could withstand the pressures of being a bird singer. As a bird singer, it is expected that he will participate in the all-night ritual singing that happens when someone passes, and this requires great stamina. The ceremony he participated in helped him learn how to be uncomfortable and to seek out other

ways to soothe himself through stressful conditions. This type of ceremony was characteristic of the older generations, who privileged strength and emotional toughness above other qualities.

Takook believes the culture surrounding ceremonies is changing to reflect more acceptance of outward emotions, especially by men. The middle generation, approximately aged 30-55, aims for balance and fully embracing a spectrum of emotions during ceremony. Takook explains, "Like, 'Hey, we should be in a serious location and it's okay to laugh.' Or we're in a, you know, laughing around situations, it's okay to cry and just kind of mix it up. And, you know, it is okay to dress in any way you want to the ceremony." This contradicts the approach of the older generation, referred to as the boarding school generation, who had strict ideas about how to behave during ceremony, including what to wear.

The meaning and representation of modesty has greatly changed for the U.S. Kumeyaay community over the past several decades. It is now acceptable for a woman to wear pants, tank tops, or more revealing clothing during gatherings. Among the boarding school generation, this might have prompted gossip and judgment. The cultural environment this generation grew up in dictated that women needed to wear skirts and be fully covered. In the first half of the 20th century, indigenous people were pressurized to fit into European-American standards and to perform their gender roles. The influence of boarding schools created a rigid ideology through abuse, trauma, and marginalization; Catholic Christian ideologies surrounding modesty and sexuality were imposed through religious education and governance. Because the boarding school generation was barred from practicing their own cultural traditions and were subjected to abuse if they resisted this cultural erosion, strict ideologies about gender roles and bodily autonomy developed, reflecting their harsh religious childhood environment.

During Daniel's childhood, Kumeyaay ceremonies were not commonly practiced in his community and Catholic religious traditions were dominant instead. But, when he was a teenager, Daniel and his friends began to learn more about the ceremonial ways. Daniel felt ceremony brought togetherness to his life. It didn't matter the type of ceremony that occurred or what regalia was used, these interactions produced feelings of unity, love, and peace. Based on his experience in a ceremony that lasted 16-hours, Daniel argued that transformation was possible, and one could become integrated into a "unit of unity." The transformative nature of ceremony was something that I heard frequently in my interviews.

The transformation that is possible during a ceremony or gathering is embodied physically by an individual and communally by all those who participate. The sacred self within this context does not exist in a vacuum, it is co-created and reconstructed countless times over the course of a lifetime, with and against those in our social circles. In his work, Csordas (1997) illustrates the healing system for Catholic Charismatics, demonstrating how the therapeutic process is maintained within ritualization and habitus. Csordas' embodiment theory (1990) points to the body as a starting point for cultural and self-analysis, especially in the context of ritual healing. This is further explored by Suzanne Crawford-O'Brien, who argues, "healing is the ongoing act of self-making. It is not a finite destination but an ongoing experience" (2013:22). This speaks to the transformative nature of healing modalities, which allow the self to recover, re-establish, and renew. It offers the chance for beneficial health outcomes and for more connection within a community.

The revival of ceremonies has been hugely positive for my Kumeyaay interlocutors, particularly for their mental health. Therapeutic ceremonialism allows for healing based on gatherings, spirituality, and shared indigenous knowledge. Intertribal practices that support

therapeutic ceremonialism can help ease the trauma inflicted during the boarding school generation and beyond. By invoking ancestors during therapeutic ceremonial practices, present-day Kumeyaay people can connect with spirits and ask for guidance.

Ceremonial Encounters with Ancestors

There was an inclusion of ancestors during the spiritual and ceremonial practices I witnessed in my fieldwork with Kumeyaay people. Experiences during ceremonies and gatherings can be subjective, intersubjective, or even in(ter)corporeal if they involve ancestors or deceased family members. There are hauntological implications with the added invocations and communication with ancestors during ritual dances and ceremonies (Good 2019; Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022). As ancestors are invited into these spaces, they add to the spiritual healing and can have embodied effects on participants. Offerings of tobacco and white sage for purification are elements that call to ancestors. Ancestors are also invited in specifically through spiritual prayer, which serves as an acknowledgement of their contributions and blessings.

Takook discussed what would potentially happen if a person did not participate in ceremonies. He believed they would "feel bad" and "maybe feel a loss that you don't do the things your ancestors did." He said that, without ceremonies, individuals would negatively impacted by the lack of spiritual guidance of their ancestors. Takook believed this was one of the reasons why indigenous people seek out drugs and other ways to fill their lives with temporary relief. In this sense, ancestors can be said to haunt those who ignore them or are unable to develop a spiritual connection with them.

During our interviews, Takook emphasized how their ancestors were all around, and it was up to the individual to feel their presence and connect with them. One way to connect, he stated, was by using their ancestors' language and embracing their worldview. Another way was through ceremonies that were "passed down and fine-tuned" by their ancestors. Julia suggested that she found this connection by living in a manner that honors her ancestors, including finding and using medicine that is closely aligned with their practices. Spirituality is foundational even during practices like doctorings, where it guides participants' emotional and physical experience. Indigenous medicine is characterized by a holistic attentiveness to the spiritual, mental, and physical parts of healings. Takook explained the importance of spirituality for healing during our interview:

> The doctorings started to become more than just like 'I'm going to give a tea, or this plant, or this whatever, this cactus, whatever needs to be done'. But it becomes a telling of the spirituality, so it becomes a connection to the creator and our grandfathers to the ones who are gone, the spirits. They're still within us and around us, and we are still able to tap into that. That's kind of a hard thing to explain, how that works but it, it... I've seen it, felt it, experienced it. The spiritual side of it and then also the mental side of it.

By comparison, biomedicine does not attend to the spiritual aspects of healing. There are many reasons why biomedicine tends to ignore religion, the biggest being the relatively "unscientific" nature of spirituality. Within indigenous medicine, there is more room for the exploration of spiritual themes and apparently unnatural occurrences. This importance of these kinds of explorations was highlighted by Julia, who uses rituals and ceremonies to help people cleanse themselves of trauma and abuse. Julia reads auras and uses what she learns from ancestors in the spiritual realm to inform her healing practices. For other indigenous people, the spiritual experiences they encounter in ceremonies and at gatherings greatly contribute to their healing and need for connection.

Using hauntology as a framework for analyzing therapeutic ceremonialism shows us that interacting with ancestors offers benefits, while neglecting or being separated from them can have negative consequences. The benefits that come from honoring your ancestors, speaking their language, and practicing their ceremonies can include better mental health and overall wellness. Daniel specifically mentioned the feelings of "peace" and "oneness" that came from working with his ancestors in this way. On the other hand, abandoning your ancestors and their traditions can bring suffering, low self-worth, mental illness, and even substance addiction. Given this, it is clear why my interlocutors forged connections with their ancestors through ceremonies, prayers, and blessings. Their incorporated acknowledgments of their ancestors into their everyday rituals, intertribal events, and ceremonial practices demonstrates how significant these practices are for my interlocutors in terms of their spirituality and mental health.

Capacity for Struggle

During one of my interviews with Daniel, he assured me that it wasn't his job to heal every Kumeyaay person. He could help provide the tools for healing, but he couldn't take the credit or do the hard work of healing itself. This sentiment was reflected in Waldram's work with indigenous people who were incarcerated, in which an elder who led Native American programming at a prison said, "there is nothing that I can do to heal anybody" (1999:115). The elder lamented that no one can be rushed or forced to participate in healing work. While indigenous healing is a collective goal for the larger community, an individual is still responsible for their own path. That path will be a struggle to find what works best for that individual's healing, and for many indigenous people it is often a combination of intertribal healing practices that proves most meaningful.

The capacity for struggle, as illustrated by Jenkins (2015a), refers to the range of human experiences involving possibilities and conflict. I use this framework to emphasize how individuals, their families, and their wider communities navigate obstacles in their everyday lives, particularly in the struggle for mental health and wellness. This struggle is not an all-or-nothing process; it is achieved over time, through routines, ceremonial practices, and self-care. People regularly face new struggles and challenges in their lives, so we cannot judge anyone's mental health based on one interview or one experience alone. Instead, the commitment to returning to practices that are meaningful and generate feelings of wellness needs to be further explored. This ongoing commitment is where the struggle lies, the struggle to find balance, to find strength, to find unity within personal, interpersonal, and intergenerational relationships. People struggling with complex compounded trauma need to be seen as human and be offered compassion for their reactions to, and endurance through, unspeakable hardships.

While there isn't one solution for complex trauma as healing can be a challenging and dynamic process, therapeutic ceremonialism offers hope and cultural connection. The "engaging possibility" (Jenkins and Csordas 2020:7) of therapeutic ceremonialism is evident in the narratives of my interlocutors. These kinds of communal events have potentially beneficial emotional health outcomes for the community members who engage with them. These benefits are magnified when envisioning what a co-created, safe space for healing looks like for the Kumeyaay community, a space to grapple with mental health issues and to find healing practices. By adopting the framework of the capacity for struggle, we focus on how healing can help improve someone's life, rather than fix it entirely. There is no cure for settler colonialism when it is still ongoing. But there is a need to find ways to support indigenous community-led projects that are committed to healing and wellness.

Conclusion: Heal and Replenish

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that intertribal exchanges facilitate the growth and development of healing practices for the Kumeyaay people I interviewed, their families, and the larger community. The co-creation of these healing spaces and therapeutic processes by indigenous people is not a new occurrence and has been critical for their cultural wellbeing (Flynn 2011; Jilek 1978). Most of the research has focused on larger tribal groups, such as the Navajo, the Haudenosaunee, and the Sioux (Csordas 1999; Jilek 1987). There has been a lack of research on Kumeyaay intertribal exchanges of therapeutic ceremonial practices and how they are currently promoting healing. I have sought to investigate the intersection of indigenous identity, collective processes, and healing, responding to Csordas' (1999) framing in his article on Navajo ritual healing.

In this chapter, I have illustrated how ceremonies and gatherings provide opportunities for connection and wellbeing through therapeutic practices such as bird singing, dancing, and ceremonial traditions. The Warrior Spirit Movement demonstrates how intertribal exchanges can help heal trauma through storytelling, indigenous healing modalities, and therapeutic interventions. From the movement has emerged the goal of a Kumeyaay healing center, which is profoundly inspiring and has the potential to invigorate healing modalities in the community. By using intertribal knowledge, along with the combination of indigenous and biomedical practices, the proposed healing center is one possible way to ensure indigenous people have access to care and holistic medicine. The Kumeyaay Healing Center would be a form of intertribal exchange, as one of the key proponents of the project is an indigenous person from another tribal group. Indigenous healing centers in the U.S. can also benefit from research on the governmentally

sponsored healing lodges in Canada, which have been around for almost three decades and offer examples of how to incorporate indigenous epistemologies, such as through Elders-in-Residence programs.

Intertribal exchanges produce opportunities amongst indigenous people to share their knowledge, traditions, and ceremonial practices. Because colonialism, in the form of boarding schools and anti-indigenous legislation, greatly impacted the ability of indigenous people to share their traditions with the next generation, there are knowledge gaps and dormant practices. Intertribal exchanges offer ways to fill these gaps by adopting related practices or knowledge from local tribal groups. Indigenous knowledge exchanges happen on the familial, communal, and tribal levels. They illustrate how Native people rely on a network of indigenous leaders, scholars, and healers for their individual and community needs. It is a form of decolonizing work that further supports indigenous epistemologies and values.

Kumeyaay therapeutic ceremonialism has been co-created to unite members within sacred spaces, and to allow them to find healing with themselves, their families, the community, and their ancestors. Based on the narratives of my interlocutors, part of the Kumeyaay story is their endurance and commitment to hope. In this research, I have been informed by the notion of the capacity for struggle because it leaves room for possibility and recognizes the inconsistent process of human experience (Jenkins 2015a; Jenkins and Csordas 2020). My interlocutors' use of ritual and ceremony in their struggles for sobriety and better mental health illustrate how therapeutic ceremonialism and intertribal exchanges can provide experiences of optimism, unity, and connection that improve overall wellness. This ongoing process of healing and reflection enables growth and co-creates new experiences of wellbeing.

Chapter 5 Spirituality, Bird Songs, and the Revival of Dormant Practices

This chapter builds on my previous argument about the importance of intertribal exchanges to demonstrate how the Kumeyaay community engages with the revival of dormant cultural practices, particularly in the realm of therapeutic ceremonialism. Cultural revitalization is a co-constructed, dynamic, and controversial process of reintegrating dormant practices through research and lengthy community discussions (Baldy 2018; Harkin 2004; Kehoe 2006; Nagel 1996; Wallace 1956; White 2006). By labeling revitalization processes as "co-constructed," I aim to shed light on the complexity and difficulty of reviving dormant processes. Members must reconstruct cultural practices that have been influenced by structural forces to create or rebuild new customs. There is an element of construction during the revitalization process that is influenced by revivalists and foundational cultural factors.

The word "dormant" was chosen for two main reasons. First, it was directly suggested as the only appropriate way to refer to Kumeyaay cultural practices from the past by one of my interlocutors. Second, cultural and linguistic revitalization scholars echo this preference within indigenous cultures for "dormant" or "sleeping" instead of "extinct" (Fishman 2001; Hinton 2001; Warner, Luna, and Butler 2007). Indigenous scholar Real Bird states, "Some have gone dormant or we are told not to say anything because this knowledge and information is still in the streams, winds, dream world, or remote geographical locations in nature to Native people" (2017:8). In contrast, speaking about "extinction" will call forth the "spirit of those dark forces" which can have harmful outcomes related to death (Real Bird 2017:8). Words like "extinct" can imply that practices will never be recovered and focuses on the damage of colonization. As this

project is centered on desire-based narratives, words like "dormant" are embedded with the hope that there will be recovery and revitalization for these previous cultural practices.

There are many similarities between the revitalization of dormant languages and dormant ceremonies. A dormant language refers to a language with no current fluent speakers (Warner, Luna, and Butler 2007). Imperfect revival is a commonality between cultural and linguistic revitalization because it is not possible to fully revive a ceremony or language solely from archival research (Warner, Luna, and Butler 2007). This may mean that only certain aspects are recoverable, leaving gaps in knowledge. To fill these knowledge gaps, changes and cultural adaptations are implemented to modernize the linguistic or cultural practice being revived (Warner, Luna, and Butler 2007). The result is a revitalized practice available for critique by community members regarding its legitimacy and efficacy. It is the right of every community to decide if and how to revitalize their languages and cultural practices. For both linguistic and cultural revitalization, it takes a significant amount of work and determination by a community for a result that may be less than perfect (Warner, Luna, and Butler 2007:72).

The concept of dormancy invoked some discussion among my interlocutors regarding the guidance of ancestors and "old ones" who practiced those traditions. Calling upon ancestors and learning from the objects they made are ways of regaining cultural knowledge about dormant indigenous practices (Peers 2013). Four interlocutors expressed how they relied upon ancestral guidance for knowledge about reviving spiritual traditions and sacred practices. Ancestral connections offered insights into which practices they should engage in and which they should avoid.

Based on my research, I found that revitalization efforts were happening in Kumeyaay communities to advance the preservation of linguistic and cultural practices. Transborder

exchanges between Kumeyaay members in the U.S. and Mexico are critical for maintaining shared traditions and cultural identity. Despite the structural violence and separation incurred because of the U.S.-Mexico border, efforts are being made on both sides to share resources, connect, and collaborate. To better ground this chapter in the lived experience of my participants, I will begin by introducing the remaining three interlocutors. Following this, I contend that spiritual practices and the revival of dormant traditions are unifying and healing processes for my Kumeyaay interlocutors. These cultural practices enhance their emotional wellness, while also illustrating how intertribal exchanges build relationships. Additionally, therapeutic ceremonialism calls on ancestral guidance to lead current members back to their ancient values and to the interconnection experienced at gatherings.

Sarah, A Tribal Leader

Sarah is a middle-aged Kumeyaay woman and tribal leader. She also stressed to me the significance of her role as a wife, grandma, and great-grandma. Sarah grew up on the reservation and talked about how it was rare for her as a child to even travel into Lakeside (a close city in San Diego County). When she was around 20 years old, Sarah got involved in tribal leadership after working in the office as a teenager. She began cataloging in the library and completed her first task, which should have taken three months, in a week. She was a very quick learner and soon took on other office tasks such as filing, sending faxes, and answering phones. This was the start of a steady progression from secretary to bookkeeper and on to higher positions in tribal leadership.

Right before our first interview, Sarah's mom passed away. Her mom was a sensitive topic, both because of her recent passing and because of Sarah's complicated relationship with

her. When discussing mental health, she spoke about the importance of balance as well as how mental illness and drug abuse were prominent in her family history. Her mother had married seven times, suffered from mental illness, and was frequently absent during Sarah's childhood. Sarah had two children of her own while she still very young and she made the decision to choose a different path for her life. She prioritized her kids and committed to sobriety after going to rehab, and her husband was also in recovery from drug and alcohol abuse. Sarah reflected how,

> I think a healthy or well life is, you know, it is [a] balanced life between. The philosophy I believe in is mental, spiritual, emotional, and, physical, you know, and these all have to be in balance. A lot of times, I mean it comes from the background of our own drugs, I came from both. And then you put a little mental illness in there and, you know, the stereotypes in mental illness. Luckily, I wasn't one of, you know, a person in my family. My siblings and my mom was. But, I believe that when you have all that in balance, you know, that's wellness.

Over the years, Sarah had experienced different forms of therapy and intertribal gatherings. She told me she particularly loved participating in vision quests, Sun Dance, and events like the Gathering of Native Americans. Doing art therapy with other women was one of the most impactful experiences for her. She crafted moccasins, skirts, earrings, and keychains while speaking to other indigenous women. Since she had taken on the tribal leadership position, she lamented that she barely had time to crochet, one of her favorite past times. Sarah had learned to crochet from her mother, a skill she herself had learned while in prison. An example of her crochetwork included "therapy blankets" for kids, items designed to offer comfort.

For Sarah, her sobriety is intertwined with her spirituality and her dedication to sweat lodge practice. During her youth, she struggled with drug abuse and intergenerational addiction within her family. In her twenties, she went to rehab and was first introduced to a sweat lodge and the heat of the fire. She says it wasn't until she was 21 that she learned about the Californian

Mission Period, including the horrific genocide and enslavement of indigenous people. Before then, Sarah was baptized, had attended church, taken communion, and was confirmed in the Catholic Church. Learning about missionization transformed her understanding of the world. Until then, she had felt like something was missing or hidden from her but didn't know what it was. After she learned the truth, she sat in church and realized she no longer felt anything towards the religion. By contrast, she had a powerful experience in a sweat lodge during her rehabilitation.

Sarah's connection to sweat and spiritual leadership has been crucial for her wellbeing over the past decade. As she explains, "Yeah, and that's how I maintained my sobriety and I maintained my spirituality with my family and the community. And any time I struggle, I go back to that fire, and I go back to because that's what's in my heart." She mentioned sweat frequently, and credited it with making her a better mom, grandmother, and leader. It improved her mental health because it provided a space for self-care, reflection, and healing. By taking care of herself, she was able to invest more of herself in her family and community. The sweat lodge she attends is run by an individual that she describes as her spiritual leader and who she talks with at least once a week. Her spiritual leader communicates with the ancestors and has been able to teach her things about herself without her having to ask. She respects his dedication to his ceremonial practice and how he can pull her back to the sweat lodge when she hasn't gone for a while.

An intrinsic aspect of the ceremonial sweat process is that everyone contributes to the building of the lodge. This involves the physical labor of moving heavy rocks, wood, and water buckets. There are also prayers, tithes, and other sacred aspects that are involved in the process of rebuilding each year. This co-created space is available to Sarah when she needs it the most,

like following her mother's death when she needed a place to grieve in private. She felt that she needed to be strong in front of her community during her mother's funeral. Her spiritual leader offered the ceremonial sweat as a safe space for her to let out her bereavement and feelings without necessarily carrying the weight of being a leader at that moment.

In her role as a tribal leader, Sarah has encountered difficulties with repatriation and university politics. The Kumeyaay Nation was in a long-term legal battle with UCSD regarding construction at the Chancellor's House and the university's failure to return the remains of their ancestors (Killgrove 2016). The Kumeyaay Nation was ultimately successful in making their case and Sarah believed this was because they were united in their cause. She said, "What I do know is that if our own communities aren't doing it for ourselves -- nobody else is gonna save us." For Sarah, the most important aspect of being a leader in her community is understanding the needs of her people and reservation. That comes from growing up there, being part of the community, and listening to her people's desires and fears.

Reuben, An Educator

Reuben is a middle-aged man of Kumeyaay and English descent, who works as an educator and researcher. He equated his mental health directly with his spirituality and was the only one of my participants to label themselves as a "Christian." Reuben believed his spiritual connection allowed him to be present in the moment and to be "sensitive" to things that were harmful for him. He expressed how daily spiritual practices and principles can affect mental health. A particularly important aspect of his faith that he described was the transcendence and healing offered by worship music. Music, for him, was a way to pray and connect to his

spirituality. Through this form of prayer, he felt whole and reconnected with himself, and experienced his faith on a deeper level. Reuben noted,

> I think of prayer so differently than most people. People think I was sitting in a room reading a Bible. I mean to me like I'm very OCD. I have to be moving in a way. So for me, prayer is exercise. Like when I'm exercising playing music. I know I'm supposed to… try to sit somewhere. But I just can't do it. Music is a way of me connecting with God, my purpose. It's hard to explain what music does, but it's definitely a way that you transcend all this stuff. And I get to a place I can't get in any other medium through music.

Reuben explained that music can lift his spirit if he is having a particularly hard day or feeling sad. The music helps him become more vulnerable and release some of his emotions. There were times in his life when he had gone without music for months at a time, and he said he didn't want to do that again. He had begun playing music again, particularly with his church band, and it helped him deal with the stress of COVID-19. Reuben felt that playing in a church was a much better option for him that doing so in a bar or dealing with the difficulties of the music industry.

When Reuben was growing up he felt there was "almost no culture at all" for his Kumeyaay community. He qualified that though this was his specific experience it was also a common sentiment among his age group. He believed "when we were kids our culture was the Pan-Indian Movement." Reuben is speaking specifically about how unique Kumeyaay cultural elements, such as religious practices and Bird songs, had fallen dormant or were less popular during his childhood. He once felt the absence of those traditions, but this has changed over time as more traditions have been revitalized. For Reuben, the Pan-Indian movement served as a substitute form of culture, shaping his understanding of indigenous identity. It influenced his personal development, including his religious beliefs.

At 16 years old, Reuben had a profound moment of clarity when it came to his life and his relationship with God. He describes himself as having a party lifestyle at this point in his life,

and argues that he was making a lot of bad choices. A relative passed away from an alcohol-related accident and this loss precipitated a lot of feelings about the way he was living and what he should be doing to contribute to the people around him. Reuben describes,

> And at his funeral, you know, the night that he died, again, we do these all night and wakes. So I had this moment, and this is around the time that I participated in a fire ceremony. I should have been dead actually. I was spared from dying when I was 16. When he passed, I was supposed to be with him. But in my own mind, that's how I realized like, you know, God was setting me apart to be different and I think you have to think like that in a way. You have to go pursue your own goals, your own mental health, come back and then you can heal and help after you have started the healing and that's kind of what I'm trying to do. 'Cause now I'm influencing my people in a positive way.

Following this loss, Reuben felt that he underwent dramatic changes, both mentally and spiritually. This process of change led him to enter rehabilitation for drug and alcohol use at the age of 16. Tribal funds paid for his detoxification and rehab services. While he didn't agree with the message of Alcoholics Anonymous, the overall experience of his recovery allowed Reuben to see colonization as the root cause of many of the issues his community faced. Instead of leaning into Alcoholics Anonymous, he sought out education and spirituality. Academics were a significant part of his journey, and allowed him to pursue more opportunities outside the reservation. As Reuben puts it, "I always tell people education saved me." He chose to study theology and has since become an educator within the Kumeyaay community.

While he considers himself Christian, Reuben also relied on medicine healers while he was a teenager. Reuben lamented that his communities' medicine people had been "taken away" due to colonization and racism. Consequently, he sought out medicine people from other indigenous communities. In the end he went to see one of his father's friends, who was a well-known medical practitioner and fire watcher. During the ceremony, this man looked into the fire and gave readings about the participants. Reuben felt that the reading was accurate, but it wasn't

until later that he understood the ceremony's real meaning. It took time and reflection on what he was told during the ceremony for him to see its full impact, but eventually Reuben came to see the truth of the fire watcher's words.

When I asked Reuben about being an educator, he spoke about his passion for teaching and his pedagogical techniques. He discussed teaching a history course about changes to the Kumeyaay diet over time and how colonization affects lifestyle practices. He also expressed what it meant for him to be an indigenous person:

> Being Native is a lifestyle thing. It's how you carry yourself. It's how you talk. It's how you listen. It's how you engage. It's how you care. So, it's so many more things and a lot of people because they don't know those things, they think it's just an ethnicity, it's just the color of your skin, or it's wearing regalia, or it's an external thing. And the more I've studied things, what it means to be Native is actually more of an internal thing. And that relates to your lifestyle, how you carry yourself, the decisions you make.

Reuben's perspective on the significance of lifestyle to Native identity emphasizes emotional wellness and the value of caring. While he stated this only represented his own opinion, his understanding of Native personhood speaks to deeper internalized states of wellbeing, rather than external states related to phenotypes or clothing. In this conceptualization, the emphasis is placed on positive engagement with the world and active listening to what your community needs, whether these needs come in the form of education, leadership, or activism.

Walking Stick, An Activist

Walking Stick, a middle-aged Kumeyaay man, is known for his activism with indigenous groups across America. Walking Stick has frequently spoken out about important issues within the indigenous community, including participating in protests at Standing Rock, the Longest Walk, and the U.S.-Mexico border wall. In 2018 alone, he went to 30 nations, participated in 21

ceremonies, collected 800 surveys, and gave presentations to over 6,000 people. He believes there is no one proven way to help improve the mental health of indigenous people, but that "trust and not showboating go a long way."

Walking Stick said indigenous communities "cannot move into the future without our people healing within." He believes the biggest issue affecting indigenous people is drug abuse stemming from PTSD and ACEs. In response, Walking Stick promoted the efficacy of drug rehabilitation programs and spiritual practices. He described how historical and intergenerational experiences led to the addiction epidemic among indigenous people. He blamed colonization, citing its effects on his grandparent's generation, which trickled down to his parents, and then to him. Walking Stick firmly stated that overcoming this intergenerational trauma was "not a one-person deal. It's a 'we' deal." His emphasis on community healing illustrates how the issue of addiction needs to be examined from a collective perspective when working with indigenous groups.

During multiple events that I participated in, Walking Stick asked to give a blessing and lead a purification ritual for the group. He used white sage and tobacco for cleansing and as offerings to the ancestors. Additionally, he would include sacred and spiritual items given to him during his journeys with other indigenous groups. These combined items, along with his own prayers, were used to call to the ancestors. Walking Stick's spiritual practices, including his use of sacred items gathered from other indigenous groups, show how intertribal exchanges can be incorporated into therapeutic ceremonialism. The use of plants was a commonality among my interlocutors' practices, underscoring the profound connection indigenous communities, like the Kumeyaay people, maintain with native plants for medicine, sustenance, and ceremonial purposes.

Kumeyaay Ethnobotany: Site of Cultural Revival and Cultural Appropriation

As part of cultural revitalization, there are efforts to restore traditional ecological knowledge and management practices among Kumeyaay people (Wilken-Robertson 2018). Kumeyaay people have been using native plant and animal life to support themselves and maintain their health for tens of thousands of years (Wilken-Robertson 2018). While some of these traditions have become dormant due to colonial legislation and territory encroachment, plant practices remain vibrant parts of communities in both the U.S. and Mexico. The knowledge of how to use these plants in ceremony and for healing has been spread through powwows and interactions between indigenous peoples. As Sarah explained,

> We use different medicines for different reasons. There's sage, and cedar, and sweetgrass, and lavenders, and whatever other medicines that are introduced by other cultures, you know, they share that with us- and, we make a lot of teas you could bathe yourself in it. You know, it's very important like now that my mom passed away, is that we set up water and food for her so that her spirit can come take what she needed, or she needs. There's also tobacco. You know, tobacco is like an offering. Like when we gather, you always leave the offering, and you pray to a plant until, you know, what you're using it for, and why you're taking it, and you're to take as much as you need.
> You're gonna prepare the whole area.

Sarah explained that you need to cleanse an entire area if you are going to be harvesting plant life. This is an important detail that illustrates how certain Kumeyaay members conceptualize their relationship to the land. It is not about taking all the available resources but making a respectful offering to the plant life and only removing what you need. This also helps maintain the landscape in a manner of the ancestors who cultivated land management practices known as "plant husbandry" which required burning, planting, and tending to native plans (Wilken-Robertson 2018:32).

Sarah also described how the use of plant life and ritual botany can help with family members and ancestors who have passed on. Two of the plants that she mentioned, tobacco and sweetgrass are said to represent "unity" between the body, mind, and spirit within many indigenous cultures (Waldram 1997). Tobacco is used in most indigenous people's ceremonies because it represents the harmonious connection between people and the Creator (Waldram 1997). During ceremonies, tobacco can be burned as an offering to ancestors and Elders and as a sign of respect between people (Waldram 1997). The smoke from tobacco and other plants used in ceremonies may purify or carry prayers (Waldram 1997). Sweetgrass is also used and is usually woven to represent life stages and the circle of life (Waldram 1997). Both native plants have clear metaphorical and spiritual meanings for community and wellness. They are not endemic plants to Southern California or Baja California, nor a traditional part of Kumeyaay ethnobotany (Wilken-Robertson 2018). Therefore, they are excellent examples of intertribal exchanges and represent the use of plant knowledge for the broader indigenous community in North America.

While plant knowledge originating from intertribal exchanges was important for my interlocutors and their healing practices, they also rely upon a variety of local native plants. White sage, for example, is a fundamental element of Kumeyaay purification ceremonies and healing practices (Wilken-Robertson 2012). Sage has been a documented part of Kumeyaay agriculture, used as food and for sacred medicine, and requiring an intricate burning process for its maintenance (Shipek 2015 [1989]). The recognized benefits of white sage include its ability to treat rheumatism and respiratory problems (Córdova-Guerrero et al., 2016; Wilken-Robertson 2018:203). During my participant-observation experiences at powwows and the Kumeyaay flag

ceremony at SDSU, white sage was present as a ritual component to cleanse the space and people present. Its value as a purifier was echoed by one of my interlocutors, Reuben:

> But I will say that sage is a stronger deterrent against evil spirits than any book ever made. I believe there's a reason for that now that I'm, you know, a little bit further down the road. Live sage grows out of my land. And it always has been. I think it's always been used in that way. It's a protector and it's a deterrent against evil and it's a purification, a process, right? So, actually sage purifies the air scientifically. But it also purifies air spiritually. So, I started using sage a couple of years ago and it works like a charm even when my kids are having bad dreams. So, they're such a powerful thing for sage that I wouldn't have believed if I didn't see with my own two eyes.

Reuben connected the use of sage with protecting against bad dreams and cleansing a place, like a new house.

Tobacco and sage were frequently part of the events I participated in and were used as offerings to ancestors and for purification. During one powwow, Kumeyaay bird singers offered sage to the entire crowd to purify them before they performed. This is one way that non-indigenous people can participate in a Kumeyaay cultural tradition with the expressed permission of some members. Despite these public opportunities to participate with white sage, non-indigenous people can and do sell, buy, and commodify white sage without any authorization from indigenous or Kumeyaay people. This has led to cultural appropriation by non-indigenous people. The known benefits of white sage have led to overharvesting and many people fear what could happen to the local ecosystem if this commodification continues (Gutierrez et al. 2022). The Kumeyaay people have practiced small-scale harvesting for thousands of years and it would be devastating for the local wildlife, the larger ecological system, and their own ceremonial practices if overharvesting of white sage causes long-term harm to the environment. There needs to be more awareness of why the use of white sage has been deemed a closed practice by many indigenous leaders.

Fears around the commodification of white sage by non-indigenous people can be compared to the recent commercialization of certain traditional handicrafts. For example, ethnographic researchers working with the Kumeyaay community in San José de la Zorra, Mexico, documented how traditional plates and storage containers for small seeds and plants made from willow and reeds have turned into decorative basket-weaving art to be sold instead (Gutierrez et al. 2022). This has generated income for local artisans who sell their handcrafted items. By contrast, even though the use of white sage is considered a closed practice, the plant is often purchased by non-indigenous people from non-indigenous sources, with no benefit to Native communities.

The religious aspect of smudging and its use in ceremonial practices are two main reasons why my interlocutors fear the consequences of sage overharvesting by non-Natives. Kumeyaay practices with white sage are considered part of their connection to the land and their ancestors. As Reuben noted,

> The white sage is the same sage our ancestors had. It was the same seed, you know? We have all these connections to the land that no one else has. So, I think that makes us more spiritual alone, just that connection because I think the land is spiritual. And so, we have more dreams, we have more experiences, just because of who our ancestors are.

By highlighting his ancestral link, Reuben states he can tap into spiritual experiences in the form of dreams. Ancestors, in this sense, allow him and other Kumeyaay people to draw upon their relationship to their homelands to form sacred encounters and connections. The ancestral haunting in this scenario is positive because it provides an opportunity for therapeutic and familial connections. These experiences are not with rogue spectral entities, but rather provide direct evidence of their ancestry and interconnectedness with their homeland, which goes beyond the physical plane.

For my interlocutors, there is a deep and complexly intricate relationship between the land, plant life, ancestors, and spirituality. The respect Kumeyaay people have for the sacredness of plant life is shown in demonstrated in their use of botany in their ceremonies and in practices to heal their bodies. Because some Kumeyaay people understand their connection to the land in California and Baja California in terms of tens of thousands of years, there is a deep-running reciprocity between themselves, their ancestors, and the land. Their spirituality guides them in their healing journey and allows them to engage with indigenous traditions and ceremonies.

Bird Singing is a Lifestyle, Not Just a Tradition

Song cycles provide important pathways that allow people to become respected within their community and knowledgeable about their culture. Oral traditions within the Kumeyaay community are transmitted via stories and are often sung in cycles. Bird songs are the most popular form of song cycles, and they narrate early Yuman migration stories from the Colorado River area to Arizona, Alta California (Nueva California), and into Baja California, Mexico (Field and Cuero 2012). These songs embody cultural competency and serve a social purpose for members (Field and Cuero 2012). Since the 1950s, Bird songs have undergone a revival within the community after being on the verge of complete dormancy. During ceremonies, these songs are representative of identity, familial relationships, and cultural continuity.

Takook identified himself as a bird singer first and foremost, before any of his other occupations or titles. Bird singing is an intrinsic part of who he is as a Kumeyaay person. More importantly, he defined being a bird singer as an identity that went beyond knowing the songs. Instead, for him it referred to the lifestyle and the rituals associated with bird singing. Takook

was raised to be a bird singer and spent his childhood being trained for the role. His father was one of his main teachers, just as Takook is to his young sons:

> Like even the Bird songs, I can teach people some of the songs and what the meanings are a little bit here and there, but ultimately for them to really be at the height and peak of it they would really have to live the lifestyle, and I would guide them through it and train them. So, like my boys they are being raised as bird singers. Their whole life that's what they've done and that's what they participate in. That's what they're… you know, they are being groomed to be singers, because I was.

Takook remembered how, during his childhood, there weren't very many bird singers left apart from a few elders. Today there are younger Kumeyaay people, including Takook's children, who are practicing bird singing and participating in ceremonies. Bird singers are called to perform during funerals, weddings, birthdays, graduations, and other life celebrations. These events represent some of the saddest and happiest days in people's lives. Takook believes that the unity of coming together is a "beautiful thing" that can be very healing.

Song series, like Bird songs, were prominent within many Southern Californian indigenous groups until the 1940s (Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed 2020). Then, the effects of the boarding schools and other restrictive cultural policies pushed them to the verge of dormancy. On his account, Daniel could not recall Bird songs occurring during wakes until the mid-1960s. Following all-night singing and dancing, Daniel took an elder to a recording studio and got him to record some Bird songs. He reminisced about how they listened to the recordings day and night. It was like a music album to them. As he recalled,

> But it was the essence of the melodious vibration that set into motion within us, that cannot even be explained, these feeling of one-ness, this feeling of peace, this feeling of the ancestors, the appreciation of them, that we were singing songs that were literally, I don't know... eight thousand years old? I don't think anybody really knows. No one was keeping track of it.

There is a deeply embodied element of the experience for the people who sing, dance, and watch the bird singing, related to how they allow the music to flow into themselves. Takook explained that people feel those songs and dances on another level that goes beyond their visual or auditory senses. This is supported by Csordas' exploration of ritual healing and the sacredness of embodied experiences for Native peoples (1997, 1999). Daniel described it as "one-ness and spirituality" and feelings of being "united and together." This usually happens at remarkably different life events—funerals and gatherings—but "both times of prayer and appreciation and purpose" (Takook). In my experience, Bird songs evoke feelings of timelessness because of the rhythmic nature of the music and the echoed voices. Reuben explained how,

> It's interesting because in our creation story, the first thing we do is sing in Kumeyaay creation story. So, I think it's a part of our—it's a release. Yeah absolutely, that's a good way to say it in a simple way, and we do it when someone passes, you know, all night. So, we have all night wakes, where we sing all night.

Creation stories are central to understanding the old ways and the "old ones." They hold a powerful place within indigenous communities and are a source of deep pride and knowledge. Takook stated, "people will come in, we welcome them in with songs. When people leave, we sing them out of the village." This practice using songs for greetings and farewells mimics the cyclical pattern of the songs themselves. The notion of the songs being sung over and over throughout the night also lends itself to the infinite nature of this storytelling.

Bird songs are a key part of cultural exchanges because they are shared with other indigenous communities during intertribal events and gatherings. For example, "Bird Songs are sung (in an abbreviated form) at nearly every powwow, representing native Southern California culture alongside the louder and faster singing of the Plains culture "drums" that accompany most of the dancing at these events" (Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed 2020:224). Based on his

role in intertribal exchanges, Takook had been invited into many other communities because he was a gifted bird singer and others wanted to hear him sing stories.

For Takook, the true meaning of being a bird singer goes beyond knowing the songs and performing at events. Bird singing is a lifestyle that involves everyday spiritual practices and a dedication to the community. His male children are experiencing life as bird-singers-in-training by preparing and cleansing for sacred ceremonial processes. For others within his community, bird singing can be something that they learn later in life to help them with addiction recovery.

Community Reintegration Through Bird Singing and Other Kumeyaay Cultural Practices

Alcohol and substance abuse are well-established problems in many indigenous communities, but traditional cultural practices provide one possible route to recovery and reintegration for Native people. In Takook's experience, there comes a point for many community members, typically in their 30s, when they decide to get sober and change their life for the better. Takook has witnessed people rebuild their lives while giving back to the community and pursuing spiritual guidance. The popular routes to sobriety include twelve-step programs and engaging with a higher being. But for Native folks, Takook says, these routes can be problematic because they often have Christian connotations, and the Church and Christian missionaries have committed atrocities against indigenous people.

The fraught relationship between indigenous people and Christianity stems from intergenerational trauma due to colonization, missionization, and boarding schools, which left a generation saddled with the effects of abuse, including addiction. So, instead of turning to Christianity, many people look towards "traditional ways" and their indigenous cultural identity for community reintegration. Takook believes it doesn't matter about an individual's resumé or

what they may have done in the past, they can play an important role as long as they commit to being a knowledge-keeper in their community:

> They still need the traditional singers, linguists, our cultural people. So, it's an opportunity for someone with no resume to kind of get back into things. It's a spiritual connection there, a spiritual understanding as to why they are the way they are, all the traumas that our people have experienced. You start talking about the culture, you start talking about history, and it goes hand in hand with our culture. You know, the way things were for our old ones.

These dynamics mean that there are many cultural practitioners who didn't engage fully with their practice until adulthood. Their process of becoming cultural knowledge-holders is different than that of Takook, who was raised as a bird singer. Takook himself discussed an example of an older Kumeyaay man who was trying to learn some Bird songs later in life. This man didn't speak the language and after a year of study had yet to master any of the nuances of bird singing. Nevertheless, following a performance in San Diego, a person in the audience commended the older man. The audience member said how good it was that he was there to teach the younger people how to bird sing. Her perception was that because he was older, he must be the one who is instructing the other bird singers. This is a common misconception regarding elders and olders, as I discussed in Chapter 4. Takook said, "We can't stop her and go, 'actually ma'am he's just learning, my boys are way more advanced than him.' Right? Because that would be disrespectful to him. We would never do that." In reality, Takook was leading the singing and his sons were helping assist the older man.

Based on his training of future generations of bird singers, Takook's actions are comparable to peer providers for his cultural community. Peer providers within the context of healthcare typically refer to individuals who are hired to assist those in mental health or substance use recovery (Blash, Chan, and Chapman 2015). They rely on their lived experiences,

plus skills acquired from formal training, to provide support (Blash, Chan, and Chapman 2015). Based on his shared experiences, Takook can contribute to the development of the next generation of bird singers. He can help anticipate the future needs of the community by providing peer-based support. This was also demonstrated by Walking Stick who discussed mentorship with many indigenous folks across the country who were struggling with mental health or substance issues. By examining the efforts of indigenous people to provide mental health support within their community, the importance of peer provider support becomes more apparent.

For the Kumeyaay people in the U.S., bird singing provides an avenue for people in substance recovery to work on their sobriety and have a second chance within the community. Takook emphasized the rarity of this kind of redemptive transformation, arguing that it does not occur within the larger American culture. Despite struggling with issues of substance abuse and trauma, a Kumeyaay person can choose to dedicate themselves to their culture and become "one of the most respected people in the Nation," according to Takook. This illustrates how cultural knowledge-holders are deeply valued and how engaging with culture is a recognized route to healing within this community. The emphasis is on finding a way to contribute to the group's preservation and passing on that knowledge to the next set of community members who seek it.

One of the new ways of learning about Kumeyaay culture is through enrollment at educational institutions such as KCC, Cuyamaca College, and SDSU in San Diego County. However, Takook distinguishes between *learning* about Kumeyaay culture and *becoming* a cultural practitioner. Kumeyaay members learning songs in academic courses are not necessarily immersed in the culture like he was when he was growing up: "They learn it as music as opposed to this spiritual medicine given to us by our creator. So, it has a different meaning. It becomes

social, not ceremonial and we are told that it's both." When it comes to bird singing, Takook can teach people the songs and some of the meanings behind them. But ultimately, for them to be considered a full bird singer like Takook, they would need to live the lifestyle and be fully engaged during their decades-long training. For that reason, bird singers are usually trained by their families from childhood and are deeply revered within the community.

The Revival of Bird Songs and Other Song Cycles

Bird singers need extensive training and financial support to gain the cultural knowledge needed to be successful. Casino wealth has been essential in the supporting the growth and revitalization of bird singing among U.S. Kumeyaay communities. My interlocutors who were from communities with tribal casinos talked about the double-edged sword of casino wealth. A portion of the revenue made by federally recognized casinos is distributed to officially enrolled members through monthly stipends. For some, the stipend is spent on alcohol or substance abuse. On the other hand, stipends can also help facilitate individuals' pursuit of education and cultural knowledge with fewer economic burdens. Based on their research with Southern Californian indigenous singers, Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed found, "Bird Songs have undergone a renaissance in the last twenty years because of the establishment of the casinos, which provide more resources, so that gatherings can be held more frequently" (2020:230). The resources from casinos have allowed Kumeyaay communities to invest in their cultural revitalization projects focused on Bird songs and language. Bird songs are an example of a revitalized cultural tradition that has developed into a significant part of contemporary Kumeyaay culture.

There are other song cycles, such as Wildcat songs and Lightning songs, which also teach foundational cultural knowledge about socialization and Kumeyaay values (Field and Cuero

2012). In Mexico, there are currently no active bird singers, following the death of Bird and Wildcat singer Jon Meza Cuero. Jon Meza Cuero was the "sole teacher of the Wildcat singing tradition" within the Kumeyaay community (Field and Cuero 2012:320). Wildcat songs are believed to have been derived from Kumeyaay Bird songs in the 1800s (Heller, Henry, and Arrow-weed 2020). When asked about the difference between Wildcat and Bird songs, Jon talked about the way he shook the rattle like a cat's tail swaying back and forth for a Wildcat song (Margaret Field, personal communication, December 9, 2023). While he was able to pass on his Wildcat and Lightning song knowledge to at least one Kumeyaay member (Ross Frank, personal communication, December 7, 2023) and other indigenous singers (Margaret Field, personal communication, December 9, 2023), there will be significant challenges to reviving this tradition because of the limited number of people with access to this knowledge.

The community in Baja California has expressed a desire to bring in more singers, due to the success of the revival of Bird songs in the U.S. At the time of our interview, Takook had begun the process of meeting with some children and adolescent Kumiai/Kumiay in Mexico to help them learn how to sing. He planned begin their work in person and then move to Zoom to facilitate an ongoing connection. This project is a long-term commitment for Takook: "I'm gonna try in the next few years to this community, start bird singing and bring it back there. So that's my hope." One of his goals is to connect his youth group in the U.S with the young people in Mexico. He began by collecting donations of backpacks, binders, and other school supplies to help some of the Kumiai/Kumiay children. He wanted this experience to help instill values of unity and charity for his U.S. group.

While the tradition of bird singing is growing among the Kumeyaay community on both sides of the border, there are lingering questions about how to best revive certain other dormant

cultural practices. The U.S.-Mexico border created a physical separation but also increased cultural differences because it blocks the free flow of shared knowledge between bands. A clear example of this can be seen in the very limited number of speakers of Ipai/'Iipay (Northern) on the U.S. side of the border, whereas Tipai/Tiipay (Southern) is still actively spoken by approximately 50 Kumeyaay members in Mexico (Field and Cuero 2012). There are notable efforts being made on both sides to exchange knowledge, but these faced challenges due to COVID changes and increased border restrictions. The revival of language and dormant ceremonies is ongoing, but it is an uneven and complicated process. Despite these difficulties, Kumeyaay community leaders are finding paths to enhance the lives of members through the revival of old ways and the introduction of intertribal practices from other groups in North America.

Revitalization and Kumeyaay Community College

Many Kumeyaay members hope for revitalization through education and the sharing of cultural practitioners and elders' knowledge. Through research, Kumeyaay member Banegas found that there is enough information available to recover about "forty percent" of their religion (Banegas 2017). He believes the revival of spiritual knowledge, combined with access to sacred sites "like the Kuuchamaa, Tecate Peak, Wee'ishpa, Signal Mountain, and Viejas Mountain," would enable greater healing from some of the effects of historical trauma (Banegas 2017:93). This recovery process would also call for "the recovery of the Kumeyaay language, development of spiritual leaders, reestablishment of the sweat lodge, the Karuk ceremony, the eagle dance ceremony, and the traditional Kumeyaay cremation" (Banegas 2017:93). But, Banegas argues, this requires the assistance of academic, local, and federal institutions for its success. On the

local level, KCC is at the forefront of the recovery efforts. The professors and staff at KCC have been working to reestablish dormant practices, particularly those related to language and ceremony.

Over the last decade or so, there has been progress made on revitalization efforts for the Kumeyaay language, particularly the Tiipay dialects. Kumeyaay does not have a standardized written alphabet and has been orally transmitted between members (Field 2012). The linguistic anthropological work by Langdon (1975, 1990) and Field (2012) has been dedicated to documenting the existing Kumeyaay speakers and understanding lexical variation. A Kumeyaay community leader has created language classes at KCC to help support language acquisition in their community. These combined efforts have given younger generations access to Kumeyaay language classes in high school and have enabled the development of the first written documentation materials for the Kumeyaay language. Despite this work, the language is still threatened with dormancy because of the lack of fluent speakers currently living. It is currently (as of 2022) seen as "critically endangered" based on UNESCO assessments (Rodriguez 2020). The numbers dropped from approximately 75 Kumeyaay speakers in 2015, to an estimated 45 (Connolly Miskwish 2016; Rodriguez 2020). This change is mostly due to the loss of older Kumeyaay members, given that the median age of a Kumeyaay speaker is 60 years old (Rodriguez 2020).

In his linguistic survey, Rodriguez found that there were very few U.S. Kumeyaay speakers left and the majority were elderly or unwell (2020). Rodriguez identified that bird singers were prominent among the U.S. language speakers because their singing apprenticeship is based on oral traditions. In his predictions for the future of Kumeyaay language use, Rodriguez suggested that Kumeyaay will become a common second language due to changes in

language acquisition for younger generations (2020:145/6). While there was some tribal support for language classes, there was a lack of developed materials that encouraged more than a simplistic understanding of the Kumeyaay language. An intergenerational approach, Rodriguez contended, would be the most beneficial for language learning in Kumeyaay communities (2020). This would enable knowledge exchange between elders and youth and help promote Kumeyaay use in people's homes.

In addition to engaging in language education, KCC is also working to revive Kumeyaay ceremonies. One such effort took place during the summer of 2021 and 2022, when instructors held workshops to launch Tule boats. These boats were used by Californian indigenous people to travel across lakes, bays, and inlets. They are traditionally made with willow and other local materials. While this event demonstrated how Kumeyaay people were able to travel across water, it could not revive all of the many dormant water ceremonies. For that to happen, Kumeyaay people would need a safe access point to the ocean through the reappropriation of coastal land. The call for the return of land was expressed explicitly by Sarah.

Kumeyaay Ocean Access and Water Ceremonies

After tens of thousands of years of living by the water, the Kumeyaay people in the U.S. were pushed into what is commonly referred to as "East County." This is typically dryer and much warmer than the coastal areas of San Diego County. While these lands in the east were also Kumeyaay territory, the seasonal migrations which were foundational to their way of life were now prohibited. Based on archaeological evidence, the Kumeyaay used to have access to ancient water sources like Lake Cahuilla in these eastern areas, but the geography has greatly changed over the last 500 years (Buckles, Kashiwase, and Krantz 2002). There are no longer ample water

sources in East County to sustain a significant marine life. With the loss of this land and geographic changes, came a loss of traditions. Takook explained,

> Our people had ceremony with the water, they had connection with the ocean. And when you don't live near that ocean, you lose that connection, you lose those ceremonies. So, I don't know how many ceremonies we had associated with the ocean and, even just the animals that are in there that we eat the fish lights and the plants that are down there, we lose that connection. We lose all of that knowledge and that's nutrition that our ancestors would have had that psychological understandings of just looking at it. How huge an ocean is, that does something to your psychology. We had generations of people who never got to see the ocean much and connects like that. And so those are all ceremonies that were lost, medicine that's good for our people that was lost. And now we're having to regain that, we're having to go through those processes again to recreate those ceremonies and bring that ceremony back. It's been said that ceremony, that things our ancestors gave us never truly die, that it's held by the ancestors and it's all around us at all time. We just have to realize it.

In this ethnographic excerpt, Takook acknowledges the loss of water ceremonies and a connection to the water. The forcible removal of Kumeyaay people from the water impacts their ceremonial traditions and their options for therapeutic ceremonialism. As Takook says, there is a loss of ancestral knowledge, which impacts psychological understandings and blocks access to medicine. In order to regain that knowledge, cultural revitalization processes will need to include water ceremonies and practices.

The Kumeyaay people will need physical locations to practice these emergent ceremonial traditions and regain their cultural knowledge involving water. As Sarah noted,

> You know because there's like 12 bands with us right now. And you know, we have territory everywhere but the ocean and that really needs to be established. There needs to be an area for us to be able to go next to that region where there's a building and we can, you know, whether it's a meeting or it's a gathering, or if it's just a cultural center or something in that sense. You know, of that water. Our creation story started there. For us to be cut off from things like that is, you know, something that needs to be reestablished. And if they really want to do right by us, they'll do that. You know, they'll do that and they'll provide that. And you know, there's all this tourism stuff that goes on, but you know, they pay for tourism to come through San Diego. Why can't they just give us a little area over there? You know, we're not asking for La Jolla Shores or anything.

In his ethnographic research with Western Apache people, Basso (1996) documented the sacred connection between indigenous people, land, and cultural practices. Basso's interlocutors said that any potential loss of land would be detrimental because their lands contained ancestral memories and cultural knowledge about morality and history. Basso demonstrates how the Western Apache are deeply rooted in their homelands through storytelling, language, and place naming. The Kumeyaay people have endured the loss of a significant portion of their land, particularly the coastal areas, which resulted in their homelands being renamed and colonized by settlers. When indigenous people are removed from their original homelands, or only receive a section of those homelands, it represents more than a loss of territory. It is a loss of sacred knowledge and identity. Basso argues, "relationships to places may also find expression through the agencies of myth, prayer, music, dance, art, architecture, and in many communities, recurrent forms of religious and political ritual" (1996:109). In this sense, access to a water site could enhance the connection between land, spirituality, and therapeutic ceremonialism through many different forms of embodiment.

The loss of their water ceremonies and access to sacred sites is still devastating to my Kumeyaay interlocutors. They are aware that the ocean, sea life, and subsistence gathering were critical to their survival and their ontological framework. That connection, however, is hindered by their forced removal and the lack of private access to sites that would enable their ceremonial traditions. Sarah suggests that the Kumeyaay people should be returned some land with access to the ocean as a means of reparations for the harm done to their people by the U.S. government. Her joke about La Jolla Shores refers to one of the wealthiest communities in all of San Diego, because she knows the authorities would be unlikely to give up any valuable real estate for free.

But perhaps this should be on the table, given that there are multiple recent examples of private citizens and conservation groups returning land to indigenous tribes in California.

Case Studies: Ancestral Land Return

The Tongva tribe, through their nonprofit Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy, was transferred 1 acre of land (estimated worth: $1.4 million) in Altadena, California from its owner in October 2022 (Purtill 2022). The property includes a 1931 Spanish-style home and many oak trees, which produce acorns that are culturally meaningful to tribal groups throughout the Southwest. It is important to note that the property is held by a nonprofit because the Tongva do not have federal recognition and, therefore, face greater administrative difficulties receiving land. Additionally, the land's previous owner received a monetary settlement from the Tongva to reimburse them for another tenant's lack of rent payment (Purtill 2022). In the end, the nonprofit was able to acquire the land for around $200,000, including legal fees (Purtill 2022).

The purpose of this acquisition is to create a ceremonial site for their tribal community, where they can be among indigenous plant life on their ancestral lands. The Vice President of the Conservancy said, "We're working towards one common goal, and that is to have a place of safety, security, where we can have ceremonies and where we can exercise our self-determination. That's where the healing has begun" (Purtill 2022). The relationship between healing, ceremonialism, and self-determination is central to many of the desires of indigenous groups today. Non-indigenous people need to recognize and meet the need for more spaces to be dedicated to indigenous people, to help support their health and wellbeing.

Other recent Californian examples of land retrieval include the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council and the Esselen tribe of Monterey County. Over 500 acres of redwood

forests in Mendocino County were transferred to the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, which represents ten Northern Californian tribal nations (Treisman 2022). The land will be known as "Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ" ("fish run place" in the Sinkyone language). The $3.55 million purchase was supported by PG&E and included an additional $1.13 million endowment to fund stewardship (Treisman 2022). The purchase aims to promote conservation and to allow indigenous groups to practice their traditional ways of tribal stewardship.

The Esselen tribe recently regained part of their ancestral lands in the form of 1,199 acres next to Little Sur River (Smith and Sturgill 2020). Like the Tongva, the group lacks federal recognition, so the land will also be held by the tribal nonprofit organization. The deal was negotiated by the Western Rivers Conservatory and purchased with a grant from the California Natural Resources agency. Like the acquisition deal that was given to the Intertribal Sinkyone Wildness Council, the land is part of a long-term stewardship and repatriation process. "The tribe plans to build altars, a ceremonial dance house and a bear dance lodge. They also hope to rebury ancestors whose burial sites were disturbed by development" (Smith and Sturgill 2020). This marks another clear connection between stewardship, the revival of cultural traditions, and ceremonialism.

In 2020, California Governor Newsom signed an executive order to recommend that state agencies work with indigenous groups to co-manage land and give "excessive land" back (Office of the Governor 2020). Despite these efforts, there is still much more that needs to be done to enable reparations and land returns. The Native Ancestral Lands policy was crafted with the intention to facilitate more land returns to indigenous people by the state and federal governments. While this is a noble goal, the policy is difficult to enforce, and it doesn't guarantee any actual land awards. In this regard, it is indistinguishable from dozens of other

policies that have been made as lip service to the indigenous people of North America, which amount to empty promises and further engender feelings of mistrust, powerlessness, and disappointment.

In recent years, land acknowledgements have become a popular way to communicate that indigenous people are stewards of the land across the Americas. While they have become widespread and used by many institutions, including universities, land acknowledgments are often performative and usually are not paired with any direct action to benefit indigenous communities in tangible ways. The loss of ocean access for the Kumeyaay people is harmful because it prohibits their ability to participate in sacred water ceremonies or create a space to revive dormant practices. As Sarah said, they "aren't asking for La Jolla Shores or anything," but they should be returned a place with ocean access like their ancestors had. Examples of the Tongva, the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, and the Esselen tribal groups clearly demonstrate how land can be returned to tribal groups in a manner that allows them to practice their spiritual beliefs on ancestral lands.

The return of ancestral lands supports the possibility of reviving more dormant practices and the potential repair of intergenerational harm. Many of the dormant ceremonies require sacred spaces and it will take time as well as community involvement before they can be fully incorporated again. There are Kumeyaay ceremonies related to life and mourning that have been revived recently, or are in the process of being revived, thanks to ethnographic research and community interest. Mourning ceremonies and funerals can provide opportunities for therapeutic ceremonialism through the gathering of community and the use of indigenous cultural traditions.

Ceremonies for Grief and Healing

There are specific Kumeyaay practices to help with the healing and grief precipitated by death and loss. There are overnight mourning ceremonies that involve bird singing and the gathering of the community. For bird singers, this means that they may be called upon at any time for their ritual contribution if someone passes. Takook and other bird singers I spoke with informally emphasized the spontaneity of their lifestyle, but they also made a point to put bird singing first. The unpredictable call from their community for service was an undeniable part of the work and it meant giving up other activities or job opportunities.

Kumeyaay funerals can be a combination of Kumeyaay and Catholic traditions, depending on the person's faith. For example, the Catholic Church ceremony at The Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the Viejas reservation can be performed partly in Tipai. During my fieldwork, I was invited to a funeral and was able to witness how the funeral exemplified syncretism that allowed for both Catholic and Kumeyaay beliefs. Following the Catholic ceremony, when the beloved was being moved from inside the church to their resting place in the small cemetery, people began singing Bird songs and using gourd rattles. This procession exemplified how Kumeyaay healing traditions, like bird singing, can be used to aid in grief and provide moments of harmony within a group setting. As Reuben described,

> Say there's a group of 3,000 people. We're burying people all the time, you know, and we're always doing in a way ceremony. So, and sadly, that's like the only thing that's lasted after colonization. We used to have all kinds of ceremony. But I mean, this is the one thing that has remained as our mourning and death ceremonies. I would argue that [indigenous people] do it better than anyone else because I don't think, you know, non-natives mourn good at all. I think they hide their elderly at old folks' home. When someone dies, they just have a small funeral, short, sweet. Done. And then they're left with to mourn sometimes the rest of their life. So, I think when it comes to us, when we do our traditional way, our ceremony, you have a more thorough mourning process, and you can live again sooner.

Reuben's emphasis on the differences between Euro-Americans and indigenous peoples' ways of mourning suggests that the former's lack of ceremony and connection can be potentially harmful because it doesn't allow for full bereavement. He argues that Kumeyaay ceremonial practices allow the community to be present for a thorough grieving processes. This supports the argument that therapeutic ceremonialism has positive effects on the community, not just the individual. Another interlocutor, Takook, discussed the importance of spirituality in guiding families through their grief:

> Every person has to deal with loss, they have to deal with that hardship. And I know when people are disconnected from our culture or disconnected from spirituality, from all of those old traditions, they are very lost in those times, they don't understand why it happens, there's anger that comes from it, or disbelief. They just feel so lost, they just, it makes a hard time harder. But when I come across families and they are very much in their faith, in their tradition, and ceremony, even if it's not a Kumeyaay way, or it's a Christian way or something else it seems that we have more understanding or more strength in those times. It's still hard to lose somebody, still hard to mourn, but at least they have in their mind what is going on, and why it's going on, you know.

As a bird singer, Takook is present at many significant life moments for Kumeyaay families and those from other indigenous groups. He can observe how they process their grief and what brings them peace even during the most confusing parts of life. Bereavement can bring out intense emotional states in people. By enacting traditions that honor those who have passed and allow for the community to come together for mourning, there are more opportunities for connection and healing. Although grief and bereavement do not leave physical scars, they often create an emotional need for therapeutic healing processes. As Reuben noted, ceremony can aid in this process:

> So I think what ceremony does, it allows you to be whole again, maybe not completely whole, of course, you're going to always miss that person forever and you always have empty space, but when we do our ceremony, um, we are able to, first of all, get together, get each other's back, support each other, some too often, financially too. It's expensive.

> We'll do stuff for each other, and then we'll have this like real, you know, it's really good for your mental health. I'll just say that.

The healing power of ceremony following a death cannot be underestimated. As Reuben states, it can help you become "whole again" or at least mentally well following the processes of bereavement and grief. Each cultural group has their own understandings of death and its meaning for the living. Based on my interviews and fieldwork, I found that the use of ceremony within the Kumeyaay community creates feelings of unity, connection, and wellbeing. Cultural leaders and bird singers provide a fundamental service to their community through their blessings, music, and therapeutic contributions.

Some of the most sacred practices, including the Karuk mourning ceremony, are being relearned by Kumeyaay individuals. The Karuk mourning ceremony, also known as an image ceremony, is being revived due to community interest and through the preservation of image elements that occurred as part of a previous, problematic anthropological examination of the ceremony. While the revival is slightly controversial because of differing opinions within the Kumeyaay community about the hauntological implications, the Karuk mourning ceremony exemplifies how indigenous groups use intertribal exchanges and ethnographic research to bring back dormant practices.

The Karuk Mourning Ceremony

During my interviews, a few interlocutors referred to the *Karuk* mourning ceremony in passing. Daniel mentioned there were efforts to revive the practice and that he had intentions for his wife who had recently passed, and eventually himself, to be part of the ceremony. Dr. Ross Frank, a professor in UCSD's Ethnic Studies department, also suggested that I investigate the

Karuk ceremony as a potential topic of interest relating to the revival of dormant practices. However, through my research process I never felt like I knew enough about the ceremony or its revival process to write more than a brief footnote in this dissertation. Because the Karuk is a sacred ceremonial death practice, I found that it was a difficult topic to bring up in conversation. That was until I spoke with Reuben at a final check-in in early February 2023, when he sent me a piece called "The Repatriated Karuk Dolls of Edward Davis."

This work details the childhood experiences of Banegas, a Kumeyaay member, in the Powwow circuit, as well as his encounter with Karuk dolls during an internship for his Master's degree. Banegas traces how amateur anthropologist Edward Davis was a critical player in an ethnographic controversy surrounding the Karuk ceremony and facilitated the ceremonial dolls' transfer to the Heye Collection in New York (Banegas 2023). The dolls are central to the Kumeyaay mourning ceremony, which involves a planning phase, wood gathering, building a Karuk house, and making images (dolls) (Banegas 2023:30). This sacred practice was documented by anthropologists like Davis and Waterman (2004 [1910]) in the early 1900s before going dormant due to prohibitive indigenous religious laws, boarding schools, and other forms of structural violence. Banegas weaves ethnographic narratives, historical research, and interviews to show how there are two prevailing interpretations regarding Davis' connection to the Karuk.

According to Banegas (2023:30), the Karuk ceremony is based on the Kumeyaay creation story and commemorates the Creator Tuchapai's death and cremation. It is performed by Southern Californian indigenous peoples, including tribal groups in San Diego and Riverside counties (Banegas 2023; Waterman 2004 [1910]). There is evidence, Banegas argues, that the Karuk ceremony was started by the Kumeyaay people and then later adopted by other tribal

groups in the surrounding areas. Local tribal groups still practice the Karuk and can offer insight for Kumeyaay community members who are interested in reviving the ceremony. This is a clear example of how certain Kumeyaay individuals are using intertribal exchanges to revive dormant practices. They can visit other local tribal groups and see how they perform their own version of the Karuk mourning ceremony. While it might not exactly replicate how the ceremony was practiced by their Kumeyaay ancestors, this intertribal exchange offers hope for the eventual revival of their own form of the Karuk. They can use the information they gather based on other tribal groups' iterations of the Karuk to decide how to practice their own ceremonial tradition. Intertribal interactions about the revival of dormant practices are happening on local levels and demonstrate how indigenous knowledge can be used to support the healing of colonial trauma.

The instability and precarity faced by the Kumeyaay people in the early 20th century was overwhelming and led to many changes to ceremonial practices, including the Karuk. Delfina Cuero mentions in her autobiography that her grandfather led the Karuk ceremony "for all the dead" (1991:37). Her grandfather danced with an image created from brush and reeds, which represented the dead. The importance of being a ceremonial singer was evident in Delfina's description. She states, "Grandfather knew all the songs that went with the death ceremonies and the image. He was an important man because he knew all these things" (1991:37). This is still true today, as bird singers and other ceremonial leaders continue to be crucial to ceremonial and other community religious practices. Delfina goes on to discuss how the practice had changed over time to incorporate the use of gourd rattles, instead of the traditional deer hooves. This is just one example of how the practice changed during the early 20th century. The Karuk eventually went dormant in the 1920s due to the banning of indigenous ceremonies and the continued effects of colonization.

Karuk ceremonies were incredibly expensive and could financially devastate an unprepared clan (Banegas 2023; Davis 1919). Banegas interprets the high cost of the Karuk ceremony as representing the deep spiritual significance that death holds for the Kumeyaay people. He says, "the care and cost served as a lesson to the community that death is part of our existence and that the spiritual world is equal to—if not more important than—the temporal world" (Banegas 2023:32). By reviving dormant practices, indigenous people are better able to understand their cultural values prior to colonization, including deeply significant practices like the Karuk ceremony, and decide which they want to maintain for future generations.

While anthropological documentation can prove helpful in this revitalization process, the case of Davis and the Karuk dolls exemplifies the deeply problematic power relations that are often embedded in these kinds of encounters between anthropologists and indigenous people. According to the two different stories of Davis' engagement with the Kumeyaay, he either ignored orders to cremate the dolls, or he was given express consent by the Kumeyaay community to keep the dolls in the museum. Davis admits in his own work that he was expressly forbidden from taking photographs of or otherwise recording the ceremony, and that he violated those terms (1919:17). Therefore, he is culpable of breaking his interlocutors' trust and disrespecting the tribal group he was investigating. Banegas states, "Many of us are grateful for the work Edward Davis has done recording our most important ceremony, but also deeply disturbed that he acquired his collection and his knowledge by deception and disrespect" (2023:13). Banegas examines Davis' legacy with careful consideration and argues that while it may never be known whether he had explicit permission to give the dolls to the museum, that does not negate his ethical responsibility to the Kumeyaay people.

In April 1999 the Karuk dolls were repatriated to the Campo Kumeyaay Nation (Banegas 2023). The dolls were made by Jim McCarty Qualsch Halapooka, and his great-granddaughter, Chairwoman Angela Santos of the Manzanita Band of Diegueno Mission Indians, was told a different story about them. According to her family's narrative, the dolls were always intended for museum preservation (Banegas 2023:33). "Santos explains that these were the last dolls Halapooka planned to make because he realized the ceremony was fading from practice and he wanted to leave a record of it for future generations, painting a picture of resilience and active participation in preservation" (Banegas 2023:33). This may mean that Davis had permission to keep the dolls in a museum, but it does not excuse his unauthorized photography or his unethical power dynamic with the Kumeyaay people.

Davis is representative of the murky historical relationship that anthropologists have had to the Kumeyaay people. The knowledge produced about the Kumeyaay people in the early 1900s was inaccurate and left lasting negative impressions on many of the older generation. This is demonstrated by the contradictory narrative surrounding Davis and the dolls and in my experience. Among my interlocutors, there were clear reservations about my position as an anthropologist and what would be produced in this dissertation. In his piece on the Karuk dolls, Banegas questions the role of anthropology in cultural revitalization. He argues that the repatriation of the Karuk dolls has allowed for this practice to become revived but recognizes the deeply troubling history surrounding museums' holdings of indigenous peoples' cultural materials. This particular situation is unusual and provides an excellent case for examining how anthropology can both help and hurt a community and its relationship to its ceremonial items.

As Banegas argues, the "dilemma of reviving ceremony" happens when there is a lack of consensus about how or if a ceremonial practice should be revived. Some elders believe that the

Karuk should be left alone because there is not enough information to properly revive it, while others think it should be revived, so long as this is done with good intentions. When discussing the potential ramifications of reviving a ceremony incorrectly, Banegas states, "Christman cautioned that doing a ceremony incorrectly may have the reverse of its intended effect. Instead of healing, a ceremony done incorrectly may instead cause illness. However, bad things also happen when cultural ceremonies are neglected" (2023:41). He goes on to question a community can revive a ceremony when they only have access to some fragments of what it once was and considers where to find the missing knowledge. The answer is to look to other tribal groups' rituals and ceremonial traditions.

Embedded within his telling of the story of Davis and the dolls are Banegas' own experiences with Pan-Indianism and cross-tribal culture. He describes how the powwow circuit was able to help fill in the cultural gaps that were missing in the Kumeyaay community due to colonization. Moreover, he argues that the Karuk can be revived if Kumeyaay members use elements of intertribal ceremonies as substitutions for the missing pieces. Intertribal exchanges are critical to the revival of many dormant practices because they fill in ceremonial gaps through relevant indigenous cultural knowledge. By relying on an indigenous network for knowledge, Banegas was able to learn much more about the Karuk ceremony than has been available to the Kumeyaay for over 100 years. The SIHC is now the holder of the three Karuk dolls, which are now on public display (Banegas 2023).

The debate about if and how to revive the Karuk mourning ceremony is complex and remains contentious as of this writing. Through Banegas' ethnographic work, the world will better understand the debate surrounding these dolls and what they mean to the Kumeyaay people. He states, "We must tell our stories and make them public for our people, and not hold

back important pieces from each other, even at the expense of non-Kumeyaay people having the information, too" (Banegas 2023:45). Indigenous people worldwide face difficult decisions regarding the future of their ceremonial practices. The Kumeyaay, like many other indigenous tribes, have lost many traditions due to colonization, racism, genocide, and other forms of structural violence. Despite this, there is significant hope for a future that is more connected to their cultural heritage through both intertribal exchanges and ancestral guidance.

Hauntological Orientations for the Revival of Dormant Practices

The revival of dormant ceremonies is one way that the Kumeyaay people have found to take back what is rightfully theirs and resist cultural oppression. According to Reuben, there is a significant debate about how to revive ceremonies. One of the underlying questions within the community is "If we can't do the ceremony 'right', should we do it at all?" Underlying this quandary is the fear is that doing a ceremony incorrectly could lead to horrific outcomes, including death. A healing ceremony performed wrong could make you sick instead, as Takook described to me. As Kumeyaay individuals call on ancestors for guidance with this process, the dynamics of revival take on a haunting quality. A hauntological perspective (Good 2019; Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022; Hollan 2019) is relevant in this context, because it foregrounds how trauma, silence, and resistance are evoked through hauntings and ancestral engagement. For my interlocutors, there was confidence and trust that, with the support of their ancestors' guidance, they would reclaim what they needed to. I found that while fears about improper revival were discussed, they were outweighed by enthusiasm about the potential benefits of revitalization.

The revival of the Karuk mourning ceremony was a particularly contested issue within the community. For instance, one of my interlocutors expressed significant concern about reviving the Karuk mourning ceremony. Walking Stick told me that he was not involved in the Karuk revival process and did not believe that the ceremony should be brought back for spiritual reasons. When I asked Reuben about the best way to go about revitalizing ceremonies, he was undecided. “I don't know. I mean, it’s kind of out of my wheelhouse. I would say I always defer to our cultural leaders. And again, you have people as cultural leaders that I’ve talked to and interviewed, they say, I should do it. We should do it, and others say we don’t.” He stated that he would defer to their knowledge and wisdom. Ceremonial revival involves discussions with elders, community tribal leadership, and ancestors for guidance. It continues to be a source of hope and contention within many indigenous communities who continue to co-create and revitalize ceremonial practices.

The Complexities of Ceremonial Innovation and Revival

The creation of new ceremonies and the revival of dormant ones are complicated, non-linear, and dynamic processes. In my fieldwork, my interlocutors spoke about the potential for ceremonial recreation and the invention of new ceremonies. As previously discussed, the Warrior Spirit Conference featured ceremonial innovation, including intertribal traditions such as the fire gifted by the Cherokee people. This emergent kind of ceremony is inclusive and demonstrates how indigenous people can adapt to new forms of rituals and gatherings.

The purpose of ceremonial innovation is to find new ways to connect to the land, animals, and spirits in a way that is meaningful to the practitioners. Forms of therapeutic ceremonialism, which encompasses any ceremonial event that promotes indigenous healing, are

often well received. It can include dancing, singing, drumming, or other embodied actions. The embodied aspect of ceremonialism was illustrated by Takook when he pointed out how surfers connect to the water and their bodies:

> Now you can recreate and create your own ceremonies at a later time. Like, um, I know people who surf and are in the water and one of the things they do is they get up and go see the ocean every morning. And it's like they've created their own ceremony. It's a very physical thing, keeps them in shape about their surfing or in the water.

The underlying point here is that ceremony can be practiced in a wide range of ways that connect people to their ecological surroundings and to themselves. Ceremonial innovation exists because people are searching for ways to connect, or reconnect, to something greater than themselves. For my Kumeyaay interlocutors, it was necessary to involve their ancestors in their ceremonial practices for guidance. They would invoke their ancestors through prayer and blessings at the start of ceremonial practices. This call to the ancestors constituted a common thread between the ceremonies that I witnessed during my fieldwork.

Revitalization is often a lengthy process that includes discussions with elders, intertribal exchanges, and ethnographic research. For the Kumeyaay people, the revival of water ceremonies may be a long-term goal that involves land return. It will take meaningful community efforts to revive practices that have been lost due to removal and cultural oppression. It might not be fully possible, and instead, ceremonial innovations and intertribal exchanges may have to fill in knowledge gaps.

Endurance and the Problem with Resilience

The conversation about reparations in the U.S. usually does not center on the return of land to indigenous people or accountability for the mass genocide and cultural loss that was inflicted. Native Americans are often brushed aside in these discussions perhaps because they

have relative sovereignty, tribal land reservations, and potential access to more resources through casino wealth. While the BIA offered a formal apology to Native people in 2000, it was clear there was no intention to offer "tangible resources" or substantial reparations (Tsosie 2006). In the 24 years since that apology, what has been done to improve the lives and welfare of Native Americans? The sad truth: *very little*.

According to the American Community Survey, 1 in 3 Native Americans live in poverty with a median income of $23,000 a year (Redbird 2020). That is the highest poverty rate for any racial group in the country. According to Indian Health Services, American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) have a lower life expectancy than all other groups in the U.S. COVID-19 has disproportionally affected Native American communities, with higher infection rates and higher mortality rates than whites based on research from the CDC (Hatcher et al. 2020). All these statistics illustrate the same finding: Native people in the U.S. are suffering at significantly higher rates than the rest of the population.

There are multifaceted reasons for this suffering, but they mainly stem from colonialism, racism, and trauma. My research shows the many ways in which some Kumeyaay people endeavor to heal and overcome these effects on their health and wellbeing. I have explored this in previous chapters as evidence of a capacity for struggle based on the work of Jenkins (2015a) and Jenkins and Csordas (2020). The goal is to understand that people don't one day arrive at the destination of "healed" from adverse childhood experiences. Instead, they manage their stresses day by day and sometimes experience bad mental health for periods of time. This contrasts with the idea of eternal resiliency, a characteristic commonly ascribed to indigenous people because of the historic and ongoing suffering they have endured.

While I do believe the concept of "resilience" can be useful in some contexts, it often ignores relevant cultural ideologies embedded within communities of color. Instead of examining what it means to be resilient within a certain cultural group during a particular time, resilience is frequently used in academic research as a badge of honor for making it through unwarranted hardships. In fact, much of the work on resilience has been based on upper- and middle-class, white, Euro-American communities that place disproportionate value on academic success, family attachment, and self-esteem (Boyden and Mann 2005; Ungar et al. 2007). Consequently, using these standards to judge all individuals' biological capacity for withstanding adversity can be negligent if there is no acknowledgment of how members understand resiliency within their communities.

As Kleinman (2015) and others (Jenkins and Stone 2017; Segal 2016) have argued, "endurance" better captures the true struggle to manage and cope with life's hardships. Kleinman (2015) describes his own experience of being a caretaker for his ailing wife and how distressing it was to watch her suffer and ultimately pass away. He suggests that sometimes all people can do is endure. Our ability to endure is a coping response and one that encapsulates the capacity for struggle in real-time. Endurance, rather than resilience, is often a much better way to discuss how people cope with intergenerational trauma, precarity, and adversity (Jenkins and Stone 2017). This framework focuses on how people make sense of difficulties and how they respond to distress. While resilience may appear to be a more positive outlook that emphasizes how a person can overcome hardship, it can create unrealistic and unnecessary expectations of quick emotional and social recovery. For cultural groups that have been constantly bombarded with complex trauma, abuse, and instability, it is an unreasonable expectation. Native American people cannot be expected to fully recover from the trauma of settler colonialism because that

trauma is not over. Settler colonialism is ongoing, and the U.S.-Mexico border is a concrete symbol of that trauma.

This is not to say that Kumeyaay people are not resilient—they most certainly *are* resilient. Rather, I argue that placing the expectation of resiliency on marginalized groups is an unfair expectation built to further narratives of white supremacy. The concepts of the capacity for struggle and endurance more accurately reflect people's lived experiences, and allow for a greater range of reactions and emotions. My interlocutors had personal experiences with addiction or had family members who suffered from addiction. Some of them had experience with rehabilitation centers or were sober as a response to substance abuse. They endured trauma, racism, and significant obstacles to get to a place where they could discuss their journeys with me. One clear point of their endurance is cultural revitalization efforts which shows that even dormant practices can be revived for new generations of indigenous people. Ethnographers and anthropologists should strive to find examples of endurance when examining how Kumeyaay and other indigenous groups persevere in societies that profited off their cultural loss.

The effects of genocide and racism are still present in the Kumeyaay communities. It can be seen in the structural violence experienced by the Kumeyaay in Baja California, Mexico, who struggle with poverty, access to health care, and land rights. It exists within the statistics regarding the life expectancy of Kumeyaay members, particularly in the United States. It is present within indigenous families who have generational problems with substance abuse and trauma. These are the outcomes of governmental policies that inflicted lifetimes of mistreatment and that continue to marginalize indigenous people. Therefore, there is a need for more federal and state policymaking and outreach to Kumeyaay communities on both sides of the border, to facilitate greater access to resources. Despite these obstacles, Kumeyaay bands and local

governing councils are engaging community members through workshops and incentivized programs. It would be beneficial for government bodies to continue to support these outreach programs and work with local leadership to develop sustainable mental health promotion, in particular with the Kumeyaay bands that do not yet have access to tribal gaming funds or additional outside financial resources.

Conclusion: "That Things Our Ancestors Gave Us Never Truly Die"

In this chapter, I have explored how cultural revitalization efforts have potential positive community impacts through therapeutic ceremonialism, community reintegration, and ancestral guidance. Although there is a lack of uniformity in their healing approaches, each of my interlocutors felt that there were significant advantages to their practice of drawing on other indigenous traditions for their own healing and wellbeing. Specific Kumeyaay traditions, like bird singing and local plant harvesting, were also identified as critical aspects of their mental health practices because they offered a connection to their homelands and ancestors.

While it is crucial to acknowledge the ways in which indigenous people have suffered, it is as important to recognize the ways in which they have endured and even thrived. Through indigenous plants, ceremonies, and Bird songs, the Kumeyaay people enrich their lives and remain connected to their "old ways" and lineage. The use of white sage and other ceremonial plants throughout the Americas by indigenous people for recreational, medicinal, and spiritual practices (Kimmerer 2013; Wilbert 1987) embodies the significance of intertribal exchange.

The power of cultural knowledge to reintegrate Kumeyaay members back into their community shows that there are pathways for redemption and recovery from substance abuse. This was also documented by Jilek, who found that "Navajo ceremonialism is designed to restore

order in the individual and in society, to allow man to live in harmony with himself, his fellows, nature, and the universe" (1978:120). Similarly, Kumeyaay therapeutic ceremonialism has been constructed to unite members and allow them to find healing with themselves, their families, the community, and their ancestors, within sacred spaces. By committing themselves to sobriety and to cultural revitalization, people who are reintegrating within this community have an opportunity to provide valuable contributions.

Ancestral guidance and intertribal knowledge are central pillars in the revival of dormant practices and spirituality. Despite fears of reviving incomplete practices or performing them "incorrectly," there are Kumeyaay people who are working to bring back some of their most sacred ceremonies. This calls for a hauntological examination of how ancestors may interfere with ceremonial revival because they do not agree with the methods or practices being used differently than intended. While I did not hear any accounts of ceremonies with bad outcomes, there was a lingering apprehension about the revival of ceremonies that are lesser-known or that have fallen into greater dormancy. The Karuk was one of these ceremonies because it had not been practiced in almost 100 years.

The Karuk mourning ceremony is a compelling example of how ethnographic research, along with tribal accounts and intertribal exchanges, can be used by indigenous people to help fill in gaps and revive dormant ceremonies. It is an illuminating case of how both harmful and beneficial outcomes can be caused by anthropological work. The "dilemma of reviving ceremony" (Banegas 2023) involves intertribal and hauntological implications that will have potentially lasting effects on the next generation of indigenous people.

Chapter 6 In the Borderlands of Injustice and Resistance

The U.S.-Mexico border fractures transnational indigenous sovereignty, ignoring tribal territory and limiting Native people's ability to protect sacred sites. Transnational indigeneity is shaped by separation and displacement, as well as the irreparable harm created by the desecration of ancestors in the name of border construction. The indigeneity of transnational tribal members is also rooted in acts of contestation against the structural violence of settler colonialism as their indigenous identity is a partial product of resistance. Kumeyaay indigeneity, like other transnational groups, is linked to notions of federal recognition, tribal sovereignty, and self-determination. Tribal sovereignty offers Kumeyaay members in the U.S. access to more resources and political power. Since the U.S-Mexico border was formed in 1848, it has enacted harm on the indigenous people that it has bisected and displaced. There have been lasting repercussions for cultural knowledge, language use, and ceremonial traditions for the Kumeyaay people as well as for other transnational tribes. Today the border continues to cause distress as border wall construction threatens sacred sites.

In this chapter, I examine resistance in the borderlands and explore how the border enacts structural violence on the Kumeyaay people through enforced separation, displacement, and damage to sacred sites containing ancestors. COVID-19 directly impacted the U.S.-Mexico border during my fieldwork as it temporarily closed to non-essential travel between the two countries. Despite these severe hardships, transnational groups, like the Kumeyaay and Tohono O'odham, are active in their resistance, as demonstrated in their legal battles, protests, and stewardship of the borderlands. These acts of resistance by indigenous groups represent the importance of hope and endurance in contested places such as the borderlands.

Kumeyaay members are what historian Eric Meeks refers to as "border citizens—people whose rights of belonging [are] in question, leaving them on the margins of the national territory and of American society and culture" (2007:11). Brenden Rensink has applied this framework to his study of the experiences of Arizona Yaquis, Montana Crees, and Chippewas communities (Rensink 2018), other transnational tribal groups who, like the Kumeyaay, were significantly impacted by the expansion of the U.S. borders with Mexico and Canada. The Yaquis, Crees, and Chippewas used the border to their advantage to escape pursuit and oppression. Additionally, they found opportunities and benefited from active resistance. Their examples demonstrate how the border influences transnational peoples and how transnational people can influence the border.

Due to colonial practices including the restrictive security measures enacted at the U.S.-Mexico border, Kumeyaay members have experienced and continue to experience instability and the conditions described by Jenkins (2015a) as constituting precarity. The precariousness can be found in the limited access to quality health care experienced by Kumeyaay members in Mexico, as well as the structural and cultural differences created by cross-border separation. As Rodriguez (2020) argues, the creation of the border greatly impacted language usage and, subsequently, the cultural knowledge that was transmitted through oral traditions and ceremonies. The border, and the subsequent emergence of the borderlands, has permanently altered Kumeyaay culture and will continue to influence the broader community. As a dynamic landscape, the borderlands occupy a precarious position in our imagination, in part through enforced national security.

In discussing the literal and metaphorical space of the U.S.-Mexico border, I invoke the concept of the "borderlands" as advanced in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa. Although Anzaldúa is

referring more specifically to the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas, her work become a touchstone for understanding the conditions that affect the lives of people at a crossroads, or borderlands, of intersectionality in terms of their identity, power, and emotions. As someone who proudly occupied the space between cultures, Anzaldúa revolutionized multiple disciplines and tore down paradigms. She experienced the pain of separation wrought by enforced national boundaries and the struggle to decolonize your own mind. Anzaldúa eloquently uses poetry to submerge the reader in her ontological landscape of the borderland.

"A borderland is a vague and undermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants" (Anzaldúa 1987:3). The "*atravesados*," as Anzaldúa calls them, live in the borderlands: people who do not fit into the mold of what is considered "normal" by colonial and white standards. The people of the borderlands are remarkable in their resistance against hegemonic powers and marginalization. Using metaphors, storytelling, and language-shifting, she explores the history of how Texas was stolen and its people brutalized. She intertwines her own family history into this broader narrative, to show the personal harm caused by white supremacy and racism.

By examining her connection to the land and people, Anzaldúa shows how, as a woman, a Chicana, and as someone descended from the Aztecs, her identity is multifaceted. She declares, "my Chicana identity is grounded in the Indian woman's history of resistance" (1987:616). Using Aztec female rites as an example, she shows how women deploy their power even when facing restricted choices. She describes how the *India-Mestiza* has been subjected to some of the worst degradations in history and yet still holds power in her own "inner flame" (1987:23). The legacy of Anzaldúa's work is its value for understanding how power can emerge from being in-

between, and that you do not need to conform to ideologies of whiteness to keep your strength. Instead, by knowing your culture, your community, and your family, you can unbind yourself from the process of colonization and begin to grow into something else – *something better*. She argues for the new mestiza, who takes ambivalence and turns it into a selfhood of confidence and consciousness by breaking down dualities created by white patriarchal societies. The book, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza (1987), ends with the potent lines:

"This land was Mexican once

was Indian always

and is.

And will be again." (91)

As I write this dissertation, I am on Kumeyaay land. It always has been and always will be. We cannot forget that crucial fact because doing so erases the people who have lived here for thousands upon thousands of years. This land acknowledgment is meant to be reflective of my subjectivity and my positionality here in the borderlands. It also reflects how my "fieldwork" in the borderlands was, at the same time, at "home," as part of patchwork anthropology. The borderlands are complex, intricate, and difficult places to navigate.

Government agencies use the borderlands for surveillance, security, and propaganda, to achieve what Michel Foucault referred to as disciplinary power (1977). Transnational indigenous people continue to be subjected to injustices that erode their sovereignty and cause harm to their cultural community. Kumeyaay member Rodriguez claims the border "fractured the Kumeyaay Nation" (2020:150). The creation and enforcement of the border had direct effects on Tiipay language proficiency among members because it forced many people in Kumeyaay communities, particularly in Mexico, into a diaspora. The scarcity of resources and job opportunities in rural

Kumiai/Kumiay communities in Mexico has compounded the harm caused to families in these areas, many of whom have been forced to move to urban areas along the border, such as Tecate or Tijuana, for employment. Due to the lack of Kumeyaay speakers in the cities, this exacerbates language loss and language shift (Rodriguez 2020:150). Thus, the move from reservations or traditional homelands to urban centers has contributed to the prevalence of English and Spanish as a first language among many Kumeyaay people. Overall, the border has had considerable consequences on the cultural and community cohesiveness of the Kumeyaay people (Rodriguez 2020).

The border is a site of ongoing trauma because it creates physical, emotional, and financial divisions between transnational indigenous communities. Anthropological work has shown how historical trauma can be experienced by cultural groups who have been subjected to colonization and cultural oppression. Moreover, these effects of structural violence impact individuals and generations differently and should not be generalized across cultural groups (Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses 2014). For the Kumeyaay people, the border denies their wholeness and their sovereignty. The U.S.-Mexico border creates harm insidiously because it has, over time, become an accepted part of the Kumeyaay experience. The Kumeyaay people are subjected to the desecration of their ancestors, towering security walls, and the loss of sacred sites.

There is a general sentiment in the U.S. that claims colonization is in the past, but colonization is happening now, and at the U.S.-Mexico border less than 20 miles from where I sit. Colonization is the ongoing occupation of Kumeyaay land. Therefore, there are intrinsic questions about the impact of the border on Kumeyaay people, particularly regarding their access to sacred sites, their experiences of familial separation, and their acts of guardianship for ancestors in the borderlands.

Operation Intercept, Operation Gatekeeper, and the Secure Fence Act

> Well, I think I would start the conversation off with, like, colonization, in general, was the worst thing that happened to the whole world. Not just our area. Like if you look at Africa, King Leopold, where he sat in Belgium, and they looked at a map of Africa, and just two arbitrary lines. They didn't care about the physical borders, the clan borders, the territorial borders that are already there, that were created by people or by geographical means like rivers.
>
> —Reuben

There is no doubt that colonization has been devastating for indigenous groups worldwide and has produced systems of racism, oppression, and erasure. For the Kumeyaay people the border is a symbol of that continued colonization, as they and their ancestors have inhabited the land between the U.S. and Mexico for over ten thousand years. While it has always been a representation of the hegemony of nationhood, security at the border has significantly changed over time. President Nixon's "Operation Intercept" (1969), combined with 1970s government policy, significantly impacted Kumeyaay people's previous ability to travel with relative freedom between the two nations. As Reuben explained,

> So I actually looked into this border thing a lot recently. And in the '70s, it wasn't a big deal. So in the '70s, you can go to and from, especially the Campo folks. They still had this connection through family. And yeah, it was a pain in the butt, you know, to traverse, but we were always used to that. You know, we were always used to going 30 plus miles to somewhere on foot, you know? So it wasn't until, you know, Nixon's war on drugs. And then by the time you get to the '90s, you know, Nixon was the '70s, you have the border really solidifying and you couldn't have—it wasn't porous anymore. You had to get these visas. You had to have identification. You know, people don't have ID and there's still probably a lot of them. And so, you know, you get to the '90s, and, but up until the '70s, though, it was actually pretty good. That's what I'm trying to say. Up until the '70s, it was pretty good. When I talked to the elders, Junior Cuero of Campo, he remembers. And then a lot of people from Jamul. So, we have all kinds of relatives back and forth. The people from Barona, the Cueros, their grandma is from down there. If you just look at the totality of it all, we always were connected, and even up until recently have been, through marriage, through migratory patterns.

"Operation Intercept" almost resulted in the closing of the U.S.-Mexico border to stop drug trafficking. The operation ultimately failed but did lead to the Boundary Treaty of 1970, which formalized border lines. President Ford and President Carter both focused on countering undocumented immigration and in so doing restricted the flow of people between the U.S. and Mexico. Border crossings stayed at comparable levels until the mid-1990s.

Until 1993, Kumiai/Kumiay members in Mexico were able to regularly cross the border from Baja California, Mexico into San Diego without much bureaucratic difficulty. They used inexpensive border crossing passes issued by the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI). In 1999, Tecate was selected as the border checkpoint for Mexican members who wanted to enter the U.S. (Rodriguez 2020). They were able to use the Visa Laser, which would later be known as Mexico Border Crossing Card, to cross the border. This changed when U.S. Border Patrol officers caught non-Kumeyaay people using these cards and consequently revoked their usage (Luna-Firebaugh 2002). This forced Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay members to obtain Mexican passports to come into the U.S. As previously discussed, many Kumeyaay members are without the proper documentation or funds to be able to obtain a passport, which further marginalizes them and prohibits them from being able to cross the border.

"Operation Gatekeeper" began in 1994 and focused on the 66-mile stretch of borderlands between San Diego and Tijuana (Hing 2001). The operation increased border security and changed the way that undocumented people can attempt to cross the border. Its policy of "control through deterrence" forced migrants to take more dangerous routes and resulted in significantly more deaths from environmental causes (Hing 2001). Between 1996 and 2001, the combined San Diego County and Imperial County crossings resulted in 625 recorded migrant deaths, with hundreds more deaths suspected (California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation; Hing 2001).

Most migrants passed away due to the harsh elements experienced on their border-crossing journeys, which caused "hypothermia, heat stroke, and drowning" (Hing 2001).

During the 1990s, Kumeyaay members in the U.S. could cross the border using their tribal identification cards alongside a valid California driver's license (Rodriguez 2020). They did not require a passport for entry into Mexico or re-entry into the U.S. This is just one example of how members in the U.S. have incurred fewer hardships when it comes to crossing compared to members in Mexico. Even so, Kumeyaay members on both sides are not immune to scrutinization from border agents. "In San Diego County, for example, U.S. Border Patrol agents have subjected the Kumeyaay to repeated stops and detentions" (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:169). Moreover, locating the designated checkpoint for Kumeyaay people in Tecate firmly situates them further east than the checkpoint of Otay Mesa (a Kumeyaay name describing the area) or San Ysidro. These procedures changed significantly following the border security measures implemented after the "Global War on Terror".

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush and his administration implemented strict border policies, launched the Department of Homeland Security, and began "Operation Streamline" as a zero-tolerance policy for undocumented crossings (Burridge 2009). The effects of these more restrictive policies were compounded by the increased presence of fringe militia groups such as the Minute Men, who harassed, assaulted, and murdered people of color who they believed were crossing the border without documentation, magnifying sentiments of fear and racism surrounding the borderlands. Instead of the Kumeyaay people, and other transnational tribal groups, being recognized as the guardians of these lands, the Minute Men brought violence stemming from white supremacy to the border, at the expense of migrants, refugees, and indigenous people.

In 2006 a new construction project, known as the Secure Fence Act, added 650 miles of fenced wall along the U.S.-Mexico border (Burridge 2009). As of now, there seems to be no end in sight when it comes to new operations and increased security along the U.S.-Mexico border. The border has become a fixed reality of the Kumeyaay experience and, therefore, efforts are being made to help overcome the barriers to communication and knowledge exchange brought about by this reality. The compounding effects of these decades-long policy changes have intensified border security and made it more challenging for Kumeyaay people to gather and meet the way their ancestors once did.

Irreparable Trauma and Resistance at the Border Wall

During the early part of 2020, a vast construction project was underway along the border to build 14 miles of additional wall in the Laguna Mountains, as per the policies of former President Donald Trump. This wall cuts through Kumeyaay territory and impinges on tribal burial grounds and other ceremonial sites. The construction is being overseen by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, who are required to follow the rules laid out in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Protestors, largely made up of Kumeyaay members, argue that this construction is based on out-of-date archaeological surveys (Rivlin-Nadler 2020) and is flouting the protocols regarding indigenous remains. Usually, discussions between U.S. border officials and indigenous groups occur before construction begins. In this case, however, construction work started first, and discussions only took place once Kumeyaay members began to protest (Rivlin-Nadler 2020). The U.S.-Mexico border is a controversial topic for both indigenous and non-indigenous people because it is a material representation of sensitive issues including (im)migration, security, xenophobia, and political polarization. But

more than that, the protests regarding the border wall are also about ancestral remains and NAGPRA.

Many Kumeyaay members are rightfully upset about the continued disturbance to their ancestors' burial sites and the failure of the authorities to acknowledge their concerns. When I spoke to a spokesperson for the Kumeyaay Heritage Preservation Council during this time (2020-21), they told me the following:

> The 'border' between the U.S. and Mexico is a modern concept of people outside of our community. The Kumeyaay People have been here since time immemorial and our ancestral lands are now, literally, cut in half by a metal border wall that desecrates places we have gathered for thousands of years and continued to gather for cultural and religious ceremonies, until that wall was erected. The Border Wall keeps us from continuing ancient and sacred ceremonies. It not only divides our nation, but it divides Kumeyaay families. Many of our ancestors' remains were exhumed and defiled during the destruction of that wall. We feel that wall is yet another affront on our customs and our way of life, and the trauma it is causing our People is irreparable.

In addition to the border's ongoing desecration of sacred sites, its geographical division of families is a clear example of how colonization is not only something that occurred a century ago, but is a living, breathing reality for transnational indigenous tribes. Kumeyaay people in Mexico are unable to travel across the border to visit their families without paying the exorbitant fees associated with a passport and visa card. This is a luxury that many people in Mexico, particularly those who are indigenous, cannot afford due to structural racism and abject poverty. The Kumeyaay spokesperson elaborated on this issue, saying,

> The border wall adds to the enormous trauma Kumeyaay People continue to endure. So many people outside of our community think the crimes against us took place in the past. That is partly true, but such affronts continue against us and their impacts are massive and painful. When will this pain end? A towering 30-foot-high wall, much of which was paid for with misappropriated funds and authorized by a non-confirmed U.S. politician, now physically divides our nation, much like the Berlin Wall separated its citizens. How can we tell our children that things are getting better for us, that their future will be better than ours when they witness continued attacks against us.

This quote begins by highlighting the trauma experienced by the Kumeyaay people and emphasizes their endurance. It also draws attention to the dissonance between perception and reality regarding the ongoing challenges faced by transborder indigenous communities. The Kumeyaay people, along with other transnational indigenous groups, are impacted by the expansion of border security and subjected to injustices influenced by the ever-changing landscape of American politics.

President Donald Trump was initially responsible for the increased border-wall construction. One of Trump's key campaign slogans was to "Build the Wall." Before Trump took office in 2016, there were 654 miles of border wall. During his Presidency, this was increased by 15 miles to 669 miles of "primary barrier" and an added 65 miles of "secondary barrier" (Rodgers and Bailey 2020). Although he ran a campaign that promised to make Mexico pay for the wall, that never happened. Instead, Trump requested that $10 billion be diverted from the Department of Defense to finance the border wall, including funds for counter-narcotics and military construction activities (U.S. Customs and Border Protection). And additional $5 billion from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has also been used.

In 2019 Congress rejected Trump's request for funding, so the then-president declared a national emergency and relied on powers from the National Emergencies Act to reroute funding. This strategy has prompted legal challenges and two lower courts have decided that $2.5 billion was diverted illegally (Rogers and Bailey 2020). Still, so far the Supreme Court has allowed the construction to continue. I asked the Kumeyaay spokesperson what should be done regarding the ongoing construction and they replied that,

> It should be stopped. Short of that, it should be delayed long enough for us to protect the few undisturbed remains of our ancestors. All along, we have pleaded with Customs and Border Patrol and the Trump administration to please allow us to protect our ancestors and holy places, but they continue at a record pace to desecrate what we hold sacred. At

> this point, we want this barbaric destruction and disrespect to stop, so that we can present our case to those who may hear us... Sadly, the border wall is 99% completed and hundreds, if not thousands, of our ancestors and cultural sites have already been damaged. All we can hope for now is that we can protect what remains of these precious items. Several of our religious sites have been damaged, but we can still protect parts of them if the government allows us to do so. Then, we hope to work with the new administration to get help rebuilding what has been damaged, including the well-being of the Kumeyaay People.

Here they make the important point that the existing desecration cannot be undone. Construction at the border has caused irreparable damage, including the harm done to ancestors. The disrespect for and violation of sacred religious practices has gone unpunished and without restitution.

U.S. government administrations have the power to decide to stop disturbing these sites, but instead have chosen to push the problematic narrative that our borders are insecure and need substantial reinforcing. As Sarah noted,

> They destroyed a lot. You know, real disheartening to see there's no real policy with like border patrol or Homeland Security or even the government on our sacred sites. If they were to build a wall through Arlington Cemetery, I'm sure there would've been an uprising, right?

Her words convey a disheartening reality. Kumeyaay burial sites are older than Arlington Cemetery and do deserve at least the same amount of respect. This double standard is a glaring example of racism and hypocrisy. In this way, the U.S. government has failed the Kumeyaay people. Their ancestors have been disrespected and unforgivably disturbed. While certain media outlets and politicians have acknowledged wrongdoings against indigenous people, there remains silence around the issue of ancestor desecration at the border wall.

Even amidst the enduring disregard towards their ancestors, it is imperative to recognize and prioritize the significant acts of resistance. As part of my fieldwork, I attended an April 2021

Zoom meeting of the Kumeyaay Land Defenders to discuss land acknowledgments, environmental justice, and tribal sovereignty. Around 6 minutes into this meeting, it was interrupted by a "zoom bomber" or "zoom raider" (someone who disrupts video calls). This individual used inappropriate meme videos to try to take over the Zoom session. They were kicked out of the meeting and the roundtable continued with a single additional chat interruption. At the end of the talk, the keynote speaker—a Kumeyaay member—calmly addressed the Zoom bombing. They said the intense reaction people have to discussions on indigenous rights is the very reason why they continue to do this type of work and spread awareness. They said it would not stop their mission to fight for their land rights and address other Kumeyaay issues.

In a follow-up email after the event, the keynote speaker sent out a statement they had written on border resistance in 2020. Describing a peaceful demonstration at the San Diego Hall of Justice against the desecration of Kumeyaay sites, they state, "We want our voices to be heard. My Kumeyaay people have taken a stand to protest the construction of a segment of the border wall that will destroy one of our ancestral sites. We are overwhelmingly tired of not being respected; our presence and voice matter." The statement also calls into question the lack of communication offered by the U.S. government to the Kumeyaay Nation. In the keynote speaker's words,

> Our ancestors sacrificed everything for us to be here today. We are our ancestor's prayers answered. I want to paint a picture for you: imagine all the atrocities that were committed against the Kumeyaay Nation recorded live and seeing what we went through. How would you look at them? How would you feel? I believe everyone would be outraged, and just because it happened many years ago does not mean it's forgotten. Imagine if most of your ancestors suffered that way, what would you do and how would you keep their memory alive, and years later, you continue to be disrespected by a government entity that wants to blow up your ancestral sacred lands.

As previously discussed, Kumeyaay religious beliefs are deeply rooted in the connection to ancestors and to the land. My interlocutors and the keynote speaker expressed the sentiment that their ancestors are not being treated with the same respect and dignity offered to those from other cultures. It is the compounded trauma of historical atrocities and cultural oppression that has caused so much devastation. Kumeyaay ancestors are not safe even in their eternal resting place on sacred grounds because of border security and border construction. The keynote speaker calls for Kumeyaay CRM monitors, consultations with the Kumeyaay Nation, and collaborative relationships to help the community move forward. In all, the statement is a passionate call for restorative justice and human rights.

Indigenous restorative justice usually refers to "a healing process based in indigenous traditions" (Hewitt 2016:316). Rather than a U.S. criminal justice model, restorative justice in this context seeks to privilege decolonized indigenous models of justice that enact revitalized knowledge stemming from indigenous traditions (Hewitt 2016). Discussion on restorative justice began among indigenous people who are incarcerated in Canada, but it has emerged to encompass broader actions by governments and organizations for justice in response to acts against indigenous communities (Tauri 2016). I use the term restorative justice to denote the recognition of wrongdoings related to the destruction of sacred sites and ancestors. Furthermore, the concept of restorative justice holds relevance in discussions surrounding the landback movement and advocacy for a Kumeyaay water site.

With the election of President Biden in 2022, there was hope that construction at the border would come to a complete stop or at least be temporarily paused. Despite campaign promises to not build "another foot," the Biden administration has not been clear about their intentions regarding the border wall. Construction has paused in many places and, arguably,

continued in others. U.S. Customs and Protections has claimed that a current project (as of February 2022) in Texas constitutes repairs of deteriorating levees rather than new wall construction (Garcia 2022). Phrases, such as "environmental planning concerns," "safety" for border patrol agents, and "flood concerns" have been used to explain other areas of construction along the border. At the same time, the Biden administration is being sued for not using appropriated funds for additional wall construction. Many have claimed the Biden administration has been using stalling tactics (Garcia 2022), potentially because of a new deal with Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

In July 2022, it was announced that Mexico will spend $1.5 billion dollars on "modernizing" the U.S.-Mexico wall (Buschschlüter 2022). The U.S.-Mexico joint undertaking focused on immigration issues but failed to provide specific details on precisely how this plan would affect migration. Critics have pointed to the increased number of migrants crossing the border since Biden took office. Numbers were down during the Trump years and significantly increased in 2022 (Buschschlüter 2022). The issue of what to do with incoming migrants was front and center during U.S.-Mexico negotiations. President Biden praised President Obrador's policies of offering temporary visas to Central American migrants, saying "This is a proven strategy that fuels economic growth as well as reduces irregular migration" (Buschschlüter 2022). In response, President Obrador asked President Biden to allow more migrant workers to come to America. The discussions will continue, and as ever-changing policies continue to impact the lives of Kumeyaay members, it is easy to see why so many transnational indigenous tribes struggle to fight for their sovereignty when administrations frequently change their policies. The Kumeyaay have resisted border encroachment onto sacred sites through legal

action and protests. During my fieldwork, two interlocutors were deeply engaged in activism against border construction, sharing narratives of their resistance experiences.

Protests in the Borderlands

The sense of harm caused by border wall construction can be summarized by the La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indian's lawsuit in August 2020. It reads, "If these sacred places are allowed to be desecrated, Kumeyaay children will never be able to learn about these places, and thus would be deprived the opportunity to fully understand their cultural and religious heritage." Their lawsuit filed against the Trump administration accuses it of "currently constructing the border wall directly through Kumeyaay burial sites and sacred lands, causing irreversible and easily avoidable damage to Kumeyaay remains, cultural items, history, and religious practices" (Srikrishnan 2020). This lawsuit was a response to planned construction in Jacumba, an area that is known to contain an "ancient tribal cemetery" (Srikrishnan 2020). While their lawsuit was not successful and construction did continue, it is critical to view this as a part of ongoing resistance in the borderlands against threats to Kumeyaay ancestors and sacred spaces.

Walking Stick and Takook both spoke to me about their activism at border protest events. For Walking Stick, the point was to slow down construction and to stop the Trump administration from succeeding in it plans. He said Kumeyaay protestors were able to shut down the border for longer than any other group. He spoke about protests that caused four-hour shutdowns to border construction work. During the time that Kumeyaay and other indigenous activists were waiting and protesting at contested sites, they prayed for their ancestors. Walking

Stick was extremely active in these kinds of body politics, and he continues to be involved in local and country-wide indigenous activism.

As previously mentioned, Takook was greatly impacted by the demolition at sacred Kumeyaay sites along the border. He joined the protests as a response to seeing ancestral harm firsthand through grave and sacred space defilement. When speaking about the border protests and the challenges of the lawsuit, he told me that change is part of life. Understanding the reality of the border is "part of the growing pains for separation of people." Although the Kumeyaay were not ultimately successful in stopping the construction, there were good things that came out of the experience of the protests, according to Takook. He said it helped to rekindle relationships between Kumeyaay members and that it motivated him to continue efforts to revitalize Bird songs in Mexico. This represents the hope that can come from resistance, even when those actions are not entirely successful. Additionally, he spoke about how resistance wasn't just protests and lawsuits. Resistance also occurred within everyday experience:

> When we resist, people always think of physically fighting back. Real resistance is internal and eternal. What you put into yourself—mental, physically, spiritual. Self-care is a form of resistance. Thinking good thoughts. As long as we as a people, or individuals, we are always resistance. For us, that is just being alive. Other forms of resistance like connecting with each other. Using education system to strengthen ourselves... Use the things that were used to harm us and destroy us to strengthen us. As long as there are Kumeyaay people, we will always resist.

Takook contends that resistance manifests in diverse forms that are interconnected with mental health and self-care practices. By portraying resistance as an inherent aspect of daily life, he reinforces the idea that their existence is resistance. While prominent political demonstrations such as protests serve as overt displays of resistance, it is necessary to scrutinize how resistance is woven through the endurance of the lived experience. Therefore, protests, routine ritual

practices, gatherings, ceremonies, and ancestral interactions all serve as beneficial ways for my interlocutors to support their mental health and spirituality.

"My Ancestors are Speaking to Me": Hauntological Implications of the Border

> I am made from this land, I use the animals and the plants that grow on it. I make my home and I secure myself, but the elements of the earth that I live in, but the soul who I am, comes from the creator to my earliest ancestor all the way down to me.
>
> —Takook

My research has led me to an analysis of the borderlands as a haunted space of ancestors, unspoken trauma, and irreparable harm. They are marked by the "haunting presence of settler colonialism" (Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022:439) and the loss of ancestral lands and elders. The borderlands contain countless beloved ancestors, as well as their knowledge both known and unknown. According to their cultural beliefs, the Kumeyaay are responsible for their ancestors but, instead of being able to act as their guardians, they are currently subjected to violence under the banner of security and the building of yet more border wall. The harm is also rooted in the knowledge that some ancestors were taken for biological samples and scholarly examination. As part of the NAGPRA, cases of ancestral repatriation are intended as steps to make amends for the disruption and harm caused by construction on these sacred sites.

The Kumeyaay people have fought to get their ancestors returned, but it is hard to determine if they can recover all of them. There are many examples of uncatalogued indigenous remains hidden away in collections that scholars and collections managers ignore. This is a direct consequence of anthropological activity and part of our work as anthropologists must be to shine a light on how we contribute to these hauntings, too. These are examples of secondary hauntings, which encompasses the outcomes, interpretations, and chain reactions from the actions involving

harm against ancestors (Lincoln and Lincoln 2015). Secondary hauntings can also push people to action because they feel the weight of these responsibilities given to them by their ancestors and the haunted representation of their harm.

Part of the borderlands' inherent complexity lies in the fact that they are haunted by unspoken trauma and are sites of ancestral resistance. The protests at the border are for the ancestors and to further their protection. The ecology of haunting, as Hollan (2019) states, depends on "whether the cultural and political context encourages or discourages an acknowledgment of harm done to the known or unknown dead" (461). While NAGPRA has led to some acknowledgment of these harms, this does not undo the damage inflicted through border construction and the desecration of sacred sites. It has not put an end to the injustices carried out in the name of border security. The borderlands continue to contain the ecology of ancestral hauntings.

The growth of the border wall is a major concern for the Kumeyaay people because it is an affront to their ancestral lands. But, more importantly, there are significant objections because of its desecration of sacred sites. The use of explosives at cremation sites and other spiritual places was exceptionally hard for Kumeyaay people like Takook to witness. He said, "and that stuff does not sit easy. And that stuff was very hard to-to watch and to know that was going down." He spoke about walking through an ancestral place one day and then returning to find it destroyed by explosives and construction. This was something that could not be taken back or fixed. There will be no amends; these are the heartbreaking detrimental effects of increased border security and border wall construction. In Takook's words:

> In my lifetime, there's always been a fence there. There's always been pretty strong immigration rules and laws in my lifetime. But going there and then destroying all of these sites and you actually seen them do it. Going through a local it's beautiful, and go

> back just a couple of weeks later and it's all been destroyed, you're like, 'Oh, my God'. That has lasting effects. You feel like, you know, that doesn't feel good.

Protests at the wall have made these harmful issues visible to the local community and beyond. This form of resistance requires Kumeyaay people and other indigenous activists to be physically present at sites and to use their bodies as shields to stop construction. It is a powerful and overt form of resistance in the name of ancestors and the potential haunting caused by their disruption. By protesting against border construction, activists are protecting their ancestors and speaking on their behalf. The protests are aimed at preventing the desecration that happened to other ancestors in the borderlands. There are hopes for future collaborative relationships, as well as calls for the employment of more Kumeyaay CRM monitors, consultations with the Kumeyaay Nation, and stricter regulations, including measures like soil testing requirements (Winkley 2020).

The hope and wisdom granted from a connection to the ancestors can be also be felt in the everyday experience of being on ancestral homeland. One of my interlocutors, Reuben, shared "maybe that's why because I'm actually connected to the land. I'm not necessarily. Of course, I'm mostly English, but you know, my ancestors are speaking to me." In this sense, Reuben's primary haunting is not an experience of harm or trauma, but rather a reminder that he is part of the Kumeyaay community. Despite the influence of his European genetic heritage, he feels a strong attachment to the land and to the ancestors who rest here.

By using a hauntological theoretical orientation to better explore the issues surrounding the borderlands, I have attempted to bridge conceptualizations of ancestors with those of ecological ghosts and hauntings (Hollan 2019). The anthropological turn towards hauntology presents unique opportunities to investigate how the inhabitants of places rife with the impacts of

colonization, structural violence, and unknown histories can use their ontologies to create narratives of ancestors, harm, and resistance. Everyday hauntings can also be reassuring, creating a sense of home within the borderlands. The juxtaposition of harm and hope is an intentional one, framing the following examination of the violence and resistance that continues to play out along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Separation and Being "Made Whole Again"

For the Kumeyaay people, each one of the major border policy changes impacted their ability to travel throughout their homelands. Cumulatively, these changes have made it increasingly difficult for the larger Kumeyaay community to hold events and exchange cultural knowledge. This has resulted in clear differences between the experiences of Kumeyaay communities in the U.S. and Mexico, respectively. The three most important are differences lie in access to resources, language knowledge, and cultural practices. Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay people do not have the sovereignty or reservations that would allow them ownership of their homelands. The Kumeyaay who choose to live in rural villages on their ancestral lands face an absence of schools, job opportunities, and economic mobility. Still, as Reuben explained during our interviews, both communities have aspects of their experience that could be improved through trans-border exchanges:

> The border is devastating… They [the Kumiai/Kumiay] got screwed economically, for lack of a better word. Their economic opportunities are not very good down there. Their educational opportunities are not as good. But they have culture and that language, so they have the two things we don't have, and we have the two things they don't have. So, what we would need, I think is, to be made whole again, is connect the communities, and we would be made whole again. So, I think that's something that I think is an opportunity we can look at, and a challenge that we could we would both benefit greatly from. They would benefit educationally and economically, we would benefit culturally and linguistically, 'cause the vast majority of our speakers are down there. There's about 50 left, others about a dozen here, and the rest are down there. But their language is not- it's

> like mixed with Spanish. So, there's a lot of problems with that. But it is what it is, and then I think the benefits certainly outweigh the costs for that, and it's been truly devastating, but it also represents an opportunity, if we all would like that.

Reuben's words uses here are very telling, particularly his emphasis on being "made whole again" and the needs to be a connection between the two Kumeyaay communities. While it is historically established that the Kumeyaay always existed within different bands, this doesn't erase the shared aspects of identity and ancestry that transcended these smaller groups. The creation and enforcement of the U.S.-Mexico border prevents the cultural exchanges necessary for the broader cultural community's growth. It amplifies structural differences in lived experience and separates families.

The border functions as a physical obstacle to language revitalization, as it currently prevents key language speakers in Mexico from travelling across the border to provide language classes and to transmit cultural knowledge in the U.S. I witnessed this firsthand during my preliminary fieldwork, as Tiipay speakers needed additional legal assistance to cross because of issues with visas and other documentation. While there are many other mechanisms that contribute to cultural loss, the border remains a clear structural obstacle for the transmission of language. For example, colonization and urbanization both disrupted cultural and language exchanges between Kumeyaay people. The impact of the border on cultural loss was demonstrated by Kumeyaay member Rodriguez's (2020) argument about Tiipay's critical endangerment.

The Kumeyaay people in the U.S. are physically separated from sacred sites located along the border and in Mexico, preventing them from participating in ceremonies and interacting with spirits there. The border also poses an obstacle to large gatherings where language could be practiced. In addition, the border separation has divided the Kumeyaay

population into smaller groupings, resulting in fewer available members for marriage and cultural exchange. This is compounded by restrictive blood quantum requirements for federal tribal recognition, which make it difficult for members in the U.S. to marry Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay members without their children or grandchildren possibly losing their recognized status.

Despite these hurdles to intermarriage and other relationships between Kumeyaay members separated by the border, my interlocutors spoke at length about their hopes for the future generation. Daniel believed that younger generations would change the dynamics and that there would be more connections made between the Kumeyaay people on both sides of the border. Daniel strongly stated his love for all Kumeyaay people and his desire for community members to be brought together. In his words, the "government should not separate people that love each other. I don't have to know those people down there to love them." The last part of his statement reflects the disconnect between Kumeyaay members in the U.S. and Mexico. Because of the border, trauma, and colonialism, there is more than a language barrier, there is estrangement between bands and within the broader Kumeyaay community.

When asked what the ideal outcome would be for his people, Daniel said, "If I had a magic wand I would have us, have us all together. We wouldn't have Barona. We wouldn't have Sycuan. We wouldn't have Jamul. We have a place where we can all stay together. We are separated because the border checkpoint itself is so cumbersome." And if they cannot have this connected larger Kumeyaay community, then Daniel argued that his people should have the freedom to travel back and forth without hindrance. His sentiments show how the border itself has reinforced these tribal divisions of the Kumeyaay into different bands, rather than one large

tribal group. Daniel's comments about the difficulties crossing the border also illustrate how even U.S. Kumeyaay members encounter obstacles traveling into Mexico.

Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay Border Crossings

For Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay, it is especially difficult to cross into the U.S. for a visit with extended family members. Kumeyaay people often face discrimination, harassment, and racism from border patrol agents (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:169). They risk detention and imprisonment if they are caught crossing without legal documentation. The cost-prohibitive nature of obtaining documentation, including visas and passports, in Mexico is also a barrier for indigenous people in Baja California. Additionally, many Native individuals, particularly those in rural communities, do not have the birth certificate required to qualify for these documents, or the funds necessary to acquire a new one.

Conversely, while Kumeyaay people in the U.S. do have tribal sovereignty, they do not have the power to travel in the borderlands like their ancestors did. The colonization of the borderlands continues, just as the enforced separation continues to generate feelings of apathy, disconnectedness, and loss. As Sarah explained,

> We have families that are married to Baja people and you know, it's just so far. I've been down there with some of them and it's so far to have to travel down there to you know because they can't come here or whatever the issue, they can't afford it or whatever it is. And it's just really sad to see that they're so separated from their families. That they don't grow up together. That they don't—they only get to see each other, you know, at certain times. Mainly when somebody dies because it's so far.

When Sarah says it is "too far," she is referring to traveling around 110 miles from her reservation to the Valle de Guadalupe in Baja California, Mexico, or to those even further south. Moreover, in addition to this physical distance, there is the precarity of navigating the security

process at the U.S.-Mexico border. Sarah discussed how, when crossing the border, there is a "fear" about one's ability to return. She also noted how, even when she is prepared for encounters with border patrol, as an indigenous woman she does not feel comfortable with the process. Being indigenous, being a woman of color, having an indigenous name, and looking "Mexican" can all impact how someone is treated while crossing (Luna-Firebaugh 2002).

For Kumiai/Kumiay members in Mexico, experiences crossing the border are arguably even harsher. Sarah explains, "Even though they're citizens of the Kumeyaay Nation, they still get the same treatment. Like, you know, if they're undocumented." The U.S. and Mexico governments place great importance on documentation and the ability to obtain these forms. The lack of documentation for numerous Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay members means they are unable to cross into the other side of their homelands. This is a problem for other transnational tribes along the borders of Mexico and Canada, too. One tribe in particular, the Tohono O'odham, has fought for recognition of their Mexican members and has won some hard battles in transnational indigenous rights.

Case Study at the Border: Tohono O'odham

The Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona is the only tribe in the U.S. that grants full enrollment to their Mexican counterparts (Luna-Firebaugh 2002). This allows Mexican citizens who are Tohono O'odham, to utilize health services and other resources that the tribal group has access to in the U.S. Although these individuals are legally allowed to cross the national boundary, militarization and racism at the border still cause them undue hardship and danger. Luna-Firebaugh (2002) reports that Tohono O'odham people assisting with transportation have been harassed and can be refused entry if they don't have all the necessary governmental

paperwork. Bureaucratic paperwork and governmental procedures are seen as the ultimate authority, rather than hundreds of thousands of years of indigenous tradition. Tribal membership identification is not accepted as substantial proof for crossing, thereby undermining the tribes' sovereignty and power.

This inequity at the border stems from broken and patchwork treaties that recognized some indigenous groups but not others (Luna-Firebaugh 2002). The U.S. and Mexico did not consult with tribal communities about border issues and continue to ignore the glaring issue of their division by the border. This denigration is furthered by nationalist rhetoric that asks people to declare what "nation" they belong to upon (re)entry. Indigenous people are forced to reply with "Mexican" or "American," instead of their tribal citizenship (Luna-Firebaugh 2002). This reinforces nationalistic distinctions between tribal groups and completely disregards tribal sovereignty. It is a marker of how settler colonialism is not over, but, instead, a continuous process that dehumanizes and erodes the foundations of indigenous communities.

Restrictions on border crossings for transborder tribal groups has a direct effect on their ability to maintain contact with their larger community, hindering gatherings, ceremonies, and life celebrations. "Tribes have also been concerned about degradation of tribal land by federal officials, cutting of roads into sensitive and/or sacred lands, and high-speed pursuits over tribal roads, some of which are unpaved, activities that endanger tribal members and livestock" (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:169). To combat these obstacles, some tribal groups have pursued legislative routes to challenge existing laws and regulations. The outcomes have been varied, with some tribal groups having success and others meeting harsh legal barriers. Results depend on the politics of local and federal governments, the ability of tribal governments to pay for costly legal

battles, and the joint action of governmental agencies to regulate policies (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:170).

One of the reasons why the Tohono O'odham have been successful in their battle for Mexican membership and routine border crossings is that they did not accept the initial rounds of the bill that were proposed. However, they also faced bureaucratic barriers that limited the access they were able to secure. For example, they had deep misgivings about a clause that would require members to cross only at official U.S. border sites. Instead, they asked that their traditional crossing places be accepted (Luna-Firebaugh 2002). This has been a controversial issue for both the U.S. and Mexican governments who have refused to agree to the Tohono O'odham's requests.

Like at many other border crossing sites, the legislation resulting from the attacks of September 11, 2001, created increased border security and surveillance for the Tohono O'odham. More recently, the border wall construction promoted by President Trump has had harmful consequences for the Tohono O'odham community. There is a border wall system that includes "motion sensor systems, cameras, radar, aerial surveillance and observation posts" throughout their land (Miller 2019). Additionally, there are constant drones, vehicle barriers, and border patrol agents through sacred sites and ancestors' resting grounds. According to Amy Juan, a Tohono O'odham member and Tucson office manager at the International Indian Treaty Council, this surveillance system makes their nation "the most militarized community in the United States of America" (Miller 2019).

The increased surveillance and regulations create "checkpoint trauma" and add to the atmosphere of fear and anxiety surrounding crossings. The embedded political ethos is one of continuously restricting the agency of transborder indigenous people, pushing them into a state

of illegality and exclusion. Tohono O'odham youth often pay the price for resisting the limits of their rights and face violence when confronted by border patrol agents (Miller 2019). The death of Tohono O'odham tribal member Raymond Mattia, who was shot nine times by border patrol, demonstrates how transborder indigenous people risk their lives when they cross borders or even exist on their own land (Reznick 2023).

While the Tohono O'odham's struggle to protect their traditional crossings has faced significant challenges, they have found more favorable outcomes regarding their Mexican members' enrollment. The Tohono O'odham were able to get the U.S. and Mexico to agree to "accept a birth or baptismal certificate or an identification document issued by" the tribe (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:173). Priority has been given to 88 of the 104 Mexican citizens identified as needing serious medical care due to chronic conditions (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:173). While this is a significant victory, and shows how tribal nations can use their power to incorporate Mexican indigenous members, it has come at a substantial financial cost. Not all 104 chronically ill people have been accepted because the tribe must first establish the identity of Mexican tribal members, and this has an estimated cost of at least $100,000 (Luna-Firebaugh 2002:173). Further complicating matters is the response from activists who believe it is unethical to ask indigenous people to carry paperwork to prove their identification while traversing their own lands. This raises questions about issues of sovereignty and self-determination.

The Right to Sovereignty and Self-Determination

Sovereignty and self-determination are two key concepts within global indigenous issues. Article 3 of the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People states, "indigenous people have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political

status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." Sovereignty is a profoundly related concept, which emerges from self-determination and allows for self-governance through statehood or Native groups' own distinct governments. These concepts are part of the recognition of collective rights for indigenous people. Both concepts are "in flux" as Muehlebach argues (2003:241) because they exist in contexts that are at odds with them and are interpreted differently across different political and legal contexts.

There is a desperate need to protect indigenous groups who fall outside of the collective rights discussions and who do not have the sovereignty to defend themselves against larger national governments (Muehlebach 2003). Muehlebach sees "self-determination as an evolving, contested legal concept that indigenous activists refuse to have reduced to claims to statehood" (2003:244). The concept of self-determination was first used in international law disputes following World War I. President Woodrow Wilson promoted the concept of "self-determination" during a speech regarding the European people. The concept was picked up by the United Nations in the 1960s when referring to the "Independence of Colonial Peoples." Since then, there has been great debate about the implicit meaning behind "self-determination" and, in the context of indigenous rights, who qualifies as indigenous "peoples" (Muehlebach 2003). This is most notably demonstrated by the fact that most governments differentiate between sovereign states and indigenous collectives who are within colonized states (Muehlebach 2003).

The push-pull between sovereignty and citizenship is embedded within Native Americans' struggle for agency over their own lives and communities within U.S. society. "Native imagination need not reach far to define sovereignty as proactively planning, governing, and educating in a broad context that percolates far beyond reservation boundaries" (Lomawaima 2013:345). Lomawaima argues that this vision of sovereignty already exists, in the form of

overlapping jurisdictions, and via education and resource management. The next step requires U.S. federal, state, and local governments to work with Native communities as "sovereign partners" (Lomawaima 2013:345). This involves listening to Native community leadership about their needs and helping to enhance and support programs that are already working. Healing centers, as previously discussed, are one example of how the U.S. government could partner with indigenous groups and build places of wellness that are community-driven and empowering.

The border is a key example of the hypocrisy embedded within the concept of sovereignty, as it is legally understood in the U.S. While the Kumeyaay people officially have sovereignty, they do not have ownership over their entire homelands. As Takook noted,

> One of those things where we as a sovereign people have to realize that we're not 100% truly sovereign over all of our lands. It's just a reminder that we're playing a game but we didn't write the rules and we didn't create the board pieces, you know, the board. And so, we're in confines and we have to try to work to the best of our abilities within those confines. So, the borders really are symbolic of all of that and then obviously practically, you know, the practicality of like would it be cool just to go down there and come back and having to deal with all of that mess. That creates a stress as well.

This liminal state of partial sovereignty impedes the Kumeyaay people in reaching their true potential as a people. A general lack of awareness about the Kumeyaay people is another underlying factor that restricts their political power. They do not have the cultural recognition within American society that other indigenous groups, such as the Navajo or Cherokee, have. There are three main reasons why the Kumeyaay are less well-known: the Mission system, their transnational identity, and population numbers. Missionization decimated their numbers, and the border greatly impacts how they can define themselves and their population numbers. The Kumeyaay people are split in two, so each side has fewer members, which limits their overall representation and authority. Additionally, there is an incentive for U.S. members to marry only other U.S. members because their children or grandchildren could potentially lose their future

federal enrollment status by marrying a Kumiai/Kumiay member from Mexico. This is reinforced in the structure of blood quantum laws and expressions of colonial understandings of indigenous identity. There should be no negative consequences for marrying another Kumeyaay person, regardless of their national citizenship. The current situation is problematic and illustrates the deeply embedded racist ideologies of colonialism.

Sovereignty encompasses self-governance, self-determination, and self-education (Lomawaima 2013). Tribal sovereignty allows indigenous communities to have power and agency, but it comes with limitations. Indigenous people deserve greater political representation, such as a voice on planning and development committees in San Diego. We must stop ignoring the harm and injustices that have occurred, and are occurring, at the border and that directly conflict with Native sovereignty. The Kumeyaay Nation is separated by band affiliation, by national borders, and by tribal governments. There is a need for more research on the overall impact of these divisions on transnational indigenous communities and how the concept of tribal sovereignty can be used to protect sacred and ancestral sites.

Conclusion: "There's Always Been a Fence There"

As Rensink says, "people affect borders and borders affect peoples" (2018:219). He reminds us that the very fact of the border allowed countless indigenous people to escape persecution in the U.S. and continue their way of life in Canada or Mexico. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2, Delfina Cuero's fled to Baja California and managed to preserve many aspects of their cultural traditions there. The imposition of the border has been traumatic, but it also allows for negotiation around cultural identity and access to opportunities. I would be remiss to ignore how indigenous people have used the border to their benefit and to gain power in

difficult situations. The Tohono O'odham are a clear example, as are the Cree, Chippewas, and Yaquis (Rensink 2018). There is power in their opposition and their defiance, as they continue to cross the physical boundaries even though they face criminalization. For Kumeyaay people today, their effective resistance is illustrated by protests at border construction sites and in their continued efforts to reach across the border to their extended family and community members.

My intentional examination of hope and harm shows the dynamic and fluid exchanges of power at the border. While Kumeyaay members do inherently suffer because of the border, they also hold power through protests and their ability to stop border wall construction. Over the last couple of decades, there is far greater political and social recognition of the Kumeyaay people, and they have made strides in legal battles with academic institutions for the return of their ancestors and material culture. Casino revenue has assisted in providing economic support for their legal battles and has enabled Kumeyaay people to have more political power. While there has been irreparable harm done, there is also hope forged through the power of resistance and embodied in the Kumeyaay community's ongoing fights for justice.

Throughout my research, I have employed a hauntological orientation to address how ancestors, their knowledge, and their hauntings can impact Kumeyaay experiences. The borderlands are a contested, haunted, and dynamic site of resistance. Transnational indigenous people, Border Patrol, the U.S. government, as well as invested construction companies are in a conflict over sacred land that contains hauntings and ancestors. The ecology of haunting (Hollan 2019) points to the insights that can be found by examining the borderlands as a haunted space co-constructed by the known and forever unknown secrets of those who have crossed, passed, and existed but will forever be hidden. Those ancestors who are uncovered or destroyed by construction represent the ongoing haunting rooted in trauma and irreparable harm.

The U.S.-Mexico border will continue to enact trauma on Kumeyaay communities for as long as it prevents them from being personally united at ceremonies and politically united via federal recognition. The desecration of sacred and ancestral sites must stop because it erodes tribal sovereignty, religious freedom, and human rights. While the border has become an accepted part of the Kumeyaay lived experience, particularly for those under the age of 50, it continues to be a site of harm. It cosigns familial separation and impairs the exchange of essential cultural knowledge. The border is trauma, but the ways that Kumeyaay people navigate around it embody hope.

The borderlands are multifaceted, and the identities produced by being transnational and indigenous in the borderlands reflect that. Anzaldúa's poetic conclusion recognizes the borderlands as "always" indigenous, currently indigenous, and "will be again" indigenous (1987:91). This expresses the hope that the borderlands will one day truly belong to the people who have always been its guardians and protectors. In this chapter, I have intended to illustrate how the borderlands can be a site of resistance, irreparable damage, and trauma all at the same time. This dynamic interplay continues to fluctuate in terms of the distribution of power and recognition, which means that further research will find new ways of interpreting and analyzing the borderlands.

Chapter 7 Conclusion: “I Am Made From This Land”

A Gift from Turtle Island

At the end of my last interview with Daniel, we talked at length about intertribal exchanges and the individual, familial, and communal benefits stemming from these interactions. Daniel told me that he wanted to give me something and he disappeared inside his house. I waited outside with one of his friends and watched the dozens of hummingbirds that were in his backyard. I’d never seen so many hummingbirds in one place before; they were attracted there in part due to the multiple feeders that Daniel had set up, as well as the open space of the reservation itself. When Daniel returned, he held a beaded pouch out for me to take. This bag was beautifully beaded with exceptional handwork in various shades of green.

Inside the pouch were five items: a silver turtle, white sage wrapped with red string, a dreamcatcher, a small eagle feather, and a metal arrowhead. He told me that the turtle stood for Turtle Island, a reference to the creation story that many indigenous people believe. The white sage was for purification and was representative of the Kumeyaay people. The dreamcatcher was to watch over my family. The eagle feather is a hugely important sacred symbol that carries connotations of the creator and hope. For some indigenous groups, the feather symbolizes resistance as it was a right that was fought for against oppressive anti-indigenous religious legislation. Lastly, the metal arrowhead has different interpretations, including symbolic associations with ancestral guidance and bravery. It also represents the tens of thousands of years that indigenous people have been present in the Americas.

Receiving this gift from Daniel was unexpected, beautiful, and deeply moving for me. It symbolizes so much of what this dissertation is about and confirmed much of what I had been

speculating about. These symbols of indigeneity are political, personal, and spiritual. They have local and specific meanings for the tribal groups that they emerged from, as well as for the broader indigenous community. They are intertribal, shared, and meaningful. While many indigenous cultural knowledge gaps have been created by colonialism and structural violence, there are countless ways that indigenous people have co-constructed adapted ontologies and epistemologies to generate new ways of healing. The beaded pouch that Daniel gave me represents a collection of items that he was gifted over a lifetime of his work as a tribal leader and as someone interested in learning more about indigenous ways of being. His decision to share them with me in the hopes that it would allow me more insights and reaffirm my arguments about intertribal exchanges speaks volumes about his own interpretations and position. Our intersubjectivity was built on a foundation of hope and an acknowledgment of collective healing.

Summary of Findings and Key Themes

Over the course of my fieldwork and analysis, I found that particular Kumeyaay individuals used ceremonial traditions, indigenous community networks, and Pan-Indianism in a manner that they thought was mentally and spiritually helpful, and which aided the healing of traumas and other negative life experiences. This finding was supported by their discussions of Bird songs, dancing, sweat, ceremonies, gatherings, powwows, and other intertribal exchanges. By using intertribal exchanges, these select Kumeyaay members were able to invoke feelings of unity, togetherness, and restoration. Intertribal exchanges and healing experiences allowed for therapeutic possibilities along with a connection to their community and ancestors.

Issues of revitalization, border construction, and overcoming trauma were frequently discussed by my five Kumeyaay interlocutors. While they were able to engage with therapeutic ceremonialism for the benefit of themselves and their families, there were challenges involving other community members who were not interested in intertribal exchanges or community revitalization efforts. In my findings, particular Kumeyaay interlocutors who were invested in community development through revitalization and other local Kumeyaay projects remain hopeful that these opportunities will have lasting positive impacts on future generations.

The Revival of the Karuk and Other Dormant Ceremonies

Anthropological discussions on cultural revitalization illustrate how challenging and rewarding this process can be (Baldy 2018; Harkin 2004; Kehoe 2006; Nagel 1996; Wallace 1956; White 2006). The revival of dormant traditions for the Kumeyaay people offers new therapeutic possibilities for those interested in participating. The Karuk mourning ceremony is being revived through processes of ethnographic research, intertribal exchanges, and ancestral guidance. As Gone documents in his work with Traveling-Thunder, the revival of sacred ceremonial traditions can impact community wellbeing, improve mental health, and "recirculate life" (2021:4). The return to therapeutic ceremonial practices offers new spaces for negotiations, contestations, and reimaginings for indigenous people among their tribal communities.

For certain Kumeyaay individuals, intertribal exchanges of Bird songs and language revitalization efforts have been extremely meaningful. Takook's commitment to bird singing and helping train a new generation of Kumeyaay bird singers has provided him with purpose. Bird singing could easily have become dormant in the U.S., but significant efforts were made to record and preserve knowledge of the practice. There is hope that younger Kumeyaay members

will embrace bird singing and even revive it in Mexico. Language revitalization, particularly for Tiipay, is labor intensive and challenging but offers many benefits for increasing cultural knowledge. The potential for more intertribal exchanges between fluent Kumeyaay speakers in Mexico with Kumeyaay communities in the U.S. is one way that the broader tribal group can help support each other.

The "dilemma of reviving ceremony," especially regarding the Karuk mourning ceremony, is fraught with complications and quandaries (Banegas 2023). Even drawing on community narratives, repatriated image dolls, and ethnographic records, there are missing pieces in contemporary understandings of the ceremony, and a lack of consensus on how to fully revive it. The example of the Karuk mourning ceremony illustrates the difficulties inherent to revival as well as the potential healing that can stem from the revitalization of sacred practices. Revitalization efforts have been going on across the country for decades, yet they still have meaning for indigenous communities today. These efforts also generate questions about ancestral guidance and hauntological consultations.

Hauntology, Ancestors, and Stewardship

In this dissertation, I have employed hauntology to investigate the connection between the unknown, trauma, colonization, and resistance (Good 2019; Good, Chiovenda, and Rahimi 2022). Hauntology offers a framework for exploring how ancestors—known and unknown—can be present in the lives of interlocutors through spiritual and ceremonial practices and through memory. Throughout my research, my interlocutors referred to ancestors as representatives of their familial lineage, elders of the community, and Kumeyaay people who lived before

colonization. Ancestors and the "old ones" were present in their lives through spirituality, revived dormant traditions, and hauntings.

Hollan (2019) uses hauntology to explore the ecology of ghostly experiences and the ways in which the land itself can be haunted. This concept relates directly to transnational indigenous people and border contentions surrounding tribal sovereignty, stewardship, and ancestral places. "Indigenous people worldwide play a key role in environmental stewardship. According to a 2021 United Nations policy brief, they represent some 5% of the world's population, but effectively manage roughly 20%-25% of the Earth's land. Much of their land is in areas that hold 80% of the planet's biodiversity and about 40% of protected lands" (Treisman 2022). While they may be stewards of the land, there is much hidden beneath the soil that they are protecting. Secrets, violent histories, and sacred traditions are also buried across the U.S.-Mexico borderlands and the Kumeyaay people are guardians of that knowledge. Their active resistance to border construction is based on the belief that the sacred sites and ancestors should not be disturbed, particularly by non-indigenous people. Therefore, the border is an ecological domain of ongoing contestation between the government, transnational indigenous people, and ancestors.

The stewardship also extends to protestations against the overharvesting of white sage and the privatization of land that prohibits wild plant-gathering by indigenous people. Whereas an indigenous person may take only what they need for a ceremony, many non-indigenous people harvest plant life without any concern for regrowth or its sacred importance. Plants like tobacco and sweetgrass represent unity and connection between indigenous people and their cosmologies (Waldram 1997). My interlocutors used plants in their ceremonial traditions and as offerings for ancestors and recently deceased family members. It is crucial that the Kumeyaay

people continue to be stewards of their ancestral homelands and have the right to white sage harvesting without the threat of overcollection. Their land stewardship allows them to continue their ancestral traditions and honor the spirits of the borderlands.

The idea of the "Warrior Spirit" invokes the guidance of ancestors to better the lives of their descendants today. The start of the conference is framed by the Lakota Chief Crazy Horse's prophecy from the Creator that refers to how the seventh generations will "gather under the sacred Tree of Life and the whole Earth will become one circle again." This prediction calls directly to the ancestors and for a return to their beliefs. The prophecy states "for when you are at that center within you and I am in that place within me, we shall be as one." This evocative unity represents an alignment between ancestors and descendants within their being. It is a remarkable example of a haunting, which presents an opportunity to find healing and connection. For my interlocutors, many of the hauntings they discussed or the ways they invoked their ancestors were framed as counseling and interrelation. While there was a fear of being haunted because of reviving or performing a ceremony incorrectly, the discussed interactions with ancestors were rewarding and affirmative for my interlocutors.

A Legacy of Resistance

Within this dissertation, I have juxtaposed the themes of hope and harm to illustrate how Kumeyaay members endure and continue to fight against cultural oppression. By highlighting these themes, my intention to acknowledge the ongoing trauma of settler colonialism while also attending to the broader Kumeyaay community's investment in supportive models of healing and resistance. Throughout my research, it has been clear that there is a legacy of courage among the Kumeyaay people; the courage to fight against the tyranny they have been subjected to. That

resistance flows from their ancestors and continues today in their opposition to border construction and the embracement of intertribal traditions.

Early accounts from the Mission period describe the stubborn and violent resistance of the Kumeyaay people to Franciscan or Dominican rule (White and Fitt 1998:259). In 1775, the Kumeyaay reacted to the imposition of Catholicism by burning down California's first mission and murdering three Spanish invaders, including a priest (White and Fitt 1998). These actions were a response to the horrific conditions created by the Catholic Church, which attempted to enslave, imprison, and abuse indigenous people. Despite these conditions, 700-800 Kumeyaay people survived as of the early 1920s, the largest numbers of any California indigesnous group that endured missionization (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:712). The earliest written records demonstrate how the Kumeyaay fought to protect their people, to resist oppression, and to subvert religious control.

Kumeyaay resistance can also be seen in the records regarding the El Capitan Act, as they fought removal and BIA intrusion. This mobilization of Kumeyaay leadership used political power to help secure two new reservations for Viejas and Barona members. Their legal battle, dealings with the BIA, and fight against removal show how Kumeyaay resistance was a community endeavor. "The Conejos and Paipa coalition demanded and won a very high price for their cooperation: their use and ownership of over 14,000 acres at Capitan Grande not surrendered, a new reservation owned collectively, new homes and better economic prospects, and, potentially, a land bridge connecting their two trust properties" (Thorne 2010:60). This monumental win did come at a cost, as Kumeyaay members were structurally impacted by the loss of water rights, economic hardships, and lingering hostility with the BIA (Thorne 2010). Despite these impediments, the struggle against the El Capitan Act is another clear example of

the Kumeyaay's resistance and their ability to harness political machinations for their own benefit.

The creation and policing of the U.S.-Mexico border has presented new challenges to Kumeyaay tribal sovereignty and communities. As a transnational tribe, the Kumeyaay have navigated the borderlands to hide and avoid persecution, as is demonstrated by the autobiography of Delfina Cuero. Other transnational tribes, like the Arizona Yaquis, Montana Crees, and Chippewas have also resisted border enforcement and illegality by using the borderlands as a source of opportunity (Rensink 2018). However, conditions in these areas have significantly changed over the last seventy years, as border security has increased exponentially and the legal paper requirements for travel have changed. Kumeyaay people have actively protested the continued construction at the border for decades and often put their physical bodies in the way of harm to prevent further harm to their sacred sites and ancestors. The borderlands belong to the Kumeyaay people and other transnational indigenous tribes who have been stewards there for generations. While the border is a source of harm and trauma, it can also be a site of resistance and provide unique advantages during periods of great societal change.

Resistance can also be seen in the efforts to stop construction at academic institutions like UCSD's Chancellor's House and in Kumeyaay demands for ancestor repatriation from UCSD's anthropology department. The Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee (KCRC) requested the repatriation of funeral objects and ancestors that were uncovered in 1976 beneath what would later become the Chancellor's House (Zimmer 2016). The ancestors who were disturbed date back 9,500 years. In spite of geographical, archaeological, and ethnographical evidence pointing to a biological relationship between the ancestors that were found and present-day Kumeyaay people, some academic perused legal avenues to keep the ancestors and objects for research,

claiming they were “culturally unaffiliated.” It took almost 15 years for all the legal battles to be resolved and for the ancestors, along with their objects, to be eventually repatriated to the Kumeyaay people, specifically the La Posta band. This is another example of Kumeyaay resistance enacting change through persistence and a continued commitment to protecting their people and their ancestors.

During my fieldwork, I was able to witness the flying of the Kumeyaay Nations Flag at SDSU for the first time, on November 5, 2021, after enacting a campus policy to this effect in March 2020. This flag ceremony was an important step forward for SDSU and is a physical representation of their land acknowledgment. A Kumeyaay member described this event by stating, “In 2006, our Kumeyaay Nation adopted a flag for all Kumeyaay bands in San Diego County, Imperial County, and Baja California. In the Kumeyaay spirit, we promote a balance of life and open our minds and hearts to the legacy of the red and black, the land of the Kumeyaay. We stand upon a ground that carries the footsteps of Kumeyaay for millennia.” The Kumeyaay resistance in this example is illustrated by their commitment to spreading awareness of their Nation. SDSU’s recognition of Kumeyaay people’s tribal sovereignty and their land stewardship furthers engagement in discussions about indigenous rights and self-determination. Resisting the narratives of settler colonialism and indigenous erasure, the Kumeyaay people continue to fight for their rights and the acknowledgment they deserve.

In this section, I have discussed five cases of Kumeyaay resistance throughout the last two hundred and fifty years. Each one of these examples demonstrates how the Kumeyaay people have endured, contested, and challenged oppression from missionization, removal, border separation, legal battles over repatriation, and land rights. There is a powerful legacy of resistance among the Kumeyaay people, which they draw on to protect their community and to

protest the harm caused by colonization, racism, and erasure. The stories discussed here only represent a small sample of the many instances of resistance enacted by the Kumeyaay people. New forms of resistance can also be seen recently in Tommy Pico's queer Kumeyaay epics which challenge settler colonialism and honor his ancestors (Scudeler 2021). Many more examples have gone undocumented and will remain community stories of hope and resistance.

Hope and Harm

In response to Tuck's (2009) call for desire-based research, this dissertation has attended to the hopes and healing practices of my interlocutors. The legacy of resistance by the Kumeyaay people, including my interlocutors, demonstrates hope in their endurance and continual fight against harm. The theme of hope is present in the revitalization efforts discussed by my interlocutors regarding Bird songs, the Karuk, and ceremonial innovation. For example, Daniel spoke about how he hoped there would be more language revival among the younger generation. When I asked Takook about his wishes for his community, he stated:

> "I want to see our people get strong. I want them to be able to learn and have that opportunity to teach and continue the sacred traditional ways of our ancestors. To be able to be stewards of our own land and to have that acknowledged. To be able to strengthen ourselves in a way that'll guarantee we're going to be here looking forward time in memorial. Like we look back and we've been here all these thousands of years and everything, but going forward, will we be here in 100 years, 100,000 years?"

Takook discussed his hopes for the Kumeyaay people regarding their stewardship, sovereignty, and spirituality. While he has great hopes for the future, he also questions whether they will exist in times to come. In this sense, hope is a delicate aspect of life as it has the potential to both grow and to be extinguished. The reason for this precarity is because indigenous people have endured

genocide, structural violence, and complex trauma. Hope remains a critical part of indigenous narratives for resistance and endurance.

Some key scholars who have articulated hope include Montgomery (2023), who describes the importance of presenting indigenous oral histories to bear witness to the ways in which the S'Klallam community members in Port Gamble, Washington, can resist, refuse, and persist in the face of the harm enacted by structural violence. Montgomery elaborates, "Hope keeps the future open to difference: a present and future in which S'Klallam people assert their sovereignty in ways that embed tribal languages and epistemologies into education" (2023:352). The hope for increased language revitalization and tribal sovereignty was echoed by my interlocutors as they envisioned the future.

In conceptualizing the paradox of hope, it is necessary to examine the circumstances that can impede or influence hopefulness. Mattingly (2010) states that hope is an "existential problem" that "takes cultural and structural root as it is shaped by the poverty, racism, and bodily suffering" (3). This description illustrates how hope and harm often occur simultaneously. Lived experiences marked by structural violence can often be overshadowed by suffering and harm. It is imperative to highlight personal transformations and the "capacity for hope" that individuals rely on during difficult experiences (Mattingly 2006:24). Five of my interlocutors demonstrated their personal transformations in their recovery narratives and their commitment to community building through education, leadership, and revitalization.

Chew and colleagues (2019) draw attention to the importance of hope within research on the revitalization of indigenous cultural traditions and languages. They contend, "Nurturing hope becomes an act of resistance intricately linked to processes of reclamation" (Chew et al. 2019:134). Through desire-based narratives, I have focused on hope as a form of resistance

through revitalization efforts. While harm is embedded in revitalization discussions due to the loss of dormant practices, the potential hope of cultural recovery holds greater importance. The hopefulness exhibited by my interlocutors, as well as the creation of a Kumeyaay Healing Center, reflects optimism about a future with more healing modalities and increased indigenous cultural revival.

Conceptual Contrasts

Throughout this dissertation, I have described contrasting themes: damage versus desire, harm versus hope, trauma versus counting coup, suffering versus struggle, resilience versus endurance, and vulnerability versus precarity. The purpose of these comparisons is to highlight the complexity of lived experience and mental health. I have consistently drawn attention to the second term in each set of pairs to define my stance as one of engaged advocacy. At the same time, I have also recognized the history of damage, harm, and trauma present in the lives of my interlocutors and their community.

When examining these conceptual contrasts, it is possible to see how the first term in each pair tends to undermine or deemphasize agency and can come across as patronizing or condescending. Tuck (2009) explains how, by focusing solely on the damage and trauma that indigenous people have experienced, we risk recreating harm to indigenous communities. Themes of suffering and vulnerability do not fully represent how individuals and communities make sense of their mental health, because they ignore everyday engagement with wellness and forms of resistance.

These contrasting terms can be interpreted as binaries existing at opposite ends of a spectrum, but some can also overlap and co-exist. For example, in the case of revitalized

ceremonies hope can be born from harm. The Kumeyaay people are resilient because they endure. While these terms may seemingly contradict each other, they are meant to demonstrate how one concept does not completely define a person or a mental state of being. Instead, these terms should be taken as illustrative of paradigm changes within the field of anthropology that foreground the necessary work to emphasize the agency of indigenous interlocutors.

A Request for a Kumeyaay Water Ceremonial Site

This dissertation project was designed to attend to the desire-based narratives of my interlocutors. By doing so, I found that my Kumeyaay interlocutors were interested in an ocean site for performing ceremonial traditions. We know that the Kumeyaay people and their ancestors had ocean access for tens of thousands of years. Many ceremonial and cultural traditions were water-based, and it was a critical element of their lived experience. The creation of the U.S.-Mexico border and the resulting displacement of Kumeyaay people forced them away from the water and into the dry parts of eastern San Diego County. The connection to the water is, and will continue to be, important for some Kumeyaay members. Therefore, it is the intention of this dissertation to call for the return of water-accessible land to the Kumeyaay people so that they can exercise their right to their religious traditions.

The loss of Kumeyaay ceremonial knowledge related to the water was caused by the horrific combined effects of genocide, colonization, and anti-indigenous legislation. The Kumeyaay people have a right to reclaim that knowledge and revive dormant ceremonies. In order to perform these ceremonial traditions, they will need a site with access to the Pacific Ocean. In Chapter 5, I examined the examples of the Tongva, the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, and the Esselen tribal groups to demonstrate how it is possible to return

small areas of ancestral homelands to allow indigenous people the freedom to practice their religious traditions. Land returns are mutually beneficial agreements between public agencies, landowners, and indigenous groups that exemplify repatriation and align with tribal sovereignty.

Restorative justice processes for indigenous people often entail complicated negotiations between the government and churches and offer minimal forms of restitution, which may not reflect the needs of the communities that are being asked to offer forgiveness (Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses 2014; Niezen 2013). As Sarah said, the Kumeyaay people aren't expecting La Jolla Shores, but any oceanfront property will be considered valuable and there are many considerations about private access to be debated. Despite these obstacles, a dedicated ocean space would reconnect the Kumeyaay people to part of their ancestral homelands. All twelve bands of the Kumeyaay in the U.S. could benefit from a site, potentially along with Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay members, too. A water-accessible site could have long-lasting positive implications for future generations. The potentiality of reviving water ceremonies and traditions from intertribal exchanges offers more healing, connectedness, and unity. It is my sincere goal to support any endeavors that provide the Kumeyaay people with private access to a water site for community and ceremonial benefits.

Ethnographic Experience and Positionality

Fieldwork for this dissertation began in a time of significant political and cultural shifts in the United States and Mexico, marked by heightened awareness of racism, privilege, conservatism, and populism. Concurrently, academia increasingly emphasized anti-racist research and decolonized methodologies. This dissertation reflects these approaches throughout, aiming to be anti-racist through collaborative engagement with interlocutors and employing

decolonized frameworks in research. By explicitly acknowledging its anti-racist stance, this work contributes to discussions on ethical anthropological practices, especially in complex social contexts like the Black Lives Matter movement and pandemics.

The ethical entanglements of conducting fieldwork during a global pandemic will surely be the source of much future academic debate. This dissertation is one project that was interrupted and altered by COVID-19. During the two and a half years of fieldwork, there were numerous times I was uncertain about conducting research with indigenous people because of the long history of harm inflicted by anthropologists and ethnographers. This was exacerbated by the pandemic, which brought up new challenges and questions about how to build rapport over Zoom, emails, and texts.

As an ethnographer, I relied upon subjectivity and desire-based narratives to guide this research and to present findings that accurately represent my interlocutors' perspectives. This dissertation has focused on restorative justice and collective healing to discuss indigenous issues. These are topics that emerged during my interviews and fieldwork as most salient to my Kumeyaay interlocutors in the U.S. While these individuals may not be representative of the entire Kumeyaay community, the themes they emphasized align with the desire-based narratives and avoid damage-centered research on indigenous people.

As a non-indigenous person, I will never fully be an "expert" on Kumeyaay culture in the same manner that a Kumeyaay person is. Anna Willow expands on this issue stating, "anthropologists today rarely claim representational ownership of the diverse groups who populate our studies, but we sometimes seem to forget that neither do we own the terminologies and conceptual schemes we employ" (2010:35). Terms used throughout this dissertation like "intertribal" come directly from indigenous communities and are used regularly by them. My

goal in using the concept of "intertribal exchanges" is to highlight how indigenous community networks rely upon each other for knowledge and assistance, rather than colonized perspectives that are rooted in systems of white supremacy.

Within the Crazy Horse prophecy, there is a line that states "in that day there will be those among the Lakota who will carry knowledge and understanding of unity among all living things and the young white ones will come to those of my people and ask for wisdom." During our interviews, Daniel would often recite this to me and emphasize how "young white ones," me included, can be part of the process for moving forward and healing. This is a very optimistic outlook that centers on the power of indigenous knowledge. There has been great damage done to indigenous communities by white people, and specifically by anthropologists, since the time of Crazy Horse. There are also numerous reasons why Sioux Tribe member Vine Deloria Jr. (1969) once wrote, "Indians have been cursed above all other people in history. Indians have anthropologists." As a white anthropologist, I have done my best to mitigate any potential harm and will continue to formulate my research based on recommendations by indigenous scholars.

Finally, a significant shift in my own personhood and identity happened when I became a mother during my fieldwork. The experience of having a high-risk pregnancy during a pandemic—while also teaching, working as a teaching assistant, and conducting fieldwork—was intense and overwhelming. This project reflects some of my personal difficulties as well as my interest in trauma and healing. I am still processing and making meaning of my research and experiences during COVID-19. There is more ethnographic reflexivity to unpack about pandemic research and there will be many interesting discussions moving forward.

Limitations

There are limitations to this study due selection bias, COVID-19, and the lack of ethnographic records on the Kumeyaay people. There are additional limitations to consider related to sample size and the perceptual distortions that are sometimes known as "Windigo's Revenge." In this section, I will consider the effects of these limitations and describe how I attempted to account for or navigate them.

I previously described the selection bias of this study in Chapter 3. My interlocutors were selected based on recommendations and snowball sampling. Most of them were suggested to me because of their connection with Dr. Margaret Field and their perceived willingness to discuss mental health issues. My interlocutors have shared experiences related to Pan-Indianism and recovery. This degree of homogeneity is a significant limitation; I did not interview Kumeyaay members who did not engage with Pan-Indianism or intertribal exchanges. Therefore, there are likely a variety of complex reasons why a Kumeyaay person might not be interested in these indigenous interactions, which are not adequately addressed by my findings.

While I can only speak with specificity about those I interviewed, I would like to acknowledge that there are Kumeyaay community members who are not interested in intertribal traditions. Certain people prefer to maintain Kumeyaay cultural traditions that have been kept safe within their families. There are Kumeyaay people who do not support the ideologies described in this dissertation, nor do they participate in Pan-Indianism, intertribal exchanges, or the revival of dormant traditions. Additionally, there are Kumeyaay members who do not experience issues with substance abuse, the process of hitting "rock bottom," and the subsequent recovery. While trauma can be linked to the development of substance abuse, it is not a genetic certainty and does not describe the experience of every indigenous person.

When it comes to selection bias, there is a need to recognize my interlocutors' choice to participate in my research. Ideally, research with indigenous people involves intersubjective experiences and overlapping shared interests. "Because American Indian people today have the desire and, increasingly, the ability to control their own cultural representation, they are unlikely to involve themselves in outsiders' projects unless these projects intersect in some way with their own interests" (Willow 2010:36). Those individuals who were not interested in this project or who did not have the time available during COVID-19 chose not to participate in this research.

COVID-19 greatly restricted my ability to conduct fieldwork and recruit interlocutors during my research. It was an unexpected global complication that raised serious ethical and health concerns. I had anticipated continuing my research in Mexico within rural communities. This became impossible due to the pandemic, which resulted in the closing of the U.S.-Mexico border and the suspension of non-essential international research by both UCSD's IRB and state mandates. Right before the pandemic, I had been in the process of applying for SIHC's IRB to allow me to conduct research in a clinical setting. This was completely suspended because I was told there would be no research conducted during COVID-19. After these changes, this project greatly shifted to focus on Kumeyaay members in the U.S., and particularly on their intertribal exchanges.

There are additional limitations linked to COVID-19 to consider, including the issues inherent in online ethnographic research and phone interviews. My dissertation was intended to be based on in-person research, but COVID-19 restricted my ability to meet with people, because of the lack of a vaccine for the first year and the continuous threatening waves of the pandemic. Daniel preferred to be interviewed by phone because of his challenges with online technology. This means I did not see him in person during our first three interviews and may have missed

important body language. As an ethnographic interviewer, I find physical indicators exceptionally important for building rapport and gauging the interview dynamic. Daniel and I were eventually able to meet in person after becoming vaccinated, but the limitations associated with these early phone calls should be considered. My Zoom interviews went mostly well, with only some small technical difficulties. While I could not make direct eye contact with my interlocutors, Zoom did provide enough physical data between us. My dissertation reflects these obstacles, drawing on online ethnographic field methods and patchwork ethnography.

A potential limitation of this dissertation is my own bias and exclusion of specific data related to spiritual and ceremonial practices. There is a significant portion of Kumeyaay traditional knowledge that has never been recorded in ethnographies or discussed with outsiders. There are song cycles that are not covered in this dissertation because they are sacred and were never openly discussed with me. This may impede some analysis and results of this dissertation. Song cycles are often made up of numerous individual songs and require multiple singers to put them together (Wilson 2001). As described in the Kumeyaay report (Wilson 2001:17) discussing repatriation of their ancestors,

> These songs are not only ceremonial; they contain the collective knowledge of the Kumeyaay people and are distributed among the various families and clans for safekeeping. The fact that there are no translations of these Kumeyaay song cycles, nor any comprehensive written record of these songs' scope and content, suggests how much knowledge is unrecorded and unknown to non-Kumeyaay people.

Many ceremonial and sacred aspects were not discussed at length in this dissertation out of respect for indigenous beliefs. Additionally, my understandings as a cultural outsider of song cycles and ceremonial traditions are considerably limited, in part because of how the knowledge has been kept private among the Kumeyaay people.

Lastly, there are limitations relating to a phenomenon known as "Windigo's Revenge" related to conducting research with indigenous peoples. Windigo's Revenge refers to "the persistence and tenacity with which we cling to ill-conceived ideas as truths, the ways in which we are consumed by the very knowledge that we trust to guide us" (Waldram 2004:320). As previously discussed, Native American and global indigenous research has encompassed many examples of problematic and harmful behavior. While I have attempted to avoid many pitfalls, there is the possibility of confirmation bias within this research. I looked for desire-based narratives and found them in my discussions with my interlocutors. Therefore, there are emerging questions about the impact of cherry-picking and selection bias. While I have been transparent about the limitations of my research, these challenges present undeniable interpretation quandaries about the unevenness of ethnographic research.

Insights for Future Research

There are five main areas for future research that I would recommend based on this dissertation: 1) healing centers and lodges; 2) migrant and tribal clinics; 3) Mexican Kumiai/Kumiay experience; 4) patchwork anthropology; and 5) water and climate trauma.

Existing research on healing centers and lodges has shown how these spaces can cultivate indigenous knowledge, healing, and therapeutic outcomes (Gone 2011, 2013; Wendt and Gone 2012). The proposed Kumeyaay Healing Center contains many therapeutic possibilities and offers insights into how healing centers are co-created by community members and intertribal exchanges. This project stems from the Warrior Spirit Conference and an indigenous person outside of the Kumeyaay Nation. Future research should investigate how these indigenous spaces are emerging across the nation. Cross-cultural comparisons are available with indigenous healing

lodges in Canada. The concept of "Elders-in-Residence" could also provide a more nuanced understanding of indigenous epistemologies and intertribal exchanges.

While I was unable to conduct research in a clinical setting, there are important research questions about access to mental health services and how community health centers are providing essential care for indigenous people, including Kumeyaay members. Future research should examine issues of mental health beyond trauma to highlight everyday practices as well as those that occur in clinical settings. IHC and SIHC clinics are important nonprofit institutions in the U.S. that serve Kumeyaay members and address mental health issues. I was told that they have had significant difficulties accommodating the large number of people requesting mental health services during COVID-19.

A full understanding of the effects of the global pandemic on mental health is still forthcoming (Aknin et al. 2022; Kumar and Nayar 2021; Moreno et al. 2020; Pfefferbaum and North 2020; Sampogna, Pompili, and Fiorillo 2022). Feelings of isolation, fear, and insecurity, combined with massive cultural changes impacted humans across the globe. My interlocutors experienced precarity and loneliness during lockdown on their reservations. During interviews, a Kumeyaay member remarked, "it's certainly been challenging with COVID because we're inside doing all these things by ourselves, isolated." Another member discussed community-led efforts to take care of elders on her reservation and facilitate vaccine outreach. Research is needed to investigate the mental health effects of COVID-19 isolation and to determine how tribal clinics responded to these challenges.

Another potential clinical setting for further research is Health Frontiers in Tijuana (HFIT), which is a student-run free clinic that serves a large number of immigrants and indigenous migrants. At the end of 2020 I had a meeting with Dr. Jose Luis Burgos of HFIT,

where we discussed the potential for tracking Kumeyaay members and their usage of the clinics. Between January 9, 2021, and January 15, 2022, nineteen patients (18 male, 1 female) seen at HFIT self-identified as a member of Baja California Native communities, including the Kumiai/Kumiay community. Two of the nineteen said they could speak Kumiai or Tiipay. The overwhelming majority of the clinics' patients are from Central America, but some Kumeyaay members are using free clinics outside of Mexico's governmental health care system. Both HFIT, IHC, and SIHC clinics are clinical settings that would provide useful information about Kumeyaay members' access to mental health services and how Kumiai/Kumiay people in Mexico navigate structural barriers.

While I have focused more on the injustices of the borderlands, there is a great need for more exploration into the efforts being made on both sides to unite the community and exchange cultural knowledge. More attention should be paid to the ways that Kumeyaay communities in the U.S. and Mexico are reaching across the border through intertribal exchanges and ceremonial practices despite the complications of the border. The U.S-Mexico border bifurcates Kumeyaay ancestral lands, but it also separates two countries. Future research could examine the nuanced ways in which Mexican nationality and culture, including *curandera* practices, have influenced Kumiai/Kumiay members. Overall, such research would do the important work of highlighting the many ways that harm and hope coincide in the borderlands.

Patchwork anthropology attends to the uneven, yet rigorous, process of fieldwork that occurs where the professional and the personal meet (Günel, Varma, and Watanabe 2020). It is one new framework that emerged to conceptualize changes in the framing of ethnographic fieldwork, the impacts of COVID-19, and ethical considerations. Patchwork anthropology will continue to develop as more research emerges. There is the potential for substantial insights the

ways that the increasing volume of online ethnographies, combined with a growing attentiveness to reflexivity, will impact future anthropological paradigms. As we begin to analyze more pieces of how COVID-19 has impacted local communities, the patchwork anthropology orientation embodies many ethnographic experiences of adjustments and unknowns.

The theoretical and methodological approach of patchwork anthropology related directly to my experiences conducting fieldwork in pandemic conditions where "home" and "the field" were the same location. Patchwork anthropology calls attention to research issues that arise from conducting research with childcare and work obligations, along with complications that arise from online methods. While I am specifically using this orientation to situate the challenges that I faced while conducting fieldwork in the pandemic, there are broader implications for patchwork ethnography that are beyond the scope of this project. The call by Günel, Varma, and Watanabe (2020) suggests that "anthropological knowledge itself must be transformed" to better comprehend the dynamics of knowledge production by ethnographers. Additionally, they argue the discipline of anthropology must reexamine the role of the researcher's personal and professional life within fieldwork. Patchwork ethnography offers anthropologists an opportunity to reconcile traditional fieldwork with emergent online methodologies while attending to feminist and decolonial theoretical orientations.

As land stewards, the Kumeyaay people have witnessed many changes to their homelands over time, including the impacts of climate change. Climate trauma (Woodberry 2019) is a developing theoretical approach to understanding how the climate crisis can personally and collectively affect cultural groups in traumatic and ever-present ways. When I asked Walking Stick his thoughts on the issue of climate trauma, he spoke about encountering issues of water trauma in his intertribal exchanges and lived experience. He said most tribes he

has spent time with have issues related to a lack of water resources and that he could only think of one or two tribes that did not. Future research that employs a lens of climate trauma, combined with an attentiveness to hauntology, may offer unique insights into how indigenous groups relate to the land, particularly in their role as stewards during times of climate crisis.

Concluding Remarks

In this dissertation, I have argued that just as trauma "operates at community, societal, and cultural levels" (Waldram 1997:68), so do processes of healing. There are individual and collective benefits to intertribal exchanges which promote indigenous networks and the revival of dormant traditions. Community efforts to offer mental health workshops, indigenous traditions, and other practices of healing demonstrate a commitment to introducing new opportunities for intertribal exchanges and holistic approaches. Therapeutic ceremonialism has infinite possibilities to benefit the larger community, through the co-creation of healing spaces as well as the improvement of individual mental health and wellness.

The concept of "therapeutic ceremonialism" (Jilek 1978) was used in this dissertation to describe the healing effects of participation in revived dormant traditions, intertribal exchanges, and indigenous spirituality for the Kumeyaay people. There are many different forms of therapeutic ceremonialism available, such as singing, dancing, and participating in rituals, ceremonies, and gatherings. Indigenous ceremonial practices encompass the individual, the family, and the community in processes of healing (Koithan and Farrell 2010; Keyes and White Jr. 2021). The ceremonies could involve specifically Kumeyaay cultural traditions or those stemming from intertribal exchanges. Therapeutic ceremonialism offers an opportunity to find connectedness, unity, and mental restoration. Waldram contends that healing is a responsibility

and an experience for indigenous people (1997:130). My interlocutors expressed similar feelings about their recovery journeys and their present engagement in healing work.

Sarah illustrated the ripple effects of healing when she discussed how participating in sweat allowed her to be a better mother, grandmother, and tribal leader. By engaging in a practice that embodies indigenous knowledge, self-care, and spirituality, she has been able to heal herself and spread that healing to her community. She does this through her work in tribal government, which is a demanding role. In addition, Sarah spoke about how she frequently invites other Kumeyaay members to come with her to the sweat ceremony. While not everyone has loved the experience like she has, her encouragement and the therapeutic possibility offered by this intertribal exchange of sweat have the collective potential for more healing in the community.

Endurance and healing are two potential pathways for engaging with the difficulties and mental health challenges that can emerge from the burdens of compounded trauma. This dissertation has shown the benefits of intertribal exchanges and therapeutic ceremonialism for my interlocutors. Community-based intervention research is one way to reduce emotional distress and alleviate mental health difficulties stemming from compounded trauma (Brave Heart et al. 2011). Indigenous researchers involved in trauma research have called for more culturally based interventions, rooted in indigenous ontologies, to help manage the impact of trauma (Brave Heart et al. 2011). As described by Brave Heart and colleagues (2011:288),

> Our aim is to restore and empower Indigenous Peoples, to reclaim our traditional selves, our traditional knowledge, and our right to be who we are and should be as healthy, vital, and vibrant communities, unencumbered by depression, overwhelming grief, substance abuse, and traumatic responses. In essence, we strive to transcend our collective traumatic past.

Research on Kumeyaay epistemologies has primarily focused on identity, language, and ethnobotany (Field 2012; Field and Cuero 2012; Gamble and Wilken-Robertson 2008; Hedges 1975; Langdon 1975; Shipek 1982; Wilken-Robertson 2018). In this dissertation, I examined intertribal exchanges and their ability to influence Kumeyaay members' mental health, wellness, and political belonging. I investigated how narratives about mental wellness are constructed and contested between families, communities, and borders. The subjective (Biehl, Good, and Kleinman 2007; Garcia 2010; Jenkins 2015a; Luhrmann 2006) and intersubjective (Csordas 2008; Duranti 2010; Parish 2008) lived experience of my interlocutors illustrates how people, along with their families and the broader community, can experience healing and therapeutic possibilities through intertribal exchanges, the revival of dormant traditions, and spiritual practices. My research contributes to this theoretical paradigm by examining how a transnational indigenous community conceptualizes mental health and wellness based on their lived experiences. Through a desire-based research framework, this project acknowledges a history of structural violence but attends to what *is* working for Kumeyaay communities in terms of empowerment, hope, and self-determination.

One of the forms of trauma discussed in this dissertation is the ongoing harm inflicted by the border. The U.S.-Mexico border obstructs the political authority of transnational tribes and lessens their hegemony through forced separation. As a transnational tribe, the Kumeyaay have a complicated history with the border that includes unique opportunities and severe challenges. The border displaced people like Delfina Cuero, while also enabling them to escape to Mexico to avoid persecution and criminalization. Kumeyaay language and cultural knowledge losses are substantially worsened by border separation and the ongoing cultural oppression enacted by both the U.S. and Mexican national governments on indigenous people. Border construction today

threatens more sacred sites and the desecration of ancestors. This is why resistance to border wall construction is so important; it is something Kumeyaay people will continue to protest, along with increased security measures and other threats to their tribal sovereignty in the borderlands.

The benefits of tribal gaming include access to more educational, recovery, and institutional resources. For four of my interlocutors, tribal gaming offered them a stipend to take care of their families during COVID-19 without the fear of financial devastation. For others, it allowed them to pursue their educational dreams without the fear of staggering student loan debt. At least three of my interlocutors went to rehab for substance abuse because of funds from tribal gaming. My interlocutors also discussed the double-edged sword of casino wealth, which can enable substance abuse habits and bring about tragedy. While these are exceptional and harmful uses of the stipends made possible by tribal gaming, many Kumeyaay members use them to support their everyday lives, build businesses, and maintain financial stability. These Kumeyaay members represent the community as much as my interlocutors do. Overall, tribal gaming offers advantages and access to resources that can significantly affect the health, including mental health, of indigenous groups.

This dissertation investigated the current conditions affecting Kumeyaay members' lives, which, in the face of a global pandemic, are often precarious. In doing so, it emphasizes their indigeneity, to better comprehend the relationship between the political and personal. My research illuminates how therapeutic ceremonialism and intertribal exchanges are used to improve mental health and wellness for my Kumeyaay interlocutors. In this dissertation, I have used desire-based narratives to explore issues related to collective healing, cultural revitalization, and restorative justice. Resistance is a tool of political power that the Kumeyaay use to challenge structural violence, white supremacy, and cultural oppression. In closing, my dissertation

research has examined Kumeyaay experiences of trauma, healing, and mental health to illustrate the significance of endurance and resistance demonstrated by my interlocutors.

Final Thoughts: Intergenerational Love

> How does a group of people who walk the same land as their ancestors did, for the last ten thousand years, how does that happen? Well, I have some real answers for that. That has evidence-based, but also, I think what can hold everything together, Ms. Stone, is love. It's the most powerful of all emotions. And, you know? As a scientist and studying mental health, the ingredient that's going to mitigate all that is love. There is nothing they cannot accomplish. I think this is what was happening, why we stayed together for ten thousand years, we are probably one of the only people in the whole world, maybe there's more, but few, that still walk the same land that their ancestors lived ten thousand years ago. Yes, and if trauma can be passed intergenerationally through epigenetics, I can connect that dot pretty easy and know that so can something that is positive and loving.
>
> —Daniel

Daniel has a goal of rediscovering ancient Kumeyaay values, to decolonize ideologies and honor his ancestors. He has asked the help of Dr. Margaret Field for her linguistic knowledge of 'Iipay and Tiipay to determine which words have an older etymology and which may, therefore, represent Kumeyaay ancestral beliefs. Daniel agrees with the sentiment, "the Kumeyaay community values of compassion, empathy, respect, ceremony, kindness, and humility are what has sustained us for over 10,000 years" (Keyes and White Jr. 2021:355). Another value he spoke to me frequently about was love. The love he received as a child from his aunties and family. The love of his community members led him to be a tribal leader. The love he had for his wife while caregiving for her. And the love he believed came from his Kumeyaay ancestors that has sustained them for generations.

As previously discussed, intergenerational and historical trauma has been a major focus of research on indigenous people (Bombay, Matheson, Anisman 2009; Brave Heart 1998, 2003; Duran and Duran 1995; Duran et al. 1998; Gone 2021; Gone and Kirmayer 2020; Kirmayer,

Gone, and Moses 2014). This is in part because trauma has been linked to health outcomes that can have impacts on a person's ability to cope and maintain good health. While intergenerational trauma has been heavily investigated, the concept of intergenerational love remains relatively unexplored, particularly within anthropology. Intergenerational love offers new possibilities to discuss how cultural communities have lived together for hundreds of thousands of years and provide insulation against life's challenges through endurance and care.

Attention to what works for my interlocutors and what they perceive to be working for their communities has been central to this dissertation project. By using desire-based narratives, I have invested in concepts of hope, healing, and unity for my Kumeyaay interlocutors. There is hope for the future, as is embodied in the proposed building of a healing center, for the revival of dormant traditions, and the continued resistance of their people. The therapeutic possibilities for healing stemming from intertribal exchanges offer more opportunities and ceremonial practices for indigenous communities across the globe.

Chapters 1-7 may be reprinted in the future as publications. The dissertation author will be the primary investigator and author of this future paper or book.

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APPENDICES: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Open-Ended Questions

1. How do you ethnically or culturally identify?
2. What do you think it means to live a healthy or well life?
3. What does it mean to have good mental health or mental wellness?
4. Is mental health or mental wellness a priority in your life? Why or why not?
5. Can you give me an example of someone you know (yourself, family, friend, or community member) that has good mental wellness?
6. Can you tell me about someone you know (yourself, family, friend, or community member) that is mentally unwell or ill?
7. Do you think that dreams have to do with mental health?
8. What do you do to take care of yourself mentally or emotionally?
9. What health care coverage do you have? What services do you use?
10. How do you feel about the border? How does it impact members of the Kumeyaay in terms of their wellness?
11. Do you talk to any of your friends or family members about mental health?
12. Did you parents or grandparents ever talk about how to have good mental wellness? If yes: what did they tell you?
13. Is there anything else I should know about mental wellness within this community?