ANG AMIN MGA KWENTO AY SIYANG MAGPAPAGALING: OUR STORIES ARE OUR HEALING

by

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HEALTH SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 2024

Abstract

What are the health stories of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn[1] in rural, remote, northern, and Indigenous geographies of so-called BC? What do these stories of Land, Water, Air[2], and Body[3] say about the health and well-being in these specific places? This doctoral project privileges the stories and voices of Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn, from and about so-called northern BC, to document their lived experiences. These womxn's voices, I argue, hold insights into solidarities anchored in relationships to the Land, Water, Air, and Bodies. Taken together and braided into story-poems of dialogue and collectivity, these womxn's voices reveal experiences amidst past, present, and future colonial injustices in places where industrial, extractive projects are a priority for settler-state governments. Set within an adapted critical narrative inquiry and transformative research paradigm, and informed by Critical Race Theory, Black Feminist Thought, and Intersectional Feminist methodologies, my research documents and creates a new offering. A collection of story-poems which opens potential pathways for further understandings about womxn's health and well-being. Using arts-based methods and kuwentuhan, which reflect a collaborative and caring process, my research celebrates insights offered by womxn's voices and stories. Framed by reviews and discussions about creative

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[1] In this dissertation, the term womxn breaks gender binaries. It is a term that acknowledges the diversity and fluidity of feminine sexualities including those that self-identify as trans, non-binary, two-spirit, and queer. I alternate between using the terms racialized womxn of colour as well as Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn acknowledging that these terms are not always able to capture the diverse intersectional identities of womxn. While the use of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) is prevalent in artistic and community organizing, in this dissertation, I refrain from using the acronym BIPOC because such terms collapse and reduce the diversity within racialized experiences and continue to "other" groups that are non-white. It is important to be aware that the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and Women of colour are not monolithic. Another term beyond BIPOC that I frequently hear being used is "people of the global majority." The term "people of the global majority" enables **non-white people worldwide to refuse to play by the hierarchy of white supremacy and autonomously claim their power** — power that is born from global solidarity rather than oppression. The term "people of the global majority" is super-inclusive of all non-white people worldwide.

[2] In this dissertation, Land, Water, and Air are capitalized to acknowledge them as sovereign entities within Indigenous ontologies, governance, and self-determination.

[3] Body is occasionally capitalized to draw attention to the ways marginalized bodies are restricted through multiple systems of oppression.

literature and academic scholarship (alongside local journalism), I argue that these health story-poems about Land-Water-Air-Body worldviews provide new ways of unlearning colonialism and thus represent embodiments of decolonial knowing.[4] Story-poems become timely and innovative ways to speak back and speak against multi-scalar racism and other structural determinants across health policies, practices, and institutions. The poeticized voices of Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn in this dissertation, I argue, are ultimately a radical decolonial praxis.

[4] In this dissertation, decolonial knowing is an orientation to unlearning colonialism through listening and attending to voices and embodied experiences of Indigenous, Black, and womxn of colour.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation has been generously supported by the Health Arts Research Centre (HARC) at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Award, and the UNBC Human and Health Sciences Department. I am grateful to Dr. Sarah de Leeuw for her willingness to take me on as a PhD student during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have appreciated her humor and support (not to mention her style and charisma) throughout this academic journey. I also would like to thank Ts'ako ze' We'es T'es, Sandra Harris, for her gentleness and encouragement along this journey, in the community and academia. I am indebted to Dr. May Farrales for her wit, brilliance, and kindness in seeing my work as part of a broader ecology of emerging critical Filipinx scholars and studies in so-called British Columbia and beyond. Thank you to Dr. Rita Wong for her dedication and long-term advocacy with Indigenous writers, Land, and Water defense, and for being part of my journey.

Pasasalamat to my fellow kapwatids and the shared spaces of being together. You planted the seeds and love of being in kinship: Sobey Wing, Joyce Rosario, Ariel Dela Cruz, and Dani Magsumbol. Maraming salamat po to Dr. JP Catungal, Dr. Casey Meijica, and Dr. Marissa Largo, who organized the FilipiNext Conference at York University on the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat with acknowledgment of the law of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant and acknowledging the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation in July 2022. Thanks to advisors Dr. Conely De Leon, Dr. Lisa Davidson, Dr. May Farrales, and Dr. Ethel Tungohan at FilipiNext! What a generative, fun, and culturally affirming conference. Kudos to the organizers, advisors, scholars, artists, and community members who created a Filipinx-specific space where we were nourished through food, relationships, and daily celebrations of being, feeling, listening, and storying our artistic and academic journeys together.

Maraming salamat po to Magdalena Matthews, who invited me to accompany her to Binmaley, Pangasinan, in 2022. Her invitation and support enabled me to reconnect with many matrilineal relatives and with ancestral bodies of Water such as the Lingayen Sea. I am indebted to Tita Maggie for the laughter, language learning, travels, and many joyful days and nights of nourishment feasting on fish and fruit.

Warmest regards to all the folx I met through the Health Arts Research Centre with special gratitude for the encouragement and camaraderie to: Onyx Sloan Morgan, Laura McNab Coombs, Janet Ocloo, Monika Kryzwania, Marion Erickson, Vanessa Mitchell, and Kelsey Chamberlain.

My family deserves recognition for their ongoing support throughout my graduate studies. I thank my ancestors, especially my paternal grandmother, Luz Verdolaga Añonuevo, paternal great-aunt, Lourdes Verdolaga Palacio, and paternal great-uncle, Luis Verdolaga, who were the first relatives in my family to migrate and live in so-called Vancouver. In addition, I am grateful to my mother, Socorro Añonuevo (née Salindong), and my father, Jose Ernesto Añonuevo for the sacrifices they endured through the deracination of immigration. Maraming salamat po for the

life and instilling the importance of saving and sharing seeds and growing and giving away our ancestral food and fruit.

To Cynthia, Renata, and Lillian: being an Ate and a Tita are the greatest gifts of my lifetime.

To my partner, Gu si Wilakset (One who teaches), Darwyn, and Spencer, thank you for your daily lessons in love, laughter, and humility as we navigate being a family. Maraming salamat for your patience, encouragement, and understanding as I pursued this PhD.

Thank you to my partner's Father Clan, with gratitude to Herb and Ken George.

This dissertation was written in the early mornings before my family was awake and late into the twilight after my family went to bed. Any errors written henceforth are solely my own. My dog Ruckus kept me company while I tapped at the keyboard and always nudged me to get fresh air, play, and move my body.

I am thankful for the cyclical beauty of the seasons on the unceded and ancestral Gitxsan Lax'yip, Wilp Spookw territory, which continues to nourish me and my loved ones.

Dedication

To the co-researchers: thank you for your courage and powerful knowledge sharing.

To the people of Palestine, from the river to the sea.

To the Land, Water, and Air defenders

in Gitxsan and Witsuwit'en territory & in the so-called Philippines

we are indebted to you.

To the future generations,

we defend the Land, Water, and Air

for your children's children.

To all those who struggle with

mental, physical, and spiritual health issues

as a result of intergenerational colonialism and imperialism

may you be guided

by your ancestors

who are always with you.

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Chapter 1-Introduction: Diasporic Filipinx-Indigenous Relations

In my previous graduate studies (Añonuevo, 2018), I explored ways that diasporic Filipinx[5] became aware of Indigeneity and how new forms of belonging with Indigenous people were created. My previous research was anchored in critical Narrative Inquiry (NI). Like my previous work, this dissertation is also informed by critical NI. I have in this work, however, attempted to expand and explore in an anti-colonial fashion what my previous graduate work set out to do. I have used NI to engage and document the voices of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx in and from so-called Northern British Columbia,[6] Canada, but in a way that extends more traditional forms of NI, I have braided together the voices of diverse womxn into what I call "story-poems." Previously, I explored how some Filipinx in the diaspora engage in relationality with Indigenous Peoples in both the so-called Philippines and Canada while attending to the colonial nature of residing on the unceded territories of Indigenous People. I hoped that such awareness had the potential to transform the material conditions of systemic racism and white settler colonialism towards arrivants,[7] migrants, and diasporic populations. Learning with and from my fellow kapwatid and kababayans, my previous graduate work laid the groundwork for me to continue disrupting settler moves to innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2014) in the Filipinx diaspora.

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[5] I use Filipinx throughout this dissertation to expand notions of gender binaries and gendered grammar while acknowledging that the Tagalog language uses gender neutral terms.

[6] I use "so-called" in front of colonial place names to draw attention to the colonial underpinnings of toponomy or the study of business naming, another geographic tool that has both supported and detrimentally affected Indigenous self-determination. Jimenez's (2016) work explores how Chicana pedagogy must start with one's relationship to the land, "in tandem with the renaming of lands and physical removal of Indigenous people from them" (p. 222).

[7] Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd defined the term "arrivant" in Transit of Empire to "signify those people forced into the Americas through the violence of European and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe" (Byrd, 2011, p. xix). Barbadian poet Kamau Braithwaite's collection of poems titled *The Arrivants: A New World - Rights of Passage/Islands/Masks* (1988) gestures to Black-Caribbean poetics and a diasporic practice of relationality.

Building on my previous research, this research extends my embodied knowledge[8] and my familial kinship-based knowledges – this work also documents and poeticizes voices of racialized womxn of colour with whom I entered a shared storytelling practice. Poeticizing the voices of the womxn with whom I worked opened space for a practice resulting in story-poems. I engaged in a qualitative research study because I am drawn to interpretive, descriptive, and language-related research. These story-poems are meant to speak against the isolation of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn, and our voices, in times and spaces of white supremacy and extractive colonialism by centring these voices on the public record and in an academic space. The voices of the co-researchers embody knowledge of a refusal against racist attitudes, policies, laws, and state-sanctioned projects. These voices serve as powerful living knowledge of survivance, solutions, and strength.

My dissertation is a polyphonic and collaboratively written work situated within specific geographies (the nation-state of so-called Canada, in so-called northwestern British Columbia) where colonial logics undergird an increasing number of extractive capitalist industrial projects. As per my learnings from familial and community teachings, I centre my embodied knowledge. Thus, I am guided by my ancestors, and the communities I am accountable to. I honour the voices of Indigenous, Black, Filipinx, and racialized womxn of colour knowledge keepers and scholars and seek to enact what Dani Magsumbol declared "a citational love practice" (Magsumbol, personal conversation, July 14, 2022). Sara Ahmed has argued in *Living a Feminist Life*, "Citation is feminist memory… I cite feminists of colour who have contributed to the project of naming and dismantling the institutions of patriarchal whiteness…" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 15). Such a citational love practice uplifts Indigenous, Black, Filipinx, queer, and

[8] Embodied knowledge is a qualitative research methodology whereby the body and its emotions and felt sense are the sites of knowledge production (Ellingson, 2006).

intersectional feminist womxn and scholars that I am in relationship with, both throughout this dissertation and beyond. My work is a document of embodied story-poems that express these womxn's voices and their insights.

In Chapter Two, I discuss the historical, legal, and ethnoecological literature that forms the backbone of this research. I then turn to a discussion of the structural determinants of health. Next, I explore frameworks of white settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and environmental violence as essential conditions for colonial critical infrastructure and extractive projects. As this dissertation centres womxn's voices and their story-poems, I discuss false notions of reconciliation in a landscape of government-generated reports and outdated legislation that is perpetuated by heteropatriarchal leadership. Such leadership clashes with the resistance of Land Back social movements. Finally, I briefly review the transatlantic slave trade and critical Black feminism, Asian, and Indigenous literary works to inform my methodologies.

I describe my methodologies and the methods in Chapter Three which are arts-based, poetically informed, and include autoethnography. My methodologies are shaped by intellectual foundations in critical NI, Black and Intersectional Feminism, and Indigenous Storytelling. I delve into storysharing with the co-researchers through braiding together their voices and experiences in a collaborative poetic autoethnography in Chapter Four that I refer to throughout this work as story-poems that form the heart of this research. I engage with kuwentuhan, a Tagalog ontology and place-based practice to celebrate and employ Filipinx knowledge passed on through intergenerational and familial transmission. In Chapter Five, I conclude with my thoughts about collective solidarity that centres Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous futurity, Land, liberation, and our braided possible futures.

This dissertation reinforces that Indigenous sovereignty in the form of traditional leadership, cultural practices, laws, governance, health, and ecological knowledge in so-called northern BC is alive and thriving. From time immemorial, Indigenous matriarchs have had special ties to the Land as a relation and relative. This connection to being on the Land and all relationships that exist on the Land are the basis of Indigenous self-determination and authority. The Land is a mode of healing, the Land is part of important ceremonies, the Land is a source of plant medicine, the Land is a cultural and spiritual teacher, and the Land is a source of understanding of how Indigenous people govern themselves (de Leeuw et al., 2022; Hoffman & Joseph, 2019). Indigenous ways of knowing and being form the basis of the Indigenous determinants of health (Greenwood et. al, 2015; Greenwood & Lindsay, 2019). The specific determinants of health for Indigenous populations are factors that increase and support physiological, mental, spiritual, and cultural health and improve the overall health outcomes for bodies and territories (de Leeuw et.al, 2022).

With this in mind, my two guiding research questions were:

1. What are the Land-Water-Air-Health-Body[9] stories of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn, especially related to Indigenous self-determination struggles, in so-called northern BC?
2. How do Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn and their voices provide insight into broader provincial, national, and global conversations about Indigenous self-determination and body sovereignty[10]?

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[9] I wanted to use a Land, Water, Air, Health, and Body approach because of my lived experiences of witnessing different First Nations communities talk about the interconnected elements and holistic approach to orienting themselves in the world and viewing these elements as relatives to whom they have are accountable and responsible for. I acknowledge that Fire is also an element that has distinct cultural understandings in Indigenous knowledge systems but is beyond the scope of this dissertation (see https://thenarwhal.ca/indigenous-cultural-burning/).

[10] Broadly, I define body sovereignty as the equitable and human right to seek health access for all womxn and the right to make decisions about our bodies and general health. This dissertation recognizes that body sovereignty for

Relatedly, my research has four main objectives:

1. Detailing voices of Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn and their embodied experiences of health and well-being in northern BC on the public record as counter-knowledge to ongoing coloniality.[11]
2. Contributing creative narrative evidence to discussions about large-scale industrial projects, anti-racism, and healthcare concerning determinants of health and Indigenous self-determination.
3. Drawing on existing creative and scholarly literature about and written by Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour who refuse colonialism and other forms of oppression to anchor new story-poems in a broader scholarship landscape.
4. Creating powerful new spaces, in the form of story-poems, wherein voices of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour speak about their relationships with and thoughts about work, Land, place, and health.

Health and well-being related to the Land, Water, Air, and Body was an orientation that I used throughout this dissertation to explore the interconnected realities of the co-researchers. For womxn in this research, the safety of their bodies as it relates to Land, Water, and Air impacts their holistic health. Environmental violence, patriarchal systems, and colonial-capitalist systems disrupt and undermine womxn's agency to function as healthy individuals and within healthy communities. Because I embody realities that have informed my guiding questions and

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Indigenous, Two Spirit, Trans, and Queer people have distinct and nuanced understandings of body sovereignty and are beyond the scope of this dissertation and are best written about by scholars and community members with lived experience.

[11] Coloniality is a term coined by Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano, a concept that refers to the coloniality of power and the coloniality of knowledge. As a Latin scholar, within the context of increased globalization, he critiqued the Eurocentric nature of knowledge production (Quijano, 2000).

burnt lumpia
by Christine Añonuevo

my skin, at times, I wish I could peel off like a Chiquita
banana sticker and leave behind at the grocery store
to hide the caramel tones of brown upon dark brown
and to escape the ~~white~~ gaze
to erase the enyay (ñ) that marks the surname that few
can pronounce
my ancestors have a sense of humour
new year
without the enyay (ñ)
creates a new posterior
a diacritical
mark of 300 plus years of
colonization
the sound of oil sizzling, on top of the stove
connects me to my relations:
past, present and future
a tight ligature filled with ground meat and mixed
vegetables
fry fry
fry
wait
repeat and rewind
if the oil is too hot, your
lumpia will burn
let stand, after frying to
ensure crispiness
my ancestors are watching, waiting to be fed
I come from mangoes and malunggay
a place of salt and mangrove trees
somewhere I have travelled
only in *Nanay's* blood memories
where
ponds are filled with brackish water
salt water and fresh water
converge
where the milkfish
swim swim
swim
until they get fried.

objectives, I describe my positionality as a researcher in the next section and contextualize the motivation for my research.

1.1 Positioning Myself in Contexts of Contemporary Racism

My research bridges my positionality as a lifelong learner, creator, community member, daughter, sister, Tita, mother, and partner. Extractive projects impact me as a racialized womxn of colour living and labouring with other racialized, Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn in northern geographies. I am a diasporic Filipina with twenty-five years of work experience in the non-profit sector and formal and informal education throughout so-called British Columbia and overseas in South Africa, Japan, and Ukraine. I have extensive experience as an anti-oppression educator working with LGBTQIA2S+, Black, Indigenous, and racialized people and youth of various diverse abilities. For the past sixteen years, I have worked, lived, learned, loved, resisted, and mourned in rural and remote, northern communities in so-called BC, including Haida Gwaii, Ts'msyen, Witsuwit'en, and Gitxsan territories. I have engaged with youth, traditional knowledge keepers, Matriarchs, and food

sovereignty advocates through community-based education, health and arts-based programming, and Land-based pedagogy. By Land-based pedagogy, I refer primarily to Indigenous ways of knowing and being that centre Land and Water as a teacher and sentient being, and Land as sacred (MacFarlane & Schabus, 2017; Tuck et al., 2014).

From a personal perspective, my partner is Gitxsan, Ts'msyen, and Witsuwit'en.[12] We have a son together, and I am parenting a stepson. Each of these family members is registered as a Status Indian under the Indian Act. My scholarly interests are informed by my personal, lived, and professional experiences in rural and community settings, intersecting with health humanities, critical geographies, diasporic Filipinx studies, and Indigenous, Black, and Asian literatures. My professional and personal realities provide me with a unique setting to implement and actualize decolonization (Tuck & Yang, 2012). I have responsibilities to my family to combat settler moves to innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2012) and avoid being complicit in the logics and conditions that give rise to systems and institutions that perpetuate settler-colonial violence and racial capitalism, preventing or erasing Indigenous governance and self-determination.

My kinship and personal realities also demand that I am mindful and attentive to how (im)migrant and racialized bodies, particularly in the Filipinx diaspora, may perpetuate settler colonial logics and proximity to whiteness and white supremacy (through internalized coloniality) as it relates to anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism through priorities set by settler-colonial governments. These two realities, in turn, inform how I approach research, including the

[12] The spelling of Wet'suwet'en and Witsuwit'en varies throughout this dissertation. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en has been using the spelling Wet'suwet'en since the beginning of land claims against the Province of BC. During the Delgamuukw Gisdaywa court case Witsuwit'en Chiefs had to write down everything about their land, culture, and language. Such words were written using the sounds available in the English language which does not contain all the sounds of the Witsuwit'en alphabet. Since the 1980s, linguists have been recording many Witsuwit'en words and fine tuning an alphabet that is most appropriate to Witsuwit'en sounds.

questions I ask, the means I use to answer the questions, and the ways I frame and conceptualize research findings (all explored in Chapter Three, the methods and methodologies section of this dissertation). Additionally, I am adopted into my partner's father's clan, which necessitates a level of awareness about Gitxsan and Witsuwit'en protocol, responsibility, and accountability to ways of knowing and being in my partner's father's clan. This research project, anchored in my family contexts, aims to contribute to the small but growing literature of Filipinx scholars whose voices are largely absent in academic literature in so-called northern BC geographies despite being present in large numbers (Szeto, 2021). Additionally, this research project seeks to connect Filipinx scholars in so-called Canada (and beyond) who are critically reflecting on our awareness of Indigenous Land, life, and histories with each other and other diasporic Filipinx community members.

I am a daughter of the Filipinx diaspora (Pangasinense/Quezonian). I was born and raised in so-called Penticton, a town on Land which the Penticton Indian Band has declared that the Okanagan Nation holds title and rights as part of the whole of the Okanagan and Syilx territory. I need to locate my ancestors, their genealogical stories, and their physical journey to Turtle Island, which is part of my decolonial process and practice (Phung, 2019). Locating myself and my family tells a story of how governmental policies have shaped my family's experiences. My paternal great-aunt was my first ancestor to migrate. After living in Korea and working for the Philippine Embassy, she arrived in so-called Vancouver in the late 1960s. Her migration to Turtle Island was premised on the settler-state of Canada's immigration policies, which focused solely on state labour needs. Her sister, my paternal grandmother, migrated to so-called Vancouver shortly afterward. My grandmother spent most of her life in a tiny apartment on East Broadway, near Commercial Drive. Their spirits, along with my great uncle, are encased at the

Forest Lawn Memorial Park in so-called Burnaby on the ancestral and unceded territory of the hən̓qəmin̓əm̓ and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh, home to the ancestors of several local Central Coast Salish Nations. My father migrated to so-called Canada shortly after Martial Law was declared in the so-called Philippines in the early 1970s. My father worked as a labourer and welder for a company in the Okanagan. My father then developed para-nasal lymphoma because the company that extracted his labour did not provide the appropriate gear to protect him while he worked.[13] My mother migrated from the province of Pangasinan in the so-called Philippines in the late 1960s, landing first in Spirit River, in so-called Alberta, located on Treaty 8 before relocating to the Okanagan Valley. She worked at the Penticton Regional Hospital for over thirty years. Her midwifery credentials from the so-called Philippines were not recognized[14] by colonial Canada, and thus, she was paid less than her mainly (white) counterparts. She was one of the first diasporic Filipina women to settle in so-called Penticton. Yet, her story, her encounters, and her friendships with women from the Penticton Indian Band and Syilx Okanagan Peoples remain largely invisible and untold (see exception Añonuevo, 2024). Both of my parents have developed high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes, which I have observed are the culmination of many years of acculturative stress due to race (and class)-based struggles while living in predominantly white and semi-rural environments, and socioeconomic factors. As I write this dissertation, I am

[13] I connect my father's health outcomes to his work conditions in low-paying employment. I connect his individual experience to the collective experiences of Filipinx during the COVID-19 pandemic. A disproportionate number of Filipinx people are represented in various precarious, low-paying health care related employment situations, which resulted in a larger proportion of that population catching COVID-19 and experiencing ensuing health inequities (Fung 2021; GlobalNews, 2021).

[14] On April 20, 2022, the Province of BC announced a new streamlined process to accept and support internationally trained nurses to meet healthcare needs in the Province of BC. This is an example of a settler government using racialized and gendered labour for their priorities. As Ma (2021) states: "Immigration policy is the way the government controls via laws and regulations who gets to come and settle in Canada. Since Confederation, immigration policy has been tailored to grow the population, settle the land, and provide labour and financial capital for the economy. Immigration policy also tends to reflect the racial attitudes or national security concerns of the time which has also led to discriminatory restrictions on certain migrant groups."

dealing with health issues from my everyday existence of living in places and spaces where an Indigenous-white settler binary is pervasive.

My parents' stories tether health outcomes to national, transnational, and international governmental policies and practices. Within the context of labour extraction methods held in place by multicultural policies (Farrales, 2017; Tungohan, 2018), my parents (who arrived in so-called Canada separately) unwittingly played a role in a colonial agenda. So-called Canada's colonial agenda, through their policies simultaneously welcomed their arrival as part of an embracement of multiculturalism, decredentialized them (and other diasporic Filipinx), and pigeonholed them as actors in labour production subservient to the needs of the settler state government (Day, 2016; Rodriguez, 2010; Thobani, 2007).

The Country that I Come From is called the Temp Agency of the Planet
By Steffi Ta-dy

To the man
At Tim Horton's
who shouted, "Come on,
where my Filipinos at?"
I wish I was a whip
speaker.
Instead of freezing
in front of coffee beans.
It's all good, just
insert your debit card.
Thousands of timbits
in a briefcase
I hauled home as if
I have no history.
Diabetes both sides
of my kin.
red dots on a map
scattering.
I thought poems,
should they earn
enough punchlines-
as stellar scorecard of words-
could offer a way out.
But I wake up
in the break room
embarrassed.
I drooled again,
this poem is a poem
and it is for the shoulders.

My own work as a creative writer and critical scholar (We'es T'es & Añonuevo, 2022, Anonuevo et.al 2023; Morgan et.al, 2023; Anonuevo et.al, 2024), as a mother, and as a family member of people consistently exploited by Canada's colonial state is in dialogue with other writers, especially those who write about similar themes, including systemic racism. Creative writers such as poet Steffi Tad-y beautifully capture the reality of my family and the health impacts of transnational migrant labour in her poem, "The Country I'm From is Called the Temp Agency of the Planet." Filipinos have been calcified as underpaid labourers overrepresented in low-income employment that

includes being nannies, long-term healthcare aides, and healthcare workers (Coloma et al., 2012; Soewarso-Rivera, 2021). On the one hand, this overrepresentation speaks to a legacy of human labour exportation by dictators in the so-called Philippines (Rodriguez, 2010). On the other hand, it speaks to the neoliberal agenda of the Canadian settler state that exploits migrants through logics of extraction and exploitation through the Overseas Foreign Worker (OFW) programs and Temporary Foreign Workers Program, documented by many scholars (Magsumbol, 2021; Tungohan, 2018) and has been compared to a modern-day version of slavery (Calugay-Casuga, 2022).

Harsha Walia (2021), in her book *Border and Rule*, argues that migrants are displaced labourers whose movements are linked to "war, capital flows, policies imposed by states and international financial/economic bodies, racist and patriarchal security regimes, and the struggles of working people on every side of the border" (2021, xviii). Walia traces worldwide economic, political, and social systems that, over time, have become ensconced as laws. Laws, whose logic is embedded in race-based settler imperialism, and which are dependent on migrant labour in an economy that treats migrant populations as disposable resources: struggling with lost jobs, migrants are being neglected by institutions and face rising xenophobia in many countries, including in so-called Canada where many Canadians ignore this reality. Despite the intergenerational contributions that migrant labourers have made to the countries where they work, often at great personal cost, almost no level of government has supported them (Rodriguez, 2010). My family (as well as many Filipinx in the diaspora) has lived (and continues to live) the conceptual terrain Walia and Rodriguez map out. They live health and employment disparities. These cumulative experiences and my own lived and living experiences of health impacted by racism have shaped my research interests in the health and well-being of racialized

and gendered diasporic Filipinx communities. My family's stories are why I believe in listening to the voices of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour as a way of opening space for stories as Bodies of embodied knowledge. Against many odds, I am the first woman in my family to attend university and pursue doctoral studies. My research is indebted to and motivated by the experiences of my ancestors, the futurity of my family, and their relationships with Land, Water, Air, and more-than-human beings in both so-called BC and the so-called islands of the Philippines.

By its very being, my research interrogates taken-for-granted ways of knowing, being, researching, and writing in the university setting. Universities in so-called Canada naturalize white settler society, reifying stories of national belonging undergirded by ideas about the superiority of (white) European signifiers (skin colour, history, the dominance of and expected fluency in English and French). These stories, on which the university is built, perpetuate ideas about the Canadian benevolence of belonging and comfort (Bannerji, 2000). Sherene Razack asserts that Canada is a white settler society, by which she means that Canada, as a settler state, is anchored in mythologies that celebrate white people as the ones who came to develop Land first, thus making European white settlers the original inhabitants and entitled to the fruits of citizenship (2009; 2014). Within such naturalized mythologies, white settler innocence and white amnesia work to erase historical and contemporary stories of violent conquest, genocide, chattel slavery, and the exploitation of racialized and gendered bodies for labour (Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). The stories shaped into poems in Chapter Four form the heart of this research. These story-poems aim, directly, to push against and rupture white settler innocence and white amnesia. The poetic stories bring Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour in dialogue

with one another to disrupt individual silos that separate local, transnational, and global interconnectivity and relationality. That is the work of this dissertation.

1.2 Preamble about Genealogies

Throughout this dissertation, I attempted to braid[15] (often clumsily and messily and briefly) a multiplicity of genealogies of critical Black Feminist, Indigenous, and Filipinx studies drawing on a plethora (or rather a cacophony) of interdisciplinary scholars. In my attempts to bring these genealogies together, I am drawing attention to how such genealogies are distinct, yet always (historically and contemporarily) entangled. Rinaldo Walcott's *On Property: Policing, Prisons, and the Call for Abolition* argues for the defunding of police and for the elimination of incarceration and criminalization (2021). This argument braids notions of time to the past and the present, drawing attention to the enclosure of Black bodies through the transatlantic slave trade, and white ownership on stolen Indigenous Land. I am thinking alongside Walcott about how Euro-American imperialism through mechanisms of colonial-capitalism is a project of global Anti-Blackness. As Walcott reminds us of the history of white domination over the "property of Black flesh" (Walcott, 2021, p.28). Walcott eloquently writes, "precisely because of Black people's intimate relationship to property… as having been property ourselves that we understand the entire carceral network" (2021, p. 26). Walcott connects present-day policing in the form of surveillance, carding, profiling, and threats of incarceration as the hauntings of racial histories of white domination of ownership, Land, and extraction of labour.

Katherine McKittrick through analysis of space and place links the legacy of Black subjugation through the transatlantic slave trade (McKittrick, 2006). McKittrick contends that through a colonial and white lens, Black geographies are viewed as lacking or having inferior

[15] Synonyms for the word braid include intertwine, weave, twist, plait, interweave, etc.

value and Black people are denied their humanity (2006). She notes that this understanding of Blackness and Black people is a colonial myth and that in fact, we need to recognize Black geographies as spaces of imagination, complexity, and liberation (McKittrick, 2006). Black liberation struggles and survival are enacted through community care with Black geographies as interventions of worldviews, knowledges, ontologies, and practices that transcend Western (Euro-American) orientations of spatiality and temporality (McKittrick, 2006). The story-poems and voices of the womxn co-researchers express such interventions as embodied sites of what I term, decolonial knowing. Walcott argues that abolition is a reimagining of what life, specifically Black life can be without property ownership (and its resulting carcerality) under colonial-capitalism (2021). My understanding of Walcott's call for abolition is a future without policing or property relations as well as the abolition of institutions and orientations that stem from white supremacist, colonial, and capitalist ideals.

I turn next to Tiffany Lethabo King, who is theorizing about the connections between slavery and white settler colonialism in the so-called Canadian context. In *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies*, King makes the argument that the transatlantic slave trade and white settler colonialism are distinct phenomena within the violent social relationship of "conquistador-settler" King, 2019, p. xi) and can "never be bracketed… from one another" (King, 2019, p. 200). King points to the use of conquest as a "shared dialogic space to articulate genocide and slavery as forms of violence that are essential to the emergence of conquistador humanism" (2019, p. 21). The use of the shoal as "always in formation" (King, 2019, p. 8) is a metaphor to describe a relationality and space "to create an alternative site of engagement to discuss Indigenous genocide, anti-Black racism, and the politics of Black and Native studies" (King, 2019, p. 35). That is, a space for Indigenous and Black communities to

relate to one another on their own terms. For me, *the Black Shoals* pushes back against the limitations of white settler colonialism, white-dominated studies, and scholars who perpetuate Western ways of thinking and writing to rupture possibilities of Black and Indigenous relations about and beyond conquest. Racial hierarchies and hegemonies globally are sites that King terms conquistador humanism, "the crafting and sustaining of European human life and self-actualization through Black and Indigenous death" (2019, p.84). King discusses conquest as a set of relations "that we can push on, move around in, and redo from moment to moment" (King, 2019, p.40). Most importantly, King writes, "I still need to heal. And my own healing, Black healing, is connected to Indigenous healing" (2019, xii) and "[m]y inheritance is that, as a Black person living under relations of conquest, I care about Native People's survival" (2019, xiii). King's writing in *the Black Shoals* theorizes the shoal as an intervention to understanding new ways to be in relationship with one another for scholars thinking and feeling how to be in better relationship with one another. King also disrupts a white-settler[16]-Indigenous binary to expand ways to engage geographies and non-white communities. King's writing made me self-reflect on how Filipinx studies can engage in conversations about Land, Water, and Bodies in varying states of migration.

I am thinking about how Filipinx geographies, genealogies, and communities relate to Black and Indigenous studies. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez in her book, *Migrants for Export*, traces American colonization in the Philippines whereby the United States conquered the Philippines to expand their empire in Asia and shaped Filipinos into colonial subjects who could labour for the US empire (2010, p. 97). Throughout the book, Rodriguez outlines how the Philippine government shapes its citizens as migrants and thus becomes a labour brokerage state. I

[16] For more nuanced conversations see *Otherwise worlds: Against settler colonialism and anti-Blackness*. Duke University Press.

understand this to mean the practice of the Philippine state using a global neoliberal strategy to mobilize its populace into working abroad and sending money through remittances to their families and loved ones in the Philippines. Critics of the government labour's policies have argued that the Philippine state engages in a legalized form of human trafficking[17] (Rodriguez, 2010). Within the legacy of American imperialism, the Philippine state draws on gendered and racialized logics to broker their population to foreign countries and their labour needs. Often, what is left out of these histories and legacies, are the stories and survivance of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (which is beyond the scope of this dissertation). As more and more Filipinos migrate globally, how are they building awareness and relationality with Indigenous Land and life? My research through story-poems is an intervention into the archive of Filipino-Indigenous relationships in northern geographies in so-called British Columbia to document voices that express an understanding of Indigenous Land, laws, and life over conversations related to migration, citizenship, and relationality to the settler state.

As I use the terms Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour or Filipinx throughout this dissertation, my aim is not to perpetuate or tokenize identity categorizations. Instead, I gesture to genealogies of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx studies, histories, and legacies to move toward new spaces and relationships. My research is rooted in orientations of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour and their relationality to Indigenous Land, life, and communities thereby attempting to create expressions and possibilities of decolonial and liberatory futures aligned with Indigenous Land, life, and life-generating practices.

[17] See https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/120/97/pdf/g2412097.pdf and https://www.policynote.ca/tfwp/ for current criticisms of BC and the Temporary Foreign Workers Program.

Chapter 2-Background and Literature Review: Erasures of Histories and Bodies

Scholars know that academia is an ongoing site of troubling colonial encounters of racial and intersectional exclusion (Bunjun, 2021; Henry et al., 2017; Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Todd, 2016). Sara Ahmed has written extensively (2012, 2013) about how and why racialized, queer, and intersectional students are "bodies out of place" (2013, p. 78). Our bodies disrupt the naturalization of white belonging and are thus perceived as threats and tokens in academic (and in healthcare, education, child welfare, and social justice) settings. Even white students at the intersections of queerness, class, and ability reproduce a national belonging. They live in a degree of comfort in institutions where they embody and reflect the (white) image of the (white) institution back to itself (Ahmed, 2012). Ahmed more recently argues that bodies that live racialization, queerness, and intersectionality are sites of complaint (2021). When such bodies bring forth evidence of their experiences in academic institutions, they are punished in tangible and material ways for doing so. We embody differences and bring discomfort to the status quo.

In documenting voices and then creating new story-poems with and about Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn about their health experiences in so-called northern BC, I aim to highlight and celebrate how Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn provide insight into their (our) understanding of Indigenous self-determination, resurgence, and refusal of a politics of recognition as defined by the settler state (Coulthard, 2007; Coulthard, 2010; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2013). By documenting and braiding Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx voices, this research centres a critical intersectional feminist perspective and practice through an embodied orientation of creative methods and methodology. Unlearning colonialism asks us to consider the differential forms of colonialism and settler colonialism as contingent on racializations and

racialized acts of violence becoming obscured or erased (Vimaalssery et al., 2017). In the context of my research, I understand *decolonial knowing* as an epistemology, by which I mean *a way of knowing*, located in *racialized*, embodied, intergenerational, intersectional, and lived bodies and voices. The voices and story-poems gifted to and shared with me for this dissertation are embodiments of "decolonial knowing" within (and against) colonial regimes of ongoing (settler-state) power and domination. Such power and domination continually work to invisibilize the systemic and structural racism that impacts our health. Indigenous Peoples across so-called Canada (and worldwide) are asserting rights to self-determination boldly and in unprecedented ways (Land Back, 2019). The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) clearly states that Indigenous Peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their Lands and territories. Indigenous Peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals, and minerals and have the right to access without any discrimination to social and health services (Article 10 & Article 24). At the heart of my research is a belief that declarations in documents like UNDRIP are tied to people's health and well-being and must be implemented and action-oriented to improve inequitable health, child welfare, education, and social justice conditions. Story-poems have a role to play in making new spaces for these implementations.

Self-determination is closely connected to health and well-being and includes the rights to determine how bodies are cared for and how healthcare is delivered, as well as rights to medicinal health. For Indigenous People, holistic health and well-being stem from daily practices in traditional knowledge and healing practices through Land-based sustenance activities. Some of these include access to and preparation of traditional foods, plant and animal medicines, and

balance among kinship networks (Johnson, 2019). There is clear evidence that the dispossession of Indigenous People from their Lands and territories negatively impacts health and disrupts connection to Land, Water, kinship, and community (de Leeuw & Teegee, 2023; O'Toole et al., 2023; Teegee, 2016; Women's Earth Alliance, 2016). However, in the northern geographies where I live, there is a proliferation of resource extraction projects, including gas pipelines, Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) facilities and projects, and industrial work camps that continue to bring destruction, disease, and unhealthy ways of being to Land, Water, Air, and womxn's bodies (Simmons, 2024; Sloan Morgan et al., 2021). In the face of this, however, Indigenous womxn are demonstrating that body sovereignty, or *the right to make decisions about one's body and general health*, is crucial to self-determination (Carmen & Waghiyi, 2012; Women's Earth Alliance, 2016). At the first international Indigenous Women's Environmental and Reproductive Health Symposium, a declaration for body sovereignty concerning environmental violence against Indigenous women and children was submitted to the United Nations Permanent Forum (Carmen & Waghiyi, 2012). This declaration advocated for the accountability of severe harm to Indigenous women caused by environmental contaminants and toxins produced by extractive industries (Carmen & Waghiyi, 2012, p. 12).

In 2014, the Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network began to document how extractive industries impact Indigenous women and young people's health and safety. The framework documented in the report, Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence (2016) recognized that gender-based violence, which includes environmental violence, needs a response that is community-based and upholds "Indigenous people's self-determination over their bodies and supports the leadership of Indigenous women, Two Spirit and young people working to resist this violence,

while also decreasing the harms they face from extractive industries" (Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2016, p.6).

The story-poems in this dissertation aim to document intersecting experiences of the conditions of multi-scalar colonialism and racism where logics of anti-Blackness, and racialized and patriarchal power undergird these conditions. The voices in Chapter Four serve as an intervention to ongoing settler colonial-decision making that enable extractive projects, projects authorized by largely patriarchal government leaders. These logics continue to ignore womxn and their health concerns and continue ongoing socio-economic domination rooted in ideologies of white supremacy perpetuated by settler state projects by ignoring their health concerns. Tlingit scholar and Land defender Anne Spice argues that Indigenous resistance against extractive projects are movements that "may appear to be interruptions of the normal progression of relations between settler states and Indigenous peoples, they are in fact continuations of hundreds of years of Indigenous resilience and resistance" (2016, n.p.). In my work, I argue that colonialism and racism result from the ongoing logic of power and domination of the Canadian colonial state that demands a settler futurity[18] (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). The womxn's voices, via story-poems in this dissertation, are shared in the spirit of a decolonial knowing that celebrates *the humanity and relationality* of critical Indigenous, Black, and emerging Filipinx studies that strive towards an Indigenous futurity which includes all non-Indigenous peoples. (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). These story-poems, formed around

[18] By settler futurity, I am referring to what Eve Tuck and Rubén A. Gaztambide-Fernández have argued, that a settler futurity "which always… means the continued and complete eradication of the original inhabitants of contested land" (2013, p.80). Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez point to an Indigenous futurity. A futurity that "does not foreclose the inhabitation of Indigenous land by non- Indigenous peoples but does foreclose settler colonialism and settler epistemologies. That is to say that Indigenous futurity does not require the erasure of now-settlers in the ways that settler futurity requires of Indigenous peoples" (2013, p.80). With regards to settler futurity versus Indigenous futurity, Reuben George has said, "if they [settlers] win, everybody loses. If we win, everybody wins" (It Stops Here, p. 132).

and with womxn's voices, aim to challenge and subvert the obscuring of how racialization is entangled with colonization, conquest, dispossession, and the power dynamics of violence.

In much contemporary antiracist and feminist scholarship and research, some of the most life-generating considerations about well-being, and self-determination arise from relationships between Indigenous and Black womxn, and Indigenous and Asian womxn where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are centred (We'es Tes & Anonuevo, 2022; Hunt/ Tlalilila'ogwa & Farrales, 2024; Christian & Wong 2014; Maynard & Simpson, 2022). These considerations take the form of letter writing, mutual aid, collaborative writing practice, and life-long relationships engaging with those that are centring Indigenous, Land, life, laws, Water, Air, and futurities. There is, however, little academic research in and from northern geographies, especially when it comes to bodily and poetic stories of health related to Indigenous self-determination told from the perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and racialized womxn of colour. Furthermore, academia privileges work that shy away from the creative voice, so creative stories of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour from these places are sparse. Such stories and poetic voices might potentially disrupt dominant discourses about Land relations considered, generally, through binary and heteronormative lenses of white settler/Indigenous Peoples relations. My research provides new entry points to considering relationships, relationality, and solidarities among Indigenous and Black womxn, and Filipinx settlers of colour, racialized im(migrants), and arrivants (Byrd, 2011; Day, 2016; Lloyd & Pulido, 2010; Phung, 2011). I agree with Filipina scholar Robyn Magalit Rodriguez and Japanese-American scholar Iyko Day who assert that labour production enacted by racialized bodies reproduces ideologies that have extended historical and contemporary legacies of racialized labour disposability (Day, 2016; Rodriguez, 2010). At the broadest level, these womxn's story-poems are nestled within a long history in so-

called northern BC about how racialized (and often gendered) labour needed for extractive projects is a condition to the settler-colonial logic of nation-building building settler critical infrastructures.

With all this said, however, I am cognizant that research is still considered a dirty word in many Indigenous communities (Smith, 1999; Tuck, 2014). In engaging with academia and research ethics, I believe not enough is done to ensure that within the research process, there is meaningfulness or usefulness for the people or communities being researched. Often, social science research collects stories of "pain and humiliation in the lives of those being researched for commodification" (Tuck, 2014, p. 223). Kahnawake scholar Audra Simpson asks the following questions of her ethnographic work with members of her nation: "Can I do this and still come home; what am I revealing here and why? Where will this get us? Who benefits from this and why?" (2007, p. 78). These questions force anti-racist and anti-colonial researchers, including me, to contend with the strategies and limitations of producing "legitimated" knowledge based on the colonization of knowledge, especially in the English language, itself a colonial construct. I argue that the most powerful knowledge, both theoretical and material, is expressed by the lived embodied experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour, albeit these expressions are uneven, divergent, and not without tensions amongst each other. Braiding together these diverse voices opens the possibility to tell new and relational stories. These stories, I hope, push back on colonial forces that have always sought to isolate and separate what are actually and always intersectional racialized womxn's voices.

My research, through poetic story creation, delves into the impacts of deep-rooted attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that continue to conceptualize racialized womxn of colour as threats to the status quo of white dominance. I draw on theories about white settler colonialism as a form of colonization whereby outsiders (namely white, European, and heterosexual men) settle on Lands belonging to Indigenous People and claim them as their new home (Tuck et al., 2014). The voices of Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn in northern BC (including some of my own, woven through this dissertation in italics and presented inside text call-out boxes, as above and throughout this dissertation) thus become a possible means to understand how structurally excluded voices interface with settler-colonial policies and projects tied to natural resource extraction in northern, Indigenous, and rural geographies. My work is in dialogue with interdisciplinary Black studies and scholars such as Katherine McKittrick, Dionne Brand, Christina Sharpe, Saidiya Hartman, Kamau Braithwaite, Wayde Compton, Robyn Maynard, Tiffany Lethabo King, and Kimberly Crenshaw. Simultaneously, this research thinks and feels and centres critical Indigenous studies, knowledge, and scholars such as Dian Million, Anne Spice, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Glen Sean Coulthard, Michelle Daigle, and many others. As an emerging Filipinx scholar my research aims to contribute to critical Filipinx studies in so-called British Columbia as an

Christine Añonuevo, Self-reflective journal entry, December 2022
My mother had aspirations for me to become a lawyer. As an immigrant woman who migrated to so-called Canada by herself, the sacrifices and hardships she endured so that I could attend university, I often feel guilty for not embodying her dream. Although I would not end up becoming a lawyer, I do have an earnest interest in understanding Indigenous law and governance, something I don't think my mother or I could have predicted. This thesis is in equal measure a lovesong to my family and their Filipino roots and saltwater stories, histories, and the laws of Indigenous Peoples on the territories where I make my home. I am concerned with the stories of migrants such as myself as well as Black womxn and how they engage with Indigenous Land, life and law.

intervention. This intervention attempts to move Filipinx studies in so-called Canada away from orientations of citizenship and relationality with the settler state. It aims to orient Filipinx studies towards relationality with Indigenous Land, laws, and life theoretically and through grassroots relationships on Gitxsan and Witsuwit'en territories. I orient this research towards recognizing the importance of bringing together (and braiding albeit in an uneven fashion) Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx voices and studies, regardless of their divergent viewpoints. I hope that my work holds the possibility to enable decolonizing, generative, and holistic kinship solidarities (Byrd, 2018) when considering our unique and diverse ways of knowing and being which are sometimes aligned and sometimes exist with tensions. Such solidarities and relationalities that centre Indigenous life-generating and life-giving practices might be pillars to and for a healthier future. Such solidarities reflect resistance, struggle, and survival through collective embodied knowledge and resurgence.

I do not want to homogenize or essentialize or tokenize categories of identity in this research project. As the story-poems in Chapter Four illustrate, the co-researchers[19] in this project are not monoliths. I do not want to essentialize identities or perpetuate pan-ethnic identities (such as pan-Indigeneity) or stereotypes. While I acknowledge that there are distinct and interrelated experiences of colonial violence and racism amongst Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities,[20] I want in this work to push back against the idea that our solidarity is rooted in a shared experience of oppression. Instead, solidarity is posited in this dissertation as an intentional orientation to being in better relation and in alignment with Indigenous Land, laws,

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[19] I define the term co-researchers as the womxn who volunteer to tell me their stories related to health and well-being. Co-researchers can also be defined as co-creators of their health knowledge with the understanding that knowledge is embodied, relational, connected to ancestry and kinship, interconnected to where we live, and place-based (Gilpin et al., 2020), which I will discuss in further detail in Chapter Four.

[20] I use the terms, Indigenous, Black, Filipinx, and racialized womxn of colour- knowing that there are many nuances and complexities within such identities. The terms are used in this dissertation to push back on dominant white scholarship and are not meant to collapse or essentialize identities.

and life and working towards more generative relationships with Black life. Filipinx and other diasporic communities who occupy space in so-called Canada need to de-centre ourselves (and our communities) when we show up for Indigenous communities and their ongoing defense against colonial projects and Black communities working towards abolition and our collective liberation. Filipinx in the diaspora need to attend to the anti-Black and anti-Indigenous attitudes that circulate in our communities as a result of our messy entanglements and internalizations of intergenerational coloniality.

Throughout this dissertation, I push back against the inherent colonial atmosphere of academia, where Sandy Grande (2018) theorizes the university is an arm of the settler-colonial state. Universities are places where the logic of elimination, erasure, capital accumulation, and dispossession are enacted, and epistemic violence is palpable and felt. The academy and many academic disciplines taught therein can further perpetuate white logics of neutrality and objectivity when research is involved. As a result, racialized students who may have intersectional and overlapping identities such as being Indigenous, queer, trans, disabled, non-binary, and Two-Spirit, often experience epistemic violence on multiple levels. Such violence happens when the hegemonic white tower sees and reads their bodies, knowledge, and lived experiences as biased or one-sided (Lozano-Neira, 2021). Lozano-Neira offers a different reading of academia

> Rather than adapting our ways of being, thinking, and working to fit white academia, we must continue questioning, critiquing, and creating discomfort in the systems and people… those people who boasted at being unbiased because they could not see the role they played in our oppression. It is time to let our own biases pour all over our work, to infiltrate the tower, to centre our voices and histories, to be meaningful allies to one another, and to ground our work in dismantling the systems created to make sure we did not survive (2021, p. 161).

While Lozano-Neira advocates for the grounding of racialized students, their voices, and histories in the university to dismantle white supremacy, Robin D. G. Kelly (2016) states, "the fully racialized social and epistemological architecture upon which the modern university is built cannot be radically transformed by simply adding darker faces, safer spaces, better training, and a curriculum that acknowledges historical and contemporary oppressions" (p. 49). Kelly cautions against academic institutions and performative gestures under the guise of contemporary diversity initiatives. Instead, rather than the "add and mix" diversity approach that many post-secondary institutions adopt, Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Coulthard (2007; 2010; 2014) proposes a theoretical framework of Black and Indigenous scholars that calls on racialized bodies to repurpose the university towards their own liberatory needs and evokes a politics of refusal of white settler colonial frameworks of recognition (see also McKittrick, 2006; Simpson, 2004). Such a refusal would be both a methodological and an aesthetic stance. As a gendered and racialized first-generation PhD student, my research aims to decentre the presences and practices of taken-for-granted logics of whiteness. My work is explicitly committed to creating liberatory spaces of belonging for Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx bodies that can elevate knowledge beyond Eurocentric, Anglo-American thinking and writing (within the confines of the colonial construction of the English language). My work is, thus, a racialized refusal of Western assumptions that value the individual, objectivity, and narrow disciplinary orientations. By creating and centring a collective of voices and story-poems I am documenting voices that have been ignored by heteropatriarchal leadership, institutions, and systems. I am creating ethical space (Ermine, 2007) to share research and uplift relational aesthetics grounded in place. My research aims (in all its stages) to create an intentional "space" for creative and embodied ways

of knowing. Along with many other racialized and feminist geographers, Michelle Daigle and Margaret Ramírez (2022) have (re)theorized space as

> the material substance through which power is transmitted and through which relations are made. Space is never neutral and reflects the structures of power that human societies are founded upon… without collapsing distinct racialized and gendered experiences, it is necessary to understand how colonial and capitalist space grammars function as genocidal, anti-Black, gendered, and classed totalities that are imbued across space (p. 217).

I hope my work may, in some small way, have the potential to respatialize the academy towards imaginative, relational, decolonial, and collective participatory understandings that also have practical applications within and beyond the confines of the academy. My research, through my autoethnographic field notes combined with poetry (again, see writings throughout this dissertation presented in "call out" text boxes), along with creative writing by Indigenous, Black, and racialized creative writers (which also appear throughout this dissertation), is a record of how Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour are entangled with institutional coloniality. This research is critical of asymmetrical power dynamics perpetuated by the settler state that unevenly celebrates the inclusion of racialized minorities in so-called Canada through policies of multiculturalism and national coherence through logics and narratives of a liberal and progressive state. Such logics and narratives may be interpreted as a celebration of national assimilation or subjectivity that erases the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. As a racialized Filipinx womxn, I need to be mindful of performative policies of multiculturalism and model minority myths that orient our bodies to assimilation within the conditions of white supremacy and nation-building priorities as well as sentiments that erase, ignore or minimize the ongoing violent relationship the settler state of so-called Canada continues to have with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities.

Policies such as multiculturalism and stereotypes of the model minority myth perpetuated by settler government bodies mask the ongoing dispossession and health inequities experienced by Indigenous and racialized Peoples and subsume different minorities together under an umbrella of "equal citizenship" (Kanji, 2020; Brosseau & Dewing, 2018; Cho, 2002). So-called Canadian immigration policies in the 1960s and 1970s used a points system for individuals to enter universities and professional fields (Guo & Wong, 2018). However, the system continues to be a way in which the settler state controls migrants and refugees to orient and assimilate them into the settler state and its neocolonial projects (Alcarez et al., 2021; Damasco, 2019). Filipina-Canadian scholars such as Ethel Tungohan and Conely de Leon have written about the influx of Filipinx migrants into so-called Canada in the 1990s under the Live-In Caregivers Program. This program, Tungohan and de Leon argue, led Filipinx into situations of economic hardship, precarious employment conditions, and stigmatization (2015; 2018). Filipina-American scholar, Valerie Francisco-Menchavez, alongside Ethel Tungohan, and Dani Magsumbol have written about the gendered and racialized conditions of female migrant workers who despite facing hardships have engaged in building solidarity with one another through affective economies of emotions, communities of care, and care activism (Francisco-Menchavez, 2018; Tungohan, 2023; Magsumbol, 2022). Scholars have critiqued so-called Canada's global reputation as a humanitarian state (see Nguyen & Phu, 2021). As my personal story aims to illuminate, these concepts mirror and embolden ongoing white settler-colonial and neoliberal governmental narratives of belonging and unbelonging, immigration and settlement, citizenship, "equality," and integration as aspirations to a performative, "progressive," benevolent, peaceful, nation-building colonial agenda that is welcoming of diverse communities.

My project thus fundamentally seeks and works to create new decolonial spaces of care. Decolonization unfolds throughout this dissertation as an active relationship that is "inherently connected to the lands, lives, histories, and futures of the Indigenous [P]eople's of Turtle Island" (Hunt & Holmes, 2015, p. 157). Racialized womxn of colour are often in unique situations when it comes to decolonization. My ancestors have been colonized by the Spanish, the British, the Japanese, and American imperial forces. Through my creative and academic writing, daily community relationships, and intimacies with my family and kinship networks, I work on attending to my internalized colonization that orients me to capitalism and the logics of whiteness and white colonial-capitalist aspirations (David, 2008). I strive to embody and create both decolonization and anti-colonial spaces through genealogical memory, kinship relations, language learning, and cultural practices. In my lived and embodied reality, decolonization involves the rematriation of Indigenous Land and life, something I examine and work to create new narrative spaces about in further detail in Chapter Four. I feel it is important to note that decolonization is part of a continuance of everyday intimate relations, feelings, and interactions (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). In embodying anti-colonialism and decolonizing knowledge systems, I am aligning with Indigenous-led refusal of state policies and practices. Indigenous communities are demanding that all levels of local government follow UNDRIP and the 95 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and not refute, ignore or dismiss these initiatives. Indeed, within so-called BC, Indigenous communities have been fighting colonial provincial and federal governments for their constitutional rights to be recognized for centuries (Manuel, 2015).

Several Indigenous-led grassroots movements have recently been occupying their homelands despite facing violence from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) (McIvor,

2021). These occupations are met with silence from elected government officials[21]. Some examples include the Tiny House Warriors are stopping the Trans Mountain pipeline from crossing Secwepemc Territory; the Ada'itsx blockade (Fairy Creek) on so-called Vancouver island is exposing archaic old-growth logging practices of Teal Jones with a private logging company (with over 1100 hundred arrests to date, with little mainstream new coverage); the Witsuwit'en are occupying their territory, fighting RCMP harassment as Coastal Gas Link and its proposed pipeline destroys cultural sites (Follet-Hosgood, 2021); the Dogwood Initiative has been drawing attention to how the RCMP and C-IRG may be acting as an arm for American corporate interests (Coles, 2023); a proposed open-pit metallurgical coal mine is engaged with the provincial environmental assessment process at the confluence of the Widzin Kwah (Bulkley) and Telkwa rivers in so-called Telkwa; and a house group in Gitxsan territory, G'itluul'um'hetxwit, has asserted full authority over their ancestral territories to stop unsustainable logging. Additionally, the West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations have both opposed the expansion of the Site C dam in the Treaty 8 territory (Simmons, 2022; Wong, 2021). In the fall of 2023, an open house was held to discuss the proposed Ksi Lisims LNG project in the Nass Valley and the potential impacts of having a pipeline and compressor station in the Kispiox Valley on Gitxsan Lax'yip. These examples of Indigenous resistance are a snapshot of projects across so-called BC that are impacting womxn's health and well-being in contemporary times.

Indigenous resistance has been happening against a naturalized assumption by white settlers about a so-called northern resource hinterland being essential for a racial-capitalist-colonial economy (Markey et al., 2012).

[21] With the exception of Green Party leaders.

Decision-makers, who often live in urban and southern geographies or come to northern geographies from other places, are often white and male[22], promote natural resource extraction projects that negatively impact the health of trans, non-binary, racialized, Indigenous, and Two-Spirit womxn in northern geographies (Amnesty International 2016b). From an anti-colonial, anti-racist, and feminist standpoint, I believe our stories and voices are urgently needed to contribute to decolonial futures. Such stories and voices have the potential to transform contemporary governmental leadership who, writ large, ignore these voices and the voices of Indigenous leadership, particularly matriarchs, who are calling for a halt to extractive infrastructure projects. As these voices are being ignored, there are ongoing and

Christine Añonuevo, Self-reflective journal entry, July 2021

I expect a federal election to be called before the end of the month. I recently read that Kuun Jaadas of the Ts'aahl clan/ Adean Young has decided to run for the Green party in my riding, Skeena-Bulkley Valley, one of the largest ridings in the country. I am hopeful that the leadership of an Indigenous woman, rooted in Haida Gwaii-culture can contribute to a more just future. I am thinking about the racialized and Indigenous womxn who have demonstrated tremendous skill and courage in the face of widespread structural and systemic violence... and I wonder about the toll it takes on their health and well-being. Harsha Walia, the former Executive Director of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, exited her position amidst a Twitter post in which she wrote, "Burn it all down." A call to end widespread systemic oppression-not a call for arson. Or Nunavut MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq who, in her impassioned farewell speech spoke of feeling unsafe, being racially profiled, and having to witness those with the power to make an impactful change- refuse to take action. Closer to home, Jessica McCallum-Miller, who is Gitxsan, Nisga'a, and Ts'msyen, the first Indigenous womxn to be elected as a City Councillor in Terrace, quit after citing systemic racism from her colleagues. And I can't help but think of my embodied experiences of being in leadership positions over the past fifteen or so years and how my health suffers.

[22] Not all decision makers are male and white. BIPOC people who embrace racial capitalist propaganda and ideology can also make harmful decisions and enact lateral violence. The comprador class is a term for the natives of a colonized land that are "bought" by the colonizers. The comprador class arguably uses its race to undermine the care for the land and its people. While white supremacy is problematic and pervasive, further research and dialogue is needed to develop vocabulary and a narrative analysis that focuses more on what people do (whether it's land protection or land destruction) rather than identity politics as identity can muddle issues. (Rita Wong, personal conversation, October 8, 2024).

intergenerational irreversible impacts on womxn's mental, physical, cultural, and spiritual health — all of which contradict the intentions and recommendations of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples (1996), UNDRIP (2007), the TRC Calls to Action (2015), and the 231 individual calls for justice from the National Inquiry's Murdered and Missing Women's Final Report (2019). My research gives a snapshot of the current health impacts on racialized womxn of colour, living and working in northern geographies, in the face of major extractive projects. The story-poems in Chapter Four act as a counter-archive to the ways government bodies and industry disregard the health of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn as well as the health of the Lands and Waters that will inevitably be harmed by such projects.

Christine Añonuevo, Self-reflective journal entry, February 2020

I was born and raised in the Okanagan Valley on Okanagan territory, otherwise known as Penticton, along with my younger sister, where I spent my childhood with working-class migrant parents who were navigating systems, worlds, and languages on lands far from the archipelagos of their motherland. Peppered throughout my formative teenage and early adulthood, I have memories of my mother's friendship (and the hospitality she received) with members of the Penticton Indian Band and the food exchanges that allowed my mother to share her baking and sweets, namely pandesal and leche flan, in exchange for salmon. I was aware of Indigenous resistance and refusal, especially in the 1990s when many First Nations were disillusioned with failed treaty negotiations with the provincial government. I remember the blockage of Green Mountain road by the Penticton Indian Band that marked the resistance to the Apex Ski hill expansion; the Gustafsen Lake standoff between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Secwepemc Sun Dancers; the so-called Oka crisis, otherwise known as the Kanehsatà:ke resistance to prevent a golf course expansion on sacred lands and the war on woods in Clayoquot Sound that followed the Meares Island court case where Nuu-chu-nulth members blocked access to MacMillan Bloedel's timber access. When I was in junior high school, the book that made me dream about being a writer was a novel called Slash by Jeannette Armstrong. This novel and author taught me about the power of literature, the power of relationships to place, and made me aware of systemic issues that are at the forefront of contemporary current events in so-called Canada.

2.1 Critical Legal, Health, and Ethnoecological Geographies

Health issues in northern, rural, and remote geographies must be understood relationally, as grounded in

specific place attachments (Hanlon & Kearns, 2016). So-called northern BC is an area traditionally governed since time immemorial by 17 overlapping First Nations and presently is the home of close to 47,200 First Nations people, representing 35.6% of the province's First Nations population with Métis and non-status Indigenous peoples also sharing these same geographies (FNHA, n.d). These largely untreatied geographies and Lands, Waters, and Skies act as an ethnoecological memory repository for many First Nations (Turner, 2020). Ethnoecology is a discipline that expresses the relationship and responsibility among Lands, Waters, plants, animals, fish, marine ecosystems, and humans as relationships that form the foundation of Indigenous law (Curran & Napolean, 2020). Indigenous law's origins in ecosystemic relationality form governance processes, harvesting practices, and sharing protocol within a community (Hoffman & Joseph, 2019; Mills, 1994; Overstall, 2005). Colonialism in its myriad forms has not only disrupted Indigenous Peoples' governance systems but also harmed the Land, plants, furbearers, swimmers, crawlers, flyers, and Water on which their governance is based (Turner, 2020). Such disruptions have been expressed in *Tsihlqo-tin Nation v. British Columbia* (2007, para. 1288), when Justice David H. Vickers found the British Columbia forestry industry had devastating environmental impacts and infringed upon the Aboriginal rights of the Tsilhqot'in, as affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada. While the Crown must consult Indigenous communities and accommodate them when planning or developing projects that impact territories, this duty to consult is not a guarantee of a substantive outcome of a healthy environment with intact ethnoecological relationships or the ability to exercise one's Indigenous laws (Curran & Napolean, 2020). Despite these disruptions, language, ceremony, governance, storytelling, medicine-making, and traditional ecological knowledge have survived (Green, 2018; We'es Tes & Añonuevo, 2022; Hoffman & Joseph, 2019).

Indigenous communities are using their ethnobotanical relationships and other legal processes to counteract the colonial processes of large-scale extraction projects and translate their Indigenous legal principles into environmental governance policies and frameworks. Through documenting voices that speak to site-specific laws, ethnobotanical relationality, and governance, my research proposes that this multiplicity of feminist voices holds the keys to understanding alternative sustenance economies that counter the harm of industrial extraction projects within a capitalist-colonial extractive economy. Because of my lived and embodied realities, I have witnessed some of the laws and governance I am writing about, including Witsuwit'en, Ts'msyen, and Gitxsan laws.

As a lifelong learner, educator, and witness, I share this information on laws, yet I am mindful that I am not an authority on Witsuwit'en and Gitxsan (or any other Indigenous) laws. Authority lies with the Hereditary Chiefs, accountable to their house group members. However, Witsuwit'en law establishes the principles that govern human relations and relations between humans and the Land, the animals, the plants and trees, the Water, and the spirit world (Harris, 2013). A part of the 'Anuc niwh'iten, Witsuwit'en law states that the territory and Land are for living, economic, cultural, spiritual, and other purposes to provide for the many generations of our people to come. The law also states that the continued reinforcement and full enjoyment of the house, clan, and feast system should be enabled through the ecological health and sustainability of the territory so that our children and our children's children can continue to enjoy the harmony, bounty, and beauty of the Land. Furthermore, Witsuwit'en law states the affirmation of our spiritual values concerning the Land and all the living things it contains and the recognized presence of jurisdictional and institutional arrangements which will enable us to fully exercise Witsuwit'en governance so that we can accomplish our social, economic,

environmental, cultural, spiritual, and political goals with our entire territory (Office of the Wet'suwet'en, 1997).

Authority and decision making is collective and witnessed with the Witsuwit'en. Political and social decisions are made in the balhats (the feast system and governance hall), predicated on a deep wiggus (respect), spirituality, and interconnectedness with the Land, the Water, the animals, and the people. The balhats is also an ongoing system of credit and debt, and feasts encourage ongoing and active relationships of reciprocity and close ties (We'es Tes & Añonuevo, 2022; Mills, 1994). The 'Anuc niwh'it'en underlines the traditional governance of the house, clan, and feast system as structuring the life of the Wet'suwet'en people. Connection to the Land in all aspects of life, cultural, economic, spiritual, and others, is central to a spirituality that underlies its relationship to the Land. Respect and right relations are guiding values for self-determination in social, economic, environmental, cultural, spiritual, and political goals (Mowatt et.al, 2022; Mills, 1994).

With this in mind, my research is set within another context: the context of landmark court cases in the 1990s that proved to the Supreme Court of Canada that Aboriginal title exists on these Lands. The *Delgamuukw v British Columbia case* [1997] forced colonial legal systems to address Aboriginal title by setting a test to determine if Aboriginal title still existed and, if so, how the Crown might justifiably infringe upon it. The Court further ruled that Aboriginal title is different from mere Land use and occupation, as previously defined, but also incorporates Aboriginal jurisdictional *authority over how the* Land is used. *Delgamuukw* also acknowledged Aboriginal collective ownership of the Land that includes a cultural relationship to the land (Hoffman & Joseph, 2019; Mills, 1994). I have experienced and witnessed legal governance in the Witsuwit'en balhats; witnessing the oral stories of knowledge holders involved in this case.

Witnessing carries the responsibility to share what has been learned and engage in action[23]. I am someone who has witnessed firsthand the ongoing inequitable health impacts of cumulative coloniality and ongoing pressures from government and industry that are in direct conflict with (Indigenous) responsibilities and relationality to healthy Lands, Water, Air, and kinship. Writers such as Larissa Lai have written about the role of the witness and their responsibility to share what they learn (Lai, 2006). By documenting intersectional feminist voices and placing them into a collective dialogue with one another on the public record, my research strives to contribute to demands that colonial institutions, such as provincial and federal governments, take their action-oriented commitments to UNDRIP seriously and transform existing colonial laws and legislation to be accountable to Indigenous legal governance and Indigenous frameworks of relationality and accountability by documenting these voices on the public record and connecting them to historical and current injustices. This research plays a role in witnessing the co-researchers' lived and place-based experiences in northern geographies and sharing what they have learned so that those in positions of influence (such as government officials and academics) can reflect on their relationships and accountability with Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit community members.

Within these ethnoecological and legal geographies, there has been ample research demonstrating how the social determinants of health, specifically the proximal (the conditions that have a direct impact on physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual health), intermediate (the origin of those proximal determinants), and the distal (historical and contemporary structures) determinants of health impact Indigenous populations resulting in extreme health inequities (Greenwood et al., 2015; Reading, 2018). Distal (also known as structural) determinants of

[23] In Coast Salish territory, see more in the Ut'sam (Witness) Project- https://collections.squamish.net/Detail/entities/304/accept_terms/1 and https://larissalai.com/utsamwitness/.

My Soft Heart Herds
By Jennifer Wickham

My soft heart herds
And yet there is no-one in my family to tell me what they taste like
Alcan drowned what was left after the CN railway cut them off
I mourn them often
full chest heaving painful sobs like I'm being crushed by the loss
but when I talk about them my words just dissipate

Maybe it's too painful
like admitting that we have lost something so sacred makes it real/ and all turn to elk and moose to fill our plate, in silence

I feel it all
and it's a joke that I cry about everything but I can't hold it anymore
the pain of the land and the water is too loud to ignore

They're in my bones
And the strength of my DNA fed from millennia of these beautiful beasts
And the land that sustained them fuels my resistance
I wear their memory as a shield
Protecting whatever it is we have left and shaking the rest of you awake
I'll show you every day even when you hate me
Our survival depends on it.

health are the deeply rooted historical, political, ideological, economical, and social foundations that construct proximal and intermediate determinants (Krieger, 2008; Reading, 2018; Richmond & Ross, 2009). Addressing Indigenous and racialized health inequities through an analysis of the underlying distal determinants (not just symptomatic effects) needs to be framed from a strength-based perspective that celebrates positive determinants such as embodied connections to Land, Water, skies, relationships, and communities. I aim to make visible the ongoing impacts of distal determinants of health, such as colonialism and racism, in order not to erase their material influences on womxn's health. In this research, womxn's voices connect embodied health and well-being to the health of territories, watersheds, foodsheds, and airsheds. Thus, I hope this collection of voices has the transformative potential to influence current colonial policy, practice, and programs. Health issues faced by Indigenous Peoples and arguably Black, racialized, and gender non-conforming Bodies are felt exponentially, rather than being the cumulative sum of wounds as a direct result of colonialism. Such wounds impact the entire community and ways of life (Chandler & Dunlop, 2015). The story-poems in Chapter Four connect the distal determinants of health to the disproportionate negative health outcomes experienced by Black, Filipinx, and other racialized communities (without intentionally

tokenizing, conflating, essentializing identities, or reducing these experiences and stories) with anti-Indigenous, anti-Black, and anti-Asian racism. As Gina Starblanket has observed:

> State institutions not only deprive Indigenous people of justice but also operate to mask the frequent and extreme forms of violence that Indigenous people face when interacting with them. As the racist and evolutionary doctrines of civilization that justified Canada's early Indian policy have been called into question over time, the Crown has committed to offering limited degrees of change to the political relationship with Indigenous peoples, while also further concretizing its own authority and jurisdiction" (2019, p. 15).

Starblanket's observations insightfully comment on how colonial laws and institutions are weaponized against Indigenous people while they also covertly invisibilize colonial institutions' lack of accountability for the impacts of their decisions on the health of Indigenous people. This research draws direct links between Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's embodied health stories and the extreme intergenerational health inequities that I argue stem from the distal determinants of health rooted in systemic racism from government policies, processes, programs, and projects. The story-poems gesture to the ways governments pander to industry interests and capitalism over the health and well-being of Indigenous, Black, racialized womxn of colour. And by impacting the health and well-being of womxn, this ripples out to our partners, children, siblings, families, communities and across nations as we are often married into another tribe/community/nation.

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) is one example of a leading global organization that documents the health impacts of industry as ongoing harm to Indigenous womxn, children, and racialized communities with environmental violence enacted by the inaction of settler states' governments and corporations. In January 2022, the IITC submitted an official report to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Indigenous Women

and Girls that recognizes environmental violence to be on the same level as physical violence (International Indian Treaty Council, n.d.). By environmental violence, I mean violence that includes settler states and industries that knowingly permit, produce, release, store, transport, export, and dump known hazardous waste that negatively affects neurodevelopment and reproduction and causes disease. From my informal conversations with doctors in rural and northern places, there are high degrees of cancers in places where extensive natural resource projects occur. Caleb Behn is Eh-Cho Dene and Dunne Za/Cree from Treaty 8 in northeastern BC, the epicenter of BC's fracking operation and the focus of the 2013 documentary *Fractured Land.* In an interview, he states:

> For the NDP to exempt a review of fracking from any health-oriented research is — I don't know if I have strong enough words — I feel as if it's criminal hypocrisy. To give this problematic industry and this problematic technology a pass on health because you're pro-LNG puts Indigenous and rural populations at risk. The vast majority of original research on fracking — 84% of which has been conducted in the last four or five years — indicates health risks are present or strongly indicated. More recently, I helped facilitate a pilot study looking at muconic acid…in the urine of pregnant Indigenous women in northeast BC. Muconic acid is a marker of benzene exposure. The findings are intense. In essence, rural women in northeast BC have three and a half times the national average of this marker that is likely, but not guaranteed, benzene metabolization. What's interesting is Indigenous women within that cohort have six times the national average. This is the first original research into the potential human health impacts of fracking in northeast BC I am surprised it hasn't raised some red flags. It took over two years to conduct. To avoid addressing these health impacts in a fracking review is hypocrisy of the deepest and most dangerous kind. And it is evident it's of a very strategic benefit to the LNG industry[24] (Linnitt, 2020, p. 36).

[24] There is also ongoing health research of Rio Tinto Alcan that shares maternal health concerns and also higher rates of certain cancers in Haisla territory (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

A distal determinants analysis could potentially measure governmental institutions' (in)action to examine how multi-scalar forms of structural, systemic, and environmental racism impact individual womxn's health. With this in mind, I discuss how white settler colonialism, racial capitalism, environmental violence, and slow violence[25] are yoked together. Understanding that yoking offers a lens to consider the possibility of the distal determinants of health as an analytical framework (akin to a health impact assessment) through which to examine multi-scalar forms of structural, systemic, and environmental racism are enacted by government and industry-backed extractive projects and their colonial, legal, and carceral institutions which impact womxn health. Womxn's health, especially First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women's health and wellness, is also and always implicated by white-settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and environmental violence – to which I now turn.

2.2 White Settler Colonialism, Racial Capitalism, and Environmental Violence

White settler colonialism anchored in whiteness violently displaces First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from their territories and makes white-European settlers the hosts and owners of the Land through the logic of property ownership and possession. This framework imagines control of Indigenous peoples and all racialized Others (Razack, 2002) through ideologies of white supremacy. White settler colonialism subverts Indigenous People's self-determination and "has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous people of their Lands and self-determining authority" (Coulthard, 2014). This logic of white possession, property, and ownership (which results in white entitlement and superiority) is further entrenched in legal, political, economic, and discursive power resulting in Land theft and ongoing resource extraction (Coulthard, 2014;

[25] Rob Nixon coined the term slow violence to describe how systems of capitalism exacerbate the vulnerability of ecosystems through natural resource extraction and petro-imperialism (2011).

Pasternak, 2015; 2020) and continues to rely on colonial court procedures, policing, violence, militarization, and carcerality against Indigenous peoples on their own territories (Cox, 2020; Follett-Hosgood, 2022; Simmons, 2021). The incarceration of Indigenous womxn is high in so-called Canada, particularly in Prince George (Paul, 2022). Such violence serves a material purpose; it controls who has access to Land (Mawani, 2009) and continues to echo how so-called BC was founded through racial hierarchies enabled by legislation that incarcerated racial bodies to protect white identity, privilege, and property (Knowledge Network, n.d.).

My research project represents a vision of health potential of health dreams, through womxn's voices, poetics, and collaborative autoethnographic voices that speak back to extractive industrial projects. I aim to highlight that such extractive projects and decision-making continually privilege white, patriarchal, Western, Euro-centric worldviews as superior, naturalized, and universal while erasing and diminishing Indigenous holistic systems and lived experience (Moreton-Robinson, 2015; Quijano, 2000). This research explicitly applies an anti-racist, intersectional feminist, and decolonial methodology while including Indigenous and queer scholars supported by a framework shaped by the distal determinants of health (colonial structures, institutions, laws, policies, practices) about diverse racialized womxn's health and well-being. The research attempts to transcend narratives and spaces of white settler-Indigenous binaries, identities, and positionalities (Byrd, 2011; Farrales, 2020; Jafri, 2012; Pulido, 2017). Through situating womxn's stories within a dialogue of policies and practices related to natural resource extraction projects, migrant labour policies that shape labour production, and how Black and Indigenous bodies are surveilled, treated, and incarcerated, I highlight the transformative potential of solidarity, refusal, and resistance against white settler colonial-hetero-patriarchal capital figurations.

White settler colonialism is deeply anchored and invested in critical infrastructure. Critical infrastructure, such as the building of dams, railroads, highways, fossil fuel pipelines and major extractive projects (forestry, mining, construction, oil, and gas), are markers and makers of white settler colonialism, racial capitalism, environmental violence (and racism), and settler futurity (Cowen, 2024). Anne Spice makes the argument that the characterization of both oil and gas pipelines as "critical infrastructures" constitutes a form of settler-colonial invasion and that Indigenous resistance to oil and gas infrastructures, through suspension, disruption, and blockages, protects our relations against the violence of settler-colonial invasion (2018). Transnational corporations fund colonial critical infrastructures, with provincial and federal government decision-makers doing very little to regulate or ensure the health and safety of communities, Lands, and waterways (Amnesty International, 2016b; Cowen, 2019; Simmons, 2023). This collection of voices and story-poems makes visible Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's ability to contribute to writing theory and knowledge about themselves through grounding their lived and place-specific voices. Generating these collaborative story-poems, or undertaking storymaking, can be thought of as infrastructures that are life-giving. Winona LaDuke and Debra Cowen name such infrastructures as alimentary (2020). Spice names Indigenous infrastructures, such as clean Water, natural food abundance, intact habitat for wildlife, and the freedom to harvest, as marking and making the future of Indigenous infrastructures. (2018). Spice makes her argument by referencing Freda Huson's[26] embodied stories, which I liken to the story-poems in Chapter Four and that represent an alternative epistemological understanding of critical infrastructure:

[26] Freda Huson is a Witsuwit'en woman also known as Chief Howilkat. She is a leading advocate for Indigenous communities and the coordinator of the Unist'ot'en camp that has established a Land-based healing centre. For more information go to unistoten.camp

> So, industry and government always talk about critical infrastructure, and their critical infrastructure is making money, and using destructive projects to make that money, and they go by any means necessary to make that happen…So for us, our critical infrastructure is the clean drinking water, and the very water that the salmon spawn in, and they go back downstream, and four years, come back. That salmon is our food source; it's our main staple food. That's one of our critical infrastructures. And there's berries that are our critical infrastructure, because the berries not only feed us, they also feed the bears, and the salmon also don't just feed us, they feed the bears. And each and every one of those are all connected, and without each other, we wouldn't survive on this planet… For example, the bears will eat the berries and they'll drop it, and the waste that comes out of the bear, it's got seeds in it, so that germinates and we get more berries. We need the bears in order to keep producing our berries, and same with the salmon. The bears eat the salmon as well, because once the salmon spawn, they end up dying anyways, and that becomes food for the bears, so it's not being wasted. All of that is part of the system that our people depend on, and that whole cycle and system is our critical infrastructure, and that's what we're trying to protect, an infrastructure that we depend on. And industry and government are pushing these projects that would destroy that critical infrastructure, most important to our people (emphasis added by Spice) (2018, p. 41).

Anne Spice and Freda Huson make an important point. Colonial infrastructures invade the relationships between Indigenous people and their kinship with human and more-than-human networks that sustain generative life forms and relationships that are the basis of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. Colonial infrastructures (in the form of the oil and gas industry, dams, pipelines, and mining projects) are industrial developments that are, in turn, enabled by racial capitalism.

Racial capitalism, a concept coined by Black scholar Cedric J. Robinson (1983), is the process of extracting social and economic value from a person of a non-white racial identity.

Racial capitalism reproduces racial hierarchies that undergird Land ownership, enslavement, and border rule with capitalist economies that benefit from imperial expansion, colonial dispossession, and racial domination (Walia, 2021). As Ruth Wilson Gilmore says, capitalism requires inequality, and racism preserves it (Haymarket Books, 2021). Gilmore argues that racial capitalism is a technology of antirelationality (Melamed, 2015). This technology reduces life and relations between humans and other-than humans in the interest of capitalism. As such, racial capitalism does not simply describe the ways race and capitalism intersect. Instead, racial capitalism insists that capitalism has always been predicated on racial difference and the exploitation of racialized bodies for labour. Capitalism and racism are co-constituted (Robinson et al., 2019). Settler states with colonial-capitalist extraction projects continue to enforce policies that re-enact global colonialism and capitalism to fulfill a state plan of resource extractive projects, producing and polluting waste in specific geographies. May Farrales (2020) and Laura Pulido (2017) point to environmental waste as geographical practices ensconced in the very logic of racial capitalism. Environmental waste relies on racially devalued bodies to act as "sinks" where the mess or unwanted pollution and excess of industrial activities and capitalist lifestyles are dumped (Pulido in Farrales, 2020). The voices braided together in Chapter Four map how environmental waste affects womxn's physiological well-being and mental health by resisting projects on an intergenerational basis. I turn next to the latest iteration of resistance against environmental racism and racial capitalism.

2.3 Land Back

Land Back is an Indigenous-led movement. According to Canada Council for the Arts Chair Jesse Wente, it is "about decision-making power. It's self-determination for our Peoples here that should include access to our territories… and for us to have control over how that

actually looks" (David Suzuki website, n.d.). Land Back demands that Land governance systems under provincial and federal governments support Indigenous People to be decision-makers about land use, and respect and be accountable to Indigenous Peoples' concerns about the health impacts of industrial activities and development. Land Back movements (Yellowhead Institute Red Paper, 2019; Briarpatch, 2020), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women's final report demand that international, federal, provincial, and local leaders not forcibly remove Indigenous People from their Lands or territories. Nevertheless, in northern geographies, critical infrastructure in the form of large, industrial, extractive projects that implement man camps is normalized to justify employment, economic, and wealth outcomes (Cowen, 2019; Morgan et al., 2021; Spice, 2018) while bringing violence, disease, and continual social harms to womxn (Estes, 2019; Morgan et al. 2021) despite calls from rights and title holders:

> The province has a responsibility to Indigenous people. Many policies have been implemented to destroy our people, lands, language, and culture. These policies have been very effective, and we must protect what we have left. The unnecessary death of one language speaker or knowledge keeper would have devastating effects on our families, communities, and governance system. Making a conscious decision to bring transient workers into our territories and communities is telling us that the economic gain of the province or state is more important than our language and cultures. You are telling us that the economic gain of the province is more important than our lives. Your behaviour and attitude facilitates the states' genocide of our people and lands (Wet'suwet'en Ts'ako ze' and Skiy ze' 2020, para. 4).

Mary Deleary, statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 26 June 2014, statement number SE049, cited in Final Report, 6:5.

For six years, as the (TRC) commission travelled across the country, we sought input on the multiple concepts and meanings of reconciliation. We heard from Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers whose understandings and teachings about reconciliation extend well beyond the need to remedy the significant harms of residential schools and the ongoing impacts of colonization. They told us that while there is no word for reconciliation in their languages, there are many concepts, stories, teachings, laws, ceremonies, protocols, and practices that their respective nations have used for millennia to resolve conflicts, repair harms, and restore good relations among diverse peoples and with the Earth. The commission concludes, "Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, from an Aboriginal perspective, also requires reconciliation with the natural world. ***If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy the natural world, then reconciliation remains incomplete.*** *This is a perspective that we as Commissioners have repeatedly heard: that reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth. Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous laws stress that humans must journey through life in conversation and negotiation with all creation. Reciprocity and mutual respect help sustain our survival.*

The poem-stories in my research pivot around racialized and gendered bodies as sites of political, spiritual, social, emotional, cultural, and physical embodied health. I argue that, as the poem-stories make visible and speak to, these bodies extend as genealogical homelands and homes to Indigenous, diasporic, archipelagic, and oceanic places, opening possibilities to imagine and build the conditions for collective liveable futures on the Land and Water together. By highlighting and presenting the poem-stories that I do in this work, I aim to document that the co-researchers' bodies and voices are crucial sites for self-determination. Scholars such as Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson argue that body sovereignty is inseparable from sovereignty over Land, Water, and Air and is not fixed, it is fluid and constantly recreating itself (2008). I believe that my collaborative storying work, which culminates in a series of seven story-poems, provides insight into womxns' well-being and health in current times and especially in specific geographies (so-called northern British Columbia) through relationality with Land-Water-Air-Body.

These story-poems attend to urgent calls to address the climate crisis and demand governments (and academic institutions and banks) to divest from fossil fuels and invest in sustainable and non-extractive sustenance economies in northern geographies through uplifting Indigenous self-determination and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous communities in places where extractive projects are proposed to take place. This research celebrates racialized womxn of colour voices, their embodied knowledges, and their rightful place as knowledgeable leaders of holistic and planetary health issues.

2.4 So-called Reconciliation

It has been eight years since the release of the final report and the 94 Calls to Action by the Canada Truth and Reconciliation Commission urging Canadian governments to remedy the structural, genocidal legacy of Indian Residential Schools (Yellowhead, 2021). With the revelations of thousands of Indigenous children's graves at these schools, there is an ongoing failure of the federal and provincial governments to enact substantive change and take action that would dramatically alter the health outcomes of Indigenous Peoples in this country. Instead, the Canadian settler state has an ongoing spectacle of reconciliation (Daigle, 2019; Gaertner, 2020; Hunt, 2014). Survivors of Indian Residential schools and Indigenous leaders, intellectuals, and creative writers (including Lee Maracle, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, and Eden Robinson) have centred the importance of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination with their Land over the empty promises of reconciliation (Gaertner, 2020). Maracle in her book, *Conversations with Canadians* points to the artist Susan Blight who states, "It is not about our knowledge fitting into yours- decolonization is about how you fit into us" not how Indigenous people fit into colonial structures (Maracle, 2006, p. 124). In this research, the creation of story-poems provides counter-knowledge through place-based womxn's health experiences that reconciliation

frameworks by government bodies are not effective. Scholars have argued that the emphasis on reconciliation processes and ensuing apologies are hollow, performative acts, failing to include actual redress or tangible measurement of increased health and well-being outcomes or resolution to ongoing Land claim issues (Barkaskas & Hunt, 2017).

The Yellowhead Institute analyzed the federal government's progress on the 94 Calls to Action. They found ten actions completed in their 2019 analysis, an exceptionally low completion rate. Given the scale of commitment from the federal government, at this rate, a prediction of 94 calls to action will only be completed in 2057 (Yellowhead Institute, 2019). Potawotomi scholar Kyle Powys White remains skeptical of any attempts at reconciliation that "fail to end the parasitic aspects of power" (2018, p. 278). By documenting voices of refusal and resistance to political and government ideologies of reconciliation, this collection of story-poems provides a living record beyond promises of reconciliation. So-called BC legislated the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (DRIPA) in November 2019. Despite implementing DRIPA, large, industrial, extractive projects expand across Indigenous territories in BC with increased state-enabled violence, harm, and spread of disease (Follet-Hosgood, 2021; Morgan et al., 2021; Myette & Riva, 2021).

In 2022, the provincial government unveiled a five-year action plan for implementing DRIPA on the themes of self-determination, title, and rights, addressing Indigenous-specific racism and social, cultural, and economic well-being (Schisler, 2022). Grand Chief and President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs Philip Stewart's reaction to the implementation of DRIPA was as follows:

> Make no mistake, there have been and there will continue to be numerous obstacles that challenge the work being done to revolutionize and rebuild a relationship that has long

> been mired in colonial violence and discrimination. We must reflect on the processes, frameworks, and institutions that continue to deny the Title and Rights of First Nations, enact tremendous harm upon our communities and perpetuate a colonial cycle of marginalization and violence… we must hold our governments and those in positions of power accountable for their actions and commitments to the Declaration Act (Schisler, 2022, n.p.).

Anne Spice (2018) asserts, "the settler accumulation of energy, capital, and territory is reliant on the parallel distribution of toxicity and violence to Indigenous nations, and forms of immediate state violence … tied to the slow environmental destruction of Indigenous homelands" (p. 50). Prompted by such observations, my research illuminates the embodied voices of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn immersed in intergenerational resistance, migration, and survivance. The resulting story-poems, created through processes of story sharing and deep listening, point out how ideologies of reconciliation coupled with ongoing colonial laws, declarations, policies, and projects (and related violence) do not take accountability for the theft of Land and continue to circumvent the actual and tangible implementation of Indigenous self-determination. By bringing to bear the context of the distal determinants of health upon the voices I have documented and woven into story-poems (see Chapter Four) this research demonstrates how decision-makers ignore people and places and their embodied stories. The voices of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn and their embodied knowledge that I present as story-poems, contribute to alternative accountabilities beyond settler-state platitudes of reconciliation to enliven meaningful and transformative multi-scalar health outcomes for womxn.

2.5 Transatlantic Slave Trade and Broader (creative) Discussions in Black, Indigenous, and Asian Literature

The history of the transatlantic slave trade was not brought up in my primary, secondary, and post-secondary education. From the late 1400s to the mid-1800s tens of thousands of people were extracted from Africa by British imperial forces and made into slaves. European and colonial expansion occurred through the violent elevation of European domination over Black Africans and Indigenous communities in the Western Hemisphere. The legacy of European colonization in Africa is the transatlantic slave trade, an issue that is not widely taught in educational institutions. Slavery was legal in so-called Canada until 1834. African, Black, and Caribbean people face everyday erasure, hypervisibility/invisibility, and ongoing issues related to their intersecting identities. Extractivism, the process of extracting people from their homelands destabilized, divided, and drained Africa of strength and intellect. Saidiya Hartman writes that the "skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishments are all the afterlives of slavery" (2008, p.6). Such an afterlife persists as Black bodies must live within the ontological, political, and socio-economic entanglements of colonization and slavery. Hartman is a seminal figure in Black studies. Her phrasing of the "afterlives of slavery" had a long-lasting impact on the ways people viewed the chattel slavery on Black life. Hartman's work tackles the legacies of slavery through memoir *(Lose Your Mother*, 2006) to the radical everyday practices of young, queer, Black womxn to experience notions of freedom (*Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, 2019). Hartman humanizes the Black experience. Her writing examines the past by exploring the archives of slavery to demonstrate how slavery haunts contemporary times. She provides a reorientation of Black life reanimating it with beauty, care, agency, and creativity.

Hartman's work is in dialogue with Black scholars such as Christina Sharpe in her book, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being,* which interrogates representations of Black life in the afterlives of slavery. Sharpe highlights Black survival in a world shaped by persistent violence and negation towards Black life and Black bodies. For Sharpe, "the wake" can be read as both a theory and a methodology for the metaphors and materiality of how the slave ship haunts Black life. This haunting produces conditions of containment, regulation, and surveillance in contemporary Black life. Sharpe also illustrates that anti-Blackness and white supremacy are the climate or weather that normalizes the erasure of Black lives and bodies. Importantly, Sharpe counters erasures by situating artistic production and resistance as possibilities for disrupting Black invisibility. Through her "wake work," Sharpe invokes an ethics of care of and for Black bodies. Importantly, much of Sharpe's work explores historical memory and how it can interrogate acts of Black remembrance. I share womxn's voices and words (Chapter Four) with tenderness and care, thus affirming Black experiences, Black agency and creativity, Black life, Black brilliance, and Black survivance and joy.

Barbados-born poet Kamau Braithwaite, in his seminal work *The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (1988) situated within the experiences of colonialism and slavery, illustrates the long-lasting impacts of slavery on African identity, including psychic wounds and scars. His work predates both Sadiya Hartman and Christina Sharpe's work and can be in placed in dialogue with them as he traces historical and personal events to the exploration of Black, Caribbean, and African lives in his poetry. Through Braithwate's poetry, "tidaletics" is a descriptor of tidal dynamics with waves hitting shores, rolling and retreating through high and low tide. When tidalectics is applied as a symbol of the slave trade era, Braithwaite gestures to the ships from the shores of Europe, as vessels of slave trade and colonialism across oceans to

the shores of African coastlines. On arriving at Africa's shores, Africans were captured, bought, or tricked into captivity. Tidaletics also represents the method of colonial transmission (human and material cargo) between ports across the Atlantic. Wayde Compton, a Black writer born in so-called Vancouver, also carries Braithwaite's tidalectics into his introduction to the anthology *Blueprint*[27] where he describes tidalectics as

> a way of seeing history as a palimpsest, where generations overlap generations, and eras wash over eras like tides on a stretch of beach… Repetition, whether in the form of ancestor worship or the poem-histories of the *griot*, informs black ontologies more than does the Europeanist drive for perpetual innovation … In a European framework, the past is something to be gotten over …in tidalectics, we do not *improve upon* the past, but are ourselves *versions* of the past (Compton, 2001, p.17).

The Middle Passage was a triangular trade where ships left Europe or British North America with goods for African markets, traded for African slaves, and then shipped those slaves to European colonies in the Americas and Caribbean Islands. Underlying slavery is understanding the displacement and regulation of Black bodies, especially Black womxn, that was "rooted in patriarchal ways of seeing and white colonial desires for lands, free labor, and racial sexual domination [that] rest on a tight hierarchy of racial power and knowledge" (McKittrick, 2006, p. 309) The historical context of slavery continues to have long-lasting impacts on the Black, African, and Caribbean diaspora. Métis scholar Chelsea Vowell, has written that "the descendants of enslaved Africans cannot be considered settlers… enslaved peoples could not consent to being brought here, and their presence cannot confer upon their descendants acceptance into the settler colonial system." (Vowell in Morgan, 2019, n.p.). One of the impacts

[27] *Blueprint* was a groundbreaking creative and comprehensive anthology of literature and orature by Black so-called British Columbians.

of being Black in a world dominated by global conditions of anti-Blackness, are feelings and states of unbelonging and precarity. Anthony Morgan has articulated this state of being as "displanted" (Morgan, 2019). Both the interdisciplinary scholars that I have noted throughout this dissertation (for example, Dionne Brand and *the Door of No Return*) and some of the Black co-researchers express ideas of precarity. The presence of Black people in so-called Canada is linked to the transatlantic slave trade, which was a mechanism of a racial global capitalism in the 1600-1800s (Morgan, 2019). Such a mechanism speaks to the historical haunting of global anti-Blackness and the need to transform and transcend contemporary and current anti-Blackness.

Nadine Chambers in *Sometimes Clocks Turn Back for Us to Move Forward: Reflections on Black and Indigenous Geographies* (2019) writes in a hybrid experimental form through reflections and poetry to address the movement of aluminum from her Jamaica home to Haisla territory. Chambers traces corporate and colonial extraction and destruction affecting Lands, people, and relationships binding Black and Indigenous relations in Jamaica and in Kitimat. She writes

> As a person who has lived in BC for most of her life, with the persistent question, "Are there Black people in BC?", I read Immigration Acts alongside Indian Acts alongside Mining Acts and Indian Land Policies. I trace the genesis of anti-Blackness in British Columbia to see what kind of Canada has been produced through its treatment of Black people, through anti-Black immigration and discriminator-to-deadly patterns (2019, p.27).

With this research, I aim to counter the erasures of diverse Black womxn's stories in these specific geographies and connect them to Black feminist methodologies and scholarship and to document racism and discrimination Black womxn encounter. At the time of writing this

dissertation, there isn't disaggregated race-based data concerning Black womxn and their health outcomes. However, the Black in BC Convener Pilot Project report highlights excessive racism felt by Black and community members of African descent (Oduro-Marfo, 2022).

The conditions of global modernity are premised on the colonial and imperial exploitation of violence against Black, Indigenous, and Asian peoples (Lowe, 2015). This is certainly an urgent concern for many creative writers working in these axes of genocide, slavery, and racial hegemonies, as I am doing in this dissertation. A question that fuels my research is thus: in what ways do Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn practice an intersectional ethics of solidarity and responsibility with Indigenous Land and life in northern and Indigenous places? According to Harsha Walia, solidarity building between Black and Brown communities should centre their efforts against the forced displacement of Indigenous Peoples from their traditional territories, the destruction of autonomy and self-determination in Indigenous self-government, and the assimilation of Indigenous Peoples' cultures and traditions (2013). Walia purports that the role of racialized people in building relationships with Indigenous People includes developing customs and structures that will guide just relations with Indigenous Peoples into the future. These customs and structures refuse the settler state and colonial mentality by recognizing the importance of Lands as honoured medicinal grounds, burial sites, ceremonial sites, hunting places, or gathering places (Walia, 2013, p. 251). Other scholars assert that the only way to escape complicity as a settler or a migrant is "active opposition to it… that happens in the context of on-the-ground, day-to-day organizing and creating and cultivating spaces where we can begin dialogues and discussion as natives and non-natives, within a shared terrain of struggle" (Singh, 2007, n.p.). The voices of Filipinx womxn offered in Chapter Four, woven with other voices, document insights into the experiences of diasporic womxn. These voices also

gesture to relationships with place in the forms of archipelagos, islands, oceanic and salt-water. While many Filipinx scholars have written about the conditions under which migration from these islands take place, my research documents voices and memories of movement and engagement with Land, Water, and northern Indigenous communities. These voices gesture towards possibilities of a decolonial practice with Indigenous Land and life. These womxn's voices illuminate the ways that structures and systems continue to try to extract labour from their bodies and eliminate their bodies (through inaction, surveillance, carcerality, or ongoing coloniality).

Asian poets, writers, and scholar-activists such as Rita Wong and Larissa Lai, through collaborative writing and activism, have been making connections between personal responsibility, feminism, and environmental concerns for several decades (Christian & Wong, 2017; Lai, 2013, 2019). In addition, these and other writers have been calling for an ethics of responsibility to the Land through an action-oriented praxis, genealogical acknowledgment (which I discuss in Chapter Four) and attending to one's positionality as a settler of colour (Phung, 2011; Phung, 2019). For instance, poet Rita Wong writes:

> I got arrested because we're in a climate emergency. We are in imminent peril … We are losing species at an alarming rate, and many face mass extinction due to the climate crisis that humans have caused. This is the irreparable harm I sought to prevent, which the court, the Crown, and corporations also have a responsibility to avoid (Wong in Mockler, 2017, n.p.).

More recently, with the passing of Sto: lo writer and activist Lee Maracle, poets Rita Wong, Larissa Lai, and Hiromi Goto reflect on the influence of Maracle's writing and activism on their lives:

> Lee kindly and rigorously let us know that if we were serious about our anti-racist work, we had first to address colonization, the system that used race, gender, class, and more to divide, devalue and control people of all colours. She shared stories that asserted who the original peoples of these lands were and are, reminding us that this injustice to them was and is an injustice to all. She opened up our hearts and spirits, reminding us that our minds and bodies work best when aligned with our spirit, not fighting it. (Rabble, 2021, n.p.).

The long-term relationality between writers such as Maracle, Wong, Lai, and Goto reflects the possibilities of Indigenous-Asian solidarity across time and space. Lee Maracle was connected with an earlier generation of Asian-Canadian writers and activists such as SKY Lee and Jim Wong-Chu illustrated in her short story, "Yin Chin" (see Canadian Literature, No. 124-125, 1990). My research documents how similar relationality exists in specific northern spaces. Filipino-Japanese scholar Dean Saranillio's work has focused on Asian settler colonialism in Hawaii and follows Haunani Kay Trask's methods. Methods that focus on the Land prioritize what one is *doing* to address the genocidal consequences of aligning oneself with the settler state over how one self-identifies as a settler of colour or arrivant, uninvited guest, or occupier (2015). Saranillio urges the study of multiple modes of racial, gendered, classed, and colonial power dynamics with one another, "until we become multilingual in each other's histories, we will continue to renew a system of imperial violence and capitalist exploitation" (2015, p.296). My research seeks a multilingual relationality with a particular emphasis on relational solidarity possibilities between Filipinx, Black, and Indigenous womxn and communities in so-called northern BC. My research contributes to the goals of Indigenous resurgence and self-determination, and collaborative ways of uplifting cultural, physical, spiritual, mental, and

physiological health and well-being with an emphasis on wellness related to Land, Water, and Air. There are currently interdisciplinary Filipinx-Canadian scholars engaging in Indigenous and Filipinx relationships in so-called British Columbia (see Hunt/Tłaliłila'ogwa 2024; We'es T'es & Anonuevo, 2022). This research is an entry point and an intervention to consider how emerging Filipinx studies in so-called Canada orients itself with critical Black and Indigenous studies and how Filipinx in so-called British Columbia relate to Indigenous and Black communities.

Diasporic African, Caribbean, and Black poets, writers, and scholars across time and space have also been documenting ways in which anti-Black racism and Black diasporic experiences impact their lives and health outcomes while also envisioning Black liberation and joy (Brand, 2018; Cole, 2020; hooks, 1994; King, 2019; Maynard 2017; McKittrick, 2006; Walcott, 2018, 2021). For example, poet Canisia Lubrin documents the impacts of climate change, slavery, and capitalism and gestures towards war and mass migration. Aligned with a broader diasporic African tradition, "how many ways can you disappear/ a people dignity by dignity" (2020, p. 67). Lubrin states:

> For someone who has always had a particular sensitivity and awareness to these very issues [of anti-Black and systemic racism] — what is happening now is very different from many movements that have come before it, certainly in scale. All of my work is committed to looking at the conditions that create, sustain, and perpetuate different forms of oppression and other kinds of modernist nightmares. The fact that the global pressure on this call to confront anti-Black racism seems new for me in a way that I've never seen so many white people, so many people of different ethnicities and races out there making demands for a better world. (CBC, 2020, n.p.)

Robyn Maynard is at the forefront of writing about how settler colonialism perpetuates anti-Black racism within a Canadian context. Maynard also writes about the importance of Black and Indigenous self-determination and freedom from carceral systems perpetuated by the settler-nation state (Diverlus et al., 2020; Maynard, 2017). Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson have engaged in co-writing about community-building towards Black and Indigenous decolonial futures without reliance on whiteness or the settler-colonial state of Canada (2020; 2022). In what Simpson and Coulthard (2016) call "grounded normativity," reciprocity and relationality with diasporic populations can uphold Indigenous sovereignties and self-determination. Similarly, I see connections between Katherine McKittrick's (2016) call to rethink our political, epistemological grounds and Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2017) who argues that abolition geography starts from the premise that freedom is a place in dialogue with Eve Tuck's (2009) refusal of damage-centred narratives. All three scholars emphasize instead research that upholds and builds on the desires for freedom for subjugated people oppressed by settler-state policies and institutions.

In Plantation Futures, McKittrick describes racial violence experienced on plantations: rooted in violent Black subjugation, racial hierarchy, and land exploitation and shaped by white patriarchy and power (2016). McKittrick also provokes the reader to consider thinking about deciphering a plantation future (deciphering is a practice she borrows from Sylvia Wynter) by focusing on the land and its ability to nourish and sustain the humanity of Black life leading to a more humane future. Ruth Wilson Gilmore believes that the goal of abolition is to "change how we interact with each other and the planet by putting people before profits, welfare before warfare, and life over death" (2022, p.20). Gilmore has also argued that abolition is about presence not absence, she advocates that abolition is about creating conditions where people

flourish. For me, Gilmore echoes what McKittrick has argued, that a reframing and reimagining futures must be through an orientation of life and life-giving processes. Eve Tuck, in 2009, wrote a letter to call out academics, communities, and educators to stop writing damage-centred narratives about Indigenous Peoples. Tuck goes on to state that without talking about racism and colonization, all that is left is the damage, the pain, the brokenness that oppression leaves. Instead, Tuck advocates for an epistemological shift towards desire based on complexity, contradiction, and "the self-determination of lived lives" (Tuck, 2009, p.416) and "based on a present that is enriched by both the past and the future. It is integral to our humanness" (Tuck, 2009, p. 416).

My research uplifts the voices of Black, racialized, and Indigenous womxn who are enacting awareness and solidarities across relations of Land, Water, and Air. Maynard nods to the work of Indigenous activists and thinkers such as Audra Simpson, Patricia Monture-Angus, Sarah Hunt, Pam Palmeter, Chelsea Vowel, and Arthur Manuel, who have been seminal leaders in Indigenous-led resistance. At the same time, Simpson mentions Black scholars and writers such as Rinaldo Walcott, Dionne Brand, Canisia Lubrin, Tiffany Lethabo King, and Angela Davis, and a host of others who are querying the overlapping logic and outcomes of slavery, Anti-Blackness, and white settler colonialism. The authors discuss overlap in the form of state violence, missing and murdered women and girls, the school-to-prison pipeline, racism in the form of policing and the prison-industrial complex, abolition, racism in the academy in the form of unconscious bias and anti-intellectualism, and ongoing denial of Canada's legacies of slavery and settler colonialism.

Within Christina Sharpe's framework of wake and wake work, she argues that "thinking needs care… that thinking and care need to stay in the wake" (2016, p. 5). The wake is simultaneously a metaphor and a material framework for the work of care and survival:

> Living as I have argued we do in the wake of slavery, in spaces where we were never meant to survive, or have been punished for surviving and for daring to claim or make spaces of something like freedom, we yet reimagine and transform spaces for and practices of an ethics of care (as in repair, maintenance, and attention) an ethics of seeing, and of being in the wake as consciousness; as a way of remembering and observance that started with the door of no return, continued in the hold of the ship, and on the shore (2016, p. 130–131).

In many Black feminist practices, care is at the heart of communal transformations. Notions of care and caring disrupt dominant narratives of Black suffering and state violence against Black bodies. Care counters suffering and creates new spaces for freedom and liberation and away from domination.[28]

Through engaging with and drawing connections between and across Indigenous, Black, and Asian literature, and with insight from critical legal and ethnoecological geographies, my own research documents voices of Black womxn and their health stories in northern, Indigenous, and rural places. The literature review reveals very few stories about Black womxn, their health, and their relationships with Indigenous Peoples in these specific geographies. So, my research listens to and braids Black womxn's voices, to produce new and distinctly anti-colonial story-poems in which they interact with other racialized womxn of colour and Indigenous womxn's voices. The contextualizing of the history of global and local colonialism and slavery sets the

[28] While my dissertation does not encompass Disability Studies, further reading could include Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's *Care Work* and Akemi Nishida's *Just Care.*

stage for these contemporary story-poems, which I discuss in Chapter Four, but which I argue are, at heart, systematically refused and erased by hegemonic white patriarchal colonial power.

These story-poems, I insist, offer insight from and within northern geographies about healthcare, education, and leadership that engender the transformative power of embodied storysharing to create more just and equitable and ultimately healthy environments. I turn next to the methodological and philosophical frameworks that influence this research.

Chapter 3- Methods and Methodology: Kuwentuhan and Decolonial Knowing

I am interested in creative, boundary transgressing, theoretical approaches, methods, and praxis that support Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn and their voices that tell their experiences of health and wellness. These womxn's voices, I argue, provide unique insight into the knowledge of too often overlooked people. The grounded means, otherwise known as methods, that I undertake in this work are informed by a series of theoretical frameworks, otherwise known as methodologies. I am acutely aware that academic research, particularly concerning Indigenous Peoples, has an embedded unequal and ultimately colonizing structure of resource extraction and capital accumulation. As a Filipinx womxn living in community where 90% of the population identifies as First Nations in so-called northern BC, I prioritized lived and living knowledge that substantiates the voices of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour and the communities they are accountable to. Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith, in *Decolonizing Methodologies,* emphasizes that in any research project, "getting the approach right and employing the most appropriate methods and people" (1999, p. 190) are important. Smith believes research

Christine Añonuevo, Self-reflective journal entry, December 2023

In the past fifteen years, I have attended numerous rallies and community gatherings on Ts'msyen, Witsuwit'en, and Gitxsan territories. One project that united people across the north, was the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline: a planned but never realized twin pipeline from Alberta to Kitimat. This pipeline was heavily criticized by Indigenous communities. The National Energy Board's Joint Review Panel were completed in 2013. The NEB decision based on the National Energy Board Act and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act asserted that the pipeline should be approved subject to 209 conditions. Despite 96 % of the 9,500 submissions opposing the project including a coalition of 160 First Nations, thirty-one municipal governments, two regional districts, the Union of BC municipalities and six unions passing resolutions against the project. If the majority of people living in area most affected by such a project say no to the project-why do our governments continue to push them through?

knowledge projects should stretch intellectual, creative, spiritual, collective, and individual work (p. 187). In approaching this research, I was also mindful not to continue "hit and run" research trends where (predominantly white) researchers do not live in communities where they conduct research yet extract knowledge and publish with no transformative change for the lives of those, they conducted research upon (Smith, 2021).

By its very methodological design, which is intent on anticolonialism and creating new spaces, my research desires to shift and challenge more standard research expectations about who can be a knowledge holder, what counts as knowledge, how research is enacted, and who benefits from knowledge production. Smith asserts that the structures of power and feeling that have framed most of the research on Indigenous peoples continue to protect, privilege, and sustain Euro-American paradigms and status in relationships and have not served Indigenous peoples participating in the research (Smith 1999; 2021). For any researcher concerned with anti-colonial methods and social justice, therefore, one must be clear about the paradigm, the worldview used to shape an investigation, and how the research findings will be used.

The goal of creative transformative research is to think about ways to make change happen. Essentially, a transformative paradigm is a research framework that is centered on the experiences of marginalized communities, includes analysis of power differentials (spanning the past and present and with implications for the future) that have led to marginalization, and links research findings to actions intended to mitigate disparities (Rudman & Aldrich, 2017). In this research, I drew from a transformative research paradigm, which I see as congruent with uprooting health disparities that continue to exist for Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities. This paradigm of transformative research, committed to radical change, aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of

Indigenous People, the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women's Report, and the RCAP, and my personal goals of relational accountability to Indigenous peoples that addresses anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in communities that I am accountable to.

From an ontological perspective, one of the most salient questions for any researcher concerned with transformative change and social justice is: "What is the form and nature of reality?" A transformative research paradigm acknowledges multiple realities when understanding the world (Mertens, 2005; 2009). As social justice scholars and educators have made clear, people who are white, cis-gender, male, and heteronormative, and who come from European backgrounds, largely have greater access to power, privilege, opportunity, and authority. In contrast, the voices and interests of womxn, people of colour, and Indigenous peoples may be made invisible or silenced altogether (Dei et al., 2004; Mertens, 2009). White domination, however, allows social, cultural, political, and economic inequities to go unnoticed or even to be denied by those not from marginalized backgrounds (Collins, 2021). Scholars such as Mertens (2009) urge researchers to use their skill(s) collaboratively and alongside those who have less material access to privilege.

Indigenous-informed methodology, learning, and knowledge acquisition are embodied within a relational and holistic epistemology (Battiste, 2002). Indigenous methodologies embody cultural sustainability and collective responsibility (Kovach, 2021). Mi'kmaki scholar Marie Battiste states that one of the most important aspects of Indigenous research is the ethical responsibility to guard against the exploitation of Indigenous knowledge and people (2007). Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2001) asserts, "you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research" (p. 177). Transformative researchers must be clear about their positionality concerning those they are researching with, which I attempted to do earlier in this

Reflective Journal Christine Añonuevo, February 2024

Stories are gifts and gifts are stories
we embody, we carry in our bones
in our hearts, in our spirits
our mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional bodies
cannot be divorced from the is/lands and waters and air we came from
we are all is/lands connected
how do we maintain and restore balance in the telling, sharing, and circulating of
our health stories
our wellness stories
our language and land stories
our suffering stories
like umbilical cords that connect us to our mothers
despite physical severance from where we come from, there is always a connection
colonial logics, influence, and thinking
disrupt, divide, separate, and silo
us from our homelands
and each other
our felt experiences interconnect mind, body, heart and spirit aligns with
community and wellness
we resist
we remember
our stitched together stories and our identities
our self-expression transcends colonial imaginaries
everything is relationship
constant flow
constant giving
our spirits are fluid, creative
quiet, queer acts of resistance
everyday acts of rematriation, restoration, reclamation
remembering
our bodies as land
our bodies as water
our bodies as islands
our bodies as breath
in the face of exhaustive impediments
state violence, racism, emotional and physical labour
mental exhaustion, physical exhaustion, colonial exhaustion
lateral violence
our bodies belong with land
our bodies belong with water
our bodies belong with islands
our bodies as sacred
as our creative breath

chapter. Additionally, cultural competence in the form of Indigenous anti-racism, and anti-oppression training, cultural safety, and cultural humility training is necessary to establish and maintain research relationships to ensure that no harm is done.

When researchers attempt to carry out research with Indigenous people and communities, bias and hierarchical power relationships can pose a serious barrier. Story-poems in this research study were created first through attending to relationships, holding a culturally safe space for womxn, and listening from the heart to womxn. After taking time to experience the words and experiences shared by the womxn co-researchers, I began braiding the voices of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn. When I was younger, one of my core memories with my mother, is of her braiding my hair. This intimate gesture connects me to her voice and stories as she would reveal details of her life to me during this special time. There was a tenderness in making beautiful braids

from my stubborn and thick hair that I remember fondly. The conceptualization of braiding is relevant to my research in a number of ways. First, braiding evokes the notion of taking distinct strands and integrating them to make something that is stronger together. I think braiding is applicable to conceptions of time in this research through fluid movement into the past, present, and future. Braiding allowed me to visualize bringing diverse knowledge systems and histories together: namely Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx epistemology and ontology into dialogue with one another.

I was imagining braiding distinct (messy, entangled, and diverse) strands of thought, stories, genealogies, life experiences, and voices into a strengthened collective that could illustrate distinct and interrelated voices and their relationality without equivalence, or equating and conflating their experiences of colonialism, [29] racism, genocide, and slavery. The questions in this research project focus on womxn's health and well-being while being mindful not to perpetuate damage and deficit-centred narratives: the questions aim to open up a new creative platform that documents personal stories, matrilineal leadership, and insights into the systems and structures that impact Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's health and well-being (Aldred et al., 2021; Tuck, 2009, 2014). New research directions, such as this one, can grow and thrive when diverse ways of knowing, doing, and being are affirmed in academic institutions and used to aspire to more just health outcomes for those from marginalized and equity-oriented populations. These methodologies and theoretical frameworks exist within a broader scholarship of narrative inquiry (NI), which is where I turn next. Following a discussion of NI and

[29] As King (and others) have written, "these conversations and practices of listening can be difficult and challenging, yet generative and meaningful… The engagement of deeper connections between Black and Native studies/peoples can be indications of the ongoing failures of white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and genocide and lead us to better modes of getting free" (King et al., 2020, pp. 9-10).

Indigenous storytelling, I then describe the intellectual foundations of the research, including Black Feminism, Intersectional Feminism, and CRT.

3.1 Narrative Inquiry (NI) and Indigenous Storytelling

Narrative Inquiry, a methodology I used in my previous graduate work, has roots in educational research and the ontologies that education and life are interwoven (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin, 2006). When NI is used in conjunction with Critical Race Theory and Indigenous storytelling (which I discuss in the following section), it affirms individuals' experiences "with an exploration of the social, cultural, and institutional narratives with which individuals' experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted- but in a way that centres the storied lives of the people involved" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 42).

This NI project seeks to understand the lived health experiences of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn while also seeking to expand previous narrative boundaries and conceptualizations. Tanana Athabascan feminist scholar Dian Million states that Indigenous womxn's narratives are inseparable from their emotions. She states, "we feel our histories as well as think them" (2009, p.3) to bring attention to a refusal of disconnecting mind, body, emotions, and spirit. Both NI and Indigenous storytelling align with a decolonial, anti-oppressive, and anti-colonial research methodology in which critical reflexivity and felt experiences ground the location and privilege of the researcher with multiple truths in the co-creation of knowledge and thus are integral to this research. NI allows for exploring an individual's experiences, including how social, cultural, and environmental factors impact and shape that person's experience. NI alone, however, was not sufficient to address the complex and varied histories, lives, and communities that form the heart of this research. NI was thus supported by other methodologies

and methods (poetics and the creation of story-poems) for a more robust decolonial, anti-oppressive, anti-colonial, and transformative research paradigm approach.

NI scholars strive to understand how a story is constructed, for whom, and why, alongside the social, cultural, and environmental discourses it draws upon (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Trahar, 2009). In NI, both the researcher's and the co-researchers' voices, perspectives, narratives, and counter-narratives are represented in a project. NI amplifies voices that may otherwise have remained silent or underrepresented, which makes it a congruent methodology with this research project focusing on Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn led by a Filipinx womxn. Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn were consulted throughout the research process, were given agency over their transcripts, and were asked if their words could be used in the arts-based process, including and importantly the creation of story-poems with their voices. A narrative approach, which is fundamentally what I used in engaging these womxn's voices, acknowledges human and health experiences as dynamic entities in a constant state of change — NI can thus provide insight into phenomena and paradigms that shape people's health experiences. NI asks researchers to hold space and understand voices through dimensions of sociability, temporality, and place (Clandinin & Connely, 2008). Understanding time, place, and socio-cultural conditions sets the stage for exploring health and well-being experiences. Narrative-based inquiry can also complement Indigenous research methods of knowledge transmission (Kovach, 2015; Smith 1999).

Reflective of Indigenous research methods, Stó:lō scholar and storyteller, Jo-Ann Archibald has identified principles for First Nations storytelling that I want to honour in this research. These principles include respect, responsibility, reverence, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy (2008). Such principles were taken into consideration during all phases of this research.

In each relationship, knowing the deeply personal and intimate nature of the words shared with me, I approached each conversation I had with the co-researchers with an attempt to enact an ethics of care and the values of kapwa-tao, discussed in the next chapter. I held space and foregrounded cultural safety and agency for each co-researcher, so they could share stories guided by broad conversational questions provided before our meeting as a starting point to our kuwentuhan. Co-researchers were producing meaning and knowledge through sharing their affective memories and lived experiences. I approached the co-researchers' voices and words with tenderness and care. I attempted to braid their voices into story-poems to illuminate something deeper and more powerful than individual voices might: together, we are stronger. Taken from the frameworks of CRT and Intersectional Feminism, both of which I review in further detail in this chapter, NI (with support from Indigenous storytelling and Black Feminist Thought) felt like a fitting methodology to document voices and express new story-poems as evidence of systemic inequity and discrimination and as evidence of intergenerational strength and survivance. The story-poems, I think, validate the diverse yet deeply interconnected experiences of these womxn. Through their voice-togetherness, the story-poems in this research speak back to hegemonic discourses that isolate us and, in our isolation, continue to privilege white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and heteronormativity and provide an archive of decolonial knowing braided with Indigenous, Black, and womxn of colour voices, which I discussed in the previous chapter.

3.2 Black Feminism, Indigenous Storytelling, Intersectional Feminism, and CRT

An important part of my research goal is to disrupt extractive historical (and current) trends of racism, heteropatriarchy, and white-sexist supremacy in research. Given this, my work is informed by several critical social theories or methodologies, including Black Feminism,

Indigenous ways of knowing and being, Intersectional Feminism, and autoethnography, each of which I (briefly) discuss in this section. My qualitative inquiry uplifts Black Feminist thought so that Black women's lived experiences can be highlighted in informative ways. Black Feminist thought leader Patricia Hill Collins put forth four dimensions of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology: (a) lived experience as a criterion of meaning, (b) the use of dialogue to assess knowledge claims, (c) the ethic of caring, and (d) the ethics of personal accountability. Such an approach pays attention to the intersections of race, class, gender, and other intricacies relevant to this research (2022). Additionally, I align with Black scholar Cynthia Dillard's assertion that a (global) Black feminism centres research as responsibility (2016). The stories in the next chapter attempt to document womxn holistically and to present the myriad and diverse experiences of a Black womxn.

As Audre Lorde (2007) said, examining the stories of Black women "effectively requires that we be seen as whole people in our actual complexities—as individuals, as women, as human rather than as one of those problematic but familiar stereotypes provided in this society in place of genuine images of Black women" (p. 117). In including Black womxn's voices in this research, I aimed to present their stories responsibly, told in their own words as evidence of their lived experience, and to act as a counternarrative to negative and deficit-based dominant stereotypes of Black womxn and their health. Black feminism speaks directly to bodily forms of dispossession (Maynard & Simpson, 2022). While slavery and anti-Blackness have different pre-conditions than Indigenous dispossession, both Black and Indigenous womxn have historical (and contemporary) experiences of being viewed as the property and commodity of white peoples, which has had health impacts on their bodies, minds, and spirits. Both Anti-Blackness and colonialism enact severings. Severings from bodies, from Land, and as NourbeSe Philip has

noted, a severing of Black womxn from themselves and their breath (Smith, 2022). Black and Indigenous womxn have linked yet different and distinct experiences with the dispossession of Land and bodies and its impacts. Many Black and Indigenous stories resist constant elimination and erasure while also demonstrating severings and interrupted relationships from Land, histories, and knowledge.

Black Feminism has a long history of commitment to love as a political practice. Black Feminist political practice has emphasized love as a form of collectivity, a way of feeling, with love operating as a principle of "vulnerability and accountability, solidarity and transformation, that has organized and undergirded black feminist practice" (Nash, 2019, p. 115). Black Feminism as a theory and practice can also be conceptualized as a form of witnessing, akin to Christina Sharpe's notion of "wake work" which I mentioned in Chapter Three. Sharpe insists that Black women live amid ordinary daily violence. Thus, Black Feminism is survival in the form of politics, a critical practice, a mode of living, and a form of witnessing made visible in Black joy, Black creativity, and Black life. For Sharpe, "wake work" is how black women "resist, rupture, and disrupt the immanence and imminence [death] aesthetically and materially" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 13). In this research, Black womxn name how anti-Blackness is part of their everyday existence, and they also articulate the ways their lives attend to Black life in "the wake." I turn next to Indigenous methodologies and their role in this research.

Indigenous storytelling can be considered a ceremony, a method, and an epistemology with a direct connection to Land and community, and a process of cultural healing (Wilson, 2020). Indigenous methodologies are embedded with Indigenous epistemology (Cajete, 1999; Ermine et al., 2005; Bear, 2000). Additionally, Indigenous epistemologies are axiologically embedded (Kovach, 2021). This means an ethical and spiritual foundation is interconnected with

relationships between people, nature, and the cosmos. In general, Indigenous methodologies emphasize a belief system that is "non-fragmented, non-human-centric, holism focusing on the metaphysical and pragmatic brought alive by an animate language structure and contextualized within place and land-based knowing and teaching" (Kovach, 2021, p. 80). My approach to embedding Indigenous methodologies in this research centred on witnessing knowledge that is contained within cultural and ceremonial practices such as song, dance, and governance in the feast hall, which are repositories of genealogies, histories, and beliefs about the world and the relationships they contain.

Listening and sharing space for story exchange in this research project is methodologically congruent with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. In grounding Indigenous epistemology with storytelling, place, and community, I approach the research understanding that Indigenous knowledge involves relationship (with particular attention to the special relationship between Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous womxn's ways of knowing), reciprocity, and responsibility. Due to the plurality of womxn and their intersecting identities in this research, I found it helpful to draw on additional frameworks of theory to complement and coexist alongside Black Feminism and Indigenous methodologies that I have discussed above. I will turn next to Intersectional Feminism as an additional methodological framework that supported this research.

I have outlined two strands of my methodologies: Black Feminist Thought and Indigenous storytelling. As a Filipinx researcher, I attempted to embed Filipinx methodologies (and epistemology and ontology) throughout this research as a third strand. I did this through incorporating the Tagalog values of kapwa, kapwa-tao and pagkikikapwa which are discussed later in this chapter. I see these values based on relationality and responsibility to other human

beings and non-human beings. These values are place-based in the Tagalog-speaking areas in the so-called Philippines. These are values that were carried by my parents and passed along to me. I struggled throughout the research process and writing of this dissertation to articulate a place-based understanding of Filipinx methodology. While I have a grasp on Indigenous Land-based orientations, and the precarity of the Black diaspora due to the long-lasting impacts of the transatlantic slave trade as well as Black orientations to water, I had difficulties in articulating an oceanic understanding of my ancestors as islanders and oceanic beings with close ties to bodies of water in the so-called Philippines. Recently, some Filipinx scholars have been theorizing about an oceanic turn in Filipinx studies. That is, an engagement with the idea of the ocean to evoke a fluidity and multiplicity of the Filipinx experience in the diaspora across diverse oceans and dwellings in nation-states (Saramosing & Labrador, 2022). Such an oceanic orientation can refer to the ebbs and flows of the diverse embodied, discursive, and material experiences of Filipinx in the diaspora and the emerging field of critical Filipinx studies. I agree with Katherine Achacoso, who cautions the use of the oceanic in Filipinx studies to not reproduce settler colonial erasures of Indigenous Peoples and places. Achacoso argues, "I find the oceanic useful as a methodology to consider how geography, region, and place shape diasporic experiences and more importantly visions for decolonization" (2022, pg. 391).

As a Filipina researcher who is concerned with the ways the Asian diaspora and communities of colour participate and become indoctrinated in the Canadian nation-state, I pay attention to the ways that racialized (and often gendered) labour are exported from Asian countries for extractive projects, especially in so-called northern BC. This policy collusion between Canadian and other governments who export citizens as labour is a condition to the settler-colonial logic of nation-building building settler critical infrastructures. Processes of

racialization under ideologies of white supremacy grant non-Indigenous people of colour and migrants the ability to be complicit and or enact and reinforce settler colonial power. The term, arrivants coined by Jodi Byrd complicates the notion of migration by signalling peoples who were forced into the Americas through Euro-Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism (Byrd, 2011, p. xix). Asian arrivants complicate binaries of white and Indigenous while highlighting the messiness of racism and colonialism. Asian arrivants can simultaneously experience violence and anti-Asian racism in so-called Canada while participating in notions of model minority myths, assimilation, multicultural acceptance and belonging[30] to the so-called settler state of Canada. Regardless of how settlers of colour or arrivants choose to name themselves, both terms signify the complicated, messy, and complicit relations of peoples of colour in settler states and their participation, wittingly or unwittingly, in the ongoing colonization of Indigenous nations. Filipino/a/x community members and other Asian community members need to acknowledge, understand, and unsettle their complicities in settler colonialism in so-called Canada. By doing this, they can begin to work through how to be in better kinship with Indigenous peoples. The story-poems presented in this chapter are one way to think about relationship building with Indigenous peoples and communities and to help imagine Filipino-Indigenous solidarity processes that honor everyday support, co-creation, and daily practices of care. As Filipinx arrivants come to so-called British Columbia across different temporalities, we in the diaspora through kuwentuhan need to share our understanding of Indigenous histories with those who are just arriving to Turtle Island with attention and care. In bringing together Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx methodologies, I leaned into other methodologies, such as Intersectional Feminism.

[30] Model minority myths, assimilation to dominant ways of knowing and being and multiculturalism are practices that orient people of colour and Asian arrivants towards whiteness and white supremacy.

An Intersectional Feminist methodology allowed me to engage in a research practice while integrating my subjective experience with the co-researchers. Intersectional Feminism gave this research the ability to pivot, respond, and be in relation to diverse female voices, and allowed me to understand and be empathetic to the intersecting identities, genealogies, relationality, and migrations stories of each of the womxn who participated. Intersectional Feminism was the connective tissue that held this series of relationships together and generated connections (as well as tensions) amongst and between the co-researchers and the scholars and poets I discussed in the literature review chapter. Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American law professor who coined the term Intersectional Feminism in 1989, explained it as a prism for seeing how various forms of inequality often operate together and reinforce each other (1990). In the early 1980s, an anti-racist and feminist theory began using the language of intersectionality, arising from Black, Chicana, and Latina women and other women of colour discussing race, sexuality, and class (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1981; Davis,1981; Lorde,1984) as ways to interrogate the power and domination structures prevalent in their lives. An intersectional approach shows how people's social identities can overlap, creating compounding experiences of discrimination: "We tend to discuss race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality, or immigrant status. What's often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts" (Crenshaw, 2020, n.p.). Intersectional Feminism centres on the voices of those experiencing overlapping, concurrent forms of oppression to understand the depths of the inequalities and the relationships among them in any given context. In my research, Intersectional Feminism is the (methodological) glue that showcases how diverse and overlapping identities, relationalities, and communities are distinct but connected and impacted by past, present, and current systems of

oppression. Intersectional Feminism as a theoretical framework is crucial in narrating diverse racialized and feminist experiences with health.

By offering a race-conscious approach that makes visible inequities and structural racism, CRT has the transformative power to lead to greater social justice, especially in health sectors.CRT is a set of anti-racist strategies and modes of knowledge production used by legal scholars of colour, led by Crenshaw in the 1980s (Crenshaw, 1995). By placing race as an analytic, CRT scholars interrogate policies and practices that uncover the explicit and implicit ways racist ideologies, structures, and institutions create and maintain inequities. CRT is a tool that is helpful in critically examining epistemology and knowledge production. Black scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings promoted using CRT to address disparities in the education field (1998). Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2005) suggest that power relationships play a role in how research is collected and interpreted.

Race and its relationship to power ground the preconditions for understanding broader exclusionary practices that give rise to structural inequalities such as racial capitalism (Walcott, 2021). In the context of this research project, CRT makes visible the salience of race and racism in womxn's stories with underlying implications of the daily impacts and multi-scalar experiences of racism and discrimination on their health and well-being. CRT, as an anti-racism tool, assists with identifying, understanding, and ultimately uprooting and undoing the pervasiveness of systemic and structural racism mentioned earlier in this dissertation, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act, the internment of Japanese-Canadians, the impact of Transatlantic Slavery, and the Indian Act. CRT scholars push to critically interrogate dominant narratives and the silenced counter-narratives. Similarly to Indigenous methodologies, CRT supports the notion that there are multiple ways of knowing and deems the notion of objectivity as evidence of truth

invalid (Crenshaw, 2019). Integrated and braided stories have the potential to teach others how to be in better relations. Cherokee scholar Daniel Health Justice reminds us of the power of good medicine stories that "can drive out the poison, heal the spirit as well as the body, remind us of the greatness of where we came from as well as the greatness of who we're meant to be, so that we're not determined by the colonial narrative of deficiency" (2018, p. 5).

Autoethnography holds the power and potential to express stories of joy, creativity, collective power, and survivance. Throughout this dissertation, I use autoethnography as a practice of making myself accountable and transparent as a Filipina scholar and person working at the intersection of critical race studies, emerging critical Filipinx studies, and Indigenous and Black studies. Autoethnography (which I offer in small snippets, described in the introduction and represented in italics and callout text boxes) is a personal, reflexive practice and process that relates my grassroots community experience with Indigenous communities to my academic work. As a Filipina, cis-gender womxn with a mixed Indigenous partner and family, I strive to be an ethical, accountable, and responsible relative. Engaging in an anti-colonial autoethnography that looks inward to the self "to articulate a plethora of [lived] experiences specifically rooted in colonial histories" (Chawla & Atay, 2018, p. 4) provided a space for my self-reflexivity. In *Not a Metaphor: Immigrant of Color Autoethnography as a Decolonial Move*, Santhosh Chandrashekar asserts that when settlers of colour write autoethnographies, we must engage in "an ethical centering of questions pertaining to Indigenous lands and lives" (2018, p. 73). Engaging with Chandrashekar's anti-colonial autoethnographic praxis, I write about my own lived experiences as a subject of colonialism and imperialism and also as a Filipina who embodies intergenerational wisdom and strength to engage in the process of disrupting colonialism, disallowing settler colonial futures, and collectively helping their/our own

community's position. Incorporating autoethnography is one way that, throughout this dissertation, I can continuously reflect on and make myself transparently accountable to what it means for me to be in relation to Indigenous peoples and their territories as a diasporic settler, scholar, mother, partner, and community member.

Methodologically, critical autoethnography explores personal lived experiences and interrogates whose interests are being served, to uncover oppressive power dynamics and to combine theory and action to challenge conditions of domination (Reed-Danahay, 2017). According to Ellis and Bochner, it is a "methodology that involves evocative, emotional, dialoguing and engaging writing…closer to literature and art than to science" (2000, p. 740). Bochner (2000) elaborates that it "is a genre of writing that displays multiple layers of consciousness connecting the personal to the cultural (p. 739)." This justifies autoethnography and collaborative autoethnography as a means of writing lived experiences in the form of stories, poems, and art-based expressions about self and others within a sociocultural setting along a continuum but also as a process that creates multiple layers of learning throughout this research, which is why autoethnography is used throughout this dissertation as part of my personal story and to uplift collaboration and my interrelated journey with the co-researchers' voices.

Counter-storytelling is a methodological approach to storytelling that aims to cast doubt on the validity of discourse and national myths generally accepted as truth by the dominant white majority (Dixson, 2006). Counter-storytelling subverts stories from becoming a neoliberal, multicultural show-and-tell, instead emphasizing stories as evidence to document ongoing (health) inequity, which is germane to this research. Originating from the rich storytelling tradition in African-American, Chicano, and Native-American communities, counterstories are a tool used in qualitative research to expose, analyze, and challenge the "majoritarian stories of

racial privilege" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). Counterstories also play theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical roles in the research process (Delgado, 1989).

According to Solórzano and Yosso (2002), counter-storytelling enables the building of community among marginalized groups, allows for challenging the views of the majority by providing alternate realities, provides comfort to marginalized groups by showing that they are not alone and that they can learn from the experiences of others, and demonstrates that the stories of marginalized groups can be used to help create change. Crichlow (2015) argues that storying allows participants to learn from the "theorization of their/our complex lived experiences or lives" (p. 194), and to "share their own lived experiences of race, identity, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity and/or Indigeneity" (p. 194). Counter-storytelling is a methodology that lends itself to guided and collaborative spaces and conversations that invite Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx epistemologies and ontologies to be in a dialogue with one another and allows for an arts-based approach.

My research uses counter-storytelling rendered into collaborative autoethnographic poetic form to document and analyze gendered and racialized health stories that speak back to dominant systems of capitalist-colonial projects, hetero-patriarchal leadership, and persistent forms of racism in womxn's lives. Counter-stories (appearing in this work as story-poems) act as a means to enable an anti-racist, anti-colonial, and decolonial praxis that (I hope) can validate experiences of ongoing racism and, more importantly, demonstrate positive health practices from racialized womxn's felt and embodied stories. Counter-stories are an intentional act of remembering within and against coloniality by their very nature. Braiding the Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx voices creates counterstories through remembering our lived and interrelated health experiences.

CRT and counterstories in this research project have the potential to influence health equity research, policies, and practices. The implementation of CRT in the health sector is emerging and much needed. CRT has the potential to confront anti-Indigenous, Black, and Asian racism by problematizing Eurocentric conceptions of "race" and examining the long-term (intergenerational) impacts on health due to constant multi-scalar racism that disproportionately affects Indigenous, Black, and Asian communities. Public Health Critical Race Praxis (PHCRP) is a new approach to understanding how race and ethnicity are linked to health inequities (Borrell, 2018). The story-poems documented in the next chapter provide first-person narratives in the form of a poetic intervention about womxn's health. There is a paucity of studies targeting racial health inequities and the capabilities for measuring racism. There remains a need for a public health framework that moves beyond documenting disparities toward preventing and possibly eliminating them. This research acts as a catalyst towards tangible change to advocate for multi-scalar supports and to eliminate health disparities embodied by racialized womxn.

Furthermore, my use of CRT allows me to present these story-poems as counternarratives to dominant, white, heteronormative male stories in the academy, specifically within human and health sciences. Using CRT lays a foundation for my work to braid voices in the production of counter-stories, rendered in this work as story-poems, that are embodying anti-racist, queer, and feminist experiences. In the seminal text, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Colour*, Chicana feminist Cherrie Moraga asserted "theories of the flesh" concerning her experiences as a light-skinned, mestiza, and queer womxn (1981). Moraga demonstrated that theories of the flesh centre the historical and contemporary materiality of the body in the ways bodies embody, remember, and disrupt colonization. The voices of the womxn presented in Chapter Four demonstrate a spectrum of "stories in the flesh" in specific places. The material,

gendered, and racialized bodies are sites of knowledge and can represent a historical meeting space, making visible the interconnectedness of distances constructed by transnational coloniality. Womxn's voices are living registers of diverse diasporic genealogies, politics, and histories — some of which are dispossessed or deracinated from their ancestral home and heartlands. The stories in Chapter Four demonstrate that knowledge can come from multiple sources, including the mind, the heart, the body, and the spirit. I will turn next to the specific methods I used in this research.

3.3 Kuwentuhan

I am conscious that academic language can be foreign to community members and that academic pursuits (such as this dissertation) may not change social, economic, and political realities of people experiencing ongoing oppression that results in health inequities. Grounded in my personal and cultural identity, I orient myself as a researcher using kuwentuhan. A method that makes an effort to disrupt academic norms and that, loosely translated, means story talk, or talking story. For me, kuwentuhan is a research method (as well as a practice) that reclaims Filipinx epistemology and ontology through language. As a researcher with Filipinx heritage, I carry ancestral knowledge as embodied ways of knowing and being. As a method of research, kuwentuhan has a distinctly humanizing approach to research because it involves relating to everyone in the research process as kapwa-tao, or human beings, who are each sharing kuwento or stories as if we were engaging in a casual conversation (Morales et al., 2023). I aimed to create a space that intentionally tried not to feel clinical, extractive, or retraumatizing. Each co-researcher holds ownership to their narratives. When I engaged with the co-researchers in conversation and story sharing, kuwentuhan was used to guide conversations to share personal experiences around health and well-being and relationships to the Land as well as informal topics

such as being mothers, our relationships with our dogs, our past work experiences, and ancestral relationships to Land, Water, and Air. While I was not able to conduct interviews in the Tagalog language, I did share ideas and concepts with the co-researchers throughout the process to honour my roots and begin the lifelong journey of language learning and reclamation. Kuwentuhan as a method is not without its inherent tensions in this research. Kuwentuhan is used as an everyday practice amongst the Filipinx community (de Leon, 2022, Francisco-Mencahvez, 2022) with kuwento (story/stories) as a cultural mode of interacting and communication (Pino, 2023). Filipinx-Canadian scholars have pointed out that kuwentuhan is a specific Tagalog and place-based notion used for nation-building (Farrales, personal conversation, August 6, 2024). However, despite these tensions, the use of kuwentuhan allowed me to disrupt Western norms in the research process and orient myself with a cultural method to relate to the co-researchers on a more humane level.

As mentioned in Chapter One of this dissertation, my positionality informs and motivates this research. Unlike so much research led by white men in academia, and within a Eurocentric tradition, my research aims to substantiate the voices of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn as direct response to calls for a grounding of overall research design by conceptual framework of CRT. Too often, research about those who are from marginalized backgrounds benefits white people from privileged backgrounds (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). White researchers[31] benefit from studying or publishing research on communities of colour, which reinforces racial, economic, and health inequities as well as calcifying power imbalances. Inviting womxn in this research project to be co-researchers ensures their control over their words and stories within this dissertation and outside of the confines of the dissertation. Within the context of research,

[31] Researchers of colour need to be mindful of reproducing whiteness when engaging in research and publication to ensure mutual benefits for the communities and people they are engaged with.

engaging with co-researchers as co-creators pushes back on the extractive history of research which perpetuates unequal power relationships. Rather than have myself as the researcher (or subject) in a position of hierarchical authority and the co-researcher as the object of study, I sought to restore balance in story sharing, sharing knowledge and relationality. This was a project anchored in ***shared voices and collectively braided stories***. I aimed to integrate an ethics of relational and decolonial listening in my work. I aimed to sense and feel what the co-researchers were saying and not saying (Robinson, 2020). I did this by listening to the kuwentuhan several times and checking in with co-researchers after I sent them copies of their transcripts. I paid close attention to my positionality as a cis-gender, Filipinx, settler-arrivant womxn, listening, sensing, and feeling Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx ontologies in story form. Engaging in this kind of listening involves self-reflexivity in being attuned to filters of race, class, gender, and my ability to be open to Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx ontologies.

Some womxn indicated to me that the transcripts of their stories generated from these relationships, transcripts that I gave back to everyone, will be used for their future writing projects and/or will be shared with community members to further discussions about Land, Water, Air, and Body. By documenting the power of knowledge creation from the heart, into the hands of those whose experiences are being shared, people have a say in the way their voices and stories are expressed. Fundamentally, writing, listening, and documenting voices and stories is an arts-based research method. Storytelling expresses living, telling, and retelling experiences as method (Bruce et al., 2016). This research must thus be understood as using arts-based methods, which unfolded in the following ways. First, I engage with co-researchers as co-creators of this knowledge with the understanding that knowledge is embodied, relational, connected to ancestry and kinship, interconnected to where we live, and place-based (Gilpin et al., 2020). Second, I

share the stories (with the ongoing consent of the co-researchers) in the following chapter through interwoven poetry. I turn next to describing the steps taken in obtaining research ethics approval for this research project.

3.4 Research Ethics

Approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Northern British Columbia was granted before proceeding with this research. For approval, an Invitation to Participate was prepared and included the purpose and description of the research, the invitation to be a co-researcher, the voluntary nature of the research, and the support, if needed, that was available during the research. All co-researchers shared and signed the Invitation to Participate and the Informed Consent Form. The process of obtaining ethics was a challenging process and needs to be modernized to reflect epistemological and ontological ways of knowing and being that are not steeped in Western discourses of objectivity and neutrality. Feedback from the research ethics board indicated that my prior relationships with some of the womxn co-researchers could cause bias in the research. This feedback is contradictory to Indigenous belief systems that pivot "around a relational understanding and accountability to the world" (Kovach, 2010, p. 41).

Many womxn in this research project I have known or met over the past sixteen years through community connections. Some of the womxn in this project were referred to me by colleagues and friends. These long-term relationships were foundational to reciprocity and respectability before, during, and beyond the boundaries of this research. Trust and relationships of care are antithetical to extractive research methods, which I also reflect on.

Adam Gaudry and Jeff Corntassel (2018) are critical of extractive research, which perpetuates a system of academic prestige for individual scholars. Such an approach distances researchers from the values and socio-economic realities within Indigenous communities most

affected by colonialism. Instead, Corntassel and Gaudry insist on frameworks of research within Indigenous resurgence practices. Such practices are the inclusion of an Indigenous worldview, being responsible to Indigenous communities, and engaging in Land-based action for communities and collective (2014). This transformative praxis can advance community wellness through "as a refutation to a resource extraction-based economy, Indigenous peoples practice and honor their sustainable relationships. Belonging to each other in the broadest sense means that we are accountable and responsible to each other and the natural world" (Corntassel, 2012, p. 96). For the purposes of this project, the co-researchers are the womxn who volunteer to share with me their stories related to health and well-being and in doing so, become part of a group of womxn who collectively share their embodied health stories with one another through this dissertation and through the story sharing circle that happened in March 2024. When I approached and invited womxn to be part of this project, I had honest conversations about my motivation for undergoing a PhD and talked about the legacies of academic research. In this way, I was transparent about the history and legacy of academic researchers and power imbalances. I shared my own stories of being a first-generation PhD student and the troubling encounters I had as a racialized womxn of colour in institutions built for white (heteronormative) men. This act of invitation and transparency into a sharing circle is an attempt to refuse individually focused research that extracts from others to gain knowledge.

Often academia is associated with personal benefit in an academic environment without a focus on giving back to community. I let the womxn co-researchers in this project know that, beyond completion of this dissertation, I will continue to be in a lifelong relationship with them and coordinate sharing circles to discuss our health and informally meet with them. Some womxn in this research sharing circle vocalized that they participated in this research project

because of its focus on Indigenous, Black, and racialized women of colour and their health: they noted that they felt free from being judged as stereotypes. That is, womxn could speak freely about their health issues, without being judged as "an angry woman of colour" (Sharing Circle, 2024). Being grounded in community work and being in ongoing relationality with womxn and their health stories counters the status quo of academic researchers who do not have lived experience of the everyday realities of the populations they research. Being a Filipinx researcher, who orients myself towards Indigenous Land and laws and whose community relationships trump my academic pursuits, I encounter womxn's health stories daily and leverage my positionality to advocate to government bodies and authorities when directed to do so.

The documentation of voices and the creation of story-poems is an example of collaborative autoethnography, which includes "emotion, action, introspection, self-consciousness, and the body itself" (Martinez & Andreatta, 2015, p. 228). Co-researchers had power and agency to direct how the collection of story-poems is disseminated beyond academia. Co-researchers were aware that their stories, words, and voices would be shared in this dissertation and were given their transcripts and asked for feedback. A synopsis of their story-poems and themes was emailed to the co-researchers in July 2024. As a Filipina researcher, inviting womxn to be co-researchers enacts the value of kapwa. That is the interconnectedness and collectivity between and amongst humans. Pagkikipagkapwa is a Tagalog value of relationality that loosely translates to "a deep connection with everything." So, my invitation to womxn for this project as co-researchers stems from wanting to enact an orientation that extends beyond individualism and into a collective and collaborative consciousness gesturing towards shared life and life-giving relationships (that implicitly extends this invitation to ancestral remembering and futurity). Beyond the academic relationship with the co-researchers, I extended

invitations to continue our relationships through ongoing sharing circles and informal check-ins. I met informally with all the co-researchers (except for one, who had moved to an eastern province) several times during the research process. This principle of kapwa has the potential to help guide Filipinx in the diaspora to be in better relationships with Indigenous Lands and Black relations (and other Filipinx in the diaspora) in efforts to build a decolonial present and future. Through an embodiment of kapwa, I extended relationality before, during, and after the research project to continue building emotional resilience and strengthening agency and advocacy to support womxn in speaking out about their health experiences.

Inviting womxn to be co-researchers in this project is inherently an act of decolonization and resurgence. I listened respectfully and deeply to the ten womxn's voices and stories about embodied health. With their permission and consent, I invited all the co-researchers to share parts of these stories with all other womxn involved in a collaborative sharing circle. Eight of the ten womxn were able to participate in the research-sharing circle. Two womxn were unable to attend due to time differences and personal family emergencies. Acts of deep listening, humour, gift-giving, check-ins for ongoing consent, and collective sharing are some of the ways I enacted relationality and learning to foster connections about how our diverse stories are part of our collective healing from ongoing colonial and oppressive systems that perpetuate inequitable health outcomes to racialized womxn of colour. Visiting the co-researchers in person and committing to holding sharing circles and sharing stories as educational and learning resources were additional ways that I enacted an ongoing commitment to relationality beyond the confines of this research project. Upon completion of the dissertation draft, I formally reached out to the co-researchers to share the story-poems and to confirm ongoing consent for their insights, experiences, and words.

Despite my intentions and efforts, there is always room for slippage in research because, as my engagement with critical research methodologies has illuminated, researchers inherently hold degrees of power *purely because we are researchers*. However, unlike many researchers who are not embedded in the communities where they do research, I have deeply rooted community-based relationships developed over sixteen years of living in so-called northern BC communities. I need to consider ways that I, as a womxn who will achieve certain markers of sociocultural and potentially economic power and privilege upon completion of a PhD within a colonial system of individuality, am benefiting from the systems that I am also intent on critiquing. Upon completion of this PhD, I will continue to listen and be in service to communities that I belong to and use any skills gained from completing this PhD to serve Indigenous, Black, and Filipino communities if requested and invited by those communities. I will use the writing and researching skills that were honed throughout this PhD journey to continue to collaborate with, write about, and research issues important to Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx communities when invited to do so.

To my knowledge, there is no Critical Filipinx Studies program in any university in so-called BC. This disturbing invisibility of Filipinx knowledges (Coloma et al., 2012) and Filipinx communities (Diaz, et al., 2017) speaks to the underrepresentation and overlooked knowledge and lived experiences of the Filipinx community. As a first-generation Filipina university graduate, living and working in rural and remote communities with populations under 200 people, there are few opportunities in the labour market that would offer economic advantages for me. Given the proliferation of resource extraction projects, especially LNG projects near where I live with my family, I hope the skills gleaned from completing this academic journey (in congruence with other practical skills I have) can contribute on multiple registers to improving

health conditions in the place I call home through future writing, researching, and being in community. As a Filipinx womxn and researcher engaging with other racialized womxn of colour and co-researchers, I faced dilemmas that my white counterparts did not. For example, during the research phases and in my efforts to ensure a culturally safe space aimed at fostering the respectful participation, partnership, protection, and power of the co-researchers with the demands of the outdated research ethics process, a lot of emotional labour was expended to ensure no harm was caused by engaging in story sharing. The logics of white supremacy and whiteness in spatialized and racialized national narratives often silo Indigenous womxn from immigrant and racialized womxn (Razack, 2002). I was motivated to bring racialized womxn of colour together to share their health stories to build relationships and emotional resilience. Members of The Women of Colour Intimate Research (Caldera et al., 2020) collective assert that tensions arise when womxn lead research within their respective cultural communities due to compounding demands such as academic institutional deadlines and the emotional toll and labour of caring for other women, noting that:

> Even though I knew this project would be intellectually rigorous, I was not prepared for the emotional investment it demanded. Having conducted prior ethnographic research, I expected to hear difficult stories that touched me emotionally, but when conducting research with sister-friends, I felt a range of emotions: fear, overwhelming sadness, guilt, ambivalence, and occasional bouts of anger (p. 72).

All the co-researchers remained in touch with me throughout the research process and provided ongoing feedback that they wanted to continue with the research. I felt this was a positive indication that the research process also held value and reciprocal learning opportunities for them. I hope that in my position as a Filipina and community-based researcher, I can uplift and mentor emerging Filipino/a/x scholars who wish to further dialogues amongst critical Filipinx

studies in relationship with critical Indigenous and Black studies within academia and at a grassroots community level. I also will support Indigenous and Black students who wish to pursue post-secondary opportunities to encourage their success and learning.

The womxn I approached to participate in this research project were emerging and established leaders in their respective fields, ranging from education, academia, community activism related to Missing and Murdered Indigenous womxn and men, territorial management, the arts, and healthcare. My positionality as a racialized womxn of colour foregrounds the connection with the co-researchers as opposed to privileging my position as a PhD student. Through my involvement with community-based initiatives around food sovereignty, murdered and missing Indigenous womxn, anti-racism, arts, and activism around Indigenous self-determination I built relationships with many of the co-researchers outside of and beyond the confines of this PhD. My experiences in the community and in witnessing Indigenous governance and laws in action inform and influence how I orient myself in my day-to-day life and my scholarly pursuits.

In using a CRT framework, I intentionally and deliberately limited the scope of this research project to only include Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour. Ten womxn volunteered to participate in this project. They ranged in age from being in their twenties to their late fifties. They all lived or had lived in northern geographies in so-called BC for a minimum of six months and identified as belonging to Indigenous, Black and/or belonging to racialized communities. Every womxn gave their consent to be part of the project. This project is far from an exhaustive examination of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's health. A more detailed description of the womxn and their specific story-poems appears in Chapter Four of this

dissertation but, before I turn there, I outline each phase of the research process and the steps that unfolded with the co-researchers.

Phase 1: Outreach

Each co-researcher was identified through informal conversations I had with leaders in community wellness, health, education, arts, community activism, and territorial management. Many of the co-researchers are womxn I met through volunteer and community-based activities focused on food sovereignty, anti-racism, environmental racism, community arts, and murdered and missing Indigenous womxn initiatives over a sixteen-year period of living in northern geographies. Some of the co-researchers were referred to me through colleagues at the Health Arts Research Centre.[32] I reached out to ten womxn through social media and e-mail and invited them in a preliminary and very informal way to join a research project that I was undertaking. After that initial conversation, if they expressed interest to learn more, I provided them with the research outline and consent form. In preparation for our conversation, I asked each co-researcher to choose a place that felt good for them to enter into a discussion about wellness, well-being, healing, leadership, and relationships with Land, Air, and Water. Most co-researchers chose to meet by Zoom due to COVID-19 concerns, geographical and travel constraints, family responsibilities, and work schedules. The womxn had lived experience in Shelley First Nation, Lheidli T'enneh: Prince George, Saik'uz First Nation: Vanderhoof, Witsuwit'en First Nation: Smithers, Gitxsan First Nation: Hazelton, Hagwilget Village Council, Tsyms'en First Nation: Prince Rupert, Witset, Terrace, Tse-Ke Dene, and Gitxsan First Nation: Gitanyow. The ten womxn had varying work experience with missing and murdered womxn

[32] The Health Arts Research Centre is a research-based hub of artists, health researchers and health practitioners that seeks to address health inequities using the creative arts, multidisciplinary approaches, and cross-community collaborations. For more information visit www.healtharts.ca.

advocacy along Highway 16, sustainable Wilp/Land management, health care experiences as a nurse in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, working with community members navigating employment in the resource extraction industry and other industries, working in education with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners in high school and post-secondary settings and as health researchers in urban settings.

With the co-researchers' permission, our kuwentuhan was audio-recorded. During our meeting, I asked the co-researchers if they would like a financial honourarium or a handmade gift by me. During the research process, I gifted each of the co-researchers a jar of honey from bees that my family collectively takes care of. This gifting process aligns with the Indigenous protocol learned from my partner's father's clan. Additionally, the gifting process is congruent with Filipino traditions of gift giving and pasalubong, or gifting relatives or friends upon meeting or when returning from a trip. Finally, gifting the co-researchers something from the Land and something that was processed by my hands and heart was important for my own sense of accountability and respect as a researcher. The gift-giving comes from my own cultural teachings and represents reciprocity and communicates appreciation. Co-researchers were given the choice of having a pseudonym to protect their identity and confidentiality or using their real names. Three out of the ten womxn requested to have pseudonyms for their stories. I also offered supports such as trauma-informed practitioners and ethno-specific counsellors if the co-researchers needed emotional support after our conversations and story sharing.

Phase 2: Transcription and Preliminary Reflections

I transcribed each guided conversation verbatim, which allowed me time to reflect on our conversations. This phase can be described in seven steps: (a) Initial review of the audio recorded conversations to ensure recording quality and completeness. (b) Re-listening to the

audio recordings while transcribing the conversations. (c) Reading the transcripts, along with listening to the corresponding audio recordings. (d) Identifying significant quotes using a NI method called threading. (e) Returning the transcripts to the co-researchers and asking for their feedback and honouring the changes or edits they identified. (f) Undertaking a poetic analysis of each story, actively and purposefully linking and situating individual quotes to and within broader circuits of histories and geographies of power that include interdisciplinary scholarship and contemporary political discourses through braiding voices. (g) By braiding and threading together co-researcher's words into story-poems to tell new narratives, I attempted to uplift anti-colonial relationality and collective power to counter conditions of white settler coloniality which aims at binaries to divide and conquer and categorize, separate and/or subsume differences. This process allowed me to understand interactions between everyday narratives and the influence that personal narratives might have on societal discourses (Souto-Manning, 2014). The connectivity of the voices across time, space, genealogies, and geographies expressed ongoing solidarity and survivance.

Phase 3: Research Sharing Circle

All the co-researchers were invited to participate in a subsequent process (over Zoom), *Research Sharing Circle*. Due to increasing health concerns such as variants of COVID-19 and respiratory illnesses as well as the geography and distance between the co-researchers, I reached out to all the co-researchers who were amenable to meeting via Zoom. This online platform enabled womxn to meet and to accommodate work schedules and children's extracurricular activities and prioritized the safety of womxn who would face inclement weather while driving along the notorious Highway of Tears. Despite having two Canada Research Chairs as references, I was denied a UNBC travel grant that would have financially supported an in-person

meeting with all the womxn co-researchers. Despite this denial of much-needed funding that would have benefited a group of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn, I used my own financial means to visit and informally meet with all the womxn co-researchers several different times throughout the research phase, except for the co-researcher who was based in an eastern province, whom I contacted via text and e-mail. I will continue to keep in contact with the co-researchers beyond the completion of the dissertation in the spirit of being in good relations, and accountability, and to counter severings of relationships only tied to an academic project with institutional funding and time constraints. In community and activist-led relationships that I have been a part of, sharing of funds, food, and time strengthens communal reciprocal relationships. One of the important lessons, I have been gifted by being a witness in the feast hall, is that the act of giving and the act of receiving enlivens a reciprocal responsibility to sustain one another in a non-hierarchical manner.

During the 2-hour Zoom sharing circle in the spring of 2024, I felt that it was important to bring the womxn co-researchers together so that the teachings, learnings, stories, and wisdom shared by co-researchers would return to the collective in a relationship-based way. The circle provided a space for co-researchers to hear one another, to reflect together, and to share our emerging understandings of wellness, leadership, and relationships to Land, Water, Air, and Body. In bringing the womxn co-researchers together in a culturally safe and relational way to meet one another and to share their personal health experience.

Engaging with womxn co-researchers is action-oriented, provides a space for felt experiences to be witnessed, and moves beyond theoretical thinking and abstraction (Hunt/Tłaliłila'ogwa & Farrales, 2024) into a sharing circle that promotes sharing lived experiences. Some of the womxn revealed to me that they were grateful for having this

experience to discuss their health stories as it countered feelings of isolation. My research methods align with critical methodologies and are nested within an action-oriented and transformative research paradigm. A transformative research paradigm claims that people who embody a particular identity are best equipped to speak from and for that position (Mertens, 2005, p. 21). In bringing together Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn to exchange their personal health stories, the sharing circle reflected a decolonizing practice in action. The story-poems at the heart of this research are, in a way, an extension of that sharing circle, a kind of poetic circle creation that links and overlays and brings together in a mediative way the voices of co-researchers. Such a practice, I hope, aligns with Indigenous scholars who encourage research practices like storywork (Archibald, 2008). In *Research is Ceremony* (2008), Shawn Wilson suggests that storytelling is a gift of reciprocity between the tellers and listeners and that story-based research "exemplifies what research should do: enable people to sit together and talk meaningfully" (p. 81). Following the collaborative circle sharing held in March 2024, I continued to write the chapters of my dissertation and sit with and feel the words of the stories shared by the womxn co-researchers.

Phase 4: Preliminary Sharing

Each co-researcher received their transcript, and a summary of their stories for their consideration, review, and input. Each co-researcher had full agency to leave the research project at any time, and as communicated through informal conversations and the consent form, the knowledge, teachings, and learnings shared in the project belong to each individual. Throughout the research phases and during the writing of the dissertation, I kept a reflective journal of my own learning, observations, and creative thoughts. While I was waiting for feedback from my

supervisory committee about the dissertation I sent to my supervisory committee, I informally checked in with the co-researchers to share the story-poems and ask for their feedback.

3.5 Autoethnographic Reflections

One of my Indigenous colleagues at the Health Arts Research Centre revealed to me that she did not know much about the Filipinx diaspora and culture beyond stereotypes of them being caregivers, nannies, and nurses, which prompted me to write the following poetic essay:

Excerpt from Walang Hiya (Without Shame) (forthcoming 2025) Christine Añonuevo

the philippines was colonized by the government and military forces of the spanish, the japanese, and the united states. my paternal surname is the result of the catálogo alfabético de apellidos. part of tracing my ancestry is understanding that i am a bygone possession of the spanish empire. an imposed surname as part of an empire that sought to name, trace, and tax their colonial subjects and the intergenerational impacts on health connected to an unravelling and untenable identity. i wasn't taught this history in the settler colonial state of canada. in fact being filipina is tacitly knowing that your history, geography, and identity are invisibilized, minimized, and subsumed, not unlike other racialized minorities in the settler colonial state of canada because your history is not found in curriculums, not found in the archives of libraries, notwithstanding, a disturbing invisibility. but our presence is hypervisible in calcified and stereotypical caregiving roles: nurses and nannies; subjugated and legislated servitude in the settler colonial state. where decrees of multiculturalism are empty platitudes of embracing diversity but not allowing equitable access to equal wages, jobs, or lifestyles to our white and white-adjacent counterparts. as louie leyson wrote in glossary for an aswang, "bodies are the philippines' most urgent export" (as cited in santos-vieira, 2023). an aswang is an aggregate term for a mythical creature from filipino folklore—a shape-shifting, half-human and half-something-else hybrid creature. one version of the aswang myth relates that it can sever its body at night and seeks to eat life forms in the making. another pre-colonial version is that the aswang is a medicine woman and healer. how many of our folkloric myths and histories been subverted by centuries of colonialism?

through a lifetime of intergenerational kuwentuhan, or stories, i have heard of the impacts of health due to the subjugation of their minds, bodies, and is/lands through centuries of colonialism. filipino/a/x suffer from mental and physical exhaustion, stress-related skin and autoimmune disorders, heart attacks, heart disease, high blood pressure, gout, blindness, intergenerational colonial trauma, ptsd, depression, addictions, suicidal ideation, diabetes & dialysis, cancer, cataracts, eating disorders, and so on. there are no determinants of filipino health research in the province where i live (yet). there are no disaggregated race-based data on the health and well-being of filipinos in the province where i live (yet). filipinos in the diaspora rarely seek mental, physical, and physiological health supports despite being employed in large numbers in the healthcare system. isn't that ironic? and what conditions would motivate more to seek health supports?

3.6 Summary of Methods and Methodology

Throughout Chapter Three and throughout this research, I sought methodologies and methods that felt accountable to the research design's relational, ontological, and epistemological assumptions. Unlike Western Cartesian dualism, logic based on a myth of unbias that is a denial

of the speaker's own situated knowledge (Haraway, 2013) and impersonal observation and substantiating "objectivity" or "neutrality" as the groundwork for legitimate inquiry into physical sciences, this research uplifts and affirms Indigenous and Black feminist emphasis on relational and embodied understanding(s) that methodology, theory, and ideology are overlapping, not easily separated into categories, and interwoven. In choosing to bring together interdisciplinary Indigenous and Black methodologies alongside a transformative research paradigm and CRT conceptual framework, this research moved with a specific purpose. The purpose was to offer the possibilities of an intercultural and Intersectional Feminist research methodology anchored in diverse stories and personal narratives expressed as story-poems to document health experiences largely absent from academia and the healthcare field. As Nehiyaw scholar Margaret Kovach states, "[qualitative inquiry] is story interpreted from experience to offer further insight into human experience from human experience" (2021, p. 24).

This research project prompted me to approach the co-researchers through reciprocal and responsible relationality with a broad goal of providing baseline evidence and knowledge in the form of story-poems and interlaced personal narratives to inform better health practices. Storysharing, through story-poems, may be one way to decolonize research, especially research about the health and well-being of womxn too often not afforded unearned privileges associated with whiteness and coloniality. These story-poems may address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to integrate Indigenous wellness practices into healthcare systems (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Because Western research approaches are steeped in epistemic racism[33] and have been used to (not) understand Indigenous perspectives, research has often failed to address the health needs of Indigenous Peoples (Smith, 2012). By braiding

[33] Epistemic racism can be explained as the valuing and devaluing of knowledge systems.

together NI with Black feminism and Indigenous methodologies, and by bringing Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx voices into poetic dialogue with each other, I actualized Intersectional Feminist and anti-colonial story practices. A poetic arts-based practice (counter-storytelling, storytelling, storysharing, and poetry) thus opened up possibilities to document (in new and creative ways) marginalized/misrepresented/invisibilized/erased experiences. Additionally, I have peppered reflections and my own stories throughout this dissertation, using aspects of autoethnography, for transparency and accountability. I hope that both the methodological approach and the research methods establish the conditions for intercultural alliances and for imagining more just futures with fewer health inequities. An essential aspect of health and well-being for Indigenous peoples is to live a life rooted in traditional knowledge systems, laws, and traditions (Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2011, 2017; Smith, 1999). Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx ways of knowing and being in the world have historically been ignored and erased. By uplifting womxn's voices from specific geographies and by braiding them into poetic dialogue with each other, I attempted to bear witness to these often invisibilized voices[34] and to amplify their knowledge, agency, leadership, and strengths. Such voices have too often been isolated from each other and then suppressed by white, male, heteronormative, and heteropatriarchal worldviews. The next chapter documents these voices, stories, and poetic knowledges in more detail and reveals how our stories overlap, intermingle, and are relational. Documenting and bringing into dialogue with each other the living and lived experiences of the womxn co-researchers refuses the logic that such voices, bodies, and stories are not valued as valid knowledge in academic institutions. These story-poems, I hope, may even have the

[34]It's important to note that First Nations, Metis, and Inuit voices have a strong oral tradition. I use voices in this dissertation in multiple forms and from diverse sources: written, poetic, academic, community, etc.

potential to contribute to transformative learning in healthcare settings which could impact health policies to foster public health action from a racialized and feminist perspective.

I would like to note that materially and literally throughout this dissertation, I have highlighted personal and poetic reflections in text boxes, representing a singular and individuated voice. The text boxes were a way for me, as a racialized womxn of colour, to push back against the inherently colonial structure of an academic dissertation: the text boxes capture a freedom of documenting my voice. In the following section, and with permission and through discussion, I have assembled co-researchers' voices into story-poems. These story-poems bring co-researchers' voice into dialogue with one another using poetic form. The poetic representation of stories allows for a circularity that on the page represents a fleshy and embodied expression of decolonial knowing. I have done this to speak back to colonial systems that often want to silo marginalized voices rather than for these diverse voices (and womxn) to be in a relationship with one another. My deliberate decisions are not meant to reinscribe asymmetrical power dynamics of an individual researcher and a group of "subjects" – to counter this possibility, I have remained in dialogue with all the womxn with whom I worked. My purposeful decisions in structure and form highlight the power of collective knowledge expressed by the co-researchers. This power within a collective of voices expresses an anti-colonial aesthetic while attempting to serve as a decolonial space for womxn to freely speak about their health as it relates to Land, Water, and Air. However, as with any form of academic knowledge production, especially a dissertation set within colonial institutions and tradition, there is a risk of unintentionally reinscribing power hierarchies. As I am aware of this risk, there is space for me to reflect on uneven power dynamics despite my best intentions in further research.

Chapter 4-Findings and Discussion: Embodied Story-Poems

In Seneca scholar Mishuan Goeman's landmark book, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations* (2013), she uses the concept of "re-mapping" to describe and capture the use and power of words (in literature and poetry) to create new worlds. The writers in her book open a space to critique nation-state policies by imagining a decolonial space in the here and now. Goeman provides a new model for researching "flexible spatial communities" (2013, p. 117) that enliven multiple levels of belonging and identity and hold the potential to transcend colonial policies. Goeman suggests that community healing can be achieved by understanding that places are embodied and always a process of transformation. This chapter is my attempt at re-mapping and creating new maps of health narratives embodied by Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn who reflect on their health and healing within ongoing and intergenerational coloniality. The voices shared throughout this chapter, rendered in poetic (story-poem) form represent a capacious invitation to the reader to reflect on what it means to centre Indigenous Land, life, and liberation on a multi-scalar level: in our day-to-day relationships, in our community organizing, in academia, and beyond academia, and in our

Christine Añonuevo, excerpt from ALON journal article, forthcoming

In 2008, I moved to Prince Rupert on Ts'msyen territory to work with Jeunesse Canada Monde/ Canada World Youth with youth from across the country and Ukraine on an Eco-Leadership bilateral experiential learning program. At the time, Royal Dutch Shell wanted to drill for coalbed methane in the Sacred Headwaters (the birthplace of the Skeena, Nass, and Stikine Rivers on Tahltan territory). I witnessed stories of elders and culture keepers talking about the potential impacts of extraction on the land, water, and salmon. This was one entry point into remembering (previous and) ongoing extractive industrial activities that threaten waters, salmon, and First Nations' relationship to their territories, creatures, plants, sacred watersheds, foodsheds, and airsheds. The Sacred Headwaters, known as the Klabona to the Tahltan, is the birthplace/headwaters of the Nass, Stikine, and Skeena rivers. In 2005, the Klabona Keepers, a group of Tahltan elders and women, stopped Royal Dutch Shell from drilling and extracting coalbed methane. These rivers supply Indigenous people with salmon, their primary source of food. Klabona is a sacred place for the community. It's where they hunt and gather for their winter food. It's their kitchen and where they take kids to teach them their culture. It's where we connect with their ancestors, heal and feel grounded. Yet, for the past fifteen years, these Elders have had to fight coal and gas tenures permitted by the government. Witnessing artists and knowledge-keepers share their embodied wisdom has had a long-lasting impact on my worldview with lands and territories.

global and interconnected place-based laws, politics, and governance. The story-poems are invitations to consider how Black and Indigenous Feminist thought and embodied stories orient themselves outside of subjugated conscriptions of what it means to be human and where humanity can take place. Blackness can be imagined beyond a settler-conquistador relationship as the Black body can play a role as forms in space that expand geographic humanity rather than solely being forms exploited for their labor. There are many threads interwoven between Black, Indigenous, and racialized womxn's voices and resulting story-poems.

This chapter is divided into seven poems (story-poems) that braid together womxn's voices. In NI, narrative threads are understood as "plotlines that threaded or wove over time and place through an individual's narrative account" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132) – in the case of these story-poems, womxn's voices are the threads of the story-poems I have created. Narrative threads also reflect the experiences of both the co-researchers and the researcher in the NI study: threads should be "embedded within social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 207). I listened to each of the co-researchers' kuwentuhan multiple times and re-read the transcripts of their kuwentuhan to search for "resonances and echoes that reverberated across accounts" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132). I was listening for cues from the co-researcher related broadly to their health to braid into poetic form. Driftwood Pile Cree scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt writes, "A poem…is at the very least a record of one's survival. It brings about an 'I.' It is a process of generation and survival" (2024, p. 57). Through a series of seven story-poems, the braided voices create narratives that express the lived reality and complex intersectional and racialized identities. These voices contribute powerful insights into local and global conversations about womxn's health, Indigenous self-determination, and body sovereignty.

4.1 Braiding Voices, Geographies & Bodies

In NI, the relationship between one's story and one's identity is reciprocal (Tuval-Mashiash, 2006). As stories are told, people reveal themselves (Baddely & Singer, 2007). Womxn co-researchers in this project introduced themselves and revealed their names, relations to relatives (human and more-than-human), relations to northern and Indigenous geographies, relationships to Land, Water, and Air, relationships to migration, relationships to communities, and relationships to pursuing further education or employment opportunities. In engaging with womxn and their voices through story sharing, I struggled to translate the dynamic nature of our time together in a way that captured the energy, emotion, lived experience, and holistic feelings into a logical, reductionist, and legible academic form. I reflected upon the times I have been privileged to be in the feast hall. I have often found the ways in which Hereditary Chiefs and wing-chiefs introduce one another and speak to be poetic, circular, and expansive, and an example of non-linear time. Thus, when thinking about how to express womxn's narratives, I found poetry to be a suitable method for this form of storysharing. Additionally, I often think about my embodied kuwentuhan with my mother. Often, our conversations are fluid, jumping from topic to topic. Our dialogue feels circular. My mother often speaks to me through a lens of lifelong experiences as we exist in different timeframes to one another with almost five decades of memories and rememberings. The story-poems offer an entry point to consider the scale of how one life is interconnected to many lives. Thinking about my lived experiences in the feast hall witnessing Hereditary Chiefs speak and my mother's ongoing kuwentuhan, I employ various forms of poetic practices (including erasure poetry, enjambment, radical lineation, repetition, and refraining) throughout this chapter to produce womxn's story-poems. Geopoetic practice was another poetic practice upon which I called.

While not exclusively geographically or ecologically focused, I still found geopoetics[35] to be a useful concept in producing the story-poems at the heart of this dissertation. Indeed, in dialogue with goals of geopoetics, I aim to "push back against the rigid academic constraints and norms that tend to encourage linear, quantitative, clean, concise, rational, reductionist, and Eurocentric ways of thinking and being" (Anonuevo et al., 2024). Poets and geography scholars Eric Magrane and Sarah de Leeuw invite people to use geopoetics as

> An opportunity to reorder or refresh the world. This is a radical proposition, an ethical one. What world, what earth, is to be made…what relationships are to be privileged and honoured? Who is making the world, and according to whose form and representation? For whom is the world being (re) imagined? (de Leeuw & Magrane, 2019, p. 146).

Using techniques of geopoetics, along with found and spontaneous poetry,[36] I created portraits of each of the womxn co-researchers, using their own words to introduce themselves and share their narrative identities and their health experiences. Throughout the research process, I struggled to present the voices in a way that aligns with the anti-colonial orientation of my positionality and to honour distinct genealogies and backgrounds. I reflected on a time during my childhood when my mother would braid my hair. This simple act of braiding connects me to my mother, memories of the past, and to my matrilineal motherland of archipelagos and islands. The act of braiding gestures to the way time can act in a non-linear fashion by combining the past, present, and future. The voices of co-researchers were braided together and presented in a poetically lineated fashion, or as I call them, story-poems. I attempted to stitch together a collaboratively braided poetic autoethnography that speaks against isolated siloed voice, a method that reflects a

[35] Geopoetics is a method anchored in geohumanities that uses poetry to engage place, ecology, power, difference, and landscape, as well as human and more-than-human relationships with Earth (de Leeuw and Magrane, 2019).
[36] Found poetry is a type of poetry created by taking words, phrases, whole passages and reframing them.

new written space and disrupts conventions of individualism and separation on the page, reimagining collective power. In a small act of colonial refusal to the English language, I titled each poem, salaysáy tulâ, through combining two Tagalog nouns that mean story and poem, respectively. The Tagalog verb isalyáay has multiple meanings, such as to tell a story about something or to recount something, which I thought made it fitting to begin each story-poem.

Throughout each of the seven poems, not all ten voices of the co-researchers are present. However, themes and echoes from our story-talking resonate through the seven poems. Individuated voices appear throughout this section in text boxes in my effort to uplift diverse voices within this collaborative collection. Indigenous voices begin each poem and appear on the left side of the page, while diasporic voices on the right-hand side to ground and honour Indigenous knowledge in this particular space.

Salaysáy Tulâ 1: I Am, We Are

I am Birdy
I belong to many communities, because I wear many hats
first and foremost
I belong to and with the Witsuwit'in community
I'm a matriarch in training
I'm a matriarch in training
from the Laksilyu clan
I was born and raised in Prince Rupert
raised in Witset
by my grandma
my grandma's had me since I was two months old
she was 65 when she got me
my first education is all in
[Witsuwit'in]language
[Witsuwit'in]language
not English

I am Ashley
I am mixed, my mom is white, my dad is Black
as an adult, I am recognizing,
I grew up with a lot of internalized racism,
growing up with a white mom,
who is racist and homophobic
"mixed" sounds gross, "biracial" doesn't quite work, to say Black is fine,
It's not really the whole story
It's not really the whole story
how do I identify
as biracial, in brackets
Caribbean and settler
how can I unpack that for you?
It's 25 years of unpacking
I lead with Black because there's a real push
for women of color
especially in academia to be there
and take up our space

I am Ana[37]
born in the Philippines
born in the Philippines
my parents and my sister migrated before I did to
Treaty One territory
most of my childhood there
finished high school on the West Coast
I started working in the North when my son turned 19
worked in remote nursing
it was Community Health Nursing that drew me
I applied
I lived in a northern community
It was for six years, six months at a time

I am Ruth
I was born in Dawson Creek in the Peace region
I ended up there because
my mother immigrated from the Philippines
On paper, she was a domestic helper for my dad

[37] Pseudonym as requested by co-researcher.

they were pen pals around the People Power[38] *revolution*
against the Marcos regime
against the Marcos regime
she wanted to leave the country
she heard about people being sought out, arrested, or executed
she dodged that
on my dad's side, we lived on a hobby farm in East Pine,
20 minutes east of Chetwynd
That's the area that he settled when he came from Ontario
And then we moved here (Hazelton) in 1998
we built the house here
the same house that we live in now

I am Tara
My dad's side of the family, they're Gitxsan
My grandparents lived in Gitanyow
My grandfather was from Gitanyow; a Hereditary Chief
My grandmother was a matriarch from Gitsegukla
they had a whole bunch of kids
One of them was my dad
My mom is non-native
She's still alive
My dad passed away, and my grandparents on my dad's side passed away
My mom was a teacher and lived in Gitanyow
where my parents met
I grew up in and around Gitanyow outside of Kitwanga
spent a little bit of time in Hazelton, before moving to Prince Rupert
I got to move home after going to university,
working in different places,
getting some education and experience
then moving back home
14 years ago, which seems so long ago
when I got pregnant I moved back home
coming home
coming home
I'm close to Gitanyow.
Hazelton is
where I want to raise my kids

---

[38] The People Power Revolution was a series of popular demonstrations and civil resistance in 1986 against President Ferdinand Marcos, who was considered a dictator and led to his departure after twenty years in political power.

where I want to raise my kids
where I live and do work now

I am Jane[39]
I ended up in Smithers in the mid-2000s
I moved up here to finish my fourth year of schooling
I did my practicum
I was hired after my practicum was over
I found out I was also expecting at the time,
I did work for a little bit with them
paid
then I had my first baby
growing up
I was kind of in two places
growing up
when I aged out of care, I was still in Merritt
growing up
not knowing [my mother and father] and
being a permanent ward
at two so
growing up
in all kinds of housing situations
with no Indigenous People, as an Indigenous person

I am Katanya
I lived and worked in
Turks and Caicos for six and a half years,
I came back home to Jamaica
I came back home to Jamaica
that's where I am from
that's where I am from
I ended up in Turks and Caicos
they were recruiting teachers
my husband was not happy
I took advantage of an opportunity
I was told about
which culminated in him being here [in the north]
My family was separated for approximately two and a half years

[39] Pseudonym as requested by the co-researcher.

then the children and I came in Christmas of 2015
by way of permanent residency
that is how I ended up being in Canada

I am Adaku[40]
I came to Northern BC to further my education
I was living in Southern Ontario
From Nigeria
I was waiting for answers
my pastor who's also my spiritual head, called me,
what are you doing?
what are you doing*?*
He asked me to consider furthering my education
have you thought of a PhD in northern BC?
I have not thought of a PhD
I'm not thinking of any more school
He said, you know, you really should think about it. And we have a church branch there
I hadn't even heard about the University of Northern British Columbia.
Then I Googled UNBC
I had a spiritual connection immediately, there was so much joy
It was the only school I applied for a PhD
I had that spiritual connection to UNBC

I am Kumbayaz
My father is Edward Dennis
My mother is Reba Solomon
My father is Beaver clan, and his mother comes from Tl'azt'en Nation
which separated
It's Binche, past Fort St. James.
My dad's dad comes from Babine, which is Nadot'en
that's where my ties to this land come from
My mother is of settler origin
first generation Canadian
from New Zealand through England,
her parents came from England and
moved to New Zealand
and then to Canada where she was born
My mother, who was white was adopted into the Caribou clan

[40] Pseudonym as requested by the co-researcher.

therefore, I am Caribou clan,
my parents had met at a symposium in Vancouver
they moved up north
when they got pregnant with me
my dad had a project doing
language revitalization language revitalization language revitalization
because he's a fluent Dakelh speaker
that's why we came back to this territory
where I was born and raised in this territory
that my grandparents come from my dad
my ties to this land here I'm Dakelh residing on Dakelh territory
this is our land that we come from we have a responsibility to our Land
this is our land that we come from we have a responsibility to our Land
My ancestors, my ancestors are here
My ancestors, my ancestors are here
and then my mother
just trying to reach out to my mother's family
I know my mother's brother and sister
but I don't know the extended family really
I just reached out to somebody in New Zealand.

Each co-researcher began their storytelling by introducing how they came to live in so-called northern BC geographies and what ancestral ties they claim in such geographies. Some of the co-researchers migrated as a result of transnational and neoliberal state policies that are reflective of being an arrivant, the colonial phenomenon of migration enforced by nation-state policies (Byrd, 2011). Stories of migration echo enduring legacies of colonial projects, forced migration caused, by American and British imperialism and colonization. Jennifer Adese and Malissa Phung argue that "genealogical disclosure" (2021, p. 120) is more than stating one's positionality. Such a disclosure expresses an accountability and relationship-building tool to contextualize who we are and how we come to be who we are in the so-called Canada.

Genealogical orientation aligns with Indigenous laws and protocol. Within many Indigenous legal structures, locating and positioning oneself is central to relationality. Some of

the womxn came to northern geographies for work or to pursue graduate work. Others have deep-rooted relationships with communities and Land through genealogical belonging. Others gesture to ancestry belonging to islands, continents, and oceanic archipelagos far from northern geographies. By locating oneself in and of place, relationality is made visible. The introduction and location of one's family allows for a situating of oneself and a detailing of relationships with others. For Indigenous womxn involved in this study, locating oneself makes visible relationships to clan, house groups, and territories within governance structures. The act of locating situates kinship within a collective with an emphasis on matrilineal ties. I turn next to the womxn's understanding of their accountabilities and belonging. Personal and professional accountability are values aligned with Indigenous reciprocity and respect embedded in my research. Central to Indigenous legal governance, kinship accountability is built into the feast or potlach system (Davidson & Davidson, 2018). The Witsuwit'en word for feast is denii ne'aas meaning "people coming together" (Mills, 1994 p. 43). Feasts make clear the jurisdiction of Hereditary Chiefs and that jurisdiction is predicated on a "deep appreciation of the spiritual qualities of the land, the animals, and holders of title" (Mills, 1994, p. 43). Pagkikipagkapwa is a Tagalog word akin to the English

Tara

I'm not the Adaawk, or
really the oral
history expert. But I
have a little to share
in this area, out the
Kitwanga back road. some people
say it was closer to Two
Mile. it's the Damelahamid
that was the Gitxsan sort of
ancient metropolis there
was a rise and a peak of
Gitxsan society
there was a large city in
the area there was a
series of events that cause
people to disperse from from
Damelahamid go
into different parts of the
Gitxsan territory
established Wilp territories
that's part of why there's a
connection that I have to
the Hazeltons
just love imagining
that history I love
imagining how many
people will have walked in the
same places for 1000s of years
how they've sustained themselves for
1000s of years.

word *relationality* that loosely translates to "a deep connection with everything." This word (and concept) helps me orient myself viscerally through my own personal and cultural epistemology to the co-researchers in a holistic and relationship-based manner.

Salaysáy Tulâ 2: Routes/ Roots

Within such a short amount
of time, when contact happened
there's a lot of damage that's
happened to the territories

For me, it's always seeing that
that history is still
alive today. And that the
Adaawk[41] *talk, they are always*

lessons, there are always ways
that the people learn not to
disrespect nature there are
always lessons about the

ways that people learn
when they almost starve to death
when there was natural
disasters brought upon

them they took those as
to be more respectful
it was always about
being more respectful of

the Land. we need that more than
ever. a lot of our own
people through residential
schools[42] *and colonization*

have lost those teachings and there's

[41] Gitxsan oral histories. Please note that there are variations in spelling, adawx, adaawk, adaawx, adaawak.
[42] For more on residential schools, https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/(Hanson, 2009).

a lot of non-Indigenous people that have lost
those teachings or never had
them to begin with and are

not even aware of the
history of this place. this
area. Adaawk . Wilps.
Damelahamid[43]*.*

Maybe when I just came [here]
I was accountable to
the Seventh Day Adventist
community. I have since
left because I felt like that

didn't align with me.
LGBTQIA
Two-Spirit community

I cannot tell you how I
identify
I would have comfortably
told you I identify

as bisexual probably still
do. I probably still do.
currently navigating
being divorced from the man
I followed
I have entered into a
relationship
with a woman I don't think
I want to entangle my
self with another man
in my life. let's see
what happens I don't have a
Jamaican community
here, per se. I don't have a
Black community here, per

[43] Please note there are many versions of the spelling of *Damelahamid.*

se to belong to there is
another family that

is Jamaican here we speak
but we don't hang out as much
learned to keep to myself. I
have a cultural community

I am more accountable
to my spiritual to
my spiritual people
and spirit community.

my ancestors would be all
the people who lived and gave
birth to our language, and dress
our culture as we practiced
it. My mom brought me up and the
way I grew up,
in a faith-based home, we do
we do have a cultural

root, a traditional base
religion, they have Gods with
the small letter g that they
worship. But I never did

practice that. I
was raised in a Christian
home. That's how I grew up, still
even after I
migrated to Canada

I still feel connected
connection to
my spiritual
community than I would

be to any cultural
or tradition, culture is
the meals you cook culture is

the language you speak. All of
those things are still inherent
in me. when I meet others
who speak my language. I speak
my language with them

I am Black/Mixed a lot of
my core values come from my
dad's side of the family
those are the things that I want

to pass on those are the things
that I strive to embody
I'm very accountable
to my father's side of my

family. I was thinking about it
this morning on my dad's side
I'm the first generation
born in Canada, that's, that's
something that adds a layer
of internal pressure I
really have to achieve.

Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, challenges readers to reimagine and (re)map ourselves by interrogating our relationships to place and each other outside the constructs of settler colonialism (2013). This collaborative poem places Black and Indigenous womxn's voices and words, derived from their stories in relationship with one another to challenge colonial spatialities. Family stories and personal memories make visible Indigenous theory and methodology in specific place-based geographies as womxn negotiate their homes and homelands. Goeman has written that "[Native American] maps remain today in oral traditions, contemporary stories, and experiences conveyed through story, and these stories are often carried on through women" (2013, p. 25). In this story-poem, I

was thinking about the ongoing power of Gitxsan oral history passed on intergenerationally through the story of the Damelahamid which creates a law and story. A process that affirms and narrates "Indigenous Peoples back into their governance, territories, and cultures" (Barker, 2017, p.18). As Anishinaabeg political scientist Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark has noted,

> There is a rich body of scholarship that calls for us to seriously consider how narratives, whether encoded in law or circulated through dominant society and embedded in the national consciousness, shape, and inform how we understand ourselves and relation to others (Stark in Doerfler et al., 2013, p. 262).

Adaawk (Gitxsan) Kungax (Witsuwit'en), and other oral accounts describe landscapes, and their changes as illustrated above. Thus, they serve to archive significant historical and cultural events spatially. Susan Marsden highlights that Indigenous epistemology, like the adaawk are interconnected to facilitate intersections of knowledge and legal systems (Marsden, 2002). As ethnobotanist Chelsea Armstrong has written, "oral records and adaawx add explanatory power, not only to human history, but to landscape and ecosystem history as well...the history of people and the history of their lands-should never be separated at all" (2022, p. 56). Gitxsan stories rooted in place hold information in maintaining generational responsibilities about familial rights and territorial knowledge. The 1997 Delgamuukw/Gisday'wa case from the Supreme Court of Canada was significant as it is the first time in "Canadian" law that the so-called Canadian court system acknowledges the duty to consult with First Nations. The case also affirmed the existence of Aboriginal title and that Aboriginal oral history could be used in case law as evidence. While Indigenous oral history archives and reinforces intergenerational knowledge, the voices of Black womxn in this poem serve to remind us in the so-called Canadian state that notions of Blackness and Black subjectivities have relationships with Indigenous Peoples and their struggles against ongoing coloniality.

With this poem, I aim to counter the erasures of diverse Black womxn's stories in these specific geographies and connect them to Black feminist methodologies. Stories told by co-researchers with Black, African, and Afro-Caribbean identities reveal a sense of displacement and loss when disconnected from ancestry and place. Their stories are connected to legacies of African and Afro-Caribbean histories. Even though many of the womxn are far from their ancestral homelands and communities, their stories reveal a pull or connection to places they have been displaced from and gesture to ways they make and negotiate spaces of belonging in their current communities in the north.

Ashley

I don't think there is a
strong
connection anymore for
any of us to
Barbados,
where we are from

the Caribbean, where we
are originally from

if you ask my grandmother
she lived more in Canada
than in Barbados. that's
complicated, because

we are trying to get
back to Barbados

the connection Barbados
back to Barbados.

Such stories echo some of the themes in Trinidadian poet Dionne Brand's work, particularly in *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2002). Brand's poetry provides a method for identifying how the embodied experiences of Black womxn form an archive for generating Black and queer theoretical and material understandings of how the conditions of colonialism and imperialism have shaped the Black diaspora and the aftermaths of unbelonging and identity. Early in *A Map to the Door of No Return*, Brand remembers a childhood experience related to her grandfather, once he knew "what people we came from" (2002, p. 3). Brand writes, "we were not from the place where we lived and we could not remember where we were from or who we were" (2002, p. 5). In Brand's poetry and in the co-researchers' stories, we see the impacts of memory and forgetting. When people are extracted from place, there is loss of memory, history, and psychic sense of belonging which impacts womxn's health. An embodied

approach, like the one used in the story-poems attempts to facilitate an intergenerational remembering of ancestors, place, and memories storied in our bodies. Through paying attention to our bodies, hearts, and minds wisdom is passed to us via ceremony, dreams, reflections, and other ways (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

Brand blends memoir and autobiography to produce a creative text woven from multiple archives: the author-speaker's Black queer embodied experiences, colonial journals and travelogues, and the archive of metaphors used by Black subjects to narrate and understand the African diaspora. Similarly, such embodied and textual archives shared by the co-researchers allow us to understand diaspora as an existential condition or an existential haunting that negotiates various and diverse forms of gendered, racialized, and sexualized orientation and disorientation, belonging and unbelonging. The co-researchers' stories echo movement, mobility, and the afterlives of imperialism and empire in Africa and the Caribbean. These stories counter the dominant narratives of white settler and Indigenous binaries that erase Blackness within the white settler colonial project of Land theft where Black people remain aspatial subjects. Within broader nation-state narratives, so-called Canada tends to "prioritize the settler-Indigenous binary and subordinate-erase-the nation's history of slavery and anti-Black racism" (2019, King, p. 10). Within global narratives and geographies, Black stories highlight the historical and cultural erasures and dispossession of people of African descent as a result of the condition of the

Adaku

I am a Nigerian
and a Yoruba person
in Nigeria in. in
Nigeria, we have
250 ethnic
groups. my ties
to my spiritual
community are stronger

than my ties to my ethnic
community. I felt more
accountability to
my, spiritual
community as I don't
attend ethnic meetings and
stuff like that

I'm not sure we
even had any in Prince George.

transatlantic slave trade. More importantly, stories of Black womxn mark and map their agency and experiences within place-specific sites in northern geographies.

Scholars have highlighted the ways Black subjects are perceived and experienced within archives of colonialism, anti-Blackness, and slavery as economic objects or subjects of colonial law and denied their humanity within colonial laws and economies (McKitrick, 2006; 2013; 2020). *A Map to the Door of No Return* acts as an intervention as it gestures to an embodied experience as a nuanced archive and accounting of how Black diasporic subjects are in the wake of the conditions of slavery and anti-Blackness. In this poem, the voices of the Black co-researchers act as interventions in the archives of so-called northern BC to document their voices, their experiences, and their stories and parallel themes in Brand's poetry about memory and forgetting and absence. Yet, despite absence and forgetting, the intimate personal memories of the Black womxn in this research act as an archive congruent with Black feminist theoretical frameworks of Black futurity and demonstrate new relationships of care, community, and belonging.

Salaysáy Tulâ 3: Sustenance

When I was a kid
my dad would take us out to Babine
and we'd go up to old fort
We boat to Smokehouse Island
and they would set the net

We would do a couple of days of hard work
and we would
have our salmon for the whole year

It provides mobility
there are so many things that our water is
it's our duty to protect it
As women it's important for us
to do ceremonies with water

and to take care of it
just the same as the earth
it's part of us and
when our Water isn't well
We aren't well
our brothers and sisters
the four-legged
the winged
we all suffer if our Water is suffering
the health of our Water is
directly related to our health

On my father's side,
they are rice planters
they mostly
tilled rice

My dad tilled rice my grandpa tilled rice
All my aunts and uncles tilled rice
until folks started

the migration

the first person who ever migrated
On my dad's side was my aunt
I just loved hearing her stories
of when we were kids
they would till the land

but that drive to just want
to have a better opportunity

because they were tenants
they never owned the land
they just relied on whatever crops
that would provide money in return
they lived off the land they tilled

my aunt migrated from the Philippines in 1970
as a garment worker,
my father
my other aunt followed
over the generations

more and more of my uncles

migrated to Saudi Arabia

leaving the land they were tilling
left it,
left it
to my aunt and my grandfather
to stay and till the land

more and more our family
became a diasporic family in the 70s
You can see that the land also changed
because in the 80s, there was a land conversion
to no choice of my dad's side of the family

the landowners sold the land for housing development
And in return
my aunt, my uncle and my grandpa, who stayed behind
were given just a bunch of money
in exchange of that land

I went back (to the Philippines) in 1986

I saw the rice plantation
how it was still truly countryside
When I returned in 1991
it was gone
It was like traffic and housing and concrete

Sad

fractured relationship to the land and water
seeing the different distractions
even the nearby river that in 1986, we went back there
When I was back there, we were swimming in it

they would do laundry
in the nearby river in 1986,
we went back there
When I was back there,
we were swimming in it

now it's so polluted, it's just like stagnant water

I went outside on my lawn
took off my shoes and socks

just
stood on the earth
just to feel that recharge

there's very much
a correlation
between my health
and what the earth provides
the Earth will instantly recharge and ground me

I need to have that connection
our waters
are the same
as a life as
our blood flowing through our body

It's the same as
the air we breathe

It's
all connected
When there are dysfunctions
or blockages that are happening

because of how we live
it'll affect us as people who are connected
and our hearts. They're doing work on our territory
right now
the pipeline is going through

going through
all these beautiful berry-picking spots
And they're blasting and, it really hurts
hurts to see that
our land is already suffering
so much

there are places
that our people are using every summer
Every summer people go there
It's not like one specific family

it's used by all of us
I'm getting emotional
because I feel like when Earth is hurting
of course

it's gonna hurt all of us.

I was born and raised in Lagos
it's
right by the ocean
there is no trade in Lagos that does not involve water
in terms of food, buying and selling
we do a lot of a lot of shipment comes through water

in terms of health and well-being because
our health and well-being

is everything
your mental health
is your physical health
lots of the food we eat gets transported over water
we eat a lot of seafood as well, that comes from water
I feel like in that way
Water contributes to my health and well-being

the cars we drive are shipped via the water, right?
most of them were shipped from the US, UK, and other countries
There's no way you can get around Lagos without driving
I feel for my health and well-being the water does a lot
That's the way I would term

health and well-being in relation
to bodies of water
helping me to exist in terms of food,
transportation, even the
medications and stuff like that
are carried via
bodies of water

There were some boys in the next grade
I would have been in grade six
there was this big kerfuffle
they didn't want to take cultural awareness class
I remember seeing a picture of these boys with their

arms crossed. I was like, It's so fun
you don't want to do that?

in high school, I moved out of my house when I was 16
I moved to Hagwilget
lived with my boyfriend's family

I needed the freedom to grow up and do what I needed to do
I didn't feel safe at home.
I remember
they got a moose

We were at the smokehouse
My friend was also dating his cousin
We didn't realize that we were being a little bit insensitive
we were sort of like poking at the moose

I put my finger up its nostril
And Granny was like, no, no, we don't do that
We need to show respect for this being
that is going to sustain us
I needed that reminder that this is really important
They had a [fishing] net too
We would go and help with the fish and labouring for that
But that's a kind of labor that you feel it's mutually beneficial

what was that movement called?
It was the Idle No More
It kind of solidified all of it
what happened here with the railway blockades and then the highway blockade

Indigenous self-determination relates to wellness
because if you have the very fact that
they have been displaced, removed
contributes to decreased ease not just disease but an ease this is because

they're (we're) no longer

connected to their roots
is like you
chopped down on a big tree
And you want to uproot you
want to put the tree somewhere else

You cut off the cord on a tree
and then you don't care and
then you put it somewhere else
Expect it to grow without roots
Land is important [in Jamaica]
because it's a food source.
Anybody that has land, everybody wants to own land,
So that they can have things that can be planted,
be it fruit-bearing trees, food-bearing trees

spaces to grow yams,
bananas, plantains,
food source derivatives and whatnot
I want to say that's important for a lot of people,

especially people who have the option of owning land [in Jamaica]
in a rural area where you can
get more acreage but people in town take
advantage of the fact if they do have a little land space,

you will invariably find something food-related

I couldn't imagine living somewhere too big
or their air quality isn't great
we harvest a lot of the
foods off the land
as we know the wild game and fish so water

we still you know get fish from the water
I know there's sicknesses
happening with a fish sometimes.

Co-researchers shared stories of their relationships to Land and Water and how it sustains their health and well-being. Some womxn shared that the integrity of Land bases and territories is intricately linked to foodsheds and watersheds, particularly for berries, fish, and wild meat which are the traditional sustenance of many Indigenous peoples (Daigle, 2019; Morrison, 2011; Robin & Cidro, 2020). One co-researcher spoke about relationality to Land through stories of her family's rice planting in the Philippines and migration to so-called Canada. These stories of relationality to Water and Land demonstrate ties to ancestral places of origin and movement, motion, and migration. I draw attention to migration stories to highlight displacement as a result of transnational and neoliberal state policies which reflect being an arrivant, the colonial

phenomenon of migration enforced by nation-state policies (Byrd, 2011). Voices of migration in this poem speak to enduring legacies of colonial projects, forced migration caused, in this case, by American imperialism and colonization. Filipina-American scholar Robyn Magalit Rodriguez's *Migrant for Export* (2010) elegantly critiques the processes and policies by which the Philippines has established itself as a labour brokerage state. Rodriguez (2010) historicizes the influence of US imperialism and the influence of the US colonial labour system in creating programs for training, recruitment, and employment of Filipino workers in the US and ties this to Filipino state migration bureaucracy. Rodriguez theorizes that such a bureaucracy simultaneously manages and mediates workers overseas and acts to affirm the state's hegemonic legitimacy over its populace. Stories of migration from the Philippines in this poem, cannot be decoupled from the conditions of neoliberal globalization that gave rise to the co-researcher's family members leaving the Philippines. Neoliberalism is often defined as a political ideology that posits the supremacy of the market over the state in regulating nearly all domains of social life (Brown, 2003; Centeno & Cohen, 2012; Harvey, 2007). Such a political ideology has become an increasingly hegemonic project globally. When arrivants, migrants, and refugees come to Canada, they carry with them stories,

Ana

My family migrated from the Philippines to Winnipeg

I see some of my relatives express their relationship to land as a diasporic people

my aunts and my dad are really into having gardens

community gardens and their backyard gardens

the knowledge that they had on the soil and the you know, and how they grow garlic and an it seems so natural and I never thought about it

I think about that knowledge that they had and brought over with them

My family really enjoys fishing and preparing the fish that they caught my dad was into hunting. most happy

when he would be a laborer, and he would always be so upset

those are some of the distinct memories I have, because I think [fishing, hunting, gardening] reminded him of home.

knowledge, and experiences related to their relationships with Land and Water, as well as traces of nation-state policies that force them from their homelands due to conditions of neoliberalism and legacies of imperialism. Neoliberalism[44] and imperialism often leave in their wake deep collective and intergenerational loss, grief, and disconnection from place, Land, Waters, community, and family (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

The poem also reveals an Indigenous feminist ceremony with Land and Water. As Jacobs (2013) has asserted, Indigenous communities need to "strengthen our ceremonies. We need to go back to the old ways of living healthier, being more in touch with the Land. All life is sacred" (2013, p. 85). Womxn co-researchers shared their learnings from experiences and relationships with Water, which generated stories and dialogue about how Water makes them feel, and the importance of Water to their/our everyday lives from personal, community, and planetary perspectives. In her latest writing, *Theories of Water*, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson contemplates what happens when we listen to Water and become attuned to the collective and generative nature of ice and Water (College of Social and Applied Sciences, 2024). The womxn co-researchers powerfully expressed the important lessons Water teaches as a sustainer of all life forms. Daniele Behn Smith and Shannon Waters have written, "Water is indisputably a fundamental determinant of health; without it, we cannot survive"

Kumbayaz

Our water is like our blood.
Our whole life force is the water
Our water is our food
it nurtures us it we travel along the water

Our life is based around water

The most valuable source

It's constantly purifying and moving
We rely on it completely

We are water
It is us.

[44] To counter neoliberalism, see Dara Kelly's research on Stó:lō economies (gifting and reciprocity), See https://digitaldemocracies.org/dara-kelly-indigenous-gifting-and-reciprocity-economies-the-trickster-and-the-academy/.

(2022, p. 114). One co-researcher speaks about ceremonies with Water, the healing power of Water[45], and the idea that "Water is life," which is pervasive in Indigenous teachings (Harris, 2011; Assembly of First Nations, 2013).

The poem, anchored in womxn's voices, expresses the importance of nourishing one's spirit through connection with Land and Water and the sustenance of traditional and seasonal food as medicine. Food sovereignty and ethnoecological continuity were evidenced in these stories. Métis and Cree scholar Tabitha Robin has written about Indigenous Peoples' holistic and powerful relationship with their food systems. Robin writes that Indigenous Food Sovereignty (IFS) is a practice that emphasizes the relationship between food, people, and Land to "honour ancestors, nations, and lands" as well as being a "vehicle for connecting Indigenous Peoples with their cultures, lands, and histories" (Robin, 2021, p. 25). Embodied wellness is found in the emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual bodies of an individual. Food systems intricately tied to personal history contribute to a larger sense of wellness and well-being. Food is medicine especially in high stress situations, traditional food or a grandmother's diet is key to well-being (Redvers, 2019).

The poem highlights the co-researchers' experiences of Indigenous self-determination through their lived experiences with communities in the north. One co-researcher speaks about her lived experience on a reserve as a teenager and she also talks about lessons learned from a First Nation's grandmother in respecting where food comes from. A co-researcher speaks to the importance of self-determination and relationships to one's roots using a metaphor of a tree and her observations of food memories in Jamaica. Another co-researcher speaks about being invited on a womxn's hunting trip and what she observed while hunting for moose. In braiding these

[45] See also Water (T'oh) Engagement sessions for the Office of the Wet'suwet'en with We'es T'es, Sandra Harris https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2JmItf4jpA.

polyphonic voices together in this poem, the co-researchers revealed their stories related to food sovereignty in local, northern, Asian, and Caribbean geographies to evoke connections to Indigenous self-determination, wellness, and global conditions of migration and the legacies of global capitalism.

One thread in this poem articulates key lessons learned about respecting food sources which allude to the co-researcher's knowledge of Idle No More (2012) that honours Indigenous sovereignty. Idle No More was started by four women in Saskatchewan who rallied around hunger-striking Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence. Spence was drawing attention to severe housing issues in her community, Omnibus Bill C-45, and critical issues that affected First Nations People and their relationships with government leaders such as then Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Bill C-45 came under scrutiny by Indigenous leaders, communities, and activists, as it would weaken collective constitutional rights and environmental protection and turn "Canada" into an extraction state that would give corporations unchecked power. Bill C-45 contravened the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. Idle No More was a historical, political flashpoint that galvanized solidarity around Indigenous issues and marked women's bodies (such as Theresa Spence's) and communities like Attawapiskat as "zones of permanent emergencies" by the government (Aguirre Turner, 2018). Idle No More was a visible and widespread act of solidarity that mobilized and oriented Indigenous Peoples and their co-conspirators in "co-resistance" (Simpson, 2017) against the status quo Conservative government.

Through her use of the metaphor of the tree, one of the co-researchers speaks to her understanding of Indigenous self-determination in northern geographies. The severing of the tree results in severing of relationality. Delgamuukw has also shared that the ayookw[46] of the Gitxsan

[46] Gitxsan laws.

Birdy

We had a women's camp near Unistot'en

Jen had a massage table right along the river there

it was so stunning, it was so beautiful

She asked, do you want me to do Reiki with you?

I said, sure, and I laid down.

As soon as she started with the drumming and the Reiki she called on to my ancestors, and I felt everything

she felt that too, because when she called my ancestors to me,

I felt all my ancestors come to me

What I remember vividly was the color, the dusk, dark color of the mountains and the trees

All the trees standing tall. And the sky above was like dusk, I think. And there was a cloud that came and cut the mountain in half

I saw the darkness of the rocks on the bank

I felt like I was going down into the darkness coming back up into the sun and the sun was shining

I was going back into the darkness and it's coming back up into the sun

it's still visioning the sand, the color, the sand, dark rocks and the trees and the sun was shining, it was quite stunning.

is like an ancient tree, with deep roots-akin to deep laws and responsibilities are in the ground (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024). Sami scholar Rauna Kuokkkanen claims that there are multi-layered meanings of self-determination but the root of Indigenous self-determination is relational (2019). Self-determination for Kuokkanen remaps and restructures relations of social and bodily domination. Her relational approach advocates for a feminist-informed method based on the free, prior, and informed consent of Land and Indigenous bodies, with a focus on children and Elders. Kuokkanen's Indigenous feminist approach to self-determination echoes the calls Bonita Lawrence and Kim Anderson made to understand what Indigenous female visions of nationhood and the future are out there (2005). The story-poem reveals one of the co-researcher's understandings of the importance of local food systems in Jamaica. It is significant to note that Jamaica was colonized by Spain and Britain. During colonization, the arrival of sugar culture

impacted economies in the Caribbean, increasing slavery and sugar plantations. Enslaved Africans were shipped to the Caribbean Islands via the transatlantic slave trade (McKitrick, 2013). The Caribbean was the geographic site where chattel slavery took legal form in the Slave Code, which was first instituted by the English in Barbados. This law, passed in 1661, defined and dehumanized Africans as "heathen" and "brutes." This legislation deemed Africans a property.

The Slave Code was enacted across the Caribbean and became the model applied to slavery in the North American English colonies that would become the United States. Resistance to slavery and colonialism has made the Caribbean a principal site of resilience and racial justice (McKitrick, 2013). Katherine McKitrick poignantly writes that "the geographies of slavery, post-slavery, and black dispossession provide opportunities to notice that the right to be human carries in it a history of racial encounters and innovative black diaspora practices that… spatialize acts of survival" (2013, p.2). McKittrick also writes about "plantation futures" (2013, p. 2). This practice of plantation futures reframes the legacy and labour of slavery as an opening, a conceptualization of time-space that does not forget the antiblackness legacy of race and space. Complicating our understanding of plantation futures demands orientations that are centred on life and life-giving ways of knowing, being, and doing that include local food sovereignty and require an emphasis on life and nourishment from the Land.

Jane

This past moose season
there have been
a few hunters
who are saying
the moose are sick
they're riddled
with worms
and the one I saw
it was filled with cancer
so within this past few months,
hunters are becoming more
aware of moose illnesses
which they use to provide to
community.

Food sovereignty was a concept coined by the international peasants' movement La Via Campesina (2003) and is the right to define their own agricultural and food policy. Importantly, food sovereignty is concerned with tactics of economics and politics causing

damage to ecosystems with negative social and cultural impacts and seeks a solution through participatory action (Gonzalez de Molina, 2013). The concept of Indigenous Food Sovereignty (IFS) came from the Indigenous Food System Working Group of British Columbia in 2008. Secwépemc leader Dawn Morrison (2011) has conceptualized food pillars in IFS: (a) sacred or divine sovereignty, (b) participation, (c) self-determination, and (d) legislation and policy. Morrison asserts that "Indigenous food sovereignty is ultimately achieved by upholding our longstanding sacred responsibilities to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants, and animals that provide us with our food" (2011, p. 100). The cumulative impacts of extractive and other activities on global, regional, and local Land bases compromise the ability to access local and culturally relevant food. Such activities negatively impact social, cultural, and ecological health and food sovereignty.

Many scholars have written about the positive holistic health benefits of accessing traditional food as central to Indigenous life and cultural identity (Morrison, 2011; Dennis & Robin, 2020). Indigenous foodways nurtured and nourished by local ways of knowing and must be protected, as they are the foundation of cultural and health revitalization. The co-researchers emphasize their relationship to Land and Water as integral to their own personal well-being and the well-being of the communities they belong to. On another register, these story-poems connect womxn to food and water that sustain them in their daily lives and the importance of accessing healthy (not contaminated with toxins from industrial activity), traditional, and seasonal food where they live. As Tabitha Robin argues,

"[f]ood is a powerful relationship builder, a vehicle for connecting Indigenous Peoples with

Brenda

My dad passed when I was seven years old

I didn't really get to know him that well
later years, between 42 into my 50s
I really started learning about who my dad was and how he was raised
he ended up
ended up
in the Miller Bay Hospital

which is also part of the whole
~~truth and reconciliation~~
how we're being treated in the healthcare system

he ended up dying when he was 37

We don't know what was happening in those hospitals

if they were using them as guinea pigs

he ended up leaving there with one lung

And then he didn't last very long after that
ended up becoming an alcoholic
was abusive to my mom,
all these things
that happened.

their cultures, lands, and histories. Being actively involved in one's food system is foundational to well-being" (2022, p. 25).

Salaysáy Tulâ 4: Skin/Kin We Are In[47], Part 1

My *first recollection of being in the hospital*
when I was probably about three or four
I had a boil on my neck

I remember this cold place

it wasn't comfortable
or anything inviting
That's all I remember; I don't remember much more of it
It was probably so traumatizing

the other time that I went to the hospital when my mum was assaulted by my dad, and she had to get stitches
and stuff on her face

that was the other time
I didn't
really absorb a lot of that memory

just tried to forget about it
it was very traumatic as a young child,
I was probably around five or six
There was nothing
nobody came to see us or anything after

that to see if we were okay,
witnessing something so traumatic

as a child so there was absolutely no healthcare back then, in terms of mental health or counseling

anything like that.

[47] A play on words with inspiration from Desmond Cole's book, *The Skin We are In.*

Nothing to assist my mom or my dad or us as children

the other traumatic time of being in the hospital is when I had

My child, my first child,

I was 14 and I was left in a dark, cold room in pain

not comforted in any way

the nurses, you could hear them laughing

you could hear them

the way they talked to me was just
very aggressive, not comforting

it took a very long time for them to give

me any kind of anything for pain
I felt so alone
wasn't a good experience having a child
at a very young age

it's like, this is your own fault
You deserve to go through this pain
I wasn't comforted

going through that pain, or even saying what was going
to happen or anything

I was just left in this dark room

I've heard stories from some cousins
some of my friends if it wasn't for us giving
our sister-in-law's comfort, or our niece's comfort,
it would never have been there.

It was, you know,
something that was not a priority to take care of,

of children or of our people
I knew about racism.

But I didn't really understand it
in the health care system
For me, in the health care system, they take an oath.
And it doesn't happen, like we are less than when we have to go to the hospital.

Our needs are not a priority

We're always secondary to anybody else

That's in the waiting room.
hasn't changed a lot
I recall going through a vehicle accident

just barely remember and, you know,
they didn't keep us very long
It's just natives don't matter.
Just let them go

not keeping us in the hospital to see if
we were really injured
something has been wrong because they made it look
like okay, nothing's wrong with you guy

There were a lot of aftereffects from that accident.
we can't do anything now because it's past the
point where anybody cares? Or anything can be done.

For myself, I never thought about all this stuff
Until I moved to Prince George
Then it became more evident how people were being treated
my Auntie, even what she told me what was going on in there,

even to this day, that racism still happens in the hospitals

she had to give them shit and go to the head
doctor to tell them how she was being treated by the nurses in that hospital.

That was only a couple of months ago, and this year and 2023
my recollection was like, in 1980, when I had my child
and we're still being treated like this today,
and there's been several stories, tons and tons of stories

I know, just recently, they set up, a program or something like that, where

Indigenous People can send in their complaints about their treatment in the hospitals, but it's not advertised very well

I don't even have the information on it,
so that I could pass it on to our people,
because they haven't been able to find it.
Yeah, it's just terrible.

You know, stories of things being left in people's bodies for years and years,
and, you know, taking a toll on their bodies to, you know,
to even causing their deaths and, and things like that

many they couldn't even keep track of
especially through COVID showed its true colors of priority of,
you know, who was going to look after first, and it wasn't Indigenous people.
You're left on the sidelines

dying as others, you know, got the care that
they needed there's so many people dying
Just can't believe it
I didn't think it was that bad

[There is a] film[48], made by one of the community members, it has the

Elders speaking for themselves about the land

their
history
of destruction [as a result]
of Land extraction

displaced from a dam in the 60s

they were flooded out and moved from different
communities.
not a great community in the 70s, 80s

[48] https://gem.cbc.ca/dne-yiinjetl-the-scattering-of-man

they were in shacks with no running water

in the 90s, they were moved to where
they are now and the community is
the northernmost tip of a reservoir
the reservoir itself is mostly flooded

It's a lake, the community of course don't see it that way,
they just see it as destruction. And because of the rise and
fall of the water, there's also

in the summertime, there's all this dust storms, like crazy dust storms,

get created and it's really impactful.
Like it's big, you'd get more we have to get warnings to stay inside and

all kind of people with respiratory issues,

I see a rise in trying to support the respiratory issues when they come into the clinic

I was invited to participate in a healing circle

And brushing down by community members
it was facilitated by
people who I think are from a coastal community who could come in.
It was just so poignant for me when they did the brushing

they asked me if I could go to the water and pray

I asked, "How do I pray in water where it has been flooded,

and there's so much destruction and anger?"

I also see the impacts of the intergenerational impacts
on people's health because of that flooded water

so what he said was,

and I've never forgotten it

the water is still alive underneath

There's still life, it's still alive underneath

So the water is still there
That really stuck with me
what he also said was he connected

even though your ancestors aren't here,

because they're all born and died like in the Philippines.

They're still here

They traveled a long way to be here,

and the ancestors here and your ancestors start talking

and are together and protecting you

And I was like, holy, and that blew me away too
on my last day in the community,

the lake was so low,
it was the very first time in the years that I was there,
that you actually saw the natural rivers flowing
I saw the river, like the original river,
we're still alive, you know.
that was one of those moments where I'm like,
this is such a gift,
such a gift.

This work is a 'poem home' – a place for the landing of co-researcher's intergenerational experiences of lived survivance of the structures, discourses, and day-to-day normativity that sustain the logics of white settler colonialism (genocide, global racial capitalism and anti-Blackness). Survivance stories draw attention to colonialism but also to the diverse practices of survivance within such experiences. Anishnaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor focuses on Indigenous

Peoples' "active resistance and repudiation of dominance" (2008, p.11). In *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (1999), Vizenor speaks to Indigeneity as an active and continuing presence beyond survival and struggle. Indigenous womxn and their stories embody "an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories" (Vizenor, 1999, p.vii). In this poem, we learn about a co-researcher's father attending the Miller Bay Hospital which points to the colonial policies of state-sanctioned Indian hospitals set within the broader colonial project of racial exclusion, land removal, developmental childhood trauma, and segregation (Mosby & Swidrovich, 2021). Scholars such as Maureen Lux Arnold have written about how Western medicine is implicated in colonialism:

> Canada's colonial policies and practices — sociocultural disruption and economic dispossession — shaped Aboriginal ill-health while rudimentary Euro-Canadian medicine attempted to confine illness on reserves, marking Aboriginal bodies as fundamentally weak and diseased. The characterization of Aboriginal communities as unrepentantly backward and roundly infected reinforced the superiority of white colonizers, justifying further isolation and repression. But isolation of the ill in mission hospitals or in Indian wards of community hospitals could no longer contain what an increasingly shrill medical and bureaucratic discourse identified as the threat of rampant 'Indian tuberculosis.' … Indian hospitals emerge as Canada was consciously defining national health, or a normal white citizenship (2010, p 409).

It is important to pay attention to institutions and healthcare systems and the ways people, policies, and practices have perpetuated structural and systemic racism and to engage in lifelong learning and reflection on unconscious bias. In the story-poem, one of the co-researcher voices speaks to her intergenerational experiences as a Gitxsan womxn accessing healthcare and the racism she felt throughout her life. She discusses her first encounter as a young child seeking medical attention. She talks about her father, who was a survivor of the Miller Bay Hospital, and

the long-lasting health impacts and trauma that resulted from his experience. The co-researcher speaks to her experience as a teenage mother giving birth, and the lack of empathy from healthcare providers. She also speaks to being treated as "less than" as an Indigenous womxn during the COVID-19 epidemic.

The second half of the poem voices one of the co-researcher's experiences of living on a reservation where the community members were displaced due to a dam. Her story reveals colonial logics perpetuated by government decision-makers when the province of so-called BC completed the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and created the Williston Lake reservoir, displacing Tsay Keh Dene community (Sims, 2017). Historian Mike Lenaghan writes about the provincial government's myopic vision that hydroelectricity would create economic progress and prosperity. He writes,

> The reality however, is that such projects did not simply create local economies from scratch, rather they completely reconstituted existing economies based on the ideals of progress and modernity espoused by government politicians and bureaucrats. In other words, hydro development was less about economic progress per se, and more about economic prioritization as determined by a centralized government (2012, p. 36).

Lenaghan writes that although the BC government touted the success of development projects, they did so by, "destroying the capacity of remote BC communities for self-reliance through both physical pressure (flooding and migration) and economic pressure (increased taxation), the government effectively forced their assimilation into the wider provincial economic system from which it drew its power and legitimacy" (Lenaghan, 2012, p. 39). Through the WAC Bennett Dam and its aftermaths, we see history repeating itself with the Site C project and its devastating impact on Treaty 8 First Nations' traditional territory and way of life and the potential impact on local farm and food systems (Cox, 2020; Ligeti, 2020).

What was most evident for me in this co-researcher's story of her lived experience as a healthcare professional was the connection to Land and Water as a central determinant of health and well-being (de Leeuw & Greenwood, 2017; Lines et al., 2019). Even in the face of damming and displacement, the community members demonstrated their sacred and interconnected relationship with the Land and Water as an integral part of physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional health and healing. What was revealed to the co-researcher was that the spirits of the Land, Water, and Territory are within us even as we move and migrate to different geographies, demonstrating a multidimensional, transnational, and global relationality[49].

Salaysáy Tulâ 5: Skin/Kin We Are In, Part 2

I do remember being
~~followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around~~
in Winners
~~she wasn't trying to hide it at all she wasn't trying to hide it at all she wasn't trying to hide it at all~~
I was carrying [my baby] in the baby sack
where does she think I was gonna hide things?
*~~followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around

~~she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she~~
~~wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all~~
~~she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she~~
~~wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all she wasn’t trying to hide it at all~~

It’s (racism is) ***every day***
every day, every day, every day, every day, every day, every day, every day, every day every day,
every day, every day, every day, every day, every day
I feel
It still happens to me when I go to a store
I feel like I’m being followed
I’m being followed
I’m being followed
I’m being followed
I’m being followed
I’m being followed
happens a lot when I’m in communities like more rural communities

I get cut off
~~[from speaking]~~ ***a lot***
~~[from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking]~~
~~[from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking] [from speaking]~~
~~[from speaking~~

You then start to internalize,
maybe it is me,
those are the impacts

I think my children dealt with it
[racism]more
in high school. I’m a poet
I’m going to find a poem that I wrote

I think this has been my way navigate things
I write. And [my daughter] she had a day when

she was at school and these
little seventh
graders

throwing

the N-word around,

Number 21
By Katanya

I can't wait to get out of this town
I am slowing counting the days
I cannot wait to leave school
And part company and ways
With these people and these ids
Who think it's ok to see me
An call me a NIGGAA

I have to cry because Ican't slap them
Then I would be in the wrong
They would call me the angry black girl
For reacting so strong
Bur the words they hurt
I am black everyday
The colour of my skin
Is not something I can wash away

But you know what is the most hurtful
The ids that say it are only in Grade seven
What are they going to be like
When they get to grade eleven
I am literally standing right there
And they fling that word around without care
Do they not realize that I can hear
They say it purposely without any fear

So I can't wait to get out of this town
And move on to a bigger place
With people who are more interested in my mind
Than my colour or my race
I wish it would be over tomorrow
And I could be on my way
To see the world and go to university
I don't want to stay here another day.

like carelessly

She didn't know what to do about it
And I'm thinking well if they're
doing this in seventh grade,
what is going to happen when they get to 11th grade

how do people not see that children don't just get up
and just say things like that?

[as a medical doctor] you know, you're different

You're Black, right?
Everyone will remember you because ***you're Black***
You can't afford to mess up because they will remember who
messed up, right?

We're very few Black people in the medical field
And sometimes they get us mixed up
Some people see me and ***call me the other Black physician***
She makes this joke like, ***"You better behave yourself because there'll be less [of us] doing anything if you do something wrong"***
I think if anything, ***I'm very, very visible,***
your faults become so very visible ***people remember that Black person I worked with messed up or did something wrong***

if anything, that makes you more cautious
makes you do more work, to want to stay,
to make sure that you're doing the right thing
it's going to take very little for anybody

to be able to identify you,
as the person who said this
the person who did this
It makes me want to be extra nice to everybody
I find myself wanting to
explain everything wanting to, you know,

make myself very clear
I sometimes go to a patient,

I'm making them aware of what I'm doing
I don't feel like that more obvious or easily
recognized.

I will just say it's ***the stress, right?***
I haven't been practicing that long in Canada, right
in the long run, it's going to be stressful
in the long run, ***you have to do everything right***

the fact that it took me almost 10, 11 years before
I could get a license to practice medicine, ***you don't want to mess up, right***
You have ***all that much pressure*** *on you as well.*
And the fact that you know that
you're one of the only Black physicians
in the whole of a northern geography
it can be more so ***a lot of mental stress.***
if there's anything wrong with your mental health,
it can affect your physical body

I don't want it to get to me
I just find ways to manage it.
When you start talking about my personal health,
you realize that I can't do that anymore because
I have bad knees
I've been on a waitlist since 2020 for a knee replacement

I have no idea when that is
going to happen.

I'm a big girl I need to move to be able to not be a big girl anymore
I can't do that because I don't have any knees and on a good day, I don't have any ankles

in terms of other things that will bring me some amount of comfort?
gardening.
Another thing I like to do is craft.
I make greeting cards.

I remember I was volunteering with another harm reduction organization

we went to the grocery store to pick up all of the things that we need to give our clients and we went every week, same time, same store, we place the order in advance sometimes.

sometimes we would go in and pick up a few extra things
they knew us
I went with the food security lead, who is African, and very dark, and a really great guy.
we went and for whatever reason, the credit card from the company was declined.

I had already started like taking stuff out to the car, and

~~*they wouldn't let us leave alone they wouldn't let us leave alone they wouldn't let us leave alone*~~

we're here every week, you know, who we are, you know that we have money, you know, the organization we're working with? Like, why can't we leave? Why? You know, we weren't trying to steal it.

there was no space to just be like, Oh, hey, I'm sure this was an accident.
It was like, No, you're clearly stealing.
there was no grace at all, there was no understanding
we have multiple company (credit) cards, we just need to use a different one

But they were so convinced we were stealing
it got kind of heated and uncomfortable
I don't know if it was because it was just us

we were/are Black

But I couldn't help but think, what if we had sent our white manager?
Would it have been different, right?
I'm really trying to embody and look for roles to be kind of representative
I was just writing an application for the research ambassador program.

And one of the things that I wrote about was

I want to represent for students of color

that there is an option,
there is a space for you,
in STEM in graduate studies, in a PhD program

specifically, like you can take it to the PhD level.

It's frustrating, and you know, it wears you down.
I think about my research project on racialized people with
a Sub Focus on black homelessness, which is going to be awesome,

because there's no literature about it.
But it also makes me gets me fired up and it makes me go,
Okay, well,
I need to be the change

I'm going to be that representation and more than representation

I'm going to give hopefully, someone who is thinking about it,
but doesn't see a place or a pathway for them
I'm going to be that representation to say yes, you can be here
you deserve a place here, we all do as

Black people as scholars of color
We all deserve to be here

I'm always trying to make a difference.
I'm lucky I get paid for what I do
I love my job
I feel like I'm always trying to think outside the box

I think that I get paid well for what I do.
Which means in a small way that I feel like I'm a bit of an outlier, too,
Because
I don't think that most women in leadership roles
get acknowledged or paid adequately for their work

I work in an office, and I am becoming soft...
my body aches, my eyes get tired at the computer
When I labour, just for my own self
my own life when

I'm on the Land
I am healthy
I am happy

this line [points to her forehead]
just disappears.
this line right here is gone
I've worked in an employment centre

so labor is my whole job
A lot of what we have around here
is resource extraction, logging, mining

Those are the main things
I don't see healthy, wholesome people coming out of those industries
My ex
worked in the mill
for a long time and he's white, that work
bothered his Spirit

if we are laboring, not for ourselves,
but for the wealth of others
it's harmful, it's harmful to ourselves,
our health, our well-being
it's harmful to the earth
when we can labour for ourselves
and go and feed ourselves
have our own we are working to sustain life and family

I work
to ensure that the unemployed find work
And if these things bring employment,
especially now since the logging and lumber industry
are no longer a mainstay and an unreliable source of income
I cannot feel conflicted when I get asked questions
because on one hand

I see how it would be good
to have people working
But the detriments there
in the long run, is it worth it?

If it's going to spoil the land
spoil the water

because we have this
work being done on the pipeline
and in our territory
we have a man camp

right on the residential school grounds

built a man camp
Right on LeJac[50] *grounds*
They disturbed the soil
also, with men camps
we know what happens to the population,

especially Indigenous women suffer
There are these people that are coming from
all around the world
they don't have ties to our land

They just use the land like
they use our people it's the same thing.

The beginning of this poem,

"*I do remember being/*

~~*followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around followed around "*~~

yokes for me Christina Sharpe's "*wake work*" as sites of resistance, consciousness, and *possibility for living* in the Black diaspora. Survivance counters taken-for-granted national myths and narratives that erase Black bodies, life, and life-givers. Co-researchers shared stories about their experiences in healthcare of being a Black female doctor; racism experienced when shopping for supplies for the harm reduction healthcare organization she worked for; racism when other people cut off your words in mid-sentence; insights about the long wait times for her surgery and the impacts on her health. Braiding each of these womxn's voices and embodied stories together produces a new narrative of understanding, a collective voice that opens a new

[50] For more about the LeJac Residential School, see https://thetyee.ca/News/2024/05/23/Ground-Search-Lejac-Residential-School-Site/.

space, a new poetics, of healthcare experiences and insights in and about so-called Northern BC, specific to Black bodies.

These specific experiences speak to how the co-researchers experience systemic anti-Black racism. When I think about these experiences with and alongside Christina Sharpe's writing in *The Wake*, I am compelled to think about the metaphors and materiality of the "weather." The weather, in this context, is the climate of anti-Blackness evidenced in the everyday racism experienced in these co-researchers' stories. The Black in BC report published by the provincial government in 2022 highlights the pervasiveness of anti-Black racism. When the conditions of anti-Black racism are entrenched in systemic inequities of power, discrimination becomes normalized in institutions, policies, and practices that are invisible to those who are not directly impacted. The poetic stories presented in this poem provide evidence of the institutionalized and ongoing nature of anti-Black racism in their lives and some of the impacts on their health and well-being.

Racism thrives in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours such as microaggressions (Sue, 2010). The current focus on individual bias obscures the institutional, systemic, and structural processes that perpetuate racial subjugation. Less attention has been focused on internalized racism, a colonial mentality that has been associated with self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (David, 2008). Historical trauma discourses associated with ongoing legacies of coloniality serve as everyday, self-reinforcing reminders of structural and individual forms of racism and have material health impacts, as evidenced by the womxn's stories in this poem. Neurodecolonization[51] is an important healing pathway for Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour (Bird, 2016). Decolonization also represents much needed attempts to "engage

[51] For further reading about neurodecolonization, please see the work of Dr. Michael Yellow Bird.

with issues of affect and the intimate… alongside conventional concerns with governance, Land" (Maxwell, 2014, p. 427). Creatively decolonized thoughts, actions, and embodiment can shape and empower thinking, feeling, and doing to overcome legacies of oppression and internalized racism that result from coloniality and to open possibilities of holistic well-being.

Given that work and employment are factors that impact women's health, I was listening for when the co-researchers mentioned how their jobs influence their health. Some of the womxn have found work that they are passionate about and have healthy working conditions. Others struggle with tensions between the need to earn a living and harm done to the environment due to industrial activity as well as to their own health.

These stories reveal tensions among the womxn and their work. Some of the womxn enjoy their jobs; others feel conflicted about jobs and industries that have detrimental impacts on the environments where they live. One of the co-researchers reflects on labouring for other people versus focusing on her health and well-being. While much has been written about so-called northern BC's labour base being dominated by forestry, mining, oil and gas, fishing, and agricultural development (Hanlon & Halseth, 2005; Markey et al., 2006; Markey et al., 2007) very little scholarship exists on the work experiences of Black, Indigenous[52], and racialized womxn in northern geographies, although Tyler McCreary in his book *Shared Histories*, documents some of the employment Witsuwit'en women engaged in from 1913 to 1973 (2018).

[52] One of the biggest impacts of church and state colonialism is the disempowering of Witsuwit'en women "owning" their traplines, cabins, and property on their territory. These structures had to be placed under a male name which changed responsibility roles as spouses were from another Clan/ House group. Violence towards women grew exponentially as patriarchal ways of knowing and being deeply impacted Ts'ako'ze' (female Hereditary Chiefs), and house, clans, communities, and nations (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

Scholars have written about the risks and gendered nature of industrial and man camps in northern British Columbia as sites that amplify multi-scalar health risks for women through ongoing government and corporate violence (Morgan et al., 2022). Further research is needed on the long-term impacts on womxn's health and work environments.

Salaysáy Tulâ 6: Rematriation

This goes back to our matriarchs
back to our matriarchs
back to our matriarchs
I remember my grandma's cousin
Marianne Austin,
raised Ron Austin

we have this powerful word in Witsuwit'en country

It speaks to
the sweetness of being a girl
or a woman or a child, female child
it's Nuh

As you hear that
just like a kid again,
you [feel], loved again

you're, in that space where
you are most valuable
most precious,
that's the word that I think of
when I think of my ancestors

I think of how
I've been brought into space in a loving and caring way

sweetness
we lost my grandma
we lost her in 2008

Ruth

In the Philippines, my mom she has a degree in chemical engineering she worked in, I think it was mostly like textile manufacturing did like quality control and stuff. And then when she came here, it just, I mean, it was the 80s. She just didn't know and it just didn't pan out that she could sort of do an equivalency or, or whatever. She ended up in just minimum wage work, like retail . I do remember she was gone a lot when I was young I remembered she did have an opportunity. When we moved to Hazleton, she met a friend, and he had a connection to the mill. There was an opportunity to do her fourth-class power engineering or something. And I was really excited for that. I was like, wow, go Mom! Like, that could be really cool for whatever reason, she declined. And she didn't want to work around. I know, for one thing I know, she didn't really feel comfortable working around men.

my daughter
Alannah was 10
she was devastated
Don't know, she said,
Who is going to call me Alan'nuh now?
My mom calls her Alan'nuh
But my Grandma
put that in her heart. Right?
Just sweet.
And love and embraced
and caring
Who's gonna call me Alan'nuh?

she knew the power
of that word when she was ten
I knew the power of the word
when I was six.

My sister
is Sabina Dennis
was out there
arrested
on the territory

a Hereditary Chief
was saying that a woman is never wrong
A woman when she says something,
She's never wrong

It's in our DNA
nurturers
We take care of our children
We're fierce protectors
our culture as Indigenous people
as a Dakelh woman
It's our duty
how we were raised

it's in our DNA
to be the caregivers
We even protect our men

In residential schools

they saw the power of the women
that was a big goal
to damage
women are leaders
we are selfless

we think about the whole
we think about everybody
we cook/ we clean/ we are caregivers

it's just completely natural that
we would be the ones look to for advice and guidance
because you go to somebody who loves you and cares about you

our women are matriarchs, they were naturally our leaders

as far as I know, within my culture, at my Dakelh culture,
the Aunties would, would get together
my dad said, his grandma and his old Aunties
they would have smoke parties
they would talk and talk

and talk and talk and talk

They'd be figuring stuff out
And the Hereditary Chiefs would go
to the Matriarchs for guidance and wisdom

I would like to see our system adopt
more of that accountability to the people
I think that I would love to see a more accountable

I love how our Balhats is set up
It's all transparent
Nothing is done behind closed doors
important things are done with witnesses

I would love to see that happening
even our Chief and Council

I've heard they're doing backdoor deals
certain people benefiting and it's just so corrupt

It's like the whole system needs to be looked at and for all people,
not just Indigenous people, but for all of us

it should be against the law to make a decision
that will affect other people without them being consulted,

It's so against the law of universal law.

Indigenous self-determination
Is related to my personal wellness

It's more emotionally and spiritually
it does kind of connect my thoughts to colonization

like the fallout of that in the Philippines and
how that's affected
our lineage
I feel there is some connection there, for sure

growing up here, and
knowing people in the community here
we also get some of our food from the First Nations community too
whether it's vegetables someone's grown or if it's fish

It makes me feel
makes me feel stable, knowing that other people feel stable too

CGL or whatever it is
going through our territory right now
there are so many infractions

try to report it to Canada

because Canada is supposed to be taking care of these things

there's no oversight
it's so frustrating because
you can't even use the system

that they have set up so that they have policies and things in place,
you can't even, you can't even use those

Indigenous womxn they have to put their bodies on the front line

the Canadian government is going against its own laws
They're breaking their own laws to do this stuff
what choice?
what choice do we have?
what choice did they have?

They went through court, they won the title
Freda [53]is an amazing person to talk to about land and healing
built a healing camp, land-based healing camp out there
to protect the land and to heal the people

Land healing, healing & Land

When I feel disconnected, I'm just unwell
Just being on the land
I've had really beautiful healing experiences
out on the Witsuwit'en territory

Just being with people who are out there protecting the land
on any part of the territory
Being around others who are working towards that goal of

thinking of our future generations

To me, that specifically is this heightened level of healing
Because it's not only my healing,
it's their/ our healing, it's
our future generations healing

My favorite place to be is when I'm on the land, when
I'm by myself
I'm out there picking berries in the space
my family is all around me

---

[53] For more information about Freda Huson (Howil'kat) see https://unistoten.camp

I'm in my zone
I'm out there picking berries

it feels like I'm back to the Land

that's where I feel the best

Gisday'wa, the late Gisday'wa used to say
go walk into the forest
let the forest take that all the way from you
that's when I feel the best is when I'm by river

My favorite place of being
by a lake
Camping

I grew up
on the river

bathed in the river

fell in the river

dived into the river

From a young age [I was] tethered to a tree
within walking distance to protect you
from falling into the river
the river provides sustenance for us
we check our fishnet every day
we had our fishnet out
we'd fill our Smokehouse out with the fish
that we got from our two fish holes along Highway 16

between Hazelton and Witset,
we would check it
every day
I have a very intimate & close relationship with the river

when I was a kid

walking down to the river

going down to the river

coming back up from the river

packing all its fish on our backs

I couldn't do any of it right now
I would definitely fail to think that my grandma was at that time
she must have been 80 years old, hiking down that hill and doing all I know
I'm not even 60

I couldn't even climb the rock that
she climbed to get up over it's just started amazing
the difference in her lifestyle in my lifestyle,
she was on the land working hard, right?

I'm at my desk
I'm doing my job is different
My physical body is not in the same shape
her physical body was in, so it's interesting,

where we land, right?
when I'm not in the office
I like walking
Walking on my lunch

trying to stay hydrated is another one
trying to keep an eye on the fuel that feeds my body

trying to stay active
Whether that be walking,
hiking and outdoor activities in general.

I lived in an apartment on the second floor,
and I would keep my windows open pretty much all the time,
because the air especially at night,

just smelled like the cleanest fresh pine
I would leave my windows open for hours

and let that roll in. And it was so beautiful
And I think that's probably the biggest piece
related to land and air
that I miss from living (in northern Ontario)

It was so beautiful, no matter what part of town you were in
You could smell it
And it was that or you had clean,

fresh water
smell coming off the lake like it was beautiful

And when I think about going back there,
I think about Northern Ontario,
that's what comes to mind first
is like, ah, the air smells good
Like you want to breathe it in here.

I don't know if I should breathe the air in Prince George
And it's just unbearable, really.

being connected to the community here is important

but I had to work hard on that and
continually work hard to
being accountable to the Land I'm residing on
relationships and keeping up with those relationships

it's just not like you go out and meet people once and then
you don't hear for them or see them again

and involving myself and family in those activities
that are open to community members
events like the
return to the salmon and other activities like
berry picking or medicine harvesting

I think it was more of a Carrier teaching
it was
if you take care of the land, the land takes care of you

it's, it's quite true
a lot of the work that I do is environmental work

I am constantly aware and

observing the health of the water and the trees

and the fish and habitat.
I work with biologists who are studying it every day
and try and develop initiatives or projects or plans

or what have you that are going to help protect
this area from further damage
at the same time, ensuring people can make a living you know,

if people want to participate in it,
that it's at least a sustainable one
I find that the people myself included
when you're disconnected

when you don't have a connection through what you eat,
and you don't have a connection being physically outside
and on the land or water: your mental health suffers

That's the first thing that goes and then things kind of spiral I find

And so, you know, just biologically like chemically in our brains, we
benefit from fresh air and from being out in nature
and we benefit from the omega-fatty acids in the salmon
there's all this scientific evidence that sort of backs things

that people have known for a long time.
But now we understand more,
or at least are paying attention more to mental health.

I have access to fresh, grown vegetables whenever I want now,
and everyone has apple trees, and so you can just do that here
And it doesn't cost a lot of money
It doesn't inconvenience you; you just figure out a system for your family

But the challenge that I see with other people is
that they're struggling through different addictions
And once people get out of whether it's alcohol or drugs
different traumas and addictions,

they then just like substitute with a really poor diet
many of our people are just unhealthy because of sugar-processed foods, junk food many unnecessary
autoimmune diseases and diabetes and heart disease and cancers

we have so much richness in terms of natural foods
that we could benefit more from

I come from a strong and powerful place

My family lived in Indian town
There was a push to move our families out of Indiantown
you put a family in turmoil and stress when

you're forced to move someplace
my grandma passed away of a preventable disease
called rheumatic fever
It's very preventable

And so that's what took her life
I feel like the push of my family from Indiantown really did shape
the way my mom and her siblings grew up
because they grew up without their mom.

And they were displaced
They were displaced
But they were still raised in where they grew up
Raised with their family

They were displaced from their original home
they ended up going back to Witset and being raised in Witset

When I think about leadership,
I think about

servant leadership
being bold
being courageous

I never really thought, in my wildest dreams
that was something that I needed, ***being bold***

I'm also in a position,
specialized position,
I'm the one that's the voice
that's speaking for many

going to university was a really nice place for me to grow
and maybe grow my voice
being supported by women
in that in that space,

who were real, traditional women
caring and really caring about your spirit

there are other teachers who look like me
who are taking up those conversations

we have Indigenous leadership in our school district

we're very fortunate

I know that if I make a mistake,
my community will probably,
forgive me if I make a mistake,
as long as I'm going to use it as a learning experience

as leaders
we're always reflective
where we think about how
we impact people:
relationships are foundational

we've become really good, colonized people when we stay in our own little silos
colonized people

we are a communal people

We need to be in a space where

we're all joking, and loving each other and having fun, and
also being angry in those places in a good healthy way

So that ***things are being resolved***

I remember going to a museum with a whole bunch of Chiefs many years ago,
and they brought out this blanket
It was a moose hide blanket and in the center of it had this red ochre
And the Chiefs were saying that

this was the place for restitution

If you were behaving badly in the community,
you'd be sitting in the center and the community would be telling you what,
what has been going on?
Or how this person has impacted them in a negative way.

And then
there are ways for restitution to take place

How can we make this better?
Usually it was that person standing up and how they're going to change
And how
the community is going to support that change

To me, that's such a beautiful vision experience of what restitution could like look like
But that all
requires relationship
requires connection

and culturally as with the Witsuwit'en people,
we would
keep the peace with other Nations

other families by intermarrying

we kept and restored that connection
and that peace made restorations

Through logics and conditions of white supremacy, settler coloniality, racial capitalism, and heteropatriarchal leadership, which assume their inferiority, Western Euro-colonialism and imperialism subjugate Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn into marginalized positions. Conditions of assumed inferiority (and subsequent dehumanization) give rise to the conditions of racial capitalism, environmental racism, and slow violence (Nixon, 2011). Many of the stories shared during this research, and thus the voices at the heart of this poem, contained evidence that the co-researchers embodied governance and collective wellness through intergenerational self-determined agency, actions, and relationships.

Audra Simpson locates matrilineal relationality in womxn's bodies and their ties to their nations (Simpson, 2014; 2016; 2020). This distinct Indigenous feminist way of knowing and being is an embodiment of decolonial knowing. Hereditary rights flow from relationships with mothers. Indigenous laws, governance, and authority are embodiments of Indigenous values. When Indigenous womxn put their bodies between state authorities and Lands and Water, they are asserting their sovereignty to fulfill their responsibilities. They are doing this because they love their nation, their territories, and their community members. Womxn, particularly Indigenous womxn, as embodiments of law, governance, and politics, intervene and resist notions of state-oriented Indigenous sovereignty. As the late Stó:lō writer Lee Maracle wrote in her novel *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*:

> The land is scarred with extraction in the interest of corporate imperialism. The language is battered: battered in the interest of sanctioning the scarring of the land in the interest of profit. Stripmining, uranium production, oil and gas extraction, mega hydroprojects,

> clearcutting, overfishing, chemical disfiguring of the soil, and tampering with foodstuffs are all carried in the interest of profit. (1990, p. 7)

Indigenous womxn's knowledge as felt, lived, and experienced is what carries the essence of Land-Water-based governance practice into embodiments of contemporary political protocol and community, house, clan, and Nation-led healing.

Scholars have written about the harmful impacts of man camps as environments that amplify physical, environmental, and sociocultural risks (Estes, 2019; Sloan-Morgan et al., 2021). Tlingit land defender and scholar Anne Spice has also outlined how "the settler accumulation of energy, capital, and territory is reliant on the parallel distribution of toxicity and violence to Indigenous nations, and forms of immediate state violence is… tied to the slow destruction of Indigenous homelands" (2018, p. 50). Nick Estes has written about Indigenous resistance to settler colonial infrastructures in the form of police, prisons, dams, and oil pipelines that intend to destroy, replace, and erase (2019). Throughout this poem, the co-researchers discuss the impacts of industrial projects such as pipelines and LNG on their health. By braiding the voices and words of the co-researchers together, a new and illuminative narrative (poetic) arises, one in which voices resonate in conjunction with each other, highlighting the collective nature of the impact of industrial projects on bodies. And the collective nature of holding space for one another to heal from collective trauma.

These voices in this story-poem describe the impacts of settler colonial infrastructure on Indigenous womxn's responsibilities and laws of mutual care embedded in Indigenous governance systems. Such colonial infrastructures represent a disruption to Indigenous governance as embodied by womxn and their relationships to Land, Body, Water, community, and territory. What becomes evident by weaving voices together in a story-poem is how

pipelines embody colonial infrastructure and the logics of extraction (Cowen et al., 2023). As Deborah Cowen has written, settler colonial infrastructure (such as pipelines, dams, and railroads) is based on "dispossession, theft, and extraction" which normalize carceral logics and logics of containment (Pasternak et.al, 2023, p.2). Dian Million's framework of felt theory (2008; 2009) illustrates that Indigenous womxn have always occupied and will continue to occupy self-determined positions of governance, body sovereignty, and healing authority within and beyond their communities. This sentiment is evident in the current scholarly discussions concerning the emancipatory possibilities of decolonial love and felt experiences of culture, belonging, and kinship (Ramayya, 2022; Simpson, 2011). The ability to feel, to love, and to experience an embodied belonging and/or accountability within a relational network is a recurring concept within decolonial literature and practice and ethics of care.

In this story-poem, co-researchers' voices dialogue about the current power and ongoing authority of Indigenous governance and the matrilineal aspect of power and authority. One of the co-researchers asserts the legitimacy and contemporary process of Indigenous assertions of law and authority. She contrasts the accountability and transparency of Indigenous governance with the secrecy, corruption, and "back-door" aspects of colonially imposed band governments influenced by current colonial government bodies. She also mentions the lack of meaningful consultation in colonial constructs of government and contrasts this with universal laws of Indigenous frameworks of sovereignty. Her voice speaks to conflict (enabled by provincial and federal government officials) between colonial band council government interests and traditional Indigenous Hereditary Chiefs' interests. Stories and voices in this poem counter the narratives that widely circulate in mainstream national media that Land defenders are criminals (2022, Simmons). The Indian Act of 1867 implemented band councils with elected chief and councils to

act as pseudo-governments for Indigenous nations, attempting to replace Indigenous hereditary forms of government. This form of paternalism has had long-lasting impacts within communities, resulting in lateral violence and a "divide and conquer" mentality. One of the co-researcher's illustrates the power of restitution in Witsuwit'en culture and notes the missed opportunity at uniting her nation. Industrial activity and LNG projects often involve government and industry bribing First Nations with money to approve their industrial projects in violation of Indigenous laws and governance where such decisions are to be made in the feast hall, in the presence of witnesses, and with consensus from house members. I turn next to a discussion of Indigenous self-determination and wellness and well-being.

Indigenous womxn are the backbone of communities and keepers of knowledge. I once heard a Tahltan Elder say that when an area's biodiversity is gone, its linguistic diversity will also begin to disappear. For example, I live on Gitxsan territory. Git means people, and 'Xsan is the Gitxsan name of the Skeena River, which means River of Mist. In Tsimshian, 'Xsan means Water flowing from the clouds, a mist river. Witsuwit'en means people of the Wedzin Kwah (colonially known as the Morice River), or people of the lower drainage (valley) lower in relation to Lake Babine. These rivers have been a source of wealth, culture, and survival. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit have used their own language to remap resistance and refuse ongoing colonialism. I am reminded of Syilx scholar and educator Jeannette Armstrong, whose creative and scholarly writing centres around the Land and language as central to Indigenous existence (2016). Language is inextricably linked to storytelling and oral histories. In this poem, a co-researcher gives an example of the beauty of the Witsuwit'en language across matrilineal lineage and the power that such language holds.

In this poem, the use of the Witsuwit'en language illustrates, language and Land are connected to rematriation. I first came across this concept of rematriation in Lee Maracle's *I Am A Woman* (1988/1996) and again in *Memory Serves* (2015). In these texts, Maracle implies that rematriation is essentially an Indigenous feminist and decolonial embodiment of governance and laws, "the restoration of matriarchal authority and the restoration of male responsibility to these matriarchal structures to reinstate, respect and support for the women within them" (2015, p. 149). Maracle's writing gestures to reinstating the place of women in Indigenous governance systems. In the poem, we learn how the embodiment of the Witsuwit'en word "nuh" is the core of female identity, the sweetness of being a girl. As with many Indigenous cultures, matrilineal relations are the heart of relationships including grandmothers, mothers, and aunties. Rematriation is Indigenous womxn-led resurgence that works to restore sacred relationships between Indigenous people and their Land, honouring matrilineal societies, and resisting against patriarchal and white settler power and violence. This story within the poem also demonstrates relational care and reciprocity across several generations rooted in ties to language and Land.

Salay-say Tulâ 7: Rupturing Relations

Linear projects have much more permanence
There is always the fear with the LNG pipelines that
once that's in there, with the infrastructures there,

it can then be turned into an oil pipeline
the linear projects, they're a big thing
They're a big thing in terms of locking down

large tracts of land
large tracts of land
large tracts of land

Once a major highway is in place

It's probably not going anywhere;
it just creates a central artery for
other things to pop off
It's just that point of access and
what we know for wildlife, especially
is it bisects their habitat, and they
have to cross dangerous highways,
get killed

get cut off from areas of their habitat
linear projects
are so permanent, even with a mine,
there's going to be mines that aren't going to be totally devastating,

we hope like Brucejack Mine,
we hope
it seems like it's on the right track,
it's doing everything it can to employ our people
and to not have bad tailings management

That footprint, you know, once that mine is done,
theoretically

it's going to be reclaimed.
The footprint will hopefully go back to what it was before,
or as close as possible.

But when you have linear projects, it's like, that's it.
There's a clearing, there's a path from A to B,
a path for products or for energy, you know,
if it's a transmission line or a pipeline,

and that seems to be much more,
permanent in terms of cumulative impacts,
I would say. And so that's sort of the framing that I look at,
because I've dealt with a lot of industry in my work. The pipeline,

especially like reviewing pipelines, fighting them all that
and now, with the railway, of course, you know,
when they built it out to Rupert, I don't think they would
have ever envisioned, or maybe some people did,
to have the amount of traffic that we have

going through right now on these mega trains.
So that is very permanent in the way
They've made that right of way private property and
have their own police force and all these things

it's such a bisecting of habitat and people's territory
and removes people from accessing it.
And the people who I know people who work for the railway,
and you know, they work hard, and they're proud of their job

I've been complaining about the air in Prince George[54]
since the day that I got here, because it's horrible
And it stinks
I'm convinced there's no way it's healthy for us to breathe

Everybody said you'll stop noticing it.
I don't know that. That's the point
It's not that I'm noticing it
It's what does it mean

we have a colleague
who is doing a whole research project
on
air quality and health impact

And we talked a lot about the air when it's bad,

I'm not going to go outside, I'm not going to open my windows,
I'm just going to stay in my apartment the whole day
But one of the things that we talked about
is where I live in town,

is where the smell is the worst,
because it's like in the bowl,
it's the lowest elevation and
everything kind of settles here.

[54] Prince George is known to have poor air quality due to the cumulative impacts of pulp and paper mills. Forest Wildfires in the area have also given the city a reputation of the worst air quality worldwide (Grewal, 2018; Berry et al., 2023).

And one of the things we talked about was
air quality and health impact
like, who lives there?
People who are lower-income people
who are primarily people of color

like the neighborhoods are more expensive
where the air is better

and they're typically white neighborhoods
But the air has been a huge effect physically, I'm like,
this smells horrible

But mentally it takes away
any pride in where I live,
it's like, oh, well, it smells like poop air

So I'm not that excited to be here [in Prince George]

Another thing like smell is so powerful and tied to memory
and emotion in so many ways
as soon as I get off the plane, and I smell it,
if I go home and I come back, do I have to be here

the air has been a really big thing since I moved here
when I was living in northern Ontario,
that was such a different relationship to land and air
totally different experience

it feels like linear projects have much more permanence
always the fear with the LNG pipelines was that
once that's in there, with the infrastructures there,
it can then be turned into an oil pipeline,

big investment
And when it's such a long, long corridor
That's a big investment
They're not going to just let that
you know, kind of fade away and 20 years,

that's going to become some permanent piece
of infrastructure on the land
Those are probably my biggest concerns
I would say in terms of impacts

this LNG experience in my family has been ...
It's impacted my health negatively

impacted my health negatively
broken my community
It's broken my community
my community is still struggling

we're in space and time together again
but not in the way that we once were
it impacts my health by knowing that
young men and women who needed a job

but I've talked to them, it doesn't seem like the happiest
most joyful work
that's kind of what comes to mind and infrastructure,
like buildings and things that are site-specific and temporary

the young men and women who worked for these organizations. they are not necessarily
embraced the way they used to be. It impacts my community,
it impacts us intergenerationally, by having this trauma kind of
continuing to fester in its space

Because in the past, we would have talked to our aunties and matriarchs about it,
we hold on to each other, we hang on to each other
Despite whatever challenges, and you know, I think back to that, to that blanket
How can we get our families back to our blanket to make us reconnect

I feel like the Earth and the Land and the Water and the Air are
important, but so are families. this is my personal feeling,
we as Witsuwit'en have completely missed our mark with
some of our community participating in LNG

as with the Witsuwit'en with LNG, how do ensure that things were
happening to change the direction of that pipe(line)
If we were at the table, LNG would not have happened.

we would have been able to have our voice at the table

equally with industry
I feel like we have it's been a missed opportunity
for people to stake their claim
against LNG

being connected to community
here is important
but I had to work hard on that and
continually work hard to
being accountable to the land I'm residing on

relationships and keeping up with those relationships
it's just not like you go out and meet people once and then
you don't hear for them or see them again
being connected to the community

and involving myself and family in those activities
that are open to community members
events like the return to the salmon and other activities like
berry picking or medicine harvesting

I think it's about staying connected community-wise.

This poem sheds insight into ways industrial projects such as pipelines rupture relations within the co-researchers' lives by pitting families against one another, pitting different First Nations community members against one another, and fracturing relationships with more-than-human relatives. Yet, the voices shared in this poem contain evidence of everyday ontologies of care present in the lives of Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn in so-called northern BC geographies despite ongoing industrial projects that directly impact their health. Womxn who radically care about air quality, their health, and other racialized, Indigenous and Black womxn. To echo Anne Spice (2018) in her subversion of settler-state understandings of critical

infrastructure, the infrastructure represented in the co-researchers' embodied and poetic storysharing and kuwentuhan were anti-colonial and feminist. Connection and care with the community was interwoven throughout the womxn's stories as a source of strength. Harsha Walia reminds us that the COVID-19 pandemic is the latest manifestation of a 500-year war enlivened by capitalism through Land enclosure, dispossession, extraction, pollution, and oppressive forms of governance (2021, p. xvi). Walia writes that Indigenous women, Black women, and womxn of colour have been organizing (locally, globally, and transnationally) against those who represent and reproduce structural and spatial injustices for as long as racial capitalism has been present in our lives (2021). With this in mind, and with the voices of the womxn with whom I worked and to whom I listened deeply, I turn now to my concluding chapter.

Chapter 5 Conclusion: Collective Continuance & Futurities

I return now, and finally, to my original research question: "What are the health stories of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn in northern and Indigenous communities?" Black and Filipinx co-researchers made correlations between their health and well-being and the health and well-being of the Land, Water, and Air where they had lived experiences in northern geographies. As I reflect on the co-researchers' stories about their health and their bodies, what became evident for me was how Indigenous feminist laws, jurisdiction, and infrastructure overlapped with Black studies and abolition in stark contrast to settler colonial laws, jurisdiction, and infrastructure. The story-poems I have written, anchored in the co-researcher's voices with whom I was in story-sharing relationship, whom I listened deeply and tenderly to, document the ongoing failure(s) of government policies and practices (at both the provincial and federal level) to take womxn's health seriously. Paternalistic colonial governance and a neoliberal colonial mentality have resulted in a proliferation of extractive projects (pipelines, LNG) that have resulted in multi-scalar health impacts in the form of ongoing physical, mental, and cultural, and spiritual wounds and trauma and are at the heart of worsening the climate crisis, wildfires, and other natural disasters (Blandy, 2023).

Industrial projects are linear in time and designed to take up space on Indigenous Land, creating economic and capitalist certainty for governments and banks who invest in such large-scale endeavours[55]. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson has noted in her creative and academic work that

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[55] As Ts'ako'ze' We'es T'es has shared with me: this is the reality for First Peoples of this Land. Many families were burnt off the land for the war veterans returning to so-called Canada and could not pay them. So land was "given" despite Witsuwit'en people living there… our people were removed although many resisted (see Jean Baptiste reserve story). Intergenerational and historical trauma is here- my family shares that our great grandmother

> rejecting linear, progressive temporalities has been important in my work because my ancestors didn't live within these sorts of concepts. Nonlinear, expansive linking of cycles was the organizing force for our lives. The idea that the present moment is a collapsing in of the past and the future, or perhaps an on-going conversation with the past and the future transports me to a different register and opens up imaginings. (Maynard et al., 2021, p. 154).

Storysharing has the potential power, if people are willing to listen, to shed insights about being in relationship with each other in a non-linear fashion. Robyn Maynard has argued that ontologies from the African continent prior to colonization were also not linear or temporal. She puts forward the notion of abolition as a praxis and mode of thought that is nonlinear. Instead, abolition offers a way of thinking and being in multitudes that is

> the seeding of multiple freedom-oriented timelines, it is planting more liberatory futures in the present. In refusing to naturalize policing, prisons and the carceral state as natural and permanent structures of governance; in rejecting capitalism as a necessary and inevitable mode of production in the march toward progress, we are also interrupting a teleological view of history. And daring to say that nothing needs to be as it is (Maynard et al., 2021, p. 155).

Maynard and Simpson give examples of how we might think about time beyond linearity and temporality and instead as a circle in which new worlds and new relationships are free to form beyond the colonial-capitalist logics of the present moment. The co-researchers' stories and poetic voice shed insights on health by considering movement and global entanglements of racial capitalism and colonialism that structure migration (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2018). The

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died of a broken heart as they "lost" the ranch they grew up on. I feel their loss, as does my mom and my children… this is part of our history now (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

transnational and global circulation of people, goods, services, and energy is critical to contemporary capitalism in so-called Canada. Scholars such as Deborah Cowen have written about land grabs and migration, where logistics of motion reshape networks of infrastructure into circuits of capitalist production (2014). When Indigenous people assert their legal sovereignty and jurisdiction the nation-state sees this as an interruption in commodity flows, choke holding the circulation of capital (Cowen, 2014). The occupation of Witsuwit'en and Gitxsan territory in response to the Coastal GasLink project is a defense against colonial and capitalist invasion; a refusal of pipeline and fracked gas infrastructure that are endorsed and subsidized by different levels of government bodies that operate on settler time with notions of settler futurities reliant on genocide, mass extinction, and/or assimilation, in other words, futurities that are dead ends rather than life-giving and life-affirming futurities.

Leanne Simpson and Robyn Maynard have been thinking through different ways of being in relationships outside of ones that engage state recognition and ones that enliven the living ecosystems of the planet in what Simpson calls a generative refusal (2021). If I consider the abysmal response by our governments to the TRC calls for action, nine years after their introduction, the lack of response in defense of Black lives and incarceration, the adoption of the 2019 DRIPA legislation in so-called BC with militarized invasions of Witsuwit'en womxn and matriarchs in 2019, 2020, and 2021, and the proliferation of extractive projects backed by Canadian government and banks, I cannot help but conclude that state recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and reconciliation (defined by government leadership) is a kind of theatrical, performative, and colonial trick (Gaertner, 2020). The kind of trick that aims to criminalize movements and struggles concerning Indigenous law, Lands, and life, calcifying existing and ongoing systems of oppression with more money being poured into industrial and extractive

projects and RCMP funding (Follett Hosgood, 2023). In this way, what becomes visible for me is the ongoing privileging of Western legal jurisdiction exerting a continual colonial power for capitalist projects led by industry and government authorities. Anishnaabe scholar Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark has written that settler states strip Indigenous communities of their political authority, carving power relations, exercising (colonial) jurisdiction which denies the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty (Stark et al., 2023). I also think about how the state continues to individualize and empower or tokenize a few Black or Indigenous people while leaving in place the structures and systems that leave the broader health of Indigenous and Black community members unchanged. This reminds me of the ways in which the model minority myth is enacted (and endorsed by state governments) in Asian communities.

Robyn Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2020) suggest that Indigenous/Black community building can be helpful in "building Black and Indigenous futures without relying on appeals to whiteness or to the state" (p. 74). In their most recent book *Rehearsals for Living*, Maynard and Simpson (2022) extend these ideas in a praxis of letters and dialogue, offering possibilities for world-building and communing as a practice and way of life. What Simpson offers is a way to think about and generate more life as opposed to what logics of colonialism, racial capitalism, slavery, and extractive industries offer: endings of life and relationality. As Simpson tells us,

> In my culture, we have lots of stories about rebuilding the world after a catastrophic world ending. In some ways, I think my ancestors rebuilt their world every day, every season, every year through practices of renewal and repetition. Right now, engaging in world-building is a collective act of generating the knowledge we need to figure out how to live with each other the day after this world ends. That seems to me to be important work, that needs not to be insular, but to be in continual communication with other forms of life (Maynard et.al, p.152).

Maynard responds with,

> I think it can be generative to ask: what does it mean to move toward the end of this world, and prepare for another? I am comfortable with some world endings: I'm comfortable with an end to the world that white supremacy built, the world that colonialism and racial capitalism built, the world that chattel slavery built. By this I mean that I am comfortable with the end of a global mode of production and a system of carceral governance that committed this world, and all of its inhabitants, to a mass extinction event. Apocalypse, given the threat that the climate crisis is posing to earthly life, feels accurate (Maynard et.al, p.152).

The womxn co-researchers' voices, presented as story-poems, enliven the interrelations of health, Land, Water, Air, and Body across time and space. Racialized womxn's bodies are sites of memory and healing that counter and disrupt the logic of gendered and racialized subjection and erasure within everyday whiteness, white supremacy, and white settler colonialism. Rematriation encompasses reclamation, a resurgence of ancestral spirituality, and a return to life, co-creation, and honouring life-giving forces of womxn in regenerative and sustenance economies.

Countries around the world are demonstrating innovative legal frameworks that address Indigenous self-determination and holistic planetary health and well-being within contemporary government systems through the granting of personhood status or agency of rivers and bodies of Water (Magallenes, 2015). Yet, infrastructure in the form of gas pipelines and dams continues to carve out colonial power, through enacting colonial law and jurisdiction through police enforcement and criminalization of Indigenous Land and Water defenders who are enacting and embodying Indigenous laws, authority, and governance. It becomes evident that settler logics of jurisdiction through police enforcement, protect the private capital of industries. Police, state,

and industry, such as the Coastal GasLink pipeline, mark ongoing colonial power and domination based in extractivist logics that spatialize coloniality, carcerality, and oil and fracked gas extraction. In northern geographies, such infrastructures disrupt relationality and life-giving Waters and life-sustaining food systems. Winona LaDuke has criticized how settler governments, industry, and corporations have pawned off large extractive projects to Indigenous people dressed as economic reconciliation (2020). LaDuke laments that Indigenous communities are then left to live with ecological destruction[56] and deep divisions within and between community members, as well as environmental and health issues (LaDuke & Cowen, 2020). As Huson and Spice highlight, anti-colonial infrastructures are life-giving, capable of not only sustaining the body but the spirit and law as well (Spice, 2018).

By braiding together voices, stories, genealogies, and migration-tales into new story-poems, and by uplifting and working creatively with voices of the co-researchers through collaborative poetic autoethnography, I was able to experiment with the fluidity of storysharing to elevate voices and power and the importance of co-constructed narratives to understand complex social and geo-political historical conditions that are often erased and invisibilized. Bringing together poetic practices and autoethnography offered an intersectional feminist practice and, I hope, captured the interplay of emotions, distal determinants of health, and survivance inherent in these narratives. Poetic form played with the constraints of academic and linear narratives of conventional methodologies. The power of narrative and poetry opens new possibilities in research in the capacity to evoke empathy and understanding in the nuanced

[56] The 1950s mining push has left a few Witsuwit'en house groups with dead lakes, streams, and yintah. With no accountability from the mining companies-the companies are long gone but the environmental destruction remains (We'es T'es, personal conversation, August 7, 2024).

exploration of the felt and lived health experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn in northern geographies.

I argue story-poems are examples of counterstories that act as evidence, proof, and possibility of the survivance of anticolonial and intersectional feminist embodiment, kuwentuhan, and knowledge. In bringing together Indigenous, Black, and racialized voices from specific geographies, I aimed to make visible impacts on womxn's health resulting from the conditions of white settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and extractive projects supported by the nation-state of so-called Canada. When combined, the conditions of these colonial structures form structural and systemic environmental racism that negatively and disproportionately impacts the health of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour at a multi-scalar level.

In this dissertation, I created a new space, a form of social and spatialized justice (and freedom) albeit on the page for Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn through collaborative poetic autoethnography, and personal reflections that do not centre the white gaze that often reads such experiences from a deficit or pathological perspective. The freedom and ability to share one's story, and make it come to life enlivened by personal agency, creative power, and self-actualization is one pathway of personal and collective power. Many of the co-researchers expressed gratitude at being able to share their stories as a positive action for their health and well-being countering isolation in rural and remote geographies. Alfred and Corntassel (2005) remind us that "there is a danger in allowing colonization to be the only story of Indigenous lives. It must be recognized that colonialism is a narrative in which the settler's power is the fundamental reference and assumption, inherently limiting Indigenous freedom and imposing a view of the world that is but an outcome or perspective on the power" (2005, p. 4).

The broad story sharing around health and Indigenous sovereignty was an entry point for reflexivity for Black and Filipinx womxn to consider how they can orient themselves to liberatory spaces that uplift Indigenous knowledge, relationships, Land, communities, and people rather than the priorities and projects of the settler state. Indigenous womxn in this research shared lived experiences rooted in their relationships and connection with the Land, Water, Air, and Bodies as a tradition that legitimizes historical and contemporary laws, knowledge, and expertise that forms the backbone of their identity to place-specific territories. Through intersectional and intergenerational stories, we engage with the possibility of imagining how we can relate to one another through a life-generating lens.

I titled the dissertation "Ang amin mga kwento ay siyang magpapagaling" (which loosely translates into "our stories are our healing") to mark the language learning and language (re)making I endeavoured to undertake in concert with the academic journey of pursuing a doctorate. During the COVID-19 lockdown, I attempted to learn more of the Tagalog language online. Although my Tagalog language knowledge remains limited (and my mother's ancestral language of Pangasinense even more limited), I hoped to signal a different agenda in the human and health sciences field with an emphasis on the humanities and stories and their impact on womxn's health. This agenda signaled the power of stories to illustrate womxn's agency in their healing process in personal and collective communities.

Through my lived experience, I have witnessed that Indigenous healing has a circular form. It considers the multiplicity of circles emerging from one another, interconnecting and interrelating, constantly engaged in movement, motion, and moving. Through healing, and healing-centred wellness we restore relationships with ourselves, others, community, family, seasonality, Land, and through living our lives as whole beings. Healing and decolonizing

colonial mentalities have the potential to create generative and life-giving possibilities for Black and Indigenous liberation. We, especially those in the Filipinx diaspora such as myself, need to consider how we orient ourselves towards our daily responsibilities and intimacies in enacting and uplifting Indigenous and Black life and livelihoods while generously giving and sharing our genealogical stories and knowledge from our ancestral origins and attending to our own healing and restorative practices.

This dissertation created and connected local and global stories of survivance and strength and articulated the power of storysharing from a diverse group of womxn with experiences in northern BC geographies. Fleshy, bodily story-poems written and told from the perspective of Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx womxn created new infrastructures of care, community, healing, and collective knowledge. The Land, Water, and Air in these diverse northern BC geographies acted as a storied site of human interactions for myself and the co-researchers (Goeman, 2013), where the continued transmission and production of Indigenous knowledges continued alongside intersectional feminist Black, Filipinx, and racialized transmissions and production of knowledges. Beyond the words found within these pages is a connection to community and to the Land, Water, and Air both locally and globally. I was humbled and honoured to bear witness to the spirits, minds, hearts, and bodies of womxn co-researchers with relationships to Indigenous life and Land and to their genealogical stories. Although the academic journey was not easy, I remain inspired by the expertise, leadership, and passion of Indigenous, Black, Filipinx, and racialized womxn whose stories and presence represent for me an opportunity for more dialogue and collaboration about liberatory and healthy futures, community and collaborative organizing and decolonial futurities.

The story-poems created and shared in this dissertation invite the reader to consider what it means to be a guest, a settler of colour, and arrivants on Indigenous Lands and to consider questioning the sovereignty of the settler state of Canada. What are your daily relations and responsibilities to Indigenous Land and life? I argue that identifying and acting upon an ethos around and a responsibility to Indigenous Land and life can provide a way for guests, settlers of colour, and arrivants to seriously meet Indigenous People's calls for action while addressing issues of personal and planetary health amid the climate crisis. Using poetry and references to Indigenous, Black, and racialized literature, I disrupted biomedical, reductive, and linear ways of knowing to highlight ways of feeling and sensing ontologies of (radical) care in the human and health science field and to contribute new knowledge to the health humanities and northern health geographies.

Through content and form, this dissertation is an effort to critique contemporary state-led reconciliation efforts. State-led reconciliation has calcified its own logics and structures steeped in white settler colonialism and anti-Blackness as exemplified in "economic reconciliation" rhetoric and ongoing industrial projects in northern geographies. Projects related to LNG pipelines are tied to settler futurity and are not focused on challenging and dismantling settler colonial structures and privileges. Glen Coulthard argues that such projects represent an extension of settler colonialism's structured dispossession and reproduce "the very configurations of colonist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples' demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend" (2014, p. 3).

As the settler state of Canada continues to support extractive industrial projects, we must pay close attention to the multiple ways these projects impact womxn's health. How are these projects impacting womxn, their future kin, their ability to harvest seasonal and traditional food,

the quality of air, and life-giving Waters? We must pay attention to their lived experiences and stories of struggle, solidarity, and survival. We must create conditions of health, healing, and well-being through refusals of settler-state policies and governance that prioritize economic gain for corporations and industries over people who live in communities and are dependent on the health of local Land, Water, and Air to sustain themselves. We must create new strategies of collective survival and solidarity across and amongst intersectional communities by sharing our embodied knowledge. The collaborative poetic autoethnographies and voices shared in Chapter Four signal an ethics of care and community through embodiments of decolonial knowing. This embodied decolonial knowing is an entry point to collective wisdom, collective sisterhood, and a multi-scalar ethics of community care.

These collaborative and interwoven story-poems make visible Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's ability to contribute to writing about themselves and to epistemological knowledge production through grounding their lived health experiences and place-specific knowledges. Similarly to Filipina scholar Dr. Conely de Leon, I use kuwentuhan as a space where collective healing lives and intersectional and racialized feminist kinship is centred, validated, and supported (de Leon, personal conversation, July 14, 2022). The interwoven poetic voices presented in this dissertation aim to disrupt, decentre, and destabilize "assumptions of power and Eurocentric notions of normativity" (Atwood & Lopez, 2014, pp. 1144–45). Simultaneously, these voices validate the experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn of colour and provide a strategy to challenge the complacency of those in positions of power. Such a strategy has the potential to build empathy in people indirectly affected by everyday racism (and those directly impacted which results in internalized racism) with hopes that such empathy transforms into action and more culturally competent and culturally

appropriate healthcare. The use of interwoven and racialized voices in this dissertation is meant to interrupt dominant narratives around the erasure of Black, Indigenous, and racialized womxn of colour and is needed to challenge narratives that perpetuate and pathologize a single story around womxn's deficit states of health. Through their poetic form as research-creation[57], the collective poetic autoethnographies uplift womxn, their leadership, their agency, and their collective power, as their voices sing, "We are still here," despite the genocidal legacy of the so-called Canadian government and the legacies of slavery and racial capitalism. As scholars have stated, "Indigenous dispossession continues unabated to provide the logics that order power, violence, accumulation, and belonging for all those who find themselves on lands stripped from Indigenous peoples" (Byrd et al., 2018, p. 2). The voices in the collaborative poetic autoethnographies document the ongoing failure(s) of government policies and practices (at both the provincial and federal level). Failures that do not reverse the impacts of heteropatriarchy vis-à-vis paternalistic colonial governance and a neoliberal colonial mentality have resulted in a proliferation of extractive projects (pipelines, LNG), a continuation of ongoing dispossession of Land and Water, dispossession of relationships, and violence against women and children which have resulted in multi-scalar health impacts in the form of ongoing physical, mental, cultural and spiritual wounds and trauma.

When thinking about womxn's stories as embodiments of Intersectional Feminism and decolonial knowing, bodies (hearts and minds) become understood as sites for the intersection of material, spatial, and cultural experience, knowledge, memories, and geographies. The diverse intersections of womxn's bodies and voices speak to their body sovereignty. Such voices

[57] Research-creation is innovative knowledge-making as an example of ongoing experimentation with what counts as knowledge at the juncture of academic, artistic creation, and diverse audience membership (Loveless, 2020). I utilize research-creation as an alternative entry point to knowledge as academic writing can be perceived at times as inaccessible.

illustrate how Cartesian and categorical systems of health policy and biomedical health care have yet to consistently account for and adapt to the intersectional nature of their lived realities and health needs. How might we consider that Indigenous laws and knowledges ground us to and from (multiple) Lands through movement, multiplicity, and multi- relationality and can contribute to our holistic health? My hope in documenting these polyvocal voices through story-poems was to make visible the health stories of womxn traditionally erased from colonial imaginaries and narratives in part because of the assumed inferiority of their racialized and intersectional identities by the settler state. I highlighted agency, leadership, relational balance, and bodies as radical sites of care for Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx womxn and scholars. I hoped to demonstrate the importance of relationality and relationship-building amongst womxn with diverse genealogical histories and cultures.

Through a framework of Intersectional Feminism (Black Feminism, Indigenous Feminism, and emerging Filipinx Feminism), I highlight the poetic power of lived experiences and listening to stories. Black, Indigenous, and Filipinx ways of knowing, being, and doing demonstrate radical care and lateral love for meaningful solidarities and relationalities that hold potential to enhance well-being and health on a multi-scalar level. The poetic stories of the co-researchers could be interpreted as Indigenous, Black, and Filipinx futurisms that embody the opposite of colonial ruptures. I hope that the voices and story-poems demonstrate the joy and freedom of Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn who continue to survive "global patterns of violence and conquest" (Mitchell & Chaudhury, 2020, p.311).

As I write and edit this dissertation, there is a critical water shortage in rural communities where I live. Witsuwit'en and Gitxsan land defenders will be in so-called Smithers next week, facing colonial court charges for upholding Witsuwit'en and Gitxsan laws. The emergency room

at our rural hospital is often closed due to a shortage of staff. Construction may begin on the proposed Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Pipeline, if TC Energy[58] can convince provincial regulators that it has achieved a substantial start which would enable TC Energy to have an environmental assessment certificate that would be valid forever. There are local media reports about TC Energy influencing the provincial government to weaken environmental policy.[59] I remember that I was offered a scholarship from UNBC by the BC Oil and Gas Commission in my third year of study and that I turned it down while engaging in this research. The health of the Land, Water, and Air is paramount to the health of communities and Indigenous, Black, and racialized womxn's survivance. Perhaps, the co-researchers' leadership, care, and life-giving practices, stories, lived experience, poetic voice, and knowledges could hold the key to solutions that would enable sustainable, liberatory, and decolonial futurities that could happen here if they were not constantly being obstructed by colonial interference such

Christine Anonuevo,
Reflective Journal, August 26, 2024
Last week, my youngest son and I witnessed Gitxsan and Witsuwit'en youth organizing against the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Pipeline. A few days later we witnessed Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs close a road and issued a public statement and taken action to protect their Lax'Yip from LNG activities (see www.gitanyowchiefs.com). I have noticed more and more equipment and large ATCO trailers travelling along highway 16. I am uncertain about what the fall will hold, however, I am certain many people will be taking action to protect the Land, Water, and Air for future generations. My hope is that the violence we saw on Witsuwit'en yintah (territory) with the Coastal GasLink Project, (see the documentary film www.yintahfilm.com) will not be repeated on the Gitxsan Lax'yip. This past summer there have been wildfires, water shortages, and droughts. More attention to Indigenous womxn's voices and their embodied knowledge will play an important part in addressing our climate crisis. Land defenders who stood up against the Coastal Gas Link project face will have trial dates this fall for upholding Witsuwit'en law.

The aurora borealis still dances in the night sky
There are invitations to go huckleberry picking
We still eat salmon,
Red currants can be found nearby.
I am grateful for the gifts of the lax 'yip.

[58] TC Energy is the Calgary-based parent company of Coastal Gas Link and the proposed Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Pipeline Project (PRGTPP). The PRGTPP is a proposed 900 km pipeline that will carry fracked gas from BC's northeast region to a proposed liquefied natural gas export facility Ksi Lisims on Nisg'aa territory.
[59] See https://thenarwhal.ca/tc-energy-leak-attorney-general-reacts/.

as C-IRG[60]. Many people and communities[61] are gathering, organizing, and creating dialogue and action about the health of our Land, Water, and Air in the face of increased LNG projects. The dismantling of colonial-capitalist systems, structures, and ideas hold the potential for a healthier and collective Indigenous futurity that include all life forms through ongoing relationality, responsibility, accountability to Indigenous Lands, laws, and life-giving systems. Many people and communities are gathering, organizing, and creating dialogue and action about the health of our Land, Water, and Air in the face of increased and proposed LNG projects. I am humbled and indebted to the Gitxsan and Witsuwit'en Land Defenders, matriarchs, and especially thankful to the Gitxsan Lax'yip, X'san (the Skeena river), and the clean Air for continuing to provide sustenance, beauty, food, medicine, and memories for myself and my family. I am also grateful for the many infrastructures of care in my family and in the communities, I belong to.

[60] C-IRG has been rebranded as CRU, Critical Response Unit.

[61] https://ecojustice.ca/news/community-groups-challenge-bc-regulator-for-bending-rules-and-bypassing-legal-steps-as-construction-of-900-km-fracked-gas-pipeline-is-set-to-begin/.

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