

# EXPLORING RESILIENCE AND INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING<sup>1</sup>

Patricia D. McGuire – Kishebakabaykwe

## ABSTRACT

This paper introduces aspects of indigenous-based resilience as well as a nuanced understanding(s) of knowledge and healing. It is exploratory as it investigates these areas of inquiry. Focus is on the experience and ways of knowing of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, specifically, the Anishinaabe of Lake Nipigon in northern Ontario. This exploration will assist research in Aboriginal communities by offering a vantage point of health that is less examined. The relationships between indigenous identity, land, and resilience underpin this beginning dialogue. Indigenous knowledge is part of a broader discourse that challenges mainstream knowledge and how it is generated, presented and maintained.

**Keywords:** Anishinaabe, Ways of Knowing, Worldviews, Sociology of Knowledge, Indigenous Resilience, Aboriginal Resilience

---

1. **Acknowledgement** is given to all Indigenous based scholars who are exploring our ways of being and knowing. Acknowledgement is given to Dr. Patricia Monture at the University of Saskatchewan and Dr. Neil Andersson at CIETCanada who both force me to focus while challenging my thinking. I am grateful to CIETCanada and the Canadian Institute of Health Research for enabling me to do this research. Gratitude is given to the copy editor of this journal, Laura Botsford, and the nameless but central reviewers of this paper.

## *GE GII IZHI GIKINOO'AMAWIND*<sup>2</sup> “THAT WHICH ONE LEARNS SO WILL ONE DO IN LIFE”<sup>3</sup>

My entire family would go out into the bush for three or four months in the late summer, early fall from the 1950s–1980s. After we<sup>4</sup> got to our land, the camps would be made ready for our family, the land would be cleared and tent platforms and furniture, (chairs, tables, and beds), would be crafted from materials at hand around us. Sometimes my father and brother did this ahead of time so that the rest of the family only had to put up the big canvas tents. A cache for food would always be made closer to the river. This area became a bush community when other Anishinaabe<sup>5</sup> and *Anishinaabe Wiisaakodewag*<sup>6</sup> from other communities around Lake Nipigon would arrive. The land area was called Crooked Green. Our family lived beside the bridge over the river. We lived on the land, picking berries and other plants, fishing and hunting moose and birds. My parents taught us how to survive on the land and how to share with others. We left the place where we lived in the same condition that we found it. We were taught how to treat visitors to our camp. We visited other families, maintaining connections with people in other communities in the Robinson-Superior treaty area. There were many people who lived there and many different age groups. I listened to, *mindimooyenh* and *akiwenzii*,<sup>7</sup> Anishinaabe men and women from around the Lake Nipigon area. These old people would tell all kinds of stories and if you were quiet, you heard these stories. The social issues

- 
2. Following style convention, foreign languages are italicized where the main article is in English. Dr. Patricia Monture and I agreed that Anishinaabe words are not foreign in the sense of coming from another country, but they are other than English. Since this article is mainly in English, the copyeditor and I have decided to italicize the Anishinaabe words to avoid confusion.
  3. This Anishinaabe idea of education informing your life is central to decolonization efforts in our communities. Although, I am relearning my language, I am not fluent, yet. My mother said that all of her children stopped speaking *Anishinaabemowin* when they started school. My parents did not force it as they thought we might have an easier time. They both attended residential school but were able to maintain their language.
  4. The basis for truth within Anishinaabe communities is often very personal. You have to form part of your story. You are an active agent within the story, hence the use of first person narration.
  5. Many people and communities are reclaiming specific terms that they use to refer themselves such as Anishinaabe and even more specific terms such as *Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabe* or *Kitchenulmaykoosib Inniuwug*.
  6. Other Anishinaabe have told me that I am Anishinaabe and that I should just say this. If I did, I would be showing disrespect for my Irish grandfather. In addition, I would be showing disrespect for my father Patrick McGuire as he was the founder of both Métis organizations, the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (now defunct) and the Métis National Council affiliated Northwestern Ontario Métis Federation, (forerunner of the Métis Nation of Ontario).
  7. In *Anishinaamowin*, an old woman is *mindimooyenh* and an old man is *akiwenzii*. I did not use the word elder. The main reason is that the word comes from a church tradition, i.e., church elders.

that occurred in Aboriginal communities rarely existed in Crooked Green. The relationships that were nurtured when I was a child with my family are still evident today. The Anishinaabe and *Anishinaabe Wiisaakodewag*, who travelled to Crooked Green, shared this common experience as community members. This experience created a desire to explore indigenous knowledge and resilience as being land based with the hope that doing so will help with decolonizing efforts underway in many Aboriginal<sup>8</sup> communities. I will now continue to discuss how indigenous knowledge informs<sup>9</sup> who I am and how I relate to the world.

Knowing who I am and where I came from gives me a solid foundation in my life. This knowing establishes my contextual framework, that is, my perspective on how my life has been affected by social and political happenings. Like other scholars, this is the base that nurtures, heals, and is nourishing me as I do my work, (Monture-Angus, 1995; Hernandez, 1999; Hart, 2002; McGuire, 2003; Absolon and Willett, 2005; Kovach, 2006; McLeod, 2007; Farrell, 2008; Archibald, 2008; Wesley-Esquimaux, 2009). I return to stories of land and stories about Anishinaabe history many times in anything that I do. *Kishebakabaykwe ezhinikaazoyin Nii Nokomisans Nii Biizhii indoodem*. The ability to say who you are is critical in generating meaningful and needed indigenous-based histories that can transform how we, as Aboriginal peoples, think about ourselves and our location within this place called Canada. Identifying as *Anishinaabe Wiisaakodewag* determines who I am and how others will respond to me. It determines how I understand my past and establishes what my contextual direction for the future will be.

I am from MacDiarmid, Ontario. In a few years this community will not exist.<sup>10</sup> It is close to *Biinjiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabe. Biinjiwaabik*, which used

8. The term *Aboriginal* indicates various relationships that indigenous peoples in Canada have with the Canadian state. *Aboriginal* is specified in Section 35(2) of the Canadian Constitution as Indians, Métis, and Inuit. In federal legislation such as the *Indian Act* 91(24), First Nations are legally referred to as *Indians and lands reserved for Indians*. The terms, *indigenous* or *First Peoples* often refer to similar peoples in international context(s). Specifying these definitions has become standard practice in Canada, especially since Tri-Council has released its second draft of its policy statement, <http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/revise-reviser/Default/>. This website was accessed September 10, 2010.

9. This paper has been deliberately been written in a hybrid manner of what academia expects of a discussion and what is expected in Anishinaabe based discussion. It is not written as a detached observer and is not based on rationalist principles. Yet, it is a discussion that is based on a worldview that needs to be explored within Canada and within academic disciplines. As scholars, each of us comes from an academic position whether we admit this or not. In this case, I am stating what my bias is, privileging my specific community's perspective as part of a broader indigenous knowledge dialogue occurring in Canada.

10. MacDiarmid, Ontario currently has possibly two homes that are still provincial land. The land surrounding these houses is considered federal land. Treaty Land Entitlement is a process that takes time in Canada. This process means that under the terms of the Robinson-Superior Treaty #60, this

to be called Rocky Bay Indian Reserve, is expanding its border under treaty land entitlement to extend into what used to be MacDiarmid. MacDiarmid is where mostly *Anishinaabe Wiisaakodewag* lived, that is Anishinaabe Métis. This is where my family lived. I no longer live in my home community but I maintain connections with family and friends there. My family has lived in this area since long before the signing of the treaty in 1850. I still live within my treaty area, although in an urban environment about two hours from my community. Yesterday, I went to a feast.<sup>11</sup> I saw some community friends and we were discussing our children. Our sons had met, independently of us. She told her son that our families had been friends for at least five generations that we can remember. This means that stories exist about how our fathers and mothers were friends, our grandparents, our great-grandparents, and our great-great grandparents. Both of our families are now in an urban context, yet these community relationships continue.

The question I want to explore in my dissertation is the continuity between the contemporary experience of land and the historical views of land expressed by the Anishinaabe of the Lake Nipigon area within the Robinson-Superior treaty area. To do this, I must explore indigenous views of resilience that may be land and/or place based within an indigenous knowledge framework.<sup>12</sup>

Resilience, as a social theory term, dates from the 1970s (Dion-Stout and Kipling, 2003). The definition of resilience is elusive as it can mean many things. The common meanings are “the ability to rebound from challenges in everyday life” (Wesley-Esquimaux, 2009) and to recover from and survive adversarial conditions. Fleming and Ledogar (2008) call it a positive adaptation to life despite harsh conditions. Andersson and Ledogar (2008) describe resilience as a positive lens through which to view Aboriginal communities. Exploring resilience is based on community strengths, although Newhouse (2006) cautions that resilience can also be based on ideas about survival of the fittest. If the concept of resilience is used as a social lens on Aboriginal

---

community was promised lands that it never received.

11. Each year, the Ontario Native Women's Association will host feast(s) to celebrate sacred objects that they are taking care of.
12. In 2010, Tri-Council released a new policy statement on ethics. In this document, Tri-Council “accredits respect to Indigenous knowledge systems by ensuring that distinct world views are represented wherever possible in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through to analysis and dissemination of results. It affirms Aboriginal rights, interests and responsibilities as reflected in community customs and codes of research practice in order to better ensure balance in the relationship between researchers and participants and mutual benefit in researcher-community relations.” Accessed May 31, 2010 <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/revise-reviser/chapter9-chapitre9/#toc09-1>

communities, Merritt (2007) argues, then, it must be defined from an indigenous context. To this end, Durie (2006) defined indigenous resilience as

Superimposed on adversity and historic marginalization, indigenous resilience is a reflection of an innate determination by indigenous peoples to succeed. Resilience is the polar opposite of rigidity. It provides an alternate perspective to the more usual scenarios that emphasize indigenous disadvantage and allows the indigenous challenge to be reconfigured as a search for success rather than an explanation of failure. (quoted in Valaskakis et al., 2009)

Indigenous resilience in this context is based on indigenous people(s)' innate capacities and focuses on success rather than overcoming challenges. In 2009, Wesley-Esquimaux contended that indigenous resilience has to be considered as a reawakening of the social and cultural resiliencies that indigenous peoples used to sustain them throughout other challenges.

Why does resilience need to be discussed at all? A short overview of salient events in Anishinaabe history will explain. It has been about 380+ years since the first European was seen by the Anishinaabe in northern Ontario. This year, it will be 160 years since the signing of the Robinson Superior Treaty in 1850. Like other indigenous peoples, there have been challenges to the Anishinaabe peoples introduced by various colonial governments.<sup>13</sup> The main disruptions that the Anishinaabe communities faced (and are facing) are the *Indian Act*, residential schools, and child welfare agreements. A short synopsis of each of these colonial forces will discuss different impacts that they introduced in Anishinaabe communities.

In 1876, the full force of colonialism was brought to bear on Anishinaabe communities by the consolidated *Indian Act*.<sup>14</sup> Canada, as a developing nation, began to target Anishinaabe cultures. Assimilation as a policy goal of Canada meant that efforts were made to force Anishinaabe to become "civilized" like other Canadians. Indian reservations were set up. Some Anishinaabe communities were recognized by the colonial government and some were not.<sup>15</sup> Anishinaabe governments were dictated with *Indian Act* chiefs and band councilors. The colonial government determined who could and could not be a citizen of Anishinaabe communities. Traditional land use, hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering were all controlled by colonial government(s).

---

13. The Anishinaabe in this area signed a treaty in 1850 with the British Crown. The Canadian colonial government began in 1867 with confederation.

14. In 1876, all Indian related legislation was consolidated in the current *Indian Act*.

15. In negotiations leading to the signing of the Robinson-Superior treaty in 1850, the headmen who attended repeatedly mentioned that half-breeds should be included. William Robinson specifically excluded them from the signing of the treaty. Other Indian communities were also excluded.

Anishinaabe children were forced to attend residential schools. Education became a key colonial tool of forced assimilation. Residential schools continued until the 1970s in this area of Ontario,<sup>16</sup> targeting Anishinaabe children as young as four years old.<sup>17</sup> Children were forced to speak English and Latin for church services.<sup>18</sup> Some children were badly mistreated and many other forms of abuse were present.<sup>19</sup> Children were prevented from maintaining relationships with their siblings at school.<sup>20</sup> They were not allowed to speak their language to one another. Residential schools and the underlying ideologies of assimilating Aboriginal peoples continued in other guises such as the provincial child welfare authorities in the late 1950s and 1960s.

In 1965, the General Welfare Agreement between the federal and provincial governments meant that the provincial government was allowed to apprehend Anishinaabe children on federal Indian reservations, based on provincial guidelines. Like residential schools, whole generations of children were taken away with some Anishinaabe families having multiple generations of children removed. Yet, in spite of these overwhelming challenges, Anishinaabe still maintain their identities, languages, and cultures. This continuity is community resilience. On what is this Anishinaabe resilience based? It is intriguing to consider broader indigenous concepts of resilience such as cultural ideas and traditions about place and land.

Land resilience is not restricted to an Aboriginal community setting such as a reserve or settlement area. It may be based on treaty area, where these land boundaries<sup>21</sup> were part of confederacies'<sup>22</sup> boundaries.<sup>23</sup> The

16. St. Joseph's Boarding school in Fort William, Ontario, closed in 1963. Other residential schools in Fort Frances and Sioux Lookout closed in the early 1970s.

17. My aunt was four years old when she attended St. Joseph's Boarding school.

18. My mother can still read Latin. She said that all church services were conducted in Latin so that she had no choice but to learn it.

19. With the current focus on residential school abuses in Canada, more stories are emerging about the abuses that took place at these schools. Truth and Reconciliation Canada, chaired by Justice Murray Sinclair, began collecting stories and conducting hearings in 2009.

20. My mother was the oldest in her family. She remembers her youngest brother being sick and she was prevented from going to help him by the nuns at St. Joseph's Boarding school.

21. Treaty land boundaries are those land areas that form part of treaties with the British Crown (pre-confederation treaties) and Canada (postconfederation treaties). Land boundaries are the actual land areas that various indigenous peoples and state governments agreed to in the treaties that Canada and Britain recognize and honour.

22. There were political, spiritual, and military confederacies that the Anishinaabe in this area of Ontario had with other indigenous people. The most well-known was the Three Fires Confederacy between the Anishinaabe, Adawa, and Pottawatomi. Other relationships existed with the Blackfoot, Assiniboine, and Cree as well as with other Anishinaabe peoples in this area of Ontario. The land boundaries negotiated in the Robinson-Superior treaty #60 will be fully explored in my dissertation, as they may correspond with existing alliances and relationships.

23. Dr. Neil Andersson mentioned ethnogenesis to me. I am currently researching this intriguing concept for my dissertation. Resilience based on land within a specific area such as a treaty boundaries

Canadian colonial government set up reserves after the signing of treaties to restrict movement and contain people. Colonization<sup>24</sup> in Canada affected Aboriginal communities in many ways. Recognizing the colonial impacts on Aboriginal people and land is a starting point for understanding how the Anishinaabe have managed to remain as a people, in spite of external challenges introduced by colonial governments. Understanding this may also help with decolonizing efforts.

Indigenous place-based resilience requires understanding the traditions and sustained relationships with the land. Relationships are embedded in the land. As Meyer (2003) maintains, land-based knowledge is practiced knowledge, knowledge that is used on the land. This becomes tied to the personal identity, spiritual development of people, and their overall relationships with others. Can maintenance of community relationships be part of indigenous resilience? Marker (2004) states that

knowledge of places is therefore closely linked to knowledge of self, to grasping one's position in the larger scheme of things, including one's own community and to securing a confident sense of who one is as a person.

This discussion of land, Marker maintains, is like the concept that Deloria introduced and referred to as a "sacred geography." This discussion conflicts with the academy concept of knowledge.

An Indigenous theory will inevitably collide with the academy's insistence on separating the sacred from the secular because the story has a power to affect not only the consciousness of the individual, but also the spirit of the person.

---

will also be explored further.

24. Some historically powerful countries with a history of imperialism and colonialism, such as Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, United States of America, and Canada "have been opposed to various rights and provisions for indigenous peoples, because of the implications to their territory, or because it would tacitly recognize they have been involved in major injustices during periods of colonialism and imperialism" (website accessed May 20, 2010, <http://www.globalissues.org/article/693/rights-of-indigenous-people>). French, British, and Canadian state governments have unique histories with indigenous peoples in Canada.

Colonial governments are those governments with legacy of colonizing other people's lands and resources. According to the Assembly of First Nations in 2009, colonialism is "the control or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people; the system or policy by which a nation maintains or advocates such control or influence" (website accessed May 25, 2010, [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)). The Assembly of First Nations posted this definition in response to Stephen Harper's contention in September 25, 2009 at the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh, USA that Canada had no colonial past (accessed website May 25, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE58P05Z20090926>).

On June 11, 2008, the Canadian state offered an apology to the survivors of the residential school system, their families, and communities. Stephen Harper as Prime Minister stated that the "two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption that Aboriginal cultures were inferior and unequal" (accessed May 25, 2010 <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rqpi/apo/index-eng.asp> ).

The transformation going on in the story often reproduces itself in the transformation of the individual who hears the story. (quoted in Marker, 2004, p. 108)

In this discussion, indigenous resilience is concerned with the interconnected relationships in a specific place. "A focus on the smallest aspect of a place that invokes the spiritual relationship that binds reality together creates a more genuine sense of the universal and global" (Marker, 2004, p. 107). It is this sense of place that is needed so that broader perspectives can be conceptualized. This ensures that a relational sense permeates ideas of place that include more than the physical (Hart, 2002). Smith (1999, p. 74) has outlined some of these themes of indigenous ways of knowing:

The arguments of different indigenous peoples based on spiritual relationships to the universe, to the landscape and to stones, rocks insects and other things, seen and unseen, have been difficult arguments for Western systems of knowledge to deal with or accept. These arguments give a partial indication of the different world view and alternative ways of coming to know, and of being, which still endure within the indigenous world.

Indigenous social lives are living processes much like indigenous languages and cultures are living processes. Aboriginal resilience based on conceptions of land may take the form of interconnected and interrelated discussions difficult to separate from one another. Perhaps, considering how knowledge is created generally will assist with this discussion.

In the sociology of knowledge, knowledge about the world is discussed as socially created knowledge. In my dissertation, I will examine knowledge that is produced by Aboriginal peoples within social processes and within interaction with social structural features of their societies. Some knowledge is privileged, such as that generated within university systems. These academic knowledge systems construct the world they profess to describe and study (Barth, 2002, p. 36). In examining such knowledge when it concerns Aboriginal peoples, it is easy to forget that we are human.

Much of what is written about the indigenous as the other has a dehumanizing effect on us. In early academia and not so early academia, we are often discussed as objects to be studied. Our cultures and lives are seen as static, unchanging relics of another time. We and our cultures are often seen as based in the past and as inert objects, not as active dynamic subjects interacting with the social world.

Our story telling traditions are disregarded as ritual practice and our philosophies are seen as superstitious. Kana'iaupuni (2005) states trad-



itional social theory and research have silenced the experiences of those on the margins of society and instead look at a deficit-informed approach to explaining their lives and experiences. Brown and Strega (2005) argue that the ways of knowing of those considered on the margins — their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages — have historically been devalued, misinterpreted, and omitted in the academy. Foucault (1980) referred to this as subjugated knowledges, knowledge(s) that have been either trivialized or excluded. For Aboriginal peoples, colonialism was and is a pervasive factor in this silencing process.

To make matters even worse, we have to learn and use the same scholarly tools to talk about ourselves. As King (1997) states, Aboriginal peoples have

been observed, noted, taped, and videoed. Our behaviours have been recorded in every possible way to Western science, and I suppose we could learn to live with this if we had not become imprisoned in the anthropologists' words. The language that anthropologists use to explain us traps us in linguistic cages because we must explain our ways through alien hypothetical constructs and theoretical frameworks.

While King directs his comments at anthropology, it is equally true of other disciplines of Western academia. Aboriginal people have choices. We can remain trapped in these words or we can take this space and claim it, as Baker (2009) suggests, as our own. We can then fill it with words that reflect who we are and what our dreams and aspirations are. Words that reflect our dynamic nature and our familiarity with social change while remaining who we are. This, then, can remind people that we are human.

We, as scholars, do this work so that the next generation of scholars will have indigenous spaces to build on. We tell our stories to balance what has already been written. These stories may and will differ from standard accounts. These stories must also be explained and informed by “alien hypothetical constructs and theoretical frameworks” as King so eloquently states while remaining our stories. Clearly, in academia, there is a need to appreciate other ways of knowing, seeing, and doing. Knowledge systems construct the world they describe and study. It is a dynamic process that is based on perceptions of reality. What people see as reality is informed by their knowledge of the world.

The power of Western science is its ability to depict its findings as universal knowledge. This includes the ability to determine what is not legitimate knowledge and to advance what is considered legitimate. This “power

lies in the use of knowledge to advance one understanding of the world as opposed to another” (Kana’iaupuni, 2005, p. 32). This view, while dominant, is only one of many ways. The modernist way of producing knowledge and constructing reality is one of a multitude of local ways of knowing — it is a local knowledge system that claims to produce universal knowledge which then becomes “true” regardless of context (Semali and Kincheloe, 1999; Shadjahan, 2005; Smith, 1999). Yet, alternative knowledge(s) exist in spite of this situation.

In 2005, Kana’iaupuni stated that knowledge, in order to be meaningful, must be rooted in the very realities that it is attempting to explain. Indigenous knowledge, as it is discussed in English, becomes a modernist dichotomous discussion, at risk of panindianism, yet this conversation has to start on some kind of common ground within sociology as well as other disciplines within the academy. To begin this dialogue, indigenous knowledge differs in substantive ways from what is called Western knowledge. It is a diverse and elusive term. Indigenous knowledge is a living process. It might be a thing or a body of knowledge, but to indigenous peoples, it is much more than this (Wilson, 2008). It is both a relationship with and a way of life. It is combined thought of the land, the people, and metaphysics, that is, dreams, vision, spirit, and the emotive (Atleo, 2004; Barnes, 2003; Bastien, 2004; Cajete, 1994; Castellano, 2000). Indigenous knowledge “refers to the traditional norms and values, as well as the mental constructs that guide, organize, and regulate” people’s ways of making sense of their worlds (Dei et al., 2000, p. 6). Indigenous knowledge, Dei and colleagues contend, is a “body of knowledge that is diverse and complex given the histories, cultures, and lived realities of peoples” (2000, p. 6). For some scholars such as Battiste and colleagues (2002, p. 5), indigenous knowledge provides a counter discourse that completes and fills in the gaps of Western knowledge(s).

Indigenous scholars discovered that Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposition of western knowledge. As a concept, Indigenous knowledge benchmarks the limitations of Eurocentric theory — its methodology, evidence, and conclusions — reconceptualizes the resilience and self-reliance of Indigenous peoples, and underscores the importance of their own philosophies, heritages, and educational processes. Indigenous knowledge fills the ethical and knowledge gaps in Eurocentric education, research and scholarship.

Indigenous knowledge(s) are evident in Canada. The main difference between these systems is one of recognition, authority, and place within the academy.

Mannheim (1936) said that general knowledge development occurs within a broader social and political context. Wright-Mills (1959) built on this idea by discussing how our unique social circumstances define us, acting as a frame for our interpretations of the world. This social frame of being Aboriginal creates a particular way of viewing, understanding, and critiquing social surroundings. Other scholars, contemplating these viewpoints of how our sociocultural context acts as our social frame on the world, maintain that an indigenous lens would lead to different knowledge(s) about the world as well as different methods to transmit this knowledge (Agrawal, 1995; Smith, 1999; Semali and Kincheloe, 1999; Castellano, 2000; Little Bear, 2000; Dei et al., 2000; Hart, 2002; Battiste and Henderson, 2000; Foley, 2003; Barnes, 2003; Stone-Mediatore, 2003; Bastien, 2004; Atleo, 2004; Kana'iaupuni, 2005; Shahjahan, 2005; McLeod, 2007). In these discussions about indigenous knowledge(s), implicit is the understanding that meaningful knowledge creation requires discussions of worldviews to accurately portray indigenous social life.

Aboriginal peoples have been critiquing how knowledge is socially produced for a long time. In Canada, the main criticism is that only one form of knowledge is accepted and this knowledge is used as a measure to all societies. Aboriginal people need knowledge to be based in indigenous realities, (Agrawal, 1995; Smith, 1999; Monture-Angus, 1999; Little Bear, 2000; Meyer, 2001; 2003; Barnes, 2003; Foley, 2003; Kana'iaupuni, 2005; Marker, 2004; Atleo, 2004; Wilson, 2008). Knowledge production is a basic feature of research and academic work, but its development has not been discussed in relation to Aboriginal peoples in Canada. How indigenous societies generate, create, and transmit knowledge(s) for their societies must be considered.

Social realities reflected in indigenous knowledge(s) can create knowledge that sets the basis for social transformation and empowerment in indigenous societies. Examining Anishinaabe resilience that may be based on land could be a starting point in this process. Examining aspects of indigenous resilience can create helpful ideas and practices for the current decolonizing efforts in Aboriginal communities. In the sociology of knowledge, theories are developed by people within a social context participating in their social worlds. Indigenous theories can be developed that offer a mirror in which indigenous peoples see themselves reflected back. More meaningful policy solutions based on indigenous knowledge(s) can then follow.

For many indigenous communities, knowledge creation is both a personal and collective process. For the Anishinaabe, it is a collective activity

based on personal responsibility and is informed by relationships within the society. *Anishinaabe Nii Nandagikenim Daabibaajimotaw*. This active statement means that I am taking the responsibility to seek and learn Anishinaabe stories of knowledge wherever they are found. This idea of responsibility informs my community's ideas of resilience. This idea is not unique. Other Aboriginal communities have similar ideas.<sup>25</sup> The underlying thread in this paper is that examining a specific community's response to colonial intrusions may shed light on broader indigenous colonial challenges and solutions. The resilience of communities surrounding Lake Nipigon and the role(s) that land occupies can help other Aboriginal people(s) think of another way of being, one that does not involve exploring our supposed deficits in relation to Canada but explores the strengths of Anishinaabe and other Aboriginal communities in Canada. This can then set the foundation for other needed dialogue(s) based on indigenous knowledge(s) in Canada that will help with decolonizing our relationships with one another.

## REFERENCES

- Absolon, K. and Willett, C. (2005). Putting ourselves forward: Location in Aboriginal research methodology. In: L. Brown and S. Strega, eds., *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous and Anti-oppressive Research Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Agrawal, A. (1995). Dismantling the divide between indigenous and scientific knowledge. *Development and Change*, 26, 413–439.
- Andersson, N. and Ledogar, R. (2008). The CIET Aboriginal Youth Resilience Studies: 14 Years of capacity building and methods development in Canada. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Community Health*, 6(2), 65–88.
- Archibald, J. and Q'um Q'um Xiim. (2008). *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body and Spirit*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Atleo, E.R. (2004). *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chad-nulth Worldview*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Baker E. (2009). Locating ourselves in the place of creation: The academy as Kitsu'lt melkiko'tin. In: Patricia Monture and Patricia D. McGuire, eds., *First Voices: An Aboriginal Women's Reader*. Toronto: Inanna Publications and Education, Inc.

---

25. Some examples of land-based healing programs are: In Cat Lake First Nation, in northwestern Ontario, a land-based healing program for adolescent solvent abuse opened in 1997, accessed May 31, 2010 <http://www.ahwsontario.ca/publications/Vol4-No3.pdf>. At a 2007 Women's Summit of Yukon Aboriginal Women, recommendations called for traditional land-based programs for offenders, accessed May 31, 2010 from [http://www.womensdirectoriate.gov.yk.ca/pdf/yaws\\_final\\_recommendations\\_key\\_messages.pdf](http://www.womensdirectoriate.gov.yk.ca/pdf/yaws_final_recommendations_key_messages.pdf). In Sioux Lookout, there was a recommendation for land-based healing for homeless peoples by the Canadian Race Relations, accessed June 02, 2010 <http://www.crr.ca/>

- Barnes, J.I. (2003). Living and writing indigenous spiritual resistance. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 24(3), 211–238.
- Barth, F. (2002). An anthropology of knowledge. *Current Anthropology*, 43(1), 36.
- Bastien, B. (2004). *Blackfoot Ways of Knowing: The Worldview of the Siksitaitsitapi*. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press.
- Battiste, M. and Henderson, J.S., eds. (2000). *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich Publishing Ltd.
- Battiste, M. and National Working Group on Education. (2002). *Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education: A Literature Review with Recommendations*. Retrieved June 02, 2010 [http://www.usask.ca/education/people/battistem/ikp\\_e.pdf](http://www.usask.ca/education/people/battistem/ikp_e.pdf)
- Brown, L. and Strega, S., eds. (2005). *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous and Anti-oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.
- Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. Durango, CO: Kivaki Press.
- Castellano, M.B. (2000). Updating Aboriginal traditions of knowledge. In: G.J.S. Dei, B.L. Hall, and D.G. Rosenberg, eds., *Indigenous Knowledges in Global Contexts: Multiple Readings of our World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Dei, G.J.S., Hall, B.L., and Rosenberg, D.G., eds. (2000). *Indigenous Knowledges in Global Contexts: Multiple Readings of our World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Dion-Stout, M. and Kipling G. (2003). *Aboriginal People, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy*. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.
- Durie, Marie. (2006). Indigenous resilience: From disease to disadvantage to the realization of potential. Unpublished paper.
- Farrell, A.L. (2008). *Kakanjegawin, to Know. Anishinawbe Epistemology and Education: A Philosophic and Holistic Exploration of Anishinawbe Approaches to Knowledge and Implications for Research*. MA Thesis: Lakehead University.
- Fleming, J. and Ledogar, R.J. (2008) Resilience, an evolving concept: A review of literature relevant to Aboriginal research. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*, 6(2), 7–24.
- Foley, D. (2003). Indigenous epistemology and indigenous standpoint theory. *Social Alternatives*, 22(1), 44–52.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *History of Sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books.

- 130 © Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health 8(2) 2010
- Hart, M.A. (2002) *Seeking Mino-pimatisiwin: An Aboriginal Approach to Helping*. Halifax: NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Hernandez, N. (1999) *Mokakssini: A Blackfoot Theory of Knowledge*. PhD Dissertation: Harvard University.
- Kana'iaupuni, S.M. (2005). Ka'akalai Ku Kanaka: A call for strengths-based approaches from a Native Hawaiian perspective. *Educational Researcher*, 34(5), 32–38.
- King, C. (1997). Here come the Anthros. In: T. Biolsi and L. Zimmerman, eds., *Indian and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Kovach, M. (2006). *Searching for Arrowheads: An Inquiry into Approaches to Indigenous Research using a Tribal Methodology with a Nehiyaw Kiskeyihtamowin Worldview*. PhD Dissertation: University of Victoria.
- Little Bear, L. (2000). Jagged worldviews colliding. In: M. Battiste, ed., *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Mannheim, K. (1936). *Ideology and Utopia*. (L. Wirth & E. Shils, Trans). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Marker, M. (2004). Theories and disciplines as sites of struggle: The reproduction of colonial dominance through the controlling of knowledge in the academy. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 28(1/2), 102–111.
- McGuire, P.D. (2003) *Worldviews in Transition: The Changing Nature of the Lake Nipigon Anishinabek Metis*. MA Thesis: Lakehead University.
- McLeod, N. (2007). *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times*. Saskatoon: Purich Publishing.
- Merritt, S. (2007). An Aboriginal perspective on resilience: Resilience needs to be defined from an Aboriginal context. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal*, 1.
- Meyer, M.A. (2001). Acultural assumptions of empiricism: A Native Hawaiian critique. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 25(2), 188–200.
- (2003). Hawaiian hermeneutics and the triangulation of meaning: Gross, subtle, causal. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27(2), 249–257.
- Monture-Angus, P. (1995). *Thunder in my Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- (1999). *Journeying Forward: Dreaming First Nations Independence*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

- Newhouse, D. (2006). Editorial. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*. 2. Retrieved June 03, 2010 [http://www.naho.ca/jah/english/jah03\\_01/editorial.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/jah/english/jah03_01/editorial.pdf)
- Semali, L. and Kincheloe, J.L. (1999). *What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices from the Academy*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Shadjahan, R.A. (2005). Mapping the field of anti-colonial discourse to understand issues of indigenous knowledges: Decolonizing praxis. *McGill Journal of Education*, 40(2), 213–240.
- Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Aboriginal Peoples*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Stone-Mediatore, S. (2003). *Reading across Borders: Storytelling and Knowledges of Resistance*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Valaskakis, G.G., Dion Stout, M., and Guimond, E. (2009). *Restoring the Balance: First Nation Women, Community and Culture*. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.
- Wesley-Esquimaux, C.C. (2009). Trauma to resilience: Notes on decolonization. In: G.G. Valaskakis, M. Dion Stout, and Eric Guimond, eds., *Restoring the Balance: First Nation Women, Community and Culture*. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.
- Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing.
- Wright-Mills, C. (1959, 1976). *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

**Patricia D. McGuire** is *Anishinaabe Wiisaakodekwe*. She is affiliated with *Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabe*, although she has relatives at *Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabe*. She is a mother of two and grandmother of six. She completed her Master of Arts Degree in Sociology at Lakehead University in 2003. Currently, she is pursuing a PhD in Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. A consistent theme throughout her work has been the creation of respectful frameworks for the inclusion of Anishinaabe knowledge(s) from Lake Nipigon in broader academic, social and political contexts.

Patricia D. McGuire  
318 North Franklin Street  
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4J2  
[pdm120@mail.usask.ca](mailto:pdm120@mail.usask.ca)

