“Visualizing Pedagogy and Power with Urban Native Youth: Exposing the Legacy of the Indian Residential School System”

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Abstract

The Indian Residential School System, an institution of colonization that reflects White racist culture, has had deleterious effects on the lived social reality of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The intergenerational effects are manifested in social, cultural, economic, political, spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and linguistic ways. This paper functions as an interactive discussion in response to the mnemonic landscape of Canada, which this author argues has a tradition of forgetting, erasing, or making invisible Indigenous peoples’ reality, their history and their existence. In addition, it calls on anthropologists to consider the purposes and products of our ethnographic inquiries and interventions, particularly as it relates to the Indigenous context. Using the Photovoice methodology, three urban Native youth participants—Herb Varley, 25 (Nuu-chah-nulth), Billie-Jeanne Sinclair, 23 (Nisga’a), and Daniel Cook, 28 (Nuu-chah-nulth/Nisga’a)—were provided with an opportunity to help answer the question, How do urban Native youth interpret, and experience, the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System in Canada? Through a critical examination of their photographs, my research partners visualized pedagogy and power by engaging in critical consciousness, educating the greater community, and by talking back to the master narrative of Canadian society.

Introduction

Billie-Jeanne: “...there’s just not a lot of knowledge of the residential schools or the different forms of oppression that First Nation people have faced. It’s just really saddening—you know, for it to be in Canada and people live their whole lives here, but they just don’t know. And it’s sort of taught in schools, but it’s not from a First Nations perspective—the people writing the history books are not First Nation people. So it’s good for me to share my perspective on the intergenerational affects of that system.”

Growing up in Canada as an Indigenous woman—suspended between the teachings of my community and the perceptions of whitestream society—I had my identity challenged in a number of ways. Before the age of fifteen, I encountered a range of ideologies about Indigenous peoples and our realities. These experiences include, but are not limited to, being romanticized as an “Indian Princess”; degraded as nothing more than a “Squaw”; being questioned about my authenticity and asked to prove it; labeled as a “drunken Indian”; being accused of receiving undeserved, free handouts from the government, and; having people physically touch me like I was the modern-day Ishi once
realizing that I am an “actual Indian.” These experiences are not the exception; rather, they are commonplace experiences that most Indigenous people in North America have had to endure since the beginning of their lives. Indigenous activist, singer, scholar and artist Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree) received an Honorary Degree from the University of Regina at its Convocation ceremony in 1996—a monumental year in the history of Native peoples because that is the year when the last Indian residential school officially closed its doors in Canada. In her address, Sainte-Marie stated succinctly how the weight of a fragmented history continues to burden our identities today. She said, “You see, for me, the single worst thing ever about being an Indian is to be misperceived all our lives, by otherwise knowledgeable people, many times even our friends.” (wascanafl 2009)

During class break one day in the fall of 1996, engaging in casual discussion about social studies class with a group of diverse peers, my White friend, seemingly confused, turns to ask me, a First Nation woman, and my best friend, a Black woman, “why do you care about what happened in the past? That was so long ago!” My best friend seemed to have been waiting for the question to be asked, when, without hesitation, she responds, “Why?!?! Because your ancestors stole Robin’s ancestors’ land and made my ancestors crop it! That’s why we care!” I quickly followed with witty banter to demonstrate to our friend how ignorant her comment was to both of us. Even though she was a close friend of ours—and even though other people viewed her as “being down” because she hung around phenotypically brown people—instead of taking responsibility for her comment as an ignorant one, she perceived our response as an attack on her individual character. Rather, my best friend’s answer to our friend’s comment (posed as question) was one of very few opportunities presented to us where we
felt comfortable enough to articulate an unpalatable reality as a form of resistance. We were sixteen years old and, in an inner-city school of 2,500 students, there were only a handful of others who looked like us or thought like us. Thus, the opportunity to articulate this bottled up resistance to the master narrative was an empowering and liberating experience for both my best friend and I. Pedagogically speaking, as young women “of color,” we viewed our communicative power as being located outside of the classroom, beyond the confining structures of institutional pedagogy, and in a space where we did not feel outnumbered, and therefore ashamed, to speak back to the narratives that often minimized our intellect, erased our existence or blamed our cultures for our contemporary realities.

Our White friend, like the majority of Canadian society, was a successful product of the state’s mnemonic socialization agenda. Sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel (1996) describes mnemonic socialization as a “tradition of remembering” that is “more than a spontaneous personal act,” and is normalized by social rules of remembrance:

“such rules determine, for example, how far back we remember. Just as society delineates the scope of our attention and concern, it also delimits our mental reach into the past by setting certain historical horizons beyond which past events are basically regarded as irrelevant and, as such, often forgotten altogether.” (Zerubavel 1996:286)

Zerubavel continues to outline the processes of mnemonic socialization by claiming history textbooks, and holidays commemorating “discoveries”—I would also add public apologies and mythical relationships vis-à-vis Thanksgiving celebrations—as evidence of what we are socialized to remember and what we are socialized to forget. Any type of meaningful and critical discourse pertaining to Indigenous peoples should be, by nature, in response to a national consciousness of forgetting that has contributed to erasing or making invisible Indigenous peoples and our experiences.
A decade into the New Millennium, one might be comfortable with the impression that Indigenous peoples are no longer oppressed. Yet, despite having witnessed an official apology delivered by the Government of Canada to Indian Residential School survivors on June 11, 2008, and despite the fact that there was an unprecedented Aboriginal presence in the opening ceremonies of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, the mnemonic landscape of Canada remains fragmented at best. Biological anthropologist John Relethford (2003:101-122) refers to “The Palimpsest of the Past” as a metaphor for human genetic diversity—he states that human population movements resulted in genetic admixture to the extent that, across time, the modern human genome is a palimpsest of our past, reflecting this genetic diversity. This same metaphor can be applied to the “evolution” of Canada. That is, Canada is literally a palimpsest of its own past—inheriting Indigenous peoples as a part of the landscape only to gradually obscure their existence through the processes and structures of nation-state building which necessitates adding new people to the equation (admixture), moving closer towards the idealized “melting pot” or “mosaic” (genetic diversity) that North America purports to embrace.

This discussion that you are engaging in is in response to Canada’s mnemonic landscape—its national consciousness of forgetting—and a strategy for healing in Indigenous communities. For the participants of the project, it required introspective collaboration in order to decolonize the mind, body and spirit for the sake of community. For the reader, it requires the same. Colonization in the Americas continues to be a disciplining process—Indigenous scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, asserts that the “disciplining of the colonized….is not simply a way of organizing systems of knowledge
but also [as] a way of organizing people or bodies” (1999: 68). And in order for colonizing practices to sustain functionality, it requires not only the seizing of land, but also the seizing of minds (Asante, M. in Sefa Dei & Kempf 2006: ix). In short, every human being has been impacted by colonization in different ways, and so there is a role for every human being to play in either the perpetuation or the dismantling of colonizing, and therefore White racist cultural, projects. In Canada, colonization and its attendant institutions—for instance, the Indian Residential Schools—required not only a de-Indianization process, but also a whitening one. Thus, one cannot speak of colonization without also calling attention to White racism.

Linguistic anthropologist Jane Hill’s *The Every Day Language of White Racism* (2008) successfully demonstrates to the reader that despite public discourse, racism remains unabated in the 21st Century. This is important because, like colonization, public discourse tends to treat racism and White supremacy as something of the past—as either something that we have overcome, or something that only a few, and therefore outcast, individuals perpetuate. In an attempt to highlight the symbiotic nature of the relationship between colonization and White racism, I turn to Hill’s outline of the four projects of White racist culture that, Hill argues, generally constitutes White racism today. According to Hill, these four projects include:

“1. the production of a taxonomy of human types; 2. the assignment of individuals and groups within the taxonomy of types through “racialization” or “racial formation” (Omi and Winant 1994); 3. the arrangement of these types in a hierarchy and; 4. the movement of resources, both material and symbolic, from the lower levels of the hierarchy to the upper levels in such a way as to elevate Whiteness and denigrate and pejorate Color.” (Hill 2008: 20-21)

This formula, if you will, is a cornerstone of the colonization process. One need only take a cursory glance at the ways in which Indigenous people, since first contact, have
been categorized as savage, uncivilized and on the brink of extinction; have been engaged as “Other,” always in opposition to Whiteness; have been dislocated from land base; have had natural resources, and cultural patrimony stolen and then commoditized, and; have had to endure centuries of assimilation policies. Thus, as we engage in this discussion that aims to interrogate the intersection between pedagogy and power, it is important to keep in mind that colonization and White racist culture operate in tandem with common-sense folk-theories about the nature of social reality.

In her book, Hill uses critical race theory to challenge the “folk theory of race and racism” which she states, “is an interpretation, a way of thinking about racism, that is crucial to the perpetuation of White racist culture” (Hill 2008: 4). Hill argues that “for most White people the folk theory is undeniable commonsense” (2008: 4). Her main research question examines how negative stereotypes and racist thinking can be produced and reproduced among people who deny that they are racist and who claim to abhor racism in word and deed. In short, the folk theory of racism holds that race is biological and that racism is entirely a matter of individual beliefs, intentions and actions. Hill makes the important connection that the, “folk theory of race and racism, attend to so much that is irrelevant, erase so much that is important, and create so many traps and pitfalls that it is probably impossible to develop anti-racist projects within their frameworks” (2008: 6). The folk theory of racism interacts in complex ways with various linguistic ideologies—so much so that it becomes possible to perpetuate and deny the existence of White racism simultaneously. Instead of focusing solely on how individual beliefs factor into racism, critical race theorists emphasize the collective, cultural dimensions of this social phenomenon.
The aim of this discussion is to consider the ways in which we can dismantle “white racial frames” (Feagin 2006: 27) and supplant them with decolonizing frames in an analysis of self, society and scholarship. This discussion should motivate scholars to consider how the tools and perspectives of anthropology and the social sciences can bear on problem-solving for and with Indigenous communities. Focusing on the intergenerational effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples, this paper asks more specifically, how do urban Native youth interpret, and experience, the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System in Canada? It is an attempt to challenge the mnemonic landscape of Canada, while it also aims to pay honor and give thanks to the survivors of the Indian Residential School System. Through an ethnographic analysis of the intergenerational effects, this paper seeks to understand how the descendants of the Indian Residential School System can be supported to continue the healing processes for all of their relations. Due to the fact that Native youth disproportionately represent the contemporary face of Indigeneity, this project is of pedagogical importance because, not only does the topic conjure silence and shame within our communities, our people are still healing and need the cultural tools necessary to break the cycle, so to speak. Each of the participants of the Photovoice project, including myself, has one or more living relatives who are recent survivors of the Indian Residential School System in Canada, and we have experienced the intergenerational effects in many different ways.

**The Indian Residential School System**

As early as the 1620s, Indian residential schools were established by various religious factions to solve the infamous “Indian problem.” Prior to the passing of The
British North American Act of 1867 and the pursuant birth of confederation, the legal means existed, as in the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857, to assimilate Canada’s Indigenous peoples into the lower fringes of whitestream society. By the 1860s, contractual agreements were made, and in 1867 made legal, between the Government of Canada and the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, United and Presbyterian churches to operate Indian Residential Schools in Canada and to force Indigenous children to attend these institutions for cultural cleansing. Similar to the United States context, the solution for solving the Indian problem was to systematically, “kill the Indian and save the man.” In Canada, however, this nation-building slogan was tailored to the more explicit tune of, “kill the Indian in the child.” Even after the government withdrew the legal means to apprehend children, this egregious legacy of (mis)educating Indigenous children in residential schools continued until the end of the twentieth century—the last Indian residential school in Canada closed in 1996.

The Indian Residential School System was facilitated as a constitutional obligation to “educate” Indian children while the nation was coming to fruition. Instead of setting up atmospheres for nurturing children, these so-called schools assaulted children in the most egregious manners—sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape; emotional, spiritual, cultural and intellectual torment; military and prison-style discipline; negligent homicide; public humiliation along with punishment for cultural expression and participation; and industrial training or indentured servitude instead of an edifying or nurturing pedagogy. The survivors of this system suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder not unlike those experienced by returning war veterans or survivors of genocide (Quinn 2007), and they no longer had the healthy coping mechanisms necessary to deal with the
varied aspects of trauma because their cultures were severely disrupted as a result of the Indian Residential School System, the reservation system, and various laws prohibiting Indigenous cultural expressions. As a result, relationships between the generations were compromised, survivors did not receive the necessary support for navigating the modern world, and they were socialized to adopt a “pedagogy of the oppressed” (Freire 1970) becoming victims of their own oppression, learning the negative behaviors associated with residential schools, colonization and White racist culture, while also passing on these negative learned behaviors to their children. It must be made clear, however, that through this system of assault, many Native people have also demonstrated incredible resiliency by breaking the cycle of abuse, silence and shame and by creating opportunities to reclaim the sacred teachings of their ancestors. Yet, even in breaking the cycle, in reclaiming healthy coping mechanisms, we remain affected in many ways. I grew up in a healthy family because my parents broke the negative cycle of abuse in their respective families, yet because my ancestors, including my father, were damaged as a result of the Indian residential schools and the child welfare system, I grew up away from my traditional territory, away from my extended family, and without access to either of my languages. To this day, English dominates my life and I continue the struggle to reclaim my cultural ways, which is a journey that is ongoing.

A decade into the New Millennium—an era characterized as advantageously knowledgeable, beyond historical ignorance, and as embracing diversity—non-Indigenous people continue to have little to no understanding about the ideology accompanying the creation of the Indian Residential School System, never mind what the intergenerational effects of that system are. Thought of in a very westernized sense—one
that thinks in a linear rather than cyclical way, and one that places the highest value on
the individual rather than the community—the Indian Residential School System is often
perceived as something that individuals experienced or that individuals supported (read:
some children were mistreated by some well-intentioned individuals). Mirroring that of
society, if the subject is ever approached, the common sentiment espoused by non-
Indigenous people, even in institutions of education, goes a little something like this:
“Yes, it is sad that they could not speak their language in the schools, but your people
needed to learn to speak English so they could participate in society.” In addition, many
continue to understand this system as something of the past; something that is no longer
relevant to discuss, even though residential schools remain physically in the landscape.
A meaningful opportunity for us to respond to the state’s tradition of forgetting
Indigenous peoples experiences is by engaging the survivors of the Indian residential
school system and their descendants in critical dialogue about the emotional, spiritual,
physical and intellectual effects of the system, and by continuing in the new tradition of
social science scholars who engage this topic in response to the dominant narrative.
Since the Indian Residential School System existed not so long ago, it is the closest
tangible example (along with the current child welfare system) of the way colonization
and White racist culture operate in tandem to ensure colonizing principles retain its social
value.

Increasingly, academics encouraged by the activism of Residential School
Survivors, Indigenous scholars, and education proponents have been exploring this area
of Canadian and American history with a focus on the genocidal impacts of the
residential schools (Adams 1995; Archuleta et al. 2000; Barman et al. 1986; Castellano &
Davis 2000; Chrisjohn 2006; Churchill 2004; Deloria, Jr. & Wildcat 2001; Fournier & Crey 1997; Grant 2004; Hampton 1995; Lomawaima 1994; Lomawaima & McCarty 2006; McKegney 2007; Reyhner & Eder 2004; Whattam 2003; York 1990). Whether or not the term *genocide* is an apt word to describe the experience of Indigenous peoples is a discursive battle that I will not engage in any depth. Instead, I begin with an understanding of the fact that the impacts of colonization and its attendant institutions and policies have had deleterious effects on the contemporary lived social reality of Indigenous peoples, and that these strategies were purposeful. These effects are manifested physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, culturally, linguistically, socially, politically, economically, and especially intergenerationally.

Research supports the fact that approximately two-thirds of Aboriginal peoples in Canada have experienced trauma as a direct result of the Indian Residential School System (Quinn 2007). In addition, and confirming what Indigenous people already recognized, studies show that the residential schools do not only affect the students that attended the institutions; it also affects their children, and their children’s children, and so on (Gagne 1998; Quinn 2007). Even more glaring is the fact that there is a current estimate of over 25,000 Aboriginal children in the child welfare system across Canada (Blackstock 2003)—they make up 30-40% of all children in care (Blackstock 2003) even though they make up less than 5% of the total child/youth population. (Human Resources Development/Statistics Canada 2006). In some of the western provinces, from British Columbia to Manitoba, the number of Aboriginal children in care range as high as 40-60% (Blackstock 2003). While these numbers are glaring, even fewer scholars have made the important correlation between the Indian Residential School System and the
child welfare system in Canada (Quinn 2007). Fournier & Crey (1997) most notably and convincingly argued the correlation in *Stolen From Our Embrace: The Abduction of First Nations Children and the Restoration of Aboriginal Communities*.

**Anthropology and the Question of Subjects: Personal, Political and Intersubjective**

The Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA), is a non-profit organization that operates 21 core programs that fit into four broad categories of personal support, education and training, live-in programs, and sports and recreation [to learn more about UNYA programs and history see: http://www.unya.bc.ca/]. UNYA exists to empower Native youth in the urban setting, and makes sure to give thanks to the Coast Salish Peoples for allowing us to learn and play on their traditional, unceded territory. UNYA’s pedagogical philosophy is to meet youth where they are and to actively seek out their experiences, wisdom and voices to ensure ongoing, meaningful quality of support and service in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

UNYA’s roots began in 1988 when it was formed as the Native Youth Job Corps. The Native Youth Job Corps was formed in response to the growing numbers of Native youth leaving the reservation for the city—oftentimes, these youth, with no other local knowledge, would end up in Vancouver’s notorious Downtown East Side, where many Aboriginal people find themselves either homeless, disconnected from healthy support systems, sexually exploited, or addicted to drugs and/or alcohol.

As the Native youth population steadily increased, many continued to find themselves in Vancouver with few job skills, minimal training or education, and little or no knowledge of where to go for meaningful support. In addition, urban Native youth
who find themselves living in the “concrete village” are faced with the added challenge of balancing the traditional with the modern—that, is, they live in an urban environment, experiencing culture shock of a different kind, and struggle to maintain their Indigenous knowledge systems or, in the case of those who lack connection to their Indigenous knowledge systems, struggle to seek it out. The contemporary reality for Indigenous people—and these trends are consistent across Turtle Island/North America—is that up to 60% of our population now lives in the urban setting, and up to 65% of our population is under the age of 25. In addition, our population increases at 6 times the rate of the non-Aboriginal population.

Always in response to the growing urban Native youth population in Vancouver, UNYA has expanded its culturally relevant programming at the request of the youth who either access or are interested in accessing their services and support. Over the past few years, Native youth have voiced the need for a collective healing project in Indigenous communities surrounding the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System. In 2008, UNYA hosted a series of Youth Forums and, collectively, urban Native youth recognized and articulated that one of the most pressing concerns in Native communities today is the need for healing from the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System. Also, UNYA supported urban Native youth to produce a short film for the Reel Youth Film Festival titled, Residential Truth: Unified Future [to view the 12 minute video see: http://citizenshift.org/residential-truth-unified-future]. In this film, urban Native youth expressed concern over the lack of education in the non-Native community about this egregious legacy. One young lady calls out the public school system for failing to educate people in a meaningful and honest way and suggests
that all students should have to take a First Nations studies course in order to graduate from high school. Almost fifteen years after my own experiences in Canada’s public school system, as illustrated in the introductory anecdote, Native youth continue to face the same ignorance and invisibility in their own land, prompting them to respond with strategies for addressing the inadequacy of pedagogy in the school system. These young Indigenous intellectuals have much to say, and while they honor the survivors of the Indian Residential Schools and cringe at the thought of having to endure what they had to, they continue to look to our past and negotiate their present to inform our futures.

As an Indigenous anthropologist, I am obligated to consider this reality for reasons both indigenous and anthropological. To speak to the reasons that are indigenous, I offer a quote by educator and theologian, Dr. Martin Brokenleg (Rosebud Sioux):

“First Nations youth are the gift to Aboriginal people for enduring the past and having hope for the future. First Nations youth can lead our nations out of the darkness, pain, and confusion of the past. If we follow our cultural traditions, we will have courageous youth who can accomplish personal goals that will uplift all First Nations people to our full dignity.”

Indeed, in order to create the sorts of atmospheres that allow for our people to thrive collectively requires a reconfiguration of our relationship with our young people. Native youth have a responsibility, but a responsibility that is predicated on their role models’ ability to create new paths, and bring to the fore old paths, for healing and liberation.

To speak to the reasons that are anthropological, I turn to our age-old preoccupation with social phenomenon such as culture and tradition. My attempt here is to extend the analytical gaze in three ways: first, from Indigenous peoples of the past to Indigenous peoples of the present; second, from reservation landscapes to urban landscapes; and third, from a focus on older social actors to younger social actors.
Extending our analytical focus onto the contemporary lived social realities of Native peoples makes our inquiry relevant for Indigenous peoples, and offers a companion piece to the historical record—a record that anthropology has had its hand in obscuring. In addition, it offers anthropologists the opportunity to demonstrate further how all cultures, and therefore traditions, are dynamic, sometimes suspended, always in flux, and in response to a number of social factors.

Archaeologist H. Martin Wobst has made valuable contributions to the anthropological study of human behavior when he posited that artifacts are, “devices to bring about futures different from the present and its expected trajectory, that is, either as designs to change the present to more desirable futures, or to keep the present from changing into less desirable futures” (2006: 1). Furthermore, other archaeologists (Baxter 2006) have also followed the philosophy of educational anthropologists and anthropologists of childhood (Lancy 2008) by encouraging all anthropologists to understand children and youth as cultural actors rather than passive recipients of culture and society; to use archaeology’s tools to analyze children and youth’s interaction with the symbolic and material world; and to understand that the,

“transfer of cultural knowledge is achieved both across and within generations and is often directly related to material culture and social behaviors. Archaeology’s diachronic perspective on culture and culture change provides an important approach toward understanding the processes of socialization.” (Baxter 2006: 6)

As anthropologists, any contemporary engagement requires an understanding of human behavior, an extension of the analytical gaze, and a positioning of the self, the subject and subject matter in historical and social context. Without context, a word is just an utterance, a hug is just a selfish attempt to touch someone, a photograph is taken only to create others in our own image, and anthropology is just a colonial endeavor. Our
analytical strength lies within our ability to provide context and make connections across time and space, linking the micro with the macro, and the emic with the etic.

Today’s anthropological slogan seems to be social justice. While I subscribe to some of the tenants of social justice discourse, I am more explicitly dedicated to the research agenda that Indigenous anthropologist Dr. Beatrice Medicine (Yankton Sioux) describes:

“Often, it is implicit that our research “empowers” people. To me, empowering people—especially “people of color”—means teaching and researching issues of race, class, gender, and power relations in ways that can be understood and utilized by “target populations.” Moreover, as applied anthropologists, we should do more participatory research and not use Native people as consultants but as co-directors of research projects. Thus, they can learn research techniques and initiate and implement their own “needs assessment” and application strategies to improve the quality of life in their own communities.” (2001:329)

In this way, the discussion of the research project that follows is not a social justice project—it is a decolonizing project at the community level, and one that privileges a decolonizing anthropology (Harrison 1991) that most prominently addresses communicative strategies and decolonizing methodologies (Smith 1999) that challenges the purposes and products of our academic and ethnographic engagements, especially as it relates to Indigenous populations. Let me be clear here that this is not another attempt toward addressing the power dynamics in the research relationship in a way that typically, and discursively, posits (White) researchers as the ones “with power” and the (non-White) research participants as the ones “without power.” These binaries do not address the issues of power and ideology in a meaningful way; instead, they only perpetuate hierarchical thinking which obfuscates any critical engagement with the question of why we are even anthropologists in the first place.

Indeed, what is our purpose? It is not to produce ethnography—this is a by-product. It is not to horde ethnographic knowledge—this advances nothing. It is not to
help the government to exploit and colonize—anthropology has already done its part. So what is our purpose? Are we not in the position to move beyond intra-disciplinary critiques, to move beyond superficial engagement? Are we not already “anthropologist’s of ethics” (Pink et al. 2004) concerned more with what we say than how we do? At the 2009 American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, this topic was advanced with the necessary critical engagement, by non-White, and some White, scholars at the Invited Roundtable sponsored by the Association of Black Anthropologists, *A Discipline of Cowards? Race, Racism and Anthropology* (session #0-111, Wednesday, December 2, 2009).

Lila Abu-Lughod in *Writing Against Culture* (1991:143) summarizes the imperative by stating that even as we ‘let’ Others speak back in our texts, or invite Others as consultants on our projects, “decolonizations on the level of the text—leave intact the basic configuration of global power on which anthropology, as linked to other institutions of the world, is based.” The calls for a decolonizing anthropology have gained momentum since the 1970s, but perhaps most notably since the seminal work of Faye V. Harrison’s *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further Toward an Anthropology for Liberation* (1991). In this article, Harrison makes explicit the need for different communicative strategies, which would inevitably change the character of how we approach research, the way we do fieldwork (focusing on engagement), and what we do with the data to ensure that anthropology resists colonizing practices. Stated succinctly in a 1994 Review of Harrison’s work in the *American Ethnologist*, A. Lynn Bolles is worth quoting at length here:

> “Anthropology undergoes its own cultural encounter in *Decolonizing Anthropology*. Now that many of the “natives” represent themselves, and often do so as “credentialed” anthropologists, it
behooves the discipline and its practitioners to be introspective once again. As a field of study, what does anthropology need to become as it moves into the 21st century? This volume is not about survival strategies in the academy, or reinventing or rethinking the old. It is about creating a new, meaningful anthropology that would truly be based on the premise of freedom and equality for all humankind.” (Bolles 1994:900)

Indeed, “the Natives are gazing and talking back” (Jacobs-Huey 2002) in increasing numbers, and thus it become imperative for us to address method explicitly and apply the appropriate decolonizing framework that works for our partners and coauthors first, and our disciplinary obligations second.

**Searching For a Metamethod in Anthropology**

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) has come to be known as an umbrella concept that includes different designations such as participatory research, action research, and participatory action research—even community-university collaborations. The trends toward umbrella concepts—for example, *applied visual anthropology* (Pink 2007), which combines the sub-disciplines of applied anthropology and visual anthropology—have become salient. This trend is indicative of the need to foster interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary tools of engagement to make better sense of the world both past and present. In addition, it signals a move towards decolonizing methodologies by dismantling the once rigid boundaries between discipline and method.

CBPR was first introduced as a concept in 1946 by Kurt Lewin as a way of challenging researcher objectivity and confronting issues of social justice (Fals-Borda & Rahman 1991), and in 1970, Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire built on Lewin’s ideas centering his attention on the intersection between research and education. Through his work, Freire created the much needed space in the research paradigm for research
partners to engage in critical consciousness by emphasizing community-based identification of concerns and problems, solutions and action.

In a similar, though very anthropological, vein, beginning in 1975, Margaret Meade advocated for anthropologists to stop spending their time denouncing the academic value of visual methods and to start embracing it as an anthropological tool for the ages. Building on the anthropological tradition of ethnographic filmmaking, Sarah Pink has created the much needed space in visual anthropology to accept the inevitability of an applied strand, which moves it closer to the tenants of Indigenous media (Ginsburg 1991; 1995), and increases its relevance in the 21st Century.

Influenced by the aforementioned theoretical and methodological frameworks—decolonizing anthropology, decolonizing methodologies, CBPR, applied anthropology, visual anthropology and emancipatory frameworks—I sought to locate what George Marcus called a metamethod (2008: 5)—the ability to reinvent the techniques of fieldwork (rather than the method itself) and in line with those unfulfilled potentials of the 1980s critiques in Writing Culture (Clifford & Marcus 1986). Photovoice, a method first made available to the academic community by public health scholars Wang & Burris (1997), offers to anthropologists the means to continue the dialogue around the purposes and products of ethnography and it expands our notion of what is ethnographic. By expanding our definition of what is ethnographic and how to attain ethnographic information, we give our discipline a second chance at recuperation. We were recuperated when we discovered that visual technologies helped us to advance the anthropological project of greater awareness of the human condition, but we relied too heavily on ethnographic film to represent the discipline and our subject matter visually.
Photovoice should be added to the anthropological tool kit because it is both an applied visual anthropological project that can advance ethnographic knowledge, and a community-based, participatory action research initiative that has the potential to influence policy.

Photovoice engages the increasingly popular sensory approach across mainstream and contemporary anthropologies—public anthropology and contemporary uses of visual media in representation—and it builds on the collaborative image-making principles of ethnographic media. In addition, Photovoice produces tangible artifacts, leaves research participants with the skills to facilitate their own culturally and community-responsive research, and it speaks cross-culturally among researcher, partners and those that experience or consume their images. Most importantly, Photovoice, if employed in a meaningful way, and if modified according to the target population (Castleden, Garvin & Huu-ay-aht First Nation 2008), has strong potential to plant more seeds for healing at the individual and community levels. This is something that traditional ethnographic methods alone have not achieved. There is already an applied strand that runs through the sub-disciplines of anthropology, but it does not imply healing or critical consciousness. This is where Photovoice can help to decolonize our anthropological paradigms.

The Photovoice Project

_Herb:_ “I had interest in doing this because I’ve seen projects based on the intergenerational effects of the residential school in, like, a video or a documentary context...and, to a lesser degree, in some plays that I’ve been in and that I’ve seen. I think photography is an interesting medium for exploring these issues. I haven’t heard of anyone using photography as a medium to explore this topic.”

From December 15, 2009 to January 17, 2010, I returned to my home community of Vancouver, British Columbia to facilitate a Photovoice project with urban Native
youth and in partnership with the Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA). I have worked with UNYA in various capacities since 2001, and with other Aboriginal organizations, since 1995. My roles have ranged from child/youth care worker, recreation coordinator, outreach worker, volunteer, fill-in receptionist to fill-in youth worker. I believe in UNYA’s capacity to foster the necessary change in our community because I have witnessed the power of its pedagogy. Since leaving Vancouver for post-secondary education in 2004, I continue to balance my time between the Eastern part of the United States and East Vancouver by returning home to fulfill my initial obligation and purpose in life—to keep the learning circle strong, to bring back knowledge attained on my journey, to maintain a healthy relationship with my communities, my family and friends, and to use my voice for Native youth. Choosing to collaborate with UNYA was a practical, a personal, and a political decision to make.

I received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (See appendix D) from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for conducting self-funded, qualitative research with high risk human subjects. I also went beyond my institutional obligation and fulfilled a truly ethical one when I first received approval from the community by putting the project proposal to the Board of Directors of the Urban Native Youth Association, of which over 50% of its members are urban Native youth. I found myself in a peculiar situation, like many Indigenous scholars do, because it felt like I had to formalize and professionalize my relationship with my own community, but I had to remember that I was doing what the community wanted me to do. So long as I did not compromise my existing relationships or expect more from my
people than I would have expected pre-academia, then this would be a fruitful endeavor—and it was.

I recruited research partners by circulating call-out posters to UNYA programs, to the urban Native community, and to a range of social service providers, including local political figures. The invitation to collaborate on the project was extended to self-identifying urban Native youth between the ages of 13 and 29 years old. By the end of the second week of recruitment, I had seven committed youth ranging in age from 15-28. By the time we reconvened after the week between Christmas and New Year’s, the number of participants decreased to three. The other youth had situations arise which were out of their control—in addition, it was not a very forgiving time for us to be dealing with such time constraints. Nonetheless, the three participants—Billie-Jeanne, 23 (Nisga’a), Herb, 25 (Nuu-Chah-Nulth), and Daniel, 28 (Nuu-chah-nulth/Nisga’a)—remained committed, and together we problematized some of the assumptions of Photovoice by creating fluid boundaries for application; after all, the quintessential strength of Photovoice is not solely in its method, but in its ability to foster critical dialogue and a critical consciousness throughout the process.

Each youth partner—all of whom I have pre-established relationships with—received two disposable cameras of 24 exposures each, with a built-in flash. With each camera, they were asked to answer a sub-form of the research question, *how do urban Native youth interpret, and experience, the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System in Canada?* For the first part of the question, they were asked to document what they perceive as negative reminders of the Indian Residential School System, and in the second part of the question they were asked to document what they...
perceive as strengths in the Native community to continue the healing process. We began with a 2-hour training session so that my partners could become qualified in the Photovoice methodology, with the explicit intention of leaving them with the confidence to utilize the methodology to facilitate their own projects in the future. After two weeks with the camera’s, various check-ins, and after finally developing the film, we videotaped the moment when Photovoice requires us to reveal our pictures to one another and share our insights through a process of critical consciousness. The narratives that follow are based on transcriptions from that filming. All of the youth have waived their confidentiality and wished to be named as authors of their knowledge and their photos.

**Visualizing Pedagogy and Power**

*Billie-Jeanne:*
This is my favorite mural, seeing the animals in the mountains and the people in the trees—the spirit people. It’s just an amazing mural, and we were all just kind of staring at it. To me, it’s like these people are faded away. It just seemed real sad to me, it symbolized losing our culture, our identity. But, on the other hand, [my friend] was like, “to me, it symbolizes our ancestors,” like their spirits are with us, like they’re here still......”

*Herb:* “.....they’re faded, but they’re not gone.”
Billie-Jeanne:
“Yes, the people fading away, to me, symbolizes losing our culture and our identity, and that is a result of the residential schools. A lot of people don’t have a strong connection to their culture...not saying everybody does, but.....I, myself, grew up in the city and away from my people, and I don’t know a lot about my culture. So for me growing up that definitely had a huge effect on my identity and not really knowing who I am sort of thing. So that’s what I thought when I took the picture, but I took 2 pictures of it because [my friend] also saw that it represented the fact that our ancestors are still here, guiding us and that’s our strength."

With this photograph, Billie-Jeanne was able to convey a response to both sub-forms of the research question. To her, this photo had dual meaning. In her recognition of this polysemy—or the multiple meanings associated with various readings of talk and text—Billie-Jeanne spoke power to the visual image: that everything has a vantage point. With added perspective, Billie-Jeanne internalized the possibilities for interpretation and both she and Herb were able to draw connections between perceived negative reminders and actual strengths.

In addition to everything having a vantage point, my partners also recognized that a picture is not always what it seems—that pictures are worth more than a thousand words, containing both what is conceived and perceived, what one can see and what one cannot see. With the following photograph, Herb was able to demonstrate the power that narrative wields when in the context of a visual image, and conversely, the power the visual image wields when in context of its narrative:
Herb:
“This one was supposed to be a picture of the apartments where I spent my years 15-20’ish. It was a cloudy night so that’s what all that is—it’s the fog right in front of the camera, reflecting right back at it, so you can’t get any discernable features from the apartment. But I wasn’t hoping for a lot of discernable features...I was kind of just hoping for the apartment and then the fog. But it still kind of works anyway, because I remember…16, 17, 18….being really lost, not being proud of my heritage, and, you know, just being a badass cruising around at night doing stupid stuff. And that’s because my parent’s were never there. And when they were there they were there to yell at me. And, really, that’s what residential schools did—they broke down those patterns of healthy communication between parents and kids. So that breaks down, and many of our teenagers go through life in a haze, in a mist, trying to live life moment by moment.”

Herb was originally concerned that he did not get the “perfect shot,” yet as demonstrated in his narrative, he was still able to communicate his intentions through a careful examination of what we can see and what we cannot see in the image.

Furthermore, Herb connects the impact that the loss of culture has on generations of Native people to the youth context, and the importance for achieving balance in our lives:

Herb:
“We can juxtapose this picture with the last one. This is a baseball diamond right by the apartment that I live in right now. I moved back there…20, 21, 22 until now….and everything’s a lot clearer. I’m proud of who I am, I know who I want to be, I know what I want to do. But yeah, this is the neighborhood where I grew up, where I started coming into my manhood. It’s clearer; it’s nicer, more composed. I think me finally accepting my heritage is me embracing the strength of my ancestors.”

Together, Herb’s photos are visual representations of the life phases he has experienced—one representative of the confusion and the uncertainty of not being strong in one’s identity, and the other representative of the clarity experienced when a strong identity is in place.
To further symbolize what occurs when families are dismantled and cultures are at risk, Daniel offered this image:

Daniel:
“This is a negative reminder of the residential schools. When I went up to the Queen Charlotte Islands, I visited the old village sites. The tour guide was talking about some of the reasons why people had to leave these sites—a lot of it had to do with hunting, because they couldn’t hunt in the area anymore. But also because all the kids were being taken away to the residential schools, and the parents wanted to be near their kids, so they went towards them. That’s one of the reasons the old village sites were abandoned. This is a picture of one of the abandoned villages showing the fallen house posts.”

When most people see the abandoned village sites, they often interpret it as the government respecting cultural heritage and that the government must have allowed for the past to be preserved since there is a tour available. For example, one of Canada’s world heritage sites in Haida Gwaii is of the Haida mortuary poles in the Nan Sdins village at SGang Gwaay. On the Parks Canada website, it says that the mortuary poles are all that is left of a once vibrant village. The reason for it being “once a vigorous Haida community,” according to the Parks Canada website, is because “disease decimated the population…and by the turn of the century only remnants of the houses and poles remained” (http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/spm-whs/itm2/site5.aspx). Yet, as Daniel points out, many of the reasons for the demise of the villages—including disease,
yes, but very often—was also in response to the landscape (as in needing to find places to
hunt) and the abduction of the village’s children (as in needing to find or be close to their
children). The people “went towards them” and the village’s suffered as a consequence.

Daniel’s analysis of the abandoned village in Haida Gwaii demonstrates the
power of memory in the landscape. Daniel understood that the historical memory of
British Columbians, never mind Canadians, had been socialized towards interpreting
abandoned village sites only in this way, and often perceived of these villages as
remnants of a civilization lost. As is often the case, when Indians “disappear” from the
static time-space backdrops that they are superimposed on, no one wonders where the
Indians have gone. Instead, they often assume that with the landscape, the Indian has
been erased. Daniel has offered insights regarding the interpretation of the landscape that
are often overlooked. Zerubavel (1996: 292) points the fact that, ruins, for example, play
a “mnemonic role” in the preservation of social memories, and that in the current era of
preservationism we even “purposefully design “future ruins” to capture our memories
and preserve them” for purely commemorative purposes, and to “allow future generations
mnemonic access to their collective past.”

The mortuary poles were originally designed and raised to remain in the
landscape for the future generations by the Haida people—to teach them the ways of their
ancestors—but the village site has been re-preserved for Canadian heritage, not for the
Haida people because it is preserving in the national consciousness a certain portrayal of
Canadian history. In this way, the Government of Canada is actually obscuring a reading
of the landscape that can explain what types of decisions people had to make in an era of
heightened assault. Instead, preserving abandoned villages and citing the reason for its
abandonment as disease and decimation, actually helps the state to continue to think of Indigenous peoples as existing in past times and disappearing with their traditional landscapes. It also lends to a narrative of the past that positions Indigenous peoples as victims of their nature, unable to defend themselves from alien disease. While this was certainly the case, especially in the preliminary periods of contact, an emphasis on this reasoning distracts from other plausible reasons.

Daniel:
“This is a negative reminder and shows our strength. I didn’t take the picture, but it’s of the residential school that my parents went to in Port Alberni. It’s still standing, with the gymnasium, and all the bad energies still exist there, too. But the positive spin—or the overcoming part—is that the local First Nation people there, the Tseshaaht people, after the residential school shut down....and I’m not sure if it was immediate, but.....they used the building for their band office. They changed it into that. There’s still the memory that it used to be the residential school—I know when I’ve been with my parents, when we walked through it or walked by it, they would point out and recall the memories, like, “you see that room there, that used to be my room” or “you see that window over there, that was.” whatever. So they remember it, but the local people there change it into something constructive for their needs. And for the gymnasium, it’s still there...I forget what the English name is, but it’s called the Maht Mahs, which is where everyone comes to have their potlatches.”

Yet again, Daniel is able to connect landscape with memory, but this time through architecture. His narrative prompted responses from everybody about how Native people have always had to make due. We have always been ‘given’ retrofit buildings (old...
nightclubs and factories) or, in the case with the Tseshahaht, have had to reappropriate the space of Indian residential schools to suit the self-determined needs of the community. All across North America, residential schools remain in the landscape, but are now being used by Native communities for their own purposes—tribal schools, museums, band council offices, and even cultural spaces (as in the case with the Maht Mahs gymnasium that was once a part of the residential school).

Despite being thrown scraps, Native people know how to make the best of what they have, and often take what they can get, while they can. That is how, in my observations, a gymnasium—either from old Indian Residential Schools or at Indian Friendship Centers—has come to symbolize an “urban big house” for many communities. It is precisely because Native people are resilient and can adapt in many situations why recreational spaces can become cultural spaces and why abandoned spaces can become nurturing spaces. “But not without my culture.” This is the motto that most Native peoples have accepted in order to survive and to thrive, especially in the urban landscape. Yet even though we are resilient, what does it mean to have pride in place?
Billie-Jeanne:
“I took a picture of a local Native Housing building because to me it represents the poverty that affects the lives of many (too many) First Nations people. When children were taken away from their families, they were taken away from the only way of life they knew and a new way of life was imposed on them. The alarming levels of poverty in First Nations communities is a reminder that we still have not adapted to the way of life that was forced upon us.”

Billie-Jeanne’s quote is in her own words, but was pre-written for the Photovoice Exhibit. She chose not to interact with her photos and the audience at the same time because she felt shy, so she wrote her narratives and they were featured next to her photographs while she observed from afar. Billie-Jeanne’s wisdom also prompted much response from us all, continuing the discussion about architecture and space. We have all either lived in Native Housing at some point, or have been to one or more to visit family and friends. And we all know that the waiting lists for Native Housing can be quite long. Native Housing is nothing to brag about—in fact, we all commented on how each apartment has the typical institutional feel of colonizing spaces. Billie-Jeanne’s picture of the Native Housing, connecting it with issues of poverty and the government’s response to it, compelled us to consider why all of our buildings—the actual structure and architecture, not how we have made the spaces cultural or nurturing—are recycled in the image of the Indian residential schools. Cold floors, white walls, structured boxes, bad infrastructure; these are the characteristics of the Indian residential schools and of Native housing—we can also include Indian Friendship Centres while we are on the subject. We commented that it was almost as though they were engraining in us, through architecture, a feeling that we are institutionalized, reminded that we are permanent wards of the state. We realize that many people think that just because there is a totem pole slapped in front of the building that it represents Native architecture. We beg to differ and we hope that the examples provided move people in the direction of considering what pride in place means, how we can achieve it, while also critically analyzing how contemporary Native
infrastructure, recycled in the image of the residential schools, serves to impede the
ability to achieve a sense of pride in place.

Perhaps our most mnemonically powerful dialogue derived from this photo:

Billie-Jeanne:
“This picture…. it could symbolize taking a child away to residential school, or nowadays it could
symbolize a social worker taking a child away. To me, I didn’t experience the residential school, but I
experienced being taken away from my family and put into foster care, and that’s kind of the equivalent, to
me, of residential school. And, just the number of children that have been taken away from their families
and placed into foster care is now more than the number of children that went to residential school. It’s a
huge influence, First Nation children being taken away from their families.”

Billie-Jeanne’s ability to connect the institution and ideology of the Indian
Residential School System to the child welfare system is an important correlation to
make regarding the intergenerational effects of this system of policy:

Billie-Jeanne:
“And also, residential schools, took people away from their families and the environment they were
brought to was not a nurturing environment, so when they had children, they didn’t know how to properly
take care of them because they had been abused and mistreated.”

Herb:
“It’s circular. And then, even if they are treated well, right, what are the chances that the people
who adopt or take on an Aboriginal kid knows anything about their culture? So even if they are
nurtured well, it serves the purpose of eliminating the culture before it has a chance to take form.
It serves the original purpose to eliminate and strip away Aboriginal cultural ways.”
Indeed, this demonstration of critical consciousness by my research partners was an intellectual interrogation of the intersection between pedagogy and power. By making visible what the government did and continues to do, these urban Native youth are challenging the mnemonic landscape of Canada—a landscape that blames Native youth for their school drop out rates, for getting into trouble with the police, for having their children taken away and for being insecure in their identity. It is also a nation with a tradition of forgetting Indigenous peoples, so engaging in this mnemonic battle over the social legacy of the past (Zerubavel 1996: 295), and the present, is both personal and political for myself and the authors of this research. Not only is it an attempt to reinterpret the past and the present, it is also a decolonizing strategy for the individuals because they are able to give what Indigenous intellectual Sandy Grande (2004) calls “the testimony of a journey of consciousness, a coming to know through transgression,” (4) and “that language and the ability to name one’s experience are precursors to emancipation” (5).

_Herb:_
“Here’s another one where I’m missing the juxtaposition. But, here’s the NEC, the Native Education Centre, which I was supposed to start going to last week, but I’m trying to figure other things out right now....but I made a very conscious decision to take a picture nice and level with the school, because I went on a tour and met some of the people who worked there, and so I made a conscious decision to take a picture of it on even keel, because that’s how I felt when I was in that school.”
Herb:
“And I was going to go to Britannia [High School], but I didn’t get a chance to because the weather’s been acting up, but I was going to go as close to the school as I could, tilt my head up and take the picture so the picture would look like the school was towering over me. Which is how I felt there, I felt insignificant because there were very few First Nations kids there, and a lot of the teachers—not all of them, but—they were pretty condescending, towering over me, trying to fix me, you know, and so a lot of the other students felt superior...so they used to pick on other Native kids, and myself....until we stood up. Me and my brothers stood up for ourselves...which kind of helped....but it didn’t, because once we stood up to one guy, the next time we had to stand up to five, ten guys....so, yeah, Britannia is a symbol of how it’s an ongoing cycle—we’ll always be considered lesser than the norm, and it’s unfortunate, you know, ‘cause we end up going through that, feeling like that, until we are 17, 18, until we finally just get sick of it......and we either rise above it or commit suicide—either literally, or by falling into a bottle, or a needle, or whatever, just to deaden the senses.”

Herb:
“But back to the Native Education Centre......we are taking that power, you know, we have a right to empower our selves in a meaningful way, in a one-to-one way, through empowerment. And I also tried to make it so it’s composed, so it doesn’t dominate the whole picture, because education shouldn’t dominate you in your life, it should only be a part of it.”

Again, Herb was able to critically interrogate his own experience and connect it with the contemporary terrain of educational opportunity. Inevitably, he raises a fundamental question in education studies—simply put, what is the purpose of education? And what is the purpose of education in the present day for Indigenous peoples?

A recent major study of the professional knowledge and experience of Aboriginal teachers in Canadian public schools, released on March 10, 2010 at a special Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) event on Aboriginal education, asked the question, what can we learn from the professional knowledge and experiences of Aboriginal teachers who teach in public schools about how to better promote and support the success of Aboriginal students (St. Denis 2010)? The study was commissioned by the CTF and its Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Education, and funded by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL). In-depth and ongoing discussions with 59 Aboriginal teachers across Canada revealed four themes in the data: 1. philosophy of teaching; 2. integration of Aboriginal content and perspectives into curriculum; 3. racism in education and; 4. allies of Aboriginal education (St. Denis 2010). Of most relevance to this discussion is that the
study found that racism in education, their Indigenous knowledge systems, and their perspectives were disregarded; they witnessed teachers lowering expectations for Aboriginal students; and they were often met with a discounting of the effects of colonization and oppression on the lives of Indigenous peoples (St. Denis 2010).

Herb demonstrated in his photograph that education is important—but Native-controlled education, in culturally supportive environments, that do not perpetuate or accept racism is more important. As I write this article, there is a campaign of videos circulating the internet pleading for public and federal support to keep the only Canadian Aboriginal University, the First Nations University of Canada of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College system, from closing its doors on April 1st [to view see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ze1xmmQIOY]. As one of the students states in the video, “it could be the first University in the history of Canada to close its doors.” The students feel threatened that the school will no longer exist because the federal government has not committed funds to ensure its success. Despite its name-sake, the First Nations University of Canada, located in Saskatchewan, is open to non-Aboriginal people as well. For many people, like in Herb’s narrative of the NEC, First Nations University of Canada is not just another school—it is something that Aboriginal people have been waiting for a long time. It began in 1976 as an Indian Federated College at the University of Regina—it began by serving 9 students, and today the average enrollment is at 1200. It also has a current alumni of over 2500 students, and since 1983, the University has entered into over 25 agreements with Indigenous Peoples’ institutions in Canada, South America, Central America and Asia, as well as signing agreements with academic institutions in Siberia, Inner Mongolia and Tanzania. What is different about
this institution, according to its students, is that it values Indigenous knowledge systems, it does not encourage racism in the classroom, and it provides a rare opportunity for non-Indigenous peoples to learn form Indigenous peoples in an academic setting—not sometimes, like during Thanksgiving or for rare multicultural celebrations, but all the time. Is it irony, coincidence or happenstance that the only Aboriginal University of its kind in Canada might well cease to exist in April because the government, of all communities, does not want to commit to support its existence? In light of the discussion thus far, it seems fair to conclude that even when the government has the opportunity to truly reconcile its colonizing practices by making the past wrongs right today, it will do what it can to avoid the issue and try to ensure that the original policies remain unabated in their modern forms: compulsory, whitestream schooling is necessary to continue “killing the Indian,” but a self-determined Indigenous-run educational institution like the First Nations University of Canada is a threat to that imperative.

Throughout this discussion we have asked many why questions to answer what and how questions—like what does colonization and White racist culture look like in the present?; Why do these systems persist?; How does this affect our pedagogical efficacy? and; What strategies can we use to decolonize our mind, bodies and spirits for the sake of community? In doing so we hope that we have challenged others to think critically about common-sense folk-theories and taken-for-granted assumptions about the function and ideology of the state and its institutions. We argue that without understanding the lived social reality of Native peoples throughout time and space in Canada, Canadians will never fully comprehend the magnitude of the state’s power in their lives and in the lives of others.
Mnemonic Battles

As social actors we are all inherently caught up in either side—and sometimes both sides—of any given mnemonic battle over the social legacy of the past and present. As a participant in this discussion, you were not just a passive witness to a string of narratives. You, too, have been pulled into a mnemonic battle that challenges the mnemonic landscape of Canadian society. Your role as a social actor is to make sense of the narratives in context of the demonstrated imperative—and that is that society can no longer ignore, forget or erase the existence of Native peoples. It is a personal and a political call to all peoples to join us, a mere 4% of the total Canadian population, to address the ideologies behind a tradition of forgetting and the purposes of mnemonic socialization.

For this project, we not only created tangible artifacts in the form of a travelling photo exhibit, we also have film footage of the event documented by local community members, providing you, the reader, with an opportunity to experience the atmosphere of the Photovoice Exhibit and to witness a creative expression of the days cumulative moments.[to view see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OTTvpMt54A] Zerubavel (1996: 293) recognizes that visual technologies represent an “attempt to integrate such graphic and sonic efforts to preserve the past in our minds.” Indeed, these modern sites of social memory are not only efforts to preserve the past in our mind but to also recapture the present by utilizing material and symbolic capital to, as stated by archaeologist H. Martin Wobst, keep the present from changing into less desirable futures. The Photovoice Exhibit reached more than 80 people at the opening and more
than 200 people were made aware of the Exhibit’s existence. To date, the project has received over 1,000 views on YouTube (from two separate postings—first through the W2 channel, and now on the UNYA channel) and has been used as a teaching resource in a few college or university classrooms in Canada and the United States\(^1\). In addition, the Photovoice methodology has sparked keen interest in further use of the method to address similar issues that urban Native peoples can define for themselves. In this way, we have at least ruptured the contemporary mnemonic landscape, creating the necessary space for critical dialogue and introspection to occur.

**The Indian Residential School Apology**

On June 11, 2008 the Government of Canada officially apologized to the descendants of the Indian Residential School System [to read the speech in its entirety see: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rqpi/apo/sig-eng.pdf]. Responding to a common experience lawsuit, in which the Government decided to settle out of court, the Government was forced to apologize (up until this time, the Government continued to deny any responsibility on behalf of the church or state). Had there been no lawsuit of this magnitude filed against the Government, I argue that there would be no apology based on the Government’s own merits. Nonetheless, the apology was a public and historic event. Just like many African-American survivors of slavery and Jim Crow never thought they would see the day that America would elect a Black president, so to First Nation survivors of the Indian Residential School System, like my father, never imagined the day they would be alive to receive an official apology from the

\(^1\) This information has been updated (revised 2011) to reflect impact of project over a year time period.
Government. The apology is definitely historic and necessary, but must be put into proper perspective to be able to digest the intentions of the gesture.

The “plot structures we normally use to narrate the past,” (Zerubavel 1996:288) are ideologically situated according to the mnemonic communities we are a part of. Zerubavel’s notion of “plot structures” is useful for comparative analysis in the context of the Indian Residential School Apology, delivered by the Prime Minister of Canada, and the Photovoice Exhibit, narrated by urban Native youth. Even a preliminary analysis of the discourse or plot structure of each linguistic event reveals how urban Native youth “talk back” to the mnemonic socialization of the state, of which the Indian Residential School Apology is a factor in minimizing the colonizing role of the state. Indeed, the following interrogation is more a matter of observation than a technically-sound sociolinguistic, linguistic anthropological or critical discourse analysis.

In the nationally-televised apology, Stephen Harper made an ephemeral acknowledgement of the intergenerational effects of the system when he said, “the legacy of Indian Residential Schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today.” Stephen Harper does not make explicit the root of these problems, and in doing so, creates a sense that individuals are responsible for social problems, framed according to deficit-based ideologies. This framing gives the impression that those who were negatively affected by the system are the root of the social problems that persist. Without explicitly acknowledging dominating structures of ideology and power, and the pursuant structural and symbolic violence, as when Harper said in the same apology that, “Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child"," the colonial structures of nationhood are minimized to the
actions of “some” individuals. The words “we now recognize,” to explain how terrible some of the effects of the system were to Indigenous people, obscures accountability. To suggest that the Government did not “recognize” that its policies were at all genocidal with a mnemonic slogan like, “kill the Indian in the child,” is a plot structure that erases the intentions of the state, masked, of course, as “well-intentioned” actions and ideology, when in reality, these and other plot structures like it, only support the White racist cultural projects (Hill 2008) of Canadian society.

In response to these plot structures, urban Native youth have begun to “talk back” in this mnemonic battle for recognition over erasure. The Photovoice Exhibit is an example of the ways in which Native youth can talk back to the master narrative, but it was also an attempt to both honor our ancestors while preparing the terrain for urban Native youth to navigate the social world more effectively and meaningfully to suit their needs and concerns.

**Concluding Thoughts**

Although the focus of this discussion centered on the topic of mnemonic socialization in relation to Indigenous peoples and the nation-state, including its policies and institutions, it was made clear that colonialisms wrath, and therefore White racist cultural projects, remain unabated and the intergenerational effects of the Indian residential school system remain prevalent in our communities. Throughout this discussion I tried to keep a thematic focus without compromising the wisdom of our youth. Even though it was not analyzed in length here, Daniel’s observations for why he wanted to participate in the project are important:
“thinking of the effects of the IRSS...everybody has had huge impacts...abuses that’s happened, and everyone knows that’s happened. But it also trickles down to little things, which I remember that my parents have with foods—that they don’t touch certain foods just because of the residential schools. I want to show people that there are other “little things” that have affected people, which are maybe not so little....”

Because Daniel’s father was forced to make sausages at the Indian residential schools, he grew up with a disdain for the food—it conjured up bad memories and was symbolic of his time spent (to use prison terms). However, Daniel shared pictures of his parents, who are now chefs and who have found strength in their handling of food by incorporating their culture into their profession. For instance, Daniel’s mom made a tipi and moccasins out of glazed meat at a culinary show in France in the 1980s:

And even though his father will not eat it to this day, he shared a picture of his father handling sausage as a chef. Thus, he was able to find strength despite the harsh memory that sausages conjure within him, and this is representative of his strength, his ability to continue the healing process.

Actually, Daniel had problems developing the photos that he took during the project time period, so we improvised and decided as a team that this was an unnecessary
concern because what matters is that we critically and meaningfully engage our photos, whether brought along or created during the process. We recognized that Photovoice does not have to necessitate handing out cameras for picture-taking excursions. Perhaps this modification to Photovoice, one that accepts pictures of the past, can lead to a richer—or thicker description (Geertz 1973)—of the topic at hand.

Other topics engaged in our community dialogue included the misappropriation of Native images (mascots, naming cars and landmarks, and the dominant image of Native peoples as Plains people); the commoditization of water and other natural resources (something that was argued our ancestors would have never let happen, but was made possible by dislocating Indigenous peoples from their homelands via the reservation and residential school systems for the creation of urban landscapes and capitalist markets); the perceived and actual worth of Indigenous cultures; and the importance for intergenerational connectivity with All Our Relations, like spending more time with our Elders, on the land and taking care of each other (something that the residential school systems broke down). The strengths that our people have was stated as being our ability to resist, our resiliency, the value we place on culture, our ability to adapt and our ability to find balance with culture. I leave you with a narrative offered by Billie-Jeanne about the strengths she sees our people having for continuing the healing process. In this one comment, she denounces any attempt of scholars to essentialize what it is urban Native peoples are doing with their own and the cultures of other tribal peoples. Without putting it into context—the fact that we are a part of mnemonic community with shared experience and the fact that colonization and especially the residential schools has ruptured our cultural ways to such a degree that there are variations of culture loss across
tribes—topics of pedagogical importance like the ones presented here, will fall victim to engaging the unproductive debates of what or who an Indian is and questions of authenticity based on reductionist models and outdated science. As a collective organism, Indigenous peoples need a connection to ancestral life ways.

As demonstrated in the following narrative, in context of the photograph of the drum above, and the following photograph of the medicines below, we are a people with a spiritual core that yearns for symbolic and material reference to an ancestral past:

**Billie-Jeanne:**
“The last pictures are of the drum, and the smudge, and the beading I’ve been working on. To me, it shows the resilience of our people. Everything they used to oppress our people was to kill the Indian.....they want us to be like them. Just seeing the drum or the medicines or the traditional arts and crafts, that those teachings are still being passed down today, you know, that, to me, is the strength of our people. And this might not be my people’s teachings, and I still don’t know a lot of them, but that’s something that I’m striving to learn. So I still respect and acknowledge these teachings...that they’re still being passed down. For instance, this picture is of a west coast drum, but I sat in a woman’s drum group and we sang around a big prairie drum, and I learned the songs and the teachings that weren’t necessarily my people’s teachings, but they are there for me and I draw strength from it.”
Billie-Jeanne’s very important contribution to the dialogue poses questions back to those who suggest that the urban Native experience and contemporary reality for Indigenous peoples is a matter of strategic-essentialism. She asks, who are we to not support our young people to seek out culture from other tribes that reinforces the foundational philosophies of their own people? If a young person does not have access to their culture—which is more of a reality as the years progress—do we say, “sorry, no culture for you!”? As Native peoples we cannot comprehend doing that—if we can share our cultures with non-Native people, who are we to withhold our cultural knowledge and teachings from our own youth? This philosophy is foundational to UNYA’s ability to train the leaders of tomorrow and our individual ability to decolonize our minds, bodies and spirits for the sake of community. A perfect opportunity for us to continue the healing process is in UNYA’s proposed Native Youth Centre (NYC): “In the future, when it’s finally standing, this building will be a beacon of strength…..for this community, especially” (Herb).

In the last 7 years, UNYA has struggled to secure a commitment of funding from the Federal Government of Canada for the Native Youth Centre (www.nativeyouthcentre.ca). Despite having a self-determined capital campaign, donated land to expand the existing space, and commitment from local and provincial governments, the Federal Government in its lack of support signals a refusal to recognize
the necessity for a cultural space where urban Native youth can heal, learn, flourish and thrive outside of state institutions, which many Indigenous people, as demonstrated in the dialogue of the Photovoice project, feel, and can prove, are more colonizing than liberating.

This interactive discussion should equip the reader, Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous communities alike, with the confidence to make clear that which state ideology, the national consciousness and mnemonic battles has had its hand in obscuring. To make invisible an entire people for the exploitative purposes of ensuring White virtue, White privilege and access to the souls of Indigenous children, is an egregious legacy that must be challenged. This Photovoice project—its purpose, its partners, its products—challenges the mnemonic landscape of Canada through a critical and ethnographic analysis of the intergenerational effects of the Indian Residential School System as they are experienced in the present day by urban Native youth. By challenging this mnemonic landscape we have demonstrated that decolonization can occur above and beyond the text, and that all social actors, consciously or unconsciously perpetuating colonizing and White racist culture, can engage in this decolonization and healing imperative with a reorientation of the way we look at education and child welfare as it pertains to Indigenous peoples. We hold our hands up to you, as a sign of respect, for getting through this discussion with, hopefully, the motivation to support Indigenous communities to continue “talking back” to the master narrative. All our relations.
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Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Project Description

This participatory action research project addresses historical and contemporary pedagogical topics pertinent to Indigenous Peoples of North America. As an Indigenous anthropologist, I will use both an Indigenous and an anthropological lens to explore the intersection between pedagogy and power by asking: *How do Aboriginal youth interpret the legacy and experience the affects, of the Indian Residential School System in Canada?* To address this question, I will use applied methods that traverse the disciplinary boundaries of sociocultural and visual anthropology.

The fieldwork component of this project will take place in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada during the period of December 17, 2009 to January 16, 2010. In partnership with the Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) in Vancouver, we will use purposeful sampling to enlist youth participants from UNYA programs and from the local urban and reservation Aboriginal communities to participate as authors in a Photovoice project.

The number of participants cannot be determined until after the second interest meeting, but considering time and resources we will limit 15 participants for this project. Due to the nature of UNYA programming and the definition of childhood in Indigenous communities, these self-identifying youth will range in age from 13 years to 29 years. Participation will be strictly voluntary and will involve a three-week commitment. All participants will be provided with informed consent forms and a lay summary, and for those youth 17 years and younger they will be provided with both informed assent and consent forms.

I will make every effort to protect youth privacy. For instance, youth names will not be used in any of the information I get from this study or in any of my research reports. Any information that I get in the study that lets me know who youth are will be recorded with a pseudonym (false name). During the study the key that tells me which pseudonym goes with youth information will be kept in a password-protected file. When the study is finished I will destroy the key that can link information to youth personally. If youth would like to use their name in the study, they must give me special permission, and/or their parent/guardian must if youth is between 13 and 17 years old.

I will ask for consent to tape record or video record the interpretive process as another method and to ensure accuracy of dialogue. Only I will have access to the audio or video recordings and they will be held securely in a locked cabinet along with other confidential materials. Member-checking will occur throughout the process, from beginning to end, to ensure that youth are comfortable to continue their involvement. They will be assured that they may withdraw at any time without incurring any form of penalty or stigma and that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that are posed to solicit youth interpretation—what matters is their distinctive point of view.

Photovoice methodology is particularly useful for underrepresented peoples because the goal is to initiate emancipatory dialogue through photography for the purposes of educating the self and the community, including policy (decision) makers. Through
photography, youth will answer questions about their lived social reality—what they interpret as negative reminders of the residential school system and the intergenerational affects of that system, as well as what they interpret as strengths that Indigenous people have for continuing the healing process. The potential benefits for the youth and the community include educating themselves and others, having a voice in the telling of their own story, meeting other Native youth in solidarity to address an intergenerational concern, and creating meaningful change through dialogue that may impact policy at both the community and institutional level. Dealing with sensitive topics poses a potential risk to youth participants because it may open up old wounds and create a potentially depressing experience. All participants will be made aware of the potential risks and benefits in the lay summary and to address the potential risk, UNYA will provide counselors from UNYA programs for support.

After two interest meetings, we will determine the final participants for the project. We will follow with a Photovoice workshop to train youth participants in the Photovoice methodology. It will also be an opportunity to address further ethical considerations and the informed consent process. Youth will then be provided with two disposable cameras each to address both components of the research question. They will then have a week or two to photograph their stories and interpretations. They will return with their ready-to-develop cameras to a meeting to discuss how the process was and so that I may collect the cameras for development.

Once developed, we will convene another meeting to look at everyone’s work. Each youth will decide which pictures are the most relevant for the project, which will provide another opportunity for dialogue about the process and subjective interpretation. The next meetings will refine the final phase of the process until all are satisfied. All of this will culminate in a community gathering and feast where community members, school officials, youth workers, and political figures will be invited to attend an unveiling of the youth’s exhibit.

Youth have the choice to be physically present to discuss their pictures with guests and to represent for their hard work and their community. If youth choose this option, they will be informed that this will no longer assure their confidentiality. They will also be assured that youth workers from UNYA will be present to accompany youth as they engage with guests. This will be provided as an option to assure the comfort of youth in public dialogue settings. If youth choose not to be present during the community exhibit, they will still be allowed to participate anonymously. In place of their physical presence with their photo(s), we will also provide youth with the opportunity to write their own narrative to accompany the picture on display without any identifying markers. In addition, Indigenous protocols will be adhered to throughout, and as such, a meeting or two for debrief will be scheduled as a means to transition youth from participants to facilitators, and to ensure that youth are walking away from the experience feeling empowered and supported to continue the dialogue.
Appendix B: Lay Summary & Youth Consent Form

My name is Robin Gray and I am from the Tsimshian and Mikisew Cree First Nations. I am currently a Master’s and Doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the USA. I was born and raised in East Vancouver and have worked as a youth worker in the urban Native community for 14 years. I have worked with the Urban Native Youth Association since 2001 and continue to support UNYA’s efforts in various ways every summer and winter break when I return home.

Do you have something to say about the Indian Residential School System?

I am seeking up to 15 self-identifying Native youth between the ages of 13 and 29 years to collaborate with me on a research project that aims to empower you while educating others. The method we are using is called Photovoice, which uses photography to investigate or talk about your concerns.

*The Board of Directors at UNYA has approved this project*

If you choose to participate, you will receive two disposable cameras and you will be asked to take pictures based on two questions. There is no right or wrong answers—what matters is your insights and wisdom. We will meet and discuss your photos in a critically conscious way, sharing with each other your interpretations. In the end we will hold a photo exhibit to reveal your creative work and to share your knowledge with others.

I think that your knowledge and your voice is valuable—as Native youth, you have much to say and the world should be honored to hear from you!

You are receiving a packet of forms that you must have signed if you are going to participate in this project. These forms will tell you everything that you need to know about the project—the who, what, where, when, why and how.

If you are interested in participating with me, please read the forms carefully to make sure you understand everything that is being asked of you and what your rights are as a research participant.

If you have any questions or concerns about the project before deciding to sign, you can contact me @ 604-319-8499/ rrgray@anthro.umass.edu.

(Dena Klashinsky, Program Coordinator at UNYA will supervise me on this project. Her contact is 604-254-7732 or denak@unya.bc.ca)
Youth Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Principal Investigator: Robin R. R. Gray
Partner Organization: Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA)
Study Title: Visualizing Pedagogy and Power: Participatory Photovoice Project with Native Youth in Vancouver, BC, Canada

1. WHAT IS THIS FORM?
This form is called a Consent Form. It will give you information about the study so you can make an informed decision about participation in this research study.

This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this study is being done and why you are being invited to participate. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate and any known risks, inconveniences or discomforts that you may have while participating. We encourage you to take some time to think this over and ask questions now and at any other time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and you will be given a copy for your records.

2. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?
Self-identifying Native youth (Indigenous to North America) living in the Metro Vancouver Regional District in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, between the ages of 13 years and 29 years of age are invited to participate in this research study. Youth between the ages of 13 and 17 years are eligible only if they agree to participate and also receive permission to participate from their parent(s) or guardian(s). No youth will be discriminated against based on gender, religion, sexual orientation or (dis)ability.

3. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?
I am conducting this research study, in partnership with the Urban Native Youth Association, to find out how Aboriginal youth interpret the legacy, and experience the affects, of the Indian Residential School System in Canada. That is, even if you did not attend an Indian Residential School, how has this system impacted your lives today and, as Native youth, what do you have to say about it?

I am doing this research as part of my Master’s degree program in cultural anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. I hope to present the results of this study in both community and academic settings.

4. WHERE WILL THE STUDY TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?
The meeting times and the exhibit of the research project will take place at UNYA (1618 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V5L 1S6) between December 17th, 2009 and January 16th, 2010.

Participants will be required to meet for a minimum of 10 hours during this period (1 hour for interest meeting; 2 hours for Photovoice training; 1 hour to collect cameras and discuss the process; 2 hours for each photo selection and dialogue meeting; 2 hours to prepare for youth exhibit). In addition, youth are encouraged (but not required) to attend the community exhibit for
3 hours and to attend a debrief meeting for 1 hour—this totals 4 extra hours that are optional in addition to the 10 hours required.

5. WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?
If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to answer two questions about your lived social reality. You will be provided with two (2) disposable cameras and you will be asked to answer each of the following questions: 1. What do you interpret as negative reminders of the residential school system and the intergenerational affects of that system?; and 2. What do you interpret as strengths that Indigenous people have for continuing the healing process?

The procedures for this study are simple: 1. You meet with a group of up to 15 Native youth to be trained in the Photovoice methodology (how to take pictures, the ethics of taking pictures, what the purpose is of taking pictures); 2. You independently take your photos over a period of 1-2 weeks; 3. Once the photos are taken, you reconvene 2-3 times as a group to engage in dialogue about the process of Photovoice, to pick your favorite pictures most relevant to the questions asked, and to share with the group your interpretations; 4. You meet to prepare for the community exhibit; and 5. You attend the community exhibit to share your interpretations and/or stories with guests from the community (may include family and friends, community members, school teachers, principles, youth workers, politicians, police officers).

6. WHAT ARE MY BENEFITS OF BEING IN THIS STUDY?
Photovoice methodology is particularly useful for underrepresented peoples (e.g. Native peoples, youth, women) because the goal is to initiate emancipatory dialogue through photography for the purposes of educating the self and the community, including policy (decision) makers.

The potential benefits of being in this study include becoming more empowered by educating yourself, your community and non-Native people; having a voice in the telling of your own story and reality; meeting other Native youth in solidarity to address an intergenerational concern; and creating meaningful change through dialogue that may impact policy at both the community and institutional levels.

7. WHAT ARE MY RISKS OF BEING IN THIS STUDY?
Dealing with sensitive topics poses a potential emotional risk to youth participants because we are attempting to break the silence and it may open up old wounds and create a potentially depressing experience. All participants will be made aware of the potential risks and benefits in the lay summary before confirming participation. To address this potential risk, UNYA will provide counselors from UNYA programs to support youth during meeting times, and youth will be provided with a Helping Hands: Empowering Native Youth resource manual so that they may self-refer if they feel the need. We will check in on youth’s emotional state periodically throughout the project as a preventative strategy.

If you attend the community exhibit in person and wish to be identified as author of your photo(s), this will no longer ensure your confidentiality. In this case, you will also be assured that UNYA youth workers will be in attendance to support you during the exhibit and to help alleviate any potential anxieties you may have about public representations.

Although we believe there are no known risks associated with you visibly participating in the community exhibit, a possible inconvenience is that you may encounter people that are familiar with you and your history, such as school teachers, police officers or social workers. If this would
make you feel uncomfortable, even with on-site support from UNYA youth workers, we would recommend that you not visibly participate in the exhibit to ensure your confidentiality.

8. HOW WILL MY PERSONAL INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?
I will make every effort to protect your privacy. For instance, your name will not be used in any of the information I get from this study or in any of my research reports. Any information that I get in the study that lets me know who you are will be recorded with a pseudonym (false name). During the study the key that tells me which pseudonym goes with your information will be kept in a password-protected file. When the study is finished I will destroy the key that can link information to you personally. If you would like to use your name in the study, you must give me special permission.

I will ask for consent to tape record or video record our meeting times to ensure that I record your responses and reactions accurately. Only I will have access to the audio or video recordings and they will be held securely in a locked cabinet along with other confidential materials.

At the conclusion of this study, I may publish my findings and I will present the findings in both community and academic settings. Information will be presented in summary format and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

I will also release a copy of the exhibit to the Urban Native Youth Association so that they have an archival record of our collaborative project; so that youth participants have access to the entire exhibit for future reference; and so that it continues to serve as an educational resource for UNYA staff, clients and community partners. You will be asked to write a short narrative to accompany your photo(s) and will only be identified with a pseudonym (false name), your age, your gender and your Nation(s).

9. WILL I RECEIVE ANY PAYMENT FOR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?
For your participation, you will receive a gift at the end of the study. During our meeting times, you will be provided with bus tickets and food. I will also throw a mini-feast for us during the community exhibit, in which I will provide everything needed.

10. WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?
Take as long as you like before you make a decision. We will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Robin Gray, at (604) 319-8499 or rrgray@anthro.umass.edu. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at humansubjects@ora.umass.edu.

11. CAN I STOP BEING IN THE STUDY?
Your participation in this project is completely voluntary—you do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate. Withdrawing your participation will not affect your ability to access UNYA programs in any way.

12. WHAT IF I AM INJURED?
The University of Massachusetts does not have a program for compensating subjects for injury or complications related to human subjects research, but the study personnel will assist you in
getting treatment. Youth will be provided with precautionary information on how to protect themselves while they independently photograph, as they are responsible for their physical well-being during this time.

13. SUBJECT STATEMENT OF VOLUNTARY CONSENT
I have read this form and decided that I will participate in the project described above. The general purposes and particulars of the study as well as possible hazards and inconveniences have been explained orally and in writing to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

Participant Signature:    Print Name:    Date:

By signing below I indicate that the participant has read and, to the best of my knowledge, understands the details contained in this document and has been given a copy.

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent    Print Name:    Date:
Appendix C: Visual Media Release Form

Visual Media Release Form

Project Title: “Visualizing Pedagogy and Power: Participatory Photovoice Project with Native Youth in Vancouver, BC, Canada”

You will be asked to take photographs using two (2) disposable cameras. You can take pictures of anything you want, but you cannot photograph human beings, other than yourself (if you choose), for the purposes of this project.

The disposable cameras are your responsibility. If you lose a camera, you will not be provided with a replacement. If you lose both cameras, you will not be able to continue your participation in the Photovoice project—without film to develop your participation is severely restricted.

Once I collect the cameras, I will make duplicate copies of each roll of film. One set will be yours to keep. I will hold onto the other set and mark accordingly so that I know who the authors of each set of photographs are. You will pick your photos from my set.

After choosing which photograph(s) are most relevant to the questions asked, you will be asked to write a short narrative (explanation) of your photo(s) to accompany the exhibit.

I will then make duplicate copies of each photo selected for the exhibit. The duplicate copies will be held, with your accompanying narrative, at Urban Native Youth Association headquarters. You will have access to this archival exhibit at any time.

Your photograph(s) and narrative can be reproduced in publication and may be displayed in academic and community settings without your physical presence. Only the principle investigator, Robin R. R. Gray, will have the authority to use your photographs and narratives in this way. Your photographs will not be used for profit purposes in any way. Your photos, however, will be used to defend my Master’s Degree. I do not get paid for passing my exam, but I will receive an educational degree. When I do this, I will give you full credit for your work, unless you ask me not to.

Unless you ask for special permission, your name will be kept anonymous in relation to your photographs. You can determine the pseudonym (fake name) of your choice. This pseudonym, your gender, age, and Nation(s) will be used to identify the author of each photo. This will show the variation of youth voice.

By signing below you agree to the above terms and conditions.

I, __________________________________________, agree to the release my photos.

(print name here)

___________________________________________                           __________________
(sign name here)        (date)
Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Approval (Departmental)

To whom this may concern,

I have reviewed the documentation submitted by Robin R.R. Gray in support of her request for Human Subject Review approval for her Master’s thesis work, and judge it to be satisfactory. I grant Robin approval to involve human subjects as part of her MA project (title: Visualizing Pedagogy and Power: Participatory Photovoice Project with Native Youth in Vancouver, BC, Canada).

Sincerely,

Brigitte M Holt, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor,
Human Subject Review representative
Dept of Anthropology
University of Massachusetts
103 Machmer Hall
Amherst, MA 01003

Phone: (413) 545-0697
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