

Gidibaajimomin (We tell our stories):

Making space for Indigenous feminist counseling theory

By

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Abstract

This project is an intervention in counseling theory discourses. It contributes to the development of an Indigenous feminist counseling theory (IFCT), which examines Indigenous worldviews, cultures, and healing practices as a counseling framework, ergo, expanding beyond feminist counseling theory. A multifaceted Indigenous approach like this reflects contributions by Indigenous therapists, who are already engaging in therapeutic alliances centering Indigenous feminist theory and practice alongside clients, families, and communities. Indigenous feminist counseling theory offers the possibility of a meaningful and cultural-appropriate counseling framework. We know that colonial trauma reverberates across generations, and it is high time that we, Indigenous therapists and healers, develop our Indigenous-focused counseling theories, modalities, and practices that draw from both ancient knowledge systems and western psychology. These bi-cultural and hybrid approaches are necessary for healing and cultivating intergenerational strength and resiliency across Turtle Island and throughout Mother Earth.

Key words: feminist counseling, Indigenous feminisms, Indigenous healing methodologies, colonialism, historical trauma, heteropatriarchy, bi-cultural healing approaches, grounded theory

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The women's movement has had far-reaching societal impact, because women were fighting for liberation and equality, as well as social and gender justice. Feminisms is synonymous with the women's movement, having evolved from a mainstream, predominantly white women's movement, to a plurality of feminisms which are now inclusive of diversity in representations such as: black feminisms, women of color feminisms, multicultural feminisms (Crethar, Rivera & Nash, 2008), and Indigenous feminisms (Macdonald & Sayers, 2001; Green, 2007).

The women's movement and feminisms provide some contextual grounding to this thesis: a project on developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory. A canon of Indigenous feminist theory exists because of the revolutionary literary contributions by the women who came before them: these are feminist theorists and Indigenous theorists (Maracle, 1990; Larocque, 2008; Macdonald & Sayers, 2001). Indigenous feminists have in their works focused on restoring Indigenous women to important and central roles in Indigenous cultures, thus enriching Indigenous women's intellectual history (Dory Nason, personal conversation, March 3, 2012), and representation within academia, the arts, literature, law, women's leadership, counseling and healing.

Indigenous feminist scholars (Arvin, Tuck, & Morill, 2013; Riddle, 2018) are reimagining new modes of Indigenous nationalism and alliances within decolonization politics, and are offering theories which offer new and reclaimed ways of thinking through not only how settler colonialism has impacted Indigenous and settler communities, but also how feminist theories can imagine and realize different modes of nationalism and alliances in the future (Arvin, et al, p.9). Riddle's article draws attention to public discourses on increasing awareness of Indigenous

women's safety in rural areas wherever Greyhound transportation was cancelled, and therefore increasing risk and harm to Indigenous women, as part of the gendered violence of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada.

I propose that an Indigenous feminist counseling theory is a viable theoretical framework because it draws from our Indigenous ways in order to facilitate our theoretical understanding, our strength, our scholarship, and our practice. At its core, this theory reaffirms the importance of bringing Indigenous worldviews into our clinical practices-in our work besides clients, their families, communities, and Nations.

This introductory chapter outlines the need for and purpose of developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory, defines the scope of this theory, and outlines a framework for this thesis.

Focus and Purpose of the Study

Given the longevity and success of similar theoretical frameworks, such as feminist counseling theory, it is surprising that an Indigenous feminist framework for counseling does not yet exist. The purpose of this study is to address this gap, providing the motivation for the author to contribute to the development of an Indigenous feminist counseling theory.

The Importance of Research on Indigenous feminist counseling

The scarcity of research on Indigenous feminist counseling theory is problematic for several reasons. First, colonialism is an ongoing project that has never stopped since European contact. Colonialism is still experienced by Indigenous peoples, albeit in different ways and experiences. Gone (2009) frames ongoing impacts of colonialism and colonial trauma as Indigenous wounding (p.2). Indigenous peoples are clients of psychological treatment and counseling services because of the long-lasting impacts of colonialism. For service providers, the

business side of colonial and historical trauma is lucrative. Perhaps, there are instances in which clinicians effectively do not work hard to end their job as therapists. Counseling Indigenous clients over the long term does yield, for some, steady income streams. This project focuses on working alongside Indigenous clients through a development of theory and practice that centers Indigenous feminist worldviews, culture and clinical expertise that encourage clinical practices to fully support clients to heal and move forward. Simply put, support should involve working ourselves out of our jobs as therapists, ensuring clients are not necessarily bound to utilize therapy for their rest of their lives.

There is a need to decolonize existing mainstream counseling theory and practices. This is to create space for inclusion of Indigenous therapists and their worldviews, which in turn helps these therapists meet the needs of their Indigenous clients, family and community. Indigenous family systems are frequently organized as collectivist sites. Colonialism is an ongoing institution, meaning there has been little value placed on Indigenous people, cultures, and ways of being, including healing practices.

Problem Statement

Alternately, mainstream counselors may hold racial biases resulting in misunderstanding Indigenous peoples, in general, and as clients. Historically, mainstream education systems are steeped in colonial traditions that have tended to negate, problematize, and pathologize Indigenous worldviews, cultures, beliefs, and practices.

At the same time, western psychology fails to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples who measure and gauge health along holistic terms: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. According to Bochner & Ellis (2017), mainstream therapists usually treat the mind, whilst ignoring an interconnectedness of body and spirit. Furthermore, western psychology focuses on

individuals and far less on collectivist worldviews. Because Indigenous worldviews lean toward collectivist ways, western psychology thus negates worldviews that are inclusive of family, community, and nation (p. viii).

Summary of Research Literature

There is a gap in literature regarding Indigenous feminist counseling theory. While there is an article featuring an Aboriginal feminist therapist discussing Aboriginal feminist and multicultural approaches in a therapeutic practice (Malone, 2000), the majority of articles feature Indigenous feminist theorists, feminist counseling theorists, Indigenous psychologists, and Indigenous healers. The focus of this study disrupts the colonial status quo of mainstream as normative among counseling theories, discourses and practices.

Nature of the Study

Hopefully, this study benefits the Indigenous therapeutic community and our allies through a critical merging of feminist counseling theory with Indigenous feminist theoretical frameworks and traditional knowledge practices. This act of transforming theory and cultural practices claims much needed space within counseling theory discourses for Indigenous feminist counseling theory. It is long overdue to write about Indigenous feminist counseling theory. Feminisms are diverse, there are many approaches and perspectives, and given this, it makes sense to consider incorporating the diverse approaches Indigenous feminist therapists use when working with Indigenous clients.

4. Researcher Questions

The research questions are as follows:

Questions: First Interview

1. Worldviews

- a) What is your cultural background, current profession, and experience within Indigenous communities?
- b) What forms of cultural experience and education have informed your practice?
- c) What forms of academic experience and education have informed your practice?
- d) How have your worldviews prepared you to work with Indigenous peoples using feminist counseling theory?

2. Indigenous Approaches to Wellness

- a) How would you describe wellness, as understood in Indigenous communities?
- b) How would you describe a holistic approach to working with an individual?
- c) How would you describe a holistic approach to working with a community?
- d) Are holistic approaches part of your practice? And if yes, please describe how.

3. Critiquing Counseling

- a) When working with Indigenous clients - do you use Indigenous theories and healing modalities? If so, please describe?
- b) When working with Indigenous clients, how do you provide context to structural and systemic experiences?
- c) How do you maintain your wellness as a therapist while simultaneously addressing structural factors that are not easily resolved nor reconciled, e.g. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Boys and Men?
- d) What counseling theories do you find helpful?
- e) Which Indigenous philosophies and cultural healing practices do you use in addressing: Trauma, depression, anxiety, Intergenerational effects, PTSD, and ongoing impacts of colonialism?

Questions: Second Interview

- 1) How did you feel reading the transcripts of the interview?
- 2) Are you comfortable with the information that you have shared in answering the questions that will inform this research study?
- 3) Is there anything that you would like to add to, or delete from, your previous interview?
- 4) Would you like to maintain your anonymity through use of a one-name pseudonym or self-identify using your first and last name, as indicated on the original consent to participate form or would you like to reverse your decision?

Researcher as a Person

My identity is complex. Firstly, I am an Anishinaabe-kwe (Anishinaabe woman). I am part of a culturally vibrant family whose roots are deeply connected to the bush-parklands of Northern Saskatchewan and the Manitoba border. My mono-lingual grandparents raised me in a Metis/Francophone hamlet. I attended an Indian Residential School for ten years. The federally run school was the last to close in 1996. I married a Francophone man and was married for 13 years, divorcing in 2015. I am a single Mother of a teenager. I am middle-aged and cis-gendered. Having grown up in rural place, I now live in an urban center. I consider myself an urban Indigenous person who returns home to family and community several time a year. I stumbled upon feminism in my early twenties, hence discovering a community of urban Aboriginal professional women in Saskatoon, many of whom identified as Aboriginal feminists.

I am drawn to this study because I am an Indigenous feminist therapist entering the counseling field, a field that is predominantly white. During my undergraduate program in First Nations Studies, I learned about gaps in literature concerning Indigenous women's intellectual

history, and am therefore unsurprised there is little on this specific topic in the counseling literature. However, I was unprepared for the felt experience of unpacking this absence within counseling literature. This burden of our absence in the literature suggests that we, as contributing theorists to counseling discourses, are invisible. And yet, many clinicians are familiar with Indigenous pain and trauma because Indigenous peoples are good clients. We are a commodity, a steady consumer of therapy. In other words, we are visible as clients, but are rarely seen as experts. Multicultural counselors (Sue, 1996) and others have made inroads in increasing diversity and inclusion of non-white therapists in the counseling field, but this is not enough. Lastly, according to Anishinaabe worldview regarding persons that have passed on. I have placed a “baa” suffix ending to two Indigenous authors’ surnames as this is my understanding of cultural protocols-even in the context of this project.

Definition of Terms

Indigenous/Native American/First Nations

The history of descriptors of Indigenous peoples in North America is varied. For example, “Indian” was a common descriptor, and still in use throughout the 70s and 80s. In the Canadian context, Aboriginal replaced Indian, whereas Indian is still in use in parts of the United States. Also, in the United States, Native American is interchangeable with Indian. Native American is not a descriptor typically used in Canada.

In Canada and throughout this thesis, Indigenous peoples are comprised of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples. Indigenous and First Nations may be used interchangeably as descriptors. The use of First Nations refers only to Aboriginal and Status Indians, and does not include Metis and Inuit, however the latter are considered Indigenous (paraphrased from ‘Terminology’ (n.d.)).

Settler-colonialism

Settler-colonialism is a policy or set of policies and practices in which a political power such as nation-state like Canada exerts control over a different territory, or territories, as in the case of Canada and Indigenous peoples. In terms of power relations, Dene scholar, Glen Coulthard (2007) describes the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples as asymmetrical and that Settler colonialism is an ongoing project (p.439), meaning there is a historical beginning, but there is no end point. Canadian history narratives downplay colonial violence against Indigenous peoples during conquest of lands. In British Columbia, there are few land cessations or treaties. Essentially, newcomers took lands away from Indigenous peoples, resulting in generations of colonialism and violence, (“Colonialism Impacts”, 2016). These ruptures of trust, safety, respect, care, and commitment to co-exist peacefully are felt and experienced by Indigenous peoples into the present day.

Colonial/Historical Trauma

Kirmayer, Gone & Moses (2014) define historical trauma as a construct to describe the impact of colonization, cultural suppression, and historical oppression of Indigenous peoples in North America, e.g., Native Americans in the United States, and Aboriginal peoples in Canada (p.299). Unsurprisingly, Kirmayer et al, add that psychiatry and psychology discourses contribute to the conflation of disparate forms of violence by emphasizing presumptively universal aspects of trauma response (p.299). Many supporters of this construct have made explicit analogies to the Holocaust as a way to understand the trans-generational effects of genocide (p.299).

Heteropatriarchy

Arvin et al. (2013) define heteropatriarchy as the social systems in which heterosexuality and patriarchy are normative, and render other ways of being as abnormal, aberrant, and

abhorrent (p.13). They argue that native feminist theories interrogate the overlooked aspects of colonialism, which are not taken up by feminist discourses in settler-colonial states, such as Canada, United States, Australia & New Zealand. They also argue that settler colonialism is a gendered process (p.9).

Feminisms

Pasque & Errington (2011), cite Bell Hooks' (2000) definition of feminism as “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression” (p. viii), adding that it is also a complex notion that has vast differences in meaning and connotation for people spanning generations, ethnic identities, sexual orientations, social classes, nationality, and myriad identities (p. 4). As well, feminism is a process that evolves internally over the course of a lifetime, and is influenced by how one views the world (p.4). Feminisms is diverse in representation. For example, there is black feminisms, women of color feminisms, multicultural feminisms, (Crethar, Rivera & Nash (2008), and Indigenous feminisms (Macdonald-baa & Sayers, 2001; Green, 2007), and diversity feminisms.

Indigenous feminisms (IF)

Indigenous feminisms have many interpretations. Barker (2017) defines IF as a non-essentialism of Indigeneity (Indigenous identity) and asserts that it is not a romanticization of Indigenous rights (p.5) either. For example, just as feminisms has expanded and is inclusive of diverse representations, so too is IF because Indigenous women are diverse yet distinct. Some are Anishinaabe, Cree, Dene, Musqueam, and Mohawk (p.8). We are not the same, nor are our worldviews. Our concerns and issues are not reduced to a singular voice, and are not organized, as a cohesive Pan-Indigeneity.

Indigenous feminists have differing perspectives, and not all of their work is restricted to one's nation or land (p.5). In many cases, Indigenous feminists choose to locate their work in

other areas, including rural and urban. Barker (2017) clarifies that many Indigenous contributors write about feminist theories pertaining to and addressing heterosexism, sexism, and colonization (p.5), while other intellectuals interrogate the terms of feminist theory in relation to gender and sexuality (p.5). The necessity of locating Indigenous feminist theory as a theoretical base to inform Indigenous feminist counseling theory is rooted in the much-needed critiques of settler-colonialism, heterosexism, sexism, gender and race.

Assumptions

There is an assumption that participants will engage in the interview process, including responding to interview questions, in an open and forthright manner. Furthermore, it is expected that participants will feel comfortable with being audio-recorded and having the data (interviews) transcribed and utilized for the purpose of this academic study. I anticipate participants will be able to offer their differing perspectives and worldviews and clinical practices in the context of their lived experiences as Indigenous persons and therapists.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the research includes participants who live in Vancouver and Nova Scotia. The participants are Indigenous therapists who hold either a Masters in Counseling, Masters of Social Work, and/or a PhD, and are registered as Registered Clinical Counselors. The participants self-identify as Indigenous, cis-gendered female. There is little focus on the socio-economic status of participants, as the main focus of this study is to capture the lived experiences and clinical expertise of Indigenous therapists who are working beside Indigenous clients, families and communities.

Limitations

Findings of this study will be bound to the population of Indigenous feminist counselors and will not apply to Indigenous therapists as a whole. This study is based on four interviews, reflections, and perceptions of the participants and the information gathered therein. In this research project, I am not able to control for the accuracy of the narratives participants presented in the interviews. Additionally, it is not in my control as to whether participants choose to drop out or discontinue the interview process.

Summary and Overview

Chapter 1 outlines the focus and purpose of the study, a summary of relevant research, problem statement, research questions, definitions of terms, assumptions, scope, delimitations and limitations. Chapter 2 offers a review of the literature review by examining a cross-section of feminist counseling theory, Indigenous feminisms, multicultural feminist counseling theory, and Indigenous healing modalities. A large portion of Chapter 3 focuses on a larger literature review as a substantive grounding from which to develop an Indigenous feminist counseling theory, that is intended to address a gap of specific Indigenous feminist counseling theory within counseling theory discourses. In Chapter 4, I present the findings from the interviews I conducted for this thesis, documenting and analyzing the lived experiences of Indigenous feminist therapists using grounded theory and Indigenous theoretical perspectives to develop an Indigenous feminist counseling theory. In Chapter 5, I will discuss my final reflections on the research process, my findings, and future implications of this research for further inquiry.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As previously discussed, there are gaps in the existing counseling literature pertaining to Indigenous feminist counseling theory. This is surprising given the interventions made by Indigenous feminists and women of color feminists (Trinh, T. Minha, 1989, p 6; Sinacore & Enns, 2004, p.48), black feminists (Patricia Hill-Collins, 2014, p.8), and multicultural therapists, (Sue, 1996, p.814), in theorizing white supremacy, settler colonialism, and settler and global capitalism. As well, other works challenging whiteness as normative in mainstream feminism and (Arvin, 2015, p.89) in counseling. This project fills a much-needed representation of Indigenous feminist therapists and other non-feminist, Indigenous therapists in and amongst counseling discourses.

The main research questions of this thesis are summarized as follows: *how are Indigenous therapists supporting Indigenous clients in areas of healing and well-being? What modalities and interventions are most useful, and does this include Indigenous feminist counseling therapy practices?*

The purpose of this literature review is twofold. First, it is to examine a cross-section of research related to the history of the women's movement, feminisms and critiques, feminist counseling theory, Indigenous feminisms and Indigenous feminist theory, and Indigenous healing practices and bicultural approaches. Second, it supports the development of Indigenous feminist counseling theory as a culturally appropriate framework.

Process

The research for this literature review was conducted online using the Psychology Collections databases of PsychInfo and PsycArticles, Native Health Research Database, reference lists, and recommendations from thesis advisor Colin Sanders. Online databases were

searched through City University of Seattle's EBSCO host website, querying terms meant to capture concepts of: Feminist counseling theory," "Indigenous Feminisms," "Native American" and "Indigenous", "Traditional Healing," "Multicultural feminist counseling theory," "Bi-cultural approaches" and "Indigenous feminist theory". Reference lists derived from selected books and articles were further reviewed as potential primary sources.

In selecting an appropriate search term, E.g. Indigenous vs. Native American Indian- I reference a literature review by Gone & Alcántara (2006), who identify how the use of "Indigenous" as a search term yields both North American and global results (p.4), whereas employing "Native American" narrows the literature, geographically to Canada and the United States. However, there is a text from New Zealand that highlights a bicultural approach called "Tataihono", which describes a process for bringing together Maori healing practices and Western psychiatry to treat Indigenous youth (Eds. Bochner & Ellis, 2017, p.34).

Content and Organization of the Literature Review

Despite a paucity of literature on the topic of Indigenous feminist counseling theory, there are articles, books, and chapters possessing tangential relevance (Gone et al, 2006, p. 4) to questions posed in this thesis. Accordingly, this literature review may prove useful in developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory.

The review is grouped by the following topics and subheadings: history of feminist thinking in North America, women's movement and feminisms, critique of "white" feminisms, feminist counseling theory, multicultural counseling theory, Indigenous feminisms and Indigenous feminist theory, Indigenous healing practices and bi-cultural approaches.

History of feminist thinking in North America

Ferree & Mueller (2004) assert that “the women’s movement is not new, not only Western, and not always feminist” (p.577). I situate myself within this quote because of its inclusive, decolonizing, and subversive message. I read this quote as supporting a non-white women’s movement, that pre-dates the four commonly-accepted “waves” of the women’s movement.

The first wave is the Suffragist’s movement (Munro, 2013, p.22). The second wave is the era of women winning the vote, and turning their attention to “women’s inequality in wider society”. This is when the famous feminist mantra, “the personal is political, the political is personal” (Munro, p.22), emerges alongside “the rise of women of color breaking down homogenous grouping of women” (p.22). The third wave is described as being “influenced by academics and Queer theory, which posits that gender and sexuality are fluid categories that do not easily configure into binary understandings of male and female (p. 23). The fourth wave is influenced by social media and a “call out” culture that addresses sexism and misogyny (p. 23), in public discourses, such as the emergence of the #metoo movement on Twitter, highlighting numerous cases of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation of actresses by high-profile producers in Hollywood.

History of the women’s movement

Historical narratives often present the women’s movement as white + feminist, to the exclusion of Indigenous women’s activism. The topic, history of feminist thinking, is supported by these subheadings: a history of the women’s movement and Indigenous women’s contributions.

Historically speaking, American women began to organize in the 1800s to address systemic issues embedded in class, status, and power (Ferree, et al, 2004, p.576). In terms of

context, women were treated as second-class citizens, and experiencing patriarchy, oppression, social control and male domination. In legal terms, women were not considered persons within their own right and they belonged to men, as if they were property. There were exceptions to this because laws governing women's rights varied from state to state (McCammon, H., Arch, S., & Bergner, E., 2014, p.221).

The two distinct movements within the milieu of women's organizing are: the Suffrage movement and the Women's Rights movement (Johnson, 2019, para. 1). However, there is evidence of a third distinct movement, that being an erasure of Cherokee women's organizing (Miles, 2005, p.222).

The suffragists demonstrated grit and tenacity in challenging patriarchy and sexism over multiple decades. This is was no small undertaking, and in terms of historical narratives, it makes sense to highlight the suffrage movement as a distinct moment in women's organizing. Jone Johnson Lewis (2019) defines the suffragist movement "...[as] one of the defining social movements in the modern world. A forerunner to contemporary feminist movements, the suffrage movement focused on obtaining the right to vote for women" (para.1).

The history of the struggle to obtain the right to vote is both important and problematic. As an Indigenous author, the literature revealing explicit racism in early women's organizing is unsettling. Women celebrated winning their right to vote, meanwhile Indigenous peoples were denied the vote until 1960, forty years later. This history is not easily reconciled with Indigenous experience. If anything, it reinforces the "asymmetrical power relations between Canada and Indigenous peoples" (Coulthard, 2007, p. 442), also experienced within the historical women's movement.

Indigenous Women's Contributions

The history of early women's organizing is complete with the addition of Indigenous women contributions. Tiya Miles (2005) reclaims this history by highlighting Cherokee women's activism. The Cherokee worldview was matriarchal, and social relations between genders were egalitarian. Cherokee women were highly respected and held positions of power and influence; women could take on two revered roles as "War women" and in later years, "Beloved women" (p. 224). They were regarded as "central" figures within family, community and nation because of matrilineal descent (p. 227).

Historically, the Cherokee were one of the five "civilized" tribes of the United States. They chose assimilation as a means to an end, in that they chose to preserve their culture and ensure survival. Land dispossession and genocide were part of the American colonization story. Cherokee lands were rich agricultural lands, and many citizens grew wealthy by mainstream standards. Wealth provided opportunities to write a Cherokee orthography, purchase printing presses, and publish several newspapers (personal conversation, Dory Nason, March 10, 2013).

Another tangible benefit of a "civilized" tribe was that of a bi-cultural identity. Therefore, bicultural education provided Cherokee citizens the opportunity of learning Cherokee and English. Undoubtedly, this assisted Cherokee women with the necessary skills to build alliances with settler organizers and to launch letter-writing campaigns lobbying against their forced removal from their homelands (p. 227).

In terms of gaps, Miles (2005) presents a story of Cherokee women's erasure from women's organizing. Miles provides nuanced details of Nancy Ward's letters, and that the Cherokee women were writing letters on their own for ten years before ally Catherine Beecher and others joined them (p.221). The focus of Miles' article is the practice of decolonizing by virtue of reclaiming Cherokee at the center of their anti-removal campaign (p. 221). Miles does

not focus her discussion on the inevitable ending of Andrew Jackson's duplicitous, genocidal death march, *The Trail of Tears* (p.238). Perhaps, it might have been more useful to address the Trail of Tears narrative alongside the lobbying campaign, because this activism did not prevent land dispossession. Therefore, further questions remain concerning whether matriarchy as a governing structure survived, and if so, what happened to Cherokee women organizers? What became of the revered "War women" and "Beloved women"? (p.224).

Women's movement and feminisms

In terms of context, the 1960s marked a period of important social changes and social movements such as the civil rights movement and women's movement. In an article, Ferree & et al (2004) summarize that the women's movement is one of the most enduring and successful social movements, attributing the movement's longevity to feminist theoretical efforts centering gender relations (Ferree, et al, p. 576). Additionally, convincing arguments about the efficacy of the early days of the movement were that it "will provide a more dynamic, long-term, and less state-centered approach to power, protest, and [creating] change" (p.577) in gaining more rights for women.

To clarify and demystify the women's movement and feminisms, Authors (Crethar, Rivera & Nash, 2008, p.269; Enns et al, 2010, pg. 333), tend to agree that feminism emerged out of the 60s era women's movement, and has since been linked to an organized feminisms (Ferree et al, 2004, p. 577).

Feminism is not easily defined. Ferree et al (2004) define it as "the goal of challenging and changing women's subordination to men" (p. 577). Additionally, the agents or actors of feminisms are called feminists (p.577). Typically, feminism is associated with action(s) and praxis (practice), including feminist mobilizations and activities informed by feminist theory,

beliefs, and practices (p.577). Historically, the default response of early feminists was to fight against political and social subordination (p.577), in response to sexism and patriarchy. Women feminists both work alone or in a group, through campaigns, and when brought together, comprise a larger feminist women's movement (p. 577).

Early feminists' praxis of feminism was limiting to addressing only subordination to men (Ferree et al, p.577). These feminists, who were predominantly white, continued to access existing social, political and economic institutions (p.578), and this case, were arguably benefitting from whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy. White-stream feminism was a term coined in response to whiteness by non-white feminists, (Ferree, et al, p.578), and has since led the way for the emergence of Black feminisms, diversity feminisms, Indigenous feminisms, multicultural feminisms, transnational feminisms. More recently, there are intersectional feminisms, which examine the ways in which oppression and movements and individuals are positioned in regard to social relations of power and injustice (p. 578).

As an Indigenous author, aspects of early feminism are problematic. There are, however, strengths that I wish to draw upon in formulating theory and practice. Feminism has beautifully and imperfectly facilitated the development of feminist theory and practice (Crethar et al, 2010), through the intellectual and emotional labour of early feminist theorists (p. 333). At the time, these early theorists were critiquing gender and sex-role analysis, and actively engaging in raising consciousness about the ways [in which] that women were compelled to conform to pre-determined gender roles (Crethar et al , 2010, p. 333).

Feminist counseling theory

In order to ground feminist counseling theory as an important theoretical framework inspiring Indigenous feminist counseling theory, it is necessary to link back the women's movement and feminisms to feminist counseling theory.

In terms of the history of feminist counseling therapy, it emerged about 40 years ago when early feminist theorists contributed to the theory, and counseling began to emerge (Evans, Kincaide, Marbley & Seem) in urgent response to the needs of women experiencing psychological distress (2005, p. 269).

Since then, feminist-counseling therapy developed into an important and sustaining framework (Evans, et al, 2005, p. 269), resulting in a plethora of feminist counseling literature (Crethar et al, 2010, p. 333). It is wonderful to draw upon feminist counseling discourses, however, it is time to consider our differences as Indigenous therapists, hence the rationale of developing Indigenous feminist counseling theory.

In defining feminist therapy practice, Crethar et al (2010) states, “[it] is built on the assumption that psychological growth and distress are best understood within a bio-psychosocial, ecological framework that places emphasis on how the personal becomes the political, or how personal lives are shaped by social context and culture” (p.333). This framework draws back to the popular feminist mantra, “the personal is the political” and “the political is personal”, which is often cited by those in the women's movement, popular culture and social media.

The Critique of “white” feminism

Multicultural feminist counseling

In terms of social context, feminist counseling therapy grew out of a need to assist women who were suffering greatly (Evans, et al, p.269). Therefore, in terms of race and identity politics, who was counseling women of colour?

Goodman, Liang, Latta, Sparks & Weintraub (2004) state women of color are pathologized, even when responding appropriately in resistance to systemic oppression, racism, classism, ethnocentrism, and sexism (p.796). During this time, understandings of trauma and survival-based responses to social and economic injustice, fear, and discrimination (Goodman et al., p.796), were invalidated or dismissed.

Goodman et al. (2004) theorized the origin of multicultural counseling therapy as a response to hegemonic theories embedded in psychology that were frequently misinterpreting the “lived experiences” of women and women of color (p.796). Therefore, multicultural feminist counseling theory developed out of necessity to counsel women through a cultural and gender lens.

Several articles describe white-stream (Arvin, et al, 2015, p.89) feminist dissonance. White feminists critiqued “ethnocentric” scholarship by calling out traditional, male theorists for their failure to examine the roles in which oppression and culture impact development and psychological functioning (Goodman, et al, 2004, p. 796). The irony here is, mainstream feminists were unable to examine [their] roles as women holding white privilege, and through this were ostensibly recreating oppression and devaluing the importance of culture among women of color (Hill-Collins, 2014, p. 8), therefore Collins’ in *Black Feminist Thought* directs her black feminist intervention deliberately in not centering white feminist tenets, and instead prioritizing black feminist theory and thought (2014, p.8).

Multicultural counseling theory

In a seminal article on multicultural therapy, Derald Wing Sue (1996) defines multicultural therapy as,

Both a helping role and process that uses modalities and defines goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of clients, recognizes

client identities to include individual, group, and universal dimensions, advocates the use of universal and culture specific strategies and roles in the healing process, and balances the importance of individualism and collectivism in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of client and client systems (p.814).

Sue (1996) and other multicultural therapists recognize contradictions in counseling discourses, describing inclusive-sounding approaches such as “multi-ethnic”, “multiracial”, and “multicultural society” (p.813) as confounded by a stark reality: there were no culturally-appropriate and sensitive counseling frameworks centering a client’s culture, worldview and values (p.813). Once again, much like the feminists who developed feminist counseling theory in response to relieving the psychological distress of women, multicultural counseling theory (MCT) evolved to address the culturally-based counseling needs of non-white people (p.813).

Collins and Arthur (2010) credit Sue and colleagues (1982, 1992), along with Arrendondo and colleagues (1996), as having had positive impact on both counseling and psychology, which of course, has influenced the creation of multicultural counseling training programs and accreditations (p. 205).

Whiteness and white privilege are normalized in mainstream society, therefore the concerns of non-white people in North America are not easily taken into consideration, which includes the counseling field. Sue (2017) discusses racism and micro-aggressions (p. 171) experienced by racialized people in the United States, which he seemingly draws from his experience as an individual and professional. Sue (1996) initially developed Multicultural Therapy (MCT), because of what he describes as an “[implicit] understanding that people have an innate need for their culture to have meaning and significance, as well, a need for inclusion and equal access and opportunities at every juncture of society whether as an individual or in a professional work capacity or in an institutional context” (p.813).

An article (Malone 2000) describes the efficacy of bringing together Aboriginal feminist therapy and multicultural therapy. Aboriginal feminist therapist, Judi L. Malone (2000) iterates that working with Aboriginal women necessitates addressing both gender and culture lenses' (p.33), which is best achieved by bringing together feminist theory with a multicultural counseling perspective (p.33). For example, multicultural counselors practice counselor self-awareness while recognizing the significance of culture and values that impact the client and counselor therapeutic alliance (Malone, p.34). Malone (2000) further identifies "multicultural counseling as the fourth force in psychology" (p.34), elaborating this force is a life-long process of self-awareness, skill development, and an awareness of racism, sexism, poverty, individual differences, and other cultures (p.34). Additionally, engaging in a multicultural practice allows counselors to critically examine and then transform the things that divide us, thus turning them into strengths that unite us (p. 34). In terms of an Aboriginal feminist-multicultural practice, Malone highlights the importance of incorporating cultural sensitivity and holding space for differences in the counseling process. As well, re-evaluating her personal theory of counseling, Malone includes how clients might react to her reactions and distortions, which of course, may affect clients differently. Decolonizing certain western methods of counseling include examples of challenging the notion of eye contact. For example, Malone admits documenting eye contact in the context of counseling clients, but adds a clarifying sentence normalizing infrequent eye contact as a common thing among many Indigenous cultures (p.35), and as such, ought not be pathologized. Other important examples which challenge western notions of a good counseling client include the notion that infrequent attendance does not imply resistance, nor do discussions of Indigenous spirituality and things of a meta-physical nature portend "delusions" (p.35).

Indigenous feminist counseling: why this is necessary?

This study is an intervention and response to a felt absence of Indigenous feminist counseling discourses and theory. Currently, there are Indigenous feminist theorists writing critical theory, having been inspired by early feminists, whom in their time, developed feminist theory, and then feminist counseling theory, which at the time was a response to women experiencing serious distress (Evans, et al, 2005, p.269). This project hopes to do the same, whilst diverging through a bi-cultural approach that brings together Indigenous feminist theory, western counseling, and Indigenous healing practices to develop Indigenous feminist counseling theory. There are a few articles that somewhat relate to the topic, but to the author's knowledge, there is no specific Indigenous feminist counseling framework.

First, what is Indigenous Feminisms? Joyce Green (2007) defines Indigenous Feminisms (IF) as,

...a theoretical engagement with history and politics, as well as a practical engagement with contemporary social, economic, cultural and political issues. It is an ideological framework not only of intellectuals but also of activists... Aboriginal feminism interrogates power structures and practices between and among Aboriginal and dominant institutions. It leads to praxis-theoretically informed politically self-conscious activism (p.25).

In terms of an Indigenous feminisms genesis, Arvin et al (2013) state: "We, and contemporary Native theories our article focuses on, are indebted to a rich history of Native feminist theories circulated both within and against whitestream feminism... since at least the 1960s" (p.11).

Indigenous feminisms is not a single theory, but is represented by multiple perspectives. For example, Indigenous feminisms are reflected in the literature of feminist scholars Dian Million, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Emma Larocque, Joyce Green, Lee Maracle, and Joanne Barker.

There are some Indigenous scholars who represent in academic and leadership roles, but do not identify as feminist (Late Patricia Monture-Okanee, 1995: Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond,

1994). These scholars are critical of perceived limitations of feminist theory (Arvin et al, 2013), pointing out feminist theory and feminisms are problematic (p.12). For example, historically speaking, mainstream feminists normalized whiteness as normative, decentering liberatory struggles, and in the process, ostensibly excluded Indigenous women, whom experienced this as racist and divisive. For some, this history is not forgotten, and effectively closes the door to mainstream feminism.

Indigenous feminists are scholars and grassroots activists. They work in and outside of the academy, and are thus often balancing representing roles within a University, while simultaneously being accountable to their Indigenous community.

In *Red Women Rising*, a study by grassroots activists Carol Martin and Harsha Walia (2019), the authors draw attention to compelling evidence that Indigenous women face an increased risk, seven times higher than non-Indigenous women, that they will go missing or murdered. They state:

Indigenous women in the DTES are stigmatized as having ‘high-risk lifestyles’ and blamed for violence committed against them when, in fact, colonial poverty and patriarchy are the highest risk factors in Indigenous women’s lives. Our report explores how individual experiences of violence are inseparable from state violence including loss of land, forced poverty, homelessness, child apprehension, criminalization within the justice system, and health disparities (p.16).

Additionally, the murders of Indigenous woman warrant less attention and police investigation as compared to non-white women facing similar circumstances (Martin et al, p.16). Therefore, it understandable that there is a perception that mainstream feminists are doing little in the way of supporting and advocating for Indigenous women’s struggles within women’s politics in Canada.

In the aftermath of the two year Missing and Murdered Women and Girl’s Inquiry, Indigenous women rights continue to lag behind Canadian women. According to the MMIWG

final report (2019), the authors state that gendered violence against Indigenous women and girls is “genocide” and warrants timely investigations of murders of Indigenous women, on par with those of mainstream women (p.2).

The underlying message of these articles is that Indigenous women are not a priority in Canada, and that feminist organizations are not responding enough. Both articles address a gap within processes attempting to solve genocide and gender violence that is deeply embedded in mainstream society, and is linked to colonialism, white supremacy, patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. Every social structure is impacted and systems ought to be dismantled and reset, though this is not happening any time soon.

Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2007) asserts Indigenous peoples are the most researched subjects around the world (p.118). Dian Million (2008) cites Smith’s “Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples” as impacting research practices and Indigenous peoples in challenging the status quo. Smith and others are decolonizing academia through interventions calling out colonial research practices that have been invested in harming Indigenous peoples and their respective communities since contact. Million (2008) describes Smith as a scholar-leader who speaks eloquently of this generation’s reach for Indigenous research projects that reflect “a shift . . . between being reviewed as research objects and . . . becoming our own researchers” (p.1).

As an Anishinaabe-kwe, I am an insider to this research because of my Indigenous identity. I am also an outsider-researcher, because this project is tethered to the academy. In a way, I am caught in bi-cultural soup of ethics: on one hand, accountable to my late Grandparents’ teachings, and on the other, to the academic community as a Masters of Counseling student-researcher.

Traditional Healing Practices

I situate myself in this topic because of my social location and the nature of accessing traditional healing practices in urban community. Although I live in a city, I do my best to maintain connections to land, water, nature, and animals both in traditional homelands, as well, connection to lands that I reside upon, the ancestral lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Wa-Tulth Nations.

In terms of accessing traditional practices in the Vancouver, I am reminded teachings may be diverse, but are quite often Pan-Indigenous. The reality is, many urban Indigenous peoples originate from other places. I practice Plains Anishinaabe culture, which differs from ocean and sea-going cultures.

Concerned with protecting and safeguarding traditional knowledge systems both inside and outside of the academy, Indigenous scholars Marie Battiste & Sakej Henderson (2000) are critical of cultural appropriation, having called out Indigenous pharmaceutical multinationals for the theft and trademarking of traditional knowledge systems (p.71). Ever cognizant of my ethical responsibility to do no harm to my Indigenous Nation and community, I affirm this study will not discuss cultural practices in any significant detail, less this is deemed inappropriate to share outside of community and ceremonial usage.

An important consideration of navigating traditional healing practices and ethics is engaging in a self-reflexive praxis with respect to my role as “insider-outsider researcher” (Smith, 2008, p. 137) in the context of holding space for Indigenous peoples across the globe, who have been harmed by the academy, by virtue of its colonial history and harmful, predatory exploitation of Indigenous peoples. Due to the many diverse Indigenous cultural practices throughout Turtle Island (North America), the number of distinct Indigenous peoples living in

Vancouver is astounding. This topic is not an exhaustive list of people and cultural practices because this is beyond the scope of this study.

There are Indigenous healers who utilize traditional healing practices to heal and treat people. At the same time, there are Indigenous clinicians who have merged Indigenous healing practices and western psychology. In *Therapeutic Nations*, Dian Million (2013) cites Eduardo Duran's work as an example, and describes him as an Indigenous, Jungian psychologist whose practice includes: liberation psychology, identity studies, individuation and self-esteem (p.92). Much like his cohort Paulo Freire, Duran contributed to a period of early counseling discourses centering Indigenous peoples' wounding, resulting from historical trauma and colonial violence (p.92). Gone highlights in his research that present-day experiences of historical trauma are experienced by many Indigenous peoples, and are not a benign thing of the past. Million (2013) is critical of the therapeutic industry, and at the same time, explicitly draws attention to Duran's work, who had indeed validated Indigenous peoples' experiences of grave harms resulting from genocide (p. 92). Million emphasize that Duran began to incorporate Indigenous healing practices in his work, and was convinced Indigenous "community-based" healing practices are superior to western psychological theory (2013, p.92). Based on Million, it seems Duran's bringing together of psychology and traditional healing practices was an early example of bicultural approach.

Bochner & Ellis (2017) highlight "Tataihono", a "bicultural" approach that describes bringing together Western psychiatry and Maori healing practices to heal mind, body, and spirit (p.1). The text, comprised of interviews, features a Maori cultural therapist, a Psychiatrist, and a Narrative therapist, whom all serendipitously come together. It would appear their approaches of psychiatry (science) and Maori healing practices are quite divergent, (p.1), but they discover

bringing together these seemingly opposing worldviews and cultures is effective. This bicultural approach is currently used to treat young persons with mental health problems. The treatment is holistic, and treats not only the mind, but incorporates body and spirit. Psychiatry treats just the mind while ignoring body and spirit.

In terms of gaps, bicultural approaches that combine Indigenous healing and western counseling are not entirely new. For example, Dr. Joseph Gone (2013) is an American Indigenous Psychologist, whose works may read as bicultural because he incorporates an Indigenous cultural lens throughout research practices, which are part of western training in the academy.

Gone (2013) discusses a research study conducted with a Manitoba First Nation, a community deeply impacted by historical trauma relating to Indian Residential School. He states:

Disparities in mental health status have been regularly reported for Indigenous North American communities. A major source of these disparities appears to be the disproportionately high rates of exposure to potentially traumatic stressors [Indian Residential School & Sixties Scoop] that treatment involves a return to Indigenous cultural practices because these ceremonies have local relevance and meaning (p. 700).

Gone's observations support the case for employing bi-cultural approaches in treating Indigenous peoples that are experiencing impacts of colonial trauma and Post-traumatic Distress Disorder (PTSD).

Summary

This thesis challenges the status quo of whiteness as normative within counseling, extending this to include social structures, systems, theory, and practice. Bringing together feminisms, feminist counseling theory, Indigenous feminist theory, Indigenous healing practices and bicultural approaches, this study aims to develop a timely, culturally relevant framework that

is representative of Indigenous, western-trained therapists. This study is more than an extension of feminist counseling theory. It is an incremental step towards building a substantive Indigenous counseling theory, grounded in diverse worldviews, cultural/healing practices, and inclusion of spirituality.

The author acknowledges the scholarship, emotional labour, and alliance building of Black therapists, Persons of Color (POC) therapists and Multicultural therapists, whom have helped and inspired Indigenous feminist counseling theory to emerge. Our visibility as therapists, in practice and now represented in literature, contextualizes and makes possible that our ideas, counseling methods, theory, and practice make it possible for us to take our place at the proverbial table of culturally-based, feminist therapy. In fact, perhaps an Indigenous feminist counseling framework might help to rebalance “asymmetrical” power relations between Canada and Indigenous peoples, (Coulthard, 2007, p.442), similar to the impact feminist counseling theory has had thus far.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

It is apparent that in Chapters 1 and 2, the literature review does not readily answer the research questions posed in this thesis. However, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 focus on the process of developing Indigenous feminist counseling theory. Chapter 3 discusses the methods and theory used in this study. For example, grounded theory is the qualitative research methodology used, which is harmonized with two Indigenous theoretical lenses: Story work methodology (Archibald, 2008) and Indigenous feminist theory (Green, 2007).

The following methodology outlines specifically the ways in which the research question will be examined in this thesis. The 1st section will present the overall methodologies: qualitative inquiry, grounded theory, feminist grounded theory, and Indigenous theoretical lenses. Section 2 highlights research design and approaches, including study participants, data gathering, and data analysis procedures. Section 3 focuses on bounding the study: ethical considerations, trustworthiness, and limitations of the study.

Section 1: Methodologies

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative inquiry was selected and implemented for the purposes of this study. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative inquiry is a broad explanation for behavior and attitudes, and may be complete with variables, constructs and hypothesis (p.64). As well, qualitative inquirers use theory in their research in several ways (p. 64). For example, ethnographers employ qualitative inquiry in studies examining cultural themes or aspects of culture such as: social control, language, stability, change, or social organization within kinship or families (p. 64). The themes provide a ready-made series of hypothesis to be tested from the

literature (p.64); this translates to themes emerging from the interviews, which are discussed, further in Chapters 4 and 5.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is the main form of qualitative research that will be implemented in this research study. Barney Glasser and Anselm Strauss co-developed grounded theory in the early 1960s as a methodology for inductively generating theory (Evans, 2013, p.1). This approach is grounded in data (qualitative interviews), which are systematically gathered and analyzed (Noble and Mitchell, 2016, p.1). The goal being to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area (Evan, pg.1), pertaining to topic of study; which, in this case is developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory.

It is worth noting that over time, Glasser and Strauss' definition and implementation of grounded theory diverges. For example, Glasser's definition of grounded theory is widely accepted (Evan, 2013, p.1) for its approach and rigor in data collection, handling, and analysis (p.1), whereas Strauss's approach to grounded theory research is more linear (p.1).

Features of Grounded Theory

Nobel et al (2016) cites Charmaz (1995) and highlights important and relevant features of grounded theory (GT),

- Data collection and analysis occur simultaneously
- Categories and analytic codes developed from data.
- Pre-existing conceptualizations not be used (this is known as theoretical sensitivity)
- Theoretical sampling used to refine categories
- Abstract categories constructed inductively
- Social processes discovered in the data (interviews)
- Analytical memos used between coding and writing
- Categories integrated into a theoretical framework (p.1).

Additionally, there are four categories of grounded theory: Feminist grounded theory, Classic grounded theory, Straussian grounded theory, and Constructivist grounded theory (Evans, 2013, p.3). In terms of selecting an appropriate category for this study, it is suggested that this decision is best guided by the researcher and their worldview, while also taking into consideration the impacts of different methodologies (p.1). Since this study examines the lived experiences of Indigenous feminist therapists, the most appropriate category that aligns with the researcher is Indigenous feminist theory plus grounded theory methodology.

Feminist grounded theory

Evans (2013) cites the work of Wuest (1995), as having developed feminist grounded theory which, in the context of feminist theoretical traditions, addresses androcentric bias, in addition to ensuring women's voices are heard in the research community (p. 2).

Evans introduces feminist grounded theory as emerging when Wuest overlaid feminist theory on top of grounded theory categories: Classic Grounded theory, Straussian, and Constructivist Grounded theory (Evans, 2013, p.2). Evans (2013) states that Wuest claims grounded theory aligns harmoniously with post-modern feminist epistemology for recognizing multiple explanations of reality (p.2) and that feminism is not [merely] a research method, but a perspective that can be applied to a traditional disciplinary method (2013, p.2). Therefore, Indigenous theoretical perspectives ought to harmonize with grounded theory methodology.

Harmonizing Indigenous perspectives and grounded theory methodology

In this instance, qualitative research harmonizes two Indigenous theoretical perspectives and feminist grounded theory methodology (Creswell, 2014, p.64). It is through contextualizing my worldview as a researcher that I wish to incorporate and weave Indigenous ways of being into this research.

Indigenous Storywork Methodology (Archibald, 2008) embraces a philosophy of oral storytelling tradition that is common to many Indigenous peoples, including the researcher's Anishinaabe worldview, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. According to Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork* methodology signals the importance and seriousness of understanding the educational and research work of making meaning through stories, whether they are traditional or lived experience stories (p.3). There are seven principles that comprise *Indigenous Storywork*: respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, wholism, interrelatedness, and synergy (Archibald, 2008, p. 3). These principles will frame and contextualize Indigenous approaches to analyzing research data.

Indigenous feminisms offer a significant theoretical lens that the author wishes to employ in the context of developing a counseling theory. Joyce Green (2007) describes Indigenous feminisms as, “an ideology based on a political analysis that takes women’s experiences seriously”, as well as a process “of organization and of action” (p. 20). Green’s interventions include critiquing gaps in feminist literature on issues relating to Indigenous women casts a similar critique toward Indigenous liberation theory. As well, Green (2008) asserts mainstream feminist literature “has not been attentive to the gendered ways in which colonial oppression and racism function for men and women, or to the inherent and adopted sexism that some communities manifest” (p. 23).

Section 2: Data Collection

Typically, data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured, structured or semi-structured, observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, and establishing the protocol (s) for recording information (Creswell, 2014, p. 189).

Data was gathered following a *theoretical sampling* method in which data collection procedures are based on concepts derived from the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Data refers to first and second interviews and other sources to guide subsequent data collection. In terms of the study, data was collected primarily through structured *qualitative interviews* and unstructured observations. Data was stored in a locked cell phone-recording device, which was used to record interviews. There were instances in which I took notes, but mostly during the interviews- I focused on building connections with participants while remaining engaged and present. Interview recordings were then transferred to a locked/coded computer. Audio recordings were listened to and then transcribed by the researcher into Word documents, which were stored on the same locked/coded computer.

Selection of Participants

Before commencing a process of selecting participants, the author requested permission to engage with the project through an application with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at City University of Seattle. After receiving approval (See Appendix A), the search for Indigenous therapists began.

The requirement for participants in this study was seemingly narrow, in terms of education and work experience. For example, the minimum requirement for participants was that he/she/they would hold either a Master of Counseling/Psychology or Master of Social Work, as well several years of work experience as a registered therapist/clinician. Participants were required to self-identify as Indigenous (see Chapter 2; see also Chapter 1, definitions of terms, Indigenous).

In terms of gender, the study was broad and inclusive of women, men, two-spirit, and non-gender conforming persons. Indigenous feminist theory and feminisms is not merely the

domain of women; its distinguishing feature is inclusive of all genders, because equality and liberation is for everyone, including family, community, and nation.

For the process of obtaining participants for this study, I utilized a “snowballing” approach, described by Creswell (2005) as the selection of a sample where possible participants are asked if they may know of other individuals with applicable attributes and experiences who could be approached for or made aware of the study (p. 127). I then contacted former colleagues, teachers, acquaintances, and referrals as suggested by my advisor, Colin Sanders. I reached out to potential participants through email and telephone. I sent a total of 10 emails, resulting in five participants agreeing to participate in this study. There was a two-spirit person that I was regretfully unable to reschedule for an interview, largely because of the researcher’s deadline for data gathering. In summary, four participants took part in the study, and two individuals accepted the invitation but were unresponsive to setting up an interview. Another responded, citing a “lack of time” as a factor in their decision not to participate. Three individuals did not respond to an initial email invitation.

Email sent to potential participants

The following is a copy of an email sent to potential participants,

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jodi Blanchette from City University of Seattle in Vancouver. This research is working towards the completion of a Master in Counseling. I am asking you to take part in this study because I am developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory, and part of the process is conducting interviews with Indigenous therapists. If you are interested, and feel that you wish to share your stories, insights, and experiences as an Indigenous therapist, I would appreciate your contribution to this valuable research. In terms of time requirements for interview participants, this study should take no more than one hour of your time. All personal information will be kept private and confidential. Participants will receive a small cultural gift, valued at no more than \$10.00. There are no anticipated risks to your participation in this study. Participation is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Please contact: jodiblanchette@cityuniversity.edu if you wish to participate.

Participants

The participants who took part in this study were:

- Self-identified in terms of Indigenous identity (First Nation, Metis, and Inuit)
- Cis-gender female (born female)
- Ranging in age from 30-55 years
- Regarding education, two participants had either a Masters of Counseling or Social Work, and two participants had a Doctorate in Educational Counseling
- 4 participants reported having a decade or more years of counseling experience
- In terms of participant's residences: three reside within the Lower Mainland of Vancouver, and one lives in Nova Scotia.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

In this study four participants were interviewed. They were informed by the researcher that this study would be using their interviews to generate theory. The participants were informed that I would require them to sign a consent form in order to participate in the study, and that their contribution is voluntary. I also informed participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

The researcher communicated to participants that their personal information is confidential, and that, if they desire, their identity may remain anonymous. I offered the option of using a pseudonym in the context of this study. I gave participants the opportunity to ask any questions and discuss any concerns regarding the research or their participation in the study. I disclosed that, to my knowledge, risks are minimal for this study, however, some level of risk remains. In terms of content, regarding questions pertaining to trauma, genocide, and colonial

trauma, I still considered risk to be low because of the therapeutic skills and background of the participants.

Qualitative Interviews

Interviews are one of the most frequently used methods of data collection (Thomson, 2011); therefore it is unsurprising (p.45) grounded theory has emerged as one of the most commonly used methodological frameworks (p. 45). In terms of format, qualitative interviews are typically structured, unstructured, and semi-structured (Creswell, 2014, p. 193).

I chose structured interviews because I wish to generate theory from the interview process. The research questions were pre-determined and set, thus allowing participants take their time in share their thoughts, ideas, stories, and experiences. In terms of managing participants' valuable time to participate in the study, a structured interview facilitated an interview style in which I proceeded through a set order of questions, while simultaneously observing and mindfully keeping the interview on track.

All interviews were recorded via audio recording, and note-taking was kept to a minimum, as leading the interview process entailed managing time to ensure interviews were within an hour, as agreed upon, to respect participants' busy schedules.

After obtaining informed consent (see Appendix C), I completed four initial interviews and four follow-up interviews via email. I met three participants for a face-to-face interview, either in their home, office, or in a coffee shop. The fourth interview was conducted via Skype at the participant's home. All first interviews were completed in one session. There was one interview with a planned and agreed upon contingency plan to reschedule a second interview in the event that the interview went longer. The earlier interviews ran 35 and 38 minutes respectively, and the last two interviews ran around 60 minutes. Each participant received a cultural gift for participating in the study, as is stated in the ethics application.

Carrying out an Indigenous feminist grounded theory study

The following steps detail how I will carry out this Indigenous feminist grounded theory study. According to Noble & Mitchell (2016) the researcher first identifies the area of interest, cautioning that theoretical conceptions ought to be avoided although this is easier said than done. This, of course, is followed by the implementation of data analyzing procedures and sampling strategies. It is suggested that this study is done when *theoretical sampling* is reached (paraphrased, p.1). In the context of this study, data is gathered following a *theoretical sampling* method in which data collection procedures are based on concepts derived from the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), pertaining to first and second interviews, and other sources to guide subsequent data collection (Creswell, 2014, p. 189).

The qualitative data is derived from interviews and memos is then collected and analyzed (p.2) in three stages:

1. Open coding: this involves line by line coding where concepts and key phrases are identified and highlighted and moved into subcategories, then categories. This breaks the data down into conceptual components and the researcher can start to theorize or reflect on what they are reading and understanding—making sense of the data. The data from each participant will be ‘constantly compared’ for similarities.
2. Axial coding: at this stage relationships are identified between the categories, and connections identified.
3. Selective coding: this involves identifying the core category and methodically relating it to other categories. The relationships must be authenticated and categories refined. Categories are then integrated together and a Grounded Theory identified (Nobel & Mitchel, 2016, p.2).

It seems relevant to expand on the significance of meaning of core category in the context of generating theory from data, therefore categories are described as the chief phenomena around which categories are built (Nobel et al, p.3), and that theory is generated around a core category (p.3). Additionally, core categories ought to account for the variation in the data (p.7), as well as demonstrate how a core category is located in the lives of participants in the study (p.3). Through

a careful process of following these specific steps of GT, it is the author's desire that a theory will be produced emerging from the data (paraphrased, Nobel et al, p.4).

Section Three: Bounding of the study

Ethical considerations

In reviewing ethical considerations for this study, the researcher, like many others, agrees this stage is inherently important and necessary in the context of bounding the study. Creswell (2013) states that the researcher has an ethical obligation to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informants (p.208), as well different aspects of the research may negatively impact the lives of participants. For example, I had to reconsider the utility of unstructured observations on the basis that this could potentially cause harm to participants by inadvertently revealing sensitive information that they did not intend to share (p.208), as well impacting their position, clinical practice, workplace, or institution (p. 208). The following safeguards may be used to protect participants' rights,

- The research objectives will be verbally stated and written so that the participant understands their meaning and how data is to be used
- Written permission to proceed with the study will be sent by the researcher and received by the participant
- A research exemption form will be filed with the Institutional Review Board
- The informant will be informed of all data gathering, specifically, devices entrusted for use in audio recording interviews
- Verbatim transcriptions and written interpretations and reports will be made available to the participant
- The informant's rights, interests, and wishes are to be made paramount regarding reporting the data
- The final decision regarding informant anonymity of the informant will rest entirely with them, and not the researcher (Creswell, 2013, p. 209)

Trustworthiness

According to Sikolia, Biros, Mason, and Weiser (2013), trustworthiness in the context of research is defined as "conceptual soundness from which the value of qualitative research may

be evaluated (Bowen 2009)” (p.1). As well, grounded theory has received negative feedback, in fact, suggesting its findings are more often “nice stories” (p.1), and in a way negating the value of GT research. This may be avoided altogether by increasing trustworthiness of my findings. There are four factors for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research, (Sikolia et al, p.1), which are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Brown et al. 2002; Rolfe 2004). Table 3.1 provides a listing of these steps that can be taken to improve the trustworthiness of GTM research (Sikolia et al). I will enhance trustworthiness of this study by sharing informant interview transcripts, (first and second interviews). I will also engage in a peer review of the process (p. 3).

Table 3.1

Trustworthiness dimension	Steps to improve Trustworthiness
Credibility (Internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged engagement with participants (Brown et al. 2002; Jacelon and O'Dell 2005; Morrow 2005) • Triangulation of data (data from interviews, observations, documents etc.) (Bowen 2009; Brown et al. 2002; Jacelon and O'Dell 2005) • Thick descriptions of data and sufficiency of data assessment or saturation (Morrow 2005) • Respondent validation of interview transcripts and emerging concepts and categories (participant checks) (Brown et al. 2002;

	<p>Jacelon and O'Dell 2005; Morrow 2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant guidance of inquiry (theoretical sampling) (Cooney 2010) • Use of participant words in the emerging theory (Cooney 2010) • Negative case analysis (Brown et al. 2002; Morrow 2005) • Peer debriefers (Brown et al. 2002; Jacelon and O'Dell 2005; Morrow 2005)
Transferability (External validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thick descriptions” of the research, the participants, methodology, interpretation of results and emerging theory (Bowen 2009; Brown et al. 2002; Cooney 2010; Morrow 2005)
Dependability (Reliability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of a detailed audit trail by an observer (Brown, 2002; Morrow 2005)
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of a detailed audit trail by an observer (Brown & et al, 2002; Morrow, 2005, p.3).

The limitations of this study

This research study has several potential limitations regarding sample size and my sources of data (interviews).

In terms of appropriate sample size in grounded theory methodology, Thomson (2011) states that, “the key to qualitative research and, in particular, grounded theory is to generate enough data so that illuminate patterns, concepts, categories, properties, and dimensions of the given phenomena can emerge” (p.46). Therefore, it is essential to obtain an appropriate sample size that will generate sufficient data (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p.46). Including only four

participants in this study might suggest that this is a rather small number to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area (Indigenous feminist theory), and is perhaps a limitation?

Alternately, there are no strict criteria for sample size, (Thomson, 2011, p. 47), for example four people could only experience a very specific phenomenon theoretically (personal conversation, Colin Sanders, June 6, 2019). Qualitative researchers may use larger sample sizes, however the number of participants is driven by the need for theoretical saturation, or “when no new relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category” (Thomson, 2011, p. 47); the researcher is the best one to determine this. In terms of concepts emerging from my data, it seems that four participants in this study will likely suffice for the limits of a Masters project, and working with a larger sample size is more appropriate in a future PhD project (personal conversation, Glen Grigg, December 11, 2019).

Another limitation in my sample included a lack of diversity in gender. My sample included four cis-gendered females (born female), and in spite of my efforts, this did not result in more gender diversity. My sample included mixed Indigenous and Euro-Canadian who were white passing Indigenous women and did not include participants that were dark skinned.

Again, this is a perceived limitation, but is not a barrier in generating rich interview data because all participants have engaged fully in sharing their worldviews, stories, memories, insights, theory, ideas, and lived experiences as Indigenous women who do therapy with many clients impacted by historical trauma and oppression, colonialism and genocide.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of Indigenous feminist therapists using grounded theory and Indigenous theoretical perspectives to develop an Indigenous feminist counseling theory. The numerous steps of Indigenous feminist grounded theory methodology were followed, as discussed in Chapter 3. Data was collected through qualitative interviews and memos, which included the use of structured questions via one-hour open-ended interviews. Data was inductively analyzed with several steps of a coding and categorizing process. This chapter presents the emergent findings related to study participants and interviewer.

Participants

Participants opted to have their identities remain anonymous, therefore pseudonyms are used and identifying information was redacted to protect privacy. The following pseudonyms were selected by the author, and these are:

- Reba, Indigenous, age 55, PhD, has an urban clinical practice
- Heather, Indigenous, age 30, MSW, works at a University
- Diane, Indigenous, age 40, MSW, works at a University
- Jane, Indigenous, age 45, PhD, works at a University, has an urban clinical practice

The findings in this study represent the lived experiences of participants, all of whom self-identify as,

- Cis-gendered (born female)
- Indigenous feminist
- Registered clinical therapists

Categories and Subcategories

To the best of my effort, the following categories and subcategories were inductively gathered and analyzed using an Indigenous perspectives and feminist grounded methodology. These categories are organized and depicted in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1*

Category	Subcategory
Identity is diverse	A. Reclaiming Identity B. Naming Oppression C. Reconciling Privilege
Navigating power within Indigenous and mainstream communities	A. Indigenous feminist counselor praxis B. Academic roles C. In-between roles
Indigenous worldviews and ways of being	A. Elders & learning B. Cultural values C. Building social supports

*Note: adapted from *Cross-cultural Mentoring Relationships in Higher Education: A Feminist Grounded Theory Study* by Alston, G.A., (2014).

The first category, Indigenous identity, is diverse. Subcategories are: reclaiming Indigenous identity, oppression, and privilege, which represents participants' standpoints regarding their Indigenous identity. This includes, womanhood/personhood, motherhood/kinship relations, and experiences of oppression and privilege as influenced by structural factors such as: colonialism, hetero-patriarchy, and cultural genocide, previously discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

The second category, navigating power within Indigenous and mainstream communities, reflects tensions experienced in between communities: urban and rural, and Indigenous and mainstream. Subcategories include: Indigenous feminist counselor praxis, academic roles, and

in-between roles. Participants discuss working within systems that both “do harm” and frequently fail in understanding the nature of cultural differences and systemic problems embedded in mainstream structures.

The third category is Indigenous worldviews and ways of being. Subcategories include: Elders and learning, cultural practices, building community and social supports, and teaching others.

Category 1: Identity is diverse

In this category, I will present findings relating to participants’ experiences of identity, and naming the ways structural factors have influenced their lives, including challenging oppression and privilege. As well, participants reconcile their experiences of Indigenous identity, in terms of narratives that situate them coming into awareness in young adulthood and finding strategies to reclaim and rebuild identity.

Reclaiming Identity

Indigenous identity is diverse, and in terms of identity politics, there are multiple ways of being Indigenous as indicated in these participants’ narratives, on which Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson’s elaborates:

While Biskaabiiyang (looking back) encompasses the process for decolonizing, the term Zhaaganashiiyaadizi encompasses the process and description of living as a colonized or assimilated person. Zhaaganashiiyaadizi occurs when a person tries to live his or her as a non-Native at the expense of being Nishnaabeg. In other words, they become assimilated. Zhaaganashiiyaadizi is a process by which choices are made to the detriment of being Nishnaabeg. The key is “at the expense of being Nishnaabeg,” so one many adopt the ways of the non-Natives only to the extent that it does not negatively influence the core of one’s being. My understanding of this word is indicative of the processes of the continual decisions that one might chose to make—decisions and choices, which, in this case, supplant all of the beautiful and diverse ways of living as a contemporary Nishnaabeg [Indigenous]. To me this means that we do not need to “go back” to hunting with bows and arrows, but we need to practice the

ways of being and living in the world that are profoundly Nishnaabeg [Indigenous]. It also means there is diversity of ways of being within an Nishnaabeg value system that encompasses being Nishnaabeg. For me, that doesn't mean there is a single way of being Nishnaabeg. Rather there is a set of processes, values, and philosophies embedded in our [respective] language and culture that one needs to embrace to live as Nishnaabeg. (2011, p.52-53).

The role of Indigenous identity is especially pertinent to this study because identity is central to developing an Indigenous feminist counseling theory. Identity is an important correlating thread among the participants. For example, one participant expressed their awareness of identity was experienced via adoption, as part of the 60s Scoop. Another participant experienced disconnection from her Indigenous kinship ties because of divorce, while another participant's identity was erased through a muddling of lost records at an Indian residential school. Lastly, a participant experienced a loss of identity through her grandmother's shame of being "half" (Métis), along with their family's relocation and disconnection of Métis kinship ties.

In these instances, participants articulate similar experiences of growing up disconnected from their Indigenous identity, culture, language, and (for some) their kinship ties. All participants state that they came into awareness of their Indigenous identity in early adulthood. For a couple of the participants, this began as early as 17-18 years, and others in their early 20s. It seems young adulthood facilitated the freedom to choose how and where to learn about reclaiming an Indigenous identity.

When asked about identity in terms of cultural background, Reba states that she is of mixed background – Cree and European-Canadian ancestry – adding that her mother attended an Indian Residential School (IRS). Children of former students of IRS are considered to experience a term called "intergenerational effects". In laymen's terms, this suggests the offspring of former students tend to re-experience some of the harms that their parents endured via transmission of things taught at IRS, such as authoritarian parenting and corporal punishment.

When asked about her cultural background, Reba recalls experiencing positive aspects of her Cree language and culture long before her parent's divorce, expressing that she did not learn the Cree language. Nonetheless, Cree was "familiar" to her, explaining that her mother had "certainly practiced the language" with her and her sister. In terms of familiarity between rural and urban communities, Reba was aware that she was part of a mixed race family that did not reside on-reserve, but went home to visit family during the summer. Reba grew up during the 1950s and 1960s, a time when Indigenous families were considered high-risk and frequently pathologized. In terms of family breakdown and loss, it seems that the divorce disconnected her from her Cree family. Some of these losses include access to teachings, mentoring, and language. Reba stated: "I wish I knew my language", and hopes to learn it still. She recalls that her mother's family were deemed "unhealthy" to maintain family ties with, to the extent that her custodial parent (her father) and siblings moved to another part of the city.

In adulthood, Reba reunited with her extended family. In terms of where she lives, just like in childhood and adolescence, Reba continues to live off reserve and in an urban center for the past thirty years. Reba's sense of Indigenous identity is influenced by the Indigenous community that she lives in. She describes cultural teachings that have influenced her over the years, such as participating in numerous ceremonies, talking and engaging Elders in and outside of the academy context, and observing Elder role models as teachers and how they behave in the world. Specifically, she identifies observing how Elders demonstrate values of respect and being kind to others.

Diana's sense of awareness of her identity was that of being an Indigenous adoptee growing up in a white family, while living in a large community of Indigenous people. She expressed feeling caught between "growing outside your culture" and also not feeling part of her

adoptive family's culture and the dominant culture. Diana mentions that having a best friend in elementary and high school who was also an adoptee like herself was helpful. For example, when she went to university, it was her friend group and adult adoptees of the 60s Scoop that provided social support. It was in this group that she and others supported each other to regain cultural experiences, and this led to working in women's organizations and Indigenous women's organizations. Diane shares learning about traditional practices in an urban context: attending sweat lodge ceremonies, going to pow-wows, camping and living on the land. Over time, she learned smudging, facilitating talking circles in a feminist organization, harvesting traditional foods, picking medicines, and building a fire as a way to foster and grow cultural practices for urban Indigenous students in a campus context.

When asked about her cultural background, Jane replies that she was "born in Saskatchewan, in Cree territory", and on her grandmother's side is "Métis from Montana". Her family moved to BC for "lots of reasons", including racism. She expresses that her sense of Indigenous identity grew, in part, because the First Nations community accepted her and her mother, conveying a sense of belonging since she was 10-11 years old.

Another aspect of Jane's identity included an awareness of the world around her, in the form of racism, classism, and socio-economic status. She noted that her mom was a single parent and on welfare, and that the small town was "right wing." She mentions that her sense of Indigenous values emerged long before she had kinship ties there, explaining that she later formalized those kinship ties via her Indigenous partner and children. Jane shares that when she brought her then-partner to meet her grandma, her grandma said to her, "Well, he's not half is he? Because it is horrible to be half!" Jane comments that this was the extent of her grandma talking about Métis identity, because this was something to be hidden. She states her grandma

had hidden their Métis identity, though it spilled out in the form of berry picking and medicine knowledge.

I asked Heather about her cultural background and experiences within Indigenous communities. She iterates that her background is “mixed race”, specifically non-Indigenous and Mi’kmaq. Her family were very ashamed of being Indigenous; in fact, Heather would hear them speaking in Mi’kmaq, though at the time was not transparent, leading to confusion about her identity. This confusion was further complicated by Canada’s genocidal policy of Indian Residential Schools: in the era of pre-dominion in the Maritimes, recordkeeping was not reliable. Heather’s grandparents may have attended IRS, but there are no official records, thus contributing to what she describes as “fractured knowledge” of her grandfather’s history. Heather starting working in Corrections at the age of 18-19, and it was through this work that she came into contact with an Elder and an Aboriginal Liaison officer, who were utilizing Indigenous cultural practices with incarcerated women in jail.

Over the course of seven years, Heather learned by watching, observing, and doing things as role modeled by the Elder, which she states “was an education in itself.” The Elder worked with women in crisis, that were suicidal, self-harming, and that were carrying layers of trauma. Her teachers empowered her sense of culture and cultural practices, which helped Heather gain a sense of identity, purpose and connection. Her teachers also helped her to instill pride and disappear the shame of being Mi’kmaq as a child and young person.

Oppression

Naming oppression in the context of Indigenous identity and participants’ experiences invoked stories of experiencing oppression firsthand and witnessing others experiencing oppression in many forms. One particular example involved the injustice of supporting a young person who has been sexually assaulted go through an unjust court process, whereby the

perpetuator was able to re-traumatize the defendant, because the process allows him to question his accuser. (In this instance, the participant name and location is withheld to protect the privacy and confidentiality of this young person's narrative).

With respect to their experiences of working alongside Indigenous clients, participants were asked: how do participants as therapists provide context to structural and systemic experiences?

Heather states that it is “important to have a good understanding of [colonial] history, and not how it has been taught in the mainstream”. As well, discussing addictions and family members' abandoning children ought to happen in the context of understanding those colonial dynamics, and how people are going into those situations. Heather contextualizes that identity is complex and there are nuanced experiences around it. For example, she says it is different to work with someone who has been adopted out, and has little knowledge of their culture vs. working with someone that has knowledge of their Indigenous community. Experiences of identity are diverse. When working with Indigenous peoples, it is especially important to discern whether they live in a rural or urban community.

Privilege

We need to be clear that there is no such thing as giving up one's privilege to be 'outside' the system. One is always in the system. The only question is whether one is part of the system in a way that challenges or strengthens the status quo. Privilege is not something I take and which therefore have the option of not taking. It is something that society gives me, and unless I change the institutions which give it to me, they will continue to give it, and I will continue to have it, however noble and equalitarian my intentions (Kendal, 2002, p.11).

Naming privilege in the context of these participants' experiences is challenging because the notion of a “white passing” Indigenous person is a real thing. Alternately, every participant has experienced oppression in many forms. In the context of this study, the main point of this

data is to inductively develop an Indigenous feminist counseling theory, and in doing so, privilege was generated as a subcategory. Privilege was discussed in the context of Indigenous identity. Although there is little said about whether growing up white or as white passing confers white privilege, what is clear are the instances when participants noticed and used privilege in the following ways:

- Using their voice and speaking up
- Advocating and challenging whiteness and power
- Resisting mainstream counseling practices that “don’t make sense”
- Decolonizing the notion of time by allowing time to build relationships
- Viewing clients and their needs in holistic ways
- Meeting clients where they are at
- Ensuring a relationship feels safe before requesting clients do intakes

In terms of cultural background, social location and perceived white privilege, Heather shares that her grandfather was “abandoned” and raised by a white family, and their family were the only Native people in a small town. Adding to her confusion was that her grandmother spoke Mi’kmaq, but lacked transparency in doing so. Nor was there any instilling of cultural pride in speaking Mi’kmaq. In this context, her family’s close proximity to whiteness and white privilege did not ensure an easier life. Heather experienced somatic complaints in the form of persistent anxiety, which only lessened after being introduced to the Elder-in-training and a sweat-lodge ceremony. White privilege, albeit through her grandparent’s adoption and assimilation of whiteness, did not protect her from experiencing oppression in the forms of internalized racism and shame in being Mi’kmaq.

Heather discusses privilege in terms of building an Indigenous identity via access to a learning cultural practices from an Elder during her employment at a jail. She also addresses privilege through meeting a community of Mi'kmaq students while attending a post-secondary institution. These experiences were powerful and affirming, thus increasing her ability to heal and strengthen a positive self-image, constructing a culturally affirming Mi'kmaq identity over time.

Category 2: Navigating power between Indigenous and mainstream society

This category discusses the ways in which power is both negotiated and navigated by participants both in Indigenous and mainstream contexts. Power and privilege in the context of this study are expressed by participants in their experiences of living within Indigenous community and mainstream society contexts. Subcategories discussed pertain to Indigenous feminist counseling praxis, academic roles, and in-between roles.

Indigenous feminist counselor praxis

There is a gap in the literature pertaining to Indigenous feminist counseling theory and praxis. Malone (2000) discusses pairing feminist counseling theory with multicultural counseling theory in working with Indigenous women:

Counsellor education for working with Aboriginal women (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and Native Canadians) should consider integrating multicultural and feminist counselling theories. These women have unique strengths, and the experiences of culture, and of being women. They have concerns, problems, and experiences of prejudice that may benefit from counselling that incorporates multicultural and feminist perspectives (p.33).

Despite this gap in Indigenous feminist counseling theory, these participants articulate, define, and categorize an Indigenous feminist counseling praxis. Most of the participants identify as Indigenous feminist therapists and consider their practices as guided by Indigenous feminisms.

For example, as an adoptee, Diana identified that connecting with other adoptees helped her regain cultural experiences, which lay the groundwork for working in women's organizations, and eventually in Indigenous women's organizations. Working in a feminist workplace facilitated an opportunity to learn and participate in talking/sharing circles, and gradually she began facilitating talking circles. It was during an Indigenous specialization of a Bachelor of Social Work program that she read theoretical papers, which reflected the practice she had been [already] utilizing. It was at this time she recognized that identity is diverse, stating that "even if you were adopted and didn't grow up with your Indigenous family, you're still Indigenous." Later on, during a Master's program, she was the only Indigenous student in the program. As well, the only Indigenous faculty with the program was on leave. This made for a challenging time: although she had experience using her voice to speak up in class, her voice was singular: no one else was saying or talking about Indigenous issues, Indigenous feminist perspectives, and the decolonizing / indigenization of institutions.

Diana's Indigenous feminist praxis includes a recognition and a reordering of western notions of time and relationship building. She asserts that the most important things to her are relationships and time, elaborating: "building relationships and having respectful relationships requires giving time to people to talk about their narrative of their life experiences. Storytelling and giving people that time to tell their story and taking that time to learn from what people are saying." This encompasses an understanding that relationships are reciprocal, and even though there is a power differential between therapist and client, there is still reciprocity. She states, "you are giving me as much as I'm giving you, and so acknowledging that it's a gift, and that is part of the relationship."

Another important aspect of Indigenous feminist practice is empowering women to talk about their lived experiences and reaffirming women as the experts of their lives. One participant does not consider her practice as radical, in terms of Indigenous feminist practice; however, she expresses having been taught and mentored by both women and men Elders. Her language reflects an egalitarian sense of gender. For example, she states, “men and women have their differences, including the gender differences that are labeled today that weren’t there when I was growing up.” Reba reiterates that in her practice “all people are beautiful” and “they all have a role on Earth”, which includes “the land, the animals, the rocks, and the Creator”.

In terms of asking what counseling theories they use to counsel Indigenous clients, participants describe bringing together western modalities (Cognitive behavior therapy, Narrative therapy, EMDR, art and play therapy) with cultural practices (drumming, singing, berry picking, smudging, praying), along with incorporating touch (hugs with consent). In some instances, Jane expressed the approach of meeting young people where they are at, and where they feel safe might mean that they meet outside of a counseling room and in a coffee shop instead. Heather mentions that her office space on campus is filled with visual reminders that it is a safe place to be Indigenous, describing that her office has Indigenous art on the walls, and there is the ability to practice smudging. Diana sees students at a campus office, but also meets clients outside in the university community. Sometimes her office hours are spent meeting students at weekly lunches and gathering around a fire. Reba counsels clients in an urban office space, and in this sense, is more of a mainstream therapist counselor, but offers a safe place for Indigenous clients to take their time to feel comfortable and take things “step by step.”

Another interesting aspect of feminist and Indigenous feminist counseling praxis and power is the notion of reordering power relations. Typically, in feminist counseling practice,

counselors minimize hierarchical relations with clients, although this is not always possible.

Critiquing the use of ‘power over’ dynamics in the counselor-client relationship was brought up

by Heather:

So, I am very client-led...I have a bit more freedom [outside of Corrections] and asking you [client] a question and you don't want to answer it, you don't have to just because I'm a therapist and the situation doesn't mean that you owe me answer to that...I think sometimes there is a power dynamic within a counseling relationship that I don't like, so set the stage that I can minimize that, I don't think I can totally eliminate it just because people have a certain notion when they come in that I have a certain level of expertise. So I try to push back on that and try my best to make sure they know that we're both students and teachers in that relationship.

Another correlating thread among participants is the practice of working with clients collaboratively. For example, Jane discusses instances throughout her practice when she facilitates girl's groups, both rural and urban. As well, she emphasizes the importance of bringing herself into the room, meaning she is present, and that she shares her story. In her opinion, this sharing is contrary to the mainstream counseling model, where the counselor never discusses anything personal, never revealing who they are. Jane is mindful of respecting young people's rights to make their own choices:

I like them to know that they have a choice and if they don't want to connect with me, I'll help them find someone else. I don't want them to feel they have to flood and tell me a whole bunch of stuff about themselves. I want them to choose to. I think about consent, and not replicating the dynamics of abuse especially decolonizing consent meaning that they not come in and tell the counselor everything and then they leave feeling worse.

Academic roles

This study focuses on Indigenous therapists, all of whom are registered clinical counselors. In this context, these participants have formal ties to the academy as graduate

students: two participants hold Masters degrees in Social Work, while the others hold PhDs.

These participants share an ethos and responsibility much like Dian Million (2013), who states,

I write from the position that as Indigenous scholars we are engaged in seriously in thinking the relations of power, where we make propositions while acknowledging how we are embedded in the major events and language of our times. Likewise, an ethical act and a theoretical one, I work from my position as an Indigenous feminist and offer my Indigenous feminist critique, which has given me a commitment in seeing what we have fought for over the last forty years as a rich source of theoretical intense dreaming, insight, and ethically based action that I hope is historicized in this work. I offer this work as an Indigenous feminist critique of trauma, human rights, and self-determination in our time (p.26).

When asked about the ways academic experience and education have informed their clinical practice, some participants stated they work in Student Services or teach at a University. Diana supports Indigenous students in many ways, specifically by encouraging students to decrease loneliness and isolation through joining activities on campus. This includes participating in beading and salve-making workshops and traditional food gathering. One of the things that stands out are the instances when Diana uses power and her voice to advocate for students. In one instance, an Indigenous student who is band funded, experienced her funder's refusal to pay for a class that she failed, resulting in a financial hold placed on her account. The University's position was not empathetic; in fact, it was suggested she drop out for a year and not continue her studies. Diana was angered by the lack of understanding of the University in meeting this Indigenous student where she was at. It did not make sense that the University, with its considerable means, could not decide to pay this financial hold, thus allowing an Indigenous student to continue her program without a year's interruption because of financial constraints.

Reba describes her experience of the Indigenous academy as "always connected to a community of Indigenous students and Indigenous faculty." Adding to this, the Indigenous

faculty at the two universities where Reba has worked have been always welcome and supportive in moving Indigenous people forward. As well, Faculty have reinforced that students ought to proud of where they come from, and to always continue to learn.

In-between roles

This subcategory describes a phenomenon that is not discoverable in the literature, yet is a tangible and correlating thread throughout participant interviews. For example, each participant shares experiences of disconnection from their cultural identity via systemic and state policies such as: the Indian Act, Indian Residential Schools, a mass adoption of Indigenous babies and children through 60s Scoop, and land dispossession experienced by non-Status Indians and Métis peoples. In spite of these challenges, most of the participants use their power as a phenomenon that speaks to being between Indigenous and mainstream cultures. For lack of a better word, I refer to this this as *in-between* roles.

Several participants discuss instances when working with clients, where some get angry and argue with people that represent institutions and systems that are oppressive and harming. For example, Jane discusses her own concern about systems and processes that harm young people, going as far as to question whether she is herself complicit in creating situations that harm young people. Indigenous feminist critiques are a necessary part of conferring and managing power relations in the context of therapeutic relationships. Heather challenges the Western counseling model. For example, she tells a story about attending a trauma conference with Bessel Van Der Kolk, whose research in *The Body Keeps the Score* (2014) suggests infants mimic their mother's emotions. Heather asserts that it is completely the opposite, in that you're not going to build a close bond with your client if your face isn't reacting to what they're sharing with you. This knowledge was intuitive to her. She states, "I never felt the need to have a stony

face, and I think people get weighed down in the notions of [mainstream] professionalism which people of color, Indigenous folks never had any input into- what is professionalism?!”

She tells another story about a faculty member who was open to what she was sharing, but revealed his response to an article about a mother who had lost her child, and while talking to a psychiatrist, she asks for a hug from the Doctor. He responds, “No, that’s against my professionalism,” and lets her dissolve into tears. Heather’s response was, “my God, how cold can you be when someone is in front of you, is in that much pain... how is this ethical?”

Category 3: Indigenous worldviews and ways of being

There are many Indigenous peoples, therefore there are many Indigenous worldviews. They share, however, a relational worldview that emphasizes spirit and spirituality and, in turn a sense of community and respect for the individual, (Restoule, J.P., n.d., p.1).

Elders and learning

In terms of participant worldviews, the role and meaning of Elders are significant. Elders are often viewed as a living library (Archibald, 2008) and repository of language, culture, traditional and medicinal knowledge. In terms of teaching others, Elder may share teachings directly and indirectly. For example, one participant discusses that her cultural learning began informally by observing someone she describes as an ‘Elder-in-training’ in a workplace context. This mentoring and learning process occurred in Corrections. She and two other staff provided cultural supports to incarcerated women. Some of their work focused on assisting women to heal from “suicidal” and “self- harming” and “layers of trauma.” Heather recalls that there were times they might have three sweat-lodge ceremonies in one day. The Elder-in-training role-modeled kindness and respectful relationships with the women. Jails tend to devalue women as human beings, especially Indigenous women. Heather recalls that the Elder, when asked, put women up

for ceremony. In terms of building trust with the women, Heather describes a community inside a jail in which women knew where the Elder lived. The Elder's home was not only a site of ceremony, but represented cultural safety for women outside of the institution. The humane treatment of incarcerated women contrasted with the mainstream guards, who would never reveal their home addresses to prisoners.

Cultural values

Most of the participants describe the ways that they are developing a culturally-grounded Indigenous feminist practice. Jane describes one of her role models as a "strong" Indigenous woman who hired her at an Indigenous education institute, which provided an opportunity for her to grow culturally and politically. For instance, she and others participated in what might have been the first or second march for Missing and Murdered Women. During that march, she recalls feeling like they were a family, and hearing another marcher saying, "this is where my cousin went." She recalls the institute was a site of spirituality and cultural practices in the city. They did blessings and eagle blessings. In terms of teaching Indigenous students, Jane turned things around, noticing that the counseling text was a white (mainstream) textbook. Also, instead of her interviewing students, she gave them the opportunity to interview her, ask questions, and in a way subvert normative 'power over' relations between teacher and student.

Diana articulates the value of time and relationships requires patience. Holding space for trust and vulnerability to emerge is built upon principles of decolonizing and subverting western notions of time.

Building social supports

The value of community is embedded in all of the participants' counselor praxis. For some participants who do not have access to their Indigenous family system, building a circle of socio-cultural support is akin to rebuilding a kinship system, which is referred to as chosen

family. During her elementary and high school years, Diana intuitively connected with another 60s Scoop adoptee, and through this positive experience, joined groups of common-minded folks, first adoptees, and later on, feminist and Indigenous feminist circles, thus helping her solidify the belief and practice of breaking a pattern of loneliness and isolation by reconnecting to others via groups and circles of support and belonging.

In terms of self-care and maintaining wellness, Jane identified that her accessing social support through a tight knit group of women is part of her wellness. In addition, she offers a berry picking analogy, in that we are not meant to go berry picking alone, people watch out for one another, and berry picking is like practicing self-care, meaning that we are not to do things alone, and that we need others to watch out for us.

Participants share their experiences of increasing social supports through engaging in cultural practices, which often includes mentoring by Elders, where over time, the student becomes the teacher, and mentors others. Nurturing and building community is an Indigenous value. In this instance, all participants frequently reiterate values of respect, kindness, dignity, collective-mindedness, and the importance of building and fostering community through social supports, including cultural practices, gatherings, community lunches, and being out on the land, in nature, near the water, rocks, plants, and animals.

Sometimes accessing social support in the context of self-care and maintain wellness, one participant expressed that it important to have someone to call: “sometimes self-care can be an angry and hurting conversation with someone that you love and trust.” It can also mean accessing spiritual support. For example, Reba describes the challenges of working with systemic problems such as racism, genocide, and discrimination. Her stance is to empower herself and others by exploring one’s thoughts and beliefs around these things; as well,

reconciling that, although these big issues are not easily resolved, she tries to make a difference, especially with clients in her practice. She reflects on the bigger picture, drawing on the bigger meaning of our [Indigenous] people's pain and suffering. Reba states, "I do believe the Dali Lama that pain is meaningful and that if we learn and practice compassion, then our suffering has meaning, and if we help ourselves and help others, our pain has meaning."

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss my final reflections on the research process, my findings, and future implications of this research for further inquiry. I will begin with a summary of the methodology, Indigenous theoretical perspectives, and grounded theory. I will follow up with a brief discussion of the findings, i.e. how the data was inductively analyzed into three main categories (themes) and 9 sub-categories (sub-themes). Finally, I will discuss the limitations and further implications of this study.

Final reflections on the research process

First, my lack of familiarity with grounded theory research felt like a weakness throughout the last part of this study. This topic is an important and necessary intervention, and in terms of doing justice, I sometimes felt ill-equipped to take it on. We know that completing a thesis is a requirement for any therapist to apply for certification.

In terms of methodology, at times I felt like I had no idea what I was doing. I was overwhelmed. I began to research grounded theory methodology and re-read parts of Creswell's book. I also found several articles that made sense, plus I viewed several videos on YouTube, which sort of made this otherwise difficult and challenging methodology almost understandable.

I usually like challenges, but this project was definitely outside of my comfort zone. I read a while back that growth happens just slightly outside of our comfort zone. I can definitively say that I learned a lot, and grew my knowledge base (and comfort) slowly over the past several months, taking small steps to arrive at this final chapter.

Somewhere, I had an existential moment that I suppose most novice researchers might have. I felt that I don't know what I am doing, and I was drowning in low confidence and self-doubt. My epiphany was at the moment I realized every researcher probably has these feelings of

panic. My mind took that in, and I let that epiphany “breathe” for a while, as if it were a fine wine. Gradually, I realized I was like everyone else going through a similar experience, and that I would eventually figure out GT methodology, and get things coded and categorized. I found it easier to trust, and trust that my advisors have my back. Somehow, with persistence and support, I would get this thesis written.

Summary of research study

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of Indigenous feminist therapists using grounded theory and Indigenous theoretical perspectives to develop an Indigenous feminist counseling theory. The numerous steps of Indigenous feminist and grounded theory methodology were followed. Grounded theory is previously discussed in Chapter 3. For the purposes of this qualitative research study, two Indigenous theoretical perspectives were harmonized with grounded theory methodology (Creswell, 2014, p.64). It is through contextualizing my Indigenous worldview as researcher that urged me to incorporate Indigenous ways of being into this research.

Indigenous Storywork methodology (Archibald, 2008) embraces a philosophy of oral storytelling tradition that is common to many Indigenous peoples, including the researcher’s Anishinaabe worldview. According to Archibald, *Storywork methodology* is intended to signal the importance and seriousness of understanding the educational and research work of making meaning through stories, whether they are traditional or lived experience stories (p.3). There are seven principles that comprise *Storywork*, these are: respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, wholism, interrelatedness, and synergy (Archibald, 2008, p.3), which frame and contextualize Indigenous approaches to analyzing research data. It is worth noting these Indigenous principles are reiterated throughout the participant interviews I conducted.

Indigenous feminisms are a significant theoretical lens that I employ in the context of developing a counseling theory. Green (2007) defines Indigenous feminisms as, “an ideology based on a political analysis that takes women’s experiences seriously”, and, “a process of organization, and of action” (p. 20). Green’s interventions including critiquing gaps in feminist literature on issues relating to Indigenous women. She notes that, “Indigenous liberation theory... has not been attentive to the gendered ways in which colonial oppression and racism function for men and women, or to the inherent and adopted sexism that some communities manifest” (p. 23). Indigenous feminisms draw attention to: critiquing power and control, whiteness as normative, and challenging and subverting colonialism as an ongoing project. Alternately, in the context of this study, Indigenous feminisms contextualize and make space for Indigenous feminist therapists, therapists who focus on healing colonial trauma and at the same time, cultivating and celebrating “Indigenous brilliance and beauty” (Jane, personal conversation, September 30th).

In terms of data management, data was collected through qualitative interviews and memos, which included the use of structured questions via one-hour open-ended interviews. Data was inductively analyzed with several steps of a coding and categorizing process. This chapter presents the emergent findings related to study participants and interviewer.

Summary of findings

The findings related of this study were inductively gathered through the narratives and lived experiences of participants and interviewer. Participants opted to have their identities remain anonymous, therefore pseudonyms were used and identifying information redacted to protect participant and client privacy. These pseudonyms were selected by the author, and are:

- Reba, Indigenous, age 50, PhD, has a clinical practice

- Heather, Indigenous, age 30, MSW, works at a University
- Diane, Indigenous, age 40, MSW, works at a University
- Jane, Indigenous, age 50, PhD, works at a University, has a clinical practice

The findings are organized into four categories, thus representing the lived experiences of participants, all of whom self-identify as Cis-gendered (born female), Indigenous feminists, and registered clinical therapists.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the categories and subcategories were analyzed through a harmonizing of Indigenous theoretical perspectives and feminist grounded methodology.

The first category is Indigenous identity. Subcategories were: Indigenous identity is diverse, naming oppression, and reconciling privilege. In this section, participants spoke to their sense of Indigenous identity, which includes aspects of womanhood/personhood and motherhood/kinship relations. Participants also discussed their experiences of oppression and privilege in relation to structural factors; colonialism, hetero-patriarchy, and cultural genocide.

The second category is navigating and negotiating power within Indigenous and mainstream communities. In this section I note there are tensions experienced in navigating between communities, whether that is urban and rural, or Indigenous and mainstream. Subcategories here include: Indigenous feminist counselor praxis, academic roles, and in-between roles. Participants discussed working within systems that both “do harm” and frequently fail in their understanding of cultural differences and systemic problems embedded in mainstream structures.

The third category is Indigenous worldviews and ways of being. Subcategories included: Elders, learning cultural practices, incorporating Indigenous values, maintaining one’s wellness, building community and social supports, and teaching others.

The main takeaways from the findings

- Indigenous feminisms have been here a long while before mainstream feminism.
- Identity is diverse, and it is possible to grow up outside one's Indigenous family and community, and still claim an Indigenous identity.
- Accessing and learning from an Elder is a privilege, and if you are fortunate to have a teacher, this is an invaluable resource of role modeling Indigenous values in one's practice.
- Mainstream clinicians tend to avoid bringing spirit into counseling spaces, but spirituality is not separate, but an integral aspect of an Indigenous feminist counseling practice.
- Indigenous feminist counselors critique western counseling practices that are harming.
- Relationships are reciprocal, counselors and students learn from each other.
- Following one's intuition is grounded in connection to one's body, mind, and spirit and the world around them (rocks, nature, water, animals, medicines).
- Rules do not always make sense, therefore it is okay to question the status quo.

Limitations

To be fair, even I am transparent about my self-doubt and lack of experience. I do think that my inexperience in interviewing revealed missed opportunities to follow up on some things that were expressed in the interviews. In hindsight, I wish I had been able to ask more questions. I also wish I had selected semi-structured questions vs. structured questions. Of course, hindsight is perfect. I think these are more limitations inherent to the project and tight timeline.

I wish that I had been successful in interviewing a non-binary participant for this study. I had previously confirmed a participant who self-identified as Two-spirit, but I was unable to reschedule them after a cancellation. Although some participants discussed their ongoing work

with Indigenous members of the LGBTQ community, it is not the same as having them participate in this study. This would give LGBTQ voices and representation in this study.

We know men and Indigenous men self-identify as feminist. It would have been interesting to get male gender perspectives on the research questions.

Lastly, in hindsight, I wish that I had subverted power relations with respect to Indigenous healers and Elders, who ought to be considered at the same level as Western-trained counselors within this research study. The participants in this study mentioned Elders are an invaluable resource within their cultural learning and counselor praxis. The time limit of this study did not facilitate the possibility of decolonizing and reordering notions of power and the inclusion of Elder as counselor. Thus, opening up more participants in this study could have enriched the results of this research.

Future implications of this study

I am hopeful this study highlights and supports the formal development and articulation of an Indigenous feminist counseling theory and practice, which we know is already in full practice via the clinical practices of the formidable and resonant Indigenous therapists I interviewed. I hope that more study and inquiry will be taken up to further this project. In a future study, I see the need for a larger sample size of interview participants, inclusion of male and gender diverse participants, and participants who have grown up either on-reserve or Métis settlements.

Mii'iw (that's all)

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Appendix A

The research questions are as follows:

Questions: First Interview

1. Worldviews

- a) What is your cultural background, current profession, and experience within Indigenous communities?
- b) What forms of cultural experience and education have informed your practice?
- c) What forms of academic experience and education have informed your practice?
- d) How have your worldviews prepared you to work with Indigenous peoples using Feminist counseling theory?

2. Indigenous Approaches to Wellness

- a) How would you describe wellness, as understood in Indigenous communities?
- b) How would you describe a holistic approach to working with an individual?
- c) How would you describe a holistic approach to working with a community?
- d) Are holistic approaches part of your practice? And if yes, please describe how.

3. Critiquing Counseling

- a) When working with Indigenous clients - do you use Indigenous theories and healing modalities? If so, please describe?
- b) When working with Indigenous clients, how do you provide context to structural and systemic experiences?
- c) How do you maintain your wellness as a therapist while simultaneously addressing structural factors that are not easily resolved nor reconciled, e.g. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Boys and Men?

- e) What counseling theories do you find helpful?
- e) Which Indigenous philosophies and cultural healing practices do you use in addressing: Trauma, depression, anxiety, Intergenerational effects, PTSD, and ongoing impacts of colonialism?

Questions: Second Interview

- 5) How did you feel reading the transcripts of the interview?
- 6) Are you comfortable with the information that you have shared in answering the questions that will inform this research study?
- 7) Is there anything that you would like to add to, or delete from, your previous interview?
- 8) Would you like to maintain your anonymity through use of a one-name pseudonym or self-identify using your first and last name, as indicated on the original consent to participate form or would you like to reverse your decision?

Appendix B

Institutional Review Board Certificate of Approval

IRB ID# Blanchette_Sanders032519

Principal Investigator (if faculty research):
Student Researcher: Jodi Blanchette
Faculty Advisor: Colin Sanders
Department: DAS M. couns.

Title: Making space for Indigenous feminist counseling theory.

Approved on: March 25, 2019

- Full Board Review
- Expedited Review (US)
- Delegated Review (Can)
- Exempt (US)

CERTIFICATION

City University of Seattle has reviewed the above-named research project. The proposal was found to be acceptable on ethical grounds. The Faculty Advisor Colin Sanders and the student researcher Jodi Blanchette have the responsibility for any other administrative or regulatory approvals that may pertain to this research project, and for ensuring that the authorized research is carried out according to the conditions outlined in the original Ethical Review Protocol submitted for ethics review.

This ***Certificate of Approval*** is valid provided there is no change in experimental protocol, consent process, or documents. Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures are required to be reported to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board in advance of its implementation.



Brian Guthrie Ph D, RSW, RCSW
Chair, IRB City University of Seattle

Appendix C

School/Division of _____

CITYU RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Study:

Name and Title of Researcher(s):

CityUniversity
of Seattle

For Faculty Researcher(s):

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U Email: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

For Student Researcher(s):

Faculty Supervisor: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U E-mail: _____

Program Coordinator (or Program Director):

Sponsor, if any:

Key Information about this Research Study

You are being invited to participate in a research study.

The researcher will explain this research study to you before you will be asked to participate in the study and before you sign this consent form.

- You do not have to participate in this research.
- It is your choice whether or not you want to participate in this research.
- Your participation is voluntary and you can decide not to participate or withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or negative consequences.
- You should talk to the researcher(s) about the study and ask them as many questions you need to help you make your decision.

What should I know about being a participant in this research study?

This form contains important information that will help you decide whether to join the study. Take the time to carefully review this information.

You are eligible to participate in this study because you _____.

You will be in this research study for approximately _____.

About __ individuals will participate in this study.

To make your decision, you must consider all the information below:

- The purpose of the research
- The procedures of the research. That is, what you will be asked to do and how much of your time will be required.
- The risks of participating in the research.
- The benefits of participating in the research and whether participation is worth the risk.

If you decide to join the study, you will be asked to sign this form before you can start study-related activities.

Why is this research being done?

Purpose of Study:

Research Participation.

You will be asked to participate in the following procedures:

I understand I am being asked to participate in this study in one or more of the following ways (initial options below that apply):

Respond to in-person and/or telephone Interview questions; Approximate time _____

Answer written questionnaire(s); Approximate time _____

Participate in other data gathering activities, specifically, _____; Approximate time _____

Other, specifically, _____. Approximate time _____

You may refuse to answer any question or any item in verbal interviews, written questionnaires or surveys, and, you can stop or withdraw from any audio or visual recording at any time without any penalty or negative consequences.

Are there any risks, stress or discomforts that I will experience as a result of being a participant in this study?

Taking part in this research involves certain risks: This could include:

Will being a participant in this study benefit me in any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your participation in this research.

However, possible benefits may include _____.

You will receive ____ for your participation in this research.

You will not receive any payment for participation in this study.

Confidentiality

I understand that participation is confidential to the limits of applicable privacy laws. No one except the faculty researcher or student researcher, his/her supervisor and Program Coordinator (or Program Director) will be allowed to view any information or data collected whether by questionnaire, interview and/or other means.

If the student researcher's cooperating classroom teacher will also have access to raw data, the following box will be initialed by the researcher.

Steps will be taken to protect your identity, however, information collected about you can never be 100% secure. Your name and any other identifying information that can directly identify you will be stored separately from data collected as part of the research study. The results of this study will be published as a thesis and potentially published in an academic book or journal, or presented at an academic conference. To protect your privacy no information that could directly identify you will be included.

All data (the questionnaires, audio/video tapes, typed records of the interview, interview notes, informed consent forms, computer discs, any backup of computer discs and any other storage devices) are kept locked and computer files will be encrypted and password protected by the researcher. The research data will be stored for _____ years (5 years). At the end of that time all data of whatever nature will be permanently destroyed. The published results of the study will contain data from which no individual participant can be identified.

Signatures

I have carefully reviewed and understand this consent form. I understand the description of the research protocol and consent process provided to me by the researcher. My signature on this form indicates that I understand to my satisfaction the information provided to me about my participation in this research project. My signature also indicates that I have been apprised of the potential risks involved in my participation. Lastly, my signature indicates that I agree to participate as a research subject.

My consent to participate does not waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, and/or City University of Seattle from their legal and professional responsibilities with respect to this research. I understand I am free to withdraw from this research study at any time. I further understand that I may ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation at any time during this research.

I have been advised that I may request a copy of the final research study report. Should I request a copy, I understand that I will be asked to pay the costs of photocopy and mailing.

Participant's Name: _____
Please Print

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: _____
Please Print

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If I have any questions about this research, I have been advised to contact the researcher and/or his/her supervisor, as listed on page one of this consent form.

Should I have any concerns about the way I have been treated or think that I have been harmed as a research participant, I may contact the following individual(s):

_____, Program Coordinator (and/or Program Director), City University of Seattle, at _____ (address, direct phone line and CityU email address).

This study has been reviewed and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of City University of Seattle. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the IRB at IRB@Cityu.edu.



School/Division of _____

**CITYU RESEARCH INFORMED CONSENT
FOR PARENT-LEGAL GUARDIAN OF PARTICIPANT**

Title of Study:

Name and Title of Researcher(s):

For Faculty Researcher(s):

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U Email: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

For Student Researcher(s):

Faculty Supervisor: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U E-mail: _____

Program Coordinator (or Program Director):

Sponsor, if any:

Key Information about this Research Study

Why is my child being invited to participate in this research?

The researcher will provide you with information about this research study to you before you will be asked for permission for your child to participate in the research study and before you sign this consent form.

- You do not have to give permission for your child to participate in this research.
- It is your choice whether or not you want your child to participate in this research.

- Your child’s participation is voluntary and you can decide to not let them continue to participate and you can withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the research study at any time without penalty or negative consequences.
- You should talk to the researcher(s) about the study and ask them as many questions you need to help you make your decision.

What should I know about my child’s participation in this research study?

This form contains important information that will help you decide whether give permission for your child to participate in this research study. Take the time to carefully review this information.

Your child is eligible to participate in this study because he/she _____.

Your child will be in this research study for approximately _____.

About __ individuals will participate in this study.

To make your decision, you must consider all the information below:

- The purpose of the research
- The procedures of the research. That is, what you will be asked to do and how much of your time will be required.
- The risks of participating in the research.
- The benefits of participating in the research and whether participation is worth the risk.

If you decide to give permission for your child to join this research study, you will be asked to sign this form before he/she can start study-related activities.

Why is this research being done?

Purpose of Study:

Research Participation.

You child will be asked to participate in the following procedures:

I understand that my child will be asked to participate in this research study in one or more of the following ways (initial options below that apply):

Respond to in-person and/or telephone Interview questions; Approximate time _____

Answer written questionnaire(s); Approximate time _____

Participate in other data gathering activities, specifically, _____; Approximate time _____

Other, specifically, _____. Approximate time _____

If you give permission for your child to participate in this research study they will also have to give their agreement. They will be informed that their participation is voluntary, confidential, and that they may refuse to answer any question or any item in verbal interviews, written questionnaires or surveys, and, that they can stop or withdraw from any audio or visual recording at any time without any penalty or negative consequences.

Are there any risks, stress or discomforts that my child may experience as a result of being a participant in this study?

Taking part in this research involves certain risks: This could include:

Will being a participant in this study benefit my child in any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your participation in this research.

However, possible benefits may include _____.

You will receive ____ for your participation in this research.

You will not receive any payment for participation in this study.

Confidentiality

I understand that participation is confidential to the limits of applicable privacy laws. No one except the faculty researcher or student researcher, his/her supervisor and Program Coordinator (or Program Director) will be allowed to view any information or data collected whether by questionnaire, interview and/or other means.

If the student researcher's cooperating classroom teacher will also have access to raw data, the following box will be initialed by the researcher.

Steps will be taken to protect your child's identity, however, information collected can never be 100% secure. Your child's name and any other identifying information that can directly identify them will be stored separately from data collected as part of the research study. The results of this study will be published as a thesis and potentially published in an academic book or journal, or presented at an academic conference. To protect your child's privacy no information that could directly identify him/her will be included.

All data (the questionnaires, audio/video tapes, typed records of the interview, interview notes, informed consent forms, computer discs, any backup of computer discs and any other storage devices) are kept locked and computer files will be encrypted and password protected by the

researcher. The research data will be stored for _____ years (5 years). At the end of that time all data of whatever nature will be permanently destroyed. The published results of the study will contain data from which no individual participant can be identified.

Signatures

I have carefully reviewed and understand this consent form. I understand the description of the research protocol and consent process provided to me by the researcher. My signature on this form indicates that I understand to my satisfaction the information provided to me about my child’s participation in this research project. My signature also indicates that I have been apprised of the potential risks involved by participation in this research study. Lastly, my signature indicates that I agree to allow my child to participate as a research subject.

My consent to participate does not waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, and/or City University of Seattle from their legal and professional responsibilities with respect to this research. I understand I am free to withdraw from this research study at any time. I further understand that I may ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation at any time during this research.

I have been advised that I may request a copy of the final research study report. Should I request a copy, I understand that I will be asked to pay the costs of photocopy and mailing.

Participant’s Name: _____
Please Print

Parent(s)/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Name: _____
Please Print

Researcher’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

If I have any questions about this research, I have been advised to contact the researcher and/or his/her supervisor, as listed on page one of this consent form.

Should I have any concerns about the way I have been treated or think that I have been harmed as a research participant, I may contact the following individual(s):

_____, Program Coordinator (and/or Program Director), City University of Seattle, at
_____ (address, direct phone line and City U email address).

This study has been reviewed and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of City University of Seattle. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the IRB at IRB@Cityu.edu.



**CITYU RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT
FOR ON-LINE SURVEYS AND INTERNET DATA COLLECTION**

Title of Study:

Name and Title of Researcher(s):

For Faculty Researcher(s):

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U Email: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

For Student Researcher(s):

Faculty Supervisor: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

City U E-mail: _____

Program Coordinator (or Program Director):

Sponsor, if any:

Key Information about this Research Study

You are being invited to participate in a research study.

You are being invited to participate in an on-line survey that is part of a research study that has been approved by City University of Seattle Institutional Review Board.

The researcher will provide information about this research study to you before you will be asked to participate in the study and before you sign this consent form.

- You do not have to participate in this research.
- It is your choice whether or not you want to participate in this research.
- Your participation is voluntary and you can decide not to participate or withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or negative consequences.

- You should talk to the researcher(s) about the study and ask them as many questions you need to help you make your decision.

What should I know about being a participant in this research study?

This form contains important information that will help you decide whether to join the study. Take the time to carefully review this information.

You are eligible to participate in this study because you _____.

You will be in this research study for approximately _____.

About __ individuals will participate in this study.

To make your decision, you must consider all the information below:

- The purpose of the research
- The procedures of the research. That is, what you will be asked to do and how much of your time will be required.
- The risks of participating in the research.
- The benefits of participating in the research and whether participation is worth the risk.

If you decide to join the study, you will be asked to sign this form before you can start study-related activities.

Why is this research being done?

Purpose of Study:

Research Participation.

You will be asked to participate in the following procedures:

I understand I am being asked to participate in this study by completing an on-line survey. The survey consists of _____ questions and is expected to take approximately _____ to complete. You may choose to answer as many questions as you decide and each question will have a “no response” choice.

Are there any risks, stress or discomforts that I will experience as a result of being a participant in this study?

Taking part in this research involves certain risks: This could include:

Will being a participant in this study benefit me in any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your participation in this research.

However, possible benefits may include _____.

You will receive ____ for your participation in this research.

You will not receive any payment for participation in this study.

Confidentiality

I understand that participation is confidential to the limits of applicable privacy laws. No one except the faculty researcher or student researcher, his/her supervisor and Program Coordinator (or Program Director) will be allowed to view any information or data collected whether by questionnaire, interview and/or other means.

If the student researcher's cooperating classroom teacher will also have access to raw data, the following box will be initialed by the researcher.

Steps will be taken to protect your identity, however, information collected about you can never be 100% secure. Your name and any other identifying information that can directly identify you will be stored separately from data collected as part of the research study. The results of this study will be published as a thesis and potentially published in an academic book or journal, or presented at an academic conference. To protect your privacy no information that could directly identify you will be included.

All data (the questionnaires, audio/video tapes, typed records of the interview, interview notes, informed consent forms, computer discs, any backup of computer discs and any other storage devices) are kept locked and computer files will be encrypted and password protected by the researcher. The research data will be stored for _____ years (5 years). At the end of that time all data of whatever nature will be permanently destroyed. The published results of the study will contain data from which no individual participant can be identified.

Signatures

I have carefully reviewed and understand this consent form. I understand the description of the research protocol and consent process provided to me by the researcher. My signature on this form indicates that I understand to my satisfaction the information provided to me about my participation in this research project. My signature also indicates that I have been apprised of the potential risks involved in my participation. Lastly, my signature indicates that I agree to participate as a research subject.

My consent to participate does not waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, and/or City University of Seattle from their legal and professional responsibilities with respect to this research. I understand I am free to withdraw from this research study at any time. I further understand that I may ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation at any time during this research.

I have been advised that I may request a copy of the final research study report. Should I request a copy, I understand that I will be asked to pay the costs of photocopy and mailing.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "**agree**" button below indicates that:

- you have read and understand all of the above information, and
- you voluntarily agree to participate, and
- you are at least 18 years of age.

If you **do not wish to participate** in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "**disagree**" button.

Agree

Disagree

Thank you,

Name of Researcher

CITY UNIVERSITY OF SEATTLE

General Statement of Confidentiality by Transcribers

Name of the Transcriber:

Title of Research Study:

Researcher Name:

Research Supervisor Name:

An important part of conducting research is having respect for privacy and confidentiality. In signing below, you are agreeing to respect the participant’s right to privacy and that of the people and organizations that may be included in the information collected. Such information may include interviews, questionnaires, diaries, audiotapes, and videotapes. As part of your role in the above research study, you are required to respect people’s right to confidentiality by not discussing the information collected in public, with friends or family members. The study and its participants are to be discussed only during research meetings with the Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators, Program Manager, and/or others identified by the Investigators.

By signing below, you are indicating that you understand the following:

- I understand the importance of providing anonymity (if relevant) and confidentiality to research participants.
- I understand that the research information may contain references to individuals or organizations in the community, other than the participant. I understand that this information is to be kept confidential.
- I understand that the information collected is not to be discussed or communicated outside of research meetings with the Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators or others specifically identified by the Investigators.
- When transcribing audio or videotapes (where applicable), I will be the only one to hear the tapes and I will store these tapes and transcripts in a secure location at all times.
- I understand that the data files (electronic and hard copy) are to be secured at all times (e.g., not left unattended) and returned to the Principal Investigator when the transcription process or research study, whichever is earlier, is complete.

By signing my name below, I agree to the above statements and promise to guarantee the anonymity (if relevant) and confidentiality of the research participants

Signature of Transcriber: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____