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Indigenous Pedagogies: Land, Water, and Kinship

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Introduction

Indigenous Pedagogies: Land, Water, and Kinship

Anna Lees and Megan Bang

Indigenous communities, across lands and waters, engage in and build complex knowledge systems emergent from particular values and ways of perceiving and being in the world (Cajete, 1994; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Indigenous knowledge systems, values, and ways of being are understood and enacted within socio-ecological systems grounded in reciprocal kin relations. Meaning: for Indigenous peoples, teaching, learning, living, and being in relation with human and more-than-human beings is central to our knowledge systems. In Issue #49 of the Bank Street *Occasional Paper Series*, “Indigenous Pedagogies: Land, Water and Kinship,” we bring together Indigenous educators and researchers to demonstrate how Indigenous teaching and learning takes form across contexts.

Indigenous lifeways have endured since time immemorial and demonstrate how humans and more-than-humans can live reciprocally in healthy, thriving ecosystems. That said, projects of colonization throughout the globe have worked to decimate Indigenous value systems and ways of being and have denied the intellectual legitimacy of Indigenous knowledge systems. This has in part occurred through the reconstruction of land as property (Harris, 1993) and resource for capital gain, and the positioning of humans as superior and entitled to control land, water, and more-than-humans, while denying the personhood and capacities of non-human life forms. These foundational relational construals between humans and the natural world defined by the notion of human supremacy have been named many things over time (e.g., human exceptionalism). They have created the conditions for hierarchical forms of social power throughout history in which Indigenous communities across the globe have been positioned as less-than-human, thus legitimizing or pardoning the violence of colonialism (Bang, 2017). The settler colonial paradigms¹ driven by human supremacy that continue to drive global modernity have devastatingly altered global ecosystems and resulted in changing climates that put the future of not just Indigenous peoples, but all humans, and our more-than-human relatives, in peril.

Settler colonialism has built structures and social systems that required the separation of Indigenous peoples from our homelands and communities and forced new ways of living and being—including individual land allotments, farming, patriarchal social structures, age segregation, and language assimilation. The forced shifts in foundational relations and routine practices of everyday life are consequential for the ways in which Indigenous peoples learn. The separations have disrupted the pedagogical practices and knowledges of Indigenous communities, and impacted the ways in which Indigenous knowledge systems are learned and developed in new generations. Efforts to eliminate Indigenous knowledges as complex intellectual systems have also taken place through compulsory schooling and the onset of boarding (or residential) schools. This continues in the present in a plethora of ways. For example, there is a profound absence of Indigenous peoples, our histories, or our lifeways in pre-K-12 education, which produces a citizenry that has no or minimal knowledge of Native peoples or ethical commitments to our sovereignty, and even our right to exist as peoples (Sabzalian et al., 2021; Shear et al., 2015).

Further, education has been primarily relegated to an indoor activity—separated from families,

1 Settler colonialism is defined as a type of colonialism in which foreign settlers move to and permanently reside on land already inhabited by Indigenous residents, with the goal of eliminating them and their cultures and replacing them with a settler society.

communities, and land. These examples offer insights into how settler colonialism has impacted Indigenous communities and depict the conditions that have led to efforts of self-determination, decolonization, and resurgence. While the realities of colonialism are devastating, it is equally important and remarkable that Indigenous communities have managed to maintain and grow our ways of knowing and being and continue to revitalize our pedagogical practices and forms of education. This special issue was born from the assertion that Indigenous pedagogies are necessary to facilitate teaching and learning environments that nurture Indigenous values and knowledge systems and work to cultivate forms of life that support social and ecological thriving now and in the future. We think that Indigenous pedagogies can provide insights into forms of education that are needed for all students, given the necessary adaptations and preparations young people need for a changing climate and the coming large-scale social and ecological changes.

As Anishinaabe scholars, educators, relatives, and community members, we—the guest editors—make sense of these challenging times and efforts through our experiences living on and away from our homelands. Anna is a Waganakasing Odawa descendent of Scottish, German, African American, Italian, and English ancestry. She spent her early career as an early childhood classroom teacher (infants through kindergarten) and continues her work as a teacher educator collaborating with teachers in classroom and child care settings and engaging intergenerational learning out of school. Megan is of Ojibwe and Italian descent. She spent her early career as a teacher in a preschool classroom and went on to teach at elementary, middle, and high school levels before becoming a researcher and teacher educator. She works to transform models of education to achieve collective thriving. Anna and Megan collaborate closely together in multiple learning environments. As we came together to consider our experiences and understandings of Indigenous pedagogies, we reflected on our own upbringings—the work we have done and the guidance we continue to receive from our families and communities. As Anishinaabekwe, we know from our stories that humans have always made relations throughout earth and that these relations both help us know how to be in the world and allow our communities to thrive. We also know that challenging times, socially and ecologically, were to be expected and that if we live in a good way we can bring forth our collective continuance (e.g., Whyte, 2018).

As we face changing climates across the earth, many people are beginning to look to Indigenous knowledges to navigate these challenges. Scientists across disciplines (e.g., Kimmerer, 2013; Simard, 2021) and policymakers (White House, 2021) are beginning to recognize and understand the deep insight Indigenous knowledge systems offer for understanding and studying changing climates and ecologies. For example, in 2022 the federal government recognized Indigenous knowledges “as one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contributes to the scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements of the United States and to our collective understanding of the natural world” (White House, 2021). In addition, the US has begun to develop policies and practices for the routine engagement with Indigenous knowledges and consultation with tribal nations. Federal and state policies have also begun recognizing the importance of including Indigenous knowledges and understandings of tribal sovereignty for all US citizens (e.g., Bang & Brayboy, 2021), incorporating new content about Native peoples into state standards and curricular initiatives. The recognition of and movement toward epistemological heterogeneity in policy, science, schools, and society is, in our opinion, deeply hopeful and necessary for decolonization and thriving futures. At the same time, we are worried about the growing forms of repression occurring in US schools. State and local governments increasingly use schools as sites to deny this heterogeneity and aim to maintain current paradigms and even restore oppressive conditions of past generations—particularly with respect to race, gender, and sexuality—and deny intellectual legitimacy to those not aligned with dominant forms of knowledge and knowing.

Recognizing the direct connections between policy issues and the lived everyday experience of children and families, we believe that attention toward Indigenous pedagogies is necessary to develop

interconnected, relational learning systems for children and families. Following from our understanding of knowledge as relational and contextual, Indigenous pedagogies help us to attend to how teaching and learning take place. Attending pedagogically to the *how* offers intellectual space to consider the ways we collectively support healthy human development and attend to the values that underlie how we make meaning of Indigenous knowledges as they are situated across time and place. By working to understand this, we can foster continued educator development to engage Indigenous knowledge systems in ways that support the development of all children, knowing that pedagogical or instructional approaches must be learned, developed, and practiced with support in order to be positive and effective. We have committed ourselves to better understanding this process in our own work and build from these experiences in our articulation of Indigenous pedagogies for others to engage and further develop.

As we strive to articulate how we understand, develop, and enact Indigenous pedagogies, we are conscious of the range of positionalities and contexts in which readers of Issue 49 may be situated. We expect Indigenous pedagogies to be of interest to many educators—Indigenous educators working within their homelands and those working in communities other than their own; non-Indigenous educators working with Indigenous children and families; non-Indigenous educators working with non-Indigenous communities; and across these contexts, both White educators and educators of Color. However readers may identify, and in whatever context you are situated, we encourage you to reflect on your positionality in making sense of how you interpret the ideas and insights provided in Issue 49. We ask you to consider how you come to understand, develop, and enact Indigenous pedagogies with ethical commitments to children’s thriving in the everyday and to Indigenous peoples’ collective continuance.

INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGIES

While Indigenous knowledge systems have been written about extensively (e.g., Barnhardt & Kawagly, 2005; 2008; Cajete, 1994; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001), we find a need to continue contributing toward the articulation of Indigenous pedagogies across the field with hopes of helping to concretize or illuminate how they take form in the world. Indigenous knowledge systems are often characterized at the aggregate or collective level of community, and often through adult perspective discourses or in their most expert form—meaning their development and enactments in childhood or in exchange between children and adults, or novices and experts, are not as robustly articulated. While this has happened in many ways for necessary and sensible reasons from Indigenous communal perspectives—for example, trying to understand our complete knowledge systems or what our Elders know—it also reflects a privileging of Western academic priorities that may not serve our communities well. For example, documentation of Indigenous languages has largely focused on adult-to-adult discourse, limiting what we know about how fluent speakers speak to and with children. In some ways, these sorts of dynamics have limited what we know about supporting or understanding healthful Indigenous children’s development. A focus on Indigenous pedagogies (which includes, in our opinion, child-rearing practices) is a critical step in helping to cultivate thriving and sustainable communities.

There are risks in trying to specify Indigenous pedagogies. First, no articulation would be complete or sufficient or could minimize the complexity. And without serious ongoing engagement to reflect, refine, and improve practices, educational systems might take these up in a way that results in a mere checklist of completion. For non-Indigenous educators, there is always the risk of engaging stereotypes that continue the objectification and miseducation about Indigenous peoples and practices. Nonetheless, we work to describe some of the key dimensions in our work. While these dimensions do not encompass all Indigenous pedagogies, and are certainly reflective of the values, experiences, and needs of our own communities and those we work with, we believe they are important and that they might be used more widely. We hope that they will serve as an invitation to others to continue to articulate and refine pedagogical practices that serve our collective wellbeing. More specifically, we focus on core

pedagogical practices involving lands and waters, kin relations, intergenerationality, and cultural forms of life. Within cultural forms of life we emphasize language, storywork, civics, and subsistence practices—by which we mean those practices—including artistic/creative practices, which we see as necessary for healthy life.

LANDS AND WATERS

Living in meaningful, intentional relations with lands and waters, and the more-than-human relatives within, is an essential way of life for Indigenous peoples and necessary in learning environments to reflect community ways of being. For many, living these relations involves a process of (re)learning within our daily activities and routines. Pedagogically then, educators must actively engage and collaborate with lands and waters in the teaching and learning process, which to be clear requires that education (and educator development) take place outdoors on/with lands and waters. Engaging and collaborating means that lands and waters hold an active role in the learning environment and contribute pedagogically to children's experiences, understandings, and development. For many Indigenous peoples, more-than-human relatives have personhood, agency, and are afforded respect and dignity as a fellow life form; and thus, can actively participate in teaching and learning. Engaging lands and waters pedagogically requires educators to develop relationships with the natural world in order to understand the surrounding ecosystem and more-than-human characteristics. This requires educators themselves to spend a great deal of time outdoors and to trust the knowledges held within lands and waters that contribute to human learning.

In these conditions, educators may work to facilitate meaningful outdoor learning experiences with children and families in collaboration with lands and waters. In practice, this looks like children, families, and educators walking lands and waters with educators, helping learners to notice, observe, perceive, and wonder about socio-ecological systems, and completing inquiries to build their knowledge of the world around them.

We see this take form in the examples of reading lands and waters depicted in this issue by Forrest Bruce, Megan Bang, Anna Lees, Nikki McDaid, Felicia Peters, and Jeanette Bushnell. In their article, an elder educator supports young people in developing skills in reading and interpreting water and atmospheric patterns. They demonstrate how educators can scaffold learner interaction with lands, waters, and more-than-humans by prompting observations, wonderings, and interpretations, as well as offering distinct content to support understandings. We can also offer ample opportunity for children to develop these relationships in ways that afford them natural outlets for reciprocal communication with the natural world, so they learn on/with lands and waters as routine experience. Such routine experiences and water relations are brought to life by Marissa Aki'Nene Muñoz, who shares stories of the Rio Grande across generations along with the possible futures of these relations within contemporary nation state and Indigenous peoples' scales of time and space.

KIN RELATIONS

Living with and as kin is a core value and way of being for Indigenous peoples that drives the ways in which we must design and enact positive learning environments. Living and learning in kinship is intricately connected with land, water, and place. In this issue, Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy articulates place and kinship through the ways in which Indigenous knowledges, including pedagogies, take form from and with place as relative. Following the interruption of kinship in school-based learning from the onset of boarding schools, and the contemporary structures of age segregation, indoor learning, and focus on individual achievement, there is much to be done to (re)instate kinship as a primary relational dimension of teaching and learning. We've been working to make sense of this. What

is a process for coming to understand and bring into practice kin relations that do not romanticize or shallowly represent the complexities of how we understand our roles, relationships, responsibilities, and sharing of gifts as family beyond colonial enclosures? We find that it takes intention and commitment to live as kin and see this as radical resurgence in the everyday (Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2017). And for educators working in schools or other formal settings, it requires a substantial shift in the teacher-student-family and human-more-than-human dynamic to reconnect these roles away from a transactional model toward one of relationality. To find words to express our thinking around kin relations, we draw on the work of Van Horn and colleagues (2021), who have thought deeply about kinship in their edited series across conceptions of planet, place, partners, persons, and practice. In their theorizing of kinship, they put forth the notion of “kinship as a verb... kinning” (p. 3) where, “being kin is not so much a given as it is an intentional process. Kinning does not depend upon genetic codes. Rather it is cultivated by humans, as one expression of life among many, many, many others, and it revolves around an ethical question: how to rightly relate?” (p. 3).

Wondering “how to rightly relate?” has driven much of our time together as we work to create conditions for Indigenous children and communities to thrive and find joy now and into the future, and for us to live out our teachings as Anishinaabekwe. We also see this as an important beginning for educators working to enact Indigenous pedagogies. The question of “how to rightly relate?” is also a challenging one. While being in good relations is nurturing and sustaining for human and more-than-human peoples, it can also be quite difficult. Many of us must rebuild our understandings of and attunements to our relations with more-than-human relatives, getting to know the plant, animal, and other beings who give us life and teach us how to be in the world.

In this issue, Donna Reid-Hayes depicts her efforts to engage this process with young children through a series of learning experiences with land, water, and more-than-human relatives in a kindergarten in Hawai‘i. This example demonstrates how educators, families, and communities can come together to (re)claim kin relations in education and how this process can take form intentionally, iteratively, and with generosity to foster children’s development and the process of decolonization. And while this process can elicit beauty and joy, such engagement between human people—relating rightly in a web of kinship—entails complex interpersonal dynamics where our kin may not always bring out the best in us. This is compounded through colonial constructs of individual achievement and self-gain that ground many of today’s education systems. Kimmerer offers insight as she reflects on these complexities and shares that “kinship arises not because we are the same, but because we are different. It is the respect for difference and the love that comes across difference that makes kinship hard. It is easier to love the beings that are the same as you. It is a lot harder to love those who are different than you. It is a lot harder to weave love across scale and culture and into the sovereignty of other beings” (Van Horn et al., 2021, p. 128).

In their paper, Hollie Kulago, Paul Guernsey, and Wayne Wapeemukwa share insights into the challenges of living and working within epistemological difference and the deep effort and intentionality necessary to enact Indigenous pedagogies within such complexities. While no one in this issue has claimed ease or sureness in these efforts, this reflection offers a place to begin: if we can all work to love, as Van Horn says, “across scale and culture and into the sovereignty of other beings” (2021, p. 128), we may forward our desires toward collective continuance through both school and community-based practices.

INTERGENERATIONAL

The separation of human people into discrete age groups for the purposes of teaching and learning

is a recent phenomenon grounded in settler colonial and capitalist ideals. Reinstating kinship as a premise of teaching and learning is contingent upon the development of intergenerational learning environments. Intergenerationality is present throughout this issue. Stephany RunningHawk Johnson and Sequoia Dance share how an Indigenous language teacher insisted upon mixed-age groups as he engaged children in classroom-based learning; Bruce, Bang, Lees, McDaid, Peters, and Bushnell engage this through an intergenerational outdoor learning program; and Muñoz shares daily, family-based routines that afford learning with, from, and by/in the river. The intergenerational dimension of Indigenous pedagogies is an important companion to kin relations, whereas learning as a social engagement takes form within community contexts that include children across ages, adults, and Elders—as seen by Reid-Hayes bringing children’s learning into the community context with their families. This allows for a natural representation of experiences, perspectives, knowledges, and wonderings that afford opportunities for collective teaching, learning, and sense-making.

Bringing forward intergenerational teaching and learning also disrupts the construct of one teacher leading a large group of children. Shifting the arrangements of teacher/learner, we shift how knowledge is transferred and developed and move toward a model of collectivity rather than one of individual growth and achievement. Educators can engage intergenerational learning by building their teaching and learning alongside families. Beyond a model of mandated family partnership or engagement, educators can work in relationship with families to value and make visible the ways family learning takes form within complex knowledge systems and practices. In school-based learning, this supports connections to everyday life that afford meaningful learning and developing understandings within more coherent educational experiences, as James Whistocken LaSarte does in his curriculum development featured in the paper by RunningHawk Johnson and Dance. Such relationships require that educators design opportunities and invitations for families to share themselves, their knowledges, and their daily routines in support of a more intergenerational learning environment.

CULTURAL FORMS OF LIFE

While Indigenous cultures have been a focus of curriculum content over time and have typically taken an anthropological approach in school-based teaching and learning (Sabzalian, 2019), we see opportunities to engage culture in learning environments that reflect Indigenous lifeways and have the potential to nurture children’s healthy development and community wellness. Here, we depict storywork, communal and cultural practices, language, and civic responsibility as important cultural elements to engage pedagogically. This is not the extent of Indigenous culture and we are not advocating that readers take up efforts to “teach culture.” Rather, we understand and support cultural approaches to teaching and learning. Teaching within cultural forms of life allows children and families to see educational programming that fosters the values and knowledge systems important for their communities and that have the potential for children to build the necessary skills to uphold their developing roles and responsibilities.

STORYWORK

With so much around Indigenous values, knowledges, and ways of being held within Indigenous stories, storying pedagogically is a necessary component of Indigenous activity systems. Stories teach us how we can be in the world, the histories of our sacred places, the gifts shared from human and more-than-human relations, how to learn and recover from mistakes we make, and how to live a good life overall. One must know stories to engage them pedagogically. We see this across the articles in this issue as authors have each engaged storywork in their own right. Stories also take form through making and artistic representation—where the arts, songs, dance, and other outward forms of expression embody

and transmit stories between peoples, space, and time. Opportunities to listen to and tell stories repeatedly as well as to make and create allows both storytellers and story listeners/observers to engage with the depth of content and teachings held within stories. Repeated telling, listening, observing, making, and creating also embraces the ways in which our understandings of stories develop differently with each telling in different times and places.

Jo-Ann Archibald has theorized storywork extensively throughout her career (Archibald, 2008; Archibald et al., 2022) and in this issue offers an important depiction of the pedagogical nature of storywork. We encourage educators to consider the significance of storywork and storying in ways that are different from reading books aloud as part of our instructional practice. Taking time to learn and know stories in order to tell them, rather than read them, and valuing the aesthetic and intellectual nature of making them is an important aspect of bringing stories to life in ways that connect them to the moment in time and place in which they are told.

SUBSISTENCE PRACTICES

Knowing how to live as Indigenous peoples in the places we come from and reside in is an essential part of sustaining ourselves as humans and in respectful relationships with more-than-humans. Our stories hold teachings of how to live on this earth, including how to acquire, prepare, and preserve food sources, medicines, and everyday necessities and how to develop and enact artistic and creative processes. Pedagogically, this means that we take seriously the inclusion of subsistence practices in learning environments and view this as a natural connection with learning with and on lands and waters. Offering opportunities for learners to observe and enact respectful hunting and harvesting practices and develop their skills in processing the gifts offered from the lives of plants and animals builds their readiness to live a sustainable life. For example, opportunities to harvest nettle or cedar—and learn the medicinal properties of these plants and how to make teas and salves for healing—is a skill that can serve us across the lifespan, is applicable in many geographic places, and builds understandings toward greater plant medicine knowledge. In developing subsistence practices with nettle and cedar, we can also engage the numerous gifts offered by more-than-humans. With cedar, we can build from medicinal properties to cordage and basket-making, canoes and housing, and carved goods. We can also engage understandings and respect for the gifts shared between more-than-humans, with cedar offering food for deer and other animals and older cedars providing the conditions for young cedar to thrive. These examples of subsistence through relations with nettle and cedar are applicable to other plants; to hunting deer, elk, ducks, and other animals; and to fishing, crabbing, and shellfish gathering.

Bringing these teachings into learning environments requires collaboration with lands and waters and each other, as typically one human does not hold all of these teachings or gifts. We see this through Reid-Hayes' description of bringing young children to help repair the fish pond, and with RunningHawk Johnson's and Dance's discussion of curriculum design around relations with water potatoes. In both instances, the learning environment was developed in relation with local practices, knowledges, and phenology (i.e., cyclical and seasonal impacts on plant and animal life cycles).

Engaging subsistence practices in teaching and learning also requires us to see the epistemological value in harvesting, making, and engaging the arts. The creativity and aesthetic value of these practices should not be undervalued. Making, creating, singing, and dancing are all essential life practices to foster human development and wellness and are embedded aspects of our intellectual gifts. Basket-making, for example, may not be necessary to functional routines in contemporary times, but for Indigenous education, the pedagogical practice of teaching and learning that takes form through weaving helps one understand their roles and responsibilities within their community. These practices depict the beauty and technological innovation held in Indigenous knowledges and lifeways that

foster positive self-identity and a depth of understanding around socio-ecological systems and the relationships between humans and more-than-humans—as well as mathematical and engineering concepts held within harvesting, cultivating, and processing. We hope that this articulation begins to depict the depth of teaching and learning that takes place through subsistence practices and helps educators to see ways that such learning can offer rich, culturally nourishing learning opportunities.

LANGUAGE

Opportunities to teach and learn Indigenous languages are necessary for understanding how we are meant to live and be in relation with each other and the world. Indigenous languages offer localized teachings to understand the natural world and ways of interacting with humans and more-than-humans. For example, Indigenous place names offer descriptions and stories of the places and land/water features within our communities. Plant, animal, and human names often depict the gifts and characteristics of these beings that help us to better understand their roles, responsibilities, and relationships in the world. Offering opportunities for Indigenous language learning is also of substantial importance in building Indigenous children’s identity and wellness. RunningHawk Johnson and Dance offer insight into the importance of engaging Indigenous language education in schools within meaningful contexts; in their case, they explicitly bring together language and science learning. Reid-Hayes importantly shares the process of an educator beginning to integrate Indigenous language into the learning environment with the support of families, showing how educators themselves embrace their own learning and development in the best interests of children.

In most places, Indigenous language education requires and should entail intergenerational learning environments where children, adults, and Elders can learn together through stories and ancestral teachings. Such an intergenerational and community-driven approach is important for all educators and will help make clear what the role may be for non-Indigenous educators or Indigenous educators away from their homelands who are looking to support Indigenous language education.

Indigenous language education takes form in different ways across different communities. We see language immersion programs working to develop fluent speakers (McCarty et al., 2021), teacher/learner models where adults are learning the language as they teach others (Lees et al., in press), and vocabulary-based instruction where single words or simple phrases are interwoven with English instruction. And we find value and encourage the use of every effort. Engaging Indigenous languages as central to Indigenous knowledge systems restores community practices of teaching and learning. As educators, demonstrating the value of Indigenous language across learning settings is a pedagogical effort to reverse longstanding policies and practices of linguistic.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Much work has developed around Indigenous nation-building and the inclusion of Indigenous histories and sovereignty in pre-K-12 curriculum. The importance of understanding tribal sovereignty and nationhood is fundamental in fostering positive settler-Indigenous relations. The political nature of these is at the core of treaty agreements as we know them today and in how federal and state educational initiatives have taken form. We value these efforts and maintain that pedagogical aspects of nationhood and sovereignty must begin with what Bang and Brayboy (2021) have named Indigenous civics. Indigenous civics forwards “ancestral teachings about how to be a good human and live a good life, and to fulfill our responsibilities to be good relatives” (p. 165).

In their paper, Kulago, Guernsey, and Wapeemukwa bring to light how educators work to fulfill their responsibilities within the context of higher education and help us to see the ways in which non-Indigenous educators and Indigenous educators living away from their homelands can contribute to

the recognition of tribal sovereignty and nationhood in education. Bang and Brayboy offer a framework for engaging such civic responsibility as a core construct to support the teaching of tribal sovereignty in classroom and community settings. Beginning with Indigenous civics and our collective civic responsibility, we can ask:

- What roles, relations, and responsibilities do we have with each other?
 - With more-than-human life?
 - With the land and the waters upon which all life depends?
- How should we nurture and uphold those relations?
- Who could we collectively become? (Bang & Brayboy, 2021, p. 165)

These questions move us away from sovereignty education that forwards politics of recognition (Coulthard, 2014) and instead engage learning environments committed to our collective continuance (Whyte, 2018). In this issue, we see Linda Tuhiwai Smith's offering around the significance of acknowledging land as an act of Indigenous civics, where she has reframed the institutional notion of land acknowledgments back to one of relationality and responsibility to land and water as kin.

Fostering Indigenous civics offers an opportunity to engage children's sensemaking and complex reasoning as they consider their developing roles, relationships, and responsibilities within their communities and recognize the gifts they can offer to humans and more-than-humans, as well as the gifts others have to offer. Bruce, Bang, Lees, McDaid, Peters, and Bushnell forward these efforts by promoting young people's developing relationships and responsibilities toward water as relative and the inherent sovereignty of water and water's relations with other more-than-human beings. Encouraging educators to embrace their role in forwarding Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood through a model of Indigenous civics offers important paths toward more just and sustainable lives for humans and more-than-humans.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGIES

Understanding the principles and complexities of Indigenous pedagogies is an important beginning to transforming teaching and learning environments with young children through the lifespan. We see the everyday enactments of Indigenous pedagogies as often iterative in nature. This means we reject a binary of "teaching Indigenous" or not as we work to (re)establish community-based practices that have endured since time immemorial and that have been minimized or forbidden for varying periods of time in many places. So, as we commit to serving Indigenous children and families through systems of education, we take steps forward toward our goals of resurgence and decolonization in the *what* and *how* of our teaching. We hope to have depicted the pedagogical dimensions and processes of development in the offered examples. To continue this, we share particulars of engaging Indigenous pedagogies on and off our homelands.

ON AND OFF HOMELANDS

Indigenous pedagogies develop and take form in relation with the lands, waters, and more-than-human relatives where we reside and teach and learn. Land, water, and human and more-than-human relations are necessary beginnings for developing and enacting Indigenous pedagogies for Indigenous educators living both on and away from their homelands. This includes a recognition of and responsibilities to issues of sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous peoples both in the US and globally. The nuance of teaching on and off homelands is an important aspect of educator positionality to attend to, considering that Indigenous peoples have always moved for seasonal practices, climate responses, economic activity, and knowledge transmission—as Brayboy examines in this issue.

Living, traveling, and working across territories is not a new endeavor. However, we recognize that human migrations over the last several centuries or more have been driven by power and dehumanization and reshaping relations to homelands. These forced and coerced migrations are often coupled with paradigms of race and White supremacy and simultaneously enact Indigenous erasure. To be explicit, Indigenous Africans were enslaved and brought to the US and identified as Black, not Indigenous (Kelley, 2017). Many Indigenous peoples from Central and South America become Latinx in a US context and their Indigeneity is erased (Urrieta & Calderón, 2019). We think the complexity of taking up Indigenous pedagogies and the histories of relations to homelands is profoundly complicated. But we also want to be careful about positioning our harm or colonial timeframes as the beginning from which Indigenous pedagogies are conceptualized and enacted. We know from our experiences and our stories that Indigenous people have always moved and have done so with intention and care. Understanding through story how this has taken form since time immemorial has been important in our own development as educators and the ways we work with children and families. We are thoughtful in this as so often the story of Indigenous migration begins with dispossession and relocation, and certainly that is the story mostly prevalent in pre-K-12 curriculum. Giving attention to how we teach on and off our homelands offers space to reflect positively on the factors that have led to the circumstances of where we reside. Knowing our histories and the histories of the place where we work and live is an important beginning to knowing how to be and how to fulfill our roles and responsibilities as educators.

We have each lived on and away from our homelands as students, educators, and relatives; we have lived close to one another and at a distance, and where we live has informed how we relate and work together. We have reflected on how our roles take different forms depending upon location and how developing our land and water relations serves as the core of our teaching and learning. When teaching on our homelands, we work to fulfill our relationships within a kinship network in which we were raised. These relationships with human and more-than-human relatives have guided our learning, interactions, and decision-making through our growth and development. They are familiar. Familiarity does not ease the complexity of teaching, learning, and enacting Indigenous pedagogies, but it offers a context in which we understand our developing practice as educators.

Teaching and learning away from our homelands has offered important, fulfilling experiences in understanding how Indigenous learning environments take form and what that has been for Indigenous peoples over time, where movement and exchange of knowledge and ideas have always been present. Living, teaching, and learning away from one's homeland also begins in relationship with lands, waters, and human communities. Building kin relations in places away from where you call home is a necessary condition for understanding how to develop and enact Indigenous pedagogies in that place. And knowing how to build such relations can be supported in partnership with the Indigenous communities where we reside. Ultimately, Indigenous pedagogies require a strong foundation of relationality with humans and more-than-humans; the ways in which the relationships are developed and nurtured may take form through different processes on and off homelands but they ultimately encompass shared ethics and values from educators and communities.

Understanding these positionalities and processes is also important for non-Indigenous educators who can develop meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities where they are teaching and learning. Coming to know lands, waters, and peoples as active agents in learning environments is necessary for all educators. And for non-Indigenous educators wanting to contribute toward positive Indigenous learning environments and further enact Indigenous pedagogies, beginning their efforts in relationship with the communities where they are working will offer a network of support to learn, grow, and best serve children and families. Recognizing this positionality and the complex relationships (human and more-than-human) that exist where one lives and works is an ethical responsibility

that non-Indigenous educators can hold in commitment to Indigenous sovereignty and thriving. To be sure, this is a political commitment and one that takes effort across a multitude of professional responsibilities. Knowing the histories of the lands, waters, and peoples in the place that one has come to call home sets an important foundation to forward Indigenous civics in work as an educator and a responsible community member.

CONTEMPLATING THE COMPLEXITIES

While we work to articulate Indigenous pedagogies for a wide audience, we wish to reject a homogenization of Indigenous peoples, communities, and ways of teaching and learning; here, we close with a discussion of some of the complexities and worries we hold in articulating Indigenous pedagogies and share our ideas of how educators with varying positionalities may consider their roles and practices. We embrace the unique languages, cultures, and identities of Indigenous peoples across geographies by centering lands and waters; Indigenous pedagogies will undoubtedly look different in different places as they are driven by local socio-ecological systems. We have also named the importance of relationality, which drives pedagogical practices and will be localized in nature. We worry that forwarding Indigenous pedagogies for educators broadly could result in a romanticization or appropriation of indigeneity. We have asked readers to reflect on their positionality through the reading of this piece and we ask you to think critically about your own identity and how that takes form where you teach, learn, and reside. In part, this means taking seriously how we commit to Indigenous education and pedagogies as everyday acts of resurgence and not as an additive form of multiculturalism (Richardson, 2011). It also means being explicit about our own identities within the places we teach, and actively rejecting an appropriation of Indigenous peoples and cultures; engaging Indigenous learning environments does not make one Indigenous (Tuck & Gatzambide-Fernández, 2013).

Even as we express our cautions and concerns, we remain conscious of the limitations of the written word. We hold great value in the oral exchange of ideas and time visiting with each other, Elders, and relatives, what Cajete names the sacred breath (Cajete, 2005). We recognize the importance of sharing thinking across context and the power of writing in the transmission of ideas toward social transformation. We offer our thinking here in commitment to nurturing our children's development and joy in education and ask that you join us in this thinking and in continued efforts to enact and to grow Indigenous pedagogies. Ultimately, our interest in this special issue is in the everyday experiences of children and families. Schools have not historically designed learning environments for the best interest of Indigenous peoples. With increased interest and attention toward Indigenous knowledges, we hold cautious hope that now is an opportunity to (re)imagine how educators across places and positionalities may come together with shared values and desires to regenerate Indigenous pedagogies and educational sovereignty that contribute to thriving Indigenous futures. We also hope that engaging Indigenous pedagogies will contribute broadly to sustainable and just futures.

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Megan Bang (Ojibwe and Italian descent) is a professor of the learning sciences and psychology at Northwestern University and recently served as the senior vice president at the Spencer Foundation. Dr. Bang studies dynamics of culture, learning, and development broadly with a specific focus on the complexities of navigating multiple meaning systems in creating and implementing more effective and just learning environments in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics education. She focuses on reasoning and decision-making about complex socio-ecological systems in ways that intersect with culture, power, and historicity. Central to this work are dimensions of identity, equity, and community engagement. She conducts research in both schools and informal settings across the life course. She has taught in and conducted research in teacher education as well as leadership preparation programs. Dr. Bang currently serves on the Board of Science Education at the National Academy of Sciences. She also serves as an executive editor of *Cognition and Instruction* and is on the editorial boards of several other top tiered journals in the field.