

NOVEMBER 18, 2025  
ICAI Canada

# Decolonizing Academic Integrity Practices

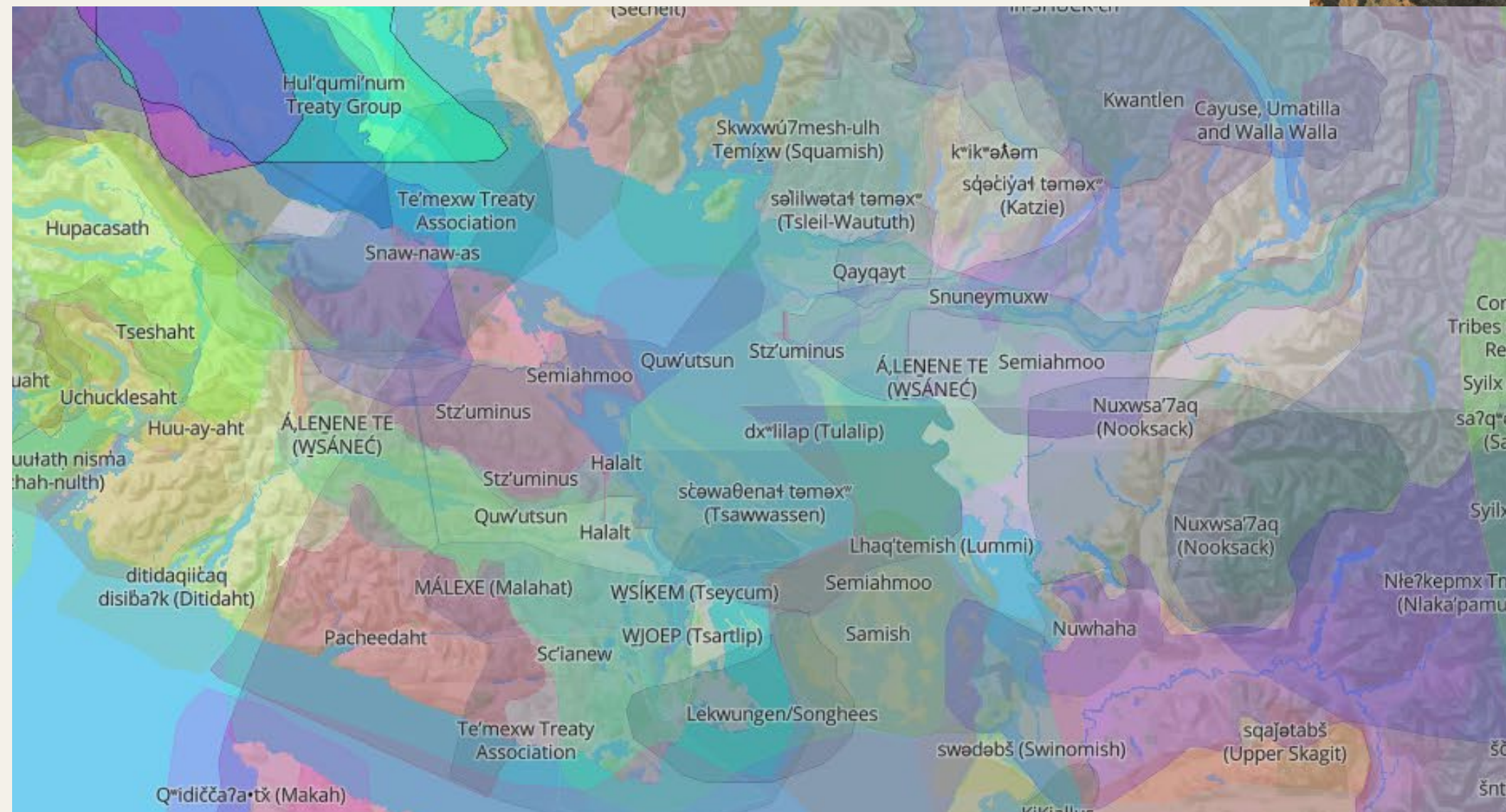
A RESOURCE FOR STAFF, FACULTY, AND INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

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# Land Acknowledgement



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# Overview

- Introduction / Presenter Positionality
- Research Context
- Project Approach
- The Project
- What's Next?
- Questions





# Presenter Positionality

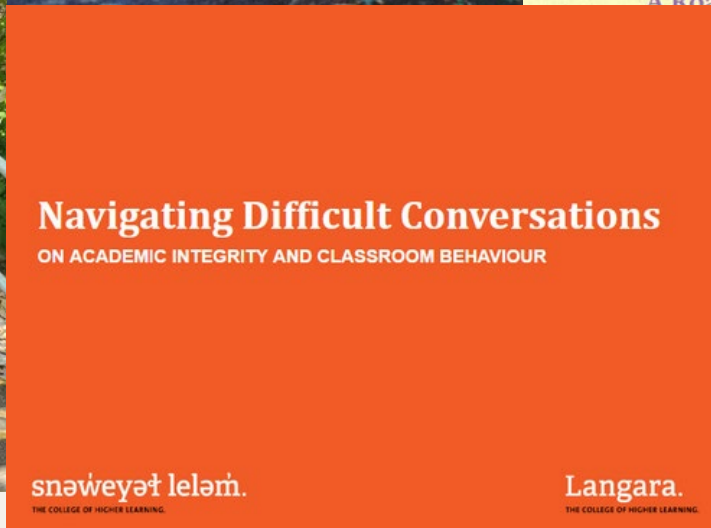
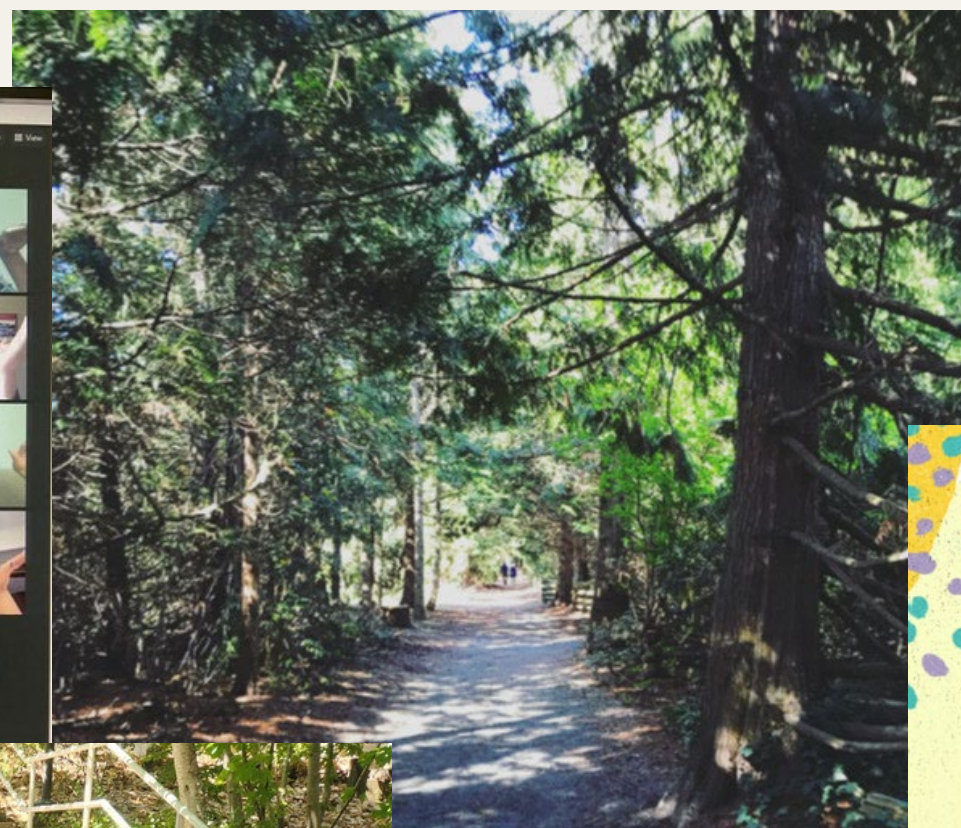
“Research...tells a story through words not numbers. It is a story interpreted from experience with an aim of offering further insight into human experience from human experience”

**Margaret Kovach**

Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts (2nd Edition), 2021, p. 24



# Presenter Positionality





# Research Context

Taking a critical transformative lens and looking at academic integrity  
in post-secondary institutions in Canada....





# Research Context

## Academic Integrity as a Moral Failing

- Understandings built on Western legal systems, themselves based in Judeo-Christian understandings of justice (Eaton, 2017)
- These understandings “profoundly shaped our thinking” (Zehr, 2015, p.5)
- Framing lack of academic integrity as a moral failing vs. lack of skills or failure of scholarship (Mulholland, 2022)
- Punitive responses, framed as failure to uphold values (Eaton, 2017)
- Despite research showing that students cheat or plagiarize for a wide variety of reasons (Bretag et al., 2014; Packalen & Rowbotham, 2022)



# Research Context

## Unequitable Reports of Academic Integrity

- Inequity inherent to academic - what is considered knowledge, ethical research, and scholarship (and how this knowledge is acknowledged, presented, and appreciated) (Eaton 2022a)
- “Knowledge and the power to define what counts as real knowledge lie at the epistemic core of colonialism” (Smith, 2022, p. xii)
- Inaccessibility of entering Western academia/the ivory tower
- The overrepresentation of particular student groups (first -generation learners, students with accessibility needs, international students, students of color, English as additional language learners) (Eaton 2022a)



# Research Context

## Rise of Cost Recovery/Revenue Generation in Education

- Capitalistic relationship forged between business and educational institutions; education as an upfront cost in order to obtain a living wage as a form of return-on-investment
- “Education becomes a farcical transaction where the players pay lip service to the quest for knowledge while engaging in a transaction whereby time and money are exchanged for credentials, which are then exchanged for job opportunities” ( [Crossman, 2022](#), p. 220)
- Consider: Canada’s post-secondary’s relationships to international students



# Research Context

## Stalling of Decolonization Efforts

- Much of the decolonization progress within post -secondary institutions in Canada often consist of “half-measures, watered-down policies, [and] other approaches that downplay major shifts” needed to truly decolonize educational practices to move towards a more equitable future (Lorenz and Gaudry, 2018)
- Essential that all members of the institution begin to question established norms and practices
- Kennedy, McGowan, and El-Hussein ([2019](#)) proposed several mechanisms by which to encourage change, including the need to disrupt boundaries and promote cross-collaboration within institutions, and the need for disruptive social innovation



# Share Your Thoughts

Thinking of this critical analysis of academic integrity in Canadian post-secondary institutions:

*Are there examples that you've witnessed or seen?*

*Times when a framing of academic integrity doesn't seem to capture something?*

*When it might inadvertently result in inequity?*

*In policy or practice?*



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# Searching for Solutions

Looking for scholars, researchers, and resources that may offer alternatives or methods to decolonize practices...





# Academic Integrity World views

Questioning the status quo....



## Honesty

**hon-es-ty**  
noun

1. The quality of being honest, free from fraud or deception, legitimate, truthful<sup>1</sup>

## Respect

**re-spect**  
noun

1. High or special regard, esteem; the quality or state of being esteemed<sup>4</sup>

## Trust

**trust**  
noun

1. The assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something<sup>2</sup>

## Responsibility

**re-spon-si-bil-i-ty**  
noun

1. The quality or state of being responsible; moral, legal, or mental accountability; reliability, trustworthiness<sup>5</sup>

## Courage

**cour-age**  
noun

1. The mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty<sup>6</sup>

## Fairness

**fair-ness**  
noun

1. The quality or state of being fair, especially fair or impartial treatment, lack of favoritism toward one side or another<sup>3</sup>

[ICAI, 2021](#)

Kalra, 2023; Parnter,  
2023



# Academic Integrity World views

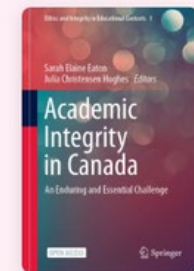
Questioning the status quo....

[Home](#) > [Academic Integrity in Canada](#) > Chapter

## Re-Defining Academic Integrity: Embracing Indigenous Truths

Chapter | Open Access | First Online: 03 March 2022  
pp 103–123 | [Cite this chapter](#)

● You have full access to this [open access](#) chapter

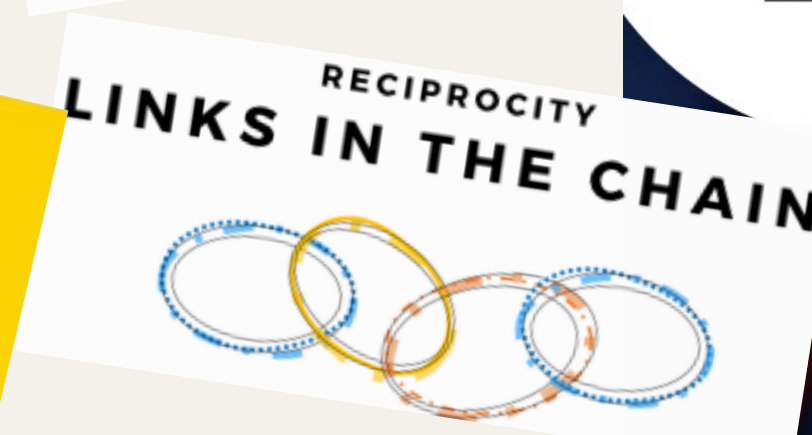
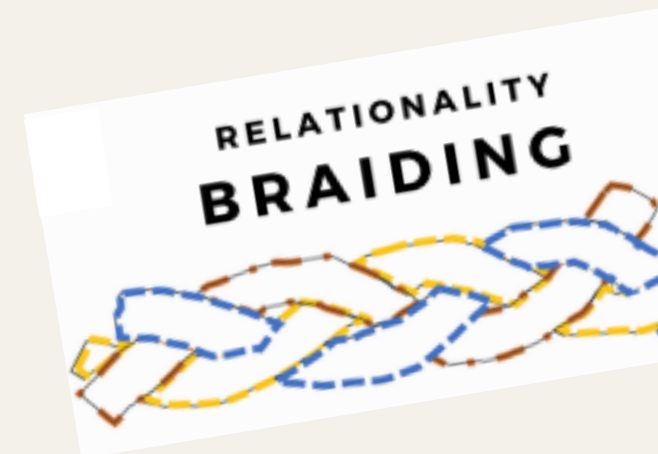
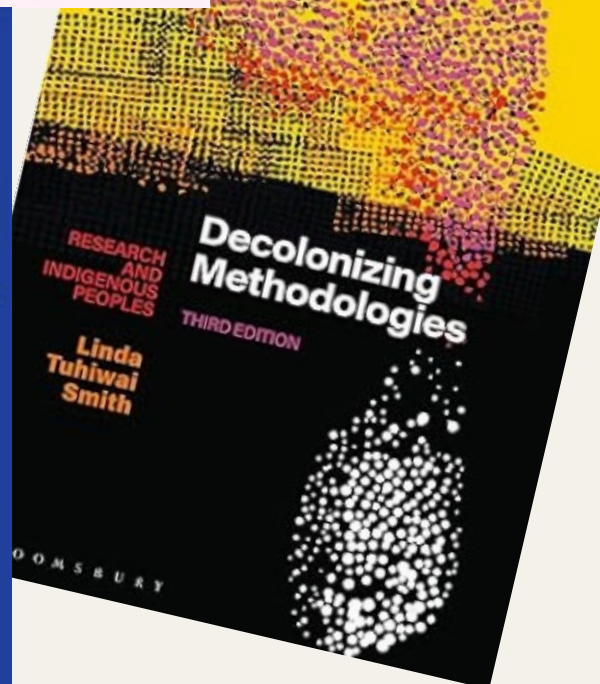
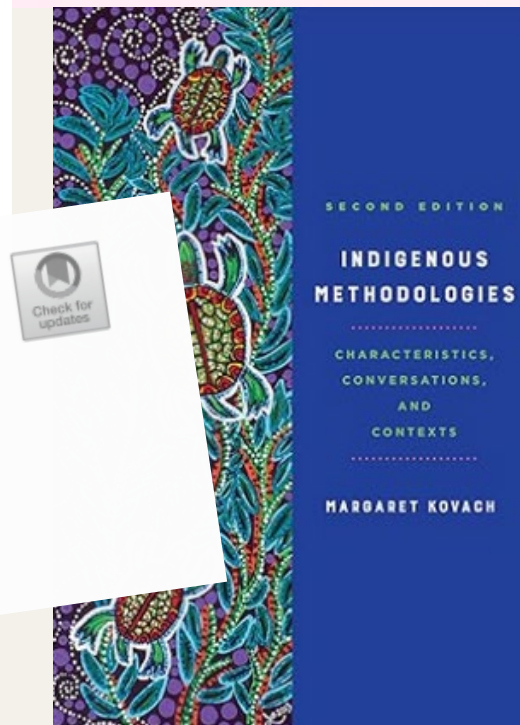


Academic Integrity in Canada



## Chapter 6 Accountability, Relationality and Indigenous Epistemology: Advancing an Indigenous Perspective on Academic Integrity

Gabrielle E. Lindstrom



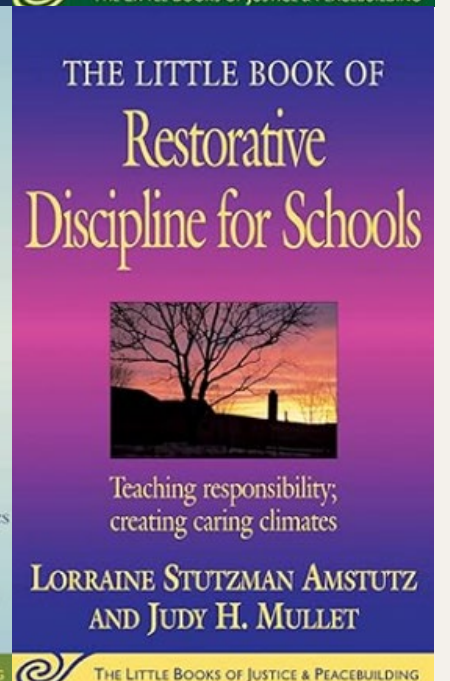
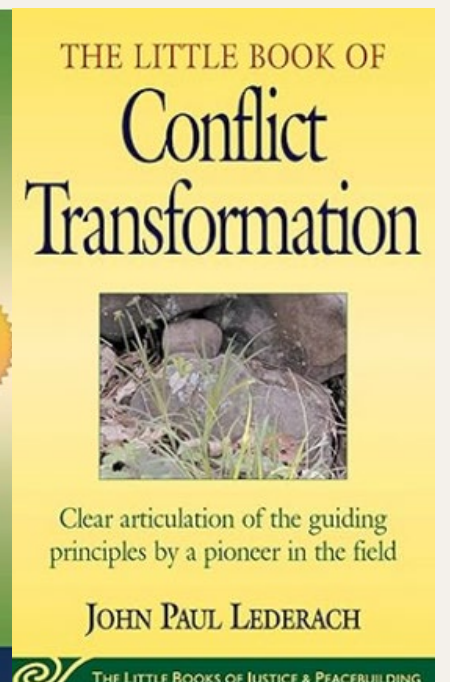
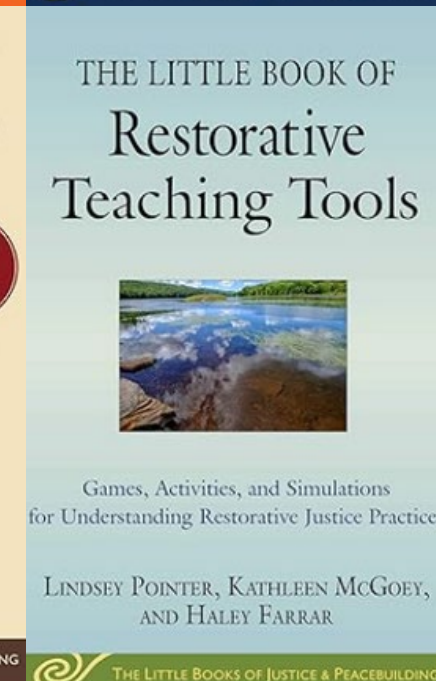
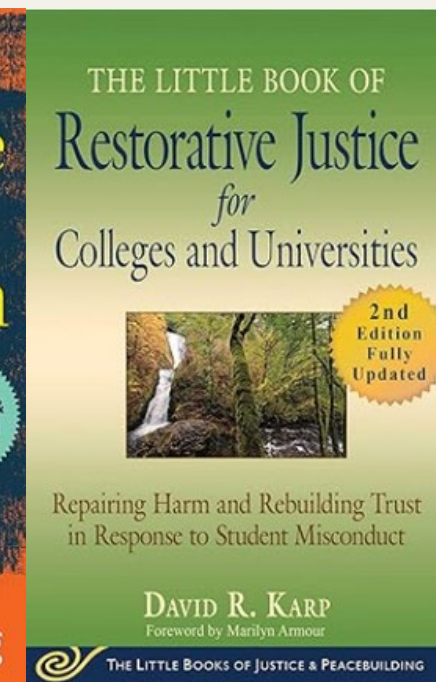
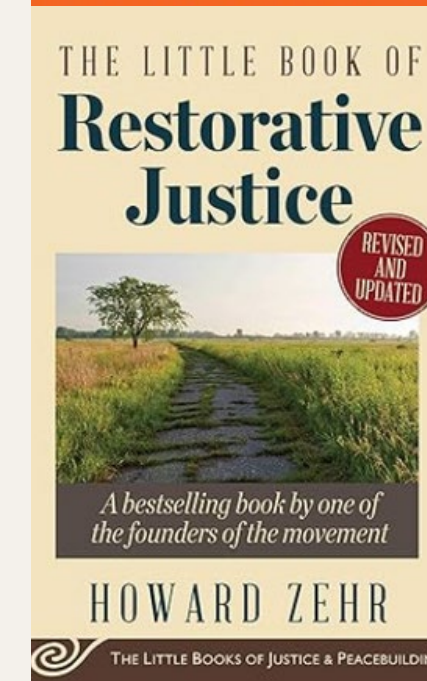
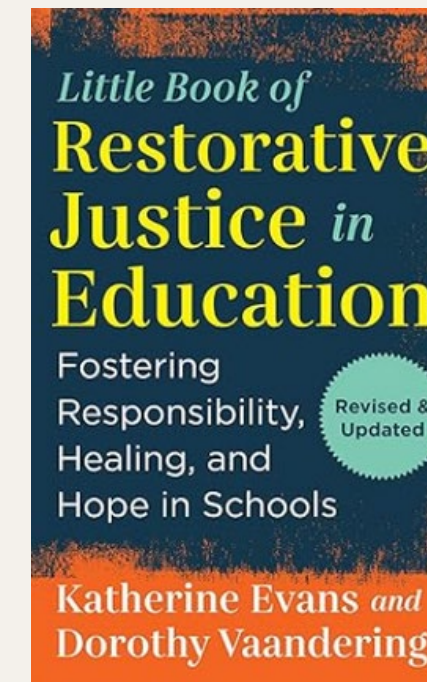
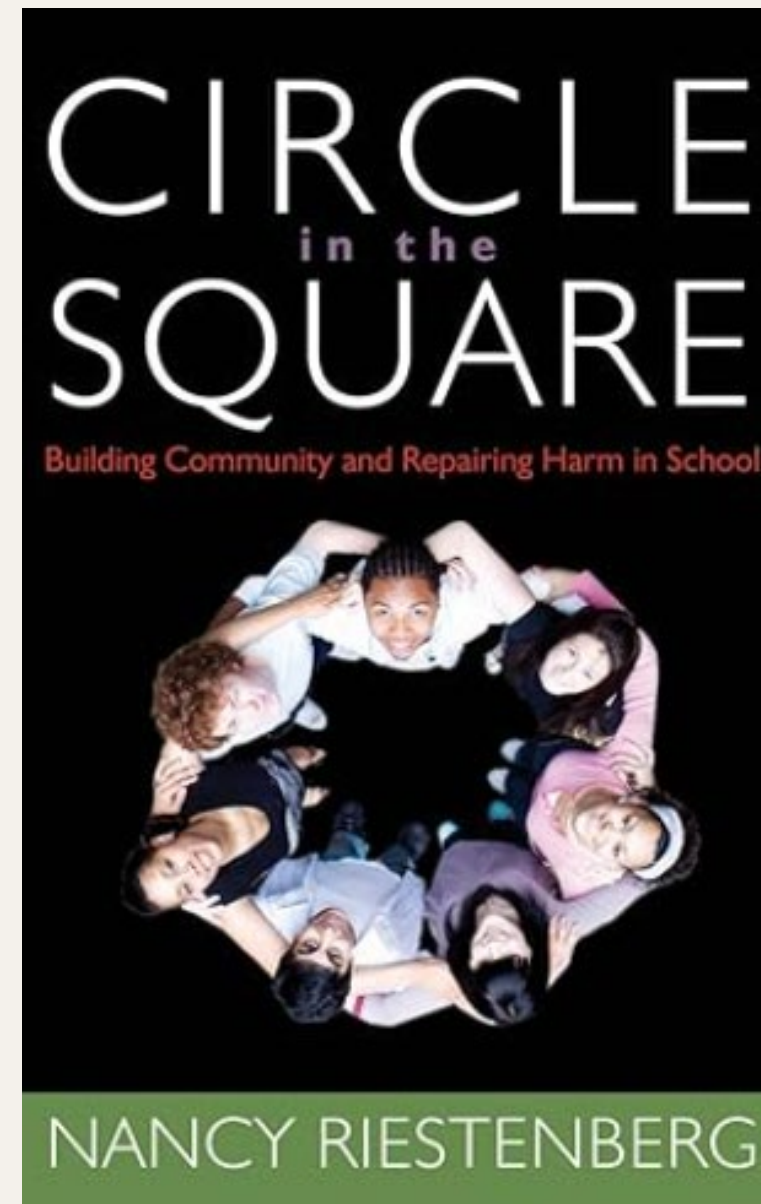
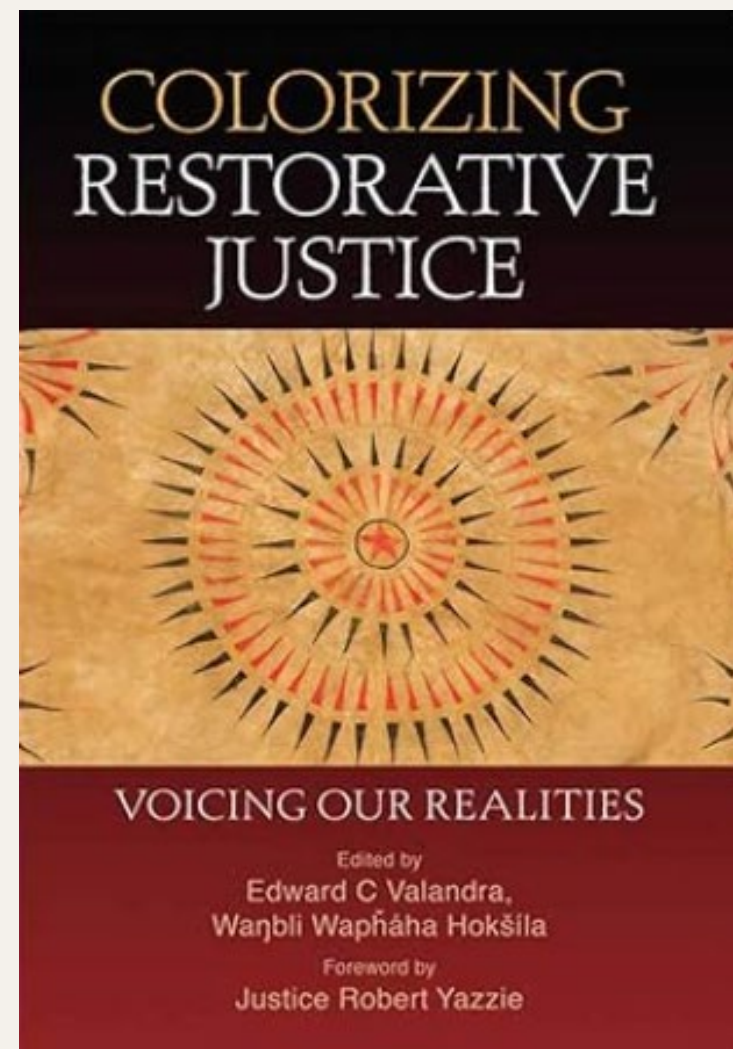
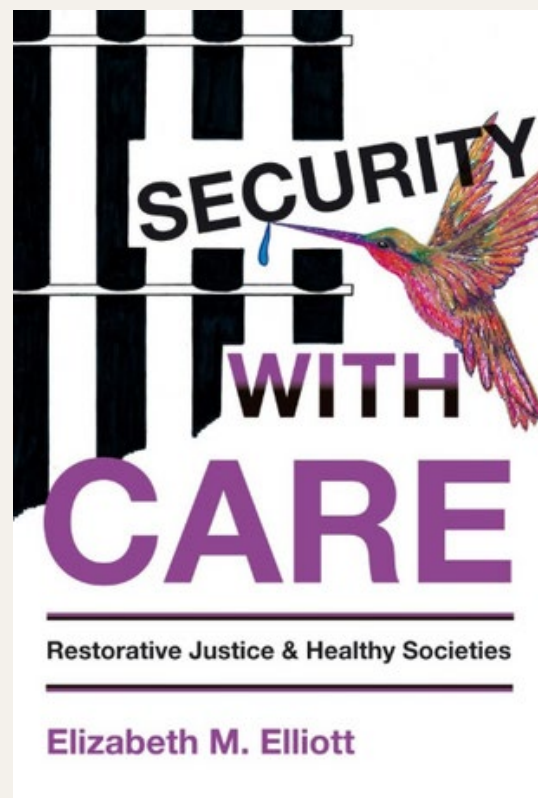
PREPARED BY:  
Keeta Gladue

[Gladue, 2020](#)



# Academic Integrity World views

Questioning the status quo....



(Cunningham Hall, 2022; Goens-Bradley, 2020)



# Research Question

“How might instructors, administrators, and institutional leadership shift from a colonial and punitive worldview of academic integrity by applying Indigenous, decolonized, and restorative worldviews and practices?”





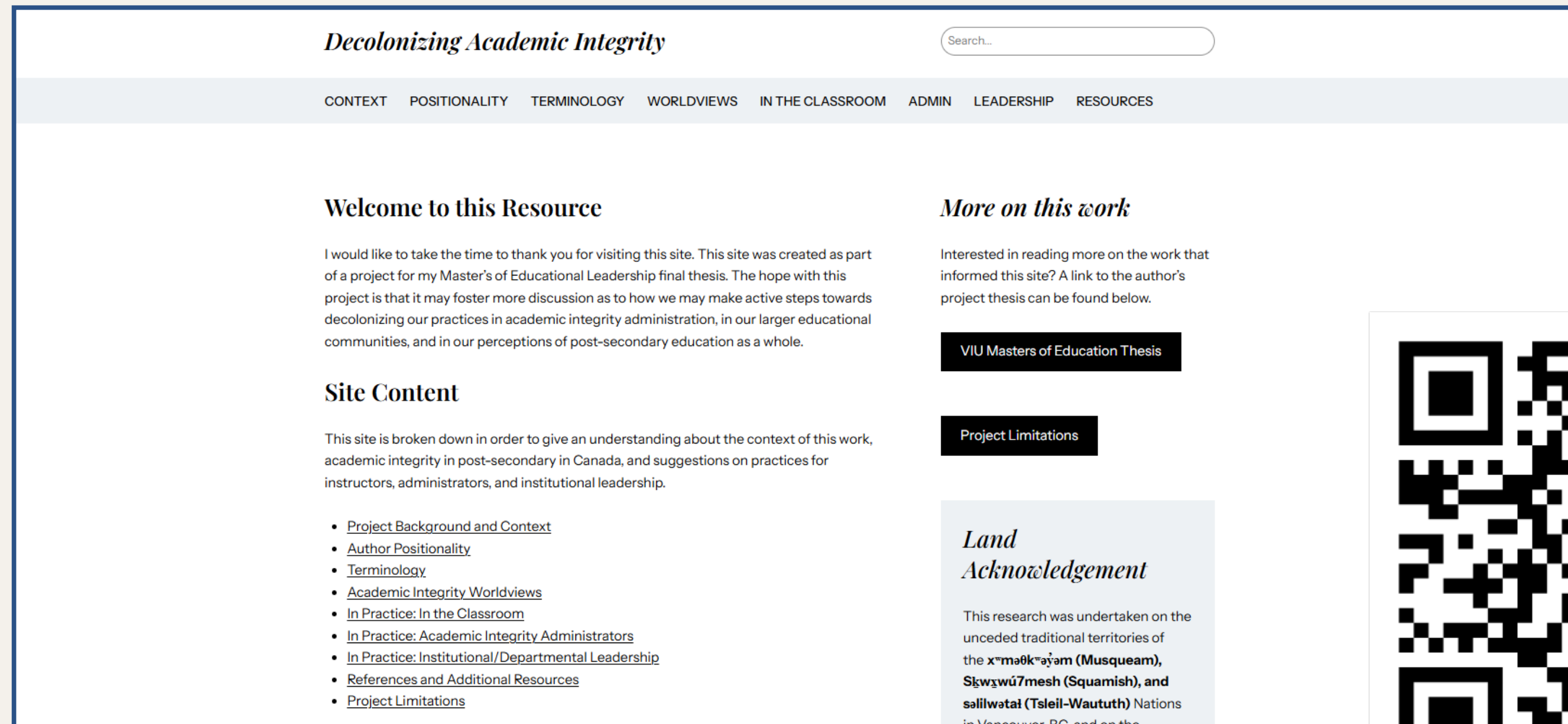
# Project Approach

Pragmatism interpretive framework (Creswell & Poth, 2018) - how can we apply understandings within our practices...





# The Project



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# The Project

## IN THE CLASSROOM

- Decolonizing the Academy
- Situating Academic Integrity Relationally
- Role-Modeling
- Reflecting on Your Positionality and Academic Integrity
- Making the Academy Accessible
- Reconsidering Classroom Hierarchy
- Undergoing Personal Decolonization Journey

### ▼ YOUR POSITIONALITY AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Often, those who work in post-secondary education are those who have excelled in Western academic environments. Being raised within certain cultural norms around education and authority, we understood what was being asked of us and our responsibilities, and we found meaningful engagement with the pursuit of certain forms of knowledge that were deemed valuable in a rigorous environment. However, it is important to note that this positive experience fits us with set biases about student experiences, and may lead to a significant lack of understanding of our current students' experiences and their own needs.

Therefore it is essential for us to consider our own experiences and understandings of academic integrity – how they shaped us and how they may differ from the experiences of our diverse student population.

Some resources on exploring your positionality as an instructor can be found below:

- [Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies](#) (Jo Chrona)
- [Reflect on Your Positionality to Ensure Student Success](#) (Christine Harrington)
- [Bringing the Practice of Positionality into Teaching and Learning](#) (Britt Dzioba)
- [Identities & Positionality](#) (MIT Teaching and Learning Lab)
- [The Danger of a Single Story](#) (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie)

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# The Project+

## ADMINISTRATORS

- Fostering Holistic View of Academic Integrity (Positive understanding/embodying values /connection to ethical career practice/knowledge caretaking)
- Reflecting on Policy Language
- Embodying Values of Integrity (Fairness in investigations)
- Equity as Our Responsibility (Internal reviews/reports, policy accessibility)
- Sharing Our Learning
- Moving Beyond Punitive Responses
- Undergoing Personal Journey of Decolonization

Traditional/Punitive	Alternatives
"Student has been found guilty of..."	"Student has been found responsible for..."
Academic Misconduct Policy	Academic Integrity Policy
Academic Misconduct	Academic Integrity Incident; Academic Integrity Concern; Academic Integrity Policy Breach
Cheating	Move towards explaining specific behaviour (ex. Exam cheating, falsification, misrepresentation, outsourcing, unauthorized collaboration)
Sanctions, Penalties	Outcomes, Decisions, Recommendations

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# The Project

## INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Developing a Whole-School Approach
- Consider Faculty Workloads
- Invest in Academic Integrity Support
- Evaluate Common Assumptions
  - grading
  - experiences limited to top-performing students
  - building relationships with Indigenous communities
  - considering the role of international student tuition
- Reflection on Institutional Marketing
- Decolonizing the Research
- Personal Journey of Decolonization

### DECOLONIZING THE RESEARCH

Institutional leadership plays an important role in promoting the research of their institutions, and therefore have a significant platform to encourage further change in this area as well. As Eaton (2021a) noted in her reflections of decolonization in academic integrity, "it is time to have deep and provocative conversations about the ways [academic] systems propagate colonialism, oppression, and elitism in education and publishing". In her post, Eaton provides a list of ways that institutions can move towards reconciliation, including:

- Learning from and citing Indigenous authors and knowledge keepers
- Educating those in institutions about how to give attribution to Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Re-considering current citing and referencing systems; Eaton (2021a) calls for a universal citation system that is free and easy to use
- Some additional ways that institutional leadership can take active steps towards reconciliation include:
  - Employing more Indigenous scholars and instructional faculty
  - Directly collaborating with local Indigenous communities, Elders, and leaders
- Ensuring that Research Ethics Boards are aware and knowledgeable about Indigenous research methodologies (Kovach, 2021; Smith, 2022)



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# Share Your Thoughts

Practical approaches to decolonizing our practices.

*1. What feels accessible? Any ideas or actions that stand out to you? What could you consider applying to your current practice?*

*2. Are there other ideas/resources/actions you would like to share?*



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# A Note....

## Fear of Failure: Roots in White Supremacy

How white supremacy shows up at work:

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Only One Right Way
- Paternalism
- Either/Or Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- I'm the Only One
- Progress is Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort

A summary of the ways that white supremacy appears in work environments. Adapted from "White Supremacy Culture," by T. Okun, 1999, Dismantling Racism, [https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun\\_-\\_white\\_sup\\_culture.pdf](https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf)



# Limitations

- This work is the result of publicly available research and writing; this research would have been greatly improved through the fostering of relationships and sharing of knowledge with Indigenous stakeholders.
- Decolonization of our institutions would greatly benefit from Indigenization efforts that reflect the unique land-based Indigenous knowledges of local communities; this resource cannot possibly reflect the diversity of cultures and communities (or identities) of those who may access these resources.
- My positionality as an author also presented some limitations to this work. As I am undergoing an ongoing process to decolonize my practice and worldview, this work will represent my place in that journey.



# What's Next?



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# Thank you

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MEDL PROJECT



MEDL THESIS



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