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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2vt6g4qx>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 44(1)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2020

DOI

10.17953/aicrj.44.1.steinman_scoggins

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Cautionary Stories of University Indigenization: Institutional Dynamics, Accountability Struggles, and Resilient Settler Colonial Power

Erich Steinman and Scott Scoggins

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit advocates and their allies have led explicit, wide-ranging efforts to “indigenize” higher education across Canada since the 1990s. The move to indigenize seeks to make colleges and universities more welcoming to Indigenous students, more inclusive of Indigenous knowledge, and more aligned with community interests. It thus revises the predominant historical function of the Canadian university system, which was run by and for (rich, white, male) settlers and produced few Indigenous graduates prior to the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, reflecting the genocidal and assimilationist goals of the Canadian state, the educational system did not teach those Indigenous students about their own cultures, languages, histories, or knowledge systems.

Unsurprisingly, prior waves of demand for Native control over education preceded the ongoing movement for indigenization, from education clauses in numbered treaties

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to the rejection of the assimilationist policy articulated by the Canadian government in its 1970 white paper. The 2015 call for action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has further spurred a widening and deepening of such efforts, as universities pledged to pursue reconciliation and amend practices of colonizing education.¹ In the linked national context of the United States, with both similarities and differences of settler colonial education—but without a national discourse or legitimization of reconciliation—the concepts and practices of indigenization are slowly but increasingly being articulated and pursued.² However, Indigenous leaders and advocates almost exclusively promote these initial efforts, which largely are limited to particular fields such as American Indian studies programs or student affairs.³ We ask: What critical lessons do Canadian experiences of indigenization to date hold for advocates in the United States, either regarding its transformative potential or regarding the process of its implementation?

We write as like-minded change advocates who worked together for over a decade at Pitzer College, a liberal arts college in the traditional territory of the Tongva people, in the outer reaches of Los Angeles, California. Our partnership was made up of a faculty member (Steinman, Norwegian and German ancestry) who works in solidarity with Indigenous nations, and a staff member (Scoggins, Pipil Maya) who is a longtime active member of the Los Angeles area intertribal community. Following a call from a local tribal chair to “help get our kids to college,” a central focus of our work with Southern California Indigenous nations became expanding educational access.⁴ While not explicitly asking for changes in higher education itself, the tribal chair’s stories critiqued the historical exclusion of local tribal people from our college and, in recalling an earlier period of militant Chicano educational activism in Los Angeles, alluded to a more profound inclusion than merely recruiting additional Indigenous students.

Looking for lessons to guide our efforts to include Indigenous people and ideas and simultaneously to unsettle our institution, we became deeply interested in processes of indigenization underway in Canadian university settings. We sought direction regarding how to indigenize, as well as critical assessments of indigenization and its implications for our work in Tongva territory and beyond. The growing scholarship about indigenization suggests practices and provides guidance for implementing it, particularly regarding specific areas such as student recruitment or curricular transformation. However, given that the concept of indigenization was unknown at our college, we suspected that any indigenizing efforts would likely encounter obstacles not only within these fields, but also in the default understandings and procedures throughout the institution.

These praxis-based concerns generated our questions about how indigenization functioned in settler institutions and in particular, about how its implementation intersected with underlying institutional structures and processes. Indeed, critical perspectives and initial reports now firmly establish that the processes of institutional change are likely more uncertain and variable than the widespread circulation and apparent embrace of indigenization would suggest. As Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz summarize, “What exactly this [indigenizing] transformation looks like in practice is still a matter of debate.”⁵ The relationship between Indigenizing declarations

or policies and the reality of how colleges and universities function remains unclear, as do the mechanisms driving or limiting these outcomes.

RELATIONSHIP AND RESEARCH PROJECT

For these reasons, and following an invitation by an Indigenous faculty member to visit the Canadian institution where they worked, we embarked on a research project to investigate indigenization as it was being vigorously promoted and pursued in an academic setting.⁶ Our research complements the crucial firsthand reports and critical analysis of Indigenous faculty and staff who are leading indigenizing efforts at their respective universities. As will be detailed in the methods section, we draw upon Indigenous methodologies as we seek to generate a holistic picture of indigenization as experienced by Indigenous people at a particular university. We realize that our investigation will reflect the histories, relationships and commitments specific to that setting. Our approach also draws upon Western social scientific approaches in our use of formal interviews conducted under conditions of confidentiality that allow participants to potentially identify troubling dynamics of indigenization as well as promising ones. We also follow Indigenous theorists and advocates in recognizing that decolonization frameworks are linked closely to indigenization and provide perspectives through which participants might name and interpret their perceptions and experiences. Given that decolonization is a vigorously contested concept, we left it up to the study participants to ignore, use, amend, or critique its salience in their responses.

The research to date draws upon a number of frameworks in making sense of indigenization as it unfolds and is experienced, which we selectively review in the next section below. While beyond the scope of this paper, we note that a growing body of critical theory and research has called into question the very possibility of significantly transforming colleges and universities, and in its place, many are increasingly looking outside of such institutions for models of robust indigenizing and decolonizing education—most recently and incisively, in the book *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*, edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang.⁷

INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS, NATIVE STUDIES, AND SETTLER-COLONIAL DISAVOWAL

We draw upon three approaches that provide distinctive complementary and critical perspectives regarding the realities of indigenization. The first, pursued by Michelle Pidgeon, foregrounds institutional or organizational dynamics at play that enable or complicate advances in indigenization, decolonization, and Indigenous autonomy within academia.⁸ Based on a number of empirical studies, Pidgeon argues that “it is important to remember that postsecondary institutions are not some abstract ideal or philosophy . . . institutional structures, values, and cultures are complex and the people who reside, engage, and interact (internally or externally) with these institutional communities all shape and influence the institution.”⁹ An institutional approach suggests that underlying logics inform the overall workings of postsecondary

institutions. The depth of indigenization efforts within and across various discrete domains, such as tenure review, will likely be limited if they conflict with logics and procedures that are taken for granted.¹⁰ As Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Jonathan Robb similarly observe, “Indigenization turns out to be much more complex and difficult than simply implementing a few strategies,” as key obstacles reflect “characteristics and behaviours [that] are almost always embedded in the living culture of organizations” and which manifest “outside the conscious awareness of principal actors.”¹¹

Pidgeon argues that a holistic Indigenous framework built on “the Four Rs” (respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility) is an essential aspect of indigenization, but one that is frequently at odds with the understandings and practices that inform Western academia (individualism, materialism, objectivity, etc.).¹² In assessing progress, Pidgeon casts indigenization as a “culminating and complex living movement” rather than a policy and suggests asking, “How do Aboriginal communities experience these institutions?” while soliciting from Indigenous peoples “what their expectations are of such institutions.”¹³

Adopting an Indigenous and Native studies approach that centers Indigenous frameworks and accountability to communities, Kevin FitzMaurice explicitly conceptualized possible outcomes and effects of indigenization.¹⁴ FitzMaurice asserts that indigenization risks splintering Native studies scholarly communities and “undermining its processes of accountability and internal knowledge validation and protection,” which would make Indigenous knowledge vulnerable to “absorptive/assimilative pressures [and] dismissive tendencies.” Accordingly, indigenization of disciplines risks “usurping” Indigenous knowledge from its foundation in Indigenous communities and “de-contextualizing it into various objects of Western knowledge expansion.”¹⁵

A third critical approach posits that settler colonialism is a form of colonial rule that elides its existence while sustaining settler control.¹⁶ Even when educational institutions rhetorically embrace Indigenous people and perspectives, as some have pointed out, such stated “good intentions” and the spectacle this creates may provide dynamics that remake and mask settler colonial power—an analysis akin to that of Sara Ahmed’s critique of diversity discourse as “non-performative” in that it obscures relations of inequality rather than enacting the thing it names, be it inclusion of Indigenous people in particular or greater diversity in general.¹⁷ If the structural dynamics of settler power and assumptions of settler futurity are not disrupted, then the resulting “deep colonization” may further embed institutional practices beyond critical scrutiny.¹⁸ In joining with Indigenous studies scholars to highlight that universities in settler colonial societies “exist in a neocolonial present that cannot fully, if ever, actually be decolonized as such,” scholars of settler colonialism complicate indigenization and, more pointedly, its relationship to decolonization.¹⁹ Indeed, Tuck and Yang’s seminal assertion that that colonization and decolonization are “always all about the land” further suggests that analyses and advocates alike should critically approach discourses of decolonization even when advocates understand their goals and actions through this lens.²⁰

Many individuals involved in implementing indigenization on campus have critically reflected upon and analyzed their experiences. Sarah de Leeuw, Margo Greenwood, Nicole Lindsay, and Tina Ngaroimata Fraser were among the first to

point out problematic dynamics such as the extraordinary burdens experienced by Indigenous faculty.²¹ Such faculty are often simultaneously responsible for implementing indigenizing initiatives, grappling with the tensions between Indigenous and Western institutional frameworks and values, working to support Indigenous students, and trying to maintain relationships with and accountability to First Nations. While they are called upon to “perform their indigeneity,” the institutional structures that need to be adapted to accommodate indigenization remain largely unchanged.²² As a result, these scholars assert that indigenization must necessarily involve the ongoing “troubling of good intentions,” or such efforts may function to conceal or reconstitute existing power relations.

Other participants in postsecondary indigenization efforts have added their extended observations and identified emergent dynamics and challenges.²³ Interpreting this accumulating record, combined with data from an online survey of twenty-five educators who teach Indigenous content, Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz argue that the indigenization efforts of Canadian universities reveal three varieties of indigenization at play: indigenization as *inclusion* (i.e., more Indigenous presence), as *reconciliation* (i.e., undertaking administrative reform and not only scholarly incorporation of Indigenous perspectives), and as *decolonization* (i.e., transforming power relations, knowledge production, and the academy itself).²⁴ The notion that very different ideas are evoked by the shared signifiers “indigenizing” or “indigenization” suggests that a wide range of potentially dissimilar policies and practices are being enacted under the same title. While Gaudry and Lorenz’s study is one systematic effort to illuminate the actual practices and impacts of indigenization, de Leeuw and colleagues’ assertion of a “lack of critically written and published scholarship” appears to be still largely accurate.²⁵

SOLICITING INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS

Attempting to gain insight into processes of indigenization on campus, our interview-based study asked Indigenous people with a variety of relationships to a particular university about their own experiences. By using this ground up approach, we sought to make more scholarly space for serious consideration of both Indigenous people’s perceptions and any linked or underlying experiences of indigenization that they chose to share. Four elements of the current study complement and extend existing research. First, and crucially, it analyzes existing practices. Second, by putting accounts provided by faculty, students, staff, and community members in dialogue with one another, it provides a holistic understanding of how indigenization is experienced at a particular university as well as nuanced insight into both broad institutional dynamics and specific fields. Third, community voices are included in this study as essential to Indigenous knowledge and Native studies. Finally, as the interviews elicited not only cognitive or analytical insights about indigenization, but also asked people about their own relationships to a specific institution, this study offers a phenomenological analysis.

Conducted in the summers of 2011–2014, the study directly pursues two main themes, explored through a variety of specific questions regarding a postsecondary institution that we call “our university” (OU):

(1) to what degree, and for what reasons, do Indigenous people feel OU is “their” school, as opposed to experiencing it an institution controlled by and serving (settler) others; and

(2) to what degree, and in what ways, is OU indigenizing and decolonizing?

The two authors and a small team of research assistants used various methods to reach out to potential participants, including emails, phone calls, office visits, and public flyers on campus. In addition, our initial delegation to campus included a California elder; while he was present, we also met a local Indigenous elder in the campus parking lot. This latter elder subsequently participated in an interview, provided additional local Indigenous historical context, and introduced us to additional community members who have developed relationships apart from this research project. While the above methods put us in contact with a number of interviewees, most participants were recruited through word of mouth, or “snowball” sampling, in which initial Indigenous participants suggested that we speak with other people or themselves contacted these individuals to encourage their participation. In two instances, individuals purposefully brought colleagues with them to the interview location and we conducted group interviews.

Except for a group interview in which both authors participated, interviews ranging from 50 to 90 minutes were conducted by one author and a research assistant, and took place in a variety of locations, including campus offices and Starbucks. In terms of cultural protocol, each interviewee was approached with the intent to honor and acknowledge their participation in a manner appropriate to their status. We brought with us a number of different gifts and offerings from California, including lemons from one author’s backyard tree; objects that represented our home institutions, such as sweatshirts; and tobacco, which we reserved for gifts to elders. Assisted by a Tongva elder, we also picked California sage growing on campus and wrapped it into bundles.

Guided by the Indigenous faculty member who was our initial campus contact, we altered our initial interview protocol in two ways. First, so that our research might be useful to this specific university community, a report would be given directly to the study participants and the campus Indigenous affairs office. After extended communication, this report was conveyed to appropriate individuals at the university. In accordance with a request from study participants and ethical research norms, a separate report focusing more on the institution itself (rather than indigenization more generally) was provided to the OU community. Second, individual participants had the option of naming individual persons (such as elders) if they felt the need to honor them and their contributions specifically rather than generally and anonymously. No participants decided to name particular individuals and neither the report nor this paper does so.

In all, twenty-three individuals participated in eighteen interviews (on a campus of approximately nine hundred Indigenous students; eighteen to twenty Indigenous faculty; and fifty Indigenous staff). Four participants were current students and seven

were former students; six were current or past faculty; seven were staff; and five were community members, including local First Nations members working in education (some participants are in multiple categories). Eighteen participants identified as female, and five as male. One staff member for an OU Indigenous program was the only non-Indigenous interviewee. Interviews were semi-structured, with a script of twenty-three questions used flexibly to explore the overarching themes emerging from the responses of participants. Most interviews were recorded electronically; in two cases, interview notes were written by hand or on a laptop.

This article describes four shared tensions and challenges generated through a grounded theory methodology.²⁶ They are shared in that multiple members of each participant category (such as faculty and staff) identified dynamics that, cumulatively, were the basis for these themes.²⁷ Similarly, both men and women in the study reported experiences and perceptions that were the basis for identifying the following patterns. “Hidden contributions” and exceptional and unequal workloads are the result of Indigenous people—often invisibly and without relief from other obligations—bearing the burden of rectifying the institution’s default colonial and Eurocentric practices and logics. In terms of accountability, the findings highlight how the community’s call for more pervasive relationships and accountability is somewhat at odds with the segmented professional and personal lives that students, faculty, and staff experience within the institution, as well as the continued functioning of fundamentally internal institutional accountability. Contradictions and uneven advances create starkly varying experiences at OU, from optimism to disappointment. Finally, participants envision going beyond indigenization and decolonization by centering Indigenous intellectual autonomy.

These themes and discussion are presented below, together with participants’ own words. We deeply appreciate participants’ gift of sharing their time, thoughts, and in many cases, powerful emotions, and have done our best to incorporate individuals’ words appropriately and accurately. Any faults or mistakes in the findings below are our own.

SHARED THEMES, SHARED TENSIONS

Hidden Contributions

Individuals identified many instances, and a regular pattern, of what we have identified as “hidden contributions” by Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and community members, thus amplifying previous research.²⁸ This entails extraordinary efforts and contributions of time, status, relationships, labor, caring, and availability that are above and beyond that formally expected of individuals, and which contribute to improving the Indigenous programs at and reputation of OU. Indigenous people work to make things better for other Indigenous people, who do benefit, while OU also benefits and is relieved of having to take fundamental responsibility for a host of changes. “Hidden contributions” highlight ways in which Indigenous people continue to bear the primary burden of changing the university, albeit working with many allies who have acted in direct support of Indigenizing and Indigenous-led initiatives and proposals.

One example is the time and energy that Indigenous law students expend to run a multi-day aboriginal cultural awareness event for first year students. The event functions to get first years out onto a reserve, otherwise “they would never get exposed or know that there even are reserves right down the road.” Indigenous students use their cultural knowledge to ensure it is done right, by bringing gifts and instructing, “Let the elders eat first.” Another type of hidden contribution occurs when students correct misconceptions and misrepresentations of First Nations and Canadian history asserted by students and faculty. A former student noted, “often the relationship is kind of switched, so you become the teacher within a classroom which is not, not right. And it is a burden . . . that’s a real burden.” Here, because of faculty members’ uncritical settler education and their inability to respond appropriately to settler myths and stereotypes, Native students educate others—professors as well as students—while simultaneously making their respective classrooms less uncomfortable for other Indigenous students. Systemic flaws in the entire colonial educational system are manifest in such instances.

Indigenous community members more generally serve to help educate non-Indigenous students, faculty, and staff regarding white settler privilege, racism, and colonialism. Staff at the First Nations’ central house “get non-Indigenous students in my office and I . . . tell them my experiences . . . because they are curious about culture and tradition.” In this sense, Indigenous staff and others do unacknowledged corrective education to the absences and distortions of settler education.

The diverse roles of elders were identified as another hidden contribution, such as when they act as additional informal instructors while enrolled in language courses. As a staff member enthused, “They are treasures, they are assets, their role is so important . . . The class will turn to them to play [many roles], from saying a prayer at the beginning of a day, to seeking advice, to saying words over a meal, to wrapping up a difficult situation.” Thus, elders who are students in language classes bring teachings and greater cultural depth to language learning. As the quotation suggests, the formal instructors and program staff deeply appreciate the elders and their offerings, yet lack institutionally sanctioned ways of fully, fluidly, and more formally acknowledging the significance of their presence.²⁹ The need for and value of elders in the classroom reflects the default Eurocentric and settler norms that infuse the institution and its learning spaces, which discourage or prevent embedding the learning process in a different cultural or epistemological framework.

A faculty member identified the extraordinary efforts when trying to teach online in a way that retained Indigenous practices, values, ceremonies, and relationships. In one program

Most of the teaching is done online. So you try to do ceremonies online, you can’t do work on the land . . . and you’re not in relationship with the students. I did do Circles . . . I’d start with the drum, the smudge, the prayer. Spirit will move through cyberspace. . . . But anyways, it’s weird . . . it’s really, really bizarre. And I’m not sure my Ancestors would [approve]. . . . To bring your heart to cyberspace, it’s a lot of extra work. All hidden activity that you don’t get credit for. You know, loading up nice pictures, and music, and recording your own music and loading it

up. It's a whole hell of a lot of work. And you're supposed to be doing all this other academic work in service to the community.

The same faculty member highlighted work that colleagues had done that was overlooked or taken for granted. "This program . . . came from the faculty who built the program. They didn't get any kind of credit. They didn't get any kind of course relief. The Indigenous programming . . . makes the school look good, in terms of accreditation and [more]." Another faculty member highlighted how the combined effort of supporting Indigenous students around campus, trying to build supportive relationships with other faculty and staff, and tending to relationships with community, all of which may involve various faculties [colleges within the university], means "we have to work across so many units and so that makes it difficult. Like it's good, and yet it also just means that we're at a thousand things all the time." This faculty member reflected that they "continue to overload faculty with service, and faculty get no reduction in research or teaching expectations even though they're [Indigenous faculty] in some ways expected [to do extra service]."

Faculty, staff, community members, and students all conveyed a powerful commitment to both students and prospective students that drove their "hidden contributions" and their expansive efforts. One faculty member reported, "I think a lot of faculty do that [extra effort] because they're really committed and want to be in institutions that will be successful in recruiting and retaining Indigenous faculty and students and staff. Like you need them in all three spaces for people to want to stay there and feel like they have a real home." As another faculty member explained,

It goes beyond a normal instructor-student relationship from day one with us, because it's more of a mentoring in terms of being an Indigenous leader, as a Native person trying to decolonize themselves. So, it's a much more intense relationship. . . it has more levels . . . because you can't just look at them as students. You have to look at them in the future, as "Okay, this person is going to . . . serve some function of leadership in the community that I care about." So you have to train them in that respect . . . to develop in that way, too. To be good people.

Similarly, another faculty member asserted,

I think it's that mentorship [*sic*]. And accessibility. We're a little more accessible. So it's not like, usually, maybe a professor position, which would be a lot easier. You just go in and lecture, hold office hours, and people show up. . . . "My only problem is . . . what's on the syllabus." Well, we go deeper than that, so it's folks who are really getting a crash course in decolonization. So it's going to raise all sorts of issues about identity, about where they're at, their commitments, all sorts of things.

Indigenous faculty members feel obligated to address a whole range of policies and dynamics around campus that affect Indigenous peoples. However, given a multitude of issues that should be addressed, and that the demands of their positions and concerns of their respective faculties consume so much of time and energy in addition to attentiveness to First Nations communities, it can be overwhelming to counter or

influence decisions and processes. As one put it, “It’s like every day we have to decide what is outrageous and what is just merely annoying. The whole world is annoying. It’s colonialism, capitalism. But you can’t fight everything all the time.”

Accountability

Faculty and community members highlighted a variety of tensions reflecting conflicts between accountability to academia and to community. Many faculty mentioned tenure review and what “counts” for professional evaluation as a central terrain of contestation. As one stated, it starts with the process itself: “You really see that tension when you’re doing your annual review, where you’re proclaiming how great you are. And you don’t have community to step in and say, ‘Well, this is what [name] is doing.’ You’re doing it yourself which is completely antithetical to community values.” More generally, as another faculty noted, tenure and promotion issues are “a huge one because our people do a lot of community work and it doesn’t get counted.” Community members are aware of these factors. After positively discussing the community programming and environment at a feeder school for OU, one noted

When you move to OU, there’s a very powerful thrust of academia and publishing, and it brings a different flavor, I think, with the work that people do. And there’s pressure to do that. And so I think . . . they can do some community work at OU, but there’s kind of a limit to how much community work they can do and get credit for.

One faculty member had previously defended her dissertation research to both the graduate school and her community. This dual accountability is both extremely challenging, and sometimes very meaningful, in that graduate students and faculty explicitly give back to (and are held accountable by) their communities face-to-face. For the faculty member above, “it meant so much for the people to see one of their own be as good as the university. That’s what I got out of it. It meant so much to them to see like how I was able to take, you know, [First Nation] philosophies and show it as philosophy, show it as law.” Another faculty member similarly elaborated on the stakes involved in such dual accountability, casting it as “another level, because then people will be participating in the kind of accountability structure through your work. Just reviewing your work and then responding to it, in that sense that’s the highest form of accountability.” However, succeeding in community accountability is

pretty hard to do . . . from a strictly academic perspective in terms of what the job expects you to do. You have to go over both of that. You have to go over it, and put extra time into it, and prioritize it. If there’s a conflict between the two, or contention, you have to choose that one, and be accountable to that one. . . . You pay a price somewhere, because you’re not consistent. The university demands are not consistent with community demands. So one or the other is going to suffer.

A number of faculty members who participated in the study volunteered that their ultimate accountability and identification is grounded in their respective First

Nations. One clarified that “those sources, and accountabilities, and responsibilities that, for me, come from my territory, from my community, from my cultural teachings. They’re not going to come from here.” But this is very challenging as, “the big thing, the important thing, is that when it comes down to it, you have to choose that one as opposed to what the university wants you to do, which is just be quiet, look good, and publish articles.” Another faculty member found the tensions too painful and difficult to manage with balance. Their articulation of the challenge movingly identifies such tensions and their impact:

I really feel that higher education for Indigenous people is the next wave after residential schools. And so it’s very alluring, because you think you’re doing something really fantastic, but people in communities don’t give a rat’s ass about what theories you’re using, and what you’re writing, and what you’re publishing . . . In fact, I’ve had Elders come and listen to my academic talks, and [makes snoring noise]. Like, “Can you just speak English? This just isn’t our way. We come from our heart.” And basically, I was just very heart-centered when I came into the institution and it [OU] wasn’t . . . and to protect myself in this place I covered over my heart. And I shared my heart with my Indigenous students. And one of my students said one time, when I left the classroom she confronted me and she said, “You just changed. You just became somebody phony.” And I said, “Absolutely, that’s how I survive in this place.”

This faculty member continued to detail the depth of the conflict she felt:

So the contradictions of trying to be Indigenous in a Western institution, there are contradictions all the time. . . . But for a while there I really thought, during my doctoral journey, I just thought I was a hotshot. . . . It’s very ego-feeding, and I [similarly] noticed a lot of colleagues change, and they become very self-absorbed and very self-centered and it’s very competitive. So there’s not a lot of helping each other. And it’s not Indigenous values. Because we help one another. . . . So I’m leaving because I desire to be in my heart. I desire to be in community and work with people. . . . And then I want to write, but . . . I want to write to the people.”

Implying that her immersion in higher education had caused her to lose touch with reality, this individual named her experience as “a very, very, very bad case of ‘academia.’ I was wondering whether I should stay in the university system. Because it’s like jail to me. It was like a prison. And I went to my ‘parole’ hearing. I paroled myself, and it’s like, I’m going to be free again.” In fact, this professor left academia.

Community members identified the “siloe” nature of the university as complicating accountability-bearing relationships with the institution. One community member, also a former OU student, reflected that while “different people [within the institution] have their relationships,” this did not indicate a strong campus-wide connection with the community. One community member who has worked with various Indigenous programs at OU reports that the institution “has a lot more boxes. And people tend to get stuck in their faculties [colleges within OU] a little bit more. . . . So I think that

silos still do exist, and I think there definitely needs to be more work on linking and bridging that.” A different community member echoed this point, saying, “I usually think of OU as quite sort of siloed, and so there’s only a few departments that I work quite closely with but the others I just know of.” A non-Native staff member who works with Indigenous issues added, “There’s no sort of protocol that goes across the university and it does vary, I think, between departments and programs for sure.” There are many such relationships, but they are uneven. Many positive collaborations and partnerships were noted, as was, contrastingly, the fact that most faculties had no relationship to Indigenous communities.

Due to variation and segmentation, community members see the need for more coordination of community relationships to strengthen accountability. Importantly, a number of community members expressed interest in further institutionalizing relationships: “A lot of the work that we’ve done has worked out as well as it has because of the people that we’re working with. Not necessarily because of the institution as a whole, but because we’ve formed strong relationships with people at [OU], people that care about our students, people that care about our community.” This, however, leaves the partnership vulnerable to turnover or changing interests.

Even with many extremely positive collaborations, individuals suggest there is significant community wariness regarding institutional collaborations in terms of bureaucratic procedures and community values and logics. As one non-Native staff observed from lengthy experiences working with Indigenous communities, “We have a huge amount of barriers we need to break down . . . we’re always coming to the table with baggage. And communities come with a lot of reservations around what it is the university is going to impose, what they’re going to take. They really want their own agenda to be the forefront, there’s really a lot of concern about imposition of institutional values and protocols and so on.” Such concerns are high when the community has invested effort in having remote courses for their members, which bring big benefits but also create demands. The staff member further elaborated the resulting tensions:

There’s pressure on us to make sure that the standards, the expectations, and the academic requirements . . . of an on-campus program are followed out the same way in the community. And it’s just not really possible . . . it’s a completely different social dynamic, it’s a completely different normal. Yet we’re still trying to impose those campus requirements on a community setting. Students are . . . in community, they are raising their families, they’re taking care of their grandkids. They’re also called to their cultural duties or their community duties, and a lot of them work full time! And so . . . we do backflips to try and accommodate situations that come up.

This staff member stated that one successful program “never would’ve happened . . . if we’d followed our [default institutional] policies and our standard approaches.”

In a last accountability theme, community members expressed concern that the relationship between the university and community is unequal, especially regarding funding dynamics. “I guess one of my biggest concerns . . . what I don’t always

appreciate as one of the partners is the feeling like you have the responsibility to bring in the funding.” In the context of shared grant proposals or the like,

My feeling is that if the funding is going to support the core budget of the program, it should be the postsecondary institution that’s applying for that funding, and not putting that responsibility on the community . . . especially if the majority of the funding is going to the institution. Why are we spending forty hours or more putting this proposal together, just to give the money over to the university so that they don’t have to pay for the instructors?

As bluntly summarized by one community member, “The university takes, takes from community.”

Contradictions and Uneven Indigenization

Interviewees identified additional examples of practices at odds with the process of indigenization. Current students perceived a gap between the alleged commitment to Indigenous students and the firing of a valued staff who provided cultural support to those students. Expressing shock and great disillusionment at this firing, one student was “dumbfounded” at the reversal this represented, particularly in the context of impressive indigenizing curricular plans. Another student saw a “contradiction . . . when [the] administration truly trumps up and promotes their relationship with Indigenous people and at the same time either ignores or backpedals from progress we’ve made in the past.” This student reflected that it is better to choose a school “where I know what I’m up against” rather than “walking in and sort of being led down the garden path to the wolves” while thinking that it was a welcoming place. Accordingly, smaller things like the “Indigenous-carved throne that the chancellor or whatever her name is sits on [at convocation] and they have this beautifully carved scepter that the chancellor holds . . . [and] the beautiful Indigenous art on the wall . . . that contradiction could drive you crazy. That contradiction, it’s like with a ‘slap’ in the face every day.” Such experiences suggest that even as rhetoric and practices oriented toward inclusion and reconciliation advance in some areas, distinctive decolonizing visions of indigenization can go unrealized.

More generally, students reported that community, cultural, and ceremonial obligations conflicted with academic timelines and rules. One community member who works with many OU-bound students offered this assessment: “I think [OU] is more and more becoming an institution where Indigenous students feel comfortable, supported, and welcomed. I think it’s improving sort of on a day-to-day basis, but we’re not quite there yet.” Former students report that the clearly hierarchical nature of positions and people at OU was off-putting. Finally, students emphasized the importance of a warm, personal welcoming from OU staff, faculty, and other students. Some students received such welcomes and it made them feel at home, but others did not, even from Indigenous students and staff, and it kept them at a distance.

Against this backdrop, present and former students affirmed the symbolic and functional importance of the First Nations Indigenous center. Similarly, there is

widespread acknowledgment and appreciation for many advances related to indigenization and decolonization accomplished at OU in the last couple of decades. Even so, Indigenous people at the university felt that these processes were unevenly present around campus, with areas where they were unmistakable alongside many faculties and programs where they were absent or minimal. A faculty member noted, “faculty have a lot of leeway to determine how much they’re going to promote or discourage decolonization” while also reflecting, “I think you could also probably go through [OU] and never engage with those [committed] people.” After naming a number of programs that work with First Nations, a community member concurred: “If I was speaking in regards to the majority of curriculum at [OU] as a whole . . . I don’t think a lot of it has been indigenized.”

Multiple individuals specifically criticized particular programs and disciplines as being Eurocentric and resistant to indigenization and decolonization, while other programs that were assumed to be more receptive nonetheless had gaps that were “shocking” to one faculty member. One community member also asserted, “What they don’t see is that you can bring Indigenous perspectives into math. They get baffled by the idea, as if aboriginal people didn’t do math before contact, right? And science. And art. And music.” These comments paint a picture of settler faculty as unaware that their own knowledge traditions reflect distinct cultural assumptions and are, in the most fundamental way, “biased” rather than universal. One faculty member saw perceptual change as a process that was still unfolding, saying, “I think they’re trying to figure it out . . . there is a willingness to understand. I don’t think that we’re equal yet. I don’t think that we’re the center but I think that it’s unavoidable.”

The gap between advances in indigenization in many areas and continued, default Eurocentrism in others creates an experiential incongruity for Indigenous people at OU that is reflected in the overall responses by study participants. One staff member stated, “It feels like we have been able to kind of jump ahead quite far, but when you jump ahead you miss certain steps along the way.” While some people interviewed for this study might question the assessment that OU has “jump[ed] ahead,” many did report transformative developments that have resulted in programs that, in their view, embodied the qualities not only of indigenization and decolonization, but also of Indigenous intellectual autonomy. However, the continuing contradictions have personal impacts. The faculty member who left the academy reported that the environment disrupted her ability to be in her heart as well as her head.

My mind . . . it has been running the show. And there’s nothing wrong with the mind, but you shouldn’t have a mind running the show. It’s really kind of dangerous. And that’s why the world is in such a dangerous place. There hasn’t been balance. There hasn’t been the heart. And when the mind is serving the heart, it’s quite a different relationship.

Clearly, the contradictions of indigenization create a variety of challenging impacts on Indigenous people at OU.

Indigenization, Decolonization, and Beyond

Individuals assessed and critiqued processes of indigenization and decolonization at OU, including the degree to which these were ultimate and satisfactory goals for Indigenous people. A number of individuals identified ways indigenization could be widened and deepened, such as a mandatory class. Many emphasized the need to extend curricular transformations and for Indigenous people at OU to be able to generate their own programs and curricular frameworks, especially outside of the existing disciplines. A faculty member explained,

The problem with all of the positions across OU—maybe [the Indigenous program] excluded—is that they all have to speak to these very Western-dominated disciplines that are controlling the agenda . . . It’s kind of like the ferry analogy: we get to be on the boat, but we’re never the ones steering it, we’re never controlling where that’s going. We get to participate, but not necessarily shape that kind of vision. And I think that’s part of what keeps the faculty divided, because then we’re all really focused on what’s going on in political science versus what’s going on in social work versus what’s going on in education. So those disciplinary divides can be very hard to overcome.

Another asserted that we “need space for Indigenous programing that sets its own visions, its own terms, its own measures for evaluation, et cetera, that’s autonomous and interconnected.”

One faculty member appreciated indigenizing advances while questioning it as a framework. “I do think we really need a faculty, you know, in political science and a faculty member in English, and we need our students spread all over the university—like that’s all really good.” However,

a lot of people are really big on indigenizing the academy and while I think that can be important in some ways, I sometimes think that that idea of indigenizing the academy takes space away from Indigenous autonomy. It’s all about still taking this Western institutional model and just making it a little more Indigenous. Like putting some paint on its face and adding a feather. It’s not about actually developing educational programs that are modeled in the vision of Indigenous peoples and communities.

Given that the formation of North American settler universities and colleges has unfolded over scores of years, deeply informed by assimilationist and genocidal perspectives, the institutional transformation called for by indigenization will likely involve multiple intersecting and overlapping processes. A non-Native staff in a community-based program perceived and valued decolonization unfolding through the program, asserting

The decolonization piece is really crucial because we developed these programs because communities asked us for them. They want to train their own teachers, they wanted to have language learning involved in the program, and they wanted

to have people in their communities so that they can graduate in their communities, and they can work in their communities so that they can establish their own schools, they can teach, they can have their own community members teaching in their own schools with their own values in their own language. And that is an important piece of decolonization.

However, some participants valued, but also questioned, not only indigenization, but decolonization as well. A student, stating that OU is on unceded territory, mused, “one of the things I struggled with is how can you really build, you know, an anticolonial space on colonized territory? You know, it’s a contradiction, right?” A faculty member said,

I sometimes question how much they follow a protocol because it’s what is expected of how you speak, versus how much that actually informs and influences what the university is doing. So while they’re willing to recognize that the local protocol and custom is to acknowledge that they’re on Indigenous peoples’ lands, in terms of the decolonization process, I’m not sure that they’ve taken it much further to recognize what it would mean, then, to respectfully live on the lands of other peoples. And then what kinds of commitments and responsibilities the university has to those Indigenous communities.

Furthermore, many reported shifting their focus beyond decolonization. One faculty member quoted Maori educator and advocate Graham Smith, “Every time we use the term or center the term decolonization, we once again center the colonizer,” adding, “and I had to figure out what he meant by that. So when we’re decolonizing, it’s always about the colonizer. So why don’t we put that aside for a while and understand [the First Nation] where I’m from . . . here is the way of life: who were the relationships with those around us? what was that life?” Another faculty member was more direct in stating that indigenization and decolonization of OU were not primary goals. Rather, working to support First Nations guided this faculty member. Another faculty member similarly elaborated

I’m not here to decolonize the institution or Indigenize the institution. I’m here looking for openings where we can do the work that we need to do. . . . We are looking for a place where we can help students on their path, and faculty and staff on their path to decolonization. And the institution itself is almost just a backdrop or a space where that could happen.

In this same spirit, another faculty member added, “the kind of work that we’re doing now is decolonizing but it’s also relearning, reclaiming, renewing, retelling”—all actions that focus more on Indigenous nations and their revitalization.

Whether construed as part of indigenization and decolonization, or beyond, participants in the study pointedly and most enthusiastically advocated increasing Indigenous intellectual autonomy by reorienting curriculum and programs around community frameworks and interests. Indeed, all participating faculty asserted the key role of community in developing Indigenous academic programming and curriculum.

One recommended that units partnering with local communities “let those local communities drive what that vision is. But it has to be done kind of together—local communities working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty who are trained within Indigenous studies.” While principles from that academic field should inform programs, “programs within particular institutions have to also be informed by the local politics and the local needs and circumstances of Indigenous nations.” Concerns and comments on decolonization and autonomy ranged from programmatic to personal levels. Various individuals located themselves in processes of personal decolonization; the faculty member who left academia said, “I must decolonize myself in a decolonizing journey.” A community member and former student said, “I had to do a lot of unlearning” at OU.

As we have been suggesting, at OU this practice of unlearning, healing, and personal care is extremely challenging because the contributions of Indigenous academic workers are hidden, in addition to its logics, norms, and the contradictions and tensions of uneven institutional change. Amid cultural difference—as a holistic Indigenous framework comes into dialogue with Western cultural norms of segmented bureaucracies based on impersonal rules—Indigenous people at OU continually expect, and seek to create, a collaborative learning environment that functions healthily through personal relationships. Put more simply, to do well by Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and community members means tending holistically to the diverse factors that support the well-being and growth of individuals and communities. These interviews suggest this is a tall order for settler universities and the practices and logics that constitute them.

DISCUSSION

A distinctive aspect of this study is that it invited Indigenous people to share not only thoughts and perceptions, but also their experiences of their relationship to an indigenizing institution. In order to further interpret these accounts and make deeper sense of the themes that have emerged, we now turn to consider differing notions of indigenization, given that these concepts necessarily shape people’s expectations and relationships.³⁰ Overall, while the tensions described above affirm some previous findings, they also build on and extend these understandings.

First, the interviews illuminate the heavy burden that Indigenous faculty and staff bear in the indigenizing process, but in particular, also highlight how this responsibility falls on Indigenous students and community members as well. Furthermore, much of their respective efforts are motivated by concepts of indigenizing that go beyond inclusion. If one considers the likelihood that non-Indigenous administrators are largely unfamiliar with either decolonization or autonomy-oriented conceptions of indigenization, this provides insight into how easy it is for many frontline efforts to be “hidden,” as this labor aims to enact notions of indigenization not embraced, much less understood, by those with institutional power.³¹

Similarly, the findings illuminate tensions relating to accountability that are experienced in a variety of ways throughout and beyond the campus community and have

unsettling effects. For example, to the degree that OU represents itself as indigenizing, it suggests to its Indigenous members that being a good student, respected scholar, and other institutionally anchored identities are congruent with Indigenous identities and can be incorporated into their sense of self. While some experiences at OU support this congruence, the many unchanged assumptions, structures, and policies sustain an asymmetrical accountability that, for some individuals, produces dissonant, and possibly irreconcilable, identities, expectations, and obligations.

One such conflict is between an academic individualism that values each “line on the vita” and the Indigenous emphasis on community. Participating in self-elevating processes works to undermine accountability to communities. This and other conflicts create significant discomfort, dramatized by the faculty member who felt compelled to leave academia. One suspects that they are likely not the only faculty member grappling with the challenge of resisting “academia” while trying to use their position for the benefit of communities. This case provides a vivid example of an outcome Greenwood and colleagues worried about: that frontline scholars would experience “burnout, exhaustion, and lack of recognition.”³² It also echoes what groundbreaking scholar Linda Smith observes as “*déjà vu*,” in that although there is now a growing community of decolonizing Indigenous scholars, unchanged elements of colonial educational institutions may still produce effects they did on earlier generations of scholars—in Smith’s words, they “consumed them, changed them, distracted them, and isolated them.”³³ Separately, this study also suggests a possibly painful calculus facing community members who, in choosing to collaborate, must do so with an institution that has more power and “takes, takes from the community.”

Indigenization at OU is an uneven process in which gains are visible in some areas, while the status quo persists in others. Such contradictions mean that Indigenous experiences at OU vary tremendously. Students in particular, depending on their fields, might encounter robust curricular transformation, or conversely, spaces entrenched in colonial attitudes. This dissonant and evolving landscape sometimes produces stress and disillusionment for Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. Individuals identifiably approach their experiences and perceptions of indigenization at OU through different conceptualizations, such as inclusion, reconciliation, or resurgence-focused decolonization. Shaped by the nature of their own “decolonizing journey” and the components of the university, individuals draw upon differing conceptions at different moments. For example, the law student who committed time and effort to ensure inclusion of information about Indian Nations within law school orientation also reported a critical awareness of how symbols of inclusion and reconciliation were featured by OU even as the underlying colonial power relations were sustained. Clearly, varying conceptions of Indigenization and the possibilities of transforming institutions are simultaneously in play, providing a shifting environment in which Indigenous people at OU continually reorient themselves and their expectations.

Study participants’ articulation of the limitations of Indigenization reaffirm previous studies and widespread calls for explicitly decolonial approaches. They also reveal that there is a fair amount of variation in different individuals’ take on the relationships among indigenization, decolonization, and Indigenous autonomy. The

first is cast as possibly complementary to the latter two by some, but also seen as a separate focus that may distract from decolonization, which some perceived as distinct. Beyond this, however, the findings also support the less common call to also move beyond institutional decolonization, and to conversely center First Nations, an approach affirmed by both Native studies scholars targeting higher education as well as Indigenous scholars looking outside of settler institutions.³⁴ As community members made clear, they would like a larger role in setting the agenda. A number of comments situate these issues in the dynamic indigenizing process unfolding at OU. Study participants identify meaningful changes achieved in the spirit of inclusion-oriented indigenization which then newly reveal inclusion's limitations as individuals encounter new, and higher order obstacles.

CONCLUSION

To indigenize Canadian universities is a long-term effort to transform the academy and reorient knowledge production and power relations. Beyond exhortations for “moving beyond good intentions” and calls to examine, rather than simply promote, indigenization, there is little in the way of systematic or evaluative research about how it is functioning, particularly at the institutional level. How is indigenization working in practice and what are lessons for advocates considering drawing upon its concepts to change US colleges and universities? Explicit in the design of this research is the understanding that even efforts within specific domains will eventually run into resistant settler-colonial institutional structures, processes, and assumptions. To understand such systemic issues, this study centered a diverse set of Indigenous perceptions of and relationships to an indigenizing institution. The phenomenologically informed findings suggest that indigenization in practice is disorienting, challenging, and full of tensions, even as it has made many notable advances. Indigenization is multiple, uneven, and a process regarding which people may hold very different conceptions even as they work side-by-side to manifest its potential.

We suggest that one useful way to think about these tensions of indigenization is to see such institutional change as an inherently uneven process that will continually reveal new contradictions and targets for change efforts. Such an iterative process or model would not suggest that the additional changes are necessarily going to occur or, conversely, will be squarely resisted. But in trying to pursue such possibilities, how can advocates address and mitigate the tensions identified above, that have dispiriting effects on Indigenous people at indigenizing universities? In light of our findings, we propose the following:

Collectively Make Contributions Visible. Countering the individualizing way that credit is apportioned within academia, advocates can purposely make visible the collective efforts Indigenous people and allies put into making an institution a welcoming and supportive place.

Advocate and Educate for Community Accountability. Advocates could proactively develop strategic plans to embed and elevate the accepted status of Indigenous community members in relation to institutional processes such as serving as external

experts in tenure review evaluations. More broadly, as suggested by one reviewer, the “naturalization” of accountability to communities is at the heart of a future transformed university. For this to occur, further embrace of Albert Marshall’s notion of “two-eyed seeing” and acknowledgement of Indigenous knowledge (and knowledge holders) as a parallel source of insight are necessary steps in this direction.

Expect and Reframe Contradictions Advocates for change can clearly and consistently place uneven, disappointing, and painful experiences within a critical and dynamic conception of such universities. It may be crucial, per the words of the graduate student, “to know what I’m up against” rather than being lulled into false comfort or uncritically believing an institution’s self-representation.

Indigenizing as Generative and Open-Ended. Regardless of the goals or the discursive framework employed (inclusion, reconciliation, or decolonization), Indigenization praxis can be used to organically plant the seeds of, and keep mobilizing for, more transformative and open-ended changes.

Of course, all of these require time and energy, as well as an embrace of indigenization as a transformational process that may involve periodic insurgency rather than administrative implementation of a model that is clear, fully welcomed, and institutionally digestible. Thinking about these possibilities in the context of the United States, and thus absent national affirmations of reconciliation or widespread familiarity with the concept of indigenization, other conceptual and discursive foundations may be strategically useful as part of a process-oriented approach. Even limited concepts such as diversity or more generic notions of inclusion that circulate in US higher education, while also problematic, might be used to help prepare the grounds for Indigenization and to target the contradictions that it reveals. Indeed, as one reviewer noted, in Canada discourses of diversity and inclusion first preceded, and were then replaced by, notions of indigenization and truth and reconciliation, though in light of Ahmed’s critique noted above, this discursive substitution suggests critical scrutiny.

We hope the findings and analysis presented here are helpful in evaluating and advancing change efforts, wherever they occur. Subsequent studies might further contribute to this by centering Indigenous community partners or more deeply exploring particular tensions such as the experience of addressing dual accountability. We again thank all the individuals, nations and institutions that contributed to this study, particularly those who shared their perceptions and experiences with us.

NOTES

1. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Calls to Action," 2015, www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.
2. While Indigenous educational advocates in the United States have been guided by similar intentions, critiques, and practices, the degree of explicit, intentional, and legitimated "indigenization" is drastically different than actual Canadian higher education.
3. Stephanie J. Waterman and Irvin D. Harrison, "Indigenous Peoples Knowledge Community (IPKC): Self-Determination in Higher Education," *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 54, no. 3 (July 3, 2017): 316–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2017.1305391>; Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, "Foreword," *Reclaiming Indigenous Research in Higher Education*, ed. Robin Starr Mint-horn and Heather J. Shotton (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2018).
4. Scott Scoggins and Erich Steinman, "Unsettling Engagements: Collaborations with Indigenous Nations, Communities and Individuals," *Journal of Metropolitan Universities* 25, no. 3 (2015): 99–110.
5. Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz, "Indigenization as Inclusion, Reconciliation, and Decolo-nization: Navigating the Different Visions for Indigenizing the Canadian Academy," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 3 (July 6, 2018): 218–27, 218, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118785382>.
6. The other main goal of the project was to develop ongoing relationships with Indigenous people in the area in order to build networks for subsequent collaborative projects.
7. *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, ed. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang (New York: Routledge, 2018).
8. Michelle Pidgeon, "More Than a Checklist: Meaningful Indigenous Inclusion in Higher Education," *Social Inclusion* 4, no. 1 (2016): 77–91, <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v4i1.436>; Michelle Pidgeon, "Moving Beyond Good Intentions: Indigenizing Higher Education in British Columbia Universities through Institutional Responsibility and Accountability," *Journal of American Indian Education* (2014): 7–28; Michelle Pidgeon, Jo-Ann Archibald, and Colleen Hawkey, "Relationships Matter: Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Students in British Columbia, Canada," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 44, no. 1 (2014): 1, <https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v44i1.2311>; Michelle Pidgeon, "Transformation and Indigenous Interconnections," in *Living Indigenous Leadership: Native Narratives on Building Strong Communities*, ed. C. Kenny & T. N. Fraser (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012), 136–49; Jan Hare and Michelle Pidgeon, "The Way of the Warrior: Indigenous Youth Navigating the Challenges of Schooling," *Canadian Journal of Education* 34, no. 2 (2011): 93–111, <https://journals.sfu.ca/cje/index.php/cje-rce/article/view/908>.
9. Pidgeon, "More Than a Checklist," 81.
10. Ismael Abu-Saad and Duane Champagne, *Indigenous Education and Empowerment: Inter-national Perspectives*, vol. 17 (Rowman Altamira, 2006); Andrew Gunstone, "Whiteness, Indigenous Peoples and Australian Universities," Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association e-journal 5, no. 1 (2009): 1–8, <https://acrawsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CRAWS-Vol-5-No-1-2009.pdf>; Kaiwipunikauikawēkiu Lipe, "Toward Equity and Equality: Transforming Universities into Indigenous Places of Learning," in *Reclaiming Indigenous Research in Higher Education*.
11. Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Jonathan Robb, "Reconciliation within the Academy: Why Is Indigenization so Difficult?" (2017), 3, http://www.fourworlds.ca/pdf_downloads/Reconciliation_within_the_Academy_Final.pdf.
12. Vema J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt, "The Four R's-Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility," *Journal of American Indian Education* 30, no. 3 (1991): 1–15.
13. Pidgeon, "More Than a Checklist," 81, 88.

14. Kevin FitzMaurice, "Transgressing the Boundaries of Native Studies: Traces of 'White Paper' Policy in Academic Patterns of Indigenization," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 31, no. 2 (2011): 63–76.

15. *Ibid.*, 72.

16. Lorenzo Veracini, "Isopolitics, Deep Colonizing, Settler Colonialism," *Interventions* 13, no. 2 (2011): 171–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2011.573215>; Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: A&C Black, 1999).

17. Michelle Daigle, "The Spectacle of Reconciliation: On (the) Unsettling Responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples in the Academy," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, January 28, 2019: 703–21, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818824342>; Sarah de Leeuw, Margo Greenwood, and Nicole Lindsay, "Troubling Good Intentions," *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, nos. 3–4 (2013): 381–94, 383, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2013.810694>; Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

18. Daigle, "The Spectacle of Reconciliation"; Deborah Bird Rose, "Land Rights and Deep Colonising: The Erasure of Women," *Aboriginal Law Bulletin* 3, no. 85 (October 1996): 6–13, <http://www6.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/journals/AboriginalLawB/1996/69.html>.

19. de Leeuw, et al., "Troubling Good Intentions," 386; Aman Sium, Chandni Desai, and Eric Ritskes, "Towards the 'Tangible Unknown': Decolonization and the Indigenous Future," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): i–xiii, <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18638/15564>.

20. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40, <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630/15554>.

21. de Leeuw, et al., "Troubling Good Intentions"; Margo Greenwood, Sarah de Leeuw, and Tina Ngaroimata Fraser, "When the Politics of Inclusivity Become Exploitative: A Reflective Commentary on Indigenous Peoples, Indigeneity, and the Academy," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 31, no. 1 (2008): 198–207, 318–19.

22. de Leeuw, et al., "Troubling Good Intentions."

23. Bopp, et al., "Reconciliation within the Academy"; Brent Debassige and Candace Brunette, "Indigenizing Work as 'Willful Work': Toward Indigenous Transgressive Leadership in Canadian Universities," *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry* 10, no. 2 (2018): 119–38, <https://doi.org/10.18733/cpi29449>.

24. Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz, "Indigenization as Inclusion, Reconciliation, and Decolonization: Navigating the Different Visions for Indigenizing the Canadian Academy," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 3 (2018): 218–27, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118785382>.

25. de Leeuw, Greenwood, and Lindsay, "Troubling Good Intentions," 382.

26. Recordings were transcribed by research assistants. A three-person team led by coauthor Steinman coded the transcripts through an interactive process drawing upon both the scholarly literature and the data to identify emergent themes. Team members each analyzed the whole set of transcripts. Themes identified in the early stages of coding were refined and revised in joint discussions by the research team and then applied to the whole set of transcripts.

27. For additional "secondary" themes that were not shared by members of all categories that have been withheld from this paper, please contact the authors.

28. Greenwood, et al., "When the Politics of Inclusivity Become Exploitative."

29. OU, like many other Canadian universities, does formally acknowledge the role of elders in a number of different ways, such as an advisor to certain programs or as an elder-in-residence within

Indigenous student services. Such titles and the compensation that may accompany them are limited, however, and are not available to recognize more organic or emergent roles and contributions outside of sustained and formalized relationships with the institution.

30. Gaudry and Lorenz, "Indigenization as Inclusion, Reconciliation, and Decolonization."
31. Ibid.
32. Greenwood, et al., "When the Politics of Inclusivity Become Exploitative," 202.
33. *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, ed. Tuhiwai Smith, et al., 6.
34. Ibid.

