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Symposium on Indigenous Scholarship: The Centrality of Culture and Indigenous Values

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Symposium on Indigenous Scholarship

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Abstract: The trend of globalization has led to a strong demand for the culture-specific or emic approach in scholarly research. It is the purpose of this paper to provide an opportunity for scholars to have their voices on the issues of indigenous scholarship. The paper consists of four essays examining the theme from four aspects, namely, the centrality of culture and communication, the Asiacentric communication paradigm, the development of Chinese communication theories, and an indigenous view of the study of resilience. It is hoped that the paper will contribute to the better understanding of indigenous scholarship and further provide a possible direction for the future investigation in this line of research. [China Media Research. 2012; 8(3): 1-10]

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The Centrality of Culture and Indigenous Values[2]

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The Centrality of Culture, which I wrote in 1990, critiqued ten years of research on intercultural communication in major journals, and noted that most of the scholarship was driven by a USA-centric model that utilized culture as a laboratory for testing the validity of communication theories (Shuter, 1990). Driven by a nomothetic paradigm from psychology which searches for universal laws of human behavior, communication research through 1990 essentially trivialized culture, particularly national culture and co-culture, by reducing it to a variable in multi-factor communication studies.

In that article, I suggested the field of communication should conduct intracultural communication research that explores human interaction within particular societies and world regions. An intracultural approach exalts culture by mining for deeply held indigenous values and communication patterns endemic to a society—long standing traditions that function as the cultural signature of a people. This approach differed from the predominant research paradigm of the period which emphasized the dynamics of intercultural transactions "between" interactants from different cultures as well as categorizing societies according to preexisting value schemes like those developed by Geert Hofstede (1980). An intracultural perspective adds value by examining cultural patterns and values "within" a society which can be useful in developing both intracultural and intercultural communication theory.

Indigenous cultural values are frequently identified and embraced in an intracultural approach to communication. Long standing within each society, indigenous values are often articulated in a single word or phrase generally known by most members of the culture. They reveal themselves in the ebb and flow of human interaction within a society and also influence transactions between cultures. And they are central to culture and serve as an essential component of cultural identity.

Although indigenous cultural values are endemic to each society, identifying them requires "mining" the cultural fabric, often with informants who are psychological members of the society and native speakers of the language. With their help, important indigenous values can be identified, and then verified, over time, by asking multiple cultural informants what the indigenous values mean to them. Listening closely to informant responses, researchers can learn a good deal about the nature of an indigenous value and how it's revealed in a society.

Consider the Law of Jante, a deeply held indigenous Scandinavian value that permeates Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. My personal journey to understand the Law of Jante—also referred to as Janteloven in Scandinavia—began more than twenty five years ago when I was asked by a Swedish company located in the US to assist in improving communication between Swedish and US employees. Unfamiliar with Scandinavian culture, I read available literature about

Scandinavian business and culture and then proceeded to interview multiple Swedish company employees. A few employees, as I recall, mentioned the word "Janteloven" during the interviews, which caught my attention. The cultural skeleton of Janteloven was "discovered" during those initial interviews while the cultural substance was added incrementally over many years of immersing myself in Scandinavian corporate culture and discourse and traveling quite extensively in Scandinavia, where I consulted for multinational Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian organizations.

The Law of Jante means roughly "don't think you're better than others—don't think you're important." Coined by Aksel Sandemose, a Norwegian author, the Law of Jante affects all aspects of Scandinavian communication including family relationships, work communication, school exchanges, interpersonal transactions, even mobile phone behavior. At work, for example, managers in Scandinavia are considered "first among equals" and, as a result, communicate on an equal basis with employees, who are neither reticent nor intimidated by them. Scandinavian organizations tend to be flat, with far fewer levels and titles than US companies, which is also a reflection of Janteloven. In fact, even mobile phone behavior is affected by Law of Jante since Danes, for example, tend to be significantly more willing than Americans to use their mobile phones when conversing with authority figures and while they're at work, seemingly unaffected by titles and hierarchy that are so essential to communication in the US workplace (Shuter, 2011).

Although indigenous values have been identified for many cultures—African Ubuntu, Chinese Guanxi, Brazilian Jeitinho, and Palanca in Colombia—the USA does not have a comparable indigenous identity encapsulated in a single "American" word or phrase. To complicate matters, although Scandinavia and the US both value self-reliance and independence and are clearly individualistic societies, Scandinavia, unlike the US, is grounded in the Law of Jante, a shared indigenous cultural value that emphasizes group conformity and modesty. Dichotomous value frameworks, like Hofstede's widely used conception of individualistic and collective societies, provide limited understanding of critical cultural distinctions between societies that appear to share similar broadly defined values like individualism or collectivism. Hence, indigenous values provide a holistic and intimate view of culture that capture the essence of cultural life and thought.

Returning to the US, I suggest that the phrase, "best and brightest," accolade du jour in America, reflects an important indigenous value, foundational to US culture and distinguishing it from other individualistic societies like Scandinavia. Google search uncovered more than forty four million references for "best and brightest" in US culture including the best and brightest schools,

movies, companies, presidents, leaders, politicians, hospitals, physicians, scientists, pharmacists, therapists, chefs, teachers, even dogs! The phrase captures the society's vertical value orientation, where performance in all sectors of US culture, be it individual or institutional, is ranked on a hierarchy from best to worst, brightest to dimmest. This vertical orientation towards people and performance is evident in all aspects of American life and thought, from business where managers are bosses and individual merit is paramount, to how schools use grades to reward individual effort and success—a hierarchical measure of performance.

Even the discourse of US Americans reveals vertical individualism which is captured in the phrase, best and brightest. For example, the language of praise and criticism, which plays a role in all societies, has a distinctly US American identity because of the assortment of superlatives used. US Americans are inclined to utilize superlatives like "awesome," "outstanding," "wonderful," "tremendous," and "great" to describe people, behavior, or objects. They are just as inclined to use the opposites of these words: "terrible," "disgusting," "garbage," "loser," and "crap"—to name a few. The US language of praise and criticism travels the emotional register, from highs to lows, and everything in between. A reflection of a vertical individualistic value, the US version of praise and criticism is at odds with Scandinavian praise which tends to be emotionally flat, bereft of superlatives, and modest. Words like "good," "interesting," and "as expected" are commonly used to express praise, which is carefully crafted to so as not to inflate egos or create false expectations.

The inherent conflict between Law of Jante and Best and Brightest is captured in a story that was told to me by a Norwegian businessman, who had been living with his 12 year old daughter and wife in the US for several years and decided, quite suddenly, to return to Norway. What finally convinced him and his wife to depart the US was their daughter's announcement to both of them that she was an "outstanding" writer. When they asked how she knew this, she said, "My teacher told me so." They both instantly realized it was time to return to Norway!

While Scandinavian audiences quickly understand the parents' decision and their psychology, US Americans are left dumbfounded by the narrative. They can't understand why this type of praise, so common and so desirable in the US, would cause anyone to leave the country. From a Norwegian perspective, praise like this violates the essence of The Law of Jante by seriously inflating their daughter's ego which, in the parents' view, potentially hinders her reentry to Norwegian society. Before she became too egocentric, too US American in their eyes, the parents concluded it was time to return to Norway.

In summary, analyses of indigenous values provide cultural portraits that are virtually impossible to capture when culture is reduced to a variable or when predetermined value categories, like individualism or collectivism, are used to classify a society. Imbedded within each society, indigenous values enrich our understanding of culture and its deeply held communication patterns. They are truly the cultural signatures of people worldwide.

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Cultural Traditions and Communication Theory:
Clarifying the Asiacentric Paradigm

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A communication theory of society would be based on the premise that the mode of communication—not in its technical and instrumental forms but in its human-interactive form—determines the outcome of social processes. In such a communication theory, cultural traditions are the basis of the rationalization of action. They are the organizational principles of communication that determine the range of possibilities in which economic, political, and technological development might evolve. —Hamid Mowlana (1996, p. 97)

My contribution to this symposium in *China Media Research* is to clarify the Asiacentric paradigm as a way of elaborating on what and why of indigenous communication scholarship. Simply put, *Asiacentricity* is the idea of centering, not marginalizing, Asian languages, religions/philosophies, and histories in theory-making and story-telling about Asian communicative life. Asiacentricity aims to encourage careful and critical engagements of Asian communicators with their own cultural traditions for self-understanding, self-expression, communal development, and cross-cultural dialogue. Intra‒culturally, it helps Asians embrace the positive elements of their cultural heritage and transform negative practices according to their ethical ideals. Interculturally, it helps Asians find "a place to stand," so to speak, and provides the basis of equality and mutuality in the global community (Miike, 2012).

From the perspective of an African communitarian philosophy, Maulana Karenga (2003) defined a tradition as "a cultural core that forms the central locus of our self-understanding and self-assertion in the world and which is mediated by constantly changing historical circumstances and an ongoing internal dialogue of reassessment and continuous development" (p. 5). Like Molefi Kete Asante's (2010) metatheory of Afrocentricity, the Asiacentric paradigm adopts this *Kawaida* vantage point. In other words, by *tradition*, Asiacentrists do not mean the cultural essence in an ancient, pure, and fixed sense, but they refer to a "living tradition" that is always invented and reinvented and proactively blending the old and the new. Hence, Asiacentricity is not past-oriented in that it does not insist on bringing Asian cultures back to the secluded past. Rather, Asiacentricity is about drawing on Asian cultural traditions as open and transformative systems for Asian communication theorizing.

It is Mahatma Gandhi (1958) who remarked that "no culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive" (p. 144). In truth, any culture is hybrid. The presence of cultural hybridity, however, should not be confused with the absence of cultural distinctiveness. For example, the "local culture" of Hawai'i is immensely hybrid. Many "locals" have multiple "nationalities." Nevertheless, there are locally distinctive ways of thinking and doing. Similarly, the fact that Asian cultures are hybrid does not diminish the development of Asiannesses. It is precisely because the local is in more and more exchange with the global that the importance of centricity must be stressed. Such ceaseless contact actually makes it all the more important for Asiacentrists to scrutinize the trajectories, forms, functions, and consequences of hybridity in cultural Asia toward the healthy and balanced centering of the Asian heritage. Thus, Asiacentricity is not merely descriptive. Asiacentric scholarship is committed to generating self-defining ideas and taking self-determined actions that underscore ethical visions for

human freedom and flourishing and communal solidarity for cultural preservation and integration in Asian societies.

It should not be misunderstood that the concept of "center" in Asiacentric metatheory is one cultural center diametrically opposed to another (Miike, 2010b). It is our own culture becoming central, not marginal, in our story *without completely ignoring other cultural viewpoints on our culture*. If we can see ourselves only through someone else's eyes, there will not be our agency. If we always speak in the voices of others, no one will hear our voices. There are many ways of centering any Asian language, religion/philosophy, and history. Asian cultures can be centered so as to highlight similarities at one time and differences at another. It is, therefore, misleading to claim that Asiacentricity is based on the presumption of the incommensurability of Asianness and non-Asianness.

Cultural rootedness in theory and in practice has nothing to do with going against other cultures. Europeans have never marginalized their own cultural traditions in addressing *European* thought and action. And yet, no one has chastised them for the act of perpetuating ethnocentrism, divisiveness, and separatism. As Asante (2010) aptly noted, "Afrocentricity was not the counterpoint to Eurocentricity, but a particular perspective for analysis that did not seek to occupy all space and time as Eurocentrism has often done. All human cultures must be centered, in fact, subject of their own realities" (p. 49). It is important to note here that *Eurocentrism* as a universalist ideology is an ethnocentric approach to non-Western worlds and people of non-Western heritage, while *Eurocentricity* as a particularist position is a legitimate culture-centric approach to cultural Europe and people of European decent (Miike, 2010a).

It is neither fair nor accurate to say that Asiacentricity is exclusively and strictly for Asian communicators and Asian phenomena. Karegna (2010) maintained that Afrocentricity contains both culture-general and culture-specific dimensions. Afrocentric scholarship "self-consciously contributes a valuable particular cultural insight and discourse to the multicultural project and in the process, finds common ground with other cultures which can be cultivated and developed for mutual benefit" (p. 42). He tersely stated that "as there are lessons for humanity in African particularity, there are lessons for Africans in human commonality" (p. 43). In effect, Afrocentrists concurrently reflect on what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense.

Likewise, Asiacentricity does not subscribe to the view that cultural particulars are in opposition to human universals. Asiacentrists are firm believers in the existence of "globally significant local knowledge." Nonetheless, they do not support the backward and outdated argument that *every* communication theory must be constructed with the implicit assumption that it should purport to explain universal phenomena across space and time. Such an assumption is indeed the longstanding problem of Eurocentric essentialism. There is nothing wrong with the fact that some theories are meant to interpret Akan or Yoruba speaking practices, whereas others are intended to observe Korean or Japanese nonverbal behaviors.

According to Manulani Aluli Meyer (2008), universality is "a fundamental spiritual truth exemplified in harmony, peace, and awareness. This can only occur through respect and honoring of distinctness, thus the idea that 'specificity leads to universality'" (p. 230). Hence, she asseverated, universality is not uniformity. There is a way to embrace the best of our own cultural heritage without suppressing others. In the spirit of valuing positive aspects of all cultures for intercultural equality and mutuality and for the true appreciation of multicultural contributions to the human civilization, it is possible for us to be Latino-centric, Hawai'ian-centric as well as Eurocentric. We can be China-centric, Filipino-centric, and Nepali-centric.

The Asiacentric paradigm partakes in this multicultural enterprise of celebrating human commonality in the global society and cherishing cultural particularity in the local community. The central thesis of my short essay, then, is that it is only through culturally rooted thinking and culturally grounded theorizing that we will be able to advance the multicultural turn in communication theory. I concur with Mowlana (1996) who passionately concluded:

> We should not be deceived by an illusion of the diversity of the subject matter and the vastness of the literature. We need to concentrate on promoting the diversity of cultural views and our ability to make the field more interesting and challenging by exploring new avenues and voices of knowledge. If we do not watch for these potential sources, we may go on for another long generation or decades without really making any effort that may account for a true shift in our thinking and our research paradigms. (p. 213)

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The Development of Chinese Communication Theories in Global Society

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The century-long domination of the Eurocentric paradigm in communication studies is problematic, but the uncritical acceptance of Eurocentrism as the universal paradigm in non-Western areas, including China, reflects a more serious problem. It is encouraging to see that the criticism of Eurocentrism and Westernization in communication education and research is growing stronger and stronger in China in recent years. The trend induces a hope for the examination of the concept of communication from an emic or indigenous perspective. However, in order to establish a solid foundation of indigenous communication studies, it is necessary for scholars and educators in Chinese societies to move from the stage of criticism of Eurocentrism and Westernization to the phase of building communication theories from the perspective of Chinese culture. It is then the purpose of this essay, in addition to explaining the need for the development of indigenous communication studies, to demonstrate a way of constructing communication theories from a Chinese cultural perspective. The future challenge of indigenization of communication studies and the emphasis of multicultural/multi-contextual co-existence of scholarship in global society are also discussed.

Why the Localization of Communication Inquiry

One of the prominent effects of the impact of globalization on human society is the emergence of a de-Westernization movement. The globalizing trend accelerated by new media provides different cultural and ethnic groups an opportunity to remove the historical scar of being marginalized, silenced, ignored, suppressed, denigrated, or excluded by the domination of Eurocentrism in the last two centuries. The Western celebration of autonomy and individualism is no longer the only choice of human societies. Instead, the pursuit of diversity of cultural values in order to achieve the ideal of human cooperation becomes the norm rather than the exception in global society. This also reflects the equal right of different cultural groups in defining the reality and issues in human societies, and the correct form of human society is not necessary to be based only on the European-American political ideal.

Academically, especially in social sciences and humanities, the de-Westernization movement triggered by globalization leads to the development of indigenous scholarship. In the discipline of communication studies scholars argued that human interaction is contextually dependent, and therefore it is inappropriate to continue to employ European paradigms to explain communication behaviors of people in non-European cultures. As Chen (2006) indicated, the ultimate goal of human communication in Eastern societies is to achieve harmony, which is characterized by indirectness, subtlety, adaptiveness, and consensus in the process of interaction; while Westerners tend to be confrontational through a more direct, expressive, dialectical, and divisive communication style. More specifically, every culture shows its own uniqueness in the process of

interaction. In Asia, for instance, Japanese concepts of *amae* (message expanding and message accepting needs) and *enryo-sasshi* (restraint-guessing), Philippine's *kapwa* (reciprocal being) and *pahiwatig* (strategic ambiguity), Korea's *uyeri* (obliged reciprocity), and Thailand's *kreng jai* (being considerate) all demonstrate a different orientation of cultural values. As for concepts such as *hexie* (harmony), *mienzi* (face), *guanxi* (social relation), *keqi* (politeness), *renqing* (favor), *bao* (reciprocity), *yuan* (predestined relations), and *qi* (vital force), they have been emphasized as the key to understanding Chinese communication behaviors (Chen, 2012). Hence, the eradication of Eurocentric domination implies the appropriateness and legitimacy of indigenous scholarship, which strongly demands an emic approach to the inquiry of human communication. Following this trend, the next section describes how to develop Chinese communication theories.

How Chinese Communication Theories are Developed

The purpose of developing Chinese communication theories is twofold: (1) to help non-Chinese better understand Chinese people by using local or specific concepts embedded in the core values of Chinese culture to develop theories applied only to explain Chinese communication behaviors, and (2) to share intellectual knowledge in the global research community or make contributions to the literature of communication inquires by using Chinese philosophical thoughts to develop a universal theory of human communication

First of all, the local theories of Chinese communication refer to the micro, emic, or indigenous perspective of scientific knowledge produced from those Chinese key concepts mentioned in the section above. A good example is the model developed by Hwang (2011), who used the concept of *mienzi* to propose a theoretical framework to represent the culture-specific mentalities of face dynamism in Chinese society. According to Hwang, face as a crucial concept of understanding Chinese social behavior was derived from Confucianism and continues to play an influential role in contemporary Chinese society. To understand the semantics and pragmatics of face language exercised by Chinese people in their lifeworlds is the key to avoiding conflicts with them.

Another example is the harmony theory of Chinese communication developed by Chen (2001). Chen pointed out that harmony "embodies the holistic nature, interrelated connection, and intuitive way of expression of Chinese communication," and as an elaborating symbol in Chinese culture, it "provides Chinese people cognitive and affective orientations and strategies for orderly social actions embedded in the defined goal of Chinese culture" (Chen, 2011, p. 3). Chen indicated that

Chinese communication aims to reach a harmonious state of human relationship, thus a fundamental axiom for Chinese communication can be stated as "An increase in the ability to achieve harmony in Chinese communication will increase the degree of communication competence." In addition, from the perspective of harmony other important Chinese concepts, such as *jen* (humanism), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (rite), *shi* (temporal contingencies), *wei* (special contingencies), *ji* (the first imperceptible beginning of movement), *guanxi*, *mienzi*, and power, that dictate Chinese social interaction can be easily related and understood.

Second, the universal theories of Chinese communication refer to the macro, etic, or culture-general perspective of scientific knowledge based on Chinese philosophical thinking. In a strict sense, although a universal theory of communication based on Chinese philosophy may help people understand the Chinese way of thinking, it aims to treat communication as a universal phenomenon which is practiced by all human beings. To theorize human interaction based on Chinese philosophical thinking means to examine the concept of communication as a universal phenomenon of human beings from a different perspective to enrich the existing literature of human communication studies by competing with scholars in different societies in the process of knowledge production.

Based on this argument, Chen (2009a), for example, indicated that a *yin-yang* model of human communication can be developed based on the five characteristics originated from Chinese philosophical thinking, namely, holistic, interconnected, hierarchical, creative, and harmonious. The *yin-yang* model of human communication with the five characteristics is embedded in four ontological assumptions of Chinese philosophy: (1) human communication is a changing and transforming process, (2) human communication is changing according to the endless but orderly cycle of the universe, (3) human communication is never absolutely completed or finished, and (4) human communication aims to reach a harmonious state of human relationship. The model can be used to supplement existing communication models developed by communication scholars in the Western world in two ways. First, in addition to laying emphasis on the dialectical, confrontational nature of human communication, it reinforces the importance of the dialogical, harmonious nature of human interaction. Second, it stresses the dynamic nature of human communication by stipulating the different forms and outcomes of transformation of human interaction.

Whither the Indigenous Scholarship

Although the globalizing trend creates a space in which people of differing cultures can equally

compete with each other, the challenge of the dominance of Eurocentrism or the movement of de-Westernization does not infer a state of mutual exclusiveness. Instead, the ideal of global competition as well refers to global collaboration, which aims to reach a state of multicultural or multi-contextual co-existence of diverse cultural groups. It is a "both-and" rather than "either-or" situation which demands people to acquire boundary wisdom to cope with the potential conflicts in the process of intercultural encountering.

As Chen (2009b) stipulated, intercultural contact creates a boundary space in which people attempt to develop a state of interculturality through the correspondence of different cultural orientations. The boundary space is noticeable for its high degree of ambiguity or uncertainty caused by cultural differences. Boundary wisdom asks participants in the space to cultivate courage for expanding the borderline through the challenge of one's own core cultural values and the respect of one's counterparts'. In other words, boundary wisdom dictates intercultural sensitivity and flexibility for the achievement of interdependence, inter-penetration, and interfusion of the two different cultural groups. It is only in this condition can the multicultural

co-equality be achieved in the process of developing indigenous scholarship.

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Toward a Research Agenda on Resilience and Indigenous People's Perspectives[3]

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Resilience processes and practices are triggered by disruptions in people's lives. These disruptions may be single occurrences such involuntary removal from one's homeland, death, natural disaster, and other upheavals in life. When people are able to adapt, "bounce back," and create a "new normal," we say that these individuals or communities have interacted with others and engaged with the material realities in their lives such that their communication helps to produce resilience (for overview, see Buzzanell, 2010; Buzzanell, Shenoy, Remke, & Lucas, 2009). Although resilience has physiological, neurological, maturation, and other bases, it is often through communication that resilience is developed and sustained. In other words, resilience is communicatively constructed or constituted—brought into being—such that people can adapt and transform their lives and surroundings to create the new normal.

Researchers from many academic disciplines have noted that collective storytelling, intergenerational

advice, and preparations for recurrent events (e.g., tsunamis, wildfires, mining accidents, job loss, migrations due to refugee status or other occurrences) can help individuals and groups to retain that which is most precious (e.g., family or community rituals) and recall how things were done during past hardships (Buzzanell & Turner, 2003; Hammoud & Buzzanell, forthcoming; Lucas & Buzzanell, in press). However, most academic and popular materials on human resilience have focused on characteristics that typify resilient individuals and communities, with focus on qualities that only certain people or groups have, rather than the processes through which resilience emerges (Richardson, 2002).

In this essay, I discuss (a) resilience as a communicative process that is constituted through the everyday talk and invocation of macrodiscourses whereby what is said and done becomes sensible. Although recent scholarship recognizes that resilience

characterizes human endurance in general (rather than a quality possessed by a few), I note the (b) lack of research on resilience co-produced with indigenous people. Finally, I conclude with (c) methodological recommendations for indigenous peoples' resilience processes.

Resilience as a Communicative Process

There seem to be several communicative processes whereby resilience begins and is sustained: (a) crafting normalcy, (b) affirming identity anchors, (c) maintaining and using communication networks, (d) putting alternative logics to work, and (e) legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action (Buzzanell, 2010). Taken as a whole, these processes view individuals and collectivities as active agents in recreating aspects of their lives that are most important to them (e.g., family rituals, everyday routines, particular familial or community roles and connections/networks). They also acknowledge that conventional (primarily rational and linear) logics or approaches may not match the complexities and seemingly incomprehensible nature of the current situation. Instead, resilience processes utilize legitimizing discourse and emotions to acknowledge people's expressions and deep feelings of loss, betrayal, confusion, and anger. Resilience processes often relegate negative feelings to the background so that living and productive action can go on.

Lack of Research on Resilience Among Indigenous People

Missing from academic and popular materials is how indigenous peoples craft resilience. Indigenous people are defined in various ways but often are portrayed as politically underprivileged group members, original inhabitants of a land, and collectivities with shared identities that are different from the national or (later-arriving) groups in power (e.g., United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, n.d.). Because indigenous people live at the margins of societies, they often are excluded from discussions, policy-making, and resources that affect them directly (O'Faircheallaigh, 1999). Given past injustices and colonizations as well as prioritization of Eurocentric ways of knowing, valuing, and being, members of indigenous groups often experience uneasiness and distrust when confronted by dominant group members and their (sometimes well-intentioned) desire to change traditional ways of sustaining indigenous members' lives and cultures (Battiste, 2008). Scholars acknowledge that dominant group members do not understand fully *how* their interventions—particularly appropriations of resources and colonization of local knowledge--have created short- and long-term unethical situations (Battiste, 2008; Ting-Toomey, 2010).

Furthermore, researchers admit that indigenous peoples' knowledge consists of "a web of relationships within a specific ecological context [that] contains linguistic categories, rules, and relationships unique to each knowledge system" (Battiste, 2008, p. 501). This web differs from dominant group members' knowledge. How indigenous group members' knowledge becomes embedded in everyday talk and embodied in everyday performance of living, surviving, adapting, and transforming—that is, resilience—is much less understood.

Communication Research Agenda on Resilience Among Indigenous People

Culture-centered approaches that operate at the intersections of culture, structure, and agency (Dutta, 2011) offer entrée points for examining indigenous group members' communication and resilience. In accessing culture, structure, and agency, many scholars would, and have, recommended narrative, deconstruction, grounded theory, and postcolonial critique (see Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008). Each of these approaches enables scholars to learn different aspects of indigenous people's lives, language, and ways of doing and valuing. In narrative, researchers learn how indigenous group members tell a story, deem what is important in their lives, express logics and values, integrate real material conditions of their lives, and engage in retrospective sensemaking. Deconstruction pursues presence and absence in texts; it provides a window into the taken-for-granted power dynamics in indigenous society. Grounded theory offers a means of developing empirically based, mid-range, and culture-centered theory through examination of data with indigenous group members' sensibilities in mind. Finally, postcolonial critique starts with the admission that colonization has deprived indigenous people of their livelihoods, families, traditions, language, and maintenance of their unique culture over time.

In adding to this list and proposing a couple of data analytic schemes that have not been used in communication, phenomenography can enable study of group-centered conceptualizations or descriptions of experience based solely on participants' experiences (see Marton, 1981). Institutional ethnography can provide a systematic means of studying the ways ruling relations, or power structures, operate on individuals as group representatives (see Faris, 2011). Both of these approaches map out what happens when activities take place, but institutional ethnography can depict graphically how certain texts rule members of indigenous groups. The advantages of these methods are that they operate less within researchers' and participants' interpretive repertoires and more with people's actual behaviors and policy or text-driven interactions and consequences. Each of these previously

recommended and new methods for qualitative inquiry into indigenous group members' lives can contribute to understanding of their processes of resilience. Their resilience processes may expand upon or differ from those processes identified by Buzzanell (2010). Indeed, one would expect that indigenous groups' resilience might be marked more by legitimation and liminality, or in-betweenness and both/and (dialogic integration) processes of action, boundaries, emotions, cultures, identities, materialities, and structures, than by the admittedly Western notions depicted by Buzzanell.

In closing, resilience is not simply adaptational but can be transformational. Communication is central in indigenous scholarship that often does not name its processes or findings as resilience. Putting the face of resilience on previous scholarship and encouraging further work directly on resilience enables engagement with a profound human process that can spark dialogue, inclusion, and (perhaps) insight into how dominant group members might learn from indigenous peoples to address the grand challenges of our times.

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Notes:
1. The authors' names are arranged in alphabetical order, but the contribution of each essay in this paper is equal.
2. Copyright for this essay is retained by Robert Shuter. Permission to reprint must be secured from the author.
3. This essay is based on a presentation to the West Lake International Communications Summit in Hangzhou, China, in October 2011, as part of a panel entitled, "Ferment and Future of Communication Studies: Towards An Indigenous Scholarship."

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