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Developing transformational curriculum to educate social work students about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge

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Developing transformational curriculum to educate social work students about
Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge.

by

Deborah Thibeault

A Banded Dissertation in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
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Abstract

While efforts to recruit Indigenous social work students must be continued, social work educators need to ensure that non-Indigenous social work students are learning about the history, culture, and wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Additionally, social work students need to become aware of the impact the social work profession has had on this population. This awareness and understanding will help social workers practice from a place of being an ally and will assist in altering the views many Indigenous people have about social work. There are three products in this banded dissertation that focus on engaging social work educators in a dialogue regarding how to teach social work students about Indigenous peoples in a culturally sensitive manner. The conceptual framework that guides this scholarship agenda is a Mi'kmaq concept called "two-eyed seeing". This means one eye sees the strengths and contributions of Indigenous knowledge, the other sees the strengths and contributions of Western knowledge, and merging the two is beneficial.

The first product in the banded dissertation includes slides and a summary of a conference presentation that took place at the National Indigenous Social Work Conference in October of 2016 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. This presentation reviews the pedagogies of service learning and cultural immersion; and introduces the concept of cultural service immersion. Service learning connects students with a community where the student provides a service while integrating classroom knowledge and leadership skills. Cultural immersion engages students in a culture different from their own for an extended period of time. Cultural service immersion blends both service learning and cultural immersion. The second product explores the use of cultural service immersion with Indigenous people as a transformational learning method. Not only is it proposed that cultural sensitivity and humility will increase

among social work students engaged in cultural service immersion but it is expected that through learning about the history of Indigenous peoples, the profession of social works impact on Indigenous peoples, and the traditions and knowledge of Indigenous peoples social work students will be better prepared to engage in a process of allyship. The final banded dissertation product is a qualitative phenomenological research study that explores the lives of seven Indigenous recipients of social work services. This study provides social work educators insight about curriculum content that can further students' knowledge and understanding about the history of Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of cultural humility and offers approaches that can lead to healing the relationship between the social work profession and Indigenous peoples.

This banded dissertation highlights the intersections of cultural service immersion with Indigenous cultures and knowledge. Themes uncovered included: the importance for social work students to know the historical trauma Indigenous people have experienced, the need for students to be aware of stereotypes and prejudices, and for students to honor and respect Indigenous knowledge and ways of healing. What's more, this dissertation stresses the need for western academics to incorporate Indigenous methods when teaching about Indigenous peoples. This can be done by allowing Elders to teach in the classroom and by social work educators taking students into the community in order. Lastly, this banded dissertation emphasizes the need for the social work profession to repair its relationship with Indigenous peoples. Meaningful relationships and allyship can blossom when social work students work alongside Indigenous peoples, while accomplishing a common goal.

Keywords: cultural immersion, service learning, Indigenous, Native American, social work education, curriculum development

Dedication/Acknowledgements

First, I must thank the Creator and ancestors for guiding this amazing ceremony. Next, words cannot express my gratitude for the patience and love of the man who walks besides me, Terry Shinn. Thank you to my family, spiritual community, colleagues, and friends who provided encouragement along the way. Thank you Cohort family, especially my suitemates for the tears and the laughter. Finally, I want to acknowledge Dr. Laurel Bidwell for her guidance and to thank all teachers in my life who serve as role models, both uplifting and discouraging because each provided the fuel that I needed to accomplish my goals.

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Developing transformational curriculum to educate social work students about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge

This banded dissertation explores pedagogies and curricula for social work educators to utilize when teaching social work students about Indigenous peoples. Social works mission is to “enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW, 2017). That said, it imperative that social work education highlight the nation’s first people who were forced from their lands, experienced physical and cultural genocide, and continue to face challenges including being the poorest population in the United States (Liebler & Ortyl, 2014). One of the core competencies in social work education is *Engaged Diversity and Difference in Practice* (CSWE, 2015). While social workers are called to understand diversity, educators must examine how it is taught particularly in regards to Indigenous peoples because little information is provided in social work textbooks. According to the United States Census (2013), American Indians/Alaskan Natives has the highest poverty rates in the nation. This fact alone depicts the need for social workers to have knowledge and understanding about the history and current concerns of Indigenous peoples.

A number of texts being used in social work education provide little information about the history of oppression and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples. For example, in *Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare: Empowering People* by Charles Zastrow (2014) the population is identified as Native American. Information about the use of the terms Native American, American Indian, First Nations and Indigenous are not presented in the text. The use of appropriate language when addressing any population is a foundation to cultural awareness. Furthermore, there are only two and half pages of information about the population with a few

comments on other pages. Most importantly, while there is mention about the Indian boarding schools imposed upon Indigenous families, there is no mention about the impact they had on Indigenous children, their families, or their tribes/communities. Zastrow (2014) also highlights the Native American Church's use of peyote under the chapter on drug abuse, which depicts a lack of understanding about the church and the ceremony. In actuality peyote is considered a deity in the Native American Church and is used as a medicine which produces a sense of wellness and has been documented as an aid to assisting in the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction (Page, 2003). In the text *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need* (2012) very little is said about Indigenous peoples of the United States; the text does not discuss the impact government policies had on the population. To conclude, Trattner's *From Poor Law to Welfare State: A History of Social Welfare in America* (1999), a text used in a social work doctoral level course called *History of Social Work and Social Work Education* mostly highlights the history and experience of African Americans and rarely provides information about Indigenous peoples.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) attempts to address issues of diversity within the social work profession. The agenda of the CSWE's 1970 American Indian Task Force and the agenda of the CSWE's Task Force on Native Americans in Social Work Education created in 2007 had a very similar focus. Each agenda focused on recruitment and retention of Indigenous students and faculty, financial assistance, and curriculum (CSWE, 1972; CSWE, 2009). The 2007 Task Force also identified the need to collaborate with Tribal Colleges and Universities, and to "promote equal value of alternative research methodologies" (CSWE, 2009). After a 37-year time span, the agenda items continue to be about recruitment and retention of Indigenous students and faculty. Increasing social work students and faculty who are Indigenous

is a leading priority. However, currently enrolled non-Indigenous social work students need to learn about the wide range of Indigenous peoples and culture in order to be more culturally competent about one of the nation's most vulnerable populations.

This dissertation provides three products for social work educators to consider when developing curricula for teaching social work students about Indigenous peoples. Included in the subsequent sections of this introduction to the banded dissertation is a conceptual framework used for the overall dissertation, summary of the three products, discussion addressing the implications for social work education and further research, and comprehensive reference list for the banded dissertation. Following the introduction of the banded dissertation each product is provided. The first is a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Introducing Non-Indigenous Social Work Students to Indigenous Culture*; the second is a conceptual manuscript entitled *Understanding Indigenous Culture through Service Learning and Cultural Immersion* and the third is a qualitative research study entitled *Healing relationships between Social Work and Indigenous peoples: "We carry that history in our DNA."*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that guides this scholarship agenda is a concept called "two-eyed seeing". This term was originally coined by Albert and Murdena Marshall, Elders from the Mi'kmaq tribe and educators from Cape Breton University's Institute for Integrative Science and Health program (Latimer, et al., 2014). "Two-eyed seeing" or *Etuapymunk* is used to describe the need to view the strengths of Indigenous knowledge through one eye, to view the strengths of Western knowledge through the other, and to bring them together in order to benefit all (Goulding, Steels, & McGarty, 2016). The two-eyed seeing lens views both philosophies equally. Looking at the two together makes the most sense because it aligns with the core belief

that we are all connected and everything is related. This scholarship agenda could not be accomplished holistically without taking both worlds into consideration. Balance between the two was needed to conduct credible research. While the United States continues to focus on Western research methods, “The Canadian Institutes of Health Research’s (CIHR) Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health has adopted the concept of two-eyed seeing with the goal of transforming Indigenous health and figures it prominently in its vision for the future” (Hall et al, 2015, p.1). Each product in the banded dissertation was viewed through the lens of “two-eyed seeing.” Three other frameworks were used in conjunction with this primary lens: Indigenous knowledge and research methods were used in all products. Western knowledge included a transformation learning perspective used in the presentation and conceptual manuscript, and a phenomenological lens used in the research study.

Indigenous Knowledge

During a series of meetings of Indigenous representatives from seven areas in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s, common cultural threads emerged. Harris and Wasilewski (2004) call these the Four R’s: relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution. These are used as a common thread throughout the banded dissertation, while acknowledging that not all nations or tribes subscribe to these same tenets. Relationship is the belief that everything is connected, such as two-legged beings (humans), four-legged, insects, trees, birds, etc. Responsibility emphasizes that we all have a commitment to our community and leaders are responsible for creating space in which relationships can be built and flourish. Reciprocity means that when we receive something we must be willing to give back. Finally, redistribution speaks

to the duty of sharing, regardless of monetary value, and being willing to give anything away (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004).

Transformative Learning

Transformational learning is an educational theory which highlights and values students learning experiences being one that transforms their worldview. Many service learning and cultural immersion experiences possess the underpinnings of transformative learning (Hogan, 2015). All of the banded dissertation products evolved from creating curricula that will take students through the process of “knowing, acting, and being” as presented by Barnette and Coate (2005). Moving through these stages is a transformational experience. Knowing goes beyond facts of knowledge or skills. It is about connecting with the material in a personal way. An expression used in 12 step fellowships to describe this process is that information is connected “from the head to the heart.” Knowing is about wisdom that one acquires navigating the changes and challenges in the world. In acting, students begin practicing their skills and sharing their knowledge in the classroom as well as in the community. Barnett and Coate (2005) explain that knowing and acting alone is inadequate because these will not be enough in a real world setting. The claim that the being of these domains is the “most significant” and “without it the others cannot take off” (Barnett & Coate, 2005, p.164). As knowledge turns into acting, it can travel from “our head to our heart” in order to have a true sense of knowing, then this wisdom can to travel to our core in order to truly have being take place, until then we are acting. In service learning and cultural immersion experiences, students step out of the traditional classroom into an unfamiliar setting where they must incorporate “knowing, acting, and being” as part of their learning process through critical thinking, reflection, and collaboration with the community. This

practice leads to “shifts” in how one thinks, feels, acts, as well as one’s own consciousness about and “being” in the world (Hoggan, 2015, p. 60).

Phenomenological

Phenomenological research explores life experiences and attempts to convey an understanding about the human experience from the individuals’ perspective (Lester, 1999; Wilson, 2015). Phenomenology focuses on an individual’s experience, rather than community based experiences which would align with Indigenous views. In using “two-eyed seeing” both the individual and community perspectives are important. A phenomenological framework is a qualitative approach to collect “deep information and perceptions” and “seeks essentially to describe rather than explain” (Lester, 1999, p.1). Additionally, with a phenomenological approach it is important to explore rather than begin with an assumption or hypothesis (Lester, 1999). This approach was used when conducting research for the banded dissertation and when conducting the literature review for the conceptual manuscript.

Summary of Banded Dissertation Products

The first product of this banded dissertation is a presentation delivered at the National Indigenous Social Work Conference in Manitoba, Canada titled “Introducing non-Indigenous social work students to Indigenous culture” which is took place on October 24, 2016. This 45-minute presentation used both new and traditional forms of communication. The first 25 minutes involved a PowerPoint presentation which explained service learning and cultural immersion and its impact when done together. An example of a professional experience of a service learning/domestic cultural immersion activity with a group of non-Indigenous social workers was used throughout the presentation. A talking circle was held for the last 20 minutes of the

presentation where participants voiced their experiences and concerns with service learning, cultural immersion, and teaching non-Indigenous students about Indigenous tradition and culture.

Concerns articulated during the presentation led to further literature review and exploration for the development of the second product, a conceptual manuscript concerning the teaching of non-Indigenous social work students about Indigenous culture and traditions through service learning and cultural immersion. Lemieux and Allen (2007) state, “Academic service learning is pedagogical approach that integrates community service with academic study to promote student reflection, critical thinking, and create problem solving” (p. 309). Experiential learning increases student’s ability to connect theory to practice by providing them with an opportunity to build relationships with individuals and communities to increase empathy and self-awareness through reflective writing and dialogue (Ishii, Gilbride, & Stenstrud, 2009). Immersing oneself in another culture while providing a service to a community provides social work students with an opportunity to work on practice skills while gaining firsthand experience of a culture (Canfield, Low, & Hovestadt, 2009).

The final product, a qualitative research study, explores the lives of seven Indigenous people, ranging in age from 36 to 79, who received services from a social worker in order to uncover what they believe is essential in social work education. Indigenous knowledge incorporates four dimensions: knowledge is personal and subjective, knowledge is passed on orally, knowledge is experiential, and lastly, it is holistic, meaning that it involves all of our senses (Rowe, 2014). Since the research involved an exploration of Indigenous peoples view and beliefs it would have been culturally insensitive to conduct the investigation without the use of Indigenous knowledge and traditions. The three products that make up this banded dissertation move the profession forward in areas of cultural competence by exploring how to educate social

workers about Indigenous peoples, the power of Indigenous knowledge, and how to use Indigenous knowledge and methods to increase cultural competence.

Discussion

This banded dissertation highlights the importance of introducing social work students to the history, culture, and knowledge of Indigenous peoples using cultural service immersion. The qualitative research of this dissertation revealed that it is imperative that social work students learn about the “true” history of Indigenous peoples. Social work students need to learn about the oppression and trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples because of initiatives imposed on them by the United States government, some of which was implemented by social workers. Skepticism about teaching practices within educational institutions was raised along with concerns about not allowing Elders, who do not possess a college degree, to teach university classes about traditions, culture, history, and the language. Additionally, an important part of this work was exploring ideas with research participants about non-Indigenous students completing cultural service immersion. The majority of the research participants expressed apprehension about students entering a community before learning about protocol and customs. They supported the idea of students learning about such things from an Elder in the classroom prior to entering the community. All research participants agreed that cultural service immersion would be an opportunity for students to deepen their awareness and understanding, not only about Indigenous peoples but also about themselves. Research participants spoke about the use of traditional ceremony and practices as part of their health and healing process; and participants suggested having students take part in traditional prayer ceremonies. Within this project, concern was also expressed regarding students only seeing the ceremonial part of the culture and affirmed that immersion with a family to experience day to day life is needed as well. It was also

declared that it should be mandatory for social work students to participate in Indigenous ceremony as part of their training, and that praying together would help begin to heal Indigenous people and their views of social workers.

The conceptual manuscript in this banded dissertation elucidates the intersections of cultural service immersion with the Four R's as described by Harris and Wasilewski (2004), relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution. The Four R's must be taken into consideration when conducting cultural service immersion with Indigenous communities. Relationships between the instructor, students, and community begin prior to students entering the community. This is important to ensure that community members and students understand that they are working collaboratively and that the students are not entering the community to "fix" them. Instead, they are there to assist the community and help them reach their goal (Bolea, 2012; Burleson, 2015). Students learn that their responsibility in the cultural service immersion project is to spend time with, learn from, and assist the community. Once entering the community, students begin to experience reciprocity because they learn as much from the community members as the community is gaining from their support. As students gain understanding this information gets passed along to others who are not involved in the project; this act is viewed as redistribution.

The concept of cultural service immersion requires educators to provide students the opportunity to engage with and learn directly from members of a community (Quinn-Lee & Olson-McBride, 2012). Liebler and Ortyl (2014) bring attention to the increase in people classifying themselves as Native American with the United States Census; and Garrett and Pinchette (2000) articulate the breadth of people identifying as Native Americans ranging from traditional to pan-traditional. A person who is seen as traditional is one who only speaks the

native language and only uses traditional native practices. A person is considered pan-traditional when they have been fully assimilated into Western culture yet they have decided to learn about and return to traditional practices. The increase in people identifying as Native American or Indigenous is another reason social work students need to engage in cultural service immersion with Indigenous communities. Having textbook knowledge alone about Indigenous peoples does not build relationships nor will it be enough to build the ally support the original people of this land deserve.

Implications for Social Work Education

There has been an increase of one million people who identify as “American Indian or Alaskan Native” from the 1990 to the 2000 United States Census (Liebler & Ortyl, 2014). This upsurge, in what is also the country’s poorest population, makes it imperative that social workers understand the history and the dynamics of the various cultures of Indigenous peoples. Social work students need to understand the historical trauma and impact social services continue to have on these communities. In turn, they will understand the reluctance Indigenous people may have about collaborating with or engaging in services with social workers. In order for the social work profession to be welcomed and trusted by Indigenous people, acknowledgement of what the profession has done to help and harm them must be made. Creating space in the social work curriculum for social work students to become aware of the history of Indigenous people is the first step in moving social work professionals into a position of being allies. The social work curriculum needs to provide depth in teaching the history of Indigenous people. For example, most social work students are unaware of basic historical information, such as the existence of Indian boarding schools, the American Indian Movement, the Religious Freedom Act, the Indian Child Welfare Act and how many tribes exist in the United States. Once students have

knowledge about the history, they can begin to analyze the role social workers have played in both helping Indigenous people and perpetuating trauma for Indigenous people. Furthermore, when students understand the impact the profession has had on Indigenous peoples they can change their approach to be more congruent and align with the social work values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence (NASW, 2017).

The use of cultural service immersion as a transformational learning tool challenges social work educators to step outside of the classroom and into the community. It challenges educators to change from the traditional style of teaching to that of being a learner alongside the students (Bolea, 2012). There are two approaches to teaching cultural competency. Some instructors focus on content while others focus on process (Quinn-Lee & Olson-McBride, 2012). Cultural service immersion provides an opportunity for both. Prior to entering a community, it is important for instructors to provide content material. As indicated in the study, students need to understand the historical oppression and trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples.

Additionally, it would benefit the class to have a leader from the community attend class to discuss cultural appropriation, protocol, and respectful behaviors. After the content is shared with students, the process of moving knowledge from the head to the heart begins when they enter the community and begin working alongside its members. It takes a great deal of time and effort on the instructor to develop a cultural service immersion experience for students.

However, once an ongoing relationship with an Indigenous community is established, the time and effort then becomes a unified process between the instructor, students, community leaders, and community members. Perhaps some social work programs, due to obstacles such as funding and class size, can only focus on the knowledge content into the curriculum. However, in order

for students to understand and change their worldview about working with Indigenous peoples, transformational learning must take place by leaving the four walls of the classroom and stepping into the community. Cultural service immersion is a mechanism to accomplish transformation learning. Social work students must be given opportunities to learn from people of different cultures so that they can move from only acquiring knowledge to possessing a true sense of understanding (Barnett & Coate, 2005; Quinn-Lee & Olson-McBride, 2012).

Implications for Future Research

There is limited research completed about the effectiveness of cultural immersion and service learning, affordable immersion trips, about working with Indigenous communities, and about cultural appropriation. Research conducted by Mapp (2012) found that a nine day cultural immersion trip was just as effective as a 14-day trip while Quinn-Lee and Olson-McBride found that a five day trip did not show any significant differences from students who stayed in the classroom. Furthermore, Pope-Davis, Breaux, and Lui (1997) report that in order for transformation to occur one must be immersed in another culture for a significant period of time. However, they do not state how much time or if the time needs to be consecutive. Due to the costs of cultural immersion trips it would be interesting to research the impact domestic cultural service immersion has on students. Domestic cultural service immersion can be a viable option for students who do not have financial means and for non-traditional students who cannot possibly leave their family or job for an extended trip.

The phenomenological research study illustrates the need to educate social work students about the history of Indigenous peoples, to teach with a “service rather than saving” attitude, and to come from a place of openness rather than fear. Research studies with students entering cultural service immersion experiences compared to those staying in the classroom could provide

further insight into these two teaching approaches. Furthermore, it is important to explore how cultural service immersion activities can be done with larger class sizes. Having too many students in one community can increase complications and perhaps a lack of service opportunities; and setting up more than one cultural service immersion project would be overwhelming for an instructor. Researching approaches that could have the same impact for large class and small class sizes needs to be conducted. Perhaps students in larger class sizes can move through the continuum of knowledge to understanding by completing course assignments that make them step into another culture on their own or with a mentor. Social work educators need to further explore methods that will assist future non-Indigenous social workers in understanding how the profession of social work has impacted Indigenous peoples. Implementing such an approach will facilitate healing between Indigenous peoples and social workers; and will inspire social workers to become allies for Indigenous peoples.

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Product One

Introducing non-Indigenous social work students to Indigenous culture

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About the Author

It is important for the reader to know who I am before reading this manuscript. My mother's family came to the United States from Poland in the early 1900's. She was born and raised in a small city in Connecticut. My father was born and raised on a potato farm in Northern Maine, across the river from Canada. His grandparents were French Acadian and Mi'kmaq. His family remained quiet about the Mi'kmaq lineage. During that time it was taboo for races to mix and Indigenous children were being removed from the home. I did not grow up on a reservation and did not grow up with anyone teaching me about Indigenous culture and traditions. I have vague memories, or perhaps dreams, of being around my father's grandparents while they drummed and sang songs around the fire. There was always a calling for me to understand and honor the traditions and culture which I began doing in my early 20's. Now, at 50 winters my spiritual family is wide. Where I live and travel provides me the opportunity to commune and pray with people who are Lakota, Cherokee, Ojibwa, Cree, Mi'kmaq, and allies of Indigenous people. I am forever grateful that Creator has put such beautiful people in my path.

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Abstract

This presentation, given in October 2016 at the National Indigenous Social Work Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, provides an overview of the benefits of merging service learning and cultural immersion for social work students to increase cultural competency. It is the first of three products of a banded dissertation which explores developing social work curriculum to increase students' knowledge and understanding about Indigenous peoples. The PowerPoint section of the presentation reviews the pedagogies of service learning and cultural immersion, the intersection of the two, and introduces the concept of "cultural service immersion". An example of a service learning project between undergraduate social work students from a small liberal arts college and a small community of Indigenous peoples is used to guide the presentation. The second part of the presentation engages audience participation through the use of a talking circle where all attendees have an opportunity to share their experiences and pose questions about the use of "cultural service immersion" with Indigenous peoples.

Keywords: cultural immersion, service learning, Indigenous peoples

Introducing non-Indigenous social work students to Indigenous culture

This presentation, *Introducing non-Indigenous social work students to Indigenous culture*, was given at the National Indigenous Social Work Conference titled *Social work activism, advocacy, and agency: A conference of Indigenous knowledges and action*. The conference took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada from October 23 – 25, 2016. This presentation was in a 45 minute timeslot that took place on October 25, 2016.

The presentation, the first of the three banded dissertation products, has two sections: a 25 minute PowerPoint, and a 20 minutes talking circle. The learning objectives are:

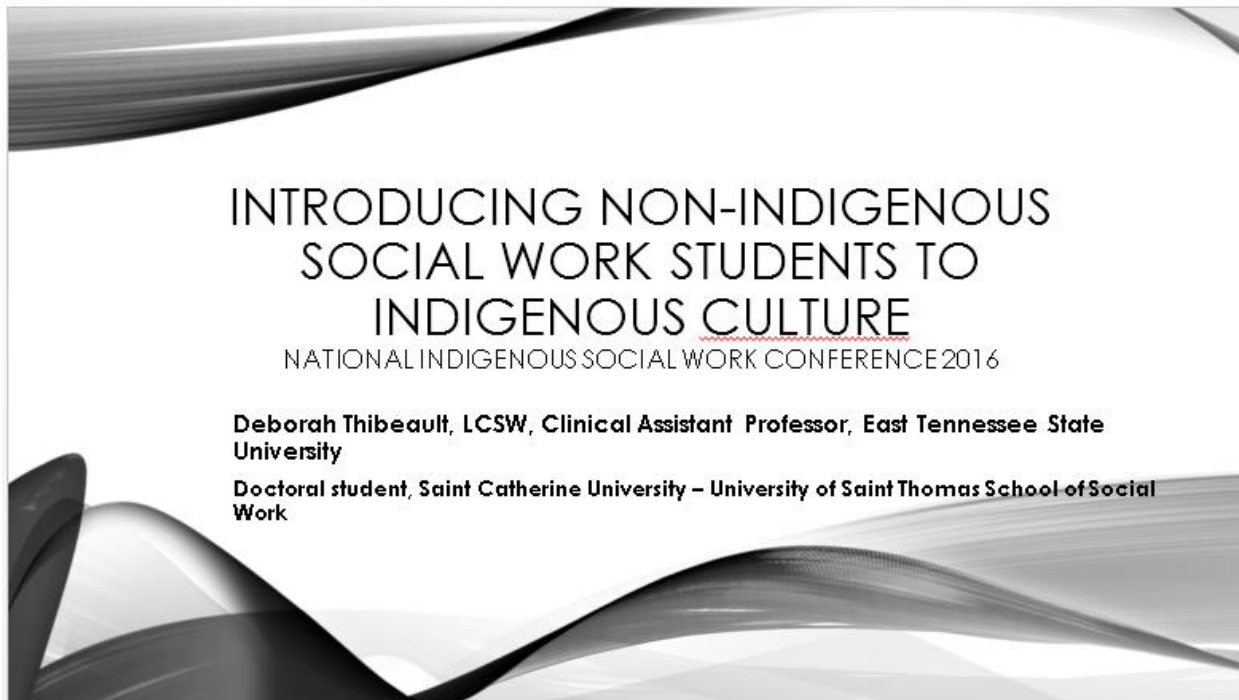
- Participants will be able to define service learning and cultural immersion and understand their intersection.
- Participants will learn ways to include domestic cultural immersion fused with service learning in social work curriculum in order to improve Indigenous cultural competence for non-Indigenous social work students.
- Participants will learn ways to make service learning immersion successful.

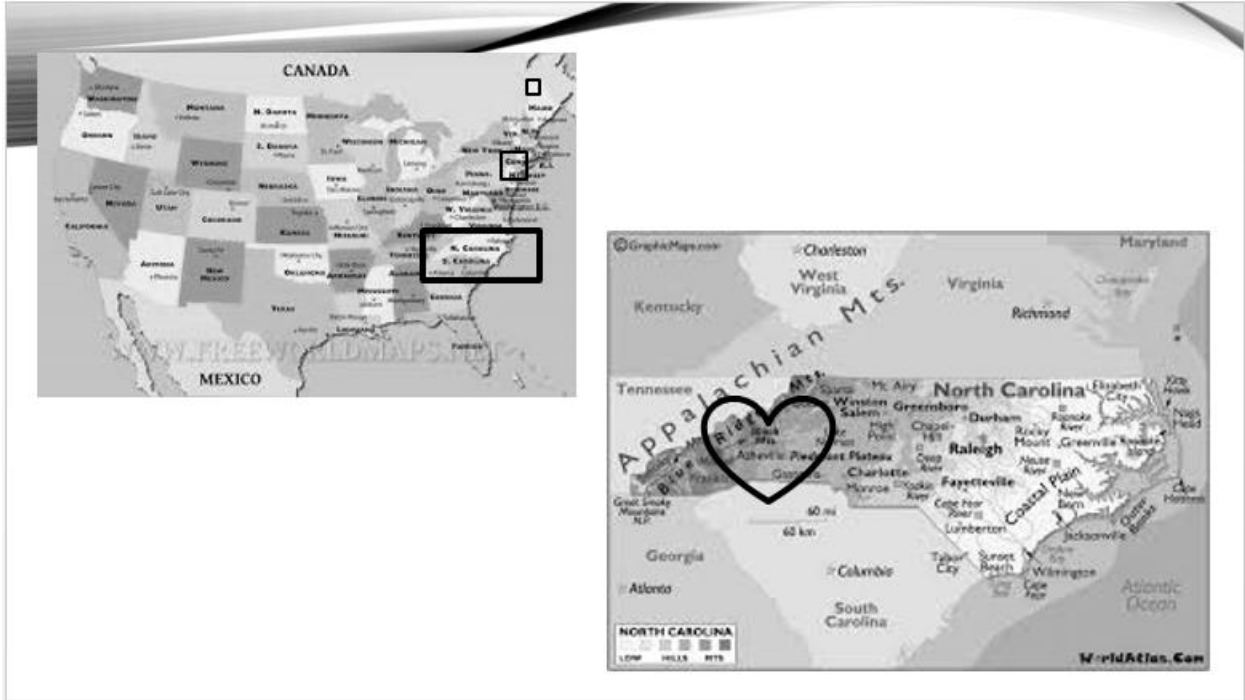
During the PowerPoint the pedagogies of service learning and cultural immersion, along with the intersection of the two, were presented. The concept of “cultural service immersion” is explained using an example of a service learning project between undergraduate social work students from a small liberal arts college and a small community of Indigenous peoples. A traditional talking circle was held after the PowerPoint presentation. A talking stick was passed from one person to the next around the circle. In this tradition whoever holds the talking stick is the only one allowed to speak. Each person had an opportunity to share their experience with service learning and cultural immersion, to present concerns about incorporating them into social work curricula, and to pose questions about successful implementation.

Twenty-three people attended the presentation and nineteen completed evaluations. Attendees completed a five question Likert Scale and were favorable in all areas: clear presentation, met attendees expectations, knowledge of subject matter, effective delivery, and attendee gained knowledge for future use. The evaluation also included room for comments. Strengths included transparency, presenting Western and Indigenous knowledges, use of personal experience, use of the talking circle, structured delivery and speaking from the heart. Areas for growth included providing more pictures and handouts, and to pay attention to using privileged language. A person noted on the evaluation that I used the phrase “our Indigenous people”. “Our” is an expression of ownership and privilege which needs to be avoided in order to further efforts of decolonization. This comment was a significant take away for me.

Although there were concerns about the presentation being the first product of the banded dissertation it was helpful. During the talking circle attendees discussed topics and questions which became a catalyst for exploring more literature for the conceptual manuscript. These topics included immersion opportunities being done close to home, costs to support immersion, teaching students history, etiquette, and protocol before entering a community, and relationship building with the community. The talking circle provided insight for the development of the conceptual paper, the second product.

PowerPoint presentation slides





LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Participants will be able to define service learning and cultural immersion and understand their intersection.
- Participants will learn ways to include domestic cultural immersion fused with service learning in social work curriculum in order to improve Indigenous cultural competence for non-Indigenous social work students.
- Participants will learn ways to make service learning immersion successful.

Agenda

- Competencies on diversity and culture
- Service Learning
- Cultural Immersion
- Service immersion learning in the course:
Global and Historical Perspectives on Social Welfare
 - Successes
 - Opportunities for growth
- Benefits of service immersion in social work curriculum

Cultural competence and diversity

Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice (CSWE, 2015, p. 7)

Canadian Association for Social Work Education - Association canadienne pour la formation en travail social (CASWE-ACFTS)

Principles Guiding Accreditation of Social Work Education Programs

#9. Standards encourage and support diversity and social justice in all aspects/domains of social work programs (CASWE-ACFTS, 2014, p. 3).

#11. Social work programs acknowledge and challenge the injustices of Canada's colonial history and continuing colonization efforts as they relate to the role of social work education in Canada and the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples (CASWE-ACFTS, 2014, p. 3).

Service Learning Definitions

- ❖ “Academic service learning is pedagogical approach that integrates community service with academic study to promote student reflection, critical thinking, and create problem solving.” (Lemieux, C.M. & Allen, P. D., 2007, p. 309)

Highlights of service learning

Service learning is not community service.

Students needing to complete community service as an assignment in a course or as a requirement for being in the social work program does not equal academic service learning (Howard, J.P.E., 1998).

“The service and structured reflection on it are the heart of the two primary course objectives.” (McNally, M.D., p. 609)

4 basic principals of service learning as outlined by Linda Plitt Donaldson and Laura Daugherty (2011, p. 81)

- 1) it is a pedagogy
- 2) it is an intentional effort that promotes reciprocal interaction and benefit between the student and the community
- 3) it integrates experiential and academic learning
- 4) the service experience must be relevant to the course

Cultural immersion definition

- ❖ “direct, prolonged, *in vivo* contact with a culture different from that of the trainees” (Pope-Davis, Breau, & Liu, 1997, p. 232)

Cultural immersion highlights

Koch, Ross, Wendell, & Aleksandrova-Howell (2014) *Results of immersion service learning activism with peers: Anticipated and surprising.*

- They may or may not include a service component
- Allows for the development of meaningful relationships with other cultures
- Increases empathy and understanding toward a population
- Challenges participants to explore their own biases
- Increases their own cultural identity


From Quinn-Lee and Olson-McBride (2012). *The effect of domestic immersion experiences on levels of cultural competence.*

- Provides the opportunity for social work educators to engage students in experiential learning while being able to observe and guide their learning

Geisler claims (2013). *Cultural immersion in the classroom: Using consciousness-raising groups to enhance diversity competence*



- social work faculty “re-inforce stereotypes” when we teach culture from only the classroom (p. 173).
- Cultural immersion increases students “openness to ideas, development of insight into values and beliefs, appreciation of cultural differences, and newfound awareness of social injustice”. (p. 174)

“to really serve in another culture you need to slow down and set an intention to try to understand their perspective” (Burleson, K, 2015)



The Warren Wilson College Triad

- Academics
- Work
- Service



SWK 210: Global and Historical Perspectives on Social Welfare

Spring Semester, 2015
4 Credit Hours

Course Description:

This course examines the social welfare system in the United States from historical and contemporary global perspectives. Course content includes theories about poverty; the historical roots of societal values and beliefs that have influenced the development of today's welfare system and profession of social work; and major welfare policies and services in the US today. Comparisons are made between these current policies and services, as well as the social work profession in the US and other countries and regions around the world.

THE SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

The integration of service-learning with academics is critical for the development of professional social work skills, knowledge, and values. To this end, service-learning is an integral component of SWK 210. The service-learning component of this course is designed to partially meet the 25-hour requirement for the PEG 2 Understanding of the Complex Issues service commitment. Students will engage in approximately 15 hours of direct service through three service-learning activities. For this course, we will be exploring the issues related to indigenous culture, ritual, and ceremony. Students will work with the local Tiispaye (community/family) of Sunaleska Oyate, Spotted Horse Nation.

*PEG 2: Points of Engagement and Growth: A complex issue

There are 4 PEG requirements students complete before graduation: 1) Self knowledge; 2) Complex Issues; 3) Collaboration for community impact; and 4) Commitment to community engagement (<http://www.warren-wilson.edu/page/2?s=PEG>)

Beginning the project

Meeting with the Elder and offering tobacco

- The Elder is the gatekeeper of the community.
- Being culturally sensitive and following protocol is the first step in working with an Indigenous community (Kovach, 2009).



Reviewing the needs of the community and the students

- Collaboration to ensure the community's needs are met as well as the students (Lemieux, C.M., & Allen, P.D., 2007)
- Coordinating schedules



Assignments Prior to Service Learning

- Overview of history of Social Welfare
- Colonialization
- Pre-Civil War Era
- Civil War Era
- **Institutional Marginalization**
 - Film: “Our Spirits Don’t Speak English: Indian Boarding School”
 - Read: Weaver, H. (2004). The elements of cultural competence: Applications with Native American clients. *Journal of ethnic and cultural diversity in social work*, 13 (1), pp. 19 –35.
 - Article search about the marginalization of American Indians.
 - Aaron Huey “America’s Native prisoners of war” (https://www.ted.com/talks/aaron_huey)
 - Guest speaker from Pine Ridge reservation

First Day of Service Learning

Students meet with the Sungleska Oyate community for a history of indigenous culture (mostly Lakota), an orientation about Sungleska Oyate, the inipi caga (sweat lodge) ceremony and the land.



Cooking for everyone

Students arriving – all students present



Silent walk in the woods

- Before introductions
- Instructions – to walk silently and bring something back that speaks to you
- Engaging all of the senses – holistic knowledge (Rowe, G., 2014)
- Sitting in circle
- Introduction of self and the item that came back to the circle



Listening to the Elder, Uncle Paul, for three hours

- Oral transmission of knowledge
- The Natural Way
- The Seven Ways of the Chanupa (Sacred Pipe)
 - Health
 - Generations
 - Happiness
 - Quiet
 - Help
 - Power
 - Respect
- Honoring of women
- Matriarchal communities
- European presence changed the Indigenous structure
- Community living
- Family
- Coyote



THE EXCHANGE

Prior to the first Service Learning day students were informed about the important of the exchange / the give away.

Student present to Uncle Paul.
McNally explains that offering tobacco is an important step in a student requesting teaching from an Elder

Sharing food





My observations

- Students were energized and engaged
- Community was energized and engaged
- Theme about the importance of listening
- Is listening service?
- DO NOT forget to go over the NASW Code of Ethics and ethical expectations for the class

Second Day of Service Learning

Students will engage in work to build a new women's sweat lodge for the community. They will do this alongside members of the community and the community's teacher, who will teach about the traditions of the sweat lodge. Due to traditions in the indigenous culture, women who are in their moon time (menses) will work alongside women in the community to craft items for upcoming fundraiser or gifting. They will also receive teachings about the importance of honoring moon time in the indigenous culture.

The building of the lodge

- Experiential knowledge (Rowe, G., 2014)





My observations

- Students were active and engaged
 - Some more hands on while others observed
- Community members were teaching and modeling for students

Third Day of Service Learning

Students will participate in a sweat lodge with the community while gaining cultural competence about the importance of prayer, ritual, and traditions in service work. Students will not be mandated to enter the sweat lodge if they do not feel comfortable, however, they will be asked to engage in the day through other activities such as helping with the fire or food. Due to traditions in the indigenous culture, women who are in their moon time (menses) will not be allowed to participate in the sweat lodge. They will participate in a moon lodge for the day and receive teachings about the moon time from women in the community.

Participating in the lodge

- The experiential knowledge, holistic knowledge, and oral transmission – every one has their own personal experience (Rowe, G., 2014)





My observations

- Students were somewhat disappointed and delighted about the men and women sweating separately
- Student apprehension and nervousness
- Student participation
- Students elation

- Community members role modeled and just did what they always do.

Reflection papers

- ❖ Description of experience
- ❖ Root causes of discrimination and oppression
- ❖ Structural inequalities
- ❖ How your participation impacted that community and yourself

What I learned

- ALWAYS Review the Code of Ethics and expectations
 - Students need to be told in advance that they will need to adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics when going in to work with a community ([Lemeux & Allen](#))
- Discuss perceptions and stereotypes in advance
- Have back up plans
- Take pictures
- The work load increases
- The promises and pitfalls of using your own community
 - ✓ Trust with the community is already there
 - ✓ There is an understanding of the community and its needs
 - Dual relationship
 - Navigating ethical dilemmas; relationships

Why cultural immersion and service learning

- Increased awareness of own cultural identity
- Increased awareness of stereotyping and biases
- Increased ability to suspend judgment
- Increase passion for social justice
- Domestic immersion as impactful
- Learning outside of the classroom leaves an impression



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Product Two

Understanding Indigenous Culture through Service Learning and Cultural Immersion

Deborah Thibeault, LCSW

St. Catherine University | University of St. Thomas

UNAVAILABLE UNTIL JUNE 1, 2020

Product Three

*Healing relationships between Social Work and Indigenous peoples:**“We carry that history in our DNA”*

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Author Note

The author would like to acknowledge external reviewers for helpful comments on previous versions of the manuscript. Correspondence should be addressed to the author at E-mail: thibeault@etsu.edu

About the Author

It is important for the reader to know who I am before reading this manuscript. My mother's family came to the United States from Poland in the early 1900's. She was born and raised in a small city in Connecticut. My father was born and raised on a potato farm in Northern Maine, across the river from Canada. His grandparents were French Acadian and Mi'kmaq. His family remained quiet about the Mi'kmaq lineage. During that time it was taboo for races to mix and Indigenous children were being removed from the home. I did not grow up on a reservation and did not grow up with anyone teaching me about Indigenous culture and traditions. I have vague memories, or perhaps dreams, of being around my father's grandparents while they drummed and sang songs around the fire. There was always a calling for me to understand and honor the traditions and culture which I began doing in my early 20's. Now, at 50 winters my spiritual family is wide. Where I live and travel provides me the opportunity to commune and pray with people who are Lakota, Cherokee, Ojibwa, Cree, Mi'kmaq, and allies of Indigenous people. I am forever grateful that Creator has put such beautiful people in my path.

Abstract

The profession of social work has a long history of being involved with efforts to colonize Indigenous peoples. This research provides social work educators insight about what needs to be included in the curriculum in order for social work students to gain an understanding about the history of the colonization of Indigenous peoples. This qualitative phenomenological research explores the lives of seven Indigenous people between the ages of 36 and 79 who received social work services. The participants varied in upbringing: four participants grew up on reservations across the country from Washington to Maine with most now living in the western part of North Carolina. The conceptual framework used during this study, *two-eyed seeing*, involves the use of seeing strengths in both Western research and Indigenous research methods. Themes that emerged when investigating what Indigenous people feel social work educators need to be teaching social work students were: history, trauma, prejudices, and health and healing. This research indicates the need for social work education on the history of Indigenous peoples and social works involvement. This paper addresses the need for the profession of social work to take new approaches when working with Indigenous populations in order to heal the relationship by becoming culturally humble and honoring the worldviews of Indigenous peoples.

Keywords: Indigenous, Native American, social work, historical trauma, healing

Healing Relationships between Social Work and Indigenous peoples:

“We carry that history in our DNA”

The profession of social work has a long history of efforts to colonize Indigenous peoples. In 1892 the phrase “save the man, kill the Indian” was coined by Capt. Richard H. Pratt during a speech at George Mason University. This statement shaped the policies of the United States government toward Native Americans. Social work, a profession derived from White middle-class culture, assisted in these policy efforts through the removal of Indian children and their placement into boarding schools and non-Indian foster homes (Kleinschmit & Craig-Olsen, 2012; Pinderhughes, 1997). Social workers have a history of being “an extension” of the colonization process (Weaver, 2000). Today, the social work profession focuses on “Engaged Diversity and Difference in Practice”, which is a required core competency in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2015). The road to understanding the historical impact social work had on the Indigenous peoples seems endless. However, efforts to repair the damage, while honoring the many Indigenous traditions, culture, and knowledge is minimal.

The mission of social work states that there needs to be “particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (Workers, N.A, 2008), Social workers have a responsibility to focus on the needs of Indigenous peoples, not the dominant society. Additionally, the social work profession must prepare itself for an increase in the population identifying as American Indian. According to Liebler & Ortyl (2014) there has been a significant growth of one million people from 1990 to 2000. Lastly, social work education has a responsibility to inform students about the historical trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples that is not taught in primary and secondary education. There is also the

responsibility to inform students about social works historical role in colonization efforts and to assist students in entering the field. The culture should be respected and honored in order to change the face of social works involvement with Indigenous peoples. While there is some literature about the historical trauma of Indigenous peoples, there is little about improving social work education from the perspective of social worker (both non-Indigenous and Indigenous). No literature was found reporting the views of Indigenous people who were recipients of social work services.

This qualitative, phenomenological research explored the personal experiences of seven Indigenous people with so in order to answer “what do Indigenous people want social work students to know?” Interactions with social workers include the sectors of child welfare, community mental health, school social work, juvenile justice system, and individual therapy. The qualitative interviews explored what being Indigenous means to the individual, what involvement they had with a social worker, what the experience was like for them, and what they feel social work educators need to be teaching new social workers. Additionally, each participant was asked their preferred racial term when identify their heritage. Therefore, specified terms of each participant are honored. While not synonymous, the terms Indigenous, First Nations, American Indian, and Native American will be used to refer to the same population: a group of people who lived on “Turtle Island” prior to it becoming what is now known as North America. It is difficult to choose one specific term because individuals, tribes, and nations have their own preference. The United States government uses the term American Indian to classify the population, while a number of writers use the term Native American. In general, since First Nations is more commonly a term used in Canada, the author has chosen to use the term Indigenous because of the geographic location of the participants.

Literature Review

History and background

When conducting the literature review, several authors provide a historical background on Indigenous peoples to discuss the lengthy oppression and trauma this group experienced and continues to experience, including the genocide that took place through war and diseases (Burnette, 2016; Garrett & Pinchett, 2000; Kleinschmit & Craig-Oldsen, 2012;). There is a long history of Native Americans being driven out of their homelands and placed on reservations. As such, further separation of community and family involved the forced removal of children, who were subsequently placed in boarding schools.

Boarding schools. During a Congressional speech in 1886, Captain Richard Henry Pratt emphasized the government's need to remove Indian children from their homes in order to assimilate them into dominant society using the famous quote "kill the Indian, save the man" (Garrett & Pichette, 2000; Kleinschmit & Craig-Oldsen, 2012; Weaver, 2015). Captain Pratt was the founder of the Carlisle Boarding School for Indians and believed that he could

end their existence among us as such separate people by a broad and generous system of English education and training, which will reach all the 50,000 children and in a few years remove all our trouble from them as a separate people and as separate tribes among us" (Pratt, 1883, p. 110).

From 1854 to the 1930s, the Orphan Trains transported children of poor families from cities in the east, like New York City, to farms further west in order for them to assist farming families while giving them a roof over their heads (Kleinschmit & Craig-Oldsen, 2012). While Orphan Trains were being used for poor children, American Indian children from the West were shipped

to boarding schools in the East acculturate them into the dominant White society under the guise of education (Garrett & Pinchett, 2000). Unlike the ending of the Orphan Trains, the removal of American Indian children continued. Children removed from the home were typically around the age of four or five, and spent an average of eight years in residential boarding school or foster care making it difficult to return home (Garrett & Pinchette, 2000). Often times they would return to their home communities, and would not be viewed as “Indian” because they did not understand the culture or traditions (Garrett & Pinchette, 2000). In 1890, anything seen as Native American religion was outlawed, making it even more difficult for children that were removed to have any connection with their customs or people. Since the government could no longer continue to kill off the Indian population, exterminating the culture and language became the next step toward the demise of Indigenous peoples, or as some call it cultural genocide (Weaver, 2015). In 1973, 60,000 American Indian children were enrolled in boarding schools (Kleinschmit & Craig-Oldsen, 2012). Although most boarding schools have closed, some have turned into day schools, private boarding schools, or colleges (without forced enrollment).

Workers. When the orphan train and the boarding school efforts began, many of the workers were Christian missionaries (Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012). Garrette and Pichette (2000) state, “the federal government wanted to ‘civilize’ Indians, and the churches wanted to ‘Christianize’ them” (p. 4). A similar philosophy supported the efforts of the Orphan Trains. Shortly after 1889, when the first social work class was offered at Columbia University, social workers were hired to assist with these efforts through private child welfare agencies and later the Child Welfare League of America, which was established in 1920 (Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012).

Disparity. Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen (2012) explain the disproportion in placements of children. While in 2004 Native American children only made up one percent of the national population of children, they made up two percent of children placed in the child welfare system. Furthermore, several authors report on high percentages of individuals dealing with substance abuse, mental health problems, intimate partner violence, and poverty. This is much higher than the White population, which can be linked to historical trauma, oppression, and colonization (Burnetter, 2016; Garrett & Pinchett, 2000; Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012; Yurkovich, Hopkins-Lattergrass, & Rieke, 2011). Walters, Simoni, and Evans-Campbell (2002) explored substance problems among Indigenous peoples as stemming from the historical trauma of colonialism and stress related to environmentalism and intuitionism. Further barriers for Indigenous peoples include the array of issues that come with poverty such as transportation and ability to receive services (Walters, Simoni, & Evans-Campbell, 2002).

Population. Today there are over 560 federally recognized tribes in the United States (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 2016; Burnette, 2015; Weaver, 2015). Given the vast number of tribes and the significant increase in people who are affiliated with a tribe claiming their Indigenous heritage, it is important to recognize the wide range of language, culture, and skin color (Weaver, 2015). Liebler & Ortyl (2014) explored the drastic increase in individuals identifying as American Indian between the 1990 and the 2000 United States Census. They attribute this increase to many factors starting with the federal definition of American Indian changing, which doubles the population (Liebler & Ortyl, 2014). In addition to the increase in Latino American Indians, White people who have American Indian heritage, but do not belong to a particular tribe are now claiming their lost heritage, which it is their right to claim. However, how this increase in population will impact sovereign tribes must be considered. It is important to acknowledge that there is a privilege

that comes with a Native American who has lighter skin. Weaver (2015) explains that historically, even “one drop of ‘White blood’ was enough to establish competence” and visibly having “Indian” features and skin color increases the likelihood of prejudice and racism (p. 5). Because of the impact colonial definitions have had on Indigenous peoples one must also understand that a light skinned Native American person may have difficulty within their tribe or their communities, leaving them lacking a sense of belonging (Weaver, 2015).

Cultural Competency in Social Work. Recognizing the importance of being a culturally responsive social worker has been a slow process. Although there was discussion and movement toward cultural competency, it was not part of the Code of Ethics until 2008 (Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012). While social justice is a value of the profession, the social work profession has not used it in a way that respectfully serves Indigenous peoples. Johnson-Goodstar (2013) claims that in order for social justice efforts to work with Indigenous communities they must be “guided by Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies of social justice” (p. 314). Adding to that, Walters et al., (2009) discuss workers having cultural humility rather than cultural competency. To be completely culturally competent about a community and all of its traditions, rituals, and protocols may never happen, however having awareness and respect of another culture can take place. Every community has its own set of traditions, customs, and protocols. Although never becoming completely culturally competent of a community, cultural humility can be maintained. Cultural humility is a never ending process of learning and evaluating one-self within the context of that community with all of its complications (Walters et al., 2009). Jackson & Hodge, (2010) explored the use of Culturally Sensitive Interventions (CSIs) with Native American Youth. After systematically reviewing eleven programs (seven of which were substance abuse programs, two tobacco use, one academic performance and behavior problems, one suicide and depression

program), five programs reported significant positive effects from using CSIs, while six reported neutrality or not seeing any significance in the use of CSIs (Jackson & Hodge, 2010). But, some of the CSIs did not include community member participation in its development. (Jackson & Hodge, 2010).

Education of social work students. Recruitment and retention has been a topic of American Indian task forces established with CSWE since 1970 (CSWE, 1972, 2009). In an effort to gain insight into recruitment and retention strategies, Cross, Day, Gogliotti, & Pung (2013) conducted a study with both American Indian and Alaskan Native undergraduate and graduate social work students and report several barriers for American Indian and Alaskan Native students to complete their education including:

- a lack of AI/AN professors;
- a shortage of placements agencies that serve AI/AN clients;
- conflicts between students' academic obligations and responsibilities to their families and tribal communities;
- students' feelings of cultural isolation;
- the need for AI/AN role models and mentors;
- a lack of understanding by universities of cultural customs and traditional values; and
- racism.

Cross, Day, Gogliotti and Pung (2013) contend that these barriers must be addressed in order to increase the AI/AN social work workforce in order to improve the social work practice for AI/AN child welfare.

Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen (2012) contend that social work curricula have significantly improved over the years and needs to be assessed regularly to ensure culturally competent work is

performed by social workers working in the child welfare system. Research agrees that social workers, especially child welfare workers, need to become more culturally competent and sensitive to the historical oppression as well as the traditions, customs, and needs of Native American families and children (Cross, Day, Gogliotti & Pung, 2013; Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012; Lewis & Ho, 1975; and Limb, Hodge & Panos, 2008). Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen (2012) advocate for a “raising baby” activity for social work students to complete in Human Behavior and the Social Environment where students work in groups to research, reflect, and share what it is like to raise a child in a different culture. As the population of American Indian and Alaskan Native people rises and since they reside in every state in the United States social work programs have a responsibility to prepare future social workers to work with this population (Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen, 2012; Liebler & Ortyl, 2014).

Indigenous worldview. In addition to educating students about Indigenous history, it is important to include Indigenous worldviews. Limb, Hodge, & Panos (2008) explain the difference between linear (dominant society) and relational (Indigenous) worldviews. The linear view is not effective when working with an Indigenous person whose views are relational. Linear is described as individualistic, person-centered, and intervention strategies that happen across a straight continuum: Relational is “collectivist” where problems are the community’s and interventions happen cyclically (Limb, Hodge, & Panos, 2008). The Four R’s--relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution—stemmed from meetings between tribal leaders in the 1980s and 1990s (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004). Weaver, (2015) and Harris & Wasilewski, (2004) share the importance of respect and reciprocity. Lewis & Ho, (1975) discuss the concept of sharing which is one of the Four R’s presented by Harris & Wasilewski, (2004), reciprocity and redistribution.

Indigenous worldviews can vary along a spectrum depending on their personal relation to traditional and non-traditional ways of life. A variety of American Indian castes are described by Garrett & Pinchette, (2000) as traditional, marginal, bicultural, assimilated, and pan traditional, and recognize that each group's culture may vary depending on the nation, tribe, or clan. At one end of the continuum is the "traditional Indian": a person who grew up with a tribe, on a reservation, and follows traditional customs for healing and prayer, speaks only the language of the tribe, and follows traditional gender roles. At the other end of the continuum is the "pantraditionalists": an Indigenous person who has been assimilated with the dominant culture, sometimes due to forced boarding school or foster care other times, and have made an effort to go back to traditional roots that were lost over generations of assimilation (Garrett & Pinchette, 2000).

Decolonization. Decolonization is a key term that social work students need to understand since it is discussed by Indigenous scholars and is a central theme and process of Indigenous peoples today. Weaver (2015) used the definition of decolonization from Michael Yellow Bird and Waziyatawin's book *For Indigenous Minds Only: A Decolonizing Handbook*

"Decolonization means engaging in the activities of creating, restoring, and birthing. It means creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate oneself, adapt to or survive oppressive conditions, it means to restoring cultural practices, thinking, beliefs, and values." (p. 11)

Weaver (2015) contends that the decolonization process must include the colonizer because it involves finding a way to operate in the same world while respecting and relating to each other. In order to do this, the colonizer must "give up dominance and share power" (Weaver, 2015, p. 11). While Weaver, (2015) discusses a concept about the process of decolonization introduced by

Lorraine Muller which include: “a) rediscovery and recovery, b) mourning, c) healing and forgiveness that include reclaiming wellbeing and harmony, d) strengthening and valuing Indigenous philosophy and knowledge, e) commitment to societal change, and f) action to decolonize knowledge” (p.11). Walters et al., (2009) share the following tenets to “indigenize” research: reflection, respect, relevance, resilience, reciprocity, retraditionalization, and revolution. When educating social work students about decolonization it is important to remember that decolonization is not a method used to shame or reject colonization, it is about the ability of Indigenous people being able to explore their own worldview. It is not having the colonizers worldview imposed upon them (Smith, 2012). The desire not to be forced into a particular way of thinking aligns with social works value of right to self-determination.

Method

Approach. This qualitative study includes the use of Indigenous knowledge to conduct phenomenological research. Phenomenological research explores life experiences and attempts to convey an understanding about the human experience from the individuals’ perspective (Lester, 1999; Wilson, 2015). Indigenous knowledge incorporates four dimensions that include: knowledge is personal and subjective, knowledge is passed on orally, knowledge is experiential, and lastly, it is holistic, meaning that involves all of our senses (Rowe, 2014). Since the research involves an exploration of Indigenous people’s views and beliefs it would be culturally insensitive to conduct this investigation without considering the four dimensions of Indigenous knowledge and the role they play when conducting interviews.

The conceptual framework that guides this research is a concept called “*two-eyed seeing*”. The Mi’kmaq use the term “*two-eyed seeing*” or *Etuapymunk* describes the need to use one eye to see the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and one eye to see the strengths of Western

knowledge bringing them together (Goulding, Steels, & McGarty, 2016). This term was originally coined by Albert and Murdena Marshall, Elders from the Mi'kmaq tribe and educators from Cape Breton University's Institute for Integrative Science and Health program (Latimer et al., 2014). The two-eyed seeing lens views both world views as equally important. Neither philosophy is right or wrong. Looking at the two together makes the most sense because of the core Indigenous belief that everyone is connected.

Recruitment and sampling. Individuals over the age of eighteen, residing in Western North Carolina, identify as Indigenous, and had at least one experience of receiving some type of service from a social worker (e.g., child welfare, financial assistance, substance treatment, or therapy) were recruited for the study. To begin finding research participants, the author offered tobacco and met with two personal teachers/Indigenous Elders to request assistance with identifying two potential participants not from the authors' or Elders' spiritual community. From there snowball sampling was used. This method involves finding a member of the group to be interviewed and then asking that participant to refer another and so forth (Grinnell, Williams, & Unrau, 2016). However, the people who the Elders made contact with did not know of anyone who would discuss their experiences working with social workers. Due to recruitment challenges, the author reached out to other Elders in the community and changed the recruitment approach from snowball to convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a method used to interview whoever is available and willing to participate (Grinnell, Williams, & Unrau, 2016). Furthermore, the requirement of participants being residents of Western North Carolina was expanded to the United States. In addition, the original plan of conducting face to face interviews evolved to include phone interviews. Seven interviews were completed. Five were face to face, and two were via telephone. Four participants reside in Western North Carolina, one was visiting

the area from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, and phone interview participants were from East Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia. Five participants were female, two were male. Four participants grew up on a reservation, one of whom also attended an Indian boarding school. Only one participant currently resides on a reservation. The youngest participant was 36 years old, while the oldest participant was 79 years old. Identified tribes of the individuals included: Apache, Cherokee, Cree, Oglala Lakota, and Passamaquoddy.

Data collection. Data were collected by conducting interviews ranging in length from thirty minutes to seventy minutes between April and October 2017. Five semi-structured interviews took place in person, in a private location designated by the participant and two took place over the phone. The data collection process also included offering a small pouch of tobacco to potential participants according to Indigenous cultural protocol. Four out of the five participants were offered tobacco upon meeting and informed that they could take the time they needed to consider being interviewed. They all chose to be interviewed during the initial meeting. The face-to-face participant who did not receive tobacco was the only participant who brought up the importance of social worker knowing and honoring that custom. The phone participants were each gifted tobacco in person at a later date. Additionally, the author conducted a gifting ritual upon completion of the data analysis and after the draft of the manuscript was ready to share with participants to ensure accuracy.

All interviews were audio recorded with the understanding that the audio recording would be deleted after transcription to protect confidentiality. Demographics collected included: age, gender, nation/tribe, whether or not the person had federal recognition as a tribal member, and whether or not the person was raised on or if he or she ever lived on a reservation. Questions during the interview focused on what being Indigenous means and what experiences the person

had with receiving services from a social worker. The following questions were used to explore the overarching research question “What do Indigenous people want social work students to know?”:

- What does being Indigenous or Native American mean to you?
- Tell me about your experience(s) with social workers.
- What went well and what did not go well with the experience(s)?
- What could they have done differently that would have improved the experience(s)?
- What did they do that made the experience positive for you?
- What are your thoughts about social work students having to complete service work with an Indigenous community as part of their educational experience?
- In light of this recent stand to protect the waters at Standing Rock, talk about what you believe social work students need to know about this effort and any other recent struggles of Indigenous peoples.

Analysis. Coding was used following Hycner’s (1985) guidelines for phenomenological analysis.

Each interview went through the process of transcription, bracketing, and reduction. Recordings were investigated for the underlying meaning of non-verbal communication, outlining of general meanings and then meanings related to the research question, eliminating redundancy, clustering themes, and writing a summary of each interview (Hycner, 1985). Themes were identified for all the interviews combined and contextualizing themes as described by Hycner (1985). The clustering of themes was completed through a coding process where themes were listed on the right side of each transcription. Themes from each interview were then extracted and compared in order to find themes among all of the interviews.

Human participant protection. Internal Review Board (IRB) approval obtained from East Tennessee State University for this research. When individuals were asked to participate in the interview, they were provided with a description of the study and the research question. They were given time to consider whether or not to participate in the study, informed about their right to self-determination, and informed about their right to pull out of the study at any time. Using Indigenous methods to ensure cultural competence, such as the offering of tobacco and the giveaway was also included in the process of recruitment.

Participants were informed that the interview could surface some emotional discomfort due to participants sharing about past challenges and traumatic history. The investigator, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, trained to recognize psychological discomfort or distress would pause and assess for continuation, or would discontinue the interview. Since the goal was not to provide therapy, participants were provided with a list of providers in the participants' area and contact numbers for Elders in the community that can assist in healing ceremonies. Should emotions surface that lead to any imminent danger to self or others appropriate providers (e.g., mental health worker, mobile crisis, hospital, or police) were contacted to ensure safety of the participant.

The study provides a perspective of Indigenous people that is valuable for social work educators to be aware of when teaching students in order to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity among social workers. How past and future generations are affected by colonizers, which includes the social work profession, is of significant importance in Indigenous culture (Kovach, 2009). Written consent forms were signed prior to beginning the interview for all face to face interviews. For the telephone interview the consent form was read and verbal consent was providing by the participant.

Results

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the question “what do Indigenous people want social work students to know?” Seven individuals who identify as Indigenous or Native American and received (or had a family member who received) a service which involved a social worker were interviewed face to face or over the telephone. Two participants identify as male; five identify as female. The average age of participants was 57 years old, with the oldest being 79 and 36 being the youngest. Four grew up on a reservation, with only one of the four currently living on a reservation. The types of services from a social worker included: child welfare, mental health counseling, classroom behavioral management, case management, and juvenile justice. The results highlight each person’s unique encounters and perspectives first in order to help the readers know the participants. Common themes among participants are described.

Unique Themes

Although Indigenous culture emphasizes the idea that everyone is related, everything is connected, and the community is more important than individuals, it is important to recognize the unique experiences and views of each participant (Garrett & Pinchette, 2000; Harris & Wasilewski, 2004; Limb, Hodges & Panos, 2008). In order to protect the participants’ identity a name which aligns with the premise of their story is given: Finds an Outlet, Felt Lost, Just another Face, Embraces Dreams, Prays with Children, Stereotyped Son, and Advocating for Rights. The terms Native American, First Nations, Native, or Indigenous were self-identified. **Finds an Outlet.** *Finds an Outlet* shared a great deal about the history of colonization and how they “conquered and divided” the First Nations people. He emphasized the importance of people needing to heal from the historical and current trauma they have experienced while stating that

colonization stripped the people of positive outlets for healing. He says that [Indigenous] people distance themselves from becoming acculturated into White society and they are also afraid of the traditional ways. He has seen traditional ceremonies and culture, such as not drinking alcohol, participating in purification (sweat lodge) ceremony, and connecting with the land become an outlet of healing for many people and makes himself available to those who want to participate, learn, and heal. *Finds an Outlet* contends that all people have to learn about themselves and do their healing work in order to help others. He says that social workers “have to get in touch with their own spirit. They have to work on themselves...Just education is not enough.” He explains that people can tell if a person has done their own healing work and if a social worker has no one to talk with. Lastly, *Finds an Outlet* questions the educational process that does not allow Elders to teach. While acknowledging education as important and helpful, it is not helpful to students to be denied learning in a college setting from Elders who do not possess a degree. He does not believe that Elders should have to possess a degree to teach a college course, especially about the language or culture of the people.

Felt Lost. Felt Lost, the eldest of the participants, experienced being a product of the Orphan Trains. At 79 years old, she talked about the separation from her family and the multiple moves in her life. She experienced the desire as a child for someone to explain what was happening each time she moved. She always felt that it was because of something she did or said. Several times she shared about not understanding the concept of “play”. When foster parents, social workers, and adoptive parents would tell her to go play she did not know what it meant or how to do it. *Felt Lost* was told that she was “weird” because of her connection with the land and with animals. After finally being adopted at the age of ten she had one friend, but her friends parents found her “strange” so they could no longer play together. She only had had one friend during

college. She repeatedly stated that she wished someone had told her where she came from and why she was being moved so much. It was not until recently, that she was unable to understand why she viewed the world differently than everyone around her. She was told about heritage and began to reclaim her Cherokee lineage.

Just another Face. Although “Just Another Face” shared about history, colonization, and trauma like others, he also shared about the importance of “forward thinking”. He says, “just because I am Cherokee doesn’t make me super special.” His philosophy is that everyone is Indigenous because we all belong to the land. He focused on being “just another face on this planet...as a spiritual being here having a human experience.” He talked about the importance of “the universal language of the heartbeat” and all of the “colors of the rainbow” (people) coming together to heal the planet, which is an ancient Cherokee prophecy. He points out that too many young people today want immediate gratification and the young social workers that come into a community need to learn to be patient. They need to become part of the community and stick around long enough to learn about the people and get the lessons they need from the Elders. “Just Another Face” stressed the importance for social workers to be “just another face in the crowd” helping to “serve the world” rather than trying to “save” it.

Embraces Dreams. When “Embraces Dreams” was a child she had visions that led to involuntary commitments in psychiatric institutions because of the lack of understanding the school social worker and counselors had. As an adult she learned about her dreams and visions and began to see them as her connection to spirit and her medicine. Medicine is a term used to describe ones gift or power that they are given to by the Creator. She shared about the importance of social workers having an understanding about the culture in order to avoid misdiagnosing individuals, which to forced hospitalization and unnecessary psychotropic

medications. Other highlights from these experiences fit into themes brought up by other participants, which will be discussed in shared themes. In addition to these experiences she, like *Just another Face*, talked about the people of the rainbow coming together with an open heart to heal the world. She also talked about disagreements between tribes and within tribes that social work students must understand. She expressed that her school social worker did not seem to care and did not understand the fear that she had when she had to walk home from school on a road that took her in the middle of two feuding reservations. Lastly, she emphasized the role of the women as life givers, taking the lead to heal the seven generations before the seven generations to come.

Prays with Children. A recurring theme, which others did not focus on, is the violation of religious freedom. “Prays with Children” stated many times that she did not feel that Child Protective Services had the right to remove her children from her home and tell her how she could or could not pray with them. Although the Religious Freedom Act has existed since 1978, because of her involvement with the Native American Church, a spiritual practice that uses peyote as a medicine during the ceremony, her children were removed from her care. When this happened, her five year old son was placed in the care of family members he had not seen since being an infant. After a long court process the children have been returned to her. However, she is afraid to participate in any type of Indigenous prayer service with her children. She says,

I am afraid to bring him back into our cultural way of prayer... Even though it's constitutionally my right to do so they have a right to see me as a bad parent because of it... .I mean anytime you bring up the word sweat lodge or sundance it's got this kind of 'oh, isn't that dangerous'. You know, it's immediately going

to a place of fear and it's stemming from a non-understanding of it. I guess it's easier to be afraid of it then to try to understand it.

Stereotyped Son. In efforts to support her son, this mother had years of communication with school social workers, as well as social workers from community mental health agencies and the juvenile court system. She reports feeling that there was ongoing stereotyping of her son by most professionals involved in his case. She did have a positive experience with her Intensive in Home workers, which she believes is attributed to one of the workers being married to an Indigenous man and walking an Indigenous lifestyle. She also had a positive experience with one of her sons' juvenile court counselors, a social worker who happens to be Cherokee. She highlighted the need for social workers to understand differences in everyone and the need to approach everyone with taking these differences into consideration.

Advocating for Rights. Once a youth placed in the foster care system outside the reservation, "Advocating for Rights" is now a social worker who has taken great strides to ensure social workers near her home reservation are following the regulations of the Indian Child Welfare Act, which were ignored when she was a child. She stressed the need for advocacy work to assist Native families to ensure that their children remain in their home community. She states that social work students need to be taught that advocacy work is a commitment, sometimes generations to make change. She also stressed the need for social workers and social work students to be open-minded to different cultures and the nuances of the community before entering it in order to avoid being disrespectful. This was a topic mentioned by "Just Another Face" as well.

Shared Themes

While each participant has their own story to share and they come from different backgrounds common themes emerged. All but one participant talked about the importance of teaching students about the “true” history of what happened to the Native people of the United States. Although the word “trauma” was mentioned by five out of the seven participants, they all shared about the trauma they or their family members experienced. Being stereotyped because of their culture and having difficulty trusting also emerged as a shared theme. Lastly, several participants spoke about health and healing, identifying the importance of traditional ceremony and practices as the remedy. While there is an effort to keep each theme separate, the intersections are apparent, which shows the relationship everything has to each other.

Knowing the history. “Finds an Outlet” opened up about how history of “kill the Indian, save the man” continues to affect families today and shared an example of how social workers have been involved in these acts,

After we buried my sister the kids were already taken by the time we went to get them. They [child welfare workers] did what they wanted with native kids. They [the children] were adopted out and came back worse because of the abuse they experienced. They grew up in a White home... They [child welfare workers] do what they want.

“Just another Face” stated that their “mom was kidnapped from her family and given to a Christian family because my grandparents were traditional.” Social workers need to know the history of what happened to Indigenous peoples and to understand the role social work has played over the years.

“Embraces Dreams” said, “American history is not taught correctly in school.” If social work students are provided with an accurate history about Indigenous peoples, they would be more open “instead of opposing forces we can come together and say ‘what is the solution?’”. “Prays with Children” adds to this point, “what they have done is such an annihilation because what they tried to do was not only kill through genocide but completely eliminate the culture, history, and language. It’s almost like they want to make it like we never existed.” “Stereotyped Son” declares,

It is important for them [social workers] to know the true history. Even to know that the young people have lost their way today because we carry that history in our DNA...It has been passed down. To let go of the history of what they think they know from their experiences at school but be open to learn from a history that is true...All the stories that they might be carrying with them, to be willing to let go of the stories and create a new story.

“Advocating for Rights” adds to this sentiment stating, “They don’t even teach real history in school. People still think Thanksgiving was a time when the Native American people sat around with White people holding hands and they all sang Kumbaya.” Furthermore, she says, “students are not going to be able to work with Native American people if they do not understand the history because that is really a big barrier because they are very mistrusting and who could blame them.”

Walking in pain. Indigenous peoples have a long history of trauma due to genocide through killing and diseases, relocation, and removal of children. As children who experienced abuse in boarding schools and foster care had children without positive role modeling, the cycle of abuse

continued. As drugs and alcohol were introduced to the people, trauma increased due to addiction, mental health issues, and suicide (Walters, Simoni, & Evans-Campbell, 2002). For generations, Indigenous people have talked about how knowledge, wisdom, and trauma gets passed down through DNA. Current epigenetic research has been finding accuracy in this ancient idea. Johnson (2012) explains epigenetics as “a process through which experience modifies physical makeup, such as the function of the central nervous system, manifested through changes in cellular, neural circuitry, DNA, molecular, and behavioral aspects” (p. 46).

Finds and Outlet believes “people are walking in pain, generational pain and oppression, walking in pain, never dealt with the trauma, they have no outlet...There is a fear of White people so they distance themselves through alcohol and do not know that they are destroying themselves.” Without positive outlets trauma is carried forward from generation to generation. “Just another Face” explained that families who seemed to be assimilated by having short hair, going to school, and going to a Christian church were left alone by the social workers. He says his family was good at this, so social workers never came to his home where abuse was taking place. “Embraces Dreams” not only experienced trauma due to abuse, she was also was misdiagnosed and placed in psychiatric hospitals during her youth into mid adulthood. Despite the Religious Freedom Act, “Prays with Children” was separated from her two children because of their religious practices,

The part that was really traumatic about the separation between me and my youngest son was that instead of giving him to my mother who had a relationship with him his whole life they gave him to his [paternal] grandmother and father who he hadn't seen since he was an infant which was five years prior.

Western medicine also plays a role in the trauma of Indigenous people. “Advocating for Rights” shares

Understand why they may not trust you when you show up on the reservation with a big smile saying you’re going to save the world. I tell them to that everybody thinks that Native American people have free college and free health care and they get money from casinos. That is not true. There are reservations right now that have no running water. They have no front door on their houses or windows even though it gets to be 30 degrees or colder during the night or winter time. It’s poverty ridden. And the doctors that go on the reservations for supposedly their free medicine – let’s look at the history of the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) – they are the ones that initiated the “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” thing. They sent doctors to use Native American people as guinea pigs. It’s not like you go to the health clinic and get excellent care from the doctor. They are not there for you. I am traumatized by doctors to this day. My doctor prescribes me Xanax as a PRN medication and I only take it when I have to go to the doctors, that’s how traumatized I am after dealing with the things I dealt with on the reservation.

Know your prejudices. Stereotypes about people are passed down through generations and through the media. In a study completed by Leavitt, Coverrubias, Perez & Fryberg (2015) they found the media continues to portray Native Americans in the historical context leaving current identity of Native Americans behind. For example, one story of an elementary school teacher who began at new job at a predominantly White school demonstrates the misguided portrayal. Her skin and hair resembles that of “stereotypical” Native American features. Some children

asked her if she was Native American. She responded by saying yes and stating her lineage.

They then asked her what it was like to live in a tipi. She said, "I don't live in a tipi. I live in a house just like you." (personal communication, Maria Geffcken, n.d.)

"Felt Lost" recalls being told that she was "strange" because of her inherent connection with the earth and animals. "Embraces Dreams" talked about the need for understanding that no one is better than another person and that each person brings something special to the table. "Prays with Children" experienced a "culture clash" and no "compassion" with Child Protective Services saying that she felt judged and criticized. She stated that "it was difficult for them to hear when I talked about medicine or praying." "Stereotyped Son" witnessed a lack of support for her son and his way of communicating and learning. She contends that they experienced "judgement," a lack of "compassion," and that many of the social workers had an attitude of her son being "a lost cause." She conveyed that one worker who was doing in-home work with her son became an advocate for him because she took the time to get to know the family and to understand their ways. "Stereotyped Son" feels that if social workers are going to be working with various populations they must take the time to become aware of their own prejudices and to be honest with themselves in order to resolve it. "Advocating for Rights" recalls her childhood explaining that when she was on the reservation she was surrounded by family and was accepted for who she was. Once she began public school she began to have negative experiences and witness prejudice. She remembers the principal of the school telling her mother that they did not want her there, "that was the first time I had ever experienced discrimination and hate, prejudice and racism based on where I was from."

It is all about healing. Several participants in the study spoke about Indigenous people who hold onto the use of traditional practices for health and healing including the use of plants for

medicinal purposes, sacred pipe ceremonies, drumming, vision quests, and sweat lodge or purification ceremonies. These traditions have shown to be impactful on their own, and have shown to work well in conjunction with Western medicine or mental health services (Walters, Simoni, & Evans-Campbell, 2002). A main focus of “Finds an Outlet” was the topic of healing, declaring that people need to find an outlet to heal through the use of traditional practices rather than taking pills, alcohol, or drugs to suppress the physical and emotional pain. He states that social workers need to understand that medicine people, unlike doctors, do not divide the body, mind, spirit, and heart. He explains that the DNA of his people is connected to the earth and the stars which is where the healing comes from. He claims, “the IHC (Indian Health Center) gives out pills for people. They only help for five or six hours then the symptoms come back and you have to take another pill.” He observes too many people not connect with the traditional ways because they listen to the dominant society. He sees some young people stepping up to learn about the traditional ways, the language, and how to carry the sacred pipe and ceremonies. This gives him hope for the future generations.

“Just Another Face” emphasized the need for people of all colors of the rainbow to step forward in order to heal the earth and all of the people living on it. He talks about the importance of people becoming educated about how to live off the land, not solely academically smart. “Just Another Face” explained that he used to be part of a group that would close down sweat lodges and other ceremonies if they were not being run by a full-blooded enrolled Native American. Today, he sees it differently, “as long as you are doing it in a good way, you don’t hurt anybody, and don’t charge people”. Charging people for ceremony and healing goes against traditional culture.

“Embraces Dreams” explained that she did not begin to heal until she became connected with traditional ceremonies. This is when she learned about her dreams and visions being part of the gift Creator had given her. Currently, she has a therapist who is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and who differs vastly from previous social workers she had. “Embraces Dreams” says, “she encourages me to explore and to get in touch with [my dreams]...I have had a really good experience with her.” She believes that this is because her current therapist has done her own spiritual work and has spent time participating in traditional ceremony. “Prays with Children” believes that if social workers were required to attend ceremony it would improve the way Indigenous people are treated because they would have an understanding and because praying together connects people. “Stereotyped Son” cautions, “Indigenous culture is not just about ceremonies...sometimes the culture can be romanticized because of the ceremonies, then they think ‘this is it’, but there is so much more to the culture; it is a way of life. She believes that in order for students to have a true understanding immersion with a family needs to take place. “Advocating for Rights” furthers this idea by articulating that students need to be taught about protocol and nuances of the tribe before going to any ceremony or spending time with them in order to avoid students unknowingly acting in a disrespectful manner. Social work professionals needs to take the depth of these themes into consideration when working with Indigenous peoples.

Discussion

In order to explore what Indigenous people want social work students to know about working with them a series of questions were asked of seven participants. Participants self-identified as Native American or Indigenous, ranged in age from 36 to 79. Participants were raised in geographic locations spreading from the Northwest to the Northeast corners of the

United States. Before exploring the personal experience each participant had working with a social worker or social workers, they were asked to share what being Native American or Indigenous means to them. Towards the end of each interview they were asked to share their thoughts about social work students being required to participate in service work with Indigenous communities as part of their education. Lastly, they were asked to talk about what they believe social work students need to know about current Indigenous activism and recent struggles of Indigenous peoples.

Themes. During the literature review studies specifically asking Indigenous recipients of social work services were not found. This signifies a need to explore the topic from a clients' perspectives. Most authors present a historical background about Indigenous peoples providing the reader with contextual information needed in order to understand the scope of the study or concept. This was an indicator of the need to educate students about the history of colonization, which led to the literature review focusing on the history of boarding schools, social work involvement with "kill the Indian, save the man" efforts, disparity, and changes in Native American population. "True" history was a theme which emerged from the interviews. As authors typically provide historical background, so did the participants. Several participants asserted that history taught in the school system is not an accurate account and that it is only information that colonizers want people to hear. This argument is supported by the number of Indigenous articles in the literature whose authors found the need to include a history section in their writings.

Although the literature review did not focus on trauma, there is a significant amount of literature about historical trauma for Indigenous peoples which emerged while listening to participants experiences. This included trauma in their lives, such as historical trauma,

displacement, and abuse as well as trauma inflicted and perpetuated by social workers. As discussed in the literature review, participants did share the importance of cultural awareness and cultural humility. It is imperative for social workers to recognize that historical oppression and trauma is part of the culture. In order to stop perpetuating the trauma participants cautioned social workers against stereotyping, of entering a community without knowing the traditions or protocols, and the importance of being of service to the community rather than trying to save the community. All participants agreed that some type of service learning experience would be valuable to social work students' education. One participant expressed that coming together to pray would be an opportunity for breaking down stereotypes and fears social workers have about Indigenous spirituality. Another agreed although she expressed concerns that service learning would not be enough to provide true understanding and felt that immersion with a family who walks a Native path would be far more transformational.

In regard to health and healing, one participant expressed the fear she has about going to a doctor. It is important for social workers to understand the trauma Indigenous peoples have attached to the Western medical model due to past treatment. Health and healing take form in various ways, such as the use of plant medicine and the use of specific ceremonies like the sweat lodge or purification ceremony. This ceremony is often referred to as a church, a hospital, and a university because it is a place to pray, heal, and learn. Understanding that Indigenous views about turning to natural ways for health and healing, rather than doctors or pharmacists is because is it what they know and are comfortable with and because they do not trust the Western medical model.

Finally, the skepticism of teaching practices within educational institutions was raised as a concern during the interviews. A mother whose son was being stereotyped and whose needs

were going unmet. Finds an Outlet voiced frustration that Elders without a college degree cannot teach university classes about traditions, culture, history, and language and he feels that it is far more valuable for Elders who know the language and the traditions to be teaching these courses whether they have a college degree or not.

Etuapmumk. The conceptual framework for this study, *Etuapmumk*, a Mi'kmaq term meaning "two-eyed seeing" was used. This framework is based on the premise that one eye is used to see the strengths of Indigenous knowledge while the other is used to see the strengths of Western knowledge bringing both together rather than making one right or wrong (Goulding, Steels, & McGarty, 2016; Latimer et al., 2014). While conducting research Indigenous Research methods were used along with phenomenological research methods. While phenomenology focuses on an individual's experience, indigenous views are community based rather than individualistic.

Strengths and limitations. The strengths of this study include the demographics of participants. Out of seven participants the ages were 36, 45, 54, 56, 62, 66, and 79 showing a span of generational experiences. Participants also varied in geographic upbringing including Maine, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Washington. One participant grew up in Mexico and then Minnesota. The involvement with social work services ranged from child welfare, mental health, addiction services, behavioral health, and juvenile court involvement. Although Western research may not understand the significance of seven interviews, Indigenous knowledge and researchers understand the significance of the number seven. Many Indigenous peoples believe that everything a person does impacts seven generations back and seven generations to come. While seven interviews may be seen as a limitation in Western research, it

would be of significant importance for many Indigenous people. This is seen as a strength in Indigenous research.

The investigator was the only person involved in the analysis of data and coding for themes. This is limiting because another person involved with data analysis could have points out differing themes that the investigator might have missed. Strengths in the results included the emergence of common themes such as the importance of history to be retaught to students, cultural humility, and healing practices. *Felt Lost* did not share common themes which may have had something to do with her being an Orphan Train child and not knowing her lineage until she was in her late sixties. She spoke a about her childhood, being confused, and not understanding how to “play.” After interviewing her, perhaps questions to other participants exploring the concept of “play” as a child may have provided some further insights.

Implications for teaching and further research. This research indicates that need to provide education to social work students about the history of Indigenous peoples and the involvement of social workers in oppression, trauma, and mistrust. Additionally, it speaks to the need to incorporate “service rather than saving” and immersion in order for students entering the field to transform their worldviews and be able to approach working with any culture from a place of openness rather than fear of the unknown. Service immersion activities with any culture different from that of the students could facilitate this learning. While these types of activities can be done with small class sizes, exploring how to accomplish this with larger class sizes is needed. Perhaps, it is not possible to complete with depth with large class sizes leaving educators to be more creative with class activities and assignments. The “raising a baby in a different culture” assignment presented by Kleinschmidt & Craig-Olsen (2012) lead to an idea about health and healing views of Indigenous peoples. Assigning students with an activity where they must tend

to something that they would like healed using Indigenous or alternative approaches rather than Western methods for a two week period might increase their awareness and appreciation for non-Western modalities of healing. Both activities could be done with teaching scholarship in mind perhaps comparing learning growth of a small group that completes service immersion with a large group that completes “raising a baby” or “healing indigenously”. Replication of this research could easily be conducted and is needed due to the differences between tribes, tribal experience, and non-tribal individuals who identify as Indigenous. This research could be replicated within smaller geographical groups, such as within a specific reservation, in order to share results with social workers from that particular region. In contrast research from a broader, global perspective could be completed by creating a quantitative survey based on the findings of this research.

Conclusion

It is the responsibility of social work educators to guide and teach new social workers how to align their values, skills, and behaviors with the mission of the profession. In order to do this, students need to have historical information about the population being served and the history of the social work professions involvement. This is especially true for Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (North America) given the misinformation students have from the educational system and the media. Educators also need to help students move information from the head to the heart. It is not enough for students to have knowledge, they must have a heart understanding which is most likely to be accomplished through connecting with people who are Indigenous and learning about the culture on a personal level. It is imperative that students understand what was done to Indigenous peoples and how social work was involved in these atrocities to begin to health the wounds of the people and to ensure that social workers avoid perpetuating the

oppression which is still being experienced by Indigenous people today. If we strive to make a new relationship between social workers and Indigenous peoples, one of respect, understanding, and alignment, will it not change the DNA for future generations?

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