

Pedagogy as Gift: Contextual Views from Scotland and Canada

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Thank you for welcoming us to your land...
and a bit about the land on which sits the University of Calgary

The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).



The session

- Four brief thoughts:
 - Paul
 - Aubrey
 - Trish
 - Amy
- Discussant:
 - Gert
- Questions/responses

Strawberry gathering

(Wall Kimmerer, 2013)

- Strawberry gathering signals: ‘... a world full of gifts simply scattered at your feet’ (p. 23).
- Togetherness: gifts, ‘...from the earth or from each other establish a particular relationship, an obligation of sorts to give, to receive, and to reciprocate’ (25).
- Establishes a ‘...feeling bond between two people’ (Hyde, quoted in Kimmerer, 2013: 26).

‘Being in, and acting on the world, with and for others’

- From transaction:
 - What should we teach and why?
 - Why ‘do it’ like that? (or even: ‘just do it like that’!)
 - How can we ensure success?
- To *gifting*:
 - What is worth knowing and why?
 - Who knows, who ‘should’ know, and why?
 - How does this help us live *with and for each other*?
- *What happens when transaction fails?*

Gifting: transaction's Bette Noir!

- From wealth as *acquisition* to wealth as *'having enough to give away'*.
 - The student 'returns the gift' in the form of living in and acting on the world with and for others' (Adams, 2023)
 - The circle of reciprocity
 - 'A gift asks something of you. To take care of it. And something more.' (Wall Kimmerer, 2013: 382)
- 'The berries trust we that we will uphold our end of the bargain And disperse their seeds to new places to grow...' (*ibid*: 382)
- The world 'offers to us':
 - *We do not take... we accept, but in the knowledge that we are often not present for the return.*

CONTEXTS FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN CANADA



STORY AS A WAY INTO RELATION WITH INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Story is a framework for understanding

- relationality, ethical engagement
- relationships and responsibilities
- Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies
- traditional and cultural pedagogy

Story takes place in relation with:

- land, environment, ecology
- experiential learning
- intergenerational education
- Indigenous communities



MAKOWICHUK, D. (2020). *THE SIKSIKAITSITAPI MEDICINE WHEEL AT NOSE HILL PARK.*

Deepening our Collaborative Practice

Three Ways Teacher
Education Can Braid
and Weave Indigenous
Knowledges in
Programs

- A mandatory Indigenous education course, plus...
- Integration through content and...
- The presence of Indigenous faculty, but...

Learning to be Brave

- Fear of Making a Mistake (23%)
- Fear of Offending Someone (22%)
- Appreciation vs. Appropriation (19%)

“I will make mistakes, but if I let that stop me, then I will never move forward in my own journey of growth and truth and reconciliation. So, I guess basically giving myself permission to make mistakes.”

Role of Leadership in Expanded Notions of Pedagogy



Sept. 2022 – Nunavut schools start the year with over 100 open teaching positions and 2 schools that will not open due to the lack of a principal.

Rural and isolated schools in the Yukon need the most teachers. Photo: APTN file

Leadership for Critical Pedagogy

Presumptive Leadership



Ghost Leadership



To Sum Up...

- How and what 'we know' are bounded by 'contexts of truth'
- To understand context is, then, vital
- The context of transaction leads to 'contractual response'
- We can learn from experience and context... but whose?
- To lead we must both challenge and accept the tensions created by context
- People: in context, through time (non-chronological)
- Rupturing post-industrial 'Othering'
- Nothing is 'absent', everything has 'presence'

Discussion/Questions

Welcome Dr. Gert Biesta - Discussant