

A Place where I feel Safe: Reconceptualizing the Aboriginal Resource
Centre from the Perspective of Aboriginal University Students

by
Natasha Lea Smith

A Thesis
Presented to
The University of Guelph

In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Public Issues Anthropology

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

© Natasha Lea Smith, September, 2012

ABSTRACT

A PLACE WHERE I FEEL SAFE: RECONCEPTUALIZING THE ABORIGINAL RESOURCE CENTRE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ABORIGINAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Natasha Lea Smith
University of Guelph, 2012

Advisor:
Jeji Varghese

By employing an Indigenous methodological framework and a community based research approach, I assess the role that the Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC) has in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph, and drawing on the ARC as a case study, I conceptualize space from an Aboriginal perspective. Drawing on interviews with a key informant, prior and current students, I demonstrate that the ARC is more than just a student service or physical centre on campus; it is a community full of meaning and lived experiences. In ARC, the students have found a safe place in which to express themselves and feel safe to explore Aboriginal identity formation. I capture the importance of conceptualizing a shared space, specifically between people who share the same cultural worldview, within a reconceptualization of space.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the participation of the Aboriginal students I interviewed and their willingness to talk about their experiences. Thank you for being so open and sharing your stories with me. I would also like to acknowledge the support from my community partner, the Aboriginal Resource Centre, without which this research would not have been possible. I am tremendously grateful to my advisor, Dr. Jeji Varghese, for her wonderful patience, advice and unfailing support through the completion of this dissertation. I would also like to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions and feedback from my committee member, Dr. Belinda Leach. I would like to thank Dr. Kim Anderson for her inspiring work in Aboriginal communities; she is truly a wonderful mentor and guiding force for aspiring Aboriginal scholars and I value both her input and encouragement through this process.

I am blessed with a wonderful support system of family, friends and colleagues; I would have never gotten to this point without your unending support, dedication and confidence in my abilities. I wish to thank my parents and family for supporting me in my decisions and making sure I didn't ignore the opportunities made available to me. My dearest friends, I don't even know how to begin to thank you for the years of listening, conversations, commiserating and support; you knew I would succeed, even before I did, and your confidence gave me strength. I also owe the completion of this thesis to the support of my friend and professional supervisor, Dr. Cara Wehkamp, thank you for valuing my scholarly pursuits and affording me the flexibility and guidance to get it done. Lastly, to Shelagh Daly, the 'mother hen' of the department grad students, thank you for all the pep talks and making sure I didn't miss a deadline.

I owe gratitude to the Whitefish River First Nation for supporting me financially throughout my post-secondary journey. I would like to also acknowledge

the monetary support from the department of Sociology and Anthropology, the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation and the Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth.

This journey has been a long one and I wouldn't have gotten to this point without each and every person in my life. So this is for you: I finally made it!

Chi Miigwetch

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Outline of the Thesis	2
Relevance and Contribution to Public Issues Anthropology	3
Historical Context	4
History of Education for Aboriginal People in Canada	5
Aboriginal People and Post Secondary Education.....	7
Barriers to Success for Aboriginal Students in Post Secondary Institutions	8
How Post Secondary Institutions can Support Aboriginal Learners.....	10
Aboriginal Student Centres	12
Demographics	12
Services	12
Cultural Support	13
Chapter 2: Theoretical Approaches to Space	14
Anthropological Conceptions of Space	14
A Social Science Framework for Conceptualizing Space.....	17
Indigenous Conceptions of Space	19
A Brief Comparison of these Conceptualizations of Space.....	23
Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods.....	25
Definition and Evolution of an Indigenous Research Paradigm	25
Reflexivity in Research: An Insider Perspective	29
Research Ethics.....	31
Research Methods.....	32
Participants and Recruitment	32
Data Collection	33
Data Preparation and Analysis.....	35
Semi- Structured Interviews.....	35
Field Notes from Participant Observation.....	37
Research Rigour.....	38
Chapter 4: Background and Description of Aboriginal Resource Centre, University of Guelph	40
Creation of an Aboriginal Place on Campus.....	40
Space and Staff	40
Funding	41

Aboriginal Students Association	42
Services and Programming	42
Institutional Initiatives	43
Chapter 5: Role of Aboriginal Student Centre in the Lives of Aboriginal Students at the University of Guelph.....	45
Community:	45
Identity:.....	47
Safety:	49
Chapter 6: Re-Conceptualization of Space from an Aboriginal Student Perspective	52
Space as Material Environment.....	52
Space as Difference.....	53
Space as Social Spatiality.....	54
Space as Community	55
Chapter 7: Conclusion	59
Limitations of Research	60
Recommendations/Future Research	61
References Cited.....	63
Appendices	72
Appendix 1: Community Research Agreement.....	72
Appendix 2: Ethics Materials.....	76
Appendix 3: Interview Guides.....	80
List of Tables	
Table 1: Similarities and Differences between Perspectives on Space.....	24
List of Figures	
Figure 1: Framework for Conceptualising Space	17
Figure 2: Aboriginal Conceptualisation of Space.....	57

Chapter 1: Introduction

The topic of this research project is one that is near and dear to me. As an Aboriginal¹ undergraduate student at the University of Guelph, the Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC) was a place where I spent time studying, socializing and networking; it is where I met some of my best friends and experienced amazing growth as an Aboriginal woman. Throughout my undergraduate career, I availed myself to almost everything the ARC had to offer its students: the free food, access to computers, long distance calling, student advising, volunteering on the Aboriginal Student's Association (ASA) executive, of which I was the Co-Chair for 3 years, and even employment through the Ontario work study program. My interest in Aboriginal student success and experiences at a post secondary level has most definitely been influenced by the positive experiences I had in university, much of which I attribute to my involvement with the ARC and the support from the people there.

The purpose of this study is three fold:

- 1) To document the history of the Aboriginal Resource Centre from its inception in 2001 up to August 2010.
- 2) To assess the role that the Aboriginal Resource Centre has in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph.
- 3) To use the Aboriginal Resource Centre as a case study to conceptualize space from an Aboriginal perspective

This research is a part of a research agreement between the ARC and myself and could be significant to the ARC because the Ministry of Training for Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has created a funding envelope for Aboriginal student access, transition, completion and pathways to the workforce. This funding envelope is currently in an interim year and proposals for another envelope are to be developed

¹ Aboriginal = Canadian Constitutional definition that encompasses the First Nations (status & non-status), Métis, Inuit peoples of Canada. In acknowledging the right of people to self-identify as they choose, in some cases I will use other terminology, such as the terms Indigenous or Native, as it is used often in the literature. I will also use the term 'Indian' in some cases, as it is the legal term still used to identify First Nations people in the Indian Act.

over the next 6 months. Having research identifying the role of this space in the experiences of Aboriginal students could potentially help the ARC secure more stable funding for its staff, programs and services by increasing their understanding of how space may be conceptualized from an Aboriginal perspective.

Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into seven chapters. In chapter one, I outline the anthropological and public issue contributions of the research and the ways in which my research ties into community engaged scholarship, which is important when working with Aboriginal communities, as well as introducing the historical context of Aboriginal education in Canada (including colonization, residential school, Post Secondary Education barriers and promising practices/programs in Canada). In chapter two, I introduce the various ways in which space has been conceptualized in anthropology, other social sciences and in Indigenous scholarship. In chapter three, I discuss the understandings around an Indigenous research paradigm, the importance of and my role in, reflexivity in research and the research ethics process. I also outline the research methods used in this project as well as the importance of research rigour. In chapter four, I examine the specific context of my research, and offer a history and description of the ARC at the University of Guelph based on my participant observation and an interview with a key informant. In chapter five, I use findings from semi-structured interviews with students to explain the role that the ARC has played in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph. The chapter is structured thematically based on the three themes that emerged from my interviews: Community, Identity and Safety. In chapter six, I draw from these three themes to examine Simonsen's (1996) conceptualization of space in terms of *space as material environment*, *space as social spatiality* and *space as difference*. Based on my findings, I add a fourth conceptualization of space, which I have called *space as community*, which captures the importance of sharing a space with people who share the same cultural worldview. Adding this fourth conceptualization provided an opportunity for me to create a new visual framework that captures an Aboriginal student's understanding of space, which can be seen at

the conclusion of this chapter. Lastly, in chapter seven, I conclude that ARC is more than just a physical space and that having a safe space that allows for community is integral to the experiences and identity development and refinement of Aboriginal students. I also discuss the limitations to my own research project as well as make several recommendations for future investigation.

Relevance and Contribution to Public Issues Anthropology

This research was designed and carried out as a completion requirement of the Masters of Arts in Public Issues Anthropology (PIA) program at the University of Guelph. My own personal journey as an Aboriginal post secondary student and my desire for any research I completed to be tangible and useful for the community informed my decision to continue into graduate studies in this program. Contemporary anthropology has the potential to not only enrich our understandings of the world, but to actually make a difference and create understanding outside of the discipline (Borofsky, 2011). PIA is a program that attempts to bridge the gap between research and knowledge acquisition to bring social transformation and understanding to the public as well as the academy. In this respect, PIA is well placed to take on the problems caused by the colonial origins of the discipline and the role of past anthropological research in assimilationist government policy formation (Jenness, 1955; Hawthorn, 1967; Deloria, 1969; Dyck & Waldram, 1993); as well as change the relationships between anthropologists and communities by taking a community based approach to research and speaking to the issues and events that are important to the communities themselves. Aboriginal student experience and achievement in post secondary education is a pressing public issue; it can regularly be seen in the media and through the financial support of the Canadian federal government with the Post Secondary Student Support Program and at the Provincial level with the Aboriginal Post Secondary Education and Training program. I am contributing to the understanding of this public issue by investigating the role of Aboriginal Student Centres in the experiences of Aboriginal students at a post secondary institution in Southern Ontario, using the University of Guelph's ARC as a case study.

Community engaged scholarship can be defined as a mutually beneficial relationship and open dialogue between the researcher and the community that results in scholarship built on teaching, collaboration and engagement (Mulligan & Nadarajah, 2008; Jordan, 2007). My approach to this research ties in with community engaged scholarship in a couple different ways. This research project was developed in collaboration with the ARC and focused on their specific research needs. A mutually beneficial research agreement outlines the parameters and uses of this research both by the researcher and the ARC management (see Appendix 1). The Centre's staff has played an active role in the dialogue throughout the research planning and ethics process, and the knowledge gained will be shared and can be used by the ARC to better address the needs of the Aboriginal student population. By taking these steps in the research process, I have upheld and fostered the community based research aspects of community engaged scholarship. This approach to research with Aboriginal communities is a best practice across Canada, with many Aboriginal communities and organizations outlining similar requirements for researchers, which I speak to in more detail in chapter three. I would argue that a community engaged scholarship approach, even if just in part as I have done here, is a model for best practices within PIA research.

Historical Context

In order to understand the importance of this research, it is important to first have an understanding of the specific historical and contemporary educational context from which Aboriginal post secondary students are coming. The literature is inundated with qualitative narratives and statistics about the inability of Aboriginal students to succeed in post secondary education (e.g., Archibald & Urion, 1995; RCAP, 1996a; King 2008; Parkin & Baldwin, 2009). This is not to say that there are no successes discussed in the literature; this information is available (e.g., Groome & Hamilton, 1995; Pidgeon, 2001), however the majority of the literature speaks to the difficulties faced, rather than the successes achieved. Also, while much of the student services literature originates from the United States, there has been a movement within Canada to contribute to this vast area of research. However, most

research combines Aboriginal students with other minority groups, which results in broad inaccurate perspectives and contexts. With this research, I want to focus on how to move forward with the knowledge of the Aboriginal student experience, rather than only speaking to the existing dominant negative narrative of Aboriginal student experiences at post secondary institutions. The following provides an overview of historical and contemporary issues and successes faced by Aboriginal students that help set up the context within which this research study is embedded.

History of Education for Aboriginal People in Canada

According to Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003) education prior to contact with Europeans was focused on experiential learning, focusing on real life skill building. Western education for Aboriginal communities across Canada has, in the past, been seen by Aboriginal people as a form of governmental control of their communities. In order to understand how education, both historically and currently, has helped to keep Aboriginal people under government control, it is important to understand what Aboriginal people, mostly First Nations experiences due to the availability of literature, have lost due to compulsory educational systems in Canada. From mission schools to residential schools to federal Indian day schools, the government, church, or both, dictated the curriculum, social activities and most, if not all, aspects of life for Aboriginal children. Beginning in the 1800s and continuing into the 1970s, Aboriginal people saw the use of western education as an assimilationist tool against their people, working to eliminate social organization and traditional cultural practices (Crowshoe, 2001; RCAP, 1996b; Morrisette, 1994).

The most disruptive and damaging of these institutions was the residential school system, with the first school opening in 1849 (James, 2001). With mandatory enrollment and attendance ranging from 50 to over 400 students of all ages, the highest recorded number of residential schools across Canada was 80 in the early 1930s (Kirkness, 1999; Malatest, 2004). Due to the use of poorly trained or incompetent teachers, education and care of the children were secondary priorities

to order, discipline and sexual exploitation (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Miller 1996). Aboriginal children were removed from their families and communities and brought to the schools, where they faced cultural and social oppression, as well as emotional, physical and sexual abuse (RCAP, 1996b; Morrisette, 1994). Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003) describe the curriculum as highlighting courses on Euro-Canadian history, where the Indian in Canada was always the enemy. Kirkness (1999) argues that the weakening of Aboriginal society can be attributed to residential school and that the lasting effects of this can still be seen today.

The integrative nature of the federal Indian day schools of the 1950s-1960s saw Aboriginal children attending public schools, rather than being shipped off the residential institutions. While the government saw this as a remedy to residential school, it did little to lessen the feelings of alienation felt by Aboriginal children (Kirkness, 1999). In 1965, Indian Affairs began to close down the residential school system and in 1969 started passing control over the day schools from the federal to the provincial governments (Stonechild, 2006). Despite these compulsory, European education systems, the hands-on experiential style of learning continued to be seen in many Aboriginal families and communities and still does today; in fact, this difference in learning styles can be linked to the struggles of Aboriginal people within the Canadian education system today.

Before the 1960s, the barriers to Aboriginal post secondary education were extreme. For those Aboriginal people who did move on to post secondary education, the 1876 amendment to the Indian Act forced them to give up their Indian status to do so. The first mention of enfranchisement can be seen in the 1876 Indian Act, section 86(1):

Any Indian who may be admitted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine, or to any other degree by any University of Learning, or who may be admitted in any Province of the Dominion to practice law either as an Advocate or as a Barrister or Counselor or Solicitor... or who may enter Holy Orders or who may be licensed by any denomination of Christians as a Minister of the Gospel, shall ipso facto become and be enfranchised under this act (Stonechild, 2006:21).

According to Stonechild (2006) this clause reappeared several times, in the Indian Acts of 1880, 1886, and 1906 and remained in effect until the 1927 Indian Act, where it was changed to be broader in scope, thus creating more reasons for enfranchisement. Enfranchisement continued until after World War II and while it eventually was removed from the Indian Act completely, the assimilationist and alienating nature of post secondary education did not disappear.

The history of these education systems still resonate through Aboriginal communities in Canada, and many Aboriginal students perceive assimilation as a prominent feature of post secondary education. The system, of what Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003) argue that “miseducation resulted in generations of Aboriginal children who were not only forcibly disconnected from their culture, but who were also relegated to educational failure” (p. 54), has led to distrust and hostility towards education in many Aboriginal communities (Malatest, 2004). The lack of support for education by communities caused by this mistrust impedes the learning of Aboriginal youth who are in the education system. Later in this paper, I will speak to the lack of representation of Aboriginal cultures and values in post secondary institutions; however this is also an issue that school aged youth face as well. Not seeing their knowledge and ways of life acknowledged in their classrooms feeds the mistrust of the western education system’s ability to properly educate in an appropriate manner. The style of teaching also contradicts Indigenous ways of teaching and learning as discussed by Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003). Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) argue that to Aboriginal people, post secondary education is an impersonal environment in which their culture, values and traditions are not recognized or valued.

Aboriginal People and Post Secondary Education

The history of Aboriginal people and their access to post secondary education is a long one, fraught with government policies and political movements. Stonechild (2006) describes the time after the World War II as a significant learning period in Aboriginal policy formation, with Aboriginal communities having a, albeit token, role, along with church groups and non-governmental organizations. One of

the effects of the Second World War, according to Stonechild (2006), was the recognition that for the more than 600 Aboriginal veterans, the liberty that they had fought for was not a reality for their people. The Hawthorn Report, commissioned in 1963, displayed the extreme disparities between Aboriginal people and the rest of the Euro-Canadian population (Hawthorn, 1967). All of this led to the creation of higher education scholarships, which originally focused more on vocational training and were never meant to cover the high cost of post secondary education.

Today, although Aboriginal people see higher education as one path to a self-sufficient nation that is empowered by its own people (Barnhardt, 1991; Danziger, 1996) and the number of Aboriginal students in post secondary institutions has increased recently (Malatest, 2004); the number is still less than 20% of the rate of the non-Aboriginal population. At the undergraduate level, more than 70% of Aboriginal students who begin university do not complete a degree (Archibald & Urion, 1995); and Aboriginal high school graduates are more than twice as likely to drop out of post secondary education or skip it altogether as their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Parkin & Baldwin, 2009; RCAP, 1996a; INAC, 1993). According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (1996), only 3% of Native Canadians of the traditional post secondary education age are attaining post secondary degrees. In some cases, as discussed by King (2008), Aboriginal students are actively recruited to attend, yet institutions are still experiencing relatively low completion rates.

Barriers to Success for Aboriginal Students in Post Secondary Institutions

Aboriginal people have historically, and still do, face cultural, social, financial and academic barriers in attaining a post secondary education. The lack of academic preparation of Aboriginal students, especially for those who attend reserve and remote elementary and secondary schools, is often a key factor when looking at the low success rates of post secondary Aboriginal students (Malatest, 2004). When people discuss financial barriers to education, it is often centered around being unable to afford tuition and books, and while this is a definite concern for Aboriginal students, it is important to note that many Aboriginal post secondary learners are mature students, usually required to move to an urban centre attend school and

they often have to bring their children with them. In British Columbia, Aboriginal students were more likely to be parents, with 27% having a spouse or partner and 21% being a single parent (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002). The high cost of living in an urban centre coupled with childcare costs and supporting a family while attending school away from their Aboriginal community and family support networks, is often insurmountable.

While there is financial support available for Status Indians through several different programs (e.g. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's Post Secondary Student Support Program (PSSP), the University College Entrance Preparation Program, and the Indian Studies Support Program), this support is limited (Malatest, 2004). Not all Status Indians and no non-Status Indians are eligible for funding through these programs, and often must turn to Canadian or provincial student loans that do not cover the high travel and living expenses faced by most Aboriginal students. Of the Status Indian students who are eligible, many do not receive funding due to funding caps placed on education support in 1994, and those who do receive funding from their bands through the PSSP only receive approximately 48% of the estimated average provincial cost per academic year (Malatest, 2004). These student support programs do not fund Métis, Inuit or non-Status Indian students.

Aboriginal culture, as discussed previously, is not something that Aboriginal students generally see reflected positively in post secondary institutions. Aboriginal students do not often see themselves reflected in the university community, either in the student population, curriculum or the staff and faculty. This issue is discussed repeatedly in the literature (e.g., Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991; Hampton, 1993; Walker, 2000; Mendelson, 2006). Malatest (2004) argues that most universities and colleges do not have any depth of understanding of Aboriginal traditions or core values, nor do they recognize the diversity of Aboriginal people and communities. There is also little recognition of the variation of Aboriginal student needs are the same and that a blanket approach to Aboriginal learning and support is not sufficient.

Other barriers include, but are not limited to, the history of colonialism and assimilation, living in remote locations, lack of knowledge of Aboriginal policies and

government, family obligations, and ignorance of Aboriginal perspectives on the part of the institution. If an Aboriginal learner can get past these barriers and begin post secondary studies, the lack of knowledgeable and appropriate student services at the institution leaves them with little or no help with the transition to university life and the supports to succeed through to completion (Mendelson, 2006; Malatest, 2004; RCAP, 1996a). Ensuring that the post secondary education experience is a positive one is the responsibility of the institution; its administrators, faculty, staff, students and the community in general. Pidgeon and Hardy Cox (2002) extend the challenge to student services professionals and researchers to develop culturally sensitive research that will create guiding values that will not only inform policy, but will help create better programs and practices for Aboriginal students in higher education.

How Post Secondary Institutions can Support Aboriginal Learners

In 2005, the Human Capital Strategies final report reported that there must be recognition that Aboriginal learners need and expect a significant amount of support and that Aboriginal students need a nurturing and culturally appropriate learning environment. Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) argue that post secondary institutions must be able to present themselves in ways that are valued by Aboriginal students by creating programs and services that connect with their cultural dispositions; thus creating an environment where students are comfortable and feel at home. Educational practices and outcomes cannot be understood separate from other factors, such as those outlined above, or as byproducts of social systems. Schooling is one of several important and independent areas of life wherein an individual's identity, experiences, and interpretations of the world are developed. In order to facilitate positive social transformation, schools need to deliver educational programming and involve Aboriginal students and their communities in these activities (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003).

Some Canadian universities, including the University of Guelph, have created spaces and/or services for the Aboriginal student population on their campuses. Student groups or university administration create these spaces, most often funded

by soft dollars or student fees. At the University of Guelph, there is one space, managed by the administration and shared by the Aboriginal student group. Both groups work together to provide academic support, cultural programming and social activities and increase awareness of Aboriginal affairs across campus and in the local community. Spaces like these offer students a safe place on campus within which they can become involved through volunteering, employment or through programming; they are places where they can practice their specific cultural practices on campus and/or have a shared sense of community.

An alternative to urban universities is community delivery of post secondary education for Aboriginal students. Rather than leaving their home communities to attend post-secondary institutions, community based programs allow students to study and live at home, eliminating much of the financial and social hardships that students who leave home may face. Even more effective are institutions or programs in Aboriginal communities that are designed and facilitated by the community. Ray Barnhardt (1991) espouses the importance of commitment to community, participation of Elders, sustained local leadership, traditional teaching practices, local language use and participatory research as common themes within Aboriginal run institutions. However, this is not an option for many communities as creating these institutions is a long, difficult and expensive process; for the time being, leaving their communities is the only way for most Aboriginal people to access higher education.

There are some who argue that simply creating a safe space on campus or having access programs is not enough. For example, Tierny (1993) suggests a comprehensive reform of institutions, from the level of student affairs to the role of the president at the institution; with the goal of creating conditions where students can celebrate their own histories and examine how their lives are shaped by society. Reform at this level is not likely to happen at many Canadian institutions and the process is time consuming; however at the University of Guelph steps are being made at all levels to create a community within the institution that fosters Aboriginal student access growth and success.

Aboriginal Student Centres

Demographics

While the literature does show that Aboriginal student services and cultural spaces are a necessity for student success, in practice, not many post secondary institutions have them in place. While institutions are increasingly committed to helping Aboriginal students (Malatest, 2004), Pidgeon (2001) found that only 49% of Canadian universities surveyed in 2000 provided some sort of support system for Aboriginal students. As there is no set of standards or requirements, each university has a different set up for their spaces and their services, therefore each school, if offered at all, offers very different experiences and services for their Aboriginal students. The literature also outlines some of the problems faced by Aboriginal student services, such as limited budgets and staff resources, resulting in a difficulty in retaining Aboriginal staff and less stability of programming services (Pidgeon, 2001; James, 2001). This lack of resources and supports ultimately leads to the exclusion of some services and therefore some students' needs may not be met.

Services

Previous research on the role of Aboriginal student services in facilitating student success has indicated that these student centers provide key support to the Aboriginal student population. This support is most accessible when culturally relevant programming is incorporated with academic, emotional and social supports (Mendelson, 2006; Moore-Eyman, 1981; Pidgeon, 2001; Wright, 1985). Increased Elder involvement, Aboriginal staff and faculty members, culturally relevant programming and counseling on post -secondary campuses are all key to the success of Aboriginal students (Archibald & Urion, 1995; Human Capital Strategies, 2005; Malatest, 2004; RCAP, 1996a). Both Wright (1985) and Moore-Eyman (1981) argue that the formation and availability of student support groups on campus is vital, especially counseling with Aboriginal counselors and culturally relevant support programs. The importance of Aboriginal role models, in faculty and staff at post secondary institutions, is not to be overlooked. Aboriginal

representation at these levels provides some Aboriginal expertise in academic and service areas, as well as acting as mentors and advisors (Malatest, 2004). While there is a focus on the importance of Aboriginal specific services to the success of Aboriginal students in post secondary institutions, the literature also talks to the actual physical environment and spaces that Aboriginal students need when attending a post secondary institution.

Cultural Support

While the services offered in these student centers are very important, it is also important to note that the literature shows that having a physical Aboriginal cultural space on campus enhances the self-esteem and reinforces the identity and presence of Aboriginal students on campus (Groome & Hamilton, 1995). These physical spaces are safe, welcoming and inclusive, often with Aboriginal displays and familiar décor; Groome and Hamilton (1995) argue that Aboriginal students tend to flourish in environments where they find support and companionship with others of the same cultural background. Their report, although it focuses specifically on Australian Aborigine students, touches on many of the same issues experienced by Aboriginal students in Canada. Renn (2000) reiterates the importance of having a physical space within which to socialize with people who have shared interests, where students will find a shared sense of community. Renn's work focuses on biracial and multiracial students, which is still very applicable, given that Aboriginal students are often of mixed heritage and can share many of the experiences and feelings of alienation that people of other mixed heritages may have.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Approaches to Space

All social interactions are spatial, but this dimension is often ignored in lieu of focusing on the seemingly more tangible aspects of research. It is as if sociology and anthropology researchers are aware that space has played a key role in the social phenomena they have studied, but have not taken the time to define or outline what their understanding of that space, in their context, is. Due to this, I have drawn on works by anthropologists, rural sociologists, human geographers and Indigenous scholars to help understand the different ways in which space is conceptualized.

Anthropological Conceptions of Space

People everywhere face the realities of space and time, but how they experience them is a cultural variable (Kuper, 1972). Kuper argued that because different members of differing cultural groups structure the same physical spaces through their own perspective lenses, they will have a concept of space that differs from others. Giddens (1990) argued that historically, kinship systems, communities, and the continuity of traditions created a sense of safety and that the forces of modernity, such as the separation of time and space, have removed the continuity of these safety nets. Without these safe places, there is no longer a clear support for identity formation (Giddens, 1990; Morely & Robins, 1993). Carter, Donald and Squires (1993) defined place as a space to which meaning has been ascribed. As social relations occur within a physical location, and the symbolic and imaginary investments of the population take root, a space becomes so much more than just a building or a location.

Rodman (1992) argued that space is a problem in contemporary anthropological theory because the meaning often goes unnoticed or unexplained. She stated that anthropologists often treat place as the locations where events happen, rather than the politicized, culturally relative and historically specific constructions that need to be conceptualized anthropologically. She used geographical literature to build a critical definition of space and place as a social construction of 'lived experiences'. Rodman criticized past anthropological

understandings of place as only a location, then as an anthropological construct (rather than a local one) and finally as a problem that 'incarcerates natives' (Appadurai, 1988). Rodman (1992) outlined three steps to acknowledging the importance of space and place. The first step is to recognize that space is socially constructed and contested. Secondly, we need to acknowledge the role that power plays in place, that they cannot be separated. Lastly, there is a need to take into consideration what Rodman called the social landscape, which eliminates the micro-macro distinction between places and takes a broader view of space and place. Rodman concluded that rather than being incarcerated by place, as Appadurai (1988) argued, people studied by anthropologists are constructing their own places and as researchers, anthropologists need look through these places, explore their links with others, consider why they are constructed as they are, see how the places represent the people and understand how people embody their places.

Low and Altman (1992) defined place as a space that has been given meaning through personal, group, or cultural processes and may vary in many ways: size, tangible, symbolic, experience, time, changes or scale. In their discussion of place attachment, they outlined the socio-cultural origins and dynamics that lead to individual and group attachment to specific places. Place attachment can provide a sense of security and stimulation on a daily basis, as well as linking people with friends and family in both obvious and symbolic ways. Low (1992) built on this definition in a cultural sense, stating the implication that for most people there is a transformation of the experience of a space into a culturally meaningful and shared symbol, and through this, it becomes a place. It can apply to the relationships between people and real or imagined spaces, the importance here being that a place evokes a culturally valued experience, as well as sociopolitical and historical experiences. Low emphasized that places can provide individuals and groups with a shared sense of a unique cultural identity. She went on to list six cultural processes of attachment: genealogical (through history or family), links through loss or destruction of land, economical (through ownership, inheritance and politics),

bonding through spiritual relationships, and participation in celebratory cultural or religious events and lastly through narratives (storytelling and place naming).

Anthropologists have looked at space through a post-modern lens as well, drawing on linguistics and semiotics. Donatella Mazzoleni (1993) used different metaphors to speak to the spaciousness of existence, which she argues, is difficult to represent with words and concepts because it belongs to the experience of non-verbal communication. She built on this and uses the body as an example of the complexity of space, how there are many types of space that can exist within space. The body itself has spaces (cavities, organs) that exist within the space of the skin, which in turn uses clothing and body movements for what she calls spatial communication. In fact, she argued that the first 'external' space is the surface of the skin, and communication happened and continues to happen with it through cosmetics, body art and tattoos. A second metaphor Mazzoleni drew upon is one of the 'city' as a lived space, the construction of which is a solidification of space experienced in social relationships. She described the city as anthropomorphic and compares it to the body, arguing that it has internal and external spaces that work together, and that it has a 'skin' and a face that makes it recognizable.

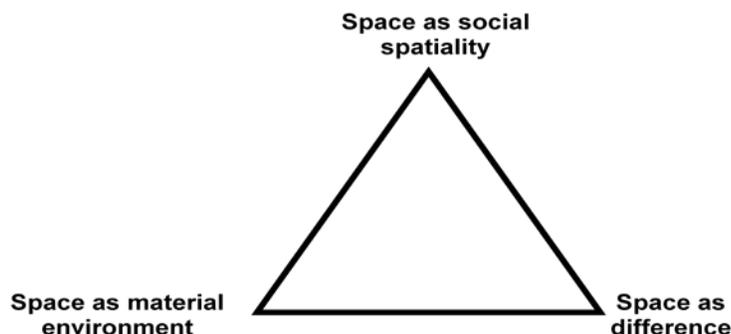
Another postmodern way of looking at space can be found with Kevin Robins' (1993) work on urbanity and the culture of cities. He spoke to the importance of public spaces in cities and the idea that a city should be a 'vessel' for shared activities with a respect for place and traditions. He argued that culture is central to the development of cities and having a cultural sense of place is integral to the postmodern vision of urban centres.

Building on her previous work (1992, 2003, 2006), Low (2011) argues that specializing culture, studying culture through a lens of space and place, provides a powerful tool in social justice as well as facilitating an important form of engagement because it gives people the opportunity to better understand the everyday places where they live, work and play. She suggests that anthropologists have an advantage with regard to theorizing space because of the nature of anthropological fieldwork; our work is inherently spatial.

Anthropology has conceptualized space in many different ways over the years, and by outlining them chronologically, one can see that space has continually come up as a concern, or something to be acknowledged, by anthropologists, but also something that has been left in the background in lieu of focusing on the more tangible experiences of the research participants.

A Social Science Framework for Conceptualizing Space

French social theorists (Bourdieu, 1977; Lefebvre, 1991) have placed emphasis on spatial arrangements as an aspect of social analysis. Simonsen (1996) reviews these and various other sociological and human geography literatures and discusses space and social theory. In this review, she not only outlines three approaches to, or conceptions of, space in contemporary human geography and social theory, but also contrasts them and looks to understand the consequences of these in social theory. Her review provides a framework for conceptualizing space (see Figure 1 below).



Source: Based on Simonsen (1996).

Figure 1: Framework for Conceptualizing Space

The first approach outlined by Simonsen (1996) is *space as material environment*. She discusses this approach in the context of two different disciplinary contexts: architectural theory and regional geography, the latter being more applicable in this context. It is in this context where the 'cultural landscape' (Jackson, 1989) is emphasized. This approach to space as material environment saw social processes as subordinate to the environment, and while it has been rejected in favour of considering material environment as just one part of social

spatial relations, Simonsen (1996) argues that this does not solve the problem of integrating material environment into social phenomena. In fact, she argues that the two are distinct and should not be integrated, rather that they should be seen as indirectly connected through social practice and mediation. Simonsen breaks down social practices into three categories: The first is the production of the material environment, which includes landscape, architecture and material things; the second is the use of the material environment, whether it is socially or naturally created. Lastly is the important practice of ascribing meaning to the material environment (Relph, 1976), and recognizing that these meanings are not inherent in the environment but can change depending on the social or cultural context.

The second approach in Simonsen's conceptual framework is *space as difference*. This approach sees all places as different, with differing influences on social processes and social life. The discussion is separated into three different theoretical viewpoints of space as difference: Realism, Postmodernist and Poststructuralist. The realist approach focuses on the different ways space as difference is looked at between abstract and concrete research. Sayer (1985) argues that by separating the social and the spatial, space as difference is often largely ignored in abstract research whereas more attention is paid in concrete work. This approach treats the material environment as passive and static, simply the conditions in which the social happens, but not influencing it in any way. The postmodernist version emphasizes difference as both philosophical and theoretical, which ultimately includes the spatial as a part of social processes. Through this, space itself becomes a question of difference, which is something to be celebrated (Cooke, 1990; Simonsen, 1996). The third, the poststructuralist viewpoint, draws on feminism, postcolonial and literary criticism writings and uses spatial metaphors to speak to the politics of position and identity. In some cases, space becomes the location of political action and a place to create new, intersectional identities (Hall, 1991). Simonsen (1996) argues that space as difference, in this context, is not actually spatial but focuses on social differences.

The third perspective in Simonsen's conceptual framework is *space as social spatiality*, which sees space as inherently social in that all social processes and

practices are all situated in space and that the spatial dimension must be taken into account. From daily activities such as work or play, to larger scale division of labour or politics, all social interactions happen within a space and in this perspective of the framework, space should be a social category in its own right. Simonsen reviews the work of French philosopher and sociologist, Henri Lefebvre (1991) who argued that “space is never empty, it always embodies a meaning” (p.154), and created a ‘conceptual triad’ for looking not at ‘things in space’, but the ‘production of space’. Lefebvre’s triad begins with *spatial practice*, which is, simply put, the production and appropriation of space by society. It is the space of social relations, created by daily experiences and practices. The second concept is the *representations of space* that looks at the rules, codes and knowledge of space imposed by the dominant social relations of any society. Lefebvre attributes this to architects, developers, social engineers and planners, in essence, the members of society who create and build ‘spaces’. While this order is mediated through abstract, verbal and intellectually decided signs, it has a substantial role in the production of space. The last piece of the triad is the concept of *spaces of representation*, which is the most complicated of the three in that it focuses on the symbolism of the spatiality of social life. It is here that Simonsen’s conceptual framework begins to allow culture to have a place within the concept of space.

In Simonsen’s conceptual framework, it is evident that while each corner of the triangle captures a different view of space in terms of social phenomena, each conceptualization holds space as having an important role in social processes and practices, and thus, a key place in social theory. Therefore, research into social interactions that separate space from the social risks is ignoring an important consideration, the creation, interaction and appropriation of space by social actors.

Indigenous Conceptions of Space

Indigenous understandings of space have been conceptualized in many different ways. Indigenous knowledge is very closely tied to land (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2002; Cajete, 2000). As such, finding meaning and building identity is done through territory, landscapes and relationships with the

natural world (Hare, 2011). Traditionally, Indigenous education focused on survival, using natural materials to make tools, gathering animals and plants for sustenance and observing the natural environment (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). This tie to the physical environment and hands on learning style was integral to Indigenous ways of knowing and living, in a very holistic way, not just for survival, but for understanding one's identity and meaning of the world. In addition, Indigenous conceptions of space, in relation to land, can be seen in language. For example, Hare (2011) notes how language expresses the distinct relationship with the land through place names, territories, responsibilities to the land and experiences.

The literature also speaks to more symbolic understandings of space from an Indigenous perspective (Mihesuah, 2004; Stonechild, 2006; Kovach, 2009). These authors, and others, speak to and go beyond the difficulties faced by Indigenous scholars within the colonial spaces that are Western post secondary institutions. Kovach (2009) states that when Indigenous people access higher learning, they are entering into colonial spaces, an experience she compares to having to live in someone else's home. This metaphor, according to Kovach, truly describes what it means for Indigenous people to be a part of Western academia. She outlines the challenges and situates the experiences of Indigenous academics within institutional spaces in a holistic way, aligning them with the four ways of being: mind, heart, spirit and body. Kovach (2009) acknowledges the challenges with the relationship between Indigenous scholars and their knowledge systems within an institutional setting. She argues that Indigenous knowledges are community based, holistic and interpretive and cannot be commodified, categorized theoretically or held within institutions. This is where Indigenous scholars struggle because while there is recognition of this paradigm, there is little structural support at the institutional level for Indigenous scholars wishing to employ an Indigenous paradigm. The challenge presented is that while non-Indigenous academics may have analytical insights into the circumstances of Indigenous people, they do not have true insight into Indigenous knowledge as it exists beyond the realm of traditional western thought. At the same time, Kovach (2009) also laments that Indigenous scholars are

being given the huge responsibility of infusing Indigenous knowledge with academia, bringing it into a colonial space, but without a recognition by the institution that Indigenous knowledges truly matter within academia, she is concerned that it will remain marginalized within the institution.

In Kovach's discussion of the experiences of the 'body' in academia, she looks at the emerging statistics of Indigenous learners in the school system, and how this correlates with a need for more Indigenous teachers, more support for the training of these teachers as well as the introduction of decolonizing pedagogies to non-Indigenous teachers already in the education system. However, there is the added conflict of dual accountability for Indigenous teachers, having to find the balance between working within an institution while also respecting and using their Indigenous understandings within their work. She gives the example of the seating arrangement in the classroom: it is expected to be a linear setup conducive to a Western approach to learning, which is also a dismissal of an Indigenous way of learning. Indigenous scholars are often not trusted by their communities because of their affiliation with a Western institution, both in research and by the basis of their educations within the system. Thus, balancing their western knowledges with their Indigenous ways of being can be an extremely disheartening task.

With the 'heart' Kovach (2009) looks at the experiences that evoke deep feeling for Indigenous scholars, and the focus here is the sophisticated, institutional manifestations of racial privilege and racism. She argues that the underrepresentation of Indigenous people in academia is a clear indication of systemic racism, however she states that the emotional toll is due less to direct racism than it is to the constant need to try to decolonize the colonial space of the institution. As teachers and scholars, the onus is placed on Indigenous people to dispel racist stereotypes in the classroom, the very classrooms where the stereotypes were born in empirical anthropological research. Kovach recognizes respected non-Indigenous scholars who focus not on research on Indigenous communities, but rather on building relationships with community, which she argues should be a best practice in Indigenous scholarship. However, humility, sense of humour and being attuned to your surroundings are all relational skills

needed to work in Indigenous communities and are not often taught in Western institutions. She ends this section on a bit of a sad note, as she uses this discussion to serve as a reminder of the ways in which the institution can devalue Indigenous knowledges.

Despite all of the challenges Kovach (2009) outlines in her work, she ends with a discussion of hope and 'spirit', the meaningfulness of meeting these challenges head on. The best way to do this, according to Kovach, is to engage with community, both within and outside of the academic sphere. She argues that if relationship building was given value within research by the academy, this would certainly be a much easier endeavor. The participation of Indigenous people in higher education does serve an important purpose and she argues that Indigenous scholars need to keep pushing at the boundaries of western, colonial institutional spaces. There needs to be an institutional recognition of the importance of Indigenous scholarship through increased Indigenous faculty, indigenizing curriculum, recognizing the importance of community engagement and revitalizing ethical review boards with Indigenous protocols.

In looking at conceptualizations of space in Kovach's work, Indigenous knowledge is seen as bound in place, to the people and as having a history. If knowledge is to flourish, she argues that there must be room for purpose, story, place and protocol in all aspects of life; however Cavender Wilson (2004) argues that Indigenous researchers are starting from a compromised place of bringing their work and knowledges into the colonial spaces of Western institutions. This contradiction is a struggle for Indigenous scholars, as their work is bound in the place of the research, be it the physical of the community, the spiritual of the ceremony or even more abstract notion of being rooted in an Indigenous 'space' or way of knowing, they face the difficulty of bringing this work into the completely different space of the institution (e.g. the classroom, student centres). Much of the literature on Indigenous conceptualizations of space seem to touch on the colonial nature of the spaces that Indigenous people occupy and how they can best navigate these spaces as modern people, while holding on to their Indigenaity.

A Brief Comparison of these Conceptualizations of Space

In looking at the different conceptualizations of space across anthropology, other social sciences and Indigenous scholarship there is quite a bit of thematic overlap (see Table 1), especially when looking at the symbolic and ascribed meanings assigned to spaces, from spatial practice in the social sciences (Cooke, 1990; Levebvre, 1991), to more culturally relevant experience and dynamics that transform places into a culturally meaningful and shared symbol among people (Kuper, 1972; Carter et al., 1993; Rodman, 1992; Low & Altman, 1992) and finally with an acknowledgement of the struggles of working within colonial spaces of western institutions as an Indigenous scholar (Mihesuah, 2004; Stonechild, 2006; Kovach, 2009). This work shows the different ways in which much of the research done with space is taking into account the lived experiences of participants within the location. A common theme running throughout the social science and Indigenous literature is the recognition of space as having an important physical role, from the material environment outlined by Sayer (1985), Jackson (1989) and Simonsen (1996), to the importance that the land plays in Indigenous understandings of space (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Battiste 2002). Anthropology tended to see space as a physical location where experiences happened, but this is mostly evident through the lack of acknowledgement of the space, which is discussed by Rodman (1992).

Table 1: Similarities and Differences between Perspectives on Space

	Anthropological Perspectives	Other Social Science Perspectives (e.g., Geography and Sociology)	Indigenous Perspectives²
Similarities	Cultural Identity Symbolic	Identity Physical Symbolic	Cultural Identity Physical Symbolic
Differences	Linguistics <i>No physical</i>	<i>No cultural</i>	

All three conceptualizations of space identified by Simonsen (1996) touch on the role that space plays in identity formation as well, however it is covered more thoroughly by anthropologists and Indigenous scholars (Giddens, 1990; Morely & Robins, 1993; Kovach, 2009; Hare, 2011) than it is in the other social sciences (Hall, 1991). Anthropology and Indigenous scholarship are quick to acknowledge the cultural importance of space (Low, 1992; 2003; 2006; 2011; Kovach, 2009) that the other social sciences fall short in recognizing.

² Within Indigenous Perspectives, it is important to note that for simplicities sake, I have combined the spiritual and historical understandings of space with the Symbolic and Cultural perspectives respectively.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

Recently, there has been a shift in Indigenous research. Long gone are the days of assimilationist and unaccountable approaches to research and salvage anthropology; while contemporary sociological and anthropological ethnographies have provided insight into doing research with ethnic or minority groups, this research has been based on Western ideologies and the guidelines have undertones of colonialism and fail to take into consideration the perspectives of Aboriginal people (Pidgeon & Hardy Cox, 2002). Now Aboriginal people and communities are taking a lead role in research, thus defining the ways in which the research is conducted, analyzed and used. Often research must be designed with the interests of the community in mind, or changed to fit within them. For example, in the case of this specific research, a community research agreement was negotiated, to ensure that the community had control over the research process, data and use of information. In this chapter, I will begin with a discussion of the shift in Indigenous research methodologies and the creation of an Indigenous paradigm. I follow this with a critical discussion of the role and implications of ‘insider research’ and reflexivity in research, the ethical considerations taken for this project, research methods used in this research and I will end with a discussion of the value of practicing research rigour.

Definition and Evolution of an Indigenous Research Paradigm

With an increased number of Aboriginal scholars within the academy and a global awareness of Indigenous issues and self-determination movements, research methodologies have begun to shift. Defining Indigenous methodologies is a very difficult task. To find a singular, all-encompassing definition in the literature is nearly impossible, the closest is Wilson’s (2001) definition of a research paradigm, being a “set of beliefs about the world and about gaining knowledge that goes together to guide your actions as to how you’re going to go about doing your research” (p. 175). Wilson (2001) adds an Indigenous spin to this, arguing that an Indigenous methodology should be about relational accountability, focusing on

fulfilling relationships between the community and the researcher. Martin (2003) describes the main features of an Indigenous methodology as a recognition of Aboriginal worldviews, knowledge and realities as distinctive and vital to their existence; emphasizing the social, political and historical contexts which shape Aboriginal experiences, lives, voices and futures; privileging Aboriginal voices, lives and experiences; and identifying and redressing issues that are important to Aboriginal people and communities. Absolon (2011) grounds this by saying that Indigenous methodologies are shaped by Indigenous worldviews, paradigms and principles, all of which are influenced by culture, socialization and experiences.

The best way to truly understand Indigenous methodologies is to understand where the Indigenous methodological paradigm has come from. According to Smith (1999), all Indigenous people have a story to tell, but have never had the opportunity to tell it in their own words, which has resulted in misinterpretation. This misinterpretation of Indigenous stories is why Indigenous methodologies are needed in academia. While similar to contemporary qualitative methods, Indigenous methodologies are a more appropriate way of doing research with community, engaging and participating with communities by respecting traditional ways of gathering and using knowledge. More often, we are seeing a community based research approach, which emphasizes community partnership, service learning and control or co-ownership of the research project (Stoecker, 2002). This shift in Aboriginal research did not happen overnight, nor all at once. Wilson (2008) discusses the phases of the development of Aboriginal research chronologically into six phases: terra nullius, traditionalizing, assimilationist, early Aboriginal research, recent Aboriginal research and Indigenous research.

Terra Nullius, the first phase, which Wilson (2008) describes as being from 1770-1900, began in Australia with Captain James Cook declaring the continent as empty land, with no recognition of the use of land by the Indigenous people. Research during this time was very colonial in nature, consisting of observations of Europeans as they colonized the land and focused on land control, identifying plants and animals of the area and the removal of Aboriginal people (Wilson, 2008). Most important to note is that the majority of research about Aboriginal people was

focused on proving the ‘inhuman’ nature of the people based on their hunter-gatherer lifestyle, which inevitably led to the evolution of eugenic theories, typology of people and the notion of the ‘noble savage’.

From 1940-1970, Wilson (2008) shows the assimilationist phase following along the same lines as Terra Nullius, with Aboriginal people and land continuing to be explored and exploited, however there was a shift from the focus on the physical traits to the social structure of Aboriginal people. Here is where discussions of “traditional and non-traditional” Aboriginal identity appear in the literature (Wilson, 2008: 49). With non-Aboriginal anthropologists, archaeologists, physicians, historians and psychologists becoming the experts on Aboriginal people, the voices of the Aboriginal people themselves were effectively silenced. Wilson argues that we can see this phase in government policies and movements such as residential school and the Sixties Scoop, and even still see it today in academia through the lack of Aboriginal faculty in native studies and anthropology departments.

The third phase, Early Aboriginal Research (1970-1990s) shows Aboriginal people, beliefs, customs and ‘the exotic’ are still the subjects of research through the colonial worldview (Wilson, 2008). However, here is where we see Indigenous people feeling, and rightly so, as though they were the most researched people on the planet, and they began to find their voice and speak out against research practices. The recent Aboriginal Research phase, from 1990-2000, is where four fundamental research projects occurred in Australia and Canada that forever changed the landscape of Aboriginal research. The Australian projects included the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (1991), the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act* (1991), and lastly the *National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children* (1997). The fourth project, conducted in Canada, was the *Royal Commission Report on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996). Each challenged the role of government in the displacement of Aboriginal people in society and asked for “a redress of the impact of structural relations since colonization” (Wilson, 2008:51).

This is where we see the beginnings of collaborative research and the emergence of Indigenous and Aboriginal scholars who demanded that their voices be heard. The final phase, the Indigenous Research phase is where we currently are situated and this is where we are seeing not only the evolution of an Indigenous research paradigm, but the beginning of its recognition in academia. We have seen Indigenous scholars struggle to fit in and use the dominant Western paradigms, but they have also introduced the idea of a new Indigenous worldview, focused on decolonization with their research and finally Indigenous scholars are conducting research that “emanates from, honours and illuminates their specific worldviews” (Wilson, 2008: 54). Not only this, but these worldviews are beginning to be properly respected and protected in Canada, with Aboriginal specific research ethics protocols for example, chapter 9 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (2010). This is a step towards ensuring that Aboriginal knowledge is treated with respect and the communities not only have a say in the research, but also are active participants in the process.

Angell and Parkins (2011) focus their literature review on how research in northern Aboriginal communities has changed over the years. Based on the available literature on resource development and Aboriginal cultural practices in northern Canada and Alaska, they outline identified a significant shift in the direction of research and point to a new set of priorities for contemporary research with Aboriginal communities. They identified two phases in this research: in the first, the community impacts phase (1970-mid 1990s), research was focused on the significant environmental impacts and changes in the social order of Aboriginal communities by large scale resource development projects, such as the James Bay Hydroelectric Project and oil and gas development in Alaska and Alberta. Much of the research was completed by government officials and consultants using quantitative surveys and the literature focused on the social issues that stemmed from increased suicide and alcoholism rates, a decline in traditional activities and a deterioration of the ‘social fabric’ of the communities (Angell and Parkins, 2011). It is not all negative, for example, Usher (1989) found a working relationship between wage work and traditional land use in one community; he found that Aboriginal

people were able to work flexible hours and spend sufficient time on the land, as well as use their wages to purchase better quality hunting equipment. Overall, the literature during this phase of northern research, in searching for the cultural impacts of resource development, suggests that the impacts of resource development were very context specific. That is, they depended very heavily on the social, cultural, economic and political state of the community, as well as the type, size and pace of the project (Angell and Parkins, 2011).

The second phase of research outlined by Angell and Parkins (2011) is the community continuity phase (mid-1990s to the present). This phase of research is much more reflective than the previous phase, recognizing Aboriginal people as conscious actors in cultural change and adaptation. This phase of research not only engages Aboriginal people and communities in research, but finds them conducting their own research projects and facilitating their own solutions. Much of the literature reviewed showed a resiliency of Aboriginal communities in retaining their cultural practices, while engaging in a wage-based economy. The reflective nature of research in this time period has built an understanding of the significance of cultural continuity within the broader context of adaptation to cultural change. Angell and Parkins (2011) conclude that this change in research priorities offers considerable opportunities for insight and a focus on the needs, concerns and interests of Aboriginal communities in the north.

Reflexivity in Research: An Insider Perspective

Extremely relevant to this research is the practice of reflexivity; the 'self' is central to Indigenous research (Absolon, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (1998) argue that the changing position of research within the research process, the socio-historical context and the changing relationships of power between the researcher and participants must be acknowledged. Nagy Hesse-Biber, Leavy and Yaiser (2004) define reflexivity as:

The process through which a researcher recognizes, examines and understands how her social background, positionality, and assumptions affect the practice of research... One's own beliefs, backgrounds and feelings become part of the process of knowledge constructions (2004: 115).

Thus it is important to note that this research is not only impacted by my own experiences as an Aboriginal post secondary student, but that I am also an insider within the Aboriginal community at the University of Guelph. I have accessed the Aboriginal Resource Centre throughout my university career, as have my research participants. They are also Aboriginal students who are currently attending, or have attended, the University of Guelph.

The historical and disciplinary roots of anthropology were built on fieldwork aimed at understanding the cultures, rituals and beliefs of Indigenous Peoples (Menzies, 2001). Thus the struggle of being both an anthropological researcher in an Aboriginal community as well as being a community member is not unheard of in the literature. Medicine (2001) states that mutual trust and understanding must be built very carefully between the researcher and participants in all anthropological investigations. As an inside researcher, defined by Jones (1970) as a person "who conducts research on the cultural, racial or ethnic group of which he himself is a member" (p.251), the understanding was already there between my participants and myself. Martin (2003) stipulates that before one can do any sort of research in an Indigenous community, one must be able to situate themselves within the context of that community. 'Locating self' is important because it reflects one's way of writing, being and doing and helps the researcher and the readers understand the context from which the writing comes from (Absolon, 2011). I was able to fully relate to not only the context, but also the experiences of my participants. Medicine's (2001) idea of mutual trust was not completely non-existent in my research, as the position of being 'one of them' came with a feeling of trust that was strengthened throughout the research and interview process. As someone that understood and lived through similar experiences to their narratives, my participants felt that they could trust me with their stories; they knew I was not going to exploit or underplay their experiences. With the majority of my research

participants, I was a familiar face seen around the ARC and campus and I believe that being an insider gave my participants a level of comfort, which in turn helped create trust much more quickly than had I not been in this position. This is supported by Jones' (1970) argument that the ethnic and/or racial identity of the anthropologist is an important factor in creating a progressive and community based research practice and puts the researcher in an advantageous position over outsiders.

However, it is important to note that there are also obstacles to being an insider in research. Jones (1970) argues that inside researchers may not be able to recognize that no oppressed group is homogenous; that membership does not mean that all members share the same experiences and interests, and; hierarchies can exist within oppressed groups just as easily as in the broader society. This power dimension is something that I considered when designing this research project. As a graduate student and researcher, regardless of my membership in community, I was in a position of power over my participants. I made an effort to reduce this power imbalance, ensuring that while I would always be seen as a researcher, I was also seen as just a student like everyone else. I made sure that my participants knew that as a researcher who was also an Aboriginal student, their experiences were very important to me and their help with my own academic work was something that I not only appreciated on many levels, but also respected.

Another important thing to note is that throughout my review of the literature, as well as my fieldwork, my own understandings of the place and space of ARC has changed. As a student, I saw ARC as just the physical space where I spent the majority of my time but now, through my research, I have come to realize that the people and the interactions between them and the space is what really made my experiences at ARC what they were.

Research Ethics

There are multiple ethical guidelines to consider when planning to do research with an Aboriginal community; in fact many communities themselves now have internal research guidelines, expectations and even ethics boards. Menzies

(2001) argues that it is critical that research with Aboriginal communities requires a set of protocols that clearly outline the rights, responsibilities and obligations of both the researcher and the research partner. The University of Guelph's Research Ethics Board, who in agreement with the Tri-Council Research guidelines involving Aboriginal Peoples (TCPS2, 2010), has Aboriginal reviewers both from the community and the academic sphere, approved this research. External from Aboriginal communities and the University of Guelph, there are multiple guidelines for research with Aboriginal People, including the TCPS2 (2010) guidelines and the principles from Schnarch's (2004) Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP), both of which can be seen throughout the research agreement between the ARC and myself (see Appendix 1). So while this specific research does little to add to this discourse, it does work within the expectations of the paradigm and the most recent developments within Aboriginal research ethics.

Research Methods

Participants and Recruitment

Data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with students and a key informant interview with the Aboriginal Student Advisor, as well as observation notes I made as a researcher in the ARC and through participating in cultural workshops between November 2009 and April 2010. The participants for the semi-structured interviews were chosen based on one criterion: they had to be, or have been in the past, a self-identified Aboriginal student at the University of Guelph. There was an open call for participants, through emails to various list serves via the Aboriginal Student Advisor and snowball sampling was used in two cases, one of which was unsuccessful. All participants were given \$20 cash per hour for participating, regardless of how much information they provided. Data was recorded using a digital audio recorder, permission to be recorded was asked for and given by each participant. Each participant was given an identifier to ensure confidentiality (i.e. the first interview participant is referred to as A0011). I transcribed the interviews and each participant was given a verbatim copy of the

transcript to review, however none of the participants asked for aspects of their interview to be removed or changed.

I held 9 semi-structured interviews with self-identified Aboriginal students, both graduate and undergraduate, both current students and alumni. The participants ranged from 18 to 30 years of age, five were male and 4 were female. Three of my interview participants were in the Arts/Humanities field, and the other 6 were in the Sciences. Four of the participants had started university before the age of 18. In terms of their knowledge of the ARC, 8 students had met the Aboriginal Student Advisor (5 in an advisory capacity) and all had at least a basic knowledge of what services and programs were available to them at the ARC. Six professed to making use of the ARC on a weekly basis, 2 used it monthly and 1 participant had only ever visited the space once. In terms of finances, seven of my participants have applied to scholarships, 4 of them have student loans and 3 of them reported facing extreme financial barriers that put them at risk of being unable to complete their degree due to lack of funds.

Data Collection

A background interview was conducted with the Aboriginal Student Advisor. This interview was done with an informal conversational approach with a general outline, focusing on the history and evolution of the ARC, its relationship with, and place within, the institution, the Aboriginal student population at the University of Guelph, and the importance of accessing stable funding. This interview, once transcribed, was sent to the Aboriginal Student Advisor to review. Due to an embargo on behalf of the ARC's funding body, I was asked by the advisor to remove all monetary information during this review. Even without the inclusion of the financial information, this interview was vital for increasing my understanding of the history and background information of the ARC. It was also very helpful in enabling me to further understand the inner workings of the centre, the Aboriginal population at the University of Guelph and how the ARC fits within the institution.

Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph.

There were six main components of these interviews:

- Personal Information (e.g., gender, program, age) was collected for descriptive purposes only; given the small number of possible participants it was not used in the data analysis to help ensure confidentiality
- Community (i.e., where they are coming from, Involvement in their community, Importance of community)
- Transition (i.e., Experiences when coming to UoG, Support systems they accessed)
- Finances (i.e., How they are paying for their education, Whether finances are a challenge)
- Aboriginal Resource centre (i.e., Knowledge of services, Expectations of ARC, Importance of ARC)
- The Aboriginal Student Advisor (i.e., Experiences with Aboriginal Student Advisor).

The participants were asked to describe their experiences within their community prior to and while attending the University of Guelph and how this has changed or not. This led into a discussion of how they transitioned into life at a post secondary institution; they described the changes they faced and how they dealt with these changes in their lives. The small part of the interview focusing on finances did not ask for specific monetary amounts, instead focused on third party sponsorship, employment, scholarship and bursary opportunities and whether the participants felt that paying for their education is a barrier for them. The last sections of the interview focused on the ARC and the Aboriginal Student Advisor. The participants were asked to list the services and programs that they knew are offered by the ARC and outline their use and expectations of them. This led into conversations about the importance of space and ended with a discussion of their use of the Aboriginal Student Advisor as a resource and their experiences with her. While these are each separate areas with distinct foci, they often overlapped with one another, with community falling in ARC, finances with transition and so on.

I also participated in the daily activities of the ARC from November 2009 until April 2010. During my fieldwork, I attended various workshops and events and learned of the different support services offered through the centre. Much of the programming at ARC overlapped with the ASA events, however I attended as many as possible. During my fieldwork, I attended two moccasin workshops, both

of which consisted of two evenings each; as well as a beading workshop offered at the ARC. I attended women's drum circles and I participated in the planning of and attended every 'Soup and Bannock' Wednesday, as this was the busiest time at the centre and thus a good time to observe the activity at the ARC. I took part in several of the social events planned by the ASA: a potluck dinner, dinner and bowling night and a brunch, all of which were great opportunities to interact with the students in a non-academic setting. Lastly, I made a point of being in the centre as often as possible, interacting with students and observing the comings and goings of the centre and I was also an executive member of the ASA during this time.

Data Preparation and Analysis

It is important to note that while all data was transcribed verbatim, before analysis began, all the data was aggregated. This involved manually changing all identifying information such as place names, family information, academic programs and volunteer/employment information. For example, if a participant said that they volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, it was changed to (volunteer organization). In order to protect the participants at the workshops and the students who used the ARC during my fieldwork, all names and any identifiers were not used or, in cases where they were, they were removed from my field notes.

Semi- Structured Interviews

Nine recorded interviews with Aboriginal students were transcribed verbatim using Expresscribe, software that plays back audio tracks and allows the transcriber to pause or rewind at any point during the track. When looking at the questions for the interviews (See Appendix 4), one can see that it is already separated into themes: Community, Transition, Finances and ARC, which were more of an organizational tool for myself, in order to avoid asking too similar of questions repeatedly. To begin analyzing the interviews, using analysis methods outlined by Warren and Karner (2005), I took notes while transcribing, noting commonalities between interviews and interesting overlaps with my field notes. Once the transcriptions were completed, I read over the transcripts multiple times, in order

to have a clear picture of what my participants were saying. This was useful in substantiating and disqualifying the themes I had already organized the interviews into, as well as creating my final three themes. This reading and rereading approach identified broad trends in the participant's narratives and experiences at the University of Guelph, and allowed me to refine the themes of community and the ARC (due to commonalities and overlap, the Aboriginal Student Advisor has been combined within the ARC theme). While finances were originally an area of interest for me for this research, it was not an area of extreme interest to the participants. Transition, an original category of my interviews, was never meant to be a free-standing category on its own; it was meant more to discover what role, if any, the ARC played in their transition to the University of Guelph. The notions of 'space' and 'identity' were both common themes that resonated throughout the transcripts, both of which I believe are important to include. Finally, I was able to distinguish three major themes from my data: Community, Identity, and Racism; with the ARC being the common physical space linking them together.

Once I had completed this open coding, I then re-visited the transcripts several times, each time with a different theme from the open coding in mind. In the first round, I reread all the transcripts with the central theme of 'Community' in mind and created what Warren and Karner (2005) call electronic thematic piles, cutting and pasting descriptions and quotes from the original electronic transcript document into a new document that was only for the aspects of the interview that touched on 'Community'. During this round of analysis, I found two sub categories of community: 'Importance of Community' and 'Involvement in Community'. These categories represent the role that the concept of community plays in the lives and experiences of my interview participants.

Identity, as one of the themes that emerged through my analysis of the interview transcripts, was difficult to categorize. Throughout the interview transcripts, mention of identity is sporadic and in passing when talking about something else. However many of the participants talked about their identity indirectly through their experiences of searching for their place as an Aboriginal person, and others spoke to how they have reconciled their Aboriginal identity with

that of a student. Through this, I was able to separate the theme of identity into two categories: 'Searching for or Finding Identity' and 'Supporting and Fostering Identity Development'.

Experiences of racism were another common theme that emerged throughout my interviews. I categorized this theme into two sub-categories: 'Racist Attitudes' and 'Stereotyping'. I have separated these based on the attitudes of my participants while telling me the stories of their experiences. Several spoke about being a 'token native' or dealing with assumptions from their friends that their education was paid for by virtue of them being Aboriginal. All the participants treated these experiences somewhat flippantly, as a mild annoyance, even with laughter. Based on the stereotypes found in the literature and the treatment of these experiences by my participants, they have been categorized as 'Stereotyping'. However, the more serious experiences of my participants, the stories that obviously upset them such as dealing with comments about colonialization and racist jokes, have been categorized as 'Racist Attitudes'. These categories emerged through conversations of how my participants felt safe from these experiences while at ARC. From this, I created the theme of 'Safety'.

Field Notes from Participant Observation

Field notes, from my participant observation, were a way to record observations, impressions and interpretations of interviews and experiences in the field (Bernard, 2006: 387). My field notes focused on the general day to day activities and usage of the ARC, as well as my experiences in participating at specific events and activities facilitated by the ARC or the ASA. Often these activities required focus, for example at a moccasin workshop I was not able to take notes while participating, so my notes on this activity were taken immediately following the event. Due to the nature of my position at the ARC, both as a researcher and an Aboriginal student, I made sure to introduce myself as a researcher at all events and gain oral permission from all participants before participating and taking any notes.

Research Rigour

It is important to consider research rigour of qualitative methods in appropriate ways (Bryman et al., 2009). For example, one of the primary criteria for assessing qualitative research is trustworthiness. Three of the criteria outlined for trustworthiness by Bryman et al. (2009) have particular relevance for my own research: Credibility, Transferability and Confirmability. Given that different people see the world in different ways, Bryman et al. (2009) notes that it is the researcher's responsibility to make sure their interpretations of the understandings of participants is correct as a means of ensuring credibility. Strategies to ensure credibility include following proper research procedures, such as having a community partner and adhering to an ethical review process which I have done with this research, as well as submitting their findings to the participants for confirmation that it is in agreement with how they see the world. In line with this strategy to ensure research rigour, I forwarded copies of interview transcripts to each participant for them to review and make changes if they felt they were not being represented appropriately. As this research is very context specific and focuses on a very small group of people, direct transferability is difficult to achieve. What works in this particular case study may not necessarily be the same in another. In order to ensure transferability, this research contains what Geertz (1973) calls a thick description; a rich, detailed account of the historical and contemporary context of the experiences of Aboriginal people and education in Canada, as well as the specific context of the ARC. This description makes it possible for other researchers to understand the very specific nature of the research and shed some light on why the findings may not be the same in a different setting. While Bryman et al. (2009) remarks that objectivity is difficult, if not impossible, in social research, confirmability is about ensuring that the researcher acted in good faith and did not allow their personal values to sway the data collection process or the findings. I have maintained confirmability by being explicit about the reflexive nature of my research and my position within the community earlier in this chapter.

Another method of ensuring research rigour is through the use of multiple methods, or triangulation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). I have drawn on multiple qualitative methods (including interviews with students, participant observation and a key informant interview) as forms of method triangulation.

Chapter 4: Background and Description of Aboriginal Resource Centre, University of Guelph

The chapter is based on a combination of my notes from my participant observation and an interview with Cara Wehkamp, the Aboriginal Student Advisor.

Creation of an Aboriginal Place on Campus

Before 2001, there was no physical space on the University of Guelph's campus for Aboriginal students to gather. A group of Aboriginal students found each other and worked towards creating a group for themselves and others; this became the Aboriginal Students Association. The ASA was ratified as a Central Students Association (CSA) club in the summer of 2001 and they held their first meeting as the ASA executive in October 2001. In December 2001 the ASA was granted a room in the Federal Building, which was renovated by the University and the ASA moved into the renovated space in February 2002. In 2003, the ASA hired an Aboriginal Student Advisor and later that year the space and student advisor were transferred to the institution, specifically to the department of Student Life, and it became the Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC). The ASA and ARC agreed to have a working relationship and while Student Life would maintain the space, the ASA would always be able to use it to meet or hold events. This close relationship still exists today.

Space and Staff

The ARC is located on the edge of campus, in a free-standing, albeit physically inaccessible, building. The ARC has the entire first floor for the use of students and staff; it has windows all along both sides of the building so there is a lot of natural light. The floor layout consists of a large main room, which is the focus of the students' usage, three offices, a kitchen and washroom. During the period of my fieldwork the centre underwent major changes; however the layout remained essentially the same. The main room can be broken into four main sections: Library, computers, work/meeting table and lounge area/media centre. The majority of the books in the library are authored by Aboriginal writers, purchased through

Aboriginal distributors and cannot be found at the University of Guelph main library or through the interlibrary TRELIS system. There had been some talk between the ARC and the main library to add the ARC library to the University's TRELIS system, however at the end of my fieldwork, the process had not yet begun. The ARC also has a subscription to the Canadian Journal of Native Studies, and many informational videos and DVDs, both of which are available for use in the centre. There are six computers and a printer available for students to use and a large table where students often would work on school work, socialize or have group meetings. The lounge area has a couple couches, a television, VCR and DVD player. Students, both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal, staff the main office and are funded through the Work-Study program, which is a provincially funded financial need based work program offered through the University of Guelph's Student Financial Services department.

The three offices, at the beginning of my fieldwork, housed the Manager of the Office of Intercultural Affairs, the Aboriginal Student Advisor and third office was shared by the Aboriginal Liaison and Transition Coordinator and a Doctoral candidate. The last room, the kitchen, is a big room with a table and chairs, a fridge, microwave, coffee maker, kettle, and toaster oven. It also houses the ASA's student pantry, free snacks, packaged meals and drinks for students.

Spaces for Aboriginal students on other campuses differ greatly in size, scope and layout. For example, Brock University and Conestoga College's spaces are much smaller with only one or two offices that house the staff with little space for students to gather or study, whereas University of Toronto and University of British Columbia have much larger centres with lecture halls and gathering spaces.

Funding

Historically, the ARC space maintenance and the salary for the Aboriginal Student Advisor was paid for using institutional soft dollars and one time grants such as the Women's Campus Safety Initiative, Student Life Enhancement Fund and Gordon Nixon Leadership Award. In March 2008, ARC received 2007-2008 Access to Opportunities funding from Ministry of Training for Colleges and Universities

(MTCU). In December 2008, ARC received 2008-2009 Access to Opportunities Strategy – Aboriginal specific initiatives funding from MTCU, which included a call for institutions to develop an Aboriginal Post Secondary Education and Training Action Plan (APSET) for 2009-2012 funding. In January 2009, the ARC was re-organized with the hiring of a new Aboriginal Student Advisor to work with the Manager of the Office of Intercultural Affairs (OIA) and the Aboriginal Liaison and Transition Coordinator was hired in August 2009. APSET funding was received in November 2009 for a three-year term from 2009-2012; the ARC also received 2009-2010 one-time funding for Aboriginal Student Centres/Student Spaces and the space underwent renovations in the summer of 2010.

Aboriginal Students Association

The ASA was originally founded in 2001 and it was through the ASA that the Aboriginal Student Advisor position was originally created, filled and funded. As explained above, it was also the ASA that gained access to the space that is now the ARC. Even though the space is now funded through government dollars and officially a part of the department of Student Life at the University of Guelph, it is still shared with the ASA. The ASA holds bi-weekly meetings at the ARC throughout the fall and winter semesters, and often use the space for events, such as movie nights, moccasin and beading workshops and potluck dinners. During my fieldwork, they also coordinated a trip to Medieval Times, a local movie theatre as well as a dinner and bowling night. Mentioned briefly above, the ASA also sponsors a food pantry for students, full of meals, drinks and snacks that students can help themselves to with a ‘no questions asked’ policy. They also host Soup and Bannock Wednesdays, a free hot lunch for students every Wednesday, which is often well attended.

Services and Programming

The ARC offers a variety of cultural and academic programming and support services for Aboriginal students. The library has several hundred books available for signing out, ranging in topics from anthropology to residential school to folklore

and history. In the fall and winter semesters, cultural workshops such as moccasin and drum making, visiting Elders and full moon ceremonies and drum circles for women, as well as the Learning on the Land program and Aboriginal teaching circles are offered. In terms of academic programming and support, the ARC offers tutoring assistance and transition programming for Aboriginal students. Aboriginal Awareness Week in October is a week of events and workshops that show cases the diversity of Aboriginal culture. From a large-scale performance and food tasting event, to an Aboriginal 101 information session and academic or research focused roundtables and more. Once a year, ARC works with the Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity, as well as Guelph Queer Equality, to put on an awareness raising Two-Spirited workshop in October as Aboriginal Awareness Week and Queer Identities Week often overlap. In March, ARC works with the ASA and the College Royal Committee to put on an Aboriginal Exhibition, ranging year to year from Métis Kitchen Parties to Inuit throat singers to First Nation dancers.

Institutional Initiatives

The University of Guelph has supported the ARC since 2003 when it became a part of the department of Student Life; however the institution has also begun to move forward with other initiatives in support of Aboriginal students and Aboriginal worldviews. For example, there are three First Nation sponsored faculty on campus, the first was established in the department of Integrated Biology followed by one in the School of Environmental Sciences and another in the School of Computer Science. The development of an Aboriginal Resource Management degree in the School of Environmental Sciences has been ongoing since 2006. There is also an Indigenous Research and Learning Network in development, which is touted as a way for faculty and graduate students from different departments on campus, and internationally, to connect with one another on common research interests.

Key Demographics of Aboriginal Population at University of Guelph

During the time of my research, the fall and winter semesters of the 2009-2010 academic year, the self-identified Aboriginal student population at the University of Guelph was 151 (Wehkamp, Interview April 9, 2010). It is important to note that this number is based on self-identification to the office of the Registrar, through the Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC) upon application to the University of Guelph, as well as walk-ins to the ARC. Many Aboriginal students actively choose not to identify for various reasons: they are not sure how they identify, they want to use their time at university as a way to find their identity and do not want to be labeled, or, as in the case of many, they often do not think of themselves as 'Aboriginal enough' to identify. Taking this information into account, Wehkamp (Interview, April 9, 2010) stipulates that the actual number of Aboriginal students is most likely closer to a range of 300-400 students. However, this is only an educated estimate, and the ARC only reports numbers based on the statistics made available through a combination of self-identification to OUAC and in-person self-identification.

Chapter 5: Role of Aboriginal Student Centre in the Lives of Aboriginal Students at the University of Guelph

Throughout my interviews with students, I found three main themes: Community, Identity and Safety. All three themes, while separated in this discussion for simplicity's sake intersect with one another in different ways, in most part because they share a common thread related to the importance of the Aboriginal Resource Centre.

Community:

Community as a theme was broken into two sub-themes, *importance of community* and *involvement in community*. This distinction was made by my participants, who saw having a community and being involved in a community as two separate, but in some cases interlinked, parts of their lives. Community has been defined in the literature in two ways that are applicable to this research: communities of place and communities of interest. A community of place is made up of people who reside within a shared geographical area but do not necessarily share anything else in common other than a geographical boundary (Foth, 2003). Communities of interest, on the other hand, are not defined by physical proximity but rather are held together by shared values, interactions and interests (Walmsley, 2000). In the literature, these two types of communities are often treated as completely separate entities however in this case, ARC facilitates both types of community simultaneously, as evident below. In this sense, ARC is a gathering space and thus a community of place as well as fosters a community of interest, by gathering like-minded individuals together.

All my participants felt that having a strong sense of community, whether it was with ARC or elsewhere, was not only important, but an integral part of their education at the University of Guelph. As one participant said, "I think it's important from a sense of, you know, that community sense that you still have a place that you can go that is, not quite your home community, but it's as close as you can get in Guelph... Even to have a small sense of community there" (A0014). For some of my participants, the ARC was the only community they had ever had. "I don't particularly consider my 'status' community as my community, I've never lived

there. Coming to the University of Guelph and spending time at the ARC is really the first Aboriginal community I've ever had" (A0019). Having this community is obviously an important aspect in the day-to-day life of a student, but in some cases, it is the reason they stay in school. Several participants accredited the community at ARC for their continued success because, "places like ARC they make it a lot easier for students to not only feel welcome at university but to also stay in the program that they're in" (A0012).

All but one of my participants had actively engaged with the ARC in some way and identified it as their main 'community' while at the University of Guelph. This involvement ranged from attending events and workshops, to participating in ceremony or simply spending time in the ARC on a regular basis. The student who chose not to engage had a, "wonderful support system at home... [and] didn't want to take away from students who don't have support" (A0011). Here we see the sense that having a community equates with having a support system. "The ties that I have to the people that I met there are still there, so there's still a pretty strong sense of community that you get from it" (A0014). Other participants spoke to how having a sense of belonging, "I didn't know where I belonged... I started feeling like it was a place where I could go, belong I guess" (A0019) and "like, when you show up and people know who you are, even though I'm not there often" (A0016) was key to not only their success at university, but also to them feeling comfortable. Returning to ARC after they'd been gone for a while, they knew that it was their space and that they could leave, but would always be able to return. The importance of this sense of community and belonging can be seen in the literature as well (Bell and Newby, 1976; Urry, 1995).

Involvement was a common theme in my interviews, with each participant speaking to the importance of being involved in their communities in some way or another. Some found their involvement strictly through ARC, "Pretty much everything I've done, I've done through the ARC" (A0017). During my observation, I saw that many students treated ARC and the events and programming as their main source for extracurricular activities, they were 'regulars' of the centre. Others have volunteered their time with clubs or committees on campus, others in their

hometowns. One participant said they're, "involved in clubs at school. There's a lot of clubs in [degree program] that I belong to. I do a bunch of different things" (A0015). Another "did a lot of volunteering in [their hometown]" (A0011). Others acknowledged the difficulty of balancing school and life, "I felt myself really torn between wanting to, being able to go back and participate in [community activities] and... I found that my studies kind of lacked from that" (A0014), but others saw being involved in their community as the missing piece in their lives or as something they knew they were going to do after graduation:

I intend to spend most of my life in Northern communities, most of which are reserve or predominately native. Although I'll still be an outsider... the strong sense of community that develops... is the sort of thing I've always been drawn to (A0018).

Identity:

The majority of participants spoke to the process of searching for or finding their identity and the difficulties they faced. "It was a little bit difficult, how to, you know, to find your place, in terms of who you are and how you present yourself to people" (A0014). For most of them, the ARC played an important, if not the only, role and first step in that search. Cultural identity is firmly located in particular places that house stable, cohesive communities of shared tradition and perspective (Carter, Donald & Squires, 1993). For these students, going to the ARC and participating in the cultural programming available there was their first opportunity to really explore their Aboriginality. The following three quotes from participants help demonstrate different aspects of this: "I came here not knowing much of anything, so I was like a sponge, trying out anything, reading everything I could get my hands on" (A0019); "I've only really started becoming invested in identity fairly recently and there really isn't a community near my hometown, there just isn't" (A0013); "Pretty much my Aboriginal identity lies in the ARC community, I suppose" (A0015). For Aboriginal students, there is a lot of confusion, or guilt or even embarrassment about their lack of knowledge or understanding about their own identity. Other people, non-Aboriginal people, even well-meaning people, who have

questions or make comments that an Aboriginal person can't respond to, because they do not know how, makes this time of searching for themselves that much more difficult. The ARC has offered them a place where they could get their questions answered, but also a space where they felt safe to not only ask questions, but to admit that they did not have the answers:

The people too, talking to people... helps foster that sense of... not being alone or embarrassed about being, well ignorant for lack of a better word. How can I say that I'm Aboriginal, but have no idea what that means? I still struggle with that. People expect me to be this all-knowing native... I always felt stupid and guilty for not knowing things. But at ARC, I was never made to feel like that, in fact I had so many of my questions answered and I don't know what I would have done without that (A0019).

Not only did students see ARC as a safe place for them to begin their search for their identity, but it is also seen as a place where they felt supported in their identity, whether they had built it there or elsewhere. Not all of my participants came from a place of not knowing about their identity, some came with a very strong sense of self and knowledge of their heritage and found ARC to be the place where they could be themselves, without having to explain who they were. This fact is not lost on Simonsen (1996), as she draws on Hall's (1991) work on identity formation in her conceptual framework for space. Identity formation is not an easy process, nor is it a one-time activity, which is why I think that the support of a person's identity is just as beneficial. Identity is fluid and ever changing, and it is important to recognize that everyone has multiple identities (Hall, 1991). So having a space where this essential personal growth and understanding can happen and be supported by your peers is important. These two groups of students met in the space and helped, supported and taught one another in different ways. The concept of ARC as a safe space for the creation and support of a student identity was very common:

"I think it really just is valuable for students who share a marginalized identity... to have a safe space. A space also where they can be with people who share that identity 'cause I think a lot of the time, no matter how well meaning people are, there are things they don't exactly get" (A0013).

Safety:

Safety has already been discussed in terms of identity, however, in this subsection; I focus more on safety from racism and stereotypes. Unexpectedly, through my analysis, I found that many of my participants had been impacted by experiences of racism during their time at the University of Guelph which I believe are important experiences to highlight and discuss. As discussed earlier, the distinction between racism and stereotypes was made by the way in which my participants treated their experiences in the interviews. Even as an Aboriginal student, I was surprised that the majority of my participants shared their experiences of some sort of racism or mild stereotyping during their time at the University of Guelph. In one interview, they came right out and said, “I find Guelph quite odd... It’s very, very racist, but the [communities] are right in the city, so people have to deal with it... People are like, ‘you’re the only Indian I’ve ever met’” (A0011). The ARC played a very important role in protecting students from these experiences, mostly by raising awareness “Aboriginal people get a lot of negativity in the media and stuff... So getting the word out there that Aboriginal people are people” (A0012), as well as helping them deal with these experiences. “I had a group of people just like me, I didn’t have to lie about funding or money, I didn’t have to answer annoying questions or put up with racist rain dance jokes. I could just be” (A0019). On several occasions, during my observations, I witnessed conversations between students where they would vent about a comment someone said in class, and how it was or was not handled by the professor or a joke someone said and how it made them feel. For those students, being able to talk about these experiences in a safe space, with other students who can understand their frustrations is a very powerful thing. As seen in Kovach’s (2009) work, the impacts of colonialization, racist attitudes, systemic racism on the part of the institution and stereotyping can have a very serious negative impact on the experiences of Indigenous scholars. She describes their experiences as heart breaking, having to deal with the quiet and not-so-quiet resentment from non-Indigenous students and professors; especially as resources are allocated to Indigenous student support programs and recruitment of

Indigenous learners. This is where the importance of decolonization of the institution and making the academy a more hospitable environment for Indigenous learners is so important.

More common in my interviews were comments about having ARC as a space with they did not have to deal with being a sounding board for all things Aboriginal, “Basically a safe space where you didn’t have to explain yourself, people wouldn’t ask you where you were from, it’s nice, I enjoy it... A place I could go to and I didn’t have to feel like I was, sort of, the token Indian, basically” (A0014); or having to dispel stereotypes, especially those surrounding funding for education “Just talking to people about education, it’s like, ‘Well everything’s paid for [...] you’” (A0011). The common implication of comments like these, from the Aboriginal student’s point of view, is that somehow their education is less valuable to them because of an assumption that they are not paying for it. This was a conversation that was constantly brought up in the ARC during my research, Aboriginal students often lamented about misunderstandings surrounding funding, who gets funding and how, dealing with people who asked them about funding or even whether they paid taxes or not. These sorts of stereotypes are a daily annoyance and frustration for Aboriginal students. It is not just First Nation students that deal with issues surrounding funding, Malatest (2004) also discusses how a lack of available Métis funding is an issue, and this is also something that I encountered during my fieldwork and interviews.

Importance of the Aboriginal Resource Centre

Based on my findings, simply having the physical place of the ARC is not enough. It is the people, programs, services that creates the community that my participants value. The participants saw the ARC not only as a place for them to hang out in or where they access services and programming, but also as a safe space for them to find themselves and be free from racism and stereotypes. It is a space that facilitates, supports and fosters the development of their various identities and lastly, as their community, their ‘home away from home’:

So I guess the importance is that it's a safe space where students can just be who they are, no pretense, no pressure, no being the Token Indian. I think that's so important. And for kids who are, like I was, I guess lost or searching or learning who they are, I guess most students are, but it's different for Aboriginal kids. The searching and learning can happen in so many different ways because of the space (A0019).

Chapter 6: Re-Conceptualization of Space from an Aboriginal Student Perspective

My interviews with Aboriginal students revealed information that substantiates much of the literature found in the introduction and context sections of this thesis. Aboriginal students have unique histories, barriers and needs that have to be considered by post secondary institutions. My participants struggled with their personal identity development, finding their place at university, racism and stereotypes and the majority of them came to rely on the ARC community in some way or another to help them grow and succeed. This case study of the University of Guelph's ARC shows that Aboriginal student centres are not only important to students, but they play an integral part in helping them succeed.

The discussion of Simonsen's (1996) conceptual framework of space in social theory in chapter two is important to keep in mind, as this research focused not only on a physical space, but how a particular group of people views that space. My findings show that Simonsen's conceptual framework is useful, and that Aboriginal students see their space as fitting into all three of her categories, however I would argue that this framework may be limiting in that it is not cross-cultural or inclusive of a cultural understanding of space. In this next section, I will outline how I see my findings fitting into each of Simonsen's three existing categories and discuss why expanding the framework to include a fourth category is important.

Space as Material Environment

Simonsen's (1996) first category of space breaks down social processes around space into three categories: the creation of the environment, the use of the environment and the meanings given to the environment. Looking at it in this way, it is simple to see the connections between this category of space and my research. As seen in my research, the ARC is a space that was created by Aboriginal students, for Aboriginal students, because they felt there was a need for their own space, before the institution had any supports available for them. A small group of students created the ASA, they secured a place and funding for their space and they eventually hired an Aboriginal Student Advisor. They created not only the physical

space of the ARC, but also decided how that space would be used: for gatherings through Soup & Bannock Wednesdays, for support through the Aboriginal Student Advisor, student pantry and the services that she offered. It was this intention behind the creation of ARC, these supports and social gatherings that gave the space meaning. This culminated to a point that the institution noticed and realized that it needed to support Aboriginal students, and that the best way to do this was to support the ARC. Over the last ten years since the creation of the ASA and ARC, there have been many changes and expansions to the physical environment and that has changed how it is used by the students, however it continues to be a place to gather and find support, and through this, the meaning it has to the students has remained the same.

Space as Difference

This category of space sees all spaces as having different influences on social life. The first of the three viewpoints outlined by Simonsen is a realist perspective put forward by Sayer (1985), which treats the physical environment as static. My research does not quite fit within this understanding of space, because as discussed earlier, the physical space of ARC has changed continuously throughout the years and these changes have influenced how the space is used. So while it is not quite a perfect fit at this point in time, it is important to note that there is a limit to the ability of ARC to expand and eventually it may reach a point where it the space itself does become static and the onus will be on the staff and students, not the space, to influence all of the interactions.

A postmodernist view of space as difference sees the spatial as a part of social processes. This is consistent with my research findings that show that the ARC is not simply a building where interactions happen; it has much more meaning to the participants than that. ARC is a space on campus that is not decorated in as much of an institutionally defined way as other offices, classrooms and spaces on campus. ARC has Aboriginal art on the walls, photos of events and students on display, with couches and lounge space available. It is meant to be a space that is a

part of the institution, but still feels homey. In addition to this, the decorations are not static; students can rearrange the furniture to suit their needs, whether it is for a group project, a workshop or a social gathering. It is a space that allows for changes in how it is used and how it best suits the needs of the students. ARC also allows for ceremony and practices that students cannot perform elsewhere. For example, smudging is a practice they can take part in at ARC but is not allowed in residences or many of the other public spaces on campus. The ARC has created as a space that allows for this ceremony; however there are other implications that arise from giving students a specific space on campus for activities such as this, most notably that it normalizes the exclusion of this practice in all other spaces on campus. If smudging is available at the ARC, then it does not need to be allowed in residence halls or classrooms or other public spaces, which is not the intended result. Another way that ARC has been set apart from other spaces on campus is that it facilitates and promotes intergenerational interactions. From visiting Elders and community members to families with children, ARC is a space on campus where students do not just spend time with other students, they have the opportunity to learn from and engage with people of all ages, experiences and knowledges. It truly is a space that they cannot find anywhere else on campus.

The final, poststructuralist, viewpoint is also right in line with the findings. As seen in the Identities section of my findings, the ARC is where many students navigate and create new, sometimes intersectional, identities for themselves. They see ARC as a social space that nurtures and, if needed, facilitates the different pathways to their identity formation including, but not exclusive of, their Aboriginal identity, rather than imposing a single identity on them.

Space as Social Spatiality

Here Simonsen (1996) builds on Lefebvre's (1986) triad for the production of space: spatial practice, representations of space and spaces of representation. Each facet of the triad can be applied, in some cases loosely, to my findings. Spatial practice is defined as the creation and use of space by society, where space is

created by daily experiences as practices. The steps taken by the original members of the ASA in the creation of the ARC could be seen as spatial practice, from the beginning where they had an empty room to use for their activities, to when it became part of the department of Student Life and an institutionally recognized space. Becoming that institutionally recognized space is where I would argue that we see Lefebvre's representations of space connect with my findings. When the ARC was created as a student club space, it was governed by the CSA and ASA, but once it fell under the umbrella of Student Life, the rules, expectations and codes for the space changed to those of the division of Student Affairs at the University of Guelph. The ARC still served the same purpose; but the institution dictated how the space and its services were marketed, branded and run. This has played an important role in the production of the ARC as a student space, albeit not negatively, as it has included its expansion both physically and in terms of staff, programming and services. The last concept, spaces of representation, is more symbolic and focuses on the spatiality of social life. All social interactions happen in spaces, they are spatial because no matter what the space is or looks like, that is where the social exists. All my participants saw the ARC as this place where social interactions happened, even the one who had only been in ARC once and did not use the services, spoke to the value of having a space like ARC on campus for students to interact within. It is in this one facet of Simonsen's (1996) conceptual framework where we can see some room for the cultural aspects of life. However, I will argue that relegating the cultural to a small piece of this framework, in an area that focuses on the symbolic, is extremely limiting and these experiences should have their own place.

Space as Community

Social theory, as can be seen throughout this paper, is valuable in research into social spaces, but the cross-cultural applicability of Simonsen's conceptual framework is debatable. As our communities, institutions and workplaces become more aware of the needs of distinct groups of people; considerations need to be made for spaces that include the cultural, and not as a symbolic side note. While my

research focuses on a very specific group of Aboriginal students at one institution, I think that, by drawing on the anthropological and Indigenous conceptualizations of space, the addition of a *Space as Community* category to Simonsen's conceptual framework that focuses on community, identity and safety would help make it more applicable cross-culturally. While all three categories are discussed separately, it is important to note that, like Simonsen's three original categories, they are linked with one another.

A strong sense of community has shown to be essential to the participants in this research. Much like Low and Lawrence-Zuniga's (2003) description of 'inscribed spaces' and Rodman's (1992) discussion of socially constructed spaces within anthropology, the meaning that students attach to these spaces turns them into places that embody their experiences. The relationship between people and their surroundings involves more than simply attaching meaning to a space; Low and Lawrence-Zuniga (2003) argue that it involves the recognition and cultural elaboration of perceived environments through experiences and narratives. This recognition and these experiences create a cohesive sense of community that helps students attach themselves to a space. The experiences of students in the built, physical spaces of student centres are facilitated through the various services offered within the space: advising, volunteering, employment, academic and culturally relevant programming. This relationship between people and a space and the subsequent creation of a community, in this case ARC, can be seen in one of my interviews, where the participant said:

A sort of second-home community is the sort of thing that you can't develop in a clubroom, or as a part of an outreach program with meetings once in a while. Community needs a physical, almost non-institutional place attached to it to make it really matter, and the ARC serves that purpose. You also need someone to anchor it, a role that the Aboriginal Student Advisor realized... But well, looking back, and I didn't realize this at the time, but without having an opportunity to meet people "like me" ... I probably wouldn't have made it through (A0018).

In chapter 3, I showed that space can play a large role in identity formation and support for Aboriginal students, and this is valuable to consider when looking at a framework for understanding social spaces. This is linked very closely with having a sense of community, that camaraderie and safety that comes from having a cultural space. Feeling safe is possibly the most important consideration when looking at social interactions within a space. I unexpectedly found a high amount of racism and stereotyping the students experienced in the city and the University of Guelph. And I feel it is appropriate to assume that these experiences are something that impacts other groups in other localities as well. So having a space that is not only free from these experiences, but also where it is safe to deal with or heal from these experiences is crucial. The ARC, as a space, facilitates this sense of community and safety that many people may not be able to find in their workplace, institutions or cities. The importance of being and sharing a space with people who are ‘like you’ or share the same cultural worldview, gives people a sense of belonging that Simonsen’s conceptual framework does not touch on in a real tangible way. Based on my research, I propose the following framework to re-conceptualize space from an Aboriginal student perspective:



Figure 2: Aboriginal Conceptualization of Space

Essentially this framework builds on Simonsens’ (1996) triangle (see Figure 1 in Chapter 2) that focuses on *space as material environment*, *space as difference* and *space as social spaciality*, and turns it into a circle that shows the fluidity and

overlapping nature of these three understandings of space by Aboriginal students, but includes the overlooked cultural components of community, identity and safety within the *space as community*. It is important to note that in this case, I see all four conceptions in this framework as happening at the same time, as well as overlapping one another. Therefore, the divisions between the different conceptions are more gradients that merge together rather than sharp division. From an Aboriginal perspective, I would argue that no one conception of space stands alone from the others, and in this case *space as community* is the central piece linking them all together. For example, in looking at this framework, starting with *space as material environment*, the physical space of the ARC facilitates the strong sense of community, both geographical and interest-based. This sense of community also gives the physical space a reason to exist. Those interests, in turn, link to the use of ARC through programming and services; all this leads to a shared meaning and sense of safety in the ARC that is essentially an underpinning of *space as social spatiality*. This safety and comfort within the community comes round to *space as difference*, where students feel that ARC is a safe space specifically for Aboriginal students to find, explore and support their identities. This ends full circle back at the *space as material environment of the ARC, simply by having a physical space within which students can build a supportive community*. With this example, it is apparent that the three themes of *community, identity and safety*, which make up *space as community*, connect and flow between all four concepts of this Aboriginal conceptualization of space.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The history of Aboriginal education in Canada is one of colonialization and assimilation. The stories of Aboriginal learners at the post secondary level are fraught with barriers, challenges and failures. Geographical and familial distance, financial and transition difficulties, lack of supports and academic unpreparedness are all factors that the literature attributes to the low numbers of Aboriginal people in higher education, as well as the high rates of attrition. In order to address these struggles, the University of Guelph's Aboriginal Resource Centre was created to support Aboriginal students throughout their journey at the institution. This research has shown that this centre is more than just a space for Aboriginal student support; it is integral to the positive experiences of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph.

Clearly anthropology has evolved over time from a colonizing, salvage ethnography and government assimilation agenda supporting discipline to one that not only supports Indigenous communities, but works with and for them. In addition to the objectives outlined for this study, I am able to use my research as an example to add a methodological finding on the benefits of thinking about using community based research and community engaged scholarship to approach Indigenous research to the Public Issues Anthropology program. Keeping these two approaches in mind in anthropological research, as well as being aware of or adopting an Indigenous framework can help anthropology students and scholars address and satisfy both their own academic interests and the needs of the communities they are working with.

Looking at conceptions of space from multiple perspectives, it comes as no surprise that spaces are more than physical locations where life happens. Despite being from different disciplines, anthropologists, sociologists and geographers have looked at space in similar ways and have all recognized that people give a vast number of meanings to the spaces within which they work, live and play. The ARC is

a community full of meaning and lived experiences, the students have found a 'home away from home' with the ARC, a place where they feel that they belong, and in some cases they have found a family away from home as well. This camaraderie and feelings of kinship came through in my interviews with students and plays an important role in their positive experiences at university. The intergenerational interactions I spoke to in chapter 6 add to this family dynamic. Having Elders and children, as well as their peers and the ARC staff, within the ARC creates a feeling that it is a community of kinship. With this community, the students have found a safe place in which to express themselves, interact with others, be safe from racism and stereotyping and, most importantly, a place where they figure out who they are. Identity development is a large part of the post secondary school experience, and with a space like ARC, many Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph have found a place in which to explore, form and re-form their identities.

Simonsen's (1996) framework of understanding space, built from her review of the sociological and geography literature, was where I started in my research of looking at how Aboriginal students conceptualized their student space. Using this framework, and drawing on anthropological and Indigenous literature and my findings from my research, I re-conceptualized Simonsen's framework to account for the experiences of the Aboriginal students within the space. This new framework allows for the feelings of safety and community that Aboriginal students feel in the space, which in turn, makes room for the facilitation of their identity formation while at the University of Guelph.

Limitations of Research

There are several limitations to this research, the first being that it is only one case study at one institution. The specific context of this project, as discussed in the research rigour section of chapter 3 makes it difficult to apply my findings broadly across all institutions. In fact I would advise against painting all Aboriginal student experiences with such a broad brush. While the majority of post secondary institutions in Canada now have Aboriginal student centres, they vary in size, scope and services from institution to institution. Also important to take into

consideration is the population from which I drew my interview participants as each university has a different population of Aboriginal students. The University of Guelph's Aboriginal student population, without being directly next to an Aboriginal community (reserve or urban) and without any sort of Aboriginal access or bridging program (e.g. Queens University has facilitated admissions and reserved seats for Aboriginal students), is on par in terms of grade point averages and academic preparedness as the rest of the University's enrolling classes. This snapshot of the Aboriginal student experience could be very different from the experiences of student at an institution like McMaster in Hamilton, ON, which is next to the Six Nations First Nation and the Mississaugas of New Credit, or Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, ON that draws from a much large pool of Aboriginal learners in the north; all of which would be vastly different from the experiences of an Aboriginal student from the West coast or the Prairies. That is not to say that there is no applicability across the student experience, but it is important to note that there will be differences that need to be taken into account on a case by case basis.

Recommendations/Future Research

Based on the limitations of my case study, I would recommend doing cross-institutional comparisons, to do this research at other institutions and compare the experiences and conceptualizations of Aboriginal student spaces and see what role the location, size, scale and population actually does play in the Aboriginal student experience within their student centres. Another interesting future research project would be to complete a similar research project on a larger scale, including multiple institutions and student centres. Taking into account the experiences of Aboriginal students across Ontario, or even Canada, could build a better framework for understanding space from an Aboriginal student perspective. I think it would also give a much better view of how institutions and their student centres can better support their students.

I would also argue that this conceptualization of space from an Aboriginal perspective could be applied cross culturally as well. I suspect that any student group with a specific history or support needs (e.g., International students, First

Generation students, students of colour) could either build on this framework within their own specific context to better understand their spaces, or in some cases, use it to advocate obtaining a space for themselves.

Moving forward, it is obvious that the ARC is an important facet in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph. The meaning that students have attached to the centre is integral to their comfort and successes within the institution and solidifies the need for this space. As outlined in the Community Research Agreement (Appendix 1), ARC will be able to use this research to inform their proposal writing for future funding through the MTCU and other sources. Throughout the interviews, the participants spoke to the services and programs they valued and found meaningful, as well as those they felt were lacking or missing, which is valuable to the ARC, as this information can be used to inform the programming and services they offer.

References Cited

Absolon, Kathleen E.

2011. *Kaandossiwin: How We Come to Know*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Angell, A. C., and John R. Parkins

2011. Resource Development and Aboriginal Culture. *Polar Record* 47(240): 67-79.

Appardurai, Arjun

1988. *The Power of Place*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Archibald, J. and Carl Urion

1995. Honouring What They Say: Post-secondary Experiences of First Nations Graduates. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 21(1): 1-247.

Barnhardt, Ray

1991. Higher Education in the Fourth World: Indigenous People take Control. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 18(2): 199-231.

2002. Domestication of the Ivory Tower: Institutional Adaptation to Cultural Distance. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 33(2): 238-249.

Barnhardt, R. and Angayuqaq O. Kawagley

2005. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Alaska Native Ways of Knowing. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 36(1): 8-23.

Battiste, Marie

2002. *Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education: A Literature Review with Recommendations*. Ottawa: National Working Group on Education, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education

2002. *British Columbia College and Institute Aboriginal Former Student Outcomes. Special Report on Aboriginal Former Students from the 1995, 1997, 1999, and 2001 B.C. College and Institute Student Outcomes Surveys*. Issued by BC Outcomes Working Group and CEISS.

Bell, C. and Howard Newby

1976. *Community, communion and Community Action: the Social Services and the New Urban Politics In Social Areas in Cities: Spatial Perspectives on Problems and Policies*. David T. Herbert and Ron J. Johnston, Eds. Pp. 198-207. California: Wiley.

Bernard, H. Russel

2006. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Fourth Ed. Lanham: AltaMira Press.

Borofsky, Rob

2011. *Why a Public Anthropology?* Centre for a Public Anthropology. Hawaii Pacific University.

Bourdieu, P. and Jean-Claude Passeron

1990. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: SAGE Publications.

Bryman, A., Teevan, J. J., and Edward Bell

2009. *Social Research Methods*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Cajete, Gregory

2000. *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. Colorado: Kivaki Press.

Carter, E., Donald, J. & Judith Squires

1993. Introduction *In Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*. Erica Carter, James Donald & Judith Squires, Eds. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Cavender Wilson, Angela

2004. *Reclaiming Our Humanity: Decolonization and the Recovery of Indigenous Knowledge In Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*. Devon Abbott Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, Eds. Pp. 69-87. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Cooke, Philip

1990. *Back to the Future*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Crowshoe, Reggie

2001. *Rebuilding Tradition to Create Workable Modern Systems and Practices for Indian Communities*. *In Turning Science to the Service of American Indian Communities*. Keith James, Ed. Pp. 141-148. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Danziger, Edmund J. Jr

1996. *Taking Hold of the Tools: Post-Secondary Education for Canada's Walpole Island First Nation, 1965-1994*. *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 16(2): 229-246.

Deloria, Vine, Jr.

1969. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. New York: MacMillan.

Denzin, N & Yvonna Lincoln

1998. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing.

2000. Introduction: the discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research *In Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, Eds. Pp. 1-29. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing.

(INAC) Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
1993. Native Canadian and Inuit Post Secondary Education. Ottawa, Canada: Department of Native Canadian Affairs and Northern Development.

Dyck, N., and James B. Waldram
1993. Anthropology, Public Policy and Native Peoples: An Introduction to the Issues *In Anthropology, Public Policy and Native Peoples in Canada*. Noel Dyck and James B. Waldram, Eds. Pp. 3-38. Montreal: Queen's University Press

Foth, Marcus
2003. Connectivity Does Not Ensure Community: On Social Capital, Networks and Communities of Place. Paper presented at the International Conference on Information Technology in Regional Areas, Queensland, Aus, December 15-17.

Giddens, Anthony
1990. *The Consequence of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.

Geertz, Clifford
1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Groome, H., and Arthur Hamilton
1995. Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents. Australia: National Board of Employment, Education and Training.

Hall, Stuart
1991. Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities *In Culture, Globalization and the World System*. A.D. King, Ed. London: MacMillan Press.

Hampton, Eber
1993. Toward a Redefinition of American Indian/Alaskan Native Education. *Canadian Journal of Native studies* 20(2): 261-309.

Hare, Jan
2011. Learning from Indigenous Knowledge in Education *In Visions of the Heart: Canadian Aboriginal Issues*. David Long and Olive Patricia Dickason Eds. Pp. 90-112. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Hawthorn, Harry
1967. A survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies (Vol: 1&2). Ottawa: Queen's Printer.

Human Capital Strategies

2005. Review of Aboriginal Post Secondary Education Programs, Services, and Strategies/Best Practices and Aboriginal Special Projects Funding (ASPF) Program. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Advanced Education.

Jackson, Peter

1989. *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography*. London: Routledge.

James, Keith

2001. There are Doorways in These Huts: An Empirical Study of Educational Programs, Native Canadian Student Needs, and Institutional Effectiveness in British Columbia and Ontario, Canada. *Journal of American Indian Education* 40(3): 24-35.

Jenness, Diamond

1955. *The Indians of Canada*. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada Bulletin No. 65.

Jones, Delmos J.

1970. Towards a Native Anthropology. *Human Organization* 29(4): 251-259.

Jordan, Cathy.

2007. Community-Engaged Scholarship Review, Promotion & Tenure Package. Peer Review Workgroup, Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health Collaborative, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health. Available: http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/CES_RPT_Package.pdf

King, Tracey

2008. Fostering Aboriginal Leadership: Increasing Enrolment and Completion Rates in Canadian Post Secondary Institutions. *College Quarterly* 11(1): 1-16.

Kirkness, Verna J.

1999. Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Retrospective and a Prospective. *Journal of American Indian Education* 39(1): 14-30.

Kirkness, Verna J. & Ray Barnhardt

1991. First Nations and Higher Education: the Four R's- Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education* 30(3): 1-15.

Kovach, Margaret

2009. Being Indigenous in the Academy: Creating Space for Indigenous Scholars *In* First Nations, First Thoughts: the Impact of Indigenous thought in Canada. Annis May Timpson, Ed. Pp. 51-73. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kuper, Hilda

1972. The Language of Sites in the Politics of Space *In* The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture. Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, Eds. Pp. 247-263. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Lefebvre, Henri, Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith
1991. *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Low, Setha M.
1992. *Symbolic Ties that Bind: Place Attachment in the Plaza* *In Place Attachment*. Irwin Altman and Setha M Low, Eds. Pp. 165-185. New York: Plenum Press.

Low, Setha M. & Irwin Altman
1992. *Place Attachment: A Conceptual Inquiry* *In Place Attachment*. Irwin Altman and Setha M Low, Eds. Pp. 1-13. New York: Plenum Press.

Low, Setha M. & Denise Lawrence-Zuniga
2003. *Locating Culture*. *In The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*. Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, Eds. Pp. 1-48. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Low, Setha M. & Neil Smith
2006. *The Politics of Public Space*. New York: Routledge.

Low, Setha M.
2011. *Claiming Space for an Engaged Anthropology: Spatial Inequality & Social Exclusion*. *American Anthropologist* 113(3): 389-407.

Malatest, R.A & Associates
2004. *Aboriginal Peoples and Post-Secondary Education: What Educators Have Learned*. Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Retrieved February 2, 2009, from <http://www.milleniumpships.ca>

Martin, Karen
2003. *Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing: A Theoretical Framework and Methods for Indigenous and Indigent Re-Search*. *Journal of Australian Studies* 76: 203-214.

Mazzoleni, Donatella, Translated by John Koumantarakis
1993. *The City and the Imaginary* *In Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*. Erica Carter, James Donald & Judith Squires, Eds. Pp. 285-301. London: Lawrence & Wishart

Medicine, Bea.
2001. *Learning to be an Anthropologist and Remaining Native: Selected Writings*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Mendelson, Michael
2006. *Aboriginal Peoples and Post-Secondary Education in Canada*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy.

Menzies, Charles R.

2001. Reflections on Research With, for, and Among Indigenous Peoples. *Journal of Canadian Native Education* 25(1): 19-36.

Mihesuah, Joshua K.

2004. Graduating Indigenous Students by Confronting the Academic Environment *In* *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming scholarship and Empowering Communities*. Devon Abbott Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, Eds. Pp. 191-199. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Miller, James R.

1996. *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Morely, D. & Kevin Robins

1993. No Place Like Heimat: Images of Home(land) in European Culture *In* *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*. Erica Carter, James Donald & Judith Squires, Eds. Pp. 3-31. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Moore-Eyman, Evelyn.

1981. The Support Service Approach to University Education for Native Students in Alberta. *Integrated Education* 19(3-6): 109-112.

Morrisette, Patrick J.

1994. The Holocaust of First Nations' People: Residual Effects on Parenting and Treatment Implications. *Contemporary Family Therapy* 16: 381-392.

Mulligan, M. & Yaso Nadarajah.

2008. Working on the Sustainability of Local Communities with a "Community Engaged" research methodology. *Local Environment* 13(2): 81-94.

Nagy Hesse-Biber, S., Leavy, P., and Michelle L. Yaiser

2004. Feminist Approaches to Research as a Process: Reconceptualising Epistemology, Methodology and Method. *In* *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*. S. Nagy Hesse-Biber and M. L. Yaiser, Eds. Pp. 3-26. New York: Oxford University Press.

Parkin A. and Noel Baldwin.

2009. Persistence in Post-Secondary Education. *In* *The Price of Knowledge: Access and Student Finance in Canada*. J. Berger, A. Motte, and A. Parkin, Eds. Pp. 64-84. Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

Pidgeon, Michelle.

2001. Looking Forward: A National Perspective on Aboriginal Students Services in Canadian Universities. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

- Pidgeon, M. and Donna Hardy Cox.
2002. Researching with Aboriginal Peoples: Practices and Principles. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 26(2): 96-106.
- Relph, Edward
1976. *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion
- Renn, Kristen
2000. Patterns of Situational Identity Among Biracial and Multiracial College Students. *The Review of Higher Education* 23(4): 399-420.
- Robins, Kevin
1993. Prisoners of the City: Whatever Could a Postmodern City Be? *In Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*. Erica Carter, James Donald & Judith Squires, Eds. Pp. 303-330. London: Lawrence & Wishart
- Rodman, Margaret, C.
1992. Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality. *American Ethnologist* 94(3): 640-56.
- (RCAP) Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
1996. *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.
- (RCAP) Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
1996a. *Education: Adults in Volume 3: Gathering of Strength*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.
- (RCAP) Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
1996b. *Residential Schools in Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.
- Sayer, Andrew
1985. The Difference that Space Makes *In Social Relations and Spatial Structures*. D. Gregory & J. Urry, Eds. Pp. 49-67. London: MacMillan Press.
- Schissel, Bernard and Terry Wotherspoon
2003. *The Legacy of School for Aboriginal People: Education, Oppression and Emancipation*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Shnarch, Brian
2004. Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research: A Critical Analysis of Contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities. *Journal of Aboriginal Health* 1(1): 80-95.

Simonsen, Kirsten

1996. What Kind of Space in What Kind of Social Theory? *Progress in Human Geography* 20(4): 494-512.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai

1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Stoecker, Randy

2002. Practices and Challenges of Community Based Research. *Journal of Public Affairs* 6(1): 219-240.

Stonechild, Blair

2006. *The New Buffalo: The Struggle for Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in Canada*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Tierny, William G.

1993. The College Experience of Native Americans: A Critical Analysis. *In Beyond Silenced Voices: Issues of Class, Race and Gender in United States Schools*. L. Weis & M. Fine, Eds. Pp. 309-324. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

(TCPS2) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

2010. Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Urry, John

1995. *Consuming Places*. London: Routledge

Usher, Peter J.

1989. *A Strategy for Supporting the Domestic Economy of the Northwest Territories: A Background Study Prepared for the NWT Legislative Assembly's Special committee on the Northern Economy*. Ottawa, ON: P.J. Usher Consulting Services

Walker, Roz

2000. *Indigenous Performance in Western Australia Universities: Reframing Retention and Success*. Australia: Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

Walmsley, D. J.

2000. Community, Place and Cyberspace. *Australian Geographer* 31(1): 5-19

Warren, C. A. B. and Tracy X. Karner

2005. *Discovering Qualitative Methods: Field Research, Interviews and Analysis*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Wilson, Shawn

2001. Self-as-relationship in Indigenous Research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 25(2): 91-92.

2008. *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing

Wright, Bobby

1985. Programming Success: Special Student Services and the American Indian College Student. *Journal of American Indian Education* 24(1): 1-7.

*Appendices***Appendix 1: Community Research Agreement****Community Research Agreement Between****Name of Researcher:***Natasha Smith***Address:**

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
 University of Guelph
 Guelph, Ontario
 N1G 2W1

[phone number removed for thesis]

E-mail: smithn@uoguelph.ca**AND****Name of Organization:**

Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC)

Name(s) of Contact Person:

Cara Wehkamp
 Jaime Mishibinijima

Address:

Aboriginal Resource Centre
 Student Life and Counseling Services
 University of Guelph
 Guelph, ON
 N1G 2W1

Phone: 519-824-4120 ext 58687 & ext 52189**E-mail:** cwehkamp@uoguelph.ca & jmishibi@uoguelph.ca**About Research Project Named:**

The Role of Aboriginal Student Centres in the Lives of Aboriginal Students at University

Conducting the Research

The student researcher, as named, and the partnering organization agree to conduct the named research project with the understanding that the Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC) is first and foremost a student space. Therefore, the data gathering, analysis and presentation of research will be done with the best interests of the students, ensuring that ARC remains a safe space for the students. The research project will not interfere with or disrupt the day-to-day activities or events at the ARC.

The purposes of this research project, as discussed with and understood by this organization is to determine what role the ARC plays in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph.

The scope of this research project (that is, what issues, events, or activities are to be involved, and the degree of participation by community residents), as discussed with and understood by this organization, is the whole of the ARC space and programming. The research project will include issues of student transition, community, importance of the ARC and its programming for Aboriginal students on campus. The events and activities that happen in the ARC on a day-to-day basis will also be included in the research.

The methods to be used, as agreed by the student researcher and this organization are as follows:

- Key Informant Interviews: This will be a semi-structured interview with the Aboriginal Student Advisor.
- Participant Observation: The participants are not required to do anything by the researcher; they will just be using the ARC for their own needs, as well as participating in the activities/workshops offered by the ARC. In this case, they will be informed of the research project before each activity and will have the opportunity at that time (and any time afterwards) to voice any concerns or withdraw from the research. This observation will be ongoing from the commencement of the research, right to the end of the winter 2010 semester.
- Student Interviews: These will be semi-structured interviews with Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph lasting no more than 2 hours.

Information (data) collected during research is to be shared, distributed and stored in these agreed-upon ways:

- All written records (interviews/observation notes) will be kept private and under lock and key, which only the researcher will have access to during the research phase of the project. When these written records are destroyed, they will be shredded. The researcher will only be audio recording interviews with the written consent of the participant. All audiotapes and transcripts will be coded with no names attached to them. They will be kept

- secured and accessible only by the researcher. These files will be electronic and when disposed of, will be deleted. If hard copies of the transcripts are made for reviewing by the participant, they will be shredded also.
- All transcripts and observation notes will be aggregated and copies of this will be shared with the ARC professional staff.

Informed, written consent of individual participants is to be obtained. A copy of the consent form is attached.

The names of participants and the community are to be used or protected in these agreed upon ways:

- The names of the student participants will not be used. All data involving students will be aggregated with all identifiers removed.

Project progress will be communicated to the community in these agreed upon ways:

- Brief monthly reports indicating progress in data collection and any issues or problems associated with gathering data.
- One presentation to the Department of Student Life before defense of the thesis outlining the major research findings.
- One brief 10-minute presentation to the Aboriginal Advisory Council once data is gathered and analyzed.
- Progress meetings with the Aboriginal Student Advisor as required.

Benefits

The student researcher wishes to use this research for their own benefit in these ways:

- Use of the research for the M.A. Dissertation.

Benefits likely to be gained by the organization through this research project are:

- Use of the data in funding reports to the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities or other funding bodies.
- Use of the data, particularly quotations, for use in promotional material (i.e. if students describe positive experiences of utilizing ARC services).
- Engagement with and mentorship of an Aboriginal graduate student.

Commitments

The organization's commitment to the student researcher is to:

- Provide the student researcher with information about the history of the ARC, it's programming and funding processes.
- Aid the student researcher in recruiting student participants, via email through the ARC list serve.

- Provide feedback on data gathering tools and analysis

The student researcher's commitment to the organization is to:

- Provide the organization the aggregated data, as well as a copy of the completed dissertation.
- Work with the organization to ensure that the best interests of the students are met.

Protection of Intellectual Property

The student researcher and the organization agree to protect and use intellectual property in the following agreed upon ways:

- The intellectual property of the dissertation itself rests with the student researcher. If the researcher uses this data to publish in scholarly journals, the Aboriginal Resource Centre and the staff who assisted will be acknowledged.

Uses of Research

The student researcher and the organization agree that the following uses can be made of the research:

- Publishing: The data from this project can be used to publish scholarly and praxis based articles.
- Internal: The data and results can be used for internal reports that describe the nature of the student's experience at ARC.
- External: The data and results can be used by ARC in reports for funders or other external bodies.

Appendix 2: Ethics Materials

Participant Observation Self-Introduction

Hello,

My name is Natasha Smith, I am an Aboriginal student, doing my M.A. here at the University of Guelph in the department of Sociology and Anthropology. I've been given permission by the management of the Aboriginal Resource Centre to hang around the centre and attend the different programming and activities as a part of my research on Aboriginal Student Centres and the role that they play in the lives of Aboriginal students. If you don't mind my being here, I'd really appreciate the opportunity to take part in the day-to-day activities of the centre/take part in this activity/workshop (depending on the situation, whether I was simply at the centre or if I was attending a workshop/activity).

Interview Consent Form



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

The Role of Aboriginal Student Centres in the Lives of Aboriginal University Students

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Natasha Smith, from the Sociology and Anthropology department at the University of Guelph. The results of this study will contribute to a Masters thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Student Investigator: Natasha Smith at [phone number removed for thesis]

or

Faculty Supervisor: Ed Hedican [phone number removed for thesis]

The researcher has communicated with the Aboriginal Resource Centre and has received approval to carry out this research. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Aboriginal Student Advisor: Cara Wehkamp at 519-824-4120 ext 58687

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to determine what roles Aboriginal student centres play in the lives of Aboriginal university students at the University of Guelph.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Interview:

Participate in a semi-structured interview that will be no longer than 2 hours long. The topic of the questions asked in the interview will be focused on the use of and roles played by the Aboriginal student centre on campus in your life. This will include questions about the role of the centre and its services in your academic, social and emotional life experiences.

The results of the research will be made accessible to you at the conclusion of the study.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There is a possible social risk for participating in this project. Should any of your individual comments become public, this could have a negative effect on your social acceptance at the ARC and with your peers.

In order to avoid this, I, the researcher, intend to keep all interviews and information confidential. In order to do this, you will be assigned an ID code so that your name will not be attached to your interview. I will also not be directly quoting individuals in the final report that will be given to the ARC.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The information gathered during this study could be used to change or add to the role played by the Aboriginal Resource Centre in the lives of Aboriginal students at the University of Guelph. As you are an Aboriginal student at the University of Guelph, this may be a benefit to you.

It is possible that this research may lead to changes in the way that Aboriginal student services at university are viewed and run. As this is a localized study (specifically at the University of Guelph) there are few (if any) benefits to the scientific community or society at large. There is potential for the improvement of Aboriginal services for Aboriginal students at university.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

You will be paid \$20/hour for participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study.

The interview will be confidential to the best of the researcher's ability; participants will be assigned an ID code number, which only the researcher will have access to, to better ensure their confidentiality. All written records gathered through this research will be kept private and kept locked up at the researcher's private office, as well as being coded with no names attached to it. Any audiotapes of interviews and transcripts will be kept secured and accessible only by the researcher. These files will be electronic, and when disposed of, will be deleted. If hard copies of the interview transcripts are made for reviewing by the participant, they will be shredded when disposed of. Data will be kept until completion of the thesis of the researcher, once the thesis is completed; the individual interviews won't be needed and will be disposed of.

The information gathered in this research will be released to the Aboriginal Resource Centre, in order to make changes to the activities to better meet the needs of the students. The information released will be general findings that cannot be linked to individual participants.

Audio tapes:

You have the right to refuse to be audiotaped during the interview. If you do agree to being audio taped, you have the right to review the transcripts, which will be transcribed by the researcher. If you refuse to be audio taped, you have the right to see the notes of your interview done by the interviewer. No one but yourself and the researcher will have access to the tapes or the transcripts/notes of your interview at any time during the research or after the research the completed.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator	Telephone: (519) 824-4120, ext. 56606
University of Guelph	E-mail: sauld@uoguelph.ca
437 University Centre	Fax: (519) 821-5236
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1	

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided for the study “*The Role of Aboriginal Student Centres in the lives of Aboriginal University Students*” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

Name of Witness (please print)

Signature of Witness

Date

Appendix 3: Interview Guides

Recruitment Email (Sent out to Aboriginal student list serve)

Subject Line: Opportunity to earn \$20/ hour!

Hello Everyone!

My name is Natasha. I'm a First Nations student at the University of Guelph and I'm currently working on my M.A. in Public Issues Anthropology

I'm focusing my thesis on the role that Aboriginal student centres, like the Aboriginal Resource Centre here at Guelph, plays in the lives of Aboriginal students. I'm looking at issues of student transition, community, the use of ARC and the Aboriginal Student Advisor

I'm hoping to interview Aboriginal students to get a better understanding of how you feel about coming to university and your perception of the services offered at the Aboriginal Resource Centre.

I know it's a busy time of the year, so I've planned for the interviews to take no more than 1 to 2 hours, and I will be paying interview participants \$20/hour. The interviews and anything you say in them will be completely confidential.

If you're interested in participating or want more information, please contact me at smithn@uoguelph.ca

Thank you!

Natasha Smith

Interview Guide

1. BASIC QUESTIONS (Only to be used as statistical information)

- a) How do you self-identify? (i.e. First Nations, Métis, Inuit)
- b) Where are you from?
- c) Age?
- d) Gender?
- e) What program are you in?
- f) What made you choose this program?
- g) Year of program/when did they start University?

h) Is this your first attempt at post secondary?

2. COMMUNITY

- a) What do you consider to be your Aboriginal community?
- b) Did you grow up in your Aboriginal community?
- c) Is being involved in your community important to you?
- d) Were you involved in your community before attending university?
(Secondary school, city level, sports, etc).
- e) Have you been involved in the university community? (Clubs, governments, volunteering, employment etc.)
- f) Are you or are you planning to become involved in the Aboriginal community at the University of Guelph?
- g) When you finish school, are you planning to work in an Aboriginal community? Why or why not?

3. FINANCES

- a) Have finances been a challenge for you at university?
- b) Are you third party sponsored?
- c) If so, by whom?
- d) How much do you receive from them? (i.e tuition, books, living allowance – no specific values needed)
- e) Do you have a job?
 - i. If so, how many hours/week?
- f) Have you ever applied for scholarships or bursaries?
 - i. If so, which ones?
 - ii. How did you hear about them?
 - iii. When did you apply for them?
 - iv. Why did you apply for them?
 - v. Did you receive them?

4. POST SECONDARY

- a) Was going to university something you always wanted to do?
- b) Did your parents go to post secondary? Siblings or cousins?
- c) Did you feel prepared for university?
- d) Before coming to Guelph, do you feel like you faced any challenges or barriers?
- e) How did you feel about coming to the University of Guelph? (Excited, nervous, scared etc)
- f) Do you feel like coming to university was a difficult transition? (Academic, emotional [homesickness etc])
- g) Were there people/experiences that made the transition better for you?

5. ABORIGINAL RESOURCE CENTRE/KEY SERVICES

- a) What kinds of services at the Aboriginal Resource Centre are you aware of?
- b) Have you ever used any of the services offered by the ARC?
 - i. Why/why not?
- c) How often would you say you use the ARC services? (Weekly, Monthly, Semesterly, Never)
- d) What do you like about the ARC space, the set-up, the atmosphere?
 - i. Any improvements?
- e) What Aboriginal cultural programming offered at the ARC do you value? (Moccasin workshops, drumming, powwows etc)
- f) What general social programming offered at the ARC do you value? (Social gatherings- movie nights, dinners, etc)
- g) Why do you think that the Aboriginal Resource Centre is an important space/service?

6. ABORIGINAL STUDENT ADVISOR

- a) Have you ever seen or met with the Aboriginal Advisor?
 - i. If so, when? (i.e. When you first came to UoG? When you were having problems? Just because?)
 - ii. How would you describe that experience?
 - iii. Did it help? How?
 - iv. Did you find the Aboriginal Student Advisor approachable?

Lastly, is there anything that you would like to talk about, anything you think I've missed or any questions you have that you would like me to answer?

Alumni Interview Guide

1. BASIC QUESTIONS (Only to be used as statistical information)

- a) How do you self-identify?
- b) Where are you from?
- c) Age?
- d) Gender?
- e) Program while at UoG?
- f) What made you choose this program?
- g) When did you start at the University?
- h) Was your time at UoG your first attempt at post secondary?
- i) Did you complete your program?

2. COMMUNITY

- a) What do you consider to be your Aboriginal community?
- b) Did you grow up in your Aboriginal community?
- c) Is being involved in your community (Aboriginal or otherwise-city, school, etc) important to you? Why or why not?
- d) Were you involved in your community before attending university? (Secondary school, city level, sports, etc).
- e) Were you involved in the Aboriginal community at the University of Guelph?
- f) Are you or are you planning to work in an Aboriginal community?
 - i. Why or why not?

3. FINANCES

- a) Were finances a challenge for you at university?
- b) Were you third party sponsored?
 - i. If so, by whom?
 - ii. How much to do you receive from them (tuition/living allowance/supplies- don't need actual #s)?
- c) Did you have a job while in school?
 - i. If so, how many hours/week?
- d) Did you ever apply for scholarships or bursaries?
 - i. If so, which ones?
 - ii. How did you hear about them?
 - iii. When did you apply for them?
 - iv. Why did you apply for them?
 - v. Did you receive them?

4. POST SECONDARY

- a) Was going to university something you always wanted to do?
- b) Did your parents go to post secondary? Siblings or cousins?
- c) Did you feel prepared for university? (Academically, emotionally etc)
- d) Before coming to Guelph, did you feel like you faced any barriers or challenges?
- e) How did you feel about coming to the University of Guelph?(Excited, nervous, scared etc)
- f) Did you feel like coming to university was a difficult transition? (Academic, emotional [homesickness etc], culture shock).
 - i. What was it like?
- g) Were there people/experiences that made the transition better for you?

5. ABORIGINAL RESOURCE CENTRE/KEY SERVICES (When you were a UoG student)

- a) What kinds of services offered at the Aboriginal Resource Centre were you aware of?
- b) Did you ever use any of the services offered by the ARC?
 - i. Which ones?
 - ii. Why/why not?
- c) How often would you say you used the ARC services? (Weekly, Monthly, Semesterly, Never)
- d) What did you like about the ARC space, the set-up, the atmosphere? Any improvements?
- e) What Aboriginal cultural programming offered at the ARC did you value? (Moccasin workshops, drumming, powwows etc).
 - i. Was there anything missing?
- f) What general social programming offered at the ARC did you value? (Social gatherings- movie nights, dinners, etc)
 - i. Was there anything missing?
- g) Why do you think that the Aboriginal Resource Centre at the University of Guelph is an important space/service?

6. ABORIGINAL STUDENT ADVISOR

- a) Did you ever see the Aboriginal Advisor? When? (i.e. When you first came to UoG? When you were having problems? Just because?)
 - i. If so, how would you describe that experience?
 - ii. Did it help?
 - iii. How/Why not?
- b) Did you find the Aboriginal Student Advisor approachable?

Lastly, is there anything that you would like to talk about, anything you think I've missed or any questions you have that you would like me to answer?

Aboriginal Student Advisor Interview Guide

1. Creation & History of Aboriginal Resource Centre
 - a. Space
 - b. Funding
 - c. Aboriginal Student Advisor
 - d. Aboriginal Students Association
2. Current Funding
3. Aboriginal Student Population at University of Guelph
4. ARC Programming and Services