

**Education for Reconciliation
Decolonized and Engaged Pedagogies:
An Experiential Learning Exercise
and
Transforming Empathy to Social Action**

**Dr. Jennifer Leason
Assistant Professor
University of Calgary**



Boozhoo

*Jennifer, Keesis Sagay Egget
Ekwé nindizhinikaaz*

*Anishinaabek Saulteaux-
indowe*

Niminwendam amaa ayan

**Exploring the Complex Context of
Indigenous Women's Maternity Experiences
in the Okanagan Valley, BC
by expanding on Aboriginal Women's
responses to the Canadian Maternity
Experiences Survey**

Jennifer Leason

Ph.D.



Jennifer Leason, an assistant professor in the University of Calgary's Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, has received a Canadian Institutes of Health Research New Investigator's Award in Maternal-Child and Reproductive Health.

Faculty of Arts photo

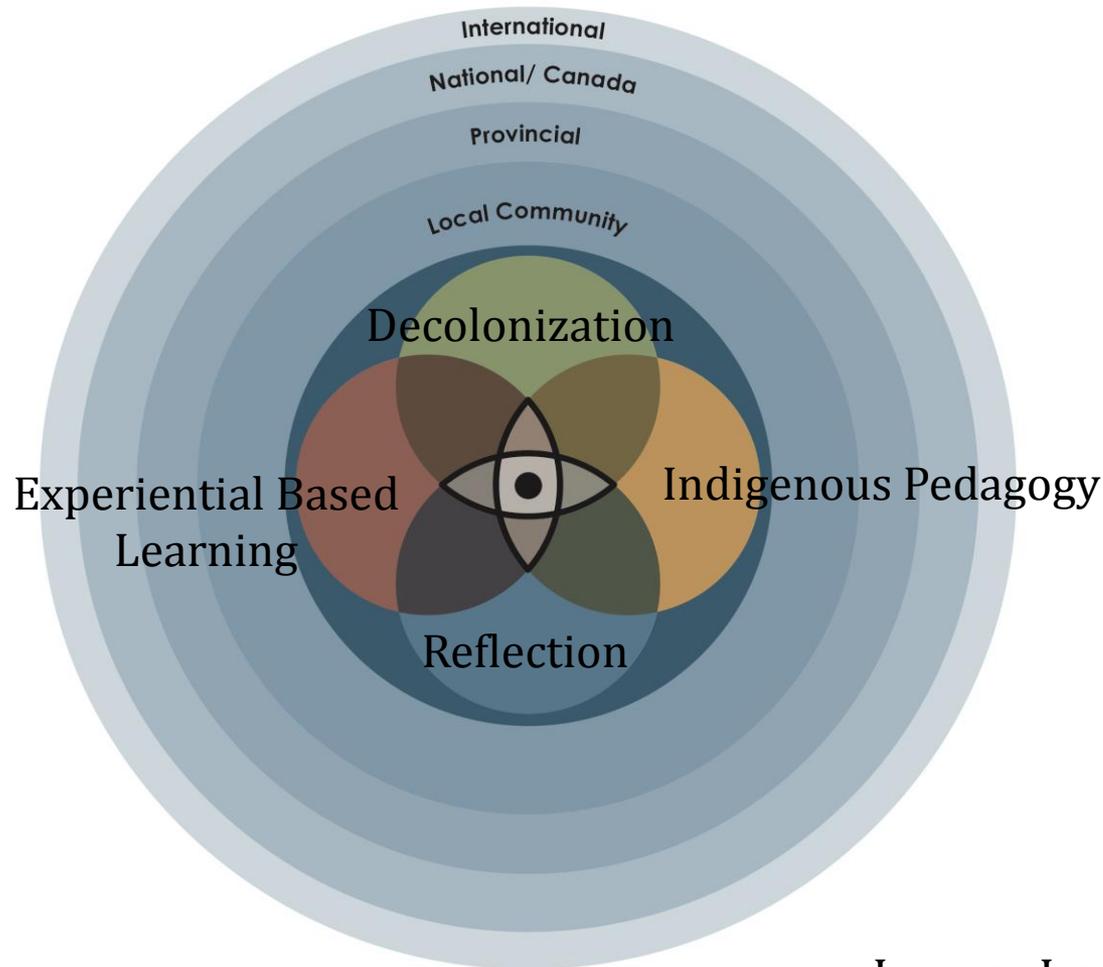
Colonialism, Decolonization & Indigenous Health



“Who’s gonna listen to us?
We’re just a bunch of Indians.”



Gwayakwaa-Agoozo-Win



Leason, Jennifer (2009)

Education for Reconciliation



**Truth and Reconciliation
Commission of Canada:
Calls to Action**



TRC call action No. 63

"We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

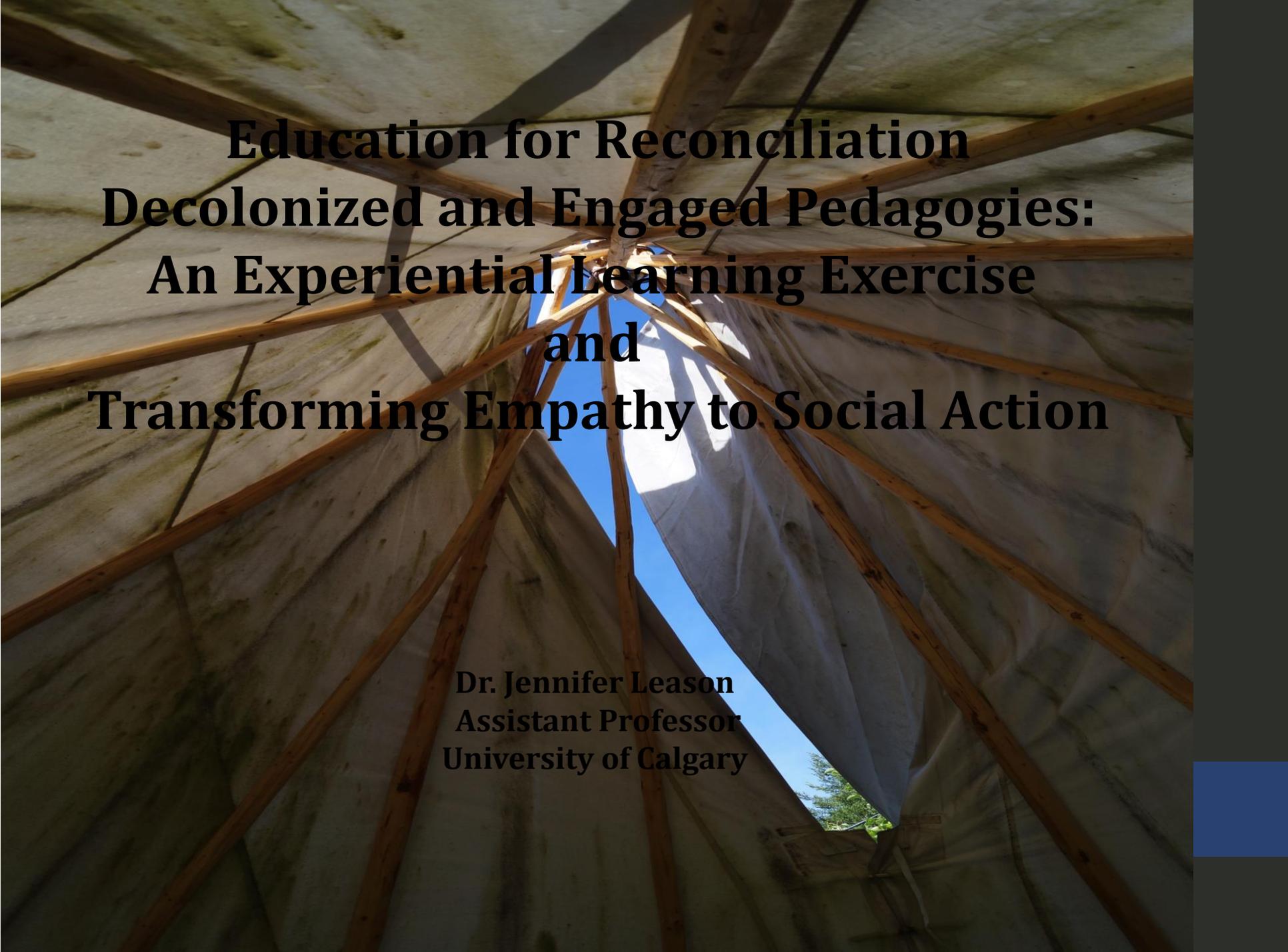
- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.**
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.**
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.**
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above."**

- 63/94

cbc.ca/unreserved



(CP)



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Intended Learning Objectives

By the end of the learning exercise, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe Canadian colonial historical events, legislation, policies and related outcomes (Knowledge and Comprehension)
2. Describe and critically examine how the history of colonization has impacted Indigenous peoples (Application and Analysis)
3. Relate and build/reinforce intercultural understanding and empathy towards Indigenous peoples (Analysis).
4. Deconstruct, reflect and assess how this exercise has transformed their understanding of colonialism and Indigenous peoples' perspectives (Transformation).

Materials

- Index Cards: 6 cards per participant
- Colour Markers: 1 per participant
- Labels with “Indian”: 1 per participant
- Power point slides with key historical events:
RESOURCE: 100 Years of Loss, Legacy of Hope Foundation:
<http://100yearsofloss.ca/en/timeline/#15>

Experiential Learning

6 index cards

1st: Write your full name at the top and 4-5 things that describe who you are.

Remaining 5 index cards: write (on separate index cards) one thing you LOVE and VALUE the most in your life.

Supports

- U of C Mental Health Services

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>

Room 370

MacEwan Student Centre

2500 University Dr NW,

Calgary T2N 1N4

Main Wellness Centre: 403.210.9355

- Dr. Jennifer Leason

jennifer.leason@ucalgary.ca

250-550-8112

- Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program. **1-866-925-4419**

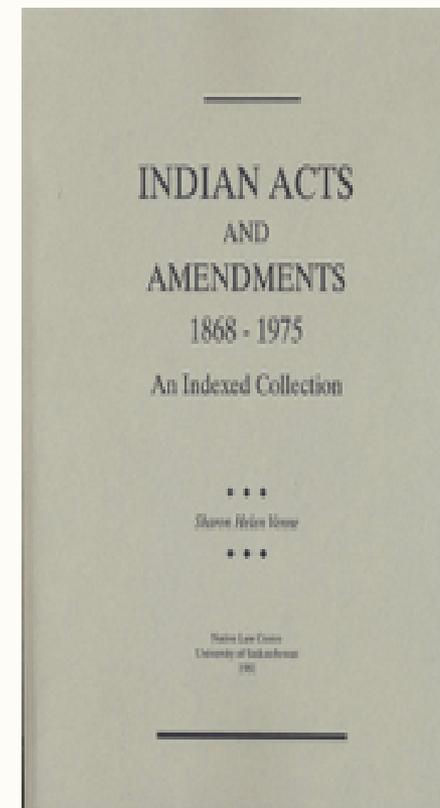
Constitution Act, 1867

- The federal government claims exclusive jurisdiction for 'Indians, and lands reserved for the Indians.'
- The provinces are assigned exclusive jurisdiction over education of Indians

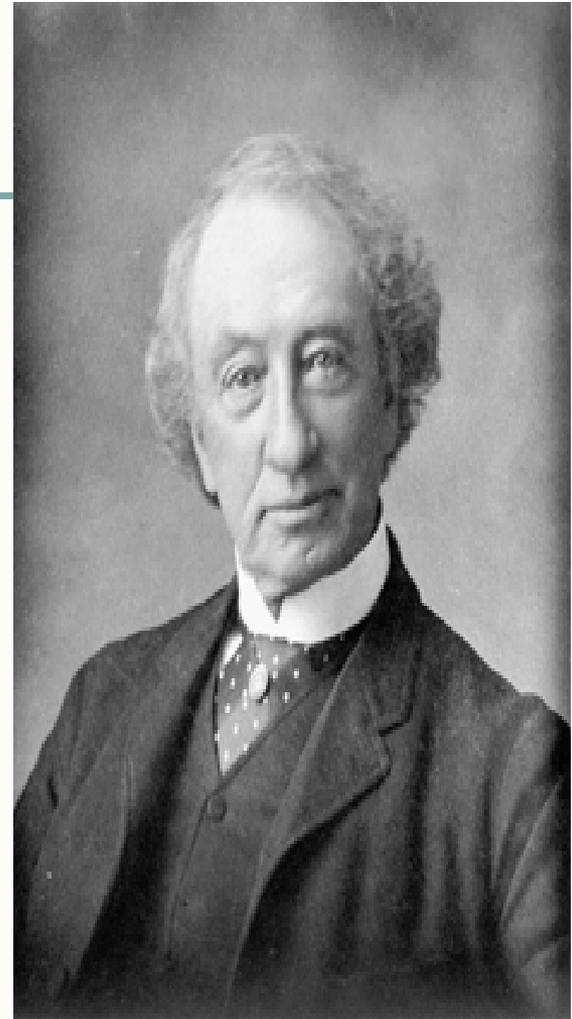


Indian Act, 1867

- The Indian Act is a new federal law that governs matters pertaining to Indian Status, bands, and Indian reserves. The federal government regulates and administers the affairs and day-to-day lives of registered Indians and reserve communities.



- “When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with its **parents, who are savages**, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training mode of thought are **Indian**. He is simply a **savage** who can read and write. It has been strongly impressed upon myself, as head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.” (John A. McDonald 1879)



1884 Potlatch Law (and Sundance)

Section 141 Indian Act

[Revised in 1951]

Prohibition of traditional ceremonies.

This provision of the Indian Act was in place for close to 75 years and what that did was it prevented the passing down of our oral history. It prevented the passing down of our values. It meant an interruption of the respected forms of government that we used to have, and we did have forms of government be they oral and not in writing before any of the Europeans came to this country. We had a system that worked for us. We respected each other. We had ways of dealing with disputes. Judge Alfred Scow

Indian Act Amendment, 1907

- Aboriginal Peoples can be removed from reserves near towns with more than 8,000 inhabitants (making more 'room' for settlement and advancement).

Residential Schools 1883-1996

- 1920, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott, makes residential schools attendance compulsory for First Nations, and later Inuit and Métis children between the ages 7-15.
- Failure to send children to residential school resulted in punishment for parents, such as imprisonment.
- “Civilize the Savage and Christianize the Indian” (Davon Report, 1879)



Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.
Library and Archives Canada / NL-022474

60's Scoop

- Although the practice of removing Aboriginal children from their families and into state care existed before the 1960s (with the residential school system, for example), the drastic overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in the child welfare system accelerated in the 1960s, when Aboriginal children were seized and taken from their homes and placed, in most cases, into middle-class Euro-Canadian families. This overrepresentation continues today.

Bill C-31 and Gender Discrimination

[1970-1985]

- Legislation stated that a status Indian woman who married a non-Indian man would cease to be an Indian. She would lose her status, and with it, she would lose treaty benefits, health benefits, the right to live on her reserve, the right to inherit her family property, and even the right to be buried on the reserve with her ancestors. However, if an Indian man married a non-status woman, he would keep all his rights. Even if an Indian woman married another Indian man, she would cease to be a member of her own band, and become a member of his. If a woman was widowed, or abandoned by her husband, she would become enfranchised and lose status altogether. Alternatively, if a non-native woman married an Indian man, she would status.

Jordan's Principle, 2015

- <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/canada-discriminates-against-children-on-reserves-tribunal-rules-1.3419480>
- The federal government discriminates against First Nation children on reserves by failing to provide the same level of child welfare services that exist elsewhere, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has ruled.
- On-reserve child welfare received 38% less funding.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women



Learning Activities

Key Terms: Define

- Indigenous
- colonialism and colonization
- power/power imbalance
- privilege
- oppression
- labels, stereotypes
- discrimination
- race, racism, and racist ideologies
- identity
- culture, community
- cultural continuity

Learning Activities

Reflection

- What are you left with?
- How do you feel?
- In the first exercise in Identity, how did it feel to be labelled an Indian and told you were all the same?
- As each slide went on and the instructor kept taking more and more away, how did you feel?
- What was the feeling/ energy like in the sharing circle? What was your body language? What was the body language in the group?
- Does this exercise build on your understanding of Indigenous peoples' perspectives and experiences? If so, how?

Deconstruction and Discussion

- How has colonialism impacted Indigenous peoples?
- What do you think about this statement: "Why can't they just get over it?"
- Who and what does the instructor represent?
- Did anyone resist while the instructor was taking away cards? Why or why not?
- What does this exercise have to do with contemporary Indigenous issues and perspectives in Canada?

Optional Exercise: Reflective Essay

What did I learn? What impacted me the most? Did this change or alter my perception and understanding of Indigenous peoples in Canada?

Reconcili-ACTION

- What does reconciliation mean to me?
- What role do we play as individuals and as a society to work towards reconciliation?
- What are some ways or ideas to work towards reconciliation?
- What are ways or ideas to work towards reconcile-ACTION?
- What are examples of Indigenous resistance and resurgence?

- **Learning Activity: Returning the Cards**
 - Do you want your cards back?
 - What is it going to take or how are we going to “give” these cards back?
 - What is it going to take or how are you going to “take” these cards back?
 - What if the cards aren’t returned in the same state as when they were taken?

A black and white photograph showing the interior of a tent. The view is from the center, looking towards the top where several wooden poles meet at a central point. The fabric walls of the tent are visible, showing some texture and shadows. The lighting is bright, suggesting daylight. The text "Questions and Comments" is overlaid in a blue serif font in the center of the image.

Questions and Comments