

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the values and traditions embedded in the Indigenous practice of gift giving to understand how this tradition can inform the work of Indigenization in post-secondary education. Seven Gitksan Chiefs and seven Elders from Vancouver Island University were contributors to this study, sharing their perspectives in relation to how this practice connects to Indigenous epistemology and ontology. The Gitksan feast system and crest pole framed the theoretical inquiry and methodology for this study. In addition, I drew on Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) 4 R's of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility as an ethical framework for quality Indigenous education and provided a reinterpretation of the 4 R's, identifying the 4 A's of accommodation, acquiescence, affiliation and acceptance, as part of my personal analysis informing this study. I also utilized Kuokkanen's (2007) concept of gift logic.

Numerous findings were identified in this study. Primary among them was the understanding that Indigenous research, grounded in protocol and traditional practices, can be a catalyst for cultural reaffirmation leading to a deeper understanding of Indigenous philosophy. Second, the articulation of a Gitksan Gift Giving Model identifying the values and principles consistent with Gitksan philosophy. Third, an Indigenous research paradigm that is uniquely Gitksan and indicative of a decolonizing approach to doing research. Fourth, the development of a Discursive Tool rooted in Indigenous philosophy as a method of inquiry to explore the distinctions and tensions related to the Indigenization process. Fifth, Goodness Theory: An Ethical Approach to Indigenization that centers Indigenous knowledge and emphasizes balancing a good heart and mind. The approach identifies specific Indigenous characteristics and principles that surround a way of knowing that can be a portal for dialogue in post-secondary education, a site of engagement for speaking our truths informed by our values.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Place of Birth: Terrace BC, Canada
Academic Studies: B.S.W., University of Victoria, 1996
M.Ed., Simon Fraser University, 2003
Current Position: EdD Candidate, UBC

GRADUATE STUDIES

Field of Study: Indigenous Education, Educational Studies

Courses

Instructors

EDST 601A	First Year Doctoral Seminar	Dr. D. Coulter Dr. K. Rubenson
EDST 593A	Ethics in Educational Leadership	Dr. D. Vokey Dr. A. Zavalkoff
EDST 508A	Research Methods 1	Dr. S. Butterwick Dr. A. Mazawi
EDST 577	Social Contexts of Educational Policy, Politics and Practice	Dr. D. Coulter Dr. K. Rubenson
EDST 508B	Research Methods 2	Dr. S. Butterwick Dr. A. Mazawi
EDST 582	Indigenous Epistemology and Curriculum	Dr. J. Archibald
EDST 580	Directed Study	Dr. J. Archibald
EDST 602B	Second Year Doctoral Seminar	Dr. G. Fallon Dr. T. Sork
EDST 690	Ed.D. Thesis	Dr. J. Archibald Dr. C. Ahenakew



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Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

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The Final Oral Examination
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
(Educational Leadership and Policy)

SHARON HOBENSHIELD

B.S.W., University of Victoria, 1996
M.Ed., Simon Fraser University, 2003

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**“Haq wil la hlo is sim: Walk Slowly on the Breath of your Ancestors.
An Examination of Gift Giving within Post-Secondary Education”**

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