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HEADS, HEARTS, AND MUSEUMS: THE
UNSETTLING PEDAGOGIES OF KENT
MONKMAN'S *SHAME AND PREJUDICE: A STORY
OF RESILIENCE*

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HEADS, HEARTS, AND MUSEUMS: THE UNSETTLING PEDAGOGIES OF KENT MONKMAN'S *SHAME AND PREJUDICE: A STORY OF RESILIENCE*

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Abstract

Museums as colonial institutions are filled with the tensions and contradictions of competing discourses. This makes them complex sites of public pedagogy and informal adult education and learning. But they are also becoming important spaces of counter-narrative, self-representation, and resistance as Indigenous artists and curators intervene, and thus key spaces for settler education and truth telling about colonialism. My study inquires into the pedagogies of Cree artist Kent Monkman's touring exhibition Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience through the lens of my own unsettling as I engage autoethnographically with the exhibition. I highlight the unsettling pedagogical potentials of Monkman's exhibition and contend that, as a site of experiential learning that challenges Euro-Western epistemologies and pedagogies with more holistic, relational, storied approaches, the exhibition offers much to unsettle and inform public pedagogy and adult education theory, practice, and research within and beyond museums.

Résumé

À titre d'institutions coloniales, les musées regorgent de tensions et de contradictions entre discours opposés. Conséquemment, ils représentent des sites complexes de pédagogie publique et d'éducation et d'apprentissage informels des adultes. Cela étant dit, ils assument aussi le rôle d'espaces importants de contre-récits, d'auto-représentation et de résistance grâce à l'intervention d'artistes et de équipes de conservation autochtones et deviennent donc des espaces critiques pour l'éducation des peuples coloniaux et l'affirmation de la vérité au sujet du colonialisme. Mon étude explore les pédagogies de l'exposition itinérante de l'artiste cri Kent Monkman intitulée « Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience » à partir de ma propre expérience troublante d'engagement auto-ethnographique avec cette exposition. Je souligne le potentiel pédagogique troublant de l'exposition de Monkman en soutenant que, en tant que site d'apprentissage expérientiel qui remet en question les épistémologies et les pédagogies euro-occidentales à l'aide d'approches plus holistiques, relationnelles et riches en histoire, cette exposition présente de nombreuses dimensions pouvant à la

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fois troubler et orienter la pédagogie publique ainsi que la théorie, la pratique et la recherche dans le domaine de l'éducation des adultes, et ce, à la fois au sein et au-delà des musées.

As I sat under the unrelenting heat of the sun in the outdoor amphitheatre at Confederation Centre of the Arts, I became aware of the performers' energy surging through me. I felt a breathlessness and an anticipation. I was in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, to research the public pedagogies of Cree artist Kent Monkman's touring exhibition *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, and I had discovered the unexpected pleasure of watching the Confederation Centre Young Company's production *Aqsarniit* (Inuktitut for northern lights). Through song, dance, and spoken word, these young people of different cultures from all over Canada were delivering an upbeat message about a brighter future. They were also engaging in critical truth telling about Canada's past and present. In this city that proudly celebrates its role as the "Birthplace of Confederation," where men who became "founding fathers" of the nation first met in 1864 to discuss a possible union of British colonies, the Young Company's performance seemed to me a perfect complement to Monkman's counter-narrative to 150 years of Confederation.

Inside the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, only a few feet away from the performance and within the large cultural complex that memorializes the Fathers of Confederation, Monkman's exhibition offered a provocative alternative to the colonialist, patriarchal, and heteronormative narrative of nation building that dominates not only Charlottetown tourism but also the national imagination. As Canada prepared to celebrate its sesquicentennial in 2017, Barbara Fischer, executive director of the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, commissioned Monkman to provide a critical response, which he accepted as an opportunity to educate Canadians (Monkman, 2017). In *Shame and Prejudice*, which is scheduled to tour across Canada through 2020, Monkman, as both artist and curator, brings together his own art with objects from museum collections to intervene within the authoritative space of the colonial museum and the Canadian nation-building narrative. Narrated by Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, Monkman's time-travelling, gender-fluid alter ego, the exhibition tells the story of the past 150 years from an Indigenous¹ perspective.

My main objective in engaging with Monkman's exhibition has been to work on my own unsettling while developing an understanding of how the exhibition works pedagogically to create possibilities for an unsettling education. I undertake this research from the position of a settler ally, adult educator, and learner concerned that I and all non-Indigenous Canadians have opportunities for unsettling. In her book *Unsettling the Settler Within*, settler reconciliation scholar Paulette Regan (2010) challenged settler Canadians to "unsettle ourselves to name and then transform the settler—the colonizer who lurks within—not just in words but by our actions" (p. 11). This requires that we direct our attention toward our collective responsibility for colonialism and that we "turn the mirror back upon ourselves" and think about how to "solve the settler problem" (p. 11). Exhibitions such as Monkman's suggest important possibilities for working on this unsettling. This is an issue not only of

1 The preferred term in Canada at this time is *Indigenous Peoples*, which refers collectively to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. I use other terms when context requires it and with critical awareness of the power dynamics at work within European naming of Indigenous Peoples and the ever-evolving nature of terminology.

an exhibition's content but also of its pedagogy, of *how* it works to teach. I contend that interventions in museums by Indigenous artists and curators profoundly disrupt the Euro-Western epistemological and public pedagogical space of the museum,² with important possibilities for unsettling settler histories, certainties, and identities and with significant implications for unsettling and informing public pedagogy and adult education theory, practice, and research within and beyond museums.

In this article, I begin with a consideration of the discourses of unsettling, reconciliation, and decolonization. Next, I address some of the tensions and possibilities in museums as sites for settler education. I then locate my research within public pedagogy theorizing, consider theorizing from critical adult education, and outline Indigenous epistemologies that have informed my understanding. After explaining my autoethnographic and exhibition analysis methodologies, I share excerpts from my autoethnographic storying of my engagement with Monkman's exhibition. I end with a discussion of my unsettling experiences, highlight the exhibition's unsettling pedagogical potentials, and consider implications for informing public pedagogy and adult education.

Unsettling, Reconciliation, Decolonization?

As a White settler Canadian, my commitment is to think about what I am doing not to be a colonizer and how I might unsettle my settler within. Many things can be "unsettled," but, like Regan (2010), I use the term *unsettle* specifically within the context of Indigenous-settler relations in which we who are non-Indigenous "must risk interacting differently with Indigenous people—with vulnerability, humility, and a willingness to stay in the decolonizing struggle of our own discomfort" (Regan, 2010, p. 13). Unsettling is an ongoing process that involves both personal and collective social transformations. Envisioning where these transformations may lead is contentious and requires navigating complex and competing discourses that offer dramatically different possibilities for building alternative futures in Indigenous-settler relations.

The discourse of reconciliation dominates the Canadian national conversation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015) has played a key role in bringing reconciliation to Canadians' attention. In 2009, the TRC began its task of gathering statements about the system of church-run, federally funded residential schools that was established in the 19th century and lasted into the late 20th century. Created to assimilate Indigenous children into the dominant Euro-Christian culture by taking away their language, culture, and identity, the schools became places of rampant neglect, exploitation, abuse, infectious diseases, and death. The schools left a legacy of intergenerational trauma and persistent inequities. The TRC defined reconciliation as "establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country" and as requiring "awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour" (pp. 6–7). Reconciliation discourse signals a need for change, but its slipperiness can be found in the gap between talk about relationship building and how the Canadian government works to extinguish Aboriginal title and rights (Manuel & Derrickson, 2017).

2 In the term *museum*, I include public art galleries and heritage sites.

I prioritize decolonization, again a discourse that requires some care lest, as Tuck and Yang (2012) pointed out, it is reduced to "a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools" instead of fulfilling its purpose to bring about "the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (p. 1). I look especially to Indigenous leader Arthur Manuel, who argued that reconciliation does not come first: "You cannot have reconciliation under the colonial 0.2 per cent Indian reserve system....The land issue must be addressed before reconciliation can begin" (Manuel & Derrickson, 2017, p. 302). Manuel's argument is rooted in Indigenous recovery of land, rights, and self-determination and remaking Canada as "a land of justice for all" (p. 56).

The TRC (2015) identified education, after generations of schooling that failed to engage in truth telling about our history, as "the key to reconciliation" (p. 234). Recognizing the need not only for formal but also informal education, the TRC emphasized that "museums and archives, as sites of public memory and national history, have a key role to play in national reconciliation" (p. 246). Museums are important public pedagogical spaces, but as colonial institutions they have been part of the settler problem, thus making them difficult sites for settler education.

Museums as Sites for Settler Education

Even as the TRC (2015) identified Canada's museums as having a key role to play in reconciliation, the commissioners acknowledged that these institutions have a history as "institutions of colony and empire" (p. 246). Museums were "active participants in colonisation, both reflecting and building the colonial societies of their day" (Onciul, 2015, p. 28). As these institutions collected, interpreted, and displayed Indigenous cultural and sacred belongings and ancestral remains, they constructed Indigenous Peoples as frozen in the past and overwrote Indigenous knowledge systems with Western systems of classification, taxonomies, and exhibition paradigms (Phillips, 2012). Museums have obscured the dark injustices and violence of the colonial past and present. They are transforming, but as Indigenous museum scholar Amy Lonetree (2012) contended, "a decolonizing museum practice must be in the service of speaking the hard truths of colonialism" (p. 6).

Pressures and demands on museums to transform their relationships with Indigenous Peoples have involved decades of worldwide Indigenous activism, the growth of social movements, and self-reflexive critiques within museology and anthropology (Onciul, 2015; Phillips, 2012). Frameworks and recommendations for museum transformation in Canada have included the report by the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples (1992), and more recently, the Canadian Museums Association received federal funding to respond to the TRC's (2015) call for a national review of museums in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples to determine compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and make recommendations. As Canadian museums pursue various levels of engagement with Indigenous communities, these processes are complex and filled with tensions, negotiations, compromises, and uncertainties (Onciul, 2015; Phillips, 2012). That museum change is slow and that it is not unusual to encounter colliding discourses within the same institution are reflected at the two institutions where I engaged with Monkman's exhibition. As I related above, the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, a partner in the production of *Shame and Prejudice*, is a space of competing discourses at a major site of nation-building heritage tourism that memorializes the Fathers of Confederation,

celebrates Canadian heritage and arts in their many dynamic forms, and seeks to play a role in reconciliation. The other museum I visited for this study, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta, was a focus of protest, boycott, and museum-changing controversy (that prompted the aforementioned task force) with its 1988 exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*, an exhibition sponsored by Shell Oil, which was exploiting the traditional lands of the Lubicon Lake Nation, and that lacked consultation with First Nations. Committed early on to transforming the relationship, Glenbow became recognized internationally for its groundbreaking partnerships with the Blackfoot Nations, work that has included collaboration, building trust and respect, and developing innovative collection practices around access and repatriation (Conaty, 2015; Onciul, 2015). Yet in terms of what is made visible to visitors, Glenbow is fraught with the tensions that emerge as one moves from the Blackfoot perspectives of *Niitsitapiisinni: Our Way of Life* to the dominant celebratory settler narratives of *Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta* and *Picturing the Northwest*. Through exhibitions such as Monkman's and workshops that bring in the art of Indigenous youth, Glenbow creates vibrant, dynamic space for Indigenous voices and stories. When they invite such interventions, museums become important sites for Indigenous counter-narrative, self-representation, and resistance, and thus places that are full of unsettling pedagogical possibilities.

Conceptualizing Critical, Transformative, and Unsettling Exhibition Pedagogies

My study responds to calls in public pedagogy literature for more research into public pedagogical mechanisms (e.g., Burdick & Sandlin, 2013) and to a need for more engagement with museums from the field of adult education (Clover, Sanford, & de Oliveira Jayme, 2010). As these are Euro-Western discourses that have limitations when the concern is for settler education, Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies have come to the foreground of my inquiry. In focusing on unsettling exhibition pedagogies within the context of Indigenous-settler relations and Indigenous interventions in the museum, my research addresses a gap in the literature. Before discussing public pedagogy, critical adult education, and Indigenous scholarship, I provide a museum studies context for considering exhibitions as educative sites with critical pedagogical potentials.

Hooper-Greenhill (1999), an early advocate in the United Kingdom for museums' self-reflexivity about their educational roles, suggested exciting possibilities when she wrote: "The development of a critical museum pedagogy that uses existing good practice for democratic purposes is a major task for museums and galleries in the twenty-first century" (p. 4). With its roots in the empowering, dialogical, transformative work of Brazilian radical educator Paulo Freire, and its translation into North American classrooms by critical educators such as Henry Giroux, critical pedagogy suggested a radical departure from museums' authoritative construction of paths to knowledge through displays. These were heady times when the "new museology" challenged the old museology, and Hooper-Greenhill coined the term post-museum to signal a change to democratic, inclusive, and progressive practice; yet years after Hooper-Greenhill's call for critical museum pedagogy, Lindauer (2007) wrote about the difficulty of implementing critical pedagogy in exhibitions. Lynch (2017), expressing dismay at how critical pedagogy became domesticated in the museum, contended that critical pedagogy in museums needs to be re-oriented toward its roots in a struggle for social justice. One way in which museums are transforming into more vibrant,

critical spheres of contestation is through the capacities of artist interventions to interrupt the museum's authority and ways of knowing, which are still predominantly oriented in the Enlightenment Project, with its prioritization of cognitive rationality (Robins, 2013). As museums engage in self-reflexivity and invite intervention, they are becoming important sites for critical public pedagogy.

Public pedagogy literature at the intersections of museums and Indigenous Peoples ranges from historical analyses, such as Bennett's (2004) examination of the late-19th-century museological construction of an evolutionary visual sequencing of human development, to Trofanenko's (2006) inquiry into the contemporary ethnographic museum's public pedagogical role in producing public knowledge about Indigenous identity. Critical public pedagogies that seek to foster unsettling and decolonizing experiences around colonialism and Indigenous-settler relations are examined in Witcomb (2013) and in my current study and previous research (Johnson, 2016). Public pedagogy is a theoretical construct employed in conceptualizing and examining "various forms, processes, and sites of education and learning that occur beyond the realm of formal educational institutions" (Sandlin, Wright, & Clark, 2013, p. 4). Sandlin, O'Malley, and Burdick (2011) characterized museums as "informal yet institutionalized sites" that "have been consciously created with pedagogical ends in mind" (p. 348). Some of these sites "reinforce dominant culture," but "others create 'counterinstitutional' spaces in which the educational activity of artwork, performative display, and other pedagogical modes contrasts with the established culture" (p. 348). In museums, "learning often takes on a subtle, embodied mode, moving away from the cognitive rigor commonly associated with education and towards notions of affect, aesthetics, and presence" (p. 348). This engagement of non-cognitive domains connects to what Burdick and Sandlin (2013) identified as a "metaphor of relation," which emphasizes "the intersection of the subject and object of pedagogy—the relational meanings that are generated via active, sensate, embodied interactions" (p. 147). A key exemplar for this strand, which is often arts-based, is post-structural feminist Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2005) explorations into "anomalous places of learning" (including certain museums and exhibitions) designed "with pedagogical intent...and in ways that emphasize noncognitive, nonrepresentational processes and events" (p. 6). Burdick and Sandlin contrasted this relational strand with a "metaphor of *transfer*" (p. 147), which they associated with foundational public pedagogy scholar Henry Giroux, in which priority is given to cognitive and representational processes, critical readings, and critical literacies within a framework of cultural transmission.

I draw on critical adult education as a complementary and supplementary discourse, with its focus on museums as sites for fostering critical, transformative learning for social and environmental justice. Much of the literature focuses on facilitated adult learning, but there is also concern for the development of critical exhibitionary practice. Borg and Mayo (2010) prioritized a Freirean practice of using museum exhibits as "objects of co-investigation" (p. 40) between an adult educator and learners, but they also considered how exhibitions might pose content as a problem through provocative juxtapositions. This is important work, but a privileging of critical readings risks neglecting non-cognitive ways of knowing that could be considered crucial to the inclusion of marginalized histories and voices. Clover and Sanford (2016) considered the potentials for "critical cultural pedagogy—a combination of adult education and exhibitionary practices" created within what they theorized as the "pedagogic contact zones" (p. 2) of museums, spaces that are

problematic but that can be activated as sites of reciprocity, critique, and resistance through critical and creative pedagogies that are not only rational but also aesthetic and embodied. Focusing specifically on informal learning, Styles (2011) considered exhibitions as sites for dialogic learning in which “self-reflexive techniques of representation” (p. 12) alert visitors to issues of power and the constructed nature of representation, thereby bringing visitors into dialogue with exhibitions. Kawalilak and Groen (2016) drew attention to the multidimensional pedagogic force of exhibitions that invite storytelling.

These Euro-Western discourses offer important insight into critical, transformative learning in and through museums, but in order to consider how an exhibition might “unsettle the settler within,” it is crucial to engage Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies—as part of a decolonizing practice, but also, as Western scholars are increasingly recognizing, because Indigenous knowledge systems overcome Western epistemological limits (Battiste, 2005). Although Indigenous knowledge is not homogeneous, but instead place-based, it is possible to identify some commonalities (Chartrand, 2012). Understanding that “all things are related” is central to Indigenous knowledge systems (Wilson, 2003, p. 173). To understand relationality within a context of transforming settler relations with Indigenous Peoples, I look to Cree scholar Dwayne Donald’s (2012) argument, inspired by Kainai Elders, for “ethical relationality,” which he characterized as “a transactional form of imagination that asks us to see ourselves implicated in the lives of others not normally considered relatives” (p. 93). Indigenous pedagogies emphasize holism, which is often neglected by Western scholars embedded in a tradition of keeping knowledge domains separate and prioritizing cognition (Wilson, 2003). Williams (2018) used the Lílwat word *A7xa7*: “Knowing is the fine synthesis of the mind, feeling, spirit, and body” (p. 39), and Blackstock (2007) explained holism in terms of four learning dimensions (spiritual, emotional, physical, and cognitive), with each situated within an “interconnected knowledge web” (p. 68). Much of this teaching and learning happens through storytelling and stories that have the power “to educate the heart, mind, body, and spirit” (Archibald, 2008, p. xi).

This review of literature is selective, but points to key insights that contributed to my decision to develop a robust, multidimensional framework for inquiring into Monkman’s exhibition, a framework that engages both the cognitive and non-cognitive without giving primacy to one over the other. This framework would itself become unsettled.

Methodologies: Exhibition Analysis and Autoethnography

My study brings together exhibition analysis, a research method that offers a close reading of an exhibition’s elements to examine how they produce meaning and construct knowledge (Tucker, 2014), with autoethnography, which is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, section 1). As Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis (2015) wrote, autoethnography involves looking “inward—into our identities, thoughts, feelings and experiences—and outward—into our relationships, communities, and cultures” and taking readers through this inward and outward process (p. 46). Similar to Kawalilak and Groen (2016) and Taber (2018), I use an autoethnographic methodology to reflect on, story, and share the critical, transformative learning that emerges from engaging with an exhibition in ways that connect stories of self, family, and society to powerful museological experiences. In my study, this means

looking reflexively at my settler self and settler culture, and working through a process of settler storying and restorying, as I engage with the unsettling pedagogical possibilities of Monkman's exhibition. According to Regan (2010): "Settler stories as counter-narratives that create decolonizing space are both interior and relational. As such, they require us to risk revealing ourselves as vulnerable 'not knowers' who are willing to examine our dual positions as colonizer-perpetrators and colonizer-allies" (p. 28). The reflexivity of autoethnography helps me to distance myself from the stance of expert analyst and to tell the only story that I feel I can tell about Monkman's exhibition—a settler story that allows room for vulnerability and discomfort.

As part of my research plan, I began with three lenses for exhibition analysis that I consider of particular value for my inquiry: *narrative*, *representational*, and *relational/embodied*. These emerged as I reviewed the fields of scholarship discussed above and reflected on my own prior experiences as a museum visitor. My narrative lens is informed by narrative inquiry (e.g., Clandinin, 2006) and uses narrative analysis to inquire into the exhibition as a counter-narrative by attending to its storytelling elements (e.g., plotlines, voice, and temporal and spatial dimensions). My representational lens uses critical visual analysis (e.g., Rose, 2001) to inquire into visibility (e.g., reversal of the colonizer's gaze and visibility of empowered sexuality) and the intertextuality of exhibition elements (how they work together to produce meaning and depend on other cultural images and texts to produce meaning). My relational/embodied lens intersects with public pedagogy's relational strand. Like Ellsworth (2005), my approach is experiential and located within pedagogical encounters that activate non-cognitive registers of experience stimulated through the power of art, curation, and design. I did not employ these methodologies rigidly or systematically, but instead organically and in response to *Shame and Prejudice's* pedagogies and my emerging understanding of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies. I also attended to contextual and intertextual dimensions outside the walls of the exhibition, particularly the effects of viewing this decolonizing exhibition within the spaces of settler museums.

I worked with these two venues, the Glenbow Museum and the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, not as a comparative analysis but rather to experience the exhibition's pedagogies over time and space and in different contexts, thus providing a rich basis for my autoethnographic engagement with the exhibition. The content of the exhibition itself was much the same at both locations, apart from a few changes in artworks and some differences in layout. My field notes at both sites attended to the exhibition (e.g., its art, objects, written text, design, and layout) and its contexts (e.g., the museum and the surrounding area) as I recorded my observations, insights, feelings, reactions, and personal reflections. I organized my field notes, along with my photo documentation, according to the exhibition's chapters, other exhibits in the museum, and observations about contexts. Other data included press coverage, Monkman's public talks, tours, and interviews, and exhibition, museum, and tourism brochures. Together, this collection of data formed the basis for analysis, reflection, and storying of my museological experiences.

Unsettling Exhibition Experiences

Shame and Prejudice tells the story of Canada through Miss Chief's memoir excerpts (presented as pages on the wall) and Monkman's artwork along with borrowings from museum collections. Presented across multiple rooms, the exhibition covers nine chapters

ranging from a time when Indigenous Peoples were equal partners in the fur trade, through 150 dark years of Canadian Confederation. It is a story of colonization, deliberate starvation, stolen children, incarceration, impoverishment, sickness, harsh urban spaces, and missing and murdered women, but it is also a story of Indigenous resilience, hope, healing, decolonized sexuality, resistance, and the power of Miss Chief's love for her people.

In what follows, I offer two excerpts from the autoethnographic account that I wrote as part of my study. Both are in relation to Monkman's "Chapter V: Forcible Transfer of Children." The first excerpt was written around my experiences at Glenbow, and my intention in sharing it is to demonstrate my storying of an epiphany that transformed how I, as a settler researcher, engaged with the exhibition. The second excerpt offers a glimpse into some of the competing discourses I experienced visiting the exhibition at Confederation Centre. My writing is informed by Rambo Ronai's (1992) "layered account," which uses "multiple layers of reflection...shifting forward, backward, and sideways through time, space, and various attitudes in a narrative format" (p. 103).

Excerpt 1

I had supposed that the way I could write this up would be as a walk through the exhibition, three times, written in three parts, each one attending to a different analytic lens. Narrative. Representational. Relational/embodied. But my plan fell apart. I felt that I was trying to impose an order that I definitely did not experience in the exhibition. Trying to determine where this should go, where that should go, began to seem like a futile exercise. More than that, it felt false, distant, cold, and colonizing. Cold and colonizing, like Sir John A. Macdonald's gaze, something I will get to later in this account. Instead, I have decided to let my lenses emerge holistically through the telling as I follow the exhibition's story.

From Miss Chief's memoir: "This is the one I cannot talk about. The pain is too deep. We were never the same."

I sit on the black gallery bench in front of Monkman's painting *The Scream* (2017) (Figure 1). Mountie reds. The black robes of priests. Black and white nuns' habits. Children being grabbed and pulled in every direction to be taken to residential school. At the centre of it all, a woman lunges forward with her arms outstretched toward the child that a priest is about to carry away. Mounties restrain her, and her mouth is open in a scream.

Cradleboards hang on the adjoining walls on either side of the painting. The ones from museum collections are beautifully crafted with mothers' love for their children, but others are plain wood frames painted grey, and yet others are haunting chalk outlines suggesting families emptied of children, children who are missing or dead.

The painting seems in motion, roiling with the violence of pulling, grasping, and tugging at children and women. A snarling dog, the threatening presence of a rifle, children about to be trampled, and the heavy weight of brown leather Mountie gloves and boots fill the chaotic, tight space of the painting. An ominous inner light in the painting suggests the glare of early morning sunlight, a light to expose all this darkness. Birds swoop in, perhaps witnesses to the trauma of stolen children. An iconic Mountie figure stands rigidly on the porch of the run-down reserve house, and he points impassively toward the children who are running away. Behind the screaming woman at the centre of the painting, another scream comes from the wide-open mouth of a small child squirming against a nun's tight grip.



Figure 1. Monkman's *The Scream* (2017). "Chapter V" *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, a Project by Kent Monkman, installation view, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, 2017. Image courtesy of Glenbow Museum.

Here in this dimly lit space, with the black-painted walls closing in on me, I do not just see the painting, I feel it. I know what it is as a mother to feel that my child is in danger. I know what it is to be a child who is frightened by the world of incomprehensible adult actions. But this collective experience of horror and loss represented in Monkman's painting, I cannot begin to fathom.

In her memoir, Miss Chief quotes Prime Minister Macdonald, 1879:

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.

Macdonald seems to stare out empty, coldly, dispassionately. This is the Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald from the Robert Harris painting that hangs on the wall opposite *The Scream*. Chief architect not only of Confederation but also of the residential school system. As I sit in front of *The Scream*, I feel him lurking there behind me from his place on the wall and registering nothing in response to children being torn from their mother's arms. I also feel myself filling up with worry that my researcher tools—analytic lenses, categorizations and classifications, data and documentation—put me at risk of emulating that cold colonial gaze of Macdonald. Three lenses for exhibition analysis. There seems a heartlessness of categories in it. What in this heartbreaking space could possibly be earmarked for, and compartmentalized into, my narrative lens, my representational one, my relational/

embodied one? It seems an impossible task to structure my experience in this space, or in any other part of this exhibition, around lenses.

The Scream doesn't relegate its action to some distant colonial past, to the times of Macdonald. It also speaks to now. The children's jeans and tee-shirts, and the reserve house—they look contemporary. And there is a sense of immediacy and urgency in all that violent action. This forcible taking of children is not past but instead ongoing, from the residential school system that continued into the late 20th century, to the Sixties Scoop, to the child welfare system of today. It is not possible for me to place myself outside this story, to find any sort of comfort or deny my settler complicity through the trick of trying to distance myself from history.

The exhibition pulls me into an experience that requires a sort of letting go that I am not used to. So I don't structure, categorize, or compartmentalize my experience, but instead allow it all in at once. I abandon the inclination to try to impose order. Yet I comfort myself with the thought that I will somehow wrangle my "data" into the structure of the analytic lenses later, when I organize and write about my experiences.

I should have known, even then, that Miss Chief would never let me pin down her story with my rigid categories.

Excerpt 2

In Charlottetown, it reads as a gash, an open wound (Figure 2). The Mountie reds seem absolutely bloody, almost throbbing within the black expanse of Chapter V. It is as though the painting itself is screaming, or is a scream. I lack the words to truly describe its effect on me. Less a space of quiet contemplation, this installation of *The Scream* draws out the



Figure 2. Monkman's *The Scream* (2017). "Chapter V." *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, a Project by Kent Monkman, installation view. Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown, 2018. Author photograph.

walls. Maybe it is because I am seeing the original and not a full-scale giclée reproduction this time (the original was out for repair when I was at Glenbow). Maybe it is because of the addition of a heavy, authoritative frame. Maybe the lighting is different. Or maybe it is just me, feeling raw after witnessing the injustices of another year of settler colonialism.

Outside the gallery, on the streets of Charlottetown and in the nearby replica of Confederation Chamber, the Fathers of Confederation are being celebrated as charismatic men who have a charming penchant for champagne parties and the daring needed to forge a great nation. But this moment of children being torn from their mothers, a moment repeated throughout the history of Canada, is one of their genocidal legacies, and *The Scream* is devastating.

In the outdoor amphitheatre, a young Mohawk woman in the Confederation Centre Young Company gets her turn to talk about the sort of world she wants to see. She speaks of decolonization, of complete independence and sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples.

Inside the Art Gallery, Miss Chief offers hope: "The others cannot see our magic, they try to tell us it is not there, but they do not understand the power of Miss Chief and they sorely underestimate the resilience of our people."

Discussion

As I engaged with Monkman's exhibition, I experienced an unsettling not only of my understanding of myself and settler society but also of the very tools that I was using to analyze the exhibition. What I experienced sitting in front of *The Scream* at Glenbow was all at once cognitive, narrative, relational, embodied, aesthetic, emotional, and spiritual. I felt part of this story and came to a deeper understanding of my settler complicity in colonialism. Serious self-doubt crept in as I connected what I perceived as Macdonald's cold colonial gaze to my own gaze as a settler researcher. I was unable to compartmentalize my experience into my three analytic lenses as I visited the exhibition, yet I tried to hold onto the notion of keeping my lenses separate at later stages in my project. This became untenable in practice, and instead I have opted for a holistic approach that allows the lenses to emerge in response to the exhibition and through the telling of my experiences while seeking to push at their boundaries. The power of my museological experiences combined with autoethnography's deeply self-reflexive and even vulnerable approach led me into ways of thinking, knowing, and learning that I have not engaged with enough. I time-travelled with Miss Chief as colonial past and colonial present bled into each other, fell in and out of my own story, found myself in a place of beautiful upheaval, and experienced a tumult of emotions.

What I experienced through *Shame and Prejudice's* unsettling pedagogies is a holism that brings together head, heart, body, and spirit, pulled together by the thread of the exhibition's powerful storytelling. I now understand that what had entered my research plan was a Euro-Western predilection for keeping head and heart apart, an epistemological tradition that creates artificial divisions between cognitive and non-cognitive knowledge domains. My three-lens framework sought to engage with multiple ways of knowing, yet initially held them separate and in tension, separating out rational and relational "strands" of public pedagogy, when what is needed for an inquiry into unsettling pedagogies is holism. Researching critical public pedagogies requires that we problematize the tools and

lenses we bring with us, often Eurocentric devices that may enact the very oppressions we seek to expose and counter. Moreover, engaging with Indigenous and unsettling epistemologies, especially within sites of experiential learning such as exhibitions, can provide the substance and drive needed to rethink pedagogy, especially in relation to the value of holism, story, and the many ways of knowing that extend capacities for caring for one another and our world. As Gitxsan scholar Cindy Blackstock (2007) pointed out, we need “to view epistemological differences as a chance to enlighten our individual and collective cultural ways of knowing” (p. 77). My museological experiences, storying and restorying in relation to them, and engagement with Indigenous scholarship became part of a recursive, meaning-making process as I struggled to overcome my own blind spots and the epistemological limits in the Euro-Western education literature. That learning could involve the spirit, for example, was difficult for me. Anishinaabe/Métis education consultant Rebecca Chartrand (2012) explained the spirit to non-Indigenous educators as “the wind and the light that we each carry within us”; the wind is, metaphorically, “our intentions or will,” and the light is like “our inner compass...that helps us to focus our attention and intention” (p. 156). My exhibition experiences combined with Chartrand’s words to form a deeper understanding of how the exhibition was engaging my spirit in ways that connected to my desire and commitment to act for change and capacity to envision a better future.

I use the lens of my own unsettling to examine how Monkman’s exhibition works pedagogically to create possibilities for an unsettling education. I do not make claims about how this exhibition will work on other visitors (an important area for future study) who bring along their own motivations, positionalities, and prior experiences, but I believe my experiences highlight the pedagogical potentials of exhibitions such as *Shame and Prejudice*. Monkman’s exhibition is a site of what education scholar Roger Simon (2011) called “difficult knowledge,” as it addresses the painful history and ongoing violence of colonization and in a way that is highly disruptive of settler expectations and interpretations. Simon pointed especially to the potentials of a “dialectical coupling of affect and thought” (p. 447) to move visitors beyond merely acknowledging the suffering of others as past harms to engaging with this suffering in the present and wanting to effect change. The affective framing in which Monkman delivers his truth telling about colonialism creates such a dialectic. Moreover, Monkman creates a relational space, what Métis scholar June Scudeler (2016) identified in his work as the Cree way of knowing, *miyo-wicêhtowin*: “the principle of getting along well with others, good relations, expanding the circle” (p. 117). Informed by Scudeler, I understand *Shame and Prejudice* as expanding the circle, bringing us settlers in where we might learn about decolonization and be good guests. Monkman’s exhibition works to attract and disarm with highly emotional paintings, hope, Miss Chief’s charm, seductive aesthetics, and, very importantly, humour, an important element in Indigenous storytelling. Pedagogically, Monkman’s carefully inserted moments of humour operate not only as a form of subversion but also as a way of helping to avert settlers feeling so much guilt that they shut down. Humour creates discomfort but also pleasure, and can even encourage solidarity, thus easing the tension within an exhibition that addresses dark histories.

Conclusions

When museums, seeking to reconcile, decolonize, and be more self-reflexive, invite interventions by Indigenous artists and curators, this creates openings for Indigenous

counter-narrative. Monkman and his alter ego Miss Chief tell the story of Canada on its 150th birthday from an Indigenous perspective, trampling on foundational myths, subverting European art and museological conventions, and reinventing the very space the exhibition occupies. What I experienced is a decolonizing, truth-telling space that not only encourages questioning of dominant national narratives but operates as a site of experiential learning that challenges Euro-Western epistemologies and pedagogies with more holistic, relational, storied approaches. Within the power dynamic of the settler museum, however, Indigenous intervention is authorized by the museum and, far too often, only a temporary disruption to the dominant narratives, epistemologies, and pedagogies that permeate these institutions. Future research and practice must consider how Indigenous, decolonizing, and unsettling pedagogies might more pervasively and permanently enter the very fabric of the museological experience. Moreover, visitor experiences are not confined to within an exhibition's walls, but are instead contextual and intertextual. Museums are full of competing discourses that these institutions could find ways to critically tease out and encourage visitors to interpret, question, respond to, and rethink.

I hope this article will encourage non-Indigenous adult education and public pedagogy practitioners and scholars to engage with unsettling pedagogies within and beyond museums as we "turn the mirror back upon ourselves" and work at fixing "the settler problem" (Regan, 2010, p. 11). We have much to learn from such pedagogies, and this could include interrogating, unsettling, and reimagining our Eurocentric educational discourses, theories, methodologies, and practices, even those we characterize as critical and transformative.

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