Transcript for Pulling Together Teachers and Instructors Series 2022 – Session 3
BCcampus webinar held on June 2, 2022
Host: Gabrielle Lamontagne
Facilitator: Tanya Ball
Guest: Kirsten Lindquist

TANYA :
Hello. Welcome, everyone. See everyone trickling in slowly. Good morning. Just gonna take one sip of coffee before we get ready to go. Good afternoon. Some parts. That's true, Jimmy yes. Happy Thursday. I know it's so nice out here. And in Edmonton, it's gonna be 20 degrees all week long. So yeah, it's a really good weekend for everyone going camping and stuff, so hopefully, you all can get outside where you are. So this week I'm just gonna get the ball rolling right away. We are officially in week three. So today we're going to be talking about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. This is definitely going to be a lecture heavy day. So if you need to take breaks, definitely take breaks, or if you need to pause your video at any time or watch it later on, it's going to be uploaded online so you can kind of take books at it as you go. So let's get this ball rolling. Gabrielle, she's not here today just to let everybody know. She's just not feeling well. So she needs to take some time and look after her.

So I told her, "Yes, we'll be OK. You do you we'll be good. Don't worry about us." So let's do this. Week three. Next slide, please. Let's start off with our video. Yeah, let's hit play.

(VIDEO PLAYS)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqBzdNpnyYY&ab_channel=1ootsie
(VIDEO STOPS)

TANYA:
I love that video so much. I love this kid. He is from I know the growl it's so awesome. He does such a good job. I know that the video when it was first posted on to YouTube, it was many years ago. So this kid is actually an adult now and it's awesome. He's from Alexis First Nation. Alexis Nation, sorry. And what you saw, the people dancing is it's a round dance. So it's always fun. It's really, really fun. And round dances are always a great way to get to know everybody. And because it's powwow season now, if you have any powwows near your area, I highly encourage you to go and visit and all that fun stuff. So today we have a very full agenda. First of all, we'll do the check-in, let you know where you should be at in the book. We have an awesome, amazing guest, Kirsten Lindquist. I am so excited to see her. This week we are going to be doing, like I said, Indigenous ways of knowing and being. But as you will come to learn in this lecture, it's very connected to storytelling. So I have a couple of my own family stories that I want to share with you guys today.

So and we'll kind of deconstruct them and reconstruct them we'll just have some fun with them. After that, we are going to be discussing storytelling then we'll talk a little bit about Indigenous ways of knowing being, and then one last story to end the day off. We may or may not finish all of this lecture within this day. If it spills over into the next day, that's totally fine or the next week, I should say. Totally fine, because this is actually arguably, I would say, one of the most or if not the most important lecture, because it provides the foundation of all of the work that you're going to be doing in the future. So next slide, please. So this is where we're at, June 2nd. We made it to June. So we are on. We read pages 23 to

35 this week. Next week we're going to be doing pages 39 to 47. And this is gonna be your ethical approaches and relational protocols in your work. So I know I've talked a lot about protocols. That's the lecture that you want to jump in on. And we'll talk a little bit about ethical approaches to research and stuff as well because it's all very connected.

We have another guest, Jan Hare, she is the Professor, Associate Dean for Indigenous Education. So she'll be able to share a little bit about her experiences. One thing that I do want to note is week five. So actually last week, one of you I think it might have been you, Jimmy, actually, that was asking about the difference between race, ethnicity, and indigeneity. And at the time I told you all that look, that's a loaded question. That is a very loaded question. So when I get big questions like that, I like to bring in people who are smarter than me to try and answer them. So, Angie Tucker, she's actually one of my colleagues and she has a very big a lot of experience in the anthropology world. So she's coming in. She actually suggested a bunch of readings for us. And for those of you who remember, I just put a link in the chat. It's the Google doc that we created for all of our resources. She sent me over some readings and stuff to get you all started and I've already uploaded them onto our resource sheet.

Otherwise, you can save a lot of your questions for her. She is super smart. Her research is around identity. So really important. I'm excited for her to come in. And then last week we have a closing with an elder. So check-in. Check. Next slide, please. So today we have Kirsten Lindquist and I am very much looking forward to her talk. She is doing such, such important work. I am going to let her introduce herself so I don't mess it up. So Kirsten are you ready?

KIRSTEN:
Yeah, I'm ready.

TANYA :
Alright, take it away. You got this.

KIRSTEN:
OK, next slide, please. Tân'si niwahkohmakanak Kirsten Lindquist nitsikason. Cheri Lindquist nîkawiy. Jim Lindquist nôhtawiy. Irene Lindquist (Jenkins) Nôhkum. Niwîkin amiskwaciwâskahikan ekwa môswaciy. I'm a member and a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta. And I'm related to the Jenkins/Dion/Blandon families of Moose Mountain and Kehewin First Nation. I have Cree, Métis and white Euro settler ancestry and family. Next slide, please. I use she/her and also they/them pronouns. I'm a PhD student in Indigenous Studies at the Faculty of Native Studies. I'm a co-producer of Tipi Confessions, which we'll explore more in this presentation. I'm also a research assistant for Dr. Kim TallBear's Relab Indigenous Research-Creation Project and also for Dr. Lana Whiskeyjack's tapahtêyimôkamik: Strengthening Kinship Relations for Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth.

I am currently studying, working, and caring from amiskwacîwaskahikan Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis nation. And I'm interested in connecting performance and visual arts storytelling with somatic or bodywork and dreamwork to explore body, and the way in which bodies connect the collective sovereignty and what this means for gender, diverse genders, and sexualities, and futurity.

So tying the past with the future in the ways that we practice in the present. And so much of my research centers embodiment embodied experience in relation to diverse genders and sexualities. And in integrating and intersecting embodied experiences with themes within Indigenous studies may elicit a

range of feelings, especially when we're talking about the impacts of colonialism, supremacism, and capitalism. So I'm just asking you to be aware, sensory aware and within your space to listen to your body. Do you ever need to take a break? Please take the time and space to ground yourself. Some of the ways I find useful are pressing my feet into the floor or the ground, placing my hand on my heart, listening to the sounds around me, taking a drink of water, a 10-second dance party, taking a deep breath, and sensing kind of like the lightness and darkness of the room. And so that's just to welcome you into this space. Next slide, please. I also want to share, like where I'm from visually.

And so I'm going to share these stories, and I'm learning through this. I'm really trying to pronounce this kisiskâciwan-sipiy river is to my north and it's flowing swiftly through the rise and fall of the contouring prairie grassland held and routed by spruce and poplar root systems. Like the river, I've crossed this path back and forth many times over my 36 years. Ashphalt rivers and gravel creeks, the Yellowhead, highway 29, highway 646, and range road 74 map a route between two rooted homes. While I turn north the number 16 continues east and assess the river stretching across older numbered territories and landscapes older that hold a multitude of lived experiences interrelated and yet also fragmented. Next slide, please. So the night sky and constellations are another way that I activate my relationship with the land these stories, which provide seasonal and place-based instructions in relationship to the landscape's waterscapes under the starscapes. And so while Orion is the winter constellation early into the winter season, you'll see approximately 4 hours after the sun descends in the western prairie horizon. Orion ascends in the east joining the dark extensive sky.

Orion or who I'm coming to know as the Wesakechak, the Transformer, the Mistapiw, and the Winter Bringer, rises above the dense orange-pink glow of amiskwacîwaskahikan. The city lights. And so these teachings I've learned from the writings and stories shared by Alex Wilson and Wilfred Buck, both from Opaskwayak Cree Nation in Nothern Manitoba. And you can see from the slide that now that we're heading toward summer solstice, Orion chases the sun until they meet up. And then after summer solstice, the days get shorter, and then we head to winter solstice, and then the cycle continues again. And so these are the seasonal kind of placeholders that help us attach stories to time to place and realize that we are part of a larger cosmic movement that is always continuously changing. And so transformer stories the Mistapiw, the Winter Bringer demonstrates a being that is both a help and a trickster, a transgressor, and a transformer. I also think and feel that Wesakechak teaches us that it's OK to make mistakes, but we need to be accountable when being corrected.

And that's where relational accountability comes from. But Alex Wilson also shares that Wesakechak is either male, female. Wesakechak’s energy. And so there's this relationship between the stars, or when wee see acâhkos, the stars, the spirits that you can follow this directional orientation between the three stars and the belts, Sirius the dog star and then to Aldebaran. And you'll see the Pleiades and on a new moon night you may also see the glow of the Milky Way or Atchak Sipi, the river of spirits. And so I always like to read this story, this orientation when I describe these landscapes and star spaces as an embodiment a practice of wâhkôhtowin as kinship to activate my connection to place and how it informs and is informed by indigeneity on the prairie. How this connection shapes my worldview, how place and these landmarks orient and shape my engagement as a relation. And so this process also activates and grounds my relational responsibilities through my research and my practices, my everyday practices. Elder, pre-elder Willie Ermine tells us that positionality is the act of identifying ourselves within all our relations.

It involves knowing about our ancestors' land, language, kinships, and knowledge systems. And these parts of identity talk about our attachment to the universe. So these stories are connected to the breadth of everyday and ceremonial practices, which also intersect in relation to place, as well as the ceremonial and history background between relationships. And this activation is also connected to addressing oppression, colonialism, supremacies, and capitalism that impact our bodies, our communities, and the land. Next slide, please. So when I talk about wâhkôhtowin or kinship or relationality, wâhkôhtowin is I am beginning to know what it is and so there is so much for me to learn. But I want to confess that this is an intention it is a law that I attempt to practice. And anything that I say is about my learning experience and I'm open to be corrected. And so where I come in through learning about wâhkôhtowin is through reading, but I'm also practicing in relation of what it means to do and move through the body in relation to the landscape, to kinship ties, to making relationships.

And so this comes from Maria Campbell, a Métis matriarch and elder. And she says, quote, "There is a word in my language it is wahkotowin. Today it is translated to mean kinship, relationship, family as in the human family. But once, from our place it meant the whole of creation. And our teachings tell us that all of creation is related and interconnected to all things within it, and wâhkôhtowin meant honoring and respecting those relationships." There are stories, songs, ceremonies, and dances that taught us from birth to death over and over again, our responsibilities, and reciprocal obligations to each other. Human to human, human to plant, to animals, to the water, and especially to the earth our whole environment, our world, in turn also have responsibilities and reciprocal obligations to us. Next slide, please. And so connecting that to wâhkôhtowin and kinship to gender and sexuality and to arts-based expression I follow Jas Morgan a Cree, Métis, Saulteaux Professor curator and past Editor at Large for Canadian Art Magazine who they say that every day Indigenous peoples are restoring their beings, their bodies, their gender, sexualities and reproductive lives from colonial institutions through play, self-representation, and sexual self-determination.

Enacting kinship in their art Indigenous artists discussed here embody the past and future in their present representations, projecting decolonial love and kinship ways into the cosmos. Next slide, please. So to create this framework to understand where our practices, our projects, our relations that I draw on from the previous two representations of wâhkôhtowin into what Mohawk Scholar Audra Simpsons talks about, nested sovereignty. And so this is an adaptation diagram of multiple Indigenous thinkers as well as somatic practitioners. And so gender and sexuality are practices of relating and structuring Indigenous governance, sovereignty, self-determination, socio-political orders which are connected to and shaped by specific place-based locations, but also by institutions and policies and historical forces and normative practices that are in our society. And so some of these nested sites. Kim Anderson, Cree and Métis scholar was also influenced by the teachings of Maria Campbell, illustrates that this is a common model for change in our societies and so founded on an Indigenous understanding of relationships.

She says, quote, "I will work through this circle to explain how specifically native women reconstruct themselves and in so doing, how they define themselves within the family, community, nation, and all of creation." And again, what I had mentioned, Audra Simpsons, she further explains, quote, like Indigenous body, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous political orders, prevail within and apart from separate governance. And finally, pre-legal scholar Janice […] also reflects the previous explanations about how we're nested in with larger sites and connections, where bodies that quote, we come into the natural world with creator, given rights and responsibility. This is Indigenous sovereignty, for

example, self-family clan, and nation. And to the adaptation with the larger spheres of the historical forces and social norms and institutional policies were explained, are explained by Staci K. Haines, who is a somatic practitioner. Uses somatic methodologies through the Strozzi Institute and was at generative somatics organization.

And she talks about, quote, "We tend to experience all these sites acting within our lives at once. The larger the circle, the more difficult it can be to perceive and understand its complexities without training." And so when we think about change and transformation, especially when we have been embedded in colonialism, capitalism if we're looking at the historical forces here. So the violent imposition of colonial narrative, myths policies as a dominance, if we think of them as stories, this is drastically shifted realities for Indigenous peoples and their kinship and knowledge systems. And so colonialism enforce eurocentric ideas of objectivity, reorganize Indigenous life and relationships through hierarchies, supremacy, and capitalism, and fragmented... And disconnected the interrelated and complex knowledges and from growing into taxonomies and binaries. And so this white supremacy pattern featured a piece of business idea that male supremacy and human supremacy, as well as capitalist extractivism has just to vast bodies from their livelihoods and in relation to the land.

So this also denigrated the roles of women to spirit and gender diverse peoples and children in communities, and has distorted land and formed knowledge systems resulting in the genocide of Indigenous life and livelihood. And so when we're looking from the history and coming into the present, it may seem like a big jump, but tipi confessions is one approach to addressing the violence of this connection. And the ways that we work in the space and with our performers is to really both restoring and restore our relations. So if you want to go to the next slide. So Tipi Confessions is making space and a perspective storytelling performance that an anonymous audience Confessions show. And so the tagline often said, Is that sex, almost everyone does it, and almost nobody talks about it except for Tipi confessions. So Tipi Confessions is a live storytelling show on sex, sexuality and gender, featuring performances and anonymous audience confessions. We highlight Indigenous colonial political humor and period of feminist, queer and educational perspectives, and our shows have a spoken word personal narrative around a perception for last performances, live musicians, and also short theatre performances.

And so TV confessions are brought up into the place that we call Canada by Dr. Kim Tallbear. When Dr. Kim Tallbear transferred from University of Texas Austin to university of Alberta, she brought up this format of the show. And we're an offshoot of the awesome Texas show Confessions, which was founded in 2010. And so Tipi Confessions as an offshoot that first had its first show in 2015, late 2015, during an Indigenous Masculinities conference. And so it is also produced by myself and also McMaster. Now McMaster, Professor Tallbear, who is also very much involved in the Indigenous Masculinity Conference. And so we're Tipi confessions and not only sexy, it's not just about sexy storytelling. Our audiences are performers, and seniors are reminded that it is political. And so as the storytelling show, you can go to the next line. Tipi Confessions aims to bring the stage light to storytellers and performances and performers, and over the history of the show, performers and the confessions range from hilarious to cheeky to poignant and healing.

And our most recent show, Because of the Pandemic, we moved it online. So we partner with the Channel Clare Film Festival and the Indigenous curatorial director to bring our Tipi Confessions show online. Tipi Confessions terms online. And it's still accessible. So I can ask the presentation and I can also

put the link in the chat. So if you're curious to see what a Tipi Confessions is comprised of, you still can have access to our most recent online show. And so not only do we showcase storytellers and performers, we also connect with other partners like the Channel Clare Film Festival. We also learn from their governance system the way that they set up and engage with their community members. And so this one featured two spirited LGBTQ plus performers and also Indigenous women who identify as Indigenous women. And we also connect with the feminist sex positive adult and educators, as well as sexual and reproductive health organizations such as HIV Edmonton to demonstrate the relation between service provider storytellers and artists and local businesses and organizations that educate the diversity of gender and sexual experiences.

Next slide please. So these are just examples of previous shows. We have also partnered with Channel Clare Film Festival for an in-person show and the show ranged from a variety of different things depending on the season. Next slide, please. But we also addressed themes of light, sex and aging and because of Dr. Kim Tallbear involvement. I think there's one slide supports that, like previous slide. Because of Dr. Kim Tallbear other lovely and Indigenous science, technology and society. We also have a sexy science confession poster being on the slide. So we have it's a range of things that connects decolonization, indigeneity and sex under a large umbrella of topics. And so but what we really want to focus on is body sovereignty and Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. And these are vitally interrelated confession and not one small spread star attributes. That's part of a much larger network of elders, researchers, practitioners, knowledge keeper educators dealing with sex workers, storytellers, artists and performers that are witnessing and advocating for gender, sexual and reproductive health affirmation from colonial male, hetero patriarchal, white, constructive possession environments.

And so with that framework, this is an embodiment and different type of expression and storytelling to share these stories. Next slide please. And so these are just some examples of confessions that are. So audience members have an opportunity to write down their anonymous confessions and one of the producers will review the confession before the read on stage by the employees, and then people in the audience can hear like, Oh, this is something that's on other people's minds. Maybe I'm not as isolated, but this is something that I was thinking about. So this is just one way of reconnecting and sharing these experiences in a way that people can relate to each other and in a safe space. Like said, I don't think that there is a safe space and we all come from different experiences. But what we try to do the Tipi confession is make it safer to experience a wide range of emotions. And we're still you know, we're still figuring that out and we're still being corrected and listening for to people with recommendations who may have an experience and have the wisdom and knowledge to help treat this to be a better writing project.

And so that's something that we're always considering. Oh, yes. So we do have at the beginning, like we do content warnings. And again, we try to we don't have specific trigger warnings, but we just remind people that they are in charge of their own bodily autonomy and to look at what's best for them. And so sometimes that could be an unexpected story, but we try our best to make those into safer spaces. And so that's kind of the gist of the framework of the structure of the show. And so as I mentioned Tipi Confessions, this is one small part of this practice and it's nested within relapse. I'll talk about a bit about the research creation project. So next slide, please. An so ReELAB is a research corporation, an art based project incubator. And it really in itself is an incubation stage. And this has been made possible by Dr. Tallbear research grant. And so the intention behind RELAB is to bring together faculty, students and

other creative workers who undertake research creation projects that are grounded in making good relations.

That is, we combine research with performance and other creative works to help decolonize sexuality environments and other sets of relations. And so this is coming from you talk them when you watch the courses of important article about decolonization is not a metaphor for other resources Indigenous land and life. Next slide, please. So three pillars of RELAB, which is restory, research and reclaim or reclamation. And in the RELAB, we interpret this as a restoration of the relation between bodies, including not only human bodies, but also with land and water and more and the relatives. It's place specific, and we're located here in which we walk again. And we also use Indigenous analytical frameworks for the projects. For example, McLuhan saw Relationality, but because it is place specific we go to and knowledge is like the interdependence of all relationships, which is informed and is informed by a series of movement and practices in the everyday. So as I mentioned, we have three pillars restory here as we as I mentioned before, the colonial myths, narrative and policies.

And so we look at challenging the civilizing American narrative and use Indigenous narratives of relationality to counter those accounts that are in the mainstream, which has influenced the normative practices and it moves bodies like the whiteness and HIV, are also practices that are within our bodies. And so what are the ways that we can practice with each other to practice in ways that help us return back to the center, that allows us to reconnect with the environment, to see people, to see our relatives who need safer spaces, harm reduction and housing. And what are the ways that we can practice to the hierarchies power and and the violence that is in our communities. Next slide please. But as I had mentioned, the research pillar foregrounds Indigenous standpoints, experience and self-determination, sovereignty and governance. And again, the two centre in making relational concepts. Next slide, please. And their reclamation pillar is to reclaim Indigenous sexual and environmental relations.

And again, practices are producing works that contribute to better human and planetary relations rooted in creative practice. Next slide please. I'm just going to share a couple. I think I'm also running out of time, so I'm just going to share a couple of seeding story concepts that may relate to better practices. So next slide, please. So connecting reformation resistance, decolonization through charities products. So the second and final part of the art space practices and performance in relation to body sovereignty, collective sovereignty, diverse genders and sexuality. I look to Dr. Toahawk Greyeyes talks about how art is a powerful tool to rewrite stories and to use multiple disciplinary, not as well. Artist and digital storyteller and also professor in Women and Gender Studies that we've all heard of. And also this idea that our media are justice, as expressed by the Native News Central Health Network News, telling our stories about our bodies and lives in ways that accurately represent us.

By creating our own stories and expressing ourselves through the multimedia arts, we are able to not only push back, but meaning and or stereotyping mainstream narratives, but also collectively create visions. And this is part of the futurity aspect which is grounded in Afrofuturism, even Indigenous to terms like Brazilian. And so reclaiming these stories, reimagining the past, present and future that is intertwined, that's also reflected in the way that we can support gender and sexuality diverse folks, not just only and expressions and identities, but also, and this comes from my Uncle Richard, worked on the 2SLGBTQIA+ sub-working group for the response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Commission report. And so they had sub-working group report for Métis, First Nation, and Inuit but also for gender and sexually diverse people. And so this is a quote from the report The

resurgence of Traditional Roles and responsibilities, gender, sexuality and futures provides for the potential reduction of community conflict later on domestic violence, incarceration, homelessness and misogyny.

It requires bringing the past and the present and forming a new history for future generations. And so this idea of futures, again quote encapsulates multiple types of art making, including one picture visual art and music. It is a process of decolonization to reimagine a future that constructs self-determination and self such common representations of alternative narratives or stories about identity and future. So next slide, please. And so part of that and in relationship to tying all these concepts, these practices, performances together, there's three. Iterations of storytelling that I just want to share and some kind of BC story work. And so that comes from doing an article solo that Sorry. Dr. John Archibald has created this idea of a story where that is encompassed with respect to what's happening with all our senses, which also it takes it takes time to build relationships, responsibility. So learning about the core of a story. Reverence ceremony being a nature. Reciprocity is about the story, the knowledge, the culture.

It's experiential, land based, intergenerational learning, holism. So similarly, going back to that framework, one means connecting through the self, family, community and nation, but also integrating the physical, the emotional and the spiritual that everything is interrelated and this idea of synergy and so she defines this as the exchange of lifeforce energies. And we can also interpret that maybe as the erotic. That infused the exchange between the story, the storyteller and the listener, and that space between the worlds, which includes your understanding of spirit. She also uses the trickster, and in example, part function of way is core to story work and that to the practices to get past the listeners and the storyteller never stopped and think that sense of centering is very important as well. Storyweaving originates from Spider-woman Theatre on the goal, which was which is a feminist Indigenous non-hierarchical theatre production and storyweaving as a practice or a methodology that layers the space with multiple stories, images, sound and movement and so Michelle Olson was reflecting on a piece of this production map on the land of the Stars, and they use story weaving as a methodology to be in the process of developing the production.

And so it's not just behind the stage and in front of the stage. This methodology is also around the kitchen table, within the plan. And so this this draws in the interweaving of multiple layers that impact the way that a story is told or performed. And then finally, Brené Brown and her newest book, Atlas of the Heart talks about stories stewardship. And here she says, story of stewardship means honoring the sacred nature of stories. The ones we share and the one we hear. And the one that we've been interested in is often valuable, that we have something valuable that we should treat with respect and character. There are common themes in being a storyteller, a story listener, story witness, and one last to get to reconnect back to the narrative. I want to ask for the next slide, please. So Dr. Tracy Baer in her dissertation talks about the moving the thought into Indigenous sovereignty as body sovereignty talks about if this is my body where my story is. I just want to show the parallels between like when we talk about sexual health practitioners and then also the research that we do in Indigenous health termination of body sovereignty and collective sovereignty.

But there are parallels and overlaps interrelated in terms of talking about gender, reimagining sexuality, relationships, bodies, body sovereignty and the values that are core to expressing and rebuilding and reclaiming and reimagining that if we look and pay attention and are aware of that, there are a lot of intersections between many different spaces that may have not overlapped. But by being aware, we can

see that there's a lot more connection, a lot other a lot of practitioners, researchers that we can look to see the diversity in which stories are told to address colonial violence and to. And to... Rebuild communities or reconnection. And this is just one small part of the work that I'm doing in relation to my mentors and my supervisor. So next slide please. And so this is just a supplementary activity, if you will. When I think about the people that come before me and how I learn. Adrienne Maree Brown as a black feminist tour organizer and she talks about writing pleasure activism lineage of how you can feel good.

And my extension question is like, how do what does it mean that when I feel good, what do I do to create space for other relations, to experience joy and pleasure, and she come to a place where they feel that they can share their experiences and stories. So it's not only about myself during joy and pleasure, what do I do in my practice that does not surrounding people That's it for today. Thank you for listening. That's the end of my presentation.

TANYA:
Awesome. Thank you so much, Kirsten, with everyone and their reactions. Can we give her an applause? I do (SARCASTIC LAUGH) love you all. And just to thank her in the chat. Do you have time to answer some questions? If there's any questions, Kirsten? OK. So if there's any questions, you can either raise your hand up or you can insert it in the chat. And we'll give you just a couple of moments to, think of something to ask. Well, everyone's thinking about that, Kirsten. I have a personal question for you. There is a slide where you talked about story, stewardship story work. And then there was one other thing with about spider weaving or spider woman. (CROSSTALK) What does that mean resource? Do you know what is the name of that resource? I just want to add it to our resources. (CROSSTALK) 'Spider Woman Theater. (KEYBOARD CLICKS) Spider Woman Theater'. I can put that in chat. OK. I think I found the website here.

KIRSTEN:
(KEYBOARD CLICKS) OK. So for story weaving, I draw that from I can talk about more in-depth Michelle Olson wrote a review or an explanation of the process. For the production of the map of land map of stars. Michelle Olson is the number of the strong depth question First Nation and is also the artistic director of Raven Spirits tenants. And so they were talking about how story weaving as a process or a methodology was used in this piece. And so she talks about the importance of place and landscape alongside connecting to the body in Indigenous theatre and performance productions. This she talks about. So she uses kind 150 as an example. I don't remember how many years ago that was then to the 2017 or 2016. So Michelle also a discusses what the harms, the oppressive harms of a single colonial patriarchal narrative, which is also referred to as much as sanction memory. So when we think of kind 150, there's a very specific narrative around Canada that doesn't bring in the complexities of colonization.

And so story weaving was brought in to do just that. So the complexities of Indigenous narrative to combat the single story of the Canadian story. And so the story weaving is also feminist, Indigenous and non-hierarchical. So it's just weaving like these many different layers. So the layer of the environment and for this particular production, they were close to Yukon River and then they also evolved question starving constellation from both land and star states were part of those layers. And so integrating not just the stories but images, sound movement and music is part of that landscape, part of the story, part of the starscapes. And so that story weaving demonstrates that as humans we're embedded in the environment around us. And so how do we take those parts to tell that story of theatre performance.

TANYA:
Excellent. Is there any more questions for Kirsten? I was wondering if I may ask a question? Go for it. Thanks. This was amazing. And I just wondered, how do you deal with issues around, especially with remixing and talking about the RELAB issues of copyright and story ownership and things like that, or labeling certain works as like available for others to remix. I just wasn't sure how you do that or how that works.

KIRSTEN:
Like in specific to like don't say where it used to be confessions as an example the performers ownership of their own stories. Is that what you mean?

TANYA:
Yes. And just maybe with the any other works, maybe been a part of where you might be weaving stories together if that's addressed, and I'm not sure if it is.

KIRSTEN:
So with Tipi confessions like that, if we do record like performers have ownership of their stories and they can use like this is just recent with the online production not so much in person, but performers can use their stories however they want to use afterwards. And we have a constant conversation about how what performers consent to in terms of the use of their stories after the production, the use of their images, the use of their name. Some folks have a stage name and they are not ready to connect that with their everyday living and with their families and whatnot. And so, like we have a conversation and they let us know how other material and their persona is to be promoted or used or talked about. So I use story weaving as an example. I wouldn't say that we exactly use it in Tipi Confession, but that is like a placeholder of a potential of moving forward with the work and so we haven't really, like really remix, I mean, like different stories and not in that aspect. But I mean on the technical side of things, like we do have to adhere to copyright the way it's like you can't use specific songs, but they have copyright if it's going to be on YouTube.

But what does it look like if is just in a private setting? And so those are the the technical aspects that we receive recommendations on how to work through that.

TANYA:
Thank you.

KIRSTEN:
Thank you for your questions.

TANYA:
Wonderful. Thank you so much, Kirsten. I'm so happy that you're able to come in and chat with us about your research, your work and everything in between (LAUGHS). I think your work is so important to Indigenous storytelling because it just shows that storytelling is such a powerful tool for everyone and it's not just traditional. So if we can just say thank you one last time to Kirsten before we let her run away and continue on her life (LAUGHTER). That would be really appreciated. So thank you again, Kirsten.

KIRSTEN:
Thank you.

TANYA:
Again. You're welcome to stay. But if you have to go, it's up to you. Is it OK to if I share your contact information?

KIRSTEN:
Yeah, that's fine.

TANYA:
Yeah. (CROSSTALK) You can buy your overnight email address. Sounds good. Perfect. So I will pop that in everyone's resource page, in case you need to reach out to her again. Awesome. Thanks again.

KIRSTEN:
Thanks. Fine.

TANYA:
OK. So we are going to get back. To. Storytelling. You're going to get exposed to a bunch of different stories. I know we are a little bit short on time here. I didn't want to cut Kirsten off because I think her work is so important. So we will definitely be looking into next week (LAUGHS). But that's OK. We got this. OK, so let's start off with a story. So my family, we have a bunch of we call them. Well, I wouldn't say that they're traditional stories, but they're stories nonetheless. So our family stories, they actually are more about ghost stories. Our stories kind of revolve around supernatural. They come from a very specific place in Manitoba, which is the kind of Interlake region. So I wanted to share with you two stories today, or maybe one story today and one story (SARCASTIC LAUGH) next time. But I wanted to give you a little bit of an idea as to what stories teach us and what stories can do their limitations or if they have boundaries. But just to get this conversation going, I thought I would share you this one.

This one is my favorite story. It's called 'The Farmer'. And this is one that my grandpa actually used to tell to all of the kids, usually in the village. In the native village, when the power all went out. All of the kids in the neighboring houses would kind of gather up (LAUGHS) into my grandparents' house. And my grandpa was the big storyteller and would sit there and talk about ghost stories, for the night until the power went on. So this one is called 'The Farmer'. So when you are listening, I just want you to pick up on some different cues of things that are relevant to you, because we will open it up to a larger discussion and actually we'll bring it down to breakout rooms and then we'll talk about it a little bit more broadly. But keep in the back of your mind, what kind of clues is this story talking to you about in terms of indigeneity or meaty culture? What is this telling you as a listener? Alright. Ready to begin. So the farmer. So in the village, there is a farmer who had horses.

They weren't farm work horses, but they were prized horses. And the farmer took a lot of time and care brushing and tending to these horses, so much so that he didn't have time to attend church on Sunday. So the priests from the village went to go visit the farmer and kind of gave him a little bit of a warning, say, hey, I haven't seen you in mass (LAUGHS) for a while. You got to get your butt back into church or something bad is going to happen to you. So the farmer, just whatever didn't pay attention to the priest and ignored all of the warnings. So on Sunday morning, he the next Sunday, I should say, he headed out to the barn to tend to his horses. And he found that all of the horses had their manes tied up in knots. And something that would take him a certain amount of time to brush through their manes actually doubled in the amount of time it took him hours to painstakingly loosen all of those intertwined knots. Afterwards, he washed and brushed down the horses. The following Sunday, he headed to the barn to

only find his prized horses, had once again had an unruly mess of knots in their beautiful manes working through the entire day.

He finally finished taming the briar and the horse's manes. This went on for several, several Sundays. And the farmer didn't know what to make of it. He didn't see anyone on his property or near the barn. So how were these horses manes getting into such a gnarly mess? So several weeks later, with a brush in hand, he started to walk towards the barn. As he walked towards the barn, he could see something that was near the horses, so he quickened his pace, anxious to see what was in the barn so close to his prized horses. As he approached, he suddenly stopped mid-stride. He was confused and he couldn't believe what he was seeing. He thought an invisible hand had reached over, clutched his chest, squeezing the breath out of him. He felt his heart pounding, boom, boom, boom, boom. His mouth just went dry and his lips began to tremble. Standing beside his beautiful horse was an enormous horned beast. He was smiling at the farmer as he entered the barn and intertwined in his fingers and in the horse's mane.

The horned beast was twisting and turning the hair and knotting each strand. And that is where the story ends. So at this point, I'm going to ask you all to if I can get everyone into different breakout rooms, I would say we can talk. If you guys can talk for about, let's say, 5 minutes, we're always running late on time, but 5 minutes, groups of five to get some ideas flowing. If I could have at least one person just present at least one idea of what you heard about the story. If you can go to the next slide, actually. This is the question that we're going to be looking at. What does this story tell us about indigeneity? Ariel. Perfect. Thank you, Kelsey, for (SARCASTIC LAUGH) adding that into the chat. So breakout rooms for 5 minutes and then we'll come back and talk about a little bit more about it. OK. So what's everyone's thoughts on this question? I thought full disclosure. I don't expect you to know everything about this story is just to get a sense of what you all are thinking about right now so that I can show you a little bit more.

So. If you can insert in the chat or if you want, you can raise your hand and just speak out loud of some of the ideas that you all came up with. Yeah. Happy to report back and break in there. Sure. They're a couple of the folks in the room had a problem with the trueness of nature of the church. And if you don't do this, this is going to happen to you in a bad way. And also another perspective was that in terms of indigeneity how things are will connect like the animals, the horses, the spiritual world. So that was sort of a breakout room to. I can jump in, Tanya. I have no idea what breakout room I was in. (CROSSTALK) That's OK. We also talked about whether the farmer would have labeled it a horned beast had he maybe not encountered that somewhere else in the world. It may very well have been just another creature. And maybe this is where the church bumps up against Indigenous ways of knowing. And also that notion of having to be really intentional about what he was doing and being really open minded to whatever came.

And maybe this isn't exactly the answer that he wanted, but it was the answer that he needed. And that notion that spirituality is much different than religion. And yet we accept religion as spirituality on a regular basis. Yes. I love that all of you are picking up all the things that I was really hoping that you would want, that you would pick up on any last things before I jump in. OK. So I actually wanted to show you a picture about the well, first about the abrupt endings. Yes, absolutely. Especially when it comes to ghost stories or kind of scary stories. I do find that there is always an abrupt ending. And the reason for that is to put the responsibility or put a little bit of responsibility onto the listener because it's a reciprocal thing is storytelling, is there is responsibility on both sides. And some of you commented on

the moral of the story. And the moral of the story is dependent upon the storyteller and it's also dependent upon the listener. Right. So some of you picked out the nuances of the church.

So this is actually a book. It's called Stories of the Rhode Island's People by Maria Campbell. But I wanted to show you this story. It's from the story called The Bush shoe. And in here, I do want to point out this guy in the middle who's holding a goblet, the golden goblet, he's sitting next to this guy here. This is actually Jesus (LAUGHS). So in our stories, it's more about relationships and relationality and how we interact with other, entities. I'm going to say, because in the story of the Bush shoe, I mean, these religious figures, they're not on a pedestal as they are in Christianity, I would say. And so, Jesus, he's not someone that is up on a pedestal for us, but rather he's our drinking buddy. He's someone that we hang out with and we just chat up and drink (LAUGHS). So this guy in the story is hanging out and drinking with Jesus and Gabriel and all of those other people. The horn beast. This is specific, actually, to meaty storytelling. So meaty stories or a lot of Indigenous stories have something called, it's called The Trickster, which I'll talk a little bit more on in a minute.

But within meaty storytelling, the devil is actually our trickster because we're very intertwined in the well, specifically the Roman Catholic religion. So there is a here's another book by Sean Tell Theola, I'll add these to your resource list to you. But spirituality and religion in meaty ways of knowing is very much on a spectrum. So it's a spectrum going this way, but also going up and down in that Native folks are they can be very traditional into Indigenous ways of knowing or they could be very much involved in the Catholic Church and everywhere in between. And that's totally OK. So I also want to talk about the storyteller and the storytelling. I purposely left my own interpretations of it out because I wanted you all to kind of think about that and see where you came from. But the way that my grandpa told the story is that the moral of the story is get your back, your butt back in the church, right? Or else bad things will happen. Now, the way that my mom tells the story is she sees that as a lesson on vanity.

Right. So don't spend too much time combing your hair, those types of things. Otherwise, you'll also run into trouble. Now, the way that I tell the story and this is all three generations, it all really depends on the storytellers context, right? And how the listener kind of takes it. So for me, what the story is actually telling you is the devil or the horned creature is bringing the farmer back to the horses. So the farmer or the farmer doesn't spend much time or enough time with the horses brushing their hair. So, the trickster character, the devil character is actually bringing him back to a Métis Indigenous ways of, of knowing of spending more time with the animals instead of with the church. So, it really depends. And that's why I think storytelling is so fascinating. And in our ways of knowing, there's tons of different perspectives and all of those perspectives are right. It just depends on the angle that you're looking at. So, I just wanted to share that a little bit with you, and I'll tell you another story later on once I give you the full lecture, so you have a bit more to pull from.

So, let's, let's move on with this. Next slide, please. There we go. So, we're gonna talk about Indigenous storytelling: knowing, and being. Next slide. So, there are two major types of stories. There are the sacred traditional stories, and then there's personal narratives. And the sacred traditional stories, I find that those ones are the stories that we often most think about when it comes to Indigenous storytelling. And in Michif, we call them lii koont, which is kind of like the French word (SPEAKS FRENCH LANGUAGE), which is like tales, like story tales or fairy tales. And then there's personal narratives and Michif is lii zistwayr. And it's close to the word, the French word of (SPEAKS FRENCH LANGUAGE), which is history, right? So, there's personal narratives and then there's sacred stories. Next slide, please. So, this is a little

bit about sacred stories. So, they can actually be even further set, like further categorized into stories from the beginning of time, stories from long ago, stories from ancient time and stories from more recent times.

So, oftentimes these stories are about like how the world came to be or how we interact with the land. They're basically they're with human and non-human characters, and it influences... OK. What was I trying to say? OK. So, there's usually spiritual components involved in these stories. There are so many protocols around these stories. And often if you're wanting to talk about sacred stories, I would highly, highly, highly recommend that you talk to an elder that specializes in storytelling, and they'll be able to give you a lot more context surrounding each story. And I say that with a (LAUGHS) with a little tongue in cheek, because some stories they actually take months to tell, and depending on where you are in your own spiritual journey some stories you are, you are privy to and some stories you're not. And it really depends on your own life stage and the elder that you're working with. So, protocol, one of the most basic... Oh, sorry. One of the most basic protocol is storytelling.

Storytelling is often told only in storytelling season. So, that tends to be in the winter. And the reason why it's like... (LAUGHS) I had someone explain this to me once, and it's almost like in the wintertime, you're brought inside, right? So, you're brought inside and your TV or your window to the world is always open during the summer, but in the winter, it's cold, you wanna stay inside, you wanna stay near the fire. So, sacred stories are often told in a spiritual circle during the winter months. And some stories you're only allowed to tell when there's snow on the ground. So, sacred stories, one last note about this is you don't wanna confuse them for with myth or folklore. These are for these librarians that are in the crowd. (LAUGHS) We like to categorize things as librarians, but identifying them and putting them in that category of myth or folklore, it actually devalues them. These are sacred stories with a capital S on both sides. So, this, this is like our Quran or our Bible or our Torah.

One of I would compare it in those kinds of ways. So, it'd be more under religion and spirituality instead of myth and folklore. So, these stories are seen as truths, and they should be treated that way with dignity and respect. Next slide, please. OK. So, personal narratives, these tend to be more in recent times and they follow more of that linear progression that we're used to seeing of this happened, then this happened, and this was the result. They tend to be more revolving around human characters and mostly about family members. So, we have a lot of other stories that are, oh, this person by name, this happened to them, or it was my great-grandmother that this happened to... You always, it always kind of lines up to somebody that something happened too. (LAUGHS). So, this one for the protocol surrounding these stories, it's less about cultural protocol and more about personal responsibility and accountability. And this goes back to the... OK. Do you really wanna sell, tell your cousin's story about them doing something embarrassing?

And the answer is not always, not always. (LAUGHS) You still wanna go home at the end of the day and be welcomed by your family. So, it really depends on the context for protocol surrounding these personal narratives. Next slide, please. OK. So, tricksters, tricksters that's I would say that this is more like "famous" kind of story that comes out of Indigenous culture. There's lots of different trickster stories that come out of other, other cultures that are non-Indigenous, like there's lots in Chinese cultures as well. However, and there's a lot of documentation on this, that the word trickster is actually an inappropriate word to use in describing these stories, because when you hear the word trickster, you think of like a joker kind of a character or a gesture kind of a character that talks about something silly,

or they're usually about deception or they're self-serving that like blurs the lines here. It can also be called a cultural hero. But with Indigenous stories, it's usually the trickster.

Can you go to the next slide, please? I can't remember if I... Yes. OK, perfect. So, tricksters, they, they tend to do the following. One of them is the enlargement of social boundaries of... They are the character that challenges the social norm and what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. So, they like to defy those confusing societal roles that are kind of there, but not often really talked about. So, I would challenge everyone to think about Indigenous trickster stories more as I call them like either cousins' stories or aunties' stories. The more that you all learn about Indigenous culture, Indigenous aunties are major. They are major. They are... (LAUGHS) They're the ones that will kind of bring you aside and shake their finger at you. And it's all about that tough love, right? (LAUGHS) that in, in Métis culture, we call them the “mean” Métis aunties that will shake their finger at you, but it's all about love, right? So, they're bringing you in and they're telling you a story.

And they're trying to give you a different perspective on this. So, if you're thinking back about that devil character, the horned beast character in the farmer's story. That character was brought in to show you something else, right, so to offer you a different perspective or to challenge your current way of thinking. So, they are that, that boundary-pushing character that we all need and love. So, if we can go to the next slide, please. There you go. So, why are stories important. As Kirsten was talking about, and as a lot of you pointed out during that one exercise is that it is the, it reveals the inner workings of a lot of Indigenous communities. So, you all pointed out about relationships. Absolutely. You are 100% correct. We're gonna talk about relationality a lot. (LAUGHS) So, they're actually living representations of this concept of relationality and relationships and kinship. And I say that they're living because it changes. The story never stays the same, which is why oral storytelling is so important because it changes depending on the context and where you're coming from from your perspective.

Right. So, that's one thing that is challenging with oral storytellings is actually recording them and getting them on, or writing them down is that it prevents that from happening that I'll call it evolution, evolution just out of, I can't think of another word for it. (LAUGHS) But I'm not like, yeah, evolution ish. But what they do is they actually impart philosophical traditions and it happens generationally. So, as I was saying before, this is my grandpa's story. And then my mom told it this way, and now I tell it this way. So, that actually connects us to our ancestors, just the act of telling the story itself. And as Kirsten was saying, often these stories, they come out in the kitchen, 'cause that's where we spend most of our time, 'cause food is so important and we watch each other cook. And so, sometimes traditional stories will come out during that time, but also gossip. Gossip is also a way of storytelling. So, they're used as teaching devices. And again, it's up to that listener to decide what is that lesson.

So, sometimes you can hear the same story over and over and over again. And depending on where you are in your life and your journey, some things will pull or stick out more to you than other times. Right? So, I guess as an example, I am a mom of two. So, stories about parenting and parenthood have a very different impact on me now than it did before I have children. So, next slide, please. So, who is allowed to tell Indigenous stories? I get this question all of the time. And a lot of this is revolving around that fear of cultural appropriation. So, who is allowed to tell Indigenous stories? Next slide, please. Everyone! Anyone's allowed to tell an Indigenous story, as long as you follow the cultural protocols and consider ethical care, right? So, that really is depending on, it's dependent upon the community that you're

working with and the individual who has rights to that story. I'll talk a little bit more about ownership, 'cause I think that's an important thing later on, later on in the weeks.

But as long as you have permission from the community and you're following all of these rules, you are good to go. You can tell a story. It's no problem. And I would encourage everyone to, everyone to tell Indigenous stories. Why? Because I think our stories are good. (LAUGHS) We have lots of great stories and lots of stories to tell. So, if you can go to the next slide, please. Before you play this, I wanna provide some context. So, this is... I'm using this as a bad example. So, this is an example of cultural appropriation and an example of Indigenous storytelling gone wrong. This is a clip from a movie called Annie Get Your Gun. It was actually the actress, the main actress, was supposed to be Judy Garland, but she ended up getting replaced by Betty Hutton, who is here now. And yeah, I'm only gonna show 30 seconds. I gave them instructions no more than 30 seconds because you'll see, you'll see it's just really terrible, really bad and also super triggering. So, trigger, trigger warning.

If you, if you watch this, you can just turn your mute off or whatever, but 30 seconds. Alrighty. And go for it.

(VIDEO PLAYS)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEpmkqWZgT8&t
(VIDEO STOPS)

TANYA:
(LAUGHS) You see, this is why I only want 30 seconds 'cause it just drives me ballistic. (LAUGHS) So, in that video, just in that short clip alone, there's so much cultural appropriation there. And basically, this actress is treating these Indigenous folks who I would argue are not even Indigenous. They're people that are playing Indigenous folks. But she's just kicking them and using them as props. Basically, they're non-human that are participating in this story. So, this 100% is cultural appropriation. So, what this is is is that when someone adapts or adopts one aspect of a culture that is not their own. So, this is important because it's representing a power dynamic, right, where there is a dominant culture that takes elements from another culture that is systemically oppressed by the dominant group. So, we see this a lot around Halloween when people are dressing up as Pocahontas-like characters.

We see this in movies, actually, for those of you who have Disney+. Disney's actually, they did something really interesting like with Peter Pan, you'll see a trigger warning before Peter Pan even shows and that it says, and it points its finger at itself that this is cultural appropriation. So, that's very different too. If you go to the next slide, please. Ian, thank you. It's different than cultural exchange. So, cultural exchange is when there's two cultures that are among the same power level, like there's no power dynamic between these two cultures. And then there's just a borrowing between the two. It is not representative of a power dynamic. So, there's a lot of cultural exchange between Indigenous nations, you'll see, or within more traditionally oppressed groups that you'll see that quite a bit too. And that is not considered cultural appropriation. That's cultural exchange. And the difference or assimilation is really important to include in this conversation as well, because that is when a marginalized group or marginalized people then adopt the elements of the dominant culture.

And this is actually a survival tactic. It's a way of trauma response. Like, you know, when you think of the fight, flight, fawn or flop those trauma responses, this is a fawning response, right? So, assimilation is a little bit different. So, we as Indigenous people and me as a Métis person have adopted different,

different elements into my life and my lifestyle as a part of pushing against that narrative. There are no options here. These groups don't have the power to decide which customs to follow. And this is where programs like the Indigenous or the Indian residential schools' programs, this is a part of that. So, I do really wanna draw attention to these concepts when it comes to Indigenous storytelling. Next slide, please. So, cultural protocol, again, I always wanna emphasize this 'cause you always wanna consult with the community that you are working with. There is no single rule to fit all Indigenous communities. And again, here are some of the examples that we've already talked about.

Next slide, please. And before you hit play, actually we, because we're short on time, this is the slide that we're gonna end on. And I think this is a really good space to end on. But this is, this is a really important video because it is about reclamation. So, thinking back to that super triggering video with Betty Hutton, this was actually adopted and this, the people that are in this video are all Indigenous people. So, the guy that's in this frame here, he is an Indigenous man that is posing as a white guy, posing as an Indigenous person. (LAUGHS) So, it is very confusing. But what's important to take here is that we are now in a space where we're reclaiming these stories and it's a really powerful thing to do. And what else did I wanna say about this video? Reclamation is important, but also the way that we tell the stories and the way that we represent ourselves is very different when, when you take away that power dynamic. So, we're just gonna end on this video here and we will pick up on the lecture again next week.

If you guys all need to head out, now is the time, but we will listen to this video. I love it. This is by the 1491s. It is a comedy group, an Indigenous comedy group. They have tons of different videos. So, yeah, let's watch it.

(VIDEO PLAYS)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BHvpWP2V9Y
(VIDEO STOPS)

TANYA:
There we go. See, this is the perfect way to end this session. (LAUGHS) I love the 1491 so much. I used to listen to it a lot with my kids, but then they started singing it at school. And I was like, OK, this might be an appropriate. (LAUGHS) OK. So, next week, we'll fit it all in. I did see your question as well about protocol surrounding telling of stories. Absolutely. We're gonna touch on that once we start talking about protocol and how to incorporate these things into your teaching. So, thank you, everyone, for a great session. I am super stoked to see you again next week and we'll talk more. Thanks, Ian. (LAUGHS).