Beneath the Ink:
Storytelling for Transformative Change

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ABSTRACT

Driven and drawn to the intersection of knowledges pertaining to meaning making this dissertation seeks to articulate storytelling as an Indigenous practice towards transformational change. As a manifestation of Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing, storytelling is a specific method in which lived experiences can be recovered, understood, and sustained in meaningful ways. Contributing to the literature on Indigenous methodologies paved by decolonial and Indigenous academics this dissertation posits that storytelling invites the researcher to critically review the methods used within colonial institutions such as the University. This is particularly important when considering lived experiences that reflect the interconnectedness of place, objects, people, and the spiritual domain. Using mainstream definitions and representations of homelessness as a case for operationalizing this form of methodology; (re)defining the elements of stories most relevant to understanding homelessness allows us to appreciate more fully the complexity, rather than individuality of lived experience. Storytelling unpacks relationships as both a means and destination, providing the context to understanding connected agents in a holistic manner. Importantly, Indigenous storytelling is not a new phenomenon. Rather, it reflects a practice of meaning making that has unfolded since time immemorial. As scholars, we must critically reflect on our own knowledge-building ecologies, considering more deeply the transformative qualities of storytelling.

Dedication to the storyteller in all of us

Upon the threshold

Where the wind is cold

We call to minds eye:

The days new and old.

For just a moment

No word is spoken;

Save the waves where

Chorus is broken.

Horizons align

And rainbows remind

Of lights beyond rain

Where your sky meets mine.

- *Gene Paul Kiely*

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GLOSSARY

Aotearoa	the Māori name for New Zealand
atua	deities
baláy	home
barangay	village
bukid	mountain
Ilonngo	language of the Philippines
kagulángan	uncleared forestry
kalanyan	chieftain
katigulangan	ancestors
manaakitanga	caring/nurturing
NPA	New Peoples Army
marae	central structure of village and buildings
Pākehā	non-Māori
pamati	to listen
tangata whenua	people of the land
tribu	tribal
tūrangawaewae	place to stand
wairua	spirit

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Prologue: Stories on the mountain

The rain came to a subtle end; the last drops falling as the final tears of a long, drawn out cry. Rice stalks swayed in the gentle breeze; oblivious to the visitors passing by. Onwards the truck carved through the road towards the summit. It was laden with supplies and resources: Trays of eggs, flour, fresh produce, spices, and every other conceivable ingredient that one would find in a Filipino cupboard. I packed light for the journey, taking only a few pairs of clothes, my journal and phone. After spending time with family in the Philippines over Christmas, I had dedicated the next few weeks thereafter to do some work in the local *barangay* (village) and later with the Itohman-Magahat-Bukidnon tribe atop the Tigbao *bukid* (mountain). As we arrived on the summit, we were greeted by the community whom we would be journeying alongside for the next few days. Elders from across the *bukid* had also travelled to meet in the *tribu* (tribal) hall. These were the representatives of each family across Tigbao. A series of discussions would be held to review the wellbeing of the community, their homes, and plans for educational and health development. Like many Filipino families, my mother had left the island she was born on to work and support the family members who remained behind. I was born and raised in New Zealand, navigating the complexities of value systems between Filipino and Pākehā ways of being, knowing and doing. I never quite grasped the core Filipino languages, learning that English was preferred at home just as heavily as in school. Often my learning of the Philippines would unfold by way of stories that my mother or aunties would share. These included accounts of my grandfather's upbringing, those who came before him; and the values that underpinned Filipino life trajectories irrespective of where one would call a place their home. Whenever I traveled to the Philippines I would sit near my grandmother, aunties, uncles, and cousins to listen to their stories. During these times, I learned about my wider family, my heritage, Filipino history, as well as our relationship to notable *bukid* and waterways. At this stage in my life, visiting Philippines had become far more than a Christmas break away from New Zealand. It meant rediscovering and reconnecting with my ancestral history. As I entered the *tribu* hall, I could not help but feel a wave of relief come over me; a sense of home in a space that was new to me - yet safe and familiar. I traced my fingers along the walls of the *tribu* hall; my fingertips

finding purchase on intricate weavings made through the intertwining bamboo. The meshing seemed to evoke an unspoken story - broken only by a single large sheet of brown, weathered paper attached to an otherwise complete canvas. A list of the tribe's values had been inscribed on the paper. As I tried my best to translate some of the values, I succeeded only in understanding one word – "*památi"* – to listen. My pondering ceased as one of the elders motioned me to join them for the welcome. Making a mental note to return to the lone sheet of paper on the wall, I stood with the rest of the visitors near the entrance of the *tribu* hall. With a nod and gesture from his wife, the *kalanyan* (chieftain) opened the space with a welcome, proceeding to invite each of the elders to also introduce themselves. Each of the visitors were then invited to speak and state their intentions for the journey. Upon my turn to speak, I began, first with my *pepeha* in te Reo Māori, and second with my greetings and intentions in *Ilonngo* (language of the Philippines). My words were broken and the delivery lacking in finesse, but the intention shone through so much so that the matriarch – the wife of the *kalanyan* – was the first to nod in approval and gesture her hands in welcome. With formalities ended, food was prepared, and all were invited further into the hall to share in the meal; including the rest of the village who patiently waited outside. Over the next week when I was not attending community meetings, sharing knowledge with the children or assisting some of the elders in the village; I would speak to the *kalanyan* and other significant leaders to learn more about the history of the tribe. I often did this with my family whenever I visited the Philippines – searching for records in journals or albums, thinking that I might see a name I recognize or be shown photos and faces that resembled my own. Beyond weathered documents that merely revealed disjointed connections to the *katigulangan* (ancestors) I sought, I soon learned that understandings of family were grounded in an intergenerational oral tradition. Those earlier moments of insight with family were there with me as I sat beside the *kalanyan* to hear the stories of the community. I came to the tribe with a desire to bear witness to stories that spoke to the histories of oral rhetoric and its constituents, as well as how these challenge my historic learning experiences that have framed the familiarity of my writing today. I also hoped that I might find a sense of affirmation of my family stories through my unfolding dialogue.

Notably, what I learned during these conversations shed a new light on what I thought I knew about Indigenous communities in the Philippines. I learned that the lone sheet of paper

containing the ‘tribe values’ was in fact not of the tribes design, but rather, the work of an academic institute from another island altogether. It sat on the wall, forgotten and unused. Buildings throughout the village typically followed a similar vein of architecture – save a single, windowless structure elevated above the main *tribu* hall. It was a church erected in the middle of the village in exchange for ongoing provision of services to the community. One of the elders directed me to articles and documents that promoted the stigmatisation of their tribe for generations: “rebels” and “terrorists” on their own land for inciting violence amongst the local townships. The news articles alone vied to disconnect the Itohman-magahat-bukidnon from the homes and land they resided on, ascribing the labels of rebel, savage or NPA (The New People's Army) in place of Indigeneity. These labels, the elders believed, had been applied so as to garner support for a stronger military presence in area, in the hopes of dispossessing their community of more land for the sake of ‘proper’ custody by the government. The experiences of imposed ‘values’, religions and livelihood reflected a colonizing perspective which invited acceptance of Eurocentric systems of being, knowing and doing; often crossing the thresholds into their very homes. Such interventions reinforced a narrative that an Indigenous community was not fit to sustain itself on its own. This was not a side of the story I was particularly ready to hear at the time. Many of the people in the city centre or surrounding villages spoke of the wonder that there were still Indigenous communities in the area, and the immense sense of pride they had in the ‘Filipino way’, whichever form that took. In the middle of the *tribu* hall, however, a more sobering tale was being shared. Oral traditions were succumbing to the desires of national education providers that follow European educational traditions for a more literate country; intergenerational knowledge about the land dwindled as youth contended between the identities of a fractured nation and that of their upbringing. For all that seemed to be going awry, the stories that followed evoked a strong sense of pride for the growth that had come from being steadfast in one’s ancestral roots. Other stories were shared that spoke to the formation of the Itohman-magahat-bukidnon tribe: once three separate tribes across the *bukid*, now unified towards a common goal of care and relationship with the ancestral domains they resided on. Here, a sense of home could be felt that traversed the bounds of four physical walls. Indeed, the *kalanyan* remarked after I shared my life story with him – that there was something missing in my life. Upon asking what it was I could possibly be missing, the *kalanyan* wisely replied: “You’ll know what it is when you find it”. He was speaking to my sense of the

relational self, my connection to home. It was a common thread of absence throughout my narrative and an awareness of this only became possible through the interweaving narratives provided by the *kalanyan* and his fellow elders. There is a deep sense of resilience and survivance through the ways in which these stories are held, a characteristic that speaks more to the values of the tribe than a tattered poster of writing on the *tribu* hall wall ever could.

While sitting in this space I still felt a pull towards uncovering the empirical data that might support the stories I had heard from the tribe. I lose count of the many times during my undergraduate studies where this same pull was felt in New Zealand when I worked alongside those with backgrounds in homelessness, incarceration and foster care. My reflections within the Philippines on home and belonging have invited me to consider how such stories are represented here in New Zealand. This is particularly notable in representations of homelessness within mainstream media which are often unchecked and unchallenged. These stories rely on taken-for-granted, sensationalised, set-piece characters and participating agents to fuel its perpetual existence. These understandings are inherently tied to accepted definitions and concepts which frame the construction, delivery and reception of such stories about lived experiences; often by those who have not experienced homelessness. In the wake of researching, collecting, coding and analysing; the common practice has been to use tools which stem from Eurocentric practices of what is considered valid and acceptable data. To accept this form of enquiry is concerning in that it runs the risk of perpetuating centuries old colonizing and assimilating practices: through the reification and representation of subjective experiences such as homelessness, as well as the experiences of Indigenous peoples deemed unworthy of consideration. Further, stories may at times be distanced from the source themselves, stored and guarded outside of Indigenous ownership and control under the guise of academic insight; the final dismissal of connection in a series of colonial practices. In consideration of the stories I have surrounded myself with throughout my life from family and tribes alike; as well as the contrasting, compounding representations of home by mainstream media – I felt drawn to consider the ways in which these two disparate sources of 'data' are held in the wake of accepted research practices. As I reflect on the pathways of my future research, a complex and nuanced methodology was needed to better navigate narratives that are equally as complex and nuanced.

Storytelling and Understanding Experiences of Homelessness

In order to inform a strength-based research that helps to understand the lived realities of homelessness, this dissertation will seek to articulate a methodology of Indigenous storytelling for transformative change within colonised structures of academic enquiry. It is important that I acknowledge my self-identification as a brown-skinned Filipino-Pākehā, heterosexual, cis-gendered man in my mid 20's who has lived both rurally and in urban settings. I was raised with value systems of both Pākehā and Filipino origin, growing more connected to the latter through extended periods of time with family and the land itself in the Philippines. I studied at St Peter's College in Epsom before pursuing a degree in Arts and Business, majoring in Sociology, Criminology, Management, and International Business at The University of Auckland. In attaining an honours degree in Sociology and deepening my learning through a Masters in Indigenous Studies; my positionality has informed my passion and potential biases with storytelling and homelessness as its insights are deeply meaningful for me. My role as storyteller and academic will no doubt shape "the conclusions and the interpretations drawn in this study" (Creswell, 2016, p. 223).

Utilising the decolonial theories presented by Smith, Wilson and Deloria, the subsequent chapter will outline a framework for storytelling as a form of Indigenous knowledge building. Although decolonising practices are sought to diminish and disempower colonial practices, it is important that Indigenous methodologies are equipped to navigate such systems which are intertwined with taken-for-granted cultures and colonial power structures. In researching homelessness, it would be prudent to consider the ways in which mainstream methods can be de-centred; inviting the use of other methods applied by and for Indigenous peoples. Beyond unpacking methods of enquiry, I contrast these with attention to the structures which underpin traditional, colonial means of research, and the need for Indigenous storytelling as methodology when working in storied spaces.

The third chapter will then discuss mainstream understandings relative to the notion of homelessness: highlighting the problem of definitions and representations enforced in storytelling by institutions such as the media. These representations will later be revisited: reframing understandings of lived experiences under an Indigenous lens. The (re)definitions

gleaned here will inform subsequent discussions of storytelling and how experiences can be better understood in meaningful, dignified ways.

The fourth chapter reviews the aspects of storytelling that are most relevant to the methodology by way of analysing the forms these take in spaces relative to homelessness. In teasing out the nuances across Indigenous and Western worldviews, this section of the dissertation considers the ways in which storytelling invites researchers to appreciate the space in which artifacts and methods reside in. I will utilise a number of studies which do not typically follow Western models of enquiry. In framing experiences through a storytelling method, my dissertation unpacks differing ways of analysis and contending dominant, Western understandings of rhetoric and narrative composition.

The dissertation summarises findings and brings together the ways in which Indigenous storytelling as methodology can encourage collective knowledge-generation. It is argued that such methodologies are necessary to de-centre the salience of deficit-based, extractive research; and surpass the perceived limitations to transform our disciplines so that other voices and narratives are brought to the fore. I posit that methodologies and knowledge-generating practices grounded in relationality and storytelling are necessary to acknowledge and grow from a history that actively resists dominant narratives borne from colonialism and the systematic denial of Indigenous voice. This dissertation looks to consider more deeply how stories can connect us all.

CHAPTER TWO: DECOLONIZING STORIES & METHODOLOGIES

Contested Research Practices

As Indigenous identities are (re)constructed across the domains of the international, state, community and individual; it is important to recognise the spaces in which resistance, empowerment and growth is exercised. While this is particularly notable in the case of 'research' that is contested outside of, as well as inside Indigenous communities; the same cannot be readily said for academic institutions such as university. Fanon (1963) would argue that colonialism, and by extension research, is not merely a tool to empty the Indigenous brain of knowing, being and doing. Rather, it distorts, diminishes and - in some cases - destroys the past of the oppressed people. Tuck (2009) notes a common yet overlooked form of research in which the oppressed are invited to share their voice, but only from a marginal space of deprivation and unfulfilled longing. This is the hallmark of deficit-based research: which seeks to document the pain or grief within an individual or tribe in a way that exploits the history of the community to explain contemporary struggle. In her book, *Decolonizing Methodologies* Linda Tuhiwai Smith discusses the formation of Western research within imperialism, noting: "'Research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (Smith, 1999, p.1). As a tool of oppression, research allowed for the systematic imposition of Western observation; alongside an equally damaging degree of extraction and denial of Indigenous livelihood. Literature contributed by Indigenous peoples has often only been included as 'legitimate' and 'real' knowledge when it has fit within a mainstream framework and has perceived value by the dominant culture (Smith, 1999). Traditional, Western ways on conceptualising legitimate 'knowledge' is called into question, which invites a renewed agenda for Indigenous research. Decolonizing research is therefore put forth as developing a critical lens towards the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices (Smith, 1999).

Importantly, the field contested through Indigenous methodologies is of knowledge itself. Among Indigenous people, self and collective knowledge-making tends to be at the fore of such discussions (Moreton-Robinson & Walter, 2009). Within the fabric of colonial development, the notions of power and knowledge are interconnected. Attwood & Arnold

(1992) analyse this connectedness through their work on 'Aboriginalism'. This study unpacks knowledge beyond simply a collection of facts, considering the space that power and value systems occupy in order to influence the judgements made by the actor exerting an 'understanding'. Aboriginalism is viewed in this instance as a formation of authoritative certainties about "Aborigines", governed by the intertwining of knowledge and power. The romanticising of Indigenous peoples can then be broken down into three separate spheres: firstly, as Indigenous studies through the imparting of, or academic pursuit of knowledge about Indigenous people by 'expert' non-Indigenous scholars who deem others, particularly Indigenous peoples, as unworthy of representing themselves. The second sphere draws upon the perception that there is an imagined difference between Indigenous peoples and the West which necessitates the construction of dichotomies such as "Us", "Them" and "Other". The third sphere considers the systemic environment including institutions and corporations through which authority in laws, rights and information is claimed over Indigenous peoples. The analysis of Attwood and Arnold falls short on considering the merits of epistemologies being developed, controlled and determined by Indigenous people. Research in practice represents a significant opportunity in empowering Indigenous peoples to exercise this role.

As with numerous Indigenous communities across the globe, history and traditional knowledge is passed down in oral form and experiential instruction, depending on cultural protocols throughout generations. These protocols speak to the collective memories of ethnic, tribal, and kinship groups (Jackson, 1987; Berkes, Colding, & Folke, 2003; Mahuika, 2019). The bulk of physical archival collections that document Indigenous community history deemed of cultural value are held in non-Indigenous repositories such as museums, universities and governmental agencies (Linn, Reuther, Wooley, Shirar, & Rogers, 2017). A majority of these tangible knowledge forms were contributed by ethnographers, photographers and anthropologists – particularly during the late 19th century whereby research was predicated on 'preserving' the disappearing Indigenous culture (Purcell, 1998; Uddin, 2011). Forming Indigenous studies as a formal discipline is one significant shift in the university space. However, while an intentional movement to decolonize methodologies and nurturing a culture of informed academic enquiry are significant, there requires a fundamental shift in the structures of power between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples – particularly in the systems within which these practices are exercised (De Leeuw,

Greenwood, & Lindsay, 2013). Ignoring systemic change in this regard runs the risk of displacing or overshadowing Indigenous studies, and by extension, the decolonisation of methodologies within the very systems of oppression it resists (Veracini, 2013).

Vine Deloria, Jr., who wrote *Custer died for your sins: an Indian manifesto,* reviewed anthropology as a discipline and how it reflected a colonizing medium of research. This is particularly evident in the notion that:

> "Indians are like the weather. Everyone knows all about the weather, but none can change it. . . One of the finest things about being an Indian is that people are always interested in you and your 'plight.' Other groups have difficulties, predicaments, quandaries, problems, or troubles. Traditionally we Indians have a 'plight'" (Deloria, 1988, p. 1).

The imagery of weather challenges the perception of Indigenous as without experiencing change. This is particularly notable in the use of language such as tradition and endangered to make sense of the "Indian" as static. Deloria (1988) argued that Indigenous peoples are not passive adherents to citizenship, but rather "dynamic" communities that asked "only to be freed from cultural oppression" (p.12). Deloria's writings were pivotal in this regard, who alongside numerous other scholars, recast Indians as Indigenous peoples demanding an active movement towards decolonization and attaining sovereignty. In this sense it would appear that non-Indigenous representations of Indigenous people are static. As an instrument of 'traditional' practices, mainstream, Western research conceptualised Indigenous people as caught in a backward state of existence; requiring cultural and economic assistance in order to enjoy the full benefits of civilised citizenship (Broadhurst, 2002; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Storytelling, here in its incomplete form, is interwoven with a sense of paternalistic guardianship pertaining to care and charitable intrusion rather than solidarity with a peoples who are both dynamic and contemporary (Deloria, 1988). The framing of Indigenous in research as experiencing "plight" rather than difficulties or troubles makes rigid an ontological existence of impoverishment: shrouding the roots and ongoing practices of discrimination through domination and renewing the settler-states striving for projects of inclusion. Deloria (1988) invites research as a practice, such as in anthropology, to consider

the value of reciprocity and the consequences that arise from distanced observing. Through the work of scholars such as Smith, Alfred, Corntassel and Deloria, the colonial structures of research has been called into question, and by extension, for decolonial work beyond the marginal space of scholarship.

Documented Research: A Need for Methodologies

The study of history, particularly for Indigenous peoples, remains a colonized domain where the practice of researching historiography is restricted to those in positions of power. This is evident in research on homelessness which relies on official definitions and metrics that are often used for administrative and governance purposes (Roche, 2004; Whiteford, 2010). These measures aid in framing homelessness as a 'situation', whereby individuals lack a conventional domestic dwelling to live in (New Zealand Coalition to End Homelessness, 2012). Objective enquiry which distances the researcher from the situation allows for the perpetuation of top-down authority and intervention. This effectively distances Indigenous peoples from participating in the formation, endorsement and acceptance of information as 'knowledge'. Western epistemologies of enquiry have formed means of accessing resources and participants that are acceptable and preferred within the Western world without due regard for the preferences of Indigenous people themselves. Within New Zealand specifically, it was not until relatively recently that Māori were included in research activities that explored their own culture – irrespective of the situation being discussed (Mead & Grove, 2003; Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, & Leggat-Cook, 2011). This has led to many myths and misconceptions about Māori practices as well as meaning making. These were believed and taken in stride by Māori and non-Māori alike through the contributions of traditional social and educational research (Bishop, 1999; Calman, 2004). This echoes the work of Jenny Lee who reviewed practices of *pūrākau* appropriation by non-Indigenous writers, whereby original Indigenous stories were deliberately edited and embellished in the name of improvement, readability and simplicity (Lee, 2009). Smith (1999) cautions that history reflects not only a form of 'truth', but also, a form of power governed by those who write it. The effects compound as mistruths are (re)told, fabricating colonisation in the name of settlement and assistance which perpetuate the dominance of false narratives in

understandings of contemporary issues. Mikaere (1992) notes that the misconstrued representations of Indigenous narratives are dangerous in that it creates epistemological confusion, destabilising the balance of social structures such as religion and familial connections. Homelessness and similar social issues within society where significant numbers of Māori are negatively impacted, therefore, require the extension of such official definitions (Groot et al., 2011).

According to Arthur Bochner, narrative in oral form, is the "gathering and telling of 'stories'… gathering "knowledge from the past and not necessarily knowledge about the past" (Bochner, 2007, p. 203). This point was iterated by Hayden White, who argued that oral narratives become problematic in that historical events cannot always be truthfully represented as reflecting the structures and processes of imaginative discourses when intertwined with fictions such as epics, folk tale and myth (White, 1984). Both scholars posit that narratives are a process by which the past is revised retroactively, using language and description that inevitably modifies the past in subjective ways (Bochner, 2007; White, 1984). Ong (1982) would argue oral narratives are specific occurrences in time, making its examinability problematic as they are merely heard rather than presented visually. The notion that oral narration as cultural expression lacks an objectivity to be examined or looked back on is significant, as it is assumed that there will be a diminished accuracy and meaning to the story when presented. What distinguishes the 'historical' from 'fictional' in stories, therefore, is not it's form but rather its contents (Taylor & Lambert, 2006). This notion emphasises the imitability of representing events, rather than the lived experiences of the historical event, even if it is a representation that is accurate. Such discourses give power to institutions including academia to delegitimize oral narrative. While minorities call for a greater acceptance of voicing their own histories, such histories are often deemed as fictional; or not fiction that holds the kinds of virtue that institutions and storytellers deem worthy (Hereniko, 2000; Babcock, 2012).

If, for instance, oral narrative lacks a stable sense of objectivity, the Western mode of research instead lends itself to exploring domains that have objectivity which legitimize histories in tangible form. As a result, the academic relies on what is material, measurable and archivable. The desire to document and preserve knowledge stems from a positivist

foundation which recognises the importance of systematically accumulating evidence and cross-referencing analysis. The written word encourages the notion that "there is but one truth, and this truth can be discovered through rigorous research" (Hereniko, 2000, p. 85). Despite the movement away from positivist theory, this did little to diminish the preferred practice of gathering, evaluating and holding "evidence" extracted from Indigenous communities (Smith, 1999; Braun, Browne, Ka'opua, Kim, & Mokuau, 2014). As the postpositivist notion that history and the conduct of research can only be conceived through fictional bias, it is interesting to note that Western enquiries are purported as the more promising method over Indigenous oral narratives. Written and documented research that is grounded in Western epistemology seeks to both distance and place the enquirer into the past as well as give impetus for future research. The drive to research in a Western paradigm does not lie in what is discovered, but the possibilities of what can still be discovered.

A number of international scholars have affirmed calls for Indigenous peoples to be steadfast in creating new knowledges that reflect the epistemological and cultural differences of communities; thereby informing the transformation of research and wider structures in academia (Alfred, 1995; Battiste, 2000; Wilson, 2008). Wilson (2008) argues that relationships are a significant aspect of research that should not be discounted, as it unfolds part and parcel when working from within one's knowledge alongside others. Arbon (2008) emphasises the importance of relationality in acting from one's worldview, spirituality and ceremony while recognising the interconnectedness that unfolds in all activity. These scholars speak to the importance of critically developing strength-based research and methodology that is not only meaningful but worthwhile. At the heart of transformative change, therefore, is a renewed and dignified use of knowledge systems; Indigenous or otherwise (Kovach, 2010a). Connelly & Clandinin (1990) speak to this form of research as upholding a 'feeling of connectedness' (p. 4). This means nurturing a participatory field of consciousness without alienating the 'researched' as separate from the 'researcher'. Such fundamental changes are significant as the knower and known become variable, rather than fixed roles in the enquiry process (Stanton, 2014). Heshusius (1981) argues that participation leads to favourable outcomes in that there is there is no onus set on separating or distancing subject matter with foreign, predetermined methods. As a practice of relationality, a focus on the self is let go and an embracing of interconnected realities (and therefore of knowledge systems) is upheld. This is

characteristic of having no desire to be in charge and thereby exert power in harmful ways. These factors form the basis of two different schools of research methods, namely, decolonial and Indigenous. While such methods are similar in a number of ways, it is important to acknowledge that they are not readily interchangeable with one another.

The Decolonizing Method Movement

Rather than talk about communities as 'subjects', whether oppressed or otherwise, decolonial work seeks to work with and alongside such communities in a way that actively responds to colonial power structures. As the term decolonisation suggests, it is a reframing of discussion, acknowledging that colonial practices continue to unfold (Lincoln & González y González, 2008). It is not simply, however, a means to renewing old systems of oppression and imposition. Tuck and Yang (2012) would argue that this runs the risk of applying decolonization as a metaphor, rather than an intentional action. The rapid adoption of 'decolonizing discourse' is seen as part of an ongoing movement towards assuming innocence; reconciling settler guilt and sustaining a future enactment of fragility. While efforts to decolonise might be seen as well intended such discourse loses its directing power when used as a blanket or overarching statement. Without clarifying its meaning, Indigenous concerns may be discounted altogether (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Simpson (2011) cautions that "historical perceptibility was used, and is still used, to claim, to define capacities for self-rule, to apportion social and political possibilities, to, in effect, empower and disempower Indigenous peoples in the present" (p. 100). When used as a metaphor, decolonisation becomes yet another form of settler appropriation. Decolonialising methodologies are a response to postcolonial work which presupposes that oppression by imperialist nations have ended and that communities are navigating the consequences. Alongside critical analysis of these power structures, decolonial enquiry seeks to unpack how Indigenous knowledge production continues to be denied and devalued in place of Western, colonial frames of understanding.

Through contributions such as Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies,* decolonial work has established a space between and across disciplines within universities beyond the 1990s.

Importantly, there is no universal framework or process for decolonial research methods. Smith (1999) outlines numerous approaches that academics have utilised when working alongside Indigenous communities in research capacities. These include the affirmation of oral narratives, strength-based enquiry over deficit-based research, active intervention into the socio-political struggles among Indigenous communities and acknowledging Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing. Mignolo (2011) would add that Western, traditional knowledge systems seek to control Indigenous communities as colonized subjects, perpetuating a system that shrouds local knowledge and redacts narrative to the space of myth or folktale. The resultant is a colonization of non-Western knowledge (Mignolo, 2011). Importantly, Mignolo situates the work of decoloniality as both destructuring the logic of colonisation and embracing an understanding of lived experience that acknowledges the existence of multiple worlds. Decolonisation methods, therefore, seek to appropriate the contributions of coloniality in order to expose power structures and disconnect them from their imperial designs (Mignolo, 2011). Decolonising methodologies are significant in that colonized ways of meaning making are not held as the all-encompassing ways to create knowledge, but rather, conceptualises it as one form that coexists even as it obscures and diminishes other, non-dominant methodologies.

In this sense, I argue that decolonising methodologies are a first wave praxis that give voice to responses against the colonial systems which inform research processes. The growth of Indigenous methodologies, therefore, requires the systematic dismantling and restructuring of historical, colonising frameworks of enquiry. Key to the movement, particularly within a university environment, is that none of the aforementioned strategies are given credence over one another. A number of scholars recognise the importance of self-reflexivity and critical research that allows non-Indigenous scholars to unpack more consciously their own relationship to colonialism. This is important so as to develop a self-determining relationship of solidarity, while at the same time retaining an “unsettled” approach to research (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Alfred, 2005; Barker, 2009; Walia, 2012).

The Indigenous Method Movement

The movements of decolonising and Indigenous methodologies have intersected with one another across disciplines, sharing in a number of practices key to knowledge creation. In this section however, the focus of Indigenous methodologies lies in the specific knowledge-generating practices that are reflective of Indigenous livelihood, rather than merely focussing on resisting colonising systems of oppression. Cardinal (2001) argues that Indigenous methodologies are not a recent phenomenon, but have existed as long as Indigenous ceremonies and communities. Amidst decolonial works, a number of scholars have contributed to Indigenous knowledge production (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Cajete, 2000; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2010a; Chilisa, 2020). Kovach (2010a) argues that there are a range of characteristics which constitute Indigenous methodologies. These include a holistic epistemology, narrative, purpose, experience, Indigenous ethical conduct, Indigenous ways of attaining knowledge, and a general consideration of the colonial relationship. These variables reiterate that Indigenous methodologies are grounded by Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing before decolonial work. As Indigenous communities vary, a specific community's methodology is local to the space, language and worldview that is upheld. For instance, the practice of dreaming may be seen as a significant building block for knowledge building among Indigenous groups but not among others (Kovach, 2010a). Rowe (2014) brought this understanding to the forefront through the development of a Muskego Inninuwuk (Swampy Cree) methodology in Canada. In acknowledging the role of inner knowing and dreams as catalyst activities for knowing, a specific development and application of Indigenous methodology is exercised. These forms of research acknowledge that Indigenous peoples have unique and meaningful ways of relating to one another, the world and wider universe (Ascher, 2002).

Indigenous research is exercised through fostering an interconnected way of knowing. Shawn Wilson's *Research is Ceremony* further articulates the potential of Indigenous methodologies and how this is guided by relational knowledge-making. This upholds the notion that all things are relevant to consideration by way of relatedness. Relationships can exist between people, alongside research participants, with creation, ideas, concepts and all that is around the individual (Wilson, 2001). Wilson (2008) critiques the Western approach to

knowledge production by positing that a reliance on objectivity stems from the belief that data needs to be separated into its constituent parts in order to make sense. In so doing, however, this disconnects the relatedness between all the parts and assumes knowledge exists as a "separate identity"; whereby intellect arises from the denial of motive and emotion (Wilson, 2008, p. 56). Chilisa (2020) mirrors this argument in that ontology through an Indigenous lens is a reality of relationships. Therefore, there is not one definitive reality, but rather, varying sets of relationships that constitute an Indigenous ontology. This includes the connections that exist between the living and non-living, with the wider land and all beings that reside upon it. This decolonizing and Indigenizing praxis requires a relational-centred literacy which is based on intimate connections both with, and knowledge of creation. Narrative and storytelling is essentially Indigenous research in praxis in that it is an exercise of relationality, responsiveness and critical reflexivity. Relationships are upheld in storytelling, which seeks to disseminate findings of knowledge production by recognising the orator, audience, surroundings and technology as active contributors to the learning process. Ideas are able to be understood throughout a story by unpacking what it is connected to and how it relates to other ideas. It is through relationality that one can make sense of the knowledge that sits between the researcher and participant (Wilson, 2001; Wilson, 2008). This provides a layer of accountability for the researcher by way of determining how they locate themselves in relation to the subject matter being unpacked. Wilson (2001) would add that the researcher is answerable to all their relations when conducting research. The focus is not upon simply judging knowledge based on validity or reliability. Instead, the focus lies in fulfilling the researchers' relationship with the world around them.

Relations in the Methodology

In summary, decolonial methodologies purports to unpack power structures to expose colonial systems. Indigenous methodologies such as storytelling seeks to mobilize knowledge building in ways that reflect Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing. Such methods are intertwined with the continual practice of participation and accompaniment. This is encompassed in storytelling as relationships between people, ideas and the surrounding

environment are recognized in meaningful ways. Storytelling, therefore, helps to inform a dynamic theory of knowledge production that is relational rather than transactional.

The notion of relationship building is described by Kovach as means and destination to building upon indigenous knowledge. Kovach (2010b) explains that such knowledge production relies upon a specific means of knowing by way of oral tradition; a "conversational method". (p. 40). It entails a shared dialogue to explore the meaning of phenomena that holds story to relate and assist. This is significant in that an equality between community is upheld which expresses a sense of interdependency - a characteristic of interconnected relationships. Importantly, all relations are included here: Indigenous and non-Indigenous by way of concepts, knowledges, processes, motivations, and resources. Each of these contribute to the practice of Indigenous knowledge making which sits at the intersection of experiences between the human, animal, environment and wider ecology.

Storytelling as an Indigenous Methodology

Cajete (1994) posits that story is fundamental to all human learning and teaching. Cajete invites us to see storytelling as ubiquitous across all cultures, and central to Indigenous communities. It is not merely the sharing of characters, plot and entertaining settings that is the focus of stories, but rather, the provision of empowering narratives about who people are, where they are located and for what purpose they traverse the spaces in between. The stories are foundational in that the speaker and learner are connected to something greater than themselves. Notwithstanding the signifance of storytelling beyond Indigenous communities, it is important to acknowledge its unique salience as a method of locating. This gives rise to the valuing of stories over others depending on the situation, and its subsequent offering through differing means. Scroggie (2009) emphasises that storytelling is one traditional form of many that has been exercised for time immemorial across every society and culture known to humankind. Storytelling has taken varying forms in order to help pass down knowledge from one generation to the next. This means that stories are effectively a repository of lived experience. It is within such distinctive, participatory practices that this section builds upon storytelling as an Indigenous knowledge-making methodology. The

following paragraphs articulate an Indigenous storytelling methodology by reviewing distinct layers of practices and how these compare to Western means of narrative building. Storytelling is reviewed as a form of relational, fluid praxis that is central to knowledge building. This contends against claims that storytelling is focalised towards objects that are not dynamic. In building upon a general theoretical framework for storytelling, a methodology will be formed as a means to help unpack the complex ecologies within which the orator, audience, surroundings and technology are held. I argue that as praxis, storytelling helps to nurture a relational way of knowing. This has implications for dominant methodologies which are embedded in colonial, top-down management structures. Through critically engaging with research methods, we can build upon the foundations of decolonial methodologies that contests again taken-for-granted power structures. Furthermore, it will also assert the possibilities of an Indigenous methodology to navigate colonial systems in order to understand the complex ecologies aforementioned.

Storytelling in Review

Within an Indigenous paradigm, stories are not merely cultural expressions, disconnected from the practice of storytelling and acts of participation they arise from. Stories are therefore moving, transcendent, evocative and shaped by surrounding subject matter (Henry, Soler, & Martinez-Falquina, 2009). They are malleable in that "stories may lead to, may have already led us to, theories and back again to stories" (Henry, Soler, & Martinez-Falquina, 2009, p. 18). Stories can therefore be initiated as a means of knowledge building which serves to interconnect people, time, the environment, and co-participants. Wilson (2008) discusses three layers to Indigenous narratives. The first and highest layer are sacred stories which are specific in their form, content, and context. The sharing of these stories are limited only to those who have permission and given responsibility to hold them. Given their sacred status, such narratives must be memorized and told without change to the content or form. The second layer of stories are manifested in origin narratives, myths, and legends. These contain specific information about morals, lessons, and events. Contrary to the first layer, these stories may be shaped by the storyteller depending on their personal experiences or the experiences of their audience. Unchanged, however, is the underlying message of the

story (Wilson, 2008). The third layer of storytelling is the sharing of experiences that can be a personal narrative or that of others. Elders commonly use this to relate real life experiences as part of learning moments while teaching or providing counsel. Such stories reflect Indigenous knowledge as lived experience (Wilson, 2008). The latter of the three layers are significant in that they have the potential to uncover hidden facets and tensions that lay beneath written history. These narratives draw from a critical consciousness and are present in a number of forms. Alternative means of sharing stories carry the possibility of operationalising Indigenous research frameworks. In conjunction with providing counter-colonial narratives, these serve as a recognition of Indigenous livelihood.

Storytelling in Praxis

Storytelling is not merely a retelling of stories. It exists as living force, as understood through Indigenous notions such as *pūrākau.* Lee (2009) discusses *pūrākau* as a traditional form of Māori narrative, consisting of "philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes, and worldviews" that make up the foundation of identity as Māori people (p. 1). *Pūrākau* are purposeful in that they encapsulate Māori understandings of the universe, the lived world, the relationship between *atua* (deities) and humanity (Marsden, 2003). The method allows for the investigation of phenomena, attaining new knowledges, as well the opportunities for amending and integrating previous knowledge (Hikuroa, 2017). This method of knowledge building and sharing has shaped the historical accounts of Māori communities across generations. Often, however, these have been systematically misrepresented and misunderstood as anecdotes or legends (Lee, 2009). What is considered actual, probable or possible is determined by the worldview of a culture. While the knowable can be made valid and accepted as objective truth, intuition is rarely acknowledged (Marsden, 2003; Hikuroa, 2017). As *pūrākau* is typically used for pedagogical purposes, they allow learners – particularly in a Māori context – to understand the qualities, responses and decisions towards situations faced by ancestors (Lee, 2009; Cliffe-Tautari, 2019). *Pūrākau* consists of knowledge that can be verified and critically reviewed across time, therefore attaining a quality of accuracy and precision that is not readily measured under a Western lens. *Pūrākau* invites the participant to be present to the sharing of local stories which act as theoretical frameworks to aid in

unpacking connections between power, space and words. Importantly, the focus is not solely on the validity of the story's content, but rather, the ways in which it brings together knowledges from the past and present. Additionally, the storyteller does not posit to pass on knowledges of specificity to the audience. The form and purpose of the story creates an opportunity for knowledge-building which may be voluntarily received. This emphasises that storytelling in an Indigenous sense is not a top-down experience, but rather, an intersection with aggregated knowledges.

In other experiences of Indigenous storytelling such as "*yarning*" across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, it is seen as both a relaxed and open space of discussion; a pathway shared by the enquirer and participant as they contribute towards a shared relationship to unpack topics related to the research at hand (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Importantly, it should be noted here that *yarning* is not an equivalent to *pūrākau*. *Yarning* involves the teller deciding what and how to share the story and what is left out and invites the academic to listen and continue the conversation in ways that may or may not relate to the research topic (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). In this way, storytelling as *yarning* maintains the practice of relationality while keeping the contemporary experience of enquiry within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultural frameworks. *Yarning* and other means of storytelling differ from Eurocentric approaches in that it seeks to integrate contemporary phenomena within an Indigenous cultural framework through reflecting on understandings of personal and communal experiences. The role of the storyteller is to contextualise experiences within an Indigenous understanding of networking.

Roppolo (2008) argues that storytelling attains a participatory quality as the listener provides meaning to the story. As the interpretative proficiency of the listener depends on factors such as age, experience and understandings of intersecting or diverging stories; narrative remains in a continual state of interpretive motion. Each agent in the storytelling process is both taught and explained by story, rather than by exposition (Roppolo, 2001). Knowledge, whether in the spheres of culture, family or individual is typically embedded in the fabric of the narrative and understandings derived by the individual listener (Wieser, 2017). The knowledge shared was already embedded into the storyteller's life prior to the enactment of the research process. Therefore, it remains under the care of the storyteller. It

is prudent to reiterate that when the researcher is participating in the sharing of processes such as *pūrākau* or *yarning* they are not recast as a discoverer of the knowledge. In the sharing of such threads of existence, there unfolds a circular transmission of knowledge which predates the exchange; and in some cases was held in similar care by other storytellers long before the initiation of the research (Wilson, 2001). In arranging knowledge in a circular, reciprocal manner, this ensures that all known aspects of phenomena are included in the information held by people and considered when drawing out decisions and conclusions. Indeed, decisions arise from the confluence of ideas presented through the story (Wieser, 2017). The storyteller recognises that the listener will sift through the story being shared and filter using their own lived experiences as the lens; therefore, adapting the information to make it congruent with their life. Deloria (1999) would add that "Tribal peoples are as systematic and philosophical as Western scientists in their efforts to understand the world around them. They simply use other kinds of data and have goals other than determining the mechanical functioning of things" (p. 41). The space becomes a network of knowledge building as agents arrive at the story in differing and relating ways. This network or ecology which will be further articulated below serves to create a platform of participation which sustains communities: one that is cognisant of interrelations between the material and immaterial nature of time and space. To fully understand the ecology of relations between agents such as human, animal, environment etc.; an appreciation for networks across time and space is needed. It is an organic, growing practice.

The knowledges derived from such ecologies are not formal, traversable in contexts beyond its practical application. Rather, it is embedded in the process of ongoing skill-building, sensitivity-building and (re)orientations that have unfolded through prolonged lived experiences when residing in a particular space. Mind and nature are not seen as separate in thought nor practice. Storytelling necessitates an immersion from the start; an exercise of the human condition to be active, practical and perceptive in engaging with aspects of the lived-in world (Ingold, 2000). In sharing experiences, or the stories of such experiences, ideas and values of import can be used so long as the sharer recognises they are part of the process of gathering information (Deloria, 1999). Given the immersive quality of ecology within an Indigenous perspective, a sense of community arises amidst the exercise of relationships. Through *yarning* in particular, a community of listeners is formed around the practice that

transcends beyond a network of storytellers. Barlo, Boyd, Pelizzon, & Wilson (2020) argue that four understandings are attained when *yarning* is observed. These are *equality*, whereby balanced rights and opportunities are provided; *responsibility,* a recognition of purpose to deal with something; *integrity,* being authentic with sturdy moral principles; and *protection,* the quality of sheltering someone or something with care. The process of beginning a conversation and unpacking new knowledges and insights facilitates a space upon which the community may further flourish. Knowledges are arrived at and valued with relation to the harmony of the collective, as well as the sustainability of the community in full (Teuton, 2008). Common links are established between the speaker and listener that allow participants to place each other in their meaning system (Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Martin, 2008). The community become knowledge producers as knowledge-making is not committed to a single agent. It is knowledge that sits in an interconnected space with all relations whether human or posthuman.

Across numerous spaces of academia, storytelling serves the purpose of adorning or bringing to life explanations for central concepts already verified in those spaces rather than build new knowledges. This indicates that it is rarely envisaged as praxis-generating. Locating storytelling in this way underscores the practice as non-critical or non-reflexive that is peripheral to the formation of disciplinary knowledge. Knowledge creation is perceived differently in relation to Indigenous meaning-making, whereby storytelling is located centrally to the practices of collaboration, relatedness and balance between agents. Storytelling reflects knowledge-building praxis when the narrative, environment, time and constituent agents are actively engaging in the process of understanding a new way of being, knowing and doing. This informs the saliency of stories for Indigenous people: it is an interconnected thread to ancestral domain and lived experiences across time shared by the community as the storytelling process recurs. It is not merely a sliver of data that is passed on, but a living tradition that embeds itself within all relationships. This recurring notion of viewing all relations within the practice of storytelling is important as agency is mobilised to reorient dominant methodologies in current colonial systems. Storytelling as knowledge-building praxis is not simply a taken-for-granted means to do things. Such processes are not static, but rather, are forces that are productive, responsive and networked with other forces. Barlo et al. (2020) discuss the salience of lore and adaptability within the practice of *yarning*, which

considers where the principles and protocols that govern the *yarning* space are sourced from as well the responses to ecological changes. Although upon face value this may be seen as an undermining of "traditional" story which weakens the validity of the story being told, the authors posit that *yarning* is fluid and relationship sensitive (Barlo et al., 2020). Storytelling as praxis means that knowledge shared does not end with gathered participants but can also cross temporal boundaries. From an Indigenous worldview, knowledge possesses a quality of being alive; thereby informing the same characteristics of stories themselves (Adams, Wilson, Heavy Head, & Gordon, 2015). Indigenous research views all elements of the story as important spaces of reflexivity, constructing a web of agents and knowledge-building process which counter Western, linear means of enquiry.

I make an argument for this theoretical storied approach, specifically in understanding homelessness. Homelessness is tied to a contested narrative which is predominantly viewed as a phenomenon removed and understood separated from other means of knowing. We are invited in this instance to unpack the relationships between aspects such as definitions, people, time and space. While dominant, taken-for-granted research often objectively label homelessness in deficit terms, it is hoped that stories and narrative based research can aid in appreciating the relations that arise. The following chapters will now critically review how homelessness is represented through mainstream definitions and public accounts. Through the above discussions on storytelling as Indigenous methodology, these definitions and accounts will then be revisited and viewed through an Indigenous lens.

CHAPTER THREE: CRITICAL HOMELESSNESS NARRATIVES

Unpacking Lived Experiences

Over the last 20 years there have been exponential increases in homelessness, particularly within the Auckland central business district (CBD). A 2018 count within the CBD found that at least 3,674 people experience a state of either primary or tertiary homelessness (Housing First New Zealand, 2018). These findings are significant in that those who are homeless most commonly reside in large urban settings amongst developed nations (Toro, 2007). In being most proximate to the public gaze, urban, storied representations such as those provided by the media gain a perpetual power of its own. It is important to note that homelessness levels also fluctuate across suburban and rural locations. This includes instances of hidden homelessness, reflecting those who live temporarily with family or friends or within non-conventional housing (Demaerschalk, Hermans, Steenssens, & Van Regenmortel, 2019).

Defining homelessness remains a contested field that is navigated through social discourse. A discussion on definitions is important as these frame how stories are conceptualised, shared and received. Receiving the stories of those who are homeless become problematic when there is lack of understanding or acknowledgement around the differing ways in which such experiences are informed. The dominant public social construction of homelessness at the turn of the century was fuelled by political representations, articles and media content which underpinned the transition from viewing the phenomenon as social condition to social problem (Jacobs, 1999). Indeed, many colonising movements have been predicated on understandings of Christian teleology and morality which justifies the existence of hardship as being tied to individual moral failure rather than a result of societal insufficiency. Since then, there has been growing attention to the structures that influence homelessness on a collective, rather than merely individualistic scale. As the social and cultural fabric of society change, the day-to-day behaviour and attitudes towards those who are homeless also take new form. Within New Zealand in particular, scholarly discussion on homelessness increased beyond the 1980s as the demographics of the homeless population changed (Percy, 1982; Lea & Cole, 1983). This

section is intended to unpack an unfolding conversation on homelessness which informs the way stories are shared about such experiences. It is expected that this research informs future prevention-orientated research that is both compelling and comparative. Beyond this brief review, merely deepening one's understanding of homelessness will not prevent the situation on its own. It is, however, expected that such knowledge will support prospective scholars and support service platforms to review the ways in which the lived experience of homelessness is conceptualized and held; particularly when these experiences are shared.

Mainstream Definitions and Representations of Homelessness

Homelessness is highlighted as a harm inducing experience across the literature. Those who are homeless often navigate discrimination (Penelope & Damian, 2007), a lack of access to nutritional food in socially acceptable ways (Herault & Ribar, 2017), and stigmatisation (Rayburn & Guittar, 2013). The label "homeless" is commonly used to refer to those identities that are dispossessed of and removed from family, community and work spheres (Hopper, 2003). However, strategies are employed to survive their lived experience, contrary to assumptions of passivity and inaction. As identity is a fluid, relational process; the experiences of homelessness are not universal. Furthermore, it is important to note that socio-historical influences upon identity shape the way that homelessness is defined between nation-states. While the experiences of other countries in relation to homelessness are unpacked throughout this dissertation; the New Zealand definition of homelessness is used here to inform discussion on mainstream and Indigenous representations of homelessness. Three differing domains of housing are used to distinguish differences in the population of homeless. This entails a physical domain, whereby the dwelling provides sufficient necessities to meet basic needs such as cooking and sanitary facilities; a social domain, accommodation with personal quarters for holding social relations; and a legal domain, whereby the occupant holds exclusive occupation and security over the household (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). Amidst the overlap of these domains, the experiences of homelessness within New Zealand can be distinguished according to those who do not have physical shelter, those in temporal or sharing accommodation, and those living in uninhabitable housing situations (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). This definition resonates with those used in Australia, whereby

homelessness is broken down into three domains: primary homelessness, including rough sleepers; secondary homelessness, including those moving frequently between accommodations such as 'couch surfers'; and tertiary homelessness, reflecting those living in hostels or emergency housing facilities (Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 1992). The prior definition will be utilised in place of other national definitions as it provides a broad coverage of homelessness experiences that are relevant to the New Zealand context.

Homelessness arises through a complex coalescing of individual and structural factors (Hodgetts, Chamberlain, & Groot, 2011). This has significant implications for how the phenomenon is understood, storied and how subsequent policy decisions are informed. Perceiving homelessness as a structural issue is evocative of support for policies and programmes which address systemic inequalities such as a lack of secure, affordable housing. Conversely, individualistic framings are typically related to policies which target individual behaviours such as substance abuse and passivity (Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 1992). Mainstream media representations can inform attitudes and belief systems, which have a role in advancing differing perceptions of social inequalities. Therefore, the media has a part in influencing the socially ascribed stories of homelessness. Beyond merely 'impacting' people in everyday life, media and content are subsumed into social life and become practiced as part of the dynamics of lived experience (Chamberlain & Hodgetts, 2008). Though the root causes of homelessness are multi-faceted in nature, mainstream media tend to highlight the phenomenon as predominantly an individual problem. In order to address how such stories are framed, it is important to consider the frameworks used to make sense of lived experiences such as homelessness.

Revisiting homelessness: an ongoing story

Numerous scholars discuss the impacts of intergenerational trauma and how this arises from colonial systems such as dispossession and displacement. These contribute to social inequalities such as homelessness and have been notably reviewed among Indigenous peoples across Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Berman et al., 2009; Memmott & Nash, 2016; Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019). These inequalities were systematically produced through

policies and practices which removed Indigenous peoples from their ancestral domains. They were then placed within settlements: disconnecting families and enforcing an internalization of Eurocentric norms through Western forms of punishment and other social policy. These settlements became the center point for providing income and medical support as well as state housing. Further, the proximity of residents within these settlements allowed for the ease of extracting tax. These processes sustained the ongoing surveillance and imposition of state into Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing (Condon, 1990; Damas, 2002). In creating a sense of dependency through the structured supply of shelter and other necessities, Indigenous peoples became more likely to experience instances of vulnerability. Alfred (2009) notes that such processes served only to embed Indigenous people in settler states as 'dependents' on those that have imposed a long-term threat to their livelihood. This occurs alongside social structures that have discriminated across physical, psychological, and financial domains.

Informing an Indigenous Definition of Homelessness

Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in homeless populations across Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; as well as people of colour within USA (Peters & Christensen, 2016). The systematic colonisation of Indigenous peoples has been highlighted as a significant contributor to the displacement inflicted upon marginal communities across generations (Loomba, 2005; McCall, Browne, & Reimer-Kirkham, 2009). Therefore, homelessness in this instance should be considered in relation to wider structures of imposition. McCall et al. (2009) argue that homelessness among Indigenous populations is located within a legacy of subordination, which positions Indigenous as 'other'. In this instance, colonization has disconnected marginalized ethnic groups from former ways of being; instead, pushing such groups towards unfamiliar, culturally imposing structures of support. This is reflective of the notion 'other homelessness', whereby the array of colonial practices experienced by Indigenous peoples has resulted in a reality beyond simply having a lack of shelter (McCall et al., 2009). In looking beyond the house as a home in of itself, a greater understanding of how meanings are attributed through the spaces of culture, spirituality and ideals can be attained (Geisler & George, 2006). The 'other' in question is contrasted to the notion of 'us'; as 'us' is

perceived as normal, taken-for-granted and perpetuated in everyday lived experiences (Fürsich, 2010; Love & Tilley, 2013). While the experiences of homelessness differ between the countries aforementioned, there is a shared history of discrimination and dispossession typical of colonisation. The 'other', therefore, becomes a point of difference for the dominant group. Stereotyping the 'other' as deviant, or in other cases criminal, further positions such groups as automatically disadvantaged within a reality built by values that are both unfamiliar and harmful.

As previously discussed, mainstream understandings of homelessness have tended to capture a mostly individualistic experience. The colonisation of Indigenous peoples fragmented collective identities and facilitated knowledge systems that brought about discriminative practices against marginalized ethnic minorities (McCall et al., 2009). In denying the practice of Indigeneity which is predicated on the collective; monocultural, individualistic values are perceived as the norm. Informing this perpetuation is the notion that those who do not adhere to such values are considered guilty of the labels ascribed to them (Hopper, 2003; Neuberg, Smith, & Asher, 2000). This deems the 'individual' as unworthy of access to the same resources enjoyed by wider society.

While collective intergenerational trauma and resilience is a common and growing discourse in making sense of Indigenous experiences within New Zealand; the wider, global mainstream literature on homelessness tends to perceive the homeless experience whether rural or urban as an individualistic, traumatic phenomenon (Hopper, 2003; Stewart et al., 2004; Robinson, 2005; Kim & Ford, 2006; Baptista, 2010; Bird, Rhoades, Lahey, Cederbaum, & Wenzel, 2017). Importantly, the roots of intergenerational trauma across the Indigenous experience are not located solely in the past, but rather, traverse in varying forms into the present (Hodgetts, Stolte, & Groot, 2014). In order to respond to the disparate experiences of homelessness amongst Indigenous peoples, an emphasis on the individual experience alone is not sufficient (Bingham et al., 2019). Discussions around individual experiences of trauma amongst those who are homeless are, therefore, inseparable from collective experiences of colonisation (Belanger, Awosoga, & Weasel Head, 2013; Pihama et al., 2014); and the contemporary policies of the government which allow for a continual distancing from legal obligations towards Indigenous peoples (Shore, 2019). Boyce (2008) notes that the

preservation of state authority in 'the Crown' has effectively shrouded the continual expansion of post-colonial power – particularly amongst political executives and bureaucratic processes. Intergenerational trauma is not a phenomenon rooted solely in the past for Indigenous peoples. Coloniality continues to branch out into the present as manifested through inequalities in social, health, economic and political outcomes (Axelsson, Kukutai, & Kippen, 2016; Rout, Tau, & Waerea-i-te-Rangi Smith, 2017). New Zealand social policy has continually sought to diminish and remove value systems that have existed for time immemorial; overlaying, or in most cases, replacing these with doctrines that traumatize and disconnect Māori from one another (Rout, Tau, & Waerea-i-te-Rangi Smith, 2017). The occurrence and perpetuation of intergenerational trauma is one such reason as to why discussions of colonialism are relevant to understanding social determinants of Indigenous health (Lang, 2001; Loppie-Reading & Wien, 2009). Given the social determinants of health are constructed and interconnected, intergenerational trauma significantly impacts upon the pathways of Indigenous to and from homelessness (Menzies, 2009; Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019). This is particularly salient for Māori within New Zealand insofar that migration and changing values created a divergence in understanding between urban living and residing on ancestral lands. This trickles down into storied understandings of home and homelessness, whereby Māori attempt to locate themselves between their physical living space, and the spiritual connections which underpin Māori meaning making through those living on ancestral domains (Groot & Peters, 2016). Understanding the practices of colonisation through legacies of displacement and dispossession are therefore important in understanding how contemporary understandings of homelessness are informed.

Relations and Obstacles

Although much of mainstream discourse in media about homelessness depict individuals as complacent in their dependency, many of the stories reviewed later in chapter four suggest that in fact those who are homeless take active measures to resist dependency that align with the concept of 'home/journeying' presented by Mallet (2004). Spending time on the whenua, *marae* or with peers were 'home/journeying' strategies used as an expression of tino-rangatiratanga and (re)building a sense of home. Notably, the importance of familial

ties and community in Indigenous understandings of home, as well as the deep hurt that arises from their absence, brings to light a significant link between a lack of 'home' and experiences of homelessness for Indigenous peoples. A disrupted sense of belonging and relational connection to place is also connected to a disruption of the network which ties Indigenous families and communities together. However, the underlying importance of family and community, as well as the deep sense of connection that arises from such relations, may also be seen in the instances of 'home/journeyed' explored. Beyond a site of trauma and trial, communities and families are significant sites of renewal and restorative peace (Walters, 2007).

Conversely, institutional processes fragment and confine understanding of home and homelessness, bureaucratizing boundaries between otherwise interconnected spheres such as health, housing, and social and community resilience. This level of disconnection discounts efforts to resist and counter the structural factors which contribute to homelessness. Distasio, Sylvestre & Mulligan (2005) further contend that mainstream definitions problematise the ability to make accurate and meaningful assessments as well as responses to homelessness. These scholars note that those who traverse through half-way homes, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres and the carceral system make up the 'hidden homeless'. The facets of post-colonial practices have fragmented Indigenous understandings of home and contribute to the causes of homelessness as well as an impediment to potential solutions. For greater improvement in spheres such as wellness and health, an equal improvement in connected spheres such as supporting families, social housing as well as income security is needed. This includes a consideration of the colonial and wider resource and socio-cultural conditions which arose from "being displaced from critical community social structures and lacking in stable housing" (Menzies, 2005, p. 8).

Differences in experiences of homelessness with relation to ethnicity and incarceration reflect an important contribution to the literature on homelessness. This is important as counts of homelessness often do not include those who navigate the reality of incarceration and homelessness. Beattie & Kong (2005) finds that within Canada, Aboriginal peoples make up twenty percent of those incarcerated despite only making up three percent of the country's population. These experiences are shared across other historic settler

societies such as New Zealand and Australia (Woolley, 2014; Te Uepū Hāpai i te Ora, 2019; Shepherd et al., 2020). Links are noted between incarceration and homelessness, whereby those who are homeless become more likely to be incarcerated and vice versa (Metraux & Culhane, 2004; Walsh, MacDonald, Rutherford, Moore, & Krieg, 2011). This is particularly notable through instances where criminal records limit the financial ability to obtain affordable housing (Metraux & Culhane, 2004). Goffman (1963) would argue that the revolving doors between homelessness and imprisonment are stigmatizing as individuals are perceived to possess attributes which effectively devalue their sense of identity. The self becomes subject to mortification and humiliation as they are increasingly treated as a manifestation of peril. This is particularly evident in cases where groups feel threatened by others within society (Neuberg, Smith, & Asher, 2000). Labelling those who are homeless as being deviant or in some instances criminal, feeds a narrative of individualised responsibility; thereby necessitating further stigma through threat and blame placing upon the 'deviant'. These stereotypes are predicated on the understanding that those who are without a home are deemed guilty of their ascribed labels (Hopper, 2003; Neuberg, Smith, & Asher, 2000). The resultant is a denial of equal rights or access to resources consumed by others as the individual is deemed 'unworthy'. Given the risk factors to re-incarceration, the carceral system is an important point of analysis when reviewing paths to and from homelessness. A review of the literature here affirms that discussions of homelessness require a consideration of both the interpersonal and structural factors which intersect with notions of ethnicity and lived homelessness.

Strength-based Responses

It is prudent to note, however, colonial space is continually called into question by those whom such spaces seek to impose on. The notion of 'home/journeying' speaks to resisting mainstream notions of homemaking and homelessness (Mallett, 2004). This entails the efforts to find or return to a sense of home, as well as how these movements come into conflict with social policy or are implicit through varying stages of homelessness. The concept of 'home/journeying' offers a more strength-based approach to understanding meaning-making and agency; a process that is often reduced to simply understanding the contributing

factors towards homelessness (Hulchanski, 2005). This is salient in that stories of homeless lived experiences are framed from the perspective of one who is traversing and navigating, rather than remaining in a stagnant situation as is common in mainstream understanding. Mallet (2004) notes that home is not a singular entity, but rather, spread across cities, locations where one has lived, or in spaces where positive connections were nurtured. A sense of 'home/journeying' is inextricably linked to relationships which offer differing symbolic meanings and salience. This is important in that home becomes both a place of origin, whether recent or relative, as well as a point of destination (Mallett, 2004). It is therefore possible to be 'homeless' in one sense and 'at home' in another. This resonates with the work of other scholars who posit that home can be structurally fixed in time but is not fixed in space (Douglas, 1991). The notion of 'home/journeying' provides a framework to recognise significant acts of agency which might otherwise be seen as a contribution to homelessness. This is evident in examples of migrating to urban centres to leave violent relationships or residing in cars to counter the taken-for-granted notions of homeless sheltering (Christensen, 2013b). Identifying instances in which 'home/journeying' are manifested would allow for potential developments in policy and on-the-ground interventions to be realised. While there are numerous housing policies that seek to alleviate homelessness in New Zealand, these often impose upon significant cultural and familial wishes among Māori (Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019).

While researching on homelessness and adjustment are significant pathways of enquiry, focussing solely on deficits and stigma-laden narratives can lead to research that is both exploitative and desensitising. This can potentially lead to affirming the salience of harmful assumptions pertaining to experiences of homelessness (Kidd & Davidson, 2007). Conversely, considering the insights that arise from personal and relational decisions are important as this allows for a greater understanding of everyday practices revolving around ingenuity, engagement with peers and meaning making (Hodgetts, Chamberlain, & Groot, 2011). Disparate definitions of homelessness suggest exposure to risk and harm is not suffered equally. Amidst such challenges, those who adapt in positive ways are argued to demonstrate a sense of resilience (Sanders, Lim, & Sohn, 2008). This emphasises that homelessness is far more than merely a housing issue. Alongside understandings of 'home/journeying', the notion of resilience offers an alternative way to unpack how meaning

is navigated by those who are homeless. Resilience involves satisfying basic needs such as shelter and food, and more importantly, utilising strategies to access networks of assistance (Williams, Lindsey, Kurtz, & Jarvis, 2001). This has been highlighted in other studies as related to seeking a sense of belonging and attaining self-acceptance (Groot et al., 2011). Resilience, therefore, lies at the intersection of protective factors such as personal qualities, relational networks and physical settings which inform life pathways. Montgomery (1994) would argue here that resilience as a strength-based process is significant as it accounts for complexities around lived experiences, as well as the ways in which those who are homeless make meaning of their lives.

Alongside understandings of 'home/journeying' and resilience, several ethnic groups include a spiritual dimension to understanding home and homelessness. This resonates with the work of other notable scholars who argue that lived experience is interconnected and (re)discoverable through the domains of spirituality (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). Indigenous scholars across Canada, Australia and New Zealand note that spiritual homelessness is inextricably tied to one's disconnection with family and communal networks as well as with ancestral lands (Distasio, Sylvestre, & Mulligan, 2005; Christensen, 2013a; Memmott, Long, Chambers, & Spring 2003; Groot, Nikora, & Rua, 2010). In the Canadian context, Christensen (2013a) discusses spiritual homelessness as lived and imagined experiences arising through relationships between material and imaginative realms as well as processes. In this instance, there is a degree of 'rootlessness' as individuals are tasked with navigating a history of socio-cultural upheaval. Memmott et al. (2003) define spiritual homelessness within the Australian context as having an incomplete identity: holding incomplete connections and knowledge of who their ancestors were and what their ancestral lands meant to them. The resultant is a barrier to one's mental health and sense of relational belonging. Indigenous scholars in New Zealand conceptualise spiritual homelessness as a disconnect from one's *tūrangawaewae* (place to stand); a space to belong and share one's voice (Groot, Nikora, & Rua, 2010). This reaffirms understandings of home as tied to land, whereby all aspects of livelihood are imbued with both spiritual and cultural connections to the spaces in which Indigenous reside. While discussions on physical homelessness are salient, the literature suggests that it is possible to find a sense of home/journeying home through accessing a spiritual sphere of livelihood, including access to one's ancestral domain. In the same sense, it is also possible to

experience a state of spiritual homelessness despite residing in ample, physical accommodation. While movements have been made to physically house the 'homeless' many Indigenous communities continue to be culturally and socially fragmented, experiencing difficulty in attaining a full sense of 'home' amongst continual discrimination of the spiritual sphere. The ways in which homelessness and constituting spheres such as the spiritual domain are defined across varying populations reveal that a localised and agreed upon definition is required before conducting research among Indigenous peoples (Distasio, Sylvestre, & Mulligan, 2005). Importantly, discussions on such definitions necessitate both involvement and acceptance by Indigenous communities that are involved (Groot, Nikora, & Rua, 2010).

This resonates with the work of other scholars who posit that homelessness, or the search for home, cannot be bound by a single definition; but rather, reflect the transient nature of navigating such a reality (Somerville, 1992). The specific aspects of 'home' are predicated on cultural, social, collective, and individual values which manifest according to the context in which the person resides in. Andrews (2004) discusses how Indigenous peoples within Canada perceive the practice of moving from space to space and encountering knowledge through the stories of such spaces as paramount to a sense of home. The transient nature of home(less)ness means that individuals traverse a reality containing overlapping strands of meaning-making. This resonates with the literature on homelessness within New Zealand, whereby 'identity' and by extension, 'home' for Māori is fundamentally related to the *whenua* (land) (Durie et al., 1995; Lawson-Te Aho et al., 2019). In this instance, home transcends the physical space and upholds a spiritual element by way of whakapapa (Hikuroa, 2015). This is particularly salient as Māori commonly refer to themselves as *tangata whenua* which translates to 'people of the land', rather than 'people on the land' as is common in western ontology. Homelessness encompasses an array of lived experiences, including the physical, spiritual, and cultural dimension (Keys Young, 1998). Keys Young (1998) note that experiences of homelessness cannot be divorced from the socio-historical experiences of Indigenous peoples. This reaffirms that individual experiences of homelessness amongst Indigenous peoples, therefore, should not be viewed separate from the collective and intergenerational experiences of colonialism (Christensen, 2012).

Following a review of decolonising and Indigenous methodologies, this chapter has sought to critically review the mainstream definitions of homelessness; offering an alternative means to frame stories of lived experience. It has been argued that such definitions require a holistic consideration of other surrounding phenomena such as colonisation and institutions as well as significant agents such as the environment and community within which such experiences are located. The following chapter now further operationalises storytelling as an Indigenous methodology, which is expected to aid in further reflections on homelessness.

CHAPTER FOUR: KNOWLEDGE-MAKING PRACTICES IN STORIES

Relating to home

While living with the Itohman-Magahat-Bukidnon tribe in the Philippines, I had the opportunity to meet the matriarch of the community – the wife of the *kalanyan.* Having finished my tasks for the day I walked back to the *tribu* hall. From afar it looked as one with the mountains behind it: bamboo intricately woven and holding motifs akin to the rice terraces that cascaded down the valley. We sat in the hall as her children played outside in the cool air, bobbing up and down on a bamboo see-saw that spun on its own axis. She spoke with firmness, gesturing to the surrounding *bukid* that sheltered the village. *"Baláy"* she said with pride, "home". By way of origins narratives, she shared the stories of how the *bukid* came to be, how each tribe came to be known by their names and what brought each tribe together in the end. She spoke of what it meant to take care of the ancestral domain gifted to the community by their ancestors. This was contrasted with the stories of challenge in the wake of corporations wishing to reap the economic benefits of *kagulángan* (uncleared forestry), as well as the national government who had branded the tribes across the valley as rebels and terrorists. A number of the community had been arrested at varying points of history, many of whom would eventually be released but disconnected from land and family. These people, she shared, would often live homeless in the city below: surrounded by far more struggle than when they had first been detained. Her story returned once more to where it began: the *bukid,* and the *baláy* it provides. She walked me to the edge of village and pointed to one that rose differently from the rest. Motioning to her children, they eagerly left the bobbing see-saw and guided me up the *bukid*. As the sun set, we soon found ourselves at the top of the *bukid* with handfuls of forest berries we had picked along the way. The top was flat where many an elder had sat with their young to teach, the matriarch explained. It was a historical space of survivance and contemporary traversing as the path was well walked-in. When I looked back to the place I had been only minutes prior, the mountain I stood atop cast a shadow that seemed to embrace the village in a blanket of shadow; the tip of which seemed to end where the bottom of the *tribu* hall began. The stories that followed carried me to a deeper place of reflection and belonging, though I had been raised in Aotearoa for most of my life. "*Baláy"*, I whispered to myself as I took in the views before me. Hearing my

unconscious reaction to all that had been shared with me, the matriarch reminded me that I was welcome to this place as home so long as I care for the ancestral domain. *"Tindogan ang yutang kabilin sa amo katigulangan; halong ang dunang mangad sa among kagikan"* - "Stand with the land that is from our ancestors; take care of the ancestral domain." She pointed to mountains yet even higher up, trees, colourful flowers and the sacred flat ground upon which we stood. We walked back down and she shared more stories. Stories not for this dissertation, but which connected me with teachings, spaces and knowledges specific to Tigbao in the Philippines.

Although this is one experience abroad, sacred and significant narratives such as these invite us to consider the poignant nature of sharing: temporary and fleeting if not carefully held, but stimulating if we recognise our important role as a participating agent in the moment. A moment in of itself is indeed temporary, but the traces of knowledge-building are often left behind. Such moments, intertwined with storytelling, invite us as the academic and learner into a knowledge-building system. In addition to the story of Tigbao in the Philippines, which I purposely shared as a way to ground myself in relation to conversations of the land, I now provide a number of 'everyday' stories through the studies of other scholars which encapsulate the sharing of storytelling about homelessness in other evident ways.

Practicing Stories: Place

Storytelling in relation to place often involves a discussion on the ways in which agents embed moral and personal meanings into differing contexts, weaving them into the fabric of lived experience. Groot et al. (2011) led a research project into homelessness, exploring experiences through story and photography. As an ethnographic, case-based methodology: storytelling is operationalised here in the accompaniment of a homeless woman (Ariā, a pseudonym). This explores the significance of Māori cultural concepts to understand Ariā's relationships as well as the places and practices she employs to nurture a positive sense of self:

> I told my grandmother, 'This [the Auckland streets] is where they run to. They [Ariā's family on the streets] think they're alright here', because she was being very judgemental. When she got to see them all, she got a fright. I said 'See, they're all here'. I said 'I'm at home [on the Auckland streets], it's our *whenua* [land], I'm *tangata whenua* [person of the land, Indigenous], and I'm still here'. (Groot et al., 2011, p. 385).

This excerpt from Ariā's story reflects an emotional link between a physical space and her inner self (Manzo, 2003). The research is significant in that Ariā – the central storyteller in this research – and her story is considered in relation to wider stories of historic human movement and displacement:

> "And then she understood. I can talk to them [streeties] about their family back there because they miss them and like hearing about them. And because I've been back there they want to go back now. But it's taking time, just talking to them, just like you and I are, and just letting them listen" (Groot et al., 2011, p. 385).

In this instance, a sense of place is developed whereby memories are tied with specific spaces, bringing about a sense of connection, social inclusion and embodied history (Hernández, Carmen Hidalgo, Salazar-Laplace, & Hess, 2007). Through storytelling about the people whom she connects with in specific spaces, this signifies how the character of a space is formed by the practices which unfold there (Dixon, Levine, & McAuley, 2006). The reciprocal inclusion of the speaker and listener here invites a shared connection to 'place' even when it is not physically present or proximate. Importantly, the stories presented by Ariā reveal that the absence of a house or apartment does not inherently reflect the absence of a home. This reiterates the transitory nature of place with relation to 'home/journeying'. While Ariā traverses across different spaces that connect to her sense of self, she also traverses the same spaces in constant relation with those around her. Her story does not find an end in the past; indeed, it interconnects with the continual exchange of knowledge through place by the knowledge holders who accompany her on the journey. Through movement, the connection to places left behind has been reconfigured (Groot et al., 2011).

Practicing Stories: Material objects

Manzo (2003) argues that the self is inherently interwoven with their physical and social environment. Material objects allow for the physical and social to become connected through a sense of routine and familiarity in ways that are unique to those who experience homelessness. Hodgetts et al. (2010) led a 3-year project which included the accompaniment of Brett [a pseudonym] and how his lived experience of homelessness was traversed over a period of six years (Hodgetts et al., 2010). The article explored parts of a homeless man's life through his use of objects to sustain a sense of place in the city: namely, across material, symbolic, spatial and relational contexts (Hodgetts et al., 2008). The relevance of considering material objects within storytelling lies in the ways that an individual's sense of self ebbs and flows within the places in which they reside and the things they use in everyday livelihood:

> …We'll go with the things important to me. Books are important to me and we've got one here along with the shades [sunglasses] and the sounds [MP3 player] and that's my escapism. Because since my childhood I get really insecure and don't have much confidence… And I can hide in a different world. Nobody sees my eyes, and I can escape into the music. And the same with books; I can escape and not be me. Cos sometimes I don't like me… Try and hide as much as I can and that's how I do it. I'd die without music. I'd go mental. (Hodgetts et al., 2010, p. 295-296).

As a physical object, this highlights the connection between the physical space discussed earlier, imagination and one's sense of self. Reflecting on the material objects of importance to those who, for instance, experience homelessness is significant in that such possessions allow for a sense of belonging to be claimed through the stories shared about them. These items offer a sense of being grounded amidst an otherwise transient lived experience. The stories which surround such objects subsequently reflect a story which surrounds the being (Noble, 2004). The meaning of the stories shared differ according to one's connection to the environment, and how the presence of other agents, inanimate object or otherwise, can change the environmental meaning for others (Hodgetts et al., 2010).

Practicing Stories: People

In addition to place and objects, a consideration of people as agents and contributors to the storytelling is of importance. From an Indigenous perspective, a key feature of this process is the intergenerational transmission of experience. This allows for people who are part of and receptive to the story to be part of the ever-changing response to differing environments (Brown, 2013; Egeland et al., 2013). Such stories are laden with complex, finely interwoven information on human livelihood and elements, posthuman or otherwise, throughout the ages to ensure its transference, connecting with both the heart and mind (Archibald, 2008). This is particularly evident in a research project unpacking the journeys of a number of Māori men who identify as being homeless, and who assist in the gardens of Ōrākei *marae* twice a week (King, Hodgetts, Rua, & Te Whetu, 2016). While the men did not consider Ōrākei *marae* to be their ancestral home, it was a space that was culturally familiar (Mead, 2003; Salmond, 2004). The signficance of people in the process of connecting place and objects as part of an ongoing story is encapsulated in the response of a representative from Ngāti Whātua:

> They [homeless Māori men] are Māori and this is a *marae* and they have the reo [the Māori language]... They just felt at home. And they had a place to come to for their *wairua* [spirit] and to just be themselves…. As a people we could identify with them because we were homeless in our own land. We had nothing left. We could identify with them and how they were feeling. We almost got wiped out. So that was our *aroha* [love/compassion] to them. We couldn't have it that we owned all of this and we left them over there…. We are giving respect to our ancestors by helping other people. The *manaakitanga* [caring/nurturing] that we got from our ancestors, we have to carry that on.... They're in town, but up here they've got the peacefulness. They're Māori so they know this. They're part of our reconciliation of our land. (Matipo) (King et al., 2016, p. 364).

The provision of people within Indigenous stories here reflects a manifestation of connecting with the land and renewing cultural forms in meaningful ways that affirm ways of knowledge production. The experiences of displacement speak to the interconnected

experiences of trauma, but more importantly, the provisions of resilience across generations. This is of import as a facet of storytelling, given that Māori transcend their sense of individual self through being formed both by and through connections; as well as in relation to the natural and supernatural domain (Marsden, 2003). These connections are manifested through the socio-cultural practices of everyday life (Kawharu, 1975). Furthermore, the above excerpt speaks to the intertwining of experiences across several generations and Indigenous spaces. It further reaffirms that narratives of homelessness are often viewed as an issue of housing without due consideration of wider socio-historical and political systems, including colonisation, which continue to impact upon the lived experience of homelessness among Māori today (Groot et al., 2011). Static stories often replicate events but do little to foster relationships nor bring about new ways of being, knowing and doing. On the other hand, storytelling as methodology can deepen the ecologies of knowledge-making in ways that acknowledge the posthuman means of enquiry, such as research on homelessness that is often based on impersonal and insensitive intrusions. The intersection of place, objects and people allows for all knowledges to become related and relevant.

Although each of the aforementioned storytelling practices explore a partial, rather than a whole moment across the story shared in each of the research projects, the above discussion allowed for a greater appreciation of how stories aid in strengthening relationships which reflect both the human and posthuman experience. In so doing, storytelling in praxis means interconnecting knowledges rather than being relegated to the status of static objects. These examples of Indigenous storytelling broke down binary barriers that might otherwise exist in Eurocentric, constrained methods of enquiry. In this chapter, I have unpacked a number of features present in Indigenous storytelling. As method, storytelling requires a degree of listening rather than categorisation; considering, more deeply, all agents that contribute to the sharing of the story rather than focussing solely on the dominant theme at hand. Moments, cultures and frameworks are interconnected realities which can bring together agents; such as place, humans, nonhumans and material objects into knowledge-making spaces. The connections between agents are transferred through to subsequent tellings of the story, each growing, learning and adding upon new iterations. We share a responsibility to nurture relationships that are fluid and driving forces, rather than exist as stagnant structures. It is being present to what is said and unsaid, and what is connected to

both instances. Storytelling, therefore, requires open-mindedness and participation. When a story is shared, it is as sacred as the space brought about when uttered: it invokes a sense of spiritual reciprocity (Lewis, 2006; Lewis, 2011). As such, deep respect is needed when storytelling is applied for the purposes of research (Iseke & Brennus, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Epilogue: Coming down the mountain

The dark clouds which sat heavily over Tigbao mountain upon my initial arrival were now nowhere to be seen. The sky had lent a shiny jewel to the mountains crowning my horizon as I packed my bags to depart from the Itohman-Magahat-Bukidnon tribe. Before I left, an elder shared with me: "What we leave in this life is often remembered - not by those who come after us, but by those who come before us." Confused, I asked how such a thing was possible if they had already left this Earth. He chuckled in reply: "We shape our tools, and later in life those same tools shape us." He continued: "Our *katigulangan* taught their sons and daughters to read the soil like the lines in their hands, how to stand, how to care; how to teach. They leave, but these tools will remain. We were in their hearts when they shared them, and so we are remembered… And so I ask of you: my friend, what tools will you leave behind?" Stories not only encapsulate the past or the details of the present, but hold a quality of openness that allows it to traverse into the future. The storyteller remembers the future by the simple act of sharing a part of their knowledge with others. Those that are part of its formation, sharing and reception are invited to hold the knowledge carefully. Stories are not meant to be possessed or controlled, but held. Furthermore, stories emphasise that relationships are both the destination and the means: they allow for growth of connections and the attainment of balance. We are cautioned when being present to the sharing of Eurocentric stories, such as those shared about homelessness. Stories of dispossession and distancing are often intertwined with mainstream research practices that disconnect us from an ecological understanding of phenomena. Theory and story are not two separate spheres of knowing; requiring separate languages to prove, rather than share ideas. Such stories are not, therefore, solely owned by Eurocentric thought and philosophy. When considered in a holistic, interconnected manner, these representations are far more than a page of content for entertainment and analysis. There is much that can be learned when we listen and are present to the relations in the stories shared with us. As Indigenous people perceive relationships as experiential, such events become part and parcel of a knowledge-building paradigm that is both inclusive and cumulative, not simply divided by discipline or 'expertise'. It is not merely a sliver of data that is passed on, but a living tradition that embeds itself within

all relationships. This appreciation for the interconnectedness of ideas and practices in their contexts allow us to view stories in their complexity, rather than their individuality. It is prudent to consider the work that aids in appreciating these processes within academia – particularly in the domains of decolonial and Indigenous literature. These movements seek to de-center the logic of colonization and embrace the potential of understanding lived experience which acknowledges the existence of multiple realities. As I sit with my experiences of finding a sense of home, I am mindful that such reflections are deeply tied across space and time through the relationships I hold. It is this spirit of connection that informed my overall research process for this dissertation.

In this dissertation I have sought to unpack storytelling as an Indigenous methodology for transformative change. I am cognisant of the fact that storytelling is not solely an Indigenous practice. It is hoped that by decentering mainstream means of knowledge-building, a deeper conversation and comprehension into meaning-making can be held. I drew upon the works of DeLoria, Smith and Wilson to make sense of the tensions and possibilities that lie amidst mainstream and critical research practices; particularly in relation to decolonial and Indigenous methodologies. Where colonial work maintains distance and imposing practices within research, decolonial methodologies are an attempt to critically respond to power structures which deny and devalue Indigenous knowledge production. Contemporary Indigenous research methodologies further build upon the spaces created by decolonial work. They are a manifestation of Indigenous values and beliefs. Broadly, Indigenous methodologies allow for the storyteller to build upon their relationship with an idea. The second half of the chapter operationalised the discussed methodologies to articulate storytelling in research practice. As a repository of lived experience, storytelling helps to make sense of the complex ecologies within which the orator, audience, surroundings are located. In arranging knowledge in a circular, reciprocal manner, all known aspects of phenomena are included in the information held by people and considered when forming decisions and conclusions. The space becomes a network of knowledge-building as agents arrive at the story in differing and relating ways. Indigenous research views all elements of the story as important spaces of reflexivity, constructing a web of agents and knowledge-building process which counter Western, linear means of enquiry. In unpacking the salience of storytelling in praxis, this allowed for an informed enquiry into how social issues such as homelessness are

understood. While collective intergenerational trauma and resilience is a common and growing discourse in making sense of Indigenous experiences within New Zealand; the wider, global mainstream literature on homelessness tends to perceive the homeless experience whether rural or urban as an individualistic, traumatic phenomenon. A critical review of definitions and representations was then articulated as this inherently informs the storied understandings of home and homelessness. The subsequent chapter unpacked a series of elements which are embedded within Indigenous storytelling. Through place, material objects and people, a deeper understanding of home could be arrived at; and how this relates to broader understandings of Indigenous lived experience.

Stories are powerful practices to build upon theory: they can manifest a quality of decentering, decolonizing, and Indigenising the way we think about knowledge. As a contribution to the literature on storytelling and broader practices of meaning-making, it is hoped that this dissertation aids in informing a broader relationship to the understandings of homelessness within New Zealand. I am cognisant of the fact that there are limitations to relying solely on a bottom-up approach. This construct perpetuates the perspective of a governmental or corporative top-down dynamic. To truly subvert these existing constructs, we need to see community as the interconnected space of society. Therefore, I hope to expand this trajectory into a community based, top-down approach with the above as a metaphorical rationale to further understanding the lived experiences of homelessness. Present in these moments of conversations are deep implications for the role of storytelling as method and means to attaining transformative change; insights particularly salient for support networks tasked with the care of those without a place to call home. This dissertation exists as a repository of stories and experiences – now shared with you in an intentional and meaningful way. As you consider your relations in the unfolding practice of knowledge-building, may you grow ever mindful of how stories can connect us all.

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