

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking:

An integrative approach for studying post-TRC organizational change

By

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Abstract

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The research method, Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking, is a novel integrative approach for studying the relationship between policy documents and enactments of respectful reconciliation-focused organizational change. Drawing from the guiding principle of *Etuaptmumk*/Two Eyed Seeing, I define six iterative methodological steps that weave together two qualitative critical research approaches - Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis (CRGBA), an Indigenous-led view of applied policy studies, and Critical Sensemaking, a Canadian-led view of management and organization studies. I use the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada as a case study to demonstrate the function of the Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking method. The TRC sparked public concern regarding Canada-Indigenous reconciliation and a discursive shift that transformed reconciliation into a defining political issue in Canada. But, the meaning of reconciliation is inconsistently used in practice. I propose the TRC presents a model for reconciliation-oriented organizational change for Canadian administrators responding to the Commission's Calls to Action.

September 27th, 2023

Dedication

To my family.

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Terminology and Acronyms

The term “Indigenous” globally refers to first peoples of a territory and is recognized internationally in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). “Aboriginal” is a term that is constitutionally recognized by the Canadian Government and has a definition within Canadian law. Therefore, it has both political and legal significance for specific sub-groups of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples) who seek to restore legitimate structures of self-governance in their homelands. I use the term Aboriginal if it was a direct reference to legal documents or the political definition is relevant. Otherwise, I use the term Indigenous. In the context of Canada, “Indigenous peoples” refers to all constitutionally recognized Aboriginal people and people who have forms of social legitimacy with Indigenous communities (i.e. non-status Indians) though their social connections may be inconsistently recognized legally or politically.

Acronyms

AHF	Aboriginal Healing Foundation
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
CSM	Critical Sensemaking
IRS	Indian Residential School
IRSSA	Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement
MOS	management and organization studies
NWAC	Native Women’s Association of Canada
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission (of Canada)
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Territorial Acknowledgement

Welcome. *P'jilasi*. This research was conducted in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship", which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

Chapter 1: A Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking of the Canadian TRC

The research method in this thesis, Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking (hereafter, Two-Eyed CSM), is a novel integrative approach for studying the relationship between policy documents and enactments of respectful reconciliation-focused organizational change. Drawing from the guiding principle of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012), I define six iterative steps in the method that weave together two qualitative critical research approaches: Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis (CRGBA), an Indigenous-led view of applied policy studies developed by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC, 2022); and Critical Sensemaking (Helms Mills, et al. 2010), a Canadian-led view of management and organization studies. I use the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada as a case study to demonstrate the function of the Two-Eyed CSM method. It is my hope that this method will be used, and developed, to conduct more equitable research in the field of management and organization studies (MOS) in the future.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was established in 2008 to study and share information with the Canadian public about Indian Residential Schools. Indian Residential Schools were funded by the Canadian federal government and administered, primarily, by religious institutions for over 100 years until the last "school" closed in 1996 (TRC, 2015). The TRC sparked a discursive shift such that 'reconciliation' has become a defining political issue in Canada. It altered public discourses, and the way Canadians think about the Canadian identity, Indigenous peoples, and the relationships between them. It brought awareness of oppressive government policies that targeted Indigenous peoples and societies in the past (Adams and Environics Institute, 2021) as well as the ongoing impacts of policies that explicitly targeted Indigenous communities (Yellow Head Institute, 2022). Today, outcomes of

the TRC's work are being studied by both Indigenous and Canadian identifying academics (e.g., Craft & Regan, 2020; Wilson, Breen, & DuPré, 2019; Yellow Head Institute, 2022).

Since 2015, the frequency with which politicians, institutions, organizations, and thought leaders talk about reconciliation has increased to such an extent that 'reconciliation' has become a defining political issue in Canada (e.g., Craft & Regan, 2020; Davis & Hiller, 2021), but, the intended meaning of the term 'reconciliation' is unclear and inconsistently used in practice. I propose based on my personal experience and observations that the lack of clarity is a problem for Canadian organizations who attempt to respond to the TRC's Calls to Action.

Neither the administrative processes of the TRC (de Costa, 2016; James, 2021; James, 2022; Nagy, 2014; Stanton, 2011) nor the implications of the TRC have been considered through a lens of organizational change. If such a disruptive social change is not being studied by academics in the field of management and organization studies, then how will research be relevant to Canadian organizations who have been called to respond to the Calls to Action? Further, how will the resources we use to teach future business leaders prepare them for the shifts in public policy and legal decisions that reinforce the inherent jurisdictional rights of Indigenous peoples?

Through this research, I support the ongoing efforts to enact reconciliation strategies in Canadian organizations and in the field of MOS. I propose the Truth and Reconciliation Commission presents a reconciliation-oriented model for navigating dynamics of organizational change. The reports produced are embedded with explanations of Commissioner sensemaking that Canadian administrators can learn about and from. I use the TRC as a case study to demonstrate the applicability of the Two-Eyed CSM method.

In this chapter, I show how my positionality allows me to see relationships between the policy issues that the CRGBA framework was developed to address and the field of MOS. I then review the institutional changes that preceded the TRC, the gap(s) in literature addressed by this thesis and describe the methods I use to analyze the TRC administrative processes.

Self-Reflexive Positioning in Relationship to a place, nations, and fields of study

This dissertation addresses two gaps in the field of management and organization studies:

- 1) how organizational research methods must change to be respectful of Indigenous methods and
- 2) how Canadian organization studies must change to address shifts public policy and legal discourses related to Canada-Indigenous relations shown in the TRC Calls to Action. This dissertation also extends the discussion of Two-Eyed Seeing into the field of management and organization studies and highlights the need for organizational research to consider the relationship between organizations and the spaces and places they occupy in practice. After establishing my positionality, I framed my analysis as an Indigenous-led Study to deliberately centre Indigenous teachings and perspectives of reconciliation rather than those informed primarily by mainstream (Eurocentric) theories of knowledge. It was my intention to question (and disrupt) the centrality of Eurocentrism within the field of MOS.

Taking my cues from protocols that are common among many Indigenous peoples, including *L'nu* and many Cape Bretoners, I introduce myself and express my gratitude to those who join me on this research journey. By opening this manuscript with a territorial acknowledgement, I convey information to you, the reader, wherever you are located, about my location and positionality. As I write, I am in *Unama'ki*/Cape Breton, one of the seven hereditary districts of the Mi'kmaw People. This has been my home and my place of residence for most of my life. It has also been the home of my ancestors for generations. My paternal ancestors are the

Mi'kmaq (*L'nu*), whose laws and teachings have maintained order in this territory since time immemorial. My maternal ancestors are of settler-European (British, and Irish) heritage; they have also called this place home for generations.

Unama'ki/Cape Breton is a small island, part of Atlantic Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia. According to oral and writing traditions, it is one of the first places where the Indigenous peoples of the place we now call Canada and European explorers established trading relationships in the 1500s, and eventually established permanent settlements on this continent. *Mi'kmaw'ki*/Atlantic Canada is a place of rich cultural heritage where many people have since flocked to find new lives. Between 1725 and 1779, the Mi'kmaq signed a series of treaty agreements with representatives of the British Crown agreements that allowed both societies to co-exist in this territory (Marshall and Battiste, 2016).

While it is common in Nova Scotia and in *Unama'ki*/Cape Breton to acknowledge territory and the Treaties of Peace and Friendship in post-secondary spaces (Wilkes, Duong, Kesler, and Ramos, 2017), does acknowledging the historical treaties mean we are also honouring them? Many Indigenous scholars and allies say we are not (Battiste, 2016; Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; King and Pasternak, 2019). The Peace and Friendship treaties are central to the way I make sense of the topic of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation. In *Mi'kmaw'ki*, and specifically in Nova Scotia, the Peace and Friendship Treaties are central to the Nova Scotia Tripartite process (Denny and Fanning, 2016) which has led to diverse ways of managing in the public sector (e.g., in Education, Justice, Economic Development, and Health Care). The Mi'kmaq – Nova Scotia – Canada framework agreement (Canada, 2009) led to new rules and ways of working that account for complexity in spaces where Canadian and Mi'kmaw sovereignty overlap in *Mi'kmaw'ki*/Atlantic Canada.

A territorial acknowledgement is recognition that location and geography influence the stories of people, communities, and economies. The introduction to *Unama'ki* also challenges a simplistic notion of one nation or area of jurisdictional authority bounded by a geographical line on a map. I position myself and my research in relationship to *Mi'kmaw'ki* and, by extension, the people who have lived here for generations before me.

My motivation for engaging in the academic space is also a result of relational accountability (Wilson, 2008) to an Indigenous knowledge system and specifically Mi'kmaw teachings and self-government projects, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 2. Positionality and relational accountability are fundamental to establishing good relations in Indigenous research paradigms (Wilson, 2008) and Critical Indigenous Research Methods (Smith, 2012). The positionality work that I have done is also a step toward relationship building. They both involved thinking through and articulating a sense of relational responsibility and ethics. Relationship building involves asking questions about relational ethics (NWAC, 2022, p.20).

As a Ph.D. candidate studying in the field of management and organization studies, I identify as a critical Indigenous scholar and a Mi'kmaw-Canadian community development researcher. I study Indigenous-led organizations in which issues of treaty, sovereignty, and Indigenous rights are as central to management research as the topics of community economics and policy development/reform. As an associate professor in a business school, my courses and students benefit from this scholarship. These professional identities frame my understanding of my academic role(s) in a business school, and the research, teaching, and service work that I do as an employee, an educator, and a student.

The MOS Gap: Critical Indigenous Perspectives of Reconciliatory Change in Organizations

The disproportionately low numbers of Indigenous-identifying business school faculty (Bastien, Coraiola, and Foster, 2022) is evidence of a disconnect between MIS, Indigenous Studies, and Indigenous knowledge systems. Intentional or otherwise, there are barriers that have prevented Indigenous-identifying people from studying business (Doucette, Gladstone, and Carter, 2021). This results in gaps in curricula (Doucette and Deal, 2021) related to barriers for Indigenous economic development and plausibility of partnership opportunities (Brown, Doucette, Tulk 2016, Introduction). Others suggest there is a gap in MOS resulting from a lack of attention (Bastien et al, 2022) or because the topic of Indigenous management is fragmented across sub-disciplines (Salmon, Chavez, and Murphy, 2023). My observations lead me to concur with the view that MOS others Indigenous individuals and Indigenous teaching/research methods so as to prevent them from being accepted by mainstream management disciplines (e.g., Brown et al, 2016; Gladstone et al, 2016; etc.). Thus, the potential contributions Indigenous ways of knowing make regarding management are presented, theorized, and remain trapped in other academic spaces, such as Indigenous Economic Development or Indigenous Policy Studies.

I present the TRC as both a catalyst for change in organizations and unique case study of the process of organizational change. Most of the research relating to the administration of the TRC and the impact it has had on Canadian organizations, has been presented in fields of Indigenous studies (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; Stanton, 2011; Yellowhead Institute, 2022) or public policy (Corntassel and Holder, 2008; Hughes, 2012; James, 2017, 2021; Nagy, 2013; 2014; Stanton, 2020), or discipline specific journals, or books of collected essays (Craft and Regan, 2020; Kymlicka and Bashir, 2008; Regan, 2020; Regan, 2010). My research is a critical

Indigenous study (Smith, 2012), and the first to consider the TRC and Reconciliation from a lens of organizational change.

Case Study Analysis of Administration in the Context of Truth and Reconciliation

The story of Indian Residential Schools is a story of political, religious, and legal power structures that deliberately and systematically targeted Indigenous societies by removing their heart - the children. While surfacing the stories of Indian Residential Schools, the TRC brought to light “Canada’s policy of cultural genocide” (TRC Summary Report, p.1). It also revealed the extent to which the Indian Act policies created a structure of social separation to minimize interaction between Indigenous societies and Canadian societies.

The TRC has asked Canadians to confront their own biases and sources of information. Canadian institutions were also called to change the stories they tell in public institutions (e.g., museums, public and post-secondary education, justice). Now that these stories are being told they cannot be ignored. As suppressed stories emerge, Canadian citizens are starting to comprehend the scope and scale of the political, institutional, and legal structures that were required to maintain these institutions. But, does the increase in the public awareness about history represent a shift in the power dynamics of the relationship between Canada and Indigenous governments? Does the variation in the discourses filter through layers of relationships to dismantle the systems of oppression that the TRC surfaced?

In this thesis, I narrow the scope of inquiry to the meso-level of organizations. Organizations I work with have been shocked by the findings and want to respond to them. Some have looked to the TRC’s Calls to Action for guidance, they learn from Indigenous knowledge holders about history and modern social systems, and on-going resilience efforts. But then, many get stuck, unable to make sense of their role in on-going reconciliation efforts (Root, Augustine,

Snow, and Doucette, 2019). The field of management and organization studies has been slow to capture Canadian organizations' responses to the TRC Calls to Action. This is a space where a CSM approach that focuses on change management processes helps to identify how members of an organization make sense of, and enact, reconciliation efforts.

When I started my thesis research, I was skeptical about the impact the TRC would have on Canadian organizations. I expected Canadians to respond to the TRC in the same way they had responded to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). Uncertain of the reactions that would follow, I opted to position Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission itself as a case study. As a case study, it grounds a discussion of reconciliation-oriented organizational change that is relevant to both the field of Aboriginal Studies and management and organization studies. As interest in the TRC Calls to Action increase, the administrative context in which the Commissioners were making sense of change continues to provide significant learning opportunities.

Studying the TRC through a lens of Indigenous Studies literature means centring the writings of Indigenous peoples who have been studying working in this field of practice for decades. It means engaging with a body of work that has been central to resurgence and resistance, but on the fringes of the mainstream. It means understanding the political and legal advocacy work of national Indigenous organizations as a united effort of Indigenous peoples working to resist the imposition of colonial Eurocentric knowledge systems.

I recognize that the field of Indigenous Studies is vast and the expectations for what is necessary to achieve reconciliatory change varies by region and community. The TRC administrators organized in ways that reflected teachings from many Indigenous communities

that represent different social values, languages, and process of communicating. I believe studying how they described their sense of the mandate and actions in the reports they produced is instructive for on-going administrative efforts to respond to the Calls to Action.

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking

My research approach is guided by the *L'nu* (Mi'kmaw, Indigenous) teaching of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing. *Etuaptmumk* roughly translates as *striving to consider a situation from multiple perspectives*. It is a teaching from the Mi'kmaw language and knowledge system that encourages us to explore what we know and how we know it. In the words of Elder Albert Marshall (Personal Communication, 2020), "*Etuaptmumk* is an action word. It means to consider and act appreciatively with love and respect." I adopted *Etuaptmumk* as a guiding principle early in my research because it also speaks to the goal of supporting on-going efforts toward truth and reconciliation in Canadian organizations. Reconciliation is happening in multiple places (Craft and Regan, 2020) yet there remains a relative paucity of research that explores reconciliation from a lens of management and organizational studies. I assert that the process of Two-Eyed CSM developed in this thesis will help close this gap.

Etuaptmumk is not a research method, though some people refer to as such (Wright, et al, 2019). I view it is a teaching, calling on the inquirer to consider multiple perspectives. In my case, I wanted to understand reconciliation from two perspectives, that of Indigenous peoples and that of Canadian administrators while challenging the tendency for MOS to minimize the Indigenous theorizing. I achieved both intentions by drawing on two critical approaches in the study of power dynamics in fields of administration and management - the Indigenous methodology of Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis (NWAC, 2022), and the academia-endorsed method of Critical Sensemaking (Helms Mills, et al. 2010).

Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis: A Critical Indigenous Policy Framework

I used CRGBA and multiple toolkits developed by the Native Women's Association of Canada, to assess and address the pragmatic issues that tend to be overlooked by existing Canadian policy frameworks (See *History of health research*, NWAC, 2022). The CRGBA Framework is a robust critical Indigenous framework designed to address blind spots in Canadian policy regarding Indigenous communities and their knowledge systems. CRGBA is comprised of five key concepts: distinctions-based, intersectional, gender-diverse, Indigenous knowledge, and trauma-informed.

There are multiple methods and methodologies used for studying organizational change. Few of them explain the intersectional influences of Indigenous business as thoroughly as NWAC's approach to Indigenous-led policy analysis. By weaving CSM and CRGBA together, I explain the value of being explicit about relationships to place and relationships between researchers and subjects. At the same time, development of Two-Eyed CSM extends the usefulness of CRGBA into the field of MOS. Until recently, CRGBA has not been considered by the field of MOS. I consider the policy analysis framework from a lens of organizational change to consider the role of people who are tasked with enacting policies in context of administrative power dynamics.

Critical Sensemaking: A Qualitative Approach for Studying Organizational Change

Critical Sensemaking is a qualitative research approach for studying organizations and human interactions that derives from the research traditions of phenomenology (Aromaa et al., 2019; Helms Mills et al., 2010). Phenomenology is a theoretically interpretivist position that assumes the world is a social construction (Prasad, 2005). CSM analysis leverages four

theoretical concepts to focus on the interplay between individual agency, organizational structures, and social context (Helms Mills, et al. 2010). These concepts include: (a) social-psychological properties of individual sensemaking (Weick, 1995), (b) institutional rules and power (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991), (c) formative context (Unger, 1987), and (d) discourses in a Foucauldian sense (Foucault & Gordon 1980).

I examine the TRC administrative functions from the perspective of MOS because I do not distinguish processes of corporate management from public administration as they are considered social organizing processes. However, business schools and field of business research tend to delineate between fields of MOS, public policy, and social sector administration. CSM's focus on power helps to create bridges between macro-level colonial discourses and meso-level organizational rules. Critical Sensemaking can complement and extend the value of CRGBA, and likewise, looking at CSM through a lens of Critical Indigenous studies I identify some of its weaknesses as well.

Research Contributions

The first goal of my thesis was to apply *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle for reconciliation-oriented research by conducting a Two-Eyed Seeing analysis of the TRC. By adopting this principle for a study in organizational change, I subsequently determined it was necessary to draw on both a critical Indigenous research approach, i.e., CRGBA, and a critical management research heuristic, CSM to analyze the work of the TRC. The second goal was to apply this novel approach, named Two-Eyed CSM, to identify the conditions under which the two methods are most compatible.

The empirical contributions are a study of the Canadian TRC through the lens of Two-Eyed CSM to show how rules of government policy tend to replicate social and systemic power

dynamics and perpetuate injustice in practice. I also introduce CRGBA into the field of MOS as a pragmatic guide to exploring the cultural relevancy of organizational policies generally, not just in spaces of public administration. CSM supports an oscillation between the administrative rules of (colonial) government structures and the local contexts of historically informed social organizing. Of equal importance to my analysis is the idea of researcher positionality and relationality (Wilson, 2008) in CSM processes.

Finally, I contribute to the theorizations of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing, extending its relevance locally into the field of business administration. Studying the institutional practices of the TRC introduces alternative ways of making sense of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadians. It may also present new options for studying how administrators address reconciliation in practice (Maddison, 2017).

Outline of Thesis Chapters: The theory and application of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking

In this chapter, I explain my positionality and the relevance of the TRC as a case study. I expressed a desire to ground my research in Mi'kmaw teachings of *Etuaptmumk* and a local Indigenous knowledge system. I state that my main intention is to explore the compatibility between Critical Sensemaking (Helms Mills, et al. 2010) and Indigenous research methods such as CRGBA. In the process I develop a novel reconciliatory research method for the field of MOS.

In Chapter 2, I position the research theoretically and relationally. Guided by the concept of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing, I review two theoretically aligned critical research methods, where CRGBA (NWAC, 2020, 2022) serves as a Critical Indigenous methodological “eye” for analyzing of Canadian policies and CSM (Helms Mills, et al. 2010) serves as a second (Eurocentric) “eye” that counter-balances it and connects my research to the field of MOS. Then

I outline the steps of the Two-Eyed CSM method. In Chapter 3, I present literature that outlines the formative context of the TRC and discourses of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation. I foreground Indigenous discourses of policy change to establish a relationship between the context of the TRC, and (i) critical Indigenous policy research, and (ii) the field of Aboriginal Economic Development.

In Chapter 4, I focus on steps three and four of Two-Eyed CSM. I use the CRGBA Starter Kit (NWAC, 2020), to review ‘rules’ presented in the initial mandate of the TRC through a lens of cultural relevancy. I follow this review with a discussion of the implications of critical dimensions of CSM to highlight the tensions that commissioners worked through. In Chapter 5, I repeat the analysis; this time focusing on the processes and decisions that were reflected in the reports produced by the TRC. I contrast the “rules” with what the commission(ers) said was done (TRC Final Report, 2015). In Chapter 6, I discuss the commensurability between the two methods, and the conditions that made it plausible to combine them as a Two-Eyed CSM method. In Chapter 7 outline next steps where Two-Eyed CSM can help guide future sensemaking of Indigenous-Canada relations specifically within MOS research.

Chapter 2: Developing a Theoretically Aligned Method of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking

My research efforts were guided by locally relevant Indigenous teachings of the Mi'kmaw knowledge system (e.g., *Etuaptmumk*), drawing on Mi'kmaw-led academic research efforts that are locally specific. I focus on local knowledge systems, but they are also connected to, and reflective of, the International Critical Indigenous field of literature (Battiste, 2000). In this chapter, I review literature that provides core principles of Indigenous paradigms (Wilson, 2008) and fundamental aspects of Critical Indigenous research methods (Smith, 2012). I position the research, theoretically and relationally, as an Indigenous-led research project guided by Mi'kmaw teachings. Centering the teachings of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing, I elaborate on my reasons for choosing to develop a Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking (hereafter, Two-Eyed CSM) approach. I also explain why I cautiously describe the methods I employ in this thesis as a fusion of Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis, hereafter CRGBA, (NWAC, 2020, 2022) and Critical Sensemaking (Helms Mills, et al. 2010). I conclude the chapter with a description of the steps of a Two-Eyed CSM method and the importance of following a specific order of operations.

Indigenous paradigms and Critical Indigenous Research

The field of Indigenous Studies developed globally through collaborative efforts to explore decolonizing approaches to research (Smith, 2008) and expose the taken-for-granted assumptions of western Eurocentrism (Smith, 2008, Tuck and Yang, 2012). Smith, an internationally recognized Māori author described the field of Indigenous Studies as active, political, and responsible (Smith, 2012). Smith explains that Indigenous research is inherently critical because,

Indigenous research focuses and situates the broader Indigenous agenda in the research domain. This domain is dominated by history, by institutional practices, and by particular paradigms and approaches to research held by academic communities and disciplines.

The spaces within the research domain through which Indigenous research can operate are small spaces on a shifting ground. (Smith, 2008, p.91).

Since Indigenous knowledge systems have been constructed within mainstream academic spaces as inferior by colonizer states for centuries, the field of Indigenous studies have continued to develop globally to be freed from and critical of colonial knowledge systems (Battiste, 2000; Little Bear, 2000). This is particularly true in countries that identify as part of the British Commonwealth, as Canada does. In modern states Eurocentrism is now so pervasive, it is something that we marinate in (Battiste, 2013a). Thus, there is a need to understand the global context of resisting colonial conquest, imposition of Eurocentrism (Battiste, 2000), and the localized re-assertion of Indigenous knowledge systems (Battiste, 2000, Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008).

Academically, decolonization refers to an ethic, an understanding, and it is active and activated through research methods (Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019). The rise of decolonization narratives within academic discourses suggests there is a plausible middle ground approach (e.g., Augustine, 1998) within academic spaces (discourses) that has the potential to be generative and constructive. In other words, the commonality across and within Indigenous research methods is in large part a response to on-going imposition of, and resistance to, Eurocentrism. However, as long as Indigenous knowledges are seen as necessarily critical of the mainstream, a dichotomous power dynamic is reinforced, such that one must always be positioned as more powerful than the other. Indigenous worldviews grounded in social customs, philosophies, and values of localized

knowledge systems provide multiple diverse ways of thinking about reality and the world (Littlebear, 2000). They draw attention to a common recognition among Indigenous scholars that research must be based in localized Indigenous-led efforts to re-establish regionally distinctive knowledge systems, languages, histories, politics, etc.

Research paradigms: Indigenous relationality and relational accountability

An Indigenist perspective of research then recognizes that, “Indigenous knowledge is not made up of discrete or arbitrary relationships, but rather represents a system of relationships that encompasses worldviews and cultures that arise from their Place” (Wilson and Hughes, 2019, p.10). Indigenous knowledge systems are complex and simultaneously grounded ways of knowing that are connected to their places, stories, sovereignty, and cultural resilience. After engaging in discussions with multiple Indigenous researchers studying in countries of the British commonwealth (Canada and Australia), Wilson (2008) concluded that two fundamental concepts of relationality and relational accountability distinguish Indigenous research from other forms of academic research. He suggested that the concepts of *relationality* and *relational accountability* present a combined sense of what Western philosophy describes as ontology and epistemology. Determining what research methods are most appropriate to use for a given study thus depends on several factors, such as the research question, the field of study, and the paradigmatic positioning of the research.

I explore the implications of Mi’kmaw teachings for business studies. My intention is to ground research in a Mi’kmaw knowledge system because I live in *Mi’kmaw’ki*/Atlantic Canada. I position my research relative to this work in support of a vision of a Mi’kmaw-centric humanity (Battiste, 2016). Thankfully, there are multiple others have been working in diverse academic fields to enact the vision of a Mi’kmaw-centric, post-secondary system in fields of education,

language revitalization, legal studies, political science, and economic development. Thus far, this vision has not fully considered the past and future implications of economics and business within the Mi'kmaw humanities. My body of work explores Indigenous-led models of applied community economic development and is positioned in the academic space of a business school. I have been focused on explaining Indigenous business by highlighting the principles and practices of business within the mainstream structure (e.g., Brown, Doucette, and Tulk, 2016). However, our approach has admittedly been more of an *inclusion* approach to “Indigenization” as opposed to a decolonizing one (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018).

In this thesis I argue for the development of reconciliation research that varies by region and recognizes localized knowledge systems. It is also necessary for individual researchers to understand the historical national discourses that have defined the Crown and Indigenous relationship thus far. The discourses that Critical Indigenous Policy Research has sought to address focus on interconnected social, legal, and political issues because they are central to Canada-Indigenous relations, and foundational concerns of the Canadian TRC. However, Indigenous perspectives of resistance and resilience may be unfamiliar to many in the fields of mainstream business and MOS. In the next chapter, I review key legal and political moments from the past 500 years that are commonly referenced by Indigenous scholars in diverse fields. The brief history presents cues to common Indigenous-led narratives from the lens of Indigenous-led Community Economic Development. It highlights germinal legal and political reference points for the modern Crown-Indigenous relationships.

***Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing: A guiding principle for reconciliation research**

The version of Two-Eyed Seeing I attempt to enact, through this thesis, builds from the lessons of the Integrative Science Journey (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012). In this

germinal paper the authors reflect on over a decade of collaborative co-learning while create a science program at Cape Breton University that integrated Mi'kmaw teachings throughout.

Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing offers strategies to understand that multiple or diverse knowledge systems will view situations differently, but that does not prevent them from being used constructively side-by-side to develop a thorough understanding of a situation before responding responsibly (Reid et al, 2020). The teaching of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012) encourages me to be responsibly reflective by remaining curious while maintaining respect for those I interact with during the research process (Roher, Yu, Martin, & Benoit, 2021).

Often *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing is simplistically presented in academic research as a mixed methods approach or a method that includes Indigenous peoples (Wright, et al, 2019). The guiding principle of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing then is not a method. It is a teaching from the culture and embedded in the language of a knowledge system. In fact, it is a complex process of collaborative co-learning in shared spaces and through relationships that develop over time. My research embraces this complexity which methodologically refers to a process of weaving between multiple or diverse knowledge systems, comparing and contrasting the claims of each (Bartlett, Marshall, Marshall, 2012). As Denny (2022) explains, the challenge presented by Two-Eyed Seeing research lies in the need to accept that while benefits are derived from the processes of knowledge weaving, some ways of knowing are incompatible and may be irreconcilable.

It is in this realm where beliefs and values create tension between knowledge systems and the opportunity for Two-Eyed Seeing to emerge. Here, understanding underlying beliefs of both knowledge systems and cooperating to not only respect values but to incorporate

values of both knowledge systems to develop a path forward,[...], while recognizing and respecting human rights, power imbalances, and equal opportunities while striving for transformative action and change (Creswell, 2013) (Denny, 2022, p100).

In the context of the co-learning journey shared by Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall (2012), the lesson to “*View science in a culturally inclusive way*” was a call to explore culturally inclusive views of science without dismissing or diminishing the value of some aspects of dominant Western scientific methods. It was a call to understand that scientific methods are cultural constructs. To develop culturally inclusive approaches to science was to also recognize the validity of Indigenous scientific methods of systematically observing, questioning, and sharing knowledge.

The field of management and organization studies is broadly defined, yet there is a tendency to favor scientific, positivist, approaches to social science research (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The challenge I faced initially identifying a methodology was selecting a research approach that had legitimacy within the field of MOS and Indigenous Studies. Critical Sensemaking, derives from a more critical paradigm and phenomenological paradigm, which has been recognized as being more aligned with Indigenous theories of knowledges (Smith, 2012).

Reflexivity – put our values in front

Two-Eyed Seeing has also encouraged me to think broadly, read widely, and to seek models that are beyond my disciplinary boundaries. I interpret the lesson of “*Weaving back and forth between our world views*” (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012), as a call for researchers to be consciously reflexive about their position as a researcher (Voyageur, Brearley, and Calliou, 2014) and to explore and acknowledge their biases and blind spots. The lessons learned from the

co-learning journey of Integrative Science (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012), ultimately, explain that Indigenous methodologies are insufficient on their own to create the kinds of reconciliatory changes imagined by the TRC. Instead, to counterbalance the pervasiveness of Eurocentrism we must be able to “*Put our values and actions and knowledges in front of us like an object, to enable acknowledging the philosophies inherent in our knowledges, in our stories*” (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2012). It is necessary to use both Eurocentric and Indigenous methods to explore how the existing state of academic fields perpetuate Canadian power dynamics through systems of organizing.

In this thesis I position CSM as a Eurocentric methodology field of management and organization studies, and CRGBA as a Critical Indigenous methodology from the field of applied policy research and development. Both are critically oriented and encourage researcher reflexivity as part of the methodology, though CRGBA is more deliberate about providing direction about how to foster reflexivity in practice (NWAC, 2022).

Action and Agency

The topics of Two-Eyed Seeing and Reconciliation are ever-present in my professional conversations. Therefore, it is difficult to see what a world without Canada-Indigenous reconciliation at the centre looks like anymore. For me reconciliation involves the ongoing exploration of the implications of Indigenous centred policies on Indigenous communities, and the implications of Canadian policies that ignore the unique experiences of Indigenous peoples as they move between urban and rural contexts, Mi’kmaq and Settler-Nova Scotian contexts, and theories of management and social economics. Therefore, I return to the teaching to *Do! And do so in a creative, grow forward way* (Bartlett, Marshall, Marshall, 2012) which challenges

researchers to do something and learn from tension. It explains my search for complementary MOS methods that explore agency and action.

Management Studies needs Two-Eyed Seeing to study Reconciliation

When I started on my thesis journey in 2018, my question was (how) are Canadian organizations responding to the TRC? In the ‘Calls to Action’, multiple institutions and organizations were explicitly named by the TRC, and they were provided guidance about how they can/must change (de Costa, 2017). As de Costa explains, the majority of the 94 Calls to Action were directed at government and its statutory agencies, but some called upon professional bodies of lawyers, doctors, and nurses, and their affiliated university departments. Unfortunately, many industries and fields of study with highly specialized fields of knowledge were not given such specific directions. Thus, it is plausible that the expectations with respect to their role in reconciliation are less clear. This may also explain why so many Canadian organizations are disengaged from the reconciliation discourse (Blackman and Malatast, 2017) or they believe their efforts to engage Indigenous communities are good enough (Walker, et al, 2021). Arguably, because they were not specifically named in the TRC, there is less pressure for these private sector organizations to respond to the TRC. Incidentally, these are also the industries that MOS research tends to focus on.

The absence of MOS scholarship related to reconciliation becomes a circular problem: MOS scholars are unlikely to study reconciliation until it’s a priority for the business managers they’re studying, and business managers will not have reliable research regarding reconciliation approaches to management until business research provides evidence-based approaches. Assuming MOS scholars would engage in reconciliation if they were provided explicit

directives, did the TRC inadvertently overlook the space where business schools can contribute to reconciliation?

I suggest a Two-Eyed Seeing methodology is necessary to address challenges faced by organizations seeking to respond to the TRC's Calls to Action because reconciliation requires collaboration between groups of people as well as knowledge systems. Analyzing the TRC administrative reports using CRGBA combined with CSM allows me to explore the role of commissioners as managers of temporary institution. In the process I discuss need for culturally relevant, in this case Indigenous, approaches to administration. I also consider the potential for MOS research to be guided by the CRGBA and Indigenous research methodologies.

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking Analysis: Weaving together methods of CRGBA and CSM

A goal of this thesis is to explore the synergies between CSM and Critical Indigenous methodologies, and limitations of combining them. Weaving between the two knowledge systems and methods was an iterative process. I identified Critical Sensemaking as complementary to Indigenous research methods. However, while exploring the critical dimensions of CSM – discourse, formative context, and rules – in concert with my own sensemaking of reconciliation efforts, I found it was insufficient on its own to effectively explain the dynamics of institutional power that dominate Indigenous perspectives of reconciliation. I chose a Critical Indigenous framework to probe my own sensemaking, and the sensemaking of commissioners, in Indigenous community contexts and perspectives. The Eurocentric logics or organizing, politics, law, religion, and economy, are so pervasive within society that is difficult to recognize the absence of others.

Toolkits and frameworks, like CRGBA, employed by Indigenous-led organizations and Critical Indigenous scholars are robust and pragmatic approaches to reconciliation. But,

Indigenous peoples and their knowledges continue to be systemically discriminated against in the field of MOS (Bastien et al, 2022). Adopting Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle for a CRGBA, I present CSM as a counterpoint and an exemplar of Critical Management Studies. I show how CSM complements and supports CRGBA to highlight areas where the Indigenous-led approaches to business have struggled to connect with the field of MOS. Looking at CSM through a lens of Critical Indigenous studies, I suggest foregrounding Indigenous teaching about *relationality* and *relational accountability* increases its usefulness as a heuristic.

Critical Sensemaking Heuristic a Critical research approach from the Field of MOS

The CSM heuristic approach derives from the research traditions of phenomenology. Phenomenological traditions present reality as possible because it is interpreted and created by the actions of people within it (Prasad, 2005). A CSM approach to empirical research involves triangulation of multiple theoretical positions (e.g., poststructuralism, interpretivism, and critical theory) to provide different frames of reference that can simultaneously ground and problematize the knowledge claims of CSM (Helms Mills, et al. 2010). The CSM heuristic has four interactive components: the seven social-psychological processes of sensemaking (Weick, 1995), Organizational Rules (Mills & Murgatroyd, 1991), Formative Context (Unger, 1987), and Discourse (Foucault, 1980). The combination of the four, is relatively more critical of/than each of the four mainstream (Eurocentric) approaches alone. Triangulation of methods increases the credibility and validity of the findings. For example, analysis of the language used documented public policies in to describe Canada-Indigenous relationships and reconciliation represents more than a political aspiration. You can better understand the words used are embedded with legal meanings that evolved over time. Further, when these words are used in policies, they can also

reproduce the power dynamics in which settler-colonial institutions assert their power over Indigenous peoples and their legal principles.

Within some paradigms, the possibility of objectivity is taken for granted and some quantitative positivist methods of the natural sciences are valued over others (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). In contrast, the phenomenological research traditions assume consistency and rigour in research are not necessarily at odds with qualitative research if the epistemological assumptions about the knowledge claims are aligned. In other words, although the CSM approach derives from research traditions of a Western knowledge system, the knowledge claims of the system are viewed with skepticism, which also creates space for other socially constructed knowledge systems to plausibly co-exist. The phenomenological grounding of the CSM approach is the reason I believe it can complement Indigenous research traditions, specifically Indigenous relationality.

Seven Socio-psychological processes of Sensemaking. CSM builds from and extends the seven psychological properties of Weickian sensemaking. Weick (1995) initially referred to the concept of sensemaking to explain why and how individuals working in groups, or teams, make sense of unanticipated and sudden changes to work routines, shocks. He proposed seven interdependent socio-psychological processes of sensemaking, which have been concisely summarized by Hilde and Mills (2015, p. 175):

- Social context (the actual, implied, or imagined presence of others);
- Identity construction (the sense of self that is constantly in play);
- Retrospection (understanding current events through past experiences);
- Ongoing sensemaking (flows of events that constantly need to be understood);
- Enactment (the relationship between acting and thinking about action);

- Cues (the “facts” that we focus on in creating a sense of something); and
- Plausibility (those factors that make a story, or sense, acceptable).

Together, these seven properties of sensemaking create a fluid and dynamic sense of self by influencing the way individuals process and respond to new information they are presented within a given social interaction. From this perspective, the seven psychological properties of sensemaking helpfully centre social-psychological processes of individuals in moments of unexpected change.

For example, I introduced myself in Chapter 1. I explained who I was, where I worked, and where I lived. These are all foundational parts of my identity, i.e., my sense of self that is constantly in play. I provided a territorial acknowledgement to situate myself in a social context comprised of a physical place (*Unama'ki*/Cape Breton) and in a social context defined by the structures of university systems in which I am both a teacher and a student. I also shared some historical information, i.e., retrospective cues, that I refer to when making sense of the discourses of reconciliation in Canada. Lastly, I explained that my motivation for choosing to study the TRC was because of the changes that I was observing around me. When the TRC first launched, I, like many Indigenous scholars were hopeful, but skeptical, about the impact another national Commission would have on improving the lives of Indigenous peoples or finding justice for those who were harmed by the Indian Residential School System. I had worked in and with Indigenous communities to know that the stories of residential school experiences were not new, i.e., it was plausible that Canadian institutions would ignore recommendations put forward. They would fail to change the way they operated, i.e., enact change, as they had failed to change in the past.

Weick's sensemaking model also posits that when new information is introduced that challenges the scripts associated with each of these properties, either new scripts are created or an individual's sense of things falls apart. This was the case with my sensemaking of the TRC. The TRC surfaced a story of Indian Residential Schools and the systematization of what the TRC referred to as Canada's policy of cultural genocide (TRC Summary Report, p.1). As formerly untold stories and silenced stories continue to surface, Canadian citizens started to pay attention (Root et al, 2019). They also talked about doing things differently. The discourses of reconciliation appeared to be changing. Canadians appeared to be making sense of the discourse of reconciliation, and the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples, differently than they had in the past. I was shocked and my own sensemaking scripts were challenged at the same time. I doubted the shift in public discourse would translate into organizational change.

Like other "mainstream" theories of organizational change, the connection to societies beyond the organization tend to be minimized in the Weickian Sensemaking model, effectively reifying social boundaries between work-life and social-life. In contrast, CSM, though also focused on organizational change, considers the implications of outside societal influences on work *in* organizations. CSM moves the focus from beyond the individual and their immediate context to consider the influences of other critical factors discourse (Foucault 1980; Foucault, Rabinow, & Faubion, 1997), organizational rules (Mills, and Murgatroyd, 1991), and formative context (Unger, 1987). Each is discussed in turn in the following section.

Discourse Analysis. Discourses at their most basic are forms of written or spoken communication, a verbal interchange of ideas. Various discourse analysis methods tend to be used in the field of MOS, to explore the relationship between talk, forms of communication (e.g., written text), and shared language (Bryman, Bell, Mills, and Yue, 2011). Each method of

discourse analysis reflects connections to different theoretical academic traditions (Alvesson, and Kärreman, 2000). Thus, there has been a call to be specific about the theoretical assumptions of various discursive research methods (Alvesson, and Kärreman, 2011). CSM is informed by a Foucauldian (1977; 1980) approach to discourse which recognizes that the texts and language must be understood within the social practice from which they emerge and of which they are part (Helms Mills, 2003).

Initially, I was curious to understand what appeared to be a change in the discourse of Aboriginal business studies following the release of the TRC's final report. Prior to 2015 when the final report was released, I regularly worked with Indigenous students and Indigenous businesses to support their efforts to be treated equitably by public institutions. Part of my job was to encourage Canadian organizations to pay attention, and it was a struggle to get their time or attention. However, following the release of the TRC's final report, more and more people were seeking me out and asking questions about Indigenous businesses and communities. They wanted to respond to the Calls to Action. They wanted to work with Indigenous people. The public discourses of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation *were* changing (de Costa, 2017; Wilkes, 2017; Wyile, 2018, 2019) as were public sector discourses in Indigenous Services and Crown-Indigenous Relations. This shift prompted me to questions whether these variations in discourse would translate into organizational change in universities and in the private sector?

Organizational Rules and Social Context. For the purposes of Critical Sensemaking analysis, the organizational rules framework grounds analysis in the structure and order of organizations (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991). The rules framework creates space to problematize processes through which rules are made meaningful through social interaction recognizing that rules are also socially constructed phenomena. Actions may be seen as adhering to or resisting

rules, and subsequently reinforcing or challenging organizational norms. The organizational rules framework also explains that rules are not universal. Rules, therefore, are not always known or understood. For example, individuals do not limit their interpretations of meaning solely to the official language cues provided to them by formal or approved administrative rules. Instead, sense makers connect ideas by drawing from other experiences and stories they have been exposed to through past experiences in other social contexts (Helms Mills, 2004, p. 6).

The idea of rule-bound activity refers to the broad sets of expectations and practices which serve to guide, direct, and constrain people in action. “Rules provide a pre-existing sensemaking tool that contributes to the plausibility of an interpretation or the likelihood of a cue to be extracted as meaningful.” (Thurlow and Helms Mills, 2009, p464) Initially I wanted to explore the question: would organizational rules change in response to the Calls to Action? There were multiple academic articles published in the first few years following the TRC that indicated the rules of acknowledgement were indeed shifting (Wilkes, et al, 2017). There were also indications that Canadian organizations in various industries were interested in working with Indigenous communities differently (Malatast, 2017). It was not clear if the changes would continue? And, did the changes represent the kind of transformation that the TRC commissioners envisioned?

Formative Context and the History of Canadian Social Structures. Critical Sensemaking also extends an analysis of organizational change to look beyond the local meso-level lens of organizational structures. It challenges the artificial boundaries imposed for the sake of studying organizational rules by acknowledging that individuals do not make sense in silos. Instead, whether they realize it or not, they draw on memories of prior lived experiences from other relationships. By centring the individual and introducing the issue of formative context,

CSM opens analysis to consider other factors that influence sensemaking like past experiences and stories. CSM draws on Unger's (1997) explanations of formative contexts, as structures that limit what can be imagined and done within society, and therefore within organizations. "While no one formative context is necessary or fixed, some are more 'visible' than others and therefore more easily destabilized" (Thurlow and Helms Mills, 2009, p.463). Formative contexts link activity at the local level with dominant social assumption and can help make sense of the reproduction of discriminatory social practices and resistance to new ideas.

Initially, I assumed that CSM could account for different knowledge systems because it encourages consideration of formative context. Henderson explains that "although [Unger's] writings are based on Eurocentric traditions, they provide inspiration for Indigenous people seeking to understand the limits and patterns of Eurocentric thought (Henderson in Battiste 2000, p.250.). Eurocentric thoughts can be limited and difficult to change because the thought patterns of society reinforce the status quo. In other words, accepting Unger's theory of social context, it is plausible that because Indigenous traditions' social norms formed before western/colonial thoughts were introduced, they provided additional plausible strategies for encouraging respectful reconciliation.

Despite the potential of the Critical Sensemaking heuristic, I determined as a single comprehensive heuristic it did not explain the interacting dynamics of reconciliation I observed since the TRC. Even if I pivoted between my own professional and personal identity positions, I still needed to ground my sensemaking, and plausibly that of the Commissioners, in Critical Indigenous framework and Indigenous community contexts. Therefore, I positioned my analysis as an Indigenous-led approach. In doing so, I centred the values of relationality and relational accountability to challenge the homogenizing tendency to position my research as a counterpoint

to a “Western” or Eurocentric paradigm. The information provided in the next chapter are cues common in the field of Indigenous economic development; they influence my ongoing sensemaking about plausible future reconciliation-oriented organizational change efforts. I draw on CRGBA, a research framework embedded in the formative context of Indigenous-led resistance, resilience, and self-government. My familiarity with these discourses has implications for my understanding of what the TRC commissioners saw as plausible in their situation and social context.

Indigenous-led Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis

I adopted the CRGBA research toolkits to ground my research in Critical Indigenous research. They were developed by the Native Women’s Association of Canada, a national social advocacy who have been working to surface the pervasiveness of “settler colonialism [in “Canada”], which is an on-going structure that continues to shape the lives of everyone who lives here.” (Toolkit, 2022, p. 11) The CRGBA toolkits were developed to provide guidance for applied policy research in the settler-colonial Canadian context, recognizing the specific intersectional identity group dynamics that are most prevalent locally. I used two CRGBA toolkits throughout my research. One is the *Research toolkit* (NWAC, 2022); it was compiled by NWAC the health research team as a guide for academic researchers designing community-based research projects. The other is the *CRGBA Starter Kit* (2020); it introduces the core concepts of CRGBA and a series of questions to be used when reviewing policies and initiatives through a lens of CRGBA. Both reflect the NWAC’s anti-colonial approach. The NWAC approach to policy research is also pragmatic, referring to policy analysis as consideration of “organizational policies (what you might find in your employee handbook) or public policies (policies outlined and enacted by the federal, provincial, or municipal governments).” (NWAC 2023, p5). NWAC

introduced and advanced its CRGBA framework in 2007 as a response to gaps in the federal government's approach to gender-based policy analysis.

The implementation of a CRGBA framework should be viewed as an opportunity to challenge the assumption that all people are affected by policies and programs in the same way. CRGBA provides a foundation to better advocate for the safety, empowerment, and self-determination of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, Two-Spirit, and gender diverse people in all of the work that we do (NWAC, 2020, p. 12).

The CRGBA Framework is comprised of five key concepts: distinctions-based, intersectional, gender-diverse, Indigenous knowledge, and trauma-informed. Below I review the five concepts of CRGBA and highlight their relevance for my analysis.

Indigenous Knowledge informs decision-making every day. The NWAC toolkit describes Indigenous knowledge as follows:

Although it can mean different things to different cultures, Indigenous knowledge broadly refers to the understandings, skills, and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. For Indigenous Peoples, local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. This knowledge is also integral to a cultural complex that encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual, and spirituality (UNESCO, 2017 cited in NWAC, 2020).

Indigenous peoples are skeptical of modern mainstream research methods because they tend to facilitate on-going colonization. Many research processes are dehumanizing,

(mis)appropriate Indigenous knowledge, undermine rights, and re-inscribe scientific supremacy of a Eurocentric knowledge system (NWAC, 2022, p. 14). The focus on Indigenous knowledge also reflects its value as an appropriate first step in a Two-Eyed CSM process, which also echoes the teaching of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing. At the heart of Indigenous Gender-Based Analysis is a recognition of two equal and opposing forces. One is the imposition of the forces of colonization that have had devastating consequences for governance, community, and family relations, not to mention direct impacts to health and wellness. Indigenous collective resistance to the imposition of patriarchal worldviews represents an opposing force (NWAC, 2020).

The reasons why Indigenous knowledge is one of the five pillars of the CRGBA framework resonate with one of the four critical dimensions of the CSM heuristic - the structuring influence of rules and power. When NWAC formed in 1974, Canadian governments did not recognize the rights of Indigenous women and there was no constitutional recognition of Indigenous people. As Indigenous territories were colonized, settler leaders created policies that reinforced a sense of European sovereignty and a unified Canadian identity legally and politically akin to Great Britain. All the while related policies of Indian Affairs worked to delegitimize the relational and regionally specific sovereignty claims of Indigenous nations. The literature review in Chapter 3 provides an overview of Indigenous perspectives of Canadian history and a timeline of significant events is provided in table 1 at the end of this manuscript.

Indigenous understandings of sexuality and gender are more complex. By foregrounding gender analysis, the CRGBA framework recognizes the interactional influences, and inherent tensions of working to normalize the use of Indigenous Knowledge within a context dominated by settler colonialism. Upon contact, many Indigenous groups were forced to assimilate and adopt colonized notions of gender and sexuality, including the gender binary and

its associated gender and sexuality norms. Patriarchal and heteronormative values were forced upon Indigenous communities through assimilative laws like the Indian Act and programs like Residential Schools, forced migration, and the Sixties Scoop (NWAC, 2020). Modern gender mainstreaming tools have failed to account for the negative impacts of historic and ongoing colonialism on Indigenous peoples' lives and lands (NWAC, 2022).

CRGBA evolved as a response to the federal framework, a framework that was grounded in colonial categories of exclusion. Approaching policy from a gender-diverse lens requires interrogating how colonization has informed and shaped our current conceptualization of gender, and how these conceptions are manifest in current policy interventions. Before colonial contact, gender (if such a construct existed) was not always understood as a binary between men and women and was not always determined by one's primary or secondary sex characteristics. Therefore, NWAC also encourages consideration of diverse gender spectrums that move beyond the hetero-normative gender binaries. Indigenous women, Two-Spirit (a term that is used by some Indigenous persons to assert the cultural specificity of their gender identities, community responsibilities, and political organizing (Laing, 2021; Sylliboy 2021), and gender-diverse Indigenous peoples living within urban and rural areas of Canada continue to face racism and sexism at the socio-political, community, and interpersonal level (National Inquiry into MMIWG, 2019). Consequently, a gender diverse approach to policy entails the ethical and equitable engagement of the perspectives of Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse+ (WG2STGD+) and LGBTQQAI+ People, and the disruption of heteronormative, trans-exclusionary, or binary values within policymaking.

The priority given to considering gender-diversity in the Canadian context also highlights why CSM on its own may be insufficient to study the discourses and power dynamics of the

TRC. Multiple studies have been completed in Canada using the Critical Sensemaking heuristic to explore gender dynamics and many using an intersectional identity lens. To my knowledge none have challenged nor considered the role public policy plays in normalizing gender binaries.

Intersectionality cannot be an afterthought. NWAC refers to intersectionality to highlight that multiple aspects of individuals identities and lived experiences cannot be considered as an afterthought in policy development. Instead, they advocate for analysis that situates the understanding of gender identities, roles, and responsibilities within diverse Indigenous contexts. The CRGBA framework credits its use of the term intersectionality to the germinal work of African-American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991). Crenshaw, a critical race and legal scholar, coined the term “intersectionality” when illustrating how race, class, and gender intersected to shape the experiences of women of colour navigating domestic violence. Crenshaw originally sought to make visible African American women’s experiences with discrimination in the legal justice system which were obscured by separation of gender and racial discourses.

“Intersectionality encapsulates the idea that identity and oppression are multi-dimensional and create complex, interlocking social and economic barriers (NWAC, 2020, p.9).” The CRGBA developed to address the Canadian context in which Indian Act policies were developed explicitly to promote anti-Indigenous racism among settler-Canadians and delegitimize the traditional roles and responsibilities of women in Indigenous societies. Therefore, while gender and sexuality are both integral parts of one’s intersectional identity, the detrimental and on-going implications of gender-mainstreaming policies used by the Canadian government.

Distinctions-Based Analysis recognizes socio-politics of place. The distinctions-based approach to GRGBA evolved out of efforts to resist the pan-Indigenous lens that dominated federal policy. While the the federal government's distinctions-based approach recognizes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people as defined by the Canadian Constitution Act (1982), it disregards Indigenous understandings of sexuality and gender and fails to account for urban, displaced, and/or non-status Indigenous community members (NWAC, 2022). NWAC has transformed the understanding of the Federal government's gender-based analysis approach to both resist pan-indigenizing and to include communities who have been overlooked by the federal system. Indigenous Knowledges must be contextualized by community and lived experiences of First Nations, Metis, Inuit, are distinctive regardless of their place of residence.

The issues raised by the arguments in favour of distinctions-based approaches are also central to the conclusions I draw from the analysis of the TRC, which I discuss in Chapters 5 and 6. The relationship between organizational identities, place, and politics of place are central to the way I make sense of the opportunities for more ethical approaches to ongoing efforts of reconciliation in organizations.

A Trauma-informed approach focuses on solutions that create safety and empowerment. NWAC opted to include trauma-informed approaches (Bowen & Murshid, 2016) into the most recent policy analysis toolkits such as the *CRGBA: Roadmap for Policy Development* (NWAC, 2023). They explain that through the legacy of the *Indian Act*, we have seen how social policy has been weaponized by the Canadian government as a tool for furthering colonial violence. At a systemic and personal level, intergenerational trauma continues to impact Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples lived experiences; it is a direct legacy of residential schools and ongoing colonial violence in Canada. Thus, policies, programs, and research must consider

how trauma, including intergenerational trauma, has impacted Indigenous ways of knowing and living. A trauma-informed approach focuses on solutions that create safety and empowerment for Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples in terms of their strengths, and the individual and community resources available to them.

A CRGBA Analysis of policy highlights the foundational challenges of organizational change. Following the TRC's completion, Canadians appeared to be paying attention to new narratives shared about Canada's history of cultural genocide. Still, many Canadians also appear to be unwilling or unable to follow through on the kinds of reconciliatory solutions that Indigenous scholars are calling for in universities and administrative spaces (Yellowhead Institute, 2022). Meanwhile, some Canadian leaders are genuinely motivated to engage with new and innovative reconciliatory solutions and are collaboratively working to develop pathways of reconciliation (Craft & Regan, 2020). Why then, does there appear to be so little engagement within the field of MOS (Bastien, Coraiola, & Foster, 2022)?

It has been suggested that Canada's TRC was different from other TRCs because it took "a nuanced, differentiated approach to influencing Canadian society. (de Costa, 2017, p. 195)" If that is true, there are benefits to understanding the unique elements of the Canadian approach from a lens of Critical Indigenous studies. While the Critical Indigenous perspective of government policies is necessary to consider, it only takes us so far down the path of managing administrative change processes that will lead to the creation of more just social systems.

Research commissions are a common political mechanism in Canada. They are a way for governments to research or investigate important social topics with the purpose of improving policy. Specifically, with respect to topics of importance to Indigenous people and Aboriginal Rights, the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), referenced in the Mandate

Statement for the TRC, was another significant national commission. Many Indigenous leaders and scholars of Indigenous studies consider RCAP to be a turning point in the Crown-Indigenous Relations though we continue to see reflective essays arguing that little has changed (Wuttunee and Wein, 2009; Graham and Newhouse, 2021). I propose engaging NWAC resources and employing the full complement of CRGBA toolkits to identify pragmatic, culturally relevant ways to address the complexity of social institutional change called for by commissions.

Several studies analyzing the structure of the TRC discuss complexity of the legal and political professional social networks and identify the ways networks of political actors influenced the structure of this temporary institution (James, 2022; Nagy, 2014; Stanton, 2017). Few explain the connection between the interacting influences of the hybrid institutional structure (Nagy, 2014, 2016) and the administrative role of commissioners in enacting a truly intersectional approach (James, 2022). Therefore, it was advantageous to study the TRC administrative process longitudinally, first taking note of the interactional influences of the political networks as commissioners leveraged power, and then reviewing the way decisions were recorded in the official reports produced by the TRC.

Discussion Theoretical alignment

Recognizing that mainstream and critical Indigenous research methods are, each on their own, insufficient to study reconciliation-oriented organizational change, I have developed a novel research method, Two-Eyed CSM, to support MOS scholars in this pursuit. I developed the method by coupling CSM with Critical Indigenous methodologies taking note of their synergies and limitations. To do so, I adopted an *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing approach requiring me to weave, in an iterative fashion, between the two knowledge systems methods.

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking: A knowledge weaving discourse analysis process

The document analysis for this research was an iterative process spanning years. I talked to students and colleagues, and the conversation prompted new questions. Then I read texts looking for evidence or explanation, which resulted in additional question or explanations. Initially, I read academic articles about Truth and Reconciliation Commissions globally as well as texts, academic articles and books about Canadian culture and methods. In my thorough reading I identified consistent themes, selecting quotes that resonated with conversations with various knowledge keepers.

Here is a general description of my reading process, and the process reviewing the documents from the TRC archive. The first time I read the Summary Report, I did not intend to study the TRC for this thesis. I read it within months of it being released. I knew about Indian Residential Schools and the TRC process before I read it. It was an emotional process. I expected the information to be heavy and difficult to read, but I knew it would help me to be more informed and to be a better ally and advocate. I had planned to study the application of Two-Eyed Seeing from an administrative lens at another Mi'kmaw-led organization. The TRC did not become the focus of my thesis until a few years later when I encountered questions from business leaders about Canada-Indigenous reconciliation and how they should respond to the Calls to Action. Sometimes they appreciated the suggestions I made, often they did not. We were not making sense of reconciliation or the Calls to Action in the same way. We were drawing on different retrospective cues for organizational change. We also had a different sense of the scope of change required. Once I realized that my colleagues working in Canadian organizations were interested in doing something, but struggling, I committed to studying the TRC.

Critical Sensemaking: Initial Content Analysis

For the formal analysis I used a qualitative analysis program, Atlas ti. I uploaded the document archives including the Settlement agreement and the Executive Summary of the Final Report. I highlighted sections of text that defined ‘reconciliation’, ‘truth,’ and ‘truth and reconciliation’. I also coded identity groups, e.g., Canada, Indigenous, Aboriginal, Metis, Inuit, etc.) and well as institutions and organizations (See Appendix E Table 5-1 for examples of coding). The language used in the documents represented the discourses of reconciliation. They clarified which groups or individuals were involved in reconciliation efforts and when (past, present, or future). Then I looked for and coded the things that reflected the related aspects of the CSM heuristic – indicators of constructed identities, rules/power, and formative context. All were related discourses.

The discourses were challenging to code because I was familiar with reconciliation commissions and the problems with them. I had a sense already of the expectations that people had for the Canadian TRC. With respect to **identities**, Indigenous communities had been seeking apologies for Indian Residential Schools for decades (e.g. documented call for an inquiry in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP,1996)). And the apologies they were seeking were part of a bigger desire to see their sovereignty as nations recognized by the Canadian government. Further, I was aware of political and legal challenges presented against the Federal government, that remained unsettled by courts. This represented the official position of the Federal government was to limit Indigenous rights. Although this position contradicted section 35 of the Constitution Act. I also read literature to see how and where Indigenous peoples were included in the narratives of Canadian history. I observed Indigenous literatures were published that attempted to re-story Indigenous voices and perspectives of Canada. These narratives were inconsistently recognized by mainstream historical narratives. Thus, discourses were not

different for dual identity groups there were Indigenous narratives of Canada's past that constructed one discourse of resistance, another that constructed a Canadian legal and political narrative of denial, and another Canadian public history in which Indigenous perspectives were relegated to the margins of Canada's multi-cultural society.

I also reviewed the texts identifying aspects of historical narratives, **the formative context of reconciliation**. I looked for and compared the references to past events such as the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996) and the subsequent *Working Group on Truth and Reconciliation and Exploratory Dialogue Sessions*. Both of which were referenced in the mandate while other documents, like treaties and the Canadian constitution which states that Aboriginal peoples (Metis, Inuit, and First Nations peoples) are distinctive rights holders, were not mentioned in the Mandate Statement or the Settlement Agreement but were central throughout the TRC's report. I realized that the references made to the past in the TRC's documents were not because of cues in the mandate, the references were plausibly the result of the Commissioners' sensemaking.

As I read, I noticed patterns not only in the texts of the TRC documents, but also in the academic texts that were being published. The identity of the authors seemed to influence the discourses presented. Professional identities as well as aspects of "**cultural-political identities**" of Canadian and Indigenous authors seemed to be thing that determined the discourse. Some authors writing about reconciliation used more historical reference points and referred to systemic issues inherited from **previous policies and laws** like the Indian Act (1885) and the British North America Act (1885) the precursor to the Canadian Constitution (1982). Their historical references to the discourse of reconciliation were more complete. The connection

between these political and legal rules and the devastating influences they on Indigenous communities and communities of practice were also more explicit.

Two-Eyed Seeing Implications for Critical Sensemaking.

From the perspective of Two-Eyed Seeing the observations I made during this first content analysis had two implications for my overall analysis. I decided it was necessary to foreground Indigenous authors for a CSM analysis to truly appreciate the intersecting power dynamics that were heavily influenced by the formative contexts of changing social norms, rules, and policies. I also decided it was necessary to consider the implications of the professional identities - mine and others - for the texts I was reading. I went back to the Mandate Statement for the TRC (Canada, 2006) to look for indicators of the professional identities of those negotiating the settlement agreement. I looked for 'rules' in the Settlement Agreement and the Mandate that positioned the TRC within a Canadian legal and political power structure. The words in the mandate that stated what the Commissioners "shall" and "shall not" do. Then I reviewed the TRC reports (TRC, 2012, 2015) for indications that they (dis-)agreed with the mandate and/or sought to change or enact their agency as sense makers. For example, they did not agree with the decision "to establish the Commission as a federal government department – as opposed to a commission under the Inquiries Act." It was a decision made prior to their appointment and it is not one they would have chosen because the associated bureaucratic processes that "were onerous and highly problematic" (TRC, 2012b, p. 2).

I also chose to integrate CRGBA, because the questions presented in the Starter Kit (NWAC, 2020) explained the tensions I was feeling and noticing. While thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of CRGBA, I determined that the NWAC toolkit's focus on

administrative policy takes us only so far into an Indigenous view of Canadian administration. Heeding encouragement to be more explicit about my identity and positionality, I also revisited my relationship to methods, approaches to research, and choosing how to present something about my learning journey that might be of interest and value to the field of MOS. By weaving between CRGBA and CSM, I identified points of synergy and tension in the two methods before deciding to fuse them together as Two-Eyed CSM (See Appendix C Figure 2-1).

Theoretical Synergies

Like Critical Sensemaking, the NWAC position research in a way that recognizes that discourse is social, political, and enacted by people. It is the formative context of the relationship between social actors informs sensemaking. The CRGBA is also inherently critical of the way power dynamics institutional rules are normalized through talk and text. The distinctions-based priority of CRGBA presents critique of the current dominant mainstream structuring of the dual relational discourse of Canada vs. Indigenous peoples. A distinctions-based lens makes a plausible argument for favouring diverse local knowledge systems of geographical places and makes the case for considering the formative contexts of the regions as part of discourses of identity. It highlights a duality of opposing forces as Eurocentric Canadian oppressive systems of governance vs. Indigenous collaborative resistance to colonial oppression by re-asserting self-governance in multiple negotiated treaty territories across the country.

NWAC's conceptual and applied contributions also inform discussions of intersectionality in organizations. However, the tools presented by other intersectional identity researchers initially developed in and for contexts of the modern-colonial United States. Over time, the concepts have been taken up and applied in other contexts internationally (Davis, 2020). Similarly, methodologies for applying intersectionality in the context of business and

management research (Rodriguez et al., 2016) have developed in Canada and elsewhere (e.g., Ruel, 2018a). We cannot assume that the issues of identity are the same in the Canadian context as they are in the United States because the socio-politics of the Canadian nation state developed differently. The formative context of the Canadian society, policy, and business practice matters. The NWAC argument that prioritizes intersectionality as one of five core pillars reflects the need for analytical approaches to policy research in Canada that account for the localized formative contexts of colonization.

Issues that are practically relevant to Indigenous identity communities in the Canadian context are prioritized in CRGBA resources. However, the examples of research provided in the NWAC toolkits are primarily focused on federal political policy, administrative government policies, and areas that work closely with individual citizens in health care and social services. CSM can be used to extend the usefulness of CRGBA when considering the relationship between policy and administrative rules. The critical dimensions of the CSM heuristic - its focus on how individuals make sense of their agency to enact change in organizations, and by extension societal issues of power and privilege (Aromaa et al, 2019) - can account for the structural and discursive social aspects that may hinder reconciliatory change efforts called for by the TRC.

Grounding Identities in Context

Part of the appeal of the CSM approach as a counterpoint to CRGBA is that it both grounds analysis in recognized academic traditions and problematizes the imposition of theoretical boundaries onto analysis. I believe CSM has the potential to complement Indigenous approaches to research because it is not methodologically prescriptive; instead, it is adaptive to various organizational contexts, and encourages conscious reflexivity of the researcher in analysis. CSM is more a guideline or set of “wise practices,” (Calliou & Wesley-Esquimaux,

2014) that may use multiple methodological approaches to explore the critical aspects of a situation from multiple theoretical positions, grounding and problematizing knowledge claims.

Tensions and extensions

Identity is a central aspect of the Critical Sensemaking heuristic. The heuristic is built from theories of identity that are founded in Western constructions of identity. Strategies to problematize and ground identities in intersectionality have served to extend CSM as a method, e.g., anchor points (Ruel, Mills, & Thomas 2018). CSM also recognizes the interplay of the critical dimensions (formative context, rules/power, and discourses) that create cues for sensemaking individuals when they determine what is plausible. Intersectional identities and organizational identities together demonstrate the pragmatic value of using CSM as a method to explore the agency of individuals making sense of multiple, plausibly contradictory, goals of reconciliation (e.g., Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; Walters, 2007).

The tendency within the CSM tradition has been to focus on the sense maker's identity position and/or the formative context of organizational change. But the formative context can neglect to consider the relationship between place-based identity politics by focusing on what is happening within an organization as though the physical location has little or no influence on sensemaking. I chose to intentionally ground my analysis in critical Indigenous research strategies that have been developed over the past 50 years to challenge and disrupt settler-colonial policies and place-making narratives that interact with the socially normative, cultural, and political aspects of identities. I foreground CRGBA policy research toolkits (2021) in the Two-Eyed CSM method to surface the structuring influences of British and Canadian policymaking on Canada-Indigenous relations today.

For example, I noted several CSM studies focused on sensemaking in Canadian organizations. Although they all discussed the formative context and macro-discourses of Canada, they were mostly silent on the topics of colonization, Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous territories. By failing to consider colonizing influences of settler-colonial rules within organizations they overlook the taken-for-granted foundational laws of Canada's sovereignty. These laws effect sensemaking of individuals and structure the relationship between modern legal rules and political power structures and enduring oppression of Indigenous peoples and Nations. Even the critical aspects of CSM are built from theories of identity and social context that are founded in Western constructions of identity.

CSM suggests that identity is central to sensemaking, therefore, clarity about the sense maker identity scripts, and intersectional identities, influence what is plausible and reasonable. Neglecting to consider the relationship between colonial place-making policies and narratives as part of the researcher's formative contexts is especially problematic in the context of settler-colonial societies like Canada. Anyone seeking to support the Calls to Action and Nation-to-Nation dialogue have also been called do the work of unsettling their Canadian identity narratives (Regan, 2010).

Fusion of CRGBA and CSM to create a Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking Approach

Now that the theoretical synergies between CRGBA and CSM are clear, I present the steps in a Two-Eyed CSM method. My analysis process was iterative. It involved moving between multiple literatures, methodologies, and methods analyzing discourses, comparing historical narratives, and identifying formal and informal rules that structure reconciliation commissions. For the sake of this analysis, I distill the process into six methodological steps, the order of which is important (See Appendix D Figure 2-2, mapping CSM and CRGBA).

Step 1: Using CRGBA Research Toolkit to foster reflexivity.

Step 2: Positioning research in relationship to Indigenous communities of place and practice.

Step 3: Policy Analysis using the CRGBA Starter Kit.

Step 4: Analysis of organizational change processes using the CSM heuristic.

Step 5: Action and observation - weaving between knowledge systems.

Step 6: Ongoing sensemaking.

Below I explain how each of the steps was applied in my case study analysis of the TRC administration. I opted to study the processes of the TRC itself because as a case study it grounds a discussion of reconciliation-oriented organizational change that is relevant to both the fields of Aboriginal Studies and management and organization studies. The administrative context in which the Commissioners made sense of change, and what they achieved as an instigator of discursive change, continues to be a significant case to learn from.

Step 1: Self-Reflective Analysis Using CRGBA Research Toolkit

The first step of Two-Eyed CSM involves fostering reflexivity. I referred to the CRGBA Research toolkit (2022) while positioning myself in relationship to the TRC. The questions provided in Chapter 1 of the toolkit are accessible and identify multiple intersections. The output of my own reflexive analysis is evident throughout the thesis. In Chapter 1, I explained my identity positions that have been most meaningful to the way I made sense of reconciliation and my position as a researcher making sense of the TRC.

Step 2: Positioning of the context clarifying your relationship to an Indigenous community.

This step refers to the need for the researcher to be clear about their organizational positioning relative to communities of practice and knowledge. The question presented in the CRGBA toolkit asks: “Thinking back to the five principles of research, how does locating your

positionality as a researcher help you practice reciprocity, respect, relevance, responsibility, and relationships?” (NWAC 2022, p. 5). I highlight this line of questioning because it helps to demonstrate where there can be a disconnect between the social context of collegial discipline-specific relationships and the context of community-based participatory research communities.

For example, the spectrum of Indigenization (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018) highlights the ways in which people working in the same academic institution and engaging the same language of “Indigenization” imagine different meaning and plausible outcomes associated with an initiative. For my analysis of reconciliation, it was therefore important for me to present a literature review of the discourse of reconciliation in a way that foregrounds the work of Aboriginal and Indigenous authors. The body of work that makes up the field of Aboriginal economic development specifically represents the formative context of reconciliation. It also provides salient and retrospective cues that inform my sensemaking of the context in which the Commissioners and Indigenous survivors were themselves making sense of changing discourse.

Step 3: Policy Analysis using the CRGBA Starter Kit.

The third step of my analysis draws on the CRGBA starter kit questions as a guide (NWAC 2020). The analysis completed in this step is presented in Chapters 4 and 5. I use the starter kit to structure a review of the mandate statement (Chapter 4) and the work of the TRC (Chapter 5). I analyzed two “policy” documents: (a) the Mandate Statement (Canada, 2006) and (b) the executive summary of the final report (TRC, 2015) to contrast the assumptions about rules at the beginning and end of the TRC processes. I reviewed them separately to delineate between the expectations that were outlined in the mandate statement (i.e., the rules and salient cues) and the administrative work that the TRC did as a government initiative (i.e., enactment).

Step 4: Analysis of organizational change processes using CSM heuristic

CSM analyses are presented in Chapters 4 and 5. A typical process when using the CSM lens involves asking: Who is sensemaking? And, what are they making sense of? Answering these questions involves being clear about the sense maker's identity and social context. In Chapter 4, I use the critical dimensions of CSM as I review the mandate statement after completing a CRGBA to explore its cultural relevancy to Indigenous claimants. I position the Commissioners as sense makers in the Chapter 5 analysis, and I explore the decisions they made during their appointment period enacting and (re-)framing a discourse of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation.

Step 5: Action and observation, weaving between knowledge systems

The process of surfacing the various discourses, formative contexts, and power dynamics the Commissioners were making sense of was iterative. I include action as observation as a fifth step in the process because at various points I used different methods to explore longitudinal change in TRC administrative processes. I used CSM in combination with qualitative research methods of historical archival analysis (Hartt et al., 2014), actor-network theory (Durepos & Mills, 2012), storywork (Archibald, 2019; Doucette & Castleden, 2023), and discourse analysis (Thurlow, 2007) to account for critical aspects of commissioners' sensemaking. Each time, I identified some new issue that I had not considered, and I would not have considered it unless I asked the questions, did the analysis, and asked for feedback from various knowledge holders and wise people.

This back and forth of changing positions, or changing perspectives, is a teaching of Two-Eyed Seeing, it is also reflected in two properties of CSM, enactment and on-going sensemaking. However, the discussion of implications of weaving between knowledge systems

is not always reflected when academic research is published, and the failure to recognize the iterative steps of doing, learning, and changing course has implications for reconciliation, which I will elaborate on in Chapter six.

Step 6: Ongoing sensemaking

Reconciliation is on-going, the TRC commissioners presented their vision for a future. It is not a closer, but an opening up. In Chapter seven I return to the Calls to Action and how I make sense of them now, in 2023 at the end of my thesis journey. Some things have changed, some organizations have changed, and some Calls to Action have been “closed.” But those that have been closed, can be re-opened, and some will never be completed.

Conclusion: Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking must be grounded with Indigenous methods

Two-Eyed Seeing involved knowledge weaving, moving back and forth between the two critical approaches to explore the synergies and tensions. I started my research from a theoretical position in which the concepts of relationality and relational accountability are central. I explained that Two-Eyed CSM is a research approach that involves weaving between CRGBA and CSM to explore the case study of organizational change. I believe that fusing the two methods together into a new heuristic, extends the usefulness of each.

The literature review that follows is framed as a review of Indigenous perspectives of Canadian history. It presents the formative contexts of the discourse of reconciliation that are connected to communities of place, politics, and policy that have changed over time. Scholarship in the field of Aboriginal economic development challenge the boundaries of local economic orders and provide cues that explain the relationship between the taken-for-granted role of governments and government policy (Newhouse, 2004) for the field of MOS in Canada.

Chapter 3: Indigenous Perspectives of Canadian History: The Formative Context of the TRC

The first step of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking, hereafter Two-Eyed CSM, involves fostering reflexivity using the tools presented in the CRGBA Research toolkit (NWAC 2022). As I did the work to foster reflexivity for this research, I explored intersecting dimensions of my social identity first and continually as I completed my research. The second step of Two-Eyed CSM is to position yourself, as a researcher relative to the community (NWAC, 2022). In my case, I considered the implications of my identity positions as a researcher in intersecting fields of MOS and Aboriginal business studies, and my positionality relative to the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The outcome of the clarifying my responsibility to these professional communities and communities of practice was my decision to foreground Indigenous perspectives of reconciliation in this literature review. I focus on literature that is germinal to the field of Indigenous-led economic development. This brief history highlights significant political and legal events from the past that continue to serve as touchpoints for Indigenous-led organization studies and therefore the discourse of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation. I also establish a relational connection between myself as a researcher and Indigenous organizations who participated in the formulation of the TRC.

The literature review also addresses two critical aspects of the Critical Sensemaking heuristic. It outlines the changing dynamics of the discourse of Canada-Indigenous Reconciliation, and establishes the formative context of the TRC. Although the language of the discourse has changed over time and may be unfamiliar to those studying in the field of MOS, it is salient understanding the work done by the TRC and the on-going conversations surrounding Canada-Indigenous reconciliation.

Germinal Legal and Political Reference points of Aboriginal Economic Development

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (RCAP, 1996) is a jumping off point for this review. I refer to the RCAP report - a five-volume report produced between 1991 and 1996 - because it was the first of three foundational texts referred to in the mandate statement of the TRC (Canada, 2006). The RCAP report continues to be an important policy reference point in the field of Aboriginal economic development because it punctuates significant political and legal events and discourses from the past that continue to serve as touchpoints for Indigenous-led research today (Graham & Newhouse, 2021; Voyageur, Newhouse & Beavon, 2011).

The TRC also produced historical records. They fulfilled the goal of their mandate “to create as complete an historical record as possible of the IRS system and legacy (Mandate, 2006. p. 2).” The TRC reports (e.g. *They Came for the Children*, 2012 and *What we have learned*, 2015), identify significant events, actors, and policies. Their history of Indian Residential Schools starts with the 16th century imperial context of the relationship. They proceed to describe the relationship between “the growth of global, European-based empires and the Christian churches (*What we have learned*, 2015, p. 15).” I refer to the final report of RCAP (1996) because it structured a story of the past relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples into four temporal periods which I review below. They are: (1) Separate worlds (Before 1500), (2) Contact and Cooperation (1500s – 1867), (3) Displacement and Assimilation (1867 – 1969), and (4) Negotiation and Renewal (1969 – 2016) (RCAP, 1996). Arguably, we are now in a fifth period that may be called Truth and Reconciliation (2016 – future).

Separate Worlds (Before 1500): Sovereign Nations before European arrival

In RCAP, the period prior to 1500s was described as separate worlds, Aboriginal societies in the Americas and non-Aboriginal societies in Europe developed in entirely different

geographic spaces, in ignorance of one another. It is a period that shall not be presented as a historical void for the territories we now refer to as Canada. Indigenous societies who occupied the space had regional governments and traditional territorial boundaries that spanned the continent. There was also variety in their languages, cultures, and social traditions. Historically, from an Indigenous perspective, Indigenous peoples are groups of self-governing societies with traditional languages, teachings, and ways of organizing, that have developed since time immemorial. Referring to the period before European settlement of Canada refers to a time when Indigenous nations' relationship to places were not questioned. The relationship between Indigenous societies and place was engrained in social norms/laws and reflected in the language (McMillan, 2020).

In the last chapter I referred to two concepts of an *Indigenist* research paradigm - relationality and relational accountability - because they direct us to explore localized Indigenous teachings that derive from Indigenous relationships with local spaces. In *Unama'ki*/Cape Breton, where I live, the Mi'kmaw nation was a sovereign, self-organizing, political, whole system of knowledge. Traces of the past are found in stories, place names and the language of *Mi'kmaw'ki/L'nu*. Mi'kmaw origin stories speak of people who sprang from this place (Sable & Francis, 2012). Modern Mi'kmaw governance structures rely on traditional legal concepts that translate into the modern sense of jurisdictional authority (Denny, 2022). The concept of *Netukilimk*, for example, refers to the responsibility that the Mi'kmaq must live in a symbiotic relationship with land, earth, and the environment (McMillan and Prosper, 2016).

Mi'kmaq are among the many Indigenous nations of what is commonly referred to as North America and were vibrant, politically sophisticated, and economically active societies. When Indigenous leaders talk about returning to a nation-to-nation relationship (RCAP, 1996;

TRC, 2015) or inherent rights (Canadian Constitution, 1982; TRC, 2015), they are referring to the sovereign nations and political and legal orders that pre-date European settlements in the territory. There were complex models of exchange and trade (i.e., economies) that functioned in this space within and between nations (MacLeod, 2016, Voyageur et al, 2011) such that traditional Indigenous trading routes of the period were the foundation of the fur trade (Heber, 2011).

Contact and Cooperation (1500s – 1867)

The next historical period is defined by the events of first encounter between Indigenous societies, European settlers (citizens of primarily France and England), and official representatives of the British or French Crown (e.g., military leaders, religious leaders, and political delegations). *Contact* refers to the new contacts that were made between those societies who had not been aware of one another, let alone in contact with one another. In the 1500s the encounters between Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies began to increase in number and complexity (Heber, 2011; Newhouse, Voyager, & Beavon, 2005). The period spanned over 300 years, and generations of families. It witnessed significant economic events, including the establishment of military outposts (e.g., Fortress of Louisburg, locally), trading posts (e.g., Hudson's Bay Company, Northwest Company), the Royal Proclamation (1763), the War of 1812, and the American Revolution.

The period is characterized as contact and cooperation in reference to the nature of many of the inter-societal interactions between and among treaty partners and political allies. The political agreements were negotiated between governments to clarify how the places their citizens occupied would be managed. Treaties were formed with settlers representing the crown, the church, and the state (Battiste, 2016; Borrows, 2017; Morin, 2005). The treaties allowed for

social, economic, and political relationships to develop that became the foundation of the modern Canadian economy. A list of treaties in chronological order is provided in Brown et al (2016, p. 292). During the period in which the historic treaties (e.g., Peace and Friendship Treaties) and numbered treaties (i.e., Treaties 1-11) were signed, Indigenous societies were recognized as independent self-governing groups with sovereignty in their homeland. This counternarrative undermines the basis of claims through which European governments claimed sovereignty in the space commonly known as Canada's baseline colonial policy, the Doctrine of Discovery (Borrows, 2017; Canada, 1996).

Displacement and Assimilation (1867 – 1969): Canada's Indian Act Approach

The British North America Act (BNA) of 1867 ushered in a new political relationship between nations and with it the Indian Act of 1876. Together they signified the beginning of confederation processes for European settler colonies and governments. The Canadian TRC referred to the Indian Act as a policy of cultural genocide established as part of the BNA, a policy of the British sovereign that claimed rights to territory, and the pre-cursor to the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982. The construction of Indian Act policies, based in these assumptions, disenfranchised Indigenous peoples from their claims to tradition, culture, and sovereignty in their homelands.

I think of this period as a shift toward colonial denial. It is defined by the implementation of new settler-colonial laws. The new laws informed a new idea of Canada (the state) that was dependent on the delegitimization of local Indigenous societies. Once the BNA was in place, the Federal Government's approach to Indian affairs replaced Indigenous leaders' sense of sovereignty and agency with dependency. Multiple amendments gradually increased the power of Indian Agents and diminished the relative power of Indians to resist enfranchisement

(Cardinal, 1969). It was a systemic approach that, over decades, became more pervasive through policy development and militarization.

There are several select events (see Table 3-1) that represent a relationship between the colonial government's approach to Indian Affairs that treated "Indians" as incompetent wards of the state. They include implementation of policies (e.g., gradual enfranchisement, encroachment in places, resource exploitation, and militarization) and court decisions that reinforced the legitimacy of their actions, at least from the perspective of Eurocentric legal principles (Borrows, 2017). Among these many regionally specific and national policies, was the Indian Residential School (IRS) policy.

Indian Residential Schools were one aspect of cultural assimilation and cultural genocide. Canada's Indian Residential School System was a nation-wide federally funded program. The expressed goal of the system was to (re-)educate Indigenous children (then referred to as Indians) by disenfranchising them from their families, communities, and traditions (Battiste, 2013). The Indian Residential School policy, like so many policies managed by the Federal Department Indian Affairs was designed to eradicate Indigenous cultures and languages, through systems that promoted neglect for human dignity. The operation of Indian Residential Schools spanned years between 1867 – 1998, but the peak recorded annual enrollment was almost 12,000 children in the 1950s spread across roughly 90 schools.

Many "students" who attended these schools were treated terribly. They were subjected to physical and emotional violence. We now have evidence that thousands of children died in residential schools, and hundreds of them were buried in unmarked graves on the school sites¹.

¹ <https://nctr.ca/memorial/national-student-memorial/memorial-register/>

Like all other federal policies that derived from *Indian Act*, administrative oversight for the national program was delegated to the Department of Indian Affairs who then outsourced the administration of the “schools” to religious institutions. The Federal Government was ultimately responsible for continued funding of administration and the supply of students to them (MacDonald, 2007; MacDonald and Hudson, 2012), thus it was also responsible for the harms endured by those who attended them.

Indian Residential Schools and the White Paper Policy. Most of the Indian Residential Schools were closed during this period too. The closures reflected a change in the federal government’s Indian Residential School approach. By the 1950’s the Indian Affairs education system lacked the money and resources required to support the segregated school system, and modified *The Indian Act* so that First Nations students could attend public schools. The move to transfer students from church run schools to provincially run public schools temporally coincided with the release of the federal government’s White Paper on “Indian Policy” which “... proposed a massive transfer of responsibility for First Nations people from the federal to provincial governments. It called for the repeal of the Indian Act, the winding up of the Department of Indian Affairs, and the eventual extinguishment of the Treaties (*What we have learned*, 2015, p. 40).”

Negotiation and Renewal (1969 – 2016): Indigenous- led united resurgence in Canada

The final period RCAP identifies started around 1969, referring to the White Paper (Canada, 1968), and corresponding response, the Red Paper (Cardinal, 1970). Negotiation refers to the prevalence of legal and political responses to Indigenous advocacy which eventually led to a re-negotiation and recognition of Indigenous peoples’ rights. Three watershed events are recognized as shaping this era of Native activism in Canada (Coulthard, 2014): (1) The

militarization of First Nations' opposition to the 1969 White paper described as, "an unprecedented degree of pan-Indigenous assertiveness and political mobilization." (p.5); (2) The *Calder* decision in 1973 that launched a series of discussions regarding Aboriginal title to land that existed prior to settlement; and (3) series of events related to the energy crisis and the oil crisis of the 1970s that were also related to unresolved issues of Native rights.

I think of the 1970s and 1980s as a period of defined by Indigenous-led peaceful political resistance and leadership leveraging their power through diplomatic assembly. Multiple Indigenous advocacy organizations were established regionally and nationally. The National Indian Brotherhood, the precursor to the Assembly of First Nations, was established in 1967 and incorporated in 1970. The Native Women's Association of Canada was established in 1974.

Resisting government policy and seeking justice: The origins of the TRC. The Oka Crisis of 1990 was one of the most notable and relevant to consider the intersection between economic development and reconciliation (Meng, 2020). From a lens of economic development, Oka represents the plausible implications of failing to consult Indigenous nations before launching new developments in their territories. It also marked a turning point in terms of reconciliation because the fall out of the standoff between the land defenders and Canadian military, prompted the launch of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Barsh, 2005; Regan, 2010).

In the 1990's the Canadian justice system that historically supported values of colonialism began ruling in favor of Indigenous rights (Cassidy, 2005, p. 38) and challenged federal policies to change. If the government refused to acknowledge the truth about the systemic nature the Indian Residential Schools and controlled the narrative in public Canadian places (Regan, 2010), Indigenous peoples continued to resist and seek justice through public measures.

While leaders of federal government and church institutions continued to deny their legal accountability for the residential school system as a whole, individuals in local churches had begun to acknowledge the harms that some individuals and communities suffered because of the schools. The series of apologies offered in the 1980s and 1990s from religious officials and church representatives are listed in Appendix of TRC's Executive Summary TRC, (TRC, 2015, p. 378). The church apologies that span 1986 – 2015, further evidence of the scope, scale, and impact of the Indian Residential School Programs on local communities. In the same period, student survivors increasingly turned to the justice system as a means of seeking reparations for damages.

With respect to reconciliation, the period following RCAP also saw the launch of the 1998 Exploratory Dialogues, and the process of Alternative Dispute Resolution Process, and the birth of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF). Taken together, this series of events increasingly affirmed Indigenous rights, and legitimized the truth of survivor stories. Because the TRC mandate was established as part of the settlement process, the legal context of negotiation presented salient cues for framing of the localized TRC discourse (James, 2022) discussed below.

The launch of the TRC coincided with the Federal Public Apology for the Indian Residential Schools. On June 11, 2008, the Prime Minister of Canada delivered an official "Statement of Apology – to the former students of Indian Residential Schools" (TRC, 2015, p. 369). The apology, in theory, would represent an end to the government denial. And, while it is beyond the scope of the analysis here, it raised important new cues for the Canadian public and Indigenous peoples. The government apology could not be compelled through the Settlement

Agreement and was therefore considered a strategic political decision/announcement (Niezen, 2010).

Truth and Reconciliation (2016 – future)

I contend we have entered a fifth period that may be called Truth and Reconciliation for three reasons: (1) the RCAP (1996) laid out a 20-year strategy presented as the foundation for a renewed relationship; (2) the publication of the TRC's final report was issued two decades after the RCAP report (Graham and Newhouse, 2021); (3) the TRC process appears to have changed the discourses of reconciliation and may have also marked a shift in the dynamics of negotiation and renewal that were imagined in RCAP; and (4) while many people were looking to the TRC for guidance about reconciliation (e.g., Craft and Regan, 2020) many have taken a longer view of reconciliation referring to the on-going implications of RCAP (Graham and Newhouse, 2021; Hughes, 2012; Regan, 2010).

Discussion implications of formative context for my Two-Eyed CSM analysis

It was important for my analysis of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission to foreground Indigenous literature because in my experience the work of Aboriginal and Indigenous authors tends to be overlooked by mainstream business school literature. Step two of the Two-Eyed CSM method involves positioning yourself as a researcher relative to Indigenous communities, including communities of practice. The information provided above (see Appendix 1) are germinal to legal and political reference points of Indigenous-led community economic development. The literature review also addresses two critical aspects of the Critical Sensemaking heuristic. The body of work that makes up the field of Aboriginal economic development specifically represents the formative context of the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission. It also provides salient and retrospective cues that inform me as I make sense of the context of the case study.

There are four points to highlight before moving on to the case study analysis. First, the specific language or words that are presented in popular media that make up the discourse of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation today have been carried forward over time. The discourse of reconciliation is changing and adapting, so when I hear it used today, I am attentive to the relational cues that position the intended meaning of the dialogue temporally, professionally, and politically. I discuss the dynamics of the discourse in greater detail below. Second, the Indian Residential Schools were devastating, and were but one aspect of the systematic process of political disenfranchisement and cultural genocide. Third, the strategy that the Federal government has used has been policy dependent which prompted the sub-sequent resistance response of Indigenous communities. The distrust and skepticism about the intentions of government action is justified and can be used to surface the discursive political moves. Lastly, I reiterate the value of the culturally relevant gender-based analysis toolkits developed by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC, 2020, 2022, 2023).

Connecting the history of Canada-Indigenous Relationships to global reconciliation discourses

As a discourse of change there is an assumption about what truth and reconciliation commissions are and what they are supposed to do (Stanton, 2022). Initially, in my analysis I reviewed the global academic discourses related to truth and reconciliation commissions (Hayner, 2011; Maddison, Clark, and de Costa, 2016) with the intention, as others have done, of positioning descriptions of the Canadian TRC relative to them (Nagy, 2012; 2014; Regan, 2010; Snelgrove, Dhamoon, & Corntassel, 2014). The basic premise of a TRC appears straight

forward: social justice is dependent on surfacing truth (e.g., government transparency), development of socially equitable policies (i.e., policy change), and gradual social reform (i.e., discursive change). Therefore, the role of commissions, temporary constituted government institutions, is primarily discursive (de Costa, 2017). Their goals are to focus on illuminating how political and legal rules/structures must change to create more equitable processes and to promote public accountability by recommending reforms.

The truth aspect of a commission, then, assumes that if publics are made aware of structures that perpetuate injustice, then they will hold institutions accountable to change (Bakiner, 2014; Hayner, 2011). This model of change also assumes the power to enact change lies with states and government institutions. By extension, the role of civil society is to present a united ethical stand to pressure governments to change policies and laws (Bakiner, 2014; Hayner, 2011). Hayner (2011) suggested it is necessary to evaluate change over extended periods of time to determine whether historical narratives of the past become more complicated. Bakiner (2014) discussed the need for TRCs to mobilize civil society to disrupt political power dynamics. Citizens must be aware and engaged. Therefore, one of the questions that was asked with respect to the Canadian TRC was this: If Canadian publics were disinterested in Indigenous issues leading up to the TRC (James, 2017), did the work of the TRC instigate change in the public awareness and interest?

The review of global discourses highlights a need to clarify the locally relevant dimensions of discourse. If we explore and subject national histories to critical questioning, i.e., about the legacies of national histories and the place of the nation state, we make room for radically different conceptions of justice (Scott, 2020). The first step then is to consider the pre-conditions of the relationship to be reconciled, or the locally relevant formative context (e.g.,

national history). A multi-level approach to conceptualizing reconciliation reveals the need to take a broader perspective on a range of structural, institutional, and interpersonal transformations that promote democratic values and contestations (Maddison, 2017). In other words, the means of evaluating the success of commissions is also dependent on the situation specific baseline conditions from which success is measured. And it is also necessary to be aware of the often-implicit assumptions about history, the objectivity of knowledge claims, and agency to create change (Suddaby and Foster, 2016).

The Discourse of Reconciliation: Learning about history to make sense of plausible future action

The relationship between traditional Indigenous governments and the federal government of Canada is complicated by the way the relationship was (re-)presented in mainstream media and literature (Regan, 2010). The brief history above, presented to foreground Indigenous perspectives of the formative context of the Canada-Indigenous relationship, highlights cues that continue to be important to the modern Crown-Indigenous relationship and therefore the discourse of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation. My analysis of the administrative process of the TRC shows a correlation between the change in the discourses of Crown-Indigenous relations and the completion of the TRC.

The analysis in the next two chapters focuses heavily on two documents: (1) the *Mandate Statement*, Schedule N of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (2006), and (2) *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary Report of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (TRC, 2015a). In terms of the discourse of reconciliation they reflect the language used at the beginning and end of the TRC's process. At the beginning of the process the principles of reconciliation said:

Reconciliation is an ongoing individual and collective process, and will require commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government, and the people of Canada. Reconciliation may occur between any of the above groups. (*Settlement Agreement*, 2006, p. 1)

Similarly, the opening chapter of the summary report defined reconciliation as follows:

[...] reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen there has to be an awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour. (TRC, 2015, pp. 6-7)

Later in the same chapter, “The Commission defines *reconciliation* as ongoing processes of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships (TRC, 2015, p. 16).” Further, “A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate societal change. (TRC, 2015, p. 16)”

Reconciliation is a political process and requires engagement and change in all departments of the federal government and within the policies they produce. Reconciliation processes are not the exclusive responsibility of the federal government or federal departments. Reconciliation requires, “...commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada.” (*Settlement Agreement*, 2006, p. 1)

Exploring the connection between history and future action. The TRC presents a discourse of reconciliation that requires fostering awareness about Indigenous histories and Canada's histories so that they can inform the future reconciliation processes. The decade of dialogue sessions as part of the negotiation and renewal period was significant for the TRC. They frame the relationship and the corresponding power dynamic that existed between Indigenous governments and the Federal government. The federal government and church institutions continued to deny their legal accountability for the Indian Residential Schools as a whole, but some began to acknowledge the stories of individual harm. Student survivors increasingly turned to the justice system as a means of seeking reparations for damages.

With respect to reconciliatory change, the narrative presented by RCAP also reflects the agency of individuals and communities to change policy. In the case of the TRC, a series of small wins over time created a situation in which it was increasingly difficult to publicly deny the nature of the Indian Residential School systems, the legacy impacts, and the extent of the institutional coordination and involvement. For example, when the courts certified the *Cloud Class Action* of Mohawk Institute (1997 - 2004), the decision validated the plausibility of *systems of neglect* (Nagy, 2014). A new precedent was set where, "Wider harms of residential schools would be legally actionable (Nagy, 2014 p. 205, cites Leslie Thielen-Wilson 2012)." Up to that point, the federal government, and churches as administrators of schools, could not be held accountable for the impacts of a residential schools on a whole group of people. At best, a senior administrator would be held accountable for their individual behaviour. Once the *Cloud Class Action* was certified, it created a legal precedent for evaluating the social structures and impacts of residential schools. *The Settlement Agreement* (2006), the largest out-of-court settlement in Canadian history, was a legal process to help survivors receive justice. It

represented legal acknowledgment of the plausibility of the mass number of legal claims made by former Indian Residential School Survivors against the Government of Canada and Religious Institutions.

The IRSSA was meant to bring a fair and lasting resolution to the legacy of Indian Residential Schools by providing financial and non-financial benefits to the individuals affected by the Indian Residential Schools experience. Its implementation was to be overseen by nine provincial and territorial Superior Courts, and funded by the Government of Canada (Independent Assessment Process, 2021, p. 21).

It was further determined that various structures of settlement were necessary to sort through the claims, determine legitimacy of individual claims, and evaluate the scope of the Indian Residential School system nationally. Thus, the Settlement Agreement presented a solution that helped to legally determine the truths about the past. While some sub-processes like the Independent Assessment Process provided compensation for residential school survivors (Independent Assessment Process, 2021), the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and funding for commemorative events “extended beyond direct survivors themselves and were intended to document the residential school experience and advance healing and reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state” (Independent Assessment Process, 2021, p. 21). Because the TRC mandate was established as part of the Settlement Process the legal context of negotiation presented salient cues for framing of the localized TRC discourse (James, 2022).

Challenging the silent identity discourses of reconciliation. Canada-Indigenous Reconciliation is inherently a political discussion, because government policies flow through to

the delivery of services to people, i.e., citizens. Indigenous peoples in Canada have a unique relationship that the federal government is bound in the definitions of citizenship presented in the *Indian Act* and the *Canadian Constitution Act*. Despite the Canadian justice system historically deeming many traditional practices as illegal (Denny, 2022; Young, 2016), multiple court cases of the past have been overturned on the grounds that the original decisions did not recognize the treaty rights of Indigenous peoples. Thus, the Supreme Court of Canada has legitimized Indigenous claims to inherent rights in their traditional territories. Furthermore, modern provincial and federal governments of Canada still derive jurisdictional authority in the territory from the British Crown via the British North America Act (i.e., the Constitution) are responsible for upholding the spirit and intent of those historic treaties.

Policies such as the Indian Act and the Canadian Constitution Act also have direct implications on the relationship between individuals and regional governments on account of the social services that are provided to them (e.g., health care and education). Political identities are also tied to their physical location (on or off reserve) and their political/legal connections to Indigenous governments. Until recently other levels of Canadian government did not formally engage with Indigenous communities to avoid conflation of jurisdictional boundaries. However, the strict definitions of jurisdictional authority that are bound to place rather than individual has been shifting as duty to consult legislation, the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, and Supreme Court decisions expand their definitions and return to the original treaty arrangements.

I focus on the (dis-) connections between these discourses of reconciliation and the discourses that reproduce power in the problematic settler-colonial discourses identified in the CRGBA framework. The literature review above presents a dynamic story of relationships

between Indigenous peoples and settler-colonizers that have changed over the course of almost 600 years. There are stories of meeting, cooperation, economic development, disagreement, political and religious manipulation, social displacement, and resistance to change. Future reconciliation efforts to repair broken relationships must account for the political, legal, social, religious, and economic dimensions of these stories and their legacies that are reproduced in modern Canadian policy documents.

In my analysis of the reconciliation processes addressed by the TRC, I refer to the CRGBA framework because it distills the challenges Canadian policies present for Indigenous peoples into five absent discourses: (1) the need for policies to account for legal and political Indigenous identity distinctions, (2) Indigenous knowledges and teachings, (3) gender diversity and (4) other common intersectional identity concerns, (5) and legacies of trauma resulting from the weaponization of policy (NWAC, 2022, p.48). The relative silence in mainstream literature with respect to these important policy issues was a challenge for me to articulate until the CRGBA toolkits were published.

Conclusion: Historical Discourses, Silences (policy gaps), and CRGBA

It is not a secret that Canada is a colonial state. The ties between the Canadian Government and Canadian cultural identity are closely tied to the British Government and the Commonwealth. And yet, the idea of settler colonialism is often presented as a part of the distant past of Canada's formation and not as a modern ongoing project of maintaining Canadian power and legitimacy in sovereign Indigenous territories. Canadian social systems were, in fact, intentionally designed to erase Indigenous peoples, or at least their social structures and rights. The literature review in this chapter highlights germinal points that explain the integrated and deliberate political institutional strategies that were designed to prevent them from acting as self-

governing nations and to diminish legitimate Indigenous claims to self-government. The brief history above highlights cues that continue to be important to the modern Crown-Indigenous relationship and therefore the discourse of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation. This chapter represents one of the steps that is necessary in the reconciliation process - listening to, and learning from, Indigenous people's perspective of the past. It is also the second step in the Two-Eyed CSM analysis, positioning my research question in the context of the communities with whom I study and work.

It was clear in the TRC reports that these foundational legal and political Crown-Indigenous and Nation-to-Nation relationships must be reconciled. It was also clear that these were not the only relationships that mattered. I focus on the TRC case study to consider whether and how these cues from formative context influenced the work of commissioners as administrators. The line of questioning I follow in this thesis asks how the Commissioners made sense of the discourses in order to enact reconciliation-oriented change. And, to what extent were their choices helped or hindered by other related processes outlined in the Settlement Agreement that potentially conflated the meaning of truth and/or reconciliation?

The historical review helps to identify policy gaps and reinforces the value of the CRGBA framework. It clarifies the reasons CRGBA prioritizes the need to account for politically distinct identities, i.e., distinctions-based policy, and to be trauma-informed. In the next chapter, I will review the goals set out for the TRC. They were extensive, complex, and ambitious (James, 2022; Nagy, 2014; Stanton, 2017). I use questions presented in the CRGBA framework to evaluate the extent to which the TRC was designed to be culturally relevant to Indigenous claimants (former IRS Students and their families) drawing on the resources provided (NWAC, 2020, 2021, 2022).

Chapter 4: An analysis of the policy, power, and rules of the TRC using Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking

For this Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking (hereafter, Two-Eyed CSM) analysis of the TRC case study, I position the formation of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an outcome of an Indigenous-led collective effort to resist systematized oppressive forces of colonialism. The history also demonstrates why many Indigenous peoples were skeptical that a Commission mandate developed according to the norms of the Canadian legal system could be trusted (Corntassel and Holder, 2008). The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement positions the formation of the TRC in a legal context of negotiating a settlement. It is plausible that a process created within a Canadian political and legal framework did not meet the expectations of Indigenous claimants. I used the Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis Framework (NWAC, 2023) to complicate the duality of the Canada-Indigenous reconciliation narratives that reproduce a politically driven settler-colonial strategy to diminish Indigenous rights and knowledges.

For this step of the Two-Eyed CSM Analysis, the Mandate Statement is reflective of a punctuation point in the process. It was drafted at a temporal moment of change that was punctuated by multiple corresponding events (Nagy, 2012). A social shift reflected in increasing public concern about Indigenous people's rights (e.g., #Idle No More movement), a legal shift represented by the negotiation of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, and a political shift represented by the federal apology. The TRC in this context is acknowledgement that the Indian Residential Schools had spurred a legacy of social implications reinforcing systems of oppression that most Canadians were unaware existed.

In this chapter, I move onto the next steps of the Two-Eyed CSM method to consider the cultural relevancy of the TRC mandate from a lens of Critical Indigenous analysis presented by the CRGBA toolkits (NWAC, 2023). At the same time, I address the critical dimension of the CSM heuristic which focuses on the structuring power of rules. I begin by reviewing the directives and guidelines provided to the TRC via the Mandate Statement (Schedule N, *Settlement Agreement*, 2006), delineating between the rules that initiated the formation of the TRC and the work that was done by the TRC with guidance from commissioners. I present a close reading of the text to identify and explain what I read as contradictory messaging in the rules laid out in the mandate. I conclude the chapter by framing the contradictions as tensions the Commissioners navigated over the course of their appointment overseeing the design and administration of the TRC.

Exploring the Cultural Relevancy of the TRC Mandate for Indigenous Claimants

The mandate for the TRC was one aspect of the negotiated settlement processes. The mandate for the TRC in this context of the Settlement Agreement laid out a structure (rules), that were embedded in the words of the text. It established the idea of a Commission that was bound to a discourse of Indigenous peoples who were victims of Canadian public policies. The scope of work set out for the TRC in Schedule M of the Settlement Agreement was ambitious. It involved addressing multiple powerful settler-colonial power dynamics including legal principles, religious ideologies, political rhetoric, administrative policies, an ultimately low public awareness of Canada's history, and specifically Canada's treatment of Indigenous societies (NWAC, 2023).

The Mandate of the TRC (Schedule N of the Indian Residential School Settlement, 12 pages) provided guiding principles for what would be a temporary institution. It defined what

would be done as part of the TRC initiative and how the TRC would be administered. The mandate set out the expectations of the Commissioners, and it set guidelines and limitations about who, what, where, when, and how the Commission would operate. The document included a preamble, principles, and terms of reference with 14 sub-sections: (1) Goals, (2) Establishment of Powers, Duties and Procedures of the Commission, (3) Responsibilities, (4) Exercise of Duties, (5) Membership, (6) Secretariat, (7) Indian Residential School Survivor Committee, (8) Timeframe, (9) Research, (10) Events, (11) Access to Relevant Information, (12) National Research Centre, (13) Privacy, and (14) Budget and Resources.

For this analysis of the mandate statement, I refer to the CRGBA Starter Kit (2020), a pre-cursor to the research toolkit (2022). The CRGBA Starter Kit (NWAC, 2020) is an accessible step to exploring the cultural relevancy of policies, programs, and legislation. It provides activity sheets that walk analysts through a series of review questions focusing on the following four questions as an initial guide for policy analysis:

- Does the policy/program/initiative place emphasis on non-Western and/or Indigenous knowledge?
- Does the policy/program/initiative employ a distinctions-based lens?
- Is the policy/program/initiative gender-inclusive and non-binary, recognizing that gender and sex are spectrums?
- Does the policy/program/initiative account for intersecting identities as the foundation rather than as a matter of inclusion?

Before the questions from the CRGBA analysis can be explored, it is necessary to define the object of research as a policy, an initiative, or something else. I found it was helpful when

analyzing the TRC to delineate between the rules set for the TRC, by referring to the Mandate as a policy, and the activities completed by the TRC as part of a change initiative. I used the questions as guides to consider whether the TRC was designed to be culturally relevant for Indigenous claimants, i.e., former IRS students and claimants. I read the questions from the starter kit reflecting on the text and the themes of CSM. I looked within the text for words and phrases that were evidence of the inclusion of culturally relevant considerations. I considered cues that were explicit or implied, and whether the direction about how to deliver on culturally relevant aspects was explicit or vague. If they were vague then delivery was dependent on commissioners to determine appropriate actions.

Emphasising non-Western and/or Indigenous knowledges. With respect to the question about emphasising Indigenous or non-Western knowledges, the CRGBA starter kit provided helpful examples of what should be considered. “Does the policy place value on non-Western ways of knowing and transmitting knowledge, such as storytelling, ceremonies, sharing circles, or land-based learning? Does the policy place value on Indigenous women’s ways of knowing? (NWAC, 2020, p. 12)”

I read the mandate looking for explicit and nuanced references to Indigenous knowledge systems - laws, tradition, and practices like storytelling – and found many. For example, in section one of the mandate, one of the goals of the TRC was to, “...c) Witness¹, support, promote and facilitate truth and reconciliation events at both the national and community levels;”. The footnote clarified that witnessing refers to an Indigenous principle of "witnessing" (Mandate p. 2). Further, *Section 4 Exercise of Duties* states the Commission shall recognize, “... (d) the significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities; ... (Mandate, p. 5)”.

The references are evidence as acknowledgment that Indigenous traditions should influence the TRC's approach to gathering. It is also reasonable to conclude that the Mandate placed an emphasis on Indigenous knowledges. The term Aboriginal was used as a qualifier in 12 instances in the Mandate statement. Four of the 12 refer to knowledge to encourage the Commission to recognize the "significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities; (p.5, Exercise of duties)."

And, in placing an emphasis on Indigenous knowledge, did that mean that Indigenous traditions were prioritized when they were inconsistent with Canadian processes? For the sake of comparison, there were also 12 references to the word "Canada" and/or "Canadian" in the Mandate. And the counterpoint to the single directive to recognize Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities, there were five instances that indicated they are only to recognize Aboriginal traditions so long as they do not contradict, interfere with, or duplicate the 'formal legal processes' outlined in other processes of the Settlement agreement.

A distinctions-based lens. Regarding whether a policy employs a distinctions-based lens, the CRGBA starter kit says, "Does the policy recognize and account for the distinct lived experiences between and among First Nations (both on-reserve and off-reserve, both status and non-status), Inuit (land claim beneficiary or not, living in Inuit Nunangat or not), and Métis (urban or rural) individuals? (NWAC, 2020, p. 12)"

I read the mandate looking for explicit and nuanced references to any and all of these distinctions. In the Mandate there were indications that it was plausible for the TRC to use a distinctions-based lens. For example, within the principles section located on the first page, Reconciliation is an ongoing individual and collective process, and will require commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former

Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada. Reconciliation may occur between any of the above groups. (Mandate, p.1)

Later, reference was also made to ensure that

In the exercise of its powers the Commission shall recognize: (a) the unique experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Métis former IRS students, and will conduct its activities, hold its events, and prepare its Report and Recommendations in a manner that reflects and recognizes the unique experiences of all former IRS students... (Mandate, p. 5).

It appears that distinctions-based language was used in the mandate and that efforts should be made to account for the unique experience of distinctive identity groups. However, the two examples above were the only explicit references to the three distinctive groups. Otherwise, the umbrella term of *Aboriginal* was used. I expanded my search to recognize complexity of the lived experiences this question in the CRGBA is intended to address. I looked for indicators that acknowledged the diversity of territorial and regional dynamics of residential schools such as geography, proximity, religious orders, Indigenous languages, time spans, etc. The regional liaisons would be tasked with the heavy lifting of overseeing regionally diverse perspectives of distinctive Aboriginal identity groups.

Therefore, the directives in the Mandate did not guarantee that the TRC processes employed a distinctions-based lens. The lack of clarity about the language used, and the complexity of the formative context of identity discourse is another thing the Commissioners navigated. It was plausible that the Commissioners once appointed adopted an approach that reflected regionally distinctive aspects of community experiences in and with Indian Residential

Schools. But, the processes depended on several assumptions, including the assumption that the Commissioners had agency to define and perhaps change the order or scope of deliverables to highlight diversity of regionally specific Indian Residential School experiences. The use of language and action with respect to a pan-Aboriginal approach, was also challenged by the overarching colonial power dynamics. For example, the costs associated with travel to and from rural and remote communities, and ensuring survivors, many of whom are Elderly, were able to access events.

Intersectional identities, gender diversity, and trauma. I have combined the next set of questions presented in the CRGBA starter kit which address issues of intersectional identities, gender diversity and trauma because gender was not explicitly mentioned in the mandate. Gender was not discussed in the mandate which may suggest the document was gender neutral. James (2022) presents a thorough analysis of the gender responsiveness of the TRC's design. She found that the TRC did not purposively incorporate gender equity in its programming and outputs. It offered few avenues for furthering transformative reconciliation and gender justice. "Does the policy account for intersecting identities as the foundation rather than as a matter of inclusion? Is the program or policy gender-inclusive and non-binary, recognizing that gender, sex, and sexuality are spectrums? (NWAC, 2020, p. 12)" I looked for indicators that acknowledged individuals' past lived experiences were unique, thus each survivor and participant in events could retrospectively make sense of stories differently.

There are indications that the TRC activities inherently accounted for the complexity of intersectional identities by emphasising that the TRC shall recognize the uniqueness of former IRS student experiences and all individual statements are of equal importance (Mandate p. 5).

For example, the Mandate indicated a foundational sense of distinctive community experiences in Section 10, when describing national events.

The Commission shall, in designing the events, include in its consideration the history and demographics of the IRS system.

National events should include the following common components: (f) an opportunity for a sample number of former students and families to share their experiences; (g) an opportunity for some communities in the regions to share their experiences as they relate to the impacts on communities and to share insights from their community reconciliation processes; (Mandate, p. 9)

But there were no obvious indications that the Mandate was “framed by decolonized understandings of gender, sexuality, and identity” as defined by NWAC, nor did it explicitly “acknowledge the intergenerational impacts of traumas inflicted by colonialism on communities” (NWAC, 2020, p. 10). Therefore, it could not be assumed based on the Mandate that the TRC enacted an intersectional approach though there was language that indicated that individualized the stories would be collected, and the Commission was to design activities considering diverse regional experiences.

Trauma informed processes. Note that the last question about being trauma-informed was not included in the NWAC starter kit. It was added as a dimension in the research toolkit (NWAC, 2022), and the policy road map (NWAC, 2023). “Does the policy statement account for trauma - is it trauma-informed? (NWAC, 2022)” Where the intersectional identity dimension of the CRGBA framework also speaks to trauma as a component of identity resulting from a

person's lived experience, I looked for evidence of that the mandate considered the need for trauma-informed processes. Did the design of events and programs reduce or replicate harm?

The trauma informed approach included the CRGBA policy road map (NWAC, 2022) is an adapted version of Bowen & Murshid (2016), trauma-informed approach to policy. Their approach highlights the need to:

- mitigate risk of harm by prioritizing the safety of impacted communities; prioritize processes that are trustworthy and transparent;
- encourage collaboration and peer support by meeting people where they are at without any expectations or assumptions around what they need;
- emphasize empowerment by focusing on the strengths of Indigenous peoples; and,
- facilitate choice, ensuring community autonomy is fostered at all stages of the process.

Without minimizing the significance of this aspect of the review, I say efforts were made to encourage the TRC to develop processes that accounted for trauma. Section 10 states that the provision of, "(1) health supports and trauma experts during and after the ceremony for all participants" (Mandate, p.9) was a common component of all national events. Further, during community events, "The Commission shall provide a safe, supportive and sensitive environment for individual statement-taking/truth sharing" (Mandate, p. 10). However, I also highlight that in terms of sensemaking, the directives in the mandate assumed a lot about the Commissioners, their training in trauma-informed practices, and/or their connections to ensure events would be properly staffed both during events and after stories were shared.

CRGBA Analysis of the Mandate - Institutional positioning and assumed institutional rules

Indigenous organizations operate in areas of jurisdictional control which are unclear due to either regulatory gaps or spaces of jurisdictional overlap, between federal, provincial, and municipal, and Indigenous governance (Doucette and Lanine, 2016). They are used to addressing gaps and jurisdictional uncertainty through policy development, institution building, and/or through legal challenges by drawing on wise practices of Indigenous organizing (e.g., Calliou & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2014). I have drawn on CRGBA resources because they were developed by an Indigenous-led organization that operates in an organizational context akin to the TRC's.

The Native Women's Association of Canada developed the CRGBA toolkits to focus on Canadian policies because they are familiar with the multiple ways in which Canadian policies do not address the specific cultural needs, circumstances, and complexity of Indigenous individuals. The CRGBA framework highlights all the spaces where these settler-colonial political and economic strategies of superiority over Indigenous peoples and their lands continue to be replicated in federal policies. The policies of the federal government continue to present problems because they fail to account for distinctive communities of rights holders, gender roles, Indigenous knowledges, intersectional experiences, and they are not trauma-informed. The questions represent salient cues Indigenous communities draw from when making sense of social contexts, particularly when interacting with Canadian institutions that provide public services.

By reviewing the Mandate statement of the TRC through a lens of CRGBA, I identified multiple examples that directed the commissioners to develop culturally relevant strategies. The specific references in the text to Indigenous forms of witnessing, distinctive groups of constitutionally recognized Indigenous peoples, and the recognition of the need for community-led, regionally dispersed healing events, were promising.

Highlighting gaps, contradictions, and inconsistent messaging. In the preceding chapters of this manuscript, I centred Indigenous perspectives of reconciliation because they highlight the ongoing and normally contentious nature of the relationship between Indigenous communities (governments, communities, and individuals) and the rules of the federal government. From the perspective of Indigenous nations, the stories of the past explain how we have come to be in a position where federal and religious institutions are being held to account for mistreatment of Indigenous individuals. The discourses of reconciliation (e.g., truth and reconciliation, Nation-to-Nation, or Crown-Indigenous relationships) and related power dynamics are familiar to Indigenous identity organizations. Indigenous communities and individuals are regularly confronted by inconsistent administrative rules of the federal government (e.g., the modern Canadian legal and political recognition of Aboriginal treaty rights embedded in the Canadian constitution, 1982) and rules of *Indian Act* policies that do not recognize the sovereignty of Indigenous nations in their homelands. The sense of Aboriginal and Canadian duality was constructed as a response to federal policies in which Canadian society was always positioned as superior to Indians.

I position the mandate of the TRC as formal rules and salient cues to power dynamics inherited from the settlement context. In terms of Two-eyed CSM, I asked how do the lines of questioning provided by the CRGBA reflect the critical dimensions of CSM? Cues and references that indicated it was plausible that the Commissioners of the TRC could read the mandate and draw on cues that directed them to create programs that were culturally relevant for Indigenous claimants. With respect to the distinctions-based lens, the Commissioners decided what language to use to avoid replication of a pan-Aboriginal approach, that could be

rhetorically manipulated by powerful institutional actors seeking to maintain the status quo. Many decisions were left up to the Commissioners. They had some agency in the process.

When the spaces where the expectation of being culturally relevant was in any way contradictory to the norms of the Canadian legal system, there was tension. I also noted several places where there appeared to be limitations to the process. For example, budgets and timelines on the surface may appear to be pragmatic and necessary because temporary quasi-government institutions require oversight. Commissioners were left to make sense of many things. If the principles were in conflict, were Canada's rules favoured? What happened when the Commissioners determined it was more cost effective to hold national events later, in year three or four of their mandate for example? Would the budget be released had they changed the schedule? What happened when the Indigenous principles of witnessing, in order to be trauma-informed, required a confrontation with the accuser? The Commissioners decided how far to push the legal system. Did they seek advice or act and risk the repercussions?

CSM Analysis of Mandate: Inconsistent cues conflate meaning, reflect systems of power

The fourth step in the Two-Eyed CSM method is to conduct an analysis of organizational change processes using CSM heuristic. The premise of CSM is that individuals make sense of inter-organizational contexts by drawing on salient cues from discourses, formative contexts, and organizational rules. In the next chapter I focus on role of TRC Commissioners as sense makers. However, at this stage of the analysis I continue to maintain my position as the researcher, making sense of the context of the situation where the critical dimensions of the CSM heuristic to complement and expand the CRGBA.

This is where the next critical aspect of the CSM heuristic helps to explain what I categorized as tension and contradictory rules. The organizational rules aspect of the CSM

heuristic considers how social networks within organizations respond when rules, the written and unwritten norms of the organization, are challenged (Mills and Murgatroyd, 1991). Rule-bound activity refers to the broad sets of expectations and practices which serve to guide, direct, and constrain people in action. However, when the rules or structures are unclear or unknown, or when changes occur that are too disruptive, people do not limit their interpretations of meaning solely to the official language cues provided to them by formal or approved administrative rules. Sense makers connect ideas by drawing from other experiences and stories they have been exposed to through past experiences in other social contexts (Helms Mills, 2004, p. 6). In my case, I have experience working for Indigenous identity organizations, and I have had multiple experiences working with government departments where rules of government administration conflicted with the needs, norms, and values of the communities I was working with. In these cases, one either concedes and move on, or one finds a “work around.” I went back through the mandate looking for counterpoints to CRGBA that were both explicit and implicit. Were Indigenous knowledges prioritized when they contradicted norms of Canadian structures?

The TRC Mandate in Settlement Agreement Context: A plausible narrative of structural rules

The Canadian TRC was a national research project. The Commission was established with a five-year mandate defined within the scope of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (2006). The Mandate set up an expectation about organizational structure of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Mandate presented a set of expectations about how the TRC would operate. It included information about what would be done, when, and with whom. Structurally and legally, the Canadian TRC was a specially constituted department of the Federal Government of Canada (legally “Canadian,” institutional form). The start and end of the organizational work was bound by the appointment term of the Commissioners. As a temporary

department of the Canadian government, the TRC was expected to follow all the administrative standards and norms of a federal department.

There was an ambitious agenda and timeline presented for the Commission. The rules of time and deliverables were specific. The Mandate presented a model of a Commission that was expected to balance two large and interdependent processes. Although it was not to act as a public inquiry, there was still a social justice aspect of the Commission, in which they were responsible to witnessing, recording, and archiving the stories of Indigenous peoples from across the country about their experiences in the Indian Residential School system. Even if everything went smoothly, the Commission was a complex administrative process with multiple deliverables, deadlines, and budget constraints. Assuming the Commissioners followed the timeline and deliverable schedule presented in the mandate, there was an assumption that all related processes flowed without delay, allowing the Commissioners to deliver on the mandate. They also produced a report that documented an official story of the Indian Residential School System and share these stories with the Canadian public.

They outlined an ambitious agenda, with a very large scope of work, and limited resources. It is these expectations that the Commissioners made sense of once appointed. How did they do it? What choices did they make? What rules did they challenge? CRGBA outlines the broad strokes, the discourses and formative context of the TRC, highlighting the desire for political plurality (i.e., distinctions-based), and the implications of Indigenous knowledge. But it does not address the rules and norms of operating an Indigenous organization. The terms of the agreement were agreed to by all parties. The terms of the agreement are rules that the Commissioners made sense of.

Discourses of Cultural Relevance in Context of the Settlement Agreement

In the context of the Settlement Agreement, the discourses of Truth and Reconciliation are structured around duality claimants and defendants. Given the number of claims made by former students, the Settlement Agreement outlined several sub-processes that were intended to efficiently sort through and assess the claims of former students. Their claims were categorized by severity and filtered through one of multiple legal processes such as the Independent Assessment Process (Independent Assessment Process Oversight Committee, 2021) to reach a settlement. The formation of the TRC among the other legal processes represents an imperfect attempt at balancing the legal certainty-making models of relational repair, e.g., bringing closure, and justice-making models of social reparations, e.g., fostering reconciliatory processes based in trust, tolerance, and reconciliation (Woolford, 2004). In the social context of legal settlement, the truth of the claims was decided by lawyers and judges who were trained to look objectively at the facts to determine their legitimacy. Also in the legal sense, “reconciliation” between the claimants and defendants was settled once the Settlement Agreement was enacted and compensation was awarded to victims.

In the context of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation the TRC processes were an extension of the legal settlement processes. The TRC had no legal authority (e.g., to subpoena witnesses) and determination of legal truths was delegated to another process outlined in the Settlement Agreement. Section 2 of the Mandate there were 11 items that defined the powers, duties, and procedures of the Commission. Nine of them were presented to ensure the conduct of the Commission did not jeopardize any legal proceeding (*Settlement Agreement*, 2006, p.4.). “The Settlement Agreement was the largest class action settlement in Canadian history and it marked the cumulation of many thousands of active or potential civil litigation cases” (IAP, 2021, p. 7).

The comprehensive claims and specific claims processes saw more than 38,000 claims filed by Residential School survivors against governments and churches. “From 1883 to 1997, 150,000 First Nations, Metis, and Inuit children were forcibly removed from their homes, families, and communities and placed in Indian residential schools across Canada” (IAP, 2021, p.10).

The TRC was to reveal and broadcast truths about Indian Residential Schools, a tragic part of Canada’s past, to Canadian publics. It was to focus on the general public good aspects of reconciliation (e.g., sharing information with Canadians to begin repairing the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadians). But the TRC also had additional dimensions of the discourse to consider too, including a political (nation-to-nation) relationship, ongoing challenges of Canada and the AFN, Indigenous leaders including the National Council and the Inuit.

The TRC was expected to focus on exposing the need for justice for constitutionally recognized Aboriginal rights. The use of the term Aboriginal is a constitutionally recognized term that refers to rights of diverse Aboriginal communities, that can be used to reinforce a narrative of needing to return to a relationship in which Indigenous governments have jurisdictional authority to act with authority on behalf of their citizens in their homelands. However, when taken out of context, for those who are unfamiliar with the ongoing debates about identity politics it is also plausible that that use of the term Aboriginal reproduced a problematic duality that reinforced misunderstanding and separation between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. Their expectations for reconciliation may not be as nuanced or complex as that of Indigenous claimants seeking justice.

Power dynamics and contradictory rules

The TRC mandate was part of a legal settlement process that emerged from Indigenous resistance to the imposition of Canadian law, and disagreement about the interpretation of justice. It was reasonable to assume there were moments when Indigenous knowledge systems and traditions contradicted the norms and assumptions of the Canadian legal system. Returning to the example above, the meaning ascribed to Aboriginal principle of witnessing was clarified in section two which indicated Canadian legislation took priority over Indigenous or Aboriginal principles of witnessing.

Commissioners, once appointed, navigated this contradictory messaging about Indigenous knowledge. There were cues in the text of the rules that Indigenous-identifying Commissioners drew from to make a case for integration of Indigenous traditions, but there were also limits to how far they could take it. The Mandate explicitly defined what the TRC was expected to do and when they could do it. The timelines set out in section 8 were explicit about the number of national events that must take place within the first two years. Though it was not explicit about how or where the events would take place, the only constraint on events was budgetary. This leaves an impression that the Commissioners, once appointed, plausibly had agency to define the process.

Indigenous Priorities. Although the administrative structure of the TRC was a department of the Canadian government, the institutional identity of the TRC was not necessarily defined by the logic of a settler-colonial power structure or knowledge system. For example, the references in the Mandate that propose RCAP, Exploratory Dialogues, and the Statement of Reconciliation are presented as foundational documents for TRC to build on. They are also

salient cues for retrospective sensemaking and identity positioning for anyone as familiar with the issues as the Commissioners. For example, the RCAP report states that:

Aboriginal people generally do not see themselves, their cultures, or their values reflected in Canada's public institutions. They are not [in 1996] considering the nature and scope of their own public institutions to provide security for their individual and collective identities that Canada has failed to furnish. (RCAP, v.1. p. 11).

It is a salient cue that reinforces the legitimate reasons why Indigenous people do not feel like they are part of Canada's public institutions. Indigenous individuals plausibly had a dual sense of social dynamics because Indigenous-identified individuals were constantly confronted by racist policies and denial of individual rights, while much of the mainstream Canadian population was not. The next paragraph in the RCAP report also introduces plausible alternative approaches might emerge from, "More effective Aboriginal participation in Canadian institutions...", that could plausibly, "...be supplemented by legitimate Aboriginal institutions, thus combining self-rule and shared rule (RCAP v.1. p, 11.)." The reference to Aboriginal peoples, as presented in the legal context of the Settlement Agreement along with referential cues to other germinal policy papers and reports, like RCAP or CRGBA resources, is a salient cue to the presence of multiple Aboriginal institutions and a model of a multi-national federation, that continue to be a part of the modern-Canadian political fabric.

Therefore, although the mandate presents a structure that is legally Canadian, it is plausible that Indigenous-identified commissioners and allies used their agency to put in place organizational rules and/or social norms that were more reflective of Indigenous knowledges, teachings, and cultures. If identity and cultural connections of the organization are clear then

they can to identify when the discourses, rules, and their role as commissioners created tension and/or contradiction and address them. They created a strategic vision/plan with support and guidance from networks (Calliou & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2014; Brown et al, 2012). It was plausible they constructed a TRC in practice that operated more like a community-based Indigenous identity organization than a typical department of the federal government.

Procedural Constraints and Limitations. However, it was also an ambitious agenda. If all the rules of the mandate were followed to the letter, it was unlikely that the Commission would successfully devise a strategy to effectively meet all the deliverables and the expectations of all Indigenous communities (e.g., women, and LGBTQQI+) within the timeframe defined. Commissioners were expected to consult with survivor groups, seek guidance and direction from them, and in contrast, they were expected to consult with the Canadian legal system very little. Thus, it was possible that once the Commissioners were appointed they designed TRC processes that had cultural relevancy for Indigenous claimants and their communities despite the apparent control the Federal Government maintained through administrative mechanisms. But to do so, they must have moved quickly.

They needed to prepare and submit a budget within the first 6 months, and receive approval from the Treasury Board before spending money. They also met with the Indian Residential School Survivor Committee to get their advice about the national events and definitions of community. They had to establish internal administrative protocols, recruit staff, communicate priorities. The lesson learned from the resignation of the first group of appointed commissioners was that they also had to establish their roles as commissioners if they wished to function effectively as a team.

The designated order of operations reduced the opportunities for the TRC and the Indigenous claimants to share their stories broadly with the Canadian public. It appears the Commission also had difficult decisions to make about the budget and their priorities in terms of operational focus. Did focus on ensuring the process was trauma-informed and broadly inclusive of diverse experiences in order to centre the healing process of Indigenous students? Was this goal at odds with the need for Canadians to hear the stories, however incomplete the archive of information may be as a result?

Conclusion: Sense maker Identity matters

I started the analysis of the Mandate referring to questions from the CRGBA Starter Kit to determine whether it set out a structure in which the TRC processes were culturally relevant for Indigenous claimants. After analyzing the TRC Mandate statement referring to the guiding questions of the starter kit (2020), I suggest the rules in the Mandate set the TRC up to be moderately attentive of the cultural expectations of Indigenous claimants. But the Mandate guidelines are presented within a framework in which the legal settlement process and Canadian knowledge was plausibly prioritized over Indigenous knowledge. I then referred to the critical dimensions of CSM to consider the implications the power dynamics that were evident in the Mandate. The direction for commissioners to implement trauma-informed processes by drawing on Indigenous principles for example, plausibly contradicted the legal and budgetary restrictions. The Commissioners made sense of the institutional rules and expectations the Mandate presented. The administrative mechanisms that were in place to maintain accountability may have prevented them from consistently enacting culturally relevant processes.

Even if the teams negotiating the Settlement Agreement had a sense of who might be appointed, the exact profile of a complex individual and their intersectional identities was

unknown. Once all the Commissioners were appointed, actively processing the monumental size of the task assigned to them, it was impossible to know how they would make sense of their position. Although the TRC was accountable to the terms of the Settlement Agreement and by extension the formal rules of the Canadian governance structures it is also plausible they made sense of the cues in the mandate differently than the legal teams who wrote them. Did they focus on salient cues to Indigenous teachings (e.g., law, justice, healing, and relationships) and work to amplify them?

Chapter 5: Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking Analysis of Commissioner Agency

In Chapter 4, I focused on the Mandate statement of the TRC using a Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking (hereafter, Two-Eyed CSM) method and identified points of inconsistent messaging that the Commissioners were left to resolve. In that analysis, the CSM critical dimensions extended the CRGBA to highlight its value as policy analysis tool. It identifies points of tension, but it does not outline a strategy that explains the role of administrators tasked with making sense of the tension. What instigated or limited the kinds of changes they made?

In this chapter I repeat steps three and four of Two-Eyed CSM but I focus on the role of TRC Commissioners as agents of change tasked with (re-)framing the discourse of reconciliation in the context of Canada-Indigenous relationship. I consider whether the Commission, or individual commissioners, had as much ability to decide the meaning and follow through with decisions without interference as the rules in the Mandate suggested they might? I used CSM first to identify the sensemakers and the critical dimensions that explain their sensemaking scripts. Then, for consistency in the Two-Eyed CSM method, I conducted a CRGBA analysis using the questions in the starter kit (NWAC 2020), this time focusing on the documents that describe activities of the TRC. In the discussion of organizational change that follows, I expanded the focus of my analysis to include additional reports produced by the TRC. I position it as an initiative and I refer to the documents it produced as evidence of choices to administratively enact policies that were culturally relevant.

Critical Sensemaking of Truth and Reconciliation Mandate

Critical Sensemaking analysis tends to focus on situations when sensemaking happens in organizations during situations of change, when localized organizational norms are most likely to be obfuscated by conflicting new ideas or people. Often a Critical Sensemaking analysis is

bound by the organizational context in which the work happens. The critical dimensions of the CSM heuristic focus on how rules and power influence an individual's sense of what is happening in the context of organizational change.

For the case study focused on the TRC, the situational context is the Mandate statement created as part of a complex legally negotiated settlement agreement with hundreds of potential stakeholders. The intention of the Settlement Agreement was to clarify the legal rights of hundreds of individuals and groups of claimants, and responsibility of multiple individuals and groups of institutional defendants. I position the mandate of the TRC as formal rules and salient cues to power dynamics inherited from the Settlement context.

Commissioners make sense of the Mandate

At the centre of a CSM analysis is the individual sense maker(s), whose response(s) to changes in their professional environment are explained by seven interacting socio-psychological properties of sensemaking - identity, salient cues, social context, plausibility, retrospect, enactment, and ongoing sensemaking. The role of commissioners was to make sense of these rules, as well as salient cues from the formative contexts, to establish the TRC organizationally, and see it through to completion. I identify the gaps/uncertainties faced by the Commissioners referring to details that were presented in the official records, (e.g., the Interim report and final reports). The details in the reports provide insight into the sensemaking processes of the Commissioners as they made sense of the rules and power dynamics presented in the Mandate, which I describe below referring the psychological properties of sensemaking.

Three complex identity sense makers. The property of identity construction refers to the sense of self that is constantly in play. The CSM heuristic explains that individuals, when

presented with conflicting ideas, will also draw on other thoughts, memories, and cultural cues from their personal experiences when making sense of organizational situations. The implication is that we must know and articulate an appreciation for the identity of each individual sense maker. The mandate specified that at least one in three commissioners must be of Aboriginal identity, but individual sense makers are complex individuals. It is also important to have an appreciation for the aspects of their professional identity, their understanding of organizational rules, and the intra-organizational and inter-organizational power dynamics. The TRC had three commissioners. The two Aboriginal Commissioners include The Honourable Murray Sinclair, and Chief Wilton Littlechild. The third Commissioner was Dr. Marie Wilson.

Lead Commissioner Senator Murray Sinclair is an Indigenous leader from Peguis First Nation, in Treaty 1 Territory of Manitoba with a strong sense of self and connection to community and Ojibwe culture. At the time of his appointment as the TRC's lead commissioner, he had a significant experience with the Canadian legal structure and political structures, and knows their faults. "In 1994, Murray Sinclair was the recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award (now Indspire) in the category of Law and Justice, for his work as the first Aboriginal Associate Chief Justice in Manitoba.²" He served as Co-Chair of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry in Manitoba (report issued in 1991), and in 1995, Sinclair was appointed to head the Pediatric Cardiac Surgery Inquiry (report issued in 2000). When he accepted the role of lead Commissioner, he knew the process would be difficult (Palmater, 2023). In a recent podcast interview Sinclair said that following the first resignation, he only agreed to the role on the condition that he could identify the other two commissioners (Palmater, 2023). They were the

² Source: <https://indspire.ca/laureate/senator-murray-sinclair/>

second group of commissioners appointed after the first three resigned as a result of irreconcilable differences.

Chief Wilton Littlechild is an Indigenous leader from Ermineskin reserve, Maskwacîs, Treaty 6 Territory, Alberta. He is a respected lawyer and a gifted athlete. When he was appointed to the TRC as a Commissioner, he had an established a legal career as an advocate for the rights of Indigenous peoples globally having “worked with the United Nations for more than 30 years, advocating the rights of Aboriginal Peoples all over the world.³” As a child, Littlechild spent more than a decade in Indian Residential Schools in Alberta. He had also chaired the Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform in Saskatchewan from 2001 to 2004.

Dr. Marie Wilson is a Canadian journalist who has lived much of her life in the Northwest Territories. Before being appointed as a Commissioner, she had spent much of her journalistic career with Canadian Broadcast Corporation working to change the way news coverage in the Northwest Territories was presented. Notably, “A career highlight was working with the South African Broadcasting Corporation to prepare TV journalists to cover their first democratic election and their own Truth and Reconciliation Commission, during South Africa’s transition from apartheid to democracy.”⁴

Social context, and relationships to community. I cautiously imagined how these three professionally accomplished and complex individuals interacted. For the purposes of a Two-Eyed CSM Analysis focused on the role of TRC Commissioners, it is helpful to assume Commissioners drew cues from their collective experiences in similar positions as advocates for

³ Source: <https://www.alberta.ca/aoe-wilton-littlechild.aspx>

⁴ Source: <https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/trc-CommissionersCommissioners/>

Indigenous rights and justice. I propose the Commissioners had a deep sense of the conflict and complex social dynamics that discourses of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation inherited from the Canada-Indigenous legal, political, and social relationships of the past. They imagined plausible solutions by drawing on past experiences as professionals working in, for, and with Indigenous and Canadian identity organizations.

Salient cues presented in as rules and words (in mandate). In the CRGBA analysis, I identified several references in the Mandate as indicators of either being culturally relevant or not. In terms of sensemaking, I suggest these words were salient cues that Commissioners made sense of as they designed the TRC processes. For example, when the words “truth” and “reconciliation” were presented in the Mandate they were also presented with additional qualifiers (e.g., truth-telling and witnessing). The qualifiers are salient cues for sensemaking. I suggest the Commissioners’ sense of the discourses of reconciliation and truth could be different than what was conceived during the process of negotiating the terms of the Settlement Agreement. The change in context from being primarily between claimants and defendants also changed the inter-organizational power dynamics. The rules of public commissions are not the same as those of settlement processes, there are additional salient cues that affect sensemaking, too (e.g., dependency on public participation and inter-organizational relationships).

Retrospective cues, contradictory logics and uncertainty. In the mandate there were statements that indicated the Commissioners had discretion to manage the special initiative. I consider the ways the Commissioners made sense of their position and leveraged their agency. The Commissioners made sense of the language used in the mandate to describe the expectations of the TRC. The text reflected areas where the claimants and defendants had common goals of reconciliation but inconsistent expectations for the reconciliation processes. The inconsistent

interpretations were carried into the TRC through the rules of the mandate which remained uncertain until commissioners made sense of them. However, I highlighted three significant contradictions that continued throughout the process.

Despite the best intentions of the Commissioners, their ability to act on their decisions effectively was dependent on other intra- and intra-organizational collaboration. The Commissioners decided on a community engagement process model. Multiple organizations and institutions were referenced explicitly in the Mandate (LAC, NAC, Survivor groups), but the approach to each of these networks could be directive or collaborative. Commissioners decided to accept the assumptions of Canadian legal context of the *Settlement Agreement*, or and sought clarification when there was uncertainty or contradiction. It was easier to accept that legal processes (e.g., IAP, Common Experience Payment process, and TRC) and only share a select number of survivor stories at reconciliation event. They could choose to maintain boundaries between truth-telling (encouraged by the Mandate) and legal truths (determined by the Canadian courts). Though to do so reinforced the assumptions that Canadian legal norms must be prioritized over Indigenous legal norms (e.g., Indigenous witnessing).

Finally, the Commissioners also decided whether to challenge the prescribed order of operations. For example, the initial resignation of initially appointed Commissioners highlighted a dilemma about whether enough of the stories of Indian residential schools were shared and accessible to justify moving on and putting the past behind. The order of deliverables presented in the mandate suggested that all national events intending to share the story of Indian Residential Schools with Canadian publics could be completed in the first two years of the TRC before the community healing and sharing events, assuming the facts of the IRS history were already known but not shared publicly. In contrast, Indigenous healing approaches like those

advocated for by the reconciliation network prioritized survivors need to share their stories, many of which had never been shared previously.

Retrospective cues, contradictory logics, and uncertainty. Commissioners explained in the Interim Report the challenges they faced launching the TRC. “The rules and regulations that govern large, well-established, permanent federal government departments have proven onerous and highly problematic for a small, newly created organization with a time-limited mandate. (TRC, 2012b, p. 2)”

They cited challenges like lack of cooperation from the federal government and church institutions. Specifically, the defendants had failed to comply with the directive to make institutional records available to the Commission (TRC, 2012b, p.16). They also refer to cost-related issues, again related to the way in which records were transferred from the federal institutions, libraries and archives, and the burden of copying and filing that far exceeded their budget allocation.

They sought clarification about language within the Mandate where the norms/rules of the Canadian legal context that were specific (must do/may not do), unclear (may do, use discretion), contradictory (Indigenous sense of witnessing), and/or bounded their interpretation (e.g., Approval of Treasury Board, or being a department of the Federal government). Boundaries may be explicit or taken-for-granted (Mills & Murgatroyd, 1991). The Commissioners were directed to resolve any disputes on their own before seeking direction from the courts (*Settlement Agreement*, 2006). Yet, they had to seek guidance from the courts five times during their tenure because of failures to comply with the record delivery. They also sought clarity about the legal boundaries between their work of witnessing, statement gathering, and archiving stories, and the other processes like the Independent Assessment Process which

also gathered testimony (TRC, 2015). There was disagreement about whether the other processes should submit copies of their records to the TRC and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Sensemaking happens in moments of uncertainty and it is ongoing. Two core aspects of sensemaking present that sensemaking happens in moments of change and uncertainty when there is a shock and the scripts that individuals normally rely on fall apart and sensemaking is a continuous flow or ongoing process. (Weick, 1995). The Commissioners upon receipt of the mandate made sense of the text and decide how to proceed. As I discussed in chapter four, there are some decisions they made quickly. They prepared a budget, received advice from the Indian Residential School Survivor Committee, establish internal administrative protocols, recruited staff, and communicated priorities. In light of the resignation of the first group of appointed commissioners they also had to restore the credibility of the commission with survivors and the Canadian public and clarify discrepancies in the process logistics (TRC, 2012b). The order of operations defined in the Mandate was ambitious to begin with, the delayed launch due to the resignation added another layer of uncertainty.

The property of ongoing sensemaking refers to the flow of events that constantly need to be understood. Each of those decisions, the actions they took, and the responses they received, created a continuous flow of new cues. They interpreted not only the cues presented in the Mandate but also their ability to act on their interpretations by communicating effectively with others. I also highlighted three significant contradictions that continued to create uncertainty throughout the five-year mandate period. The Commission's success was dependent on inter- and intra-organizational collaboration assuming they attempted to enact a consensus-based and compromising approach.

The official reports provide examples of the tensions, actions, and decisions made by TRC administrators at three different points in time. The first period of sensemaking was loosely bracketed between the Commissioners appointment and the Treasury Board Approval of the budget and workplan. Relationality and relational accountability were prioritized. The Commissioners sought advice, specifically from networks named in the Mandate. For example, the cues in the footnotes of the mandate Aboriginal witnessing tradition were a reference to Indigenous legal principles that are plural but also have similarities. The wise practice teaching refers to the tendency for Indigenous leaders to favor collaboration, partnership, and fostering external relationships (Calliou & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2014). Individuals who were involved in designing the mandate, specifically the Assembly of First Nations, provided advice because they were collaborating on approving the commissioner assignments. Indigenous organizations favored and reinforced the norms of Indigenous community organizing and teachings.

During that period, the Commissioners made sense of the rules and discourses in the mandate by laying out a strategic plan for the following 5 years (TRC, 2012b). It included a vision statement, mission statement, and operational framework. They also outlined decision making protocols and norms for internal and external communication. They began defining an organizational identity for the TRC that favored Indigenous organizational norms. They made multiple decisions as they created a strategic framework and multi-year budget to guide its work. They established a head office in Winnipeg and satellite offices across the country. They also formed an Inuit sub-committee, recognizing the unique challenges of establishing trust with remote and isolated Inuit communities (TRC, 2012b). During the first six months, I suggest the Commissioners postponed making some decisions so they could adapt or adjust as new information came in.

The second period of sensemaking was bracketed by the Treasury board approval of the budget and work plan and the submission of two reports designated in the mandate: (1) recommendations (TRC, 2012b) and, (2) a report of historic findings (*They Came for the Children*, 2012). The submission of the reports at the time signalled an end to the mandated two-year timeline. The interim report included recommendations for the parties of the agreement and a series of reflections from the Commissioners about their experiences to that point. During the first two years they visited hundreds of communities to attend events, and spoke at “over 200 conferences and events organized by universities, governments, and churches, as well as by various professional and social organizations. Initially, presentations dealt with the Commission and its mandate, and the history of the residential schools (TRC, 2012b, p.4).”

In 2012 following the completion of the Interim report, their attention turned towards “engaging Canadians in discussions about the importance and meaning of reconciliation (TRC, 2012b, p.4).” The final moment of sensemaking was bracketed by the Interim report and the Final Report which signalled the official end of the Commissioners’ appointment. At the conclusion of the TRC processes all the collected information was transferred to the new National Center for Truth and Reconciliation for archiving.

Strategic planning: Prioritize Indigenous communities, be adaptable, reduce conflict

The Commissioners desire to meet the community aspirations for the TRC was counterbalanced by the need to set a clear vision and management plan that was acceptable to the expectations of government agencies like the Treasury Board and the National Administration Committee. The teachings related to strategic vision and planning, speak to the tendency for Indigenous leaders to be systems thinkers who use strategic plans to “help focus scarce resources on their collective goals” (Calliou and Wesley-Esquimaux , 2014, p. 47). Thus, Indigenous

leaders read the Mandate, highlighted which rules were specifically bounded, unclear, and/or contradictory and consider their interdependencies. Throughout the process, there is evidence to suggest that the Commission developed a strategy to prioritize community, to be adaptable, and reduce administrative conflict. The bulk of the Commission's work could not start until the funds were transferred from the Treasury Board; thus, they did not challenge the power dynamics or expectations of the Federal administrators. From an administrative lens, they minimized plausible interruptions. Once the administrative structure of the Commission was established and they had funds to start work, they sought clarity about the contradictory rules. They distinguished between the dual intentions of the Mandate. I discuss the evidence of each of sensemaking in relation to these strategies.

Community engagement processes. The first item that perpetuated uncertainty was related to the community engagement processes. The community engagement processes included both the pre-existing organizations that were referenced explicitly in the Mandate, e.g., the parties to the Settlement Agreement, and Library and Archives Canada. The engagement processes also expanded to include internal members of the TRC - Executive Director, the employees of the Secretariat, regional liaisons, the Indian Residential School Survivor Committee. Then, it extended again to include new members of the public, including communities of Indigenous peoples and Canadians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations across the country (e.g., NWAC, universities, etc.), as well as international organizations (e.g., the International Centre for Transitional Justice). The Commissioners could, at best, assume their networks, including the defendants in the process, supported their mandate. And they could request support, but they only had a true sense of the intra- and inter-organizational dynamics once the work began. The reports produced provided evidence of a

Commission process that was open and transparent. They sought to build trust among all those they were working with. They were aware of the administrative rules and for the most part accept all the explicit rules in the mandate regarding early deliverables, things they “must do” within the first six months, without question.

The sensemaking property of enactment refers to the relationship between acting and thinking about action. While I propose the Commissioners temporarily accepted the prescribed order of operations early on to get the money flowing; some decisions were determined gradually as new salient cues emerged throughout the process that defined what was plausible to everyone involved. Until the money was flowing, there is evidence in the Interim and Final Reports indicating that Commissioners relied on intra-organizational relationships - advisory groups, Indigenous community relationships, and AHF (e.g. AHF, Canadian think tanks, powerful allies) – to get things moving. The interim report discussed how inter-organizational connections were leveraged. For example, they described receiving generous support from Governor General Michaëlle Jean. It said,

The Governor General’s primary interest was in engaging youth. In 2009, with the Commissioners, she hosted a special event, Witnessing the Future, at Rideau Hall. In 2010 she invited the Commissioners to help engage hundreds of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth at a forum in Vancouver immediately prior to the Vancouver Olympics. Later in the year, she attended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s first National Event in Winnipeg... as the Commission’s first Honorary Witness, (TRC, 2012b, p. 4.).

The strategy of drawing on professional networks and communities they were connected to without requiring additional funds was evident throughout their report. Universities sponsored

discussion circles prior to and following national events. The Commissioners joined discussions with regional and federal leaders including the Annual General Assembly of the Assembly of First Nations, the board of the Métis National Council, the board of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, and provincial and territorial premiers. The Commission also established relations with international networks of organizations that allowed them to “learn from the work of other commissions, and to make contributions from its own experiences (TRC, 2012b,p11).”

Canadian Legal Context. The legal context of the Settlement Agreement was a significant tension throughout the process. The institutional parties participated in the Settlement reluctantly and their reluctance created tension around the kinds of reconciliation work the TRC could achieve. The legal context of the Settlement Agreement perpetuated uncertainty and require on-going sensemaking. The Commissioners inserted cues to this tension throughout their reports, highlighting, for example, the disconnect between what was lost as a result of and the compensation received for such losses.

There is a need for the recognition of the continuing value to communities and society of Aboriginal traditional knowledge, including spiritual, cultural, and linguistic knowledge. This will require long-term financial investments in measures for the reclaiming and relearning and sharing of this knowledge. The resources spent on this should be commensurate to the monies and efforts previously spent to destroy such knowledge (TRC, 2012b, p. 7).

The Commissioners interpreted some cues in the Mandate statement in ways that did not align with the legal settlement processes. Specifically, the other processes outlined in the

Settlement Agreement that were running concurrently (IAP, Common Experience Payment process, and TRC) were supposed to be managed as distinctive bounded processes; but it was difficult to maintain separation because the survivors were involved with multiple processes. The separation between processes, in theory, was intended to limit the mis-understandings between the rules of compensation process and public truth-telling. Victim-centred processes minimized the need for victims to re-tell their stories in multiple spaces, however because of the separate procedural rules sharing across process contradicted the legal processes of gaining consent. In an interview Commissioner Sinclair said they went to the National Advisory Committee seven times seeking clarification about sharing. It was an aspect of the Mandate that was never resolved to his satisfaction (Palmater, 2023).

This item was contradictory because the Commissioners were “authorized and required in the public interest to archive all such documents, materials, and transcripts or recordings of statements received, in a manner that will ensure their preservation and accessibility to the public ... (Mandate, p. 2).” But the TRC was also directed to not duplicate “in whole or in part the function of criminal investigations, the Independent Assessment Process, court actions, or make recommendations on matters already covered in the Agreement. (pp. 5).” It was not clear what happen when a first-person account shared in a public forum in accordance with an Aboriginal tradition of witnessing directly contradicted to the rules of Canadian justice, closed legal proceedings. While the intention of the TRC was to establish a process that “reflects and recognizes the unique experiences of all former IRS students... “(Mandate, p. 5.). The implication of maintaining a complete separation between the legal hearings and truth-sharing events was that it created confusion for the claimants, and created additional legal and administrative confusion for the those managing the records (James, 2022).

Order of operations. Another item that required ongoing sensemaking related to the TRC's dependence on others. In the Interim report the Commissioners discussed the workplan and the multiple delays they encountered as a result of the prescribed administrative structure.

The decision by the parties to the Settlement Agreement to establish the Commission as a federal government department... has created additional challenges for the Commission. The rules and regulations that govern large, well established, permanent federal government departments have proven onerous and highly problematic for a small, newly created organization with a time-limited mandate (TRC, 2012b, p.2).

They further clarified that requirements prescribed by the federal structure to that point had already "hampered the Commission's ability to carry out its mandate to implement a statement-gathering process, hold National Events and community hearings, and establish processes for document collection and research activities" (TRC, 2012b, p.2). Further, the parties to the agreement had not followed through on their commitments to release documents.

The Commissioners challenged some of the conditions and limitations of the Mandate more vigorously than others. They connected with networks of advisors listed in the Mandate. For example, the survivor networks who were less directly involved in negotiating the terms of the settlement were more directly involved in the advising and enactment of the TRC (Nagy, 2014). Although the budget of the TRC imposed constraints on networking (e.g., hiring staff), it was silent on things like volunteers and the leveraging of other non-monetary assets (e.g., powerful social networks). The inclusion of these others, who might be indirectly involved in the process, plausibly created space for Commissioners to make sense of their position differently by engaging with additional cues from Indigenous social norms and teachings. Until the workplan

was approved and they started hiring, working with internal members of the organization as well as external networks, they did not have a complete sense of the support or resistance from others.

CRGBA of the TRC initiative: Orienting the mandate in context

The insights presented in the CSM analysis highlight ways in which commissioners strategically balanced the inconsistent messaging presented in the mandate to achieve all the goals. In this section I return to CRGBA and consider the process from a view of cultural relevancy. I highlight several power dynamics that could be missed by CSM analysis alone.

Where the mandate statement was characterized as a policy, I characterize the TRC as an initiative because the TRC was a dynamic series of events, activities, and administrative process. It is the activities, the choices made, and the strategies used by the Commissioners to adapt to change that are the focus of the analysis below. To consider the cultural relevancy of the work the TRC completed over the course of 5 years, I used CRGBA to analyze the *Summary of the Final Report* (2015), a 528-page document including appendices. It was released at the end of the TRC and described many significant moments and events that took place as well as the people and organizations who were involved throughout the process. The rules presented in the Mandate were contradictory, inconsistent, and nuanced. In this analysis I looked for evidence of what they did and indications how they navigated through the inconsistency. I identified places where their actions were choices to enact processes were culturally relevant to Indigenous communities first.

Choose to Emphasise Indigenous knowledge

The Commission model favored an Indigenous sense of collective identities (e.g., the community-based reconciliation logics). They leveraged agency to put in place organizational rules and/or social norms that were more reflective of Indigenous knowledges, teachings, and

cultures. Indigenous traditions not only influenced the process of gathering information as was suggested in the Mandate, but the Commission appeared to have placed greater emphasis on Indigenous knowledge than was minimally required by the Mandate. For example, a section of the report discussed efforts to explore definitions of reconciliation from Indigenous legal perspectives.

In 2012, the TRC partnered with the University of Victoria Faculty of Law's Indigenous Law Clinic, and the Indigenous Bar Association, to develop a national research initiative, the "Accessing Justice and Reconciliation (AJR) Project." Working with seven community partners, the AJR project examined six different legal traditions across the country: Coast Salish (Snuneymuxw First Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation); Tsilhqot'in (Tsilhqot'in National Government); Northern Secwepemc (T'exelc Williams Lake Indian Band); Cree (Aseniwuche Winewak Nation); Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation # 27); and Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaq Legal Services Network, Eskasoni) (TRC Summary Report, 2015, p. 206).

In this section of the report the TRC not only highlighted the value of learning from and the need to revitalize Indigenous laws, they also referred to the tensions between Indigenous processes and Canadian processes. Problematizing the issues that most Canadians are unaware of the past, the Commission called for an examination of the foundations of Canadian laws. Looking at the Canadian legal system through a lens of Indian Residential Schools, they explained:

Canada's laws and associated legal principles fostered an atmosphere of secrecy and concealment. When children were abused in residential schools, the law, and the ways in

which it was enforced (or not), became a shield behind which churches, governments, and individuals could hide to avoid the consequences of horrific truths (TRC, 2015, p. 202).

Thus, Call to Action number 50, of the Calls for Justice, recommended that the federal government, in collaboration with Indigenous organizations, “fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Indigenous peoples in Canada (TRC Summary Report, 2015, p. 207.). Could the same be said of each of the areas addressing the legacy (Calls to Action, 1-42): child welfare, education, language & culture, health and justice? What about those Calls to Action to move towards reconciliation (43-94)?

Choose to Employ a distinctions-based lens

When reviewing the Mandate, I suggested it did not guarantee the TRC employed a distinctions-based lens. It was plausible that the Commissioners once appointed, adopted an approach reflecting regionally distinctive aspects of community experiences in and with Indian Residential Schools. I highlighted multiple aspects of the Final Report that indicated when a pan-Indigenous approach was used and when a distinctions-based lens was employed. When Indigenous communities were discussed as a whole, as in the mandate, it was to contrast Canadian and Indigenous experiences. But, more often, the presentation reflected the significance of regional diversity in terms of localized traditions and protocols, but also in terms of their regionally diverse experiences with settler-colonialism.

The section of the report dedicated to presenting a historical narrative of the Indian Residential School System, for example, explains that efforts were made to discuss the reasons experiences varied from one region to the next.

Most of the residential schools were located in the northern and western regions of the country. With the exception of Mount Elgin and the Mohawk Institute, the Ontario schools were all in northern or northwestern Ontario. The only school in the Maritimes did not open until 1930. Roman Catholic and Anglican missionaries opened the first two schools in Québec in the early 1930s. (Summary Report, p.63)

The TRC's description of their approach to events reflected a distinctions-based lens too.

Traditional knowledge and practice guided much of the Commission's work. The Seven Sacred Teachings of the Anishinaabe—Respect, Courage, Love, Truth, Humility, Honesty, and Wisdom—served as the themes for the seven National Events, and ceremony and traditional observance played an important part in the National Events. Sacred fires were lit at the beginning of each National Event and every day's proceedings began with ceremony. As much as possible, the observances followed the cultural protocols, customs, and traditions of the Aboriginal peoples in whose territories the Commission was a guest (Summary Report, p.30).

The quote above not only speaks to the recognition of a plurality of Indigenous traditional approaches, it also reflects the tendency to move beyond the reliance on the constitutionally defined language of Metis, Inuit, or First Nations, by identifying cultural groups with specificity (E.g., The Seven Sacred Teachings of the Anishinaabe). When referring to speakers an individual's social-political affiliations with diverse cultural communities was specified. Likewise, when identifying schools, they refer to specific provincial and regional identifiers.

Choose to Account for intersecting identities and be trauma informed

The way in which the TRC approach moved away from a pan-Aboriginal approach to reflect the impacts on diverse communities and individuals also ties into the evidence of intersectionality. They recognized that every person that participated in the national and regional events had distinct lived experiences which were highlighted throughout the report through first-person quotations. The quotes throughout present individualized the stories, a diversity of voices, and efforts to represent plurality of experiences including those who worked in the schools.

Further, the TRC processes were described in a way that indicated an intersectional approach was likely foundational.

The Commission made a commitment to offer everyone involved with the residential school system the opportunity to speak about their experience. The Commission received over 6,750 statements from Survivors of residential schools, members of their families, and other individuals who wished to share their knowledge of the residential school system and its legacy (Summary Report p. 25).

Extending the mandate beyond the focus on the experiences of Aboriginal peoples, the report also indicated that,

Statements were gathered at public Sharing Panels and Sharing Circles at National, Regional, and Community Events and at Commission hearings. They were also collected through private conversations with statement gatherers. The Commission also gathered statements in correctional institutions in Kenora, Ontario, and Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, recognizing the high rates of incarceration of Aboriginal peoples and how the

experience of residential schools has contributed to the kinds of personal struggles that may lead to incarceration (Summary Report, p. 26).

As expected, the TRC approach was trauma informed. There were multiple references to strategies employed to ensure culturally appropriate supports were available to participants.

Health-support workers, cultural support workers, and/or professional therapists were present everywhere the Commission gathered statements to provide support and counselling as needed. (Summary Report, p. 26)

It is also significant to note that in the introductory paragraph of the Summary Report, the Indian Residential School System was described through a lens that Canada's Aboriginal policy was "cultural genocide."

Cultural genocide is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next (Summary Report, p. 1).

By framing the Indian Residential School system as part of a larger colonial effort, the boundaries that had been established by the Mandate were challenged. It was further explained that "shaming and pointing out wrongdoing were not the purpose of the Commission's mandate.

Ultimately, the Commission's focus on truth determination was intended to lay the foundation for the important question of reconciliation" (Summary Report, p. vi).

Noting that, "the concept of reconciliation means different things to different people, communities, institutions, and organizations" (Summary Report, 2015, p. 16), they also defined reconciliation from the lens that was more culturally informed than the mandate. Explaining that reconciliation is "an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change" (Summary Report, 2015, p. 16). They went on to say, "It is important that all Canadians understand how traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Métis approaches to resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships can inform the reconciliation process" (Summary Report, 2015, p. 16).

Limitations or choices?

It fell short in some areas that the CRGBA prioritizes – e.g., gender diversity. It may be argued, that by highlighting first voice of individuals and taking a position that was generally silent on gender, they avoided the gender mainstreaming dilemma. Though, as highlighted by James (2022) this failure to confront the heteronormative patriarchal design of the system, "The TRC missed an opportunity to interrupt these patterns in which gender justice often falls second to other discourses of sovereignty and national liberation. (James, 2022, p.181)

Getting to the truth was hard, but getting to reconciliation will be harder. It requires that the paternalistic and racist foundations of the residential school system be rejected as the basis for an ongoing relationship. Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a

commitment to mutual respect, be developed. It also requires an understanding that the most harmful impacts of residential schools have been the loss of pride and self-respect of Aboriginal people, and the lack of respect that non-Aboriginal people have been raised to have for their Aboriginal neighbours. Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one (Summary Report, p. vi).

Discussion of the Two-Eyed CSM Analysis of the TRC

The first point I wish to highlight after reviewing the TRC mandate and the final report was that the Mandate statement did not necessarily set the TRC up to be culturally relevant for the claimants in the network. The structure laid out in the mandate appeared to be specific about some things, but the mandate also prioritized colonial structures because the legal system had a final say in disputes, and the timeframe and budget were controlled by Treasury Board. The contradictory messaging required sensemaking. Yes, references to Aboriginal laws in the Mandate made it possible for the Commission to be Indigenous-led (e.g., at least one commissioner of Aboriginal Heritage), and to account for Indigenous knowledge (e.g., be guided by Aboriginal principles of witnessing, or by seeking advice from survivor groups).

In contrast, the Summary Report of the TRC seemed to be more culturally relevant to Indigenous claimants when considered through a lens of CRGBA. The TRC appeared to place a greater emphasis on being distinctions based and referred to Indigenous knowledges. There was also evidence that they attempted to account for intersecting identities (region, age, experiences, etc.) as the way to reflect the trauma of all those who were involved. Thus, the second point I want to highlight is that the TRC appears to have been able to deliver on all the items of the mandate while being culturally relevant. It was more successful than early critics anticipated it would be.

The final point evident from the review of the Summary report is how the TRC managed to reflect intersectionality: by inviting traditional leaders with different cultural practices and oral teachings designed and delivered regionally specific events and by reflecting regionally diverse, first voice, approach to reporting. In effect, the processes described in TRC's summary report reflected a long view of reconciliation that referred to the TRC as an ongoing effort to seek justice that was connected to RCAP and other movements like the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation in that context takes time. Time for "First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities [to] access and revitalize their spirituality, cultures, languages, laws, and governance systems, and" time for "non-Aboriginal Canadians [to] increasingly come to understand Indigenous history within Canada, and to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches to establishing and maintaining respectful relationships," only then could "Canadians can work together to forge a new covenant of reconciliation (Summary Report, 2015, p. 17)."

Implications for reconciliation they accomplished was a result of leveraging agency.

My analysis highlights the uniqueness of the Canadian TRC's approach and its limitations as a temporary institution. Changing a social discourse that was intentionally constructed over 150 years is a huge undertaking. Even at its most productive, the TRC within 5 years could only accomplish so much. Like other TRC's globally, there was skepticism that it would achieve its mandated goals and instigate disruptive social and institutional changes.

But following its completion, it has had moderate success at raising awareness in Canada which has begun to translate into meaningful shifts in some organizational practices. They also laid the groundwork for reconciliation in the future by modelling approaches that are informed by Indigenous teachings, gathered information that could be archived, and created a new site for future engagements, i.e., the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

The final report of the Canadian TRC included Calls to Action intended to motivate institutional and organizational changes that reduce injustice within Canadian society (James, 2017; Rogers, et al., 2014; TRC, 2015). They defined reconciliation saying:

[Reconciliation is] an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change. (TRC, 2015, p. 16).

The Commissioners also expressed their hope that their work will have ongoing positive impact because Canadians and Canadian organizations will be motivated to learn about Canada's history and ultimately create a more equitable relationship between Indigenous communities and settler Canadian communities. However, it is only in the final report that there is evidence of a different kind of sense-giving strategy (de Costa, 2017). It is different because the Calls to Action are not framed as recommendations, they explicitly address Canadian organizations and institutions that have agency to change without direct federal involvement. Though many of the Calls to Action address departments of the federal government and public sector institutions, the actions are achievable. The TRC called on multiple specific Canadian institutions (child welfare, education, health, justice etc.) and organizations to change how the history of Canada and Indigenous peoples is presented. There are also multiple Calls to Action that addressed non-government third sector and corporate entities.

The hand-off of the final report to Canadians created another moment of sensemaking. As organizations, institutions, and departments of the federal government respond to the Calls to Action, there are inevitably ripple effects that also create new cues for sensemaking in various

industries and sectors of Canadian society. Undoubtedly, how these institutions respond to the TRC's Calls to Action today and in the future will have direct and indirect impacts on Indigenous communities.

The TRC was a catalyst for reconciliation-oriented Organizational Change

In the Calls to Action the TRC doubled down on a teaching of agency and responsibility – Canadians do not know their own history. The additional assumption is if they know the history of Canada and Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples, they will be motivated to do things differently. This position explains why they embedded the Calls to Action as 94 directives to various Canadian institutions and organizations.

However, it was also suggested that the work completed by the TRC did not prepare Canadians for the final report nor the specificity of the Calls to Action (James, 2017). Each of the Calls to Action explicitly identified organizations and industry sectors that had the power to influence important conversations about Canadian history. The Calls to Action highlight change is required at a macro social-political level (UNDRIP, OCAP, Public Policy, Treaties). The TRC presented examples of policies and position papers that can be guidelines for future administrative change. For example, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be used as a framework for positioning rights holders as citizens of self-determining nations in co-occupied spaces. It is not yet clear how these guidelines will translate into practice within Canadian identity organizations.

Museums, and libraries, national centres of knowledge, and journalism were called upon. They are repositories of national histories, the decisions their administrators make about curated exhibits, the stories they tell, and the approach they take to re-organizing the presentation of

knowledge as well as the content, influences the narrative of Canadian identity and culture. Other institutions that are supposed to be focused on upholding the values of Canadian society were also called to action. Fields of justice, sports programming and social programming, and Immigration and citizenship were all referred to in the Calls to Action, and administrators of all these programs will be the deciding how to respond.

Calls for Action for MOS?

A broad reading of the Calls to Action, highlights the opportunities for organization studies researchers to consider how discrete institutions have responded to the TRC. However, business schools were not explicitly referred to in the Calls to Action. I suggest this was a missed opportunity to engage businesses and instigate organizational change. Scholars who study and teach management and organization studies in business schools will be working with, advising, and teaching administrators in each of these industries. The connection between these public administrative spaces and business studies loosely hinges on an assumption that MOS scholars are closely tied pragmatically to public administration too.

When researchers in the field of MOS look to the TRC, they look to the Calls to Action for the cues for what they should do. They are likely to read the Calls to Action and only see number 92 because it falls under the heading “Business and Reconciliation.” A first reading of the Calls to Action identifies a list of core intercultural competencies required by Canadian administrators, including base level awareness of Indigenous cultures, conflict resolution that includes Indigenous approaches to conflict resolution, and human rights that can be contrasted with communal rights. Like multiple other Calls to Action, No. 92 also calls upon “the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms and standards to corporate policies

and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources (Final Report, 2015, p. 208).”

However, call to action No. 92 also presents a challenge for MOS research and business schools to connect with the *Declaration*, as the United Nations Global Compact business guide (Final Report, 2015, p. 207). They may have assumed that business education, management scholars, understand how or where their scholarship theoretically connects to location specific contexts including Canadian history, Canadian sovereignty, Canadian legal studies, and Canadian political studies. But, ‘Canadian’ management studies as a field is poorly defined (e.g., Austin, 1998; McLaren and Mills, 2015). Thus, management scholars may be unprepared to make sense of the changes that may require the field to first confront the absences of Canadian history, law, human rights, and racism within the field before (or while) introducing new information about Indigenous knowledge systems.

The other language and work of the TRC may therefore be lost on most business school faculty unless the Calls to Action are reframed in ways that highlight the pragmatic implications of adopting the *Declaration* as a framework, the economic implications of land tenure, and the ways organizational norms reify localized stories and history of places. The TRC’s approach reflects the priorities of (Critical) Indigenous scholarship which, like the Native Women’s Association of Canada, have tended to focused on addressing the power dynamics in Canadian public administration. However, the Calls to Action highlight the need for education at all levels; Educational institutions including universities and research centres were called to act by first learning Indigenous histories that are ignored or overlooked by their disciplinary norms, and by learning from Indigenous peoples about histories and cultures so they can be included in curriculum.

CSM's pragmatic usefulness lies in its legitimacy as a method of engaging with research lies in the recognition of the influence of social systems, language/discourse, history, politics/power, rules, and individuals with agency. But even it is incomplete because relationships between land/place is not explicit. Using Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle for Organization Studies, it is helpful to re-evaluate the relationship between public and private sector administration and whether it is fair to assume that managers will engage with rules and publics differently.

Conclusion to Two-Eyed CSM analysis

In this chapter I discuss the agency of commissioners to choose to reinforce Indigenous teachings and organizational norms in practice and continue to challenge political and legal inter-organizational power dynamics. By focusing the analysis on the texts produced by the TRC I have identified where descriptions of reconciliation in practice highlighted discourses of Indigenous resilience referred to in Chapter 3.

By focusing on the role of the Commissioners as sense makers, I highlight the role complex sense makers have in influencing change. Individuals worked within the system to make sense of the contradictory cues presented in the Mandate in order to create reconciliatory processes that were plausible to two social knowledge systems by (a) analyzing the policy provided, through a lens that did not necessary accept the power dynamics as a given; (b) looking for contradictions between Indigenous and Canadian power dynamics (wise practices and Canadian administrative rules); (c) agency is drawing on cues (wise practices) accepting, clarifying, action, and dialogue; (d) on-going sensemaking – Calls to Action (conclusion and new discourses of reconciliation?). I suggest the TRC may have missed an opportunity to connect directly to business schools and the field of MOS; But sensemaking is ongoing, and I

believe it is possible and necessary for business studies, MOS to engage with the TRC by reading beyond the calls to action. In the next chapter, I discuss the lessons learned about both CSM and CRGBA by combining them and the plausibility of applying Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking for future research.

Chapter 6: Methodological Contributions Exploring Commensurability between CSM and CRGBA

Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing is a Mi'kmaw teaching that encourages consideration of how different people see and think about a situation. In my case *Etuaptmumk* was a guiding principle for exploring administrative agency when making sense of reconciliatory change in the context of Canada-Indigenous relations. I explored application of a new method, Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking - theoretically and empirically - by focusing on administrative processes of the TRC. I had determined early on in my research process that the Critical Sensemaking approach has the potential to complement Indigenous and Indigenist research methods, i.e., Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis (CRGBA, because of the theoretical synergies discussed in Chapter 2. Despite the synergies, however, I continued to encounter challenges that made me question whether the two methods of CRGBA and CSM were compatible. It was eventually evident that the two were only compatible under certain conditions that ensure CSM does not reproduce colonial identities and problematic narratives of colonial place making.

In this chapter, I discuss the conditions that made it possible to bring these two processes together. I share methodological lessons learned from studying the Canadian TRC using a Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking approach. I reflexively review my agency as a researcher and consider decisions I made in the research process to question and disrupt the centrality of Eurocentrism while evaluating when and if the two methods were complementary.

Merging critical research methods by foregrounding relationships to place

My primary intention for this thesis was to explore the applicability of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing for the field of management and organization studies. Where Two-Eyed Seeing is a

guiding principle for research that suggests that by looking at knowledge from two or more analytical perspectives is likely to yield greater insights than each separately. Once I determined that the Critical Sensemaking heuristic appeared to be theoretically complementary to critical Indigenous perspectives of research, I studied the TRC separately analyzing each of the three critical dimensions of the CSM heuristic. For the purposes of my sensemaking, I also explored Mi'kmaw teachings throughout the research process and wanted to be relationally accountable (Wilson, 2008).

Initially I believed the phenomenological grounding of the CSM heuristic was sufficient to address the desire to be relationally accountable throughout the research process because the theoretical foundation of phenomenology positions the researcher as part of the research. I believed if I adopted a practice of being self-reflexive by journaling and questioning sources of discourses, I would remember to cite and acknowledge other. However, the phenomenological grounding was not sufficient because while CSM researchers posit that identity is central to sensemaking and all the other properties flow from there, while Indigenous scholars posit that relational responsibility is central in an Indigenous research paradigm. I further assumed that the sensemaking property of social context paired with the property of identity could compensate for the different priorities.

As I proceeded with my analysis guided by *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing, I found the property of social context was insufficient to explain and address the concerns that were raised by Indigenous scholars. I determined relationships to place and relationships to communities of place needed to be foregrounded in the analysis to explain the power dynamics. It was necessary to combine CSM with another research methodology because CSM alone does not require the researcher to be explicit about their own relationships to the topic, the organization, or the place

where the organization is located. Thus, it is possible to miss implications of significant geopolitical discourses that are used to perpetuate unequal power dynamics, oppressive social systems, and the organizational and institutional rules and structures that were once explicitly designed to be oppressive, and continue to be, despite the discursive changes that rhetorically suggest otherwise.

In other words, I determined CSM is only compatible with Indigenous research methods if there is a strategy to surface and foreground the structuring influences of British and Canadian policy making on the Canada-Indigenous relations today. In my case, I opted to use CRGBA policy research toolkits (2021) to ground my analysis in critical Indigenous strategies that have been developed over the past 50 years to challenge and disrupt settler-colonial policies and place-making narratives that interact with the socially normative, cultural, and political aspects of identities. The CRGBA framework tools explain why it is necessary to foreground Indigenous perspectives in the research process, their toolkits also provide pragmatic and accessible guideline for how to do so. As I explored the strength of compatibility between CSM (Helms Mills, et al. 2010) and culturally relevant gender-based analysis (NWAC, 2022), outlined the steps of a Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking approach. I then used it to study documents that described the processes of the TRC to demonstrate how it can be used in an analysis of reconciliation focused organizational change.

The conditions that make combining possible

I present Two-Eyed CSM as having potential to be used for studying reconciliation-oriented organizational change. I distilled the conditions that make it possible for CSM to complement Indigenous methods into six methodological steps, the order of which is important.

Step 1: Use CRGBA Research Toolkit to foster reflexivity.

Step 2: Position research in relationship to Indigenous communities of place and practice.

Step 3: Policy analysis using the CRGBA Starter Kit (extended in the CRGBA Roadmap for Policy Development, (NWAC, 2023)).

Step 4: Analysis of organizational change processes using the CSM heuristic.

Step 5: Action and observation, weaving between knowledge systems.

Step 6: Iteration. Ongoing sensemaking

My analysis process was iterative. It involved moving between multiple literatures, methodologies, and methods analyzing discourses, comparing historical narratives, and identifying formal and informal rules that structure reconciliation commissions. But the essential aspects of the process were the first two steps.

First researchers must be clear about their positionality and explicitly their relationships to the spaces they occupy. Researcher positionality refers to a physical position as well as a social and theoretical positions. CRBGA toolkit helped me clarify my positionality in a way that explains the need to consider the physical position of research, which is a dimension of identity relationships that tends to be overlooked or taken for granted in the field of MOS.

Second, researchers must be clear about the positionality of the organizations they work in relative to those that they study. The CRGBA Research Toolkit (NWAC, 2022) encouraged researchers to be reflexive and presented a guide that explicitly addresses local concerns about identity politics and social policies. The CRGBA toolkits provide a framework for studying the pre-conditions for the CSM analysis in step 4 - relevant discourses, formative contexts, rules/power dynamics – that influence respectful development of reconciliation-oriented organizational change strategies. I present the first two steps of Two-Eyed CSM method are

essential, though the process that I followed was iterative. Next, I discuss the implications of the first two steps followed by a discussion of lessons learned about agency.

Fostering Reflexivity about Researcher positioning and positionality: CRGBA Steps 1 and 2. Two-Eyed CSM was first a reflexive process in which I, as the researcher, was exploring the boundaries and synergies of and between knowledge systems. Critical Sensemaking researchers posit that identity is central to sensemaking and all the other properties flow from there (Helms Mills, 2003). The CSM heuristic approach, while complex, encourages researcher reflexivity at a micro level. CSM also provides a heuristic to make sense of the actions of others. My intention was to consider the implications of the CSM heuristic when it was used to explore the agency of individuals working within powerful systems (i.e., commissioners appointed to temporary role within temporary institution).

When exploring the TRC using CSM initially, the temptation was to investigate the individual identity of named commissioners and to explore their sensemaking. However, while the identity of the sense maker is central to CSM, I was cautious about making assumptions about complex individuals and the complex social contexts they were making sense of. I felt given my positionality, my social relationships, and responsibilities to networks of interconnected relations inevitably influence how I completed my analysis and my conclusions.

I started my analysis believing that I was making sense of the TRC differently than others because of my intersectional identity positions. I explained earlier that I identify as a settler-Canadian and Mi'kmaq. The settler-Canadian context where I reside determines my constituency, CBRM (municipal), NS (provincial), and Canada (national). At the same time, within the Mi'kmaw relational and contested political context, my relationships determine my

constituency regardless of where I reside. This is true despite the rules of the *Indian Act* policies that have imposed rules for designated parcels of land (reserves). And yet, because of these rules, the importance of place and location is more visible to me because of my lived experiences knowing when and where specific rules directly contradict the assumed norms of mainstream public service (e.g., health care, home ownership, or taxation). However, the value and necessity of prioritizing their approach only became evident after multiple iterations and attempts at making other research methods and methodologies fit with Indigenous methods. The relevance of my positionality became increasingly evident as I tried to explain my analysis process without drawing on literature from the field of Aboriginal economic development and policy analysis. The reifying relationship between discourses and identity feature prominently in my analysis because I was aware of the political discourses because I had read literature produced by Indigenous scholars. The depth of consideration that has been given to these political discourses and their implications is why I must rely on literature produced by Indigenous theorizations of identity. The implications of CSM analysis were different because I spent time on reflexively positioning myself in relationships to the research subjects.

Clarifying positionality: CRGBA Steps 2 and 3. At the outset of my research journey, I focused on studying discourses presented about reconciliatory change that were presented in academic literature. There appeared to be efforts to account for Indigenous perspectives of Canada and reconciliation in mainstream fields of political science. For example, the collection of essays about the politics of reconciliation in multicultural societies (Bashir and Kimlicka, 2008), presented Indigenous Canadians as a historically oppressed social group (Bashir, 2008) and another considered the legal theorizations of Aboriginal Rights (Walters, 2008). However, they also appeared to do so in a way that reproduced a model of diversity that included

Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and Canadian institutions without fully exploring the implications of Indigenous sovereignty. Much of the research and theorizing seemed to overlook or ignore the critical contributions of reconciliation discourses presented by Indigenous leaders and authors that I referenced in Chapter 3.

Reconciliation discourses presented from a Critical Indigenous lens ground their discussions in entirely different in spaces, histories, languages, and legal principles (e.g., Craft and Regan, 2020; Cornthassel and Holder, 2008; Snelgrove, et al, 2014; Wilson, et al, 2019). Steps 2 and 3 - clarifying the relationships to community and focusing on the five aspects of CRGBA policy analysis - were essential, because it influenced the way I made sense of words and rules presented in the mandate statement.

Once I decided to prioritize NWAC's CRGBA in my analysis, and clarified my positionality, the implications of my complex identity scripts were more evident. In Chapters 2 and 3, I explained my view of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation is informed by literature from the field of applied Aboriginal economic development. The initial tensions I was feeling talking about reconciliation efforts were based on my failure to recognize that the following foundational issues raised by Aboriginal economic development scholarship tend to be poorly defined or understood in MOS: the relationship between capitalist economic systems and land tenure (sovereignty), and the relationship between socio-political identities (citizenship) and legal jurisdictional rules of business. Steps 1 and 2 of the Two-Eyed Sensemaking method helped me to work through the dimensions of my sensemaking scripts, and to consider the sources of the cues that seemed salient to me, but unfamiliar to others.

Positioning Organizations in Regional Contexts: Two-Eyed CSM steps 3, 4, and 5.

Once I was aware of the multiple perspectives of reconciliation and locally relevant discourses that were interacting with the discourses of truth and reconciliation, I began seeing patterns of tension in the documents produced by the TRC. These patterns were easier to explain because the CRGBA toolkits identified the many ways Indigenous perspectives were silenced by Canadian policies, and the questions in the CRGBA toolkits aligned with the critical dimensions of the Critical Sensemaking heuristic. Thus, the analysis of organizational change processes relied on the CSM heuristic that was an iterative weaving between the dimensions of CSM and five central aspects of CRGBA.

The TRC was structured by a legally negotiated mandate, established as a government department, and limited by the rules of a Canadian system. I identified multiple conflicting goals, because there were nuanced implications reflected in the words of the mandate that were more evident to me because I knew that Indigenous legal traditions tended to favor restorative justice approaches that were communal, where Canadian traditions are do not. They are punitive and dependant on court processes. The textual references to Indigenous witnessing and Indigenous legal traditions were cues to whole other knowledge systems and opened up other plausible priorities for commissioners.

CSM then helped to identify ways that the Commissioners leveraged their agency to challenge the assumption that Canadian models of justice must be prioritized over Indigenous processes of justice. They reinterpreted the rules of truth and reconciliation by challenging the organizational boundaries that had been assumed by the legal context of the Settlement Agreement. They were able to support ongoing efforts to restore Indigenous knowledge systems, traditions, and histories. They overall work produced a process that was more culturally relevant

for Indigenous claimants than it ought to have been given the contentious nature of the Settlement Agreement and the rules that were outlined in the mandate.

Action, observation, and ongoing sensemaking: Two-Eyed CSM Steps 5 and 6. In this section I highlight an additional lesson that echo lessons learned from a co-learning journey, the expansion of the teaching to *Do things (rather than “just talk”) in a creative, grow forward way* (Bartlett, Marshall, Marshall, 2012). In the context of the Integrative Science Program this teaching refers to the need for science education to include active learning, as well as a willingness for instructors to “just start, have the courage to learn by doing, and emphasize creativity;” (Bartlett, 2011, p2. citing Cajete, 1986).

I describe step 5 of Two-Eyed CSM as action and observation while weaving between knowledge systems. The intention of this step is to be explicit about a theme I discuss in my analysis, the ways Commissioners chose to leverage their power/agency. The Commissioners’ time was limited, and the need to get started was amplified by the delays that were a result of the resignation of the first group of commissioners. They learned by doing what they could to adhere to the mandate, and also had the courage question the order of operations and strict timelines laid out in the mandate statement. The national events were not completed in the first two years, they extended over four years. They also presented a series of recommendations in the Interim Report, and then altered the terminology in the final report. Where recommendations could be considered and ignored, Calls to Action present a stronger message about needing to act, and a failure do so will be seen as deliberate resistance.

I refer to the lessons learned from an integrative science journey because they explain ways of embedding Mi’kmaw teachings of life long co-learning far better than I can. The

implications of the teaching to learn by doing, is represented in step 6, iteration an ongoing sensemaking. The teachings that refer to ‘act and learn by doing’ also explains tense experiences I encounter in conversations when talking about the Calls to Action. Mi’kmaw knowledge holders teach that inaction is a choice about responsibility. If someone asks for advice or guidance, and refuses to take it, or reads a call to action and refuses to follow through, that is a choice to shirk responsibility too. I have come to understand this teaching of responsibility to act in the service of the community, is not a teaching understood in the same way by everyone. Therefore, I read the cues embedded in the Calls to Action as new mandates for all Canadians and organizations to do something in ‘a grow forward way.’ (Bartlett, 2011)

Methodological Lessons learned about Two-Eyed CSM

While referring to the NWAC starter kit I highlighted the difference between two points in the process. First, I looked at the mandate through a lens of Critical Indigenous perspective and decided the language in the Mandate did not guarantee the TRC was culturally relevant to Indigenous communities seeking justice. Second, the final report of the Commission suggests the concepts of CRGBA were integrated throughout the process because they were reflected in the final report. The Commission interpreted the Mandate in a way that created something more culturally relevant to Indigenous communities than might have been expected. Thus, from a lens of Indigenous-led efforts to restore sovereignty, Two-Eyed CSM is a heuristic that appears to work. CSM and CRGBA can complement each other and contribute lessons about agency.

However, for CSM is to be culturally relevant to Indigenous scholars who seek to challenge and disrupt the centrality of Eurocentrism, it must explicitly discuss the jurisdictional rules that are reproduced through Canadian national and regional policies. The potential for integrating Two-Eyed Seeing and CSM together rests in a method that consistently considers the

researcher's sensemaking around place and space within the analysis. For me, I was constantly questioning the presence and absence of Indigenous voices. I was consistently questioning whether there was evidence to support the political resistance narratives, and the legal decisions that re-iterate the validity of self-government claims (e.g., the findings of RCAP and decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada. When there was inconsistency, I questioned whether my sources of information reflected mainstream "Canadian" or "Indigenous" teachings. I leveraged my agency as a researcher disrupt the centrality of Eurocentrism by providing evidence of political and legal efforts that reinforce the TRC's work. When the sources of information had been rigorously defended and validated, I chose to foreground them as relevant cues to commissioner sensemaking.

The CRGBA toolkit provided an accessible and robust Indigenous-led process that could act as a counterpoint to CSM. I drew on the CRGBA resource documents (NWAC, 2020, 2022). In combination with CSM, the published CRGBA resources effectively present questions that highlight how complex power dynamics of Canada tend to be reproduced through text, and spaces where the power dynamics can be changed to be more culturally relevant for Indigenous peoples. The guides they provide encourage consideration about how the language presented in the TRC texts (Mandate and reports) disrupt or reproduce powerful and problematic discourses of Canadian and Indigenous identities, histories, knowledge systems, politics, legal systems, religious institutions, and economics. The CRGBA starter kit asks whether the policy prioritizes Western (dominant mainstream knowledge) over all other plausible knowledge systems. It does not assume that knowledge must be *either* Western *or* Indigenous. Using CRGBA as a foundational method, also highlighted five socio-political discourses that are central to the Canada-Indigenous reconciliation discourse. (1) There was a tendency to critique the way

Western knowledge systems were positioned as superior to Indigenous knowledge systems. (2) There was a tendency to problematize the duality of Canada-Indigenous, Crown-Indigenous, relationship that centres the federal government and normalizes a pan-Aboriginal approach to citizenship. (3) There was an understanding of the relationship between legal, political, and social power dynamics that are regionally diverse, but obfuscated by the Canada-Indigenous narrative. (4) Indigenous discourses seemed to recognize the advocacy for more complex and nuanced constructions of identity, and citizenship in social programs and public services. (5) There was a tendency to critique the governments failure to see the present experiences of trauma that are perpetuated in and through integrated settler-colonial systems.

It is plausible that I could have completed this research without being so explicit about the need to use the NWAC toolkits. However, the CRGBA toolkit provided an accessible and robust Indigenous-led process that could act as a counterpoint to CSM. From an Indigenous perspective that is grounded in CRGBA, the TRC was an important step in the resurgence efforts of Indigenous peoples. Without inclusion of the NWAC toolkit in a Critical Sensemaking Analysis, it was more difficult to explain the layers of interrelated differences between Indigenous knowledge systems and structures and Canadian. When CRGBA is used to ground Critical Sensemaking in local priorities of Indigenous advocates, the structuring influences of policy that reproduce rules through text (e.g., policy documents, legal structure, and administrative reports) are more visible. CSM can be grounded in local knowledge systems because it encourages consideration of the formative context of sensemaking. CSM research can be extended to prioritize responsibility and relationality to, and in, a social context that explicitly includes place and relationships to communities of place.

CSM Extends CRGBA to explore change and agency

Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing offers strategies to understand that multiple or diverse knowledge systems will view situations differently, but that does not prevent them from being used constructively side-by-side to develop a thorough understanding of a situation before responding responsibly (Reid et al, 2020). CRGBA improved my CSM analysis, and in the process of combining I also identify an opportunity to extend the value of CRGBA. The CRGBA framework derives from the space in which NWAC, like the TRC, seeks to address complex spaces of jurisdictional overlap, where the federal government has a whole set of national rules for policy areas. Their framework is intended for analysis of policy gaps in fields and industries (e.g., health care, social services, justice) that are primarily considered provincial jurisdictions. It is a national effort with regionally diverse networks of people seeking to address problems of systems that are designed around imagined jurisdictional boundaries that have been embedded as complex webs of government rules. Legally, the jurisdictional boundaries are being directed to change, but few people writing the policies are prepared with alternatives.

Policy analysis of the meta-narratives (distinctions, identity, gender, knowledge systems, and trauma) are interwoven with issues of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation – the policy analysis highlights the rules of institutional systems – but it will only take us so far without exploring the agency (choices and actions) of those who have been put into the role of sense maker (decision maker). The power imbalance between Indigenous Nations and Canadian governments will be perpetuated until other localized, regional, disciplinary scripts are created or centred as counter-narratives. The key concepts of the CRGBA represent points of tension that are embedded into organizations through policies. They must be surfaced and discussed in organizations before they can be addressed. The CRGBA toolkits are new and there is an opportunity to put them into

practice. Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking is an opportunity to use CSM to explore the usefulness of their framework in diverse administrative settings.

Returning to the conditions of combining.

In the processes of describing the Two-Eyed CSM method I determined it is necessary to be clear about research identity narratives, their relationship to the organization they are studying, and the relationship between the organizations and the spaces they occupy. Researcher positionality refers to a physical position as well as a social and theoretical positions. I have used CSM and CRGBA in my analysis because they both present researcher reflexivity as essential. Recognition of the socially constructed nature of knowledge is common ground between the two theories. Whereas CSM relies primarily on theories of intersectionality and constructs of organizational identity, the reflexivity tools provided by the NWAC toolkit take intersectionality steps further. They necessitate definition of social identities as tied to communities of place (local power dynamics, discourses, stories, and formative contexts) as well as rules of organizations.

When the positionality of the researcher and the organization are deliberately framed using tools provided by the CRGBA research tool kit, assumptions are explicated, and in the process the implications of local policies and historical discourses are more obvious. In contrast, when the position and assumptions are assumed or taken for granted, the same words can be used but be interpreted to have entirely different meanings. Researchers must be clear about the positionality of the organizations they work in relative to those that they study. However, I want to reiterate that the two critical research approaches were only compatible because the methods of CRGBA were used to mitigate the risk of reproducing colonial identities and problematic

narratives of colonial place making. It may be plausible to combine CSM with other Indigenous research method but the conditions of combining must be cautiously considered.

I explained in chapter two that before I grounded my research using CRGBA, I used a combination of qualitative research methods to explore the critical dimension of CSM. I tried historical archival analysis (Hartt et al., 2014) using actor-network theory (Durepos & Mills, 2012). This strategy helped me to consider the relationships between actors, but found it didn't capture the depth of the Nation-to-Nation discourses of reconciliation. I also considered storywork (Archibald, 2019; Doucette & Castleden, 2023) and discourse analysis (Thurlow, 2007) to account for critical sociology of the discourse that changed over time. I identified a new insight about the process with each iteration that I would not have considered unless I asked the questions. The practice of weaving between perspectives is a teaching of Two-Eyed Seeing, it is also reflected the properties of CSM. However, the process of reflecting and weaving tend to be erased when academic research is published. There must be space to discuss the iterative processes of reconciliation research. Nation to Nation reconciliation is going to be an iterative process for everyone. It is imperative that we talk about and share our trials and missteps which are part of the process of doing, learning, and changing course. Otherwise, we will continue to do the same things and continue to rely on the same familiar sensemaking scripts.

Methodological implications for future research applying Two-Eyed CSM

My intention for this thesis was to consider the implications of adopting *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle for MOS and to support the on-going efforts of Truth and Reconciliation in Canadian organizations. I developed my approach, Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking by bringing two critical research methods into conversation together to explore the administrative processes of the Canadian TRC. I also contribute to the

theorizations of *Etuaptmumk*/Two-Eyed Seeing, extending its relevance locally into the field of business administration.

I applied the Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking method in a way that considers the relationship between formative legal and political contexts of Canada and the administrative structure of the TRC. As part of my contribution, I introduce CRGBA into the field of MOS as a pragmatic guide to exploring the cultural relevancy of organizational policies in spaces other than public administration. I also address gaps in research related to the social impacts of TRCs. I extend the theorization of CSM by considering the relationship between organizations and relationality. My analysis of the reports produced demonstrates that they made sense of their role as powerful in ways that modelled and approach to reconciliation that management scholars and business administrators can learn from in the future.

In my analysis I also highlight the potential for sensemaking researchers be agents of reconciliatory change by including stories of place. If an organization seeks to address the issue of reconciliation in a way that is meaningful for Indigenous populations it must include localized Indigenous knowledge as a separate and distinct knowledge system. Two-Eyed CSM that puts Critical Indigenous CRGBA first in the process presents two issues as necessary for justice-oriented reconciliation: 1) self-reflection about the researcher identity and researcher's relationships to local discourses of power (Aboriginal rights, Indigenous knowledge, Gender, and justice), and 2) the need to be explicit about identifying the relevant place-based communities in which an organization is embedded. Without putting place first, you risk obscuring and ignoring the influence of locally relevant institutional and geo-historical power dynamics of historical value systems, economics, politics, religion. Relationship to others including place, and responsibility to others is also essential, reflexivity must be explicit. In the next chapter, I

identify opportunities to apply Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking in the future to create equitable and respectful strategies for reconciliatory change in organizations.

Chapter 7: On-going Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking for Reconciliation

Since the conclusion of the TRC's official mandate, Canadian publics are increasingly aware of the Indian residential school legacy. The TRC raised issues about Canada-Indigenous relations and Canada's history of cultural genocide. While the TRC was a catalyst for change, the change in the discourse of reconciliation is also a result of decades of Indigenous-led advocacy organizations who draw attention to the harms that continue to be perpetuated within modern Canadian organizations. The scope of the systemic issues addressed by the TRC was broad, and it extended to multiple diverse sectors within the Canadian economy.

In this chapter I come full circle to consider the future implications of the Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking approach. I suggested in the conclusion to chapter five that the language and work of the TRC will be lost on most business schools unless the Calls to Action are reframed. Researchers in the field of MOS look to the Calls to Action for the cues for what they should do. If they read the Calls to Action narrowly, they only see number 92 because it falls under the heading "Business and Reconciliation." Management scholars may be unprepared to make sense of Call to Action No. 92 and the call to connect with the *Declaration*, as the United Nations Global Compact business guide (Final Report, 2015, p. 207). They are not making sense of the *Declaration* in the way it was intended. Thus, Two-Eyed CSM presents various potential future reconciliatory responses and trajectories for research about reconciliatory change efforts that are taking place in Canadian institutions and organizations. While there is much work to do in the field of management as Indigenous-identity organizations work to restore Indigenous leadership and remodel wise practices (Voyager, et al., 2014). The research projects I highlight focus on Canadian-identity institutions building on the work of Regan (2010), who explains it necessary for settler-Canadian, and by extension settler-Canadian organizations, to unsettle the

settler-Canadian assumptions about their histories and the narratives they rely on when making sense of their positionality.

I highlight two opportunities to increase engagement between the field of MOS and respectful reconciliation using Two-Eyed CSM as a guideline. The first opportunity is to adopt a Two-Eyed CSM method to re-evaluate previously published studies that outline the history of management studies at a national level (Austin, 2000; Coller, 2021; McLaren and Mills, 2015). I return to the gaps in MOS literature that have been identified by my MOS scholarship to highlight the opportunities to instigate change at a national level. The second opportunity is to deliberately engage in local, place-based, efforts by fostering awareness of local stories of colonization and Indigenous communities in the regions across the country where business schools are located. I explain the implications of this type of strategy by drawing on local examples of respectful reconciliatory organizational change in Nova Scotia, and *Mi'kmaw'ki* organizational change.

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking of the Calls to Action

The meaning of the term reconciliation is less clear today than it was when it was referred to in the final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) when referring to the “Treaties as historical expressions of Nation-to-Nation exchanges” (v.1. p.13). When Canadians commit to reconciliation it is not clear if they are committing to socially just corrective action, committing to substantive change, committing to reconciliation as relationship as opposed to reconciliation as the status quo, or something else. Why is there so much confusion?

I suggest the confusion in the Canadian discourses stems from the global discourses that consistently theorize the structure-agency debate from a lens of macro-social systems. In the process they reify the duality of identities in ways that favor the political goals of

colonial/colonizing governments like Canada. As a global discourse, the ideals of truth and reconciliation commissions have changed over time, expanding to include a wider and more diverse subset of government structures, conflict scenarios, and strategies to address oppression and inequity. What is common within the global literature about the truth and reconciliation commissions is a broad sweeping acknowledgement that institutional reform, i.e., disruptive change, was required to create more just institutions, and therefore societies. Commissions, regardless of whether they were truth commissions or reconciliation commissions, are understood to be a mechanism that serves to bridge the macro discourses of government policy, i.e., rules and structure, and citizens experiences of justice in societies, i.e., micro-level sensemaking.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada also worked to strengthen the linkages between macro discourses of Canadian government policy with and micro-level sensemaking of citizens throughout Canada. They witnessed and collected stories of hundreds of individuals so they could be archived. They also shared many stories in first person quotations throughout the texts of the final report. They sought to address the social legacy of the Indian Residential Schools by recording, archiving, and sharing publicly with Canadians the truth about Indigenous people's lived experiences with Indian Residential Schools (Gettler, 2017; James, 2017; TRC, 2015). They recognized the complex series of identity politics that are entwined with social identities public histories, institutional policies that create structures based in political, religious, and legal values.

Throughout their reports they also reinforced the ways in which structures and institutional rules made it difficult to complete their work. The Calls to Action were positioned throughout the reports in a way that highlights the connections to the stories shared and the need

to include them as part of national narratives. To change structures of oppression we first must be able to see them, understand their origins, and reflect on the ways we engage with them or disengage from them.

The TRC called for respectful reconciliatory change that starts with teaching and learning about the past and present relationships between powerful institutions and Indigenous peoples. The Calls to Action also identified organizations whose work is typically thought of as public administration and may have had little to no meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities in the past. The TRC called on Canadian organizations to pay attention to Indigenous people's stories, and to help amplify them through mainstream channels. They specifically named a variety of public institutions where their stories had not been shared before (e.g., in museums and archives).

The TRC may have been a catalyst for substantial change (de Costa, 2017). Following the release of the TRC, many Canadians have responded with curiosity and want to learn about and from Indigenous peoples (Root, Augustine, Snow, Doucette, 2019). Since 2015, when the Final Report of the TRC was released, some organizations have been able to respond and adapt quickly, completing Calls to Action, while many others have not (Yellowhead Institute, 2022). And some Calls to Action, even after completed, require on-going committed effort to maintain respectful relationships. More Canadian organizations must consider their role in (re)producing Canadian-identity narratives.

This is an opportunity for researchers of Canadian management and to (re)visit management history by asking how has the field been structured to support support-colonialism? And how must the stories told about Canadian management history be changed to understand the

political and economic logics of place (e.g., how giving priority to land assets reproduces systems of economic injustice)?

Reframing the calls to action for business schools and management studies

I started this thesis identifying two gaps in literature, the apparent lack of engagement between the field of MOS and the pragmatic concerns of Indigenous-led businesses (Bastien et al, 2021). There appears to be a disconnect between organizations in practice and organization studies. The lack of data and information provided by the field of MOS may indicate of disinterest within the disciple of management. It is not necessarily a reflection of disinterest on the part of Canadian managers. A survey of Canadian organizations showed that organizations were interested but uncertain about how to responding to calls for reconciliation, but the responses vary by industry and region (Blackman and Malatast, 2017). And administrators in all industries whether it be law, or health care, social services, or education will also be looking for advice about how to enact reconciliation. We must work with them to understand their experiences and challenges. Indigenous organizations are also more sophisticated than ever and there are lessons to learn from their experiences too.

Business schools, like these other organizations, increasingly claim they are responding to the Calls to Action in the TRC (Aussant, et al, 2023) along with other calls to be more responsive to issues related to justice, equity, inclusion, and decolonization (BSAC, 2023). Internationally there has also been an expansion of related discourse of decolonization, justice, and principles of responsible management (Verbos and Humphries, 2015). In this chapter I want to articulate the tension between the emerging rhetoric of organizational change and the evidence of just, equitable, and decolonized processes. However, the meaning of the discourse of responsible management and decolonization are used inconsistently and conflated in context. It

presents a greater sense of change than is realized in practice (James, 2022; James, 2021; Snelgrove, 2021).

It has been difficult to make sense of the depth and breadth of organization and institutional efforts to engage with reconciliation across the country. If the literature generated by in the field of management and organization studies in high-ranking journals and teaching materials is an indication of the priority and attention given to reconciliatory change, then there is a lot of work to do. In the absence of systematic and longitudinal studies of change, building on models developed by organizations like Indigenous Works (Blackman and Malatast, 2017) it is necessary and useful to consider how responses will vary by region and by sector.

Making Sense of Academic Responses: Problematizing the Calls to Action for MOS

My analysis highlights the uniqueness of the Canadian TRC's approach and its limitations as a temporary institution. The Canadian TRC was established as part of a legal settlement process, apparently defined by unequal power dynamics. Like other TRC's globally, there was skepticism that the TRC would achieve its mandated goals and instigate disruptive social and institutional changes. But following its completion, it appears to have had moderate success at raising awareness in Canada which has begun to translate into meaningful shifts in some organizational practices.

In fields related to university education new curricula and new funding programs developed have been put in place for Indigenous identity students. There is, however, a lot of information to process, including how and why the responses thus far have varied by sector (Blackman & Malatast, 2017), and by region (Wilkes et al., 2017). The work of the TRC requires ongoing strategies to address the issues of truth and reconciliation to ensure the new programs do

not perpetuate more of the same neoliberal forms of reconciliation (Wyile, 2019) that have been described as dishonourable political promises (McCrossan, 2019), and moves to innocence (Mawhinney, 1998; Tuck and Yang, 2012; Walker, Doucette, Rotz, Lewis, Neufeld, and Castleden, 2021), and denial (Nagy, 2012).

Management studies is not well mapped with respect to Indigenous issues and reconciliation because it has either not been paying attention (Bastien et al, 2021), or the *idea* of Indigenous is presented as fragmented or peripheral to what is assumed to be the central aims of management and organizational studies as a field internationally (Salmon et al, 2022). However, in Canada we see increasing efforts to engage Canadian business researchers in spaces like the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada for example (Deephouse et al., 2021; Deephouse & Doucette, 2020). And, although there are a handful of new research efforts led by early career Indigenous scholars, we are still statistically underrepresented in business schools. Of all the academic disciplines I suggest business studies, broadly defined, has been among the slowest to change because they have had great difficulty making sense of the implications of the TRC for business studies and organizations in general.

The issue of reconciliation is not being studied from the perspective of mainstream business administration and the field of management and organization studies with a few notable exceptions of researchers who have undertaken collaborative research agendas focusing on both applied Indigenous self-government efforts and the responses of non-Indigenous organizations to them (e.g., Colbourne, et al, 2020; Walker et al, 2021). “The way we do business must change” (TRC quoted in Regan and Craft, 2020 p.276). I suggest the meso-level of organizational behaviour and organizational change is critical to the types of administrative justice Indigenous peoples are seeking to create. Therefore, more longitudinal analysis must be completed to

explore the implementation of reconciliation and equity-focused organizational change efforts. For example, use the CRGBA starter kit to evaluate the cultural relevancy of human resource policies or strategic plans. Ask how culturally relevant were they before the TRC launched? Are they more culturally relevant now? If they have changed, how are local communities' staff and Indigenous partners making sense of these changes?

As people begin to pay attention and strive towards reconciliation, going forward I suggest it is necessary to be attentive to how the discourses of organizational change are framed, and how the discourse itself changes. For example, there has been increasing efforts to clarify the spectrum of reconciliatory responses in academic institutions (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018, 2019). They suggest that while many academic institutions are responding to the Calls to Action by creating Indigenous inclusion programs, Indigenous knowledge holders are imagining and striving to create decolonization and decolonized education systems (e.g., Andreotti et al., 2015; Battiste, 2013; Corntassel, 2012; MacKinnon, 2015; Marsh et al., 2015; Munroe et al., 2013; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2019; Snelgrove et al., 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012). In other words, there are categories within reconciliation. Some of these align closely with the intentions of those who are advocating for legal and political recognition of constitutionally defined Aboriginal rights and the goals of people who seek to establish new and reimagined relationships. Other moves toward reconciliation however are more closely aligned to neo-liberal forms of reconciliation that are as likely to reinforce values of settler colonial ethics of the doctrine of discovery - racist policies that led to the Indian Act and the Indian Residential School System - as they are to reinforce capitalist economics solely based in land tenure and property. If the spectrum of educational institutional responses were re-considered through a lens of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking, would it highlight the role of university administration and policies?

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking of management histories in Canada

First, this study addresses and presents a gap in the field of MOS. As a field, we are not listening to the calls to explore economic justice (Bastien, et al, 2022; Hamilton, et al. 2021) in modern settler-colonial contexts. Specifically, in Canadian MOS, we have been failing to consider the historical relationship between social context, economics, governance, regional politics, and the treaties that were signed between Indigenous nations and European settler communities. Mainstream analysis processes provide incomplete understanding of Indigenous business issues. The field too readily accepts the current state of capital economics without understanding/considering both the theoretical and pragmatic relationship between sovereignty and capital economics, jurisdictional boundaries, and policy. As a field MOS must also challenge the Eurocentrism of our theories and methods by reviewing what we know about the history of the discipline.

The themes of power highlighted as questions by CRGBA Starter Kit are related to the gaps I had identified in the field of MOS, and while exploring the sociology of Canadian management practices and business education (Doucette, 2017). I present them here as additional opportunities to apply Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking to future research projects.

The Sociology of Canadian Management Project. It developed to consider whether there was something unique or novel about the field of Canadian management studies. It built on a project to document the history of Business Education in Canada (Austin, 2000). The studies followed that examined the sociology of Canadian management knowledge by tracing the influence of politics and powerful actors (Collier, 2022; Hartt, Mills, Helms Mills, & Corrigan, 2014; Deal, 2022; Ruel, 2018). Collectively these studies explain how idea of Canada was

politically created by influential actors to differentiate a social group of Canadian citizens and culture from American and European counterparts (Austin, 1998; McLaren & Mills, 2013).

The issue presented by Bastien et al (2022) and which the I seek to address are explained by studies that describe the sociology of management scholarship and business schools in Canada (e.g., Austin, 1999; Coller, 2021; McLaren and Mills, 2017). Canadian MOS is different because of things like social policies, unionization, and government interference (Foster and Mills, 2013; Foster, et al, 2014). “As a result, Canadian corporations have different laws that need to be followed, different barriers and opportunities and are governed by the values of a nation who has approached business differently. This issue is not unique to Canada alone (Coller 2021, p. 129).” As Coller explains, “when scholars unintentionally focus on research that will appeal to American conferences and journals to secure grants and funding, it leaves the Canadian story of management studies unexamined (Coller, 2021, p. 128).” As long as the Canadian stories of management reproduce a notion of universal or globalized change of management, Indigenous scholars will be expected to follow suit by searching for gaps in global literature about Indigenous studies that miss exploring innovative local and interdisciplinary solutions.

By extension, those who have sought to surface the contributions of Canadian MOS are differentiated from those of either the United States or Europe because of the rules of public administration – funding mechanisms, public policy, and administrative norms. It is unclear from the studies of Canadian management whether there is anything more theoretically substantial than the extent to which policies of today derived from the political choices to maintain economic relationships with European nations or to claim independence from them (Foster, Mills, & Helms Mills, 2014; McLaren & Mills, 2015). The explorations of theories of Canadian management knowledge have, for the most part, failed to account for the narrative that Regan

(2010) described as the peace-keeper myth of Canadian identity (Doucette & Deal, 2021). They have failed to question the implications of Canada's history as a settler-colonial government, and Eurocentrism generally, as the primary source Canada's wealth economically.

Indigenous knowledge systems were not being considered or discussed. The discourses did not discuss Indigenous peoples or distinctive groups of rights holders in a meaningful way. They did not consider the foundational principles of the Canadian economy based in racist assumptions about land tenure and exclusive or primary sovereignty of the Canadian government. They did not consider the colonial ethics of the discourse of Canadian identity and knowledge.

Building on these discourses the NWAC framework additionally presents challenges to the narratives of power, namely gender, that were considered in this body of work. Grounding analysis in CRGBA encourages expansion of gender and intersectional identities to include more complex justice-oriented and trauma informed intersections. The history of Canadian MOS projects can be positioned as the foundation of this work. The unique dimensions of Canadian management identified relate to politics (national and regional), gender, institutions, and economics, as well as the intersections of Indigenous leadership, entrepreneurship, and management. The dimension that is missing, which I contribute to via my thesis outlines the role of policy in reproducing and idea of Canadian identity and colonial values that were dependant on the erasure of Indigenous people, knowledge systems, and cultures. All of the studies that were produced as part of that project can be re-read using a Two-Eyed CSM lens. I hypothesis that if the sociology of management knowledge was studied through a lens of CRGBA, then the similarities and differences management strategies of settler-Canadian and settler-American governments, past and present, will be clearer.

Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking to Repositioning the role Indigenous Nations Regionally

Canadians generally do not know the histories or stories that Indigenous peoples/organizational leaders know. They cannot make sense in the same way until they are familiar with this information. In other words, Indigenous peoples make sense of reconciliation differently than Canadians do because the whole structure of society is based on different values, constructions of identity, and relationships to place. Reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective is not a solution to duality until Canadians challenge the value of their national and regional identities.

Colonization continues to influence how people feel they should look, think, and act, particularly in terms of gender expression and roles. Policy has often been a tool for reinforcing this binary, consequently reinforcing the ongoing privileging of cisgender, heterosexual male perspectives within federal policy and leadership. For example, the *Indian Act* disenfranchised Indigenous women, imposed gendered segregation, forced gender roles in residential schools, and imposed patriarchal and hierarchical governance structures in Indigenous communities. This has informed the current distortion and/or exclusion of Indigenous WG2STGD+ People's knowledge, perspectives, and voices in policymaking. All organizations are formed based on information and communication. Eurocentric traditions have ways of confirming and authenticating the accuracy of information, so too do Indigenous communities. Indigenous models of organizing and law are available through story and in conversations. These are also systems and processes that are being re-established and require attention as more and more inter-cultural, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research is conducted. It is not until we are confronted by another perspective or frame of reference, another way of seeing the same object that we begin to re-evaluate truth.

Reflection first: The call to listen to and learn from Indigenous-led organizations

The TRC also legitimized and amplified the voices of Indigenous peoples who have been advocating for public administrative changes for decades. In the realms of public policy, e.g., the space where NWAC operates, public funding has been directed towards Indigenous-led efforts focused on community rebuilding, institution building, and collaborative inter-sectoral, inter-jurisdictional research efforts. There is more information to draw from in these spaces focused on local and Indigenous-led policy. New models of public administration are increasingly plausible, and these models are spilling out into other spaces, like community economic development, social enterprise and Indigenous owned enterprises.

This is where Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking can help uncover and develop strategies for change. First, it is necessary to actively reflect on positionality of both the research and the research subject. Where are the researcher and the organization of interest located and what narratives of place are evident and silenced or taken for granted during research? Secondly, it is necessary to read beyond disciplinary boundaries, to pick up new cues for sensemaking from regional knowledge holders who have experience working in these unique hybrid spaces. Indigenous academics are increasingly calling for interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and land-based research. All of which are calls that the field of MOS and Two-Eyed CSM can contribute to. Interdisciplinary research is often community-based participatory action research. These studies also tend to be localized and therefore place-based case studies. It is plausible to apply Two-Eyed CSM to these projects in order to test the applicability of the method in other reconciliation-oriented projects. Is agency being leveraged through policy change, restorying histories? How are institutional rules and mandate, like those of funding agencies, being made sense of by Indigenous participants?

Since the TRC has been released, part of the challenge with evaluating the discourse of Indigenous reconciliation is the presumption about how important and meaningful change must be generalizable as a macro level of an international discipline globally. But there is also the challenge of confronting the power dynamics of the scholarly disciplines that are resistant to change. The success metrics are reified by the central systems of American or capitalistic and/or powerful mainstream Eurocentric structures that have been working against Indigenous knowledges (Doucette, Gladstone, and Carter, 2021), and the plausible alternative models of governance and exchange they present (Bastien et al, 2022; Kelly and Woods, 2021 Verbos, Gladstone, and Kennedy, 2011; Verbos and Humphries, 2015). Going forward it is necessary to consider whether the apparent silences in the field are faulty metrics. Is the appearance of engagement a result of the discourse, the design of the system or the choice of Indigenous peoples to work in more productive and pragmatic spaces.

I see multiple intriguing examples of reconciliation-oriented change processes underway nationally and within my home province that have yet to be translated in the field of MOS. New institutions like First Nations Bank, First Nations Finance Authority, and the First Nations Financial Management Board, are challenging the rules of lending and risk assessment. They have begun to include additional factors in their risk assessments that mainstream banks value less than physical assets (Doucette and Lanine, 2016). Indigenous development corporations are investing in bigger and more impactful international partnerships.

Regionally Grounded Trans-disciplinary Studies in Reconciliatory Change

The examples of reconciliation-oriented change that are happening at a national level, also have regional implication. I am familiar with these examples because I am a registered member of the Membertou community, and I have seen first hand the impact. Membertou's

leadership team has been recognized nationally for their work to encourage these massively disruptive shifts to national economic policy. These examples therefore also emphasise the second suggestion I derive from my analysis of the TRC, which is related to the need for more meso-level understandings of ‘Nation to Nation’ reconciliation efforts. The contributions to reconciliation that have been made at the level of the federal government continue to be important. But regional dynamics of reconciliation within and across traditional Indigenous territories and treaty territories, and within provinces and municipalities must also be explored in greater detail too.

For example, the recent purchase of Clearwater Seafoods by partnership between the Mi’kmaw Coalition, a conglomerate of Mi’kmaw development corporations, and Premium Brand Holdings. The deal fundamentally changed the landscape of the Canadian seafood industry and Indigenous participation in the off-shore fishery (McIntyre, Morgan, and McDonald, 2023). Each of these projects can be studied longitudinally using Two-Eyed CSM to explore the teachings of agency, and models administrative change that are creating new models for the future of reconciliation. Does looking at the purchase from a lens of CRGBA change the way this purchase is understood by the partners? Does the overlapping discourse of Peace and Friendship Treaties in Atlantic Canada and the stories of administrative reconciliation in the region(s) and the industry influence the sensemaking of the partners?

As Canadian organizations, including universities and research centres, continue to respond to the TRC, analysis of administrative processes should consider the relationship between organizations and the places they occupy. There is value in conducting reconciliation-oriented studies that consider the relationship between organizational identities and place, the relationship to the history and cultures of the place, and ongoing legal and political discourses

related to land claims. This is particularly true when considering Indigenous perspectives of organizing, but it is also true when the place is legally uncertain or ambiguous, as is the case in settler colonial states.

Within Atlantic Canada that means exploring the role collaborative working groups and planning networks that include businesses, municipal governments, and provincial departments that have not worked together historically. For example, the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative was established in 2004 with the intention of encouraging dialogue between all organizations with a vested interest in the watershed (Doucette and Root, 2022). The people who participate in these networks recognize that the stories local residents tell about a place influence the way they make sense of their policy work (Doucette and Castleden, 2023). Any discussion of plausible future must foreground history of the space, and the political claims that are settled or unsettled, to sort through problems created by modern jurisdiction boundaries (Doucette and Root, 2022; Denny, 2022). Then, through a lens of policy research, CRGBA presents questions that help organizations consider the extent to which their policies, initiatives, and projects are culturally relevant to Indigenous peoples, as well as other marginalized identity groups.

The future of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking and Reconciliation is Bright

In closing I want to highlight the potential of Two-Eyed CSM to develop and change. I started this journey seeking develop a Two-Eyed Seeing approach to management studies. I chose to focus on the TRC as a case study because it was an accessible archive of resources, and I was disappointed that so few of my colleagues had read them. The stories profiled are difficult to read. They are emotional and for many the stories will be triggering. Even if you do not read the reports produced, it is necessary to read something and to seek answers. There are countless

resources available that talk about the difficult as well as the inspiring aspects of Indigenous vibrancy and creativity.

I present the Two-Eyed CSM method as pragmatic guide studying the discourse of reconciliatory change in administration policies. It is possible for all researchers in the field of MOS to study and instigate change in organizations indirectly through their research. I present this thesis as a model for change in MOS research. It is informed by Indigenous teachings and critical Indigenous research, and as a result generated new research questions to explore. It is also a call to change how research in MOS is theorized, discursively framed, and conducted. It draws on localized Mi'kmaw teachings and knowledge systems and national Indigenous-led and theoretically grounded research. Can it be developed and applied in other regional contexts? Would drawing on knowledges that have been deemed illegitimate in the past, and knowledges systems that have been isolated from the mainstream similarly identify other reconciliation priorities?

I conclude this thesis with a final teaching on the topic of agency from Dr. Thomas King, an Indigenous Storyteller and the first Indigenous Massey Lecturer. He presented *the Truth About Stories* (King, 2003) a collection of five short stories about and from Indigenous peoples. Each of the stories he shared ended with a similar refrain. It seems relevant given the context of the TRC and Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking because it is a teaching about the sociology of knowledge, and a teaching about personal agency. This is mine. Writing about the TRC has been a personal journey. I have listened, and read, and learned by weaving between the stories and histories of Canada, *Mi'kmaw'ki*, and Indigenous business. Now that its written, it's also yours. As Thomas King says,

“Do with it what you will. Make it the topic of a discussion group at a scholarly conference. Put it on the Web. Forget it. But don’t say in years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You’ve heard it now (King, 2003, p. 60).”

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Appendix A

Timeline: select nationally significant political events

Period of time	Significance of the period	Years	Event/Report: My sensemaking cues
Period 1 Pre-Settlement (... - 1671)	The sovereignty of Indigenous nations was unquestioned. E.g., the Mi'kmaw nation was sovereign, self-organizing, political, whole systems of knowledge. Traces of the past are evident in stories, place names, the language of <i>Mi'kmaw'ki/L'nu</i> . RCAP (1996) Referred to the period before 1500 as separate worlds.	1372 (?)	Oral Histories
		1493	Roman Catholic Papal Bulls Doctrine of Discovery
		1497	John Cabot contact Mi'kmaw
Period 2 Early Period of European Settlement and Treaty Making (1671 - 1866)	Treaties were formed with settlers representing the crown, the church, the state. E.g., in Mi'maw'ki Chain of treaty agreements that spanned 1725-1779 (Marshall and Battiste, 2016). (Brown et al, 2016, p.292) Stage 2: Nation-to-Nation Relations Encounters between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people began to increase in number and complexity in the 1500s.	1672	Est. Hudson's Bay Company
		1716-63	Peace and Friendship Treaties
		1725-1779	1763 Royal Proclamation 1776 Est. North West Comp.
		1812	Selkirk Settlers Reach Winnipeg War of 1812
		1850-54	Robinson Treaties
Period 3 Treaty Making and Denial Establishment of Legal Foundations of Canada (1867 – 1968)	Indian Act 1867 – “The Indian Act facilitated a strategy of assimilation through incarceration (McMillan, 2018, p.85)”, multiple gradual amendments, increased the power of Indian Agents, and diminished the relative power of Indians to resist enfranchisement. Stage 3: Respect Gives Way to Domination In the 1800s, the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people began to tilt on its foundation of rough equality. The number of settlers was	1867	BNA Act a.k.a Constitution Act (1867) Indian Act Act of gradual enfranchisement 1869
		1870	1870 Manitoba Act
		1871	1871- 1929 Numbered Treaties #1-11
		1912	Exchequer Court removes Membertou
		1928	King v. Sylliboy
		1967	The Hawthorn Report A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada

Period of time	Significance of the period	Years	Event/Report: My sensemaking cues
	swelling, and so was their power. As they dominated the land, so they came to dominate its original inhabitants.		The National Indian Brotherhood forms
Period 4 a Organized National Political Resistance (1969 – 1989)	From the 1960s onwards, many people within churches began to re-evaluate both the broader history of the relation between churches and Aboriginal people, and the specific history of residential schools. Multiple Aboriginal advocacy organizations were established Regionally and Nationally (e.g., NWAC, Urban Friendship Centres, Indian Brotherhood, Union of NS Indians). Stage 4: Renewal and Renegotiation Resistance to assimilation grew weak, but it never died away. In the fourth stage of the relationship, it caught fire and began to grow into a political movement. One stimulus was the federal government's White Paper on Indian policy, issued in 1969.	1969	The white paper policy Harold Cardinal's Red Paper (ref. Manuel, 2017, p. 95)
		1970	The National Indian Brotherhood forms
		1972	National Association of Friendship Centres https://nafc.ca/about-the-nafc/our-history
		1973	Calder Decision (1973)
		1974	Native Womens Association of Canada Established
		1975	World Council on Indigenous Peoples, 1975
		1977	Berger Report 1977 Lysysk Report 1977
		1982	Constitution Act, 1982 (was BNA Act, 1867) First Assembly of First Nations held
		1983	Canada, House of Commons, Report of the Special Committee, Indian Self-Government in Canada (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1983). 1983 Marshall decision
		1985	Report of the Task Force to Review Comprehensive Claims Policy, Living Treaties: Lasting Agreements (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1985);
		1986	Apologies issued by United Church of Canada in 1986, Royal Commission of the Donald Marshall Jr. Prosecution 1986 (Hickman, Poitras, and Evans, 1989).
Period 4 b United Political Resistance/resurgence	Political resistance and resurgence. Increasingly legal decisions were being made in favor of Indigenous rights.	1990	Nunavut Land Claim Sparrow Oka CANDO

Period of time	Significance of the period	Years	Event/Report: My sensemaking cues
Legal affirmations of Indigenous rights (1990 – 2005)	Formal dialogues developed around political reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and Indian Residential Schools.	1991	Launch of Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
		1992	BC Treaty Commission (1992)
		1996	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples release Report (1996)
		1997	Delgamuukw Court Case
		Jan. 7, 1998	Statement of Reconciliation <i>Gathering strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan</i>
		1998 - 1999	Principles developed by the Working Group on Truth and Reconciliation and of the Exploratory Dialogues
		1999	Aboriginal Finance Officers Association of Canada (AFOA) Formed
			Alternative Dispute Resolution Program (2004)
		2001	Multiple lawsuits filed by Oct. 2001
		2004	2004, the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled <i>Cloud v. Canada</i> (Attorney General) 2004 CanLII 45444 (ON CA).
Period 4 c Truth and Reconciliation (2006 – 2015)		2006	Mandate Statement (2006) Federal Apology (2006)
		2007	Statements of Resignation Public Media Reports
		2008	TRC Launches
		2012	They Came for the Children (2012) TRC Interim Report (2012)
		2015	TRC Final Report(s) 1 – 6

Appendix B

List of TRC Reports Reviewed from the Archive

<p><i>Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement</i>. (2006). Retrieved April 11, 2021, from http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/settlement.html</p>
<p>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2012a). <i>They came for the children: Canada, Aboriginal peoples, and residential schools</i>. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.</p> <p>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2012b). <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Interim Report</i>. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.</p>
<p><i>Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada</i>. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (p 535)</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 1, Origins to 1939: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume I</i>. (p 1025)</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 2, 1939 to 2000: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 1</i>. (p 859)</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: The Inuit and Northern Experience: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 2</i> (p 289).</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: The Métis Experience: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 3</i> (p 97).</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: Missing Children and Unmarked Burials: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 4</i>. (p 273)</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: The Legacy: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 5</i>. (p391)</p>
<p><i>Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 6</i>.</p>
<p><i>The Survivors Speak: A Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada</i>. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (258 p)</p>
<p><i>What we have learned: principles of truth and reconciliation</i>. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (p.199)</p>
<p>Independent Assessment Process Oversight Committee. (2021). <i>Summary of the final report</i>. Retrieved July 30, 20231 from http://www.iap-pei.ca/information-eng.php?act=2021-03-11-eng.php</p>

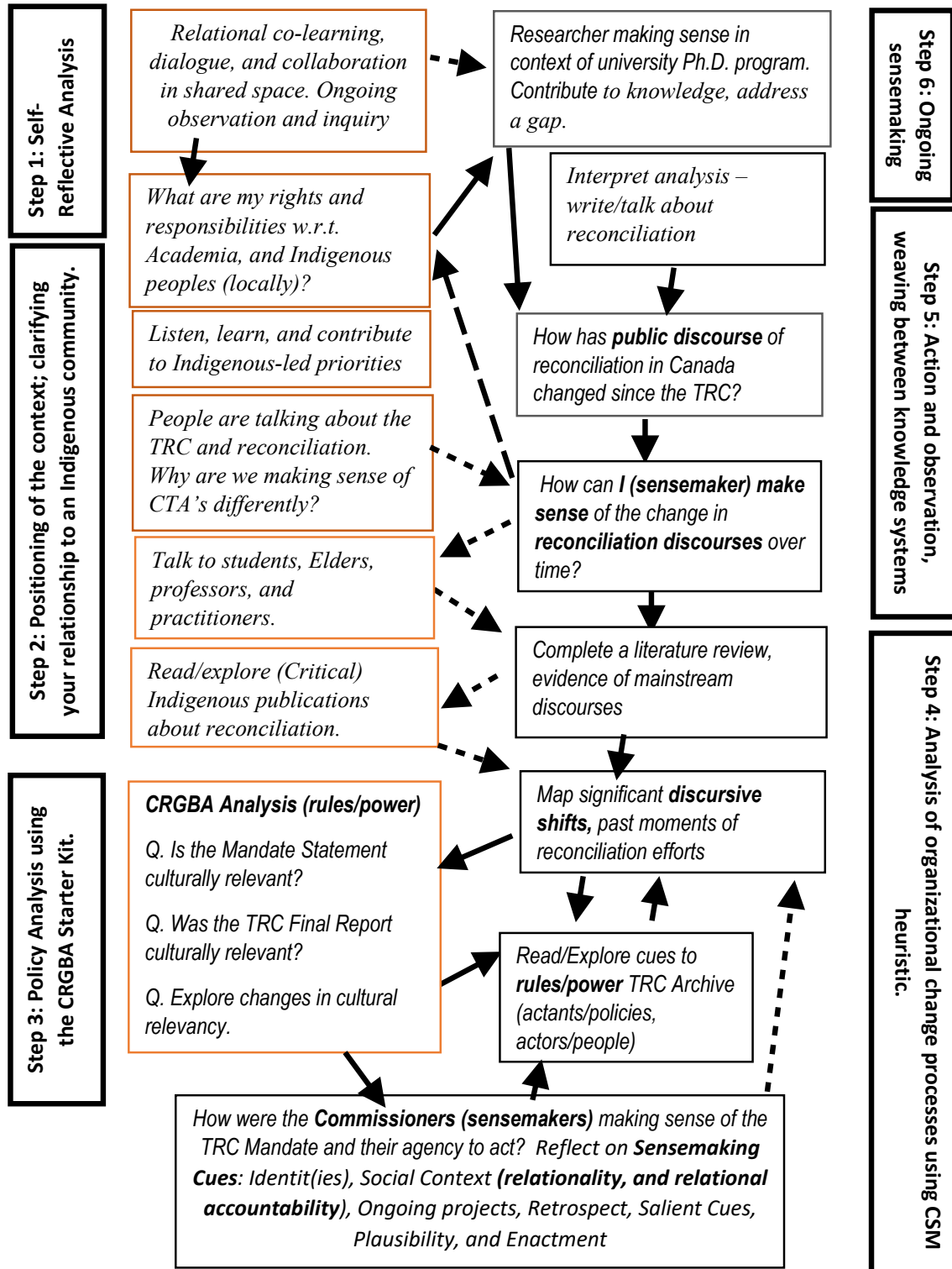
Appendix C

Figure 2-1 Theoretical Synergies Critical Sensemaking and Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis

	Critical Sensemaking Analysis	Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis
Research Question	How did commissioners make sense of the TRC Mandate?	How did commissioners leverage (positional power) agency to create organizational change to create new discourse of reconciliation?
Paradigm/Worldview	Critical Phenomenological	Critical Indigenous (Indigen-ist)
Theory	Critical and Subjective	Critical and subjective Relationally Accountable
Methodology	Qualitative	Qualitative content analysis
Method/Approach	Content analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CSM identifies 4 Frames of Reference)	Critical Discourse Analysis Content Analysis
Contribution	Knowledge weaving between two approaches increases the value of both.	
Outcome of Analysis	CRGBA Framework identifies 5 specific discourses that tend to be overlooked or dismissed by Canadian policies. Points of tension for two-eyed seers (people familiar with duality).	CSM Heuristic focuses on agency of sensemaker to identify choices made by commissioners to infuse the TRC process with Critical Indigenous Discourses.

Appendix D

Figure 2-2: An outline of Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking in 6 iterative steps



Appendix E

Table 5-1: Sorting Sensemaking cues in the text of the Mandate Statement and TRC Archive

Sensemaking Property	Cues	Mandate Statement	TRC Archive
Identity Construction	Who is making sense?	<p>5. Membership</p> <p>The Commission shall consist of an appointed Chairperson and two commissioners, who shall be persons of recognized integrity, stature and respect.</p> <p>(a) Consideration should be given to at least one of the three members being an Aboriginal person;</p> <p>(b) Appointments shall be made out of a pool of candidates nominated by former students, Aboriginal organizations, churches and government;</p> <p>(c) The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) shall be consulted in making the final decision as to the appointment of the commissioners.</p>	<p>The TRC had three commissioners.</p> <p>Two Aboriginal Commissioners: The Honourable Murray Sinclair, recognized Ojibwe leader, lawyer, with experience co-chairing the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry in Manitoba (1991), and leading the Pediatric Cardiac Surgery Inquiry (2000);</p> <p>Chief Wilton Littlechild, Cree chief, lawyer, residential school survivor, athlete, and an advocate for the rights of Indigenous peoples globally, working with the United Nations.</p> <p>One Non-Aboriginal Commissioner: Dr. Marie Wilson, a Canadian journalist, covered the South African TRC, and post-TRC political transition.</p>
	Identity in social context	<p>...Canadians</p> <p>... These principles are ... forward looking in terms of rebuilding and renewing Aboriginal relationships and the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians (p1). Rebuilding relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. Together and in context it creates two boundaries around non-Aboriginal Canadians. (Does it also imply that Aboriginal peoples of Canada must also be Canadian?)</p> <p>Non-Aboriginal Canadians is only used once in the text.</p>	<p>Three complex individuals.</p> <p>Commissioners drew cues from collective experiences in similar positions as advocates for social justice.</p> <p>Shared awareness of discourses of Canada-Indigenous reconciliation, including complex social dynamics, potential for conflicting rules, and solutions for navigating social tension.</p>
Making Sense of rules/power in policy documents (the IRSSA; TRC Reports) in context of IRSSA	Rules about how to operate, behave, “The Commission will/shall”	<p>Section 2 refers to powers duties and procedures. This section describes how the commissioners are expected to managed. It describes what they are authorized to do, what they are not authorized to do, and general guidelines about how they should operate. (p4) (k) shall ensure that the conduct of the Commission and its activities do not jeopardize any legal proceeding;</p> <p>(l) may refer to the NAC for determination of disputes involving document production, document disposal and archiving, contents of</p>	<p>A strong administrative ability – experience managing large multi-faceted projects with tight timelines and limited resources was not a requirement.</p> <p>Professional skills – people management. Use discretion, have good judgement, and be detail oriented.</p>

Sensemaking Property	Cues	Mandate Statement	TRC Archive
		<p>the Commission's Report and recommendations and Commission decisions regarding the scope of its research and issues to be examined. The Commission shall make best efforts to resolve the matter itself before referring it to the NAC.[National Advisory Council]</p>	
	<p>Dependency on others, inter-organizational relationships and social networks.</p>	<p>The Commission shall operate through a central Secretariat. (s6. P6) The closing ceremony shall have the participation of high-level church and government officials.</p> <p>11. Access to Relevant Information In order to ensure the efficacy of the truth and reconciliation process, Canada and the churches will provide all relevant documents in their possession or control to and for the use of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission... except for those documents for which solicitor-client privilege applies and is asserted. ...</p> <p>Canada and the churches ...are required to compile all relevant documents [original or true copies] in an organized manner for review by the Commission and to provide access to their archives for the Commission to carry out its mandate. (p10)</p> <p>S.12 - The Commission shall use such methods and engage in such partnerships with experts, such as Library and Archives Canada, as are necessary to preserve and maintain the materials and documents.(p11)</p>	<p>The rules and regulations that govern large, well-established, permanent federal government departments have proven onerous and highly problematic for a small, newly created organization with a time-limited mandate. (TRC, 2012b, p. 2)</p> <p>defendants failed to comply with the directive to make institutional records available to the Commission (TRC, 2012b, p.16)</p>
	<p>Agency to make sense and enact sensemaking</p>	<p>14. Budget and Resources: The Commission shall prepare a budget within the first three months of its mandate and submit it to the Minister of Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada for approval.</p> <p>Upon approval of its budget, it will have full authority to make decisions on spending, within the limits of ... its Mandate,[and] Treasury Board policies,... (p12)</p> <p>Commissioners have agency to manage the secretariat staff. Beyond that, much of their ability to deliver the mandate will be dependant on others. For example – section 11 TRC must be first given access to relevant documents before they can be analyzed.</p>	<p>prepared a budget, received advice from the Indian Residential School Survivor Committee, establish internal administrative protocols, recruited staff, and communicated priorities</p> <p>Budgets required Treasury Board Approval.</p> <p>Leveraging intra-organizational relationships - advisory groups, Indigenous community relationships, and AHF (e.g. AHF, Canadian think tanks, powerful allies).</p>

Sensemaking Property	Cues	Mandate Statement	TRC Archive
		<p>Section 12 – refers to Libraries and Archives Canada and other experts as necessary.</p> <p>Or in section 14, the timelines for preparing a budget were explicit, but the process of ensuring approval of budget and spending was not. Their ability to use funds (e.g. hiring staff) would be dependant on ministers and Treasury Board. (government oversight processes that can be slow).</p>	<p>Sought court direction to resolve disputes (TRC 2015a, p. 27)</p> <p>Clarification sought regarding records collected for IAP Process (p. 28)</p>
(Future) Enactment	<p>What is the Commission expected to do? Rules about specific deliverables – outcomes will be produced.</p>	<p>7 milestone deliverables Section 3 (p.4) refers to responsibilities – They can be read as expectations about enactment processes. – Employing methods, adopting procedures, engaging responsible others.</p> <p>Then section 8: Timeframe – describes specific deliverables and timeframes as to when the work – e.g. reports will be submitted, and to whom.</p>	<p>Report at 2 year point</p>
	<p>What they cannot do? (Boundary between legal proceedings and truth commission aspects).</p>	<p>Section 4: As the Commission is not to act as a public inquiry or to conduct a formal legal process, it will, therefore, not duplicate in whole or in part the function of criminal investigations, the Independent Assessment Process, court actions, or make recommendations on matters already covered in the Agreement.</p>	<p>procedural rules sharing across process contradicted the legal processes of gaining consent</p> <p>IAP process required strict confidentiality, not in line with the terms of <i>the Settlement Agreement</i> (p. 28).</p>
	<p>What might they do?</p>	<p>Refers to more informal rules or rules that assume agency and an ability of commissioners to make sense at the time. (a) the unique experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Metis former IRS students, and will conduct its activities, hold its events, and prepare its Report and Recommendations in a manner that reflects and recognizes the unique experiences of all former IRS students; (b) that the truth and reconciliation process is committed to the principle of voluntariness with respect to individuals' participation; (c) that it will build upon the work of past and existing processes, archival records, resources and documentation, including the work and records of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples of 1996; (d) the significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities; (e) that as part of the overall holistic approach to reconciliation and healing, the Commission should reasonably coordinate with other initiatives</p>	<p>establish relations with international networks of organizations to “learn from the work of other commissions, and to make contributions from its own experiences (TRC, 2012b, p11).</p>

Sensemaking Property	Cues	Mandate Statement	TRC Archive
		under the Agreement and shall acknowledge links to other aspects of the Agreement such that the overall goals of reconciliation will be promoted; (f) that all individual statements are of equal importance, even if these statements are delivered after the completion of the report; (g) that there shall be an emphasis on both information collection/storage and information analysis.	
Plausibility and power	Ambiguity, tension, and Sensemaking	...principle Foot note 1: [Witnessing] refers to the Aboriginal principle of “witnessing”. Sets a boundary around “Aboriginal [legal/social] principles and the assumed social context of non-Aboriginal or Canadian law/social orders.	Dialogue: Ceremony, testimony, and witnessing (TRC, V. 6, p. 163, Introduction footnote 12)
	Witnessing	... principles The community events are for the purpose of: ... respecting the goal of witnessing in accordance with Aboriginal principles. (p.9) Sets a boundary around “Aboriginal [legal/social] principles and the assumed social context of non-Aboriginal or Canadian law/social orders.	Sought clarification about language Multiple sources of information were restricted intentionally (OPP records, GOC, IAP records) IAP Records are likely to be destroyed, rather than stored at the NCTR (2015, p29)
	Assumptions	There’s an assumption that the Commission is familiar with the complexity of Indigenous legal traditions and can navigate through both Canadian and Indigenous legal Traditions. Weaves between Canadian norms that separate processes – court from public, keeping processes separate; but also acknowledges the unique nature of the situation “(e... holistic reconciliation and healing)” it refers to Canadian legal traditions and Aboriginal Oral Traditions; It will emphasize the importance of all stories, but it will build upon (and not duplicate) the work of RCAP.	Statement gathering (TRC, 2015a) Received 6,750 statements from survivors (p. 25) The Doctrine of Discovery (p.191) “Far from being ancient history with no relevance for reconciliation today, the DoD underlies the legal basis on which the British Crown officials claimed sovereignty”... “its influence in Western law and its destructive consequences for Indigenous peoples have been well documented by scholars and other experts (p. 193)”
Retrospection	Archives from the past	An Historic ... Through the Agreement, the Parties have agreed that an historic Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be established to contribute to truth, healing and reconciliation. (p2)	Commemoration projects (p.283) Unlike more conventional state commemorations, which have tended to reinforce Canada’s story as told through colonial eyes, residential school commemorative projects challenged and recast public memory and national history.... The scope, breadth, and creativity of the projects were truly impressive.

Sensemaking Property	Cues	Mandate Statement	TRC Archive
			<p>Projects ranged from traditional and virtual quilts, monuments and memorials, traditional medicine gardens, totem pole and canoe carving, oral history, community ceremonies and feasts, land-based culture and language camps, cemetery restoration, film and digital storytelling, commemorative walking trails, and theatre or dance productions. (p284)</p> <p>The Commission strongly believes that Survivors' stories must be preserved. The loss of these documents would be a blow to Canada's national memory of a significant historic injustice, could contribute to the possibility that future generations would never know of the abuses in residential schools, and could contribute to the argument of those who would assert that this never happened. (p. 29)</p> <p>Three elements of Commemoration projects were essential to long-term reconciliation. 1) Survivor-driven, 2) forge connections between Aboriginal family memory, community memory, Canada's public memory and national history. 3) Incorporate Indigenous oral history, reclaiming, and revitalizing for self-determination.</p>
Ongoing SM	Beyond the scope of the commission	<p>... peoples</p> <p>In the exercise of its duties the Commission shall recognize ... (c) that it will build upon the work of past and existing processes, archival records, resources and documentation, including the work and records of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples of 1996; (p5.)</p> <p>(d) the significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions in its activities;</p>	
		<p>Contrast the language of the past report, which used a plural multiple groups of Aboriginal peoples. And singular Aboriginal people (a single group).</p> <p>Inconsistent terms and definitions – require interpretation?</p>	<p>Indigenous used 540 times, Aboriginal used 1815 times in the Summary Report.</p>

