Reimagining Post-colonialism: Initiating progress within Canadian industries towards Reconciliation

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that I am a settler, decended from settlers, and currently live and work on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Syilx peoples. I approach land acknowledgements as a first step towards ongoing learning. I am committed to continuing to address the gaps in my knowledge and search for tangible steps towards true reconciliation.

1 Research problem

Lack of progress on TRC Calls to Action

- Treaty responsibilities remain unmet
- Canadians remain willfully ignorant (Wekker, 2016)
- Reconciliation lite (Midzain & Smith, 2020)
- Hypocricy of self interest

Research Question

Hindsight: How can critical discourse analysis disrupt the status quo of colonization in Canadian organizations?

2 Theoretical framework

Goal: challenge apathy

Social justice change

- Post colonialism
- Anti colonialism
- De colonialism

Decolonizing solidarity

Do we need to choose one?

(Colpan-L 2022; Land, 2015)

3 What is reconciliation? Who is responsible?

"Trusting relationships"

- Racial profiling
- Profiting
  - from economic privilege and opportunity
  - from misappropriated "stuff"
- Red washing
- stop putting up barriers

- Consultation, transparency, and accountability
  - Reporting on initiatives and progress
- Strategic Mgmt, business planning, and product development
  - at the expense of profitability
- Support/contribute to/participate in ***Indigenous-led*** community initiatives
- Governance structures

Formal instruments

treaties, legislation, lawsuits, land disputes, settlements, etc

- primary: lawyers, courts, politicians with "skin in game" from Chiefs and council
- peer pressure: activists/anti-colonialists, other countries, corporations, social justice groups, and students/academics

- primary: white/all settlers, corporations
- peer pressure: indigeneous peoples, activists/anti-colonialists

4 Barriers

Settlers and privilege are the problem

From willful ignorance... to various forms of fragility... to nationalism

5 Next steps

Literature review:

- settler-colonial theory
- nationalism theory and racism
- social identity theory and fragilities
- Indigenous-settler relations
- post-/anti-/de-colonialism
- decolonizing solidarity
- contact theory
- Indigenous research methodologies
- case studies for best practices to-date

Intended methodology

- Action research study with a willing organization
- Postcolonialism that takes a constructive approach to drawing from anticolonialism and decolonialism for inspiration.
- mixed methods with a predominantly qualitative and exploratory approach to develop solutions.
  - quantitative methods will be used to test solutions

6 Beginnings

Research question: How can postcolonialist activities ignite Reconciliation initiatives within Canada's corporate industries.

Contribution to theory and practice: a generative and iterative process to help companies actively and progressively pursue reconciliation with the Indigenous communities that have been disadvantaged by their privilege.

- best practices
- warning signs

Sandy Walker
February 2024