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Running Head: GAINING UNDERSTANDING FROM APSÁALOOKE

EDUCATION IS YOUR MOST POWERFUL WEAPON: GAINING UNDERSTANDING
FROM APSÁALOOKE KNOWLEDGE

By

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for the degree of

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in Counselor Education and Supervision

The University of Montana
Missoula, MT

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GAINING UNDERSTANDING FROM APSÁALOOKE

Beaumont Hill, Salena, Ph.D., Summer 2020

Counselor Education and Supervision

Abstract

Chairperson: Kirsten W. Murray, Ph.D.

American Indian college students have many motivating factors for pursuing a higher education. One common theme among American Indian college students is the motivation to give back to their tribal nation. This study explores the expectations of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation for college students returning home. An Indigenous Research Methodology with Apsáalooke epistemology is used. Along with tribal practices and protocols, situational analysis was adapted to align with the methodology. The findings include four major elements informing Apsáalooke expectations of returning students: culture and identity, the college student experience, the realities of returning home, and expectations of Apsáalooke students who have obtained a college education.

Keywords: Indigenous Research Methodologies, Indigenous methodology, tribal epistemologies, tribal practices and protocols, Apsáalooke, Native American, American Indian, Native American Student, higher education, tribal nation building

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My dissertation is dedicated to the individuals who shared their stories with me and welcomed me into their homes, hearts, and minds to talk about education. Ahó, may their teachings inspire others as they did me.

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Chapter I: Conceptual Framework

American Indian students actively enroll in higher education institutions across the United States. Between 1976 and 2002, this enrollment doubled (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005a). On par with recent national enrollment trends across all students, American Indian student enrollment in higher education fell from 23% in 2016 to 19% in 2017 (Post-Secondary National Policy Institute, 2018; National Student Clearing House, 2019). The overall rise in American Indian student enrollment and recent decline brings attention to the need for culturally responsive systems within higher education institutions that recruit, retain, and support their completion.

For American Indian students, the desire to serve native communities has been identified as a powerful motivator for pursuing a higher education (HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002; Lee, 2009). Many American Indian students report their goal in obtaining a college education is to give back to their tribal nation (Guillory, 2002). From a Native American perspective, the idea of giving back is about returning to our home community and helping (Guillory, 2008; Reyes, 2016). Hallmarks of giving back to one's tribal nation are captured by the values Harris and Wasilewski (2004) recognize as the Four R's: relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution. These values represent core obligations in Indigenous communities (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004).

Much of the literature on American Indian students and higher education is focused on supporting students while in college (Guillory, 2009; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002). Resources that adequately address preparing Indigenous students to return home and effectively meet the needs of their Nation is sparse. The information available does focus on important concepts of nation building, self-determination, and sovereignty (Brayboy,

Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012; Champagne & Stauss, 2002; Champagne, 2004; Lee, 2009; Minthorn, Shotton & Brayboy, 2018; Reyes, 2016; Shotton, Lowe, & Waterman, 2013) yet remains vague when it comes to how these concepts are enacted and what tribal nation members expect of their returning students. The details of giving back remain ambiguous at best. Because the overall goal of higher education for Indian students is about benefiting their tribal communities (Cajete, 1994; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001), clarity about these expectations could be especially useful. Further, cultivating an understanding of tribal nation expectations in institutions of higher education are critical when preparing Indian students for their future work and Nation roles. A necessary step in understanding what needs to be done to better prepare American Indian students begins with learning directly from tribal communities about their expectations.

Use of Language

Language is a reflection of values, and how I will be using language is important to clarify. You will find that I follow the common practice in the literature by using the term American Indian or American Indian/Alaska Native. In addition to this practice, I will use Indigenous, Native American, Native, Indian, Tribes, and Tribal people interchangeably. I also tend to follow the terminology of the author I am citing, keeping the same context as the author.

Regarding my use of the term community, it is important to explain the different types of American Indian communities I will refer to. Native communities are defined by several characteristics and are found in various places. American Indian college students come from both rural and urban communities. Some have lived on the reservation, others have grown up in cities off the reservation, and some have moved between the two settings throughout their lives. Large pockets of Native communities can be found in urban areas. Native American communities

embody an interdependent view of self and recognize the importance of connecting with one another. Native American community members are strongly connected to their family and their culture (Shotton, Lowe, Waterman, 2013). When referring to Native communities, I will be including communities of any setting where American Indians have felt sense of interdependence and connection to their culture. I also will use the term's Nation and Tribal Nation as this more accurately describes American Indian tribes who have their own unique languages, cultures, and sovereignty (Champagne, 2008).

The concept of the Four R's as values has already been briefly introduced (relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution). These are common values in American Indian communities and are cultural foundations that can be found among all tribal people (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004). Relationship refers to the kinship obligation. This relationship is the sense that everyone and everything are related and considered our blood relatives. Responsibility refers to the obligation we have to our Nation and it is also the responsibility to care for all of our relatives. This responsibility is determined by our relationships and roles in our tribal nation. Reciprocity is the cyclical obligation that once we encounter another, we are in a relationship with them, and are obligated to that relationship. This idea of reciprocity is based on relational dynamics where we all see each other as kin, thus the obligation is dependent on the relationship. Redistribution is based off of a sharing obligation with the primary purpose of balancing relationships. Harris describes redistribution as making a point to give away personal items, emphasizing the value of generosity among tribal people. The principle of redistribution is to keep everything moving and in circulation (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004).

Moving from college back to the tribal nation is often described in the literature as transition. Merriam-Webster (2019) defines transition as passage from one state, stage, subject,

or place to another; or a movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another. American Indian students who are near the end of their college experience will often describe this transition as “going home” or “moving home” which describes more of the physical relocation back into their community. This is important to understand as I will use this terminology to reflect the way this transition is commonly described among American Indian college students. Many American Indian students who attend college away from home maintain connections and an active presence in their tribal nation. Maintaining this connection and participating in cultural ceremonies are important factors in both student persistence while in college and support a smoother transition when they return home (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). The term “moving back” will capture the physical relocation, while also emphasizing the felt connection to tribal communities that remains consistent on every other level, no matter where a person is geographically.

Tribal Nation Building

As American Indian people continue to uphold their right to remain as sovereign nations, conversations about tribal nation building in higher education institutions hold great value. In addition to preparing American Indians to be professionals in their field, institutions can also come alongside American Indian students to prepare them to strengthen their tribal communities.

A nation, as defined by tribal communities, includes kinship relationships, tribal governments, land bases, worldviews, and a spiritual community (Champagne, 2008). Nation building in tribal communities includes goals that strengthen identity, strengthen relationships within tribal communities, defend and practice sovereignty, and provide for the tribal nation’s well-being. Nation building is a process of reenergizing a tribal community while committing to their cultural traditions and practices. The process of nation building consists of legal and

political, cultural, economic, health and nutrition, spiritual, and educational elements, and the motivating forces of nation building are grounded in the well-being, sovereignty, self-determination, and autonomy of the tribal community (Brayboy et al., 2012).

To understand nation building, it is helpful to know where process and motivating forces connect. Well-being, as a motivating force, can be found in health and nutrition, culture, and spiritual tribal practices. Successful, strong, healthy nations require individuals who practice their tribal culture. Sovereignty is a unique relationship American Indian tribes have with the federal government. It is an engagement of legal and political relationships between tribal nations in the United States and the U.S. government and can be found in political, economic, and educational tribal practices. Self-determination began with the passing of the Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. The act put into motion formal policies that encouraged tribal communities to reclaim sovereignty and well-being which includes all of the elements previously listed.

Once the Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act was put in motion and tribal communities began restructuring and creating autonomy, this became known as the nation building movement. In this era of self-determination, the nation building movement is manifested as tribal nations rewrite constitutions, generate revenue through the creation of tribal taxes and businesses, establish our own legal systems, and remake school curriculums through implementing culturally responsive teaching and learning grounded in tribal language and culture (Brayboy et al., 2012).

Ultimately, nation building occurs when tribal people are making the decisions about what and how things happen in their community. Ideas for nation building should come from the tribal community and be guided by sovereignty (Brayboy et al., 2012). However, tribal nations

cannot successfully engage in nation building projects that are driven by sovereignty and self-determination without developing an independence of mind. This independence of mind can be accessed by restoring pride in tribal traditions, languages, and knowledge. This means sovereignty cannot only happen in regard to education, economic, and political processes but needs to also happen “with sovereignty of the peoples’ minds” (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 15).

Tribal nation building is how we want our government and health care systems to look, what we want taught in our schools, and where we want our economic resources to come from. Higher education institutions that help prepare American Indian students to meet these challenges contribute to tribal nation building. To build tribal communities, development of tribal members needs to be fostered in higher education systems and American Indian students need to be successful in higher education. This success can be fostered at the university level if there is an understanding and awareness about the components of tribal nation building, and adequate support and mentoring are provided (Brayboy et al., 2012).

In order to support nation building, Indigenous students and their education systems need to understand Nation’s needs and expectations, and these needs must be identified by the Nation. It is vital that American Indian students learn about tribal nation building elements and the expectations ahead from their tribal communities. This awareness can help cultivate the actions of nation building when students move back from college and into a professional position with their Nation.

Importance of Education to Tribal Nations

Native American people have acknowledged the importance of a Western education and have encouraged their tribal people to gain an education once it was evident that Western expansion was unavoidable. Chief Plenty Coups, who was the last principal chief of the

Apsáalooke (Crow) people, stated, “Baaishtashíile ammaaéhche iiwaa awássahcheewailuuk Ammaaéhche éwahkuulak baaawássahcheewiolak baleetáak (With what the white man knows he oppresses us, if we learn what he knows, he will never oppress us again)” (T. McCleary, personal communication, October 2, 2019). These words spoken by Chief Plenty Coups were quoted by Glendolin Wagner, a reporter, in the 1930’s as saying, “Education is your most powerful weapon. With education you are the white man’s equal. Without education, you are his victim and so shall remain all of your life. Study, learn, help one another always.” (Library at Little Big Horn College, Famous Speeches; Coups & Linderman, 2002, p. 179). Chief Plenty Coups knew the importance of equipping oneself with an education as a survival mechanism in Western society. As a champion of education, he encouraged his people to go to school, become well educated, and return home to put their knowledge to work. The Chief knew that in order for the Apsáalooke people to survive they would have to learn the White man’s way (Library at Little Big Horn College, Chiefs & Leaders, Chief Plenty Coups; Library at Little Big Horn College, Famous Speeches). The belief in the importance of a Western education was held by other Native American leaders; this remains evident in the values about education held by many American Indian people today (Guillory, 2002; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002; & Lee, 2009).

As American Indian students continue to attend higher education across the U.S., naming and understanding expectations held by their tribal elders, leaders, families, and kinship communities would be an asset for the students, their tribe, and the higher education institutions that serve them. Having conversations with tribal elders and leaders will provide insight into the expectations they have for their tribal members attending college. Gathering this insight can provide both colleges and the students with more information about the learning that can eventually benefit their tribe. These conversations may also help further develop an

understanding for families about their students' purpose while away from their home community, and the investments being made to benefit their tribal nation. Exploring expectations with tribal members through my research will help understand what is expected when giving back to one's Nation and explore expectations of the Apsáalooke (Crow) people.

The Role of Western Education in Tribal Nations

In order to understand American Indian people and their relationship with the Western education system, it is important to learn about their history and experiences with education from a historical perspective. This understanding provides a holistic context of the role higher education plays in American Indian communities and demands higher education institutions to develop programming that is culturally attuned and actively builds supportive and responsive structures for Indigenous students and their communities (Brayboy et al., 2012).

Historical Context of Western Education in American Indian Nations

Many tribal leaders now encourage and promote Western education. However, during the Boarding School era, between 1869 and 1960, American Indian families were often forced to send their children to government or church run boarding schools (National Museum of American Indian website; The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition website). These boarding schools were developed to help the government deal with the "Indian problem" and the schools used tactics of forced assimilation where Indian children were not allowed to speak their language, forced to cut their hair, give up their traditional clothing, and have their names replaced with English names. These children were removed from their families and communities and raised without their cultural norms. The government boarding schools were patterned after a military model intended to teach children the dominant cultural values and language. Many children experienced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and died of disease

and homesickness while in boarding school. The Boarding School era has had devastating effects on American Indian families and communities. These effects are still being dealt with today and are often referred to as historical trauma (Yellow Horse Brave Heart, M. & DeBruyn, 1998). “Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart, M., 2003).

Historical trauma can be a result of the boarding school experience. The repercussions of trauma from this era are evident in tribal people today and the era is a critical marker when discussing Indigenous education (Duran, E., Duran, B., Heart, Horse-Davis, 1998; Minthorn, 2014). However, the trauma inflicted by boarding schools set a context for the resiliency of American Indians to materialize even further. It is astonishing that even with the boarding school era experience negatively affecting every tribal nation in this country, American Indian people believe that obtaining an education will provide a better future for our tribal nations. This example of our persistence and resiliency shows the great strength of our communities. Resiliency must be a part of conversation about American Indian education issues, setting a tone to operate from a place of hope and a strength-based teaching and learning model (Smith & McNeil, 2008).

Contemporary Issues in American Indian Education

American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) college students represent diverse tribal backgrounds with 574 federally recognized tribes in the U.S. (Reyes & Shotton, 2018; “Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction”, 2020). Even with the steady increase of American Indian student enrollment during a thirty-year period, American Indian students are few in numbers on mainstream college campuses across the United States. In most college

classroom settings, Native students often find themselves as the only Native American in their classroom. This is not surprising given that AI/AN students make up only 1% of the total college student population (Shotton et al., 2013). In addition, the AI/AN graduation rate is the lowest in the U.S. (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2012). This is especially concerning as tribal communities look to educational attainment as essential for protecting and strengthening nation building. American Indian college students and their educational success is crucial as tribal communities strengthen attributes of tribal sovereignty and self-determination (Stewart, 2018).

Education helps build a foundation for giving back to tribal communities (HeavyRunner & Marshall, 2003). When addressing the present-day needs of American Indian people, remembering that “education should serve the needs of Native people in ways that are relevant to them” (Lee, 2009, p. 24) can serve as a guiding value. This relevancy is supported in the goals and motivating factors of nation building. When institutions of higher education incorporate elements of tribal well-being, sovereignty, and self-determination into their curricula the needs of American Indian students and their communities are attended to. By incorporating nation building topics, institutions contribute to a better understanding of American Indian people as political members of our society while adding to everyone’s knowledge base and understanding. Teaching and valuing American Indian experiences and perspectives can also contribute to American Indian student retention by increasing the likelihood to feel seen and establish connection to the institution (Guillory & Wolverson, 2008). When concepts that relate to tribal nation building are disregarded, American Indian students are not given the academic preparation and support needed to adequately serve their communities. Learning more about tribal nations’ expectations for returning American Indian college students can better position

institutions to prepare students in alignment with their tribal values, including efforts toward nation building.

Because American Indian populations across the U.S. college campuses are small in number, many people have not personally interacted with Indigenous people. This lack of personal interaction perpetuates misconceptions and stereotypes. These misconceptions and stereotypes contribute to racism and microaggressions experienced by American Indian students (Shotton, Lowe, Waterman, 2013). By teaching Indigenous perspectives, understanding of American Indian cultures deepen across predominantly White institutions, and the value of Indigenous students, their values, and worldviews are made explicit (Pidgeon, 2009 & Lee, 2008). By understanding tribal nation's expectations of the education system for their students, institutions can become allies in nation building, anti-racist, and decolonization work.

Types of Higher Education Institutions Attended by American Indian Students

Predominantly White Institutions (PWI). This term is used to describe mainstream institutions of higher education that represent the predominantly White population. Shotton et al. (2013) prefer to use the term non-Native colleges and universities (NNCU) to describe these mainstream institutions as this term centers the experience of Native people in higher education. American Indian students attend NNCU's because of the variety of opportunities that are available. NNCU's provide experiences that are not always available in tribal communities. Access to a wider range of academic programs and support as well as extra-curricular activities such as student groups and intermural sports attract American Indian students to NNCU's (Shotton et al., 2013).

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). This term is used to refer to colleges and universities chartered by tribal governments. Tribal identity is at the core of every TCU. All

TCUs share the mission of tribal self-determination and service to their tribal nation (American Indian Higher Education Consortium [AIHEC], 2019; Shotton et al., 2013). Montana has seven tribal colleges located on each of the seven reservations (AIHEC, 2019).

Both NNCUs and TCUs are charged with providing a quality education with the common goal to support and foster successful students. The infrastructures in both institutions include academic programs that prepare students for the work force and advanced degrees, and house student support programs that help with accessibility, retention, and persistence. TCUs provide a variety of American Indian experiences and are founded on culture and tradition. TCUs offer courses in tribal language and history, as well as cultural enrichment classes that teach tribal practices such as beading, tan hiding, and buffalo hunting. These courses foster tribal culture and students' sense of cultural identity.

Institutional Support of American Indian Students

In this section, the institutional support will focus primarily on NNCUs as this is where most research attention is given. For some American Indian students, attending a NNCU is the first time they have lived away from their tight knit families and communities. Given this, the institutional support systems are often a necessity for educational success. For a student to contribute to tribal nation building, their educational success is critical to this process (Brayboy et al., 2012). These support systems can include the Family Education Model, Native American Studies program, and faculty and peer relationships.

Family Education Model (FEM). HeavyRunner and DeCelles' (2002) founded this Indigenous-based framework on the role of the extended family in tribal cultures. The FEM replicates the extended family structure within the college culture to address persistence, retention, and completion. FEM is based on family support, empowerment, and Native American

values. The essential elements of student success involve inclusion of the student's family members as partners in the educational process and establishing a sense of family both at home and at college. Developing a sense of empowerment and cultural resilience are essential elements to this model (HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002). Understanding and integrating knowledge about expectations for students' move home to their tribal communities can help complete the circle of transitions not only into a college environment, but also upon their departure.

Native American Studies (NAS). NAS departments in NNCUs also play an important role in students' education success and nation building. NAS departments are academic programs that usually include student support components. They provide an in-depth history of American Indian people, the impacts of colonization, and provide understanding of sovereignty and self-determination (Brayboy et al., 2012). The support components offered by NAS departments commonly include staff and faculty support and provide spaces where students can gather. American Indian student clubs are also frequently connected and supported by NAS departments (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008).

Faculty. Faculty serve as mentors and help build connections to campus. Supportive and involved faculty are identified as persistence factors for Native American students and play an important role in helping maintain students' tribal identities (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). A solid tribal identity helps students maintain a positive self-concept and holds strong implications for students who move home to their tribal communities. The transition back into the community will have fewer obstacles if the community knows that the students have not forgotten who they are and where they come from (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). If faculty have limited knowledge about the importance of maintaining a strong tribal identity and tribal values and expectations,

they will lack the understanding necessary to mentor students holistically as they prepare to move home.

Peers. Peers provide on-campus social support and connection. Student connection supports community building by providing a sense of family. Peers are also a source of support as students look for ways to express their Native American culture and connect with other Native American students. These connections enhance their sense of belonging to the university, or at least to the Native American community within the university (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Connecting with peers, especially other Native Americans, also helps maintain a strong cultural identity, which ultimately benefits their return to their tribal community and allows for a more positive transition.

Family and Tribal Nation Support and Persistence in Higher Education

The connection of American Indian students to their families, whether nuclear or extended, is strong. Guillory and Wolverton (2008) found that Native American students were willing to overcome many difficult situations, including an unwelcoming environment, lack of academic preparation, and inadequate financial support to persist in earning a college education; making life better for their families by obtaining a college education served as a motivating factor to persist (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008).

Guillory and Wolverton (2008) also identified the home community as a source of encouragement and motivation in persistence. Students “felt that many people within the community had given them so much support, emotionally, spiritually, and financially, that they owed it to the tribe to succeed” (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008, p. 75). This in itself is a reflection of an Indigenous philosophy of putting community before individualism (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Although families are a student’s central source of support as they pursue their education

and are a primary factor in wanting to return home, the expectations upon returning home remain unclear, if not absent, in the research.

Preparation in Higher Education for Return to Tribal Nation

None of the support or persistence factors in higher education focus on the transition after college as students return back to their tribal nation. Preparing American Indian students to return home to work and serve their communities does not get much attention. Research in this area is vague and the limited information focuses exclusively on the challenges that accompany returning home to work (Guillory, 2008; Reyes, 2016). Because tribal nation expectations for returning college students has not been researched, institutions lack clarity in how to best prepare students making the transition to return home to work and serve their communities.

Education Success Defined by Tribal Nations

The American Indian concept of success is important to understand as it relates to education. Success can be measured by the tribal nation in several different ways according to Indigenous perspectives and beliefs (Pidgeon, 2008). One might be labeled successful if they had left their community to attend college. Others might define success by the student completing a semester at college away from home. Yet others see success by the level of education acquired such as completing trade school or a certificate program. Success might be seen as obtaining an associate or bachelor degree. The common theme across different descriptions of success is the persistence of the student in their educational endeavors (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002). Pidgeon (2008) reminds us that for many Indigenous people, success at a university means more than matriculating through a prescribed curriculum to graduation. The benefits of a college education extend beyond financial and career outcomes. Higher education is valued for its capacity building within Indigenous nations toward their goals

of self-government and self-determination; education is a tool to empower Indigenous students (Pidgeon, 2008).

Tribal Nation Expectations Post-College

Leaders of American Indian tribes have unique expectations when it comes to higher education for their students. They want American Indian students to soak up Western knowledge, place that knowledge within the context of their cultures and languages, and return home to better their communities (Austin, 2005, p.43). This charge can be daunting for a newly educated student moving home. American Indian students look forward to returning home and sharing their new skills and knowledge with their families and communities. After all, this is what we have been told is the main purpose for obtaining a higher education.

When American Indian students leave their tight knit communities to attend college, this is most likely the first time in their life that they are away from their families for an extended period of time. The communities they come from have known them from birth and watched them grow up. In our small and tightknit communities, there are few phases of our life that our community has not witnessed first-hand, or has heard about through our kinship system. When we leave for college what we experience, learn, and participate in is unknown to our families and communities because they are not witnessing first-hand. This physical separation creates missing information and a connection to what we have been a part of our entire lives. The unknown components of our educational journey have an effect on how our community understands our experience. This space of unknowingness is outside the norms of our experience. In this space, American Indian students and tribal communities lose a piece of the lifetime relationship and connection that was automatic in our society. This space needs to be filled with conversations

about what the tribal nation wants to know about the student experience and what they expect from their student upon their return.

Student Experience when Returning to Work in their Tribal Nation

The values of relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution are all at play when American Indian students return home to work after college. Connected to these values is the action of nation building. In order for tribal communities to successfully work towards nation building, it is important to identify the challenges and supportive factors experienced by American Indian students who return home.

J. Guillory (2008) conducted a qualitative study that looked at the concept of “giving back” in tribal communities. This concept, which is related to the American Indian value system, played a critical role in the educational journeys of the participants and continued to influence their decisions after college. J. Guillory’s (2008) study found that American Indian students have mixed experiences when returning home to their community. J. Guillory (2008) also found that the concept of giving back is more complex in the lives of American Indian students. It is not uncommon for American Indian college students to experience both rewards and challenges when returning home to work. One reward experienced by returning college students is becoming a role model for other tribal members and becoming a change agent in Native-led organizations can sometimes be identified as a struggle (Guillory, J., 2008).

Challenges. Some students in J. Guillory’s study experienced a positive response and were offered employment immediately upon their return but faced other challenges while working.

Generational tension. Tensions can occur between younger people and the older generations in the community. The source of the tension can be found in how each generation

views change. Young people can be motivated to change things for the better and older people can be resistant to the changes the younger people want to make, finding value in the status quo (Guillory, J., 2008).

Finding employment. Guillory (2008) discusses the significant challenges that arose for students returning to their Nation and the difficulty of finding a job within their tribe.

Employment challenges are due to lack of employment opportunities related to poor economic conditions (Montana Department of Labor and Industry, 2015).

Rejection. Another challenge faced in finding employment within one's own tribal nation is rejection of those with a college degree by those without. College graduates from tribal communities may initially face rejection by some members of the community as there is sometimes a subtle division within the tribal nation between those with a college degree and those without a degree who have years of work experience.

Minimizing accomplishments. Guillory's (2008) research identified another challenge facing students returning home to work. It is not uncommon for a Native graduate to have their academic accomplishments minimized by other American Indian people when they transition back to the community. Both rejection and minimization of accomplishments are examples of lateral oppression that can be linked to effects of historical trauma (Duran, Duran, Heart, & Horse-Davis, 1998).

Another challenge I have come across in my observations are that some employers have high expectations for students who have the education, yet lack the practical experience of skill application under supervision or mentorship before beginning their career. Employers in tribal communities may experience confusion given beliefs that students went to school to prepare for a specific field of work and are having difficulty meeting job requests and responsibilities. This

can create animosity for all involved. Western education institutions do not adequately provide the skills and knowledge to prepare American Indians for work in tribal nation settings resulting in confusion or even disappointment from employers within their tribal nation. In sum, the challenges identified by Guillory (2008) emphasize the value of identifying expectations of college students and why further research is needed to seek out these expectations.

Supportive Factors. Participants in Guillory's study identified ways they felt supported upon returning to work in their community.

Community Mentorship. Community mentors play an important role for students reentering tribal communities after being away at college. Connecting returning students to tribal mentors is beneficial to the process, specifically when helping returning students connect with employment opportunities (Guillory, 2008).

Fulfillment. Participants in this study shared how fulfilling it was to provide opportunities to help other people advance their educational and professional endeavors. Another fulfillment was promoting and revitalizing tribal traditions and culture to help strengthen identities of others in the community (Guillory, 2008).

Opportunities. Suggestions for cultivating opportunities for students included tribal internship programs and tribal governments identifying specific degrees to meet tribal needs and ensure employment. Returning Native students also recommended staying connected both socially and professionally to their tribal nation during their education. It is essential for Native students to show a commitment to the community. If students leave for college and do not maintain relationships and connections, people in the community may respond to the student with distrust upon their return.

Limitations. Guillory's study provides useful information regarding the experience of students returning to their community to work and give back. Understanding these experiences are important when informing nation building. However, this study still leaves the gap in understanding what the community expects of our American Indian students when we return.

Giving Back to Tribal Nations

Helping or giving back is an expectation of Indigenous people and is a value held in high regard. Helping or giving back is an expectation of everyday life (Reyes, 2016). Education is regarded as a gift and intended to be shared by design. The values of helping and education are intertwined in Native communities (Reyes, 2016). Reciprocity is at the core of these value systems. Indigenous people feel a sense of duty to give back to those who have given so much to them. "From this perspective, Native people give so that others may take, and they take so that they may be empowered to give to others" (Reyes, 2016, p. 229). A college education can be seen as an important resource that prepares Indigenous students to give back in impactful ways. Knowing many had sacrificed so they could have the opportunity to attend college creates a sense of responsibility to take the education they have been given and find ways to put it to use for their families and communities (Reyes, 2016). This responsibility holds expectations of embracing community leadership roles at some level. Students who move home may be dedicated solely to their field of study or more widely focused to benefit their entire community. Upon returning to their tribal communities, these students will likely be looked to lead in certain capacities because they have an education and are deemed ready to contribute to nation building efforts.

Students will continue to return home with the goal of contributing in a positive way to their community. What remains unknown about this process is how to best prepare students for

their transition from an academic setting back into their tribal nation. There is no research about the experiences of how communities foster the transition of Native students' move home after their college experience. Clarity about the moving home experience and expectations of giving back from community leaders will shed light on expectations for the college students they've invested in and the institutions that serve their students. The expectation to give back is clear, yet the details of giving back remain ambiguous. Talking with leaders and understanding their experiences of supporting college students as they move home will add to the research in three ways: 1) increase knowledge, clarity of expectations, and bring voice to experiences not explored in the research, 2) Indigenous students can gain clarity about expectations, and 3) those preparing our Native students in college and university systems can hold a better idea of the expectations they will return to.

Purpose of the Study

My proposed research will seek to identify Apsáalooke Nation expectations of students returning from college. This information will help prepare Apsáalooke students for their transition back into serving the Apsáalooke tribal nation. The primary research question guiding my inquiry is: What are the Apsáalooke Nation's expectations of returning students and graduates?

What roles are we expected to fill?

What contributions are we expected to make?

How do you support the transition of returning students?

What needs to be done to better prepare students and graduates to return home?

American Indian students will be better prepared to return to tribal communities when they understand what their tribal nation expects of them. To better prepare Indigenous students, understanding the expectations of giving back to tribal communities, and how these values are enacted are especially valuable for institutions preparing American Indian students. When expectations are clear and practices are explicit, American Indian students and their communities will benefit. This inquiry brings voice to tribal community members, and allows American Indian students to be equipped to contribute to their communities and ultimately tribal nation building (Brayboy et al., 2012).

Chapter II: Methodology Using Apsáalooke Ways to Guide Me

Understanding more about tribal nation expectations for American Indian college students returning home after college contributes valuable information for both the community and their college students. When there is a clear understanding of what is expected students can work towards meeting those expectations. The purpose of this study is to learn about the tribal nation's expectations of American Indian college students, specifically Apsáalooke (Crow) students. American Indian students are encouraged from a very young age to further their education and then return home to help their people. The literature holds a wealth of information about the necessary components needed to enroll American Indian students into college and help them persist (Guillory, 2002; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002; Pidgeon, 2008; Shotton, Lowe, & Waterman, 2013), yet their transitions back to their tribal communities has been largely ignored. The concept of nation building and American Indian college student roles in this process are referenced throughout the literature but there still needs to be clarity around the concept of returning home to help. This study will utilize an Indigenous Research Methodology to learn more about the experiences and expectations tribal members have when college students move back home to their tribal community (Kovach, 2010; & Wilson, 2008).

Qualitative Paradigm

Qualitative research is both inductive and interpretative, seeking to understand a given phenomenon. "Qualitative research stresses the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, as cited in Kovach, 2010, p. 26). Qualitative

methodology lends itself to expose rich detail and is especially useful when raising voices of underrepresented participants who are often overshadowed in traditional quantitative structures.

Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRM) can be considered both a qualitative approach and an independent research methodology. There are key differences that separate IRM from Western qualitative approaches. Kovach (2010) uses the term “insider/outsider relationship” (p. 31) to describes how Indigenous methodologies can be located both within and independent from the Western qualitative research paradigm. “Indigenous methodologies flow from tribal knowledges, and while they are allied with several Western qualitative approaches, there are key distinctions” (Kovach, 2010, para. 1). The knowledge itself is rooted in oral tradition and is a distinction between IRM and Western qualitative approaches. IRM characteristics are congruent with qualitative approaches in that the research designs are interpretive, relational, reflexive, and value both process and content, denoting the “insider space” of similarity (p.32). These distinctions and alliances between IRM and Western qualitative approaches are discussed and integrated in the Indigenous Research Methodologies section later in this chapter.

Postcolonial/Indigenous Research Paradigm

Multiple paradigms define and describe how knowledge is formed. The Postcolonial/Indigenous Research paradigm is the most recent to develop, however, its foundation includes the oldest knowledge system. Chilisa and Kawulich (2012) describe Postcolonial/Indigenous research as a way to “challenge deficit thinking and pathological descriptions of the former colonized and reconstruct a body of knowledge that carries hope and promotes transformation and social change among the historically oppressed” (p. 5). A defining factor of Postcolonial/Indigenous research is the use of Indigenous knowledge systems to seek

meaning and understanding and promote social change among historically marginalized people (Chilisa, 2012).

Indigenous research comes from a paradigm informed by relational ontologies, relational epistemologies, and relational accountability. The Postcolonial/Indigenous Research Paradigm has recently developed as a way for sharing non-Western voices and acknowledging the voices of formerly oppressed people from silence brought on by colonization (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Valuing Indigenous knowledge systems and philosophies is central to inquiry from this paradigm (Chilisa, 2011; Chilisa & Preece, 2005; Smith, 1999; Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012).

Chilisa and Kawulich (2012) describe the underlying beliefs or assumptions of researched based in a Postcolonial/Indigenous Research Paradigm. This framework explains the assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), knowledge (epistemology), and values (axiology), as well as how knowledge is accessed (methodology) (Wilson, 2008). Recognizing ontology as the body of knowledge that deals with what it means to exist (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Wilson, 2018), relational ontology is a social reality where “the investigated can be understood in relation to the connections that human beings have with the living and the non-living” (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012, p.13). Among Indigenous societies, “people are ‘beings’ with many relations and many connections. They have connections with the living and the non-living, with land, with earth, with animals and with other beings. There is an emphasis on the ‘I/We relationship’” (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012, p. 13). Chilisa and Kawulich (2012) use a Bantu concept, “I am we; I am, because we are; we are, because I am (Goduka, 2000) to emphasize this concept; a person is because of others. Communalism, collectivity, social justice, human unity and pluralism are implicit in this principle. Reality implies a set of relationships” (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012, p. 14).

Epistemology is the study of the nature of thinking or knowing, and the assumptions we hold about knowledge (Kovach, 2018; Wilson, 2008). Relational epistemology are the systems of knowledge built on relationships (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Wilson, 2008). Wilson (2018) explains the differences between an Indigenous and dominant research paradigm with relational epistemology in mind: “An Indigenous paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all of creation. It is with the cosmos; it is with the animals, with plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge. It goes beyond the individual’s knowledge to the concept of relational knowledge....you are answerable to all your relations when you are doing research” (Wilson, 2008, p. 56). Kovach (2018) adds that Indigenous epistemology is fluid, non-linear, and relational. Knowledge is produced between and among, not in isolation; recognizing that knowledge production is relational has significant implications for how Indigenous research paradigms are enacted.

Axiology refers to the ethics or morals guiding the search for knowledge, including what information deserves to be searched. Axiology also addresses the ethical way to go about gaining knowledge and how this knowledge will be used (Wilson, 2008). Axiology is specifically important to American Indian communities as a marginalized group who have experienced exploitation by researchers throughout the history of colonization. The Postcolonial/Indigenous paradigm emphasizes respect for marginalized groups’ belief systems and equality in the relationships between researcher and participants. Indigenous researchers value cultural ways of understanding the world and focus on the use of oral histories, social justice and healing methods, sharing circles, and songs as examples of useful methods (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012, p. 14). Revisiting the concept of the four R’s as values is important as relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution ensure the community will benefit

from the knowledge gathered. The interconnectedness of these cultural values guides the ethics of the research.

Methodology is the theory of how knowledge is gained (Wilson, 2008). Indigenous methodologies are founded on Indigenous knowledge systems (Kovach, 2018). Kovach (2018) stresses that when choosing an Indigenous methodology for Indigenous research much will depend on the research question, the purpose of the research, the consideration of the Indigenous research context, and the desire and capacity of the researcher. To further understand this, Wilson (2008) describes using an Indigenous research framework as relational and emphasizes reciprocity: “Our research is connected to our tribal communities, our families, our ancestors, Creator, and future generations. Embedded in our worldview is a responsibility to ensure that we are accountable and responsive to the communities from which we come and with whom we work” (Wilson, 2008, p. 97).

Indigenous Research Methodology

Indigenous methodologies, also referred to as Indigenous research frameworks, can be located alongside qualitative research approaches when examining paradigms (Kovach, 2010). The distinctions, or “outsider space,” establishing Indigenous methodology as an independent approach include the unique contributions of tribal epistemologies and tribal languages. Tribal epistemologies are at the center of Indigenous methodologies: “it is this epistemological framework that makes them distinct from Western qualitative approaches” (Kovach, 2010, p. 25). Tribal “language is a central component to Indigenous epistemologies (Kovach, 2010, p. 61). Kipp (2015) describes the structure of tribal languages and its connection to worldview, “Every description, everything you see, everything you look at, everything you sense is described via the language as an action.” (Kipp, 2015) Another key component of Indigenous

epistemologies can be found in tribal creation stories, which share important tribal teachings and practices (Kovach, 2010). Tribal epistemology differs from Indigenous epistemology in that a tribal epistemology is unique to each tribal nation's cultural practices and language, it is centered in specific tribal knowledges (Kovach, 2018). Each tribe's creation story teaches values and shapes the tribal epistemology. The concept of knowledge gathering on a continuum and not isolated within a timeline is also an essential element of tribal epistemology. Tribal epistemologies and tribal knowledge are simply not found in Western knowledge systems, including systems of research and inquiry. Tribal language adds further to the distinction of IRM as Indigenous knowledges are constructed from tribal languages and serve as inseparable mirrors of one another; knowledge systems and language cannot be separated. The "fluidity and motion" (Kovach, 2010, p. 30) of tribal languages resist the cultural constructs of the English language and the Western epistemologies that colonized research practices are grounded in. Language is a critical component to understanding tribal epistemology, and these Indigenous knowledge systems are the foundation for all knowledge and learning when using an Indigenous Research Methodology approach.

Indigenous Research Methodologies are a fairly new approach in research. Yet, American Indian peoples have always been researchers who observed our surroundings, learned about our environment and how to interact with it and use it to sustain ourselves. From these early observations and experiments we developed theories about what might happen next and how to respond (Brayboy, p. x). Our knowledge systems have been in existence since time immemorial. IRMs first guide researchers to identify these knowledge systems, and align their research process with their way of knowing. Throughout application of an Indigenous

methodologies approach, the researcher must reference tribal knowledges and prioritize this knowledge throughout the research process.

When using an IRM, Indigenous researchers are required to reflect on how their tribal identity influences their ways of learning and knowing. The researcher's knowledge and understanding of their own tribal culture is a critical component to applying Indigenous methodologies. My upbringing in the Apsáalooke culture shaped the knowledge and understanding I have. My Apsáalooke culture defines who I am and guides my thoughts and actions. Because of this, the role of reflexivity is very important. Reflexivity is the process of self-reflection during meaning making and serves as a means of identifying researcher bias.

When establishing IRM as a distinct methodology, I will rely on four aspects Kovach (2018) has outlined: tribal knowledge systems, indigenous theory principles, relational actions, and re-storying. First, there can be no "doing of Indigenous methodologies" without having an understanding of tribal knowledge systems and how Indigenous epistemology fits within the knowledge system (Kovach, 2018, p. 218). Wilson (2008) defines epistemology as "the study of the nature of thinking or knowing" (p. 33). Kovach (2018) speaks to this process of gaining knowledge and describes four principles of Indigenous epistemology, knowledge "is holistic and implies empirical, experiential, sensory, and metaphysical possibilities; arises from interconnectivity and interdependence; animate and fluid; arises from a multiplicity of sources, including nonhuman sources" (p. 218). As I begin this research and seek knowledge to understand the experience of supporting American Indian college students' move back home, it is important that I reference my own tribal knowledge system. This will help me make the connections and identify the relationships between the expectations of students moving home and what we value as Apsáalooke people.

The second guiding focus will attend to Indigenous theory-principles. These principles outline the teachings, laws, and values that are central to an Indigenous belief system. These principles guide the Indigenous researcher in seeking out knowledge, “offering research guidance and language to facilitate the conceptualization, design, practice, and interpretation of research to be anchored within Indigenous epistemology” (Kovach, 2018, p. 218). Indigenous theory-principles emerge from an Apsáalooke perspective through the practice of sharing knowledge. This value emerges in the display of respect, treating the person sharing knowledge with respect and being respectful of the process by following protocol (Real Bird, 1997). The person sharing knowledge models reciprocity and redistribution by continuing the practice of passing on knowledge.

The third aspect, relational actions, encompasses the strategies and methods of Indigenous methodologies. “Relationships are how we do Indigenous epistemology” (Kovach, 2018, p. 218). Relationality is a set of values and relationships are the action and how we enable Indigenous methodology. The relationships that are defined by the cultural system provide direction in how an Indigenous researcher gathers knowledge. Storying through conversations are a relational action that is practiced and is therefore a method. These aspects are all connected to the cultural foundation that informs our value system and the protocols of how we interact with each other and what our responsibilities are within the tribal system (Kovach, 2018). A required component of this aspect is relational capital. Relational capital asks the researcher to clearly identify the tribal community they are connected to and evaluate if they are trusted in that community. As a researcher, seeking out participants I have an established relationship with and following Apsáalooke protocol in approaching participants will display the aspect of relational action that is important to an Indigenous epistemology.

The final aspect relates to the data gathered, and processes of the Western inferences of analysis and dissemination. Kovach (2018) captures these actions as re-storying, and emphasizes the processes of interpretation and representation within Indigenous methodologies. Kovach explains in gathering participant stories “it matters to respect their dignity, their voice, and their experience on their terms” (p. 227). Here, the research holds responsibility for witnessing participant story, and relating events and their meaning in a way that is contextualized in tribal history, the gaze of the researcher, and represents meanings and understanding through multiple means (ie. metaphor, visual representation, performative). Offering understanding of the data and keeping representation of findings accessible to the Apsáalooke Nation will help me stay true to this aspect. Kovach (2018) notes that this aspect of Indigenous methodologies requires further thought, dialogue, and writing. The process of re-storying does not follow a prescribed method, yet is guided by the ‘Indigenous laws of love, respect, kindness, honesty, generosity, reciprocity, and caring’ (Kovach, 2018, p. 230), aligning with the inductive nature of qualitative research.

Researcher’s Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Indigenous knowledge systems contain tribal knowledge that includes values and ethics, protocols, and define relationship responsibilities. For this research project, I will be following the Apsáalooke knowledge system. In this knowledge system, there is importance in relationship through one’s Clan and District belonging, the Apsáalooke language and spirituality, and connection to the land. All of these components will guide my research process. Approaching my research in this way allows me to bring my own tribal knowledge along with me as I gain new knowledge. “Doing” research in this way will empower me to stay true to my tribal culture while also learning and meeting Western education and research expectations.

The Apsáalooke (Crow) Knowledge System, An Indigenous Theory-Principle

As a child I would often hear, “Because we are Crow, this is how we do it.” Growing up, the Apsáalooke (Crow) language was spoken all around me and as a non-Crow speaker I would carefully observe the interactions in my surroundings so I knew how to behave as expected. It was not until adulthood that I began to fully understand the reasoning for, “We are Crow, this is how we do it.” Now, I will approach my research in this way.

The Apsáalooke (Crow)

The Apsáalooke (Pronounced: Up-saw-lou-ga) translated to English is “Children of the large beaked bird,” and was communicated in sign language by flapping one’s hands as if resembling a bird’s wings in flight. The White explorers and traders misinterpreted this sign as “Crow” and used that term in reference to the group (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1268; taken from Medicine Crow, 1992; Medicine Crow & Viola, 2006; Snell & Matthews, 2000). When one says, “Bii Apsáalookak” they are saying, “I am Crow”.

The Apsáalooke people have a set of values that are incorporated into the culture that include family, spirituality, and respect. The importance of family is stressed throughout our teachings and practices. Family includes both Clan and Adoption. The Apsáalooke Clan system is an extended family structure that is a foundation for learning social and religious protocol. The Apsáalooke Adoption differs from the Western sense of adoption as it is a proclamation instead of a legal process but is similar in the parent relationship and responsibility it holds. Apsáalooke spirituality is also very important. The practice of prayer is also seen in many aspects of the Apsáalooke culture. Spirituality is signified through the pipe, tobacco, sweat lodge, and other ceremonial practices (Sings In The Timber, 2018). Respect is the foundation for defining who an

Apsáalooke person is (Real Bird, 1997, p. 217). Respect for others but also for one's self is both expected and practiced throughout our cultural protocols.

Apsáalooke Demographics, Who the Apsáalooke People Are

The Crow Indian reservation is located in southcentral Montana and covers 2.2 million acres. There are over 11,000 tribal members. Approximately 75% live on or near the reservation (<https://tribalnations.mt.gov/crow>). This data indicates the value of remaining in proximity to community, and is also a marker of the tightknit family relationships that support using a relationally driven Indigenous knowledge framework.

Education System. There are five communities located within the Apsáalooke Nation. The public school system includes three high schools and eight elementary schools. There are two Catholic school systems that include grades K-8, and Head Start programs are in every community. Little Big Horn College (LBHC) is also part of the education system. LBHC is the tribally operated two-year college providing certificate programs and associate degrees (Montana Indians Their History and Location, n.d.).

Language. The Apsáalooke language is our first language. The percentage of fluent speakers is 27% and 68% are passive speakers, meaning that they understand the language and primarily speak in English (Personal Communication, DyAnna Three Irons, November 8, 2019). The Apsáalooke language is now considered an endangered language (Crow Language Consortium, 2018). There are several initiatives in place to help revitalize the language that include the Crow Language Consortium, Apsáalooke App for smart phones, Language Immersion classrooms in both Head Start and at Crow Elementary School (Apsáalooke Language Project, 2018; Crow Language Consortium, 2018).

Districts. The Apsáalooke Nation is divided into six districts for cultural and tribal governmental purposes. These districts include Reno, also known as Center Lodge; Lodge Grass/the Valley of the Chiefs; Pryor/Baáhpuuo or Arrow Creek; Big Horn/Valley of the Giveaway; Wyola/Mighty Few; and Black Lodge/Ashshipíte. Historically tribal members had three subgroups: the Mountain Crow, River Crow, and Kicked in the Bellies (Montana Indians Their History and Location, OPI website).

Land base. The reservation is a small fraction of what the Apsáalooke had before the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 that included 33 million acres throughout Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakota Territories (Montana Indians Their History and Location, OPI website). The current day nation consists of three mountain ranges – Big Horn, Pryor, and Wolf Mountains; three major water systems -Bighorn and Little Bighorn Rivers; Pryor Creek, and acres of range and farm land. The mountain ranges are sacred to the Apsáalooke people, "The mountains are the heart of the Crow, the rivers are the blood of the Crow, and the college is the mind of the Crow." (Marvin Dawes, LBHC 30th Anniversary; <https://engb.facebook.com/pg/Littlebighorncollege/about/>).

The Apsáalooke people have a connection and relationship to our land base. Chief Sore Belly speaks to this connection (LBHC Library, Famous Speeches, around 1830):

The Crow Country is exactly in the right place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains; all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies, you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh, and the bright streams come tumbling out of the snowbanks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer, and the antelope, when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep. In the autumn, when your horses are fat and strong from the mountain pastures, you can go down into the plains and hunt the buffalo or trap beaver on the streams. And when winter comes on, you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo meat for yourselves, and cottonwood bark for your horses; or you may winter in the Wind River valley, where there is salt weed in abundance. The Crow Country is exactly in the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow Country.

Apsáalooke Knowledge System

The Apsáalooke Creation Story

To begin to understand the Apsáalooke knowledge system, the best place to start is at the beginning with our Creation Story:

The Crow people say the Creator, Iichihkbaalia, created the humans by instructing four ducks to go down into a body of deep water and retrieve mud from the bottom. The first three ducks failed, but after a long time, the fourth duck brought some mud from the bottom of the water. From this the Crow were formed. The Creator then breathed into his creation and for this reason Crow people say that speech or the word is sacred. Then he brought the Crow to a very clear spring and inside this spring they were shown a man with his bow drawn taught. The Creator said, "This is Crow people, I have made them to be small in number, but they will never be overcome by any outside force." The Crow people say that neither man nor woman was made first, it is simply said that the Crow were created (<http://lib.lbhc.edu/index.php?q=node/84>).

From this creation story, Apsáalooke believe words are sacred. This has been a part of my understanding and influences the way I walk through this world. I remember learning this teaching from my Father while I was working on my undergraduate degree. I would call him and ask him questions, usually related to our Crow culture, questions I would hope for a quick response to. He would always say to me, let me think about that or let me check on that and get back to you. I would wait a day or a sometimes a few days. The next time we would talk he would have an answer for me.

The carefulness in my Dad's responses taught me to not speak without thinking and that words are important. I remember my Dad saying to me on several occasions, "Words are powerful." I also learned through his lessons that when you are seeking knowledge, it does not happen on your time but on the knowledge holder's time. This was also a great lesson on patience.

Ashammaliáxxiia, The Apsáalooke Clan System

The Apsáalooke people call clans, Ashammaliáxxiia, which means the lodge where the wood intertwines. This is in reference to a driftwood pile and a metaphorical reference to the unity of a clan (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995). The term ashammaliáxxiia has a traditional translation; "asha" means lodges, and "ammaliáxxiia" means where they come together" translating into driftwood lodges (From Real Bird, 1997-Bulltail, translated personal conversation, 1997). "Driftwood lodges are symbolic of driftwood in a river, tightly bound, all clinging together in a turbulent stream, as in life" (From Real Bird, 1997-Old Coyote, 1993, p. 37).

To understand the Apsáalooke knowledge system, the significance of our clan system is vital. Real Bird (1997) writes, "The Apsáalooke Clan System is an institution and foundation for learning. The clan system serves as a foundation for social control and religious protocol for honor and respect" (p. 5). Ashammaliáxxiia, as the Apsáalooke Clan System is called, provides direction for all that we do as Apsáalooke people from how we interact with each other, and who we go to who we go to when seeking guidance and knowledge. There are currently five Apsáalooke Clans. The clans are Greasy Mouth (Uuwuutasshe), Whistling Water (Bilikóoshe), Bad War Deeds (Ashkápkawiiia), Ties in A Bundle (Xúhkaalaxche), Big Lodge (Ashshitchíte), and Piegans (Ashkaámne) (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995; Real Bird, 1997). These five clans are what remain of the many clans that are now extinct (Real Bird, 1997). The Apsáalooke Clan system is at the center of the Apsáalooke knowledge system and is the framework of my knowledge base. The clan system describes roles and responsibilities and provides guidance about who teaches about the roles and responsibilities. Practicing the Apsáalooke clan system protocols helps guide us through life.

Clan mothers and fathers exercise a distinct role in the clan system either as parents or children. The Apsáalooke are matrilineal and receive their clan membership from their mother. The mother's clan provides the physical and emotional needs of a person. The clan fathers have two significant roles for their clan children. The father's clan promotes the status of a person through public announcements of their achievements so that people will know about their clan children's accomplishments and they also speak on behalf of their clan children in the spiritual realm by providing "blessings for a long, happy, successful life" (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995, p. 67). The father's clan also provides a person with joking relations known as teasing cousins. This joking relationship gives freedom to tease each other about misconduct and is supposed to keep deviant behavior in check.

Clan mothers and fathers are considered sacred to the Apsáalooke people. All adults in the clan are mothers and fathers to children in the clan (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995; Real Bird, 1997). The late Evelyn Old Elk, who was one of my grandmothers and an Apsáalooke tribal elder, explains this complex relationship: "If you were in the Whistling Water, too, you would be my sister, and your children would be my children, and my children would be your children" (Native News, para. 22).

While developing my own understanding of Apsáalooke cultural practices through our clan system, my observation was vital. Observing relationship expectations with others and observing during ceremony and other social gatherings helped me learn what was expected of me. The Apsáalooke Clan System fits within an Indigenous research framework as described by Kovach (2008), the process of learning through observing our tribal systems. The importance of observation and attentiveness in learning as one generation transmits knowledge in kinship

relationships is the foundation of the Apsáalooke Clan System, and central to my research methodology.

Kinship Roles

In addition to the clan system roles, Apsáalooke people also have specific kinship relationships that are recognized in the Apsáalooke family system. Kinship relations are highly valued within the Apsáalooke culture. Family is an important value so much that even distant relatives are referred to as sisters or brothers, mother or father, or grandmother or grandfather (Real Bird, 1997).

Real Bird (1997) explains, paternal aunts are referred to as "isbaaxía" and maternal aunts are referred to as a mother or "isahké" (p. 99). There are no words for uncles as this relationship is either a father or a brother. Identifying these relationships in this way relays the responsibilities of these roles. These relationships are also important in terms of the honor and respect the Apsáalooke have for their families. These kinships are recognized by identifying the important relationships with specific names (Real Bird, 1997). Crow kinship includes blood relatives, clan relatives, and relatives by adoption. The term, relatives, is used to describe all Crow kinship because Crow people honor all different relationships.

Spirituality

Apsáalooke people's actions and thoughts are based mostly on spiritual beliefs. The Apsáalooke strongly believe that there is a reason for the order of the world and what happens within it. The Apsáalooke believe in Akbaatatdía (The One Who Made all Things) also referred to as Iichíhkbaahile (First Maker), the creator of the world. While First Maker is the creator of all things, the Apsáalooke believe that certain things were given powers and could assist humans as needed. Given that anything can carry a message, the reference to "things" is used as we remain

open to our spirituality being communicated from many places. When we hear stories of animals talking, or people who are helped by particular things it is because we believe that many things have been blessed with different powers by First Maker. The Apsáalooke believe that any form of worship or prayer is good, and that to be fulfilled as human beings one needs spirituality (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995).

Apsáalooke Names

It is custom to for a Clan Father or Mother to give a child an Apsáalooke name, commonly referred to as an Indian Name. These names are given to help guide people throughout their life; however, if a person has bad fortune or becomes ill they can be given a new name. Thought and prayer goes into deciding an Apsáalooke name and can be found through dreams or visions. The story behind the name is as important as the name itself. The story is most commonly connected with the clan father or mother's accomplishments, or life experience, or their personal character. The story provides the explanation about the meaning of the name (Augustine Hill, personal communication, November 11, 2019; Brien, 1995, Tribal Histories Project).

Using my Apsáalooke name as an example, Baawátbakala Xíasseesh (Shining Crucifix), was given to me by my clan father, the late Larry Plain Bull Sr. My clan father gave this name to me because of the importance his own spirituality had in his life. He was well known in our tribe for his ability to sing Crow Hymns (Christian hymns sung in the Apsáalooke language) and was invited many places to share these songs. My name has directed how I connect with others and strive to be the bright light that helps guide them. As a researcher, my Apsáalooke name guides the connection I have with people and motivates me to find a clear understanding of my tribal nation's expectation of college students as they return home to serve their people. In this

research, I feel like I am using my light to guide our Nation to create an understanding between the two experiences.

The Apsáalooke creation story, kinship and clan roles, spirituality, and Apsáalooke names reflect the values and practices of the Apsáalooke people and are components of our tribal knowledge system. These values and practices are interwoven throughout our tribal knowledge systems and provide the Apsáalooke people with guidance. As an Apsáalooke person, I cannot separate this way of being from how I conduct my research; locating myself in this work is necessary and congruent with the values of a reflexive researcher.

Locating Myself in this Work, Researcher Lens

The researcher lens is described in qualitative research as “the personal biography of the researcher, who speaks from a particular class, gendered, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 11). The researcher’s multiculturally situated approach includes “a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology), which are then examined (methodology, analysis) in specific ways” as the observations based on the research question are collected, then analyzed, and then written about (Denzin & Lincoln, 201, p.11).

I begin describing my researcher lens by honoring the people and places that helped create and guide my journey. My paternal grandparents who have both gone on to the Other Side Camp, Philip Beaumont and Martha (Sun Goes Slow) Beaumont Sr. (Apsáalooke/Crow); my maternal grandparents Ethelmae Matzdorf Billedeaux (Czech and German) and the late Dwight Armelle Billedeaux (Amskapipikuni/Blackfeet), each made personal sacrifices to ensure a better future for their children and grandchildren and I am thankful for their determination and vision of creating a better future through obtaining an education. My parents Ronald and Marcia

(Billedeaux) Beaumont Sr. who made sure they passed on the value of family and education.

Without my grandparents' perseverance and my parent's commitment to instill the values taught by my grandparents, I would not be on this academic journey.

As an American Indian woman, I first identify as Apsáalooke because this is the culture I was raised in. It is important to also acknowledge that I am a descendent of the Amskapipikuni (Blackfeet) Nation to honor my maternal grandfather. As an Apsáalooke, I am both a member of the Greasy Mouth Clan and a child of the Greasy Mouth and am from the Alúutaashe (Arrow Creek) district.

I have been married to my husband, Augustine John Hill for the past twenty years. We have three daughters, Alyssa, Sienna, and Thea and a grandson, Aiden. John and I have helped raise our nephew Trajan and were given a daughter (through Apsáalooke adoption) Daniel. I am also a kaalé, auntie and sister and I am honored to serve in these roles. My family is my motivation and priority in all that I do.

I have spent my career working in education. Most of my time has been working for American Indian student support programs in higher education at both the University of Montana and Little Big Horn College. As an Apsáalooke, I see factors influencing how collectivist perspectives, cultural identity, historical trauma, community engagement, and social responsibility intersect with tribal and educational responsibilities. My professional experience as both an educator and student support provider also contribute to my researcher lens.

All of the pieces of myself and my experiences have intersected to form my research question. The value of education instilled in me combined with my work in higher education are primary motivations for exploring this question. Seeing the many opportunities that an education can provide American Indian students, as well as witnessing the barriers these students face

when returning home, contributed to the development of my research question. Learning about expectation will help inform and shape the work I do in higher education moving forward.

Gaining this knowledge will help me better understand the needs of the Apsáalooke Nation and how college students can help meet those needs. Discovering the answers to my question will inform the role I serve in preparing Apsáalooke students for returning home. Helping create a clearer pathway for meeting tribal community needs will benefit both Apsáalooke college students who move home and our tribal community.

Research Procedures/Practices/Protocols

Designing this Project Using Apsáalooke Ways

This research will benefit the Apsáalooke people with the intent of identifying the expectations of those who attend college and then move back home to work with the people of the Apsáalooke Nation. My wish is that other American Indian communities will be able to use this work as a foundation for beginning this conversation in their own Nation. I will apply my research findings in the work I do with program development and also share with students, faculty, and administrators who can learn from the stories of the Apsáalooke people.

Research Question

The concept of giving back to one's tribal community by returning home after college to work is shared by many American Indian college students (Guillory 2008; Lee, 2009; Reyes, 2016). Commitment to one's tribal nation is a value that is taught and enforced throughout one's life. Obtaining a higher education and using one's education to work with their tribal nation is a common approach to tribal nation building (Guillory, 2008; Lee, 2009; Pidgeon, 2008). However, some college students experience challenges upon their transition back into their community. The current study is aimed at learning from the community about their expectations

of college students returning home to work. Learning more about these expectations will help create a clear educational and career path for American Indian students who want to give back to their tribal nation. This study will seek to answer the central question: What are tribal communities' expectations of returning students and graduates?

Using an Indigenous Research Methodology is appropriate for gaining an understanding of expectations Apsáalooke communities have of their college students and graduates. Using an Indigenous research framework will allow me to conduct research in a way that is aligned with Apsáalooke protocols and practices. IRM helps ensure that I stay true to my Apsáalooke ethics and values and honor the relationships I have with my Apsáalooke people.

Protocol Clarifications & Tensions

In developing this research study, the possibility of tension between cultural and academic protocols were identified. I deferred to cultural and clan system protocols first. Consultations with both Dr. Kirsten Murray, dissertation chair, and other individuals familiar with Apsáalooke protocols were utilized. The clarifications and tensions are transparent in my writing and detailed descriptions are included in Chapter Three: The Evolution of Methodology Using Apsáalooke Ways.

Partners and Protocols

As a member of the Apsáalooke Nation, I am connected to the Apsáalooke community; the Apsáalooke people are my partners in this research, and I attended to this relational capital wisely, protecting community trust (Kovach, 2018). Following the Apsáalooke knowledge system, I adhered to the cultural protocols of the Apsáalooke Nation (Hallett et al., 2017). Apsáalooke relationships are defined by the clan and kinship roles. These relationships drove the partners and protocols that directed how I conducted my research.

Following tribal protocols regarding knowledge sharing, tribal elders were consulted first. The consultation of elders is a sign of respect and respect is a protocol in itself. Respect is a foundation of defining who the Apsáalooke are. Respect is the gesture that implies that clan parents, clan children, and siblings have a basic human right to be treated well. Demonstrating respect is the responsibility of all Apsáalooke people and central to my role as a researcher as I established partnerships to answer this research question. “Practicing respect and honor through kinship is the foundation for learning, teaching, knowledge, experience, scholarship, and education among the Apsáalooke” (Real Bird, 1997, p. 218).

Protocol for Participant Selection. Following Apsáalooke principles and protocols, it was essential that I spoke with an elder who is also a Clan Mother in my community to gain permission to begin my research journey. The Apsáalooke Nation had a Crow Cultural Committee (CCC) who was made up of Elders and each Apsáalooke district had a sub-committee called the 107 Committee. At the time of my research study, the CCC was inactive. How I proceeded will be addressed in Chapter Three: The Evolution of Methodology along with the additional changes I made in my evolution of the methodology.

Following Apsáalooke protocol, I did use purposeful selection (Maxwell, 2013, p. 98) to adequately capture the heterogeneity in the Apsáalooke population. My approach in using purposeful selection was aligned with IRM and described in chapter three. Using purposeful selection allowed for deliberate selection of individuals and provided confidence that the conclusions adequately represent variances of the population I based my research with (Maxwell, 2013).

Criteria for visits:

1. Elder (Clan Mother)

2. Community members recommended by my elder
3. Elder with college experience
4. Experienced professional who has worked in the community
5. Experienced professional who has worked in the community and has had college experience
6. Young Professional
7. Young professional with college experience

I visited with people in my hometown community of Pryor and others within the Crow Nation as I have what Kovach (2018) refers to as relational capital there. Although I knew the importance of receiving both female and male perspectives, it was more appropriate for me to have these conversations with females. Apsáalooke women are taught the value of modesty, modesty in practice includes not only in physical appearance but also the way one carries herself around others. An example of this is not being too loud or doing anything that will call much attention to one's self. The value of modesty is interconnected to the value of respect, respect for one's self and the relationships you have with others. As an Apsáalooke woman it is not modest or respectful to have personal conversations with males who are not your father, brother, or spouse. Following Apsáalooke protocol, a female would only have personal conversations with males in the presence of other females whom they have a spousal or kinship relationship with. This was practiced in my research as I honored our tribal protocols. Participants were sought out until it was evident that my research question was answered with depth, breadth, and detail. The ten visits and conversations produced common themes among individuals as well as variation within these themes from each person.

Participant Contact. Following Apsáalooke protocol, it was appropriate to have an established relationship before asking permission to visit with them about my research. It was also appropriate to provide gifts as a gesture of appreciation for asking them to share their knowledge with me. Kovach (2009) supports this practice, “having a pre-existing and ongoing relationship with participants is an accepted characteristic of research according to tribal paradigms” (p. 51). Absolon (2008) concurs, endorsing that existing relationships are appropriate channels for Indigenous inquiries (as cited in Hampton, 1995a; Marsden, 2005; Weenie, 1998).

The format of these conversations respected Apsáalooke values and customs. Both the participants and myself have viewed this research topic from the Apsáalooke perspective. Gathering data included visiting with Apsáalooke Nation members where I followed the conversation process that Real Bird (1997) explained in his dissertation:

“First, the formal interviews were recorded with the approval of the participants. In this formal process, gifts were offered to the participants such as tobacco, cedar, and other items. Permission and consultation were the first exercises to request participation. According to the Apsáalooke tradition, respect and honor must be at the forefront of any request. This procedure is the convention for approaching clan parents and other respected elders. Traditional Apsáalooke elders are obligated to help those people who ask. The true and dedicated elder will not refuse. If they are unable, they will find some other means to help by offering suggestions or referrals.”

Gathering Knowledge through Conversations and Storytelling

To communicate an Indigenous belief system, Indigenous methodologies rely heavily on concrete actions such as storytelling, ceremony, and protocols (Kovach, 2018). Some of the techniques of gathering data include methods that are based on language frameworks through stories (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). Sharing stories serves as a means of knowing, which is in line with Indigenous epistemology. Kovach describes sharing stories as a conversation, a non-structured method of gathering knowledge and should not be confused with an interview. Sharing stories is a combination of reflection, story, and dialogue (Kovach, 2009). Apsáalooke

people often use the phrase “visit with” to describe conversations and storytelling that happens when a person is trying to learn from another.

Indigenous research frameworks commonly use storytelling as a research method (Kovach, 2018). Storytelling is congruent with relationality in Indigenous teachings and is practiced by Indigenous societies. Indigenous storytelling is personal and collective, relational and reflexive, informal and flexible but respects protocol (Kovach, 2018, p. 226). This practice of conversation methodology has been described as Yarning (Kovach 2010), Storywork (Archibald, 2008), Storying (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014), and re-storying or re-membering (Kovach, 2018).

Brayboy’s (2005) eighth tenet of TribalCrit honors stories and oral knowledge as valid forms of data and ways of being. Stories are not separate from theory, they construct theory. Indigenous people have strong oral traditions and use them as a way to transfer culture and knowledge. When practicing Indigenous research, it is important to view stories as data, and key to collecting this data is hearing these stories. Hearing stories means that they are valued and the stories are understood. “One must be able to feel the stories. You tell them, hear them, and feel them—establishing a strong place for empathy and for ‘getting it’” (Brayboy, 2005, p. 440). Stories often are the guardians of cumulative knowledges that hold a place in the psyches of the group members, memories of tradition, and reflections on power.

Absolon (2008, p. 56) uses the term “conversation” to denote an Indigenous way of meeting and sharing ideas with people. She also used the term interview to denote that as a researcher, she was searching for knowledge. Conversations provide space for stories to be told without the pressure of an interview guide and allow the researcher to be more focused on listening versus questioning (Sinclair, 2003). This method of conversation signifies an Indigenous way of meeting and sharing ideas with people. Where the term interview indicates

that it is the researcher who is searching for knowledge. Conversations provide space for stories to be told without the pressure of questioning with an interview guide but rather take a listening position and be the receiver of knowledge (Absolon, 2008; Sinclair, 2003).

Indigenous people have traditionally used stories to cultivate deeper levels of collective understanding and storytelling is an integral Indigenous research methodology often central to data collection (Hallett et al., 2017; Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). Hallett and colleagues (2017) describe conversations with Elders, the importance of the oral tradition, and storytelling; “The Apsáalooke value of strong family ties, and the significance of visiting and of spending quality time with others” (p. 1270). Dr. Janine Pease explains the power of stories, “We have storytellers in every family . . . many people don’t recognize the healing properties of telling stories, but when you go to a family gathering, you come back feeling well” (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1270). Hallett and colleagues (2017) also reviewed archival resources at the LBHC library emphasizing how stories transmit knowledge and shape the lives of Apsáalooke people. Mr. Dale Old Horn explained that stories, “build trust [and] normalize people’s experiences” (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1270). The use of stories is a powerful, respectful, and supportive approach for sharing advice (Hallett et al., 2017). In the context of this research, I will emphasize receiving participants’ stories in their own words to open discussion and take a listener position, focusing on the meaningful insights and teachings offered in the traditional Apsáalooke processes of storytelling and visiting to build relationship and understanding (Hallett et al., 2017).

Within the Apsáalooke knowledge system, there are specific protocols during the act of knowledge sharing. It is both respectful and part of protocol to have the participant lead the conversation and decide what topics they will discuss. The researcher will avoid or limit

comments or questions unless invited to do so, otherwise this may be considered disrespectful. Note taking is also discouraged during the conversation (Real Bird, 1997).

In this research study, gathering knowledge was done through visits where knowledge was shared through storytelling and conversations. The visits were done in a way that adequately reflected my relationship with each individual. If they needed guiding questions, I relied on using the following questions that helped direct a steadier flow in the conversation (See Appendix C):

1. In what ways is a college education important for the benefit of the Apsáalooke community?
2. What wishes do you have for Apsáalooke students who attend college?
3. When students move home from college what are your hopes for them?
4. When thinking about college students who came home, what was something they did that you appreciated or noticed that you felt was good for our people?

During conversations, especially with elders, I was prepared to present my research question. After my question was presented, I transitioned into my role as a listener and knew that I would not guide the conversation, it was okay for me to be curious but not to lead the conversation. It was more common to anticipate questions they had for me.

Gathering Knowledge and Attending to Ethical Considerations

An Apsáalooke approach to gathering knowledge was integrated. At the time of proposal, a Western research approach guiding the data collection and analysis of the research project was planned to be used, however through the evolution of my methodology this approach was adjusted and is addressed in chapter three. Ethical considerations for this research project are described below.

Gaining Access. The Apsáalooke Nation has a policy that requires research conducted within the nation to go through the Institutional Review Board (IRB), however, there is no governing board in place to review IRB proposals. As a result, I reached out to other Apsáalooke researchers who provided me with suggestions on how to go about this process. The suggestions included that I go through the Crow Cultural Committee, or seek out approval of the Legislative Branch, and complete Little Big Horn College's (LBHC) IRB process. After exploring all of these options, I did receive approval from the Vice-Secretary of the Apsáalooke Nation and LBHC's IRB.

The Apsáalooke people are my nation. However, I needed to secure permission to gather information on this topic from my elders. Gifts were offered in the form of food, money, material and blankets (Real Bird, 1997). Real Bird (1997) explains gaining access following Apsáalooke protocols:

In order to approach Apsáalooke elders, a person must demonstrate and exercise the proper respect in acknowledging their presence. Elders are formally greeted along with the acknowledgment of their gender or relationship such as "biikaa", "bachuukaa", "axee", "ihkaa", and "bisbaaxia". Translated respectively, the approach would be "How are you big brother, or little brother?" or "How are you father or mother or clan aunt?" Sincerity is important; being honest and wholehearted are also qualities an Apsáalooke person pursues. Genuine concern and acknowledgment about greeting them is important. Elders are wise and aware of when requests are going to be made of them. When clan uncles or clan aunts are approached by their child, they are ready for any requests. Clan parents will respond by asking a child, "What Can I do for you son?" or "How can I help you my child?" These Interactions are distinctive because of the clan responsibilities. (Real Bird, 1997, p. 115-116).

Storytelling and Conversation

The oral tradition of sharing knowledges is still practiced and in Indigenous research frameworks is referred to as the conversational method. The conversational method is significant to Indigenous methodologies because it is congruent with an Indigenous paradigm. Kovach (2010) explains that storytelling "involves dialogic participation that holds a deep purpose of

sharing story as a means to assist others. It is relational at its core” (p. 124). This conversational method among the Apsáalooke is often referred to as “visiting” and is relational.

Observation

In addition to storytelling and conversations, observing is another learning tool used to gain knowledge. Because asking questions is not always appropriate in situations, observing can also be relied upon to gather knowledge. Real Bird (1997) describes many instances of observation in his research done on the Apsáalooke Clan System and explains details of the importance of observation, “The Apsáalooke people need to observe these kinds of dynamics [clan forums] and create environments where they can practice clan relationships of honor and respect” (p. 254). As mentioned, growing up in my community where many people spoke the Apsáalooke language and I did not, I learned that observation could also teach me what I needed to know.

Observations happened through social media as many community members shared cultural lessons through stories and videos. The social media platforms allowed me to stay connected to the events happening in my tribal nation and provided a way to engage with members of my community even though I was not physically there.

Recording Information. With permission of the participant, I used a voice recorder and the Otter application on my phone to record visits. My phone and the Otter application are password protected. The conversations were transcribed. Notes about any of my observations pertinent to the research were recorded as voice memos using the Otter application after the visits were completed.

Storing Data Securely. Transcription and audio files were uploaded and kept on my secure password protected laptop. Research journals and voice memos were also kept on my laptop and helped track the process, questions I had, and observations I made.

Data Analysis

During this process it was essential to stay true to each story and to the participant's voice (Kovach, 2010). Traditionally, individuals are expected to receive a story, develop their own meaning from the story, and take actions appropriate for them at that point in time (Wilson, 2008).

Wilson (2008) addresses analyzing results using an Indigenous paradigm. In this paradigm it is crucial to keep in mind the importance of relationship. "Indigenous style of analysis has to look at all those relations as a whole" so you are looking at the entirety of the conversation and coming up with your analysis (Wilson, 2008, p. 119). To achieve this, applying a situational analysis mapping technique that lays out major human, nonhuman, and discursive elements, and the relationships between these elements using visual representations of elements surrounding a phenomenon of interest and how they relate to one another were applied (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2017). Situational analysis mapping helped achieve viewing the conversations as a whole as Wilson suggested.

According to Apsáalooke Elder, Dale Old Horn, the "individual is responsible for receiving the story and discovering how it applies to their own experience" (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1269). Dr. Janine Pease shared that "when listening to a story, an individual hears certain things more than others, and receiving a story can take you to a new place" (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1269). In these visits, I received my participants' stories of college students moving back to our community and interpreted my meanings in a way that offered both my understanding of the

data while also producing a transparency about the research process that allows readers to make meaning (Kovach, 2018).

Hallett et al. (2017) found that conventional qualitative analysis techniques do not offer the space required for individual meaning making as was described by Apsáalooke Elders, “Community members indicated that breaking apart individuals’ stories was not culturally appropriate” (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1268). As such, Western qualitative analyses that involves word by word, line by line, and open coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) are not suited for this process. The data was not deconstructed and then reconstructed. Conversations were analyzed as a whole. “Through the process of coding by themes, the totality of the story and relationships within the narrative that cross themes are lost, and information describing a theme may take on different meaning when displayed outside of the surrounding information” (Hallett, 2017, p. 1268). Hallett and colleagues (2017) conclude that “combining sections of text in this manner is disrespectful to the storytellers and their stories as the integrity of individual stories is lost” (p. 1268). The research group also found that incompatibility arises during the removal of the participant’s voice. “When the identity of the individual is removed, the impact of the story is greatly decreased, as the connection between the individual receiving the story and the storyteller is lost.” (p. 1269). In my analysis and restorying of the conversations, participants were named and honored for what they had shared. Following Western research’s imposition of confidentiality would have resulted in disrespect, and possibly harm to the relationship the participant and I have. Kovach (2010 & 2018) explains that “our stories are our truth and knowledge” (p. 148) and in tribal cultures one must own their words as this protocol keeps us accountable to the collective group.

Using IRM, which is an emerging methodology, as my research framework resulted in evolutions about my methodology along the way. Chapter Three: Evolution on Methodology provides an accurate description of how my methodology evolved.

Credibility, Reciprocity, and Accessibility

Steps to establish credibility were taken. Credibility is the terminology used in IRM and is similar to the process of trustworthiness. The activities that supported credibility included prolonged engagement (established relationships), persistent observations, and triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). Prolonged engagement is satisfied by being raised and socialized in the Apsáalooke culture. Being an Apsáalooke person and being raised in the community had created the trust factor and following tribal protocol was evidence that I continue to follow our ways and can be trusted. Persistent observations have occurred throughout my lifetime and have given me a depth of understanding of the Apsáalooke ways.

Triangulation was approached differently than what is practiced in Western science. Contextual validation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was applied along with using different methods, sources and multiple investigators (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The multiple investigators were Dr. Kirsten Murray, dissertation chair, and Dr. Janine Pease, dissertation committee member and an Apsáalooke Nation citizen.

The pitfall of using these techniques to establish trustworthiness is described as “going native” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). In using an Indigenous research framework, the entire purpose is to “go native” or in most cases, stay native, and learn from my tribal knowledge system by following our tribal values and protocols.

Individuals were asked if they wanted to review and approve the sections of their transcripts used in the dissertation findings. If so, they were also able to make changes. Asking

participants to read their transcripts and giving them a chance to verify what is being said and edit or correct statements is a form of establishing validity and reliability in a Western approach. This process was offered but was not used by most individuals. It was optional because it did not follow the recommendations within the IRM literature (Chilisa, 2011; Kovach, 2008).

Reflexivity was also practiced capturing my personal reflections by reflexive journaling (Chilisa, 2012; Kovach, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reflexive journaling included observations, questions I had, thoughts and feelings that came up during the visits and analysis. Prompts that I used for reflexive journaling were concepts and ideas that stood out for me and were demonstrated or referenced during the conversations. It was important that I was aware of my experiences and perspective and how they could influence my process in interpreting data and the practice of reflexive journaling helped ensure my awareness around these areas.

Summary

The idea of returning home to one's tribal nation and giving back is a value held by many American Indian college students. Knowing more about tribal nation expectations of Apsáalooke college students returning home after college is valuable. Knowing these expectations can help guide students in their educational journeys and allow for tribal nations to voice the needs of their nation and better prepare integrating college students back into our tribal nation.

Conversations about expectations contribute to the values of relationships, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution.

Using an Indigenous Research Methodology was critical to understanding this experience as an Apsáalooke. IRM allows for the use of tribal epistemologies and belief systems, uses tribal protocols in gathering knowledge, and acknowledges the importance of tribal language and the structure it follows to better understand the context of conversations. IRM also aligns with my

perspective as a researcher and creates space for me to practice and apply research using my culture as my foundation.

In conducting this research, my hope was to meet the expectations of the four R's by honoring relationships within the Apsáalooke clan and kinship systems. Honoring the responsibility I have to my people. Practicing reciprocity by keeping the cyclical obligation that I owe to all of the people who have helped me. Most importantly, redistributing the knowledge I have gained not only in this research project but also in my educational and professional journey so I can share the knowledge with the next generation of educators and helpers. This research is a way for me to give back to the Apsáalooke Nation.

Chapter III: The Evolution of Methodology Using Apsáalooke Ways

“Dii aeakaawaleewik, heelak, baliwuuk. (I’ll go see you, we will talk.)”

My process as a researcher began when I was a child, before I knew I would be on the education path I am today. Built within the Apsáalooke culture is a method of teaching and learning. Our grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles teach us how to be quiet and observe what is going on. Sitting in silence and observing my environment is second nature because this way of learning was taught to me at an early age.

During my education, my way of learning through observation and listening was challenged. I was expected to speak on topics that I had no authority on and before I had gained a full understanding of them. I had begun to doubt myself and my way of learning and being. I unconsciously fought the pressure to speak before really knowing or understanding. I refused to compete against others in class by talking about how much I knew. Even though I fought with myself internally about speaking up, I stayed true to something that was built into my way of being and I would say nothing until called upon. It was during my graduate education where I developed an understanding about critical thinking and learning the importance of questioning information and not just accepting information at face value. I am thankful for my childhood teachings and have also learned to appreciate critical analysis and how to share the knowledge I have with others when it is appropriate. Both of these ways of knowing have prepared me to be a researcher.

As I progressed in my dissertation work, I embraced qualitative methods because they were closest to my way of learning. Qualitative researchers are charged to listen, observe, and analyze the stories and observations made. As I was still working to understand research from a Western perspective, I enrolled in a Native American Studies graduate class where the focus was

on Indigenous well-being through education. This course focused on gaining an understanding of the influence of culture on Indigenous people. Many of the class conversations were about how Indigenous languages are the foundation of our cultures and the roles of Indigenous language and culture in education settings. This class also introduced me to the concept of Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM). I was excited to learn about IRM because it gave me permission to use the ways I was taught to learn and provided the framework for knowledge gathering that aligned with my ways of knowing. IRM used Indigenous ways of gathering knowledge and focused on how knowledge gathered would benefit the community. My IRM research process would not only benefit my community, but also be instilled with the values of Crow cultural practices.

Before beginning the process of gathering knowledge, I had not adequately explained the procedures for how I would gather and make meaning of the knowledge shared with me. This was partially because using an IRM, I had planned to follow my own unique tribal protocols. I had guidance through Kovach (2009 & 2018) and Hallett et al. (2017) that provided the framework on how I would do this. The purpose of using an IRM is so that one can use their own tribal protocols; therefore, specific tribal methods are not described in IRM literature. I partially introduced tribal protocols during the research proposal phase because I had not fully described pieces of the process that have been intuitive to me all of my life. Making these innate tribal protocols explicit has been a process of slowing down, recognizing, and naming what is largely unspoken. Throughout this process, I have developed a full understanding of how important it is to describe what I intuitively know about gathering knowledge using Crow tribal protocols.

Similar to the experience of many Indigenous scholars who are learning to use IRM, I too had areas of the research component I had not fully understood. My comprehension of

qualitative methodologies was helpful in my development as many of the qualitative processes are iterative with IRM. Meaning making was one of the areas where I needed to further develop my understanding, utilizing both IRM and qualitative methods helped develop my comprehension. This chapter will describe the evolution of my methods of gathering knowledge and using analysis and interpretation to make meaning.

Research Practices and Protocol: Gaining a Clearer Understanding

In the evolution of my methodology using Apsáalooke ways to guide me, there were several discoveries I made. One discovery was linked to protocol and the other was terminology. Both protocol and terminology have now been updated to more accurately describe the research process.

Protocols

After receiving research approvals from the Vice-Secretary of the Crow Tribe Executive Branch, Little Big Horn College Institutional Review Board, and University of Montana Institutional Review Board, I followed Apsáalooke protocol in seeking out permission from an elder to begin my research. I had several obstacles connecting with people who I had originally planned to approach. When initially describing protocol, I planned to seek permission from an elder who was also my Clan Mother. When I ran into obstacles connecting with the elder I had hoped to see, I talked to my Dad about my process. As usual, he listened and asked who I was going to visit with and reminded me that my Auntie Lou was also my Clan Mother. In speaking with my Dad, I had also realized I had been consulting with an elder all along; my Dad has always been my cultural advisor. Ronald Beaumont Sr., my Dad, is the person I seek guidance from the most; especially when it comes to cultural matters. I started discussing ideas about my

research with him when I began the process. He has continually provided me with guidance and support.

In addition to my Dad, I also received permission to proceed with my research from both my Auntie Jennifer and Auntie Lou. Their permission looked a bit different from my father's and came in the form of guidance as they answered my questions and helped with my research. Reflecting on protocol made me realize the generation immediately ahead of me are now elders. Crow tribal protocol is different than the IRB protocol granting permission to proceed with research. My dad and aunties did not grant permission with a clear approval or denial, it was granted through their actions by providing advice with guidance and help in my research process. In consultation with Dr. Pease, she pointed out that I was seeking advice from highly knowledgeable elders and advice seeking is very much an Apsáalooke protocol, as well as advice giving (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). Kovach (2018) calls this relational action which includes Indigenous laws such as personal responsibilities, orality and movement, personal experience, and collective story (p. 229-230). Dr. Lanny Real Bird (1997) also describes how advice giving is used in the Crow paternal Clan System, "In a serious and important undertaking one will ask an Áassahke [Clan Father] or Ishbaaxia [Clan Mother] to advise, bless, and support him all the way (p. 195)." Dr. Real Bird adds, "Relations of a paternal clansman (Áassahke or Ishbaaxia) to a person must always be an expression of concern for his or her welfare by always being ready and willing to come when requested to advise, comfort, and pray for his recovery if ill, from his release of problem situations, ect." (p. 196).

Another revelation I had in process was about who I needed to visit with. As established in the dissertation proposal, I knew the importance of requesting visits with people I already had connections with. However, it wasn't until after receiving Institutional Review Board approval

and having permission to begin reaching out that I realized what Kovach (2009) was referring to when she wrote about the importance of having relationships in place. As I looked at the list categorized by criteria of the people I had hoped to visit with in my proposal, I realized what was more important than meeting these criterion of purposeful selection (Maxwell, 2013) was visiting with people I had already established trusting relationships with in my community. These are people I would typically have visits or conversations with. I then chose to reach out to those on my list who I felt the most connected to as a priority for participant selection, these are people I had authentic relationships with that have been built over a lifetime, not merely in title but authentic connections. This resulted in ten active participants for this study while continuing to meet the purposeful selection criteria of selecting individuals who represent average members of the population, and individuals who I can establish the most productive relationships and will best help me answer my research question (Maxwell, 2013).

My community membership is what allowed me to have the connections and trusting relationships I have with each individual I visited with. The strength of relationships with the community and people I visited was central to my research. Community membership is described as relational capitol by Kovach (2018) and was a central component that uniquely situated me to do this research and is important to acknowledge.

Another component related to protocol was the unspoken understanding of our cultural ways. Because of the established relationship I had with those I visited with; they knew I understood our cultural ways. This meant that in our visits, there were very few explanations or details given about Crow practices and protocols, it was known that I had cultural understanding.

Visits and Conversations

Indigenous Research Methods use storytelling, re-storying, and yarning as ways to describe conversational methods of gathering information (Archibald, 2008; Kovach, 2009; & Wilson, 2008). Tribal languages have words to describe this process. As a passive Crow speaker, not speaking the language but having an understanding of it, one way I knew how to describe this interaction in the English language is visiting. Visiting happens between people who have a close relationship, whether it be through kinship or friendship, and is a space for the conversational method of storytelling to happen. Visiting is how Crow people often refer to this method which includes storytelling as a way of gathering knowledge found in Indigenous research (Kovach, 2010).

To explain the essence of a visit or visiting, I called on DyAnna Three Irons who is my sister through Crow kinship and is someone I consult with about Crow language. DyAnna explained to me that there are several phrases to describe going to visit with someone. The phrases in the Crow language are translated to English as, “I will go see you,” or “We will drink coffee,” or “I will go inside of your house,” or “I will go see you, we will talk.” After DyAnna helped me identify how to describe this conversational method in our language, it was during my visit with my Auntie Lou that I was reminded how visiting, in its truest sense, is experienced and how visiting is one way we share story to help others.

Visiting is a deeper extension of the conversation method described in the proposal. Conversations were experienced differently from visits. Conversations more accurately describe some of the talks I had with individuals who spoke with me about my research question. Conversations were different from visits in that they took place in more public settings. There was very little time spent reconnecting before presenting the research question, and the conversation stayed focused there. There were still lighthearted moments and laughter in the

conversations, but they also kept more in line with the conversation protocol I developed for the proposal. During the conversations, it was more appropriate to look to the conversation protocol to help guide the interaction and keep it flowing. However, during visits, the conversation protocol was not as necessary because the conversation had a natural flow to it that included attention to the research, but also easily expanded into story, paused for meaningful reflections, and included elements of vulnerable emotional disclosure.

When describing visits and conversations, I made a conscious decision to stay away from terms like interview and data collection. These descriptions seemed very formal, and because of the relationships I have with each person who met with me, the words interview and data collection do not accurately describe the depth of the interactions or the layered relationships that go well beyond researcher and participant. This is also why I refer to each person by name or describe them as an individual; the name participant does not honor the relationship I have with each of them.

In addition to Indigenous conversational methods for gathering knowledge, Kovach (2009) also stresses the importance of relationship in regard to IRM. Reviewing the concepts of relationship and relational capital are important because they are at the core of “How we do Indigenous methodologies” (Kovach 2018. P. 223). Relational capital is having connections within your community and being trusted by the community. This relational aspect is central to conducting meaningful research in one’s community (Kovach, 2018).

While preparing the conversational protocol for IRB, I remember thinking about what I would say when I began contacting people to request a visit. When thinking about how I would naturally say this, I came up with, “I would like to *visit* with you about the question I am asking

for my research...” Developing and practicing the conversation protocol helped me realize the word visit was one way we described our conversational method and transfer of knowledge.

Description of Participants

I am connected to each of the ten individuals I visited with through Crow familial relationships. All of them are either my sisters, aunties, or cousins by blood, marriage, adoption, and Clan system.

All ten individuals reside on or near the Crow Nation and are members of the tribe. Each has acquired a college degree or has some college education. They also currently work in a professional capacity within our community or have retired from a career spent working with Apsáalooke. Nine of the individuals are women who are also mothers, aunties, and some are Kaalé (grandmothers) and great-grandmothers. Following Crow protocol, as a female it is more appropriate to visit with other women. However, one of the individuals is a male who is also a father, uncle, and my brother in Crow Way, making it acceptable for me to visit with him.

Because relational aspects are central when using Indigenous methodologies, it is important to define my relationship with each of the individuals I visited with. The types of relationships have certain responsibilities in the Crow culture as there are obligations depending on the relationship. These relationships are also important to how I went about selecting who I requested a visit with. Relationality also guided my decision to acknowledge each person by name showing respect for those who shared their stories and knowledge with me (Kovach, 2009). It is common practice among Crows to acknowledge the person who imparted their knowledge.

“I wanted to see my, my grandkids, my great grandkids to be successful in school and whatever they're doing. I want them to be successful and I still support them... I think that's one of the main issues that we have is, is the parents, expect the teacher, you know to work hard with the students and be on a good relationship.” -Linda Mae

Linda Mae Little Owl is a retired teacher. She spent her teaching career on the Crow Nation and alongside her husband, has served as pastors and ranchers on the Crow Indian Reservation. Linda Mae was one of the first bilingual teachers who created curriculum to teach the Crow language in our schools and also taught special education. Linda Mae is my husband's maternal grandmother. She is a sister to my husband's maternal grandfather. In Crow Way, Linda Mae is my mother-in-law.

“And I think they want them to be aware of our environment, what's going on and what's happening in the community.” – Reva

Reeva Little Owl-Not Afraid teaches Kindergarten at Crow Agency Public School. Reeva is an Army Veteran and is also married to a Big Horn District tribal legislator. Together they operate a family ranch along with helping her parents with their church. Reeva is an Auntie and Kaalé to many people, including my husband and our children. She is the daughter of Linda Mae and is my husband's maternal aunt. In Crow Way, Reeva is my mother-in-law.

“You're expected to change the world.”

Individual three was the only person who chose not to be named. This individual is a very humble person and I am appreciative of their time and respect their anonymity. This individual works in education on the Crow Indian Reservation.

*“So you have to understand the history of graduates coming back to the reservation...It's very emotional, we work so hard to be in the education system or the system where we go to college.”
– Auntie Jennifer*

Jennifer Flat Lip is a retired teacher who has taught at schools throughout the Crow Indian Reservation and at the college level. As a teacher, she was “dedicated to a lifetime of mastering pedagogy experiences with children, student teachers, and community and was dedicated to wanting to make a difference amongst our people.” Jennifer also worked for the

Crow Tribal Education Department for ten years. She has served on the school board for Pryor Public schools and remains a cultural educator for our Nation. I am related to Jennifer through my paternal grandmother and also by marriage through my paternal grandfather. Jennifer is my aunt and I refer to her as Auntie Jennifer honoring the special relationship we have.

"We're just encouraging you, we're here. We're not going any place...if anything, we're here for you." - Auntie Lou

Louella Merchant is a retired paraeducator who spent the last part of her career working at St. Charles Catholic School in Pryor. Louella is my paternal aunt and is my dad's sister in Crow Way. Their mothers are sisters and their grandmother took them both as her children when they were growing up, which is also a common practice among Crows. Louella is my aunt and is fondly known as Auntie Lou to all her nieces and nephews.

"We need to pay more attention to ourselves as Crow people, and what our ancestors did to preserve that for us to be here." -Roses

Olivia Roses Williamson is a small business owner of the Crow Nation and a graduate of the University of Montana. While she was an undergraduate at UM, I had the honor of working with her in my role as the Academic Advisor in Native American Studies. She is known to most as Roses. She and my younger sister are close friends and grew up together. Roses and her mother were adopted into the Tobacco Society by my mother-in-law, the late Theda Smart Enemy, this is also an important kinship relationship to acknowledge. I am also related to Roses through my maternal grandmother and she would be my sister in Crow way.

"They somehow see these graduates with, they view them as hope, you know that they're going to come back." -Lorri

Lorri Old Coyote Not Afraid is a rancher of the Crow Nation. Alongside her husband and three daughters, they operate a cattle and horse ranch. I worked with Lorri at Little Big Horn College where we became good friends. I also assisted her daughter and her late son-in-law

while they were students at UM. Lorri's uncle, the late Barny Old Coyote and my grandfather, the late Phillip Beaumont Sr. were close friends. The Old Coyote family and my husband's family, the Smart Enemys are closely related. In Crow Way, Lorri is also my in-law.

"I just wanted to make it better. Especially for kids..." -DyAnna

DyAnna Three Irons works in Crow language preservation. She also assists her partner with Crow Tribal Government business, as he is currently the Vice-Secretary of the Crow Nation. DyAnna and I have known each other most of our lives and became close friends when we attended graduate school together working on our Master's in School Counseling. From there our friendship grew and our three daughters also became good friends. DyAnna has provided much guidance and assistance to me throughout my research process, especially around questions I have about Crow language. She translates Apsáalooke words and phrases for me anytime I ask. During this process, DyAnna's mom shared with her that my paternal grandmother and DyAnna's grandmother were both raised by my paternal great-grandmother. They were raised as sisters and so this makes DyAnna and I sisters in the Crow Way.

"Our clan system is really important... they say good wishes for you will come true and I'm a firm believer in that." – Sampson

Sampson DeCrane currently serves as an Arrow Creek (Pryor) District Legislator for the Crow Nation. He also serves on the Pryor Public School Board and has worked for several tribal programs throughout his career. Sampson and I grew up together and attended the same school most of our lives. My paternal grandfather and Sampson's maternal grandmother were brother and sister. Sampson would be my brother in the Crow Way.

"I always just felt blessed to be able to take care of our people." – Nicole

Nicole Merchant Turns Plenty is a Family Nurse Practitioner who has worked as a nurse providing care to American Indian people her entire career. She has dedicated her life to

improving healthcare for American Indians. Nicole is the daughter of Louella Merchant; we grew up side by side and have experienced every joy and hardship together. Nicole is my sister.

Requesting Visits

Reaching out to request a visit was done the way I would have typically reached out if I was trying to connect to a relative or friend for a casual visit. I sent Facebook messages and text messages asking people to visit with me. The messages were personalized to each person aligning with the relationship I have with them. In some cases, I was asking daughters and granddaughters to check and see if individuals had time to visit with me. In some requests, I included more information on my research. For others who I had been visiting with all along about my doctoral work, I only asked if I could visit with them about my schoolwork. Each of the responses had great examples of the relationship in the Crow way. One example of relationship and Crow protocol that stood out for me most was when I sent a Facebook message to my sister-in-law Roses Little Owl and asked her to visit with her Mom and Kaalé. Part of her response was, “They will make time for you.” As my mothers-in-laws, this was a request they couldn’t decline out of the respect and love they have for my husband. Following Crow protocol, they won’t tell me no. I hadn’t considered this until I read Roses’ response and remembered the level of importance when asking something of my in-laws. This is an example of why our relationships are important, not only in the research, but before and after the research is done. This is also why IRM researchers emphasize the importance of approaching the work respectfully (Kovach, 2009).

Once I had confirmation each person was willing and available to visit I then asked them when and where they would like to meet. I wanted to be sure to be respectful of their time and meet in a location that was convenient to them. The Crow Indian Reservation encompasses 2.2

million acres and the communities are spread out from as close as five miles to over 100 miles apart, and I traveled to locations of their choosing. Visits happened in their homes, at the public library, in a cafe, in a church, and at the local high school. One visit took place over video conference.

Following Crow protocol, visiting begins with an initial request. One example of this protocol was when I called my Auntie Lou and told her I wanted to visit with her about my research. She responded with, “I will call you when I get home so you can come over.” The invite to her home had two meanings. The first is that she was fulfilling her duties of being my aunt by helping me. The second meaning was giving me permission to learn more about this topic. If she had disapproval of my inquiry, she would have helped me by redirecting me to a topic she approved of. This process set up our visit.

Structure of Visits

An invitation to one’s home or an agreed upon meeting place and time are part of the protocol. Being respectful of one’s home and their time is always important, but especially when asking something from them. Once the meeting arrangements are established and it is time for the visit, time is first spent catching up and reconnecting. Depending on the closeness of the relationship, this can be brief or can last for hours. Depending on the type of visit, much laughter usually takes place during this reconnection. The individuals I visited with gave me a verbal cue when they were ready to transition to my research topic. My question was answered through story. Stories about their own experience and others’ experiences, mostly family members, were shared. The tone when reflecting on the research question becomes calmer and slower and less laughter is exchanged.

One example of this structure was the visit I had with my Auntie Lou. Once my Auntie Lou contacted me to let me know she was available, I drove to meet with her at her house. We spent time catching up and laughing. When My Auntie Lou was ready to talk about my research question, she said “Lets go to the kitchen table.” Throughout my life, my Auntie Lou’s kitchen table is where most of our visiting sessions took place and I knew when I sat at the table we would be there for a while because there would be lots of visiting taking place. We started in my Auntie Lou’s usual fashion, talking about the family and her catching me up on what the latest news was. It was comfortable and familiar. We were in her home, a place where many family gatherings take place and her kitchen table is where many lessons have been shared.

During our visit, my Auntie Lou rarely talked about herself and her experience. She didn’t even mention that she was a retired paraeducator and that she had worked at St. Charles Mission school for many years. Her focus remained on her children and grandchildren, which is a common practice among Crows. Crows are taught not to speak of our own accomplishments, we have Clan Father’s and Elders who do that for us, just as my Auntie Lou did that for her own children and grandchildren. Seeing my Auntie demonstrate this was a reminder of Crow cultural practices and helped guide how I listened to other’s stories when asking my research question. My visit with my Auntie Lou was a good reminder of what the essence of “visiting” truly is in our culture. I am happy that I had this time with my Auntie, she reminded me what relationship and visiting looked like in the Crow culture and also the comfort visiting created. Reflecting about our visit made me think about the lesson I was meant to learn from it, I believe it was exactly that: the reminder of what knowledge gathering looks like in the Crow Way.

When I later went to visit with my sister DyAnna, this process was repeated. It began with the initial request of me asking to come over to visit. My request was followed by DyAnna

inviting me to her home, offering me food and something to drink while we spent time catching up on the latest news before focusing in on the research question.

Visiting Procedures

After we spent time reconnecting and as we transitioned the visit to the research question, I would then go through the informed consent. The informed consent described how I would use the information they shared with me. At this time, I also asked if it was okay to identify them by their name or if they wanted their identity to remain confidential. I only had one person ask to be kept confidential. Once I had consent to record the visit, I would start the voice recorder. Visits and conversations were then recorded in their entirety. There were two times when two separate individuals became emotional and they both asked me to pause the recording. As the recording was paused, I offered support with hugs and words and did not continue until they gave me permission.

Voice recordings were transcribed using the Otter application and visits with background noise were transcribed by an online service called TranscribeMe. I listened to all voice recordings and corrected any errors on the transcripts and edited for accuracy. All recordings and transcripts were stored on password protected hard-drives and backed up on University approved cloud storage that is also password protected.

Questions Guiding the Visits and Conversations

A conversation protocol was developed (See Appendix C) for the IRB process and to prepare for the visits. After piloting the conversation protocol method and receiving feedback about the flow of it, I consulted Dr. Kirsten Murray about the uncomfortable nature and jarring flow of the protocol. She had asked me to think about how I would more naturally ask the questions. I then shared how I had anticipated to ask the main research question and then follow

the lead of the individual I was visiting with but would refer to the protocol if I needed to do more follow up during the visit. Kovach (2018) writes, “Conversations manifest as semi structured dialogue...the conversation has a focus with prompt questions but is allowed to unfold organically. The storyteller is granted the power to tell his or her story on his or her own terms.” (p. 226). Kovach’s description of how to use a conversational method in IRM is reflective of the process I experienced in the visits and conversations.

During the first visit, the conversation protocol was my guide throughout the visit. As the visits progressed and I became more familiar and comfortable asking the research question clearly, it usually only took the first question to gather information and hear stories.

The question I always began with is the main research question, “When students come back home from college, what are some of the expectations our people have for them?” As I gathered stories, the question evolved. Below are the questions taken from the visit transcripts:

What I'm trying to get to an understanding about is, we prepare them to go to school to go to college right. We have trio upward bound, gear up and then they get in school and we have all these other support programs but then there's like no transition home. And so how do we prepare our students who have gone away to school to come back and work in our community?

I'll ask some follow up questions but, really, I just want to hear what your thoughts and experiences are around what you think our community needs from students who come home from college if they're planning on coming home to work?

[W]hat I'm trying to really understand is, when our students go away to college and they come back home and they plan to work, as community members already established in our profession or just in the community, what are some things you think about when you, when you see them come home?

Each visit and conversation is rich, with in-depth stories and reflections on the experiences of college students from the Apsáalooke Nation. It was evident to me when I completed the visits that I had gained a wealth of knowledge. Each individual’s story was not a brief concise answer, it is full of context and is a complete story that has full body expression. I

eagerly began the process of analysis and interpretation excited about applying a mixed methods approach to learning more about my findings.

Unexpected Processes in Methodology

Using Indigenous research methods and Apsáalooke epistemology there were components of the methodology that I knew would appear but was not expecting the level of importance each component would play. These unexpected components include loyalty to the concept of story, the level of emotion shared during individual stories, and the generosity people showed by inviting me into their homes and candidly sharing their experiences, observations, and ideas with me.

In regard to generosity of sharing their stories, this generosity was demonstrated by stories that were intergenerational, deep sharing of stories. The level of sharing and the sense of breadth and depth of knowledge shared was unexpected. One example of this is presented in Chapter IV when my Aunt Jennifer talks about the trauma her father experienced in boarding school. Although it is common in Crow Way for us to share our loved one's experiences if we have been told them or witness to them, the depth of the intergenerational stories shared were unexpected. This is important to note because it relates to the deep connections I have with each of the individuals I visited with. The lifetime connection I have with them allowed me to hear their intergenerational and sometimes highly emotional stories. This is a gift that goes beyond academic research and connects to the relationality Kovach (2018) describes as it is a core element to IRM.

Using Indigenous Research Methods and Situational Analysis

Kovach (2009) describes using a mixed methods approach when using an Indigenous inquiry alongside a Western approach of analysis. Indigenous Research Methodologists are in

process when it comes to developing analysis protocol that meet research community standards (Kovach, 2009). A mixed method approach can be necessary while negotiating methods of analysis within Indigenous methodology structures. When considering the recent introduction of IRM into academic circles, a mixed method serves as a way of bridging familiar Western academic requirements into indigenous ways of knowing. My understanding of mixed methods in connection with IRM did not become clear until I came into the analysis phase of my research, and chose an allied analysis model using Situational Analysis (Clarke, 2005; Clarke, 2018). My research approach, therefore, utilizes elements of qualitative research methodology informed by Clarke's (2005, 2018) Situational Analysis (SA) and Indigenous Research Methodology (Absolon, 2008; Archibald, 2008; Chilisa 2012; Hallett et al., 2017; Kovach 2009; Kovach, 2010; Kovach, 2015; Kovach, 2018; Wilson, 2008) to create a mixed methods approach. Mixed method in this context is IRM's interpretive approach allied with thematic analysis (Kovach, 2018). Using Indigenous methods for gathering information through listening to story and learning through observation was then followed by using interpretation and representation guided by a Situational Analysis framework to make meaning. This mixed methods approach will be seen in my writing about analysis and interpretation as I jump between Western research language and IRM. In the following description of my evolution of methods, I will describe components that IRM and SA hold in common, and also identify where they add different strengths to my approach, primarily in the analysis and interpretation phases.

Self-in-Relation

Both Indigenous and qualitative methodologies are aimed at developing an understanding using relational and interpretive approaches. The practice of reflexivity allows the researcher to utilize self-reflection in the meaning-making process. Using relational and interpretation

approaches aligned with tribal epistemology creates space for understanding experiences of Indigenous people using our ways of knowing and sharing knowledge.

Kovach (2009) writes that Indigenous methodologies can be “situated within the qualitative landscape because they encompass characteristics congruent with other relational qualitative approaches” (p. 25). Both approaches include reflexivity and are interpretive using the researcher as the central instrument in the meaning-making process. As the research instrument, I must honor the stories that are shared with me and find their meaning in relationship to my question. These “stories have power...and what we do with the stories matters” (Kovach, 2019, p. 226). As the interpreter and holder of participant stories, I must continually locate myself in relationship to the data. Reflexivity becomes a central process in both qualitative and IRM methodologies.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is important to both Indigenous and qualitative methods. Reflexivity is the researcher’s self-reflection in the meaning making process and serves as a means of identifying bias within the research (Kovach, 2009). In this process, the researcher reflects upon both knowledge gathering, interpretation, and analysis processes. Throughout my research process, I practiced reflexivity both internally (my own reflections and memoing) and externally (discussions I had with people familiar with my research process). Detailed descriptions of my reflexivity practices follow below.

Weekly meetings with Dr. Kristen Murray. Weekly meetings began early in the research process. Dr. Murray and I would meet weekly and discuss our understandings of IRM as we navigated learning about the methodology and implementing the practices for the first time. Dr. Murray created the space for me to come to my own understanding of IRM allowing

me to teach her what I knew. In return she would pose reflective questions that created further development in my understanding of IRM.

This process continued through the analysis and interpretation of my research. It became common practice for us to record our conversations as I would describe my process of meaning making. Some sessions would include me explaining my situational maps to her and she would ask questions that furthered my development in making meaning of stories. When I began to write, I could refer back to the voice recordings. This helped me remember how I described a process or relationship and also provided more space to reflect on my understanding.

Cultural consultations. When I set out to utilize an IRM, I was required to reflect on my understanding of Crow knowledge through cultural practices and protocols. I greatly utilized people closest to me who included my husband John Hill, my sister DyAnna Three Irons, and my parents Ron and Marcia Beaumont. In addition, I frequently consulted the Crow Resources page on the Little Big Horn Library website and the online Crow dictionary developed by the Crow Language Consortium.

I had frequent conversations with John about cultural practices and his knowledge of Crow Ways shared with him by his grandparents. DyAnna was always available to me, especially when I had questions about the use of Crow language. It was important for me to incorporate as much language as I could. As a passive Crow speaker, which was a term I learned from DyAnna, I wanted to incorporate Apsáalooke words and phrases that would bring more meaning to processes and concepts I was learning and writing about. Finally, my parents have always provided me with direction and guidance. They continued to do so throughout the research process providing me with explanations about Crow history and cultural practices. The

conversations I had with my husband, sister, and parents were sources that helped in the reflexivity process that cultivated conversations and served as protocol checks.

The LBHC Crow resources webpage provided a wealth of information about Crow history and culture. I referenced the page to find cultural stories including the Apsáalooke Creation story and the meaning of the tipi. Both of these are included in my interpretation of the findings.

Reflexive Journaling. While the weekly meetings and cultural conversations were external processes, I also practiced my own self-reflection through reflexive journaling. Dr. Murray had pointed out that part of my learning process was dialoging. Because of this, she encouraged me to voice record my reflections and questions. I would use the Otter application which recorded and transcribed my voice memos. I would then upload the transcriptions and created a journal file that I would refer to when I needed to recall my thought process around my own reflections and questions. Below are a couple examples of how I used reflexive journaling in the knowledge gathering process.

Notable experience during and after visits. First journal on the way to visits: As I made the drive home, I was anxious about the journey I was taking. My anxiousness came from worry about not knowing who I would speak with and what I would learn, followed by an overwhelming feeling of responsibility of not only gathering information but also feeling worried about following proper protocol and being respectful. Wanting so badly to be sure and get it right. I wanted to prepare myself to be a ready to listen and learn from my visits, I pulled up the video recording of a keynote presentation by Kovach (2019) from the American Indigenous Research Association Conference where she shared her work on the Indigenous Paradigm. Listening to her keynote gave me a refresher on Indigenous Methodology and provided a sense of reinsurance that I did know what I was doing. I then listened to a lecture given by Pease (2019) about Apsáalooke Women Chiefs and Leaders and then listened to Crow hymns. All of these audio recordings centered me to focus on my research task as well as reminding me to trust in the process. As my six hour drive came to an end, I felt ready to listen and be present in each moment and with each person who would graciously share their time, knowledge, and experience with me.

Final journal before last visit: When I was driving to Pryor for last visit, I reflected on the generosity of the people I visited with who shared their stories with me. Dale and

Janine's words about meaning making were always at the forefront of my mind as I was listening to their stories. I said a prayer and thanked Akabaatadía (God) for having this opportunity and for being Apsáalooke.

Notable experiences of analysis. Journal entry: I am now synthesizing the messy maps. As I do this, I am recalling the conversation I had with Linda Mae and also thinking about the reflection I had with KM about what her map was saying to me. It wasn't clear to me at first, I wasn't hearing what I think she wanted me to hear about education on the reservation. She repeated several times in several different ways that a good/positive relationship with the teacher was important. She gave many examples of this and it wasn't until I talked with KM who pointed out to me that she was showing me what was important in a person's education foundation and that was having a good relationship with their teacher. If a student had this, they would live up to their potential and be successful. This success would then spill into other areas of their life and keep them in school. In this process, I am practicing a process that D. Old Horn talked about in Hallett et al in that it is up to the receiver to hear what they need to hear from a lesson, and it is up to that person to make sense of it. I wasn't able to do this all on my own, I needed to be able to talk this through with KM who helped me find the meaning.

Keeping track of self-reflections was very helpful in my analysis and interpretation processes. Reflexive journals helped me keep track of the order of events and what I was thinking about at specific phases of the research process.

Analysis and Interpretation

To help with my analysis of the visits and conversations, I used a process of thematic grouping called Situational Analysis (Clarke, 2018). This particular analysis was an allied approach to the Indigenous method of interpretation and representation (Kovach, 2018). The Situational Analysis method involves looking at the data represented holistically rather than dissecting visits with coding and bracketing, "reducing a whole to the sum of its parts" (Kovach 2009, p.130). Using Situational Analysis as an allied approach aligned nicely with Kovach's position rejecting word-by-word and line-by-line analysis. The goal of situational mapping analysis never moves away from considering the visit as a whole, as it requires you to "lay out all of the human and nonhuman elements in the situation of inquiry" (Clarke, 2018, p. 127).

Situational Analysis

Using the Situational Analysis (SA) mapping method as my framework for analysis, I began by reviewing Clarke's analysis method (Clarke, 2005; Clarke, 2018). Situational Analysis (SA) maps are narratives that provide "'the big picture' about the situation under study" (Clarke, 2018, p. 104). The "situation," defined by Clarke (2018) involves "enduring arrangements of relations among many different kinds and categories of elements that has its own ecology" (p. 17). There are three kinds of SA maps used in this approach: the Situational map, Social worlds/arenas maps, and Positional maps. In my analysis, I primarily used Situational mapping. The focus of the Situational map is to identify all of the major elements in the situation being studied. *Elements* are all of the pertinent human and non-human, material, and symbolic pieces of a situation (Clarke, 2005). Elements include attributes in the data such as issues, qualities, situations, and relationships. The Situational map allows the researcher to analytically attend to what is in the situation as a whole and to the smaller parts of a situation, later examining the relations among them transitioning to relational mapping (Clarke, 2018).

Clarke's Situational Analysis has evolved from her initial introduction; I began learning about the analysis using earlier works. In early works, Clarke (2005) describes the maps as analytical exercises with a major focus on "'opening up' the data and interrogating it in fresh ways" (Clarke, 2005, p. 83). The analytic exercises' goal is to get the researcher "moving into and then around in the data" (Clarke, 2005, p. 84). The purpose of this exercise is to stimulate one's thinking and so should be accompanied by memoing. Clarke (2005) recommends audio recording your memos so that you can speak while you layout the maps and gather a holistic picture of the data. Memoing includes notes about areas that need more analytic attention, inadequate data needing further information, and noting areas of interest. Memoing is the

approach of analytical note making throughout the research project (Clarke, 2018). Memoing records new insights, signals emphasis shifts, and details further direction in the approach (Clarke, 2005).

Analysis Exercises

My analysis exercises process included mapping, memoing, identifying common elements, and describing versions of maps to my dissertation chair, Dr. Murray. Using the Situational Analysis mapping method helped uncover main focuses and elements from my visits and conversations as I analyzed the data and maintained a reflexive process (See Appendices F and G).

I began the analytic exercise process by creating **Abstract Situational Maps** using **Messy/Working** versions of the map for *each* person I visited with (Clarke, 2005). A total of ten messy maps were created in this process and each individual messy map represented a visit I had. The messy maps include all of the analytically pertinent human and non-human elements shared during the visit; everything I thought might matter went on the map. The ten messy maps were created as I listened to the audio recording of the transcript following the order the visits took place. As I listened to the separate audio recordings and reviewed transcripts, I wrote down each element that was talked about. Most elements were written using the exact words used by the individual. Occasionally I would summarize the element using my own words if the element was not specifically named. Next to each element I would note the line number from the transcript so that I could easily find the element when I needed to refer back to it. Immediately after I created a map, I would write up a memo and include my thoughts and ideas that came up as I reviewed the visits.

After creating a messy map for each individual (10 maps in total), I reviewed several of the messy maps with Dr. Murray. We started with Dr. Murray asking me to look at Reva's messy map, "You tell me the story. What is your interpretation of what Reva told you? Look at the messy map, how do you tell her story?" I began by looking for a starting point on the map that helped me tell Reva's story. I then talked about elements on the map that stood out for me. I repeated this exercise with each of the messy maps.

The **Ordered/Working Situational Maps** are the second type of Abstract Situational mapping I utilized in this process. This map is made using the messy map as data and begins as a photocopy of the original messy map. SA recommends making copies of maps and dating each version, keeping all versions of the maps for reference. I chose to use Reva's messy map to lead me through this process.

I created the first Ordered/Working map listening to the recording of my discussion with Dr. Murray as I described Reva's messy map to her. On Reva's ordered map, I wrote down the descriptive words that came up during the summary of Reva's messy map. The descriptive words were a combination of single words or phrases that helped me recall the story behind the word. Visually I saw a single word or phrase but cognitively I was thinking about the story associated with it. The process of summarizing and synthesizing maps led me to naming categories of key elements. I then decided to color code the main categories found on Reva's ordered map. These overarching categories are named *focuses* in SA, I have also referred to them as *major concepts*. I also referred back to transcripts to remind myself why I wrote a specific word or phrase to make sure I understood the concept attached to the focus or element.

Using the color coding from Reva's ordered map, I then went to the other photocopied maps that I used as the order map version and color-coded similar elements that aligned with the

overarching categories identified on Reva's ordered map. The use of colors to connect the focus and elements on each of the ordered maps helped me visually identify common elements and their frequency.

This first round of synthesis resulted in the following focuses: Expectations, College Students Coming Home, Community, Roles, Barriers, and Family Responsibilities. These categories were later synthesized into four focuses that will be named in the final findings.

After the ordered/working map was created, the next analytical exercise was to create a **Relational map** (Clarke, 2018). I then used the analytic exercise of relational mapping as the primary mapping strategy in my examination of focuses and elements. This analysis exercise requires attention to how elements are connected. Lines are drawn between foci and elements depicting relationships and descriptions of how and why they matter to one another.

Many of the relationships among the elements and foci I made, came from the verbal processes I had with Dr. Murray during our weekly meetings. The verbal process of sharing the story of a map helped me make connections between elements. Talking about the maps was an important step in the relational analyses process. As I described the maps, Dr. Murray would ask questions that helped me make further connections in the relational analyses. Again, it became important for me to remember our discussions, so we began recording our weekly meetings. This allowed me to avoid being distracted by stopping to take notes or to write down new thoughts or connections. I could later go back and listen to the new discoveries that came up in our conversations. The audio recordings and memoing helped me keep track of the relational components in the situations shared during visits.

Components of the two other types of SA maps can be found in the relational maps I created. Elements of Social World/Arena mapping can be seen throughout my mapping process

(Clarke, 2018). The Social World/Arena maps layout all of the major groups, organizations, institutions from the visits and conversations, while also noting their influence and relationships in what had been mapped. My final map also included components of a Positional map; this map plots positions articulated and not articulated in the major discourse in the situations about issues of concern and often contestation (Clarke, 2018). Each person's visit had elements of their position reflected in the relational maps that were either described or I had interpreted because of my familiarity with the issues and perspectives in the community. The foci, realities of returning home and expectations of Apsáalooke, are built around represented perspectives. The elements in these foci are based on experiences and observations of the individuals I visited with.

The process of SA mapping allowed me to identify the foci and relationships between elements through drawing lines connecting elements. The practice of drawing then led me to sketch an image of the tipi used in my interpretation. The physical act of drawing helped me “really think through my data” linking both processes to each other (Clarke, 2018, p. 140).

Interpretation and Representation in IRM

In research we are representing a story (Kovach, 2018). In writing about our research, we are “re-storying through our own lens, gaze, and perspective” (Kovach, 2018, p. 227).

Representation of the story in Indigenous research matters and is achieved through writing about it responsibly. Writing responsibly can be translated to accurately representing the story as this respects individuals' dignity, voice, and experience on their terms (Kovach, 2018, p. 227).

Kovach states, “Why does this matter? It matters because our stories are our truth and knowledge. It is about standing behind one's words and recognizing collective protocol, that one is accountable for one's words” (Kovach, 2009, p. 148). Accurate representation is also important because of the history Indigenous people have with being exploited by non-Indigenous

researchers. Among the Apsáalooke people, words are sacred and so it is very important to be responsible with the words you chose to share because they are a representation of who you are. Crow people often link thoughts and ideas to the person who said them when sharing with others what was said.

One way Kovach (2018) describes writing responsibly with representation is by using interpretive approaches. Once my analysis was completed and findings identified, I was charged with writing about them. Following Kovach's direction of framing my findings using a tribal metaphor helped realign my analysis with an Indigenous epistemology. Kovach (2009) largely embraces data interpretation using IRM: "I draw your attention to re-storying or interpretation and representation within Indigenous methodologies. This aspect of Indigenous methodologies requires further thought, dialogue, and writing" (p. 218) which is the reason a mixed method approach is used here. A mixed method approach in the analysis where tribal epistemology is used in the process of interpretive meaning-making combined with Western approach of analysis that includes thematic grouping.

Guiding my interpretation were the words spoken by Dale Old Horn, "An individual is responsible for receiving the story and discovering how it applies to their own experience" (Hallett et al., 2017, p. 1269). This responsibility is both receiving the story with cultural understandings and in context (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). As I began my interpretation, I kept going back to these words as they would refocus and guide my understanding of the information shared with me during the visits and conversations. Another component guiding my interpretation was my knowledge about our Crow culture. My understandings of our culture helped me make meaning of the stories that were shared with me.

Cultivating Holistic Meaning through Story

Analysis and interpretation together helped me make meaning of my findings. One example of how both processes assisted my own meaning making is an Apsáalooke story Roses Williamson shared with me about Corn Tassel. This story will be further explained in the findings, however it is important to use this example to understand my process of holistic meaning. As Roses shared this story with me, I felt appreciative of the knowledge she was sharing regarding tribal history and culture. When I was in the SA mapping phase I noted this story as an element because it was significant to me. The story was also important as it was a relational element to an overarching category in my findings. These two processes brought me to understand how I made meaning in regard to the teaching of Dale Old Horn (Hallett et al., 2017).

Hearing the story of Corn Tassel, my responsibility as the receiver of knowledge is to make meaning of the information shared with me. This was one way I began to understand how Indigenous Research methods work, and is an example of how everything from our tribal stories, practices, and traditions all connect together. It was through the full process that began with listening to the story, followed by transcribing the visit, then memoing about the visit, then mapping the elements of the visit, and finally writing about the visit before I was able to understand and make meaning of the significance of the story being shared with me.

Kovach (2018) explains this process:

With re-storying in Indigenous methodologies, it is necessary to be mindful of Indigenous epistemology and the beliefs that Indigenous people hold about knowledge creation...Knowledge arises from multiple and multidimensional sources and through holistic, nonfragmented processes. Knowledge arises as a result of interconnectivity and has a fluidity and movement to it. Thus, in Indigenous methodologies, the forms of re-storying and representation will invite interpretation and representations that may be broad ranging (p. 227).

Crow epistemology is shared through story, and the use of story creates meaning. I relied on the stories of Corn Tassel and Yellow Leggings to help me cultivate meaning and understanding in my interpretation of the research.

Apsáalooke Tipi Metaphor

Metaphors are how we, as Indigenous people, learn and connect to the world. The tribal metaphor I used in the interpretation process helps me present my research findings. These metaphors are a reflection of knowledge creation. Learning the story of how the tipi was gifted to the Apsáalooke is a way to share my findings in a way that makes sense to Apsáalooke Nation members, and the tipi metaphor is now the conceptual frame for my findings. This conceptual frame is “a way to interpret, re-Story, and present” my research (Kovach, 2018, p. 228).

Summary

Applying a mixed methods approach using both the Situational Analysis framework and interpretation using the Apsáalooke tipi helped me solidify my findings when asking the question of my community about their expectations of college students returning home. The importance of culture, experience, realities, and expectations became evident in using a mixed methods approach.

Chapter IV: Findings Using Visits and Conversations

“It's a hard life and it's harder because the land [can no longer support us], our parents and grandparents lived off [the land] but that's not going to happen. So if you want something really bad you have to work for it. And we're here, we'll help you as much as we can and we do.”
-Auntie Lou

During visits and conversations, the Apsáalooke people who I met with shared many stories accompanied by tears, laughter, and moments of silence when asked about expectations of those who attend college and come home to help our people. Most of the stories focus on family members and other relatives who have gone off to college but each person also had a story about their own college experience. Their personal story was woven into what they shared of their hopes and wishes for our people and how education contributes to our communities of the Crow Nation.

After transcribing the conversations, I used Situational Analysis mapping to interpret the story of Apsáalooke people's expectations for students who come home after college. The mapping analysis exercises used align well with Indigenous knowledge systems and the exercises are respectful to the practice of storying and keeping the totality of story intact and not breaking them apart. This analysis helps tell the story of those who use their education to help our people. The story includes both the experiences of Crow people returning home from college, the expectations for college educated people when we return home, and the critical situational factors that cannot be separated from these experiences and expectations.

During my analysis of data from these visits and conversations, I identified four primary concepts in the story of Crow people returning home from college. The number four, *shoopé*, is an important number for the Apsáalooke people. I find it fitting that my analysis was narrowed down to four major concepts out of hundreds of elements Apsáalooke people shared describing the experience and expectations of returning home from college. The significance of the number

four to the Apsáalooke people is grounded in the representation of harmony and balance. This balance can be seen in the four stages of life, the four seasons, the four sacred elements (earth, air, fire, water), the four directions, and the four major religions of the Apsáalooke (Real Bird, 1997). The number four, shoopé, is sacred because when things come in four there is balance.

The four major concepts in my analysis include **(1) Crow culture and identity, (2) the college student experience, (3) expectations of the Apsáalooke people and (4) the realities of returning home.** These four concepts describe the situations a college student encounters and begins to clarify what returning students can expect when they come home to the Crow Nation. Using the Apsáalooke tipi as a metaphor to explain my findings connects important elements of the tipi to the major concepts found in my research.

The Apsáalooke Tipi

The Apsáalooke word for tipi is ashé and means home. The story of Yellow Leggings, who brought the tipi to the Crows, provides an explanation for each component of a tipi (See Appendix H). Crow tipis are erected using twenty-one poles, each of the poles is a representation of meaningful elements in Crow culture. The four base poles signify the four seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter while the poles at each side of the tipi's entrance signify the Grizzly Bear and Mountain Lion described in Yellow Leggings' story as protectors of the tipi. At the rear of the lodge, where the tipi covering is tied, is the Chief pole representative of the owner of the tipi. The two poles to each side of the Chief pole are called Helper poles referring to helpers in the natural world and spiritual realm. The remaining intertwined tipi poles symbolize sacred items of the lodge owner, the ten lunar months of pregnancy (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995).

The cover of an Apsáalooke tipi is white and represents purity, as Yellow Leggings was instructed not to allow anything bad or evil to touch the tipi. The stakes and pins used to hold the

tipi to the ground were later gifted to Big Metal by the badger. The badger explained that his claws could dig into the earth and there would be no force that could move him from his home, not even strong winds could knock down the tipi (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995).

I chose to use the Apsáalooke tipi as a metaphor to explain my findings because of the symbolism within the structure of the Crow tipi (See Appendix I and J). The tipi, in its entirety, represents **Crow culture and identity**. Each element of a tipi has significance much like each element of Apsáalooke culture has a purpose. The tipi stakes gifted by the badger represent the systems within the Crow culture including the family and Clan system that instills Crow identity in oneself. Being Crow, one's primary identity, keeps individuals connected to the community and ensures that one will use their education to help the Crow people.

The two outer poles used to move the smoke flaps on the tipi represent **the college student experience**. These outer poles symbolize sentries that watch the home and warn of evil or bad things. The sentry poles represent the student experience in that students returning home use their education to guard and protect their people by equipping themselves with skills and knowledge.

The tipi stakes gifted to Big Metal by the badger are meant to hold down the tipi from strong winds and other outside elements. These outside elements represent the **realities of returning home** Apsáalooke people encounter in our tribal community today. These realities are the hardships that exist and are directly linked to colonization, historical trauma, and boarding school experiences. The tipi stakes gifted to Big Metal represent Apsáalooke staying grounded in our culture to protect us from these outside elements.

The tipi poles represent the **expectations Apsáalooke people** have for college educated members of the tribe. Specifically, the poles between the four base poles represent wellbeing,

health, good fortune, and wealth. The representation of these poles can be connected to the outcomes of obtaining a college education. The twenty-one tipi poles as a collective can be described as a representation of the expectations of college students to contribute to building tribal infrastructure that supports the tribe.

The four base poles also have an important representation related to the area of Crow Country, “I have but one tipi. It has but four poles . . . My east lodge pole touches the ground at the Black Hills, my south, the ground at the headwaters if the Wind River, my west, the snow-capped Absorke and Beartooth Range, the north lodge poles resting on the Bear Paw Mountains” (Two Leggings, 2007, see section 3.5 Famous Speeches.)

Interpretation using the Apsáalooke Tipi

Using the Apsáalooke tipi metaphor to help understand the four major concepts aligns with using Indigenous epistemology in the research process. Each major concept is connected to an element of the tipi. Each element of the tipi has significance much like each major concept has a role in answering my research question. **Figure 1** represents the Apsáalooke tipi as a metaphor to describe the major concepts and elements identified in my findings.

The importance of **Crow culture and identity** is linked to both the **college student experience** and **realities of returning home**. **Expectation of Apsáalooke** are directly linked to **Crow Culture and identity** and also have connections to the **college student experience**. There are parallel experiences of the **expectations** and **realities** of returning home.

Remembering the significance of each element of a Crow tipi helps connect **Crow culture and identity** (tipi) to the **college student experience** (sentries that are the smoke flap poles) and **expectations of Apsáalooke** (tipi poles) who have obtained a college education and are facing the **realities of returning home** (outside elements/strong winds).

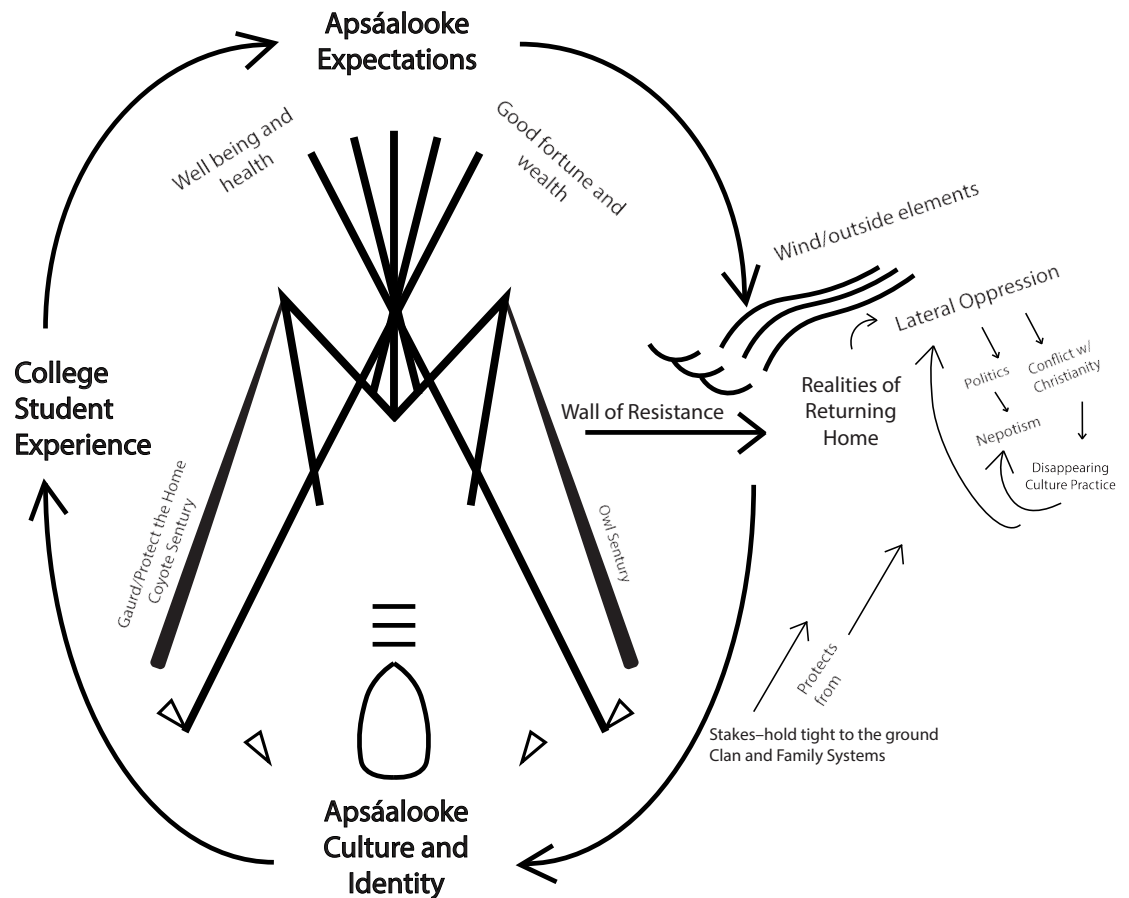


Figure 1: Apsáalooke Tipi Metaphor, designed by Salisha Old Bull (Crow/Salish)

Apsáalooke Culture and Identity

“I want to stay true to being a Crow. And hopefully, one day, I’ll be fluent [in the Crow language]. One day, when we’re gone, I want to still be able to talk to our ancestors.” -Roses Williamson

Using the tipi metaphor, the entire tipi represents **Crow culture and identity**. Each element of a tipi, like each element of the Apsáalooke culture, has a purpose. Crow culture encompasses everything, it does not stand alone, it is how everything is interconnected much like the tipi. **Crow culture and identity** are a major focus and directly connect to all of the themes identified in my analysis. To understand this focus, it is important to understand that identifying

as Crow is more than just an ethnicity or tribal affiliation. One's identity of being Crow, Apsáalooke, is so deeply ingrained in our being that when one identifies as Crow to another Crow this translates into much more than an ethnicity or tribal affiliation. Being Crow means you carry generations of knowledge, strength, and cultural practices that are all intertwined with one another making us all related or connected through our many familial and clan relationships. There are so many intricacies of being Crow that it takes us a lifetime to learn, understand, and practice what it means to be Crow, to be Apsáalooke. Being Crow is an unspoken expectation of generations of cultural practice and understandings. These practices are commonly described as "the Crow Way." You will often hear, "This is how we do it, we're Crows" anytime our protocols are being practiced.

During the visits and conversations, different elements of significance to the Crow culture were talked about. *Crow language*, the *Clan system*, elders, *family structures*, significant battle and encampment sights, *Crow spirituality*, Crow practices, and Crow etiquette were represented in a variety of ways throughout the visits. For Apsáalooke people, education and developing one's skills have always been highly valued. Chief Plenty Coups speaks to the freedom education provides when he says, "Education is your most powerful weapon" (Coups & Linderman, 2002, p. 179).

Being a Crow person myself, I was not surprised that Apsáalooke cultural components were frequently talked about or described in the visits and conversations. We are raised to know who we are as people, as Apsáalooke. I had specifically chosen IRM because it allowed me to use my perspective as an Apsáalooke in my research. I wanted to embrace my way of knowing while doing my research and have it inform how I conducted my research and not be hidden away. However, it wasn't until my analysis that I was able to see that the same reasons I chose to

use an IRM is the same reason we return home after college. Just like being Apsáalooke is always guiding me, it is that same experience for those who shared their stories with me. We do what we do because we are Apsáalooke.

Story as Knowing: The Story of Corn Tassel

Story is a means of teaching within the Apsáalooke culture. “While story may be superficially entertaining, it is metaphorical providing lasting lessons. Story encompasses a holistic portrayal of Crow life” (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

During my visit with Roses Williamson, she shared the story of Corn Tassel with me. This took me a bit by surprise because I never thought my research question that was focused on expectations of college educated tribal members would bring me to hear a Crow story. I would not have made the prediction this would happen. I believe I was a child the last time I heard someone tell a Crow story and although the Apsáalooke culture is still very much alive, the stories are not as commonly shared as they were in past generations. Roses sharing Corn Tassel’s story signified the importance of our cultural teachings and how they provide explanations for our cultural practices and why who we are is important and carries significance. Our stories tell us who we are and why we have the cultural practices that we do. We don’t separate our stories from who we are, our stories explain who we are. For me in this process, hearing the story of Corn Tassel represents the value of story to Apsáalooke ways of knowing.

Going into each visit, I practiced the concept of hearing what the storyteller had to share, knowing I would have to make my own meaning of what was shared with me. As Roses shared the story of Corn Tassel, I had no idea how this story would connect with my research question but I felt very fortunate to be hearing the story from Roses. When I was transcribing, I was excited that I had the story recorded so that I could listen to Roses tell it again and would be able

to learn it and share the story with my daughters. Even after transcribing and writing the elements of Crow history and knowledge that Roses shared with me, it wasn't until the synthesis of all interviews was mapped that I was able to name **Crow culture** as a primary focus connected to my research question. Even then, it wasn't until I began explaining the **Crow culture** focus during a weekly research meeting that I understood how important **Crow culture** is to my research question. **Crow culture** is our way of life and is often described as the Crow Way. **Being Crow** is an **identity** that ensures we know who we are and where we come from.

Speaking Crow (*Bíiluukaa dilih? Do you speak Indian?*)

Having your **Crow identity** intact after college is so important because we are taught first and foremost, we are Apsáalooke. When we return from school, our relatives are proud of us but they also want to make sure we still know who we are and where we come from. So much of our identity is connected to our language. Many times, when Crow people first meet each other, they will ask, "Bíiluukaa dilih? Do you speak Indian?" and "Who is your family?" An individual's answer to these two questions tell how connected one is to their Crow culture.

Another important component of **Crow identity** is related to naming. Naming is highly connected to identity and is given to help guide people throughout their life. All Crows follow naming through clan relationships or family relationships. "'Who am I?' My Crow name, name giver, meaning of the name to the name giver, the story of the name grows with the child's age. Name givers are invited back into the child's life at key points" (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

Having our **Crow identity** intact is the ultimate **expectation**. If being Crow is still our primary identity, then we know our roles and will meet our **expectations**. The Apsáalooke *roles* of mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, and sister guide us. If we know our *roles*,

then we know our responsibilities within our *family* and *Clan system*. If we follow our *Clan system*, then we learn our ways. Our *spirituality* teaches us how we connect with our world and each other. Our teachings and beliefs are built into the Apsáalooke *language*. This is why **Crow culture and identity** connect to the other major concepts in my findings.

The focus of **identity** was discovered when thinking about a story Reva shared. She was talking about listening to her relative, who had left the Crow Nation for college, speak Crow during his visits home:

And even [Reva's relative] when he comes home, because he hasn't been here, he got his education elsewhere. And when he comes home, . . . we like, expect him to know more than us. But then also we expect him to know . . . to know his language. So, we all like listen to him talk [Crow].

Reva's example demonstrates how *language* connects to **identity**. In making further meaning of this example, it also shows how **Crow culture and identity** connect to **expectations**. In this example, Reva is telling me about both Crow culture and identity and about expectations. The **expectation** that individuals who leave for college don't forget where they come from. This is demonstrated through speaking our *language* and practicing Crow etiquette showing we still know what it means to be Crow. As our relatives listen to how we talk and how we act, they are checking to see if our **Crow identity** is still there. Thinking about *language* and culture helped me connect **Crow culture** to **identity** because they do not exist separately from each other. Cultural **expectations** are important to practice because this helps us ensure our first **identity** remains Crow.

Clan and Family Systems and the Importance of Roles

If one's primary **identity** is as a Crow person, then their *roles* are defined by **Crow culture**. This is displayed by not only understanding or speaking the *Crow language* but also by

acknowledging our *family* and *clan relationships*, practicing *Crow etiquette* and protocols, and participating in our gatherings and activities. In regard to family, my Auntie Lou talked about the importance of family:

The family thing is important in the Crow way. The family is close and that's the way I was taught and that's the way I've tried to keep the kids and all 22 of them [grandkids].

The importance of the Clan system was also expressed in the following:

Sampson: You know like they say, our clan system is really important . . . you know whatever they say for the good wishes for you will come true and I'm a firm believer in that . . .

Lorri: You know that, like the clan system was set in place to keep us in line. We had our clan elders, our mom's side or dad's side one was to nurture us, provide us with everything, our basic needs the other one was to praise us and give us our words of confidence and recognition. Then you have our teasing clan to keep us in check, so we don't get so arrogant and boastful.

Cultural Roles Connect us to Our Professional Role. The *roles* one has in the community are also important to **Crow culture and identity**. The *cultural roles* and *professional roles* are not separate when Crow people are interacting with each other. In our tribal community, individuals have professional expectation and cultural expectation and are both connected to who we are, we are unlikely to dissect profession from person on an individual basis. “The roles are viewed holistically, not in separate parts” (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). Some important *cultural roles* include elder, Clan father or mother, *káale* (grandmother), parent, and auntie or uncle. When individuals are addressed in this way there are expectations that are associated with their role. In this way, roles are held in more than title, they have the rights and responsibilities in their relationships with family members. These cultural expectations then merge with one’s *professional role* such as a teacher or nurse and do not vacate the person when they take on professional roles (J. Pease, personal

communication, June 1, 2020). Individual roles are important to understand when thinking about experiences and expectations of college students returning home.

Spirituality

Apsáalooke Spirituality is a foundation to Crow culture. “Much of what Apsáalooke people do and think is based on [our] spiritual beliefs” (Two Leggins, 2007, see section 3.11 Apsáalooke Spirituality). Much like the Crow language, spirituality is interconnected into Crow practices and protocol and connected to our identity.

Roses shares what she heard an elder say when talking about Crow spirituality, “In our belief system, we believe in four entities and without one, you can't survive: earth, fire, wind, water. You take one away and we suffer. . . [H]e [Crow elder] is applying that to those mountains [the Crazy Mountains], to not touch them.” Roses goes on to retell what she had heard, “and we require all those things [earth, fire, wind, water] in sweat when we pray.”

Summary, The Tipi

Reflecting on the tipi metaphor where the tipi in its entirety represent **Crow culture and identity**. Everything is interconnected, our Crow stories, such as the story of Corn Tassel, inform us about our culture, sharing the stories helps us pass our cultural teachings on to the next generation. Our cultural practices, beliefs, and spirituality are explained within our language structure, knowing our language structure teaches us our culture. Connecting all of these elements together helps us learn our role(s) within our tribal system. **Crow culture and identity** are a way of life among the Crow Nation where the practice of the Crow culture happens every day. The stories shared with me during my visits and conversations display what it means to be Apsáalooke.

College Student Experience

“I always just felt blessed to be able to take care of our people.” Nicole Merchant Turns Plenty, Native Nurse Practitioner

The Apsáalooke tipi has two outer poles that prop up the smoke flaps. These poles represent the coyote and the owl who are sentries that guard and protect the home. These tipi poles represent **the college student experience** in that just as the coyote and the owl protect the home, those who have gained a college education are charged with guarding and protecting our people using the skills they have acquired in their education.

Many of the people I spoke with began our visit by sharing their own college experience story. They all spoke about the support and encouragement they received from their families. Their stories also included the sacrifices they made to attend college. Meaning making for this focus came when they talked about their experiences returning home to the Crow Nation after college. Two common elements emerged in their stories: the *importance of staying connected to the Nation* and the *process of returning home after college*. These two elements are directly connected to one’s **identity of being Crow**, Apsáalooke.

Staying Connected to Apsáalooke

Staying connected to the Apsáalooke Nation is an important practice while one is away from the community attending college. Connection is maintained through participation in cultural activities and family gatherings in the community. Maintaining connection requires college students to travel home and be physically present in order to participate. Staying connected to the community was shared in a variety of ways during the visits and conversations. Roses returned home each summer to work for Apsáalooke Tours which is a tribal business operated by both the Crow Tribe and Little Big Horn College. The effort to *maintain connection* with the community is essential and is taken into account when individuals who move away for

college return home to work. Just as Roses came home every summer to work, many students make their summer plans to return home for longer visits or more frequent visits if they are too far away to return home on the weekends.

About half of the people I visited with chose to attend a college close to home so they would not have to relocate away from their families. Reva explained that she commuted to Billings to attend college each day and returned home to Crow Agency each night. Reva's grandmother would watch her daughter while she went to her college classes. The family support Reva's grandmother provided and her decision to commute to college rather than move away played a key role in *maintaining connection* with the community, especially her family, while she was in college. Others talked about returning home for visits often, and for some this meant every weekend. Jennifer shared, "I made sure I went home every weekend. And yet, I didn't need to. And it was expected. 'Why you over there? Why aren't you with us?'" The obligation to family is connected to **Crow cultural** values is a motivating factor for frequent visits home.

Home also has a broader context than location. For Apsáalooke, home represents a connection to our land, our tribal membership, our cultural practices, and our relatives. Crow country was given to us by the Creator and when we return to our home, we are returning to "land of our generations" (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). When talking about Crow country, Roses shared in our visits, "I found out that when they were making these treaties and setting the boundaries, these Crow warriors were having special prayers on this land, . . . there are prayers all over this land."

Chief Sore Belly provided a description of Crow Country that emulates the Apsáalooke belief about our home:

The Crow Country is a good country. The Great Spirit has put it exactly in the right place; while you are in it you fare well . . . The Crow Country is exactly in the right

place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains; all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies, you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh, and the bright streams come tumbling out of the snowbanks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer, and the antelope, when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep. In the autumn, when your horses are fat and strong from the mountain pastures, you can go down into the plains and hunt the buffalo or trap beaver on the streams. And when winter comes on, you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo meat for yourselves, and cottonwood bark for your horses; or you may winter in the Wind River valley, where there is salt weed in abundance. The Crow Country is exactly in the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow Country (Old Horn & McCleary, 1995).

In all of the stories shared, the personal sacrifice of being away from family and Nation that each person made was clear. Feelings of both hardship and pride could be heard in their stories about their college journey. *Staying connected* was an important element that met both cultural and family expectations. The idea of *staying connected* to family and community was not named, it was displayed in the stories of their journey and done because it was **expected** and instilled in our value system that is carried out through Crow cultural practices. Talking about the *connection* to home was expressed in a variety of ways. Jennifer provides an example of both the expectation to return home after college and the frequency of her visits home while in college, “My dad would say, ‘You are going to school, so that you can teach [Crow] children how to read.’ That was my mission. And so then I would be at the dorms and then, then I'd go home on a weekend.”

Staying connected is important because it helps us stay tied to our Crow culture and helps maintain our relationships with our families and community. Staying connected is also linked to the experience of returning home after one completes their college education.

Process of Returning Home

The second element related to **college student experiences** is the *process of returning home* after college. This process includes the expectation one has by family and community to come home after college and also attitudes that others have about their return. This process has elements that overlap with the **realities** and **expectations** that have been observed or experienced by the people I visited with.

Visiting about Apsáalooke people returning home from college made space for those sharing their own stories to reflect on their experience coming home. During several visits, this felt like the first time some had shared their own college experience. Their emotions seemed to take them by surprise as they talked about their experiences with staying connected and returning to the community. Long moments of silence and tears were shed as they remembered both the challenges they faced returning home and the opportunities they had to help our people. Jennifer speaks of these challenges while expressing emotions of sadness:

So you have to understand the history of these graduates coming back to the reservation...It's very emotional. We work so hard to be in the education system or the system where we go to college. We're there all the time. We have to do with all the other elements of the college. We're not number one all the time. We, we learn to read, we discipline in that field and we keep working, we keep working. We keep working at it, and we work so hard but so many times we got rejected coming home.

Nicole shares her experience with returning home and shows an emotion of gratitude to be able to work with the Crow people:

Salena: Can you go back to that first year as a nurse and working in our community and think about when you say how you have to react to meet or reacclimate. What was that experience like?

Nicole: My first year as a nurse was full of exciting and challenging experiences. After completing my degree and passing my State Board exam I applied to the new grad program at Billings Clinic to work at their satellite site, the Absaloka Dialysis Unit in Crow. It was a rigorous new graduate program that required additional twelve-week rotation on the medical and surgical floor in the hospital. The intensive training continued with an additional twelve-week rotation

in the Dialysis Unit in Billings. After an additional three months of experience I transferred to Crow. I finally made it home to work with my Native people. I have been blessed to work in multiple areas during my nursing career and formed strong connections since that first day twenty years ago.

Salena: Yeah.

Nicole: So again, that connection was built, and it was just really good. I really love my job. I always just felt blessed to be able to take care of our people.

The process of returning home was also connected to the advice given to them as they prepared to leave for college by relatives who told them to, “Get your education and then come home and help our people.”. Both DyAnna and Lorri shared their experience receiving this advice. One example is from my visit with DyAnna:

We're taught to go and get an education. Or make, you know make yourself better. Or learn something and then come back and help. Help [paused] your people I guess and, so I think that is like instilled in us, because . . . this is our home. And so that's what you know. I guess that's what our . . . it's taught to us at a young age, very young age. So we want to do that. So, usually like for us, like Crows, that's what we want to do. We go and then we come back.

DyAnna sharing this is also connected to how the values and roles instilled by Apsáalooke culture play an important role in *the college student experience*. Lorri shared her experience hearing an elder talk about returning home:

And I'll never forget what Padgett Bad Bear had said, he had spoke to a group of graduates and he told them, he said, "Once you get that degree you make sure you come back to help your people not to hurt them. Not to use it against them," like, “Hey, I know I got a degree for Bozeman or whatever. What have you done?” So, he's even thinking about that mentality that you still got to be humble and not be arrogant about [your education] you know because again somebody helped them [college student]. Somebody helped them to get that degree. You know? . . . The ones that I consider that are really successful graduates who have gone on, gotten in position where they really have helped people, they always have that humble attitude and always gave thanks to the people who prayed for them, you know, who helped with money or took care of stuff at home for them. Because especially if you have elder parents or elder grandparents you know, and I know that that's hindered some people from even going on [to college] as well because they felt guilty about leaving. And some people have guilted them or they made them feel guilty and then again, they're still . . . is that cultural part of it, aspect of it as well. You know, where once you do get a degree you know sometimes it's not worth it even trying try to go home. Because you're kind of shunned. Again, it's just that kind of mentality.

Especially the younger you are I think, and I've seen that, like the younger men are treated a little bit better than the women. If that makes any sense? With the graduates.

For some, coming home to help was never a decision that needed to be made. Coming home after college to help our people and return to our families and our cultural environment was an automatic next step in our journey. The phrases, “Come home and help your people,” “Use your degree to help your people,” “Use your education to help your people,” are so frequently spoken in prayers and wishes for college students that the concept becomes ingrained into what our life’s purpose is. The purpose of education is to acquire the skills necessary to help our people. Crow systems designate that “everyone has their role.” Lorri shares a teaching from her father about roles:

Everybody has their role in a community, in a society. I always think of like my dad, what he'd say about the Crow people. You know you have the different bands, you had everybody who had a different role that they played. In their survival. You know. You had your Chiefs, your band chiefs, all of that. You had, again the women . . . taking care of the camp then you know all of this. If somebody didn't do their job, you know, getting the water, gathering the wood. That's survival. And you know we've gotten away from that. Where we have to really understand that every role is important. No matter how somebody helps. Remedial or whatever it may seem.

Lorri’s example is connected to someone fulfilling the wishes of our elders and community to acquire an education and then use the skills learned through their educational endeavors. Lorri’s father’s teaching also talks about the importance of *roles* connected to **Crow culture and identity** and the **expectation** is explicit: return and help our people.

However, the choice to come home is not always simple. During visits, insight and understanding about why some may choose not to come home factors such as housing and employment had to be taken into account. Housing is limited on the Crow Nation; making the decision to return home might mean that you live with other family members, take on the task of

building your own home, or commute from an urban area. Sampson addresses the lack of housing on the reservation:

One of the barriers is housing. You know let's say you bought a house and you own it. You had the land . . . when you get to the survey part of it, you know politics always plays a part. And I know, like you know, you don't want to move in with your parents. Or you know, if you have something set up, I mean we're close enough to Billings where you can commute but is that officially moving back home? You know there's always a barrier you know like, oh I got a house but I got the land but you know the . . . surveyor from the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] can't come because the [Crow] tribe is charging the BIA to come and do a survey on your land for architectural reasons. . . when they provide that service for free. You know the tribe is trying to collect on it, I've heard of that.

The availability of employment opportunities also becomes a factor when making the decision to come home. Louella talked about jobs being limited and if one does not have a degree in education or health care, the possibility of finding employment in the field they are educated in on the Crow Nation may not be realistic. Louella explains this, "But you know Pryor doesn't have, unless you're a teacher or going into the medical field, Pryor is not a place where you can find a job. You'd have to move to Billings to do that." The Crow Tribal government is one of the largest employers on the reservation but many have doubts about employment with the Crow Tribe. Jennifer talks about her experience working for the Crow tribe, how she contemplated taking a job, and what she learned:

We had a chairman, Carl Venne, who said, "All of you that are educated, come work for me." He said that and many of us went. And I never worked for the tribe because I thought, "the tribe, you know they're just not, they're not hundred percent perfect or anything. And why work there, when I could work in a perfected place [school]?" But the best thing [from that experience] because I learned to become more humane to my own people. I began to see [pause] things that were real reality kinds of things it's like survival, you know?

Becoming a tribal employee can be a hard decision to make as the tribal government is known for its instability and high employee turnover rate:

DyAnna: So now, you know I went to school, got a master's degree, and came back. I did that [job with the tribe]. And right after the last election I was let go. I was laid off. And I thought "Okay, what am I going to do?" You know . . . And this is gonna change is how I feel. I guess, because people here are so used to just being treated like that. And feel somehow [pause] How do you say that, how they feel? [pause] It's like a norm. And it shouldn't be.

SH: Every time when a new Administration comes in...

DyAnna: Yeah, there's no due process. You could just say, "You have been laid off or whatever." And it's not like that. He's never [said that]. Nothing. He just quit paying them.

In my visit with Jennifer, I was able to come to an understanding about the process of coming home is a decision that one has to make, knowing that they are returning to a community that needs help building infrastructure that meets the needs of the Crow people:

So, I think that at the college level. My thought is that, you know...they've got to...I guess, apply. They've got to come, they got to be a part of it all. They have to come and be accepted. And then once they are accepted, then it's like they have to understand the dysfunction...of the...I guess, our environment on our reservation. They have to accept it or not be there [Crow Nation].

Also important to the *process of returning home* are strategies college graduates need in order to have a successful transition home. Jennifer talks about one strategy she has seen work:

I was a student teacher supervisor here. And so, we had student teaching going on all over the reservation, I went to them, and worked with them . . . They were already engaged. There was a work partnership. They're already engaged, you know, they're at Lodge Grass and Wyola. I went to Hardin, I went all over the place, they chose that, but yet there was some that went over here into the Billings school system. They weren't hired, . . . They should have, they should have gone home and establish themselves.

During the visits, there were many things said about the process of returning home. Most of the comments could be linked to the other three major themes identified. The experience some have in this *process* are linked to family and tribal **expectations** of coming home and how they are expected to contribute to the tribal nation. Their contributions fulfill tribal nation needs and cultural *roles*. However, there are challenges linked to the **realities of returning home**. The challenges can have positive outcomes but can also come with hardship. My visit with my

Auntie Jennifer helped me understand that there is a *process to returning home* and that if one makes the decision to engage in that process, we need to be realistic about what accompanies the **realities of coming home**, “And then once they are accepted, then it’s like they have to understand the dysfunction...of the...I guess, our environment on our reservation. They have to accept it or not be there [Crow Nation].” In interpreting Jennifer’s quote, she is providing a road map for returning home. She is saying that one has to make an effort to stay connected and be accepted as a professional person within our tribe. Once this is accomplished, we must then acknowledge that social problems exist in our tribal nation. After we admit this, we need to accept social ailments are present. If we can accept that social problems exist in our tribal nation and can see the intersectionality of why they exist, then we can begin working towards healing. If we can only see the problems and not think past them to focus on what is for the greater good of our tribal nation, then we do not belong home because we just add to the problem.

Assimilation, Times Two

Having to experience *acculturation* is an additional element that came to light in the visits and conversations. Acculturation means adapting to another culture, however, assimilation was the term used to describe this type of experience during a visit. These experiences of acculturation happened when individuals left to college and again when they returned home. When talking about assimilating to the college environment, examples of feeling alienated and being the “only brown person in the room” were shared. Nicole describes this experience when she talks about going away to college and then coming back to her community as a Nurse:

And what world do I fit in? You know, because of always trying to find the balance. The diversity of the values and belief system from world you grew up in is challenged. When you go to high school, when you go to college you change. It's a different culture. And then on an academic and professional level. You get your degree and you come back, and it's another culture. And there's different expectations. And do you blend- and that's

where you have to acclimate, *assimilate* again, into this different role. And so sometimes that can be hard, but also it's amazing. I felt totally blessed to be able to do what I do.

Jennifer explains this same process as an observer of those who went to college and returned:

When I worked for the Education Department, they finish and they come back and they have- they're like foreign. They're like different people. They dress different, they act different, and it's like they have assimilated and acculturated into the [non-tribal] system, to the point where like, "Hey, come back down."

In another visit, students who return home after college were described as being "urbanized." Reva describes this, "And then it's like, everything is new to them again. . . "Oh, I didn't know that happened." or "Oh, I didn't know that."

The changes that people go through while away at a college are noticed when they return. These changes are seen physically in regard to the way people look or dress and are noticed because it is different from when they left and most likely different from the norm in the community. Changes are also seen in the way they think and behave because they may "act" different than they did before they left. The college experience introduces different ways of thinking and doing. When those ideas and behaviors are brought back into the community returning students are experienced as changed and are sometimes described as one "acting different" or "urbanized" describing how they have changed while away.

Privilege

Another important element highlighted in the student experience are the *privileges* acquired with a college education. In the visit with Jennifer, she explained the concepts of privilege. Privilege has two meanings, one example in the Crow culture is when one buys the right to carry out a responsibility. Both Crow women and men are full participants in the Apsáalooke culture. However, we are expected to earn or buy the right to carry out a responsibility. One example of this is buying the right to speak in public. In addition to this right,

Jennifer spoke about having a college education as earning the privilege to speak on matters related to your educational background or on matters of one's profession as many educated men and women whose education has afforded them this privilege:

For me, as a Crow person, because I'm female, and I'm Crow, a lot of times we're not allowed to take over MC or be in a position to [be an] announcer like your grandpa, Phillip has that right of way. That's earned through family, he's earned it. He's given that right and so he uses that. It's a privilege to be able to announce for people what they want to say you know so its akashappéeliliia [announcer], they are able to state what they want to say on behalf of another person. So, as a female, as a Crow, I don't have that right. So I have to stand next to a Crow man, our announcer, and tell them what I want to say, and they in turn, say to the public what I want to say. But for me, because I'm an educator, I veto that right, because I'm privileged in the education world. I have a bachelor's degree, master's degree. I'm degreed in a white system . . . Therefore, I'm privileged. I've been given that privilege. [I]n a public setting where there's announcers I have a right to stand and speak on my behalf, or speak on behalf of the school. . . I have that right to do that. . . . We step up to that responsibility. It's a leadership responsibility. You don't just wait for the announcer to say what we want to say. That's politeness, respect you know in a Crow way. But in a setting such as that we are in, we can't wait for that. And then there's misinterpretations . . . it's so important that we've been privileged by doing this. So, I went through all of this and so now I'm able to state what I feel, because I've earned that right. My mind and my thoughts are mine and so I'm strong enough in the leadership way. And responsible and respectable to say what I want to say, in a good way . . . So in that realm, I do that.

Then the Crow way, the women don't have a right to stand up and speak. We were at an activity for my dad's family [and no one stood] up to take leadership. So, we kind of waited around . . . and then one of my aunts. She's a teacher too, she stood up and started taking control, "We should do this, we should do this, we should have this, and do this." She just stood up and started doing what she needed to do and finished everything. . . So, then I bought that right from her. And so, in the Crow way, because this woman stood up, she's my Clan aunt, she's my paternal aunt, she stood up and she started taking over and speaking . . . So I gave her money, and I bought that right from her. Now I have the right and I say that in public. I say, I have a right to speak, I bought this right from my Clan aunt, so now I have that responsibility. . . it's a Crow way, but you know, we're educated, we're in a position where we still want to admonish our Crow way of life and will.

Both are *privileges* that hold responsibility and are important to understand. In my analysis I also saw the element of *privilege* being connected to one's college education. This privilege can be seen in the description Reva gave:

They [the Crow people] kind of put them [college graduates] on a higher level because they graduated from college and . . . if they [Crow people] never graduate or something I think they kind of feel intimidated, or they're not intimidated, they just feel like you know "oh you're higher than me, you're higher than me because he graduated from college." So, . . . I think they [Crow people] expect something from them [college graduates].

The **college experience** granted certain *privileges* and those privileges came with responsibility to helping our *Nation*. This is reflected in the wish by our family and elders to “use your degree to help our people” which is a concept shared in visits with DyAnna and the Little Owl family.

Realities of Returning Home

“You know I always go back to rhetoric versus reality. You know some things are easier said than done.” Sampson DeCrane

In the story of Yellow Leggings, the badger describes how his claws will hold the tipi to the ground and protect the home from outside elements. The outside elements, such as strong winds are representative of the **realities** Apsáalooke people encounter in our tribal communities today. The **realities** shared in visits and conversations include examples of *lateral oppression* and *loss of cultural practices*. When thinking about Apsáalooke Ways, these realities are like the strong winds described in Big Metals story. Crow cultural practices and spirituality are the stakes that were meant to protect us when we are faced with these outside realities.

During visits and conversations, strong feelings were expressed when the elements of **realities** were talked about. Feelings of anger, sadness, and expressions of sarcasm are common when talking about **realities** the Apsáalooke face today. Underlying causes of these **realities** can be attributed to forms of *lateral oppression* and *loss of cultural practices* and practices which are results of *historical trauma*.

Historical Trauma

Lateral oppression is a manifestation of *historical trauma*. *Historical trauma* and its long-lasting effects are like the strong winds the badger talked about when he gifted Big Metal the tipi stakes. *Historical trauma* was referenced in several of the visits when experiences with hardship, rejection, and negative remarks were talked about. Lorri described an experience of what the manifestation of *historical trauma* looks like as *lateral oppression*:

That all comes back to that lateral oppression. What's that saying, 'hurt people hurt others.' And I think there's a lot of that with us, we're all hurt to an extent. You know like whether I can say, you know, we've all have experienced some type of trauma no matter what. And so, . . . that must affect our, like, how we treat other people, perceive them. So yeah, and we're always hurting and . . . we're not going to be happy for other people's successes. Like, you know some of the graduates, that's what they're going to be met with. Some of them [Crow people] are just like, you know, they're not going to be happy for them [college graduates].

Lorri talks about the impact of trauma and how negative treatment of each other keeps us from celebrating each other's successes.

Negative experiences and attitudes unfortunately are a common experience for college students returning home. The "crabs in the bucket" mentality, undervaluing our own people by giving more credibility to non-Indian people, untrustworthy politics and nepotism, and the long-standing effects of *historical trauma* were identified as elements to the **realities of returning home**. Although we know these experiences are common among our tribe, DyAnna explains "this is our home," and so we will face the realities that come with returning home.

Wall of Resistance. During a visit, experiencing *lateral oppression* is described as a wall of resistance. This description is an important element to acknowledge in order to understand the experience of college students returning home. The expectations for them to do great things and contribute to our tribal nation has another experience in the spectrum of what a college student returning home will encounter.

During my visit with my Auntie Jennifer she had shared her experience as one of the first tribal members to become a teacher on the Crow Reservation. She shared how her father was sent to boarding school and was told that he was “too dumb” to be there and then sent home on the train. Because of his experience at the boarding school, he taught his children to never feel like they couldn’t learn. He encouraged my Auntie Jennifer and her brothers to get their education. They all attended college and three of them earned college degrees and one brother was a semester away from graduating.

My Auntie Jennifer’s experience as a college student and then becoming a teacher on the reservation was challenging. She shared her story of being one of the first college graduates to come home and teach. She gives many examples of the sacrifices she made to go to college and the rejection she experienced from members of her family and by community members as she worked as a teacher. She used the word rejection over and over in her recollection of her experience. In the early years of her teaching career, she was viewed by some as incompetent and questioned by other Crow people who wondered what she could teach their children. She knew that she came from the same place as them and looked like them, but she felt they wondered what she had to offer her community. When she described the wall of resistance that she felt after returning home to work as a teacher, she cried as she explained:

We bang our heads against that wall of resistance and some of us break through...So I think our graduates come into an environment where it's not a comfort zone. You know, they're, they're coming and the problem that I see is that they're graduating, they're coming home, they're saying "I'm smart. I'm above, I'm this and, yeah, yeah, this that," they come and it's like a wall. They hit it head on, this wall of resistance this wall that's built generation and generation historical trauma, whatever it is, that wall is right there I think. That's my opinion. [Began crying] And we come and we hit on it. We hit on it and some of us come through. Some of us make it through and we're like accepted, we're okay.

My Auntie Jennifer describes the painful experience of making many sacrifices to attend college and then to return home to your own people and not feel welcomed. Instead, feeling the rejection and judgment about something that you accomplished so you could return home and contribute to your community.

Her story was full of emotion as she tells her father's boarding school experience, recalls her own experience, and recalls her brothers' experiences. Sharing the challenges they had each faced was accompanied by tears as she remembered the painful memories.

Lateral Oppression

Woven throughout the stories shared during visits were examples of *lateral oppression*. Lateral oppression is marginalization that occurs among a group of people who come from the same background. In the visits and conversations, lateral oppression was often described as "crabs in the bucket" or "bully" mentality when describing the negative experiences and attitudes that exist in the Crow Nation. Words like envy, jealousy, judgment, resentment, and resistance were used to describe experiences with lateral oppression.

Examples of lateral oppression were shared when describing the mentality and attitudes about college educated people who come home to work. Sampson shares some of the attitudes about those who attended college:

You know, there has been people that have gone on and they've come back but there's always that negative, that negative um... You know the negative feeling, I guess. People's negative comments like "Why are they back?" "Oh, they're acting better than me" or you know "Them and their overpriced education." You know there is always that and you know working with OPI when I first came out in 2011-2012 you know I lived in Crow for a number of years it's like [19]97, [19]98. And um, When I moved back over here, you know, it was a welcoming home for me. But for some other people it wasn't, it was kind of pick and choose. For instance, one student you know got their bachelor's degree they came back. You know they were involved with the school [in Pryor]. And you know they accused of not turning in some stuff, you know, whether it was money or receipts and... you know, as Crows were a, were a shame based society, you know,

meaning we're family oriented, you know, when someone does something wrong the whole family gets shamed.

During several visits it was stated that those with a college education are expected to “save us” and are viewed as hope but will also be judged and resented by others in the community. Those who went off to college were able to leave and seek out opportunities outside of the reservation but are often times confronted with resentment upon their return and treated poorly by others. This is an example of “crabs in the bucket” mentality where if someone is trying to leave, they are often pulled back by others in their environment.

Within education, Crow teachers have experienced rejection in different ways. During one of my visits, this rejection was described as an “undercurrent” that carried messages of not being accepted as professionals in the community. During another visit, this was described as an experience. This experience happens when Crow people are not seen as equals to other non-Native professionals:

That's another thing, Crow people or Indians, there's two people, whether lawyer, doctors, teachers, whatever. If one is not Crow or non-native and the other was native, they think this white person is smarter. They think they know better, they know more, you know, they think, and they'll go this way. That's like another thing that people that come back with degrees that come back educated, face that too.

I think it's because they think that this mindset of being, of thinking that Native Americans are not intelligent. You know, for so long we've been pushed on so long that, even our own people have no like confidence in people that graduate too sometimes. Like she said sometimes, even you see this at school, if there's two first grade teachers one is non-white and the other one is white then they want their kids in there [with the white teacher] because they think she has more knowledge and more experience or whatever, more expertise. And yeah, so they kind of tend to go that way.

This explanation provides an example of not being seen as an equal to non-Indian people and is an example of how lateral oppression is experienced on the Crow Nation.

One of the main vehicles of *lateral oppression* discussed in the visits and conversations was politics. The tribal government plays an important role in the Crow Nation. As a sovereign nation, the Crow Tribe has our own government system that includes Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. These branches of government also oversee many programs and services that are available to the Crow people. Forms of lateral oppression can be seen in how our political system operates. During visits, tribal politics were described as halting progress because there is no separation between business, politics, and family. Nepotism was described as being practiced often throughout the tribal government system affecting college graduates who may not be selected for employment positions they qualify for, so political leaders' family members can be given employment.

Disappearing Cultural Practices

Disappearing cultural practices was an element identified in several of the visits and conversations. Later during analysis, the examples of cultural practices disappearing was linked to **realities of returning home**. Examples of disappearing of cultural practices include missing information for why cultural protocols are in place resulting in the misuse of cultural practices, and cultural components being forgotten all together. Cultural learning takes place over a lifetime. Some families take great effort to fully educate their family members about many cultural aspects beginning at an early age. Others have the misfortune of losing family members who know Apsáalooke culture to health issues, addiction, and Pentecostalism (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

Examples of missing cultural information were shared during visits. One example connected to the Crow Fair celebration which has been held for the past 100 years was shared:

That's what I've noticed, too. Within this last year there was a person who was like a Crow speaker, and they were asking me questions that are simple but you could tell it

wasn't their culture, even though they're Crow and it floored me. Like, what are the days of Crow Fair? What are their symbols? What is the purpose of a parade dance? What day is parade dance? These people are campers? I'm like, "What?!"

Another example of missing information related to the Clan system:

That was really interesting, too, 'cause a lot of people didn't know what their clan was. They didn't know the difference between their clan, and being a child of that clan. And they're like, "I don't know!" [when asked about their clans] And they would be mad... And then at first I was really stunned [that they didn't know their clans] and then after a while I would be like, "oh it's ok! You can learn." . . . They'd be like, "I don't want to." Or they would be scared or something. [There] was something, probably that [historical] trauma.

An example of how missing information of cultural protocols result in the misuse of cultural practices:

Like the clan system was set in place to keep us in line. We had our clan elders, our mom's side or dad's side one was to nurture us, provide us with everything, our basic needs the other one was to praise us and give us our words of confidence and recognition. Then you have our teasing clan to keep us in check so we don't get so arrogant and boastful. And so that was the balance but we lost that somehow. Somewhere along the way we lost that. And I remember my dad even telling me and other uncles say just because, if your teasing clan, they always say we can tease you, do this and you can't get mad. He said that's really not true, there is a limit. But you've got some people because of their twisted mentality they think they can do that. And so that's what we've kind of lost some of that and again that applies to how successful our people are going to be, our graduates are going to be. You might have somebody who just you know they're just going to continually torture you for being an apple and leaving the rez and abandoning your people you know you're less likely to want to come back and help.

These examples shared during visits are important to acknowledge when thinking about realities facing college students returning home. As Crow people, we are proud of our Crow ways but with each generation, we are losing the foundation that kept our ancestors safe and protected.

This *disappearing of cultural practices* is directly linked to historical trauma and the effects of boarding schools. Christianity was forced upon the Apsáalooke during the boarding school era and has had lasting effects on Crow culture. Christianity conflicts with Apsáalooke spirituality and this conflict has created a division among Crow people. This division created by

outside sources has resulted in the division *loss of cultural practices* which is linked to the **realities of returning home.**

Christianity and the practice of religion are a big part of many family structures on the Crow reservation. The division between religion and Apsáalooke spirituality in our nation indirectly effects the realities college students are facing when they return home. Although many families practice both Christianity and Crow culture there are still strong feelings about Apsáalooke spirituality among those who practice traditional ways and those who follow a Western religion.

Expectations of the Apsáalooke

“When they graduate and come back, especially our relatives ..., you know, we're proud of them.”

The tipi poles between the four base poles within the tipi symbolize wellbeing, health, good fortune, and wealth. These poles are representative of the **Apsáalooke people's expectations** for college educated members of the tribe. When one is asked to say a prayer for their Clan child, it is a common practice to ask for good health and good fortune for one's clan child. In essence, if one has good health, they will have a healthy wellbeing. One's healthy wellbeing can result in strong *leadership*, positive *mentorship*, and one honoring the *responsibility* they have to their tribal nation. These qualities were common **expectations** shared during the visits. While visiting, ideas about what Apsáalooke people wanted to see in our tribal members returning home included qualities describing *leadership* and *mentorship*. The concept of *responsibility* to one's tribal nation was described when thinking about ways one can give back to our tribal community. Visits and conversation also included other topics about Nation **expectations** and how to continue to build and strengthening tribal infrastructure. Reminders from elders and Clan fathers to use one's degree to return home and help our Crow people also

can be interpreted as a way to continue *building our infrastructure* and strengthening the Crow people.

The community **expectations** of our college students who return home are immense. They are “expected to change the world,” share their knowledge and experiences, and help our tribal community in some way. College graduates also bring a feeling of hope to our tribal community as our relatives want to see us do good things to help our people. During our visit, Lorri shared something her dad had said to her:

[E]very body has their role in a community, in a society. I always think of like my dad, what he'd say about the Crow people. You know you have the different bands, you had everybody who had a different role that they played in their survival. You know, you had your Chiefs, your Band Chiefs, all of that. You had, again the women if they're not taking care of the camp, then you know all of this. If somebody didn't do their job, you know, getting the water, gathering the wood. That's survival. And you know we've gotten away from that. Where we have to really understand that every role is important. No matter how somebody helps. Remedial or whatever it may seem.

The teachings from Lorri's father gives perspective to how each of us has a *responsibility* to our Nation. Those who acquire an education have a *responsibility* and everyone has an important *role*.

Strengthening Tribal Infrastructure

The element of *strengthening the existing tribal infrastructure* were brought up when talking about *leadership* and *mentorship*. Ways to improve and build upon our tribal infrastructure are included in **expectations** of Apsáalooke people. Tribal infrastructure expands beyond the programs and offices operated by the Apsáalooke Nation Tribal Administration.

Infrastructure that employs Apsáalooke people extends to both the county and federal government as well as the education systems that operate among the Apsáalooke Nation.

Employers include Big Horn County, Indian Health Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of

Reclamation, Housing Authority, non-profit organizations, the public and private school systems, and Little Big Horn College.

If one is connected to the **Crow culture** and maintains that connection and **identity** as a college student, their motivation to obtaining a college degree is so that they can give back to their tribal community (Guillory, 2008). The result of giving back can result in the *strengthening and continued building of our tribal* government, programs, education systems, healthcare systems, and businesses.

Leadership

Throughout visits and conversations, the **expectation** of college students taking on *leadership* roles was brought up. The **expectation** to “help our people” by providing *leadership* was a common element during my visits. Examples of their own *leadership* and **expectations** of others who return were often shared, “I think they kind of expect them [college students] to come in and lead. Whatever field they’re in, they want them to lead.”

One example of *leadership* came as Roses talked about becoming an entrepreneur and creating her own businesses by “solving a problem” in the community. She explained, “Just think about your society and what’s wrong here, what can be fixed, and then, what’s my passion? And you got to put that all together.” Roses has created several businesses out of her passion for Native American history and art: Indian Battle Tours and Lady Pompadour, an Apsáalooke artist beading and jewelry maker. Her entrepreneurial spirit led to her recruitment by the nonprofit organization, Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation, which focuses on improving the economy and promoting cultural expression on the Crow Nation. Roses’ leadership in identifying needs and using her talents are one example of what *leadership* looks like when wellbeing is cultivated.

Bringing in new ideas, sharing experiences and talking about good things college students have seen and learned was also something people look forward to from those who have gone off to college and then returned. Doing these things are seen as *leadership* qualities and are actions that are part of the solution to bettering tribal infrastructure. This leadership can happen at many different levels including personal leadership within family, through athletic coaching in the education system, and developing non-profit organizations or businesses.

Examples of ways one can contribute to building and strengthening tribal infrastructure that supports the health of our tribe were shared during the visits. Ideas about developing an Apsáalooke Montessori school, Crow Fair Tipi rentals, and Apsáalooke Water Bottling company brought excitement to people's voices when their ideas were shared. Using the skills that one gains when earning a degree can be used to help our people. Using our own people as resources was also an idea shared. Putting people to work and accessing the knowledge and skills they have learned could help improve existing tribal infrastructure and also build our own economy in the Crow Nation. Roses talks about this in our visit:

And we got to make use of all our [Crow people], everybody that went and got that [education]. I mean, and you don't even have to be educated. Whatever your field is that you're good at, apply yourself. Something seriously has to change because [pause] there's nothing for us if we don't make this plan.

Nicole also shares her ideas about strengthening tribal infrastructure:

I just think that for students there needs to be more support coming home. There needs to be an investment in the tribal members to return home and practice in their field of study. There needs to be a program that is dedicated to recruiting those individuals. However, the instability and tribal politics makes it difficult. It would be beneficial to set up the infrastructure to engage the youth in high school and on the collegiate level. The establishment of these type of mentor and internship programs foster an environment to return home. So, I think it starts there.

Utilizing the knowledge and skills of our own Crow people would also meet the aspirations of our Clan fathers and elders who have asked us to use our degree to return home and help our Crow people.

Other visits included thoughts about qualities the people I visited with would like to see in our leaders. These qualities include breaking away from the “crabs in the bucket” mentality by being open minded, encouraging students to attend our tribal college, providing more support to college students coming home, creating employment opportunities, and advocating for change. These qualities can be found in leaders, and we as a people could use more who have these qualities. Lorri talks about this when she says:

It is hard, I don't know what the answer is but just that we all have to be a little more open minded. And just because something was always done a certain way like "Oh we've always done it this way," that doesn't mean it's the right way . . . And so, I think maybe if we kind of let go of that rigidity, you know.

Responsibility

Responsibility to our elders, Clan fathers, and those who prayed for us to use our degree and return home and help our Crow people is an important element connecting Nation **expectations** to *leadership*. We have a *responsibility* to those who have supported and prayed for us as we pursued our education. The support we received came in the form of prayers, good words, and encouragement and it is our *responsibility* to give back to the people who gave to us.

Lorri talks about this when she says:

So he's even thinking about that mentality that you still got to be humble and not be arrogant . . . because again somebody helped them [college students]. Somebody helped them to get that degree. You know? So, I rarely, the ones that I consider that are really successful graduates who have gone on, gotten in position where they really have helped people. They always have that humble attitude and always gave thanks to the people who prayed for them, you know who helped with money or took care of stuff at home for them.

Jennifer provides a nice explanation of *responsibility* in both a professional setting and cultural setting:

It's part of your education, it's part of your responsibility, your ethic responsibility, to take over, not wait for anyone to get up and do what you need to do. Get up and take care of it [whatever needs to be done]. That's your ethic responsibility as a woman, as an educated woman. That's your right.

Jennifer shared this when she provided an explanation for earning the right to publicly speak. In the Crow culture, the right must be bought, as an educator, she acquired the right because she received her bachelor and master's degrees. Nicole displays this *responsibility* in her profession as a Nurse Practitioner providing quality healthcare services for members of the Apsáalooke Nation. DyAnna, Linda Mae and Reva are accountable to their *responsibility* by contributing to the preservation of the Apsáalooke language and educating our youth as teachers. Sampson serves as an elected official at both the tribal government and local public school levels. Roses acts upon her *responsibility* by providing an accurate representation of Native American history using her tourism business and through her work with the Plenty Doors organization. Lorri worked at Little Big Horn College in student services. All of the individuals I visited with have used their education to serve the Apsáalooke Nation at some level, carrying out the *responsibility* and reciprocity to the Apsáalooke Nation.

The **Apsáalooke people's expectations** symbolized by the tipi poles represent responsibility in that we have a personal responsibility to contribute to the health, wellbeing, good fortune, and wealth of our tribe. Doing this fulfills our goal of giving back to the community that has given us, as college students, so much.

Mentoring

Several people I visited shared ideas and recommendations about providing *mentorship* opportunities for new college graduates returning home. Creating mentoring relationships is

connected to both *leadership* and *strengthening tribal infrastructures*. *Mentorship* creates connections between young students, returning college graduates, and established professionals in the tribal community. These relationships can have a positive effect on other Crow students' college experiences. *Mentoring* relationships can help those attending college by providing encouragement and have a positive effect on their process of returning home to help the Crow people. Reva talks about how she believes *mentoring* can help new professionals:

I think when we come back, we need mentors too, you know. Whatever field or even if it's just a person. I think we can probably get our own mentor and not really like professionally but just someone that can support you.

Having a mentor relationship can benefit new professionals and can also be a way for established professionals to provide support and help build confidence in a person just coming into their field. Mentors can provide encouragement to professionals who are new to the field and new professionals have the opportunity to learn from someone who is familiar with the Nation.

Linda Mae stressed the importance for students to have positive relationships in school beginning at a young age. A positive experience in education might be the factor that determines how far one goes in their education. The importance of positive experiences and relationships in school relate to the *responsibility* and *mentorship* elements. Mentorship is a relationship that begins at a young age and is why Linda Mae stressed the importance of the responsibility of mentoring students as a teacher, "I think that's one of the main issues that we have is, is the parents, you know, expect the teacher, you know to work hard with the students and be in a good relationship.

Another example of positive experiences was during my visit with Nicole. She shared an experience she had presenting to a classroom:

I remember when I graduated with my bachelor's degree [in Nursing], I was invited to the public school in Pryor to one of the grades, ... I think it was third ... and the teacher

asked me to come ... and it was just so fun but I was nervous in the beginning. I was unsure of what would keep them engaged. Fortunately, they came with questions of their own. It was just that exposure, you know that like "Do you see blood?" ... they were just so excited because I was meeting them on their level, and it was just so fun to answer all their questions like, "Have you seen this?" You know, of course, it was always stuff they saw on TV, but it was cute. I knew who they were, and I saw them at the clinic so they could identify with me. Then they all wrote these thank you's. You know... And to me, that was so touching.

Nicole's example shows the importance of developing early relationships with mentors. She goes on to talk about how mentorship can help build infrastructure and infrastructure can foster mentorship relationships:

If [tribal] infrastructure was already set up, [with] a good process, students could come back and do mentorships, with their tribe...in what they're studying... So if we had all these programs open that fostered the environment to return home, how much better can we improve our tribe? So I think it starts there.

Mentoring relationships with Apsáalooke professionals could provide more exposure to other opportunities such as job shadowing experiences. These opportunities can build the connections needed later. Mentoring relationships also create educational opportunities. Nicole shared a great example of one way mentoring and having role models can have a positive influence:

And so if we can touch another person's life by having positive relationships ... if you can show positive interactions, relationships, ... with your own people than that trust builds and then you can be a mentor. And to me, that's just the most amazing thing. They remember me and then I see them as adults. And they're like, oh, I remember you!" ... so that's good to be able to have that connection. And so if we can foster more ... professionals. Go to college or you know, to go in to higher education and if they can see that somebody like me does it then they're more apt. So I think just having more exposure to professional opportunities or shadowing opportunities is huge.

The exposure to seeing someone you know who comes from the same place you do is so important, especially in marginalized communities where we don't often see people who look like us in the professional roles in our community. When we do see someone in those roles, it helps us see ourselves in those roles one day. This is also why mentoring is important, if we have

a positive mentor relationship with someone who we can relate to on several levels, it helps us realize that we have that same potential.

In addition to these examples, *mentorship* is also culturally appropriate. The concepts of Clan relationships have a responsibility to provide educational functions by clan elders with their clan children. Also within Crow traditions, Clan relationships and other significant relationships can arrange apprenticeships in both cultural and non-cultural trades (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

Mentorship is also represented in the **Apsáalooke people's expectations** symbolized by the tipi poles. *Mentoring* others in our Nation also contributes to the health, wellbeing, good fortune, and wealth of our tribe. *Mentorship* can result in the *strengthening and continued building of our tribal* government, programs, educations systems, healthcare systems, and businesses.

Conclusion: Returning Home and Meeting Expectations

One of the final stages of analysis was to synthesize all of the individual maps from the visits and conversations and create a map that included all of the focuses and elements. I then identified relationships that existed between the focuses and elements. These connections were important to find and reinforced the focuses named in my findings.

The major concepts found: *Crow culture and identity*, *the college student experience*, *realities of returning home*, and *Apsáalooke expectations* of college students who come home are all connected. Beginning with *Crow culture and identity* is the idea that if one's identity is Apsáalooke then they know who they are and where they come from. This identity then requires them to stay connected to the Crow Nation and is the reason why we choose to come home.

When we return home, we are faced with the *realities* of the issues that exist within our tribe. These *realities* include lateral oppression and politics. The politics that rule our Nation includes nepotism which results in high employment turnover which then feeds back into the *realities* and is a relentless cycle. This cycle then connects to the “wall of resistance” that college students can *experience* when they return home. *Loss of cultural practices* and politics are symptoms of lateral oppression. The conflict between Christianity and Apsáalooke spirituality creates a division within our Nation. This division effects our cultural practices. This internal division about values and power are *realities* facing Apsáalooke.

Realities of returning home connects to the *expectations* that the Nation has for college students. One of the main *expectations* is serving in leadership roles. Leadership asks that individuals be part of the solution to help deal with the *realities* of our Nation. Being part of the solution means bettering tribal infrastructures. Helping build tribal infrastructures means that one uses their degree to help our people which then brings us back to how our *Crow identity* is the reason we return home. Leadership and staying connected to the tribal nation are connected to each other because the *expectation* of a college graduate to come home and “change our community, help us somehow,” is expected.

Chapter V: Credibility, Limitations, Implications

“Listen, Plenty Coups,” said a voice. “in that tree is the lodge of the Chickadee. He is least in strength but strongest of mind among his kind. He is willing to work for wisdom. The Chickadee-person is a good listener. Nothing escapes his ears, which he has sharpened by constant use. Whenever others are talking together of their successes or failures, there you will find the Chickadee-person listening to their words. But in all his listening he tends to his own business. He never intrudes, he never speaks in strange company, and yet never misses a chance to learn from others. He gains success and avoids failures by learning how others succeeded or failed, and without great trouble to himself. There is a scarcely a lodge he does not visit, hardly a Person he does not know, and yet everybody likes him, because he minds his own business, or pretends to. . .”
“Develop your body, but do not neglect your mind,” Plenty Coups. “It is the mind that leads a man to power, not strength of body.” -Plenty Coups Chief of the Crows

The goal of my research was to understand the expectations of Apsáalooke college students as we return home. Using the Apsáalooke methodology of listening allowed me to learn using the ways I was taught growing up in Apsáalooke culture. The Chickadee-person, in Plenty Coups vision, illuminates learning through listening. Listening to the stories of my relatives helped me gain a clearer understanding to not only the expectations of our college graduates but also their experiences, “He gains success and avoids failures by learning how others succeeded or failed” (Plenty Coups, 2003, p. 37).

Kovach (2009) states, “knowledge and story are inseparable and . . . interpretive knowing is highly valued, [and] story is purposeful” (p. 98). Visiting with my relatives and gathering their stories is an opportunity that I will forever be grateful for. Hearing their stories allowed me to understand their experiences in education and learn what their hopes are for our people. The expectation to utilize the skills and talents to help our people is unwavering and holds the same truth it did when Plenty Coups spoke about education in the 1930s (McCleary, 2019).

In order to learn more about the hopes our community has for college student moving back to the Crow Nation, it was important that I talked with Apsáalooke who were living and working with our people. Asking the question, “When students come back home from college,

what are some of the expectations our people have for them?” To answer the question, I used an Indigenous Research Methodology guided by Crow Ways that utilized our methods of sharing knowledge and ideas. I came across Plenty Coups’ vision about the Chickadee-person in the early stages of my research. The story of Plenty Coups vision provided a description of what I knew was important, listening and observing, to the learning process and these skills guided my research approach in gathering information. As I write about my research findings, the vision has further meaning, “Develop your body, but do not neglect your mind, . . . It is the mind that leads a man to power,” further supports the importance of utilizing education and is an important responsibility for our people (Plenty Coups, year, p. 37).

In this final chapter, I will include how I established trustworthiness in the research process. I will also include the limitations of my study and the implications for the Apsáalooke community, counselor educators, and institutions of higher education concluding with discussing areas for further research. There is still much work to do in learning about the process American Indian’s experience when returning home to their tribal nations. This study provides further understanding for ways to support the strengthening of the Apsáalooke Nation.

Establishing Credibility

In this study using an Indigenous Research Methodology to ensure credibility of my research findings IRM points to tribal epistemologies to establish the credibility of one’s research. In a similar manor, Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that in qualitative studies one must account for the trustworthiness in their research findings. Although the titles of the processes in each methodology may be different, the goal is the same: to persuade audiences of the research that “findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). In this study, trustworthiness continues to be informed by a mixed methods

design using IRM and qualitative credibility practices. I have used cultural protocols, seeking advice from an elder, gathering rich stories, inquiry auditing, and reflexivity to help ensure credibility of my research findings.

Apsáalooke Protocol of Advice Giving and Receiving

Kovach (2009) explains each research methodology has their own specific code for ensuring research credibility. In a research using an IRM framework, “Indigenous research practice, method, findings and meanings will be judged as credible according to tribal epistemologies” (Kovach, 2009, p. 133). This means when using an IRM, the Indigenous researcher needs to identify their own tribal protocols that help establish trustworthiness in research findings. In addition to practicing tribal protocols, Kovach (2009) also describes collective responsibility, in that we are responsible to our relatives. This is an ethical responsibility that ensures we are not exploiting the Indigenous knowledges and people who shared their knowledge. Apsáalooke protocol also inform us of the importance of our words. This also applies to research and the intentionality of how we use our words is important and can be connected to trustworthiness.

Using Apsáalooke epistemology to establish trustworthiness, Dr. Janine Pease explains “Advice seeking is very Crow” and so is advice giving. Apsáalooke people know to seek out this advice from highly knowledgeable elders, also known as eminent scholars (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). The Apsáalooke protocol of seeking out advice was done as I sought out the guidance of Dr. Pease, who is an elder and eminent Apsáalooke scholar. Eminent scholars are those who have lifelong training in cultural ways. For the Apsáalooke, they are tribal members who are culturally rich with knowledge. Their cultural knowledge is a measure of their wealth and is equivalent to knowledge gained in the Western education system (J. Pease,

personal communication, June 1, 2020). Dr. Pease assisted with triangulation of my findings. She provided additional explanation for the protocols I used and feedback on how I presented my findings helping ensure collective responsibility.

Triangulation with an Apsáalooke Scholar

Dr. Janine Pease, is an Apsáalooke elder and scholar. She is the founding president of Little Big Horn College and an Apsáalooke historian, educator, researcher, and advocate for Native American people. In addition, Dr. Pease serves as a committee member for my dissertation study. Dr. Pease assisted me with establishing trustworthiness in this study in addition to feedback that expanded my understanding of tribal protocols. She also identified areas of my research findings where additional information was beneficial.

The goal of triangulation is to improve the probability that my findings and interpretations are credible. As the only Apsáalooke person on my committee, it was critical to receive feedback from Dr. Pease regarding my interpretation of the findings. I had sent her the Evolution of my Methodology and Visits and Conversations chapters along with the diagrams of my SA maps (See Appendix F and G) and Apsáalooke tipi metaphor (See Appendix J) interpreting my findings. I requested Dr. Pease review the documents, attending to my findings and research process with the following in mind: 1. Am I meeting my ethical responsibility to ensure that Indigenous knowledges and people are not exploited? Are there any blind spots I had where that might have happened? 2. Did I follow cultural protocols and Apsáalooke knowledge systems? Especially in the way I used the Apsáalooke tipi metaphor. 3. Would you add to, change, remove, or endorse my findings? Am I speaking truth from your experience and knowledge as an Apsáalooke? 4. Is there any place where I could be more curious? Is there anything missing or worth knowing more about?

After sending the research documents and questions to Dr. Pease, I received seven pages of written feedback and also had a two-hour Zoom conversation to discuss her impressions. The guidance I received from Dr. Pease is invaluable and helped further shape my research findings and include additional content regarding Crow Ways that I had neglected to give attention to or explain adequately.

Dr. Pease found my findings and interpretation credible however, recommendations for additions regarding my methodology and findings were made. After completing the in-depth triangulation process with Dr. Pease, I returned to the Evolution of Methodology and Visits and Conversations chapters to incorporate the feedback. Recommendations were to be more explicit about my methodology, participants, and findings. Dr. Pease also recommended changing the terms “tribe” and “community” to “Nation.” She also recommended removing the terminology “Reservation”. Crow country is located on our ancestral lands and we have a sense of belonging there. This belonging is not adequately described by the term Reservation because we were not forced there.

The following additions were made in the Evolution of Methodology chapter. Content making cultural Protocols of advice giving and receiving more explicit and highlighting elder status by describing the attributes of Louella and Jennifer as being *highly knowledgeable elders* and that *advice seeking and giving* is very much an Apsáalooke protocol. In regard to the selection of participants, Dr. Pease supported my decision to select people to visit with who I had *authentic connections* with. Dr. Pease added context to the *storying* methodology by acknowledging story as a method of teaching. Also that the individual’s story was not a brief concise answer, instead the stories were full of context including full body expression. Dr. Pease stated, “You have honored them and their story.” In regard to *responsibility* of receiving story,

Dr. Pease further expands upon the responsibility as both receiving the story with cultural understandings and in context.

In the Visits and Conversations chapter, content to the representation of the *four base poles* used in the metaphor describing the area of Crow Country were. Also added to this chapter was the importance of *naming* to Crow culture and identity and the concept of home and roles were expanded on. Dr. Pease's feedback provided lots of evidence that the Apsáalooke are not losing our culture. With her feedback, I decided to change the name of the loss of culture section to *Disappearing Cultural Practices* as this was more reflective of what was shared in the stories. Expansion of *tribal infrastructure* to include education systems, county, and federal government agencies were added. Also expanded upon was the concept of *leadership* activities at all levels of the tribal nation including personal, education, agency, business, and non-profit organizations development. The Clan system was added to the *mentorship* section.

There were also components of the methodology and findings that Dr. Pease endorsed. Comments on how the analysis was a highly comprehensive process that "open[ed] up the data and interrogat[ed] in fresh ways bringing new insights," and the "messy maps bring multidimensions into consideration" were made. She also approved of the method of gathering information and that aligned with the naturalistic method in oral history for Indigenous communities where it "poses the main question and allows the interviewee to respond. Only when the story goes far afield is there need to re-position or redirect" (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

One recommendation that I did not implement at this stage was the feedback and suggestion about anonymity. Dr. Pease suggested I use pseudonyms to create a barrier between the individuals I visited with and readers. Her recommendation was grounded in protecting the

relationships I have and protecting the individuals. Although I do understand Dr. Pease's recommendation, I have decided at this time to keep their names in this study. I choose to do this for two reasons, the first is that naming the participants, with their permission, follows Indigenous research methodology (Kovach, 2009). Secondly, I already had several discussions with each person about using their name and securing permission. I might break their confidence if I did not follow through on this. At this time, I did not implement this specific recommendation and will revisit this when necessary.

Established Relationships

The relationships I had with each of the individuals who visited with me were relationships that have been developed over a lifetime. "Not merely in title but effective connections, authentic connections" (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). In my conversation with Dr. Pease, she stressed the importance of relationship with extended family and the clan relationship and how these relationships also played an important role in gathering credible findings. Because the relationships I had with each person are authentic, I had already established that I was a trustworthy person. Dr. Pease also provided me with an explanation about attaining knowledge and how it is common for American Indian people to look for those who are attentive and listen.

The listener/observer/researcher has established an aptitude for learner, listener, and [being] trustworthy of receiving a treasured story. It is my [Dr. Pease] experience that many people in my family share with me . . . this is the aptitude. The likely recipient of a story who respects the story for the value it is. Others . . . wanted to know the stories but did not have perceived aptitude. Eminent Indigenous scholar, that's you, Salena.

Reflecting on the gratitude I had for the individuals who shared their stories with me, I was thankful for the relationship in its entirety that I had with each of them. The relationships I

had cultivated with each of them granted me with the opportunity to hear their meaningful and deep stories. I am honored with the trust they had with me to share their stories.

Collective Responsibility. Collective responsibility is an ethical responsibility that ensures we are not exploiting the Indigenous knowledges and people who shared their knowledge. Although I had obtained permission to share quotes from my visits in the Informed Consent process, I again reached out to each individual after writing the findings to ask if they had wanted to read the quotes I had used in this dissertation. All responded to my message by again giving me permission to use what was shared with me. Two of the individuals I visited with did ask to see the quotes used. I then sent them the sections with their quotes. One individual did make edits to what she had shared, not changing the meaning of her quote but making it more clear and accurate. Confirming with each person they were still okay with me using their words was important to the connections and relationships I have with them.

Gathering Rich, Thick Descriptions

The depth of conversations and visits were extensive in both story and length of time spent with each individual. The stories shared with me were not brief, concise answers. Individuals shared in-depth experiences, “Their response is without hesitation, but holistic to them. In this way the story is totally valid. You have honored them and their story.” (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020).

Using myself and the established relationships I had with each of them, I placed myself as the research instrument which allowed me to gather thick descriptions opening up space for stories to be shared. Following tribal protocols and describing the relationships I had with each person is an important component. The established relationships I had with each of them created the opportunity for me to hear detailed stories of their experiences, observations, and thoughts.

The thick descriptions allowed me to facilitate depth and detail in my analysis and interpretation. Using the exact words of the stories to display the thick descriptions in my findings establishes credibility.

Inquiry Auditing

Inquiry auditing provides an external check on steps taken to ensure credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I engaged in this process with several people throughout the research project. Conversations with Dr. Murray, the chair of this dissertation project, served as the leading inquiry auditor. Dr. Murray and I had weekly discussions about research steps. We had detailed conversations about initial observations during transcribing through the development of situational maps. She would review maps and then ask me to expand on my thoughts and ideas, include more information, and question decisions I had made in the analysis and interpretation process. The conversations we had, and her editing of my written findings provided me with feedback so that I could provide a clearer explanation of my findings.

Additional conversations with my writing tutor, Dr. Gretchen McCaffrey, allowed me to talk through my ideas and achieve more clarity and accuracy when representing my findings. Conversations with my husband Augustine John Hill (Apsáalooke), and my parents Ronald Beaumont Sr. (Apsáalooke) and Marcia Billedeaux Beaumont (Amskapipikuni/Blackfeet) helped me gain a clearer understanding of tribal protocol and other culturally relevant understandings I needed to continue to progress through this research project.

Additional forms of inquiry auditing will be ongoing. The inquiry auditing will continue to take place with the Apsáalooke Nation as I share my findings, beginning with the dissertation defense and through future dissemination writings and presentations. Dissemination of my findings will continue as I share research findings with my relatives. Following cultural protocol,

I will always be open to talking about what I found and in doing so will be open to questions about my findings and receiving feedback. My role as a Visiting Scholar with the Indigenous Research Center at Salish Kootenai College will also provide me with opportunities to share my findings, specifically with a group of Indigenous scholars who are working towards continued development of the Indigenous Research Methodology.

Reflexivity

The practice of reflexivity allows the researcher to utilize self-reflection in the meaning-making process. I utilized several reflexivity exercises including weekly conversations with Dr. Murray, cultural consultations with my family, and keeping audio and written reflective journals. The reflective practices allowed me to think freely through my reflections and allowed for major realizations especially during conversations with Dr. Murray, Dr. McCaffrey, and John Hill. Both journaling and conversations helped me form questions and thoughts about my research. The feedback I received helped me identify biases, blind spots, and incomplete thoughts and ideas.

These five steps: cultural protocols of seeking advice from an elder, established relationships, gathering rich stories, inquiry auditing, and practicing reflexivity helped ensure credibility in this research process. Although I took important steps to ensure credibility in my research, limitations remain present.

Limitations

This research study has several limitations. The main limitation relates to the researcher's first-time implementation of an emerging methodology. Indigenous Research Methodologies are grounded in tribal knowledges that have existed since creation. Indigenous people have always been researchers who sought out ways to make meaning of knowledge

gathered. Because of this, our tribal epistemologies include instruction on how to gather new information and make meaning of it. However, applying Indigenous Research Methodologies is fairly new to academia.

Dr. Murray and I had hours of conversations talking about our process of learning IRM and how to apply the methodology. I am thankful for a dissertation chair who was willing to learn about IRM with me, who made space for me to learn, and who shared her extensive research knowledge with me helping me understand the research process as a whole. Even through the analysis phase, where IRM literature states more work needs to be done in developing an analysis that is grounded in IRM, Dr. Murray continued to gently guide me towards using an analysis framework and creating a process that aligned with my way of knowing and understanding.

Utilizing an emerging methodology also had the limitation of not always having an understanding in the IRM process. Sometimes my understanding wouldn't come until I participated in it. Although Dr. Murray and I were thorough in the research process, this was still the first-time either of us applied IRM and so there are undoubtedly areas that were missed or where further understanding and expansion needs to be made. Sometimes I would think about how I interpreted IRM and would wonder if my interpretation was accurate. I didn't have direct access to scholars who have used IRM and could not talk with researchers experienced in this methodology. This also was a limitation.

Both myself and Dr. Murray have been trained in Western science throughout our education. The Western gaze and pervasiveness was relevant at times, and we would have to hold each other accountable when this gaze would interrupt the IRM research project. There

may be blind spots where our Western gaze infiltrated this process, creating limitations in the research.

After I had committed to using IRM as my dissertation research framework, I came across one of the main recommendations of IRM. This recommendation was to engage the Apsáalooke community about our research needs within our nation. Gathering thoughts and ideas from the Crow people should have been my first step. However, I had already identified my research project and continued on the path of applying an IRM. Not beginning my inquiry based on needs communicated by Apsáalooke people is a limitation of my study.

Another limitation of this research study is that it has a large female educator representation. Women, specifically women in education, perspectives are largely represented in the visits and conversations. The Apsáalooke Nation is a matriarchal society and visiting with other women aligns with tribal protocol, however this also has limited male voices in the study and needs to be overtly stated. In addition, each of the individuals had achieved a formal degree or had some college experience and this must be accounted for as a limitation.

In conclusion, the limitations of this study include first-time implementation of an emerging methodology, applying a Western gaze without awareness, not engaging with the community about their research needs, and a large representation of female educators who also had some level of higher education.

Implications

Using both the findings of this study and the methodology, there are implications for Apsáalooke Nation building, Counseling and Counselor Education, and higher education institutions.

Implications for the Apsáalooke Nation

When using the Apsáalooke tipi metaphor to share the implications, the Apsáalooke culture is the tipi in its entirety, every component is essential and serves a purpose and we need to continue to participate and practice our culture. The college student experiences are the sentries of the tipi that protect the home. “To be educated and highly skilled” has always been a value held by Apsáalooke (J. Pease, personal communication, June 1, 2020). The implication is for us to make our tipi poles stronger by equipping Apsáalooke people with the skills and knowledge to be protectors of our tribal nation and continue to utilize our resources and people to protect outside elements from harming our people.

To share these implications with the Apsáalooke Nation, I need to identify ways for dissemination of my findings making them accessible to the Apsáalooke Nation citizens. Ideas that I have noted include a photo voice project or digital story, presenting to high schools through college readiness programs. Also creating a poster, following Montana’s Office of Public Instruction’s format used to highlight American Indian educators and scholars and posting a summary of my results with the image of my tipi metaphor and displaying in the schools and tribal buildings. Lastly presenting the findings through the Indigenous Research Center opportunities.

Implications for Counseling and Counselor Education

The implications of this study regarding the field of Counseling and Counselor Education include building awareness of Apsáalooke culture and fostering awareness of Indigenous Research Methodologies.

Awareness of the Apsáalooke college experience and expectations for students upon their return to the tribal nation builds a better understanding for counseling faculty, supervisors, and

counselors about the Apsáalooke student experience and the tribal nation's expectations. This understanding contributes to further development of multicultural competencies specific to Apsáalooke students and clients, increasing counselor and educator effectiveness. Immersion in these research findings can help counselors and counselor educators be more aware of their Western gaze as they continue their process of multicultural competence (Pope-Davis et al., 2002). Multicultural competency around American Indian experiences adds relational depth and understanding to client, supervisee, and student relationships. The level of cultural understanding enhances relationships with students and also has the potential for richer and more effective education supervision, and clinical outcomes.

Regarding research methodology, faculty can gain a richer understanding about IRM. What I appreciate most about using an IRM is that I don't have to forget who I am or set aside my way of knowing to do the research. I can develop and practice my research skills as myself because IRM is based from my perspective as an Indigenous person. The methodology doesn't require me to pretend that I think from a Western science perspective. I get to use my own worldview and experiences to do the research, make meaning of what I have learned, and present it in a way that it is useful for my community. The primary outcome of this work is not writing for academic publication or academic conference presentation, it's requiring me to be responsible to my own tribal nation, something that is already instilled in me.

Implications for Institutions of Higher Education

American Indian support programs in higher education institutions have been thoroughly researched and (Brayboy et al., 2012; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; HeavyRunner & DeCelles, 2002). We have access to extensive literature focused on American Indian college student needs for retention and completion. Institutions of Higher Education continue to invest in how to

recruit and retain NA students, and little to no energy, resources, and research is invested in helping students navigate their return to tribal nations. This study begins this work. The more we understand about these expectations, the more complete the circle of recruitment, retention, and preparation can be. Students can be supported with their community's end goals in mind.

American Indian scholars need to continue to build resources to prepare their students to return to their tribal nations. This research study provides an example for other Indigenous scholars on how to gather input from tribal nations on what their expectations are for their college students returning home. Add more about indigenous scholars implementing IRM. This study helps cultivate further application of IRM.

Leaders in higher education also need to embrace the idea of providing Indigenous scholars with the opportunity to utilize an IRM. More allies to Indigenous scholars, especially in graduate education, need to be open to learning and understanding this methodology and the importance it has for Indigenous scholars. As more Indigenous scholars begin to utilize this methodology, the Indigenous scholar population will grow, and we won't need to depend on allyship in research.

Recommendations

Listening to the stories shared with me and going through the analysis and interpretation process have helped identify recommendations to share with the Apsáalooke Nation, our students, and systems of higher education. My recommendations for the Apsáalooke Nation would include bringing awareness to the importance of mentoring and how it can be used to benefit both our young professionals and tribal organizations. I would also bring attention to the importance of using our own people from the Apsáalooke Nation as so many of us were motivated to help our people and chose obtaining an education as one way to give back. We have

an abundance of individuals who have obtained an education and want to share their expertise to help strengthen our tribal nation. I would also ask the Apsáalooke Nation leaders to identify ways to strategically recruit college graduates to work for organizations serving the Apsáalooke Nation and identify ways that we as a nation can help welcome our graduates home.

My recommendations for systems of higher education would include developing and offering courses that focus on Indigenous students identifying the needs of professions within their tribal nation, offer leadership development that is tailored to meet the needs of American Indian students and their tribal nation. Also, to incorporate academic advising and course offerings that encourage American Indian students to adequately prepare for leadership roles within their tribal nation. In addition, to identify internship sites, experiential, and service-learning projects that provide opportunities to build skills to prepare American Indian students to return to their tribal nations.

The roles that both tribal nations and systems of higher education have are equally important to American Indian student's success and their eagerness to give back to their people. Both adequately preparing students and re-integrating students back into their tribal nations' systems are necessary for tribal nation building.

Areas for Future Research

This research study begins to identify the next steps of giving back for Apsáalooke college students who are returning home to their tribal nation. Applying an Indigenous Research Methodology directed my focus on one tribal nation, specifically the tribal nation I am connected to and familiar with the tribal epistemologies. Following the direction of IRM application, this centered my focus to learning more about the tribal nation's expectations of Apsáalooke college students returning home after college.

In addition to learning about the expectations, my findings also included deeper understandings of the roles Crow culture and identity, the college student experience, and realities of returning home have on nation's expectations for their returning students. Each of these major concepts can be expanded upon with future research. Research studies can focus on each category of findings and how these areas of focus relate to the process of nation building for the Apsáalooke Nation. The perspective of those who have not attended an institution of higher education and their expectations of graduates returning home would also be an important standpoint to gather.

Using this study as a model, Indigenous researchers can apply an IRM approach using their own tribal perspectives to study their tribal nation's expectations of their Indigenous graduates. Continued studies in this area will help tribal nations welcome their college graduates' home and embrace the knowledge and skills they have gained to contribute to strengthening their tribal nation.

As Indigenous Research Methodologies continues to grow, I recommend this approach be utilized by more Indigenous scholars focusing on different research topics and areas. This will help in the continued development of this emerging methodology and integrate indigenous ways of knowing into Western academic thought. Continued research application of IRM with specific attention to analysis and interpretation is required and needs to be developed by Indigenous scholars (Kovach, 2009 & 2018). As Indigenous researchers, we need to practice the application of this methodology, support each other in further development of Indigenous methodologies, and then go on to teach the methodology to our Indigenous students so we can create decolonized spaces in research.

In summary, the expectations of Apsáalooke college students has been evaluated using a trustworthiness process, limitations have been discussed, and implications for the Apsáalooke Nation, Counselor Education, and institutions of higher education have been shared.

Conclusion

“Once you have your education, no one can ever take that away from you” is a phrase I heard my grandfather, the late Philip Beaumont Sr. (Apsáalooke names: Braid on Top & World Traveler), say many times as I was growing up. The Apsáalooke people view education as a freedom. This is a freedom of mind and a freedom to create a quality life for yourself, your family, and ultimately the Apsáalooke Nation. Tribal nation building is a concept that has been practiced by Indigenous people throughout our existence. We have mastered the skill of perseverance and strength of mind and body as evident in our survival. In contemporary times, we have learned to utilize the Western education system to continue to achieve tribal nation building.

Identifying the expectations of American Indian college graduates upon their return to their tribal nation has recently been an area researched and discussed among Native American’s in higher education. Using an Indigenous Research Methodology to gain knowledge about expectations of tribal nation members gave me the opportunity to explore the expectations Apsáalooke people have for our college students returning home. Using an Indigenous Research Methodology framework required me to apply the Apsáalooke epistemologies that I had grown up in. Using Apsáalooke practices and protocols helped me gain knowledge about what Apsáalooke are expecting of those returning home after college. Major concepts identified included the importance Crow culture and identity play in the education process. These include but are not limited to, using story as a means of teaching, knowing what it means to be

Apsáalooke, knowing the importance of the Clan and family systems, and Apsáalooke spirituality. Also important is the Apsáalooke student experiences while they are in college; including, staying connected to the Apsáalooke Nation, understanding the process of returning home, knowing how to assimilate when one leaves and again when they return, and the privilege and responsibility that comes with obtaining an education. Realities of returning home were also named along with the expectations of our college graduates. The realities of returning home included societal hardships faced by the Apsáalooke Nation connected to historical trauma. Expectations of college educated people included using their skills to help strengthen the tribal infrastructures, providing leadership and mentorship, and fulfilling the responsibilities they have to our people.

The findings of this study will add to the Apsáalooke Nation's understanding, and perhaps practices, of supporting tribal members who are pursuing a higher education. The Indigenous Research Methodology and adapted analysis method may be of continued benefit for future IRM studies. Including future Apsáalooke research, and future research identifying expectations of college students from other tribal nations. The use of Indigenous Research Methodology for the Apsáalooke nation and the adaptation of situational analysis to this methodology make contributions to the emerging research practices of Indigenous Research Methodologies.

APPENDIX A: University of Montana IRB Approval

Form RA-108
(Rev. 6/24/2019)



UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research
APPLICATION FOR IRB REVIEW

IRB Protocol No.:
20-20

At the University of Montana (UM), the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the institutional review body responsible for oversight of all research activities involving human subjects as outlined in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Human Research Protections.

Instructions: A separate application must be submitted for each project. Email the completed form as a Word document to IRB@umontana.edu, or submit a hardcopy (no staples) to the IRB office in the Interdisciplinary Science Building, room 104. Student applications must be accompanied by email authorization by the supervising faculty member or a signed hard copy. *All fields must be completed. If an item does not apply to this project, write in: N/A.* Questions? Call the IRB office at 243-6672.

1. Administrative Information

Project Title: Education is your most powerful weapon: Gaining understanding from our community	
Principal Investigator: Salena Beaumont Hill	UM Position: Doctoral Student
Department: Counselor Education	Office location: Phyllis J. Washington College of Education, Suite 334
Work Phone: 406-207-6946	Cell Phone: 406-207-6946

2. Human Subjects Protection Training *(All researchers, including faculty supervisors for student projects, must be listed below and have completed a self-study course on protection of human research subjects within the last three years and be able to supply the "Certificate(s) of Completion" upon request. If you need to add rows for more people, use the Additional Researchers Addendum.)*

All Research Team Members (list yourself first)	PI	CO-PI	Faculty Supervisor	Research Assistant	DATE COMPLETED IRB-approved Course mm/dd/yyyy
Name: Salena Beaumont Hill Email: salena.hill@umontana.edu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11/26/2017 ✓
Name: Kirsten Murray Email: kirsten.murray@mso.umt.edu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	05/15/2019 ✓
Name: Email:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Name: Email:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. Project Funding *(If federally funded, additional requirements may apply.)*

Is grant application currently under review at a grant funding agency? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>(If yes, cite sponsor on ICF if applicable)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> No		Has grant proposal received approval and funding? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>(If yes, cite sponsor on ICF if applicable)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Agency	Grant No.	e-Prop #	Start Date	End Date	PI on grant

For UM-IRB Use Only

IRB Determination:

- Not Human Subjects Research
- Approved by Exempt Review, Category # _____
- Approved by Expedited Review, Category # 7
- Full IRB Determination
 - Approved *(see Note to PI)*
 - Conditional Approval *(see memo)* - IRB Chair Signature/Date: _____
 - Conditions Met *(see Note to PI)*
 - Resubmit Proposal *(see memo)*
 - Disapproved *(see memo)*

Note to PI: Use any attached IRB-approved forms (signed/dated) as "masters" when preparing copies. Notify the IRB if any significant changes or unanticipated events occur. Failure to follow these directions constitutes non-compliance with UM policy.

Risk Level: Minimal

Final Approval by IRB Chair/Manager: [Signature] Date: 2/11/2020 Expires: N/A

APPENDIX B: Participant Information and Informed Consent

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: Education is Your Most Powerful Weapon: Gaining Understanding from Our Community

Investigator(s):

Salena Beaumont Hill is the principal investigator for this study. Salena is a Ph.D. candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Montana. The Counseling Department is located in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana. Salena can be contacted at (406)207-6946 or salena.hill@umontana.edu. Kirsten Murray, Ph.D. is the supervisor for this study, and can be contacted at (406)243-5252 or kirsten.murray@mso.umt.edu.

Tribal Affiliated Reviewers:

Approved by Crow Tribe Executive Branch. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Vice-Secretary of the Crow Tribe at (406) 598-2593.

Inclusion Criteria:

To be eligible for this study, participants must be:

- A member of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation
- At least 18 years old

Purpose:

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the Apsáalooke community expectations of their students returning from college. Resources that adequately address preparing American Indian students to return home and effectively meet the needs of their community is sparse. The results of this research study will help prepare Apsáalooke students for their transition back into service of their community and help them better understand what their community expects of them.

Procedures:

If you agree to take part in this research study, you will participate in a conversation about education and what you believe is important for students to know about coming home to work. You will be asked to share your expectations of these students and your thoughts about what they can do prepare. Your initials _____ indicate your permission to record the interview. Interview recordings will be stored on a password-protected hard drive.

Risks/Discomforts:

There is no anticipated discomfort for those contributing to this study, so risk to participants is minimal. That said, sometimes questions about our experiences can be uncomfortable or can cause us to recall something that was upsetting. You are free to refuse to answer any question or to end the interview at any time.

Benefits:

Although you may not directly benefit from taking part in this study, your participation may help future Apsáalooke students who come home to work.

The University of Montana IRB	
Expiration Date	<u>None</u>
Date Approved	<u>2-11-2020</u>
Chair/Admin	<u>[Signature]</u>

Confidentiality:

Your records will be kept confidential and will not be released without your consent except as required by law. Your initials _____ indicate your permission to be identified by name in any publications or presentations. If you do not want to be acknowledged by name in any publications or presentations, please initial here _____. Interview recordings will be stored on a password-protected hard drive. Your signed consent form will be stored in a locked cabinet.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:

Your decision to take part in this research study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to take part or you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Questions:

If you have any questions about the research now or during the study, please contact: Salena Hill at (406) 207-6946 or salena.hill@umontana.edu. Kirsten Murray, Ph.D., the supervising professor, can be reached at (406) 243-5252 or kirsten.murray@mso.umt.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the UM Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (406) 243-6672.

Statement of Your Consent:

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by a member of the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Printed Name of Subject

Subject's Signature

Date

The University of Montana IRB

Expiration Date None
Date Approved 2-11-2020
Chair/Admin [Signature]

APPENDIX C: Conversation Protocol

Conversation Protocol

Participant: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Interview
Setting: _____

Pre-research conversation: Ask where to set up my materials. Spend time catching up/reconnecting and wait for cue from them to begin.

Opening Statements:

Thanks for helping me learn more about my research question. Because obtaining an education is encouraged for the Crow people, I want to hear your thoughts about how college students can prepare themselves to moving home after college and help our people?

Because I need to follow some of the protocol outlined by the University, I need to go through some things before we start talking about my research question:

- I will be asking you about your thoughts about college students who move back home to work.
- If you say it is okay, I will record what we talk about as we visit about college students moving home so I can accurately capture what we talk about. The recordings will be kept safe and I will have a typed transcript of our visit so I can look back at it and make sure I remember what you told me.
- *If you want me to keep this conversation confidential, You will **not** be identified by your name in any writing I do about my question. When quoted, your identity, and the specifics of your location will not be disclosed.*
- *If you are okay with me using your name when I share what I learned from you, I will use your name when I write about our conversation. You can change your mind at any time, just let me know so I can turn your transcript into a confidential file.*
- You can stop our conversation ant anytime without any problems. I am thankful for the time you are taking to visit with me and I don't want to be disrespectful of your time.
- There is not a right answer to the question. I want to understand how you think about the question and hear your thoughts, stories, and experiences with the question.
- Okay, do you have any questions for me before we start?
- If allowed to record, start recording devices as they sign Informed Consent and initial Procedure.
- *At end of conversation:* If you think of anything else you want to tell me or if you don't want me to share something you told me just let me know.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **When students come back home from college, what are some of the expectations our people have for them?**
 - a. Follow up questions as necessary to expand on participant meaning
 - i. What needs do our people have?
 1. What role do you think education plays for our people?
 - ii. What do you think our people need from the college student when they come home?
 1. What did you need from our people when you were a student?
 - iii. What wishes do you have for Crow students who attend college?
 - iv. When students move home from college, what are your hopes for them?
 - v. When thinking about college students who came home, what was something they did that you appreciated or noticed that you felt was good for our people?

APPENDIX D: Crow Tribe IRB Approval

01/31/2020 15:27

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PAGE 02/03



January 16, 2020

To: Shawn Backbone, Vice Secretary
Crow Tribe Executive Branch

From: Salena Beaumont Hill, Crow Tribal Member & Doctoral Student

Re: Requesting research permission with the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation

I am seeking approval to begin doctoral research with Apsáalooke people residing on the Crow Reservation. My permanent residence is in Pryor/Arrow Creek District and I am currently residing in Missoula, Montana working on completing a Ph.D. in Counselor Education. I have completed all departmental requirements to begin my dissertation research which will be the final project in completing the Ph.D. program. A description of my research project is included below.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (406)207-6946 or salena.hill@umontana.edu. You may also contact Kirsten Murray, Ph.D. who is the supervisor for this study, at (406)243-5252 or kirsten.murray@mso.umt.edu.

Project Title: Education is your most powerful weapon: Gaining understanding from our community

Purpose of Research Project: This research study will take a look at identifying Apsáalooke (Crow) community expectations of their students returning home from college. Information gathered will help prepare American Indian students for their transition into service of their community after higher education experiences. This study will pose the following research question: *What are the Apsáalooke tribal communities' expectations of returning college students and graduates?*

American Indian students return home with the goal of contributing in a positive way to their community. What remains unclear about this process are the expectations communities have for returning college students and how to best prepare students for their transition from an academic setting back into their community. There is no research about the experiences of how communities foster the transition of native students' move home after college. Learning about these expectations from community leaders will bring more clarity to the students they have invested in, and the institutions that serve them. Talking with community leaders and understanding their experiences of supporting college students as they move home will add to the research in three ways: 1) increase community knowledge, clarify expectations, and bring voice to experiences not explored in the research, 2) indigenous students can gain clarity about community expectations, and 3) those preparing our native students in college and university systems can hold a better idea of the expectations they will return to.

Results: This is a dissertation study using an Indigenous Research Methodology (Kovach, 2008; Wilson, 2010) to examine community expectations of Apsáalooke (Crow) college students returning to their

tribal community to work. Foremost, this research is an act of giving back to my community, and results will be shared with our Apsáalooke communities. I also intend to publish the findings in peer reviewed journals and/or present the findings at peer reviewed conferences in the field of Education. Due to the uniqueness and qualitative nature of the methodology of this study, the results will not be generalized to a larger population. However, results will be intended for use by other Indigenous researchers who are wanting to examine their own tribal community expectations of college students who plan to work in tribal communities. The hope is that results will also be used to inform institutions of higher education in their efforts with American Indian students. The results will identify areas of focus for future research and add to the dearth of existing literature and knowledge in the area of American Indians in Higher Education. Ultimately, the results of this study will be used to increase understanding of Apsáalooke community expectations of students returning to their tribal community to work as professionals in their tribal communities.

Subject Information: Participants in this study will include members of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation. All participants will be over the age of 18. Participants will be selected following Apsáalooke (Crow) protocol where it is appropriate to have an established relationship before asking permission to visit with participants about my research. Using purposeful selection allows for deliberately selecting these individuals and provides confidence that the conclusions adequately represent variances of the population (Maxwell, 2013; Kovach, 2008).

Criteria for who I hope to visit with include:

1. Elder (Clan Mother)
2. Community members who are recommended by my elder
3. Elder with college experience
4. Experienced professional who has worked in the community
5. Experienced professional who has worked in the community and has had college experience
6. Young Professional
7. Young professional with college experience

I have read the above description of this research study. As a member of the Crow Tribe Executive Branch I am granting approval of this research project.

Shawn Baebbon
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Vice-Secretary
Title

1-31-20
Date

APPENDIX E: Little Big Horn College IRB Approval



LITTLE BIG HORN COLLEGE

Institutional Review Board (IRB) FWA 00017400

8645 S. Weaver Drive • PO Box 370

Crow Agency, MT 59022

(406) 638-3158

www.lbhc.edu

"Education is your greatest weapon. With education you are the white man's equal, without education you are his victim and so shall remain all of your lives. Study, learn, help one another always. Remember there is only poverty and misery in idleness and dreams - but in work there is self-respect and independence."

— Chief Plenty Coups

May 31, 2020

Salena Hill
Phyllis J. Washington College of Education
32 Campus Drive
Missoula, MT 59801

LBHC IRB #: 2020-05-01

Project: Education is your most powerful weapon: Gaining understanding from our community.

Approval Date: May 31, 2020

Expiration Date: May 31, 2021

Category: EXEMPT

Dear Mrs. Hill:

This letter is to officially notify you of the decision of your application. The Little Big Horn College IRB has **APPROVED** the research protocol that was submitted on November 2019; What are the Apsáalooke tribal communities' expectations of returning college students and graduates?

For projects which continue beyond one year from the starting date, the IRB will request continuing review and update of the research project. There is no grace period beyond one year from the last approval date. In order to avoid lapses in approval of your research and the possible suspension of the subject enrollments, please submit your Renewal request at least four (4) weeks before the protocol's expiration date of March 14, 2017. It is your responsibility to submit your research protocol for continuing review, renewal, or updates.

You must report any unanticipated or adverse events of a serious nature resulting from implementation of this protocol to the IRB office immediately, within five (5) working days.

You must report any proposed changes or protocol modifications for IRB approval at least four (4) weeks before you want to implement them. All protocol deviations must be reported to the IRB within five (5) working days.

The investigator must also advise the IRB when this study is finished or discontinued by completing the proper forms. Please submit a close-out form no longer than two (2) weeks after ending your research protocol.

Please include the assigned IRB number on the Informed Consent Forms and submit a copy of the forms to the IRB office with the number included.

If you have any questions, please contact Gerlinda Morrison, IRB Administrator, at 406-638-3129 or email at morrisong@lbhc.edu.

Sincerely,
Gerlinda Morrison
Little Big Horn College
(electronic signature)

File

President

Dr. David Yarlott, Jr.
davidyarlott@lbhc.edu
(406) 638-3107

Dean of Administration

Shaleen Old Coyote
oldcoyotes@lbhc.edu
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Dean of Academics

Frederica Lefthand
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Dean of Students

Patricia Whiteman-Pickett
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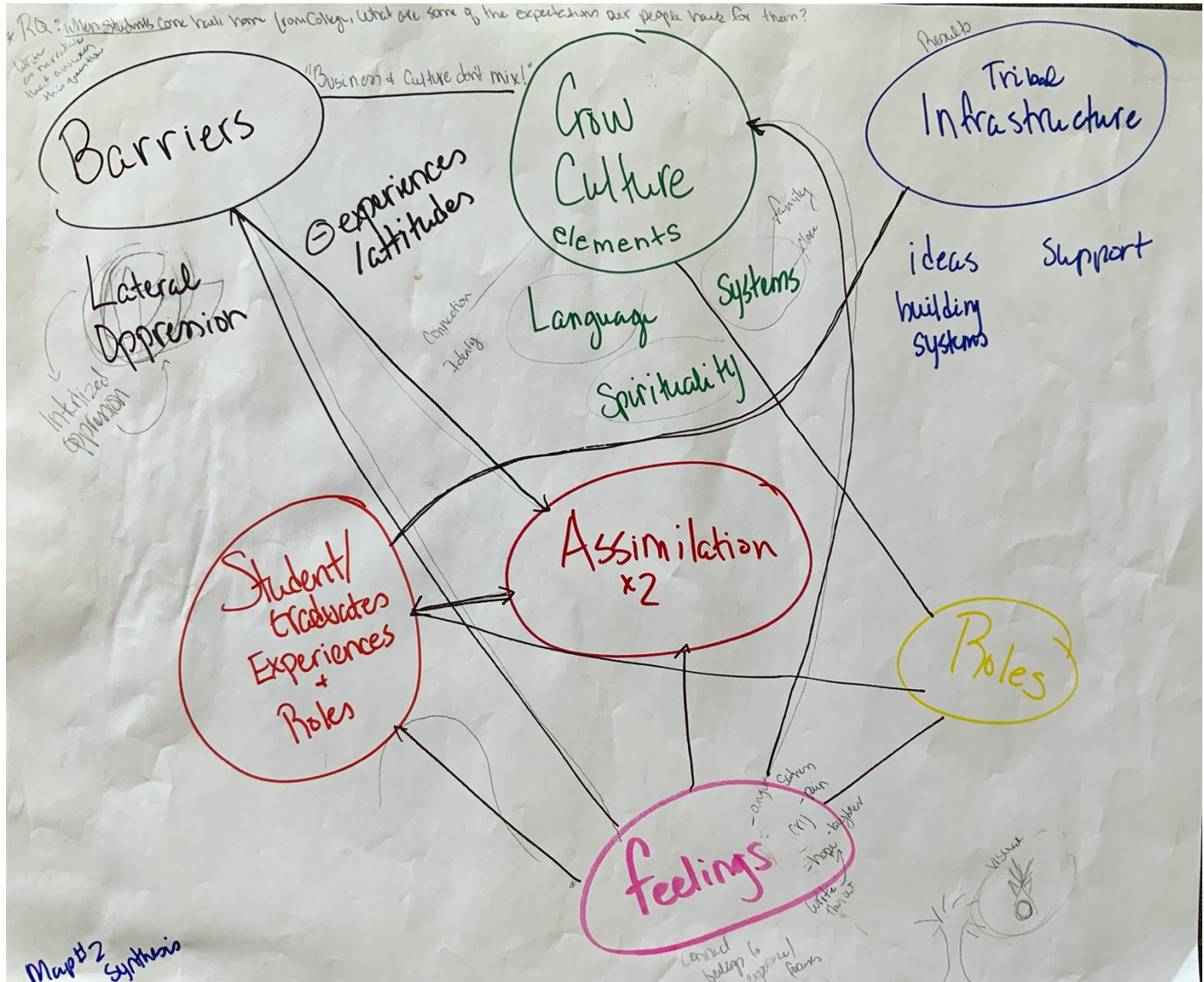
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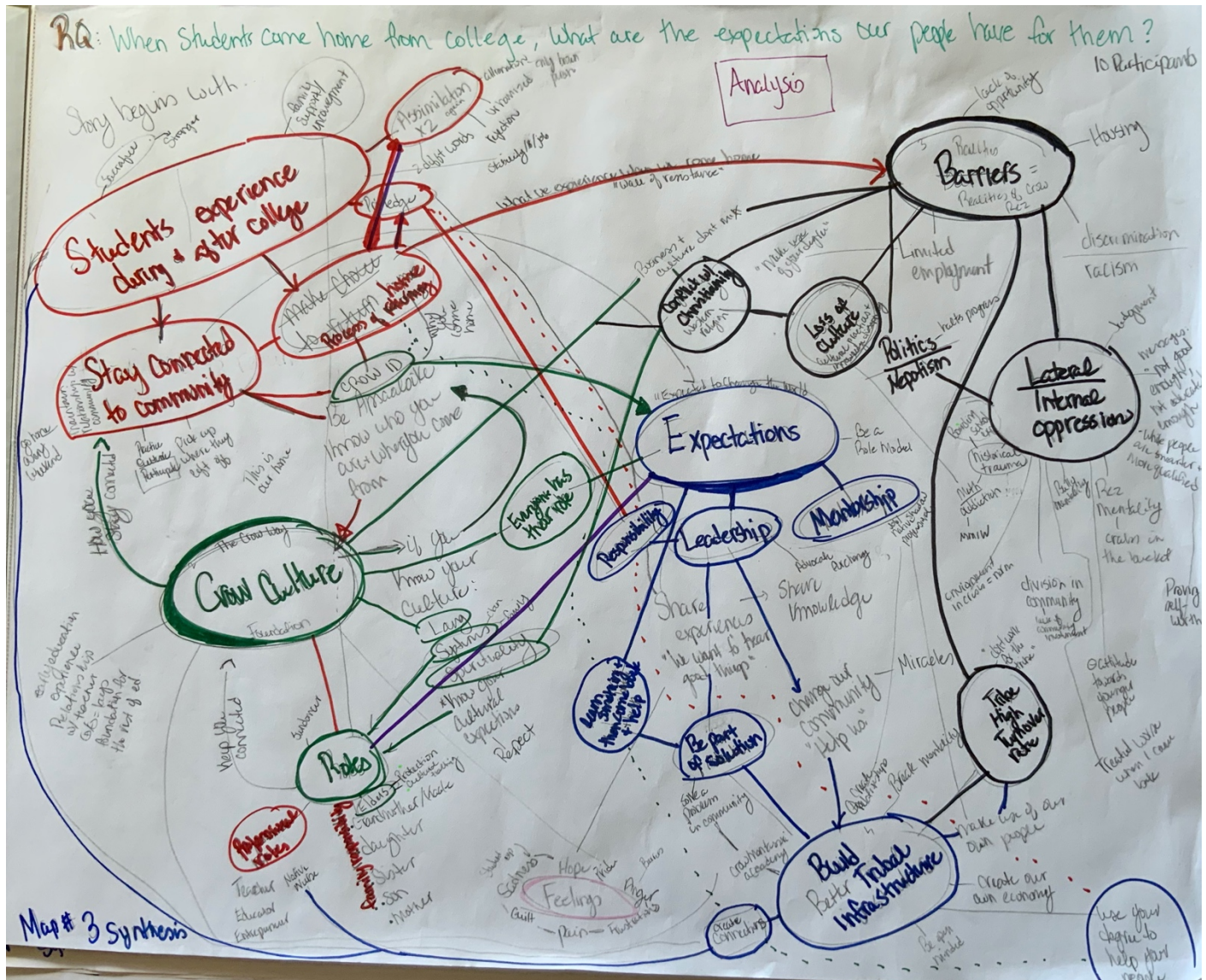
Chief Information Officer

Franklin Cooper
cooperf@lbhc.edu
(406) 638-3161

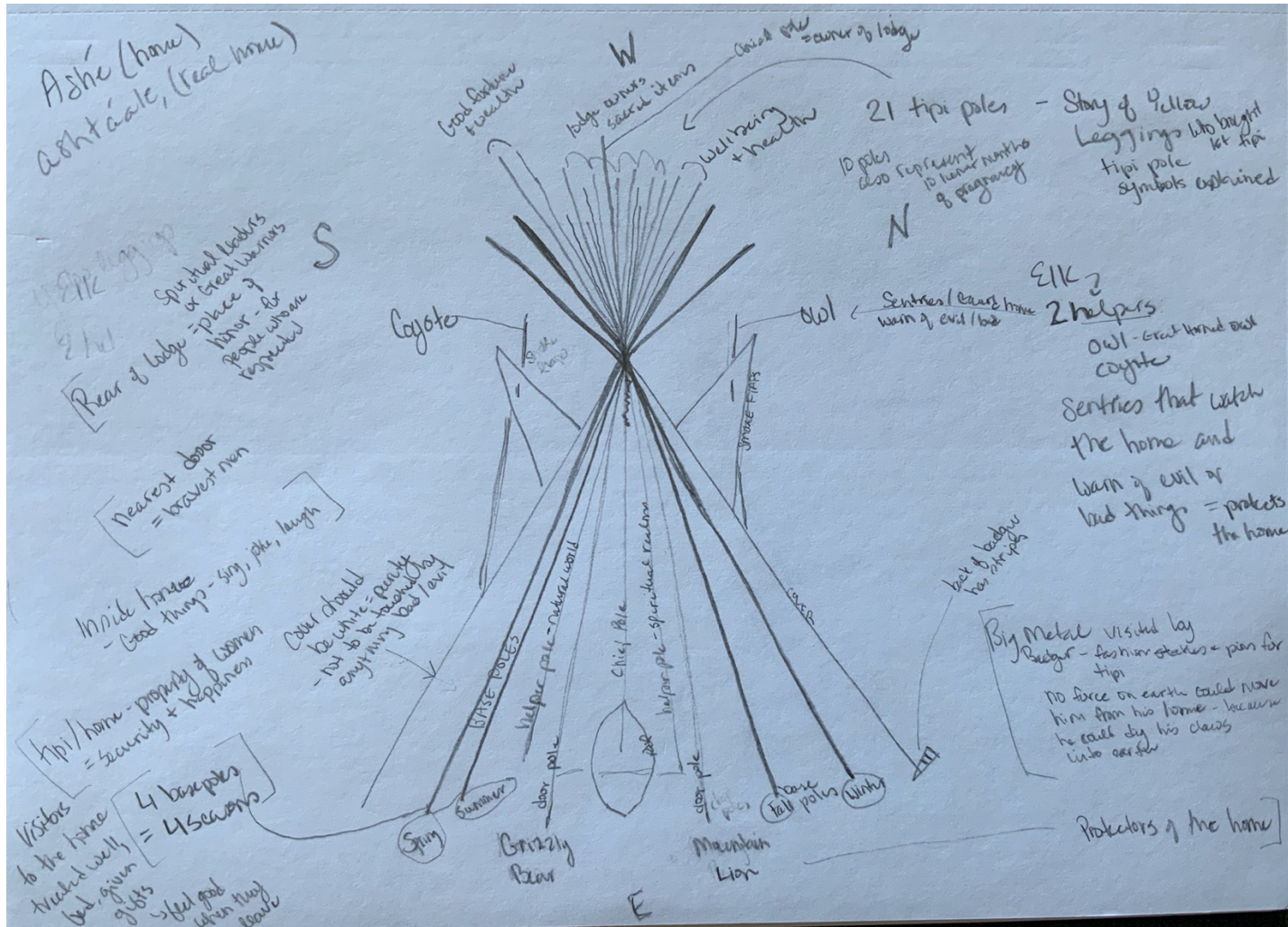
APPENDIX F: Figure 1 Synthesized Situational Analysis Map



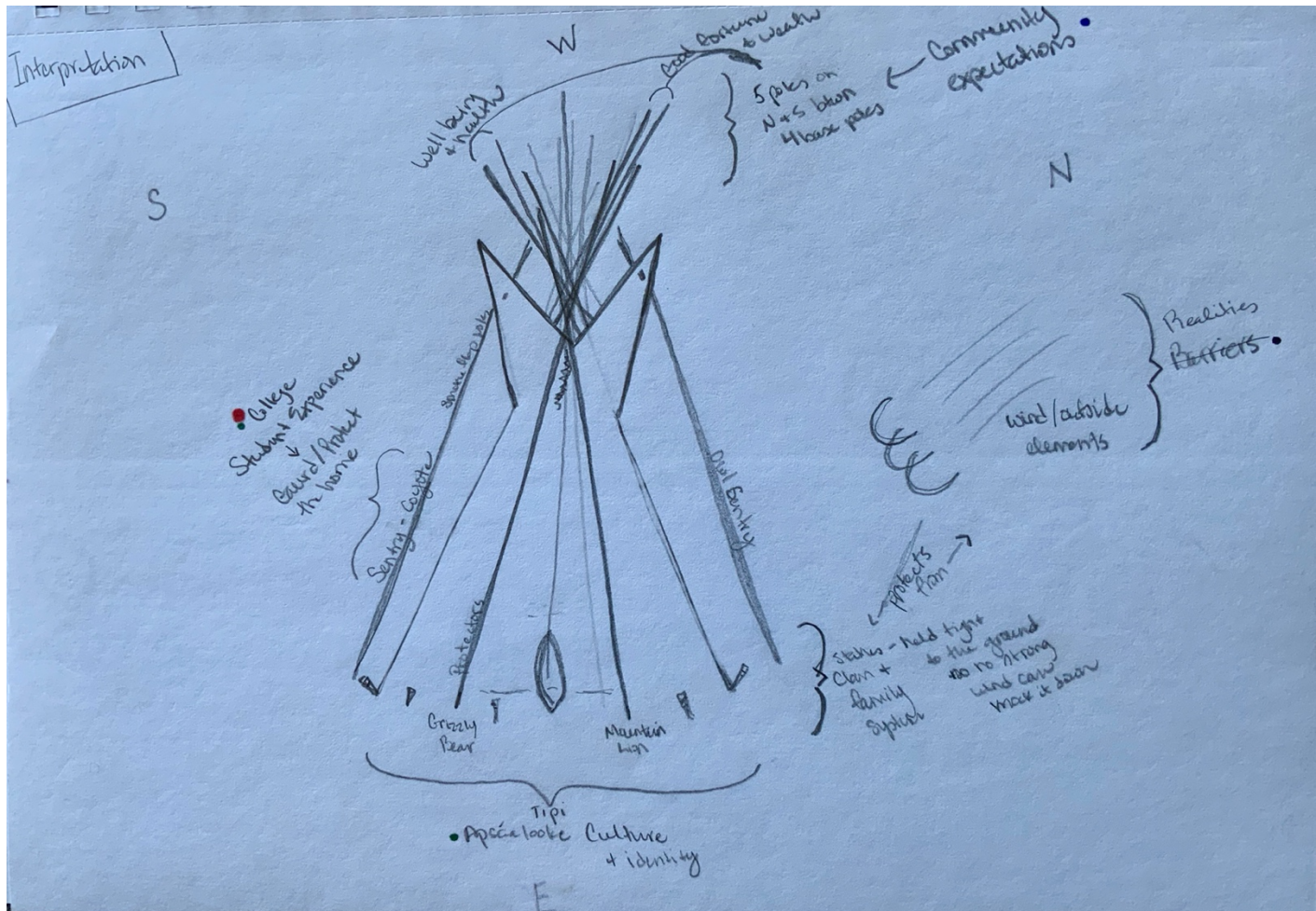
APPENDIX G: Figure 2 Synthesized Situational Analysis Map 2



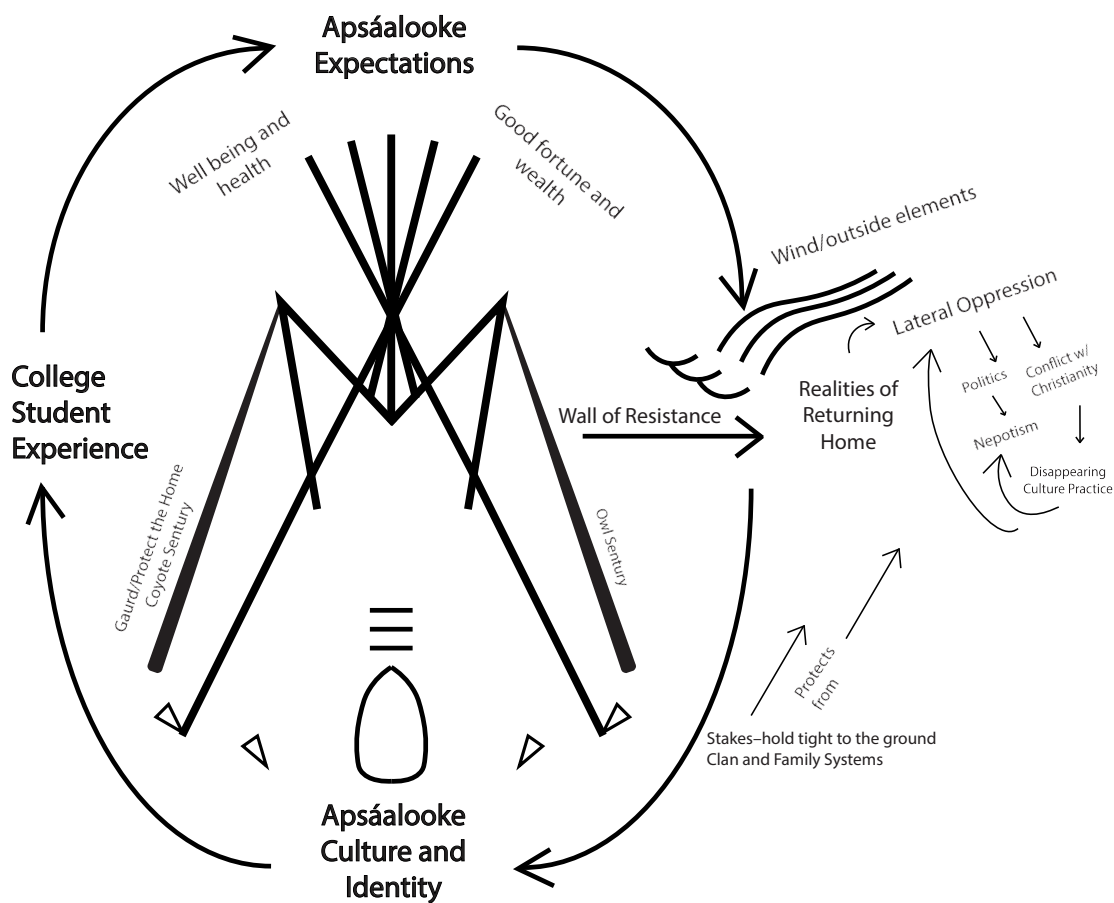
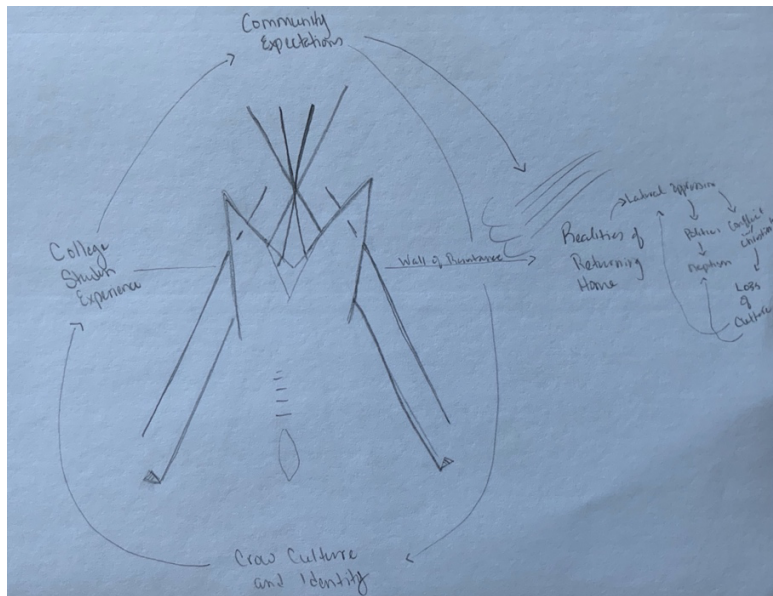
APPENDIX H: Figure 3 Apsáalooke Tipi Meaning



APPENDIX I: Figure 4 Apsáalooke Tipi with Focuses



APPENDIX J: Figure 5 Apsáalooke Tipi Metaphor



APPENDIX K: Reflexive Journal Sample

Salena Hill

Reflexive journal: Friday, February 21st

I'm just thinking this morning that I'm exhausted from trying to do this in three days. I'm proud of myself for persisting and trying, getting them all a part of me feels sad like I wish I wouldn't have rushed through it. There's some people going through my mind that I wish I would have had time to visit with. Gweny, my dad, my sister Nicole, who I will Skype interviewing next week but it's not the same. The other things that are going through my head is yeah I guess I just wish I would have had more time took time to do this, but everything happens the way it's supposed to do.

My visit last night with DyAnna was beautiful. Our friendship. Our sisterhood. I just feel very thankful and fortunate to have her in my life. She shared some really good insights with me and her experience. And over and over I keep hearing, you know the rejection and the jealousy, that people who go off and get their education face. Something I'm gonna have to think about, that next question, I guess, when you are at the end of your research. What to do next? What's the next question?

But I also hear people talking about hope and ideas they have for our people and that it takes a village. Yesterday with Lori, she talked about, she shared a story about her dad talking about everybody, you know back in our ancestor's day everybody had a role in our community, whether it was getting water, hunting, big or small, everybody had a role. And if they didn't play their role, everybody else suffered and Gosh! We can apply that to what's happening right now with our people. So, there was something else DyAnna said to me that really stuck out when people were looking for jobs at the time it's not like they apply for a specific job. They just say, I want- put me somewhere, put me somewhere, whether they have the skill or not, and it makes me think about two things one, our Western way of thinking of maybe the job the way jobs are dispersed on our reservation aren't aligned with our cultural way. And maybe that's where our tribe struggles is because we put. We're so close. We're very. We're still practice our culture very much. And so that's very much the foundation of what we do. And it doesn't align with this Western business sense and the tribe having to make the hard choice of going- eliminating cultural practices from the tribal business. And, but thinking about what will that do to our tribe? You know, I mean yes in a Western sense it might progress us but in a Crow cultural sense what will that do? We're already losing so much that I think that was another thing that DyAnna shared with me that really stood out was when there are people in their 50s or older my parents generation or older that didn't know about the clan system and didn't know their Indian names and things like that. I mean I was one of those people. And you have to seek out that information and you have but you have to have people who care to share that. I think I was, I was very fortunate to have my grandparents and my parents, and my in laws. Have the culture be so important to them. So that's how I learned a lot. And then God blessed me with a friend like DyAnna who I can ask questions to without feeling any judgment, probably cry because I'm so exhausted but I'm just really grateful for people in my life, my kids, my parents, my siblings, my nieces and nephews.

Now I'm back out to Pryor to visit with Sampson, I hope he follows through. If not, it wasn't it wasn't meant to talk to him and that will be okay too. The end for now.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

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