

OUR PROJECT OF HEART  
WHAT WE'VE LEARNED, WHY IT MATTERS, AND WHAT WE  
COMMIT TO NOW

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

DR. LISA K. TAYLOR AND STUDENTS IN EDU205 COLONIALISM, EDUCATION, AND DECOLONIZATION, 2015

# WHAT IT'S ABOUT

We've spent the past months learning about the ongoing history of settler colonialism on this land, deconstructing the founding myths that have shaped our relationships, our idea of Canada and our own sense of identity, but more importantly, we've spent time studying the history of colonial policies that are all about one thing: LAND (as Thomas King has written in *The Inconvenient Indian*).

It was helpful to read the Truth and Reconciliation Final Report that concluded that:

“For over a century, the central goals of Canada’s Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, to cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as “cultural genocide.” (TRC,5)

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Studying ongoing colonial policies, listening to Indigenous survivors and intergenerational survivors, has stirred up many questions for each of us. These questions pushed us to research further, to want to listen closer.

Some questions pushed us to each explore the histories of how our own families have participated and benefited from settler colonialism, have told stories to make sense of this, and have developed different kinds of relationships with Indigenous neighbours.

We've come to see ourselves as part of this picture and carrying a responsibility to decolonize this society and support Indigenous resurgence.

# SO WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

We refuse to live out the lie of settler colonial mythologies in our lives, families, communities, workplaces, or society any further. We refuse to live in a segregated society, separated from the kinds of relationships we hope to build between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples, relationships that can support Indigenous people in healing and building their sovereignty.

We've created this Project of Heart permanent art installation in the hallway of the Bishop's University School of Education to honour the gift of testimony from Indigenous survivors and publicly commit to carry these testimonies to guide our actions in our lives.

We're posting here photos of the art installation. Each of us is also posting our individual tile, explaining its significance.

Thank you for joining our project of public truth telling, and of honouring Indigenous survivors, intergenerational survivors, and neighbours.

OUR PROJECT OF HEART PERMANENT INSTALLATION AT BISHOP'S U (WITH OUR CALLS TO ACTION)

I encourage learners to take this course close to your heart and not be afraid of error. Get involved, you can! I will educate our youth with the CORRECT information

You should All get educated on this subject. Go see exhibits in Montreal or any where else when you have time. Use internet the library, find out involved.

Hola! as future Spanish/French teacher I want to relate the aboriginal's history because the next generation need to know about them so we can continue the healing process.  
Chanelle T. St-Jean

I promise to educate my students on Indigenous history.

I promise to keep asking questions and to continue to LEARN!

I commit to acknowledging the Aboriginal land in my class

Help Realize Sharamer's Dream.  
My call to action is my commitment as a future teacher to make my students aware of the importance of recognizing the history of the land that we live on and the importance of recognizing the role that the aboriginal people played in the history of this country.

-I will never judge someone before having heard their story.

I promise to acknowledge the fallen Indigenous soldiers and veterans who gave up their lives to protect as all they deserve to be known as the heroes they are.

I want to pin down the bracelets that those learned in the class to my future students because they owe the key to reconciliation.

Seek the truth seek reconciliation

I challenge learners to when we learn in order to understand and learn from their stories.

I want to teach our future generations the true history of our Indigenous people.

I promise to not be ignorant but open-minded for what I don't understand. We must understand that sharing is important and by sharing we will come to an understanding.

I encourage you all to be aware of your neighbors.

we will create awareness about residential schools.

I promise to educate those around me about Canada's unspoken history.



I encourage you to take this course close to your heart and not be afraid of error. Get involved, you can! I will educate our youth with the CORRECT information

Challenge what you know, push through prejudice, learn our nation's true history of our shared land.

Take time to invest in your understanding of the true history of our shared land.

I want that as a future teacher I will not educate my students with fake information. I will teach them about the real history of Canada. It is my job to educate my students about what really happened during the colonization of this country.

I commit to use a critical lens when evaluating the sources where I get my information and to LISTEN and draw upon the knowledge of those who know more than I do.

Lead through allyship and support those that I am not.

-I promise to challenge stereotypes and continue to educate myself

# LEYA JACOB

Double Click on the image  
below to LISTEN:





# NOELLA BARRIEAU



# ISAAC DOXTATOR

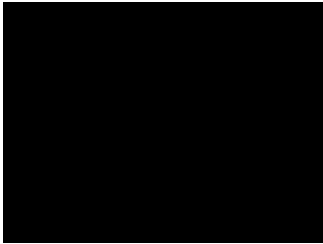
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# GABRIEL WAPACHEE

Double Click on the image  
below to LISTEN:



# KEVIN-JOHN CHAPLIN

I chose to bring to light a local myth involving the Abenaki people who call the lands we are on now Home. It is the story of 'Le Seul Pin' of the Grand Forks. The story goes, as the Abenaki, because of their alliance with French Colonialists, raided the English villages to the south, when they did, the Abenaki brought back with them two hostages, a couple who were engaged to each other and very much in love. As the story goes, the woman could not handle the rough trip through the wilderness, and as a result perished near Grand Forks. Distraught her fiancé brought her body to a rock in the center of the St. Francis River and buried her there, and from that rock, he leapt to his death to drown in the waters. From her grave grew one lonely pine tree.

I painted this to represent this area, but also to bring to light the travesty that the Abenaki people in our area faced assimilation, and as a way to honor them. The edges are black to represent both loss and reflection, the sky red to represent that reflection, rocks on the riverbed for strength, trees to represent connection to the land and finally water for healing. In the sky are three white doves that represent a hope for peace and our reconciliation with a history that caused a near complete cultural genocide of the peoples' who called these rivers home. Through this loss, I hope to let the survivors of Residential Schools know that their survival is something I am thankful for because it gives me hope that their stories, histories, languages, cultures, and their connection to the land have the possibility to live on, and hopefully one day thrive.



# I PROMISE TO EDUCATE MY STUDENTS ON INDIGENOUS HISTORY.

I chose to draw the medicine wheel on my tile. The colors represents the different cultures in our world. The heart inside the wheel is painted green to show spirit. The spirit of the heart represents the love everyone should have for one another. The green lines around the tile are to represent the land that we live on that surrounds and supports us. We are all one.  
-Callie Smith



I HOPE FOR THE TRANSCENDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING  
AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH THE GENERATIONS.



- Meghan Wickware





*Sometimes we just need to be the sunshine in other's life*

# LISTEN

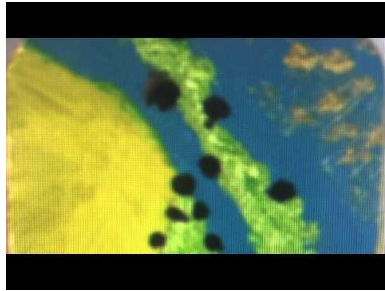
*By Gabrielle Branchaud*

*The inspiration from this tile came from one of the texts we read. It stems from the whole idea of sometimes when listening to someone, we don't necessarily need words. Sometimes all we need is to give them a hug, and listen.*





# HEALING



## Jason Earl

If you listen to the video above, I explain the significance of the colours and images I include on both sides of the tile I painted.

I stress the importance of intersectionality and complexity in both reconciliation and healing.

**Green** = Healing, Hope, & Nature      **Blue** = Water & Sky  
**Yellow** = Energy & Sun      **Red** = Blood & Love



# MEDICINE

Many years ago I went on this reserve; in a little shop I noticed a smooth black stone with a white bird painted on it, alike the one on this tile. I thought it was beautiful, and was unaware it had a purpose. I was explained it's a healing stone; it is used to heal any kind of injuries. To restore its energy it must be placed under the light of a full moon. I eventually injured my knee from running long distances. A year Later, I still had some pain in my knee, and always found the bird on the stone aesthetically pleasing. I also appreciated that it related to the moon; it's a bit 'cheesy' but I'm born during the night of a full moon, and have always been fascinated by it. Hence, while learning to tattoo I decided to tattoo the bird on my knee; for the idea of healing, and the visual of it. Therefore, I think it's the most appropriate symbol I could offer to this project. Healing is part of reconciliation and I pass this symbol over which has for meaning to heal our injuries; hoping it can help with the healing process of others. - Chad Vaudry



# SHARE

My tile started with me placing my thumbprint on the tile as a symbol of my pledge to bring awareness to our history of residential schools. I drew a head looking back to the many generations that will follow her, represented by the dots. I decided to use the colors red and white for a few reasons, I wanted the red to look as though it were a stain on the white background, one that could never be washed away. Secondly, I wanted to use the colors of the Canadian flag to acknowledge that this history belongs to all of us. After sharing my tile with Ena Greyeyes, she pointed out to me that she saw the face of a child underneath the woman. As I changed my perspective, I was able to see it too. -Emily Hudson



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# EARTH AND SKY

We all belong to this planet  
and we are all connected. We  
should learn from each  
other, instead of trying to  
take advantage of one  
another. And learn from the  
Earth.

Véronique Piatera



# OLA LINDHOLM



My tablet represents how we are fighting to understand and become something more than we were. The edges are painted in black to represent us sleeping or being in a dormant state. In the middle is the sun of light and life, and its red sunrays is fighting to break through the dream and become a reality. The blue background is for eternity as there is no beginning or end, only a being searching for existing and becoming. we are currently sleeping, but it is never too late to wake up.



# RESISTANCE . RESILIENCE. RECONCILIATION.



S.LEGGE

THE TILE WAS VERY SYMBOLIC – ROOTED IN THE TRADITION OF SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION SHARED WITH OUR CLASS BY ELDER, ENA GREYEVES THROUGH HER OWN ART. THE FIRST THING THAT I DID WAS PAINT THE BLACK PORTION IN THE CENTRE, THIS WAS TO REPRESENT THE PRISON-LIKE EXPERIENCE MANY CHILDREN HAD IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS. IT WAS DARK, COLD, ISOLATING, LONELY AND DEEPLY FRIGHTENING. THE WHITE TRIANGLE IS MEANT TO REPRESENT THE INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN, WHO WERE INNOCENT AND UTTERLY ALONE. SPEAKING WITH ENA WHILE CREATING MY TILE SHE HAD SHARED WITH ME THAT MOUNTAINS, LIKE I HAVE REPRESENTED IN MY TILE, ARE SYMBOLIC OF STRENGTH AND KNOWLEDGE. ABOVE THE CHILD ARE TINY SILVER SPECKS, THESE ARE INTENDED TO BE STARS, AND ARE SYMBOLIC OF BOTH THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE'S ANCESTRY OR FAMILY AND THE NATURAL WORLD. THE BLACK PORTION, REPRESENTING IRS SEPARATES THE CHILDREN FROM THESE RELATIONSHIPS. THE COLOURFUL LINES (OR FEATHERS) ARE SYMBOLIC OF VIBRANT CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONS. THEY ARE DIVERSE AND UNIQUE, BUT ACTING TOGETHER AS A COLLECTIVE. THESE COLOURFUL LINES ALSO RECONNECT THE CHILD (MOUNTAIN) AND THE ELDERS (STARS) AND WORK TO BREAK FREE FROM THE DARKNESS, REPRESENTING INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE. THE SOFT, GLOWING GOLD ON THE EXTERIOR WAS INTENDED TO REPRESENT A PLACE OF RECONCILIATION – A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP

# LINDSAY MASTINE

I chose to use the medicine wheel on my tile to represent the all of the Indigenous people of Canada. The heart on the tile has represents my message to the Indigenous students that went to residential school who felt rejected and unloved, that there is love for them. The heart also demonstrates my commitment to be an ally for the Indigenous.

This tile also represents my love and understanding for the Indigenous in Canada and my commitment to building a better future for them in our shared country.

Finally, the tile is a symbol of my commitment to educate others about the past and present hardships faced by the Indigenous peoples, hopefully inspiring more allies.





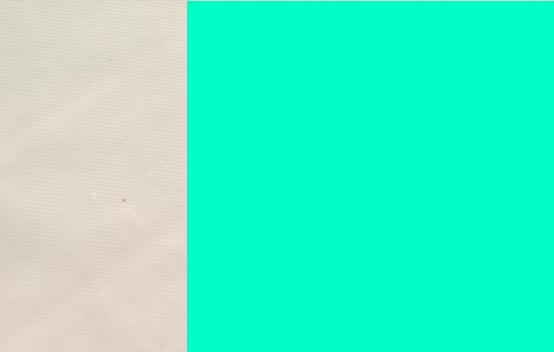
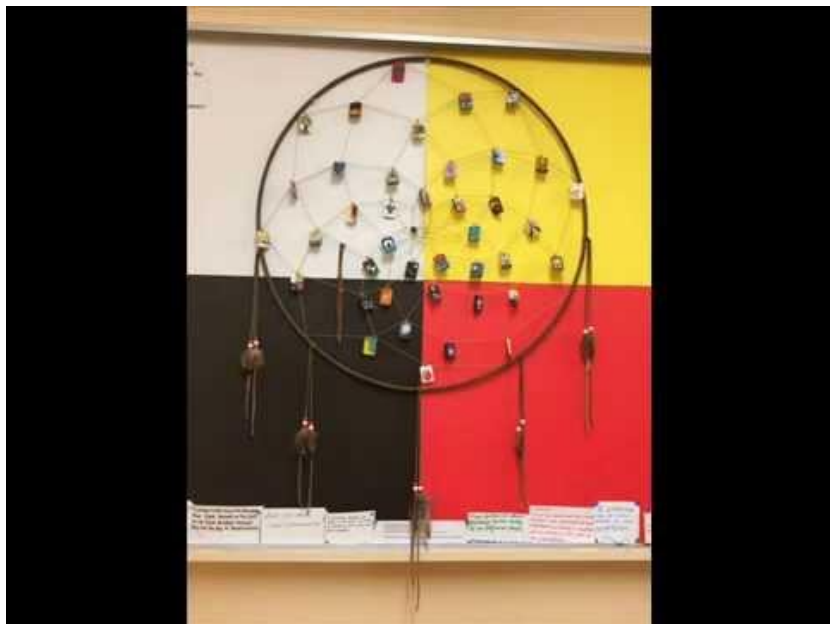
# I AM NOT A RIPPLE, I AM A WAVE

*wave(n): a ridge of water between two depressions in open water.*

I sit on the ridge that is lifted because of two opposing forces; settlers and aboriginals. I am in a position of both power and understanding and with that I am obliged to recognize my place in both communities and take action. I am not a ripple, as many have seen before. I am a wave, I will crash  
— upon the shore.

- k.dobler

ALEXANDRA A.





# RIPPLE

The ripple effect is the continuing and expanding results from an action. Much like the natural grain of this wood, the effects of Colonization resonate in Canada. Unlike the natural rippled pattern, however, vowing to be an advocate for reconciliation is neither natural nor automatic. Unlearning my own history has been a necessary and difficult first step. I am nowhere near as knowledgeable as I hope to become, but I am willing to learn. I commit to using a critical lens to evaluate the sources of information which have been fed to me through the social imaginary and to listen and draw upon the knowledge of those who know more than I do. It is only from a place of knowledge and understanding that I can begin to create a new ripple effect.

-Janelle Paquette





# THE GROWING FLOWER

This flower represents how far Indigenous people have come. After residential school, they saw themselves as tiny seeds and did not see a way out of the soil. Eventually, they started to reveal their horrible stories and grew away from their silence.

Today, many survivors are healing because they revealed the truth about their stories at residential school to their families, friends and even to the TRC, which represents the growing flower.

-Celeste Roberge



# UNDER ONE SKY

I painted the sky during the day and at night to represent our past and future. The night is dark and lonely with nothing but stars and a small flame. The darkness is our past of colonization and the many injustices faced by Indigenous peoples; in the darkness hides broken treaties, agreements, and government endorsed and mandated abuses. The stars serve as a reminder of the strength and resilience of Indigenous peoples who faced cultural genocide and continue to face discrimination. The fire represents hope for a future where the secrets in the dark are no longer hidden but are part of the general Canadian body of knowledge; the many treaties and assimilation attempts will be taught as part of the curriculum.

The sky during the day represents reconciliation and the truth behind the darkness. The sun is the small flame come to life while birds from every walk of life fly together forming a circle of trust, love, and peace.

-Kiersten Montgomery



# CHRISTINE ACKLÉ

I chose to draw the earth inside the shape of a heart because this symbolizes a coming together of people in the same heart representing “one world”. It symbolizes love which goes hand in hand with respect, equality and shared values. I chose red as my background color because it is the color of the heart and of love. It represents strength and friendship. This tile is supposed to represent a new relationship that is being built and more importantly, a love and respect for one another all living together in the same world. I also chose to draw the earth because it is what is allowing us to be alive and we need to learn how to treat the earth with love in order to sustain it.

**Call to action:** I will never judge someone before having heard their story.



# THE BIG & LITTLE DIPPER

**Sarah Kelly-Shepard**

My call to action: I commit  
to acknowledging the  
Aboriginal land in my class.



# ROAD OF HOPE

Here you see two roads which begin separate and become one of love and hope. One of the roads symbolizes the colonizers and the other symbolizes the First Nations. Our lives have been pushed apart by the past but now I believe it is time to come together and create a world of love, forgiveness and truth. We need to learn from our past and make the future a better place. I feel strongly that now is the time for forgiveness of ourselves and of each other in order to begin healing. It is time to build a strong bond of understanding and learning and celebration. Our two paths need to become one so we can share our love and embrace each other. We have the power to make the future a brilliant and harmonious place and I have hope for our future of love.





# TREE OF LIFE

The “tree of life” is an element of spiritual significance that many Aboriginal people around the world have in common. It is the idea that one specific tree would be designed to sustain spiritual life by its fruit. Trees are also often used to represent hope, as they grow, become fruitful and resplendent. This tree is my message of hope for Aboriginal people.

Émilie Houle



# THE PROTECTIVE WOLFE

The wolf represents the protection, strengths and endurance. I believe it is the best animal that can represent the force that Indigenous have in themselves. They had to protect their lands and they had the strengths to keep their spiritual beliefs and culture even if the settlers did everything to assimilate them. I simply admire them!

-Chanèle Thibault St-Jean



# RESILIENCE

BY MELISSA NASCIMENTO

The gray background on the tile represents the oppression that the Indigenous people have faced since the beginning of European settlement. It represents the residential school system, the Indian Act (which banned potlatches, other traditional practices), the practice of Enfranchisement, and much more.

In the middle of the tile, there is a golden dream catcher and the side has dots the colour of the medicine wheel.

This was painted to represent the resilience of the Indigenous people. Against the odds, many have been able to keep their traditions vibrant and integrated into their community's celebrations.



# WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

I wanted to paint something that helps remind us of where we come from. We were all born on the Earth. We need to take care of it and thank it constantly for the gifts it brings us.

I also hoped my painting would serve as a reminder that we live on this planet together. The only way peace will come is through reconciliation of the past mistakes we have made. People need to recognize that even though we may be different we all have one thing in common, and that is our home.

—Nicole Baker



# PURITY

ALEXANDRA PROCKOW

I painted a white flower on my tile, specifically the flower that grows on Magnolia trees. While these trees are not indigenous to Canada, they are resilient and strong. The large white flowers stand out among the dark green leaves.

My tile represents the purity of children that were sent to residential school, and the strength of the survivors, the Aboriginal communities and allies that support reconciliation in Canada.





# HOPE

I chose to paint a sun rise on my tile. I thought that doing so would be a good way to represent that everyday is a new opportunity to become a better person and everyday is a new chance to strive for reconciliation.

Everyday is HOPE for a brighter future.

-Dylan Smith



# TURTLE ISLAND

ROSALIE J.PATTERSON

Turtle Island represents the creation of the world in the Indigenous cultures. I wanted to paint a turtle to acknowledge this beautiful story. Also, when I heard the story for the first time, it allowed me to realise how close indigenous people are to nature. They share a special bound with it and I admire this very much. They are very respectful towards the land and I believe we should be inspired by them and take the time to truly appreciate the land we stand on.



# SUN AND MOON

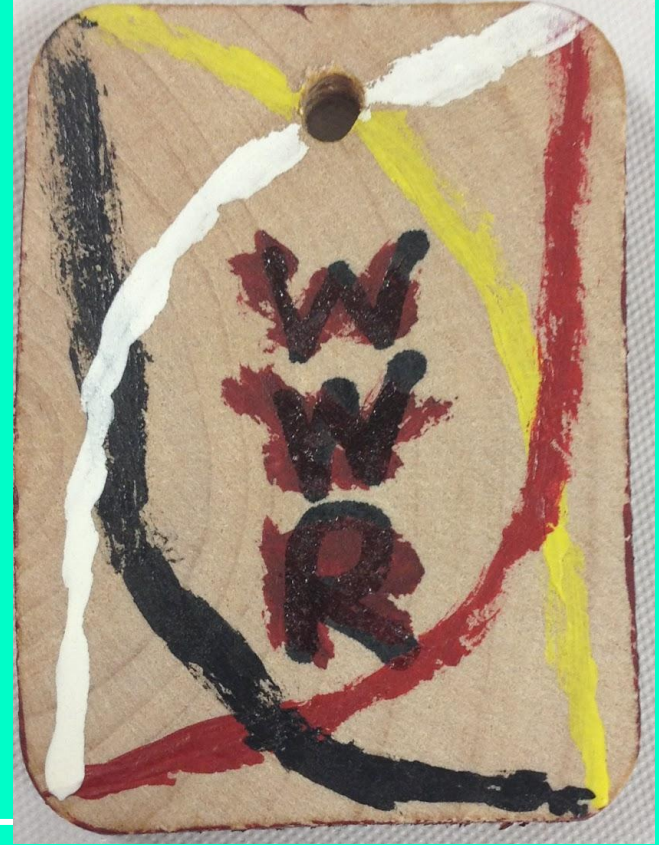
HÉLÈNE AUGER

I painted a sun to bring warmth and comfort to the children who survived residential schools. The moon represents the female ancestors that look after them.



# TIM

Due to a lack of artistic ability, I had to keep my design simple. But that's ok, minimalism is sooo hot right now. The four colours represent the medicine wheel and the design of lines crossing over are supposed to represent 'turning over a new leaf': what I hope this project will contribute to. The 'WWR' stands for 'We will remember' which we promise to do even as we move forth in our relationship and starting new dialogue.



# DIRECTION

I wanted to do the best representation of a wolf that I could. The wolf symbol signifies strength, endurance, a deep connection with instincts and power. The wolf is a symbol of direction, using it's tracks to guide us. Many tribes believed that the timber wolves, howling at the moon, were spiritual beings that could speak to the gods and impart magical powers.

Deborah Burke





# UNDER ONE SUN

The idea of acceptance, is encompassed by the acknowledgement that we are all humans, that we all live under the same sky, under the same sun. I chose to represent the settler colonial population as a black bird, in recognition that we come from somewhere else and that we have a dark history. The indigenous people however are the flowers, from time immemorial these are their lands the place they come from. They view this earth as their mother, whereas settlers view it as a commodity. Around this tile are the colors of the medicine wheel, in hopes of healing our relations to each other and the land. This tile is symbolic of cultures living together in harmony and peace, thriving under our bright and beautiful sun.

Meghan Bushey



