

“Making Space”: Lessons from Collaborations with Tribal Nations

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In light of critiques regarding the concept of service, and after highlighting limits of critical service-learning and “authentic” relationship approaches, this article presents “making space” for marginalized community perspectives as an alternative metaphor for conceptualizing university-community relationships. Drawing upon multiple experiences with American Indian tribal nations, the article identifies deeply intercultural, counterhegemonic, and decolonizing dynamics enacted through making space, and which produce a discomfoting reversal of the common analytic focus on community service recipients. Making space also enables university-community alignment, the generation of projects truly based in community interests, and facilitates interactions outside and disruptive of hegemonic power/knowledge regimes and discourses.

The field of service-learning, increasingly supported as a common element of higher education, faces a range of questions about its nature, practice, and theory. Central among these is the very notion of service itself, the types of experience it entails, and students’ relationship to those being served. While service-learning takes some inspiration from Deweyian educational theory that emphasizes problematic and disruptive situations as the origin of inquiry (Dewey, 1916; Garrison 1996, p. 16), and originated in first-generation learning experiences that were frequently only semi-structured and “messy” (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz 1999), much current service-learning appears to be highly structured and orderly. As service-learning increasingly refers to volunteer experiences touted as community service by colleges and universities, the nature of service, and the action and relationships involved in service, are worthy of ongoing debate and discussion. This article does not attempt to craft a new definition of service, however, or parse the multitude of definitions that have been introduced and reviewed elsewhere. Rather, through this article I aim to contribute to the theorization of “service” by problematizing common understandings of service and action while promoting the notion of “making space” as one alternative (Regan, 2010). Making space, a concept drawn from reconciliation efforts involving the Canadian government and First Nations (Regan), is consistent with and extends the growing emphasis within the existing service-learning literature on both “critical” service-learning and sustained community-university relationships. My discussion of the making space metaphor and its potential are based in my participant-observation in community-based collaborations with Indigenous Nations, interviews with university and tribal participants in such

collaborations, and the wide-ranging literatures salient to these collaborations.

University-tribal collaborations provide empirical examples and concepts particularly useful for advancing service-learning theory because they are deeply *intercultural, counterhegemonic, and decolonizing* in nature. Such qualities are necessary responses to continuing colonial domination in the United States that is largely invisible to non-Indigenous settlers and which is substantially reproduced via discursive forms of power or hegemonic power/knowledge regimes. By highlighting such forms of domination and de-centering the default western/Euro-American perspective, decolonizing service-learning with Indigenous Nations calls into question both non-indigenous identities and the service-learning emphasis on service. When the process of making space disrupts comfortable identities and the common “habits” that support them (Dewey, 1983, p. 21), resulting experiences such as novel personal interactions and “witnessing” can emerge to transform the learner and the relationship between university and community partners. Finally, in that such encounters serve to identify, denaturalize, and replace hegemonic colonial power/knowledge regimes, they have the potential to generate real change desired by Indigenous Nations rather than produce “just talk.”

This critique and exploration of service was inspired by a number of experiences relating to service-learning with Indigenous Nations. The first of these was feedback regarding a course in which university students met with members of the Makah Nation of Washington State to learn about the tribal renewal of whaling, a practice that had generated significant non-Indian criticism. In the process of evalu-

ating a manuscript about this course, a reviewer for another journal observed that the students did no service for the tribe as part of their learning, and suggested this was another example of non-Indians exploiting American Indians. The reviewer's comments clearly conveyed the understanding that service means taking action for the community partner. In this context, however, and as detailed below, the tribal partner did not want any such action by the students. Engaging in the collaboration as a sovereign nation, the Makah instead prioritized students listening to tribal perspectives. Lacking an appropriate conceptual model from within the service-learning literature to advance as an alternative to common-sense notions of service through action, I did not respond to this critique at the time. As a result, however, I became attentive to the limitations of, and unacknowledged bias within, the operative understanding of service and action.

The second impetus to this paper was student feedback regarding a service-learning course that initiated a new partnership between Pitzer College, where I teach, and the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe of the Ohlone people, hereafter referred to as the Ohlone. While there were projects identified by Tribal Chair Tony Cerda for students to work on, a central task given to the students in the Ohlone service-learning collaboration was to "be" with tribal members at the tribal headquarters, and to build rapport, familiarity, friendship, and trust. Tribal members were very welcoming, but just "being" there without additional action tasks was very uncomfortable for some students. Their discomfort with this unscripted, intercultural social encounter, which personalized and greatly advanced the Pitzer-Ohlone relationship, suggested to me that future students would benefit from a reframing of such non-action encounters as an important aspect of service-learning, in particular with Indigenous Nations and Peoples. Since that time I have sought to develop my understanding of such "relating" in a way that could more fully explicate its importance and value, and thus defuse some student expectations of action and their discomfort with just being with tribal members.

The third experience was what I understand to be a challenge by Native elder Robertjohn Knapp (Seneca/Tubotalobal) to further step outside of a western academic framework in these tribal-academic collaborations and to come more deeply "to our side", meaning an indigenous perspective. This elder and spiritual leader has been an essential guide and advisor in helping our college cultivate a community-based partnership that is informed by indigenous perspectives, rather than fully defined by and contained within academic frameworks, timelines, and processes. Even as we have been operating outside

comfortable academic boxes in many ways, there are yet many additional ways that service-learning courses and projects are still deeply and unconsciously rooted in Western educational concepts and practices. More pointedly, while I have participated in many indigenous community events, both with students and individually, and in some ways I straddle the line or move between western academic and indigenous worlds/ frameworks, I reproduce or observe boundaries that buffer me from more integrated involvement in indigenous communities, issues, and understandings. As I understand it, this elder's challenge and others like it that I have encountered in the context of collaborating with tribal nations, ask me to move myself and my service-learning involvement toward even more respect, balance, and integration of indigenous perspectives. Thus, this challenge has created a context of discomfort for me, analogous to my students' discomfort in being in non-task relationships with tribal members. In response, this article is an attempt to grapple with the perspectives and requests of tribal people to more profoundly integrate indigenous worldviews in my service-learning courses and to do the same regarding my personal involvement. I seek to develop an alternative to service and action not only for student learners, but also for myself as a faculty participant, and for the overall partnership. Indeed, in addition to me, all participating Pitzer faculty as well as Scott Scoggins, the key staff person who has exhaustively labored to build these relationships, have grappled extensively with the nature of our students' service-learning with tribal nations.¹

The next section of the article reviews the critiques within the service-learning literature regarding the metaphor of service, and highlights "critical service-learning" and sustained community-driven relationships as promising but limited responses. Following this, I provide frameworks that orient service-learning with Indigenous Nations, and identify specific ways in which such partnerships question common understandings and reverse the direction of analytical inquiry. Then, drawing heavily upon the insightful contributions of reconciliation theorist Paulette Regan, I advance her concept of making space as a metaphor that provides an alternative to service. Finally I explicate a number of dynamics facilitated by the making of space, and argue that the outcomes of such encounters are critical and substantive, rather than just symbolic.

Service and Action, Charity and Justice

While a great number of definitions have been generated to describe service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kendall, 1990), there has been modest attention to the idea of service itself. Many defini-

tions of service-learning take service to be self-evident, and suggest, for example, that service-learning involves “meaningful service” (Giles, Honnet, & Migliore, 1991, p. 7) or a “monitored service experience” (National Society for Experiential Education, 1994). Others state that service-learning actions “address human and community needs” (Jacoby, 2003, p. 3, as quoted in Hicks, 2009, p. 542) and “meet actual community needs” (Corporation for National Service, 1990). The idea of service has been critiqued as generating, reproducing, or being closely associated with a “charity” model of social action that imposes and legitimates social distance and inequality (Lewis, 2004; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Mitchell, 2008; Ward & Wolf-Wendell, 2000). As Mitchell writes, “Service, itself, is a concept steeped in issues of identity and privilege” (p. 55), as “doing good” functions as a form of power that elevates the doer and denigrates the recipient as belonging to a lesser class of person, consistent with a rescuer-saves-victim dynamic (Peterson, 2009). In practice, the deficits, needs, and/or dysfunctions of the communities receiving service are commonly highlighted, rather than their strengths, resistance to oppression, and survival in the face of multi-systemic inequalities (Peterson; Ward & Wolf-Wendell).

The main solution to the problem of the association of service with charity has been to emphasize the more emphatically political goal of social justice, captured by an emerging emphasis on “critical” service-learning (Mitchell, 2008). Justice-oriented CBSL emphasizes social and political awareness that elucidates the underlying causes of social problems. Such critical service-learning has the potential to undermine the rescuer-serves victim dynamic if, by generating critical consciousness regarding power and privilege, it not only provides insight into the external political-social world but also implicates student identities in focal power-inequality dynamics. In such a process, service-learning makes privileged positions in society, and students’ own identities, a central topic of investigation. Such critical self-reflection has been labeled “border pedagogy”, with “border crossing” suggestive of a way to gain insight regarding one’s own social experiences and perspectives, and to encounter others with respect (Hayes & Cuban, 1997, p. 57, 75; quoted in Mitchell, 2008, p. 57).

Even justice-oriented and critical service-learning models, however, face the problem of underlying structural inequality between university and community partners that reinforces the hierarchical associations of service noted above (Marullo, Moayed, & Cooke, 2009). Students frequently have greater privilege than those they encounter through service placements, and instructors similarly enjoy significant status, authority, and access to resources.

Educational institutions commonly occupy a dominant position in relation to community organizations and the constituency they serve. These cumulative inequalities shape the nature of service-learning projects. Such inequalities make it difficult to achieve collaborative service-learning projects that fully incorporate community members’ understandings and interests in the design, even when university participants wholeheartedly desire this. As Mitchell points out, community members commonly lack the power to determine “who or what needs to be ‘fixed’, to what standard, and who should be in charge of fixing the problem” (Mitchell, 2008, p. 56, quoted in Cooks, Scharrer, & Paredes, 2004, p. 45).

Furthermore, the power, influence, and social gulf between university participants and actual community recipients is *underplayed* by the service-learning literature, in which “community partners” is understood to refer not to the end “recipients” of service but rather to community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve as intermediaries between students and community members. A number of studies reporting positive impacts of incorporating community actors in planning operationalize “community” as CBO involvement. For example, service-learning outcomes are more successful when community actors (i.e., CBOs) are treated as partners rather than recipients (Blouin & Perry, 2009), when there is parity in relationships (Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, & Goss, 2003), and when partners have voice in planning and design (Miron & Moely, 2006). The widespread practice of de facto equating community with community-based organization suggests that the possibility that community members themselves may influence projects or interact with students in co-participatory roles seems to be virtually overlooked in the service-learning literature, even though practice and scholarship has demonstrated the potential for “unmediated” collaborations (Jorge, 2003, 2011).² While clearly useful for methodological purposes, this informal equating of community and CBO conceals additional problems for service-learning practice, assessment, and theory.³ Simply put, CBOs do not necessarily serve as a democratic expression of community members’ interests and voices. While the degree to which they do so certainly varies, the significant multidisciplinary organizational literature, especially that addressing the relationship between change-oriented organizations and their constituency or members (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), suggests we cannot assume that CBOs are merely a conduit through which the recipients of service-learning express their own perspectives and articulate their own interests. Structurally, community members have less power than the CBOs that gain funding and status in their name. The above points suggest that while a critical/justice framework is an important conceptual

counter to the symbolic inequality reproduced by “doing for” service projects, the power to define the project appears to remain in the hands of more privileged university partners, with CBO staff as potential, though structurally marginalized, voices at the table, leaving great uncertainty about the role of community members themselves. Given that the cumulative impact of these structural inequalities on the interactions between students and community members likely reflects that these two parties are significantly distanced from one another, there appears to be little possibility of overcoming the university-community gulf in meaningful, power-conscious terms on the front line, where face-to-face encounters occur.

Addressing such foundational issues, critical service-learning theorists have suggested that creating authentic, multidimensional (Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2007; Jacoby, 2003) and long-term relationships, “relationships based on connection” (Mitchell, 2008, p. 59) and reciprocity, is a significant task in itself. Drawing from critiques by Taylor (2002) and Varlotta (1997), Mitchell suggests that authentic relationships “demand a new metaphor for service, one that replaces our notions of service with notions of community in which all people understand and embrace our connectedness and interdependence” (2008, p. 59). How to develop such relationships, and overcome the accumulated barriers, is not clear. Few service-learning practitioners have to date reported unmediated service-learning experiences that embody reciprocity and “authentic” partnerships (Jorge, 2003, 2011). As Rosenberger (2000) notes, “much of the service-learning literature shares a commitment to building mutual relationships and to letting members of the community identify the need. What is missing, however, is an approach for creating such relationships” (p. 37, as quoted by Mitchell, 2008, p. 58). Students, as well as faculty and staff, likely have little experience relating to people who not only are different than they but who occupy different positions in relations of domination and subordination in ways that affirm the others’ equality or generate egalitarian dynamics. Given this, much service-learning struggles to reach the highly valued goals of reciprocity and community voice in service-learning design. To the degree there are co-defined outcomes, these likely exclude students and may exclude community members who are not CBO staff. If we listen seriously to the call for a new metaphor or metaphors for service, we may be able to find them in the context of deep relationships, as community members can articulate their needs, interests, and perspectives without being mediated by instructor or university (or CBO) frameworks.

Aiming to establish long-term reciprocal relationships makes demands on university partners, howev-

er. Community partners may demand change by the institution, hold the institution accountable in new ways, and complicate the division of labor and the timetable that structures the relationship. Social contradictions that are highlighted as part of the landscape of society may become visible within the university, or, uncomfortably, within the service-learning relationship itself. Such efforts require additional time and additional informal meetings. Even apart from these challenges, it may be difficult for projects, instructors, and students to enter into such relationships, however, through the window of service-learning. Service-learning is strongly oriented toward action. Students want to be helpful, and want to play a defined role in serving. In the United States context, where service-learning was first formalized, there exists a strong cultural orientation to see the world in terms of problems that can be fixed, in a pragmatic linear style that proceeds from point A to Point B (Stewart & Bennett, 1991). An emphasis on building deep relationships diverges from this task orientation, and also hints at the possibility that the endeavor might simply be, or devolve into, “just talk” or “liberal dilettantism” (Brookfield, 2000, p. 143, quoted in Schugurensky, 2002, p. 63).

Furthermore, the institutionalization of service-learning has increased the expectations for observable outcomes as measures of success, although to date such evaluations have focused more on student outcomes than community outcomes (Bushouse, 2005; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001; Sandy & Holland, 2006). Indeed, the limited evaluation research to date that has directed attention to community outcomes has operationalized this broad concept largely through categories originating in the educational context, not through community frameworks. The combination of logistical and power/accountability dynamics, the broad cultural orientation toward action, and the evaluative emphasis on measureable outcomes is not conducive to developing a dialogic “being together” (Pompa, 2002) that would allow community members’ perspectives, perceptions of problems, and appropriate action to emerge in the context of structural inequality between participants. How, then, to advance our thinking about creating such relationships, more deeply incorporate community members’ perspectives and perceptions, and develop new metaphors of service? In light of these broad goals, I draw upon the case of service-learning with American Indian tribal nations to further clarify the issues involved and suggest some ways to move forward.

Learning with Indigenous Nations

Collaborations with Indigenous Nations involve many of the elements identified above as goals for

developing service-learning in critical, community-directed, authentic relationship-based directions. Engaging with tribal nations requires an immediate *critical* framing that brings colonization and colonial relations in the United States into focus, and rejects the widely unexamined premise that American Indians are a racial/ethnic minority group (Champagne, 2005). Tribal nations demand a clear acknowledgement of indigenous sovereignty and their status as nations-within-a nation, which simultaneously reorders the political imagination and transcends the diversity acknowledged by pluralistic celebrations of multiculturalism. Understanding that tribal members have a distinctive dual citizenship in the United States and in their tribal nations ruptures notions of American Indians as minority citizens (Steinman, 2011). Instead of inequality within familiar critical analytical frameworks highlighting race, class, or gender, service-learning with tribal nations generates an alternative decolonizing model that calls into question the very premise of United States territorial supremacy, non-indigenous students' (and faculty members') identities, and national narratives. The structure of continuing colonial dispossession and injustice requires an analysis not only of formal policies, but of hegemonic power/knowledge regimes through which power is expressed via taken-for-granted classifications and categorizations in which students are deeply implicated. Indigenous scholar Grande (2000), asserts that the "ongoing historical denial" of the difference between tribal nations and other marginalized groups "provides the conditions for the sustained project of cultural genocide" (p. 344). Disrupting notions of American Indians as minorities simultaneously calls into question the nature of American identities for non-indigenous students, now understood to be "settlers." Encountering the decolonizing struggle of tribal nations (Steinman, forthcoming) highlights a hidden settler-colonial curriculum in virtually all primary and secondary education in the United States, with American identities shaped by the absence and invisibilities of Indigenous Nations as part of the present, not just the past.

Beyond these substantively critical aspects, collaborations with tribes also provide clear examples of university-community relationships outside of the hierarchy and charity associated with service. My experience with the Makah Nation demonstrates this clearly. In the context of intense criticism regarding the tribe's renewal of whaling, I sought to bring University of Washington students to the tribe's Neah Bay reservation to learn about the issues involved. I inquired a number of times to Whaling Commission executive director George Bowechop and other Makah officials if there was anything that my students could do for their community, as part of a ser-

vice-learning project and framework. Repeatedly, I was told that no, the sovereign Makah Nation did not want the students to do anything *for* them. While I was not told so directly, I perceived a slight annoyance among tribal officials as I repeated my inquiries about including some service in the anticipated interaction. However, the Makah generously made it clear that my students were welcome to come and learn through meetings with elders, the whaling commission, the whalers themselves, tribal natural resource officials, the tribal chair, and other tribal members. Learning from the Makah about the meaning of the whale hunt became the exclusive focus of the encounters with the tribe, and I let go of the idea of service as part of this encounter. This raised a question: Is there service-learning if there is no service provided by students? As noted above in the introduction, the reviewer assigned to evaluate a manuscript about this project for another journal likely did not believe so. By not giving back in a way that could clearly be identified, the reviewer asserted that the project was flawed and exploitative.

Rather than merely an *absence* of service, however, this and possibly other partnerships with tribal nations reframe the problem at hand and reverse the flow of expertise and assistance. While they did not say it in such blunt terms, the Makah welcomed a relationship with a university instructor and students because it provided an opportunity to correct misperceptions that exist in the broader society. Daily letters to the editor were vilifying the Makah for renewing whaling, using racist and colonialist language that provided evidence of the wide ignorance of the Makah's sovereign status, their treaties with the federal government, and the treaty's guarantee that the United States would uphold for perpetuity the tribe's right to whale. The tribe received death threats, and offensive letters from school children around the country. The emergent premise of our exchanges with the Makah was that the problem was located in the broader society, not with the Makah. This alone provides a powerful corrective to the elevated do-gooder—inferior recipient dynamic, as it suggests a set of counter questions directed at the dominant settler society: Why aren't you honoring your treaty? Why are your people so uninformed about our rights? Do you individually understand our status and rights, and if not, why is that? We are a sovereign nation—what is your relationship to us? Why is it so hard for non-Indians to accept that the original inhabitants of the land have particular rights or others things that they—settlers—do not have?

Even more useful for a critical service-learning perspective, this reversal is not just general, but is also specifically relevant to educational institutions. The U.S. government has imposed Eurocentric val-

ues through education, using it as a central mechanism in colonial attempts to dismantle tribal nations, impose individualism, and extinguish Indian culture. While such cultural genocide was most brazenly apparent in Indian boarding schools created in the late 1800s (Adams, 1997; Grinde, 2004), “indigenous knowledge” was seen, and continues to be seen, as inferior to western knowledge. Indigenous scholars highlight the cultural specificity of Euroamerican education, and challenge its claims to be universal knowledge. As Battiste asserts, “[A]lmost all...structures of university research or performative discourse in university disciplines have a political and institutional stake in Eurocentric diffusion and knowledge, that is, perpetuating colonization (1998, p. 23; also see Gunstone, 2009). Tribes engaged in decolonization are thus challenging Western scholars and teachers to examine the unquestioned paradigms that inform the latter’s practices (Smith, 1999), and fighting in various educational contexts to restore indigenous languages and respect for tribal cultures, as well as develop youth who are indigenous in outlook, not just ancestry. Indigenous students and graduates frequently experience a rift, as the deeper their involvement in western higher education the greater the “growing distance between who I have become, and who my family, my people, and my ancestors are” (Grande, 2000, p. 357). Even as western educational institutions do hold status and respect among tribal communities, encounters of any duration between tribal partners and such institutions will likely touch upon deeply problematic aspects of western educational institutions in the eyes of Indian people, and will evoke a range of negative associations. Again, the default framework for service-learning is reversed: Eurocentric educational institutions and frameworks, when presented (as they commonly are) as universal, are a problem, and we (tribes) will approach any collaboration warily, with caution and concern. “Look at yourself, not (just) at our struggles” is the message, often communicated by withdrawal and distance. While Euroamerican perspectives themselves are not rejected, *when identified as one way of knowing*, tribal nations ask settlers and others to learn, as indigenous (and all other non-Western) people must do, using “two pairs of eyes” (Archibald, 2000; Tafoya, 1982).

The *process* of developing and sustaining relationships with tribal nations generates additional examples for deeper and more community-centric service-learning partnerships. University-tribal relations take on a different nature than university-CBO relations due to tribes’ sovereign status. Relations with tribes may require explicit and formal university acknowledgement of the political status of the tribal nation involved; Makah officials requested, and I was able

to eventually obtain, a letter from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Washington that formally acknowledged the Makah as a sovereign Nation. Beyond this political dimension, the relationship process with tribal nations illustrates a necessary cultural sensitivity that could be useful for preparing students for deeper relationships with non-Indian community partners. Many tribal nations retain distinctive cultural traditions that are often integrated and operative in whole communities. Working with tribal nations as partners requires grappling with and incorporating a variety of indigenous cultural frameworks that are not “add-ons” to daily norms but elements that transform the nature of the project and interactions. Sustained service-learning with tribal nations calls for centering distinctive indigenous cultural views.

In indigenous cultures, spirituality is foundational, as “Fundamental to Aboriginal knowledge is the awareness that beyond the immediate sensible world...lies another world from which knowledge, power, or medicine is derived” (Battiste, 1998). Most events and gatherings commonly begin with a prayer or ceremony, rather than the secular or a-religious public events at public institutions and many private colleges. Teaching and learning involves storytelling, with multiple meanings rather than a linear process and fully explicated lessons (Archibald, 2000, 2009; Tafoya, 1982). In place of the rational, autonomous individual learner premised by western education, indigenous pedagogy is contextual, holistic, community-oriented, and relationship- and place-based (Archibald, 2008; Deloria Jr. & Wildcat, 2001; Ghostkeeper, 2004; Smith, 1999). History is alive, as the past and present are coterminous, rather than linearly sequential.

Respecting and incorporating such cultural beliefs and practices are practical concerns for university partners working with tribal nations (McNally, 2004). Each service-learning encounter, any planning meetings, all joint university-tribal events, and communication more generally require of university participants self-reflection and conscious thought to what are otherwise mundane details—everyday social norms regarding greetings, talking, approaches to temporality, care of elders, and other cultural aspects. All of these inform an indigenous protocol that structures both mundane and ceremonial interaction. These and countless other cultural worldviews, values, and norms are highly salient because partnering with tribal nations is likely an unmediated service-learning experience (Jorge, 2003). While various groups being “served” through service-learning projects may hold distinctive cultures, student and faculty encounters are commonly mediated through CBOs whose staffs likely share more cultural per-

spectives with university collaborators. Given this is likely not the case with tribal relationships, initiating, negotiating, and implementing a project with tribal officials and other tribal members will likely succeed only if it is cognizant of, respectful of, and participates to some degree in indigenous cultural protocol. To collaborate with tribal nations, then, is not only to learn about indigenous culture, but involves participating in indigenous culture through self-conscious adjustments of unconscious cultural behaviors. Based on my own experiences, observations about others, and a great deal of anecdotal evidence, many efforts to work with tribes falter on these accounts.

The broader field of indigenous-settler relations provides a metaphor for the overall nature of university-community relationships that could elicit more complex, challenging, and meaningful community input into service-learning projects—qualities that exemplify the goal of “authentic connections” identified in the service-learning literature. Highlighting the need for settlers to enter into their encounters with tribal nations on indigenous cultural terms, Regan advances the concept of “making space” for indigenous perspectives. Drawing upon years of experience in reconciliation efforts involving the Canadian government and First Nations, Regan (2000) offers making space as a way to deepen such efforts and make them more meaningful. Incorporating sustained and holistic efforts to meet indigenous people on their cultural terms, making space is both decolonizing and difficult. It requires settlers to think outside of frameworks that structure their own thoughts and experiences and yet regarding which, prior to the encounter, they are not even aware. Crucially, while making space includes creating opportunities for indigenous people to speak, it is different than just allowing indigenous people to speak. As Garrison (1996) observes in his advocacy of “democratic listening,” most theories of speech and listening devalue listening and cast it as a passive, rather than interactive, activity. In predominant understandings and practices of speaking and listening, even when marginalized individuals and groups have the ability to speak, their speech may be heard—if and when it is—through predominant discourses, which in turn may limit and constrain how it is perceived. Making space includes hearing indigenous people, and having intercultural dialogues with them, on their conditions, and through their concepts and processes. In a context of hundreds of years of colonial history, this requires a “decolonizing struggle on both sides” (Regan, p. 31; see also Alfred, 2005). Otherwise, even members of settler societies with “good intentions in an intercultural dialogue” unthinkingly ask “indigenous people to fit within our cultural paradigm—to have the intercultural dialogue on our terms, not theirs” (Regan, p. 27).

On the surface, making space may seem like a modest goal regarding Indigenous Nations as well as other marginalized groups, but this underestimates the depth to which structures of inequality are complexly engrained in cultural beliefs. As suggested by Canadian indigenous leader George Manuel, in the context of settler societies built on colonialism, “(R)real recognition of our presence and humanity would require a genuine reconsideration of so many people’s roles in North American society that it would amount to a genuine leap of imagination (Manuel & Posluns, 1974, pp. 216-217, as quoted in Regan, 2010, p. 29). As settlers engage in—and likely struggle through—this process, Regan writes, “the subject under scrutiny becomes ‘ourselves.’ In other worlds, the subject is not the “Indian problem” but [again] the ‘settler’ problem” (Epp, 2003, p. 228, as quoted by Regan, p. 35), calling into question broader cultural foundations rather than just political-legal knowledge or epistemological claims *per se*. She further argues that failure to engage in “critical self-reflexivity, our [Settler] unwillingness to put forward our own historical and cultural understandings and experience constitute acts of violence, subtle and symbolic, but powerful nonetheless. Our silence is an act of power” (Regan, pp. 36-37).

Making space can be considered a way of supporting indigenous people, even as it does so without the more explicit or obvious agency, or taking of “action,” that the word service conventionally conveys. This was demonstrated in the context of the “Walleye wars” of the 1980s and 1990s, in which settlers virulently and sometimes violently opposed Anishinabe or Ojibwe (also known as Chippewa) attempts to exercise treaty-guaranteed fishing rights in Wisconsin and Minnesota (Whaley & Bursette, 1994). In response to such resistance and the lack of state protection, spearfishers requested non-indigenous allies to serve as “witnesses” who would provide a buffer at boat landings during evening fishing outings. The Witness for Non-Violence, of which I was a small part, conducted trainings for such potential allies in which the latter learned about tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and also practiced remaining completely non-confrontation in the context of screaming, racist insults, and vulgarities, delivered through face-to-face provocation. Only after such training were non-indigenous allies encouraged to attend boat landings and witness—and importantly, to do no more. While incorporating a type of agency for witnesses, this clearly de-centered the role of non-indigenous people and symbolically and physically made space for indigenous people, cultures, rights, and practices. The concept of “witnessing,” as an expression of non-hierarchical solidarity, serves as one form of making space.

Transformation

The practice of making space holds out the potential to transform even the nature of the university-community encounter in ways that may be very generative in terms of student learning and also further deepen these emergent relationships. In terms of collaborations with tribal nations, the very nature of the “problem” and appropriate settler-indigenous relations may be reconceptualized once it is understood through indigenous perspectives, as the following paragraphs will elaborate. While I suggested above that service-learning with tribal nations highlights settler societies as “the problem,” a deeper cultural reorientation simultaneously transforms the nature of the conflict. Seeing relations between settlers and Indigenous Nations through an indigenous lens as well would question not only the presumed superiority of settler knowledge, but would provide an alternative moral imagination that disrupts the indigenous/settler binary, itself a foundation of colonialism (Barkan, 2000; Grande, 2000; Mandani, 2001; Regan, 2010; Said, 1994). While highly cognizant of the historical injustices, many indigenous scholars and activists rooted in traditional beliefs affirm the relatedness of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, both “two-leggeds”, and challenge the representational binary that naturalizes an either-or struggle. As suggested by the ubiquitous indigenous phrase “Mitauye Oyasin”, or “all my relations”, “(T)here is not even a white world—there is a world of the Great Spirit and the world of Mother Earth (Calliou, 1998, p. 50, quoting High Pine, 1973, p. 39), with “human beings...but one part of a whole universe of interconnected life” (Regan, p. 64; see also Grande, 2004).

Such questioning of the Native-settler binary has widespread implications. For Native people, the understanding that the past is alive, and co-exists with the present and future, means that respectful settler-Indigenous relations of the past can be renewed—and that “Western approaches to addressing conflicts rooted in history [premised on a linear, unidirectional conception of time] are deeply flawed” (Regan, 2010, p. 43). Even as settlers have violated the terms of those relations, indigenous people have shown amazing persistence and faithfulness to the most honorable aspects of such relations, and continue to hold out the possibility that settlers can return to them. These involve both interpersonal encounters and respect for treaties that are still living promises for tribes. In this vein, Akwasne (Mohawk) scholar Tiaiake Alfred calls for “re-establishing respect for the original covenants and ancient treaties that reflect the founding principles of the Onkwehonwe-Settler relationship (Alfred, 2005, p.

21). Regan asserts that settlers have disrupted indigenous narratives, “stories that we must now address together, using deep reflection, imagination and powerful action in struggles that are counter-hegemonic” (p. 43). Practices of indigenous diplomacy, peace-making, and law disrupt even sympathetic western notions of meaningful action across the indigenous-non-indigenous divide, by holding out honorable ways of relating, and the possibility of reconciliation, as part of a decolonization process.

Any possibility for transformed relationships and the possibility of reconciliation require, however, actual relating as a foundation and mechanism. As Regan (2010) states, based on her extensive experience as a settler working with indigenous peoples, decolonization is experiential, as “we must experience decolonization [through being uncomfortable and listening] not just theorize about it. And we can only do this in *relationship* with indigenous peoples where we are open to listening, learning and doing things differently” (p. 66; italics in original). Again, this can only happen on the terms and in the ways defined by indigenous peoples. As indigenous educational theorist Archibald (2008) states, “The issues and the way that we want to deal with the issues—the types of conversations and talks—must be given space for us to fill” (p. 18). But this doesn’t mean a one-sided monologue. Rather, it means non-indigenous being *participants* as listeners, what Garrison (1996) defines as “hermeneutic listening” that produces new understanding through involvement (rather than merely reproducing another’s meanings) (p. 9). This is aligned with what Urion (1991) calls a “First Nations discourse of learning” in which “the currency for the interaction is [drawn from] the very living beings involved in the discourse” (as quoted in Hermes, 2000, p. 394), implicating the listener “as an active participant in the experience of the story” (Ruffo, 1993, p. 164, as quoted by Archibald, p. 31). In this way relationships with indigenous people that “make space” for indigenous perspectives through participatory listening and engagement involve “closing the relational gap” in contrast to “spectating...a privilege where the self is distanced and separated” (Aultman, 2005, pp. 270, 271; Boler, 1999, p. 184; McNally, 2004).

Such intercultural encounters, if occurring in contexts significantly framed by native epistemologies and tribal sovereignty, are sure to produce discomfort for non-indigenous students and faculty. These factors generated some of the discomfort many of my students reported in their service-learning experience with the Ohlone. After a year in which faculty, staff, and tribal members developed a relationship, the initial cohort of student service-learners were initially told that “being together” with (Pompa, 2002) and

getting to know tribal members was a central task, with instructions to “just be” at the tribal office when there weren’t other clear tasks to address. As students, staff, and tribal members involved in this relationship noted, the discomfort was not because students were not welcomed. Indeed, one student reported that “they made us welcome...they would hug us, make you feel very much a part of, not an outsider.” Nonetheless the experience of “being with” the tribe was extremely discomfoting for some students. Students sought to accomplish more, and to move faster, than the relationship-focused placement and the tribal pace allowed. Things got done differently at the tribal office than the students imagined they would and thought they should. One student said “the pace was very slow...at times too slow,” as he was “Wanting to get something done, tangible...so that was frustrating,” while another reported feeling “a little uncomfortable because they were being appreciative when I wasn’t doing that much.”

These interpersonal encounters—involving face-to-face relating—were challenging and uncomfortable also because of the numerous dimensions of inequality at play, even when college participants were highly cognizant and thoughtful about social disparities. Even with the project’s explicit and critical reversal of the analytic focus, the respective economic statuses of college and tribal members served to produce inequality that roughly maps on to the familiar colonial hierarchy: Pitzer is a selective private college whose student base draws heavily from the ranks of professionals; tribal members are part of the urban Indian population of Los Angeles, a group that is relatively poorly educated and low income. Thus while the decolonizing emphasis on questioning settler society disrupts hegemonic knowledge/power regimes and provides symbolic power to tribal members, economic and educational inequalities tend to reproduce hierarchy and social distance. In this mix, it is difficult to know what dimensions, and what interpretations of these dimensions (dominant or critical/decolonizing), are shaping behaviors and interactions. With both students and tribal members likely drawing upon and moving between different symbolic orders, knowing exactly “who” one is, and how one is being perceived, and “who” another is, in any particular interaction is difficult to know. As noted above, students, faculty, as well as staff likely lack experience in egalitarian encounters across social inequalities, and as Boler and Zembylas (2003) discuss in detail, interactions that aim for equality and embrace critical perspectives are highly discomfoting.

Real Change

To this point I have argued with examples that Regan’s (2010) concept of making space can serve as

one alternative metaphor for service. Making space for marginalized community members can be a vehicle for de-centering the perspectives of dominant social groups, for the creation of deeper and more community-oriented relationships, and heightening university/college participants’ personal awareness of their location within, and participation in, social inequalities. Furthermore, I have asserted that, to use the case at hand, collaborations that make space for indigenous perspectives and involve holistic participation by non-indigenous individuals create decolonizing alternatives in the arena of interpersonal relations. But can making space mitigate or partially overcome the other dimensions of inequality identified above? Furthermore, what are the more general impacts on community members and on the structural inequalities and injustices that marginalize and oppress them? Does, in the end, making space produce any lasting residue or effects that extend beyond the particular individuals and relationships involved? In the following section I will argue that, in two distinct ways, making space and the relationship dynamics it elicits does have the potential to generate change in structures of inequality and injustice. While I will draw primarily from tribal service-learning examples, and also from Regan’s insightful theorizations, these two dimensions or mechanisms are not restricted to this context.

Firstly, making space in an *unmediated* (Jorge, 2003) and *undelegated* (Dorado, Giles, & Welch, 2009) community-university partnership can generate deepened trust, familiarity, and communication, through which an increased ability to collectively imagine and create new types of collaborations, or engage in *co-definition*, develops (also see Uzzi, 1997). In a relationship that includes more equity, and some threads of equality, community partners are more likely to propose their own ideas, interests, and frameworks. Doing so would help subsequent service-learning projects reach the goal, lauded in the literature but seemingly rarely achieved (see Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000), of letting the community shape the nature of the service from definition of the problem, to inception of the service, and through implementation. In the case of Pitzer’s tribal collaboration with the Ohlone and our emerging relationships with additional area tribal nations, we definitely have been given directions and feedback that have allowed us to work at *aligning* (Dorado & Giles, 2004) the partnerships. In response to Ohlone and other local tribal leaders’ requests that we help their youth envision going to college (and actually get there), in the summer following our first year of student involvement Pitzer College created and held a special two week residential “Pipeline to College” course for American Indian high school students. Thirteen Indian youth

participated in the course, including eight Ohlone tribal members, all of whom received full scholarships. Subsequently, over the course of the next two summers, 30 students from 13 different tribal nations have participated in the program.⁴

Our alignment with tribal wishes also involved the creating and revisioning of a mentoring group at the college that joined Pitzer students with Ohlone youth. This group has presented information about tribal history and culture to some Pitzer classes, and in the spring of its first year took control of one evening of our annual American Indian Film Festival. The Pitzer students and tribal youth collectively chose a series of short films to screen, and then, working in student-youth pairs, introduced each film and facilitated a post-screening discussion. Other “aligning” projects include a 5K Run/Walk fundraising event, support for new productions of a play about Ohlone history, and enthusiastic involvement in efforts by the tribal wellness committee to create a farm for growing fresh and affordable produce for tribal members and the broader community.

Few, if any, of these projects would have been on the agenda for our service options if the relationship had not been nurtured in a way that made space for indigenous perspectives and concerns. Thus, projects and tasks that can be understood as conventional forms of service have emerged from the relationship, but only because the relationship was fore-grounded, and we collectively passed through a period of discomfort in which none of us—tribal members, faculty, staff, or students—knew exactly where it was going or what it would entail. One striking and completely unanticipated outcome for those of us at Pitzer was learning about a longer framework for Ohlone-Pitzer relations that is salient to at least some tribal members. One tribal member noted that, while working for a landscaping and construction firm, he helped physically construct additions to the Pitzer campus, and that his family members and other tribal members worked in the orange groves that made Pitzer College founder Kenneth Pitzer an orange magnate. The profits from the orange business enabled Pitzer to become a philanthropist, including his \$1.2 million donation to help create the college. Reflecting on this legacy, the tribal member asserted that “Originally it was a problem, (our) people were working to build schools for sons and daughters of the people we were working for...(now) some people who got educated are sharing back.” The emergent collaboration between Pitzer and the Ohlone represents a possibility for a mutual relationship that can attempt to mitigate the structural inequalities of race, class, and colonialism. At present, we have just begun initial steps of what will necessarily be lengthy and evolving efforts toward this goal, in relation to

the Ohlone as well as other nearby tribal nations.

The second way in which making space generates change is through the actual *relating* between indigenous and settlers. Rather than the more static or stable term of “relationship,” an analytical focus on the act of relating brings even more to the fore the micro-encounters that cross the indigenous-settler divide. To some degree my claims here primarily reinterpret some of the relationship elements discussed above within what is to some the more radical, and contested, analytical framework of poststructuralism. I suggest that decolonizing *relating*, involving university and tribal participants, unfolding dynamically in social spaces deeply informed by indigenous perspectives, constitute real changes *in and of themselves*. If emergent interactions survive the discomfort of crossing the social distance created by structures of inequality and injustice, and are formed or reformed outside of hegemonic schemas and discourses, such acts of relating are not merely symbolic substitutes for structural change. How interactions, service projects, and joint events are organized conveys and creates a social reality (Hermes, 2000). When tribal members guide the agenda and shape the structure and content of a service-learning project, when collaborative events reflect indigenous worldviews and begin with prayers and blessings, when a course not only teaches about a decolonizing political imaginary but utilizes and is framed through such an imaginary, when students experience the collective power of an indigenous healing dance, when “smudging” occurs within the halls of a Western educational institution...such actions themselves manifest decolonization in the same way that ceremonies actually accomplish social transformations. While the projects I have referred to have not included all of these elements, they have incorporated many of them. In sum, such acts of relating enact and instantiate in their very being new ways of relating rather than just prefigure such relations, prepare for struggle for such possibilities, or enable more tangible and valid renderings of service. While the ultimate decolonizing goal is the widespread reproduction and institutionalization of such new, non-colonial indigenous-settler relations, the actualization of such relations, even in modest scale, is substantive change.

While such decolonizing acts cannot themselves undo broader political and legal structures, or reorganize material relations and resource distributions, they are not the equivalent of “just talk” or impotent representational resistance that leaves structures unaffected. Rather, as Foucault and other poststructuralist theories affirm, acts of relating that function to dislodge hegemonic power/knowledge regimes or discourses undermine the reproduction of structures,

such as the colonial structures erasing indigenous sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson, 2006). While obviously such encounters have limits, denying their significance serves to define “real change” in limiting structuralist terms that fail to incorporate what is now decades of poststructuralist analysis (and critique) regarding power, its reproduction, and its disruption. Hegemony involves not just weapons and unjust laws, but discourses and power/knowledge regimes that legitimate the use of weapons and the creation of unjust laws. For indigenous people, the continuing ignorance of tribal sovereignty, the casting of tribal members as racial minority members, the dismissal of indigenous epistemology, the literacy-based criteria for the federal acknowledgment of tribal nations, and other aspects of Eurocentric power/knowledge regimes function as central components of continuing colonial domination. Given the nature of such power/discourse regimes, decolonizing struggle absolutely involves subverting these dimensions of colonialism, as well as their “material” or “structural” manifestations (Steinman, in press). When settler students, faculty, and staff recognize tribal members as *citizens* of another nation, engage with them in ways that reflect respect for the “original covenants” between indigenous nations and settlers, and participate in the renewal of indigenous narratives and discourses, change *is* being effected.

One specific example of disruption generated by the making of space for indigenous understandings emerged during the process of writing this article. When the manuscript was already under peer review, I was confronted by the realization that, in an indigenous perspective, the accounts and experiences I was drawing upon were not simply mine, but also belonged to others, and that this had implications for their use in an article. As increasingly articulated by scholars (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2009), and quite distinct from western approaches to knowledge, in an indigenous worldview research is based on “relational accountability”; new knowledge is not owned by an individual researcher but also belongs to the individuals and communities whose stories and experiences contribute to its development. Even though this paper has included my own journey and has focused critical attention on Euro-American society and institutions, it nonetheless also does tell stories about indigenous individuals and nations. Accordingly, before its publication I sought to share this paper with the individuals and communities I have worked with and learned from, in order to honor them, acknowledge them, and solicit feedback about my representation of their stories. Although I am sure I have not fully lived up to this principle, I was able to circulate the paper among the key parties, and in one case I was able to have a lengthy discussion describ-

ing the most relevant sections. I am deeply indebted and grateful to all those who have helped me gain a deeper understanding of the issues addressed in this article.

Conclusion

The field of service-learning faces recurring questions about the very nature of service. To mitigate the hierarchical nature of service, the framework of critical service-learning has emerged to address and expose the social inequalities commonly present in the relations between service provider and recipient. However, such relations generally still suffer from structural inequality in the construction of service-learning itself. More and more scholarship suggests that establishing new types of authentic relationships between university and community members is itself an important goal, and a promising direction for the field of service-learning. Even so, it is not clear how to generate such relationships. In this context, service-learning with Indigenous Nations provides useful directions and examples for addressing multiple conceptual challenges facing the field. Service-learning with Indigenous Nations reverses the analytic focus and challenges dominant cultural understandings upon which the taken-for-granted Indian-Settler hierarchy is premised. It requires making space for indigenous perspectives, an idea that provides a more critical metaphor for conceptualizing the development of authentic relationships with other groups. Making space has the potential, through deepened and sustained relationships, to generate innovative and community-guided service-learning projects. But making space is not merely a process for generating conventional service-learning projects that are more responsive to community input. Experiences with indigenous nations highlight how making space can instantiate actual change through enacting new relations that disrupt hegemonic power/discourse regimes and identities, and which manifest alternatives. Furthermore, while it is beyond the scope of this article, participating in making space may prepare students to take subsequent action and create social relations that prefigure transformed possibilities.

Notes

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¹ In addition to Scott Scoggins' intensive and crucial efforts as Tribal Liaison, other Pitzer faculty deeply involved in building these partnerships include Tessa Hicks Peterson, Director of the Community Engagement Center, and Gina Lamb, adjunct professor of media studies. Many others have also contributed in numerous and important ways.

² I am not critiquing such operationalizations per se; indeed, methodologically they facilitate useful empirical analysis. Rather, the problem is the casual, unremarked nature of equating community with community-based organization, particularly in discussion and representation of results.

³ It is also true that *individuals* from marginalized communities are likely even more disadvantaged and thus vulnerable in their interactions with university partners than *organizational* actors, thus providing an additional reason for university service-learning participants to work with CBOs. This does not mean that CBOs are one and the same with the community, however, which is the broader point.

⁴ The 2011 Pipeline session generated a blog viewable at <http://nativeyouth2college.org>.

⁵ A preparatory ceremony in which burning sage is used to remove bad feelings or negative energy.

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Barbara A. Israel	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Novella Keith	<i>Temple University</i>
C. David Lisman	<i>University of Denver</i>
Gregory B. Markus	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Wilbert J. McKeachie	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Allen Menlo	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Jerry M. Miller	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Barbara Moely	<i>Tulane University</i>
David Moore	<i>New York University</i>
Keith Morton	<i>Providence College</i>
KerryAnn O'Meara	<i>University of Maryland- College Park</i>
Kenneth Reardon	<i>University of Memphis</i>
Susan Root	<i>National Youth Leadership Council</i>
David Schoem	<i>University of Michigan</i>
Timothy K. Stanton	<i>Stanford University</i>
Sharon E. Sutton	<i>University of Washington</i>
John Wallace	<i>University of Minnesota</i>
Kelly A. Ward	<i>Washington State University</i>
Edward Zlotkowski	<i>Bentley College</i>