

“WHITENESS AS PROPERTY”:
COLONIALISM, CONTAMINATION, AND DETENTION IN
TACOMA’S PUYALLUP ESTUARY

by

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ABSTRACT

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This project is a case study of carceral geographies of whiteness and settler colonialism in the United States, focused in the Puyallup River Estuary. It brings together critical race theorist Cheryl Harris's idea of whiteness as property, Harsha Walia's concept of “border imperialism,” Dean Spade's concept of “administrative violence,” Marx and Federici’s analyses of primitive accumulation’s ties with colonialism and whiteness, and Gloria Anzaldúa's idea of mobile, legal, and embodied borderlands to understand creation of poverty at the site through state violence, along with some ways the landscape has been re-claimed and re-valued by the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. It is informed by trauma theory and critical and decolonizing methodologies, and I use historical and contemporary maps to visualize interactions between the site's administration and environmental health.

Commencement Bay’s near shore tide flats are part of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians’ reservation land and usual and accustomed fishing grounds. The tide flats are currently both Superfund site and location of the Northwest Detention Center, a for-profit immigration detention facility. The Northern Pacific Railway and attendant industrial complexes facilitated colonization and environmental degradation of the site. Currently directed primarily at Latin American workers, local hostility to immigrants of color was prefigured by treatment of Chinese railroad employees and Japanese-American farmers. The Puyallup Tribe of Indians has effectively leveraged treaty rights to reclaim and re-value the landscape, while Northwest Detention Center detainees recently brought national attention to environmental injustice and human rights abuses in immigration detention through campaigns of nonviolent civil disobedience. I find that “whiteness as property” has been constructed in the estuary through a combination of federal, state, territorial, and city-level policies enforcing white power, with attendant environmental impacts. I also find that a combination of legal and grassroots strategies can effectively transform and add value to landscapes which have been degraded and devalued through administrative violence.

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Introduction

"There is no neutral body from which our bodies deviate. Society has written deep into each strand of tissue of every living person on earth. What it writes into the heart muscles of five star generals is distinct from what it writes in the pancreatic tissue and intestinal tracts of Black single mothers in Detroit, of Mexicana migrants in Fresno, but no body stands outside the consequences of injustice and inequality."

-Aurora Levins Morales, "Mountain Moving Day" (Morales 2013)

This work tells the story of how racialized hierarchy was constructed in the Puyallup River Estuary by deciphering the site's environmental history. The Puyallup River, fed by glaciers on Tacoma (Mount Rainier), empties into Puget Sound next to the Port of Tacoma. The estuary is the ancestral home and usual-and-accustomed treaty fishing grounds of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

The Port of Tacoma is currently site of the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC), a for-profit immigration detention facility run by GEO Group, the world's second-largest private prison contractor. In 2014, detainees organized hunger strikes while advocates blockaded deportation buses. The entire facility is located on and near toxic waste sites, including Superfund sites.

Racialized containment and exclusion in the Port area is nothing new, and is in fact historically linked with the site's environmental degradation. The Puyallup, along with many other local tribes, were displaced from their historical lands and fishing grounds through processes of allotment (privatization and sale of collectively-owned land) which facilitated urbanization and industrialization of

the Port. Their children were placed in a boarding school near the estuary to be trained as menial labor.

Much of the Port's initial industrialization was driven by the Pacific Northern Railway's decision to site its terminus in Tacoma. Meatpacking took place for a century where the NWDC now stands; the space is also in close proximity to a former coal gasification plant and recycling of automobiles and electrical transformers. The site's groundwater is contaminated with a plume of benzene, while its soil and surface water contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and heavy metals (EPA 2014). Meatpacking industry chose its location in the tide flats, between railroad and waterway, for easy shipping.

The railroad was a major employer of Chinese workers, and a small Chinatown formed near the Port. In the late 1800s, Tacoma's mayor and the Pierce County Sheriff led an ethnic cleansing targeting the city's Chinese population. While aware of the plan, the governor did not intervene, and the removal became known regionally as "the Tacoma Method." Sixty years later, Alien Land Laws attacked Japanese American farmers and their children; over 7,000 people were forced into an internment camp in the Puyallup River Valley. Japanese American removal facilitated transformation of their family farms and businesses into predominantly white suburbia.

The Puyallup Tribe of Indians fought to regain control of land lost through

corrupt processes of allotment, and to assert its treaty right to fish in usual-and-accustomed grounds, despite attacks on its sovereignty in the name of conservation and industry. Settlers' industrial fishing, dams, and destruction of habitat led to the collapse of fish runs. The 1974 Boldt Decision forced the state of Washington to recognize the Tribe's legal right to 50% of the harvestable catch. The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) was formed to manage the tribal fishery, and later to co-manage it with the state. In the 1980s, the Port of Tacoma tide flats were named an EPA Superfund site and placed on the National Priority List for cleanup. In years following, the Puyallup Tribe won several lawsuits for land occupied by industry, and leveraged its gains to provide economic resources and social services for tribal members.

Since colonization, the Estuary has been degraded and used as a site where communities of color were imported or devalued as cheap labor, and removed or deported when they were no longer useful. The Northwest Detention Center, built literally on contaminated ground, is merely the latest example of this constriction and expulsion of immigrants, including many Indigenous peoples from Mexico and Central America.

Slowly but surely, as the Puyallup Tribe gains economic and political strength in the region, it is buying back lost land and stewarding critical habitat restoration and environmental remediation. The Estuary's historical health demonstrates a clear connection with tribal sovereignty and decolonization. Telling the place-based story of the Puyallup River Estuary shows that construction of racial

hierarchy can impact the “natural” world, both arising from and contributing to environmental justice issues, and that the natural world can in turn shape the construction and deconstruction of “whiteness” in a place. In this study, I seek to demonstrate that the construction of "whiteness" can be read as a "text" from the landscape of a place, as racial hierarchy seeks to categorize and control human beings and the environment.

“Race” is not a meaningful biological category (Yudell et al 2016). As Kwame Anthony Appiah writes in “The Uncompleted Argument: Du Bois and the Illusion of Race,” “the human genetic variability *between* the populations of Africa or Europe or Asia is not much greater than that *within* those populations” (Appiah 1986, 21) [emphasis added]. Yet with the U.S. Congress’s first holding on citizenship in 1790, it limited naturalization to “white persons” (Haney 2006). Until as late as the 1980s in some U.S. states, the social and legal formation of race known as the “one drop rule” limited “white” identity to people with no known African ancestry (Haney 2006). In 1983, a Louisiana court held that Susie Phipps, a woman with “colored” marked on her birth certificate but who lived her life as white, could not change her racial categorization under state law because her great-great-great-great grandmother was black (Jaynes 1982, Harris 1983)

This thesis is part of a much larger tradition of research seeking to understand historical formations of racism. What is whiteness, really? In this project, I

examine linkages of “whiteness” and other forms of systemically privileged identity with U.S. citizenship, and then ask what connections might exist between these processes of constructing white power and environmental health. As Kobayashi & Peake (2000) write, “Geographically, human beings reciprocally shape and are shaped by their surrounding environments to produce landscapes that conform similarly to ideals of beauty, utility, or harmony, values not immediately associated with “race” but predicated upon whitened cultural practices.” These practices, particularly their connections with capitalism and “the racial state” (Goldberg 2002, Omi & Winant 1986, Haney Lopez 2006), shape environmental quality (Bullard et al 2007, Moore 2015).

Lauren Berlant describes the U.S.’s process of “linking personal identity with nationality” as “training in politicized intimacy” (Berlant 2014, 41). “This training... has served as a way of turning political boundaries into visceral, emotional, and seemingly hardwired responses of ‘insiders’ to ‘outsiders.’ Thus, we can say that citizenship’s legal architecture manifests itself and is continually reshaped in the space of transactions between intimates and strangers” (Berlant 2014, 41). Meanwhile, as many Indigenous feminists and womanists of color have described, there are deep and potent connections between intimate and public formations of whiteness, nationalism, and family violence, which I touch on in this study.

Patricia Hill Collins describes a mutable “triangular” racialized class relationship between white, black, and Native people which is core to U.S.

national identity: “the first class white citizen, the foreign Indian who stands outside citizenship, and the second-class black citizen” (Collins 2001, 8). Collins argues that, while these categories are far from neat (members of Latin American populations, for example, fit into all three categories), they are “benchmarks against which individuals and groups measure racial identity” (ibid, 9). “[T]he tenacity of this racial triangle explains, in part, how U.S. society can undergo massive reorganization of its basic social institutions and ethnic populations in response to phases of capitalist development, yet somehow manage to replicate a seemingly permanent racial hierarchy” (ibid).

In many ways, citizenship privileges and safety are experienced along a continuum, accruing most heavily for those with intersecting privileged or “normal” identities, and accruing least for those with intersecting marginalized identities (Spade 2011, Berlant 2014). This shapes health and life outcomes for communities of color and Indigenous peoples (Spade 2011, Bullard et al 2007, Holmes 2013, Berlant 2014, Aburto et al 2016, Indian Health Service 2016). These outcomes are intimately intertwined with environmental health (Bullard et al 2007, Carmen & Waghiyi 2012). Relatedly, while people with low or no incomes, people of color, and/or people living with disabilities are overrepresented in the criminal legal system, current environmental health assessment of carceral facilities do not take prisoner or detainee populations into account (Wright 2015).

Understanding historical formations of racialized citizenship and its connections with environmental health can help demystify our understanding of the origin of present-day social orders and landscapes. Identifying intersectional common ground between seemingly-disparate struggles is one step towards making informed choices for a different future. Why are remittances from Mexican migrants to the United States so important to the Mexican economy, second only to oil sales (Stephen 2007)? Why did Pacific Northwest anadromous fish runs collapse in the mid-1970s (Kerwin 1999)? Why, in 2008, were only about 700 Chinese Americans living in Tacoma, when proportionately there should have been over 2,500 (Chinese in North America Research Committee 2015)? How did the city of Bellevue go from Native land, to Japanese American strawberry farms, to the wealthy white Seattle suburb it is today? Is it possible these questions might share a similar answer?

This project is a response to Pulido and Haney Lopez's calls to action for anti-racist whites to help "dismantle race as a system which correlates to power and privilege" (Haney Lopez 2006) by centering racism in our analyses as "a fundamental social relation" (Pulido 2002, 49).

This work also responds to critical race scholars' calls to examine the state's role in constructing race and racial inequity, including attendant issues of environmental justice (Kurtz 2009, Spade 2011, Murakawa 2014, Walia 2013). By examining environmental impacts of the racialized state's historical

containment and expulsion of communities of color and Indigenous peoples to accrue capital for the benefit of whiteness, I attempt to connect environmental justice research with critiques of colonial “frontier” or “boom” extractive ideologies (Limerick 1987, White 1995, Galeano 1973), and legal constructions of race with processes of capitalist “primitive accumulation” (Federici 2004, Marx 1977).

In these pages, I do my best to link oft-overlooked local histories with present-day formations of structural racism and environmental degradation. I begin with an overview of my research process, terminology, and methods, followed by a review of the literature. I trace processes of colonization and decolonization in the Estuary, linking increased Puyallup tribal sovereignty with estuarine health and associated anadromous fish runs. I then describe historical connections between racialized state violence towards Puyallup Indians, Chinese railroad workers, Japanese American farmers, and Latinx detainees in the Puyallup River Estuary. Finally, I identify formations of whiteness apparent in these histories, and conclude with recommendations for future research and an overview of themes which emerged through my work. By understanding some aspects of how white power works, I hope to show that it can and must be dismantled to create healthy environments and meaningfully accountable, just, and resilient communities.

If whiteness is understood as a system of power and control, rather than a neutral racial category, then the magazine *Race Traitor*’s tagline, “treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity,” holds true (Ignatiev 1994). I expand this

framework to the nonhuman realm. Because whiteness is fundamentally linked with capitalist and colonial extractive processes (Davis 2002, Marx 1977, Federici 2004, Dunbar-Ortiz 2014, Galeano 1973), treason to whiteness is loyalty to all life on Earth, including future generations.

Methods and Research Design:

Understanding the “sphere of complex superstructures”

A note: pieces of this chapter are published in *Ecofeminism in Dialogue*, Eds. Mickey & Vakoch (2017) [in press].

Process of forming this research project

From 2008 to 2014, I worked in the fields of fair housing and advocacy for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Through this advocacy, along with community organizing experience beginning in 2002, I learned from coworkers, clients, and community activists about spatially-organized violence and environmental degradation. I also learned about the violence of the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) and other immigration enforcement systems towards local Latin American communities, as well as U.S. intervention in Latin American economies and politics which creates mass migration to begin with (SOAWatch 2016, Galeano 1973, Blum 2004). Washington State has the fourth largest population of resettled refugees in the country, and the tenth largest population of limited English-proficient immigrants (Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2015). Members of migrant and immigrant communities are unable to access state-sponsored protective resources because of the danger to their communities and families when the state becomes involved (e.g. calling 911 during domestic violence incidents, reporting child sexual abuse to police, going to the hospital for medical treatment after an assault, filing for a protective order, and more) (Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs 2016). Despite

being prohibited from asking about citizenship status, police in Washington State have worked intimately with the Border Patrol, finding workarounds like the use of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials for “translation services” (Shapiro 2011). When abusive partners are detained or deported to another county, survivors lose critical financial resources for their families, as well as parenting support for their children, and face increased social and linguistic isolation, with attendant economic and health impacts (Reeves & Cutty 2015, Bernard et al 2007, Gray 2006, Belza et al 2012, Ornelas & Perreira 2011) in an unwelcoming foreign country.

These observations of structural violence towards immigrant communities led to my eventual choice of research project. I vaguely knew I wanted to focus on issues relevant for local immigrant communities and other groups targeted by the state. I first tried to think of ways to write my thesis around sexual assaults of Indigenous Latin American salal pickers in Mason County, which community advocates had talked about bringing attention to for years. As a community organizer, I was a prison abolitionist, particularly committed to building viable community alternatives to prisons which take dynamics of abuse and oppression into account (see discussion of “transformative justice” on page 67). As an advocate, I participated in and provided specialized training in implementation of PREA (the Prison Rape Elimination Act) and learned about state-sanctioned and –facilitated sexual violence (see page 55). I became interested in identifying connections between prisons and individual, community, and environmental health. Through discussion with friends, I settled on the subject of the Northwest

Detention Center, particularly its location in and around Superfund and toxic waste sites. I approached geographer and fellow activist Zoltán Grossman about working with me as my thesis advisor, and he agreed. A few months later, advocates with NWDC Resistance/ Resistencia al NWDC--including many undocumented people-- formed a blockade of buses full of people facing deportation. Soon after, the 2014 hunger strikes began.

A friend and coworker, Carolina Gutierrez, was in touch with people at Latino Advocacy, an organization supporting detainees and local Latinx communities in general. I reached out to see if they had a research question they would like me to pursue. Maru Mora Villalpando, a powerhouse community advocate, responded and said Resistencia al NWDC/ NWDC Resistance was interested. Maru invited me to one of the weekly vigils Resistencia al NWDC held outside the center. This vigil honored one of the detainee hunger strike leaders who was recently released; he was able to receive the City of Seattle's Human Rights Leaders Organization award in person. After the vigil and celebration, we talked about topics connected with environmental studies that advocates might find useful. She asked me to focus on the detention center's location on a Superfund site.

Maru and I met again a few months later to talk about research design. I had ideas for a survey on water quality in the facility, along with a photovoice project with former detainees. She and members of the detainee collective were very interested, particularly in the survey which was similar to something they'd wanted for a long time. We discussed the possibility of making it a participatory

action research project (DataCenter 2013). I brought the proposed research design to Evergreen's IRB administrator. While supportive of the purpose of the project, he was deeply uncomfortable with the idea of working with people in detention, particularly because Evergreen's IRB wasn't equipped to provide the kind of review needed to move forward with work with vulnerable populations. The M.E.S. program director also told me in no uncertain terms that he would not sign off on the project, or any possible "workarounds" (e.g. switching from generalizable results to something descriptive), because these ethical issues remained the same.

Around that time I worked with Frances Rains, Evergreen professor of Native American and World Indigenous Peoples Studies, on an independent learning contract. The contract focused on qualitative research methods and ethics, with a special emphasis on Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies and critiques. During our first meeting to discuss a possible contract, Frances asked me if I could do justice to my proposed subject within existing constraints of money, time, and experience. At the time, I insisted I could do mixed methods including photovoice (Mitchell 2011; Brooks & Poudrier 2014), surveys, interviews, and possibly phonography (Gallagher & Prior 2014, Hemsworth 2015, Kahn 2001, World Soundscape Project 1977). She agreed to sponsor the contract, with the caveat that she thought I needed to give serious thought to her question and was glad I would devote the quarter to it.

Through the process of working with Frances and completing readings on ethics, particularly around issues of representation and mutually beneficial research relationships, I began to understand her assessment of the plan's limitations. After being told by the college that the project wasn't allowable in the ways detainees and community advocates identified as relevant, I did further re-evaluation. I volunteered my support for a related Resistencia al NWDC project, but severed detainee interviews, photovoice, and surveys from my research plan.

At the same time, Zoltán encouraged me to frame the story of the NWDC's siting beginning with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' history in the Puyallup River Estuary, and to reframe the project as examining the historic construction of racial oppression(s) imposed on the environment and Indigenous and immigrant workforces of the estuary. I reached out to members of the Puyallup Tribe's Historic Preservation Department via phone and email messages, explaining my proposed project and desire to do work that would be relevant to and respectful of the Tribe, but was unsuccessful at connecting with anyone. Later, Zoltán used his social media connection with Ramona Bennett, community health advocate and former tribal chair, to attempt to set up an interview between us. Ramona replied that she was too busy with work around issues with the City of Tacoma's proposal for a methanol plant in the Port for an interview, but would be willing to meet informally with me. If a meeting is successfully set up, either before or after the conclusion of my research, I plan to share my work with her or other tribal members she thinks would be interested in the information or in providing feedback.

One of the biggest issues with my research design was that I did not have a source of funding to pay anyone to translate or review my work (aside from my professors). Frances, several readings on ethics, and common sense emphasized that expecting members of marginalized communities to do unpaid work for my research was extractive and unethical. The plan formed with the detainee collective included partnering with both former detainees and community advocates, including people willing to translate survey questions and photovoice results. When that plan was vetoed, I felt uncomfortable seeking free translation support for my final project which, while relevant, is not aligned with organizers' most immediate and pressing priorities.

As I deepened my understanding of the limitations of my proposed methods and project, I met Liza Rognas, a TESC research librarian with expertise in archival research around Bureau of Indian Affairs records. We created an independent learning contract on ethics and methods in archival research, and I re-designed my research project as racialized environmental history. My work in that quarter to learn the history of the site led again and again to stories of violence towards Asian immigrants and Asian American populations, specifically Alien Land Laws, Japanese American internment during WWII, the federal Chinese Exclusion Act, and Tacoma's anti-Chinese riot in the late 1800s. I realized my archival research design needed to be revamped to meaningfully address these emergent stories.

Why Place-Based History?

One reason I decided to write history, along with funding and time restrictions, was a desire to contextualize and historicize present-day human rights issues. I chose to write about “whiteness as property” and administrative violence in the Port because a focus on structural violence felt like a way to meaningfully “study up” (Nader 1972). In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* (2013, p. 190), Seth Holmes applies Gramsci’s concepts of hegemony, wars of force, and wars of position to understanding scholars’ role in dismantling structural violence:

“In the United States and most other postindustrial nations, military wars of force are not officially permitted (though the militarization and criminalization of the inner city and the borderlands, among other phenomena, could be considered precisely wars of force.) In these societies, struggles related to hegemony occur primarily through wars of position. In order to bring about political and material change regarding such issues as immigrant rights and workers’ rights, then, we must engage in struggles over the manners in which immigrant workers are represented and perceived. These representations and perceptions lead to associated legal and economic inclusions, exclusions, liberations, and violence.”

Seth Holmes (2013, 190)

My professional education as an advocate also made me keenly aware of connections between the work I sought to do and historical, intergenerational, tertiary, and vicarious trauma. Because of this background, I understand the value of trauma-informed approaches to research and writing history (see page 67 for more information).

Writing environmental history offers the added benefit of grounding social analysis in a landbase. As an environmental studies scholar, I am interested in identifying connections between social justice and environment, particularly

around issues of health and inequality. This project offers the opportunity to do just that, identifying interplay between elements of a complex human social, political, and economic web and the non-human. For example, settler violation of Puyallup treaty rights involved constricting the migration of salmon; dividing and privatizing Puyallup tribal lands enabled industrialization of the Tacoma waterfront; and siting the NWDC near more than 280 active industrial facilities, as well as on a federal Superfund site, currently exposes detainees to environmental contaminants.

As Gramsci found, “[Marxist tradition had developed] no adequate [theory] of the state or what Gramsci called ‘the sphere of the complex superstructures’: political, legal, cultural” (Forgacs in Gramsci 2000, 189). In this thesis, I seek to write history which effectively describes this sphere, illuminating its supportive ideologies (racist and colonial ideologies, specifically) as “instruments of domination” (Gramsci 2000, 196) in a particular site, and going a step further to understand their environmental impact. As Kurtz argues in “Acknowledging the Racial State,” frequently, environmental justice scholars “overlook the significance of the state’s role in shaping understandings of race and racism”; yet “[g]iven that the meaning of EJ is being negotiated in the field of action between EJ activists and the state, it is important for EJ scholars to theorize and investigate the state as a robust, complex and interested actor” (Kurtz 2009, 684, 701). This work’s emphasis on the role of administrative violence in capitalist primitive accumulation is a response to Kurtz and others’ call for theorization of the state’s implication in environmental injustice, particularly using the framework of

cultural materialism (“a form of analysis which examine[s] culture... as a material formation, complete with its own modes of production, power-effects, social relations, identifiable audiences, [and] historically conditioned thought-forms” (Eagleton 1996, 198).

In writing a racialized and anti-colonial environmental history of the Puyallup estuary, I use classic geographic methods to tell the story of a particular place, to show how social forces shaped a place, and how in turn the place shaped that history, up to the present era. This place-based history exposes economic and political forces and ideologies which consistently shape the place-- for example, the waves of importation and expulsion of immigrant labor, or the use of detention (e.g. boarding schools, immigrant prisons) for those who are being absorbed into or expelled from the labor pool.

Positionality and Methods

Critical to meaningfully anti-racist scholarship is, as Robinson writes, “displacement of both the questioning researcher and the questioned research subject: the exploration of the intersections among subjects involves the interrogation of all subjects involved in research and the displacement of the privileged fixed position of the ‘same’ from which the author/ researcher speaks/writes and interrogates” (1994, 221 as quoted in Kobayashi & Peake 2000).

For purposes of this work, I apply intersectionality in multiple ways towards understanding historical geographies of racism and colonization around the NWDC. I try to understand environmental degradation and impoverishment, as well as environmental restoration and re-valuing, through the lens of racism/resistance and colonization/decolonization. I identify relationships between different strains of racism and colonization at the site, including gendered elements. I also take my own position as a white, non-Indigenous, monolingual English-speaking researcher into account, particularly its impact on narratives I am culturally predisposed to seek out and tell, as well as larger cultural contexts which make some versions of history readily accessible and wrap others in silence.

I attempted to identify and compensate for cultural predispositions towards writing versions of history which reinscribe white supremacy. One such narrative framework emphasizes white colonial agency while minimizing resistance and influence of other communities, especially Indigenous peoples (Trouillot 1995). Another reduces processes (colonization, for example)--to single moments in time, suggesting both their end and inevitability, or describes complex, ongoing processes as neatly-captured and complete (Trouillot 1995, LaCapra 2001). Yet another suggests the site's history began when white people arrived or defines Indigenous histories using colonial eras (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). A further narrative strain erases ongoing urban and industrial Indigenous presence (Thrush 2008); and still others present Indigenous peoples and people of color as monolithic groups, unchanging throughout time and/or without internal differences. I also

attempted to identify my cultural predispositions towards sources of information. Some of these included assumptions about sources' trustworthiness or accuracy (tendency to prioritize information from government archives, for example, over oral histories); expectations of entitlement to access and/or represent culturally sensitive or private information; and the possibility I might be influenced to emphasize some information based on its larger quantities (in terms of both scope and scale), ease of access, or ease of intelligibility within dominant cultural frameworks.

In "Alice through the looking glass: emotion, personal connection, and reading colonial archives along the grain," Sarah de Leeuw describes her archival research on Alice Ravenhill, an influential person in the early colonial British Columbia. Leeuw advocates for an addition to anti-colonial "against the grain" research methods which includes documenting "the complexities, insecurities, and heterogeneity of those with or in power" (de Leeuw 2012, 275). She questions dynamics of non-Indigenous researchers--ourselves implicated in ongoing settler colonialism--approaching study of colonial actors with an eye for distance and difference, rather than connection and commonality (ibid.). I translated this to my work in the sense that I looked for parallel or linked processes between past and present. I also looked for instances where people implicated in violence towards Native peoples and people of color acted against their own privilege or challenged the violence of their white and/or non-Native peers in some way.

In McCorkel and Myers' paper "What Difference Does Difference Make? Position and Privilege in the Field," they make an important observation about how issues of positionality are commonly dealt with. Researchers typically either (a) do not discuss their positionality or (b) do not explore or discuss how their positionality has informed their data, analysis, and conclusions. Token mentions of researcher identity, without exploration of its impact on the research process, are unlikely to challenge internalized master "narratives that reinforce the legitimacy of ...dominant social position and existing race, class and gender arrangements" (2003, 200).

I applied this to my research design by including a serious discussion of the value of exploring positionality in my literature review and methods chapters. I examine my positionality, particularly as a white, non-Native, English-speaking U.S. citizen researching the Port of Tacoma tide flats with an emphasis on its significance to Native communities, settlers, and recent immigrant communities. I consider how my social, political, and economic position and context might inform the way I read the archives, landbase and land use changes-- what I start with, look for, and focus on, and how I interpret what I find. I consider how these contexts may impact my question, observations, and analysis even in explorations of the space's non-human life (e.g. anadromous fish runs), and systems of accountability in place for any misrepresentation of Native and/or immigrant communities.

Trauma-Informed Frameworks

Current thought is that “trauma-informed” systems take an holistic approach to understanding trauma and healing. Groundbreaking trauma texts such as Judith Herman’s *Trauma and Recovery* identify the study of trauma as political because it requires challenging the social context which produced it (1992, 9). In the advocacy handbook *Building Cultures of Care* (a 2013 collaboration between the U.S.’s National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project [NSAC RSP] and National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC]), core principles of trauma-informed practice include safety (‘do no harm’), trust (transparency and respect for boundaries), choice (prioritizing survivors’ control of their process of healing), collaboration (sharing power), empowerment (emphasizing strengths), and cultural competence (ensuring cultural applicability) (9).

Indigenous feminists and others have identified many kinds of trauma in addition to individualized experiences. One of these is historical trauma or “cumulative wounding across generations” (Brave Heart 2000, p. 247), usually applied in the context of a traumatized community or culture (e.g. Lakota survivors of colonial violence and their descendants, (ibid.)); a variation on this is intergenerational trauma, which can also describe dysfunctional family systems (e.g. patterns of abuse passed down generation to generation). Another type of (physical) trauma highlighted by Seth Holmes is that created by grueling work that “breaks the bodies” of immigrant workers relegated to the bottom of the U.S.

labor hierarchy, meaning that they have experienced a type of systemic violence even before any detention by the state (Holmes 2013).

An additional consideration around trauma-informed process is the impact of learning and interacting with traumatic histories. While I, as a white and non-Native person, benefit from the historical and ongoing violence done to Native peoples and communities of color, my work as an advocate taught me that witnessing violence has its own impact, known in the field by terms such as “vicarious trauma,” “secondary traumatic stress,” “compassion fatigue,” or “tertiary trauma” (Lipsky & Burk 2009; Hernandez, Gansei, & Engstrom 2007; Harrington 2013; Richardson 2001). Frankly, I expected the violence of the past to be muted by the distance of time, and did not anticipate my work to feel as personal as it did, with its attendant emotional weight and impact. Developing a *sense* for a violent historical event or ongoing events cultivated my sensitivity to these histories’ tendrils in the present, an ability to understand the present in terms of the past. It was deeply disturbing to realize these horrific acts of violence were nearly erased from local memory. Almost no one I spoke to in Olympia about my thesis project was aware of these local histories of racist and colonial violence. At points, I felt despair; learning violent histories was made more disturbing for the fact that there was absolutely nothing I could do to intervene.

At the same time, I benefited from “vicarious resilience” (Hernandez, Gangsei, & Engstrom 2007). Witnessing Puyallup, Nisqually, Muckleshoot, and other tribes’ resistance and community strength through more than a century of

attacks from all sides was deeply moving and inspiring. I learned from oral histories done with Puyallup tribal members about the concept of thinking intergenerationally (see Ramona Bennett's comments on page 116) and how truly effective long-term struggle across generations can be. The Tribe's work to regain land, create economic and environmental health for its members, the region, and Native peoples across the continent, shows that **collective, intergenerational resistance is effective**. Learning about Chinese workers' strategies to resist and survive Tacoma's racist ouster, Native young peoples' resistance to Cushman Indian School's violence, and Japanese American farming families' resilience through the Alien Land Laws and internment similarly helped to complicate simplistic narratives denying the existence of that resistance and resilience. This history of resistance continues with the immigrant hunger strikes as the NWDC and in ongoing strategies deployed by the Puyallup Tribe to regain control of its reservation land. Additionally, while much of my work was done in isolation, I felt companionship from my professors and many of the authors I read who acknowledged grappling with the same issues. In community-based education around trauma, resilience, anti-oppression in general, and disability justice specifically, as well as in community activism, I have been able to apply insights gleaned from this research, hopefully strengthening present-day work for collective liberation. These opportunities to meaningfully address some of the impacts of this violence have been emotionally sustaining.

Exposure to these histories, with their attendant emotional impacts, can lead to emotional distancing and oversimplistic narratives which seek to ease the pain of

history by presenting its most violent processes as neatly finished (Trouillot 1995). As Mona Oikawa asks, “What constitutes healing in a context where the violence of domination is continually being enacted?” (Oikawa 2012, p. 95.) Researchers who have not identified their own positionality and privilege are as likely as anyone else to experience the reactions to “loss of competency” (Mabin et al 2001) which come with challenges to worldview, and these reactions can manifest in the integrity of their work (Mathieu 2012, Lipsky & Burk 2007, Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative 2013). My goal in writing these chapters is to hold these stories with as much integrity as possible. By acknowledging their likely emotional impacts on me as a researcher, I have been better prepared to noticed problematic reactions. I have also been better-equipped in my intent to write mindfully, for audiences of survivors. I have noticed in texts like Stannard’s *American Holocaust* and others written by (well-meaning) people with privilege about others’ oppression a tendency to focus on the visceral details of violence in a way that is clearly meant to evoke empathy in a similarly-positioned, emotionally distanced audience (Stannard 1993). I choose to emphasize resilience and community strength as much as the power of colonizers and racists, for an imagined audience of readers whose ancestors and communities were and are survivors of the described violence.

Decolonizing Methods

In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Tuhiwai Smith describes histories of extractive colonial research on Indigenous bodies, communities, and traditions,

and lays a path for methods supporting decolonization. She describes “twenty-five indigenous projects” (Smith 2012). I attempted to incorporate as many related values as possible in my work while remaining mindful of problematic potential for appropriation. I also (towards the end of my research) read Tuck and Wang’s “Decolonization is not a metaphor” and attempted to incorporate their critique of works which use the term “decolonizing” while ignoring its tangible meaning as intrinsically linked with a landbase and Indigenous sovereignty (2012). I applied Tuhiwai Smith’s identified values of “connecting” by associating seemingly disparate values and movements; “gendering” by recognizing colonial state interventions into family structures of indigenous and migrant communities; “reframing” by examining seemingly-disparate social issues with an eye for parallel settler colonial processes; and celebrating indigenous survival.

In “Rethinking Collaboration,” Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins (2008) describe what they call “working the hyphen” in the “indigene-colonizer” research partnership. They argue against white liberal flattening language (similar to the “we’re all one human race” argument against addressing racism directly) which views diversity as an enemy. According to Jones and Jenkins, researchers should “protect and assert the hyphen,” viewing it as a site of learning (the *relationship* as subject, rather than the Other). I did my best to approach my relationship with people and communities represented through the archives in a similar way, doing my best to recognize ways my identity would be likely to, at best, filter and distort the truth through interpretation. At worst, it would be easy to fall into colonial patterns of misrepresentation and exploitation due to unexamined assumptions

emerging from Cartesian and positivist colonial frameworks (Battiste 2008; LaFrance & Crazy Bull 2009; Kovach 2010; Chilisa & Ntseane 2010, Walter & Andersen 2013). Dominant research frameworks' fragmented, disciplinarily siloed approach is very different from anti-colonial or decolonizing ways of understanding the world. This is one of my reasons for choosing an interdisciplinary approach.

A strong connection between trauma-informed and decolonizing methods is an emphasis on resilience and strengths-based storytelling; another is valuing somatic knowledge (van der Kolk 2015). Valuing knowledge of the body and recognizing strengths also suggests increased valuing of grassroots and applied knowledge, or “praxis” (Freire 2005, Horton & Freire 1990, Horton 1968, Gramsci 2000, Lynd & Grubacic 2008). Valuing experiential knowledge suggests the richness of somatic awareness, what Bourdieu describes as relationship between “field” (or environment) and “habitus” (how we are disciplined by our environments) (Bourdieu 1992). Indigenous thinkers have long emphasized the significance of understanding relationships with a landbase in order to understand oppression and identity, describing changes in a place as a way to illustrate changes in the people, and vice versa.

Finally, another connection between decolonizing and trauma-informed methods is their emphasis on cultural applicability, which led me to reflect on my imagined audience for this story, as well as who I am accountable to for errors or misrepresentations in my storytelling, and how these relationships shape my

writing. I will share my finished work with Maru Mora and the Colectivo de Detenidos when it is finished, as well as Ramona Bennett or other Puyallup tribal members I am able to connect with. I plan to create a more accessible version of this information, in the form of an ArcGIS story map (Ballantine 2014), as well as possible soundscape/ walking tour podcast, and to host all on a blog for public access. I also created a story map for the Prison Ecology Project (PEP) (Ballantine 2015) to accompany their comment on the EPA's 2020 Action Agenda (Wright 2015). The PEP map helps articulate the Northwest Detention Center's place within the larger prison-industrial complex and will also be shared on the blog.

Ultimately, to understand early environmental health in the estuary, I looked in federal, state, and local archives as well as digital archives, library special collections, published reports, and oral histories. I used proxies in the form of indicator species to understand wetland and overall ecosystem health (for example, mentions of skunk cabbage and reported amounts of returning salmon). Because pollutants in the tide flats are clearly linked with industry and urbanization, this was a bit redundant, but important to establish nonetheless. I did not seek access to untranslated or decontextualized Puyallup, Chinese, Japanese, or Latinx oral histories, and I chose not to conduct interviews. Gonzalez y Gonzalez and Lincoln argue that understanding of context is what allows effective cultural interpretation. Translation is really interpretation, since culture is embedded in language. I question the ethics of assuming responsibility for interpreting a language I don't understand in order to distribute results in a colonial tongue. I am not culturally or linguistically fluent in Chinese, Japanese,

or Spanish; and I chose not to pursue interviews on topics with potential to touch on historical trauma compounded by issues of translation, accuracy, representation, and accountability (Gonzalez y Gonzalez & Lincoln 2006) as a less-experienced researcher. I also did my best to present these stories as connected, but not seamless, as I recount small pieces of a much larger whole.

Language & Terms

Latinx

“Latinx” is a term that takes the gender inclusivity of “Latin@” farther to encompass all genders. “Latin@” emerged to challenge male-as-neutral (de Beauvoir 2011) ways of describing mixed-gender groups of Latin American people; “Latinx” is inclusive of non-binary people, too (Padilla 2016).

Additionally, Scharrón-del Río and Aja note that “Latinx” is a way of enacting intersectionality, decolonizing a language (Spanish) which assigned binary gender identities to Indigenous populations in the Americas. “Latinx” challenges the neutrality of these assignments and fosters solidarity and inclusiveness (Scharrón-del Río and Aja 2015).

At the same time, the assignment of a term encompassing the vastly diverse populations covered by “Latinx” is problematic in that it erases indigeneity and difference (Eby-Gomez in Padilla 2016), and has been critiqued a U.S.-based neocolonial project (Alamo 2015) because of its emergence in the U.S. and use of the English-language suffix “x” (eks) rather than one pronounced in Spanish (e.g. “Latine”). I use Latinx for detainees, as I was told directly that it is community

advocates and detainee organizers' preferred term (personal communication with Maru Mora Villalpando, May 2, 2016). I use the terms "Latin American," "immigrant," and name individual nations or tribal affiliation where possible when describing groups on larger scales.

Migration and migrant

As Holmes writes, "migration" carries the apoliticizing connotation of free movement, while for most Latin American migrants to the United States, "migration is an experience of forced movement for survival that involves what might be called a complex transnational circuit of people and capital" (2013, p. 186). The word "migrant" also has distinct race, nation, and class associations; as Holmes points out, wealthy migrants are usually referred to as "international businesspeople" or "diasporic people," while Canadian migrants are called "temporary workers." I still chose to use the term "migrant" to describe undocumented Latinx detainees, mainly because it connotes the circuitous movement so specific to seasonal farmworkers in the Americas, particularly between the U.S. and Mexico (which U.S. policymakers have intentionally preyed upon (Stephen 2007)); and because it is the word most commonly used for Latin American temporary workers.

Farmworker

As Holmes (ibid) also points out, the term "farmworker" has very specific connotation of class, race, and nationality. It is "used currently to denote only migrant pickers from Latin America" (186).

Illegal

The word “illegal” to describe people in the United States without authorization is inaccurate and harmful on several levels. First, its use as a modifier implies a *person* can be “illegal,” as a fundamental aspect of their identity (Holmes 2013). Second, unauthorized presence in the U.S. is not a crime, despite being brutally treated like one. It is a civil violation, involving fines and removal, not conviction. I do not use this term, as it spreads misinformation and contributes to stereotypes and violence towards migrant communities. Similarly, the word “alien” is both dehumanizing and fear-mongering, not to mention fundamentally inaccurate for the many migrant communities with Indigenous roots in parts of the U.S. annexed from Mexico.

Indigenous words and place names (e.g. Tacoma vs Rainier)

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o explains multiple ways alienation of Indigenous languages is fundamental to colonization. He chooses not to italicize Kikuyu words, a practice he views as resistance to linguistic norms set by colonizers (wa Thiong’o 2011). I make the same formatting choices. I also use Puyallup place names wherever possible, rather than colonial words. At the same time, I did my best to seek out information around the source of the words, as well as any issues related to cultural privacy that might come up (e.g. appropriating and representing sacred or private knowledge without consent).

Indian, Indigenous, Native American, and First Nations

I use the word “Indian” for members of the Puyallup Tribe because it is the word the tribal government uses for itself. When speaking of Native peoples in North America in the most expansive sense, I use the words Native or Indigenous. I use the term First Nations for tribes in what is now called Canada, as it is the primary term tribes use for themselves. “Nation” also linguistically reflects a place-based tribal sovereignty. Relatedly, I use the word “peoples” (plural) rather than “people” when describing a group of different tribal nations (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015), because it acknowledges the vast number and diversity of tribal nations, rather than lumping all Indigenous peoples into one group. This has the added benefit of distinguishing Native identity as nationality, with attendant sovereign status and treaty rights, rather than framing it as simply based in race or ethnicity.

American

As Eduardo Galeano points out in *Open Veins of Latin America*, the United States has claimed the words “America” and “American,” erasing all other countries in North, Central, and South America (1973). I use the term “U.S. American” when the word cannot be avoided; otherwise, I use the term “United States.”

Review of the Literature

People were in prison so that prices could be free.

-Eduardo Galeano (as quoted in Weschler 1991, 147)

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss theoretical frameworks and previous work done around issues relevant to my case study. I begin with a description of the concept of a “prison-industrial complex” (PIC) and its impacts on community health, including relationships with earlier U.S. policies towards Indigenous communities. I discuss relationships between colonialism and capitalism, including U.S. colonialism and neocolonialism’s role in so-called “primitive accumulation,” echoing earlier European processes. I describe the importance of identifying the role of the state in producing white power. I identify connections between PIC and the “War on Terror” and “War on Drugs,” including connections with migration. I discuss some of the history of U.S. military and economic interventions in Latin American countries and its relationships with mass migration. I outline the concept of “transformative justice” as trauma-informed alternative to PIC, and this work’s application of its principles. I describe processes of administrative violence and knowledge production, particularly Said’s concept of *Orientalism*, and its influence on my case study and methods. Finally, I discuss the use of feminist political ecology as a framework for understanding connections between non-human life, environmental health, and administrative violence towards humans in the Puyallup River Estuary.

The Prison-Industrial Complex and Community Health

Human law is law only by virtue of its accordance with right reason, and by this means it is clear that it flows from eternal law. In so far as it deviates from right reason it is called an unjust law; and in such a case, it is no law at all, but rather an assertion of violence.

-St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (c. 1260) (in Abu-Jamal 1998).

One in every thirty-five U.S. adults is now embroiled in the criminal legal system-- either in prison or jail, or under surveillance through probation or parole (ACLU 2016). As Elliott Currie writes, “[s]hort of major wars, mass incarceration has been the most thoroughly implemented government social program of our time” (Currie 1998, 21). Private and public prisons play a major role in the U.S. economy, particularly in rural communities devastated by globalization and economic restructuring (Sudbury 2004, Gilmore 2007, Spade 2011), leading to Mike Davis’s coinage of the term “prison-industrial complex” (Davis 1995). The concept of a “prison-industrial complex” (PIC) derives from the term “military-industrial complex,” used by President Eisenhower to describe an increasingly intimate relationship between war-related industry and government which could unduly influence the U.S. economy and politics (Sudbury 2004, 14-15). In fact, GEO Group (the second-largest private prison corporation in the world, and owner of the Northwest Detention Center) is one of the most successful in the world at “transforming prisoners into profits,” (Sudbury 2004, 12). In 2014, 65% of GEO’s \$1,691,600,000 in profit came from U.S. Corrections and Detention (GEO Group 2014, 1). They protect their interests by lobbying, despite public statements to the contrary. In one SEC filing, GEO explicitly complained that

“decriminalization of drugs... reductions in crime rates... immigration reform laws... could materially adversely impact us” (U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission 2012).

People of color, gender and sexual minorities, poor people, people with disabilities, and/ or Indigenous peoples are grossly overrepresented in the U.S. criminal legal system (Solinger 2007, Spade 2011, Bronson et al 2015). Mothers of young children are the fastest-growing prison population (Solinger 2007). At the same time, “War on Drugs” policies such as mandatory minimum sentences have increasingly criminalized addiction and poverty, disproportionately impacting those most marginalized (Spade 2011). By far the majority of federal prisoners--46.5% in February 2016-- are there for drug-related offenses. This is nearly three times the number incarcerated for the next most frequent category (offenses involving weapons, explosives, and arson) at 16.9% (Bureau of Prisons 2016). Additionally, the vast majority of people in the U.S. prison system have histories of childhood abuse, neglect, and other forms of trauma (Teplin et al 2002; Messina & Grela 2006; Wolff & Shi 2012; Miller & Najavits 2012).

Traumatic experiences, which can be single or cumulative, are marked by victims’ experience of “intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation” which overwhelms “ordinary human adaptations to everyday life” (Herman 1992, 33). Research on allostatic load (defined as “the cost of chronic exposure to fluctuating or heightened neural or neuroendocrine response” caused by chronic exposure to stressors (McEwen et al 1993, 2093) links trauma with

physical health. Exposure to chronic stressors weakens the immune system by taxing one of its modulators, the autonomic nervous system (McEwen et al 1993). In his ethnography of migrant farmworkers in the U.S., physician Seth Holmes specifically links stressors created by structural violence (such as racism and poverty) with “allostatic load” and calls for a liberatory approach to medicine which understands illness within its social, economic, political, and historical context (Holmes 2013).

A landmark two-year study by CDC-Kaiser identified strong connections between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) - one of which is a family member’s imprisonment- and long-term impacts on health and well-being (Felitti et al. 1998). Subsequent research shows a strong graded relationship between exposure to ACEs and early drinking, smoking, and drug use (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2015). Survivors of trauma frequently turn to drugs, alcohol, and other forms of self-harm or self-medication to escape their “unbearable knowledge” (van der Kolk 2014, p. 12). Thus, imprisonment facilitates intergenerational trauma, poverty, and related likelihood of involvement with the criminal legal system.

Whole communities are also impacted by removal of residents. As Ruth Wilson Gilmore describes in *Golden Gulag*, very few members of a community need be removed before

“greater instability [is produced] in a community of people who, when employed, make, move, or care for things. (Clear et al. 2001; Rose and Clear 2002). Why? For one thing, households stretch from

neighborhood to visiting room to courtroom, with a consequent thinning of financial and emotional resources (Comfort 2002). Looking around the block at all the homes, research shows that increased use of policing and state intervention in everyday problems hasten the demise of the informal customary relationships that social calm depends on (Clear et al. 2001). People stop looking out for each other and stop talking about anything that matters in terms of neighborly well-being. Cages induce or worsen mental illness in prisoners (Haney 2001; Kupers 1999), most of whom eventually come out to service-starved streets. Laws (such as lifetime bans from financial aid) and fiscal constraints displacing dollars from social investment to social expense (O'Connor [1973] 2000) lock former prisoners out of education, employment, housing, and many other stabilizing institutions of everyday life... In other words, prisons wear out places by wearing out people, irrespective of whether they have done time (Mauer and Chesney-Lind 2002)" (Gilmore 2007, 16-17).

Carceral facilities including prisons, jails, and detention centers are also implicated in environmental justice issues. The Northwest Detention Center, located near hundreds of industrial facilities and *on* a Superfund site, is one such example. Facilities like the NWDC are regularly sited in industrial and polluted zones, and are frequent sources of pollution themselves, yet environmental justice assessments and siting processes rarely take prisoner and detainee health into consideration (Wright 2015).

One might argue that U.S. policies towards Indigenous peoples prefigured the contemporary PIC, with attendant community impacts. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, an Oglala and Hunkpapa Lakota social worker, has identified a constellation of symptoms associated with "historical trauma." Historical trauma refers to "massive group trauma across generations" such as the massacre at Wounded Knee, forced removal, and the violence of boarding schools (Brave Heart 2000, 245). Brave Heart's concept of historical trauma connects with

studies in the field of epigenetics which reveal heritable changes in gene expression linked with exposure to trauma (Roth et al 2009, Voisey et al 2014); according to one meta-analysis, heritability of genetic susceptibility to PTSD is between 30% and 46%, though it still requires an environmental trigger (Voisey et al 2014). In other words, trauma experienced by ancestors may create evolutionary adaptations-- not of DNA itself, but at the level of epigenetic markers-- in descendants.

One strategy the U.S. used to remove Indigenous peoples from their lands, without incurring the expense of war, was treaty-making (Harmon 1998; Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). Tribes relinquished claims to most of their homelands, relocating to reservations in exchange for protection from settler violence and provision of social services (Harmon 1998; Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). Historically, such services have been underfunded and mismanaged, if provided at all, and reservation land has been reframed in public discourse as something the U.S. already had claim to and “gave” to tribes, rather than the other way around (Dunbar-Ortiz 1998, Hunt 1916, Puyallup Tribe of Indians 1977). In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act for Senator Henry Dawes, its creator). In his argument for allotment (the privatization and sale of collectively-held Indian lands), Dawes said,

“The defect of the [reservation] system was apparent. It is [socialist] Henry George’s system and under that there is no enterprise to make your home any better than that of your neighbors. There is no selfishness, which is at the bottom of civilization. Till this people will consent to give up their lands, and divide among their citizens so

that each can own the land he cultivates, they will not make much more progress” (in Dunbar-Ortiz 2015,158).

In 1934 Allotment ended with the Indian Reorganization Act, but by that time 75% of Indigenous land had been lost (ibid). The Puyallup Land Act specifically focused on allotting Puyallup tribal land because of its value to settler industry, and by the end of the allotment era the Puyallup Tribe was left with just 33 acres, the site of their cemetery (Hunt 1916). Privatization and allotment of reservation lands previously held in common facilitated tribes’ isolation, assimilation, and impoverishment. It was also an attack on land-based group identity, which is intimately connected with collective resistance (Sedillo 2010).

Colonialism, Neocolonialism, and So-Called “Primitive Accumulation”

“...[C]apital comes [violently into the world] dripping from head to toe, from every pore, with blood and dirt.”

— Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. 1* (1977, 926)

“The history of Latin America’s underdevelopment is... an integral part of the history of world capitalism’s development. Our defeat was always implicit in the victory of others; our wealth has always generated our poverty by nourishing the prosperity of others---the empires and their native overseers. In the colonial and neocolonial alchemy, gold changes into scrap metal and food into poison.”

— Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America* (1973, 2)

Harsha Walia shows that while “race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability are not derivative of capitalism and colonialism,” “oppression is foundational to the structuring of capitalism and colonialism” (Walia 2014, 191). Patricia Hill Collins, for example, shows how experiences of patriarchy in nuclear families

prepares family members to accept structural inequities in wider political and economic spheres as both natural and inevitable.

In the archetypal white heterosexual nuclear family system, family members experience power and control along a hierarchy, with a father at top and daughter at bottom; beneath her are domesticated non-human animals, and so on. This family system normalizes hierarchy, making it difficult for those raised within it to recognize similar patterns on larger social scales (Collins 1998 (1)). Ann McClintock writes, “the family image came to figure *hierarchy within unity* [emphasis in original] as an organic element of historical progress, and thus became indispensable for legitimating exclusion and hierarchy within nonfamilial social forms such as nationalism, liberal individualism and imperialism” (McClintock 1995, 45, as quoted in Collins 2001). Just as traumatized family systems may involve insularity, secrecy around violence, and boundary erosion among family members, the same can be true within organizations (Vivian and Hormann 2013), and on national and even international scales (Collins 1998 (1)).

In “Like One of the Family,” (2001), Collins describes how these processes apply to African American women, whose “treatment as second-class citizens reflects a belief that they are ‘like one of the family,’ that is, legally part of the US nation-state, but simultaneously subordinated within it” (3). Similarly, critical race theorist Cheryl Harris describes the citizenship of Black Americans from the Dred Scott decision through present day as a “complex dialectic between forced belonging and exclusion;” in the Dred Scott decision, “black people were

excluded from citizenship but ‘belonged to’ the nation-- inside the nation, but outside polity; stateless, and yet a critical part of the nation” (Harris, 2011). In many ways, this framework also describes the experience of Latin American-- particularly Mexican-- migrant farmworkers, whose “asymmetrically intimate” relationship with the U.S. has been compared to apartheid in South Africa (Holmes 2013, Nevins 2008).

These asymmetrical intimacies also naturalize historical and modern-day primitive accumulation. So-called “primitive accumulation” refers to the collection of resources at little or no cost, creating the base of wealth necessary for industrial capitalist development (Marx 1977). This process is intimately linked with colonialism and enslavement, as well as patriarchy (ibid, Federici 2004, Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). Enclosure of European commons was facilitated by witch hunts which fragmented European communities, linking resistance with sin (Federici 2004); as 1 Samuel 15:23 states, the Bible considers “rebellion [as] the sin of witchcraft.” This created large numbers of disenfranchised, landless workers, as well as a model of primitive accumulation these workers brought to the “New World” (Marx 1977, Federici 2004, Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). These processes were and remain critical to the development of capitalism and state power worldwide.

“It is now established that the plantation system fueled the Industrial Revolution, as argued by Eric Williams, who noted that hardly a brick in Liverpool and Bristol was not cemented with African blood (1944:61-63). But capitalism may not even have taken off without Europe’s ‘annexation of America,’ and the ‘blood and sweat’ that for

two centuries flowed to Europe from the plantations. This must be stressed, as it helps us realize how essential slavery has been for the history of capitalism, and why, periodically, but systematically, whenever the capitalist system is threatened by a major economic crisis, the capitalist class has to launch a process of ‘primitive accumulation,’ that is, a process of large-scale colonization and enslavement, such as the one we are witnessing at present (Bales 1999)” (Federici 2004, 103-104)

Philippe Bourgois describes the “unhealthy, politically imposed structural violence” created by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other neocolonial economic systems as a modern incarnation of this process (Holmes 2013, xiv). Former colonies were forced to grow cash crops for colonizers instead of developing infrastructure. Because of this, while formally independent, former colonies are forced into accepting trade conditions and predatory loans from economic institutions ruled by former colonial powers (Gwynne & Kay 2004, Black 2001). Because approximately 52% of Mexican-born U.S. farmworkers (who make up 95% of all agricultural workers in the U.S.) are unauthorized (Holmes 2013), the United States is able to subsidize its farming industry with extraordinarily low wages and almost no social wage (in the form of access to health care, education, and other entitlements) paid to the people growing its food. In addition to this, the U.S. is able to subsidize certain crops and products. Because NAFTA and similar trade agreements lower trade barriers, allowing U.S.-made products to compete with other countries’ locally-produced food, in many cases it has become more affordable for people in Latin American countries and others to purchase U.S.-made food and other products than to buy from producers in their own countries (Black 2001, Holmes 2013).

In *Life and Debt*, Stephanie Black's 2001 documentary on impacts of World Bank-imposed structural adjustments in Jamaica, she talks to Jamaican dairy farmers put out of business by imported powdered milk from the United States (Black 2001). This is hardly unusual. Similarly, U.S.-based multinational corporations move across borders with ease because of these trade agreements, locating factories in so-called "free trade zones" where they are able to extract cheap labor from local workers without paying any taxes. These taxes would, of course, support social services and infrastructure development; but it is in such companies' best interests both short- and long-term to avoid such payments and keep former colonies in the subjugated positions which force acceptance of predatory loans in the first place.

Multinational corporations are also able to exploit these trade agreements to outsource costs of pollution, especially in the case of maquiladoras along the Mexico-U.S. border, yet another form of modern primitive accumulation. The tremendous growth in U.S.-owned but Mexico-based maquiladoras along the border is a result of the BIP (Border Industrialization Program) (also known as the Maquiladora Program), implemented immediately following the end of the U.S.'s Bracero Program in the mid-1960s. One of the main goals of BIP is attracting foreign investors with competitively low wages along the border; U.S. companies are drawn by the ease of shipping materials across the border to take advantage of low wages and loose legal regulations (Heyman 2007). Echoing similar dynamics at play in prison labor within the United States, in 1995 Mexican women were paid approximately one sixth of what U.S. workers would be paid for the same

job (Mullins, 1995), while in 2009, maquila workers in Ciudad Juarez--many of them single mothers caring for entire households (Bachour 2014) -- were paid approximately 6 U.S. dollars per *day*, less than the minimum (\$7.25 in 2009) a U.S. worker would be paid in one *hour* (Morales & Bejarano 2009).

NAFTA has accelerated maquila industry development throughout Mexico, as CAFTA has accelerated their development in Central America. There are now over 3,000 maquiladoras along the U.S.-Mexico border (Villalobos et al., 2004). Industrial toxic wastes from the maquiladoras and metal smelting/refining industry contaminate the air, treated water outputs (due to disposal in sewer systems), and groundwater aquifers (from disposal on/ in the ground). Worker settlements without access to adequate sewage disposal are also a major source of pollution near the border (Heyman 2007). Some metro border areas, such as Las Cruces-El Paso-Ciudad Juarez, have such high levels of air pollution they experience periodic smog inversions. Industry releases volatile organic compounds, heavy metals, and crushed rock powder; this, combined with particulates from dirt streets and diesel trucks, internal combustion engine emissions, and soot from household fires and small-scale brickyards combine to form major air quality hazards. A study conducted by the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation found significant excess mortality and morbidity in children under 5 years old in Ciudad Juarez due to NAFTA-related cross-boundary truck traffic and commerce increases. Maquiladora-style electricity plants serving U.S. Californians are also increasingly located along Baja California's northern border, saving money on labor and fuel while dodging

environmental and plant siting regulations (Heyman 2007). Baja Californians therefore bear the brunt of environmental damage created by U.S. Californians' energy consumption.

The White Supremacist State

“... [T]he United States is the land of formal democratic enclosure...”
Fred Moten, “Democracy” (2014)

“[C]onsideration of how the racial state came to be what it is, and to follow the logics it does, takes the recognition of a racialized economy an important step further” (Kurtz 2009, 695). As Gramsci found, the Marxist tradition of his time had developed “no adequate [theory] of the state or what Gramsci called ‘the sphere of the complex superstructures’: political, legal, cultural” (Forgacs in Gramsci 2000, 189) My work seeks to complicate ideas of capitalism which ignore the role of the state in facilitating white power, or indeed its foundation in white power to begin with. I do this by identifying and historicizing elements of the “superstructure” which normalize U.S. capitalist exploitation of land and labor.

U.S. independence from Britain began U.S. America's formal acceptance of chattel slavery-- ownership, rape, forced labor, and sale of generations of families on the basis of race--which officially ended only in 1865 (and which continues in other forms today.) White practices of slavery normalized ownership and exploitation of human labor on the basis of race. Enslavement of Africans and Native Americans, and genocide of an estimated 100 million Native people

including thousands of tribes across North America (Stannard 1993), formed the foundational primitive accumulation which facilitated the United States' rise to global power.

In 1790, the U.S. Congress' first words on citizenship and immigration limited naturalization to "white persons" (Haney López 2006). These restrictions were only lifted in 1952 (ibid). Laws and administrative policies controlling entry to the United States and access to wealth (in the form of landownership, health care, nourishing and affordable food, a living wage, lending policies, elder care, homeownership, heritable wealth, school funding, voting rights, mobility, green spaces, access to privileged "public" and private spaces--such as high-ranking colleges and gated neighborhoods, and much more) congeal wealth in white communities at the expense of people of color and Indigenous peoples (Lipsitz 2006 and 2011; Haney López 2006).

In 1946, President Harry S. Truman invoked President Franklin D. Roosevelt's earlier concept of an international right to "freedom from fear," applying it domestically to describe extra-legal violence, alluding to lynching. He described such violence as lawless, a "breakdown of law and order," rather than an expression of the white supremacy at the heart of U.S. law and order (Murakawa 2014). In the 1950s and 60s, the U.S. civil rights movement forced legal changes including the critical legislation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America*, Naomi Murakawa shows how liberal faith that greater state power would somehow enforce human

rights, providing protection from “lawless racial violence” (ibid) led to organizing for “colorblind” law enforcement. This combined emphasis on “colorblindness” and state power, she argues, is at the root of the modern explosion of the prison-industrial complex (ibid.) It is also connected with modern attacks on Affirmative Action policies and others which emphasize *equity* over *equality* (Harris 1994, Haney López 2006).

“With agnosticism toward the ideological valence of law-and-order and recast in expanded historical context, my history of federal crime politics inverts the conventional wisdom: the United States did not face a crime problem that was racialized; it faced a race problem that was criminalized. Rising crime of the 1960s was not uniquely racialized as a conservative strategy to conflate civil rights with black criminality; rather, the race “problem” of the civil rights movement from the 1940s onward was answered with pledges of carceral state development—from racially liberal and conservative lawmakers alike. My overarching claim is therefore that lawmakers constructed the civil rights carceral state, in which liberal notions of racial violence and agendas for race-neutral machinery actually propelled development of a punitive carceral state. Crime politics were at once symptomatic and uniquely structuring of postwar racial liberalism, as efforts to govern a racially explosive society ultimately affirmed the sensibility that only the proceduralist, rights-based state could diffuse what racially threatened the nation. In this sense, crime policy and carceral expansion were not reactions against civil rights; they were the very progeny of civil rights as lawmakers defined them.”

Naomi Murakawa (2014, 13)

Any analysis of race or environmental injustice in the United States must take the state’s foundation in white power into account. As Kurtz discusses in “Acknowledging the Racial State: An Agenda for Environmental Justice Research,” even as the state positions itself as “neutral arbiter between capital and civil society” it opens doors for capitalist primitive accumulation at the expense of communities of color and Indigenous peoples (Kurtz 2009, 697). The state’s

foundation in white power finds its modern expression in what Gramsci called “wars of position,” cultural formations which influence law and politics. Jean Bricmont describes the importance of ideology “in democratic societies, where it may constitute the principal form of social control... In a society where people are free to demonstrate and vote, control over ‘hearts and minds’ needs to be much deeper and more constant” (2006, 31). As Paul Kivel writes in *Living in the Shadow of the Cross*, “One measure of hegemony might be how much its values and beliefs are internalized by those who oppose it.” (Kivel 2013, 4). Dominant Christianity is used to play a powerful role in constructing the white supremacist state-- including dominionist views which separate human beings from nature, according humans power “over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26–28), as well as in ideas of Manifest Destiny which lent a sense of righteousness to theft of land from Native Americans (and continue to lend a sense of righteousness--humanitarianism, even-- to theft of resources, such as oil, from non-Christian communities elsewhere in the world).

As Federici and Kivel show, the power of the white capitalist state depends upon cultural formations like hegemonic Christianity (Kivel 2013, Federici 2004). While Christianity is diverse, and includes work for social justice and community resilience (particularly in the forms of Latin American liberation theology and African American Baptist churches), hegemonic Christianity is the dominant form which is deployed so pervasively to support processes of colonization, primitive accumulation, enslavement, and mass incarceration. Columbus framed his

mission in a 1492 letter to the Spanish court as “to conquer the world, spread the Christian faith and regain the Holy Land and the Temple Mount” (as quoted in Kivel 2013, 32). In the same letter, he wrote, “Let us in the name of the Holy Trinity go on sending all the slaves that can be sold” (ibid); as Kivel points out, probably at least part of his journeys were funded with money stolen from Jews expelled from Spain the same year in the name of Christianity (ibid). About 280 years later, the U.S. Declaration of Independence referenced a Christian God (Kivel 2013). As Weber showed in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Protestantism in U.S. colonies and elsewhere sanctified capitalist accumulation, linking it with righteousness and even piety (Weber 1958). This ideological view was evident in colonization of the Pacific Northwest, including language of “progress” used to describe primitive accumulation, urbanization, and industrialization. It also prefigured the modern “myth of meritocracy” which, similar to “colorblindness,” suggests that wealth and power are distributed fairly, to the deserving.

Colonial ideologies mark communities “sinful” on the basis of race, gender, and Indigeneity, and link resistance to primitive accumulation and/or assimilation with deviance and femininity (Federici 2004, Said 1978, Kivel 2013, Stannard 1993). Papal bulls (for example, the 1452 *Dum Diversas*, 1454 *Romanus Pontifex*, and 1456 *Inter Caetera*), interpretations of Bible stories, and associations of “lightness” with “good” and “darkness” with “evil” encouraged enslavement of non-Christian peoples, lasting well into the 20th century (Goldenberg 2003).

Similarly, resistance to enslavement has been medicalized as “deviant” by scientific racism. In the mid-1850s, white psychiatrist Samuel Cartwright developed the diagnoses of “drapetomania” (an urge experienced by enslaved people to run away) and “dysaesthesia aethiopica” (“laziness” in Black people which could be cured by whipping) (DeGruy 2016). A U.S. American psychologist regarded even *today* as a “pioneer,” Granville Stanley Hall, promulgated the idea in the early 1900s that Indian, Chinese, and African people were “adolescent” races (Washington 2005).

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes connections between modern incarceration and older medical, educational, and penal “punishments of the soul,” including discipline of the body; even the term “penitentiary” arises from its original design as a place for criminals to do “penitence” and meditate on their sins (Foucault 1975). Foucault also shows how, through concepts of “rehabilitation,” medicalization and social science have come to justify penal interventions into prisoners’ senses of self and frameworks for understanding the world. In other words, people no longer simply commit crimes, but *are* “criminals”:

“Psychiatric expertise, but also in a more general way criminal anthropology and the repetitive discourse of criminology, find one of their precise functions here: by solemnly inscribing offences in the field of objects susceptible of scientific knowledge, they provide the mechanisms of legal punishment with a justifiable hold not only on offences, but on individuals; not only on what they do, but also on what they are, will be, may be.”

Michel Foucault (1975, 18)

In my brief experience supporting the Roots of Success program through Sustainability in Prisons Project (a partnership between Washington State Department of Corrections and The Evergreen State College) in 2014, I witnessed several of these ideologies in action. My supervisor told me that incarcerated people should not be called “prisoners,” but “offenders;” and the people controlling their every move should not be called “guards,” but “officers.” One white Christian woman who worked as a guard in a male prison passionately described her desire to “save” prisoners by facilitating (what in my estimation, as a trained advocate and psychoeducational support group facilitator, were profoundly unethical) emotional support groups promoting Christianity. One of my white female supervisors, a proponent of “positive psychology,” shared her view that imprisoned people were not “victims,” but criminals whose character needed rehabilitation so they would make better choices. Another white female supervisor compared prisoners she supervised in a work camp to kindergarteners. Meanwhile, per RCW 72.09.460, prisoners who refuse to work or participate in programming (including “rehabilitative” programming like the Christian woman’s support group; or work paid at less than \$1 per hour assembling goods for companies contracting with the state, cleaning and cooking and maintaining the prison grounds, and even growing prairie plants through SPP) are punished, sometimes with solitary confinement or marks on their record (used for parole and to establish qualifications for “privileges” such as a less dangerous or humiliating job (RCW 72.09.130)).

While in 1865 the 13th Amendment ostensibly abolished slavery and “involuntary servitude,” it contained an exception: “except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted” (U.S. Const. Amend. XIII). Prison labor in the United States is a booming industry; some work camps are considered “rehabilitative programming,” and language is used (as it was in the program I worked for) describing such camps as “job skills training.” In other words, forced labor is framed as if it is “for the criminal’s own good,” an opportunity to change a “criminal” into a “productive member of society,” echoing Foucault and Puritan capitalist ideals (Foucault 1975, Weber 1958) and erasing historical and socioeconomic contexts.

Just as along the border and in Free Trade Zones, hundreds of detainees at the Northwest Detention Center contribute to GEO Group’s profits by working jobs required to run the business of detention for \$1 an hour, much less than the state’s minimum wage of \$9.47 per hour for citizen employees. Meanwhile, GEO receives a per diem from the federal government of over \$100 per detainee (Resistencia al NWDC/ NWDC Resistance). Detainees at the NWDC have been put in solitary confinement for refusing to work, despite the supposed “voluntary” nature of work programs in detention centers (Urbina 2014). This is emphasis on “voluntary” is remarkable only because, unlike people in prisons convicted of a crime, the 13th Amendment does not allow for the forced labor of those in civil detention, who have been convicted of nothing. Similarly, prisoners and detainees are not *technically* considered employees, but volunteers working for stipends, since employment comes with legally-recognized protections and privileges

(Benns 2015). In other words, the forced labor (enslavement) of incarcerated workers *must* be framed somehow as for their own good, or connected with their “rehabilitation,” because their work must be framed not as employment but programming in order to limit their rights as workers. This framework also supports new incarnations of the scientific racism of Cartwright’s “drapetomania” and “dysaesthesia aethiopica”; if a prisoner refuses such programming in their own best interests, it is clearly because of some deviance correctable through discipline (Foucault 1975). This is just one way resistance is criminalized and medicalized in carceral spaces, justifying violence against incarcerated people.

In 2008, the Seattle University School of Law published a report which found numerous human rights abuses at the Northwest Detention Center. Detainees reported the misuse of shackles, which were not removed even upon request of emergency room doctors. During relocation to an Alabama facility, detainees were shackled and denied access to a restroom for seven hours; an elderly man was forced to remain seated in his own feces (2008). Solitary confinement is considered torture by the U.N. if lasting longer than 15 days (Center for Constitutional Rights 2015). The Seattle University School of Law report also found that solitary confinement was used to control detainees suffering from mental health problems (2008). Meanwhile, approximately 20% of detainees reported mental health needs, and many more displayed symptoms of anxiety and depression (Seattle University School of Law 2008). 37% of detainees interviewed were refugees who had experienced some form of trauma or persecution prior to coming to the United States. Yet the detention center

employed just one psychologist for 1,000 people (ibid). The report also found abusive use of strip searches, which have been described as “sexual assault by the state” (George 1995, Pereira 2001). One detainee described symptoms of trauma following a particularly humiliating search (ibid). During the 2014 hunger strikes, six years after the Seattle University School of Law report, one of detainees’ main demands included adequate access to medical treatment, while retaliation for the first 2014 hunger strike included the placement of strike leaders in solitary confinement for up to 30 days (Resistencia al NWDC/ NWDC Resistance 2014).

These examples of scientific racism, criminalization of deviance, hegemonic Christianity, enslavement, and colonization-- all of which were and are mutually constructed by the white supremacist state-- show how Gramsci’s “superstructure” informs exploitation of the “base”-- land and labor. The “war of position” won through white cultural hegemony fosters environmental injustices, yet “require[s], as Harvey (1996) notes, a degree of abstraction to imagine, understand, and expose. The racial state should be investigated as one such abstraction, yet such a task is made more difficult by the tendency of the state to hide its actions, and deflect critical focus from itself” (Kurtz 2009, 697). In this project I do my best to focus directly on the settler state’s role in constructing white power, with capitalism’s attendant environmental impacts.

Border Imperialism, the “War on Drugs,” and the “War on Terror”

There is what Angela Davis calls a “symbiotic” relationship between the United States’ military-industrial and prison-industrial complexes (Davis 2003). Corporations specializing in military defense technologies have branched out into domestic policing (Davis 2003, Amoore 2006). Contemporary use of biometric authentication (identification of people on the basis of quantifiable physiological and behavioral characteristics) in “War on Terror” surveillance and border management further encodes the border within bodies and links “outsider” identities with threats to national security (Amoore 2006). Surplus military equipment is distributed to police departments, resulting in increasing police militarization and encouraging disproportionate use of force, which is disparately deployed against communities of color (ACLU 2014). A recent ACLU report, “War Comes Home,” found that Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams, originally conceived as special emergency responders, are now deployed more for drug searches than any other purpose; such searches comprised 62% of all SWAT team deployments in 2011-12 (ACLU 2014). Police use battering rams and flash-bang grenades to invade people’s homes in search of small amounts of drugs (ibid). Additionally, there is little to no effective local, state, or national oversight of SWAT team deployments (ibid).

From 2006-2014, the U.S. also trained more than a thousand Mexican police, sent \$4 billion worth of weapons to Mexico, and spent \$2 billion on military and police interventions--U.S. police forces, including Marshals and DEA agents,

have conducted armed raids *in Mexico*-- in the name of the 45-year-old “War on Drugs” (Lasusa & Albaladejo 2014). Growth in drug trade-related violence caused the deaths of over 100,000 Mexican people from just 2005-2015, and has lowered overall Mexican male life expectancies (by between 6 months and 5 years, depending which states they live in) (Aburto et al 2016). This violence, linked with economic devastation related to NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) has destabilized and disenfranchised many Mexican communities, leading to increased migration north. In a 1993 Congressional hearing on expected outcomes of the North American Free Trade Agreement, INS Commissioner Doris Meissner testified that NAFTA’s liberalization of Mexico’s economy (which led to increased criminalization of Indigenous land tenure (Sedillo 2010)) would cause increased migration and recommended stronger and broader border control (Nevins, 2005). Since NAFTA took effect in January of 1994, unauthorized migration from Mexico to the U.S. has, in fact, significantly grown. The United States has constructed thousands of miles of walls and fences along the border in order to prevent unauthorized passage, and expanded border enforcement throughout the country. "Territorial denial" fencing strategies-- forcing border crossers into mountain and desert areas-- contributed to an estimated 7,954 border-crossing deaths, mainly from exposure, between 1992-2014 (Nevins & Aizeki 2008, Gray 2014). The wall between U.S. and Mexico claims more lives each year (an average of 428 people annually from 2000-2014) than the Berlin Wall during its entire existence (136 deaths total) (Gray 2014).

The State is increasingly conceptualized as a “tangible entity, with its own personhood and boundaries that must not be violated,” (Walia 2013, 54). This framework allows “improper entry” to the U.S. (a misdemeanor administrative violation) and “unlawful presence” in the U.S. (a *civil* offense, comparable to a parking violation) to be reframed as violent criminal acts. On February 17, 2005, the New York Times ran a story with the headline: “U.S. Aides Cite Worry on Qaeda Infiltration From Mexico” (Jehl 2005). Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the specter of a southern border-crossing Al Qaeda was invoked to justify increased militarization and security infrastructure along the U.S.-Mexico border. The United States now incorporates biometric surveillance (digital fingerprinting, photographs, and identity-, association-, and activity-based “risk profiling”) in its border enforcement via US VISIT (Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology). While the border has hardened in the post-9/11 climate, U.S. fear of “invasion” from the Mexican side of the border (ironic, given the actual history of U.S. intervention and invasion) is nothing new.

The U.S. may be understood as a “pioneer” when it comes to mechanisms for border and immigration control since the late 19th century. In 1848, the United States annexed California, what are now the states of New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, parts of Colorado and Wyoming, and Texas above the Rio Grande, resulting in the saying, “we didn’t cross the border, the border crossed us” (Stephen 2007, 66). Mexicans who remained were naturalized as U.S. citizens. The United States passed increasingly exclusionary immigration laws

beginning in the 1870s, but for the most part did not enforce the border; around 1903 a U.S. Customs Official wrote that there were just three authorities along the California border, and “the entire boundary line is unguarded and open, presenting no barrier to free and unrestricted trade between the two countries” (Nevins 2008, 89). Just before World War I, an international legal survey found “no consensus that nation-states had a right to prevent nonnational citizens from entering their territory” (ibid, 87). Mexicans were welcome in the U.S. as laborers but not farm-owners in order to limit Mexican families’ access to a social wage (hospitals, schools, etc.). The first temporary worker program (the Immigration Act of 1917) was enacted during WWI and allowed seasonal employment for migrant workers in the United States. Mexican laborers were considered desirable in comparison to others because of the belief that they would return to Mexico during the off-season. In the words of one lobbyist speaking to the Fruit Growers Convention in 1927, “[t]he Mexican can be deported if he becomes a country charge, but the others are here to stay” (Stephen 2007, 71). Six years after the war ended, the Johnson-Reed Act established the U.S. Border Patrol and requirements for documentation in the form of visas from visitors to the United States (Nevins 2008, 92).

Fears of Mexican "Communists" (in response to the growing strength of organized labor and perceived politics of the Mexican Revolution) facilitated scapegoating of migrants during the Great Depression. Hundreds of thousands of Mexican Americans—some estimates put the number closer to one million—were

forcibly expelled between 1929 and 1935 (Nevins 2008, 92, 95). However, with the labor shortage created by WWII, the Bracero Program was initiated and workers were encouraged to return. Public Law 45 appropriated money for an executive agreement between the U.S. and Mexico to import laborers during wartime shortages. The Bracero Program incentivized migration, including INS policies such as a de facto legalization program for undocumented agricultural workers (Stephen 2007, 72). With the advent of the Cold War and recession of 1953-1954, Mexicans made a handy scapegoat once more. The specter of “invasion” appeared again, strengthened in the 1980s by “The War on Drugs,” and perhaps also in reaction to the growing power of farmworker organizing and civil rights movements. Always ambivalent U.S. agricultural interests, however, continued to recruit workers and workers continued to come. The flow of migration has increased dramatically since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1992; the importance of remittances (money sent home by migrants) to the Mexican economy is now second only to international oil sales (Stephen 2007, 149). Similarly, Central American wars of the 1980s (fostered by U.S. interventions) generated refugee populations from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Reagan framed his 1986 proposal to Congress for \$100 million in direct military assistance (\$70 million) and nonlethal aid (the remainder) to Nicaraguan contras as a counter-terrorism effort, asserting that “[Nicaraguan rebel defeat would] mean consolidation of a privileged sanctuary for terrorists and subversives just two days' driving time from Harlingen, Texas” (Chardy 1986).

Government responses to September 11, 2001 only accelerated this process by rhetorically linking unauthorized border crossing with terrorism (Jehl 2005). The stated “priority mission” of the U.S. Border Patrol became “preventing terrorists and terrorists’ weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, from entering the United States” (U.S. Customs and Border Protection 2016). This political climate, along with technology which allows private citizens to engage in border patrol activities such as contacting Homeland Security to report “suspicious persons,” results in heightened surveillance of Indigenous Mexican people with characteristics “continuously read as dark and illegal” (Stephen 2007, 152). Such surveillance intensifies on the basis of skin color, Indigeneity, language abilities, length of U.S. residency, rural or urban origins, and prestige or authority at work (Stephen 2007). People who cross the border report an awareness of it—a heightened sense of visibility and vulnerability to citizens and the state, with a resulting desire to remain unnoticed—even far from the borderline (ibid, 144, 176). As Stephen describes, if read as illegal, “one can never safely cross the U.S.-Mexican border, either physically, legally, or culturally” (ibid 2007, 152).

“The histories of Mexicans in California and Oregon and in specific sites such as Woodburn, Oregon, are connected to the histories of places like San Agustín and Teotitlán through the political, economic, and cultural connections that have been physically carried in the bodies of people moving back and forth between these places, in the social remittances that the migration experience has brought to the residents of these transborder communities in all of their sites, and through the transnational social fields of power linked to commercial agriculture, U.S. immigration policy, and the recruitment of workers.”

--(Ibid, 93-94)

While Pacific Northwest landscapes have been mutually constructed with Indigenous Latin American spaces through transborder communities, the U.S. border (in the form of racist surveillance and policing) extends to Pacific Northwest streets and fields. Workers read as Indigenous Mexican are surveilled at the border (by Border Patrol agents), while crossing the border (by those who bring them across-- both “coyotes” and employers), while driving to work sites and elsewhere (by police who call INS for “interpretation services”), in public spaces and when accessing social services (by suspicious citizens and bureaucracies) and at work (by employers) (Stephen 2007, Shapiro 2011, Holmes 2013).

Harsha Walia describes this process as a facet of “border imperialism.” According to Walia, “border imperialism” encompasses four intersecting and concurrent processes: displacement of and securitization of borders against colonized communities; criminalization of migration; racialization of citizenship; and exploitation of migrant workers facilitated by the state (Walia 2013). Citizenship privileges are produced through abstracted or seemingly-neutral administrative policies which entrench inequality (Spade 2011). Entire communities are marked “illegal” and denied legal protections and privileges to the degree they deviate from a (white, male, cisgendered, neurotypical, etc.) norm. These processes of encoding border within bodies are critical to capitalist and patriarchal exploitation of land and labor (Holmes 2013). This suggests a “reconceptualization of the border itself-- not as an actual physical place but as an

interconnected cultural/ legal/ racial divide that can move through time, space, and place (see Anzaldua 1987, Kearney 1991, 1995a, 1998)" (Stephen 2007, 154-5).

U.S. Military- and Prison-Industrial Complexes and Immigration

While the U.S. has facilitated seemingly politically-neutral (but predatory) trade and lending agreements, its military and C.I.A. have also trained paramilitary forces, including death squads, in torture techniques; overthrown democratically elected leaders; propped up “puppet” governments loyal to the United States and its business interests; and more throughout Latin America (Blum 2004). In 1953 Guatemala, the U.S. planned and instigated a coup overthrowing Jacobo Arbenz’s democratically elected, progressive government. Arbenz challenged the interests of the U.S.-based United Fruit Company through land reform. He was attacked by a U.S. campaign of disinformation and overthrown by a U.S.-backed coup (ibid). Similarly, Chile’s democratically elected Salvador Allende, after implementing land reform and nationalizing the Chilean copper industry (including several lucrative mines run by U.S. corporations), was overthrown by a U.S.-backed junta which put General Pinochet in power (ibid).

In late 1950s and early 1960s Haiti, the CIA intervened to stop an overthrow of Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier’s repressive regime (Blum 2004). In 1960, U.S. planes bombed the headquarters of Guatemalan rebels organizing against the “puppet” regime of General Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes (ibid). Early 1960s Ecuador

provides one example of what have come to be recognized as typical CIA tactics. The democratically-elected liberal government of José María Velasco Ibarra was targeted by the CIA because of his refusals to participate in the Cuban embargo or repress leftist civilians. The CIA created a disinformation campaign labeling his government “communist.” CIA agents bombed churches and right-leaning organizations, and acted as agents provocateurs in leftist protests, all with the goal of framing the Ydigoras Fuentes government as a communist dictatorship. In quick succession, the CIA-backed military forced Velasco to resign, then threatened his replacement for not cutting ties with Cuba quickly enough. Finally, a U.S.-backed military junta took power. The junta outlawed communism and arrested “extreme” leftists using the CIA’s Subversive Control Watch list (ibid).

Around the same time, in Brazil, the Kennedy administration financially and militarily backed the overthrow of another mild populist, João Goulart, and a military general, Castelo Branco, was put in power. Branco implemented what William Blum describes as

“all the features of military dictatorship which Latin America has come to know and love: Congress was shut down, political opposition was reduced to virtual extinction, habeas corpus for ‘political crimes’ was suspended, criticism of the president was forbidden by law, labor unions were taken over by government interveners, mounting protests were met by police and military firing into crowds, the use of systematic ‘disappearance’ as a form of repression came upon the stage of Latin America, peasants’ homes were burned down, priests were brutalized... the government had a name for its program: the ‘moral rehabilitation’ of Brazil... then there was the torture and the death squads, both largely undertakings of the police and military, both underwritten by the United States.”

(2004, 170-171)

There are many more such examples in Peru, Ecuador, Cuba, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Guatemala (again), Costa Rica, Jamaica, Grenada, Nicaragua, Panama, El Salvador, and Haiti (again), just in Latin America since World War II.

The U.S.-based Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC, formerly known as the School of the Americas), has trained many Latin American military dictators and founders of death squads. In 1996, WHINSEC (then SOA) was forced to release several 1960s training manuals it created on torture techniques and strategies for repression (SOA Watch 2016 (1)). Its graduates include Argentinian junta leaders who oversaw the torture and murder of over 30,000 political prisoners; a large percentage of Pinochet's intelligence officials; a Colombian paramilitary death squad founder (also hired as an instructor at the School of the Americas); at least 13 of the top military officials involved in the "low-intensity" attacks on Indigenous Mexican communities in the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guerrero; at least 10 of 31 soldiers recruited from the Mexican Army to serve the infamous Gulf Drug Cartel as assassins; Ciudad Juarez's police chief Julian Leyzaola Pérez (accused by the UN Refugee Agency of excessive detention, violence, and torture); Panama's General Manuel Noriega, and many, many more (SOA Watch 2016 (2)).

Yet all of this is cloaked by language of "humanitarian imperialism," the idea that U.S. military and economic interventions are in the best interests of the populations they destabilize. The U.S. is the "land of the free," after all; it is just "spreading freedom" to other countries which are described as childlike, in need

of protection and guidance, unable to govern themselves; or violent and oppressive, requiring military intervention to “defend democracy” (Bricmont 2006). Of course, as Bricmont points out in *Humanitarian Imperialism: Using Human Rights to Sell War*,

“Now, nothing in United States policy indicates the slightest sincere concern for human rights and democracy. Assigning it the prime task of defending these values is strange indeed. Moreover, to call on an *army* to wage a *war* for *human rights* implies a naive vision of what armies are and do, as well as a magical belief in the myth of short, clean, ‘surgical’ wars. The example of Iraq show that it is possible to know when a war starts but not when it will end, and it is totally utopian to expect an army that is under constant attack from guerrilla forces not to have recourse to torture in order to obtain information.”

Jean Bricmont (2006, 67)

Coincidentally, both approaches reinscribe U.S. power and support U.S.-based corporate interests.

As Blum, SOA Watch, Bricmont, Gwynne & Kay, Galeano, and Holmes (among many others) describe, U.S. interventions throughout Latin America destabilize its countries and have led to tremendous violence. As Holmes writes, is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate between “economic migrants” and “political refugees” (Holmes 2013) in the case of so many people coming to the U.S. from countries whose economies and environments have been devastated by colonialism, neocolonialism, and U.S.-manufactured internal violence. As the U.S.’s military-industrial complex destabilizes former colonies and profits from arms sales and tax dollars spent training people in torture techniques, the U.S. prison-industrial complex benefits from the high numbers of people desperately seeking greater safety or economic survival through

unauthorized border crossing. U.S. immigration law mandates that ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) incarcerate at least 34,000 immigrants on a daily basis. U.S. tax dollars fund private prison contractors such as GEO Group, the NWDC's owner. U.S. prisons, while a booming industry, do not have such a bed quota; and the process for placing a person in "detention" requires very little. Detainees are not entitled to legal representation as citizens are, and often face "credible fear" hearings (where they are required to make their case for asylum before a judge) alone.

Transformative Justice and Trauma-Informed History

Transformative justice is a concept which attempts to address both interpersonal and state violence to build stronger, more resilient communities. Historically, movements to end the prison-industrial complex (PIC) have tended to focus on PIC's criminalization of poverty, disability, gender, and race (Chomsky 1997, Street 2003, Gilmore 2007). Often, proposed alternatives to PIC include calls for community-based responses to harm such as community policing or attempts at restorative justice (Wachtel 1997; O'Connell et al 1999) which rely on a "romanticized notion of 'community' that is not sexist, homophobic, or otherwise problematic" (Smith 2011, xvi); focus energy and resources on the offender to the exclusion of the victim (Herman, S. 2004); are Eurocentric (Jenkins 2004); colonial (Raye 2004); and/or coopted by the state (Kershner et al. 2007, Immarigeon 2004). Meanwhile, white-dominated movements to end sexual and domestic violence have historically focused on increasing the power of the

state to intervene in situations of domestic and sexual violence through legislation such as the 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), ignoring the state's own violence towards marginalized communities (ibid; Wright 199; Kershner et al. 2007; Roberts 2006) and increasing “professionalization” and “non-profitization” of movements, channeling resources for survivors into organizations typically controlled by members of racially, economically, and otherwise privileged groups (Koyama 2006; Kivel 2009).

Transformative justice involves progressive stages of social change work spanning multiple generations, cultivating and implementing a diversity of tactics and tools (Kershner et al 2007). It goes beyond responding to individual problems into long-term prevention work, which includes developing collective power and capacity to address systemic injustices (Ibid.). The beginnings of this preventive and transformative work involve “denaturalizing suffering” (Holmes 2013), historicizing and contextualizing problems in order to recognize and address them at their root. This work seeks both to contribute to the project of transformative justice and to describe one tribe's effective intergenerational work in alignment with its principles, predating their formal articulation as “transformative justice.”

As Judith Herman writes, the study of trauma is necessarily political (Herman 1992). It joins survivor and witness in the common effort of affirming the trauma's occurrence and challenging the context which produced it (ibid). Wilful “forgetting” is a common response to violence on individual, community, and even larger scales (Herman 1992, Hedges 2002, Boon et al 2011, van der Kolk 2014). Trauma is a “violation of human connection” (Herman 1992) and, as

van der Kolk writes, “All trauma is preverbal” (van der Kolk 2014, 43). Because it overwhelms existing coping skills and resources, and is physiologically processed in different ways than normal life stressors, trauma is marked by survivors’ difficulty putting their emotional experience into words (ibid; Herman 1992; Boon et al 2011). It also frequently poses a deep challenge to survivors’ existing frameworks for understanding the world. Thus, post-traumatic stress was originally conceptualized as a “moral injury,” impacting self-trust and trust in others (van der Kolk 2014). Finding ways to communicate and make meaning from traumatic experience can help contextualize it in time and place as just one life experience among others, allowing survivors to reconnect with self and community (ibid).

Writing history is one way to support a large-scale process of re-membering, putting together pieces of the past. It is also a process of connecting-- it includes witnessing through the distance of time, challenging simplistic narratives which may have emerged following the violence, bringing complex truths to light. As war correspondent Chris Hedges writes in *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*, “War leaves behind not memory but amnesia. Once wars end, people reach back to the time before the catastrophe... Until there is a common vocabulary and a shared historical memory there is no peace in any society, only an absence of war” (Hedges 2002, 81).

Trauma-informed responses to violence center survivors’ agency, connectivity, health, and well-being (NSAC RSP & NSVRC 2013). The histories

I am writing involve communities which are strong and very much alive today, despite the ongoing violence of white supremacy directed against them. In my effort to document the past, I hope to frame its stories in a way which honors the resilience and survival of communities targeted by state violence. I make no assumptions that I, or my readers, are emotionally or politically neutral participants in this history, and so attempt to write in a way which is aligned with trauma-informed practice (please see my Methods section, page 23, for more information).

The point of learning the history of “whiteness as property” in the Puyallup River Estuary is to contextualize its contemporary form, as part of a larger and longer process of understanding racialized carceral formations (a necessary precursor to effectively dismantling or supplanting them). Transformative justice calls for a trauma-informed examination of the circumstances under which harm is produced, instead of presuming it emerges from a fundamentally just context, and calls for “a radical restructuring of the way in which we deal with the social conditions that generate ‘crime’” (Sudbury 2004). Transformative justice recognizes that “the modern State defines itself by its monopoly over the means of coercion and the exercise of force. The State is the institutionalized legitimization of violence” (Kershner et al. 2007, 9; see also Asad 2007, Spade 2011, and Walia 2013). Transformative justice also calls for work to build accountable community and strengthen collective resistance (ibid 52-53, Burk 2011). “Accountability” can look like many things; for the purpose of this research project, I take it to include white and non-Native people like myself

contributing to work on identifying, understanding, and transforming conditions creating state-sanctioned violence and abuse. Additionally, situating state violence towards Native tribes and people of color in the Puyallup River Estuary within a larger, global context helps to identify collective interests and common ground between seemingly-disparate struggles.

Administrative Violence and Knowledge Production

In *Orientalism*, postcolonial theorist Edward Said describes colonial processes to establish control of the colonized, including the Orientalist's use of colonial education to represent the colonized to themselves through a colonizer's lens. This twisted representation affirms the colonizer's "flexible, positional superiority" in relation to the colonized (Said 1978, 7); whether resisting or aligning with colonizer narratives, the colonized are framed as simply "good" or "bad" versions of stereotypes (ibid). Similarly, in *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o writes that "[e]conomic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relation to others" (wa Thiong'o 1981, 17). This process of intertextual colonial knowledge production and colonial education took place not just in Palestine and Kenya (Said and wa Thiong'o's respective homelands) but around the world.

In the United States, one way settler colonial dominance was established was by forcing Native communities to send their children to government-run Indian boarding schools. This was an act of genocide as later defined by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Solinger 2007). The founder of the first U.S. boarding school, Captain Richard Pratt, famously said the schools' goals were to "kill the Indian, and save the man" (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015, 151). The schools imposed colonial gender norms on Indian children, teaching boys industrial trades and girls domestic skills (Roberts 1987, 222-3); students were frequently rented out to local white families as laborers. Children at the schools were emotionally, spiritually, physically, and sexually abused (Solinger 2007, Roberts 1987, Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). They were punished for speaking Indigenous languages or practicing Indigenous religions, which were outlawed until relatively recently (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015, 211-15). Young people were frequently relocated to schools far from their families, which made it difficult to escape, although many ran away anyway (ibid., Roberts 1987). One such institution, Cushman Indian Trades School, was located in the Puyallup River Estuary just miles from the current site of the Northwest Detention Center. Cushman's superintendents also facilitated allotment (privatization and sale) of Indian lands under the Dawes Act.

In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Maori professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou) similarly links the production and reproduction of knowledge with colonial violence against Indigenous peoples. She writes, "The word itself, 'research,' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous

world's vocabulary... [The] collective memory of imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways in which knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized" through "institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (Tuhiwai Smith and Said as quoted by Tuhiwai Smith, respectively (2012, 1-2). She points out that even the best-intentioned and warmest-received research done by non-Natives has historically been "absolutely useless to us, the indigenous world," yet "[absolutely useful] to those who [wield] it as an instrument," telling "things already known, [suggesting] things that would not work, and [making] careers for people who already had jobs" (ibid, 3).

In and around the tide flats, processes linking citizenship and its attendant benefits with whiteness are evident in dispossession of Puyallup people; ethnic cleansing of Chinese and Japanese American communities in the 1880s and 1940s, respectively; abuse of Indigenous youth at Cushman Indian Trades School (and the school's underfunding); industry's severe environmental degradation of the tide flats; and internment of primarily Latinx immigrants in a for-profit detention facility located on a Superfund site.

With my research design, I attempted to learn from Tuhiwai Smith's recommendations for decolonizing methodologies, while remaining aware of the potential for appropriation. I also did my best to identify, within time, funding, and skill constraints, what I could do justice to that might also be useful to

collective struggle for social justice (see my Methods section for more details). One of the goals of this work is to apply geographer Laura Pulido's insight in "Reflections on a White Discipline" by treating racism not "as an aberration, but [with the assumption] that race is a fundamental social relation" (Pulido 2002, 49). Therefore, industrial production of environmental degradation in the Puyallup River Estuary is, in fact, linked with racism, colonization, and the production of white power.

One link between the Estuary's degradation and issues of race, nation, and class are its historical and contemporary carceral facilities. It held an Indian boarding school; a reservation (arguably a carceral space in the sense that its goal was to contain Indian people, yet also deeply important to tribal sovereignty); a hospital where tubercular Indians, including children, were held for many years (again, arguably carceral in that it included involuntary commitments, yet was also created to fulfill treaty agreements and provide social services to Indians); a youth detention center and long-term treatment facility; and now the Northwest Detention Center, which also detains a large number of Indigenous immigrants.

Prisons, jails, detention centers, and other carceral spaces are directly implicated in environmental justice issues. The Northwest Detention Center, for example, is located near more than 280 actively industrial facilities and on a federal Superfund site. Facilities like the NWDC are frequently sited in industrial and polluted zones, and are frequent sources of pollution themselves, yet environmental justice assessments and siting processes do not take prisoner and

detainee health into consideration (Wright 2015), or are viewed as “essential public facilities” in the case of Washington state law, and therefore exempt from city objections to their placement (Kamb 2012).

In addition to these frameworks, I apply the theory of intersectionality to understanding my own positionality in relation to race- and nation-based containment and expulsion in the Puyallup River Estuary and Northwest Detention Center (both located less than a 30-minute drive from my home in Olympia.)

The term “intersectionality” was first coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe black feminism’s relevance in anti-discrimination law (Adewunmi 2014). Intersectional theoretical frameworks understand oppressions within a matrix, rather than as separate issues. Intersectionality teaches us racism is gendered and vice versa; similar logic applies to oppressions across the board. We cannot end sexism without ending racism, and vice versa (Smith, Richie, Sudbury, & White 2006). Intersectional feminism disputes modernist ideas of “unified subject and universal truth” (Yang 2017), challenging knowledge production to recognize and account for “positionality,” or each researcher’s location within matrices of power and oppression, and to assume reflexive approaches to knowledge production (Smith 2012, 168).

As a scholar and activist committed to work for social justice, I seek to understand the systems I, myself, am embedded and implicated in; racism and

colonialism shape my life through privilege, and intersect with parts of my identity marginalized through gender, sexuality, and ability. My goal is to research and represent white supremacy and colonization as *systems*, rather than represent marginalized racial or national *identities* or cultures. However, I accept the idea put forth by many critical race theorists that “whiteness” is a system of power and privilege, rather than a politically neutral cultural or ethnic identity. The concept of “whiteness as property” understands white identity as a politically vested system of advantages and rights (Harris 1994). Just the simple act of living as a settler on confiscated Indigenous land implicates non-Native people in historic acts of land dispossession, and creates a need to become aware of and take responsibility for that history.

In her 1994 essay “Whiteness as Property,” legal scholar and critical race theorist Cheryl Harris defends affirmative action programs as meaningful *equalizing* treatment, rather than *equal* treatment which ignores the historical and legal production of racial inequality. She writes,

“In ways so embedded that it is rarely apparent, the set of assumptions, privileges, and benefits that accompany the status of being white have become a valuable asset... Whites have come to expect and rely on these benefits, and over time these expectations have been affirmed, legitimated, and protected by the law... American law has recognized a property interest in whiteness that, although unacknowledged, now forms the backdrop against which legal disputes are framed, argued, and adjudicated” (Harris 1994, 277).

She shows whiteness’ legal construction as a valuable source of exclusive advantages and protections, in contrast with blackness and Indigeneity. Blackness was legally constructed to denote enslaved status and lesser personhood-- “three-

fifths” that of someone legally recognized as “white.” Similarly, property laws which recognized only white settler customs as valid were and are used to alienate Native American nations from their lands and resources. Courts adjudicated racial identity on the basis of the “one drop” rule and treated “‘false’ or inadequately supported claims [like] any other unsubstantiated claim to a property interest” (ibid, 284).

Sylvia Federici shows in *Caliban and the Witch* that, through law, “‘White,’ in the colonies, became not just a badge of social and economic privilege ‘serving to designate those who until 1650 had been called ‘Christians’ and afterwards ‘English’ or ‘free men’ (2004, 194), but a moral attribute, a means by which social hegemony was naturalized” (ibid, 107). At the same time, settler colonialism cannot be reduced to whiteness, and Indigeneity is not a racial category. While U.S. settler colonialism and white supremacy are enmeshed, and racism is directed towards Indigenous peoples, Indigeneity is linked with a landbase and special rights. Conflating Indigenous status with race undermines Indigenous sovereignty. It ignores treaties which recognize “tribes and their members as distinct peoples, with rights and statuses separate from those of ordinary U.S. citizens” (Karloff 2012, 1070).

Washington State’s attempts to undermine Indigenous sovereignty before and during the Fish Wars provides one troubling example of this (see page 105). By interpreting language in the Treaty of Medicine Creek (which recognized tribal rights to take fish “in common with” citizens) to mean Indian peoples had the

same legal status as U.S. citizens, Washington State pretended to the power to regulate U.S. treaties with other sovereign nations. While tribal sovereignty is not fully recognized by the U.S. government-- federally recognized tribes are technically “domestic dependent nations,” and tribal members do not have full ownership of tribal land held “in trust” by the U.S. government or the ability to try non-Native people for most crimes committed on reservations-- tribes have many rights simple U.S. citizens do not. Part of the power of the Boldt Decision was its differentiation between the “privileges” of U.S. citizens in Washington and the *rights* of tribes, which can only be abrogated by termination of tribes’ sovereign status (U.S. v Washington). As Zoltán Grossman points out, “without understanding this distinction, anti-racist analysts and activists can inadvertently recolonize Native peoples as merely a small “racial minority” within the U.S., and wonder why Native peoples are not satisfied as simply being treated better as a minority, rather than as nations” (personal communication, 5/30/2016).

Political Ecology

Economy is the bone, politics is the flesh,
watch who they beat and who they eat
--Marge Piercy, “In the men’s room(s)” (1982, 80)

As political ecologist Paul Robbins writes, “If forms of social organization are rooted in production (how things are made), they are, by implication, ultimately explained by how people use nature” (Robbins 2012, 55). Additionally, while states attempt to control the political influence of non-human nature, “the qualities of non-humans that are incongruent with state organization, capitalist

accumulation, and various forms of social institutions” “resist or create friction with human activities” (ibid, 232). For purposes of this project, I seek to understand relationships between the Puyallup River Estuary’s environmental health and dynamics of racism, colonization, resistance, and decolonization. I also seek to learn relationships of non-human actors with these processes, particularly those of the river itself, pollutants, and anadromous fish.

In *The Sexual Politics of Meat* and “Are You Man Enough, Big and Bad Enough? Ecofeminism and Wolf Eradication in the USA,” feminists Carol Adams and Jody Emel, respectively, show that control of and attitudes towards non-human animals are intimately connected with violence towards marginalized humans (Adams 1990, Emel 1995). Akwesasne Mohawk midwife Katsi Cook shows that environmental degradation is also reproductive violence towards Indigenous peoples because of the ways it disparately impacts infants (Cook in Carmen & Waghiyi 2012). Adults exposed to environmental pollution are able to mediate its impacts by storing toxins in fat, while very young children do not have the same ability. Toxins are released when fat is metabolized during pregnancy and breastfeeding, poisoning infants (ibid, Yurdakök 2012). Intergenerational health of Indigenous tribes in the Pacific Northwest, so intimately tied with anadromous fish runs, is therefore at risk when waterways fish swim through are polluted or their habitat is destroyed. Similarly, destruction of fish runs by dams has led to the introduction of domesticated hatchery fish, which have much less genetic diversity, in order to supplement the wild populations for harvest. At the same time, wild fish are trapped and trucked past the dams, causing significant

stress and interfering with their natural migration. As environmental historian Richard White writes in his description of domestication of “wild” salmon on the Columbia River, “[a]t every phase of their life they are subject to human intervention and oversight” (White 1995, 105).

Kay Anderson describes “domestication” as a political process nested within “a more extensive framework of ideas about ‘human’ uniqueness and dominion, a key material basis of which... lay in domestication of the nonhuman world” (Anderson 1997). In many ways, this process echoes the colonial relationship of Orientalist to imagined “Orient,” constructing the “human”--and a particular *kind* of human-- through its opposition to and dominance of the non-human. As environmental historian David Blackbourn writes, “The human domination of nature has a lot to tell us about the nature of human domination” (Blackbourn 2006, 7). I apply these insights towards understanding ways colonial administrative violence towards marginalized human populations may be reflected in the health of wild salmon populations, the estuary, and the landbase, as well as the creation of “flexibly superior” identity. This is particularly salient around Washington State’s attacks on tribal fishing rights in the name of conservation.

States have attempted to “domesticate” even rivers themselves to maximize their usefulness to industry and urbanization (Blackbourn 2006, Cioc 2002). “Untamed” rivers have been rhetorically framed as enemies of progress (ibid) and subjected to the kinds of oversimplistic modernist schemes described by Scott in

Seeing Like A State (1999). “Floods,” for example, are typically discussed as natural disasters, even though they may more accurately be described as the result of human urbanization and overdevelopment near rivers (Cioc 2002), and/or human intervention in river velocity through channelization and climate change. Until very recently, military engineers set to work “taming,” “harnessing,” “training,” and “improving” waterways through dredging, straightening, damming, and shoreline armoring/ fortification (ibid).

Constriction and containment of the Puyallup River has impacted the estuary’s health in many ways. The Mud Mountain’s dam construction for flood control damaged salmon runs, impacting nutrient deposits anadromous fish bring from ocean to forest, and reduced sediment deposits at the river’s mouth, increasing shoreline erosion. This has led to increased shoreline armoring, which in turn destroys additional intertidal habitat. Reduced habitat impacts species biodiversity, which then limits nutrients available within the system. Channelizing the Puyallup River and rerouting the White into the Puyallup have increased water flow velocity, scouring intertidal habitat and forcing freshwater far into the bay. This, in turn, has transformed young salmonids’ use of the Bay, bringing them into open water with little cover, where they are vulnerable to increased predation. Dredging and filling intertidal habitat to support industry has destroyed thousands of acres of wetlands. Lost wetlands (and channelized rivers) leads to increased flooding, as well as nutrient loss to soils, increased pollution of the estuary, and depleted aquifers from increased surface water runoff.

Thankfully, rivers are also what Cioc describes as “incarnations of constant change”; as philosopher Heraclitus once wrote, “you cannot step in the same river twice” (Cioc 2002, 206). Thus, despite all state efforts to control them, they are consistently linked with complexities of scale and scope which come back as challenges to control in surprising ways.

Conclusion

Writing a meaningful history of containment, exclusion, resistance, and reclamation in the Puyallup River Estuary requires me to draw upon all of the aforementioned frameworks. The U.S. prison-industrial complex both produces and exploits trauma survivors for profit; its current incarnation in the form of mass incarceration was prefigured by colonization of Indigenous landbases and communities. Colonialism and neocolonialism are intertwined with white supremacist capitalism, generating modern “primitive accumulation” of environmental resources and labor and leading to environmental degradation. The United States itself, as a complex of legal, cultural, and political “superstructures,” is predicated on white supremacy; these superstructures rationalize and facilitate capitalist exploitation of racialized people and the environment.

U.S. prison- and military-industrial complexes’ destabilization and

constriction of Indigenous peoples--Latin Americans as well as the Puyallup Tribe--are in dialogue with the “War on Terror” and “War on Drugs” in the Puyallup River Estuary. Transformative justice and trauma theory are critical to providing healthy, ethical, and accountable storytelling frameworks. The site’s history is informed by administrative violence and colonial knowledge production, which I connect with processes of state control of nonhuman populations and degradation of the environment. My work does not encompass many other elements at play in the site, such as the roles of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (what historian Murray Morgan described as “Pierce County’s basic bankroll” (Morgan 1979, 325), nonhuman animal agriculture, and others (see my Conclusion and Recommendations for more information). However, it draws from disciplines which are rarely in dialogue, illuminating connections which may inform future partnerships and decision-making.

The River Mouth Speaks: Water Quality as Storyteller in Decolonization of the Port of Tacoma

A note: a draft of this chapter is published in *Indigenous Water Histories*, a special issue of *Water History*, Eds. Berry, Cohn, Matusi, and Jackson (forthcoming).

Introduction

Around 750 generations ago, the Cordilleran ice sheet covered what is now known as Puget Sound. As the ice retreated, it carved the Sound, an estuarine inlet of the Pacific Ocean nestled between the Olympic and Cascade mountain ranges to the west and east. The Sound is the southernmost part of the Salish Sea, where the sea snakes its way through northwestern Washington State (itself farthest northwest of the contiguous United States). The Puyallup River delivers freshwater from the Cascades to the Sound. It is fed by glaciers on Mount Tacoma¹ (meaning “breast of the milk-white waters,” in one interpretation²) via the Puyallup, White, and Carbon Rivers. The Puyallup River historically carried anadromous fish including fall and spring chinook, pink, chum, and coho salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout, from the mountains to the sea and back again (Kerwin 1999).

¹ Also known as Mount Rainier

² Several Lushootseed interpretations of its name refer to its as a source of nourishment, a mother or breast (Clark 2003)

The river mouth opens into a deepwater bay (what is now called Commencement Bay) in the Port of Tacoma. Its estuary historically included hundreds of acres of tide flats and is critical habitat for young salmonids still developing capacity for osmoregulation (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) & National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 1996). At the head of the bay is an area historian Herbert Hunt called the “headquarters” of the Puyallup tribe, known as Tahadowa, or “come in” (Hunt 1916). According to the tribe, “Puyallup” derives from “spuyaləpabš (Spoy-all-up-obsh)” in Lushootseed and means “generous and welcoming behavior to all people (friends and strangers) who enter our lands” (Puyallup Tribe of Indians 2016). The river is known today by the same name as the people who have lived on and been fed by it for at least 600 generations (Clark 1985).

White settlement began as a trickle with Britain’s Hudson’s Bay Company in the early 1800s. In 1850 the U.S. passed the Donation Land Claim Act, increasing settlement to a steady stream; with the 1870s announcement that a transcontinental railroad terminus would be located in Tacoma, settler populations exploded. The tribe ceded all but 23,000 acres of land near the water through the (amended) Treaty of Medicine Creek. Overt and administrative settler violence and fraud removed tribal members from nearly all of their land; by the end of allotment (federal government-facilitated privatization and sale of collectively-held lands), just 33 acres remained. As the tribe was removed, the tide flats were transformed, industrialized and urbanized, and eventually listed as a U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency Superfund³ site. Industrialization and urbanization included hundreds of polluters doing everything from aluminum processing to petroleum refining and sewage treatment (Cirone & Coco 1993). An engineering geologist who worked on environmental remediation at the site in the 1990s wrote: “[m]ost environmental projects are not particularly interesting geologically. But this site had many layers. I developed an entire stratigraphic system for the site that included a variety of formations: Tide Flats, Grass Mat, Plank Roads and Pilings, Smelter Slag, Auto Wrecking Units with sub units of fluff, acid, oil, and coolant, PCP waste oil, Rail Waste, Coal Tar and Hair Tar. The Hair Tar was the waste tar that was used to strip the hair off of hogs. I was not on site when investigators encountered the Blood layer” (McShane 2010).

In the allotment era, the Puyallup Tribe lost all its land but the cemetery (Douglas 2015), then slowly gained ground through a complex process of survival, grassroots organizing, direct action, administrative appeals, intertribal movement-building, lobbying, and lawsuits. The Tribe has used U.S. courts’ recognition of their sovereign rights to reclaim occupied land, force remediation of severely degraded estuarine habitat, and create social and economic resources for tribal members.

³ “Superfund,” also known as CERCLA (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act) is a federal law authorizing cleanup of sites with hazardous substances, funded by damages collected from polluters and/or a trust fund (the “Superfund”).

Estuarine Health Prior to Colonization

Maori professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith ((Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou) writes in the beginning of *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) that “‘research’ is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (1) because of the long history of extractive and intrusive colonial research practices which provide distorted representations of Indigenous communities. Since my goal with this project is not to represent the Puyallup Tribe, but to “study up” (Nader 1972) by analyzing connections between structural violence and environmental change, I will not spend much time in this section describing tribal activities in an anthropological fashion. Because degraded water quality in the estuary is clearly linked with industry and urbanization, it felt a bit redundant to seek out information on environmental health prior to U.S. settlement, but important to establish nonetheless. There are no records I am aware of which specifically describe the health of the bay or estuary prior to European contact; most descriptions I found were made by Europeans or U.S. Americans encountering the area for the first time, or by Indians describing what had been lost. However, a few of these descriptions feel important to include, as they indicate the health of land and water.

I used proxies in the form of indicator species to understand wetland and overall ecosystem health (for example, mentions of skunk cabbage and reported amounts of returning salmon). Descriptions of Swedish settler Nicholas De Lin (sometimes recorded as Delin) “mucking around in skunk cabbage” while

building his 1850s mill, and of the Tacoma Land Company's cabin in a patch of skunk cabbage (Morgan 1979) suggest the health of the estuary's tide flats prior to their industrialization (Stapanian et al 2013). Reports of salmon runs on the Puyallup River, while lacking in quantitative data, suggest their abundance ("so crowded with salmon a person could practically walk across" (National Lawyers Guild 1973). Comprehensive records do not exist, but pioneer memoirs mention "hauls of two thousand salmon" in the bay in 1854 (Morgan 1979, 82). The 1833 diary of Dr. William Fraser Tolmie, one of the earliest written and preserved descriptions of the place, includes accounts of buying beaver skins from "Payallipeu" Indians and an account of a late summer trip up the Puyallup River to Mount Rainier.

Tolmie describes marshlands at the river's mouth leading to "dense & tangled thickets" interrupted by periodic "prairions" (Tolmie 1963, 231; the "prairions" may be the meadowlands described by explorer Charles Wilkes' men in 1838 (Morgan 1979). The river was fast-flowing, 10-12 yards wide, with "lofty cedars and pines" on its banks and covering the hills to either side (ibid). The river carried white clay and the soil near its banks was "clayey"; salmon fishing was good, according to his Puyallup guides, and ferns in the river's "rich alluvial plaine" grew "8 feet high in some parts" (ibid). Puyallup hosts along the way shared a meal with Tolmie which included elk meat, like many other meals during his stay at Fort Nisqually. His guides, who were hunters, expressed the expectation (and hope) that they would run into one. Elk are an indicator species for forest health because they require old-growth stands of deciduous and

coniferous forest, as well as access to water and dense groundcover for calving. They also require seclusion from human populations, and provide food for large predators including mountain lions and coyotes, as well as (sometimes) bears (U.S. Forest Service 2016). Forest health is intimately intertwined with water quality and overall ecosystem health, as woody debris strengthens the entire food chain by providing critical habitat for many species; provides shade for water (also critical for many species); prevents surface water runoff, keeping water clean; and much more. Tolmie also saw one or two “Sawbill Ducks” which he aimed unsuccessfully to shoot (ibid). As an apex predator in lake and riverine food chains which eats coho spawn and depends on mature forests for nesting and breeding, presence of the Common Merganser (“sawbill duck”) is included on the MIS (management indicator species) list as a sign of riparian habitat health (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1989).

From 1935-36, a white anthropologist named Marian Smith worked with local Puyallup and Nisqually tribal members including Jerry Meeker, John Milcane, William Winton, and Peter Kalama to understand pre-colonial “Puyallup-Nisqually” tribal histories and cultures. She was told stories of orca whales (“black fish”) and “very large [man-eating] sharks” in the Sound long ago (Smith 1940, 234). An 1870 tribal elder had possessed a bow made of whale bone (Smith 1940, 322), and before that time some tribes living on the salt water harpooned seal and porpoise (ibid, 267). Notably, no sightings of these animals were reported after settlement began to boom, coinciding with the use of the bay as a deep-water port, as I describe later.

Similarly, historian Herbert Hunt interviewed local Indians like Henry Sicade (Nisqually) for his 1916 history of Tacoma. He describes a priest named Hylebos's recollections of the bay in 1871 as "fairly covered with canoes" and Indian houses "cover[ing] the beaches all along the Tacoma waterfront" north of what was then Puyallup Avenue (Hunt 1916, 16). Hunt was also told of a spring "just west of the Commercial Dock bridge" known as "Tasatco" ("the best flavored water"), suggesting cleanliness of groundwater near the estuary; similarly, he learned a Puyallup word for Hylebos Creek, "Hacht," meant "covered with brush" (significant for the same reasons outlined earlier regarding forests' impacts on rivers and streams) (Hunt 1916, 21-22).

Early U.S.-British Occupation

European and American occupation began as a trickle-- as early as the 1770s, Spanish explorers scouted the Pacific Northwest and stopped in the Puget Sound. In 1792, Puyallup people at Browns Point encountered a group of British explorers in search of the Northwest Passage (Sailor 2014), who were quickly followed by more explorers and fur traders, including Britain's Hudson's Bay Company. A few decades later, the United States and Britain signed a treaty in which they agreed to, among other things, jointly occupy what was known in the U.S. as "Oregon Territory" and to Britain as part of the Hudson's Bay Company [HBC]'s "Columbia District" (US Department of State 2007). The Hudson's Bay Company established Fort Nisqually (briefly "Nisqually House") about twenty miles from the head of Commencement Bay. Its goal was to exploit regional fur

trade and establish an agricultural base, as well as link forts on the Fraser and Columbia Rivers to the north and south (Bagley 1915). In 1833, Edward Huggins reported several fur trade-related interactions with “Payallipa” people (presumably Puyallup) in the Nisqually House’s Journal of Daily Occurrences (Ibid.).

Through an 1846 treaty with Britain, the U.S. claimed the right to occupy Oregon Territory south of the 49th parallel, compensating Hudson’s Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company in the late 1860s for their loss of Fort Nisqually and thousands of acres of land (including the early site of Tacoma) (Bagley 1915, Hunt 1916). Part of the reason for HBC’s loss of Fort Nisqually was the increasingly aggressive flood of regional settlement following the Oregon Donation Land Claim Act. In 1850, the U.S. Congress passed the Act to promote settlement of Oregon Territory; white and mixed-race men who occupied and “improved” land for four years were then considered its owners by the U.S. government. In 1852, settler Nicholas De Lin began constructing a water-powered sawmill near the mouth of Commencement Bay (Morgan 1979). In 1853, commercial fishing was already taking place in the Bay; *The Columbian* newspaper reported one fishing outfit caught 2,000 fish in one haul, 1,500 of which were “good large salmon” (*The Columbian* 1853). Pacific Northern Railroad surveyors found the region “a mosaic of old growth coniferous forests, prairies [managed by tribes using controlled burns⁴], meandering rivers, wetlands

⁴ See Kruckeberg 1991, Williams 2001, Hamman et al 2011

and complex estuaries" (Kerwin 1999). At the same time, there were no treaties in place with Puget Sound Indians⁵.

Treaty of Medicine Creek and Puget Sound War

Isaac Stevens, newly-appointed Territorial Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, was charged with establishing treaties as quickly as possible to facilitate railroad construction and settlement. As historian Murray Morgan writes, "'Conflict of interest' was not a phrase then current in Washington. No one saw anything improper in the fact that Stevens represented the white citizenry as governor, the tribes as Indian superintendent, and the U.S. State Department in negotiating with those same tribes. Nor that he would be determining reservation boundaries for tribes whose continued presence along the right-of-way he advocated for the railroad might prove an impediment to its construction" (1979, 90). In just one year--1854-1855--Stevens pushed through eleven treaties (United States v. Washington 1974). He was adamant that treaties include provisions to move each tribe onto reservation land. This was tricky, since tribes were distinct but not separate (Harmon 1998); each community had kinship ties with others nearby, sharing customs and celebrations-- especially centered around fishing⁶-- and a common trade language (Chinook jargon) (Caster 2010). Additionally, many Indian communities had kinship ties with white settlers through marriage (Harmon 1998). Yet Stevens' original two plans (first, to move all Puget Sound

⁵ I use the term "Indian" (and not "Native American" or "First Nations") because it is the word southern Puget Sound tribal governments formally use to describe themselves (e.g. "Puyallup Tribe of Indians").

⁶ See La Pointe Gorman 2009

tribes east of the Cascades; then to try to lump everyone--including historic enemies-- together on a couple of reservations, removing most tribes from their millenniums-old homes) ignored these complexities entirely (Morgan 1979). His third proposal, the bare minimum tribes were willing to consider, was not much better.

In 1854, Governor Stevens met with representatives of nine communities listed as “Nisqually, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Squawskin, S'Homamish, Stehchass, T'Peeksin, Squi-aitl, and Sa-heh-wamish Tribes” to negotiate the Treaty of Medicine Creek. Among other concessions, tribes relinquished the vast majority of their land (except for small reservations) but kept the right to fish at their “usual and accustomed grounds and stations” (Squaxin Island Tribe 2016). The 1854 treaty left Puyallups with just 1,280 acres on the south side of the bay (Government Office of Indian Affairs 2016, Morgan 1979, National Lawyers Guild 1973, Hunt 1916). The treaties were written and negotiated in English, which few if any signatories spoke. They were translated by a U.S. interpreter to the regional Chinook trading jargon (which consisted of about 300 words, probably rendering it difficult to translate the treaties' English nuances) (United States v. Washington 1974), then translated *again* into local tongues. Frank Shaw, the white translator working with Stevens, knew Puyallup-Nisqually Lushootseed and offered to translate the agreement directly, but Stevens refused to let him (Morgan 1979, National Lawyers Guild 1973). Sixty-two Indian signatories are listed along with Stevens on the Medicine Creek Treaty, including two men called “Lesh-high” and “Qui-ee-metl” (Squaxin Island Tribe 2016).

Leschi and Quiemuth were brothers, farmers, and Nisqually community leaders. They were friendly with traders at Fort Nisqually (Hunt 1916, Morgan 1979). Some witnesses claimed Leschi never signed the treaty, while minutes (taken in English) claim he did. Either way, Nisqually people and many others voiced increasing dissatisfaction with treaties' terms (Harmon 1998, Morgan 1979). Governor Stevens, aware of tribes' dissatisfaction, requested and received legislative approval to form a volunteer settler militia (Morgan 1979). In summer of 1855, Puget Sound tribes received word that Stevens bullied Yakamas-- reportedly Leschi's mother's tribe-- into their treaty (Harmon 1998, Morgan 1979). They also heard the U.S. government didn't make payments on Yakama treaty agreements despite a gold-driven boom in settlement (ibid.), and mistrust grew. When further rumors spread that Yakamas killed an Indian Agent, Indian-settler tensions escalated, and when these rumors were confirmed, relations became combustible (ibid, McWhorter 1994). Leschi and Quiemuth caught wind that the Acting Governor intended to arrest them and went underground. This marked the beginning of Indian uprisings in the Puget Sound War of 1855-56. Governor Stevens declared martial law. He charged white men married to Native women with treason when they refused to choose a side (Harmon 1998, Morgan 1979). Settler militias and troops attacked Indians and Indian fighters attacked settlers. Many settlers left Commencement Bay, and most members of the Puyallup Tribe were relocated by the U.S. government to Fox Island (an estimated 30 remained to fight with Leschi) (ibid).

In spring of 1856, settler militiamen attacked a group of Nisqually women, children, and elders, killing at least 15 people in what became known as the Mashel Massacre (Morgan 1979, Wonacott 2008). The war was over, although Stevens did not declare victory until August of that year. Stevens met again with Medicine Creek tribes, this time at Fox Island, to renegotiate their treaty terms. Among many concessions, he agreed to increase Puyallups' reservation size from 1,280 to 23,000 acres, as well as Nisquallies'-- including historical fishing grounds and Quiemuth and Leschi's old farmlands in the new terms (Governor's Office of Indian Affairs 2016, Morgan 1979, National Lawyers Guild 1973). In early winter of that year, Leschi was betrayed and captured. Shortly afterward, his brother Quiemuth surrendered himself to Stevens in Olympia. That night, under watch by five armed guards, Quiemuth was shot and stabbed in the heart. While a man named Joseph Bunting was arrested, and widely believed to be the murderer, no one-- not even another man sleeping in the same room at the time-- admitted to hearing or seeing anything and Bunting was released (Morgan 1979, Newell 1975). Quiemuth's murder was never solved. In 1858, Leschi was wrongfully convicted and hanged for murder (Senate Joint Memorial 8054). In the following years, several settlements and towns removed Indians by force, prefiguring later actions towards Chinese Tacomans (Hunt 1916).

Early Reservation Era, Allotment, and Port Development

In 1862, new Superintendent of Indian Affairs E.H. Hale (Stevens left Washington state in 1857) conducted a survey and estimated over 10,000 Indians

were living west of the Cascades--three times the number estimated in the 1850s when treaties were made. Tribal members he talked with expressed growing dissatisfaction with the federal government's failure to meet treaty agreements. The Puyallup reservation was included in his survey. He described it as "the best and largest reservation of the three [Nisqually, Squaxin, & Puyallup], covering very nearly two townships of land. It is at the mouth of the river of the same name, and on the south side of Commencement bay, where there is an excellent and valuable fishery. The reservation consists, in a great degree, of the meadow, which is very seldom overflowed, and on which grow large crops of luxuriant grasses." There were between 40 and 50 farms sown with wheat, oats, potatoes, corn, peas, and more, and Puyallup tribal members had invested in about \$5,000 worth of "improvements" (compared with the federal government's investment of \$3,330) (Hale 1862, 385-6).

In 1868, a settler named Morton McCarver wrote to potential investors of the need to rebuild a sawmill (De Lin's burned down) and bring the railroad to "Commencement City" (later known as Tacoma) (McCarver 1868). The 1870 Timber and Stone Act facilitated waterfront development; waterfront land could be purchased under the Act for as little as \$2.50 an acre (Magden & Martinson 1982). In 1871, French deep-water ships carrying lumber to Peru began international trade in Commencement Bay's port (Magden 2008). That year, the Bureau of Indian Affairs identified a site for the trade school promised in the Treaty of Medicine Creek near the head of the Bay. A Puyallup elder living there

vacated the land so the tribal school could be built (Puyallup Tribe of Indians 1977).

In 1873, the Northern Pacific Railroad announced plans to construct its northwestern transcontinental terminus in Tacoma. Through its subsidiary, the Tacoma Land Company, the Pacific Northern Railroad acquired a local mill, 2 acres of deep-water waterfront, and 600 acres of tide flats (Magden 2008) including land within reservation boundaries (Isley 1970). The same year Leschi was executed, the legislature passed laws permitting drainage of local wetlands, allowing construction to ramp up in Commencement Bay (Kerwin 1999). In 1873, ten acres of salt marsh and mudflat were filled to allow railroad construction through the reservation, from the City of Puyallup to Tacoma (Evans 1991, National Lawyers Guild 1973). In 1883 the contemporary City of Tacoma was incorporated (Morgan 1979). Since salinity defines salmon habitat-- particularly habitat's viability for young fish who haven't established capacity to osmoregulate as they will need to in order to survive in ocean water-- it is likely that young salmon congregated around the Puyallup River mouth in the southwest Bay, exactly where the heaviest development on the water was beginning to occur (Evans 1991). Around this time, there remained an estimated 1,829 acres of "estuarine, intertidal, unconsolidated shore, mud, and regularly flooded" habitat in the Bay (Evans 1991, 10).

In the 1880s, a rising tide of immigration increased the settler population 600 percent (Harmon 1998). In 1882, the federal Chinese Exclusion Act passed; in

1885, Tacoma's mayor and the Pierce County Sheriff led an Anti-Chinese Congress. A group of white settlers calling themselves the "Committee of Fifteen" began work publicizing the planned removal and organizing others to participate. A secret "Committee of Nine," including one member of the "Committee of Fifteen" was formed by white men who felt the Fifteen were not going far enough. This committee organized itself in the same anonymous, decentralized way as the Ku Klux Klan. Members took an oath of secrecy; each recruited another nine, each of those another nine, and so on. Members only knew the man who recruited them and those men they personally recruited (Hunt 1916, Wilcox 1929, Morgan 1979). White business owners were told to fire Chinese employees; when a barrel factory owner refused, a bomb exploded outside his business (Morgan 1979). In early November of that year, as a work bell rang, an armed mob of men gathered in the streets. They went from house to house, breaking down doors and forcing Chinese families out. The Chinese community was forced to a train station outside of town; two people died from exposure and one person who resisted was subsequently so terrorized by the mob that she went "insane," according to her husband's sworn affidavit (ibid). The next day, Chinese homes and businesses were burned "to the pilings" (ibid.). When telegraphed for help, the Governor did not respond (ibid). The ethnic cleansing was so complete that the process became known regionally as "the Tacoma Solution." Over a century later, while proportionately 2,519 Chinese American people should live in Tacoma, only 727 did in 2008 (Chinese in North America Research Committee 2015).

This climate of racial fear and violence was the context for allotment of Indian lands, which began in earnest after the Dawes Act of 1887 (also called the General Allotment Act). The Puyallup Tribe was located on prime real estate along the deep-water port, and so settlers pulled out all the stops to remove them. In 1888, Congress granted the Pacific Northern Railroad a 66-foot right-of-way through the reservation (Isley 1970). In 1893, Congress passed an allotment act specifically for Puyallup land. It required that all tribal land without a house or cemetery on it be immediately put for sale, and reduced the waiting period before Indian-owned lands could be allotted from 25 years (as in the Dawes Act) to 10 (National Lawyers Guild 1973). Indians who refused to sell were assigned guardians on the basis of ability to speak English; the same five white business leaders, who profited handsomely from their own land purchases, appear again and again in these roles (ibid). Indian signatures were forged and other forms of fraud and theft were committed by railroad companies, real estate agents, and other white businesses and people (ibid). Puyallup elder Ramona Bennett described her mother's recollections of that time and its impact on her people, including her grandfather, to students at the tribal school in 2009:

“[My mother's] childhood as Puyallup was beyond traumatic, she was born in 1907. And Puyallup, as you probably know has the city of Tacoma standing on it, along with Fife, Browns Point, Dash Point, Edgewood, it's [some] very valuable real estate, so our tribe was hit very hard in the land-grab. My mother was a young child when that was taking place. There was something called the Cushman Act, and the Cushman Act gave the Puyallup's permission to sell their property. Now no Puyallup wanted to sell their property, but this was a federal authorization and it resulted in genocide.

Do any of you know what genocide is? Have any of you ever said the word? It's full scale genocide on the Puyallup reservation. And what happened is these Indians were declared incompetent, we couldn't read, write or speak English, and because we couldn't read, write or speak English we were assigned guardians. And the guardians sold the land to each other, kept the money for probate fees and then removed ...the Indian people by force. And the racism was so extreme, see like all these coast Indian people we had a long house tradition, mutually protected societies... Everyone had a role, everyone was needed, and everyone was valued. And our societies were solid healthy societies and were matrilineal... and life was good. But they did the reservation system and the allotments, then our families had to be divided up and live on these parcels of land, and it was "use it or lose it."

"So now you have families in isolated little cabins, totally on their own, living within this racist society. And these men would have a few drinks and just go kick in a cabin door, rape everybody, murder the adults and throw the bodies on the railroad tracks⁷. This was happening when my mother was a small young child. And two of her aunties were murdered that way. Her auntie Lucy and her auntie Jenny, both were killed that way when my mother was a little young girl. And to her old woman days she still cried for her auntie Jenny, who was only nineteen when she was murdered. And so this ...way of life these people enjoyed was totally destructive. As a result of these land grabs of these people selling off properties, putting them on tax rolls and selling them off, our Puyallup people found themselves homeless on our own reservation..."

"... But when this Cushman Act happened, and this land grab started, [my grandfather, who could speak and write in English] was trying to find representation for these Indians, trying to get them a lawyer. But the railroad people, the bank people, the timber people, they were all in on it... they were all corrupt. And so he's trying to get an attorney for someone one day, and the next day he's doing their funeral. And I have his little journals ...he'd be trying to help Burnt Charlie one day with this ...his property being put on the tax rolls, and the next day Burnt Charlie would be murdered, he would be building a coffin for him..." (La Pointe-Gorman 2009)

These injustices were encouraged by the federal government and city leaders

(National Lawyers Guild 1973). One leader of the anti-Chinese ethnic cleansing,

⁷ Tribal Chair Bill Sterud has also talked about this in interviews; see Douglas 2015

James Wickersham, was also involved in processes of allotment (Morgan 1979, National Lawyers Guild 1973, Pegues 2013). Rather than facing any meaningful consequences for his involvement in either removal, Wickersham was greeted by Tacomans as a hero following the anti-Chinese riot (Morgan 1979) and appointed by President McKinley as district judge to Alaska, then elected Alaskan congressional representative (Pegues 2013). Many settlers profited from sales of Indian land; the modern City of Tacoma would not exist were it not for Puyallup removal.

Turn of the Century Transformation of the Estuary

By 1890, logging cleared nearly all forest in the Puget Sound lowlands (Collins et al 2003), with several implications for salmon runs. Loss of trees increased water temperatures because of reduced shade. Loss of woody debris increased the velocity of water flowing through the river and reduced hiding and resting spots for migrating fish. Additionally, cleared lands paved the way for agriculture and urbanization, with their attendant impacts on fish runs and water quality. In the 1890s, the Tacoma Land Company began dredging the western channel of the Puyallup River, significantly damaging the amount and functionality of estuarine habitat in the Bay (Kerwin 1999). Between 1894 and 1907, an additional “estimated 1,020 acres of mudflat and emergent marsh were altered as a result of attempts to dredge and relocate the Puyallup River” (NOAA 1996). This took place in parts of the estuary young fish were most dependent on for freshwater flow (Kerwin 1999).

In 1902, the federal government began dredging City Waterway (right next to Tahadowa, now known as Thea Foss Waterway). Nearly 100 acres of intertidal area were dredged and over 3 million cubic yards of material removed, apparently dumped in nearby wetland (Kerwin 1999). In 1905, 1.7 million yards of material was dredged from 41.9 acres of Puyallup River mudflats and--again--dumped to the side, destroying more estuarine habitat (Evans 1991). In 1909, while river alterations were in process, a flood delivered a massive load of sediment into the recently dredged waterway. Orders were given to halt dredging until plans were in place to prevent further sedimentation (ibid.)

At this point, the tide flats were on their way to resembling the current Port, with its eight distinct waterways. The new City of Tacoma displaced Tahadowa. Its sewers dumped directly into City Waterway (City of Tacoma 2016). At the time, there was widespread faith in the ability of rivers and tides to almost magically dispose of waste (Outwater 1996), and so dumping in waterways was a typical practice (ibid, Cronon 1991). No permits were required to dredge waterways or fill wetlands and so it was done informally, as was convenient. Around the same time the river mouth was being dredged and relocated, at least another 50 acres of mudflats between Middle Waterway and the Puyallup River were destroyed to create a log boom storage area, while approximately 22 acres were dredged to deepen the Milwaukee Slip, which mainly served the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad (Evans 1991).

A ten-year flood event redirected the White River into the Puyallup River around 1906 (Kerwin 1999) and in 1910, the state passed legislation allowing counties to do flood prevention work. The Pierce County River Improvement District (PCRI) formed and began work to permanently redirect the White River into the Puyallup (ibid.), which was completed in 1914. The diversion increased the Puyallup River's freshwater output by 50% and increased its sediment load, damaging intertidal vegetative habitat. The increase in freshwater created a plume extending far into the Bay which would have attracted young fish still developing capacity for osmoregulation; research shows juvenile salmonids followed the plume, shifting their historical habitat (ibid). By 1917, about 600 acres of tide flats had been destroyed to create the Thea Foss, Puyallup, Middle, Hylebos, and Milwaukee waterways, which created an additional 200 acres of open water (Ibid). By end of the next decade, the Blair Waterway was opened and 162 acres of mudflats and 72 acres of marsh were destroyed to deepen waterways and build upland for piers and warehouses (ibid).

In 1910, despite stripped lowlands, Tacoma set the world record for lumber shipped in one year. It became known as "lumber capital of the world" (Magden 2008). In 1918, citizens voted to create the publicly-owned Port of Tacoma, following 1911 approval of legislation allowing creation of public ports (Magden 2008). In the following years, Navy shipyards serving Fort Lewis (near the previous location of Fort Nisqually and occupying 70% of the Nisqually Reservation in 1917) were built. By 1941, despite ongoing urbanization and industrialization, including creation of two more waterways (St. Paul and Sitcum)

(Kerwin 1999), Commencement Bay wetlands were still capable of stormwater retention and biofiltration, and habitat still existed to support the complete life cycle of waterfowl (Evans 1991).

In the early 1900s, Puyallup tribal members sued for return of the tide flats (originally included in reservation boundaries but drawn out after an Olympia fire destroyed records (National Lawyers Guild 1973)). They were denied on the basis of the property's value to industry (U.S. vs Ashton 1909). By 1903, the ten-year period limiting allotment of Puyallup land had passed, and the reservation had been decimated. "Many people--Puyallups as well as whites--[announced] that the Puyallup Indian tribe had ceased to exist" (Harmon 1998, 135). In 1904, a hydroelectric dam was built on the river, damaging fish runs and harming Indian access to traditional resources used for self-sufficiency and cultural survival. Use of heavy fuel oil in shipping became commonplace in the Port (Chasan 1981), further damaging estuarine habitat and attendant food sources including shellfish and waterfowl. By the Dawes Act's end with the 1928 Miriam Report, just 33 acres remained of the original 23,000 reserved by the Medicine Creek Treaty. Allotment had economically and environmentally devastated the tribe.

In 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act introduced new U.S. policy towards tribes. It imposed specific models of government on tribes in order for their sovereignty to be recognized and treaty rights honored (Harmon 1998); this included the Puyallups. In 1936, the Secretary of the Interior recognized a formal Puyallup tribal government (Ruby et al. 2010). Around the same time, the Army

Corps of Engineers rerouted the Puyallup River, moving it away from the boundary described in the treaty. None of the tribe's remaining land was adjacent to the river (Isley 1970). In 1939, construction began on the White River to build Mud Mountain Dam. Despite measures to mitigate the dam's impact on fish runs, which include trapping and trucking salmon past the dam (Kerwin 1999), it formed a significant and obvious problem for health of wild fish runs on the Puyallup and White rivers.

In 1913, Superintendent H.H. Johnson was removed from his position at Cushman school, the Indian trades school⁸ near the tide flats. Indians accused him of direct responsibility for death of a child at the school; refusing to allot in-demand reservation lands to tribal members, instead selling it to his friends in industry; placing illegal restrictions on their fishing rights; exploiting their labor; mismanaging their funds (when asked to produce funds held in trust for the tribe, he refused to do so), and more (*Aberdeen Herald* 1913). In 1918-19 two waves of an influenza epidemic killed nine children, overwhelming the school's medical resources; shortly afterward World War I austerity measures led to the school's defunding and closure in 1920 (Roberts, 1987). The building reopened almost immediately as Cushman Indian Hospital (Puyallup Tribe of Indians 1977), a

⁸ Indian boarding schools were notorious for human rights abuses. Indian children were frequently sent to schools far from their tribes, where they were forbidden to speak their language or practice cultural customs, and frequently subjected to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Richard Pratt, founder of the first boarding school (Carlisle School in Pennsylvania) once famously said the schools' mission should be to "kill the Indian, and save the man." (See *Brave Heart* 2000 and Solinger 2007)

sanitarium for tubercular Indians which also provided some basic care per Medicine Creek treaty agreements.

In the late 1930s through the end of World War II, the Port was “given over to the wartime effort” (Magden 2008). Thousands of soldiers left from Fort Lewis for the South Pacific (ibid.). Several Puyallups enlisted and served during the war. Returning from service to be denied their traditional fishing rights, they began fighting for democracy at home (Douglas 2015). In 1959, the state closed Cushman Indian Hospital against tribal members’ protests, reopening the building several years later as “Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic and Treatment Center,” a treatment-*cum*-detention-facility for young people in the Puget Sound area. In the 1960s and 70s, work to reclaim treaty rights and create resources for the tribe-- health care, medical care, jobs, healthy fish runs-- escalated on several fronts (La Pointe-Gorman 2009); the children of World War II veterans began fighting alongside them (Burns & Adams 1971).

Fish Wars and Boldt Decision

In the 1960s and 70s, tribes around Puget Sound escalated organizing for treaty rights. Fish runs had been decimated by dams, pollution, and industrial fishing; in 1977, just 50 spring Chinook survived their return to White River spawning grounds (Kerwin 1999). Game wardens, rather than regulating sport and industrial fishing, put the blame for declining fish populations on tribal fisherwomen and men, who were accused of “poaching” (Burns & Adams 1971). Tribes responded by asserting their treaty rights via “fish-ins”. In 1966, the *New*

York Times reported on fish-ins held by Puyallup, Nisqually, and Muckleshoot tribes in their usual and accustomed grounds, despite attacks from game wardens and over 50 arrests in the preceding 3 years (Bigart 1966). Indian organizers were beaten, clubbed, charged with felonies and misdemeanors, and their fishing equipment was stolen and destroyed (Burns & Adams 1971, La Pointe-Gorman 2009). Nisqually Valerie Bridges, Billy Frank's niece, was heavily active in fishing rights struggle and arrested several times along with her sister Alison, uncle, and other family members. She mysteriously drowned near the height of the Fish Wars while bathing in the Nisqually River; she was twenty years old (Burns & Adams 1971). This did not dissuade organizers; after a large community gathering to mourn, plans were laid for a fishing encampment along the Puyallup River (Ibid.).

Ramona Bennett recounted her experience during that time and in the encampment on a Northwest Indian Fisheries panel in 2014:

“We had had a 90-year period of time where there was no legal recognized fishery. And our fishermen had been arrested, treated like thieves, dragged off. The bottoms were beat out of all of the canoes, nets were slashed; fishermen, fisherwomen were arrested, dragged off to jail, put on trial, treated like thieves. And some of the fishermen, in defiance, began setting up fishing camps. And the fisheries and game departments, they would come in at night and beat the fishermen, and their families, roll tear gas canisters under their houses, beat their heads against the side of their cars, and so at some point, Hank Adams (who was our choreographer, who really directed the dance) wanted to bring this all out for the world to see what was happening to us. And we had set up this... little camp, the first camp that we set up it was Satiacum Danny, my son Eric, and Karen (a Satiacum), and myself; we put up this little camp over by Brando's Landing, and ...we built a little tiny fire. And we had police-- Tacoma police on motorcycles, police cars, fire department-

- they all come down, they extinguished our little fire. And so we moved to what's known at Puyallup as the ceremonial grounds. It's just under the 99 bridge there at Puyallup.

“And it was at that point, that that's where all of the energy went. And Indians from all over, [up] in Canada, Montana, people from Alcatraz, they all come into that camp, which was a camp for witnesses. It was for observers. And so the Jewish Anti-Defamation League, Urban League, the United Churches from Seattle and Tacoma, they come to be witnesses, to help us out that way. It wasn't anything that we did on our own. It was a lot of help from a lot of people. And the Socialist Workers Party Radical Women, you know, a lot of them brought food [and] support for us. And we were there in that camp, it was not an armed camp, until Pauline Matheson came from work.

“[Pauline] was a social worker, she come right straight from work. And she had on her nice suit and nice shoes. And she was carrying a rifle. Her son Paul was going fishing that day. And she told us all, she said, ‘Stand back, I don't want to be mistaken for a mob. I'm not a mob, I'm one woman with one gun, and I'm going to shoot any of these state people that bother my son.’ And so she wound up there on the bank of the river with her rifle, and stood guard over her son.

“And the next day, now it was an armed camp. We stayed in that camp for six weeks. It was very hard. And the day of the bust, 550 pigs and the National Rifle Association all came to rain down on our camp. And Lyle Smith, the chief of police there in Tacoma, met with me early that morning, and I told him, ‘You have no jurisdiction here. You are trespassing here. You have no authority here. If you come on our property, you're trespassing.’

“They came in with force. There were 60 of us in that camp that day, a mix of men and women and children-- there were at least 15 juveniles that were in that camp. And they come in with force. They gassed us, they clubbed us, they dragged us, they beat us. One of the pigs grabbed me, grabbed me, and he pulled, and I jumped toward him and he fell in the river. And I was charged with assault. By the end of that day, I was looking at 35 years in prison. Marge Matheson said it best, I had told them they had no jurisdiction, and she said ‘You hurt their feelings. And there's no law against hurting their feelings, so they had to charge you with riot, assault, arson.’ You know those were hard times.” (Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission 2014).

The same year as the raid on the Puyallup encampment (1970) saw creation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal Clean Air Act, and Washington's Department of Ecology. 1971 brought the new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as passage of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The SMA, with the Clean Water Act of 1977, ended the days when industry could dredge and fill wetlands as they pleased.

In the early 1970s, the Department of Game and Department of Fisheries sued the Puyallup Tribe to prevent tribal members from fishing against state conservation measures. The court ruled that the Puyallup Tribe no longer existed and therefore had no treaty rights, and issued a permanent injunction. A trial court dissolved the injunction and held that the tribe had the right to fish under "reasonable" regulation. After reviewing the case, in 1972 the court reinstated the injunction with modifications, holding that the state could not charge Indians fees for fishing licenses and the injunction should be "tailored to the situation and not over-broad" (*Department of Game and Department of Fisheries v Puyallup Tribe* 1972).

The 1970 Puyallup encampment raid and ensuing international news coverage prompted the federal government to get involved. It joined many tribes⁹, including the Puyallup, in filing suit against the State of Washington. In 1974, Judge Boldt ruled in *United States v. Washington* (widely known as "the Boldt

⁹ Specifically, the Puyallup, Nisqually, Muckleshoot, Hoh, Makah, Quileute, Skokomish, Lummi, Quinalt, Sauk-Suiattle, Squaxin Island, Stillaguamish, and Upper Skagit River Tribes, as well as the Yakama Nation

Decision”) that the Puyallup had a treaty *right*, not a “privilege” as state courts had previously treated it, to fish in their usual and accustomed places. He held that because this right was granted through a federal treaty, as long as the United States recognized the sovereignty of the tribe, the State of Washington had no authority to supersede federal jurisdiction and restrict treaty rights. Boldt further stated that the phrase in the Medicine Creek Treaty saying the tribes have the right to fish “in common with all citizens of the Territory” did *not* mean the state had authority to restrict tribal rights just as it restricted fishing privileges of citizens. Boldt ruled that the original treaty meaning of “in common” could reasonably be interpreted to mean that treaty tribes had the right to *at least 50%* of fish harvests (United States v. Washington 1974). This was a pivotal moment for the Puyallup Tribe. It was also a pivotal moment for estuarine habitat recovery, as it laid a foundation for lawsuits such as resulted in the 2007 “Martinez Decision” requiring the state to remove impediments to fish runs, in order to ensure fish remain for tribes to catch (United States v. Washington 2013).

In 1974, the tribe also created a mobile health unit to fill gaps left by Cushman Hospital’s closure. In 1976, Puyallups including Ramona Bennett and Tribal Chair Bill Sterud led an armed reclamation of Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic and Treatment Center, the former hospital site (Deaderick 1976, Douglas 2015). In 1977 they filed a request for special appropriations for funding to pay for return of the building (Puyallup Tribe of Indians 1977), which was finally returned in 1980.

After the Boldt Decision, the tribe filed several lawsuits for land occupied by the Port of Tacoma. The Army Corps of Engineers redirected the Puyallup River between 1948-50; this moved the river away from reservation boundaries and exposed about 12 acres of riverbed (Larson 2008). The Port of Tacoma seized the exposed bed for development. In its lawsuit, the tribe argued the Medicine Creek treaty was explicitly renegotiated in the 1856 Fox Island meetings to ensure the tribe's access to the Puyallup River, and therefore the riverbed belonged to the tribe. The court agreed; so did the court of appeals. The tribe, industry, and Port of Tacoma began negotiating a settlement (Puyallup Tribe v. Port of Tacoma 1983).

Superfund Listing, 1990 Settlement, and Environmental Restoration Efforts

While negotiations over the riverbed settlement were taking place, the Tribe filed another suit against the Port of Tacoma and Union Pacific Railroad for 170 acres of occupied reservation land. The Port had plans to develop part of the area for a \$26 million Sea-Land terminal. In 1983, the Port paid the Tribe \$1.4 million for an agreement stating that if it won the lawsuit it would lease the site to Sea-Land for 40 years (Associated Press 1984). In 1984, the tribe accepted \$77 million in compensation for the riverbed occupied by the Port (Puyallup Tribe of Indians v. Port of Tacoma 1981).

In 1981, Commencement Bay was listed as an EPA Superfund site due to severe environmental degradation from industry and urbanization. In 1983, after

hazardous levels of pollutants were measured in sediments, shellfish, and fish, the near shore/tide flats were placed on the National Priority List for Superfund cleanup (Kerwin 1999). Eight priority cleanup sites were identified across six waterways for sediment cleanup and point source pollution management (USFWS & NOAA 1996). Pollutants in the waterways include arsenic, lead, zinc, cadmium, copper, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), phthalates, and other organic compounds (ibid). Groundwater in another part of the larger Superfund site, the Tacoma Tar Pits (also located on the tide flats, and current site of a for-profit immigration detention center), was contaminated with a plume of benzene (ibid, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2014).

In 1986, construction was finished on the first “Gog-le-hi-te” (“where land and water meet” (Hunt 1916)) wetland, as part of remediation requirements imposed on the Port for environmental damage. In 1988, the Tribe voted 319 to 162 to accept a \$162 million settlement for the 170 acres of land occupied by the Port. Part of the terms of the settlement included 216 acres of land, which the Tribe required the Port to remediate before finalizing the settlement. The title of a 1993 *HazMat World* article about the remediation-- “Superfund site cleaned in record time”-- highlights the speed with which the Port cleaned parts of the Blair and Milwaukee waterways in order to meet settlement conditions (*HazMat World* 1993). It was formally accepted in 1990. The tribe also won \$10 million to rebuild a salmon fishery on the Puyallup River. In a comment to the *New York Times*, Frank Wright Jr, the Puyallup Tribe’s administrative manager, said that “With this

settlement, we can protect our culture and our river system. Our people should know they will always have a future" (Egan 1988).

The 1989 Centennial Accord between federally recognized tribes in Washington State and the state dramatically transformed the state's relationship to tribal sovereignty. Before the 1974 Boldt Decision (and through ensuing appeals), Washington State overasserted its power, treating tribes as subordinate to state government and denying tribal sovereignty. The Centennial Accord formally recognized a government-to-government relationship between the tribes and state (Steinman 2005) and co-management of fisheries.

The 1989-90 settlement, the second largest ever won by a tribe from the U.S., allowed the Tribe to expand social services including culturally-appropriate health care and education. The tribe used part of the settlement to create additional economic opportunities, including a lucrative urban casino (the Emerald Queen) and an international shipping company based in the Blair Waterway (Marine View Ventures, Inc.) The stated goal of Marine View Ventures' business is to buy back lost land, as well as create economic opportunity for tribes across the continent through access to international markets (Douglas 2015, Marine View Ventures 2016). The tribe has leveraged its wealth to improve social and environmental conditions throughout the region, donating more than a million dollars annually to local charities, government agencies, hospitals (Cosgrove 2011), and other programs, as well as other tribes (Nagle 2015), and taking

industry and governments to court to force stronger and swifter environmental regulations and remediation efforts.

In 1991, a team of environmental remediation experts reported to the Army Corps of Engineers that of an estimated 2,085 acres of mudflats in Commencement Bay in 1877, 89% were destroyed. They also found that of 3,894 acres of marsh habitat between the Bay and Interstate 5, only 57 acres, or 1 %, remained (Evans 1991). By 1994, the Superfund cleanup in the Sitcum, Milwaukee, and St. Paul waterways was considered complete. The same year, the tribe was authorized to administer Clean Water Act standards similar to a state (TOA), and in 1996 became one of the trustees responsible for deciding on a restoration plan for the Bay (USFWS & NOAA 1996). By 1999, mitigation efforts in the Port pursuant to CERCLA and tribal agreements created 50 acres of fragmented but viable intertidal and wetland salmonid habitat (Kerwin 1999). The Puyallup River was also gradually building more habitat at its mouth through natural sedimentation (ibid.). At the same time, the Thea Foss, Middle, and Hylebos waterways remained Superfund sites with no remediation plan in place (ibid), and Puget Sound Chinook were listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2001, the tribe joined many complainants in a lawsuit compelling the State to repair thousands of damaged fish passages in order to restore salmon runs; in 2007, a court issued a summary judgment holding the State responsible for the blocked culverts, with remedies to be determined by bench trial. The final

argument in the trial was heard in 2010, and the court allowed three years for the parties to negotiate a settlement, which did not happen; meanwhile, thousands of culverts remained blocked. In 2013, Judge Martinez issued the court's Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law compelling the state of Washington to repair culverts at an estimated cost of ~\$1 billion. He also interpreted the treaties to contain "the implied promise that neither the negotiators nor their successors would take actions that would significantly degrade the resource" (United States v Washington 2013). This ruling further strengthened the tribe's abilities to protect salmon habitat, potentially applying far beyond culverts, to any government or industrial activity impairing salmon runs.

In 2008, construction finished on the second Gog-le-hi-te wetland and the Port Commission deeded the wetlands to the Tribe. Gog-le-hi-te II is near Gog-le-hi-te I on a former municipal dump (*Tacoma Weekly* 2008). In 2009, the Mud Mountain dam fish trap in Buckley saw a record number of returning pink salmon-- more than 450,000 (*Auburn Reporter* 2009). In 2015, the Puyallup Tribe (with NOAA, Muckleshoots, and others) won a lawsuit compelling more than 50 polluting businesses and government agencies to fund cleanup of Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood waterways and restore salmon habitat near the Bay and along the lower White River (Associated Press 2015). In December 2015, the tribe joined a large public outcry against proposed facilities for liquefied natural gas storage and methanol refinement in the Port (Lynn 2015, Puyallup Tribal News 2016). The tribe sued to prevent the storage facility's construction, citing concerns about impacts on surface and groundwater given its proposed location in

a not-yet-cleaned Superfund site at the mouth of the Puyallup River (Lynn 2015, Northwest Treaty Tribes 2016). In February 2016 the tribe notified the EPA it was in violation of the Clean Water Act due to its delay in implementing dramatically higher water quality standards which take tribal fish consumption into account (Sterud 2016).

Conclusion

“As Indian people, we need to think generationally. You know what that means- generationally? -You need to know- okay. Chief Leschi put down his life for his Indian people. Chief Leschi had everything. He was rich by white standards, he had lots of horses, had a nice home, well-educated guy. But when it came right down to the crunch ...he stood against the white people, they were doing a treaty that denied his people access to the salmon and the clams and the things that we need to live. He stood against them and they killed him. They murdered him. He went on trial and he was found innocent, then they re-tried him in a military court and they hung him. They killed him. [And] Indians come from everywhere and they set up camps and they cried and they prayed and they sang. And they prayed that the government would change its mind. And the government murdered Chief Leschi.

“And you know what, if he had it to do over again, he'd do it over again because he loves you. And he knew if he didn't stand for the Indian people, that the future generations were going to have nothing. And he knew that he loved us, without ever seeing our faces-he thought generationally, and that's how we have to think. That's how we have to think, we have to leave something good for the ones coming after us, because we know we love them.”

-Ramona Bennett, as stated to a class at Chief Leschi School
(La Pointe-Gorman 2009)

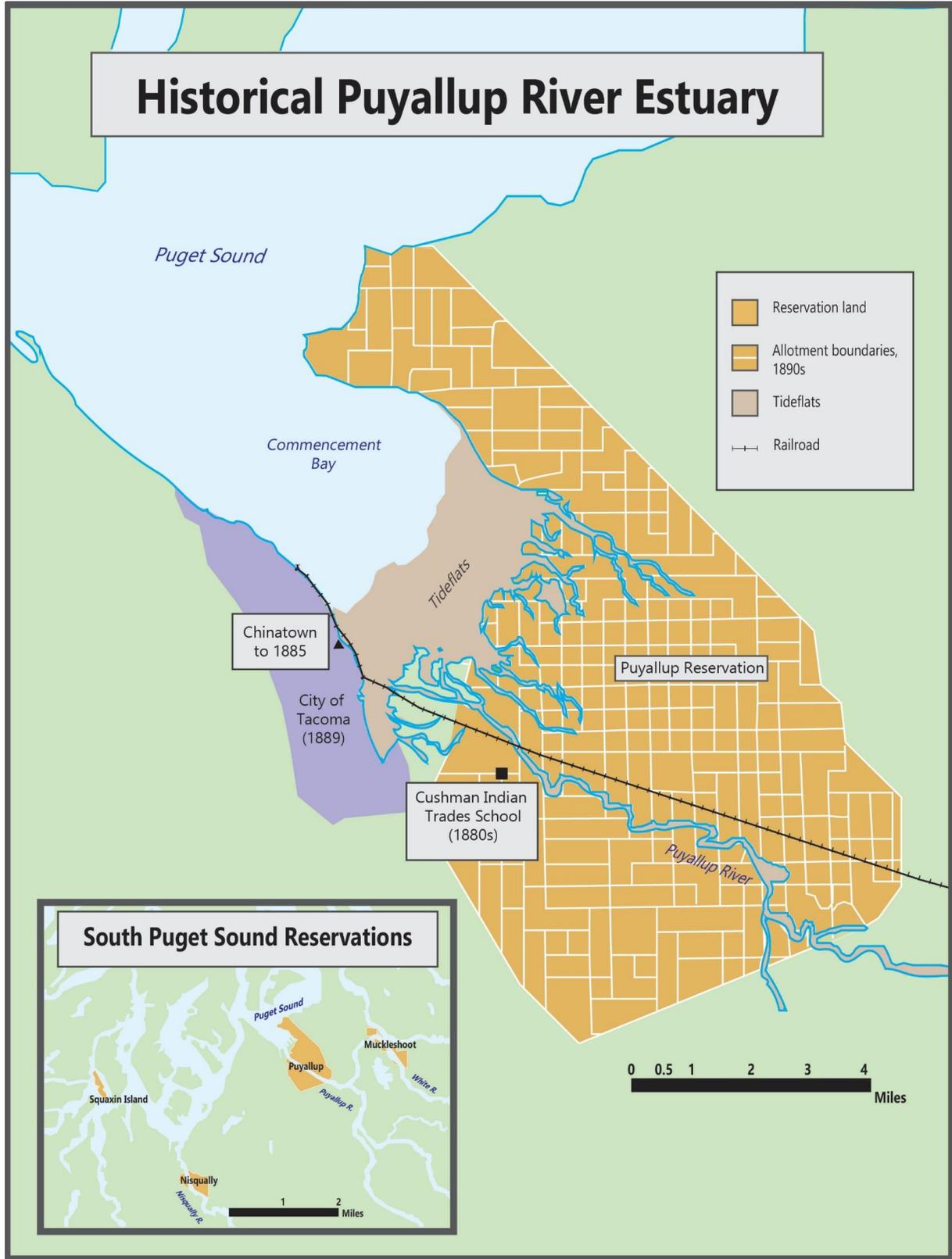
Control over the land and water is a contested and integral part of the imposition of U.S. colonization and what supremacy in the estuary, and of Puyallup decolonization and self-determination. The industrialization and urbanization which accompanied U.S. colonization was facilitated by rapid and

massive environmental degradation and extraction of natural resources.

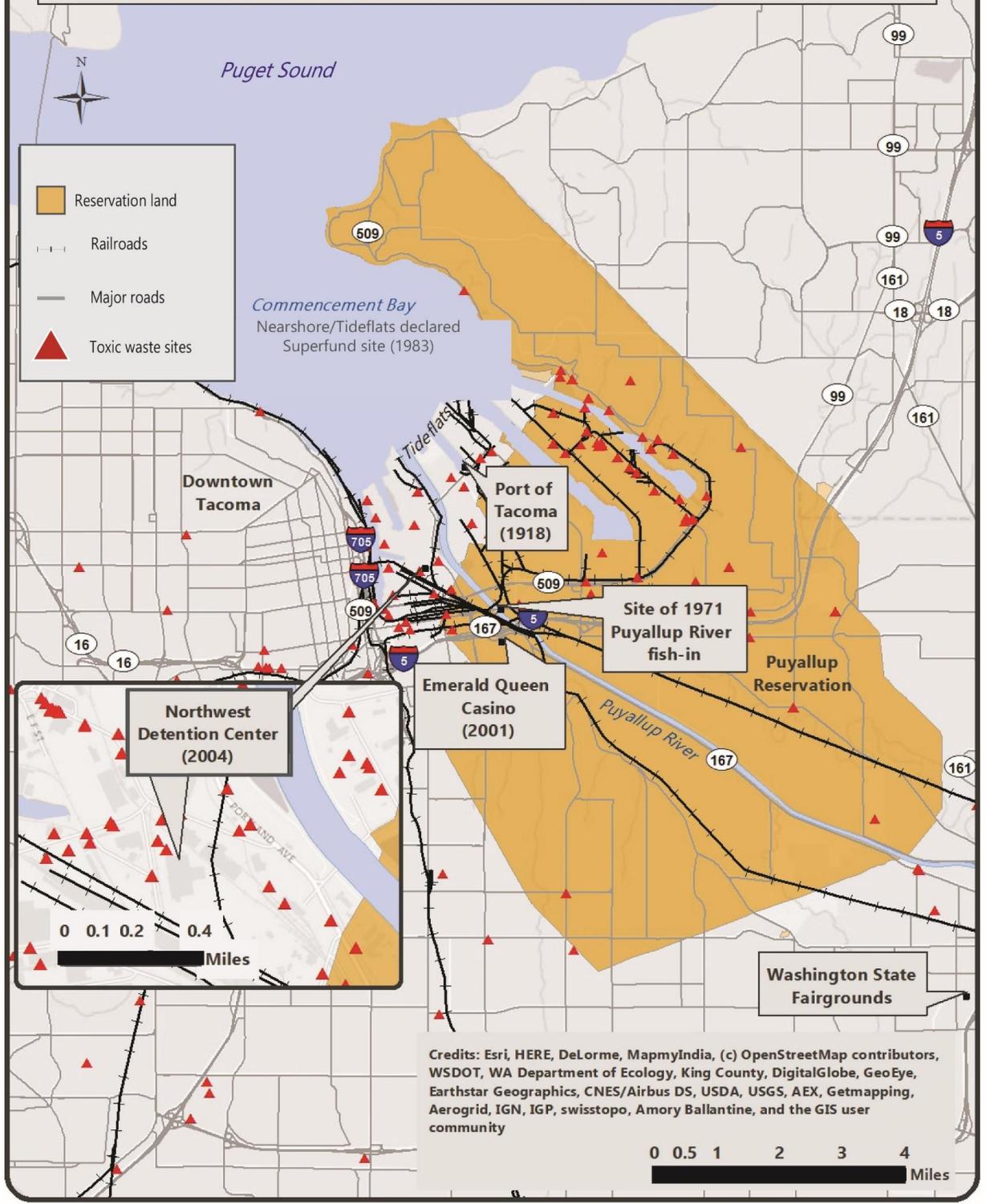
Washington State imposed over-simplistic, modernist management schemes on the Puyallup River Estuary, reflecting a very limited and short-term approach to environmental stewardship. Urbanization, industrialization, deforestation, dams, dredging and re-routing rivers have degraded the health of the estuary, harming its people and salmon.

Despite federal and state subversions of Indigenous sovereignty, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians is a powerful local force for environmental and economic health. For generations, members of the tribe have found ways to reclaim lost resources, navigating internal conflicts (about giving up their land in the 1989-90 settlement, for example) and complex choices (leveraging their stake in the Port to force environmental remediation and halt development of methanol and liquefied natural gas facilities, while also supporting deep-water shipping as a strategic resource). In many ways, the health of the local ecosystem is intertwined with local tribes' political and economic power; as the Puyallup Tribe's regional power has grown, so has the health of the Estuary and its fish. Non-Native advocates for the estuary and bay have benefited from the Tribe's intergenerational thinking, as have all people and nonhuman life dependent on clean water, air, and land. It is clear that strengthening and supporting Puyallup tribal sovereignty also strengthens and supports the Puyallup River Estuary.

Historical Puyallup River Estuary



Contemporary Puyallup River Estuary



**“Turn this wall on its side and it becomes a bridge”*: Ecofeminism,
Geography, and Critical Ethnic Studies**

*Translation of Spanish graffiti on Mexican side of U.S.-Mexico border wall
(Nevins 2008)

A note: a draft of this chapter is published in *Ecofeminism in Dialogue*, Eds.
Mickey & Vakoch (2017) [in press].

Introduction

In this chapter, I apply Black, mestiza, and Indigenous feminist theory to historical and legal geography to understand how colonization, decolonization, racism, and resistance can be traced in transformations of a landscape. While many of the theorists I draw upon do not explicitly identify as ecofeminist, they make significant contributions to ecofeminism by linking gender- and race-based violence with exploitation of land and labor, and by calling for trauma-informed, decolonizing and intersectional methods and analyses. I take a for-profit immigration detention facility as a case study: the EPA Superfund site where the Northwest Detention Center [NWDC] stands is also historically Puyallup tribal land. I begin with a brief introduction to the site of my case study; recount histories of racism, resistance, colonization, and decolonization at the site; and conclude with an assessment of how ecofeminist frameworks can bridge geography and critical ethnic studies.

The NWDC is a for-profit immigration detention facility in the Port of Tacoma tide flats. The Puyallup River Estuary, including the tide flats, is part of the usual and accustomed fishing grounds guaranteed to the Puyallup Tribe in the 1854 Treaty of Medicine Creek. In 1864, Congress granted about 40 million acres, including the current site of the NWDC, to the Northern Pacific Railway in order to fund a transcontinental line. A company subsidiary granted the space to a meatpacking company in exchange for its “improvement.” Meatpacking took place there for nearly a century, contributing to the area’s severe environmental degradation. The tide flats are now part of an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site. After the last meatpacking company left, the next industry at the site was the NWDC.

In 1871, an Indian boarding school was created just two miles from where the NWDC stands, ostensibly to serve local Native communities by teaching children skilled trades. The school was underfunded and mismanaged, resulting in student injuries and deaths from physical abuse, industrial accidents, and illness including multiple waves of influenza in 1918-19 which killed nine children. The school’s superintendents played a key role in allotting Indian lands and grossly abused their power. After the school’s closure in 1920, the building reopened as a medical facility serving local tribes. In the 1950s, the Puyallup Tribe agreed to let the federal government buy the building and manage it as a medical facility. The government almost immediately shut down the hospital and granted the space to Washington State, which reopened it as a juvenile detention facility. In 1976,

Puyallup women led an armed occupation of the institution and in 1980 it was returned to the tribe.

Puyallup tribal activism and lawsuits led to environmental cleanup and restoration in the region. Recent remediation efforts can be directly traced to tribes' ongoing fight for a healthy landbase. In the 1950s and 60s, local tribes campaigned to assert their fishing rights and were targets of virulent state and civilian violence in response. A 1970 fish-in on the Puyallup River, again involving many women leaders, led to the 1974 Boldt Decision. The Boldt Decision upheld treaty rights, and local tribes immediately began reclaiming and restoring environmental health to their traditional lands and waters. Recent remediation efforts can be directly traced to tribes' ongoing fight for a healthy landbase.

Immigrant groups besides Latin Americans appear throughout the site's racialized environmental history. In 1885, Tacoma Chinese workers and their families were targets of one of the most violent anti-Chinese riots on the West Coast, led by Tacoma's mayor and supported by local law enforcement. Japanese workers quickly filled gaps left by displaced Chinese people and became major regional agricultural producers, including via some farms in Fife (Goto 1998, Hunter 2008), a city adjacent to the tide flats located entirely on Puyallup reservation land. During World War II, Fife's Japanese Americans were interned in the Puyallup Fairgrounds, forcing displacement and relocation of Issei (Japanese immigrants) and Nisei (their children) from their farmlands, while

Japanese Tacomans were removed by train to southern California. After vicious early 20th-century evictions, Mexican workers were recruited via the Bracero Program to meet labor shortages of World War II and the Korean War. Today, the GEO Group profits from detention of immigrants, almost exclusively immigrants of color. In later sections, I describe these histories' connections in greater detail.

Early U.S. Colonial Era (1850s-1920s)

In 1854, Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens initiated the Treaty of Medicine Creek. The treaty was written and negotiated in English, translated to Chinook trading jargon (a language of about 300 words), and translated a second time to local tongues. The first version of the treaty gave away some of the best regional tribal land against the protests of appointed signatories; the Puyallup Tribe was tricked into ceding all their historic lands but 1,200 acres on a bluff overlooking Commencement Bay. Two Nisqually leaders, Chief Leschi and his brother Quiemuth, protested the outcomes; while there is an "X" next to Leschi's name on the treaty, many suggest it was forged and he in fact refused to sign. Afterwards, many tribes expressed growing dissatisfaction with treaty terms; when rumors of dishonest treaty-making with the Yakama Nation reached Puget Sound, along with rumors the Yakimas had murdered an Indian agent, relationships between tribes and settlers became combustible (Morgan 1979, McWhorter 1994).

In 1855, Leschi traveled to the state capitol to protest the treaty's terms. The state's acting governor attempted to arrest Leschi and his brother, beginning the

1855-1856 Puget Sound War. Puyallup Indians who did not join the uprising were relocated to Fox Island. Towards the end of the war, Leschi visited the Island; several women left to fight with him (Morgan 1979). To end the war, Isaac Stevens returned to Fox Island to renegotiate treaty terms. Under the amended treaty, the Puyallup Reservation was extended to 23,000 acres adjacent to the river and bay (Morgan 1979)). Leschi was betrayed and arrested, and a few months later Quiemuth turned himself in. Quiemuth was shot and stabbed in the heart while he slept under armed guard in the governor's office (Morgan 1979); while a man named Joseph Bunting was arrested, no one was willing to testify against him and he was released (Newell 1975). Leschi was wrongfully convicted and hanged in 1858 (Senate Joint Memorial 8054).

In 1871, the Bureau of Indian Affairs identified a site for a school. A resident Puyallup tribal elder agreed to leave to allow room for community services (Puyallup Tribe of Indians 1977). Cushman opened in 1871 as a primary school emphasizing vocational training (Roberts, 1987, 221) and soon expanded to become a boarding school for Native youth from as far east as Plains nations. Around the same time, the 1893 Puyallup Land Act began allotment of the tribe's 23,000-acre reservation (Roberts, 1987, 221); by the end of allotment in 1934, just 33 acres remained.

Cushman's superintendent also facilitated sales of Indian land. In 1913, the Aberdeen Herald reported that Superintendent H.H. Johnson was removed from his post amid allegations of corruption and violence. He was charged by the

Quinault Tribe with direct responsibility for the death of a child at the school; abuse of his power to control Indian working conditions and access to traditional resources, and to allot Indian land; and other forms of fraud and cronyism.

Cushman appears to have been modeled after a military school, with children holding official titles like “lieutenant” in various “companies” (Roberts 1987, Reiter 1998). Hundreds of children ran away from the school during its 49-year existence, and evidence of neglect and abuse is apparent in accounts of their conditions (Roberts 1987, 231-4). One boy, Chester Gordon, tried to run away several times. When he finally succeeded, his family enclosed a photograph of his severely bruised back in a complaint of brutality. While the school’s “Disciplinarian” (a military man) admitted to beating Chester, he claimed not to have left bruises. Another runaway, Louis Snapps (Tulalip), spent a week in city jail for assaulting the Disciplinarian. Still, school administrators puzzled over the children’s ingratitude and unwillingness to make the most of opportunities available to them (ibid, 232). This puzzlement fit with a general pattern of genocidal paternalism towards “uncivilized” Indigenous communities across the continent (Limerick, 196).

At Cushman, male students were trained in the trades (Roberts 1987, 222) while girls were trained in “American versions of domesticity,” doing much of the work required to run the school (ibid. 223). H. H. Johnson’s successor’s misogyny is apparent in his descriptions of Indian girls’ disobedience. When one girl snuck out with friends to see a movie and was evidently sexually assaulted by two

soldiers, Superintendent E. H. Hammond wrote her attackers “gave her all that was coming to her judging from the police matron’s report” and recommended she be sent to reform school (ibid.).

Boarding schools were tools of genocide across North America and are documented sources of intergenerational trauma in Native communities (Brave Heart 2000). Attending school was compulsory and usually required separation of children from families and their land (Solinger 2007). Administrators and staff physically, emotionally, and sexually abused and neglected Native youth, forbidding them to speak their languages or practice their religions. The schools did their best to “kill the Indian, and save the man,” as Captain Richard Pratt, founder of the first boarding school, famously said. Canada has issued apologies and made small reparations to First Nations communities for violence of its “residential” schools, but the U.S. has done little to address their lasting impacts. At the same time, students had varied experiences; some preferred boarding schools to classrooms with racist white peers, and some formed intertribal friendships and learned how to fight for their rights.

In recent decades, Native peoples have created resources like the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA)’s “Healthy Families” project and the Boarding Schools Healing Project (King 2008) to address legacies of intergenerational and historical trauma. Louis Snapp’s tribe, the Tulalips, teach classes on traditional parenting techniques while working to address the schools’ legacy (ibid.). Echoes of the schools are present in modern carceral facilities like the NWDC, which profits from separating families, detaining and removing

people, many of them Indigenous. Detainees do much of the labor required to run the NWDC for almost nothing (Resistencia al NWDC 2014).

Feminist historian Rickie Solinger draws comparisons between boarding schools' erasure of children's connections with community and land (and attendant assimilation into settler colonial culture) and Child Protective Services (CPS) practices of re-homing Indigenous children with white families. While CPS now makes some effort to place Indigenous children with family or tribal members, CPS intervention continues to assert U.S. federal authority over Indigenous families and communities (Solinger 2007). While Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is now building detention centers with family units, until recently children of detainees have been put in custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) Division for Unaccompanied Children's Services (Women's Refugee Commission 2007). Much like Indian boarding schools, immigration detention manages to facilitate constriction, exploitation, and expulsion of immigrant communities all at once.

The boarding school and allotment eras coincided with the constriction of Native (Puyallup) fishing in usual and accustomed places in the estuary. In the 1880s reservation boundaries were redrawn after a fire destroyed records in Olympia. The tide flats, while included in the revised treaty, were drawn out by surveyors (National Lawyers Guild 1973). When Puyallup tribal members sued for return of the tidal flats, they were denied on the basis of the property's value to industry (U.S. vs Ashton 1909). As the tribe was removed, the tide flats were

dredged and filled. Because of urbanization and industrialization, the Puyallup River was channelized and re-routed; the White River was re-routed into the Puyallup after a 10-year flood event; and in 1904 and 1930 dams were built on the river for hydroelectricity and flood control. The mouth of the Puyallup River is critical habitat for young salmon still developing capacity for osmoregulation (NOAA 1996). The river's channelization, along with its increased flow from the White River's re-routing, created a plume of freshwater extending far out into the bay, changing the habitat of young salmon to deeper and more open water. Settlers' industrial fishing interests, habitat pollution and destruction, and dam construction interrupting fish migration combined to severely constrict and degrade fish runs. This limited the tribal economy and self-reliance, and directed tribal members to wage labor in canneries, factories, mills, mines, hop fields, and other settler-owned industries.

Trauma and resilience are tightly interwoven with relationships and community. Environmental historian Donald Worster attributes a significant piece of the Dust Bowl's ecological crisis to extractive agricultural processes, particularly a lack of a sense of place, critical for environmental adaptation (Worster, 164). He identifies extractive practices with rootlessness and lack of relational accountability (ibid, 147) and posits that the nuclear family was a counterforce to a breakdown of local group identity (ibid, 171). This substitution of patriarchal family structures for community connection fits with training young people received at Cushman School; colonial violence depends deeply on white supremacist patriarchy as a stabilizing force.

Appropriation of Indigenous lands is accompanied by, as historian Patricia Limerick puts it, a legitimizing “contest for cultural dominance” (27). European belief in “improvement” of land through agriculture is a central piece of this legitimizing process (Cronon 1983, 130). Successful conquest depended on transforming land into parcels, “arithmetical abstractions,” easy to buy and sell in land speculation (Worster 1979). Alienation of land also facilitated the rise of commercial and industrial agriculture. In early New England settlements, boundaries were drawn based on livestock, whose spatial needs were also used to justify settler expansion (Cronon 1983, 139). The Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 encouraged U.S. settlers to increase their presence in the region, though claims were limited to white and mixed-race men. Similarly, Homesteading Acts encouraged colonialism by granting land to settlers in exchange for its use as farmland for a certain number of years. In the Puget Sound region, when the colonial fur trade began to collapse, the Hudson’s Bay Company transformed Fort Nisqually (a fur trading post) into the Puget Sound Agricultural Company (PSAC), dedicated to fostering “improvement” of the region as farmland (though PSAC is really better described as a ranch than a farm) (Harmon 1998, 47-49). In 145 years (1789-1834) Congress passed 375 land laws (Limerick, 61). Between 1862 and 1872, the United States granted railroad companies 180 million acres of land, approximately 10 percent of the continental U.S. (Outwater, 87).

Towards the end of the Civil War, fears of Western territorial secession led Congress to approve construction of the Northern Pacific Railway, linking the

Pacific Northwest with the rest of the United States. The earlier treaties initiated by Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens were created with the explicit goal of clearing the way for a transcontinental railroad and settlement (Morgan 1979). The Northern Pacific was granted mammoth land rights along its 2,000 mile route and recruited immigrant workers, including many Chinese people, to lay tracks for low wages and in all weather (Morgan 1979). It created a subsidiary land company, the Lake Superior and Puget Sound Company (soon renamed the Tacoma Land Company) (North Dakota State University Archives). The Tacoma Land Company's goal was to develop a town and industry around the railroad's terminus in the Port of Tacoma (Morgan 1979).

Anti-Chinese Riot

In the 1860s, famine and civil unrest in China allowed US rail and timber industries to recruit many Chinese workers to Washington (Lee, n.d.), some from B.C. and others all the way from China via agreements with the "Six Companies of Kwantung" (companies which negotiated contracts for Chinese workers with American employers, acting "as unofficial consuls" (Morgan 1979, 215). Just as forced removals of Indians from towns around the Sound following the Puget Sound War prefigured Chinese treatment (Hunt 1916), in many ways, treatment of Chinese workers prefigured later treatment of Latin Americans. White labor's arguments for Chinese exclusion reappeared in early 20th-century efforts to restrict Mexican migration, while industry (especially railroad and agricultural companies) again argued that exploiting low-wage migrant workers was critical to its success (ibid, 247-8).

In 1885, about 10% of Tacoma's population (~700 of about 7,000) were Chinese (Pegues 2013). Chinese families ran small stores and laundries, worked as servants and in mills and canneries, and sent remittances home to China (ibid, Chasan 1981, Washington State Historical Society 1940). White workers, angry at what they considered lax enforcement of the 1882 federal Chinese Exclusion Act, organized an "Anti-Chinese Congress." At this meeting, presided over by the Mayor of Tacoma and supported by the county sheriff, a public "ouster committee" called the "Committee of Fifteen" was formed to organize an ethnic cleansing (Wilcox 1929, 206). A second, secret committee, the "Committee of Nine," was formed by a group of men who felt the Committee of Fifteen was not prepared to go far enough. This committee was decentralized and anonymous, organized similarly to the Ku Klux Klan. Nine people swore an oath and agreed to recruit nine more; those nine each recruited nine; and no one but the original nine knew more than the man who recruited them and the men they directly recruited (Morgan 1979). Flyers were put around Tacoma and announcements were made telling Chinese people to leave town within a month. Employers were ordered to fire Chinese workers. H.S. Ferguson, a white owner of a Puyallup barrel factory, refused, and his plant was bombed (Morgan 1979). Some Chinese people left quickly. Others looked into legal options and were told to leave, or contacted the Governor but received no response (Morgan 1979).

The day of the ouster, a cold and rainy day in early November, an armed mob gathered at a secret signal. They went door to door, methodically rounding up the

remaining Chinese population and forcing them out of town (ibid). One woman resisted, and was so terrorized by the mob that she became “insane,” according to her husband’s sword affidavit (Morgan 1979). Two Chinese people died of exposure during this lawful and “nonviolent” process (Lee, n.d.; Pegues 2013, Morgan 1979), which became known regionally as “The Tacoma Method.” Over the next three days, Chinese-owned homes and stores along the railroad’s right-of-way were “burned to the pilings” (Wilcox 1929, 206-7; Morgan 1979). In 1993, the City of Tacoma acknowledged the violence and funded construction of a park remembering evicted Chinese Tacomans, but did not locate any descendants of the evicted. In 2008, although proportionately 2,519 Chinese people should have lived in Tacoma, only 727 did (Chinese in North America Research Committee [CNARC] 2015).

Historian Patricia Limerick describes “the essential project of the American West” as constant searching for the next “boom” of available resources (1987, 86). Viewed through the lens of “whiteness as property,” racism is clearly another quintessentially American frontier. Administrative violence provides an exploitable underclass, a ready source of wealth for settlers.

Pacific Meat

In 1895, a meatpacking plant (Pacific Meat) was constructed in the tide flats. At the time, Washington settler dependence on domesticated livestock was massive, costing more than \$2 million annually for meat alone (Tacoma Daily Ledger, July 14, 1895). The 15-acre meatpacking plant’s siting on the Puyallup

River and next to the railroad terminus allowed animals and their packaged body parts to be transported easily by boat and train. When the plant was finished, it was the “largest and most complete plant of its kind west of the Rocky Mountains” (ibid June 1, 1895); this process echoed the industrialization of (formerly tribal) fisheries in the bay, facilitated by development of the “iron ch*nk” (a mechanized salmon processor), tin cans, and gas engines (Chasan 1981).

Pacific Meat opened with capacity to kill 1,250 cows, hogs, and sheep daily (*Tacoma Daily Ledger*, June 1, 1895). The plant was built on the tide flats between the Puyallup River and railroad, bringing in experts in meatpacking and refrigeration from Chicago and Milwaukee (ibid). In many places, meatpacking plants disposed of viscera, blood, and hair by dumping into waterways. In Omaha, for example, stockyards and packing plants dumped waste in the Missouri River until the 1960s, and “a stretch of the river occasionally ran red with [blood]. Hair, entrails, and mats of congealed grease floated downstream and collected on islands and on the riverside” (Outwater, 154). In Chicago, offal was dumped into the Chicago River, the South Branch of which “soon grew polluted past all recognition, with a stench that visitors did not soon forget” (Cronon 1991, 210). And, similar to settler processes of transforming land into “arithmetical abstractions,” Chicago’s stockyards dealt in abstract, calculated ways with nonhuman lives, lifting “a repulsive and barbarizing business... out of the mire” and rendering it “clean, easy, respectable, and pleasant” (ibid, 212). Nonhuman animals’ caretakers “had little to do with those who bought and sold them, and

vice versa... [T]he large traders and meat-packers-were thereby ‘left free to work at the arithmetic and book-keeping of the business,’ undisturbed by manure or blood or the screams of dying animals” (ibid).

In the 1990s, an engineering geologist named Dan McShane wrote about his work on environmental remediation at the site: “[m]ost environmental projects are not particularly interesting geologically. But this site had many layers. I developed an entire stratigraphic system for the site that included a variety of formations: Tide Flats, Grass Mat, Plank Roads and Pilings, Smelter Slag, Auto Wrecking Units with sub units of fluff, acid, oil, and coolant, PCP waste oil, Rail Waste, Coal Tar and Hair Tar. The Hair Tar was the waste tar that was used to strip the hair off of hogs. I was not on site when investigators encountered the Blood layer” (McShane 2010). After Pacific Meat burned down in 1903, a series of other meatpacking companies and fires followed. In 1981, Commencement Bay’s tide flats and a separate area near a smelter were added to the federal Superfund program. In 1983, after hazardous levels of shellfish, fish, and sediment contamination was found, the Bay was added to the National Priority List for cleanup. The Pacific Meat property (by that time owned by Hygrade Packing Co.) was a Superfund sub-unit called the “Tacoma Tar Pits.” It had groundwater, surface water, and soil contamination. Its groundwater is polluted with a plume of benzene, while soil and surface water have metals, PAHs, PCBs, and various volatile organic compounds (VOCs) (EPA 2014). In 1990, Hygrade Packing Co. closed the plant; a decade later, the NWDC was constructed.

In 2000, the City of Tacoma voted to accept the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)'s proposal to locate an immigration detention center within city limits (Jensen 2004). While the cities of Auburn and Pacific rejected the facility, Tacoma was eligible because of its proximity to SeaTac airport and was interested in the jobs and tax revenues promised by the project (Modeen 2002). At the same time, the first proposed location, on Taylor Way (also an industrial zone in the tide flats) would impede Port development on the Blair waterway. Representatives Adam Smith (D-Tacoma) and Norm Dicks (D-Belfair) intervened, writing a letter to INS Facilities Director Richard Diefenbeck expressing "alarm" at the possible impacts on Port development if the Taylor Way site was chosen, and urging rapid completion of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Tacoma Tar Pits site (Smith & Dicks 2001). Smith and Dicks further emphasized that siting the Northwest Detention Center at 1623 E. J. Street (the Tar Pits site) was necessary because of its isolation from surrounding neighborhoods, calling E. J. Street "the only site that can hope to gain the necessary community approval" (ibid).

The siting of the Northwest Detention Center in a contaminated area is part of a larger pattern of placement of detention centers, prisons, jails, and other carceral facilities in close proximity to environmental hazards (Wright 2015). Currently, environmental justice assessments of carceral facilities do not take inmate health into consideration (ibid), even though detained, jailed, and imprisoned populations are disproportionately low- or no- income, people of color, and/or

living with disabilities, making siting an environmental justice issue by the EPA's own definition (ibid).

World War II and Civil Rights Era

Japanese American Incarceration, Alien Land Laws, and Redress

Many Japanese immigrants arrived in the region in the 1880s, “almost seamlessly” replacing the flow of cheap Chinese labor limited by exclusion acts (Grant 2008). Many Issei became farmers, helping to transform Bellevue and White River Valley “stumplands” into viable strawberry fields and farmland. By the 1930s, an estimated 75% of regional produce was grown by Japanese Americans. During World War I, white workers began agitating again, this time for Alien Land Laws to disenfranchise Japanese American farmers. From 1921-23, Washington State passed increasingly constrictive Alien Land Laws targeting first-generation farmers; between 1920 and 1925, the number of Japanese American farming families dropped by nearly two thirds, but farmers bounced back. By 1930, nearly three times as many farms were owned by Japanese Americans than before, and in 1937, Filipino activists successfully challenged another land law passed by the state (Grant 2008).

In 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, mandating incarceration and removal of over 120,000 West Coast Issei and Nisei (Japanese-American immigrants and their children) during World War II. Pearl Harbor enabled the land grab that had long been sought. Japanese Americans' assets were

frozen and 5-mile travel restrictions were enforced prior to removal. Chinese and Korean people began wearing buttons and patches which read “I am Chinese” or identified them as “Korean American” (Densho Encyclopedia 2016). In 1942, 7,390 people from Fife, Seattle, and some surrounding areas were incarcerated at the Puyallup Fairgrounds (Ott 2010). Much of their land and assets were sold at “fire-sale prices” (Boswell & McConaghy 1996). As one survivor recalls, once released, “It was hard to start farming again because everything was wrecked. We didn’t have any sources of income. The Bellevue property we just let go and it hadn’t been improved for quite a while. I drove around the farm and the house was there but it was tumbled down. There was nothing done to the property” (Matsuzawa, n.d.).

Tacoma families expected to go to the Puyallup concentration camp with communities from Seattle and Fife, but were taken by train to California’s Pinedale Assembly Center instead. Hideo Hoshide is a Tacoman journalist and veteran who lived through the removal and incarceration. Before the removal, his parents owned a grocery store in Tacoma. When it became clear that removal was really happening, he and his fiancé were married so they wouldn’t be separated in the camps. Her family lived in Seattle, and because of travel restrictions were unable to attend. His family leased their store, stored some belongings with friends, and sold the rest for “practically nothing.” In the following interview excerpt, he describes his father’s attitude on “evacuation day”:

HH: ...One thing that I could remember, well, I did take a look back once, about halfway down [the hill to Union Station]. I just took one

final look, nobody else did. And then my dad, I remember him saying, "You know, when I came from Japan, I had only one suitcase." He says, "I have two now." And like he wasn't worried about whatever else he couldn't take with him, but he just mentioned the fact that he now has two suitcases instead of one, so he had an extra suitcase...

...Well, it did strike me kind of a feeling that, well, this is how Issei, and not only my dad, but they had several things that they didn't tell me about various things. One of 'em was that the determination and all this, how we should live our lives, and like if you can't, don't resist anything, but yield like a bamboo and things like that. But this is something that you can't help, shikata ga nai. It just means, well, just leave it that way, can't be helped, so just don't worry about it, just take it in that kind of way. It was amazing how Issei, with just the education that they had, just at an early age, that's all he had, because he came when he was sixteen years old. So it's just amazing to me how Issei were able to persevere and things like that" (Ikeda 2006) [Emphasis in original].

Once emptied of its strawberry farmers, Bellevue farmland was developed into its current form as a wealthy, mostly-white Seattle suburb. Much credit for this transformation is given to a white developer known as "the father of Bellevue," (Sanders 2011), whose own father, publisher Miller Freeman, was the most rabid local proponent of Alien Land Laws (Grant 2008).

In the 1970s, a group of Japanese Americans formed a committee called SERC (Seattle Evacuation Redress Committee) in order to seek financial redress for their community's loss of land during World War II. In 1978, a "Day of Remembrance" was held at the Puyallup Fairgrounds to support healing for survivors of removal, and in 1983 a memorial sculpture by George Tsutakawa was erected there. Tsutakawa created a pillar showing a group of people holding each other's hands. When asked his thought process, he said he began with many designs depicting suffering. Ultimately, he decided an image of hope and community connection would be most healing (Ott 2010).

Cushman Indian Hospital and Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic and Treatment Center

When Cushman Indian School closed in 1920, it almost immediately reopened as a sanitarium for tubercular Indians, although general medical services were also provided. In 1959, the federal government gave the hospital building to the state, which promptly reopened it as Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic and Treatment Center.

Around this time, the Puyallup tribe began escalating organizing work to reassert treaty rights, joining the region's "Fish Wars." In 1970, tribal members including a young Allison Gottfriedson (later a tribal councilwoman) were arrested during a high-profile fish-in on reservation land along the Puyallup River. The state's raid on the encampment included the use of tear gas, clubbing, beating, and more (Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission 2014). This raid led to federal involvement in the Fish Wars and ultimately to the Boldt Decision, the impact of which has frequently been compared to the *Brown v. the Board of Education* ruling in the Deep South.

The tribe created a mobile health clinic--the Puyallup Tribal Health Authority [PTHA]--in 1974 to fill gaps left by their hospital's closure. The clinic was the first of its kind to enter into a "638 'self-determination' contract with the Indian Health Service" (PTHA 2010). In 1975, the tribe opened the Chief Leschi School for grades pre-K through 12. In 1976 Puyallup women (including tribal chairwoman Ramona Bennett) led an armed occupation of Cascadia Center,

dropping a banner in memory of Chief Leschi. Throughout the 1970s, the tribe filed requests with the federal government for money to buy back their building, since the land was originally meant to serve their community. In 1980, they got their land back and renamed the building the Puyallup Nation Center.

Following the Boldt Decision in 1974 to uphold treaty rights, the tribe filed several successful lawsuits to reclaim and remediate their historical land. In 1978 they won a \$77 million settlement for 12 acres occupied by the Port of Tacoma; in 1985 and 1987 they won additional settlements for occupied land, and in 1990 received a landmark \$162 million settlement for parts of the Port and downtown Tacoma, Interstate 5, and the entire city of Fife (Carson 2008). The Tribe forced cleanup of recovered areas and leveraged the money to create economic and social resources. In 1994, the tribe was authorized to administer Clean Water Act standards similar to a state (TOA), and in 1996 became one of the trustees responsible for deciding on a restoration plan for the bay (NOAA 1996). It invested in revenue-generating industries, including a deepwater port used by Marine View Ventures, Inc. - a corporation owned by the tribe with the goal of funding purchases of lost land, as well as promoting Native-owned business internationally (Marine View Ventures 2016, Douglas 2015). It built the lucrative Emerald Queen Casino on property formerly occupied by an Indian Agent's office. And it used its revenue to develop the Puyallup Tribal Treatment Center (for culturally-relevant addiction treatment) and a post-secondary school called Medicine Creek Tribal College.

The Northwest Detention Center

The NWDC was built in 2004 by Corrections Corporation of America on the Tacoma tide flats, a federal Superfund site. It was purchased a year later by GEO Group, the second-largest private prison contractor in the world. The NWDC began with 500 beds and within four years doubled its capacity, in part a result of Congressional requirements that ICE maintain and fill 34,000 beds daily (National Immigrant Justice Center [NIJC] 2015). It can contain 1,575 people. It is the site of numerous reported human rights abuses and three hunger strikes in 2014 (Seattle University School of Law 2008, Resistencia al NWDC 2014). The NWDC houses many migrant women caught at the U.S.-Mexico border, many of whom are survivors of gendered violence: 60-70% of women who cross the border without authorization are sexually assaulted at some point during the process (INCITE! n.d.). Detainees are not entitled to attorneys, and about 90% go through their legal process unrepresented. Detainees are held for months, sometimes years, before facing “credible fear” hearings (where they make their case for asylum) alone, with significant language barriers (Seattle University School of Law 2008). Many are Indigenous in their homelands.

Like Indian boarding schools before them, private prisons and detention centers are a lucrative business. In 2014, 65% of GEO’s \$1,691,600,000 in profit came from U.S. Corrections and Detention (GEO Group 2014, 1). The NWDC, like other privatized detention facilities, receives a per diem from the federal government estimated at \$100 or more per detainee (Resistencia al NWDC/

NWDC Resistance 2014), and numbers of detainees continue to rise as bed quotas continue to exist. Between 1994 and 2007, detention of undocumented immigrants increased six hundred per cent (Seattle University School of Law 2008). Detainees at the NWDC are paid as little as \$1 per day to clean, cook, and maintain the facility. GEO Group also makes money via lucrative contracts with prison phone companies charging inmates as much as \$4 per call, steep commissary prices for food, and taking cuts of deposits into inmates' accounts (Resistencia al NWDC 2014). While GEO claims not to lobby around immigration reform, the Lobbying Disclosure Act reveals it does (National Immigration Detention Forum 2013). In one SEC filing, GEO explicitly complained, "decriminalization of drugs... reductions in crime rates... immigration reform laws... could materially adversely impact us" (U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission 2012).

The limits of carceral power were exposed by members of Resistencia al NWDC/ NWDC Resistance, especially the Colectivo de Detenidos (Collective of Detainees), who organized three hunger strikes in 2014. Members of Resistencia al NWDC --including undocumented activists-- formed human blockades of buses of deportees, while members of the Detainee Collective held strong through retaliation (including deportations, solitary confinement, and more). Their work inspired other hunger strikes in detention centers across the nation, bringing conditions inside centers into the national media spotlight and mobilizing legislators around the issue. One such legislator is Representative Adam Smith (D-WA)--the same legislator who more than a decade earlier advocated for the

facility's siting on polluted land. In 2015, Smith introduced legislation aiming to eliminate bed quotas entirely (NIJC 2015). In 2014 the City of Seattle's Human Rights Commission recognized the Detainee Collective's work with their Human Rights Leaders Organization award (Herz 2014).

Conclusion

In the Port of Tacoma tide flats, containment and expulsion of the Puyallup Tribe, Chinese and Japanese families, Latinx people, and salmon runs, as well as environmental destruction of the land and water are mutually constitutive. Processes of containment and exclusion in the Port of Tacoma illustrate formations of whiteness as property, as well as ways white supremacist cultural values cause gendered and racialized ecological and community destruction. These intersections also bring more communities to the table by illuminating literal and figurative common ground.

Border imperialism, administrative violence, exploitation of immigrant labor, the prison-industrial complex, and agribusiness are all in dialogue at and around 1623 East J. Street. At the same time, resistance to injustice has mobilized many groups in perilous positions, from young Indigenous girls resisting boarding schools' colonial gender roles to Puyallups taking back their land and fishery and immigrant detainees mobilizing for justice despite threats of solitary confinement, violence, and deportation. As Walia writes, "the process of grassroots community organizing--resisting together and building solidarities against [various] modes of governance constituted through borders--leads to the generation of transnational

relations, which novelist Kiran Desai calls ‘a bridge over the split’” (Walia, 11). Enacting a decolonizing strategy which “[values] Indigenous sovereignty in its material, psychological, epistemological, and spiritual forms” (Sium et al as quoted in Walia, 11) humanizes us all. Building relationships across difference and working together for a shared vision of collective liberation has the power to transform walls into bridges, as an anonymous graffitist wrote on the U.S.-Mexico border wall.

“Then, what is white?”

-*Ex parte Shahid* 1913

Introduction

In their 1913 ruling on *Ex parte Shahid*, [white] judges were forced to grapple with the illogic of definitions of whiteness and ways it was bound up with citizenship. A Syrian man “of walnut color” applied for naturalization, which was limited at the time of their ruling to “free, white persons, and to aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.” More than a century later, their confusion is apparent in their recorded discussion parsing the meaning of “white” and “African” descent. What about mixed race children? What about a Chinese person (explicitly excluded) born in Africa (explicitly accepted)? For how many generations? “What degree of colorization” is included in whiteness? And so on. At one point, in apparent frustration, they ask “then, what is white?” They conclude that the meaning of whiteness should be interpreted as it would have been in 1790, while “it may also be that the statute as it stands is ambiguous and defective and most difficult of application” (*Ex parte Shahid*, 1913).

Whiteness is, as the judges ruling in *Shahid* found, complex. It has internal and logical contradictions. Persons considered “white” today--Irish people, for example-- were not always considered so (Ignatiev 2008). In the Puyallup River Estuary, whiteness was not monolithic. Individual white people protested race-based state and capitalist violence. White workers challenged white bosses. And

much of the violence, though by no means all, was directly enacted by white men (though many white women tacitly and indirectly encouraged it).

In *White by Law*, Ian Haney López describes the way law has shaped race in the United States in a literal, physical way:

“... [L]aws have shaped the physical features evident in our society. While admittedly laws cannot alter the biology governing human morphology, rule-makers can and have altered the human behavior that produces variations in physical appearance. In other words, laws have directly shaped reproductive choices. The prerequisite laws evidence this on two levels. First, these laws constrained reproductive choices by excluding people with certain features from this country. From 1924 until the end of racial prerequisites to naturalization, persons ineligible for citizenship could not enter the United States. The prerequisite laws determined the types of faces and features present in the United States, and thus, who could marry and bear children here. Second, the prerequisite laws had a more direct regulatory reproductive effect through the legal consequences imposed on women who married noncitizen men. Until 1931, a woman could not naturalize if she was married to a foreigner racially ineligible for citizenship, even if she otherwise qualified to naturalize in every respect. Furthermore, women who were U.S. citizens were automatically stripped of their citizenship upon marriage to such a person. These legal penalties for marriage to racially barred aliens made such unions far less likely, and thus skewed the procreative choices that determined the appearance of the U.S. population. The prerequisite laws have directly shaped the physical appearance of people in the United States by limiting entrance to certain physical types and by altering the range of marital choices available to people here. What we look like, the literal and 'racial' features we in this country exhibit, is to a large extent the product of legal rules and decisions.”

(Haney López 2006, 11)

In the same way, laws and administrative violence enforcing white settler supremacy have created a specific landscape. Critical race theory shows that “whiteness” is a system of power and privilege, rather than a politically neutral cultural or ethnic identity. Race does not biologically exist; it is a social construct (Yudell et al 2016). Whiteness, specifically, is different from other racializations

because of—to paraphrase Said—its “flexible, positional superiority.” The concept of “whiteness as property” understands white identity as a legally vested system of advantages and rights (Harris 1994). These advantages and rights are intimately bound up with capitalist exploitation of land and labor.

Capitalism requires raw wealth to begin with, or what political economists call “primitive accumulation.” This is explicitly linked with colonialism because of its need for resources-- in the form of land and labor-- which come at little or no cost, accruing wealth which is then leveraged to generate an industrial base. As Tuck and Wang write in “Decolonization is not a metaphor,”

“The settler, if known by his actions and how he justifies them, sees himself as holding dominion over the earth and its flora and fauna, as the anthropocentric normal, and as more developed, more human, more deserving than other groups or species. The settler is making a new "home" and that home is rooted in a homesteading worldview where the wild land and wild people were made for his benefit. He can only make his identity as a settler by making the land produce, and produce excessively, because "civilization" is defined as production in excess of the "natural" world (i.e. in excess of the sustainable production already present in the Indigenous world). In order for excess production,” (or “primitive accumulation,”) “he needs excess labor, which he cannot provide himself. The chattel slave serves as that excess labor, labor that can never be paid because payment would have to be in the form of property (land). The settler's wealth is land, or a fungible version of it, and so payment for labor is impossible. The settler positions himself as both superior and normal; the settler is natural, whereas the Indigenous inhabitant and the chattel slave are unnatural, even supernatural” (2012, 6).

Harsha Walia’s concept of “border imperialism” connects with these settler colonial processes of primitive accumulation in the Estuary. “Border imperialism” encompasses four intersecting and concurrent processes: displacement of and securitization of borders against colonized communities; criminalization of

migration; racialization of citizenship; and exploitation of migrant workers facilitated by the state (Walia 2013, 5).

Whiteness and settler colonialism are distinct yet also, in the case of the United States, enmeshed. As Tuck and Wang show, U.S. settler colonialism combines the violence of external colonialism (through wars and frontiers) and internal colonialism. In a settler context, “empire, settlement, and internal colony have no spatial separation” (2012, 7). Wealth generated by U.S. colonization primarily benefits whites through its exclusion of non-Native communities of color from settler colonial wealth. Racialization of Native peoples arises from settler colonialism (Silva 2007 in *ibid*), subjecting Indigenous peoples to multiple layers of structural violence; but assertion of settler colonial supremacy is at the root. While enslavement and the “one drop rule” created a forced *inclusion* in Blackness for any person with African ancestry (therefore justifying enslavement of generations of families) (Harris 2011), racial logics were applied in reverse to Native peoples. “Blood quantum” requiring a certain percentage of Native heritage to count as “real” Indian with a claim to treaty rights results in forced *exclusion*, reducing numbers of people recognized as Native by the U.S. government (and facilitating Native removal in order to establish settler supremacy) (Tuck & Wang 2012). Federally-recognized tribes have specific rights and privileges resulting from sovereign treaties with the United States. A “civil rights” or purely race-based approach to understanding violence against Native peoples ignores both the state’s foundation in genocidal policy towards

Native peoples, presenting U.S. power and control as a solution to problems it creates; *and*, through this, undermines Native sovereignty and treaty rights.

In the process of writing this thesis, and considering what it means to “study up” (Nader 1972), I have identified several ways white settler colonialism acts and has acted as property in the Puyallup River Estuary. In this chapter, I outline ways I noticed whiteness as legally-constructed power and control show up in these histories, along with its environmental impacts. It is very unlikely that this is a comprehensive list, since one of the functions of whiteness is its “transparency” (Haney Lopez 2006). This “transparency” or invisibility makes white people (like me) especially unlikely to recognize its functions. Even so, there were several ways I recognized its appearance as an institution, which I outline here.

Right to Land

First, and most obviously, white settler entitlement to land was asserted on multiple fronts in the colonization of spaces belonging to Native American tribes, including Oregon Territory. The British-owned Hudson’s Bay Company -- and its subsidiary Puget Sound Agricultural Company, which was arguably more oriented toward permanent or sustainable settlement than forts previously created by HBC-- was focused primarily on trade relations with local Indians, rather than facilitating white settlement. When the United States decided to encourage settlement with the Donation Land Law in order to build influence and power in the region, settler colonialism transformed relationships between non-Natives and

Native Americans into something new. Later, resource extraction booms drove a flood of colonization which quickly, dishonestly, and violently displaced Indians while urbanizing and industrializing the region.

The right of Puyallup Indians to live on their land was immediately challenged by the first (illegal) Treaty of Medicine Creek, which delineated their reservation as 1,280 acres of high bluff near Commencement Bay, and ceded the rest of their land to the U.S. Government. Following the Puget Sound War, the tribe's renegotiated treaty terms left them with 23,000 acres adjacent to the Bay. The U.S. government already sold some of the land in donation claims, but paid most of the claimants for their titles and restored the land to the tribe. Nearly immediately, Stevens manipulated Tobasket, the Puyallup Tribe's chosen surveyor, into drawing reservation boundaries in a way more advantageous to settlers and the U.S. government, leaving the tribe with 18,000 acres (Morgan 1979). The reservation's boundaries were also disputed by settlers claiming a right to land in the reservation. Records denoting the reservation's precise boundaries were destroyed in an Olympia fire, and so in 1872, a new survey was authorized through the Indian Appropriations Act. The boundaries were changed yet again, adding some land and leaving adjacent disputed areas out. Commencement Bay's tide flats, included in 1857 reservation boundaries, were excluded from the 1872 revisions (National Lawyers Guild 1973). This opened the tide flats up for development; as tribal members left or were removed, the tide flats were dredged, filled, and transformed. By the 1980s, only 187 acres of mudflats and at most 1% of the original tidal marsh (57 acres) remained (NOAA

1996). The tide flats were listed as a Superfund site and added to the National Priority List for cleanup after high levels of contaminants were detected in sediments, shellfish, and fish (NOAA 1996). The tide flats' waterways and sediments are contaminated with arsenic, lead, zinc, cadmium, copper, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), phthalates, and other organic compounds (EPA 2014).

The 1887 Dawes Act (also known as the General Allotment Act) authorized the privatization, division, and sale of collectively-held reservation lands across the United States. After extensive lobbying from Tacoma business interests (including impersonation of Puyallup Indians in favor of allotment), the U.S. Congress passed the 1893 Puyallup Land Act specifically hastening allotment of Puyallup reservation lands (National Lawyers Guild 1973). Plots of land which did not house tribal members were put up for sale immediately, and the rest, aside from the cemetery, was quickly stolen through exploitation, violence, coercion, and fraud.

White commissioners established guardianships for Indians who resisted land sales on the basis of ability to speak and write in English (National Lawyers Guild 1973). Tribal members report violent assaults on Indians who refused to sell their land (La Pointe-Gorman 2009, Douglas 2015). Guardians were established for orphaned children with inherited land, and for some children with holdings whose parents were still very much alive. These white guardians-- Eveline Ferry, James Morin, Frank Allyn, P.C. Kauffman, and C.A. Snowden-- were high-ranking

members of Tacoma's business community and profited handsomely from many land purchases of their own (National Lawyers Guild 1973). Reservation land was auctioned off for extremely low prices and quickly resold for dramatic profits. "X"s marking Indian signatures were forged and money appears to have been skimmed off the top of auction sales by commissioners (ibid.). Other forms of fraud and exploitation were committed by railroad companies, land companies, real estate agents, government agencies, guardians, and other white people institutionally granted power and control over Indian lives, space, and place (ibid.). Nonetheless, no white person or white-owned business was held accountable until many years later (through lawsuits brought by the Tribe, which also mandated accelerated cleanup as part of settlements for stolen land).

The 1850 Donation Land Law which facilitated settlement in Oregon Territory limited land claims to white and "American half-breed" men, excluding one of the Puget Sound's first settlers. George Bush was listed as "Negro" in the 1850 Oregon census, therefore delegitimizing his land claim (Morgan 1979). While Bush was eventually granted an exception for his land, he was excluded from full citizenship, including voting rights (Morgan 1979). The Homestead Act in effect from 1863-1986 onward gave more than 10% of the United States' landbase to settlers who were willing to claim historically Native American lands (National Park Service 2016). During the Civil War, concerns around Pacific Northwest secession led Congress to approve massive land grants to railroad companies in exchange for construction of lines connecting remote areas with the rest of the United States. A government land grant to the Pacific Northern railroad

facilitated construction of a transcontinental line with an eye towards settlement and increased presence in the area. The impact of this line was compared by one financier as an enterprise “equal to that of the East India Company,” opening “an empire” (Morgan 1979, 158). The railroad also leased its land to the Chinese community, because they were not allowed to own land. Railroads were powerful forces for settlement across the continent, and treaties and warfare were used to clear Native peoples off of their lands to enable railroad construction.

Settler State Violence as White Social Capital

In “Decolonization is not a metaphor,” Tuck and Wang describe two forms of colonialism brought together within settler colonialism-- “internal colonialism,” which I will describe in a moment, and “external colonialism.” External colonialism typically includes “military colonialism - the creation of war fronts/frontiers against enemies to be conquered, and the enlistment of foreign land, resources, and people into military operations. In external colonialism, all things Native become recast as ‘natural resources’ - bodies and earth for war, bodies and earth for chattel” (2012, 4). Many white settlers in the Pacific Northwest in the mid-to-late 1800s were veterans of the Mexican-American war, Indian wars, and Civil War. The Mexican-American war and Indian wars are examples of “military colonialism”; they, along with the Civil War (and most--possibly all--others) had immediate and ongoing racial and colonial implications for U.S. society and those it colonizes.

Settlers parlayed their veteran status into social capital, which became economic capital. For example, Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens was a veteran of the Mexican-American war. Stevens delegated responsibility for Cascade mountain range railroad surveys to a “comrade-in-arms,” George McClellan (Morgan 1979). McClellan’s railroad survey, while failed, initiated a process which laid track through the Cascades, linking western Washington with the rest of the United States. Similarly, Stevens won the position of territorial delegate based on the “legitimacy of the [Puget Sound] Indian War and the territory’s claim for payment from the federal government for the services of the Volunteers”-- many of whom were white settlers recruited into militias by Stevens for the purpose of quelling Indian uprisings (Morgan 1929, 136). Morton McCarver, the settler militia’s commissary general during the Puget Sound War, was a veteran of the Black Hawk War in Illinois. Later, as a boomer, he arguably played the greatest role in locating the transcontinental railroad’s terminus in Tacoma.

Tuck and Wang describe “internal colonialism” as

“the biopolitical and geopolitical management of people, land, flora and fauna within the “domestic” borders of the imperial nation. This involves the use of particularized modes of control - prisons, ghettos, minoritizing, schooling, policing - to ensure the ascendancy of a nation and its white elite. These modes of control, imprisonment, and involuntary transport of the human beings across borders - ghettos, their policing, their economic divestiture, and their dislocatability - are at work to authorize the metropole and conscribe her periphery. Strategies of internal colonialism, such as segregation, divestment, surveillance, and criminalization, are both structural and interpersonal” (2012, 4-5).

This idea of “internal colonialism” connects directly with Walia’s “border imperialism” and Harris’s concept of “whiteness as property.” External colonialism (in the form of the military-industrial complex) creates landless Latin American workers; internal colonialism (in the form of the prison-industrial complex) generates profits from their surveillance and incarceration in the Northwest Detention Center. Similarly, external colonialism displaced Puget Sound tribes from most of their historic landbase; internal colonialism criminalized tribal members’ exercise of treaty rights. The concept of “settler colonialism” combines its external and internal forms while bringing settlers who “make Indigenous land their new home and source of capital” (Tuck & Wang 2012, 5). In the Puyallup Estuary, the Puget Sound War and resulting treaty renegotiations cleared the way for railroads and settlement, facilitating massive environmental degradation. In a ceremony honoring Henry Villard, president of the Northern Pacific Railway, Tacoma attorney Elwood Evans opened with a speech on the importance of railroads to settlement and exploitation of natural resources.

“In some parts of the world, countries build railroads, but you have reversed that doctrine. Here railroads build countries...Here abound coal, iron, lime, and timber. Across yon mountain chain are wheat fields of unbounded area, of almost fabulous yield. We need the railroad to facilitate the profitable utilization of those products...”

(As quoted in Morgan 1979, 189-90).

Right to Public Space

While Oregon Territory was anti-slavery, it excluded black people. As Speaker of the Oregon Territory’s provisional legislature in 1844, the earlier-

mentioned Morton McCarver passed a measure threatening to whip black immigrants who remained in Oregon, giving men two years to leave and women three (Morgan 1979, Hunt 1916). Black people who refused to leave could be “hired out to the white who for the shortest term of service would remove the malefactor from the country” (Hunt 1916, 108). Additionally, Tacoma was a “sundown town”--one of many towns in the United States which restricted settlement by people of color through a combination of laws, threats, and physical violence (Loewen 2016).

Settlement in the Puget Sound included white community violence, including the public violence of lynchings, and forced expulsion of Chinese Tacomans in 1885. In Herbert Hunt’s 1916 history of Tacoma, he describes white boys’ cavalier stoning of a Chinese man; mob removals of Indian people from towns and cities following the Puget Sound War, prefiguring Chinese removal in the 1880s; and lynchings of Indian people. As Ken Gonzales-Day shows in *Lynching in the West: 1850-1935*, settler violence towards Native Americans, Latinxs, and Asians, frequently framed as “frontier justice,” actually acted as precursor to the lynchings which swept the rest of the nation, and particularly the South, during Jim Crow (Gonzales-Day 2006). Similarly, in *Blood at the Root: Lynching as American Cultural Nucleus*, Jennie Lightweis-Goff condemns the transfer of collective accountability for mob violence to the individual by passage of hate crime laws, but not anti-lynching laws (Lightweis-Goff 2011). This experience of mob violence was also an experience of collective identity formation and power (ibid.), framed as environmental cleansing (Morgan 1979).

This sense of a white right to public space is linked with the NIMBY (“not in my backyard”) attitude which led to the Northwest Detention Center’s siting in industrially polluted tide flats. The NWDC is located where it is because the city couldn’t contest it as an “essential public facility,” and the tide flats were already zoned for carceral buildings (Kamb 2012). It is hidden away from the city center, despite being a five-minute drive from it. This was the goal of its siting at 1623 East J Street, instead of Taylor Way, where it was originally proposed. While federal officials expressed concern about building the detention center in an environmental cleanup site (its current location), according to the *Tacoma News Tribune* “U.S. Representatives Norm Dicks (D-Belfair) and Adam Smith (D-Tacoma) intervened on the city’s behalf, arguing that the East J Street site was the only acceptable one, given its distance from the Port of Tacoma and its isolation from surrounding neighborhoods... [The Representatives] also said the Taylor Way site was problematic for Tacoma because it is in the path of the Port of Tacoma’s existing and long-term growth area” (Modeen 2002). The NWDC’s isolation belies its intimate connections with surrounding areas and their residents, including the food in our very mouths.

Right to Violence

Whole towns are implicated in lynchings and mob violence, including “unseeing witnesses,” those who do not see, but hear or hear of the lynching and approve of it (Lightweis-Goff 2011). In the same way, Tacomans celebrated the removal of Chinese people with annual torchlit parades for several years (Hunt

1916). Accused mob leaders were greeted with a banquet, parade, and civic reception in their honor when they were released (Morgan 1979). Tacoma's mayor, the Pierce County Sheriff, and other high-ranking members of Tacoma's community helped to organize and facilitate the ethnic cleansing, again with no apparent negative consequences. The Governor himself, when a Chinese man entreated him by telegraph to protect the community, did not respond (Morgan 1979). One man, Judge Wickersham, was both responsible for swindling Puyallup Indians out of their land *and* helping lead the anti-Chinese riot (Morgan 1979, National Lawyers Guild 1973, Pegues 2013). He was later appointed by President McKinley as district judge to Alaska, then elected Alaskan congressional representative (Pegues 2013). The names of the "Tacoma Twenty-Seven"¹⁰ (high-profile community members, including Wickersham, arrested after the mob action) are public record, along with their photographs, but were never held accountable. Even today, in Tacoma's Chinese Reconciliation Park, the readily-available pictures and names of mob members are left out of the story. The park is beautiful, and raising awareness about local Chinese history is important. At the same time, the park's presentation of history erases the ways white power both led to and benefited from expulsion of Chinese people, including the history's links with the present. Disturbingly, the park's founders state they could not locate any

¹⁰ Names of "Tacoma's Twenty seven" are listed in a group photo as: C.E. King; Geo. R. Epperson; E. Von Shrader; M. McAtee; M. Kaufman; T.L. Nixon; A. Redenzel; John Budlong; Jacob Ralph; D.B. Hannah; A.U. Mills; B.R. Everett; R. Jacob Weisbach (Tacoma's mayor); Geo. D. Lawson; O.J. Anderson; H. A. Stevens; E.G. Bacon; H.C. Patrick; Frank McGill; John Forbes; Henry S. Bixler; A.W. Cone; Louis Stimpson; Wm. Christie; M.C. Gillis; J.N. Fernandez; and Jas. Wickersham. A "Mrs. J.A. Comerford and Child" are also featured in the photo but were not part of the twenty-seven (Hunt 1916).

descendants of Tacoma's first Chinese community for inclusion in the memorialization.

Earlier, Quiemuth's murder in the governor's own office provides another example of white settler state violence without consequence. Quiemuth was shot and stabbed in the heart while under armed guard and with another person, James Longmire, sleeping in the same room (Morgan 1979). At the time, Quiemuth's murderer was widely believed to be Joseph Bunting, the son-in-law of a militia member killed during the Indian War. Despite all the people in the immediate area at the time of the murder, apparently no one was able to identify Bunting as the attacker. Bunting was arrested, then released due to "lack of evidence," and no one was ever held accountable (Newell 1975, Emmett 2011). Similarly, the Mashel Massacre (also known as the Maxon Massacre), committed by a militia led by a man named Maxon during the Puget Sound War, involved the murder of at least fifteen Nisqually women and children on the Mashel River, yet Maxon and his men were never held accountable and most histories record the murdered Nisqually people as "horse thieves" after the militia's version of the story (Morgan 1979, Wonacott 2008).

The white "right to violence" is evident in Isaac Stevens' ability to hang Chief Leschi for murder, ignoring the fact that civilian courts cannot try enemy combatants as murderers for acts of war, as well as evidence that Leschi was not even present for the death Stevens claimed was "murder" (Morgan 1979). Stevens leveraged the Puget Sound War *as a war* to benefit his run for territorial

representative, while denying it was *technically* a war in order to justify hanging Leschi. Stevens also declared martial law during the war in order to arrest and try white members of multiracial families for treason (the so-called “Muck Creek Five”), despite having no authority to do so, even arresting a territorial judge for writing writs of habeas corpus (*ibid.*). He was reprimanded for this unconstitutional exercise of baseless authority; but rather than facing any significant consequences, he was promoted shortly thereafter.

Similarly, police guarding Tacoma’s Chinatown after removal looked the other way when members of the Committee of Fifteen¹¹ asked to look for Chinese people they said might be hiding. Minutes after the Committee members left, the fire which “burned Chinatown to the pilings” began to roar, and no one arrived to help put it out. Tacoma police accused a man known as “Ah Chung Charley,” who had been packing up in a nearby building, of setting the fire “for revenge,” but not even Tacomans believed it. He was released but forced onto a train to Portland (Morgan 1979, 245). Soldiers and the state also facilitated removal of Japanese Americans from their homes during World War II. Military police

¹¹ The “Committee of Fifteen” led the public organizing effort. Its members were later photographed; they are listed as A.U. Mills; M. Kaufman; E.G. Bacon; John Budlong; Jacob Ralph; H. A. Stevens; James Wickersham; Charles Johnson; John Forbes; M.F. Brown; Henry S. Bixler; John A. McGouldric; William Christie; and D.B. Hannah. H. C. Patrick is listed as a member, but not photographed (Jack Allman Papers, 1935-59). A shadow group, the “Committee of Nine,” was organized in the decentralized fashion of the Ku Klux Klan as a “secret endless chain” (Hunt 1916, p. 372). They felt the Committee of Fifteen was not going far enough. Each member of the nine, after swearing an oath, organized another group of nine, who remained anonymous to everyone else but one another. Their names are also in the public record. Historian Herbert Hunt lists the members of the original “Committee of Nine” as “William Christie, a carpenter; Frank McGill, street commissioner; W.H. Hunter, house painter; John Budlong, carpenter; W.H. Rapier, Sr. and W. H. Rapier, his son, plasterers; Chancellor Graves, janitor of the Central School; A. U. Mills, contractor; ...M. P. Bulger, sewing machine agent” and A. U. Mills, who was also a member of the “Committee of Fifteen” (Hunt 1916, p. 372).

guarded the train cars at Union Station on the day Tacoma's Japanese community was forced out (Ikeda 2006 (1)). The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Border Patrol, and Army ran the concentration camps, including one in the Puyallup Fairgrounds. Before treaty time, the Fairgrounds were a site of longstanding traditional fish festivals and regional Indian gatherings (La Pointe-Gorman 2009). Settlers appropriated the festival, turning it into an annual fair oriented around agriculture, and in the 1940s the space was briefly used as an internment camp for Japanese immigrants and their children (Washington State Fair 2015).

Today, Latin American farmworkers are both economically forced to migrate for survival, encouraged to migrate for work by U.S. agricultural interests, and kept subordinate by U.S. laws which deny their basic rights (Holmes 2013). Latinx people incarcerated in the Northwest Detention Center are separated from support networks, exposed to environmental toxins, financially exploited, denied health care, and forced into solitary confinement for asserting any rights, while GEO Group profits exorbitantly from their suffering. In this way, it is clear that the state- on city, state, territorial, and federal levels-- is implicated in the white supremacist violence which confers economic benefits to whiteness. In fact, in many ways it was and remains constructed by this violence.

Right to Safety

The process of writing this history also made apparent that whites can expect safety, even when acting against majority white interests, in a way Native people

and people of color cannot. One example of this is the anti-Chinese mob's response to white homeowners who brandished guns and resisted the removal of Chinese servants, when compared to the treatment of Chinese people who did the same in resistance to their own removal. While Ezra Meeker and a local pastor, W.D. McFarland, were threatened with violence after speaking out against the mob removal (neither objected to the principle of removal, just the method), and Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Byron Young "shooed [the mob] off with a broom" and a shotgun, respectively, no white people were significantly injured during the mob action, which the Pierce County Sheriff called "non-violent" (Morgan 1979). An elderly Chinese man drew a pistol on two members of the mob, Charles Joles and Renwick Taylor, who were "hunting for hideaways." Joles attacked the man, knocking away his gun. Meanwhile, the mob broke down the doors of Chinese houses and dragged people out at gunpoint, including a woman who was so terrorized that "she lost her reason and has ever since been hopelessly insane," according to her husband's sworn affidavit (Morgan 1979, 238).

Similarly, when white gillnetters held "fish-ins" to protest the Boldt decision, fishing under cover of night (Chasan 1981), their community did not experience planes flying overhead conducting surveillance, National Guard rifle practices naming them to shouts of "kill!" (National Lawyers Guild 1973), beatings and clubbings, raids of their homes, sabotage of nets and boats, or suspicious deaths of their children (Burns & Adams 1971) in the name of conservation the way Indians did. While in 1973 the Department of Fisheries identified six government agencies (Federal Power Commission, U.S. Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest

Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Soil Conservation Service, and Department of the Army) and activities (including 18 dams) harming fisheries, Indian subsistence fishers were treated as primary threats to anadromous fish conservation (National Lawyers Guild 1973).

Right to Set Terms

The Treaty of Medicine Creek was crafted and presented in English. English was translated to Chinook trading jargon, a language of about 300 words, and then translated again in local tongues (Morgan 1973, United States vs Washington 1974). Even James Wickersham, leader of anti-Chinese violence, paternalistically described the treaty as

“a contract obtained through over-persuasion and deceit; through promises not in the record; by imposition upon minds unaccustomed to written contracts; a contract obtained from the weak by the strong; from the ward by the guardian; from the child by the parent, and wholly without consideration--unfair, unjust, ungenerous and illegal.”

(in Hunt & Kaylor 1917, 139)

Settlers, predominantly white, set the terms of tribal government and requirements for federal recognition of tribal sovereignty, critical for access to treaty rights. Even the Boldt Decision, which upheld many aspects of treaty rights, included paternalistic language denoting which tribes were “competent” to manage their own off-reservation fisheries (United States vs. Washington 1974).

Similarly, because of poverty created by colonization (which forced the growth of cash crops, rather than investments in infrastructure (Gwynne & Kay 2004) and a history of U.S. interventions leading to further economic and political

instability (Blum 2004), it is possible for the United States to manipulate Latin American countries' economies directly (e.g. through trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA) and indirectly (e.g. through control of World Bank lending policies which force structural adjustment programs). This power includes the ability to set the terms for Latinx migration and agricultural labor. As Seth Holmes writes in *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, “the distinction between economic and political migration is often blurry in the context of international policies enforcing neoliberal free markets as well as active military repression of indigenous people who seek collective socioeconomic improvement in southern Mexico” (Holmes 2013, 25). In the case of Latin American migrant workers, there is not much of a distinction between “political refugees” and “economic migrants” (Holmes 2013). Meanwhile, the cheap prices of U.S. produce-- including federally subsidized foods sold in former colonies, displacing local farmers (Black 2001, Holmes 2013)-- is financed by exploiting migrant workers. “Approximately 95 per cent of agricultural workers in the United States were born in Mexico, 52 per cent of them unauthorized” (Holmes 2013, 40). The cost of social services for these workers--especially health services for workers exposed to pesticides, repetitive motion injuries, the allostatic loads of vicious racism and poverty, and more-- is externalized by the United States, borne instead by the Mexican government and others. The United States gets away with “breaking” farmworkers' bodies for cheap food because of the asymmetrical economic relationships between the U.S. and Latin America (Holmes 2013).

Right to Mobility

When Isaac Stevens set out to fix treaties, his explicit goal was to remove Indians to the bare minimum of land required for survival, out of the way of the railroad and white settlement. Part of this involved fixing traditionally-mobile communities in one place. He first wanted to consolidate all Indians on a few reservations east of the Cascades (which resulted in the Colville and Yakama reservations). Then, he proposed that all western Washington Indians consolidate on the Quinault or Tulalip reservations, and “one big reservation at the head of Hood Canal where the tribes would have little intercourse with whites,” namely Skokomish (Morgan 1973, 93); many tribes refused to move. He finally “compromised” and created the original Stevens treaties, which included the language of “the right of taking fish, at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations, in common with all citizens,” which would enable tribes to survive on the reservations (ibid.). Meanwhile, railroads and shipping created an influx of white settlement. Settlers moved across mountain ranges to claim Indian lands, with encouragement from U.S. government incentives. Railroads and highways have cut through Indian lands with U.S. Congressional approval, regardless of tribal will, damaging salmon runs and making habitation of reservation lands cut by train tracks more challenging and dangerous.

Similarly, in their first words on citizenship, the 1790 U.S. Congress limited naturalization to “white persons” (Haney López 2006, 27). Chinese immigrants were excluded from immigration beginning with the 1882 federal exclusion act.

The National Origin Act of 1924 established a quota system limiting immigration to “western and northern European stock,” which only ended in 1965 (and arguably still continues in other forms) (ibid). The border between the United States and Mexico is remarkably harder than that between the U.S. and Canada; thousands of miles of wall bisecting the continent have been constructed, forcing border crossers into dangerous remote areas. More people die each year attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border than died in the Berlin Wall’s entire existence (136 total deaths claimed by the Berlin Wall compared to an estimated 7,954 at the U.S.- Mexico border between 1992 and 2014) (Gray 2014) . Meanwhile, United States tourists and businesses are able to travel freely back and forth across borders. U.S. corporations do so much business on the Mexican side of the border that NAFTA-related pollution from cross-boundary truck traffic has been linked with excess mortality in Ciudad Juarez’s children under 5 years old (Heyman 2007).

Right to Control Public Discourse

In these histories, another remarkably common occurrence is the use of white-owned newspapers and media to stigmatize communities targeted for expulsion. Descriptions of Chinese people from popular writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson to entries in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* were viciously dehumanizing (Morgan 1979). Similarly, press was weaponized against Puyallup Indians in the allotment era (and through the present).

The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) describes a pamphlet distributed in Tacoma and Washington, D.C. in 1892 “printed in exactly the same format, on exactly the same type of paper, and with exactly the same cover design that the Chamber [of Commerce, which lobbied for allotment] used [previously]. The booklet was titled *A Monograph on the Puyallup Indians of the State of Washington-- A Plea for the Puyallups prepared for Congress by A. Boston Tillicum. Esq.*” (National Lawyers Guild 1973, 16). The word “Tillicum” means “friend” (ibid), while “Boston” was a term used by Indians to describe whites (Harmon 1998). The content suggested that Congress could help Puyallup Indians by removing any restrictions to sales of their land. As the NLG points out, the pamphlet’s design, content, reception (it was printed in the *Tacoma Daily News*), and pen name obviously point to its authors as members of Tacoma’s Chamber of Commerce posing as Puyallup Indians.

Similarly, the white publisher Miller Freeman was the most avid proponent of Alien Land Laws targeting Japanese American farmers. When strawberry farmers in Bellevue were removed from their land, Freeman’s son developed the area into one of the wealthiest and whitest Seattle suburbs. At the same time, WWII-era white newspapermen at mainstream publications like the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and *Seattle Times*, which printed stories labeling Japanese Americans “spies” and “saboteurs,” privately assured Japanese American compatriots like Jimmy Sakamoto that their words didn’t mean anything. According to journalist Hideo Hoshide, who worked with Sakamoto at the *Japanese American Courier*, these journalists told Sakamoto “not to worry” about

what they printed; they were just writing it because such stories were “their bread and butter” (Ikeda 2006(2)).

In the same way, Leo Chavez found that magazine covers from the 1960s-2001 referred to Mexican immigration with language invoking “crises, time bombs, loss of control, invasion, danger, floods, and war” (Stephen 2007, 151 and Nevins 2008, 96, 100). This approach likely helps sell magazines; it also contributes to the virulent racism directed by white U.S. Americans towards Latin American people. The climate fostered by this kind of media coverage is what allows the U.S. to have a 2016 presidential candidate, Donald Trump, who unabashedly describes Mexicans as “criminals,” “killers,” and “rapists,” later expanding his comments to include all of Latin America (Moreno 2015). The same “populist” candidate promised his supporters to force Mexico to pay for a thousand miles of border wall by somehow cutting off migrant workers’ ability to send home remittances (Woodward & Costa 2016). Remittances are currently second only to oil sales in importance to the Mexican economy (Stephen 2007).

Right to Asymmetrical Intimacy

According to Morgan’s history of Puget Sound,

“Tacomans were not entirely of a mind about the undesirability of the Chinese presence. For some years Chinese were accepted quietly, though unenthusiastically (*tolerated* would be the precise word) as a work force. They did the town’s washing, waited table, cleaned house, handled lumber on the green chain at some mills. The town’s garbagemen and sewage disposal force, they carried off slops from homes, restaurants, and hotels in pails hung on poles slung across their shoulders...” (Morgan 1979, 214)

A similar dynamic appears around Latin American workers. The relationship between the United States and Mexico has been compared to South African apartheid (Nevins & Aizeki 2008, Holmes 2013), described by Lindsay Bremner as follows:

“While black and brown bodies were, in theory, assigned to certain localities, fixed in space, in point of fact, they were caught up in continuous circulatory migrations and asymmetrical intimacies. Black bodies were needed to nurse white children, to clean white homes, to labor in white industry, to work on white mines. White bodies policed, regulated, and administered black space. Bodies moved through and interacted with each other’s space on a daily basis. Thus, the Bantustan structure, imposed upon small and eroded reserves, was not meant to enclose or sustain its population, but was designed to force its residents into migrant labor” (Bremner 2005, 131).

Similarly, in *Blood at the Root: Lynching as American Cultural Nucleus*, Jennie Lightweis-Goff critiques stories of segregation which “[elide] connections between black and white people, allowing ‘whiteness to float free from blackness’ and denying long-standing cultural, social, and reproductive connections (Lightweis-Goff 2011, 35). Instead, she argues that while public spheres were segregated, private spheres relied on asymmetrical intimacies like those described above. As Patricia Hill Collins describes in “Like One of the Family,” these intimacies are a particularly grotesque form of race-based domination which reinforces the sense that subjugation and exploitation on national, and even international scales, is “natural” (Hill Collins 2010).

Right to Work

While the “Panic of 1873” (also known as “the Great Depression” before the later “Great Depression” claimed the title) was caused by industrialists and land speculation, impoverished white workers directed their fear and anger primarily not at the wealthy and powerful, but at a small and marginalized community group. The “need” to evict Chinese Tacomans was not questioned, even by white community members who spoke out against the mob action (Morgan 1979). It was taken for granted that the right to work of white Tacomans took precedence over that of Chinese Tacomans. Similarly, settlement of the area was framed as “progress,” and white settlers expressed frustration that they were not able to access Indian lands, which were not being “improved” through settler agricultural or industrial practices. This idea of a “right to work” appears today in much populist rhetoric scapegoating Latin American workers and others with fewer rights than U.S. citizens for factory closures and relocations offshore.

This attitude also appears in a sense of white entitlement to industrialization, recreation, and urbanization, regardless of environmental and cultural impacts for current and later generations. And so the boom in white settlement has accompanied deforestation; channelization of rivers; massive growth of animal agriculture; pollution of waterways, land, and air; dams inhibiting salmon runs; industrial fishing practices which decimate fish populations; and much more. There was never a question that this “progress” had to take place; it was merely a matter of clearing the way for industry.

Right to Cultural Hegemony

In addition to media outlets screaming white supremacist views, white settlers imposed Christian and patriarchal frameworks upon immigrants of color as well as Native Americans. Chinese people were demonized for their “heathen” religion (Morgan 1979); even those who identified as Christian were forced out. White-owned papers responded to Christian Chinese people’s question about why they were called heathen after being baptized by saying that “a Christian Chinese was a contradiction in terms” (ibid, 222). At the same time, some Indigenous and immigrant people accepted Christianity on their own terms, practicing resilience by blending it with their own beliefs (as is the case, for example, in the Indian Shaker Church), or using Jesus’ teachings around human dignity and equality as an argument against their oppression.

Indian boarding schools run by military men with a military model imposed patriarchal, Christian, and capitalist frameworks on young Indian children in an effort to “kill the Indian, and save the man.” Indian girls were taught “domestic arts” while Indian boys were taught industrial trades; both were rented out to predominantly white local families as workers. Despite this, some Indian children preferred the boarding schools to classrooms with racist peers, and formed lasting intertribal relationships, later translating these relationships into coordinated resistance.

Right to Positive Self-Image

In *White by Law*, Haney López describes the way whiteness is constructed as “not only the opposite of non-Whiteness, but as the *superior* opposite” (2006, 20).

He quotes Richard Ford:

“[In order for the concept of a white race to exist, there must be a Black race which is everything the white race is not (read of course: does not want to be associated with). Thus, the most debased stereotypical attributes of the ‘Black savage’ are none other than the guilty projections of white society. This white self-regard is at the root of race bigotry in all its forms: it is not a fear of the other, but a fear and loathing of the self; it is not so much the construction of Blackness which matters, it is the construction of whiteness as the absence of those demons the white subject must project onto the other” (ibid, 21).

He further quotes Toni Morrison on “Africanism”:

“Africanism is the vehicle by which the American self knows itself as not enslaved, but free; not repulsive, but desirable; not helpless, but licensed and powerful; not history-less but historical; not damned but innocent; not a blind accident of evolution, but a progressive fulfillment of destiny” (ibid).

It is interesting that so many white stories demonize the people whose oppression has benefited whiteness. If Native Americans were in the way, or if their precolonial “authentic” culture changed in any fashion, they were unqualified to possess their historical lands. Whites with no relationship whatsoever to the land in the Pacific Northwest-- demonstrated by our wholesale, utterly unaccountable destruction of its environment in the interests of primitive accumulation-- managed to rationalize their desire by considering *Indians* out of place, rather than themselves. During the Puget Sound War, and for many years following, Indians were and are painted by settlers as selfish, “greedy” (Hunt

1916), and controlling for asserting any treaty rights. This is evident even in white resource managers' accounts of dynamics during the Fish Wars.

In the lead-up to Chinese expulsion, Chinese families were framed as “cruel” and “dishonest” (Morgan 1979) while whites profited from their low wages for undesirable work and planned an ethnic cleansing. Whites whose numbers had multiplied a hundredfold in thirty years, displacing Indians, likened Tacoma's small Chinese community to swarming, invading “rats” (Morgan 1979, 221).

Similarly, suspicion directed at Japanese Americans was twisted into stereotypes about them as spies and saboteurs during WWII. In much the same way, Arab and Muslim detainees at the NWDC are also portrayed as a threat to national security in the post-9/11 “War on Terror.” Racist rhetoric around Latin American workers frames their exploitation by a white supremacist nation as, perversely, exploitation of that white nation; for example, undocumented workers are helping to keep Social Security afloat, since they pay into it but are unable to claim its benefits. Nevertheless, funding cuts to entitlements are blamed upon those very workers, who are accused of a parasitic relationship to U.S. resources.

Conclusion

An answer to the question “what is white?” uttered in frustration by the judges in *Ex parte Shahid* when forced to define their own identity, is complex. I have only touched on a few themes here which stood out to me in the course of my research. The transformation of settler state violence into claims to white social capital; rights to land, public space, violence, safety, mobility, and work; the

power to set terms, control public discourse, dominate intimate connection; the right to cultural hegemony and positive self-image are all intertwined. They are not really distinct categories, even though I present them that way here. It is clear, as Haney López writes, that “the edifice of Whiteness stands at the heart of racial inequality in America” (2006, 23). Whiteness is at the heart of racial and national inequity, as well as environmental destruction, in the Puyallup Estuary.

Hegemonic white cultural values, including settlers’ embrace of industrial capitalism, have transformed and severely degraded the estuary. The white supremacist state has facilitated settler “primitive accumulation” in the Port of Tacoma through the federal Donation Land Law, Homesteading Acts, massive land grants to railroad companies, corrupt allotment processes, race-based exclusion from land ownership and citizenship; milling, logging and mining accelerated by the 1878 Timber and Stone Act; and fishing and meatpacking. Meanwhile, people of color and Native peoples were excluded from access to this wealth, directly and indirectly, through forced removals, exclusionary laws, violence, and fraud. Later, the state defended white entitlement during attempts at conservation during the Fish Wars, attacking Indian sovereignty (and bodies and property) instead of settler industries which threatened fish runs in the first place, and more recently resisted federal court orders to repair fish habitat by removing impediments to fish runs.

Both natural resources and human labor which extracts and processes them have been contained and constricted in the service of whiteness, or have been expelled

or contaminated when they are no longer needed by settler industries. When Indigenous or immigrant communities resist, or exercise resilience in the face of historic abuse, they are identified as threats. These processes literally shaped the landscape of Puyallup Estuary, but are normalized and “hidden in plain sight,” becoming visible only when closely examining the hidden histories of the Tacoma tide flats.

Conclusion

“So the image is a reed in a river: like a skinny little wimpy thing. And if it doesn’t have much ability to be grounded it will just be washed away. But if it doesn’t get washed away it’s going to get so strong, right? So a reed. Here’s the river going this way. And the reed is growing and the more the river pushes it, if it doesn’t carry it, the stronger it gets. And if you kinda have this image of grass roots, or reed roots, these things are strong, man. They are so powerful and grounded and so able to cope because they’ve grown up around the stress of whatever it is, and so they can do what no other water plant can do. They can stand and they can rise.”

-L. Nieto, personal communication, November 23rd 2008

Overarching Themes

Two overarching themes emerged from the research. First, white settler colonialism constructs property relations in the Puyallup River Estuary, and these processes are connected with neocolonialism in Latin America (and elsewhere). Second, construction of this racial hierarchy is met with resilience and resistance (including tribal sovereignty and restoration of watersheds & fish runs, among other themes). Within these, several sub-themes emerged:

Whiteness is property.

Whiteness has a tangible property value of inclusion and freedom of movement, and its hegemonic cultural values, including U.S. settler colonialism and embrace of industrial capitalism, have transformed and severely degraded the Puyallup River Estuary. As George Lipsitz writes, U.S. society has a possessive interest in whiteness. He uses “the adjective *possessive* to stress the relationship between whiteness and asset accumulation in our society, to connect attitudes to

interests, to demonstrate that white supremacy is usually less a matter of direct, referential, and snarling contempt and more a system for protecting the privileges of whites by denying communities of color opportunities for asset accumulation and upward mobility. Whiteness is invested in, like property, but it is also a means of accumulating property and keeping it from others” (Lipsitz 2006, vii). This process is intrinsically linked with dispossession and removal of Indigenous peoples from their lands. White settlers and industrial capital benefit from local, regional, and federal government initiatives which historically extracted, and continue to extract, land, labor, and community-based knowledge from Indigenous peoples and communities of color. Removal of Japanese American, Chinese, and Puyallup communities created economic opportunity for white and settler-owned business which severely degraded the environment.

The construction of whiteness actively shaped the local landscape.

Logging deforested the Puget Sound lowlands, facilitating urbanization and harming waterways and fish runs. Urbanization led to demand for freshwater, rerouting rivers to “tame” them and avoid floods, demand for animal agriculture with its attendant environmental impacts; demand for electricity which led to multiple dams, increasing shoreline erosion and harming fish runs; and much more. The City of Tacoma would not exist in its current form were it not for the removal of Puyallup people from Tahadowa. Wealth accrued by white looters and developers following Chinese and Japanese American removal would remain in Chinese and Japanese American communities. Regional agriculture would not be possible without the exploitation and structural violence currently enacted

towards Latinx peoples, in this area and nationwide. And GEO Group, as acknowledged in its SEC filings, would not have the same returns for investors without its incarceration and exploitation of people of color, both citizens and non-citizens.

More than a century of urban and port development, including dredging and filling the tide flats, moving the mouth of the Puyallup River, dumping waste in the waterways, and much more, along with one hundred years of meatpacking on the site where the NWDC is now located, severely polluted the earth and groundwater. The Port of Tacoma is now a highly lucrative industrial zone, used to warehouse undocumented immigrants away from the rest of Tacoma. Settler fisheries, particularly industrial fisheries, displaced Indigenous peoples, and Washington State supported this process by supporting industry and challenging tribal sovereignty with physical and administrative violence.

Settlers' primitive accumulation of labor and natural resources in the estuary and surrounding region depended (and continues to depend upon) containment and expulsion of Indigenous peoples and people of color, both in the estuary and in Latin America. Similarly, white supremacist carceral structures such as Cushman Indian School and the Northwest Detention Center transform imprisonment of Indigenous peoples and communities of color into profits.

Neocolonialism between the U.S. and Latin America.

Construction of racial hierarchy in the Puyallup River Estuary is intimately linked with construction of neocolonialism in Latin America (and elsewhere).

United States agricultural interests depend on an exploitable underclass, with little to no recognized legal rights. Mexican migrant workers, in particular, are exploited by the U.S. government, business owners, and consumers for the ease of both their availability and expulsion. U.S. agriculture externalizes the costs of reproducing its labor force to Latin America.

Tribal sovereignty and environmental and community health.

The health of local ecosystems is linked with state and federal recognition of tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. State-facilitated dispossession of Puyallup people is directly connected with industrial destruction of the Puyallup River Estuary and its nonhuman life; increased tribal sovereignty has led to increased environmental health, because the local environment is deeply intertwined with place-based cultural, economic, and spiritual practices. Resources gained through the exercise of treaty rights have led to increased economic health for tribal members, as well as non-Native communities through taxes and donations from the tribe.

Community resilience.

Community is powerful. Even when targeted by capitalist and/or racist state violence, marginalized communities can survive, even thrive in the long run. As the Puyallup Tribe has shown, tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and the restoration of the watershed are key aspects of resistance and resilience in Northwest Indigenous territories. Those working for social and environmental justice can

draw upon the struggles and resilience of generations behind us, and our love for generations before us, to find strength for the work ahead.

Recommendations for future research:

The NWDC's siting and detainee health. The Northwest Detention Center's location exposes detainees to environmental contaminants. While beyond the scope of this project, understanding the site's health risks for detainees and their families is critical.

Joint Base Lewis-McChord. I would have liked to learn more about the role of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (formerly Fort Lewis) in the Port's industrialization and development, as well as local border militarization and policing, but it was beyond my project's scope. As local historian Murray Morgan puts it, "the military became, as it remains, Pierce County's basic payroll" (Morgan 1979, 325). Intimate connections between the U.S.'s military- and prison-industrial complexes, along with the role of different wars in settlement of Washington State (including parts played by white veterans of race-related and colonial wars), suggests deeper connections than are covered here.

Transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure supporting mobility-- particularly railroads, interstate highways, and waterways-- is deeply implicated in local processes of colonization and forced removal, including ongoing tribal efforts to preserve fishways.

Allotment-era settler violence. Ramona Bennett and Bill Sterud both touch upon turn-of-the-century settler violence towards Puyallup tribal members who would not sell their lands. This subject deserves the attention of local historians.

Workers in the Port of Tacoma. Details of labor organizing and working conditions in the Port were beyond the scope of this project, but feel like potentially rich ground for future research.

Nonhuman animal agriculture. Fur trade and agricultural interests played a significant role in regional colonization, particularly through Fort Nisqually, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, and homesteading laws. It would be interesting to learn more about its role in shaping local economies and ecosystems, particularly in relation to “whiteness as property.”

Boarding school superintendents’ allotment-era corruption. This subject also has not received the local academic attention it is due.

Community costs of local internment. Long-term social, political, environmental, and economic consequences to local Japanese Americans’ removal and internment during WWII.

Tacoma’s anti-Chinese riot: What happened to the Chinese families who were expelled? And what happened to members of the mob that expelled them? How did the expulsion impact Tacoma socially, politically, environmentally, and economically?

The role of Christianity in these processes. The role of hegemonic Christianity (which I differentiate from other forms arising from marginalized communities, such as the Black Baptist church or liberation theology) in facilitating colonization became more and more obvious through my work, particularly as I read older histories and records in the archives. This, along with primitive accumulation, provide threads of continuity from Columbus's stated mission when he first left Spain in 1492 through colonization of Washington state nearly 400 years later.

First, Christian dominionism and Puritan elevation of capitalism created the framework of Manifest Destiny, the "myth of meritocracy," and a sense of righteousness in processes of primitive accumulation and "subjugation" of the land. Non-Christian religions were racialized and targeted as part of this process. Some, including Indigenous spiritual practices, were declared illegal. Accounts by early Pacific Northwest explorers and settlers talk about the Bible, and converting Indians to Christianity, nearly as much as they talk about trade. They describe Indians as "sinful" and frame Indian survival in terms of assimilation, which first and foremost included adoption of Christianity. Similarly, during anti-Chinese organizing, white rhetoric denied Chinese Christians' existence, weaponizing hegemonic and racialized Christianity to rationalize the ethnic cleansing.

Christianity also played a large role in colonial education, which was intimately linked with the settler state's project of "killing the Indian to save the man." While the boarding school I focus on in this project, Cushman Indian

Trades School, was not run by a church, it incorporated Christianity as a key element of its curriculum. This process is also difficult to untangle from colonial enforcement of gender norms which challenged the strength of extended community networks and are connected with historical and intergenerational trauma. Relatedly, a priest named Peter Hylebos ran a second Indian school (St. George's Industrial School) on land appropriated by the U.S. government after the first Treaty of Medicine Creek. The school emphasized Christian education, along with training children in white colonial gender norms. While the revised Medicine Creek Treaty included the land the school was on, the land had already been given to the priest and was not returned to the tribe.

Additionally, hegemonic Christianity is linked with the military-industrial complex in several ways; framing colonization as "holy war" is still part of U.S. military rhetoric around invasions of countries in the Middle East. It is critical to the project of "humanitarian imperialism."

At the same time, Indians hybridized Christian and Indigenous spiritual practices as a form of resilience (e.g. through the Shaker Church). Some Chinese and Japanese people in the estuary practiced Christianity, too, and Catholicism's greatest populations are in Latin America (where, again, hegemonic European Christian traditions have been hybridized to incorporate Indigenous traditions, and where liberation theology arose). The role of Christianity in colonization is complex, but certainly should not be ignored in any comprehensive history of the colonization in the estuary.

Beyond Inevitability

“In the loss of an other, we suddenly come to awareness of the fact that our lives are not, and never have been, strictly our own. This recognition of the fundamental relationality of socioecological existence is, in a sense, the beginning of politics.”

-David Langstaff, “What could it mean to Mourn?” (2015)

In this thesis, I have attempted to share pieces of local history which shape the present-day environmental and social fabric of the South Puget Sound. These stories are about both loss and connection, structural violence and community resilience. As David Langstaff discusses in “What could it mean to Mourn? Notes on and towards a Radical Politics of Loss and Grieving,” political melancholy is a natural reaction to a time when it is “easier to imagine the end of the world [than] the end of capitalism” (Jameson as quoted in Langstaff 2015). But grief--*grief* is an eruption, breaking silence and the violence-turned-inward of melancholy. It is evidence of our interconnectedness and an opportunity for transformative mourning (Langstaff 2015).

It is easy to accept our present circumstances as inevitable, rather than a product of history, and to ignore our own embeddedness. But most history is created by banal, everyday choices. As Hannah Arendt has said, in many ways “evil” is produced by these very choices, by the diffuse responsibility of bureaucracy, by administrative violence which allows its beneficiaries to, like Eichmann in Arendt’s study, “never realize what [we are] doing” (Arendt 1963). These moments and disavowals add up to create tipping points and shifts in

political current. They can--and do-- create atrocities. They can--and do--create beloved community.

The transformation of the Puyallup Estuary from a living, breathing ecosystem into an appendage of an industrial system, expulsion of Asian communities from Tacoma, and current everyday exploitation of immigrant laborers are not hidden processes, but are “hidden in plain sight” in the local landscape, to be seen by those who care about healing the human and natural worlds from the imposition of racial hierarchies. Studying the racialized environmental history of a local site not only examines the current landscape, but implicitly asks questions about the decision-making processes that created its current crises, and about “paths not followed” which could have resulted in different outcomes.

How would our world look different if the money spent militarizing the U.S.-Mexico border were put towards enabling Mexicans and Central Americans to grow their own crops and make a livelihood in their own countries? If the U.S. *stopped* externalizing the costs of its agricultural workforce to Mexico, by covering health care, education, and living wages for migrant farmworkers? Or if the U.S. put the money from the failed War on Drugs towards social services addressing ACEs and the beginnings of “repatriation of Indigenous land and life” (Tuck & Wang 2012, 21)? How would Pacific Northwest fish runs look today if their health had always been put before hydroelectric dams, canning industries, and urbanization? If tribal sovereignty were respected from the beginning,

including its connections with communal land stewardship, nonhuman animals, language, treaty rights, community health, and spirituality? If industries were not permitted to contaminate groundwater, leaving a toxic legacy for present and future generations? What would Tacoma be like today with a thriving Chinatown? What would our region be if we had rejected the removal and internment of Japanese American community members during World War II? If the Alien Land Laws had never been passed? If the “arithmetical abstractions” allowing land and life to be bought and sold were abolished? What if our entire region thought intergenerationally, as Ramona Bennett describes?

Challenges for Environmental Professionals

In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, Seth Holmes writes that, “If health professionals responded to sickness by treating not only its current manifestations but also its social, economic, and political causes, we could create a realistically critical public health and a ‘liberation medicine’” (2013, 193-4). Similarly, if environmental professionals apply structural analyses to understanding environmental degradation, considering its social, economic, and political histories, we are able to understand it as historically produced-- and therefore malleable. This kind of analysis helps to identify strategic points of leverage and common ground, supporting effective coalition-building. It will make any work we do more effective in the long run.

Construction of whiteness and colonial power was accomplished through state-facilitated control of people and the landscape. Racialized hierarchy was

created through processes of constriction (channelizing rivers and controlling fish runs, removing Native children to boarding schools, interning Japanese American landowners, detaining recent immigrants) and expulsion (expelling the Puyallup tribe from the waterfront and railroad route through direct and indirect violence and fraud; ethnic cleansing of Chinese Tacomans; extracting natural resources and depositing enormous volumes of toxic wastes; and deporting recent immigrants). People and the natural environment were (and are) treated as resources for accumulation of wealth, and are thrown away when they are no longer needed-- literally treated as waste-- which has become a for-profit industry in itself.

At the same time, the Puyallup Tribe persisted through more than a hundred years of state-facilitated genocide. It went from a few hundred enrolled members with less than 33 acres of land in the 1960s to a major regional power with thousands of enrolled members today. Latin American immigrants have long been used and abused by the United States, which has invested in an immense military and policing apparatus focused on controlling migrant workers. Yet immigrants continue to outsmart the state. Detainees are stripped of their rights and incarcerated, subjected to passive and active structural and interpersonal violence. Yet the Colectivo de Detenidos organized three hunger strikes, despite leaders' deportations and solitary confinement. And their organizing work, along with that of undocumented community advocates on the outside, has inspired further detainee hunger strikes across the nation and drawn national attention to immigrant rights. Connections between detainees and Latinx migrant

farmworkers, such as members of Familias Unidas por la Justicia, a growing international movement for workers' rights, have also emerged.

The pieces of history relayed here are painful and uplifting. The losses they describe are (unequal) losses for all, while the resistance and resilience of so many offer lessons we can draw from today. I hope I have demonstrated interconnections between place-based, yet seemingly-distinct, processes of structural violence and community resistance. I also hope I have conveyed the importance of structural and sociopolitical analysis to understanding environmental degradation. In order to understand how a Superfund site was created, or how a fish run collapsed, we must look at intersections of cultural, legal, economic, and political forces. By understanding some aspects of how racialized power structures work, I hope to show that the future can be changed to create meaningfully accountable, just, and resilient communities and environments.

“White people need to work through “unnaturalising’ ourselves . . . by reexamining our own personal histories and geographies, *and praxis*. ‘Unnaturalizing’ ourselves means engagement in practical political work . . . [because] . . . [u]nlearning racism . . . is not the same as ending it” (Frankenberg 1993, 82 [emphasis added]). Historicizing social suffering is important. It is equally, if not more, important to support and engage in the work being done at all levels to dismantle settler colonial “whiteness as property,” in the interests of current and future generations’ community and environmental health. Settlers

must grapple with the true meaning of “decolonization,” not as a metaphor for social justice in general, but as restoration of land, air, water, and everything in between to Indigenous power (Tuck & Wang 2012). This is a deeply disturbing, “unsettling” project for non-Native people, but it is necessary for abolition (ibid). In order to really end the structural violence which produces environmental and community destruction, settlers must de-center them (/our) selves and follow Indigenous leadership; they/we must commit to showing up with transparency and authenticity, respecting boundaries, and working for the long haul. As Jewish social anarchist Gustav Landauer once wrote, “the State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of behaviour; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently toward one another” (in Lynteris 2013). This project is, to paraphrase a friend¹², “not easy; but it’s not impossible.”

“We unwrap our tongues, we bind our stories, we choose to be naked
we show our markings, we lick our fingers, we stroke our bellies
we laugh at midnight, we change the ending
we begin, and begin again.”

- Aurora Levins Morales, “Listen, Speak”

¹² Lucy Santiago in interview with Alejandro Rugarcia on KAOS 89.3 FM, circa 2010

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