DECOLONIZING COLONIALISM

Chief Seattle Club
Derrick Belgarde-Deputy Director
Nawiishtunmi Conner-Case Manager Director
“From a biological standpoint cells lie dormant or awaken based on many factors in our environment. Epigenetics has been able to explain why certain people are genetically predisposed to disease; this is also how trauma is transmitted. This is where Anthropology and Epigenetics meet. The rape, forced removal and genocide of our people is trauma that we carry through generations and colonialism continues to perpetuate.”

(Leanne R. Brock, personal communication, May 16, 2018).

Choctaw/African American Scholar
THE AMERICAN INDIAN HOLOCAUST, KNOWN AS THE 500 YEAR WAR

Since 1492, American Indian/Alaska Natives have been suppressed by acts of genocide. Which involved ethnic cleansing, cultural genocide, biological warfare, bounties for the severed heads of AI/AN that were paid by the US. Govt., (Ostler, 2015), reservation systems, removal acts, sterilization, rape, and an extermination of the food source for the AI/AN race as a means for starvation.

Death toll: 95,000,000-114,000,000 (Oxford Press, 1992)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Leaders</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Franklin</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>“If it be the design of Providence to extirpate these Savages in order to make room for cultivators of the Earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Washington</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>“The immediate objectives are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. It will be essential to ruin their crops in the ground and prevent their planting more.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>“This unfortunate race, whom we had been taking so much pains to save and to civilize, have by their unexpected desertion and ferocious barbarities justified extermination and now await our decision on their fate.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Biological Warfare

• 1767: During the French and Indian War in North America, an English general, Sir Jeffery Amherst, gives blankets infected with smallpox to Indians who are helping the French defend Fort Carillon. But the smallpox ploy works, causing an epidemic that decimates the Indians and allows Amherst to capture the fort and rename it Fort Ticonderoga. ("Cherokee Nation", 2018).

• Estimates of mortality rates resulting from smallpox epidemics range between 38.5% for the Aztecs, 50% for the Piegan, Huron, Catawba, Cherokee, and Iroquois, 66% for the Omaha and Blackfeet, 90% for the Mandan, and 100% for the Taino. Smallpox epidemics affected the demography of the stricken populations for 100 to 150 years after the initial first infection. ("Cherokee Nation", 2018).
American Exceptionalism

■ "American exceptionalism is an ideological position. There are very important reasons that have given rise to it and fueled it over the years. But it's not something that's grounded in historic fact or reality. It's an ideological position of settlers in a settler colonial society where the foundation of the nation rests on dispossessing Native peoples of their lands."  

Tsianina Lomawaima of the Mvskoke (Creek) Nation
In 1830, President Andrew Jackson wrote this message to Congress to justify forced removal of tens of thousands of American Indians from their land. More known as the “Trail of Tears”. There was not enough time to gather their things because they were being forced out to walk the long stretch in the winter months. 4,000 is the number of those who did not survive because of the weather, hunger, and disease along the way. The justification in Andrew Jackson's letter was to benefit owning more land while getting rid of the indigenous population. Many held at prison camps after removal. Cherokee Nation. (2018).
“A war of extermination will continue to be waged between the two races until the Indian race becomes extinct, must be expected.”

According to "The Indigenous American" (2017),

- In 1850, California’s first governor, Peter Burnett, announced the state’s official position of genocide, ‘as the only solution to the Indian problem.
- The state funded both the bullets for the voluntary militia, and $10 to $25 for proof of executed Indians – scalps, heads, hands, or bodies.
- California’s first bond of $400,000 was issued in 1854, to fund the bounty on dead Indians and the costs of extermination.
- Between 1850 and 1860, the state of California paid around 1.5 million dollars. Some $250,000 of which was reimbursed by the federal government.
- By the mid-1860’s only 34,000 Indians remained alive in California.
- It is estimated that before European contact in 1770 the Native American population exceeded 320 thousand. In about 100 years Manifest Destiny and colonialism led to the deaths of about 290,000 Californians of indigenous descent.
ICHÍ
Emerged in 1911 at the age of 50
The 1851 Indian Appropriations Act, which created the reservation system, forced Native Americans to move to and remain living on reservations. This prevented many Native Americans from being able to sustain themselves in traditional ways, such as hunting, fishing and gathering food. The move made many Native Americans dependent on the diet of white settlers, including sugar and wheat flour.

“KILL THE INDIAN IN HIM, SAVE THE MAN”

In 1870, the United States started taking AI/AN children from their families to steal their identity and culture. By cutting off their braids and beating children into westernized religion to be more civilized like colonists.

In 1945, Bill Wright, a Pattwin Indian, was sent to the Stewart Indian School in Nevada. He was just 6 years old. Wright remembers matrons bathing him in kerosene and shaving his head. Students at federal boarding schools were forbidden to express their culture — everything from wearing long hair to speaking even a single Indian word. Wright said he lost not only his language, but also his American Indian name. (Bear, 2008).
Ten months of the year Native children were taken away from their families and culture, severely punished if caught speaking their own indigenous language, never allowed to laugh, to read, to hug, or talk of their Native heritage, deeply scarring them for life. Now revealed, pedophilia rings, torture, sterilization, and experiments at the hands of the nuns and priests. Designed for genocide, the schools had a 50% death rate.

Armed with bible verses, the church mass murdered Indians who refused to convert, and then stole their land. Over the years, millions died from the intentional spread of tuberculosis and smallpox.

Truth Does Not Fear Investigation
1976-GOVERNMENT ADMITS STERILIZATION

4 of the 12 Indian Health Service regions sterilized 3,406 American Indian women without their permission between 1973 and 1976. 36 women were forced to have sterilizations done despite a court-ordered moratorium on sterilizations of women younger than 21. ("Native Voices", n.d.).

Two years earlier, an independent study by Dr. Connie Pinkerton-Uri, Choctaw/Cherokee, found that one in four American Indian women had been sterilized without her consent. Pinkerton-Uri’s research indicated that the Indian Health Service had “singled out full-blooded Indian women for sterilization procedures.” ("Word Press", 2013).

Native Americans Secretly Sterilized
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native, %</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic White Only, * %</th>
<th>Relative Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any Lifetime Violence</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Violence by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Past-Year Violence</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Violence by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NS = Percentages across racial and ethnic groups are not significantly different ($p > .05$).

*Non-Hispanic white only represents people who identified themselves as both non-Hispanic and white, with no other race.
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<th>Non-Hispanic White Only, %</th>
<th>Relative Risk</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any Lifetime Violence</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Violence by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Past-Year Violence</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Violence by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
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1924 INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT

In 1919 World War I were offered citizenship. In 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act was passed by Congress that allowed AI/AN dual citizenship on reservations and off reservations. The right to vote was denied and citizenship privileges were governed by state and law. ("History", 2010). In 1947 is when legal barriers dropped that prevented AI/AN from voting. ("U.s Voting Rights Timeline", n.d.).
WHEN GENOCIDE FAILED, THE NEXT TACTIC

COLONIZATION = OPPRESSION

Chemical Warfare  Rape  Dehumanization & demonizing of Native People

Femicide  Dehumanizing & demonizing of Native Women

Christianity  Reservation System

Capitalism  Isolation (Family)

Intimidation & Threats  "Treaties"  Boarding & Mission Schools

Impact of Colonization (Internalized Oppression)

Patriarchy  Male Privilege & Dominance  Man Against Woman

Indian Against Indian  Shame  Battering

Chemical Dependency  Rape  Incest

Incest  Double-Standard  Identity Confusion

Violence of Juvenile Against Juvenile  Distrust  Man Against Sacred Elements

Elder Abuse  Individualism  Alienation (Family)

Fear  Materialism  Cultural Confusion

Loss of Language  Loss of Rituals  Spiritual Confusion

Loss of Songs  High Mortality

Impact of Colonization

Natural World  Native Nations

Impact of Colonization (Internalized Oppression)

Unnatural World  Native Nations
DECOLONIZING COLONIALISM
The Main Takeaways

1. The trauma within the Native American community is vastly different from other’s.
2. Colonization is still taking place today.
3. To effectively support and serve the Native community, it is crucial to use culturally appropriate native focused programming.
Irreconcilable Viewpoints

- Different cosmologies and understanding of our universe and our placement within as people
- Linear vs cyclical thinking
- The medicine wheel and the concept of balance
  - Time
  - Elders
  - Wisdom
  - Community/individuality
  - Individual, family, community, world
  - Infant, youth, maturity, elder

- Winnemem vs. New Agers on Mt. Shasta
- Protecting Panther Meadows
- Climbers Ignore Native Americans' Request At Devils Tower
Understanding Colonialism

- “Colonialism is an ongoing system, not an isolated event” (Blais-Billie, 2014)

- The atrocities still continue today
  - Land
  - Culture
  - Treaty rights
  - Recognition
Historical Trauma and Unresolved Grief

- “Aboriginal people never had enough time, between various sequences of new world epidemics, genocide, trauma, and forced assimilation to develop tools for passing through the periodic social and cultural disintegration of their nations” (Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)

- Disenfranchised grief
  - Federal law in 1883 prohibited native spirituality until 1978
  - U.S. policies have historically been designed to forcibly assimilate natives into euro-American culture
  - 1871 - congress declared natives wards of the government with the goal to civilize
■ Trauma can create experiences of:
- Loss of safety, coherency, boundaries, orientation to time and space, of integrity, trust, resilience, control, competence, connection to one’s own life-force and source.
- Fear of inadequacy/adequacy, threat of death, a fusion to and obsession with threat, and confusion in general.
- Powerlessness with a sense of being defeated, subjugated and dominated.
- Helplessness, with a sense of failure and resignation to incapability.
- Contraction with a compression, which can lead to depression.
- Exhaustion and a collapsing of one’s stamina, a dis-spiriting process.
- Frozenness/fixity and a numbness of emotional, physical and mental proportions.

(Atkinson, 2012)
Historical Trauma.... (Cont.)

- Collective Trauma
  - *Deep mistrust of self, others, even with family;*
  - *Self-directed violence-suicide, risk-taking behavior;*
  - *Substance misuse;*
  - *Violence against women;*
  - *Unremitting grief;*
  - *Shame and humiliation;*
  - *Intergenerational conflict;*
  - *Role diffusion, including sexual abuse and other boundary violations;*
  - *Cultural genocide, losing traditional values, desecrating land and institutions;*
  - *Leadership crisis;*
  - *A conspiracy of silence – an overall attitude of secrecy.*

Ratanvale (as cited in Atkinson, 2014)
Historical Trauma.... 
(Cont.)

What can happen when denied the time and ability to heal and stabilize from traumatic events

*Chart used from the Klinic Community Health Centres’s Trauma-informed Toolkit
Learned Helplessness

“Faced with inescapable situations, such as physical extermination, cultural genocide and colonial subjugation, individuals and groups often exhibit what sociologists label “learned helplessness”.”

... affects the following psychological processes:

- Motivation (which becomes reduced as there are no incentives to try new coping responses, there is a passivity and a lack of response initiation);
- Cognition (with an ability to learn new responses to overcome prior learning that trauma is uncontrollable and cognitive representation of uncontrollability);
- Emotion (the helpless state resembles depression with feelings of worthlessness, guilt and thoughts of death and suicidal attempts).

(Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)
Learned Helplessness (Cont.)

- “socially learned helplessness may become a prerequisite for social invisibility; people unable or unwilling to act according to dominant social standards and passively (instead of actively) resisting assimilation.... The dominant society perceives the passively aggressive group as socially undesirable, as “invisible-by-necessity” and, thus, as needing the knowing subject to represent it” (Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)
Learned Helplessness (Cont.)

“... this kind of behavior occurs when an individual (or a group) perceives that his or her behavior cannot control events and that no action on his or her part will control outcomes in the future” - Peterson and Seligman (as cited in Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)

- Learned helplessness can cause...
  - A distorted sense of self
  - Low self-esteem
  - Damaged internal locus of control
• **Locus of Control**

A person with an internal **locus of control** believes that he or she can influence events and their outcomes, while someone with an external **locus of control** blames outside forces for everything. (Fournier, 2016)

**Internal** *(Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)*

- More likely to prefer games based on skill.
- After failing a task, internals re-evaluate future performances and lower their expectations of success.
- After experiencing success in a task, internals are likely to raise their behavioural goals.

**External** *(Smolewski & Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004)*

- Prefer games on chance and luck.
- After failure, externals raise their expectations.
- More likely to lower their goals.
THE CHIEF SEATTLE CLUB MODEL
The Chief Seattle Club Mission

Create a sacred space to nurture, affirm, and renew the spirit of urban Native people

Our Core Values and Guiding Principles

- **Love & Compassion** – Offer love and compassion to all of our Chief Seattle Club members, staff and board.
- **Affirmation** – Believe in the best of our Chief Seattle Club members, staff and board.
- **Acceptance** – Accept where each individual is at by listening, sharing, and inspiring a nurturing community.
- **Friendship, Respect & Support** – Be there for and respect each other every day by honoring who we are, getting to know each other and defining our diverse needs.
- **Interconnectedness** – Connect our membership with opportunities to have a greater impact on the broader Indigenous Community and world.
- **Guidance & Service** – Provide holistic full-circle coverage to give our membership the best shot at a fuller future.
- **Wellness** – Improve all members overall well-being.
Culturally Appropriate Services

- Create a welcoming native environment
- Provide non-judgmental trauma-informed services
- Focus on strength-based approaches rather than deficit-based.
Culturally Appropriate Services

Holistic Approach

- Mental
- Emotional
- Physical
- Spiritual

CSC 2016 Luncheon Video
Future of Chief Seattle Club

Current Highlights

- Re-entry Programs
- Workforce development
  - Native Works
  - Housing Development
  - Native architecture
  - 77 low-income units
THE END