SETTLER COLONIALISM, RACE & SPACE:

ARTICULATING THE CRITERIA AND DISPARITIES OF MUNICIPAL IN(EX)CLUSION IN LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

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Abstract

This Master of Arts thesis aims to discover if criteria for inclusion is present within the City of Lethbridge through surveying business owner and City Council perspectives on the community's former supervised consumption site (SCS). My research complements and builds upon previous academic work done in Lethbridge and shows that Indigenous inclusion is interpreted through a settler colonial lens which alternatively seeks to reinforce Indigenous exclusion. Inclusion premised through a settler colonial ideology and intent – or, as I have coined, in(ex)clusion - undermines the cultivation of authentic municipal inclusion. The SCS case study highlights the range of settler transfers that emerge when normative expectations about Indigenous social participation are challenged or unmet. Settler colonialism's presence in municipal environments demands greater study if, in the spirit of reconciliation, authentic municipal inclusion is to develop.

Contents

Chapter One: Introduction and Description of Research

> "Everyone did what they had to in the earliest days of grueling manual labour; many came to the city with nothing and made something for themselves with only sheer determination … Residents stood together like they have always done, eager to lend a helping hand to their neighbour … Famed and applauded for being a big city that never let go of its small-town feel, Lethbridge will always be what it was founded for since day one; a gateway to opportunity" (Uutdewilligen, 2020, p. 187).

Lethbridge is a mid-size municipality in Southern Alberta, Canada. Nestled in the province's bible belt just over an hour north of the United States/Montana border, the community's reputation is a mix of agrarian conservatism and progressive urban life, housing two post-secondary institutions and an increasingly dynamic economic base. While historically and contemporarily known for its small-town feel, Lethbridge has grown significantly in recent years, attaining a population of 100,000 in 2019. "Gateway to opportunity" is the city's slogan, promising economic, social, and political inclusion for all existing and prospective Lethbridge residents.

In 2018, the City of Lethbridge had a supervised consumption site (SCS) introduced to the community, a harm reduction initiative aimed at decreasing overdoses and disease transmission through the provision of hygienic and supervised spaces for individuals to use various substances. Provincially and federally funded, with the municipality contributing a minor amount for housing and needle debris supports, the SCS was run by not-for-profit AIDS Reduction Community Harm Education & Support Society (ARCHES) and located in what is known as the city's Warehouse District, located a few blocks from the downtown's core. From the site's early 2018 opening until its 2020

closure, it was known as the North America's busiest SCS (CBC News, 2020). The high traffic volume led to resident concerns regarding the site's potential impact on economic development and safety. As a 2020 report indicated, concerns ranged from worries about "increased illicit drug trade activity in the area; increased localization of drug activity to a single district; increased public disorder and discarding of drug paraphernalia; and/or *a skid row district that develops in the vicinity of the SCS*" (Pijl, 2020, p. 9; emphasis added). In sum, both the business owners and residents surveyed were worried that the SCS clientele were a visible blight whose illicit behavior could marginalize the Warehouse District.

As Pijl noted, the participants' political and legal opinions and perceptions were evident in public discourse that portrayed the SCS clientele in increasingly racialized terms. Snowman[1], for one, wrote in a public discussion forum that the SCS "reminds me of the years when *the reserve people* were not allowed liquor in Galt Gardens … the compassionate government allowed [them] to have liquor and enter bars … *the reserve people* should go back *to their land* and *their* new detox center, get *their problem* out of this city period" (Lethbridge Herald Letters to the Editor, "Snowman", August 17, 2019; emphasis added). Recognizing that unmoderated public discourse is unsuitable for academic inquiry unaccompanied, these comments offered an important analytical starting point. That is, it became apparent that the SCS clientele were being described as predominantly (sometimes exclusively) Indigenous. More importantly, a dichotomy was also evident between Lethbridge residents (us) and non-residents (them). This dichotomy

[1] The daily newspaper, the Lethbridge Herald, permits individuals to publicly comment or provide information directly to journalists anonymously.

was reinforced by language pertaining to the perceived non-resident that evoked a belief in Indigenous inferiority and (un)belonging in Lethbridge. For example, ewingbt and Baxter, respectively, commented:

> "… over 80% of the clientele are First Nation… are *they* going to *come back on us* and accuse us of genocide for slowly killing all their people at the SCS? Here is the question: if these addicted people were all Caucasian, would [we] be allowing them to slowly kill themselves… or would we be putting the $5.3 million paid in wages to the SCS annually into treatment… *our city has been pumping millions into First Nations supports and ripple effects… making decision[s] for a small special interest group, instead of for the citizens as a whole, ignoring citizen concerns"* (ewingbt, February 12, 2020; emphasis added).

> "The SCS is a disgusting plague on our city that attracts scum from around the area… supports their drug habits and criminal activity… *it is disgusting to see citizens* supporting ongoing criminal activities of the druggies… support *them* over *law abiding citizens* that are *victims* of their crimes… put the needs of criminals over the needs of children and *the citizens* of the city… ." (Baxter, August 19, 2019, emphasis added).

Racialized dialogues developed countless times when the SCS was discussed. I began to wonder what was motivating social attitudes in Lethbridge that led citizens to conflate Indigenous residents with SCS clientele. I hypothesized that this conflation developed based on personal beliefs regarding who was suitable for inclusion in Lethbridge and who was not. This was especially curious considering that, for the most part, City Council remained publicly supportive of the SCS even as the United Conservative Party (UCP) set its sights on decommissioning all provincial SCSs.[2] Why was it that several vocal residents and a handful of business owners portrayed SCS clientele as Indigenous and thus unwelcomed? And why did City Council members support the SCS's ongoing operations – at least in public fora - amidst these racialized discourses? It is with these

[2] The SCS was operational when my research began and closed prior to the interviews commencing.

questions ideas in mind that my thesis will evaluate conceptions of municipal inclusion within Lethbridge, Alberta.

Noting that it would be methodologically difficult to establish a representative sample of residents in a qualitative research project of this sort, to achieve a level of understanding of these issues I interviewed elite groups. Elite groups, in this case, are defined as local politicians and business owners (Stone, 1980). Though the phenomenon of framing SCS clientele as unwelcomed underscores my discussion, I am particularly concerned with exploring (a) how these groups constructed inclusion generally, and (b) how a constructed Indigeneity came to represent all SCS clientele. Or more to the point, why did business owners portray SCS clientele as Indigenous, and why did the City Councillors seem to resist doing so, at least within public fora? The latter question is especially important when we consider that Lethbridge is well-known for its racist and discriminatory treatment of Indigenous peoples (Kingfisher, 2007; Granzow, 2010; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). Despite a wealth of academic studies and public relations material confirming this point, informal interviews that took place prior my research commencing and my experience working at the corporate City of Lethbridge found that residents pride themselves on the city's reconciliatory efforts with urban Indigenous communities. On the one hand, the community embraces a desire for Indigenous inclusion through reconciliation programming, events, and political sponsorship. Yet on the other hand, it became clear that the community harbored racist attitudes that undermined the advocated Indigenous inclusion.

That the SCS clientele were portrayed as Indigenous resonates with historical precedent: the construction of Indigenous peoples as other, sub-human, or inherently

deficient is a well-documented, international colonial technology (see Berkhofer, 1987; Williams Jr., 2010; Mills, 1997). As a growing number of studies of municipal-urban Indigenous relations demonstrates of trends evident in Lethbridge, contemporary debates tend to focus on who has the right to social services, to occupy public spaces, and who is considered suitable for municipal socio-political membership (Kingfisher, 2007; Fiske et al., 2010; Granzow, 2010; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). The Lethbridge work has focused on how residents habitually pathologize Indigenous populations in their attempts to rationalize policies and attitudes seeking to keep Indigenous peoples isolated within geographies of the city, or preferably, outside of the city (Ibid).

The question remains as to whether community elites were subscribing to the same belief in Indigenous inferiority as previous trends and public discourse indicated. As I suggested, City Council members appeared supportive of the SCS in public fora and did not immediately equate its clientele as exclusively Indigenous, whereas downtown business owners were quite vocal in depicting SCS clientele as Indigenous and therefore not welcomed. Nonetheless, it did not sit well that the opinions of business owners and the politicians would be at such variance, given that members of each elite group reside in the same community as neighbours and contemporaries. Further, as Stone purported, these groups tend to share the same social ingroup and thus ideology (Stone, 1980). This variance was particularly interesting considering previous research confirmed that local politicians were equally firm in their beliefs of Indigenous pathology and separation. As a result, I knew that a discourse analysis would be required to comprehend what inclusion meant within Lethbridge and how the SCS came to crystallize inclusion's enactment – especially if SCS clientele were largely constructed as Indigenous. What was starting to

become evident through my participant observation was that race played an important role informing how elite groups understood SCS clientele generally, and Indigenous peoples specifically. The following questions emerged as critical to my examination of the SCS and unearthing the conjectures made above:

- What do people mean when they discuss social inclusion in Lethbridge? Are there specific criteria they rely on to articulate what belonging and inclusion means?
- To what extent are elite groups in Lethbridge (business owners and politicians) active in helping to construct and reinforce the image of the ideal resident suitable for inclusion?
- How did the SCS expose inclusion criteria? What specific SCS clientele characteristics led to their being publicly identified as unwelcomed?
- Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, are the criteria for inclusion and belonging racially motivated? If so, how might this be utilized to maintain settler colonial continuity? How does racial formation continue to justify and fuel in(ex)clusion?

To explore these research questions, I break my thesis into seven (7) chapters. In chapter one, I provide an overview of the research context, discuss my limitations and objectives, and present the research questions guiding my work. Chapter two is the literature review, which examines academic material exploring Indigenous inclusion in urban centers. Noting the number of previous studies conducted on this issue in Lethbridge, my contribution to the literature is to explore how elite attitudes construct and reaffirm attitudes about Indigenous peoples through the lenses of settler colonialism and

inclusion. I expand on the literature, exposing how embedded settler colonial, racially derived discourses are activated when a community such as Lethbridge is threatened by the re-entry of Indigenous peoples into bounded city space. As Indigenous peoples had previously been expelled, settler colonial residents seek out sites of community re-entry for the purposes of limiting Indigenous access. Here is where the SCS and constructed Indigeneity meet, creating the perfect conditions for conflating Indigenous peoples with pathological behaviours while rationalizing their removal to ensure safety and ongoing community development.

I build on these ideas in chapter three. Relying on Veracini's (2010) settler colonialism framework, resistance to Indigenous inclusion is expressed in various ways, which in turn allows me to analyze settler colonial practices in Lethbridge, as hypothesized, and how these practices influence contemporary perspectives on Indigenous inclusion. As an interpretive framework, settler colonialism enables me to pinpoint how community inclusion is established and under what pretexts. Settler colonialism functions and is enacted in a multitude of ways through transfers that rely on racialization, thus implicating processes of racial formation (Winant and Omi, 2014; Winant, 1994) that help to establish and perpetuate social beliefs about who is and who is not deemed suitable for inclusion. In this setting, racial formation underscores settler colonialism's need to create stereotypes that guide how community elites craft policies and expectations of inclusion, lending to the resulting in(ex)clusion.

In chapter four, I outline my methodology and my several methods. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a self-reflexive approach that studies power and ideology linked to social inequities. It is well suited to my critical academic examination of settler

colonialism and the outcomes associated with establishing thresholds of inclusion. CDA acknowledges the powerful ability of discourse to perpetuate social exclusion while helping to uncover how discourse functions to do so (Wodak and Meyer, 2016). CDA allows me to go beyond the Political Science's quantitative inclinations to study the impact of power and ideology in qualitative discourse and how it continues to nourish power hierarchies. I also touch on my positionality as an inside researcher, discussing both the problems and opportunities inherent in my positionality and resulting research practice.

Chapter five presents my analysis of each participant group's major themes. Using van Dijk's (2016) CDA ideological discursive structures, I illuminate moments of settler colonial ideology and discourse pertaining to Lethbridge inclusion that are theoretically elaborated in chapter six, where I identify the most prevalent themes, or transfers, pinpointing explicit moment of settler colonial ideology and praxis. Finally, in chapter seven, I will summarize my key findings and offer pathways for future research and improvement based upon my research findings and professional experience.

As a final note, I acknowledge that, for a more fulsome examination of inclusion within Lethbridge, a joint study including equity-deserving groups' perspectives on the issue is warranted – and needed. This is an element that is important to me as a researcher and something to consider in a subsequent research project. For the purposes of my thesis, however, I am limiting my exploration to analyzing elite commentary.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the literature about urban Indigenous inclusion, or rather, in(ex)clusion, where inclusion may be publicly promoted but socially undermined by a myriad of factors underscored by settler colonialism. This is particularly true within urban settings where Indigenous peoples are framed as incompatible with settler ideals (Klodawsky et al., 2017; Dorries et al., 2019). Despite increasing municipal efforts to resolve this socially-constructed incompatibility by developing pathways promoting greater Indigenous-municipal collaboration and inclusion (Walker, 2008; Tomiak et al., 2019), the literature highlights that these efforts occur based on the belief that Indigenous peoples remain out of place in the city (Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). As Walker (2008) has illustrated, many urban Indigenous inclusion strategies encourage Indigenous peoples to come "along for the ride" to provide check-box approval in order to meet municipal bottom lines (e.g. engagement requirements; funding usage) without formally integrating Indigenous voices into decision-making processes (Walker, 2008, p. 23). This is a key consideration when seeking to craft urban inclusion policies to ensure authentic inclusion occurs (Klodawsky et al., 2017). Borrowing from Klodawsky's definition of Indigenous citizenship, authentic municipal inclusion represents a fulsome participation and active integration of Indigenous ways of knowing and methodologies into the municipal system. This type of inclusion directly counters in(ex)clusion and ensures group difference without assimilation (Young, 1980, cited in Fincher, 2019).

Most of the academic literature discussing inclusion is ambiguous. If looking at inclusion as a "shift away from the attributes of universal citizenship" where "full

participation of group members in societal activities, decisions, and available support systems" is evident (Klodawsky et al., 2017), the various literatures complement one another through their discussions of urban Indigenous inequities. What the literature fails to highlight is how these inequities are largely the consequences of exclusion within the city, often inexplicitly debating inclusion while also discussing specific case studies that highlight its complexity. Discussion of the literature is categorized in terms of how I conceptualize the phenome grounding in(ex)clusion: the racialization of space and bodies within it, as informed by the settler colonial mandate promoting the ongoing exclusion of Indigenous peoples from settler colonial communities.

Thus, I delve into literature highlighting the racialization of Indigenous peoples and urban space to show how race-based exclusion permeates social and political institutions, lending to implicit forms of municipal in(ex)clusion (Kingfisher, 2007; Edmonds, 2010). Racialization processes are implicated in how in(ex)clusion plays out, which impacts social attitudes by demarcating 'bad' spaces and/or behaviours within urban centres (Granzow, 2010; Comack, 2019) and the more granular, socio-economic and governance processes of municipal life. Contemporary urban mechanisms employed to keep settler colonialism flourishing such as policing (Comack, 2019), fostering inadequate economic participation, and political exclusion, require analysis if we are to fully comprehend their consequences (Walker, 2008; Walker et al., 2017; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). Overall, the prevalence and persistence of the settler colonial situation and the ways in which municipalities reproduce these tenets demands greater attention.

This literature review suggests that municipal officials in Canada rarely ascribe agency to Indigenous peoples, tending to see them as passive subjects within fixed power struggles against colonial hegemony. The literature also posits that this is particularly true within urban settings whereby Indigenous peoples have been framed as incompatible to urban life (Edmonds, 2010). This belief and emphasis on incompatibility, however, undermines urban Indigenous relations and efforts within the city. I do not wish to take a deficit-based approach in my survey of the literature, nor to diminish the efforts and autonomy of Indigenous peoples and communities within urban settings. Throughout my municipal career, I have learned a tremendous amount from working alongside Indigenous organizations and individuals who exhibit a passion for equity and integration of Indigenous ways of knowing within municipal governance. Through a collaborative lens, municipal spaces ought to be seen as both traditional *and* contemporary Indigenous lands, and thus spaces of reclamation. Indeed, the literature exploring the history of urban spaces and how it can be adapted to counter dominant colonial discourses by promoting the reclamation of Indigenous rights within urban spaces shows promise (Tomiak et al., 2019; Comack, 2019). However, as I discuss below, and which validates the settler colonial literature, perceived Indigenous incursions into settler colonial space triggers a defense mechanism that activates practices designed to once again remove Indigenous peoples, or keep their community re-entry at bay, even despite efforts by Indigenous communities to collaborate and engage at the municipal level. How these barriers influence settler colonial ideas of inclusion is unique and varied, and demands that municipal institutions better understand and improve their relationship to urban

Indigenous residents. This necessitates exposing and challenging embedded colonial attitudes (Edmonds, 2010).

Most academics studying urban Indigenous inclusion emphasize multiple assumptions, arguments, socio-political and economic patterns. One underlying theme that is important for our purposes is the need to understand how the settler relationship between urban space and race influences (a) how inclusion develops in cities and (b) how race and spatial constructions are extended to individuals, which justifies and then promotes an individual's physical and discursive exclusion. Some have posited that urban environments can be sites of Indigenous reclamation and power (Tomiak et al., 2019), a perspective that aligns with strength-based assessments of municipal government which emphasize opportunity to advance democracy through greater access to political participation (Taylor, 2020). All opportunities aside, inequities persist within this order of government that must be considered (Desroches, 2017; McAllister, 2004). This is particularly important in studying cities as enduring catalysts of the settler colonial project (Tomiak, 2016; Edmonds, 2010). Therefore, it is vital to consider municipal government's role in settler colonialism, specifically how practices of erasure that seek to delegitimize Indigenous claims within urban entities are reinforced (Tomiak, 2016, p. 9). Contemporary studies arguing for Indigenous inclusion highlight this erasure, stressing the importance of properly identifying and classifying the factors that may be driving this erasure within municipalities.

McAllister (2004) has posited that municipal entities prioritize the implementation of hard-service infrastructure and economic development (often ignoring soft social responses) that privilege residents with social or monetary capital (McAllister, 2004).

Further to this point, urban scholar Stone (1980; 1987) argues that community decision-making is stratified, whereby higher-strata interests seeking to specifically advance political and/or economic development tend to be aligned with that of elected officials. The resulting lack of interaction with the lower-strata and its concerns leads to processes of exclusion becoming institutionalized at this level (albeit unconsciously or due to pressured allegiances). Based on Stone's work exploring elites in municipal government, I classify Lethbridge business owners and politicians as elite bodies. These two groups often engage in stratified decision-making, leveraging power and resources to exert their influence within the policy arena. Such competition may be relational and mutually benefit elite groups, but it can be coercive (Ibid., 1980, p. 980). Stone posits that the unique dimension of power within communities confers advantages and disadvantages on specific groups, the result being that political officials favour certain interests over others (Ibid., p. 979). As both McAllister (2004) and Stone (1980; 1989) confirm, municipal institutions create a hierarchy of residents depending on their ability to contribute what are determined to be important community resources, altering how inclusion is both conceptualized and practiced. This perspective of municipal environments is critical when assessing its relationship to equity-deserving groups, such as Indigenous residents.

Academic research conducted within Lethbridge implies that Indigenous people in Lethbridge not only occupy the lower-strata, but that the city can be hostile to Indigenous presences (Kingfisher, 2007; Granzow, 2010; Fiske et al., 2010; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). This hostility is frequently derived from historical constructions of Indigeneity that equate it as being incompatible with and/or outright hostile to urbanism, which in turn normalizes exclusion (Klodawsky et al., 2017; Dorries, 2019). In keeping with Stone's

(1980) framework, early (re)articulations of Indigenous peoples' (lower-strata) place in the city consistently (shape)shift depending on how it benefits the dominant political group (higher-strata). These articulations included privileging those they believe to be accommodating of municipal desires (i.e., the noble savage) over those who challenge municipal hegemony and territorial occupation of historical lands (Berkhofer, 1978; Williams Jr., 2012). As the literature demonstrates, these historical (re)articulations continue to influence the construction and affirmation of contemporary stereotypes used to rationalize race-based exclusion (Kingfisher, 2007; Edmonds, 2010). The literature also emphasizes the need to consider anecdotal evidence, such as that employed in the introduction, which perpetuates and reinforces ideas of an inherent Indigenous inferiority into the public discourse. Consequently, this harmful discourse impacts not only the composition of municipal institutions through social reproduction and demarcation of bad spaces within urban centers (Granzow, 2010; Fiske et al., 2010), but also the more granular socio-economic and municipal governance processes (Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). These practices and phenomena together highlight the prevalence and persistence of the settler colonial situation within urban life.

To this point, I have frequently used the term settler. For my discussion, settlers are those individuals who left their home country (where they were largely marginalized) in hopes of forming a new, idealized society. These new and idealized communities were frequently manifested through creation of municipal entities across Canada (Veracini, 2010; Edmonds, 2010). As Tomiak et al. argue, "the city is often presented as a settler achievement, the product of visionary arrivests who grasped the potential of a given locale" (2019, p. 3). Municipal bodies were central, albeit frequently overlooked,

governing agents within the settler colonial order tasked with helping to create an idealized settler society (Tomiak et al., 2019). Even though each municipality emerged within its own demographic, cultural, and other contextual circumstances, municipalities formed a network of settler colonial outposts that today make up a dense, highly communicative network of local governments. Nonetheless, urban settler strategies tend to be an overlooked if not a vital colonial technology grounded by narratives of settler achievement. The civilized-savage dichotomy inherent in this process pit the settler colonial against the Indigenous community that continues to play itself out through the discursive (re)articulation of Indigenous culture as being antithetical to urban development (Tomiak et al., 2019). This construction delegitimizes Indigenous grievances and claims for rights to the city (Lefebvre, 1996). Consequently, settler colonial cities are frequently removed from broader dialogues of colonialism, despite a clear opportunity at this level to understanding trends related to ongoing discrimination (Edmonds, 2010; Tomiak et al., 2019).

Particularly relevant is Edmonds' (2010) work, which studies frontier Victoria, British Columbia to discuss settler colonial strategies in the municipality's early and ongoing development. "Settler cities were depicted as manifestations of the highest stage of European commerce and progress, as places of triumph", substantiating the importance of studying settler colonialism at this level (Edmonds, 2010, p. 7). However, one may suppose a process must ensue for the settler colonial city to become the "privileged white space" which is presented as the epitome of achievement (Ibid., p. 5). As the literature shows, achieving this result is dependent on the racialization of both people and spaces.

How space is conceptualized and ultimately (re)ordered is crucial to the settler city's function in the context of ongoing Indigenous displacement (Ibid).

Importantly, space is not inherently meaningful until it acquires subjective expectations and interpretations through social processes dominated and defined by (white) elites (Mills, 1997). Citing Foucault, Edmonds (2010, p. 8) further affirms the argument that spatial construction functions to create subjects and consequently a hierarchy of residents depending on how those holding power construct the space's intention or "mode of occupation" (Ibid).[3] As settlers traveled in search of new lands on which to develop their idealized societies, constructions of space and race emerged as critical to developing a place that could be aligned with settler norms and mores. With time, these informal norms and mores become essential to settler colonial continuity and thus requiring protection, which leads to defense mechanisms developing (e.g., creation of segregated "shanties") seeking to re-articulate and re-affirm social and geographic settler boundaries (Ibid., p. 9). Much of the settler colonial psyche is traced to stadial theorists who speak to the "supersessional dynamic of displacement" justified by perceived under-development of certain races (Ibid., p. 8). As Mills (1997) notes, the construction of space frequently corresponds with the intentional construction of the people who inhabit it. This interdependence works to create the hierarchy of good, normative spaces and peoples, to negative, abnormal spaces and occupied by peoples perceived as contradictory to white European/Canadian mores.

[3] Belanger and Lindstrom (2016) articulate the conceptualization of resident hierarchy through discussing Lethbridge's real, and discursive, boundaries that limit urban Indigenous residents' from re-developing a traditional sense of place within *Sik-oh-kotok* (Lethbridge).

The settler colonial city relies upon racial narratives of Indigenous inferiority to justify their removal from traditional lands, a justification that was likewise fueled by the development of appropriate and inappropriate modes of production based upon the white backdrop of colonialism (Edmonds, 2010, p. 8). As towns were incorporated, anti-Indigenous attitudes grew stronger as settler concepts of production and the proper use of space became privileged. As a result, Indigenous behaviour was framed as counterproductive, further justifying their displacement. Indigenous spaces consequently became conceptualized as "bedlam", both "chaotic and unprofitable" in comparison to the "propertied, incorporated, ordered space" of settler locales (Ibid., p. 7). The bedlam as described was reserved for Indigenous folks unable to conform to the settler society's arbitrary expectations for economic inclusion and participation. As a result, when Indigenous peoples were granted space of occupancy or use, they were often inadequate due to the perception that Indigenous peoples were inherently "unclean" and "immoral", implying that Indigenous peoples' inclusion was never a settler colonial concern (Ibid). Rather, Indigenous peoples were physically and ideologically displaced to the margins of these new urban societies.

The settler reliance on false scientific arguments (i.e., biological and phenotypical attributes denoting aptitude) contributes to the ongoing racialization processes that continue to dispossess Indigenous peoples in contemporary urban centers. The early ideologies and trends within Edmonds' (2010) study of Victoria elucidate this tendency when taken in comparison to contemporary studies. Alternative conceptualizations of what space means and who may officially benefit from the space are limited when space is measured according to subjective, settler-derived progress. Kingfisher's study of

"Woodridge" reinforces these ideas.[4] Kingfisher analyzes residents' opposition to a land use application. In the resident discourse, Indigenous peoples were presented as inferior, addicted, and inherently homeless (Kingfisher, 2007, p. 94). The application was subsequently rejected based on a belief that Indigenous peoples (particularly men) were unchangeably "addicted" (Ibid).[5] As Kingfisher further posits, "the cultural construction of social problems entails the production of particular kinds of persons and/or social processes, on the basis of which responses to them are built" (Ibid., 2007, p. 92). Racializing spaces and peoples compel a municipal response that resonates with Stone's (1980) conclusion that community decision-making privileges certain residents.

Kingfisher's study also showcased how city officials racialized social service allocation, in turn justifying their refusal to implement supports (Ibid., 2007). Racialized understandings of the relationship between homelessness and addiction, and the perception of Indigenous culture, consequently leads to the assumption that all clientele seeking interventions are intrinsically flawed (often portrayed as race-based rights). Such racialized portrayals de-universalize those experiencing homelessness, permitting it to be interpreted not as a systemic concern but rather as one group's failing (Dej, 2020). Kingfisher's (2007) research is extremely important in showing how the normalization of racial discourse and attitudes led to deeply engraining negative social understandings of Indigenous residents developing alongside privileged white ideals. As a result, social services perceived to be helping minority groups rather than the community at large tend

[4] While Kingfisher uses the pseudonym "Woodridge", looking at the bibliography implies that this study took place in Lethbridge.
[5] Here we start to see similarities to the anecdotal public commentary introduced in my introduction. The tendency to conflate Indigenous peoples with all social ailments or issues within the community exists across contexts.

to be rejected (Ibid). Fiske, Belanger & Gregory (2010) showcased an instance where "expression of prejudice and circulation of fears" within public forums permit the privileging of dominant discourses that problematize Indigenous residents as "intrusive and unwanted" within the context of social services (Fiske et al., 2010, p. 87). Repetition of these discursive representations embeds them, offering further power to those who attempt to validate such representations (see Foucault, 1981).

Granzow (2010) deconstructed representations of the public versus the non-public in Galt Gardens, a public park within Lethbridge where space is "conceived, conceptualized, mapped and imposed" within the community (Granzow, 2010, p. 12). Galt Gardens was, and remains, framed as the site of "negative" use and users (reflect on its popular nickname "Lysol Gardens", as an example) (Granzow, 2010; Fiske et al., 2010). The municipal solution was to revitalize the park to ensure its inclusivity. Geographically located and conceptually presented as the physical (and often social) heart of Lethbridge, and an equally important feature of Blackfoot traditional lands, Galt Garden has been described as *socially* marginalized due to it being disproportionately used by Indigenous peoples (Granzow, 2010, p. 81). Galt Gardens became known as Indian Park, where "all the drunk Natives hang out" (interviewee quoted in Granzow, 2010, p. 77). In this case, the space is contested as a result of undesirable occupation of public space that Indigenous peoples should not be occupying (urban, sanitized). As Indigenous peoples are seen to be incompatible with urban living, their presence is considered a barrier to community development. Consequently, the racialized space must now be assimilated to municipal expectations and resident comfort (Ibid). Granzow's (2010, p. 81) study highlights how "seemingly inclusive representations often coincide with exclusionary

representations of 'other', less desirable park users," reinforcing the limits of municipal inclusion driven by racial correlations and assumptions. Community, then, becomes inaccessible to Indigenous residents within Galt Gardens, which further reveals how social constructions can continue to marginalize space within the city despite the absence of an explicit elimination of the other. Discursive erasure is equally effective (Ibid).

Numerous other studies have assessed the challenges municipalities have in developing Indigenous inclusion in privileged white space(s) (Walker, 2008; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017; Dorries, 2019; Comack, 2019). Oftentimes, there is an assimilative intent as a precondition of inclusion. As Belanger and Dekruyf (2017) found, community elites determined Indigenous residents' worthiness to participate in local economic and policy arenas by their ability to conform to elite standards. Indigenous culture itself was framed as a barrier to greater outreach and inclusion, with one business owner noting that Indigenous employees would be expected to "manage [their] schedule like everyone else" (interviewee quoted in Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017, p. 12). By evoking the stereotype that Indigenous employees embrace a culture of laziness rather than rugged settler individualism, such work demonstrates how responsibility for ensuring inclusion and participation is assigned to that individual seeking inclusion, ultimately allowing elite groups to dismiss responsibility of their role or potential influence on advancing such inclusion.

Taken together, the literature demonstrates how municipal inclusion initiatives are shaped by racialized perceptions of Indigenous peoples within linked spaces that settlers would rather disentangle and separate from Indigenous use. From Edmonds' (2010) evaluation to those of Kingfisher (2007), Granzow (2010), Fiske et al. (2010) and

Belanger et al. (2017) reveals a progressive shift away from overt municipal attempts to marginalize to more subtle, discursive forms of exclusion. This shift demonstrates how inclusion remains an ideological constant in cities whereas exclusion evolves in practice, albeit under the watchful eye of settler colonials seeking to limit limited Indigenous access to 'their' space (Dej, 2020; Ladner and Orsini, 2003). This is a critical conclusion, for I anticipate any inclusion debates or processes will be intimately linked to ideologies of exclusion, reflecting Granzow's findings. The anticipated processes of exclusion will be subtly enacted, also reflecting Walker's (2008) findings that municipal officials prefer a check-box approach to Indigenous engagement that could be described as tokenism (e.g., funding requirements for municipal projects, such as engagement) (Walker, 2008, p. 23). Such strategies and their outcomes remain disconnected from Indigenous grievances, desires, and ideas for improvement. Inclusion, then, remains prefaced by the expectation that Indigenous residents conform to municipally imposed standards of participation (Walker, 2008; Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017).

The assimilative logic underlying municipal inclusion strategies parallels those grounded by racial understandings of Indigenous peoples as antithetical to urban progress. While the literature does not speak explicitly about inclusion, instead pointing to the tendency of urban entities to continually dispossess, discursively remove, or assimilate Indigenous peoples into the mainstream to preserve the status quo and thus ensuring settler stability, we can see how the above mentioned studies illustrate how municipal elites undermine authentic inclusion from occurring. Each of these studies together lays an important foundation to understand Indigenous in(ex)clusion. The literature all does, to a degree, identify structural concerns surrounding urban Indigenous exclusion, but lacks

depth of analysis assessing inclusionary paradigms within the settler colonial context. My study and its emphasis on settler colonialism as theory, ideology and practice, has the potential to positively influence local inclusion policymaking.

Upon finalizing the literature review, I realized a specific framework to help me understand and elaborate on the complexity of urban settler-Indigenous relations in Lethbridge was required. While I previously considered citizenship theories as the bridge, I discovered a need for a more nuanced approach that considered the mostly implicit and discursive modalities of in(ex)clusion. The most prominent limit of citizenship theory, in my view, lies in its macro-approach to socio-political relations. Thus, citizenship can be conceived as a later stage of in(ex)clusion. Therefore, we need to first assess how inclusion emerged prior to establishment of codified policy and legal frameworks that underscore what citizenship means.

At the risk of oversimplification, citizenship describes the obligations and responsibilities individuals have to their sociopolitical communities (Yarwood, 2014; Aristotle, 1985). To be a citizen requires a series of often subjective 'citizenly' behaviours that stipulate inclusion and belonging. To be a proper citizen in the Greek *polis*, for instance, certain characteristics and behaviours were required (Aristotle, 1985). Those lacking these traits (natural-born slaves; women) fared worse and often experienced exclusion from true citizenship (Yarwood, 2014). Evidently, the Greek *polis* formed a spectrum of "good" to "bad" citizens with inclusion being most accessible at the "good" end. This embedded hierarchization and its normalization in current conceptions of citizenship and social inclusion are worthy of note for my thesis topic.

As citizenship is constitutionally *de jure*, it is simpler for political elites to presume equality - at least on paper (Cohen and Ghosh, 2019). Residents who do not fit the dominant conception and expectation of citizenship are at risk of becoming discursive non-citizens and excluded from granular social and political processes (Yarwood, 2014). Citizenship, as practice and theory, does not automatically denote inclusion: they may co-exist, but they are not synonymous. Citizenship therefore does not account for non-legal forms of exclusion within socio-political communities. For instance, an immigrant may become a citizen through executing the appropriate steps and obtaining legal citizenship, but this legal allocation does not guarantee equitable access to political and social structures, especially at the community level. *De jure* citizenship does not fundamentally challenge engrained structures, and in many cases, benchmarks for achieving citizenship imply assimilationist intent rather than authentic inclusion (Fiske et al., 2010). As a result, one may still experience discrimination and marginalization despite their status as a legal Canadian citizen.

Understanding how citizenship was used as a colonial technology to assimilate Indigenous peoples is crucial to understanding current Canadian societal attitudes and policies (Ladner and Orsini, 2003). However, in the absence of successful assimilation, settler colonial society sought to physically jettison Indigenous peoples in myriad ways. As we will see, this jettisoning can still be practiced on residents who have obtained *de jure* or legal citizenship status. However, legal allocation of citizenship does not fundamentally challenge engrained structures, or in many cases, imposed benchmarks for achieving citizenship that still seek conformist outcomes (Fiske et al., 2010). I argue that this ideological – and, at times, physical - rejection from the social space, or

in(ex)clusion, occurs where the greatest level of settler-Indigenous interaction occurs: within municipalities. As a result, discussions of citizenship may be premature at this stage. Settler colonialism and the tools it uses to construct race and space is therefore the most appropriate starting point. The on-the-ground issues residents face when navigating their immediate social communities in an attempt to belong and feel included become increasingly complex and difficult to obtain amongst settler colonial structures than macro citizenship dialogues would imply.

How does settler colonialism differ from colonialism? Specifically, settler colonialism diverges from colonialism in the conscious sovereignty that settlers carry with them as they move across geographies and landing in a space where communities are established as settlers become "founders of political order" (Veracini, 2010, p. 3). As such, settlers constantly seek to create an idealized society that reflects the home country's socio-political traditions but that develops into a settler society embracing new norms and expectations for their idealized space and population economy. As Wolfe (2006) asserted, settler colonialism is "a structure, not an event" (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388), which means that it becomes an embedded, ongoing process as settlers seek to constantly reassert their identity while actively subsuming regional Indigeneity to legitimize claims to space (Veracini, 2010).

Wolfe's (2006) theorization of settler colonialism centers on its "logic of elimination", and Veracini's (2010) framework directs attention to understanding how "elimination" can occur in various forms (Wolfe, 2006; Veracini, 2010). The logic of elimination, however, is dialectical in that settlers attempt to assert and rationalize their autonomy (Veracini, 2010). Veracini (2010) contends that settler colonialism is

conflicting in its dialecticism as settlers attempt to remove Indigenous presences from a space as they seek to create their own sense of indigeneity, resulting in a precarious ideology based in false ownership and legitimacy. Within this model, settlers simultaneously disdain and desire Indigenous presences. They disdain Indigenous continuity, for it is a reminder that Indigenous sovereignty remains unextinguished, which in turn renders settler claims to territorial hegemony tenuous. Settlers require an Indigenous presence, however, as a reminder of how progressive settler society is in comparison to an inherently backward, pre-political Indigenous society. Inevitably, a complex process unfolds as settler society engages in ongoing, albeit failed, attempts at elimination that is confirmed by Indigenous peoples remaining within "privileged white spaces", further escalating this tension in the contemporary (Wolfe, 2006; Edmonds, 2010). Veracini's theorization of settler colonialism encourages researchers to uncover enduring forms of elimination that I argue will take the form of inclusion policies that remain contingent upon racialized others adhering to settler standards, norms, and expectations that are rarely consistent as constructions of racialized groups also shift, thus becoming in(ex)clusion (Veracini, 2010, p. 26; Winant and Omi, 2014).

As racialization is critical to settler colonialism, Winant and Omi's (2014) racial formation theory is helpful in describing how racialized groups are reduced to cultural symbols or associations, resulting in stereotyping and shifting constructions according on how it benefits the dominant population (Winant and Omi, 2014; Comack, 2019). Race is not fixed and may shift, becoming a strategic tool often used to subordinate groups and maintain status quo (Winant and Omi, 2014). The combined theories of racial formation and settler colonialism offered the most potential for comprehending the case study of the

SCS and the racialized conflation of certain geographies, services, and spaces. As Winant (1994, p. 43) argues, racialization processes create the "political and cultural legacies of subordination and resistance" that give rise to contemporary inequities. Racial despotism has become a norm in North American contexts and demands analysis at granular levels if we are to understand settler colonialism and other racial ideologies more effectively (Winant and Omi, 2014, p. 130f).

I acknowledge that urban spaces can also be spaces of reconciliation and Indigenous reclamation of land and rights, and I am in full support of a reconceptualization of municipal regimes embracing these ideas (Klodawsky et al., 2017; Tomiak et al., 2019). The scope of my thesis topic looks at how elite actors in Lethbridge construct inclusion in reference to the former SCS, and as such, I narrowed the literature review to articles that similarly focused on institutional or elite responses within a settler colonial, urban environment. Municipalities may be making positive steps towards genuine reconciliation and inclusion of Indigenous residents. However, as many Indigenous scholars have posited, inclusion can be tenuous and – at times – a tool to maintain settler colonial society rather than challenge the "presumed and self-imposed" authority of settler societies (George, 2020). When inclusion is defined and actioned under a normative framework that complements and supports settler society desires, careful consideration and examination of the purpose inclusion serves under such institutionalized attitudes of an Indigenous inferiority is needed. More work needs to be done to move beyond an assimilative, settler colonial-funneled in(ex)clusion to create a collaborative, co-produced inclusive paradigm. This becomes challenging when racial assumptions remain prevalent in public discourse and institutional responses to urban social challenges.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

Social inclusion analysis demands a specific framework that considers the interrelated components of race and space within urban geographies. When applying this framework, one must be cognizant of the tensions that complicate settler colonial society's understanding of both their community and place within the regional geography. One must appreciate how sense of community and geographic locale (a) influences how

inclusion was and arguably remains understood and (b) how these ideas are applied to establish criteria of inclusion and thus exclusion. Such a framework is needed to elaborate the complexity of settler and Indigenous relations within a city such as Lethbridge, which for my purposes is settler colonialism.

Situating settler colonialism

Settler colonialism can be explained simply as non-Indigenous settlers' intentional dispossession of Indigenous occupants from a perceivably unclaimed spatial territory, the goal being to establish a new settler society (Veracini, 2010; Wolfe, 2005). While this practice did not specifically target Indigenous peoples, explicit tactics were created to undermine Indigenous peoples' indigeneity (Veracini, 2010). Described by Fleras and Maaka (2005, p. 14) as the state by which Indigenous rights and autonomy are protected and a challenge to the "settler constitutional order" becomes the central aim, Veracini (2010) argues that Indigeneity acted to constantly remind settlers of what they could never be: authentic right-holders to the space. Seeking to subsume indigeneity while refuting real Indigenous peoples' presence and claims to land, the new settler colonial space (what would evolve into the municipal context I discuss) became ground zero of an obsessive logic's ongoing evolution seeking to justify settler occupation by Indigenous dispossession (Veracini, 2010). Settler colonialism, then, focuses on both the creation, control and hierarchization of a population economy (Veracini, 2010).

Despite early colonial efforts to acquire land ownership, oversight for local authority and local development remained vested with the metropole. That is, the laws and policies of the European mother country remained intact and guided settler land

acquisition strategies (Veracini, 2010). Settler colonialism emerged after settlers rebuffed the metropole's demands for control. In this setting, settlers wanted to stay in the newly arrived upon space while exercising greater local governing authority. Settler colonialism emerged as a process that continued to embrace the metropole's values and norms but expanded upon them in an attempt to cultivate a sense of settler permanency, belonging, and success in what was portrayed to be an empty (*terra nullius*) or under-utilized landscape (Ibid). Attempts to foster a new identity required new economic and political norms to develop "a settler capacity to control the population economy as a marker of substantive type of sovereignty… [while] on the other hand… associated with a particular state of mind and a specific narrative form" (Ibid., p. 13). Studying settler colonialism is therefore unique from traditional colonial studies, which combines the traditional analytic practice to examine geography and race attributed to settler colonialism, in that it treats its ongoing outcomes as unique.

The most significant change from colonial to settler colonial studies is the assertion that settler colonialism is a "structure, not an event" (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388). Ultimately, settler colonialism becomes a reproductive process of ideological, spatial, and racial constructions that benefit settler efforts to establish a new and unique sense of belonging within a foreign land. Protecting one's power becomes paramount and is accomplished through the (re)production of narratives, hierarchizations, and socio-political constructions that permit and rationalize settler colonialism's objectives. As the literature review discussed, Indigenous visibility is a reminder that the settler colonial project will never be complete, even if it also serves as a reminder of how advanced settler colonial society was and remains (Slater, 2019; Veracini, 2010). That said, the

idealized settler society has yet to emerge, and likely never will based on settler colonialism's paradoxical demands for (1) Indigenous invisibility, which is needed to justify land ownership claims and (2) Indigenous visibility, which reminds settler colonials of their advanced status. In turn, settler colonial society is characterized by an enduring and tension-filled process of ideation construction.[6]

As implied above, there are important elements that give settler colonial theory its power. These elements are race, space, and ideology, all of which sustain one another and create vested power interests. Often times, these processes fabricate imagery of the dominant ingroup and the outgroup that serve to accomplish a goal for the dominant population. Said (1978) has described this as othering, a methodology imperialists employed to exoticize and dominate what were assumed to be backwards Eastern peoples into a figment of "romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes" (Said, 1978, p. 1). Said (1987) demonstrates the ways in which Orientalism became an ideological mechanism and, as a result, a discursive structure connoting many different things. Perhaps most importantly, however, is how Orientalism developed as a method employed by hegemonic societies to produce their own palatable version of what the 'other' was deemed beneficial to the colonial mandate. As a result, the political legitimacy of Eastern populations was reduced through the implication that identity cannot be defined by Eastern populations themselves (Ibid). Said teaches us that discursive construction is the settler society harnessing power it does not see vested

[6] This desire plays out municipally in a myriad of ways, but explicitly we can look to Comack's (2019) discussion of racialized policing. Comack asserts that policing becomes the archetypical response to protecting, surveilling, and enforcing settler colonial societal norms and expectations. Ultimately, policing – particularly when it undergoes racialization processes (Winant and Omi, 2014) – becomes a settler colonial tool at status quo maintenance.

within Indigenous peoples. That is, the authority to define who Indigenous peoples are resides with the non-other, ironically. Settler colonialism employs similar tactics to othering described as racial production, which results in the process of racialization that perpetuates unspoken dominance and/or forced subordination (Mills, 1997). As Mills (1997) and Winant and Omi (2014) discuss, racialization is a process of "making people up", which creates idealized polities that are built upon an arbitrary racial order (Mills, 1997; Winant and Omi, 2014). Mills' (1997, p. 1) concern is that white supremacy as a political and social system is frequently not analyzed within classic political theory, an intentional act on the part of settler society to avoid conceding the dominating political role both racialization and privileging of whiteness serves. Whiteness may not be a form of domination in and of itself, but as an ideology, it certainly sustains the subordination of non-whites.

Settler colonials, then, achieved an ideal body politic based on their forbearers' norms and mores, which Mills (1997) argues were grounded by the Racial Contract. Following the footsteps of contractarian political theorists, Mills (1997) employs the concept of the un-ideal, unjust society to highlight how the Racial Contract orders and justifies inequitable social outcomes with the claim that subordinated groups were unable to accommodate mainstream ideas. The Racial Contract is both historical and contemporary, and apt to change as the context demands. This is not unlike settler colonial societies, which remain in flux. Settler colonialism arguably can be classified as an un-ideal society governed by "a deceitful social contract" that operates as a "rhetorical trope and theoretical method for understanding the inner logic of *racial* domination and how it structures the politics of the West and elsewhere" (Ibid., p. 5f). To ignore race's

dominance in the structure and ordering of societies is to potentially miss an opportunity to assess settler colonial societies, particularly at the municipal level. It is this grounding contract rooted in racial ideology that is devoid in citizenship discourse, and another reason for choosing settler colonialism as underscored by the Racial Contract as the analytical framework.

Race might not have been the first technology utilized to control an Indigenous population, but it would emerge as an important organizing tool within settler colonialism. Veracini (2010, p. 48) likewise invokes Mills' Racial Contract as the basis of settler colonials categorizing "Indigenous peoples as something else" that "effaces their indigeneity." The Racial Contract enables control and classification of bodies by establishing a "particular moral code and a certain moral psychology" which drives the subsequent agreements between white and non-white individuals (Mills, 1997, p. 11). While an important first step to establish difference, a phenotypical sliding scale of race emerges to inform how we may identify personhood. To be white is to remain a free and full person, whereas non-whites are portrayed as sub-persons which is used to justify marginalization and their lower-strata within white-dominated society (Ibid., 1997). According to Mills, only white men can be considered inherently sociopolitical creatures, which means that they alone can transform the state of nature into civilization (Ibid.).

For settler colonialism to succeed, Indigenous populations had to be constructed as being unable to create a society that could align with settler expectations of proper land use in pursuit of political and social development. It took more than simply a statement that Indigenous peoples were uncivilized to eject them from settler colonial communities,

however. Settler colonials relied on an historically, academically, and socially accepted historiography portraying Indigenous others as savage, inherently dangerous peoples (Williams Jr., 2012; Berkhofer, 1978). Employing Rudyard Kipling's famous phrase, settler colonial society accepted their 'white man's burden' to raise Indigenous others from their debased indigeneity while simultaneously seeking to develop their own sense of indigeneity to legitimate their claims to the land (Veracini, 2010; Kipling, 1899). Indigenous others' inability to adopt these accepted standards and moral codes underscoring the unwritten Racial Contract (that acted as the foundation of settler colonialism's nascent social contract) was of no concern. In many ways, racial categorization precipitates, and once socially accepted, continues to inform the settler colonial project. By constructing Indigenous others as "permanently prepolitical" peoples who, by the act of resisting state attempts at assimilation would be deemed incapable of politically adapting, one could argue that attaining the status of persons with agency within a territory with competing claims is made difficult if not impossible. Race, then, is correlative of those negative behaviours in relation to the settler moral and social code. As Mills concluded (1997, p. 17), "the Racial Contract requires its own peculiar moral and empirical epistemology, its norms and procedures for determining what counts as moral and actual knowledge of the world." Therefore, while settler colonialism's outcomes are tangible and devastating, it is critical to understand settler colonial systems' arbitrary nature, for its logic remains rooted in a self-subscribed superiority.

Winant and Omi (2014, p. 12) reinforce the role that race plays in mainstream North American society while likewise stressing that, as Mills argues, race is a social construct that has and continues to be applied as a method to "navigate the social world." Racing

individuals and space in this way is not a benign act. Rather, racialization represents a form of hegemony transcribed in power. Thus, racing becomes a strategy in which the state assigns personhood and subpersonhood, and as such, set the context by which certain privileges may be allocated. As noted in the literature review and which will become evident in the subsequent analysis, racing space and persons in this way remains central to the settler colonial project, particularly within urban settings (Tomiak et al., 2019; Edmonds, 2010). With contemporary challenges to racial hegemony and domination, it makes sense to assume that a defense mechanism emerges to protect the established Racial Contract and its presumed world order. Furthermore, since the Racial Contract is built upon violence and ideological conditioning, challenges to its acclaimed normativity and credibility are aggressively countered. The Racial Contract, then, underwrites the logic of settler colonialism in its racial and spatial norming, establishment of a specific superior epistemology and ideology, and predication on violent origin (but desire to ignore it). As both Veracini (2010) and Wolfe (2006) have noted, the mere Indigenous presence in what is now claimed and occupied settler colonial lands represents a challenge to settler colonial normativity that in turn demands an equal response (Mills, 1997; Winant and Omi, 2014).

Settler colonial ideological, spatial, and racial constructions

Social scientists have long discussed the relationship between spatial systems, belonging, and identity. Consciously or not, occupants of a space both influence and are influenced by their environment (Aristotle, 1982; Schabert, 1989). Scholars have argued that changes in space can rupture identity and vice versa. Morley (2001), for example,

examines the relationship between "home, place, belonging and identity" amid contemporary changes to communication, such as heightened dependency on electronic means (Morley, 2001, p. 425). Such processes displace understandings of belonging, implying that belonging and identity are deeply connected and grounded in, and by, space. Untethered from a physical space, identity is implicated, inchoate (Ibid). Given this complex relationship, we can begin to appreciate the meaning of space and the consequences of space appropriation and displacement of bodies within it.

While this may appear dislocated from settler colonialism, Morley's (2001) observation is intimately related to the settler colonial project due to the simultaneous construction of space, race, and ideology as Veracini (2010) asserts. For settlers, their identity construction was linked to their desire to claim and cultivate landscapes deemed *terra nullius*, to reside upon them, and continue shaping them in their own image (Veracini, 2010). *Terra nullius* justifies territorial acquisition that compels the introduction of white European ideology that complements settler expectations that are based on re-inscribing to the land new political and social meaning. As Wolfe (2006) contends, settler colonialism is predominantly about territorial expansion, characterized by Indigenous claims now framed by the emergent and increasingly normalized mainstream society as counter claims. And, settler colonialism relies upon both the presence of Indigenous peoples, and their ability to possess an indigeneity to justify settler claims to land. With Indigenous peoples' claims being considered as counter claims, there is still a sense that Indigenous peoples' claims are secondary to those of settlers. And since settler colonialism's mandate will never be fulfilled, Indigenous peoples subvert dominant discourses and structures to protect their inherent claims to

land. Adamancy that these claims are counter, then, permits opportunity for settler colonials to reassert their own primacy and Indigenous inferiority. The dialectical relationship regarding claim to territory keeps settler colonialism alive. Wolfe (2006, p. 392) asserts that settler colonialism is consequently indicative of a "frenzy for native land" attributed largely to the (un)belonging and disjointedness felt by Europe's landlessness, further revealing the linkage between identity, belonging, and space. In many ways, the original desire to appropriate Indigenous lands underpins settler colonial ideology, often resulting in an ongoing settler need to (a) subsume indigeneity to become the territory's founders; and (b) concurrently deny that Indigenous dispossession is taking place in attempt to legitimize, and further rationalize, ongoing settler colonial power and superiority (Veracini, 2010).

The sense of settler superiority may have grown in influence, but Indigenous others consistently reminded newcomers of legitimate Indigenous ownership to land, which settlers never considered. The Indigenous other was immediately portrayed as debased, suggesting "racial phenomena as manifestations of some other, supposedly more significant, social relationship" (Winant, 1994, p. 23). Yet, as Winant argues, race is unfixed and malleable, shifting "throughout social life … both consistent of the individual psyche and of relationships among individuals, and an irreducible component of collective identities and social structures" (Ibid., p. 23). Race can thus be assigned and altered depending on context and its utilization, further demonstrating that our social understanding of race is both individual and societal. As Winant (1994, p. 115) writes, "race can be defined as a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interest in reference to different types of human bodies." Further, Winant and Omi

acknowledge that race is both essence and illusion, straddling the line between discursive and material: "Race is not something rooted in nature, something that reflects clear and discrete variations in human identity. But race is also not an illusion. While it may not be 'real' in a biological sense, *race is indeed real as a social category with definite social consequences"* (Winant and Omi, 2014, p. 110; emphasis added).

Winant (1994) argues that race is mostly (re)interpreted on elitist scales, such as through formal organizations, state agencies, religious groups, or intellectuals to redefine the meaning of race.[7] More to the point, race is constructed and always in-flux as it becomes (re)interpreted and contested within shifting sociopolitical structures. In this way, racial formation is employed to help maintain white hegemony and despotism (Winant, 1994). Though it is possible for racial minorities to defy dominant hierarchies and derive legitimacy from their own interpretations of race and identity, I am curious about how race becomes an elite tool for retaining power, as I believe this to be a critical component of the settler colonial project in Lethbridge.[8]

As Veracini (2010) outlines, racialization is a settler colonial method used to control the population economy, characterized by an "unresolved tension between sameness and difference" (p. 23). We therefore begin to see racial formation processes

[7] Winant refers to these as "racial projects" – ways that individuals contest and change racial meanings within a given sociopolitical moment (e.g., the Civil Rights Era in the United States).

[8] This is not intended to downplay the agency of equity-deserving groups. My research focuses on mostly white elites and their constructions of inclusion within the city of Lethbridge, including an assessment of the barriers that exist and they may be active in creating. As such, it is helpful to understand how these elite groups utilize (or not) racial formation processes to discursively describe/construct inclusion/belonging.
I refer to "settler colonial racial discourse" with Tuen van Dijk's conceptualization of racial discourse in mind. By analyzing Veracini's assertions regarding settler anxiety, psyche, and defensiveness, paired with van Dijk's formulation of racial discourse as a tool of power, I am able to more deeply probe the presence of these two interrelated discursive structures in interviews and textual data.

occurring that impact norms and mores to the space, which permitted settlers to characterize Indigenous others in relation to the idealized settler space and a linked, albeit emerging, ideology. Now procedurally grounded by white colonizers defining those different than themselves through a process of self-negation, the resulting socially accepted characteristics are used to help define who would be included and those fated for exclusion (Mills, 1997; Veracini, 2010). In many ways, settler inclusion criteria in relation to racialized others is contingent upon being "*Christian, English, and free*" (Winant, 1994, p. 59). This settler-inscribed belief of rationality and agency, described as personhood, was exclusive to white Europeans (Mills, 1997) and linked to freedom, which became synonymous with white racial identity underscored by an understanding of who could occupy positions of relative power – and thus able to make justified claim to land - in comparison to those who could not (Winant, 1994, p. 125).

With this internal framework established and grounded by a belief in settler superiority and thus Indigenous inferiority, settlers were then able to situate racialized others onto a sliding scale based upon perceived commitment to the settler body politic standards. Similar to the concept of race, and perhaps *because* of race's malleability, we can observe settler colonialism's fluctuating, unfixed nature. For example, settler beliefs are informed by emotional connections to the metropole and a desire to secure their occupancy of the new space. Even according to the laws created in the European metropole, settlers will never be anything more than illegitimate owners of the land (Veracini, 2010). Racialized others emerge from this settler colonial process of racial formation, informing the new local social contract's creation as both barriers and threats to the precarious settler situation.

Settler colonialism in action: transfers

Veracini (2010) conceptualizes the process of settler colonialism through transfers, which range from the physical removal of Indigenous peoples to forms of discursive marginalization. In either method, transfers seek to eliminate the authentic Indigenous presence from the settler-claimed spaces. Of the 24 transfers articulated, I use three core transfers for my data analysis: Transfer by Assimilation, Transfer by Conceptual Displacement, and Transfer by Institutionalization / Incarceration / Criminalization. While each of the myriad transfers are nuanced, it is important to highlight here that the overarching logic of settler colonialism creating its own idealized positioning - including tendency to (re)establish superiority by creating legal, social and economic expectations for land use despite lacking ownership – underpins all transfers as settler colonialism in action.

Transfer by Assimilation represents an attempt to uplift Indigenous others from their position of inferiority, even if inclusion cannot be guaranteed. Conceptual Displacement refers to perceiving and expressing concern that Indigenous others are re-entering settler space, endangering settler colonial claims to ownership and socio-political exclusivity. Finally, the Transfer by Institutionalization / Incarceration / Criminalization represents the need to encourage the forced removal of Indigenous others based on pre-existing, ascribed characteristics that imply their inherently uncivilized nature – thus justifying this removal (i.e., a preordained removal that cannot be counteracted by Indigenous good deeds). This transfer permits settlers to frame their actions as benevolent, an act of settler generosity characterized by, for example, allowing

Indigenous peoples to participate in political institutions such as municipal government committees, that nevertheless seek to simultaneously expel the Indigenous presence. In many ways, this transfer operates in-tandem with assimilation, and perhaps is an even more implicit attempt at sanitizing Indigeneity deemed counter to settler normativity. Though each one of Veracini's (2010) transfers are complementary, these three are most pertinent to understanding racial conflation and settler intent within Lethbridge.

This section has sought to explain key components of settler colonialism, including its interrelated tools of space and race construction (racial formation processes, as posited by Winant and Omi, 2014), and how these motivations ultimately create an anxious, defensive settler colonial ideology, identity, and situation. The result becomes a vice-grip on settler colonial inclusion, one that often promises belonging but serves as a mechanism to exclude. I call this paradoxical process in(ex)clusion and proceed to hypothesize its presence in Lethbridge. As Veracini (2010) emphasizes, the settler colonial situation is rife with paradoxes and complexities; it is fluid and, because it creates a structure that is unclear and unfixed, the settler colonial project continues *ad inifinitum* in hopes of finally creating a homogeneous, ideal settler locale.

Chapter Four: Methodology

This chapter offers an overview of the research methodology and approach to analysis, including the chosen methods of data collection and analysis. Considering the critical and qualitative nature of my thesis, Critical discourse analysis (CDA) practices and philosophy underpin my research methodology. A key component of CDA is acknowledging and embracing researcher positionality and engaging in reflexive research practices (Wodak and Meyer, 2016). This has been advocated for by several qualitative researchers, with benefits seen even in quantitative analyses (Ryan and Golden, 2006).

Critical discourse analysis: an overview

CDA is a field of study, or rather an approach as opposed to a theoretical or specific methodological realm, that seeks to unearth power dynamics that sustain societal inequity, as sustained by discourse. Discourse can be described in a variety of ways and touches on all socio-political phenomena. As stated by Wodak and Meyer (2016, p. 3) "discourse means anything from a historical monument, a *lieu de mémoire,* a policy, a political strategy, narratives in a restricted or broad sense of the term, talk, a speech, topic-related conversation." CDA practice and considerations stem from linguistics and traditional discourse analysis (the study of talk and text, to put it simply). Studying discourse should, however, never be seen as an isolated act: "CDS is … not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se, but in analyzing, understanding and explaining social phenomena that are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach" (Ibid., p. 2). Reinforcing this point, van Dijk (2008, p. 3) argues that "discourse is not only analyzed as an autonomous 'verbal' object, but also as situated interaction, as a social practice, or as a type of communication in a social, cultural,

historical, or political situation." As a result, CDA crosses disciplinary boundaries and permits the researcher to impart from a variety of theories to facilitate understanding complex social phenomena and the discourse surrounding or supporting it. A multifaceted social study requires a methodology that can critically analyze community dynamics.

Critically, CDA seeks to be cognizant of the power to drive various discourse and produce certain outcomes (e.g., sustainment of status quo). CDA scholars, then, take certain discourse and its social context into consideration, assessing uses of power and its reproduction (Wodak and Meyer, 2016; van Dijk, 2008). As van Dijk (2008, p. 1) posits, "CDS is not merely interested in any kind of power, but it specifically focuses on *abuse* of power, in other words, on forms of domination that result in social inequality and injustice." Furthermore, CDA scholars seek to amplify dominated groups subjugated by unequitable power relations, removing the normative academic requirement of impartiality. CDA encourages partiality and being advocative of those oppressed by power relations (van Dijk, 2008). This became a useful approach for crafting my own unique methodology, particularly as an inside-researcher who resided within Lethbridge and worked for the municipality.

As Fairclough and Wodak (1997) remind us, "Discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned–it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people" (quoted in Wodak and Meyer, 2016, p. 6). CDA goes beyond looking at merely an utterance but takes into consideration the social context and power relations that sustain or (re)produce a certain type of discourse (Wodak and Meyer, 2016). This was particularly important when considering my thesis topic and surveying the Lethbridge literature. As Kingfisher

(2007), highlighted, so much of the racialized discourse employed by public hearing participants was inexplicit: racial assumptions became embedded in the discursive associations of Indigenous residents (Kingfisher, 2007). I presumed that much of the discourse I would be studying would be similarly inexplicit thus demanding a methodology that would look beyond words spoken and consider context. CDA enables scholars to delve below the surface of a written or spoken communication to evaluate implicit assumptions or institutionalized beliefs that support power relations.

van Dijk (2005) writes that "one of the crucial tasks of Critical Discourse Analysis is to account for the relationships between discourse and social power. More specifically, such an analysis should describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced or legitimized by the talk and text of dominant groups or institutions" (p. 65). While not explicit in my thesis topic, social power remains a critical driving force in the background of settler colonial actions, strategies, and discourse, particularly when looking at the impacts of social in(ex)clusion. While not a fundamental theorist for this thesis topic, Foucault's (1982) discussion of power and repetition is useful here due to the certain phrases and associations were *repeated* and how that has the possibility to re-inscribe dominant ideologies.

Recruitment

When considering the construction of municipal inclusion, interviews with individuals possessing the social capital needed to influence policy creation and social attitudes within Lethbridge were deemed essential. While it would be critical as part of a subsequent project to gauge the perspectives of equity-deserving groups who live and share the urban space with elite groups, understanding from where dominant ideas about

inclusion emanate was vital. As CDA theorists note, power is gained through repetition. For discourse to take root and influence social attitudes, one must have some degree of power and, for this project, business owners and politicians are applicable groups whose discourse would be deemed persuasive and publicly repeated, and ultimately become translated into policy decisions and social attitudes. Stone (1980) supports this approach, arguing specifically that community decision-making is rife with powerful interests predominantly held by business and political elites that share the same social in-group and have access to pathways enabling open expression of opinion, validation, and influence.[9] Previous research in Lethbridge illustrated that these groups created discursive barriers to inclusion. As such, these two groups became my ideal research participants, for the literature emphasized their social capital. This trend from the literature, combined with my positionality as a municipal employee and Lethbridge resident, is accurate. The recruitment strategies for the two groups differed slightly, however, as the noted inside-researcher positionality enabled easier access to one participant group (City Councillors).

To recruit business owners, email correspondence was the primary method. Email introductions were addressed to the primary business contact e-information, with a digital letter of invitation attached. An even split of individuals explicitly supportive of the SCS and those who were openly unsupportive was initially desired. Letters of invitation were sent to participants that had in either media interviews, or at City Council public hearings, expressed their opinions about the SCS to create two sub-participant groups. From this correspondence, three (out of six total) of the business participant interviews were

[9] Stone (1987) contends that occasionally these linkages are the result of reasonable municipal constraints, but more often they are planned and deliberate. Although I do not touch on this in great length in this thesis, it is an intriguing tension that merits more research within the contemporary municipal setting.

initiated. As interviews began, it became apparent that the issue was more complex than the binary previously expected during recruitment. Noting this, a second open call for participants in the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce newsletter was initiated. No one responded to that open call, though it encouraged participation. Like many municipal social issues, this one was complex in meaning, and participant feelings and responses would be equally complex, and not in one explicit camp or another.

City Council participation recruitment occurred through direct email correspondence with a letter of invitation attached. Councillor contact information is publicly available on the City of Lethbridge webpage, and as such, each member's public email was used. Five individuals accepted the invitation, three declined, and one was excluded from participating.[10] Considering my role as an inside researcher, recruitment for City Council participation was a bit easier: I could present the project in person to each Councillor and had some familiarity with their schedules when it came time to proposing interview times and dates.

Research group participants had the choice of conducting their interview digitally, via Zoom, or in-person. Once indicated their preference typically via email correspondence following the letter of invitation, a consent letter was sent. For Zoom interviews, the record feature was disabled.[11] Interviews were recorded on a personal recording device with participant permission. Permission to record was included in the consent letter, and prior to beginning each project participant was asked if they had any additional questions or concerns. In-person interviews were recorded on the same device.

[10] Lethbridge City Council has nine (9) members: eight (8) Councillors and one (1) Mayor.
[11] Except for one Councillor interview, where I obtained their verbal agreement to record the interview in hopes of producing a Zoom text transcript. The transcript has their verbal sign off included.

Prior to each interview participant consent was verbally secured, their rights as a participant were recounted, and they were reminded that they would have the opportunity to review their transcript once complete.

A semi-structured interview guide was employed to encourage conversational methods in effort to build rapport and make the participant feel comfortable. While some interviews required a more conversational method, the semi-structured questions were used in each interview to ensure uniformity. It was important that participants felt safe when discussing a contentious topic with me, and as such, their anonymity was assured to the best of my ability.[12] Research questions were constructed in an attempt to permit honest, reflexive dialogue that served two purposes. One, it enabled rich, honest data from the participants, and two, allowed me to engage with the questions as part of exploring my positionality as an inside researcher.

Interviews were transcribed manually with the assistance of the phone application Transcribe+. Transcribing can be a process wrought with researcher biases and assumptions (Bird, 2005.) Mitigating this concern was kept in mind as I manually transcribed and reviewed the final documents to ensure accurate reflection of participant perspectives. Absent from transcriptions were emphasis on inflection or other linguistic features of transcribing. However, tonal shifts or emphasis on a certain phrase occurred, and italicized the in transcripts. The electronically produced transcripts underwent review to ensure accuracy. Transcriptions were converted into protected PDFs (utilizing Adobe Suite) and forwarded to the research participants for a final review. Any requested

[12] It is impossible to absolutely ensure participant anonymity, as outlined in my research ethics proposal. Identifiable phrases, for example, could be attributed back to the participant – also verbally indicated to participants at the start of the interview.

redactions were completed at that time. nVivo 12 was initially used for coding, which was organized into major themes; however, a predominant use of manual coding of major themes occurred to inform eventual findings. A combined open and manifest coding approach was additionally employed (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Atkinson, 2017). Utilizing the manifest method, transcripts were first read informally, permitting themes to emerge organically. Once that was complete, the transcripts were reviewed to identify how prevalent my first-pass coding themes were. Much of the latter discourse analysis was done manually by compiling common themes together and noting their frequency (e.g., tallying, keeping track of themes in Excel, etc.) to categorize and further disseminate my broader findings.

Notably, from an earlier review of public commentaries common themes were identified and their frequency determined. This permitted me to understand linkages and themes amongst the participant groups and community commentary in the Letters to the Editor. While no exact relationship can be determined (e.g., if a politician or business owner influenced Lethbridge public social attitudes), linkages are evident. Transcript analysis unfolded using van Dijk's sociocognitive CDA approach, which was complemented by Veracini's (2010) discussion of settler colonialism and Winant and Omi's (2014) racial formation theory, all of which enabled me to identify moments of racial and spatial constructions supporting a settler colonial agenda. As Winant and Omi (2014) highlight, race is a social construction that serves a political purpose and can be manipulated depending on how it fits with the dominant race's agenda. Through racialization, racial understandings are distilled to simplified understandings of racialized groups to the level of social representation that allows space to likewise be constructed in

a certain way when racialized groups inhabit it (e.g., Indigenous spaces as chaotic and dangerous). This is particularly critical for the urban setting as the building block of the settler colonial project.

CDA and positionality

One challenge I confronted was due to my positionality and deep understanding of Lethbridge, which at times led to preconceived assumptions. I acknowledged these and allowed other themes to emerge. As researchers, we do not exist in a neutral state or space: we engage in research endeavours that are important to us (Wodak and Meyer, 2016). Our value-systems, lived-experiences, and positionalities play a role in what type of research we engage in. To accept this, as many positivist researchers have refuted, is not to cloud objectivity or sacrifice research outcomes. Instead, it provides a way for researchers to situate themselves within their topic of study and pay closer attention to ethical dilemmas posed by that positionality. In turn, we can understand our own (at times *mis*) interpretations and potential data gaps more clearly. As a result, the potential academic rigor produced from acknowledging positionality as a researcher that we are still human beings with experiences and biases, never quite *fully* removed *or* immersed in the research topic expands (Ryan and Golden, 2006; Berger, 2013; von Unger, 2021).

The practice of engaging with one's positionality as a researcher is referred to as reflexivity. von Unger (2021), quoting Cohen and Crabtree's definition, states that "the term [reflexivity] refers to a concept and analytical practice whereby researchers take the context of the research situation into account, including the influence researchers have on the investigation and its results" (p. 186). von Unger notes a myriad of reasons why

reflexivity is gaining traction, but perhaps most importantly is the finding that "critical theories of queer, postcolonial, and indigenous studies [require] 'power-sensitive approaches' [that] … emphasize the social and political implications of research" (Ibid., p. 188). The ways in which we study social research is shifting in effort to challenge dominant discourses. Understanding the hegemony held within the academy becomes critical for moving the dial in research and creating broader socio-political impacts. Since this research competes with settler colonialism and the city, including its impact on the construction of Indigenous inclusion, power plays a key role in shaping and interpreting the data.[13]

For CDA scholars, this reflexivity is a critical component of undertaking social research. Understanding how power dynamics shift amongst/between social groups, but also within certain researcher-participant relationships, proves to be beneficial in not only protecting oneself as a researcher, but ensuring the ethical treatment of research participants (von Unger, 2021). This is especially critical for working with equity-deserving groups as a researcher, but applies as a protectorate for the researcher working with elite power-holding groups, as was the case with my thesis. As von Unger writes, "[engaging reflexively] is a genuine component of an engaged and critical research

[13] I have considered frequently my choice of research participants, and by way of, lack of inclusion of Indigenous voices from this research project. My choice to interview predominantly white, settler society descendent elites in the city was not to emphasize their power as means of protecting it or re-inscribing it (I am aware of the Foucauldian assertion that repetition sustains dominant power relations). Rather, I believe it is important to understand the power these social groups hold in shaping social attitudes and local policy. This was not to decenter or devalue Indigenous perspectives. To put it bluntly: Indigenous racism is a settler society problem in Lethbridge. To understand how social attitudes (re)produce and impact policy at the micro municipal level, I realized I needed to start with these groups. Their role in shaping social attitudes and inclusion, and whether or not these are engaged with settler colonial strategies (conscious or not) needed to be evaluated at the forefront before bringing in diverse perspectives.

practice that acknowledges the fact that research is not separate from and outside of, but rather entangled with the social phenomena under study" (von Unger, 2021, p. 187).

Analyzing the researcher within the broader context of the research being studied is critical for well-rounded scholarly work as it ensures transparency, while allowing greater analytical avenues whereby the researcher is engaged in understanding their own "why's" when gathering and interpreting data (von Unger, 2021, p. 188). Being reflexive permits researchers to understand the nuances and personal motivations that drove participants to respond the way they did through positioning themselves in relation and comparison to these participants (Ryan and Golden, 2006). Even when analyzing data, understanding the human beings behind the data allows us, as researchers, to take ethical care and due diligence, but also take care of ourselves. Rather than sacrifice the validity of their research project, it was expanded to include a qualitative element to further delve and deepen issues of reflexivity, positionality, and engagement with their participants (Ryan and Golden, 2006).

CDA and its related concept of reflexivity helped me as an inside researcher. I label myself as such due to being a City of Lethbridge employee as well as being the daughter of a local business owner. This positionality amplified the possibility for disingenuous participant responses or my bias directed at participants. Being an inside researcher, most simply, refers to research being conducted by a member of the group being researched: inside researchers often have *"a priori"* knowledge of the research, proving to be both complex and beneficial simultaneously (Fleming, 2018). To mitigate the tension of wearing two hats – academic and professional – I verbally informed

research participants of my role with the City to ensure they were aware that this project was in no way a City-led initiative.

There are benefits and detriments to being an inside researcher. For example, I had the ability to ask City Councillors personally if they wished to participate. Due to my familiarity with municipal government, I was able to better observe and cultivate research questions that could lead to discoveries that could be brought back to my work environment (Fleming, 2018). As a public servant, for instance, I understood the important municipal role in cultivating inclusion. I believe some of my research findings will translate into my professional career, hopefully shedding light on the role municipalities have in exacerbating, or highlighting, inequity – or, alternatively, combatting dominant in(ex)clusive discourses and abetting inclusion. But as Fleming (2018) also notes, "One of the initial challenges of conducting insider research is to ensure that the research design has rigor and transparency in the methods of data collection" (Fleming, 2018, p. 313). Ethical consideration goes beyond the parameters of institutional confines and checkbox exercises: it must continue throughout the research project, with the researcher continually checking in on themselves and their positionality as a factor in the research (von Unger, 2021). For me, this meant frequent check-ins with my thesis supervisor and the primary ethics advisor to ensure that I was protecting the rights of the research participants.

As a final point, being an inside researcher can fall to critique for objectivity and validity: "At times, there is the risk of a premature conclusion being reached if the preconceptions of the outcomes appear to be confirmed" (Fleming, 2018, p. 316). As a Lethbridge resident, employee, and academic I did have certain presumptions that

inevitably coloured my research questions. I have, however, worked hard to rigorously analyze data to ensure its credibility (e.g., use of open-coding at first passes of analysis, numerous discussions with my thesis supervisor) and being responsive to unexpected outcomes that might have been aided by my previous experiences. But rather than removing myself from my predisposition to care about equity and social justice, these motivations fueled my research while still allowing me to produce an academically rigorous and credible qualitative research project.

Conclusion

As Granzow (2010, p. 74) articulated of their own thesis, "this shift in my research is significant in that it illustrates the imperfect relationship between social research as it is conceived and social research as it is practiced." Changes in my research and positionality from its inception to its completion holds significance, indicating a need for flexibility, self-empathy and transparency within the research process. For me, engaging with my own positionality was a key challenge that I decided to embrace. As part of this, I adopted CDA as my methodological approach in which to analyze my data. With social processes and constructions being complex within urban settings, I needed a methodological practice that (a) acknowledged this complexity while promoting honesty in research preferences and biases and (b) could be applied to a variety of materials all falling under discourse. While my thesis shifted and evolved over its three years, these are tenets I maintained. Through utilizing CDA and being authentic with my inside-researcher positionality, I believe the research created has enhanced potential for application in the municipal setting that I live, work and study.

Chapter Five: Data Presentation - Inclusion in Lethbridge

The key data findings suggest that settler colonialism strongly influences how Lethbridge elites construct their ideas about the meaning of inclusion broadly, but more specifically, Indigenous inclusion. As argued in the next two chapters, racial production and the inscription of racially-derived stereotypes continue to play an important role in determining the meaning of inclusion. As the data highlights, Lethbridge elites do not see themselves as engineering racial production. In fact, the elites believe that Lethbridge is a welcoming city and that if racism is evident, it originates from a minority of the city's population. Indigenous peoples have a right to the city, they argue, as demonstrated through elite land acknowledgements and their willingness to engage the issues and criticize residents beheld to racist ideas.

We must remind the reader at this point that the thesis was intended to explore Lethbridge elite conceptions of inclusion through discussions of the supervised consumption site, including how the arguments expressing relief or support for decommissioning the site developed. What emerged from the research transcripts was a disconcerting trend: attempts to criticize and/or close the SCS led to all SCS clientele being framed as Indigenous. To this point, the SCS was a benevolent operation offering a safe space for connection and harm reduction services to help those experiencing substance use addiction. Yet, early on, the SCS was under constant scrutiny as several business owners and residents called for its decommission. The elite interviews reveal that the SCS prompted a variety of mixed responses. In one breath, the elites believed the SCS was needed to help those with addiction-related medical issues, reinforcing its initial symbolism as a benevolent endeavour. In another, those with authentic, complex and

compounding health issues were considered the minority within a growing community of individuals unwilling to seek help and who were considered outsiders that did not belong: that is, Indigenous peoples. As the literature review demonstrated, elite perspectives imply that Indigenous peoples have yet to develop into a reputable and trustworthy community based on perceived ongoing pathologies (Kingfisher 2007; Belanger & Dekruyf, 2017). What emerged from the elite interview data is an adaptive settler colonial strategy that framed the SCS as an Indigenous social support, which enables the SCS to be seen as a redundancy since Indigenous peoples are perceived as unable to fully appreciate its value or maximize its benefits. The SCS therefore became discursively portrayed as a portal by which formerly excluded Indigenous peoples were able to regain access to a city that had successfully resisted their encroachment from the late 1880s to the 1990s. To further complicate matters, the SCS was jurisdictionally out of reach from municipal elites, leading to frustrations over a situation deemed as spiraling out of control.

The SCS was open to anyone in need of its services. In branding the SCS as exclusively serving Indigenous residents, the elite interviews confirm that settler colonial anxiety was amplified by the threat of more Indigenous peoples traveling to and entering the city to hang out with friends, family and to partake in Lethbridge's drug culture. To satisfy latent settler colonial beliefs about Indigenous urban incommensurability and to amplify settler colonial anxiety in order to justify closing of the SCS, the public, and crucially, elite research participants, depicted the SCS clientele as exclusively Indigenous. This, too, served to avoid being villainized for demanding the closure of a vital health program. If the program was only prioritizing one demographic and causing community

unrest, we begin see how this justification emerges. After all, in a city built on rejecting Indigeneity, what better approach of justifying the SCS's closure than to link it to a constructed Indigeneity that encourages its removal?

The remainder of this chapter will elaborate on how elite groups (City Councillors and business owners) reflect on Lethbridge as a community and the established thresholds for inclusion and boundaries of exclusion. Reflections and assessments of the SCS will follow in the subsequent chapter.

Lethbridge

As the literature review demonstrated, research in Lethbridge shows that elite groups think similarly about Indigeneity. In general terms, with these groups being largely from the same community, having gone to school and worked alongside one another, this should not be surprising. The interview participants were consistent in suggesting Lethbridge embraces small-town conservatism and that the community and individuals benefit from hard work, tenacity and compassion. Though the business elites frequently expressed their frustration with local problems (the SCS remaining an issue even after its closure), City Council participants were more optimistic: they argued that Lethbridge is changing for the better with population and economic growth being the two most cited metrics. While Council participants identified similar concerns expressed by the business community, all participants emphasized that this was, truly, in the past. That is, Lethbridge was a progressive city actively seeking to distance itself from its history, as discussed below. But, most suggested that with growing economic opportunities, if a resident so choses, they can thrive and succeed thereby facilitating a return to wholesome, family-centered values (Councilor E, 2021). The following discussion will elaborate the

political and business leaders' perspectives about the state and nature of inclusion in Lethbridge.

City Councillors

Council participants were aware of Lethbridge's location in the southern Alberta bible belt, and several stated that the religious beliefs that may have once compelled elites to conform their behaviours were becoming less influential over time. New pathways for innovation were being forged with community growth. This was not without its challenges, however, with participants noting more prevalent substance abuse and demographic shifts (Councillor B, 2021; Councillor C, 2021). As Councillor B stated, "We were heading to the 100K [population] mark ... which usually causes that *shift* in a community ... we are the buckle of the bible belt, so to speak ... we're [an] incredibly religious, conservative community. But then we have 12,000 – 15,000 youth that come into our community every year to learn, to work, to play ... and that's what keeps us moving forward ... we were on the cusp of change" (Councillor B, 2021). The majority of participants, however, depicted change as a double-edged sword: while everyone appreciated the economic advantages of population growth, they understood that the community would have to contend with troubling elements linked with increased urbanization. Furthermore, the attempts to distance themselves from religious restrictions suggested that the participants believed they were open-minded thinkers not bound by tradition.

Despite presenting Lethbridge as progressive and seeking to distance itself from its religious and conservative roots, the participants simultaneously praised Lethbridge's religious and conservative family-oriented heritage while identifying anticipated

problems with such (i.e., stagnancy on desired policy changes). In discussing Lethbridge's evolution, participants indicated that what drew people to Lethbridge was more than economic opportunities. As Councillor E noted, living and working in Lethbridge offered them the opportunity to "be active in the community [and] active in the raising of my family without the stress of being in a big city … I love the City of Lethbridge, and I've enjoyed being here" (Councillor E, 2021). Councillor E indicated that while they were "notionally aware" of "poverty ... discrimination" in the city, they pointed to Lethbridge's successful mitigation strategies (e.g., immigration supports and the development of diverse stakeholder committees to resolve such issues and strategize on Lethbridge's opportunities) to draw greater investment and newcomers to the community. Councillor E commented (which reflected most of the elite interviews), that economic development draws "a significant portion of the population … from other places."

Thus, Lethbridge had shifted from a homogeneous community with uniform needs to a more diversified community. This necessitated developing varied interventions and cultural supports, in turn making governance more challenging. Nonetheless, for Council participants Lethbridge offered everyone the equal opportunity to excel, thereby fulfilling its mandate as "gateway to opportunity." Council participants concluded that this success was due in part to the community's diversified economic and cultural sector, which drew "hard-working" individuals in search of similar values. The message was clear: if you work hard enough, the community will support you and thus help you succeed.

Every City Council participant did express concerns about racism in Lethbridge. Though no one could agree on racism's severity, all stated that it was pervasive and long-

standing. As Councillor B noted, “I think there was a bit of … I don’t want to say hostility … or fear … there was a bit of concern of letting those *others* in. I hear that all the time.” They added that local resident beliefs were likely a product of “growing up as a community and experiencing some issues.” Racism, from their perspective, was evident in residents blaming “different groups, different ethnicities. Lethbridge has … a very … racist history, let’s put it that way. But I think that’s changing. I think we’re getting there.” What precisely the “different groups” were being blamed for was not articulated. An ‘us versus them’ mentality was evident, though, which for our purposes may be reduced to a framework of distinguishing those who are accepted (inclusion) from those who continue to be unaccepted (exclusion). Despite their comments to the contrary, Councillor B insisted that Lethbridge remained a welcoming community, albeit with a caveat: to become accepted one ought to not only work hard, but be both kind and compassionate. The tension associated with being kind and compassionate *and* a racist community is an important theme that suggests some in the city have a destabilizing impact, which presents a challenge when it comes time to exercising compassion and kindness (this is also a common theme amongst business elites).

None of the participants believed that they were racist or discriminatory towards others. Further, those Lethbridge residents whom the participants deemed racist were considered a minority whose voices were blunted by ongoing discussions emphasizing multiculturalism and by promoting an overarching “rampant” kindness (Councillor B, 2021). These discussions verified a community willingness to engage the tough issues and that Lethbridge’s growing diversity could be considered a tangible measure of the city’s inclusive nature (Councillor E, 2021). During most of the interviews, and without

prompting, the participants made a point of classifying the discussion of racism against immigrants and racism against Indigenous peoples as separate, unique phenomena.

Veracini (2010) shows how in settler colonial communities, Indigenous others are deemed unique from Exogenous others (immigrants), for the latter have already been transformed by colonial contact while the former await transformation. Or, as the Councillors suggested, the Indigenous others *should* have already been transformed by this contact. This failure to change led most to identify Indigenous residents through a deficit lens, with Councillors pointing to a disproportionate share of addiction and mental health concerns and inequitable opportunities within the community as an element of Lethbridge's racism. That is, whereas Exogenous others are working at adapting to the values of kindness and compassion by working hard, Indigenous others have been offered and squandered the same opportunities while remaining defiant and unwilling to adapt. These factors were not emphasized in direct relation to immigrants or in favourably discussing multiculturalism.[14] However, these factors were mentioned when discussing the SCS and Indigenous peoples. Arguably, then, the racism that Lethbridge residents and inadvertently, City Councillors, express about Indigenous peoples, is due to the latter's inability to properly transform. Further, this racism may go largely uncriticized due to its normalization.

Demarcating inclusion based on an individual or a community's collective ability to conform to the norms and mores of the dominant society is critical to bear in mind. These

[14] This was demonstrable in Councillor E's discussion of assisting Syrian refugees accustom to Lethbridge. They noted that while it was difficult determining what to do with "these people" that were fundamentally out of place within the community, they applauded the refugees' efforts at enrolling in community-based programming and recreation as a way to become Lethbridge residents (2021). Councillor E deemed this a success story in the refugee capacity to engage and adapt to traditional recreational activities within the community.

originating psychologies continue to influence how we understand the other. As Mills (1997) argued, understanding how society was created and under what pretexts of personhood and morality is critical. Furthermore, Mills posited that the Racial Contract solidified the norms to determine how to interact moving forward and thus tended to exclude those individuals and groups that could not properly adapt. By "prescribing norms for cognition to which its signatories must adhere", the Racial Contract helps those in Lethbridge better comprehend why certain populations come to be justifiably excluded from the population economy based on their perceived inability to conform (Ibid., p. 13).

Upon arriving at the desired space, settlers imparted norms that everyone needed to adhere to in order to gain personhood and thus political agency within the state. Indigeneity was not seen as a politically legitimate form of society in and of itself (Flanagan, 2000; Widdowson and Albert, 2008). As Mills (1997, p. 13) notes, "the establishment of society thus implies the denial that a society already existed; the creation of society *requires* the intervention of white men, who are thereby positioned as *already* sociopolitical beings." The white settler state, then, depends upon diminishing the savage Indigenous others represent. Opportunity for inclusion within the settler space was and arguably remains predicated on the Indigenous other transforming from savagery by adopting the white ideal that leads to personhood being established. As Indigeneity was already constructed as inherently pre-political and savage, assimilation was and remains the only way for Indigenous others to gain inclusion. If assimilation failed, exclusion from the settler state was justified. Whereas assimilation was often framed as a benevolent project for the good of the savage, it was required to foster community development since the metric of personhood and political agency was whiteness and its

correlative characteristics (e.g., Christian versus Heathen; Mills, 1997). Exclusion, then, is linked with community development and evolution.

The unique variant of anti-Indigenous racism, while deemed justifiable due to an Indigenous inability to assimilate, did not stimulate Councillors to promote strategies to mitigate racism. In fact, despite admitting to racism, most believed that Lethbridge remained inclusive. Further evidence of inclusivity is found in the Lethbridge City Council dedicating resources to a Reconciliation Action Plan (2018) and by signing a Memorandum of Understanding between City Council and the Blood Tribe (Kainai) Council (2021). However, it is the nature of *how* inclusivity is being fostered that suggests the Councillors are not as confident in Lethbridge's inclusivity as they proclaim on the surface. The growing academic literature on Indigenous-Canada reconciliation indicates that the City of Lethbridge is engaged in symbolic, token forms of reconciliation rather than seeking systemic changes through directed policy shifts, or through co-constructed policy (Coulthard, 2014). While an important first step, surface-level efforts do little to action, or even improve, Indigenous inclusion. In effect, such actions fool those responsible for strategic development into believing changes are occurring and while permitting a continued blindness to the inequities occurring under the guise of progression (Leach, 2003). It is under this guise, I argue, that Councillors believe that Lethbridge can concurrently occupy two spheres: inclusive and receptive to diversity (accepting of Exogenous others); and, uninformed and racist (not accepting of Indigenous others).

To summarize, City Councillors interviewed believed that Lethbridge was an inclusive community. Certainly, there were issues to overcome. Except for the racism

sometimes directed at immigrants and Indigenous peoples, residents were making strides. Several trends are evident. The protestant work ethic engrained in the Racial Contract (Mills, 1997) continues to be an important guiding principle that indicates a belief that hard work alone is adequate to guarantee inclusion. Indigenous peoples and immigrants were deemed unique others, and as such received unique treatment, supporting Veracini's (2010) arguments. Exogenous others do not challenge the settler primacy over space where Indigenous others do, creating a fundamental differentiation that arguably impacts how Indigenous others achieve inclusion. Thus, there is an unspoken understanding that immigrants have been more successful in their transformation to settler colonial Lethbridge since the justified racism directed at them is not as strong. Participants imply that severity of racism results from ability to successfully engage and participate in community-derived activities under the encouragement of benevolent leaders in the community (Councillor E, 2021). Immigrants did what Indigenous people have not been able to achieve: they work hard and engage in community activities. What emerges is not a rigid, community-based conceptualization of inclusion, but rather an unspoken and implicit understanding of Indigenous peoples' inability to conform to the tenets of inclusion within Lethbridge. The following section will explore the business owners' conceptualization of inclusion.

Business Owners

Overall, business owners' beliefs aligned with City Councillors by viewing Lethbridge positively. Whereas City Councillors considered the city to be in the throes of transitioning, business owners believed the community had stalled, or even taken a step

backwards, with the SCS's emergence. That is, they remained optimistic about the city's ability to transition into their preferred community (even if what this meant remained largely unspoken). One participant captured the overall tone of their business colleagues when they stated, "people were really nice and not overly diverse [in Lethbridge] … [but] that does seem to be changing" (Business Owner A, 2021). Comparative to Councillors, business owners did not consider Lethbridge to be unconditionally inclusive and were quicker to identify the negatives. Though socialized within the same community, one separating factor between the two groups is the political pressure for Councillors to ensure their comments are framed diplomatically. They can, however, weather public criticism for years due to the period between elections. Business owners, by their very nature, are more vulnerable: the personal is the professional, as businesses are directly affected by the various issues discussed, thus amplifying personal risk. The business owners' depictions of Lethbridge, then, were linked to how what they were observing directly impacted their business, their patrons, and ultimately their families' wellbeing.

Business owners similarly identified Lethbridge's economic development opportunities. The younger entrepreneurs in particular were optimistic that Lethbridge's downtown offered opportunity that other areas could not. "When you're a young entrepreneur and you're just getting started … [the downtown] just sort of fits … downtown has that community vibe" (Business Owner D, 2021). For other participants, the small-town atmosphere grounded by likeminded individuals who were compassionate, kind, and industrious, contributed to the potential for securing loyal, returning customers, and treating "staff like family" (Business Owner M, 2021). Some observed it was this close-knit, long-standing clientele that enabled businesses to maintain operations during

times of economic constraint characterized by the shift towards more online shopping and COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, to identify two trends. As the personal was deeply interwoven with the professional, business owners' positive portrayals of Lethbridge were influenced by how readily residents were able to support their operations. The business owners highlighted a resident base that was, overall, "kind [and] really nice" making Lethbridge an enjoyable community to work and live (Business Owner A, 2021). Some participants noted a lack of economic and demographic diversity within the community, but that the small-town feel of Lethbridge and its opportunity for potential outweighed these concerns (Business Owner A, 2021).

Business owners simultaneously asserted that despite its opportunities, Lethbridge was reticent to change, a community "stuck in its ways" that made it difficult to diversify the local economy or to be accepted into the business community (Business Owner A, 2021). Consumer fickleness was depicted in a variety of ways, with some noting that Lethbridge is cliquey. To be successful as a business owner within this environment, therefore, one had to "really hit on and tap on that product that people in Lethbridge are interested in" and adopt a mindset of "hard-work, passion, and knowledge of how to run a business" (Business Owner B, 2021; Business Owner A, 2021). One needed to secure customer loyalty in an economically dynamic, albeit unstable, environment. The same characteristics of Lethbridge that enabled long-standing business owners to sustain their economic stability was divergent from those participants that were new to the local business scene: it was possible for business owners to be economically excluded from the community if they did not conform to prevailing trends and simultaneously keep up with resident demands for novelty: "And it's tough, because [when a new business] opens,

everybody flocks to that one … and you've got little pods of people that flock around together because Lethbridge seems to be cliquey, right?" (Business Owner D, 2021).

For some participants, their own inclusion within Lethbridge was precarious, at times resulting in a muzzling effect for speaking up within the community. Participants implied that they, too, had to conform to the popular dialogue of the pre-existing business community or risk being ostracized, particularly surrounding social issues within the community. "Speaking to quite a few of the business owners in this area in particular, um, a feeling of like they cannot express themselves without being judged or attacked" (Business Owner A, 2021). This interview trend highlighted a significant theme of defensiveness that was shared by all business owner participants. Ultimately, they confronted a myriad of dynamics that impacted their understanding of Lethbridge and what they needed to do to be included while ensuring economic success. Not only did business owners have to break into an already difficult environment characterized by stagnancy and fickleness, but they were doubly impacted by being community members exposed to increased social disorder. Therefore, business owners alluded that they were in a more vulnerable position than mere community residents or City Councillors. This influenced their perceived aggression directed at the SCS and in turn Indigenous peoples in Lethbridge.

All business owners promoted the need for hard work and its ultimate rewards. Tenacity was needed that was informed by compassion. Compassion, however, was only afforded to customers, which was a mitigation tactic to appease a fickle community. Hard work emerged as the foundation for success. As one participant described, "I'm there all

the time… my day starts at five in the morning, and I don't finish until nine o'clock at night" (Business Owner D, 2021). Similar to the Councillors, business owners embraced the idea of community mindedness to ensure economic success while still being considered compassionate (Business Owner A, 2021). The same personal attributes of compassion, kindness, and hard work are present amongst the business owners. Unlike the Councillors, however, how the business owners presented the community was contingent on the residents recognizing the entrepreneur's value by emulating these ideal characteristics. To reiterate, as both residents and business owners, these individuals wore two hats. This led to at times contradictory discussions in the interviews, which CDA helped to resolve.

Balancing the tenets of inclusion – hard work, tenacity and compassion – proved exceptionally difficult for business owners living in a growing community that was shifting from its small-town comfortability and into a more diverse community (Business Owner B, 2021). Similar to City Councillors, the growth in population and the attendant economic stimulation were both a positive and negative attribute. In discussing the desire and importance for compassion, business owners applauded their own ability to remain compassionate while ensuring customer and staff safety, because there are some "pretty sad cases downtown here" (Business Owner G, 2021). It is interesting that while advocating for economic diversification and critiquing the community for its closed-minded refusal to change, business owners were also wary of the seemingly attendant social disorder and its potential negative impact on business operations. Here, the business owner's persona was split between aspiring capitalist seeking growth and the community member resisting change. In this setting, balancing hard work with

compassion was translated into balancing hard work with compassion for neighbours and patrons, both of whom were increasingly framed as non-Indigenous peoples. Like Councillors, those who threaten community and thus their economic stability, are framed as others, not of the community mind, and thus not always entitled to compassion.

In general, business owners did not elaborate on the community's racism as consistently as the Councillors, but most did admit to its existence. Reflecting the Councillors' unprompted response equating social disorder with Indigenous peoples, business owners expressed their fear of discussing social disorder with being labelled as a racist. This suggests that the participants linked social problems to being non-white, and those engaged in activities deemed counterproductive to creating a community mind remained outside the local social and political imaginary. To critique those involved spreading social disorder would be to single out Indigenous peoples. Like the Councillors, the business owners did not see themselves as racist, even if others in Lethbridge were. Here, the business owners argued that those who were racist should embrace the entrepreneurial characteristics of compassion and kindness "to become more tolerant and understanding" (Business Owner B, 2021). As Business Owner B stated, "maybe it's not even more tolerant and understanding, maybe those aren't the right words… but we need to listen better and not jump to conclusions" (Business Owner B, 2021). Considering business owners' collective fear of being painted negatively for discussing social issues, this comment is not surprising, and arguably reinforces the personal nature of issues discussed for business owners. It further indicates that the business owners' personal behaviours is what others should aspire.

Both the City Councillors and business owners concluded that it was the public's general inability to properly engage in civil discourse, or become more informed, that led to racism (Business Owner B, 2021; Business Owner G, 2021). Yet once again, a minority of the community was identified as racism's source, reinforcing the majority Lethbridge's tendency for compassion. As Business Owner G (2021) stated, "from a social issue angle, we're very compassionate … . I think a lot of other cities would have had far more problems than us … yeah, friendly, and compassionate." This compassion, though, was criticized at times for exceeding what would be productive "help" versus enabling social issues, such as how the SCS was perceived.

Furthermore, business owners highlighted the increase in drug activity as an unwanted consequence of the community's growth. One participant noted that in tandem with substance use frequency was an increase in "more people with different sorts of … handicaps, mental illnesses. You see that more and more now, more than ever" (Business Owner G 2021). Business owners noted that social issues had always existed within the community, but that the shifting magnitude of social disorder linked to drug potency compelled them to adopt new strategies that proved the community was changing, and that they were being forced to change as well. Such forced change was due to other individuals' actions or lack of self-control, and this led to social disorder. In this case, demonstrating compassion was considered a weakness, for blame should be assigned for those perpetuating social disorder and unable to pull themselves up by their bootstraps (Business Owner G, 2021).

The links between those perceived as embracing social disorder resulting from drug use and an insistence on maintaining their Indigeneity was evident in each discussion. Perhaps due to interacting with Indigenous peoples every day, some business owners noted close relationship with Indigenous peoples as friends and customers to highlight this personally held anti-racism and benevolence, further distancing any actual racism from the participants' social ingroup. As Business Owner G (2021) stated, "I'm about as pro-Native as anyone." Nevertheless, latent anti-Indigenous racism resulting in the need to refute racism directed at Indigenous peoples was evident. Unlike the Councillors who spoke of the community blaming Indigenous peoples for their inability as a group to assimilate, business owners suggested that racism was individualized and not directed at the Indigenous community writ-large as opposed to specific individuals unwilling to help themselves. Like the Councillors, though, business participants were troubled by racist attitudes. In fact, most of the business owners believed they were being benevolent to Indigenous peoples. One anecdote in particular illustrates how this generosity emerged: "One time, two Native fellows came into the store like, blood … everywhere, swollen feet with garbage bags" asking to use the business' washroom (Business Owner A 2021). They were denied access. Business Owner A did, however, allow "10 of them on the step" to momentarily hang out until asking them to move. Upon heeding their request to move, Business Owner A applauded their own ability to ensure a "cordial interaction and it worked out really well" (Business Owner A, 2021). The above anecdote is not unique. The "Native fellows" were denied washroom access but were provided the ability to linger near Business Owner A's business. Dressed in garbage bags and not wearing shoes, and perceived as socially dysfunctional, the Indigenous

individuals nevertheless could be cordial when called upon by the participant. This discussion, like many others, had the participant identify social disorder with being Indigenous without any prompting from the interviewer.

As Business Owner A's recollections illustrate, and reflecting the majority of business owners interviewed, Indigenous peoples were (re)constructed time and time again using the Racial Contract as a lens to separate out savage, pre-political populations from those that have gone on to develop a sense of community based on specific principles of inclusion. The actions of Lethbridge business owners reflect historic processes dating to Greco-Roman times when those deemed exotic or different from the dominant ideal were deemed also to be savages (Williams Jr., 2012). As Veracini (2010, p. 25) highlights, Indigenous others exist on a sliding scale of ability based on potential for morality. Several trends are apparent in the business owner interviews that reinforce an underlying belief in Indigenous inferiority in the settler colonial present. The belief in hard work and formal recognition of business owners' contributions become criteria of inclusion. In terms of the latter, a failure to respect the business owners' efforts is to challenge social order, for they represent the apex of community stability. As Business Owner D had indicated, being an "entrepreneur" necessitated "build[ing] relationships … getting to know other business owners that will refer clients to your door … it's about community" (Business Owner D, 2021). Despite acting as role models in this regard through their hard work and successful relationship building, Indigenous others are rarely depicted as aspiring to embrace the entrepreneurial sense that would lead them to successfully adopt "modes of occupation" that define successful cultivation of the settler

space (Edmonds, 2010). Hence, their exclusion by virtue of their public exhibition of social disorder is warranted.

Much like Councillors, this anti-Indigenous racism within the community was not discussed by business participants in terms of actioning reconciliatory efforts within the community. Rather, it was interpreted as being directed towards those exhibiting social disorder rather than activating opportunities for inclusion by reproducing acceptable behaviours the business owners had already mastered. Thus, business owners were threatened by those who chose to reject adopting these behaviours. To reject these behaviours is thus to reject inclusion, meaning that like the Councillors who assign blame to those who cannot assimilate, the business owners recognize those who also refuse to assimilate. In each case, the Indigenous others' failure to recognize the inherently inclusive nature of what business ownership and patronage means is deemed problematic.

In sum, business owners highlighted that Lethbridge was compassionate and friendly, but tainted with a fickleness that presented them an economic risk (particularly to newer business owners within the community who may have challenged pre-existing norms). It was evident that business owners interpreted Lethbridge through the success and challenges to their business operations. Business owners thus adopted the attributes of tenacity and hard work to combat a fickle customer base, which they suggested translated into a sense of compassion exceeding that of an unchanging, uninformed populace. Racism was admitted, but it was mostly in reference to how racism was wrongly attributed to business owners wishing to discuss social issues within the community, even though business owners' discourses equated social disorder with

belonging to Indigenous peoples, ultimately allowing participants to discuss their own benevolence rather than constructively engage in a dialogue about racism. It was emphasized during the interviews that business owners did not contribute to community racism. In other words, that their hard-working neighbours who were also customers and contribute to the local business scene may be the source of the racism was not discussed,[15] which means it is unclear where racism originates, in turn reinforcing that the hard-working individuals facilitating community cohesion perhaps more than other social groups within the community were, indeed, business owners. Business owners, like the Councillors, stressed Lethbridge's potential: it is compassionate and friendly, with a strong local economy. Overcoming social disorder, however, remains a significant obstacle for everyone involved.

Similarities & divergences: Articulating Lethbridge inclusion

On the surface, the two participant groups of Councillors and business owners that make up this thesis's elite community appear to present divergent beliefs about inclusion, or more specifically, how an 'other' (Exogenous or Indigenous), may secure inclusion in Lethbridge. Overall, both participant groups conclude that Lethbridge is both friendly, compassionate, and inclusive *and* racist, misinformed, and ignorant. Varying constraints influenced how each group responded (i.e., elected official pressure to represent their

[15] There was one response in particular that exemplifies this statement. When I asked Business Owner J (2021) to comment on where some of Lethbridge's polarization stemmed from, they were quick to point to other "redneck" groups within the community, such as those coming from rural communities with their "jacked up trucks." Their own business owner ingroup was not discussed as a contribution to Lethbridge's hostility to difference and was instead deferred to other abstracted groups (who were, perhaps not coincidentally, also framed as coming in from somewhere beyond the privileged space of Lethbridge, reinforcing/reflecting Council beliefs in Lethbridge as increasingly more progressive and surrounding rural communities as not).

community positively; business owners' coinciding professional and personal interests). Everyone agreed, though, that Lethbridge is a community of great potential, one that remains a "gateway to opportunity" that embodies small-town friendliness. Notably, the identified racism was not deemed the exclusive product of an inherently discriminatory community but ensued from the deficit behaviours of individuals and groups that challenge the prevailing social norms that define what inclusion means in Lethbridge. Conclusions such as these reveal Lethbridge is not as inclusive as the elite participants believe, which means that it is not as inclusive as it could be. But what are the tenets of inclusion as they are understood by Lethbridge's elite?

Authentic municipal inclusion was earlier defined as the ability of a municipal institution and its elite actors to champion policy agendas encouraging group differentiation without necessitating assimilation (Young, 1980 cited in Fincher et al., 2019; Klodawsky et al., 2017, McAllister, 2004). In effect, authentic municipal inclusion would ideally challenge historic and racist conceptions of the other to encourage the political and social membership needed for a community to evolve (Veracini, 2010). Settler inclusion unfortunately relies upon fabricated population hierarchies informed by settler colonial norms and mores that established and continue to sway how inclusion is defined and stimulated.

Authentic municipal inclusion would challenge accepted stereotypes identified by Veracini (2010) to reassess the Indigenous other (Taylor, 1994). Further, authentic inclusion should challenge dominant and historic perceptions while encouraging municipal policy's shift to embrace difference. Coulthard (2014) has argued that

Indigenous inclusion within the Canadian settler state necessitates (re)rendering the self-ascribed depiction of Indigeneity that abandons white construction. As the elites interviewed for this thesis have demonstrated, the mere recognition of Indigenous peoples is coloured by historical portrayals of inferiority and paternalism. As these settings are centers of cultural interaction and accordingly racial difference, it is important to reflect on why the elites interviewed so quickly turned to defining Indigenous peoples from deficit perspectives (Fincher et al., 2019, Stone, 1980; McAllister, 2004). What we can conclude is that those who can benefit most are community influencers who perpetuate narratives and stereotypes that normalize and privilege whiteness as the organizing principal of socio-political communities, which inculcates a system that encourages - if not demands - conformity to values of whiteness (see Mills, 1997; Winant, 1994).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, when aggregating the interview transcript data both participant groups acknowledged specific tenets of inclusion all Lethbridge residents were expected to embrace if they were to benefit from and participate within the community. Success and inclusion were conceptualized in terms of resident capacity to embody values of compassion, hard work and tenacity. As described above, however, the participant groups differed in how they determined these desired tenets. Business owners more directly positioned their own attributes as those desirable for the community, promoting individual hard work as the conduit for success: something every resident should aspire to, which meant that those who failed as employees or entrepreneurs simply did not work hard enough (Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). Unlike the politicians, who were expected to accommodate a wide variety of social and political attitudes, business owners sought to satisfy their customers, few of whom were Indigenous and rather were loiterers

unwelcome to their public spaces (Business Owner A, 2021). The business owners thus relied on accepted settler colonial beliefs that established Indigenous peoples did not belong in the city, and as such would not be regular patrons of their businesses. Business owners also subscribed to a belief in Indigenous deficiency, which likewise translated into Indigenous peoples' economic incapacity to participate in the local economy (Fiske et al., 2010).

City Councillors portrayed themselves as hard workers, compassionate and tenacious. When discussing Lethbridge, they sought to attract open-minded, compassionate, and hard-working individuals as supporters, in turn surrounding themselves with people of like mind and attitudes. Once again, relying on settler colonial beliefs the politicians deemed Indigenous peoples as outsiders who chose to not participate in local politics. By their own choices, then, Indigenous peoples preferred to dedicate their time and energy to politics that did not influence Lethbridge. While the two groups dissented with business participants speaking in terms of individuals, and City Councillors more so in terms of groups within the community, nonetheless, purposed desired characteristics – and implied notion that adopting them would better position a resident for inclusion – were consistent.

It is apparent that despite seeming differences in how each participant group understood Indigenous inclusion, both firmly linked social disorder and dysfunction with being Indigenous while suggesting that racism was not a Lethbridge issue, but rather provoked by Indigenous peoples' refusal to embrace hard work, compassion, and tenacity. Rather than reflecting on systemic disadvantages that amplify and

disproportionately create visible poverty, social disorder was considered an inherent Indigenous characteristic that destabilized community development. Such beliefs acted to reinforce settler colonial beliefs in keeping the city devoid of Indigenous influences, which mitigated the effect of personally held racist beliefs by assigning blame to others for forcing non-Indigenous individuals to lash out (i.e., comments that "they" are smashing windows on purpose post-SCS closure as retaliation; Business Owner D, 2021). The elites would regularly condemn Lethbridge residents for their racist beliefs, while concurrently blaming Indigenous peoples for triggering the racism. It becomes evident that racism, as the elites framed it, was a form of tough love, as it were: a tool to help show Indigenous peoples of the need to become hard working, compassionate, and tenacious residents. Despite this, the elites refused or failed to reflect on the use of settler colonial narratives they reproduced to rationalize keeping Indigenous peoples out of the city. As Mills and Winant (1997, 1994) respectively argue, contemporary societies are rooted in the organization and categorization of racialized bodies: Indigenous inferiority, then, becomes part of the "racial common sense" that justifies an ongoing white dominance (Winant, 1994, p. 67).

Councillors and business owners arguably relied on racial production to secure their understanding of good behaviour and thus inclusion. As both groups noted, Indigenous people bring with them social disorder, which can be resisted by barring Indigenous peoples from the city. Inclusion is possible if Indigenous peoples embrace hard work (i.e., get jobs), become more compassionate (i.e., embrace values that would demand their assimilation) and remain tenacious (settler colonial theory relies on historic portrayals of Indigenous peoples as lazy and ineffective; antithetical to proper "modes of

occupation"). Refusing to embrace these values amplifies settler colonial anxiety, which in turn intensifies the perceived need to cleanse the city of social disorder's basis (Indigenous peoples). It is this anxiety that results in settlers actioning transfers, as Veracini (2010) explains, to minimize their presence and associated threats to settler stability (discussed in the next chapter). Lethbridge's elite invoke a settler anxiety about Indigenous presences in their paradoxical tendency to counter racism, yet conflate social disorder with Indigeneity without recognizing their problematic anti-Indigenous racism is symptomatic of a discriminatory community they are a part of and play an important role in reproducing. Notably, the elite recognize that racism exists. Yet, they speak of social disorder's negative effects emanating from the Indigenous community, which is a real and existential threat to existing community values. Racism, then, takes on different meanings and is adaptable to context. If people are racist without rationale, this form hinders building social capital and community. However, if transient Indigenous peoples refuse to embrace the tenets of inclusion, racism transitions into a settler colonial discourse employed to protect the community from social disorder.

A discursive belief in Indigenous deficiency grounds the ongoing debate regarding who has rights to, and within, the city (Edmonds, 2010). Racism against Indigenous peoples does not exist, from an elite perspective, but rather it is the social disorder that accompanies Indigenous people to the city that amplifies settler anxiety, which in turn compels the elite to return to the community's origin story to try and understand what worked then versus what is not working now. Racial formation theory illustrates how stereotypes were and continue to be applied to racialized groups to justify exclusion while permitting elite actors to discuss race without explicitly doing so. What has changed is

that the stereotypes that were used to justify Indigenous municipal exclusion in the 1880s went dormant from the late 1800s to the 1970s, when Indigenous peoples show up in the local census for the first time as a permanent population. The slow population growth that followed was not deemed problematic until the early 2000s, when thousands of permanent Indigenous residents were enumerated.

As research demonstrates (i.e., Kingfisher, 2007; Granzow, 2010), old stereotypes were given new life as the elites attempted to come to terms with this new reality of urban Indigeneity – a category that, to this day, complicates elite constructions of Indigeneity (i.e., inherently separate from the urban space). Lethbridge's origin story was characterized by Indigenous exclusion, and the city remained progressive and largely unencumbered by negative social influences until the 2000s. The ongoing Indigenous deficiency is therefore the product of a non-progressive culture, which justified the original stance of Indigenous municipal exclusion and becomes the foundation of the trope evidenced in the elite interviews for ending social disorder and reclaiming the city for its rightful owners.

A conditional inclusion is present for racialized Exogenous communities that remains inaccessible to Indigenous peoples, and this is anchored by the settler colonial belief in Indigenous peoples as ongoing threats to community stability when immigrants are deemed willing to assimilate into the settler community: inclusion is spelled out in official documents and, as some indicated, are seemingly better positioned to integrate and contribute to the settler population economy. Settler colonialism posits that Indigenous peoples were expected to remain nearby but not seek (re)integration into the settler community. Even if they desired municipal access, the social disorder inherent to

their communities would serve to disqualify them for inclusion as inherently pre-political, historicized groups that do not evolve or change. As Winant and Omi (2014) have concluded, racial hegemony persists due to an elite ability to control how stereotypes best serves the dominant racial group. More to the point, these hegemonic systems are sustained by elite groups' ongoing ability to define who the other is to protect a specific racial system, which in many ways is based on highlighting what "we" are not (van Dijk, 2016; Winant and Omi, 2014; Veracini, 2010).

Conclusion

Lethbridge was depicted by the participant groups as welcoming and inclusive: that is, unless you are Indigenous. Multiculturalism and economic participation seem to be the barometer for measuring inclusion, but this is not discussed in reference to a positive Indigenous presence. Instead, an emphasis on the perceived linkage between Indigenous presences and local social disorder – rooted in a narrative of Indigenous deficiency – became the common thread and model of what not to do if one seeks to secure municipal inclusion. Both participant groups relied on inclusion tenets of hard work, compassion and tenacity. As Indigenous peoples were discussed in deficit-based terms, and linked with social disorder within the community, I conclude that for elites in Lethbridge, Indigenous inclusion is minimized due to the perceived negative social disorder that follows Indigenous presences. Even before discussing the SCS, research participants strongly implied that Lethbridge's inclusion of Indigenous peoples remains difficult and relatively unacceptable, particularly as Indigenous peoples are seen as the antithesis of ideal customers, voters, and ultimately residents. The ongoing presence of Indigenous peoples within Lethbridge, then, prompted a settler anxiety and discomfort

regarding who should access the city – and whether the city's "gateway" needed a stronger lock.

The SCS becomes an ideal case study to further examine the settler colonial anxiety that still exists within Lethbridge and ultimately informs how inclusion plays out. As discussed in the next chapter, the SCS evolved into a perceived portal that allowed Indigenous peoples ease of access to Lethbridge that challenged the ideated temporality of Indigenous presences within the community. Similar to the public forum discourse in my introduction, participants immediately conflated a persisting SCS with persisting social disorder (already coded to mean Indigenous social disorder). As participants were concerned with enhancing progression and growth of the community, but disturbed by a perceived pre-existing social disorder caused by Indigenous peoples, this portal becomes a critical case study to illustrate how settler anxiety emerges in response to perceived challenges to normative ideals and participant understanding of their community. Furthermore, the SCS highlights how settler colonial anxieties become manifest and actualized into processes to exclude, all while under the guise of betterment for Lethbridge. The questions of how the SCS further exposes inclusion criteria and activation of settler colonialism will also be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter Six: Data Presentation - Settler anxieties and the SCS in Lethbridge

The previous chapter highlighted the ways in which participants began to depict inclusion within Lethbridge, leading to four key findings: one, that Lethbridge is broadly conceived as friendly and welcoming; two, that Lethbridge inclusion is grounded in specific tenets of hard work, compassion and tenacity; three, that Lethbridge may not be as inclusive as initially portended, specifically for Indigenous others that are still perceived as antithetical to urban living and community development; and four, that Lethbridge elites have the capacity to construct what inclusion means, ultimately creating boundaries of exclusion should one fail to meet the established inclusion thresholds. The fallout associated with the SCS becomes a moment whereby inclusion, and consequently boundaries of exclusion driven by settler colonial anxieties, become better-defined.

As I previously alluded, the research participants began to view the SCS as a gathering place and portal for Indigenous peoples' entry into the community. For those already in the city, it offered a space to congregate, thus amplifying Indigenous visibility. For those seeking previously restricted access, the SCS became an entry point. When the SCS was announced, it intensified settler colonial anxiety: but the concerns were mostly framed in terms of the SCS's varied failures when it was unable to quickly resolve Indigenous substance use issues. Elite participants did note their concerns that the SCS would draw local Indigenous peoples together, potentially exacerbating substance use concerns. This was not as concerning, however, as the worry that this now physically connected community would begin to draw their relatives and friends – that is, others with similar inherent pathologies – to Lethbridge. In other words, the SCS was

problematic, but not overly so when it sought to help manage substance use issues with the goal of potentially curing people: those individuals would then be prepared to take up their role as a Lethbridge resident. That the SCS had the potential to draw in outsiders is, I argue, the tipping point for a community that was already worried about social disorder perceived as exhibited exclusively by Indigenous peoples. As a portal, the SCS could help Indigenous peoples to bypass settler colonial barriers, thereby inviting more social disorder into the community. The SCS created a site of visibility that also acted to draw outsiders in, which was enough for elites to, if not explicitly call for its closure, express relief over its demise. This chapter will evaluate how Indigenous exclusion became a practice under the guise of community inclusion and development, to which the SCS was deemed antithetical and damaging to such.

The supervised consumption site in Lethbridge

In 2018, it was announced that Lethbridge would be receiving a supervised consumption site (SCS), whereby a permanent site would be created so that those experiencing substance use challenges could consume under supervision and access other social supports and life-saving interventions if required. SCSs were not new to Canada, and in fact date back to 2003 (Greene et al., 2022). The concept, however, stirred concern in Lethbridge, as evidenced by the early public discourse in local and social media. These dialogues soon turned to discussions about who precisely was entitled to public resources: (1) individuals who had demonstrated an inability to conform to social norms (branded non-residents) or (2) genuine residents who understood the value of hard work, compassion and tenacity (branded taxpayers, families and children – true residents). After

the site's opening, SCS clientele became visible and were soon being portrayed as opposite to that of a taxpaying, hard-working resident. As one commentator wrote to the Lethbridge Herald Letters to the Editor,

> "Since when has it become morally and ethically acceptable for citizens to be exposed to this unacceptable behaviour, and be *victimized* by drug-related crimes that we are enabling with an ironically "supervised consumption site' which provides 'party packs' of needles to promote the use of illegal street drugs?" (George, 2020, Lethbridge Herald; emphasis added).

As soon as the site was operational, similar concerns overtook public forums. As another wrote in early 2020,

> "… setting up a facility *funded by taxpayer* money and knowing it would destroy the area it's in … raking in the money *at the expense of all the residents of Lethbridge*" (Bremner, 2020, Lethbridge Herald; emphasis added).

Discussions of the SCS's enabling nature and the associated cost to hard-working residents of Lethbridge became a notable trend, echoing the previous chapter's discussion of elite beliefs. Here we see an overt discussion regarding how inclusion is determined: by engaging in hard work and contributing to society. The SCS's very mandate meant that its clientele was considered recipients of taxpayer's largesse and the public quickly called for its closure. Furthermore, the formulated dichotomy situating residents (hard working, tenacious, compassionate) versus non-residents (pathologized drug users) clearly emerged. Based on the above, unacceptable behaviour correlated with substance use, which the writers portrayed as criminal activity, was deemed antithetical to being included as a member of the moral and ethically grounded collective of Lethbridge residents.

It appears the SCS opened its doors on already tenuous footing. Further complicating its efforts was the change in provincial government in 2019 when the United Conservative Party (UCP) took office. Armed with a new mandate promoting recovery and sobriety, the SCS's evidence-driven and best-practice approach to harm reduction was at variance with the UCP ideology (Greene et al., 2022). As researchers have highlighted, the UCP's shift toward a "moralistic abstinence and treatment-oriented policy" had far-reaching effects on participant access to services, with the "full impact of which … yet to be fully realized" (Ibid., p. 7). In alignment with this ideological shift, public forum discussions focused on the SCS's poor moral character and, more importantly, the same poor moral character of its clientele. By August of 2020, the SCS was shuttered after a UCP-led investigation into potential fund mismanagement.

The closure seemed irrational considering that other published reports tended to emphasize the site's positive role in reducing fentanyl-related deaths and illustrating the benefits of centralizing drug related behaviour at a clean, supervised facility (Alberta Community Council on HIV, 2019, p. 21). Disagreeing with these conclusions were public forum commenters who exclusively used a moral lens promoting local norms of normal behaviour to evaluate SCS clientele behaviours. Despite evidence that the SCS was living up to its mandate and was saving lives, community values were being challenged by the clientele. In response, City Council was being asked to adopt a greater role in controlling a situation that had been amplifying the Lethbridge community's anxiety regarding the nature of social service provision for years (Kingfisher, 2007; Fiske et al., 2010). The SCS, in effect, crystallized these concerns. Now, all social service provision was framed as harmful to ongoing community development (Kingfisher, 2007).

The SCS clientele's unacceptable behaviour added a layer of additional complexity that led to public resistance, often expressed through City Council meetings and public forums such as the Lethbridge Herald Letters to the Editor. Unlike in the previous chapter, where business and political discourse demonstrated uniformity of understanding about what inclusion meant, the political elite were now defending the SCS against business owner and resident charges of lost commerce and rampant criminality.

Indigenous peoples were at first not specifically targeted as a significant source of concern. Indigenous peoples were just one demographic contained within the larger SCS clientele. However, as public demands to close the SCS continued to mount, the SCS clientele were increasingly portrayed as Indigenous. This arguably made it (1) easier to identify who "true" antagonists threatening settler colonial stability were while (2) enabling politicians and business owners to balance their interests in pursuit of community betterment – that is, to keep Indigenous peoples outside of the community. Criticisms of the SCS permitted both participant groups an opportunity to activate their respective group power within the community to express relief over the SCS's closure. Thus, latent settler colonial attitudes expressed in the previous chapter are enacted within the SCS discourse seeking to exclude Indigenous peoples seen as frequenting the SCS, in the name of community development.

The SCS in Lethbridge: Elite evaluations

City Councillors initially expressed their support for the SCS, despite acknowledging that they did not fully comprehend, and therefore forecast, the SCS's unintended impacts. Councillors were consistent in supporting the harm reduction

philosophy, however, and remained optimistic. When asked about how participants felt when they heard about Lethbridge as a candidate for SCS approval, Councillors pointed to its potential to mitigate an ongoing local opioid crisis. As one stated, "People were dying, our emergency services were being overrun, our businesses were being overrun … it was a thought for me, 'okay, let's get a place for these folks to a) be safe and b) get away from [drug use and] … *be members of our community"* (Councillor B, 2021). Several echoed this sentiment, noting that the SCS would help resolve issues in the downtown previously identified. Though the SCS was intended to offer a safe space to improve the health and wellbeing of people who consumed various substances, Councillors envisioned the SCS as a point of transformation offering the needed supports (i.e., counselling, referrals to recovery services). For everyone, however, the underlying goal was to ensure that SCS clientele developed the proper behaviours for Lethbridge inclusion.

Referring to the previous chapter, the interviews suggest that the SCS clientele was considered predominately Indigenous. This may explain why the City Council favored the SCS, for it was an important site to prepare Indigenous peoples for community inclusion. If successful, one Councillor indicated, the SCS had the potential to offer clientele wraparound social services (Councillor E, 2021). Though the SCS clientele had yet to master the inclusion criterion of hard work, the SCS, the elite participants reasoned, reinforced the values of what good residents ought to achieve once they have overcome addiction. That is, addiction led to poor work habits and inability to be tenacious. As Councillor D emphasized, "when people have jobs, and houses, they're a part of the community in a different manner" (2021). If strategically deployed, the SCS

could help all substance consuming clientele (Kingfisher, 2007). Many of the participants highlighted a value-added element: in addition to treatment, the predominantly Indigenous clientele would be seen as seeking help and thus challenging the stereotype of inherent pathology. It was under this precondition that participants alike initially supported the SCS.

The business community similarly outlined initial expectations and hopes for the SCS with cautious optimism, ideating that the SCS could help those that needed it most. As Business Owner M stated, "We [business owners] were all in favour of it, at first. And then as it stayed, you know, the problems occurred … I had never even heard of one before, right?" (2021). As the SCS was never intended to be a temporary measure, their comments are intriguing. At the very least, it appears that SCS permanency eventually raised red flags with the local business owners. The gathering of clientele in and around the SCS vicinity was, for example, a cause for concern. Like the Councillors, however, the business community remained unclear of what harm reduction meant even if initially they appeared optimistic the site would "eliminate the problems we were having" (Business Owner M, 2021).

To summarize, the politicians and business owners were initially optimistic about the SCS's potential. The earliest complaints came from the business owners and residents living nearby the SCS site. Yet, most believed that the potential fallout would be worth it if the SCS succeeded in mitigating ongoing local social disorder and substance use through rehabilitation. Every interview participant recognized that the SCS target clientele needed help, and that they would need to drop by the SCS for assistance. Ideally,

those experiencing addiction would utilize the SCS, and after an initial consultation, would be connected to other recovery supports. The SCS was therefore understood as a consultative or referral pathway through which clientele would pass through to acquiring additional resources needed to secure their inclusion in Lethbridge. In effect, the SCS was seen as the first step towards getting clean and becoming a hardworking, tenacious, and compassionate resident.

Both participant groups soon started to express concerns after the SCS's opening. Not only was the clientele perceived as loitering, but this enhanced ongoing client visibility. As the literature has suggested, Indigenous peoples are viewed through deficit lenses and deemed to be a public nuisance. Due to harmful legacies – and contemporary actions – stemming from colonization, Indigenous peoples account for a disproportionate percentage of the houseless community, which is then discursively linked to substance use (Kingfisher, 2007). These compounding and complex factors led to many Indigenous peoples patronizing the SCS, and soon thereafter the SCS was being discursively portrayed as solely serving Indigenous peoples. While many of the SCS clients did identify as Indigenous,[16] demographic data shows the SCS clientele to be demographically diverse, clearly challenging the public perception and argument that the SCS was exclusively serving Indigenous residents (see Pijl et al., 2021). Despite this, business owners and politicians started discursively conflating SCS clientele with being exclusively Indigenous. An interesting discussion about the morality of offering supervised consumption for Indigenous peoples pre-disposed to social disorder ensued

[16] As Pijl et al.'s study highlights, of the 1,428 unique SCS participants that accessed the site between June 12, 2018 and December 31, 2019, 62.2% self-identified as Indigenous (see Pijl et al., 2021).

that was related to ongoing concerns about the permanent local Indigenous population. What concerned the elite participants most was that the SCS was drawing new Indigenous people into Lethbridge, which once again led to a rise in settler colonial anxiety. As one participant observed, "We were the only SCS for … two hours? A lot of those folks within two hours of Lethbridge *came* to Lethbridge. The reserve … I *believe*, basically closed their borders, and anyone found using was kicked out. And where did they go? They come to Lethbridge" (Councillor B, 2021).

As the SCS was now being considered an Indigenous institution that contributed to social disorder, and thus undermined the values of hard work, compassion, and tenacity, Councillors anticipated public resistance to SCS's ongoing operations. Soon the Councillors were overwhelmed with demands to rectify the situation (i.e., close the SCS):

> " … when the majority of the people there [at the SCS] were First Nations or Indigenous people, or homeless or transients … from the Blood – Peigan reserve, or visible minorities … or at least First Nations people. No one can tell me that that wasn't an issue for everybody. Right? No one can say 'oh, no, we're not so concerned about the, uh, those people … because they're OK, they just need help.' No one ever said that. Everybody said 'send 'em back to the reserve – why are we dealing with their problems?'" (City Councillor C, 2021).

Confronting demands grounded in settler colonial ideology to "send 'em back to the reserve" (i.e., remove them from the city), Councillors reminded the interviewer that the broader community was not racist, but rather that it was the SCS's Indigenous clientele's poor behaviour that engendered the public resistance and calls for closure. For example, "when you see them all congregating, it makes it pretty easy to point fingers … and people do" (City Councillor B, 2021). Several themes identified in the previous chapter are confirmed by these Councillor testimonies. Indigenous peoples remain a

pathologized collective who are privileged by state resources. In the case of the SCS, however, it was not perceived to be in place to aid with Indigenous peoples' inclusion, but rather with helping them to prolong their illicit behaviours, which fosters local social disorder and undermines community development.

Notably, City Councillors and business owners alike remained optimistic that the site could aid in Indigenous clientele rehabilitation. Given the demonstrated settler colonial attitudes rooted in a desire to keep Indigenous peoples outside of Lethbridge, and the fact that rehabilitation implies that people would remain in place, the politician and business owner advocating for Indigenous rehabilitation appear paradoxical. When viewed within the theoretical framework of settler colonialism, the SCS was expected to socialize a perceivably Indigenous clientele to ensure inclusion. This is not an uncommon strategy within settler colonial systems. Settler colonialism depends on the settler distinguishing themselves and their behaviours as normative and the ideal behaviour for all to aspire. Consequently, established institutions would be expected to follow and impart those same mores (Veracini, 2010). Veracini (2010, p. 37) depicts the practice of attempting to forcibly impart such behaviours as a Transfer by Assimilation, whereby settlers "uplift" Indigenous peoples "out of existence."

Settler colonial transfers and framing exclusion as inclusion

Veracini (2010) argues that the settler colonial project relies on various transfers to maintain continuity. While assimilation as a process may be generally understood, Veracini introduces other transfers that illuminate ideology and intention of settler colonial systems. Settlers seeking to establish themselves as the normative population

demand that the "non-settler/non-normative sectors of the population economy must be seen as disappearing in a variety of ways" (Veracini 2010, p. 33). While Veracini notes that Exogenous others (i.e., immigrants) may also be subject to settler transfers, Indigenous others pose the real threat to settler normativity for they "challenge, with their very presence, the basic legitimacy of the settler entity" and thus must be transferred away physically and/or discursively (Ibid). Therefore, power to manipulate boundaries to keep Indigenous peoples out/maintain Indigenous temporality is achieved through enacting transfers in myriad ways. These can be explicit, such as military liquidation, or discursive in the form of laws, policies, or social conventions legitimized by the free press or interpersonal interactions.[17] Though not physically violent, the latter suite of methods is detrimental, particularly when discussing inclusion and assessing the foundations in which inclusion is conceptualized.

The chosen transfers for analyzing the elite SCS discourse tend towards the discursive side, and they are 'by Assimilation', 'Conceptual Displacement', and 'Institutionalization / Incarceration / Criminalization'. Each transfer is discussed in greater detail below, and it is important to highlight the tools of racial and spatial construction as foregrounding many of the transfers employed within a SCS discourse. Processes of racialization are critical to ensuring settler transfers can occur, as Indigenous

[17] On a separate yet related note, Motz' (2018) study further highlights the ways in which racial ideology translates into racial discourse (racially motivated housing discrimination), ultimately negatively impacting health outcomes of Indigenous post-secondary students. When looking at this link, the impact of discursive racialization becomes even more notable and speaks to how discourse continues to reinforce structural inequities that impact health and wellbeing. While more implicit, discursive exclusion is still harmful.

peoples must first be discursively and narratively constructed as (a) antithetical to the settler, and (b) inferior enough that transferring away is logical for ongoing state stability.

Racial formation theory highlights the ways in which cultural symbols can be attributed to racial groups to denote their inferiority. Or, as Winant (1994, p. 59) has emphasized, processes of racialization ensure "the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group." This permits ongoing labeling and, more importantly, the ability to shift racial meaning that typically serves to benefit the dominant population economy. Within the settler colonial system, where violent removals are less common, efforts to transfer Indigenous others from the settler locale rely on discursive and implicit norms and mores. Hence, understanding how stereotypes originate, thus creating facts needed to guide contemporary social and political discussions, is an important starting point. Returning to implications of power, Kingfisher (2007) employed Foucauldian theory to argue that real power is in its absence, while concluding that Lethbridge citizens in the early-mid 2000s viewed Indigenous peoples as inherently linked to addictive behaviours, homelessness, or other pathologies -- albeit without explicitly stating the obvious, which further demonstrates racialization's success. Research participants' tendency to deviate to a discussion of the SCS was a technology used to reinforce social beliefs in the need to rehabilitate the SCS's supposed majority Indigenous clientele, which serves to reinforce Indigenous pathology using benevolent talking points.

This latter point is critical for understanding settler colonial transfers, particularly within contemporary settler society, for the latter rests on being acknowledged as the

ideal community that was founded on displacing and marginalizing populations within their now-settled space. Anticipating ongoing Indigenous resistance, the settler colonial community must establish non-violent barriers to halt the predicted violent response to Indigenous exclusion/being erased from the city's narrative (Veracini, 2010, p. 77). While settler anxieties ebb and flow regarding their right to claim Indigenous space, one consistent thread in the elite interviews points to disavowing violence against Indigenous peoples as a form of inclusion. That is, whereas they may not belong in the city, they will not be physically removed. Yet, beliefs in Indigenous peoples' inherent links to social disorder and threat to settler colonial community integration and stability demands a settler response to ensure what is best for the community. The construction of Indigenous peoples as belonging beyond the borders of settler colonial space and confined to their "slums and shanties" (Edmonds, 2010, p. 9) clearly delineates Indigenous and settler colonial spaces as unique, different, and bounded to their communities of origin.

Racial formation processes bolster the various transfers' effectiveness—individually or in aggregate—to protect settler continuity, which is visibly deemed a success when Indigenous peoples are pushed to, and exist outside, the settler colonial community boundaries. Yet, as Veracini (2010) concludes, though excluding the Indigenous other from settler colonial space is desired, paradoxically, settler colonialism demands Indigenous peoples remain nearby as a reminder of their incivility and settler colonial advancement. This delicate balance is one that the SCS challenged, thus putting operations and clientele in the line of fire. As Veracini (2010, p. 32) writes, "a selective capacity to draw lines and/or to erase them depending on opportunity and local circumstances constitutes a crucial marker of settler substantive authority." As balance is

never achieved, the fine line between inclusion and exclusion remains constantly blurred and constantly shifting. Though it is a tension-filled process, the flexibility needed to control the population economy through a constantly changing set of benchmarks of inclusion allows settler colonial society to transfer away Indigenous presences deemed antithetical or irresolvable.

The flexibility and ways in which inclusion and exclusion interact speaks to the dialectical nature of settler colonialism: settlers need Indigenous peoples to live nearby as a reminder of their incivility and settler colonial advancement. Yet settler colonialism requires Indigenous others to remain outside the boundaries of civility, for to do otherwise is to invite the basis of social disorder into the community. This flexibility also ensures that settlers can assure the continuous temporality of Indigenous presences. Below I introduce Transfer by Assimilation as the first transfer that emerges out of the SCS discourse and highlights the very ways in which Indigenous inclusion is intentionally tenuous, followed by a discussion of the subsequent two transfers.

From ideology to process: Transfers and Indigenous in(ex)clusion

The analysis of the elite interviews demonstrates that the SCS was discursively presented to be an institution that was serving local Indigenous peoples with their transition to being acceptable residents, but to do so meant allowing them to congregate publicly. The SCS, in turn, acted as a perceived magnet to regional transient Indigenous peoples. As previously discussed, the SCS had the potential to connect local clientele to additional recovery resources to promote community placement, reflecting a desire for Indigenous assimilation. However, the public discourse already established a belief in the

need to encourage ongoing Indigenous separation, which means that neither the local Indigenous community nor the incoming group of Indigenous outsiders was deemed prepared for assimilation. That did not stop the elites from noting progress for one group that did not occur with the other. Councillor D reinforces these beliefs by noting that moving the Indigenous SCS clientele into recovery services would enable them to be a part of the Lethbridge community in "a different manner." Thus, SCS clientele would ultimately "end up conforming to variously constructed notions of settler racial, cultural or behavioural normativity" (Veracini, 2010, p. 38). Councillor D directed their criticisms at SCS operations, yet a poorly operating SCS would not be able to facilitate assimilation of the local Indigenous population.

The SCS's promise to help a population that had proven its inability to formally assimilate was fading. The SCS was now being targeted because of this failure, and this achieved two goals. One, it allowed the elites to re-assert settler authority and once again impose norms of inclusion, which represents a reassertion of control over the population economy. Two, it helped to justify Indigenous peoples' exclusion due to their inability to conform, which would result in social disorder.[18] The SCS was no longer seen to be helping with the assimilation project and faced additional criticism for enabling bad behaviours. As one business owner stated, "I'm not opposed to having the injection site … I'm opposed to having it as the only option and *just as a place to get high*. It needs to be a place of rehabilitation. Otherwise, we need to make it difficult for people and *not*

[18] There is a direct linkage with Transfer by Assimilation and Transfer by Criminalization. It is worth noting that within the contemporary settler situation, attempts to assimilate or institutionalize shift from explicit efforts to liquidate Indigenous peoples, but rather, become more implicit and measured – often framed under the guise of settler benevolence (Veracini, 2010).

enable them" (Business Owner G, 2021). For the elite stakeholder groups, the SCS held promise for its ability to help rid Indigenous people of their pathology, which would set them up for eventual community inclusion.

Arguably, the SCS's downfall began because it acted as a communal space, which both amplified local Indigenous visibility and thus settler colonial anxiety. City Councillors shared Business Owner G's perceptions, stating that the facility did not churn out good residents as was hoped, but rather, drew clientele to the site due to its lack of "control and rigor" (Councillor B, 2021). Notably, even though the SCS was considered a site where Indigenous peoples could come to be rehabilitated, City Councillor D's comments are provocative and speak to the settler colonial ideology of separation. That is, as they noted, "nothing was thought out about where *they* would go afterwards … . I know that [is] what has made the greatest problem with it … it just became a rotating circle of concern" (City Councillor D, 2021). The SCS therefore was constructed as a site that attracted Indigenous peoples to the community yet failed in their efforts to rehabilitate those peoples while also not containing those engaged in maladaptive, addictive lifestyles antithetical to Lethbridge inclusion. More importantly, the testimony suggests that the SCS was to prepare people not for community inclusion, but rather for community exit. That is, once they were healthy, they would leave to return home to their First Nation community. Councillor D's commentary anticipated the SCS clientele's eventual exclusion, implied through stating that "they" were not welcome to just take up residency within the settler space once exiting the SCS.

Ultimately, the SCS had begun its evolution from a theoretically beneficial institution that had the potential to improve Indigenous resident behaviour (that really was not anticipated), into a symbolic and physical gateway that introduced new, destructive Indigenous behaviours within bounded settler colonial space. The growing Indigenous presence was especially difficult for elite participants to reconcile, especially when they realized how little control they had over the SCS operations—or the existing Indigenous population for that matter, which, as Veracini (2010) reminds us, creates anxiety. In turn, settlers revert to strategies intended to delegitimize the Indigenous other. The stage was thus set to promote the SCS's closure, even if indirectly. While Councillors all noted support for harm reduction and the site itself, they grounded their discussion with caveats about ensuring greater "controls or rigors" at the site, and that the SCS operator's actions were deemed "overzealous" and increased Lethbridge's vulnerability to social disorder ("… where they would go afterwards") (Councillor B, 2021; Councillor D, 2021). While they may not have been as explicit as business participants in criticizing the site's harm reduction philosophy, the perception that the SCS failed to contain its primarily Indigenous clientele revealed an underlying settler colonial ideology.

Though pre-existing and incoming Indigenous groups were never intended for inclusion, to keep people out would be viewed as racist or would demand physical removal. Determining the SCS as unsuitable to help with rehabilitation permitted critics to now target the SCS as attracting new Indigenous people to the city, amplifying anxiety. Further, if the SCS was having trouble with rehabilitating the local population, its ability to manage additional clientele coming from nearby reserves was deemed troubling: "Where did they go? They come to Lethbridge" (Councillor B, 2021). As Councillor A

(2021) also echoed, “people were coming in from everywhere to use the facility.” Thus, the perception that the SCS as an Indigenous gathering place was reinforced: “of course not *all,* but a very large proportion – because of intergenerational trauma, etc., etc., - *were* First Nations folks … they had been *kicked off the reserve,* they had been traumatized for generations…” (Councillor B, 2021). Ultimately, these new (Indigenous) individuals would eventually disperse through the city, thus damaging community cohesion. Consequently, the SCS should be closed. The elite informants had little ability to influence operations as the SCS was a provincially mandated operation beyond local oversight capabilities. Within months, the SCS’s promise was undone by a discursive shift to a solely Indigenous-serving institution that was unable to remedy, or at the very least control, its clientele. As Business Owner M noted, “it’s like we’re feeding them here” through having an SCS within the community (2021). Here, the SCS was pronounced a failed institution that was severed from community development ideals from which an understanding of inclusion was derived.

Framing the SCS as a portal drawing more Indigenous people to the city represents a Transfer by Conceptual Displacement, which is an attempt to justifiably exclude Indigenous presences by denying their move to the city as inevitable (i.e., some people may want to live urban lifestyles).[19] An insider/outsider ethos is created and institutionalized as the settler colonial population reinforces the separation of settler space and Indigenous borderlands thus permitting “the possibility of discursively displacing

[19] Interestingly, Councillor D similarly acknowledged that reserves were not “prisons” that individuals needed to remain bounded to. However, this was also discussed through the lens of the broader community failing to understand social inequities – and these social inequities were linked to belonging to Indigenous peoples. These comments coupled with Councillor D’s other comments are interesting to note, and show the paradoxical nature of settler colonialism.

Indigenous people to the exterior of the settler locale" (Veracini, 2010, p. 35). This transfer permits settler society to reinforce the inherent otherness of Indigenous peoples, while allowing confounding racial conflations to *justify* this separation.

Conceptual Displacement was identified as an important transfer in previous Lethbridge studies, where Indigenous peoples' exclusion occurred when elite groups embraced and legitimized public resistance to social services linked to Indigeneity, based on the fear that permitting such services would foster greater social disorder (Kingfisher, 2007; Fiske et al., 2010). The noted public resistance influenced elite groups to accede to public demands to limit ongoing Indigenous permanency to ensure community development and safety. Fiske et al. (2010) identified how by deploying public fears about property devaluation that naturally accompanied the introduction of social services for Indigenous peoples who failed to live up to Lethbridge's understanding of what a proper citizen represented, City Council almost halted a transitional shelter's move from its south-side location into a north-side residential neighbourhood. Conceptual Displacement was reinforced and (re)activated by residents who employed racial formation to depict Indigenous women as helpless and inevitably attracting greater social disorder (i.e., violent, alcoholic spouses) to their legitimately occupied spaces.

This rhetoric of illegitimate Indigenous occupation was too evident in Granzow's (2010) study, whereby Galt Gardens would only attain the profile of inclusive public space after it was cleansed of its "negative users" (Indigenous peoples). In this instance, "positive users" of the park would prevail after perceived social disorder inherent to Indigenous society was excluded from Galt Gardens (Granzow, 2010). Indigenous

peoples were invited to use Galt Gardens, but only after they adopted proper behaviours embraced by those who had the privilege of using public space. The common factor was the settler ability to conceptually displace Indigenous peoples as separate and antithetical to Lethbridge norms and mores.

Notably, Conceptual Displacement re-asserts settler primacy that encourages Indigenous separation by reinforcing embedded social beliefs that conclude Indigenous peoples do not belong in the city, or that they do not feel at home in urban centres (invoking the urban Indigenous incommensurability claims). Unlike settlers, who imported social, economic, and political beliefs from a homeland (metropole), thus bringing with them civilization, Indigenous peoples are "perceived to be coming in from nowhere" (Veracini, 2010, p. 35). Conceptual Displacement's adaptability is appealing, for it allows Indigenous peoples to be villainized whether they are physically inhabiting space or anticipated to be entering into a city that was once (still is), but is no longer considered, Indigenous land. Exclusion can occur on smaller scales, such as the marginalization at Galt Gardens, and/or implemented with the intention of keeping people out (i.e., SCS drawing in perceived transients). Similar to how a Transfer by Assimilation reinforces settler normativity, Conceptual Displacement reinforces the settler ability to control the population economy through capitalizing on racial stereotypes to justify unilateral control of the population economy. According to this premise, and returning to the SCS, if the clientele were not being rehabilitated and the site was merely drawing more social disorder into the community, Lethbridge needed to construct stronger boundaries to exclude peoples and their abnormal behaviors. The proverbial Lethbridge as "gateway to opportunity", so to speak, needed a stronger lock.

Conceptual Displacement is a subtle and complementary tool that allows settlers to promote exclusion without pursuing policies of physical removal. As Fiske et al. (2010) noted, historic ideologies impact current practices, even as those practices become more implicit in nature (p. 78). Furthermore, Conceptual Displacement becomes appealing through its ability to discursively marginalize and thus exclude Indigenous presences. Physically displacing SCS clientele was going to be particularly challenging, for City Council had no authority to regulate the SCS as Councillors frequently reminded residents (and the interviewer). As Councillor D emphasized, "most people *know* it's not ours, but don't care anymore. They just want to blame us. And I've actually had people who said that, right? It's like, 'it's still your fault!', but like … it's not … but they still want to blame us" (Councillor D, 2021). A paradox emerges once more whereby Councillors both desire to relieve themselves of responding to the SCS's public resistance, but emphasize the significant lack of control the Council had over SCS operations – resulting in a defensiveness that was also common among business owners, discussed below.

The fluidity and manipulability of racial constructs is evident within Conceptual Displacement. Indigenous peoples were constructed as the cause of pre-existing social disorder, and of the new social disorder nearby the SCS site. Interestingly, the SCS was identified as also drawing in Indigenous peoples from the city's outskirts and into the core, where their visibility led to even further unrest. Councillor A opined that "they were going back to Galt Gardens, the people that are involved in the drug world … it shifted … you're dealing with places like CASA, the Library … these places are all having to deal with that element of the population that are going elsewhere" (Councillor A, 2021). And

yet, Business Owner D noted that the SCS created the "cleanest" downtown they had ever seen since operating a business, and which ended with the SCS's closure (2021). The combination of the newly attracted Indigenous transients and the pre-existing, permanent Indigenous population, were now being churned out into the community, coming "*back* into the downtown" (2021). Existing social disorder was exacerbated, as was the feeling of lost control over the population economy. Here, we see the same racial stereotype that Indigenous peoples are the predominant users of social services within the community, and as the root of all social disorder, a dangerous population seeking to undermine settler sensibilities. In retrospect, the SCS again was presented as an ineffective service in that it was unable to heal the Indigenous population it had previously concentrated, while also drawing in more people and thus compounding an already threatening situation. Categorizing Indigenous pre-existing and new social disorder means little when the prefix 'Indigenous' is used — Indigenous points to deficit, suggesting you need not say phrases such as 'social disorder' to get the point. Again, the demonstration of discursive power is present in its omission (Kingfisher, 2007).

As Winant and Omi (2014) stress, racial connotation can shift in either direction to justify 'keeping' Indigenous peoples locked outside the settler locale. As shown above, framing Indigenous peoples as belonging to a culture of inherent social disorder was used to both justify criticisms of the SCS and clientele for requiring its services. In either case, Indigenous peoples are rendered as un-belonging to the settler locale by being constructed as either nomads without rightful settlement rights, as peoples causing social disorder by returning to their usual downtown locations, or as strangers to the space even if they have rightful claims to "settler" spaces. In sum, Conceptual Displacement has a particular way

of limiting any Indigenous permanency by reinforcing and normalizing separation both within the settler space and (preferably) outside of it.[20]

With the Transfer by Assimilation nullified, Conceptual Displacement was used to refocus attention on the Indigenous threat to local stability through evoking previously established racial stereotypes and emphasizing Indigenous separation from the normative population (Fiske et al., 2010). After all, why would population control be needed if it were conforming to settler colonialism's accepted norms and mores? Conceptual Displacement permitted the SCS to be seen as an Indigenous-aiding institution and reinforce the stereotype that Indigenous peoples were separate from the settler population economy due to pathology, but also through evoking imagery of Indigenous peoples physically *entering* Lethbridge because of the SCS "feeding them here" (Business Owner M, 2021). Conjuring such stereotypes, as we witnessed in Fiske et al. (2010), compelled residents to look back historically to better times: that is, when was Lethbridge free of Indigenous occupancy. This is important, for it is a reminder of a recent period[21] when settler colonial values did lead to a city remaining free of Indigenous peoples, which suggests a return is possible.

Once City Council and the business community identified the SCS as a portal, the elite discussion focused on the SCS's potential negative impacts. Here we see the final transfer being activated: Transfer by Incarceration / Criminalization / Institutionalization.

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[20] It is important to note here that foregoing transfers and tactics – such as narrative transfers and racial formation that attribute and reinforce stereotypes – also are needed for Conceptual Displacement, or any other transfer, to successfully occur.

[21] As researchers and historians have highlighted of Lethbridge's history (see Crowson, 2003 and Fiske et al., 2010), vagrancy laws were present in Lethbridge into the 1900s. These laws prohibited Indigenous peoples from residing within the community for more than a temporary amount of time, re-emphasizing a history based on the separation of "us" and "them."

It is important to note that each transfer discussed further emphasizes the settler being seen as the ideal in which all other activities are compared against. This is a foundational element of enacting settler colonialism through transfers. As Veracini highlights, settler primacy is reinforced through ability to co-opt Indigeneity by re-asserting settler rights to the city at the expense of Indigenous peoples' rights or claims to co-occupancy.[22] Fiske et al. (2010, p. 83) summarizes this process: "in dichotomizing rhetorical maneuvers, they [elites] rejected Aboriginal [people] as neighbours and denied their right to the city as citizens with equality … they held fast to the notion that Aboriginal [people] belong on the reserve, not in the city." Conceptual Displacement exploits this separation to reframe settler rights as predominant over pathologized Indigenous rights. This, combined with the belief in urban Indigenous incommensurability and Indigenous people's inferiority, justifies settlers remaining separate by imposing their standards and primacy.

Initially, the business community was pleased at the SCS's minimal impact on their operations. They were more concerned with significant socio-economic concerns noted earlier, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or shifts in consumer trends. Their perceptions quickly changed, however, once the SCS was seen as failing to do what was expected: quickly healing and preparing individuals for community placement. Once people began to congregate at the SCS on the slow road to recovery, property values dropped, and clientele drove customers away. As was noted, "nobody wants a social site beside them … because if I own a house, a property, it will devalue it. If I own a business,

[22] This process is referred to as Transfer by Settler Indigenization by Veracini. Even though I do not examine this transfer in my study, it is a crucial factor that focuses on what makes settlers feel entitled to an ideal ideation. To classify the population economy requires an organizing principle: perceived settler preeminence through proper land cultivation and advancement of its growth is that principle (Veracini, 2010; Edmonds, 2010).

it devalues my business" (Business Owner D, 2021). Thus, the inherently transient Indigenous clientele would inevitably damage the businesses due to their ubiquitous presence. Transiency is linked to vagrancy, and property damage is obviously a criminal act. Public substance use and purchasing drugs are also criminal acts. In all, here we can see the clientele being described as exclusively Indigenous individuals linked to criminality, at which time the Transfer by Incarceration / Institutionalization / Criminalization's emerges (hereafter Transfer by Criminalization). As reinforced by Councillor E, having criminal Indigenous others congregating around the SCS who are "listless", who "might be poorly dressed, might smell… none of those factors are good for business!" (2021).

As discussed, solutions for controlling this now-present, former SCS clientele that were Indigenous peoples residing within the city becomes a key moment in identifying the Transfer by Criminalization. That is, removal is offered. While this may appear at variance with my earlier statement that physical removal of Indigenous peoples is to be avoided due to the racist undertones, when criminal activity becomes the norm then removal is permissible. Furthermore, racial formation permits "criminal" to become racialized while minimizing the explicit racial undertone that other forms of physical, targeted removal may evoke. Transfer by Criminalization's removal occurs in various ways. In Saskatoon, the local police engaged in 'Starlight tours', dropping Indigenous detainees outside of town (Dorries, 2019). Longer prison sentences, as another example, achieve the same outcome. Residential schools and the related colonial technologies of Sixties Scoop adoptions and Millennial Scoop child welfare placements further illustrates this transfer's ongoing popularity (Kennedy-Kish et al., 2017). While Lethbridge elite

interviewees did not promote similarly harsh strategies, removal rationalized by criminality was promoted nonetheless.

City Councillors, in particular, emphasized the SCS's clientele's criminal element as an ongoing concern even after its closure ("listless, unemployed, a potential threat"). Arguably, the SCS from the beginning was ideated as an institution that could assimilate Indigenous peoples, but that it would also be attracting an inherently criminal element. In many ways, the SCS was also an important institution required to elevate this criminal element. Not unlike residential schools, where children were sent to aid with their transition into mainstream society, the SCS was a site of transition. As concluded, the elite interviewees did not believe that Indigenous peoples –whether those in town or those incoming transients from the reserve – were redeemable. Nonetheless, interviewees placed their confidence in the SCS's potential. Once again, the SCS was set up to fail based on the people it symbolically came to represent: for once it transitioned from a mainstream institution into an Indigenous institution, it had lost the public's confidence. This is evident in the concerns over clientele that continued to live locally, which highlights continuing settler concerns with Indigenous peoples in general.

As Veracini (2010, p. 45) argues, "Indigenous peoples are forcibly institutionalized in one way or another, [with] indigeneity collapsed with criminal behaviour and incarceration, of course, transfers indigenous people away from their communities and land" (Veracini, 2010, p. 45). While some participants were concerned that those drawn to the community would remain, and thus social disorder would persist, the portal drawing such presences to the community was determined as better off

shuttered for the good of Indigenous peoples. In order for an institution to exist in the future, it must be capable of efficiently institutionalizing Indigenous peoples into society due to their innately pathological and criminal behaviour. While commentaries on the site's closure and suggestions for the future may signal a return to transfer by Conceptual Displacement, the two transfers assist one another. It is this final Transfer by Criminalization that grounds ongoing justification for an SCS clientele's exclusion (i.e., an Indigenous exclusion) from the community to protect the dominant ingroup's (business and political) inclusion.

In keeping with the literature, both detailing Lethbridge's response to Indigenous peoples and prevalent national trends illustrating similar outcomes, the business owners were specifically firm in their resolve that the SCS clientele were criminals. They purchased illegal drugs and, to make matters worse, were permitted to use them at the SCS. When exiting the SCS, they vandalized nearby property. They were vagrant. They were Indigenous. At this point, it became important to discuss not what interviewees thought of the SCS clientele, but rather how they believed local authorities should respond in the future. This discussion took the form of looking forward to a time when a new SCS may be proposed and determining what criteria ought to exist should an SCS exist in Lethbridge again.

When discussing the SCS in retrospect, and if an SCS were to exist within the community again, participants identified the need to ensure an (Indigenous) SCS was located outside the city core, preferably outside of the city limits entirely. The general

sentiments proposed by most participants are captured by Business Owner D and City Councillor E:

> "I mean, you always talk about ease, right? If you make it harder for folks to get what they want, they're not going to show up as much. *You know, so, maybe it's as simple as taking them on a little drive. Let's take them out of the town a little bit or bring them to a different part and make them walk*. Right? You know, if they have to walk across town to get what they need, they probably won't do it" (Business Owner D, 2021).

> "I think the facility has to be one where there aren't people gathering … people should be going right in and leaving… and, you know, I think there's a nervousness and a strong dislike by businesses of seeing groups of fifteen or twenty people just … hanging around the facility, or… disrupting businesses… you know? Those types of things. So, the facility has to be … has to be located in an area where it doesn't do that. And I think outside of public view" (City Councillor E, 2021).

Discursively, the two participants return to early criticisms of the SCS's failure to not only rehabilitate its clientele, but also contain them. This is reflected in the ongoing anxiety about the potential for individuals to return to the city's core. Settler colonial anxiety is present within each sentiment, and denote concern regarding the perceived congregation of Indigenous peoples within the settler locale. Business Owner D returns to the presumption that the SCS was not rehabilitating, but in fact enabling ongoing, maladaptive practices held by the SCS' majority Indigenous clientele.

If an SCS were to be welcomed back into the community, Business Owner D suggests that the clientele's physical removal from the space would be a reasonable solution to keep the new site from becoming a portal to increased Indigenous transients. Similarly, Councillor E highlights that for the institution to be successful, it must be relocated (ideally to the city's peripheral) to ensure that the congregating clientele remain invisible. In this case, invisibility acts to keep crime rates down and the city cleaner. The

two participants indicate that either the site or its clientele would be better served outside the settler locale. As a mainstream institution, the SCS held promise. But as an Indigenous institution, it could do nothing but fail. These two discursive moments portray important findings contributing to the settler colonial dialogue. In arguing for the SCS and its clientele's urban exclusion, participants positioned themselves benevolently by implying that reducing temptation for a population pre-disposed to pathological behaviours (i.e., addiction, homelessness) was likely appropriate, and only accomplished through the SCS's closure.

The Transfer by Criminalization also helps settler colonial society seeking to remove Indigenous peoples from the city to deny their actions are racist. Instead, as Veracini (2010) argues, "Criminalization is crucial to the disavowal of the inherently political character of indigenous demands" (p. 45). When the elite groups expressed relief over the SCS' closure and offered solutions encouraging Indigenous displacement, narratives confirming Indigenous peoples urban incommensurability are reinforced, which helps to transfer urban Indigenous grievances out of settler perception. Processes of racial formation that settler colonialism depends upon are also protected through this transfer, as it is predicated on the underlying belief of Indigenous inferiority. The racial hegemony is sustained by disavowing the political character and rights of Indigenous peoples. By depicting the SCS as an institution that enabled greater social disorder and criminal behaviour - that is, it was seen as an Indigenous organization - helps to rationalize settler colonial beliefs (van Dijk, 2016).

The Transfer by Criminalization is, like the other transfers, a flexible tool that allowed the elite interviewees to advocate for Indigenous removal and resist community entry: racist acts based on essentialized beliefs about Indigenous peoples to present their actions as benevolent. City Councillors were careful to highlight the value of harm reduction before criticizing the SCS's operations. Closing the SCS may have been regrettable for the clientele. The Councillors still expressed relief on behalf of the business community and highlighted an ongoing settler anxiety regarding Indigenous presences. The Councillors were therefore able to present themselves as the benevolent leaders who did not have any say over the SCS's operations. They could express relief over the site's closure due to the greater positive impact it would have. Business owners also saw themselves as benevolent by suggesting that the site was doing more harm than good for a predisposed clientele. Asking the SCS (now seen as an Indigenous institution) to heal Indigenous peoples was deemed counterintuitive, so closing the SCS was sensible. Thus, the SCS is reinforced as a solely Indigenous-serving institution, and as a result, was better not located within the city where pathological/dysfunctional urban Indigenous residents would be drawn. Displacing the SCS meant an ability for both participant groups to move forward and regain control over the population economy, while privileging the testimonies and interests of those whom already adopted the tenets for Lethbridge inclusion (business owners).

Concluding thoughts

In this chapter, I have outlined how the SCS and its clientele triggered moments of settler colonial anxiety that, ultimately, resulted in activation of settler transfers. While

both participant groups were initially optimistic regarding the SCS, this narrative quickly shifted as the site began operations. Ultimately, the SCS was quickly depicted as failing to meet several prescribed expectations, but most importantly, in failing to rehabilitate its Indigenous clientele to better position them for community placement. Thus, the SCS was treated with the same rhetoric of deficiency historically reserved for justifying Indigenous peoples' exclusion from Lethbridge, often evoking discourse of unregulated wildness seen as aligned with Indigenous character and culture (i.e., Belanger and Dekruyf's assertion that Indigenous culture itself was seen as a barrier for elites to fully engaging with urban Indigenous residents more thoughtfully).

As the SCS failed to provide Indigenous peoples with the tools for community placement (i.e. tenets of hard work, tenacity and compassion), and ultimately was seen as attracting the worst element of an already pathologized population, the settler colonial mind could not comprehend its ongoing permanency – particularly as it became more apparent what little control these groups had over the site's operations. While neither group would have had direct impact over the site's closure, I predict that the SCS closure will be used as a justifying factor for ongoing Indigenous exclusion through continuing to amplify/reflect on the negative impacts experienced by the business community. If the SCS were to remain within the settler space, I believe that what Kingfisher (2007) referred to as the "moral panic" associated with Indigenous infiltration into the city would continue. This panic would be capitalized upon to justify future social service provision being rejected; particularly as social services are seen as only benefitting Indigenous peoples that – particularly after the SCS – are unworthy of Lethbridge belonging.

As Granzow offered in their thesis, inclusionary discourses are often complementary to exclusionary ones. To discursively emplace or displace groups based on their ability to meet prescribed expectations for the community ensures maintenance of what has become normative. With the case of the SCS, efforts to first Transfer by Assimilation showcased the underlying settler ideology and attempts to offer inclusion – but with the caveat of conformity to this normativity. Conceptual Displacement worked to re-assert the settler primacy by simultaneously reinforcing racial formation tropes that have permitted the ongoing exclusion of Indigenous peoples. Finally, Transfer by Criminalization combines all transfers into the penultimate mechanism for ongoing exclusion by justifying that removing a "criminal" element of the population economy was justified – and more palatable than removal based explicitly on race. Nonetheless, as racial formation theory tells us, these racial conflations (once socialized/broadly understood) still discredit the political agency of the intended population. If an SCS were to come into the community again, it would have to be located elsewhere to mitigate new criminality and social disorder (Indigenous peoples) coming to Lethbridge. In the face of an SCS closure, underlying settler colonial ideology and intent is revealed even more clearly.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to determine how conceptions of municipal inclusion emerged from the discourse of Lethbridge elites (business owners and local politicians) regarding the community's former supervised consumption site (SCS). It was anticipated that the SCS would offer compelling findings regarding what inclusion meant within Lethbridge and how that inclusionary framework was being applied to justify others' exclusion. This central inquiry is where the terminology of in(ex)clusion came from.

This thesis established two key findings. First, Lethbridge elites (business owners and Councillors) believe that the community is already positioned for offering inclusion. However, this inclusion is conditional upon residents obtaining the behaviours that enable them to benefit community development as it is conceptualized through elite ideals of hard work, tenacity, and compassion. Indigenous peoples' perceived decision to foster social disorder while avoiding rehabilitation for maladaptive tendencies demonstrated they were not prepared for such inclusion (as portrayed through public commentary and research findings). Furthermore, the Lethbridge chapter highlighted that the research participants equated an Indigenous presence with social disorder. Second, the SCS triggered a settler colonial anxiety that resulted in a transformation from latent (shared) settler colonial ideology to settler colonial action seen most vividly in adopting Veracini's (2010) transfers.

I hypothesized that inclusion criteria would be articulated during discussions with elite groups about their perceptions of the community's former supervised consumption

site (SCS). It was anticipated that inclusion would be interpreted unconsciously through a settler colonial lens, found commonly at the core of racial and spatial constructions. As highlighted in the previous chapter, multiple settler transfers can be linked to the participant interviews, which illustrated settler colonial attitudes that prioritize in(ex)clusion over authentic municipal inclusion. To reiterate, in(ex)clusion is the point when inclusion becomes destabilized by settler colonialism, as when transfers were employed to justify exclusion as a benevolent feature of society that openly claims its desires and hopes to become a more multicultural city. The presence and assertion of in(ex)clusion – albeit consciously or not – became clear when discussing the SCS. As noted above, the SCS became symbolic of both a transient and potentially permanent Indigenous presence within Lethbridge that, in each case, threatened to unravel the settler colonial project. Building upon Chapter Five's findings, racial formation processes link symbols and associations to racialized groups, such as Indigenous peoples, who are portrayed as antithetical to creating a community that was compassionate, kind, and hard-working, characteristics Lethbridge elite participants argued all residents should embrace.

The impacts of in(ex)clusion are multifaceted. In this concluding chapter, a summary of the participants interviews showcased how the SCS became ground zero for the emergence of in(ex)clusion processes and a site that helped to maintain settler colonial continuity. Whether consciously or not, racial formation theory was used to produce a racially motivated understanding of inclusion in Lethbridge that denied Indigenous participation. This is paradoxical, as participants openly stated they desired greater Indigenous inclusion. However, reliance on racially motivated understandings severed participants from effectively engaging with the prospect of Indigenous inclusion

in actuality. Lastly, returning to the work of Stone (1980; 1987), potential future research questions are provided for those looking to build on my work by evaluating, comprehending, and practically applying these findings on municipal settler colonialism.

What do people mean when they discuss social inclusion in Lethbridge? Are there specific criteria they rely on to articulate what belonging and inclusion means? And, to what extent are elite groups in Lethbridge active in constructing and reinforcing the image of the ideal resident suitable for inclusion?

Inclusion was derived from the perspective of the two elite groups, business owners and City Councillors. This is not surprising, for our epistemologies impact our ideals regarding the ideal community. That the two groups echoed each other so closely in their assessments of inclusion is notable. Both the political and business leaders determined that Lethbridge inclusion would necessitate resident ability to adopt compassion, tenacity, and hard work: characteristics Councillors and business owners claimed they exhibited and therefore enabled their respective successes. Opining Lethbridge's welcoming and inclusive nature demonstrated the universal importance of these characteristics. As with Indigenous peoples, immigrants were provided with the same opportunities for inclusion and most succeeded. The perceived inability for Indigenous peoples to do the same was largely implied as a cultural deficiency (Belanger and Dekruyf, 2017). In this vein, some participants explicitly condemned Lethbridge's racism, but it was often justified as a part of "growing up" as a community and belonging to a small minority of residents (Councillor B, 2021). The success of multiculturalism was also utilized to blunt participant concern regarding the community's racism.

As demonstrated throughout this thesis, Indigenous peoples are often perceived as historically unable to establish social order as those without personhood (Mills, 1997.

Therefore, this harmful narrative translates into Indigenous peoples being seen as resistant to social order by failing to assimilate and therefore *of* social *dis*order. As settler colonial communities brought order and life to challenging prairie landscapes, any social disorder must originate outside of Lethbridge. Social disorder was therefore the fault of Indigenous residents. Though the research participants would break Indigenous into permanent and transient groups, any Indigenous person was deemed to embrace disorder and considered suspect.[23] When compared to the description of Exogenous Others (immigrants, refugees) and participants' own behaviours, a selective inclusion process was evident that offered pathways to obtaining such. As the participants demonstrated, inclusion was not equitable. That is, it was accessible to some racialized groups that was unavailable to Indigenous others, based largely on historical and racial stereotypes that implied Indigenous inferiority. Ultimately, a settler colonial ideology coloured how inclusion was being discussed.

Inclusion in Lethbridge is a complex topic, as it is in many municipalities. However, power and positionality cannot be overlooked when analyzing municipal inclusion parameters. It may not be unexpected, then, that inclusion has become centered around the specific social ingroup perspectives of the participants interviewed (van Dijk, 2016). Noting that the participants shared and lauded the same inclusion characteristics of

[23] I recognize that utilizing pan-terminology can be discursively harmful and overly broad (see Kennedy-Kish et al., 2017). I do not intend to empower this broad-sweeping rhetoric that conflates significant cultural distinctions and unique challenges among the many Indigenous peoples within and surrounding Lethbridge. Lethbridge is Blackfoot Territory, and the unique experiences of local Blackfoot Peoples would be an important follow up to this study. Pan-terminology is employed acknowledging that this rhetoric is largely utilized in racial formation and settler colonial processes to intentionally collapse distinction amongst diverse Indigenous peoples to make transferring away easier, and was utilized by research participants.

inclusion highlights how, as van Dijk argued, ideological discourses emerge. Both groups revealed how impactful unconscious tethers to group ideology remain in how they describe phenomena within the community, from which inclusion emerges. The way these groups address what they consider to be polarizing community moments, such as the SCS's introduction, has become significantly more suggestive of in(ex)clusion than initially thought, which arguably could be described as a form of latent settler colonialism.

Settler colonial inclusion is predicated upon the selective inclusion of those able to conform to racial, cultural and normative activities of settlers (Veracini, 2010). This thesis separated out inclusion from citizenship because we must ascertain the logic that leads to categories, separation, and control over the population economy that grants settlers primacy. This is formative before we can understand how citizenly rights and responsibilities are demarcated. If social norms, attitudes, and legislation inform and reflect this initial ideology (Ladner and Orsini, 2005), it is important to also remain cognizant of how those ideas pervade the smaller scale of community. In short, identifying the origin of the "privileged white space" (Edmonds, 2010) is a vital first step and one that invariably influences how municipal legislation and other mechanisms are enacted according to specific intention and ideology.

Borrowing from Klodawsky et al.'s description of Indigenous citizenship within cities, authentic municipal inclusion in Lethbridge may not be possible, for it represents the antithesis to the prevalent practice of in(ex)clusion: of an inclusion that necessitates assimilation, conformity, and - if needed - physical removal. This challenges Fincher et

al.'s (2019) use of Young's (1990) call for an ideal of city life whereby differentiation amongst groups can co-exist (i.e., without exclusion) (Young, 1990, cited in Fincher et al., 2019). In both cases, the authors suggest autonomy for social groups is possible within a community and that this could expand to the recognition of the inherent right each group has to determining their own vision of inclusion, and more importantly, their own identity devoid of white constructions (Coulthard, 2014; Taylor, 1994). Settler colonialism and its tools of racial and spatial construction would collapse if this self-autonomous definition of the other was mandated. This is especially true given that settler colonialism and Lethbridge's method of in(ex)clusion depends on the capacity to develop and organize the population economy in a way that successfully asserts settler society as emblematic of superior community norms and mores.

Despite the argument that greater familiarity or "group differentiation without homogenization" within cities may open the door for more authentic municipal inclusion, (Young, 1990, cited in Fincher et al., 2019), this cannot be mobilized through passive or tacit understandings that social groups can co-exist. That is, acknowledging that group differentiation ought to exist is not adequate. Rather, elite actors must work to actively co-integrate alternative, interactive methodologies into municipal systems should an authentic municipal vision of inclusion ever be realized. This necessitates both a top-down and bottom-up, grassroots approach. Developing these methods demands, however, we unveil discursive associations and constructions. In short: when discussing inclusion, settler society must learn to uncouple racially formulated tropes that colour the very depiction of inclusion in cities, and this is not an easy task. Easy or not, urban environments are key sites of reconciliation and reclamation, and this requires our

reimagining municipal regimes that privilege this potential (Klodawsky et al., 2017; Tomiak et al., 2019).

This thesis, among other concerns, sought to gauge participant involvement in the construction of inclusion criteria reinforced through political and economic channels. Municipalities and their players are not powerless, and they can influence outcomes such as promoting or putting up barriers to inclusion that we normally attribute to provincial and federal politics. Herein lies the importance of pursuing this type of research at the municipal level (Taylor, 2020; Stone, 1987). Some municipalities are making strides towards genuine reconciliation and inclusion.[24] As for Lethbridge, the two elite groups were active – and aligned – in declaring expectations that residents must embrace hard work, tenacity, and compassion, which would eventually lead to inclusion. Looking at this as a math problem, the elites proposed inclusion as the final answer without showing their work. For example, no one willingly spoke of how adopting these characteristics could translate into community inclusion. Yet, it seemed everyone I spoke with implicitly understood what was involved with obtaining community inclusion – and what was not.

[24] When I started my role in CSD in 2021, I had the pleasure of speaking with the City of Edmonton's former project manager of the RECOVER: Urban Wellbeing initiative regarding collective impact and inclusion in municipalities. The work that the RECOVER team had completed to decenter dominant value systems and actively incorporate the perspectives and ways of knowing of Indigenous peoples within *amiskwacîwâskahikan* (Edmonton) is inspiring. The group utilized a prototyping method to co-create urban wellbeing initiatives and pilot them in small, incrementable steps, while privileging those with lived experience. The work done with RECOVER is evidence of authentic municipal inclusion being attempted within Alberta. To see more, visit: https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/recover-urban-wellness-plan#:~:text=What%20We%20Do,help%20people%20and%20places%20thrive.

City Councillors and business owners agreed that Lethbridge is not inclusive, despite Councillors' initial claims. When asked to reflect, however, discussion led to dialogue identifying racism and garrisoned cliques. Further, depictions of Lethbridge residents as indifferent revealed a unique perspective of the city that did not resonate with the initial representations offered by participants. Position, power, and privilege did not compel participants to assume responsibility or an active role in opposing barriers to inclusion everyone identified, despite being well-positioned to affect change due to their social capital within the community. To be fair, this thesis was not about elite actor willingness to adopt an active role in challenging inequities. But, as community actors that shape policy agendas, a more active acknowledgment of their role is expected. It appeared that elite actors ignored their power until they needed to enter the discussion after an event occurred that seemingly challenged their position of power. In other words, the perceived lost control over the SCS and its clientele amounted to a (coded) discussion surrounding the Indigenous propensity for social disorder. The SCS is in the community's recent memory and is unique in many aspects. In the past, such disorder might have been considered an individual act that occurred at Galt Gardens (again, coded shorthand) or showed up in the news. Those types of events could be ignored. When it involved a (growing) group, and an institution perceivably aiding maladaptive behaviours and drawing in more, anxiety grew and the elites sought to intervene.

Ultimately, Indigenous peoples individually did not pose as great a threat as Indigenous peoples in aggregate. While seemingly unrelated, Canada's Indigenous civilization project was designed to break up Indigenous communities and instill Canadian liberal values in seemingly adrift peoples. In Lethbridge, as was common in

most towns and cities, bylaws (vagrancy in particular) were established to keep groups of Indigenous peoples from gathering or remaining in the town after sundown. The SCS, by simply operating a benevolent outreach service and vital health program, unknowingly violated outdated laws that nevertheless have become embedded within the city's social character. A threshold of acceptance had now been transgressed that was also drawing Indigenous peoples into the settled space, all of which predicted greater social disorder and criminality. The various research participants' paradoxical perceptions of Lethbridge offered fascinating insights into how a community so proud of its "gateway to opportunity" slogan remained closed off to Indigenous peoples seeking such opportunities. The settler colonial system, as it applied to Lethbridge, manipulated ideologies, systems, and discourses. This important first step grounds what become the normative conceptions for the municipality, its space, and who has rightful access. Challenging these norms is vital to undoing the process of in(ex)clusion.

These were and remain difficult dialogues, and I appreciate the research participants' candor, openness, and trust. Otherwise, understanding the ideas driving these behaviours is unattainable, which makes it impossible to address our unconscious biases and misconceptions regarding Indigenous peoples and communities. The manner in which we discuss improvement and conceptualize community members is symptomatic of how this progress occurs. The exclusion of equity-deserving groups, such as urban Indigenous residents who were a target of racialized public discourse during the SCS debates that positioned them as purveyors and beneficiaries of the criminality linked to the SCS and thus local social disorder, will not act as the basis for change. Nor can these

elements that, as racial formation theory would tell us, are largely constructed, serve as the grounding justification for community inclusion and improvement.

How did the SCS expose inclusion criteria? What specific SCS clientele characteristics led to them being publicly identified as unwelcomed?

The SCS debate helped me to draw out the inclusion criteria that argued for inclusion of Indigenous peoples based on characteristics and goals rooted in a believed Indigenous deficiency. Consequently, these criteria were unattainable based on (1) the rigor linked to adopting these attributes[25] and (2) a historic understanding of Indigenous peoples that prescribed their failure prior to even being given a chance. Set out for differential treatment in this way, Indigenous peoples had to become better-than-average citizens that, by virtue of their inherent culture of disorder, was unattainable. This remains symbolic of Lethbridge's approach, ideas that were evident in discussions about promoting improvement despite calling for the limitation of services deemed enabling. It influenced what I would describe as the elite's latent expectations of what an SCS should achieve (i.e., elevated Indigenous peoples ready for social inclusion). That this outcome was presented at the same time the community's elite ideals envisioned fewer Indigenous peoples living in the city foreshadowed the SCS's inability to meet akin local demands. Reflecting on the history and embedded social attitudes about Indigenous peoples, this was a tall order and wholly unrealistic.

The SCS further demonstrated that there is an internally devised spectrum of good to bad residents in Lethbridge, just as the public discourse implied. As the SCS operator

[25] For instance, business owners applauded their ability to be present at their business and put in long hours; to be hard working and tenacious individuals. These anecdotes implied the perceived rigor involved with being a business owner and a good Lethbridge resident, one that the perceived social disorder inherent to Indigeneity would be incommensurate to.

endeavoured to help those using substances inconspicuously do so in a safe environment, it also helped make visible a clientele that remained largely hidden. When it was surmised that most of the clientele were Indigenous, elite and public commentary began to portray the SCS as not a site of healing and potential Indigenous inclusion, but rather a site of enabling social disorder. That is, social disorder was inherent to being Indigenous. It did cause the elites to reflect on how well some Indigenous peoples had acclimated to Lethbridge. However, it did not overpower their preconceived notions that all Indigenous peoples were inherently on the 'bad' spectrum. Those who had stayed in Lethbridge for a longer period of time were thought more equipped for inclusion and so deemed 'good' compared to the itinerant and transient group of Indigenous peoples who entered the city as SCS clients and were deemed 'bad'. What the interviews illustrated, though, is that a thriving settler colonial consciousness will consistently challenge locals to see Indigenous peoples as warranting inclusion. In sum, the SCS clientele were detrimental to community development and the Indigenous clientele served as a discursive reminder of the potential detriment of Indigenous inclusion.

The interview participants suggested restricting Indigenous occupancy within the city, but simultaneously opined compassion for the SCS clientele. Even in these cases, the concern was not with the individuals or the SCS's survival so much measuring how effective their own political and business interests would be served. Ultimately, this prompts some questions: When did community development become threatened by the SCS, which was initially portrayed as a benevolent and – potentially helpful - endeavour? Perhaps more accurately, at what point would Indigenous inclusion begin negatively impacting community development? As I conducted my research and analysis, no specific

moment in time was offered as the tipping point. And yet, everyone I interviewed generally agreed with the timing of resistance. When analyzed through the lens of settler colonialism, it is reasonable to contend that any institution seen as drawing greater Indigenous presences would result in a settler defensiveness and anxiety segueing into transfers. Here is the moment when ideology transitions from merely ideas to mechanisms of exclusion and rationales developed to remove Indigenous peoples from settler space. A catalyst is required to simplify the discourse and process, which in this case was the SCS. This, to put it colloquially, checked off all the boxes: it was a failed site of rehabilitation that enhanced the visibility of Indigenous peoples the city residents were already anxious about living nearby. That the SCS was outside of local control (it was a provincial responsibility, not unlike Indigenous peoples, who are a federal responsibility and thus deemed untouchable by municipal leaders) exacerbated the situation further. As the argument demonstrates, a complex chain of events would develop that slowly positioned the Lethbridge elite to justify the SCS's closure and to consider removing the continuing social disorder (i.e., the remaining Indigenous peoples from the SCS).

The research revealed that expectations of inclusion and belonging are implicitly understood by elites and arguably the non-Indigenous residents, and that the SCS offered the perfect opportunity to explore these unspoken ideas. The SCS's transition from benevolent site of community development to being perceived as a solely Indigenous-serving institution (regardless of the reality that the SCS was serving more than Indigenous populations in the community) demands greater attention. This research did, however, demonstrate that the SCS exceeded acceptability by complicating participants'

understanding of Lethbridge – of settler place. Much like the early settlers idealized and dreamed of cultivating a community built on new space on which to import norms, mores, and bring life to the desert, the elite groups envisioned a version of Lethbridge that would seemingly align with inclusionary paradigms. While it may have been just a few people of Indigenous descent who entered the city to obtain the SCS services, this challenged the settler ideal that the city needs to remain free of Exogenous and Indigenous Others. The SCS was soon portrayed as a portal allowing more Indigenous peoples to enter, thus failing to serve settler interests. In any case, be it the person or the organization representing the person, Indigenous peoples (especially 'bad' ones) were perceived as now actively penetrating previously sealed city boundaries.

Veracini reminds us that the very presence of the Indigenous other unravels settler constructed superiority. It may not be surprising, then, that incoming Indigenous transients drawn by the SCS amped up anxiety to such a degree barriers had to be erected (2010). This is perhaps a paradox when reconciliation and equity are advanced within the municipality – and when Indigenous peoples are already present within the 'settler space' of Lethbridge. Even though the processes of inclusion emerged from the community proper, it was the Indigenous population's ongoing desire to re-enter the space that was cause for concern. They were, in effect, shattering the order settler colonials naturally assigned to Indigenous peoples, and as such their removal, while considered by some to be a racist act, was portrayed a vital element of community building and ensuring social continuity. Indigenous peoples may be granted the right of occupancy, but certainly not community inclusion.

Perhaps the conclusion that yes, there are expectations for inclusion within Lethbridge could have been gleaned from previous academic work within Lethbridge. The previous literature clearly established that there is a hostility to difference within the community, and a particular reticence to accepting social services due to perceived Indigenous social disorder that follows it (Kingfisher, 2007; Fiske et al., 2010). This research did, however, illustrate settler colonialism's specific ongoing influence and that it is applicable at the sub-national level. More research applying these ideas to municipal-Indigenous interface are encouraged, particularly within the context of racial and spatial construction. Settler colonialism offers an important interpretive frame to study municipal phenomena that may present Indigenous inclusion as a desired outcome when in fact, at its core, its foundational principles predispose residents—elites included—to engaging in practices of marginalizing Indigenous peoples from the city: hence the term in(ex)clusion.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, are the criteria for inclusion and belonging racially motivated? If so, how might this be utilized to maintain settler colonial continuity? How does racial formation continue to justify and fuel in(ex)clusion?

Underscoring this study seeking to identify the nature of inclusion and how it was practiced was a desire to determine if criteria for inclusion was racially motivated. Public discourse certainly demonstrated a racist undertone in criticizing the SCS, as demonstrated in the introduction and previous chapter. While it is important to understand the foundation of these popular dialogues, and further research is needed in this regard, this thesis was concerned with determining whether the elites of Lethbridge also embraced these ideas and whether they were actively promoting similar beliefs in their criticism of the SCS's operations calling for its closure, or expressing relief at its closure.

As this thesis has argued, the research participants were notionally aware that racism existed within Lethbridge. Many criticized the practice and were upset at its evidence. A majority of the research participants indicated that they were not racist while also downplaying racism within the community. That is, those who may be racist make up a small minority of residents. Here, word and action are two separate issues: thoughts not acted upon are inherently not harmful. Critical discourse analysis was imperative here, for it was not until I reviewed the transcripts that participants demonstrated latent racially-motivated beliefs. It occurred along a sliding scale in that some were more overt in their portrayals than others. Yet, everyone associated social disorder with belonging to one population, reinforcing pre-existing stereotypes within Lethbridge that speak to a pathologized, constructed Indigeneity (i.e., Kingfisher 2007).

Conflation of this type may be historical in nature, but it is reproduced in public forums such as the Lethbridge Herald's Letter to the Editor commentary section and in how the elite groups discuss the SCS. As the argument above was able to demonstrate, all participants would come to define the SCS clientele as Indigenous while eventually defining the SCS as an Indigenous institution. So, despite being upset with racism's presence, and seeking publicly to discuss the issues in a balanced fashion, the elite reinforced racial stereotypes that correlate with social service provision and conflate Indigeneity with local social disorder. It suggests that, as hypothesized, the elite groups recognize the need to ensure their public presentation of the ideas balances popular opinion while still appearing to represent all Lethbridge residents (i.e., voters, patrons). That is, one must be more careful with how they discuss the issues – particularly those in

positions of power. Thus, this research demonstrated that the public persona was different from personally held opinions.

How inclusion was understood, and as a process enacted, remains racially motivated. The reason for this is that despite publicly offering balanced appraisals of SCS operations, each of the participants remain integrated into the local socio-political system that has, and will continue to, reproduce normalized understandings of Indigenous peoples produced from deficit perspectives. As Mills (1997, p. 95) stated,

> "If racism is as central to the polity as I have argued, then it will have a major shaping effect on white cognizers in all these areas ... because of the intellectual atmosphere produced by the Racial Contract, whites will (in phase one) take for granted the appropriateness of concepts legitimizing the racial order, privileging them as the master race and relegating nonwhites to subpersonhood and later (in phase two) the appropriateness of concepts that derace the polity, denying its actual racial structuring."

As the racial categorization of groups based on symbols and associations becomes increasingly more normalized, denial of its existence becomes possible if not eventual. In doing so, the claims of equity-deserving groups are delegitimized, therefore undermining their attempts at securing inclusion.

As settler colonialism relies on the Indigenous other being excluded, through this analytical frame inclusion would very much become a tool to ensure the exclusion of Indigenous others that cannot obtain inclusion tenets. As Veracini notes, this often has nothing to do with the performance or ability of Indigenous peoples, but rather ability to compare the pathology against normative settler characteristics to highlight their rightful place in the population economy. Think about this for a moment: to witness Indigenous peoples' performance means that they have broken through community barriers, which

means that anything they are doing is occurring within bounded space and further proof that the settler boundaries are too porous. While I do believe much of the racial discourse employed by participants was unconscious, nonetheless it resulted in a version of inclusion that favoured the tenets belonging to the two elite groups themselves: tenets that, embracing a latent belief in inferiority, Indigenous peoples would never be able to embrace. Social disorder, which is the perceived foundation of Indigenous culture, was ardently positioned as antithetical to these inclusion tenets, meaning that the unspoken but implicitly understood and universal inclusion criteria would, in fact, act to exclude Indigenous peoples deemed harmful to social cohesion and community development. As a result, inclusion criteria does become racially motivated, whether this is consciously recognized by the elite groups or not.

The relationship between municipal elites is important to briefly highlight here, particularly when discussing the normalization of settler colonialism. Business owners emerged in the data as a preferred stakeholder group, based primarily in how they portrayed themselves as the victims of the SCS operations. While the analysis did not delve into these shared ingroup ideologies, the chosen value placed on the SCS, especially how it exceeded acceptable boundaries of Indigenous inclusion, is worthy of note. Arguably, this response represents the conscious manifestation of unconscious social attitudes that privileged excluding Indigenous peoples under the guise of inclusion. But even if participants are acting out settler colonialism unconsciously, the Racial Contract claims that it makes no difference. As one of my thesis committee members asked at my proposal defense, “is it really a racial ideology that may emerge, or is it cultural?” I contend, based on the Racial Contract and settler colonialism’s proven basis,

that this question is moot. Does this distinction matter if the dominant cultural ideology is founded on a racialized understanding of Indigenous inferiority and incompatibility? And that these ideas evolved to influence mainstream behaviours and mores?

In each case, it still permits in(ex)clusion based to develop and remain based on settler values. Settler colonialism as the foundational ideology offers the basis for distinction between deserving and undeserving residents. This becomes normalized and ultimately is recognized as the policy status quo. Whether consciously or unconsciously, local elites propose solutions that sustain and help reproduce these outcomes, which will persist until social ingroup perspectives are challenged and the co-integration of alternative perspectives are embraced. Consequently, the settler colonial ideology imposes artificial albeit substantial constraints on how we choose both to understand, and put into practice, authentic municipal inclusion.

A call to action: future research

As Stone (1987) argued, local entities – and their elites - are not powerless, nor benign in their (non)decisions, associations, and discursive renderings. Recognizing how we discursively identify services, spaces and peoples as harmful may be the first step to achieving an authentically inclusive community (or alternatively, interrogating what we take for granted as normative). If elite groups continue to view Lethbridge inclusion via false racial stereotypes, inclusion will always be a tool to remove undesired presences under the guise of community development defined by others with similar values (Granzow, 2010). I conclude my thesis by discussing how settler colonial in(ex)clusion continues under the current Lethbridge City Council.

Being an inside researcher has been a difficult, albeit interesting, position. I have learned a tremendous amount over the three years writing this thesis while simultaneously watching the corporate City of Lethbridge adapt to a new political body. While I have always striven to maintain separation between academia and my professional career, these lines can sometimes blur; the skills I learned in my thesis follow into my career. Since I started writing this thesis, I have moved into a new role at the City of Lethbridge in Community Social Development (CSD). Through assessing social inclusion and wellbeing more closely in CSD, preferred stakeholders of Council have become much more apparent,[26] as has the desire to jettison Indigenous peoples from Lethbridge.[27] I invite future graduate students to start paying close attention to local political decisions and how they may manifest in(ex)clusion's continuity.

One key case study that a future graduate student may want to assess is how the current Lethbridge City Council responded to encampments within the community last summer (2022), as it may illustrate settler colonial continuity and racial processes, including how these ideologies underscore local decision-making. Frequent rhetoric of "trespassing" (Ryan Parker, quoted in Beeber, August 2022) was opined during

[26] I watched a Council meeting where an Indigenous respondent was invited to the microphone to speak, but abruptly cut off after the five-minute timer for speakers went off. This is a dramatically different response when white, aggrieved residents came to speak to Council about encampments within the community. These residents were privileged and allowed to speak for as long as they wanted. One resident was even invited back *up to the microphone to speak by a Councillor* after aggressively storming Council Chamber and uttering threats to the elected body. I would argue quite confidently that preferred stakeholders remain as those perceived as aiding community safety and development… and the selection of those preferred stakeholders is racially-motivated.

[27] I recently was working the sober shelter engagement for my department. I overheard a Councillor speaking to a captive audience that our best "bang for our buck" as a corporation would be to "invest in transportation", as the Councillor proclaimed, "80% of those accessing services are Indigenous." The negative racial conflation of social services and Indigenous peoples within Lethbridge still exists; the rhetoric used to justify the SCS' closure is now being used against other services and against other efforts.

encampment debates, particularly when a large encampment was situated behind City Hall on the Civic Track Field. Throughout the summer, some Councillors remained adamant that Lethbridge Police needed to arrest individuals for illegally occupying public space. As one stated to the Lethbridge Herald, "… I think it's going to become a ghetto … I don't think we should allow something like that to occur" (Parker, quoted in Beeber, August 2022). Further to this, Parker stated that moving "these people" into more "appropriate location … not in that [Civic Field] area but in the place we've already designated money provincially and locally" would be a reasonable response to mitigate the area becoming a "ghetto" (Parker, quoted in Beeber, August, 2022).

While I will not elaborate much more than this,[28] some key questions arise. As I noted earlier, to elaborate on Stone and how City Council has fabricated policy constraints throughout the encampment debates, enabling a trope that Council has no other choice but to be more aggressive in approach, or ignored legitimate constraints (such as occupant *Charter* rights),[29] would produce an interesting companion study of settler colonialism within the city. Just as how the SCS became criticized for what it seemed to represent, how does the socialized understanding of an Indigenous criminality/inferiority justify elected official commentary on encampment removal? What are the implications on social attitudes within the community when elite actors are purporting such harmful discourse? How does this further highlight criteria for inclusion

[28] If a reader is interested, I do have additional sources and context I can discuss/provide on this specific topic.

[29] Such as the legitimate, legal constraints of removing someone's shelter and private property without any cause, and particularly in the absence of diversified and accessible shelter spaces. As one Lethbridge Police sergeant stated in a public meeting, we "cannot arrest our way out of this", and acknowledged the need for a fulsome continuum of care. Evicting or fining individuals with nowhere to go, no funds to pay, is not conducive to a solution.

within our community? How do encampments highlight the belief in, to use Edmonds (2010), the "privileged white space?" And, lastly, does a perceived Indigenous infiltration to public space unequivocally result in being treated criminally? These are some things that I will be thinking about as I continue as a public servant and academic.

The harmful discourse of those in power cannot be minimized, nor can the ways in which these perspectives are engrained as normative. As Veracini (2010) notes, settler colonialism depends on settlers being constructed as the infallible, normative population to strive towards. While dismantling the engrained system of settler colonialism will take much more research and effort, I do think we can start by assessing these dynamics within the municipal setting. And it starts by realizing the municipal elites *are active in the construction of inclusion,* and beyond this, have the capacity to encourage an authentic inclusion -- or continuing to purport in(ex)clusion based upon assimilative expectations underscored by racial formation tropes. This interrogation begins with digging into the discourse and in paying attention to how settler colonialism (re)asserts itself within municipal groups and systems. By using settler colonialism as a common interpretive framework to comprehend phenomena affecting our own communities, we may begin to reveal the discursive structures and intentional (non)action that sustain settler continuity – and begin to challenge them.

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APPENDIX 1: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE LETHRIDGE BUSINESS OWNERS

Semi-Structured Interview Guide
Lethbridge Business Owners

Note: Remind participants that their identity could be revealed due to certain positionality/comments that may be associated with them.

1. How long have you been a business owner in Lethbridge?
    a. How long have you lived in Lethbridge?

2. What encouraged you to open a local business in Lethbridge?

3. Tell me a little bit about your business.
    a. Have certain years been more successful than others?

4. What characteristics do you think it requires to be an adequate business owner within the City of Lethbridge?
    a. Similarly, how would you describe Lethbridge residents?
    b. How would you describe a "good" citizen of a City? What actions do they partake in, what characteristics do they possess?
    c. How would you describe Lethbridge residency/citizenship, and what qualifications *should* (aspirational) exist for residents to be Lethbridge citizens?

5. Can you provide me with some words to describe Lethbridge that reflects when you first went into business?

6. What would be your recommendations for creating a Lethbridge in the current context as described in your earlier responses?

7. What have been some difficulties as a local business owner that you have faced?

8. Can you recall for me the first time you heard that Lethbridge was a candidate for approval of a supervised consumption site?
    a. How were you feeling at that moment in time?

9. When the site opened until its closure, had any unforeseen (direct or indirect) consequences arisen?
    a. Have there been direct/indirect impacts to your business? Can you please share with me what those are?

10. A news article has stated that Lethbridge's SCS is one of the busiest in North America. How does this statistic make you feel? What does this say, to you,

about Lethbridge at this moment in time? **CONVERSATIONAL METHOD* [supplemental question, if it comes up]*

11. How do you feel that the site and its clientele impacted Lethbridge's narrative or reputation?
    a. Are there any ongoing impacts to your business, or others?

12. Looking back**,** how did you feel City Council's response to the SCS was?
    a. Relatedly, do you think municipal officials were, and are, adequately responding to the drug crisis in the City of Lethbridge?
    b. How did you come to the conclusion that you did?
    c. If you were a member of public office, what would you do differently?

13. Do you think the services that the SCS provided are appropriate to exist within the City of Lethbridge? Why, or why not?
    a. How do you feel Lethbridge residents are being impacted (positive or negative) by the site's existence? Other business owners?
    b. Can you please share your perspective on the SCS' impact on the community at large, if any? Positive or negative.

14. Could you please share your perspective on the SCS closing?
    a. Do you recall how you felt when you heard it was ceasing operations?

15. How has the SCS impacted your perspective on harm reduction, or social services more broadly (if at all?)

16. Do you have any concluding comments or questions for me?

APPENDIX 2: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE LETHBRIDGE CITY COUNCILLORS

Semi-Structured Interview Guide
Lethbridge City Councillors

Note: Remind participants that their identity could be revealed due to certain positionality/comments that may be associated with them.

1. What encouraged you to run for your elected position?

2. How long have you been a resident of Lethbridge, and what drew you to Lethbridge?

3. Can you tell me a little bit about Lethbridge's social and political landscape when you decided to run for your elected position? [as perceived by participant]

4. Can you provide me with some words to describe Lethbridge when you first came into your position?

5. How would you describe your voter-base within the City of Lethbridge?
    a. What characteristics would a voter possess to vote for you, and what you stand for politically within the municipal setting?
    b. Follow up **CONVERSATIONAL; if it comes up*:* What have been some of your focus areas as a City Councillor?

6. How would you describe what it means to be a Lethbridge resident/what belonging looks like in Lethbridge?
    a. What qualifications should (aspirational) exist for Lethbridge residents?
    b. Say you could feasibly implement requirements for residing in Lethbridge. What would that look like?

7. What would be some of your recommendations for creating a Lethbridge as described in your earlier responses? (i.e., a Lethbridge that encouraged you to run for municipal politics?)

8. Can you recall for me the first time you heard that Lethbridge was a candidate for approval of a supervised consumption site?
    a. What were your initial thoughts? [as a politician, as a resident – do these perspectives differ?]

9. The opening of the site was quite contentious from the beginning. How have municipal elected officials worked to mitigate tensions within the community?
    a. Are you satisfied with Council's response to the community?

10. Why do you think the SCS was a contentious/polarizing issue in the community?

11. Why do you think the SCS was a needed/unneeded service in Lethbridge?

12. How have – if at all – your opinions shifted as time has gone by with the site in place?

13. Do you think that the site changed Lethbridge's narrative/reputation?

14. As an elected official, how do you feel you, and your colleagues, should respond to ongoing polarization within the community over harm reduction initiatives?

15. Can you comment/hypothesize if the SCS has impacted resident goodwill towards social services more broadly?

16. How do you feel that the municipality should have responded? [jurisdictional constraints?]

17. Could you share your perspective on the SCS closing?
    a. Do you recall how you felt when you heard it was ceasing operations?
    b. Do you have any comments or opinions about the site, or the City Council response, in retrospect?

18. Do you have any concluding comments or questions for me?