Articles

Navigating the Problem of Inclusion as Enclosure in Native Culture-Based Education: Theorizing Shadow Curriculum

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This conceptual essay explores how Gerald Vizenor's (Anishinaabe) literary discussions of "shadow survivance" provide opportunities to work against the containment of Indigenous knowledge in mainstream and culture-based curricular practices. More specifically, the essay considers how constructivism is deployed as an opening to the inclusion of Indigenous epistemologies, yet also contains Indigenous epistemologies within a materialist and more specifically, Marxist and Hegelian philosophy. The author suggests that an implicit "shadow curriculum" has been articulated within the literature of Native culture-based curriculum which works against these forms of containment, but has rarely turned to Native American literary figures to elaborate the philosophical and theoretical differences they represent.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of curricular inclusion as enclosure has often been highlighted in research relating to Indigenous knowledges in the United States (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Hermes, 2000, 2005b; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). The work of Mary Hermes (2000, 2005a, 2005b) in particular, has consistently pointed out the significant challenges facing Native and non-Native teachers in facilitating Indigenous, specifically Anishinaabe, epistemologies in tribally run schools and educational settings more generally. "Lesson plans, subject areas and course content," she writes, "all attempt to act as containers for culture-based curriculum" (Hermes, 2005b, p. 44). As Hermes's (2000, 2005b) and others' research on curriculum for Native students has shown, Indigenous cultural knowledges are transformed and often muted as they become included in the curricular and pedagogical

practices of mainstream education. Hermes's comment above and else-where (Hermes, 2000), argues that the force of the "practical" demands of curriculum and teaching combined with teachers' lack of knowledge about Native peoples facilitate the processes of "containing" Indigenous epistemologies. Along with the force of the "practical," this essay argues that the theoretical and philosophical foundations of curriculum act as forces which continuously eclipse the conceptual, theoretical, and philo-sophical forces of Aboriginal intellectual traditions.

Social constructivist theory in particular, while very useful, has con-sistently been used to both interpret and incorporate Indigenous and minoritized epistemologies and modes of learning in mainstream schooling (see, for example, Gay, 2000; Klug & Whitfield, 2003; Sleeter, 2005; and Sleeter & Grant, 1991). As I will argue, the challenge with using a Vygotskian theoretical framework and its further elaboration by Leont'ev as cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) is its interpretation of thinking as object-practical activity. Such a perspective encloses Indigenous epistemologies within a materialist perspective and more specifically within a Marxist and Hegelian philosophy. As Roth and Lee (2007) astutely point out, "The contemporary interest in CHAT is remarkable given that its lineage can be traced back to dialectical materialism, classical German philosophy, and the work of Vygotsky, who created what is referred to as first-generation activity theory" (p. 189). Insofar as the philosophy that informs and shapes Vygotsky's (1925, 1927/1987) development of constructivism goes unnamed or critically examined, the theoretical formulation for the inclu-sion of Indigenous epistemologies becomes not simply a container, but an active form of neutralizing Indigenous intellectual traditions.

This conceptual and theoretical essay argues that educational research-ers invested in the inclusion of Indigenous and minoritized knowledges need to look beyond the fields of curriculum and educational theory to more rigorously counter the problems of containment and enclosure. This is especially important in the context of culture-based curriculum as it has been formulated through constructivist theory. In such circumstances, constructivism as a theory of learning can act as a container for culture-based curriculum. The latter is a broader approach to teaching which seeks to employ particular, culturally situated modes of thinking. In this sense social constructivist theory does not imply culture-based education, but much of culture-based curriculum has come to rely on constructivist theories of learning for educating minoritized youth.[1]

Until the central terms of constructivism such as "activity," "thinking" or "learning" are informed and discussed through Indigenous metaphors and not conceived as object-practical activity, culture-based curricula will more often continue to maintain, not counter, the privileged theories of constructivism and its embedded philosophical lineages. The writings of Indigenous literary figures can assist in such a project as they name and maintain Indigenous modes of theorizing. It is not the position of this essay

that constructivism is wrongheaded or an unproductive way to interpret "thinking" or "cognition" as an object-practical activity. Nor is this an argument that Indigenous knowledges provide a "better" philosophical or theoretical foundation in some culturally essentialized sense. Rather, to reframe the issue somewhat differently, I am asking how Indigenous peoples, students and theorists alike, can better hear their own stories of thinking and learning.

Culture-based education, culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy and multicultural education more broadly have subtle distinctions and intellectual histories, but I will be speaking of them here somewhat interchangeably. I justify this based on both the ways they each explicitly draw on social constructivist theory and likewise how each of these efforts seeks the inclusion of minoritized knowledges in mainstream curricular and pedagogical contexts. Even as the scale and scope of inclusion may vary, from culture-based curriculum where it includes full Native language immersion for example, to a culturally relevant pedagogy which may use cultural knowledge as a vehicle for mainstream concepts, the problem of inclusion as enclosure in its various forms remains a central concern.

To address this, I will be drawing on Anishinaabe novelist, critic and theorist Gerald Vizenor (1994) and his metaphoric uses of "shadows" to provide an alternative, Indigenous conceptual approach to the social constructivist model of thinking and learning relied on in culture-based curriculum. Vizenor's work helps displace the philosophical lineages embedded in constructivism, thus posing a substantive challenge to the processes of containment and enclosure. For example, writing in his signature, literary trickster discourse, Vizenor (1994) suggests that "the intransitive motion of shadows is a source of remembrance and survivance hermeneutics" (p. 171). In such passages, Vizenor argues that memories conceived as shadows do not have a direct object, reference or "cause"; the movement of memories is more opaque than is claimed by Vygotsky's object-practical activity theory. The hermeneutical and interpretative act is a visionary moment of central importance for Vizenor that fosters "survivance" as thinking in the metaphors of tribal narratives. Shadows are a literary metaphor which situates oneself in active interpretations of tribal narratives and moving, unstable memories for survivance.

In this way, the term *shadow* assists in capturing something of the complexities of a Native "shadow curriculum" as well. This curriculum, alluded to in the literature through the consistent use and emphasis of terms such as "spirit," "dreams," "ceremony" and "natural worldview," is a way of affirming the visionary and totemic aspects of Indigenous epistemologies as a theoretically and philosophically rich approach to "thinking." This thinking is not only operating at the limit or the outside of curriculum, but moreover I want to suggest at the limits of culture-based curriculum itself. That is, even as a shadow curriculum can momentarily puncture the

curricular containment of Native knowledges, as shadows they also elude schooling, culture-based and otherwise, as they are cast away from the light of mainstream education.

This essay proceeds by placing the problems of inclusion as enclosure in a broader perspective. I briefly highlight how multiculturalist educators and other researchers have discussed the curricular inclusion of Indigenous and minoritized knowledges. In particular, I highlight here Lomawaima and McCarty's (2006) notion of a "safety zone" to understand how enclosure is a process of domestication and neutralization of Indigenous knowledges. I proceed by engaging some specific moments in which constructivism frames Indigenous approaches to learning and further elaborate what is at stake in the use of constructivism to interpret Indigenous epistemologies. In the second part of the essay, I turn to the work of Vizenor and provide a brief introduction to his body of work and his notion of survivance in particular. I then explore his use of shadows as a metaphor for thinking and cognition. I elaborate Vizenor's discussion of the writings of Luther Standing Bear and N. Scott Momaday to show the consistent use of this term among Indigenous writers over the last century when discussing memory and thought. Finally, I suggest how a shadow curriculum has been articulated in discussions of culture-based education for Indigenous youth. Employing the framework of shadows that Vizenor develops, assists in clarifying how a shadow curriculum implicitly and explicitly works against the enclosure of Indigenous knowledges. I conclude by noting how this work provides a site from which the rethinking of the central terms of learning and their philosophical foundations can take place.

INCLUSION AS ENCLOSURE

Inclusion as enclosure in a broader perspective can be recognized in the work of multicultural curriculum theorist Christine Sleeter (2005). Writing in *Un-Standardizing the Curriculum* for example, she comments, "it often requires some depth of study of historically marginalized knowledge to identify key concepts in that body of knowledge that do not *immediately fit* into traditional curriculum" (Sleeter, 2005, p. 91, emphasis added). The recognizable tension here is one in which teachers are being encouraged to both identify a foreign concept and then work to bring it into "traditional" curriculum. Sleeter's recognition here of the tensions of minoritized epistemologies as misfit knowledges that can eventually be included/enclosed by traditional curricular forms and practices is clearly visible.

Inclusion as enclosure has also been identified in a variety of ways by researchers at the intersection of American Indian education, and Native American Studies. For example, Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) outline the notion of a "safety zone" as a way to understand how Indigenous knowledges are absorbed into mainstream U.S. society. Against the interpretation of federal educational policies toward Native peoples as a

pendulum swinging between assimilation and self-determination, they write of a more deliberate series of appropriations and neutralizations of Indigenous knowledges. They suggest that "each generation was working out, in a systematic way, its notion of a safety zone, an area where dangerously different cultural expressions might be safely domesticated and thus neutralized" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. xxii). How Native and non-Native researchers, theorists, and practitioners work to respond to such questions and work against the neutralization of Native knowledge in educational settings is complex and ongoing (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002; Smith, 1999; Wilson & Wilson, 2002). How does one take up the project of the "inclusion" of marginalized "funds of knowledge" (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) in the midst of what Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) describe as the domesticating enclosures of the "safety zone"?

The traditional (Euro-American) theories of education, learning, and teaching continue to be ambivalent to the assumed philosophical bases of Indigenous knowledge. Hermes (2000, 2005b) and Sleeter (2005) reiterate the continuing problems at both the practical and conceptual levels (see also Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Klug & Whitfield, 2003). Hermes's (2005b) recent comments echo the sentiments of many in the field when she writes that "the teaching of a Native culture-based curriculum must go much further to create systemic change. To reflect the epistemology of the Indigenous people, changes are needed in the organization of the school day, the language of instruction, the content, the pedagogy and the approach" (p. 10). In conversation with these efforts, part of the systemic changes to be addressed involves Indigenous philosophical engagements with the major tenets of education. Such an engagement would foster what Hermes identifies here as a change of approach to education for Aboriginal youth. On my reading, this change of approach is not only the rethinking of curricular content but the assumed understandings of concepts like "activity," "thinking" and "learning" among others.

Constructivism as Container in Culture-Based Materials and Multicultural Education

The problem of containment is not unique to the development of culture-based curriculum for Aboriginal youth. Rather it is inherent to any project of change in education, particularly the larger projects of multicultural education. Indeed, the terms *transform*, *redesign* and *reform* are ever present within the discourse, signaling not only change but something about the general idea of openness to difference and the subsequent closures around it. That is to say, the opening to changing curricular materials or pedagogical practices is already a pre-structured "closure"; the closure organizes the very form of the opening. While a rather commonsensical insight, this notion of the pre-structurality of conceptual openings has been elaborated by post-structural theorists and philosophers. Derrida (1972/1981) writes

for example of the impossibility of totally new openings or "unequivocal breaks." He notes that "breaks are always and *fatally* re-inscribed in the old cloth, that must continually and interminably be undone" (Derrida, 1972/1981, p. 24, emphasis added). On this reading, schooling and education are the old, fatal cloth, providing a pre-existing warp and woof which surrounds the "new" thread.

What is ironic, then, about the project of curricular and educational change in multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy and other forms of culture-based curriculum, is how it proceeds within this pre-structured and thus enclosing structure of education. Because it cannot be otherwise, it must continue. However, it should also proceed with a more rigorous interrogation of the structurality of the opening of education to Indigenous difference. Let me turn to a few examples where this process is on display.

In Klug and Whitfield's (2003) *Widening the Circle: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy for American Indian Children*, we find the common practice of noting culturally specific Indigenous knowledge and its production brought into constructivist models and discourses of learning and teaching. One instance of this occurs where Klug and Whitfield (2003) speak of the Native Alaskan educational standards. They note how

A sample of items from the Alaska Standards illustrates the emphasis on culturally relevant pedagogy including content knowledge and teaching methodologies that capitalize on traditional methods of assisting students to construct knowledge themselves. These ways of knowing for American Indian students include long periods of observation, performance trials by oneself, demonstration to an adult, mastery of content and working with cooperative groups of students. These activities are consistent with the constructivist teaching approaches proposed by Piaget, Vygotsky and Dewey. (Klug & Whitfield, 2003, p. 46)

While *Widening the Circle* goes a great deal further than many texts to interrogate the deeper foundations of education, the above quote reveals the tension of trying to do so. Although the authors may be correct in noting a consistency between Aboriginal pedagogical forms and constructivist theories of learning, the relation is not transparent and the differences of approach cannot be easily elided. In such circumstances, the risk of the domestication and enclosure of Native cultural knowledge is very high.

One way these differences of approach can be witnessed, for example, is the way that Vygotsky (1934/1986) and his student Leont'ev developed a science of psychology based on object-practical activity. In the above passage by Klug and Whitfield, the link between the pragmatist philosophy of Dewey and the scientific psychology of Vygotsky is based on a shared emphasis on "practical," "object"-driven work of human beings. As Roth and Lee (2007) point out, Vygotsky's initial formulations were made more explicit by his student Leont'ev. They write, for example, that "It was left to

Leont'ev to make historically evolving object-practical activity the fundamental unit of analysis and the explanatory principle that determines the genesis, structure, and contents of the human mind" (p. 189). The challenge, then, for constructivists who work to interpret "traditional" Indigenous educational practices, is the theoretical framing of object-practical activity as the fundamental unit of analysis. Moreover the constructivist claim that object-practical activity is the determining principle for the "genesis, structure and content of the human mind" rides roughshod over the significant differences between Indigenous and mainstream conceptions of the human mind.

While Vygotsky (1925, 1927/1987) provided important and insightful critiques of the psychology of his day, his critical formulation is indebted to and organized by dialectical materialism and classical German philosophy (see Roth & Lee, 2007). Perhaps oversimplifying but not inaccurate, constructivism is a Hegelian and Marxist inspired scientific psychology. The object-practical activity orientation of constructivism is derived from a Marxist philosophy turned psychology which explained thinking and cognition as ultimately elements of systems of production and exchange. This is also true for the socio-historical and CHAT derived from Vygotsky's original thinking. Science was understood by these thinkers, as well as by Dewey, as a way to eliminate idealist notions of soul and spirit which still held sway in early 20th-century philosophy and psychology. As Roth and Lee's (2007) discussion of the central terms of Vygotsky's constructivism and Leont'ev's activity theory affirms, "an *activity system* contains all the theoretical terms that we introduced previously—*subject, object, means of production, division of labor, community*, and *rules*—and it contains the higher order processes of production, exchange, distribution, and consumption" (p. 197, emphasis in original). Expressed here is a worldview that sought to analyze human activity and motives in strict materialist terms. Each of these terms of constructivism then, especially cognition and thinking, are reinterpreted as "object-practical activities" oriented by and toward forms of production, labor and consumption. In this light, constructivism and CHAT are not only inconsistent with but work against Indigenous intellectual traditions which emphasize a shadowy, visionary and totemic dimension of human cognition that is at odds with a dialectical materialist philosophy.

Again, the substantive work of maintaining philosophical differences and engaging alternative theoretical modes more precisely rarely occurs among educational researchers engaged in employing CHAT for culture-based curriculum. More often, what happens is the opposite; constructivism and other Western theories get considerably more attention and elaboration, which simultaneously provides credibility for Indigenous discourses of thinking and neutralizes their philosophical bases.

This commonplace formulation among advocates of culture-based curriculum and culturally relevant pedagogy follows from a similar practice

in the broader field of multicultural education. For example, note the echoes of the above passage with that of Sleeter and Grant (1991) who write, "Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist also draws on cognitive development theory which has been developed by scholars such as Piaget (1952), Vygotsky (1934/1986) and Dewey (1938)" (p. 203). Here it again appears that constructivism provides the structure for the opening to minoritizd approaches to "learning" and "thinking" and yet encloses such thinking in the philosophy of dialectic materialism. It is again ironic that culture-based education, culturally relevant curriculum and multicultural education are precisely the sites in which Lomawaima and McCarty's (2006) notion of the "safety zone" is on full display. As these efforts rely on constructivism, the conceptualizing of thinking as object-practical activity neutralizes the Indigenous emphasis on totemic shadows in the very formulation of thought.

Constructivism then regularly plays a dominant role in "making sense" of Aboriginal education as object practical activity and thus structures the very ways such differences are defined. I am not working here toward an exhaustive elaboration of constructivism, but more simply giving some indication of the fatal forces of constructivism in the theoretical discussions of culture-based schooling for Aboriginal youth. I am not arguing against curricular inclusion or a dialogue between theoretical approaches, but working to make clear the nature and processes of containment for Indigenous philosophies. If more successful forms of culture-based materials are to be developed for Aboriginal youth, perhaps more substantive discussions of Aboriginal theory need to be articulated in an effort to momentarily displace Marxist inspired psychological models of thinking and Hegelian philosophies as they dominate these fields. Amplifying the work of Vizenor in these contexts can assist with precisely this concern. Indeed Vizenor provides a path toward a different notion of "thinking" in First Nation culture-based curriculum.

SURVIVANCE AND SHADOW THINKING IN THE LITERARY MODE OF GERALD VIZENOR

Literary scholar Alan Velie (1982) has written of Vizenor as an "American Indian Literary Master" and Vizenor's (1987) novel *Griever: An American Monkey King in China* won the American Book Award. Many of Vizenor's other scholarly works have likewise received critical international attention (see Breinig, 2008; Lee, 1999, 2000; Madsen, 2008; Tatsumi, 2008). What has not often been commented upon is how Vizenor has addressed some of the central issues in education and Native peoples in many of his novels and most of his books (see Vizenor, 1972, 1978, 1984, 1992, 1994, 1997, 1998). One vivid passage that highlights Vizenor's discussions of schooling comes from "Travels With Doctor Gerasimo" in his book *Wordarrows: Indians and*

Whites in the New Fur Trade (1978). Here the character Gerasimo reads an excerpt from *Bearheart*, at the time Vizenor's unpublished novel:

I was twelve years old and had run from the school four times. The moons were whole. The assiduous government agents were waiting, waiting, waiting generation after generation without fail for the defeated tribes to stop running. The agents, hired hunters for the givers of government, captured me once as me and three times as a bird and ran me back four times from the sacred cedar.

The first time, to teach us all good lessons not to run with the tribes and good visions of inner birds and animals, the agents forced me to wash floors and clean toilets for two months.

The second time back, from the sixth grade then, being in the vision of a cedar waxwing, the cruel and mawkish federal teachers pushed me naked into the classrooms, me and the bird in me, and whipped us for our avian dreams.

The third time back as a blue heron from the shallow rivers we were led on a leash to the classrooms and chained at night to a pole in the cowshed.

The fourth time back to school, listen now in this darkness, handcuffed and bruised, the last time as a bird, we learned to outwit and outlive government evil. (Vizenor, 1978, pp. 117–118)

This passage indicates how some of Vizenor's (1978 1992) short stories and novels have elaborated the issue of schooling as containing and neutralizing Indigenous epistemologies. Alluding to the era of boarding schools designed for the assimilation of Native peoples in the early 20th century, Vizenor dramatizes not simply the containment of Indigenous bodies but the elimination of Native totemic and visionary modes of thinking. This passage helps to convey the depth of Vizenor's attention to the topic of education for Native peoples and the challenges of overcoming the recurring problem of schooling and Indigenous epistemologies. Importantly, though, schools are not simply a novelistic stage for his characters, rather Vizenor affirms survivance here through the reanimation of the totemic and their location in tribal narrative traditions.

From his early essays on education, Vizenor has continued to probe the ironies of Native education and likewise the traps, limits and implications of Euro-American academic theorizing, particularly as they inform representations of Indigenous peoples (see Vizenor 1989, 1994, 1998). For example, in *The Everlasting Sky* (1972) one finds that the majority of Vizenor's interlocutors are Anishinaabe teachers. Moreover, culture-based curriculum and Indigenous models of education are arguably the central discussions of the book. Indeed, *The Everlasting Sky* can be read as one of his earliest meditations on who or what notion of the *Indian* will be taught to Native youth through culture-based curriculum.

In no small way, then, Vizenor's considerations of education permeate his work and have contributed to the rich set of terms and metaphors he

deploys. Moreover, his insistence on totemic and visionary dimensions of Indigenous epistemologies has fostered a new lexicon for contemporary scholarship at the intersections of education, American Indian Studies and literary analysis. Terms such as "survivance," "shadows," "postindian," "penenative" and "transmotion," are part of a visionary discourse he has elaborated to counter the dominant Eurocentric theories and philosophies in education, literary criticism and social theory more generally, (see especially, Vizenor 1989, 1994, 1998). He writes of each of these terms as component parts of Native "stories of liberation and survivance without the dominance of closure" (Vizenor, 1994, p. 14).

Vizenor (1994) has brought one of his key terms, survivance, to bear on the historic and contemporary situations of Native peoples in North America. Noting its somewhat archaic location in a variety of academic discussions, Vizenor (2008) resignifies the term toward something more than the endurance and survival of tribal peoples. "The practice of survivance," Vizenor (2008) writes "create an active presence, more than the instincts of survival, function or substance" (p. 11). In such moments Vizenor can be understood as defining survivance apart from a purely material conception of acting or surviving in the world and alludes to the role of the imaginative and narrative nature of a continuing Native presence. He elaborates in this regard that "native stories are the sources of survivance" (Vizenor, 2008, p. 11). In this way, it is the recollection, remembrance and reactivation of tribal narratives recognized as "intellectual" traditions that is taken up as a post-Indian survivance hermeneutics (see Vizenor, 1994, 1998).

In this way, Vizenor maintains an emphasis on narrative and draws upon Indigenous literatures as intellectual traditions from which to theorize. Adding "memoric" to this lexicon, I would like to indicate the intermingling of the "historic" and "heroic" in Indigenous communities as components of the "root" idea of memory. While I want to avoid a sentimentalizing and romantic conception of heroism as well as a simply mimetic notion of history, it nonetheless seems important to provide a term for that dimension of the memories of tribal historic/heroic practices as they maintain Indigenous forms of knowledge and community.

This Vizenorian lexicon signals not only the past/present, but openings to other and future Indigenous interpretations of narratives and metaphors for thinking. Of extreme importance here, however, is the recognition that these terms are not settled or sedimented. Rather, there are shadow narratives, memories, imaginations and visions to these terms which continue to be in motion apart from the conceptual formulations we temporarily make in using them. Vizenor (1994) writes for example that "postindian consciousness is a rush of shadows in the distance" (p. 64) and thus again emphasizes the unpredictable ways memory and vision move in fostering thinking and the new narratives which flow from them. In this way, Vizenor (1994) seems to more clearly outline the sense of his phrase "shadow

survivance" as an Indigenous narrative and metaphoric mode of thinking, not one dedicated to a materialist object-practical activity.

Vizenor's discussion of survivance and shadows and a notion of the memoric are potent terms offered up here as Indigenous literary modes of thinking. They are to be further refined as a defense against the materialist interpretations of thinking as object-practical activity in constructivist theory. Moreover, the traditional and contemporary Indigenous narratives in which these terms are situated provide an Indigenous philosophical grounding for a visionary and totemic interpretation of thinking as it has come to be expressed in the shadow curricula of First Nation's education.

Vizenor's Shadows of Thinking, Thinking of Shadows

Vizenor (1994) organizes his discussion of shadows through three principle orientations—the meaning of the Anishinaabe word *agawaatese*, his interpretations of Aboriginal narratives and literatures, and finally the metaphoric use of the word in the writings of Henry Thoreau. In each of these discussions, he does not attempt to write of thoughts themselves, but in a suggestively literary mode he speaks of the shadows of thoughts as animate and animating entities. Specifically Vizenor draws upon the Anishinaabe word *agawaatese* and its situatedness in tribal narratives. He writes:

The word *agawaatese* is heard in the oral stories of the anishinaabe, the tribal peoples of the northern woodland lakes. The word hears silence and shadows and could mean a shadow or casts a shadow. The sense of *agawaatese* is that the shadows are animate entities. The shadow is the unsaid presence in names, the memories in silence, and the imagination of tribal experiences. (Vizenor, 1994, p. 73)

What Vizenor first does here is to situate the word in Indigenous narrative contexts. Working against an isolated translation of *agawaatese*, he speaks of the sense of the word in stories not as a common (English) conception of "shadow" but as an animate entity which casts its own shadow. In its narrative context then, memories cast shadows and are caught up in the motions of imagination in tribal experiences thus giving meaning to *agawaatese*. Shadows in this consideration are not the memories themselves nor are they completely identifiable as a shadow of an immediately identifiable thought, as if thought and shadow are in a one to one correlation. Again, for Vizenor the shadows of memories and imagination are intransitive and cannot be understood as isolated or discrete but are in motion and are further animated in narratives. "The shadow," writes Vizenor (1998) in this regard, "is that sense of intransitive motion to the referent" (p. 72). Thoughts, then, have shadows which are animate entities whose movement is without a single or locatable cause or referent. Through this discussion Vizenor argues that Indigenous intellectual traditions turn to a literary and metaphoric discussion of the nature of thinking.

Vizenor indicates here the critical difference of Indigenous peoples in approaching the question of thinking; there is a difference between using metaphors in the telling of narratives about thinking or relationships to memory and assuming the ability to describe thinking itself. Unlike constructivist approaches which would claim an ability to access the truth of such processes, the narrative approaches Vizenor outlines provide a language-centered and literary contextualist approach. That is, by locating the word *agawaatese* in an Anishinaabe narrative, he brings along an intermingling of other narratives, their metaphors and shadow memories explored and rearticulated in an active creative process of survivance hermeneutics. In this way, memories do not attend to or come to thought as pure entities from either inside or outside oneself, but as indirect possibilities for one's own and a communities remaking and renewal in narratives. This is what Vizenor (1994) seems to suggest when he writes that "shadows are neither the absence of entities nor the burden of conceptual references" (p. 64). Shadows are possibilities, neither empty nor over-determined by words or referents but instances of possibilities located in the interpretations of the pre-structuring of Indigenous narratives.

In a similar vein, Vizenor (1994) writes that "the shadows are the pre-narrative silence that inherits the words; shadows are the motions that mean the silence, but not the presence of absence of entities" (p. 64). On this account the shadows of thought are not object driven nor are they derived from material conditions. Constructivism would seem to limit the nature of this process and reduce the complexity of imagination, memory and narration to rather unsatisfying, if not crude models of production and exchange. Approaching thought, memory and imagination through the metaphors of shadow in and through Indigenous narrative traditions counters the containment of Indigenous knowledge in constructivist theories of learning and thinking.

Vizenor further elaborates on the idea of shadow movements in narratives by turning to the writings of Luther Standing Bear (1988) and N. Scott Momaday (1969) among others. More specifically he focuses on totemic memories and the shadows of animal memories in tribal experience to further explore the intersections of narrative, memory and imagination for Indigenous thinking processes. Speaking of Luther Standing Bear, for example, Vizenor (1994) writes, "the bear is a shadow in the silence of tribal stories, memories and the sense of presence are unsaid in the name" (p. 73). Against a simplistic reading of Luther Standing Bear's name, where the literal "presence" of the bear might be assumed, Vizenor argues that there are unsaid shadow memories and stories operating in such names that indicate the role of the memoric in Indigenous thinking.

Standing Bear wrote of how the bear "will stand and fight to the last. Though wounded, he will not run, but will die fighting. Because my father

shared this spirit with the bear, he earned his name" (Standing Bear, 1988, in Vizenor, 1994, p. 73). What seems critical for Vizenor here is again the narrative Standing Bear tells in which "sharing a spirit" with the bear, should be distinguished from "having," or owning the bear's spirit. It is a critical distinction in that it notes the shadow relation through narrative. Such a reading seems to inform Vizenor's (1994) comment that "the bear he hears, reads and writes is a shadow of the bear, not the real bear, not a mere concept of the bear, but the shadow memories of the bear" (p. 73). Here the rustle and movement of these totemic shadows in narrative and memory in narratives are approaches to thinking which counter a cognitivist model; Vizenor is arguing that Indigenous narratives do not lose sight of language as the "real" relation to the world, not a representation of it. On Vizenor's reading, Indigenous narratives provide rich relations to others and the natural world through the interpretive metaphors they use to speak of these shadow memories of tribal experiences.

With this idea Vizenor also draws from the work of N. Scott Momaday (1969). Vizenor quotes from *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, of how Momaday's grandmother "lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the *immense* landscape of the continental interior lay like memory in her blood" (Momaday, 1969, in Vizenor, 1994, p. 74). While Momaday's grandmother had never physically seen Rainy Mountain, the stories she heard created memories and a landscape in her imagination. Vizenor (1994) comments, "Momaday honors memories of his grandmother and touches the shadows of his own imagination, shadows that trace his identities and tribal stories" (p. 57). Vizenor's approach to narrative and memory seeks to affirm thinking as shadow relations in visionary narratives, not discard them for the metaphors and narratives of a cognitive or psychological science. The metaphor of shadows as intransitive memories and imagination are the creations of relations with the world for Vizenor and in this sense, shadow memories and imagination are foundational to rational thinking. "The shimmers of imagination," he writes in this regard, "are reason" (Vizenor, 1994, p. 14). On this interpretation, the movements of imagination and memory provide a shadowy material for rational thought and not the other way around.

Clearly the hierarchy of educational discourses on thinking in education—developmental psychology, cognition, and so forth—does not "include" the intellectual traditions, literary or otherwise of most minoritized peoples as moments of radically rethinking its theoretical or philosophical perspectives. To the extent that learning and thinking are informed more by teacher training curriculum based on constructivism, classroom and curricular contexts will be predisposed to not only contain but domesticate Indigenous narratives on knowledge. This seems so even in those cases where all the "pieces"—language, community relations, committed Native and non-Native teachers, culture-based curriculum, and so forth—may be in place.

RE-READING THE SHADOW TERMS OF NATIVE
CULTURE-BASED CURRICULUM

Vizenor can be read, then, as not only providing an Indigenous response to social constructivist interpretations of thinking in education, but articulating how the metaphor of shadows speak to Indigenous notions of rationality. More specifically, he enlivens the intellectual substance of Indigenous thinking through his prose. Put differently, social constructivism does not provide stories in which tribal peoples can situate themselves or elaborate tribal relations to themselves, their shadow memories and imagination.

Indeed, much of Vizenor's discussions of shadows can be read as complementary to what I described above as a shadow curriculum articulated in Native culture-based education. For example, in relating her classroom experience teaching "scientific method" to a group of Anishinaabe seventh graders, Hermes (2000) speaks of the role of dreams and spirit in Ojibway epistemology. She writes, "as prediction and replication could be valued as a part of this specific [Western] tradition, intuition and spirituality could be named as valuable in an Ojibway epistemology" (Hermes, 2000, p. 393). Hermes's comments here are again representative of the paradox of culture-based schooling for Native students. Indigenous epistemologies and modes of thinking in schools seem to require a discourse of spirituality, yet bringing spiritual traditions into curricular projects risks containment and various forms of domestication. She continues to describe the classroom interactions of her lesson.

In [an] Ojibway way, if you wanted to learn something, say about a plant for medicine, you could start with a problem, let's say it is a stomach ache. How would you find out the plant that you use? How about dreams? Don't people learn things in dreams? "YES." Dreams are important ways of finding out, then it is all right to ask someone what is meant in the dream if you don't understand. Are there other Ojibway ways of finding things out about nature? Observing—sometimes other people sometimes animals . . . like did you ever watch an animal, just to watch, but you learn something, like how it walks or what kind of tracks it makes, where it lives, what it eats. . . . That's kind of "research" too. (Hermes, 2000, p. 393)

Vizenor's attention to the metaphoric and narration help navigate these paradoxes by insisting on the intransitive nature of such shadow terms. Spirit as a shadow term, for example, has no direct relationship to a particular reference or essential meaning. Rather, operating as and in the shadow of spirit, Vizenor highlights how Indigenous peoples regularly come to such ideas through narrative; these terms are situated in narrative contexts, not isolated or cut off. Indeed, it is through their isolation from narrative contexts that containment and domestication occur. By engaging in the tradition of narratives in which this term is situated, an interpretive project is invoked wherein the intellectual traditions of Indigenous communities are continually reinterpreted. In this way, a shadow curriculum

for Native students becomes a site for survivance hermeneutics—the interpretation of Indigenous narratives and tribal histories in the context of one's own shadow memories for an active Native presence without victimry or nihilism.

This complementarity between Vizenor and Hermes can be extended to much of the literature on culture-based education for Native students. *Iroquois Corn in a Culture-Based Curriculum* by Carol Cornelius (1999) is an earlier example which highlights how "epic narratives" are critical in the development of education for Native students (p. 69). Epic narratives Cornelius (1999) suggests, "establishes a way of life for the community," wherein world views are enacted by "conducting the yearly cycle of renewal ceremonies" (p. 45). In many ways, Cornelius's effort is to bring educators into specific narratives wherein terms like ceremony are situated by and within community life. In this way, she might also be read as implicitly engaged in the development of a shadow curricula for survivance hermeneutics. Indeed by structuring her culture-based curriculum principally through the engagement with Haudenosaunee epic narratives, Cornelius studiously avoids the legitimizing function of mainstream theories such as constructivism for Indigenous modes of thinking or learning. By employing the vocabulary of what I have called a shadow curriculum, she affirms a mode of survivance hermeneutics in the rereading of Native narrative intellectual traditions.

The work of Hermes (2000, 2005b) and Cornelius (1999) provide opportunities to further develop the Indigenous and theoretical and philosophical aspects necessary for Native culture-based education. Hermes (2000) has emphasized the need for such a project when she writes, "although the idea of culture-based curriculum remains strong, success in developing curriculum has been isolated, lacking in theoretical development and under researched" (p. 388). Vizenor's (1994) shadow survivance, in combination with other Native literary works can be a useful heuristic for amplifying, interrogating and developing Indigenous "theoretical" narratives for culture-based curriculum. Through such work, a more robust set of terms can be discussed and debated for the systematic changes Indigenous culture-based education might bring about, contributing to the preparation of teachers of Native youth and the reworking of mainstream educational theory.

CONCLUSION: SHADOW CURRICULUM AS SYSTEMIC CHANGE FOR CURRICULAR PRACTICES

Vizenor's discussions of shadows and survivance provide an elaboration and amplification of the implicit forms of a Native shadow curriculum present in the discussions of Native culture-based curriculum. The constancy and emphasis on dreams, epic narratives and totemic imaginaries in culture-based curriculum speak to acts of Indigenous survivance

and against the neutralization of Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous discourses on the totemic and visionary as the shadows of thinking do not align with the materialist philosophies and theoretical frameworks of constructivism.

This is not, however, to suggest that a Native shadow curriculum or Vizenor's notions of survivance or shadow thinking are a final answer to an Indigenous redefining of thinking; Indigenous epistemologies, memories and narratives are animated, shape-shifting entities. Indeed Vizenor (1994) has written of the risk of his shadow discourses becoming caught in the "fatal cloth" (Derrida, 1972/1981) of dominant representation of *Indians*. In this vein Vizenor (1994) writes, of shadows as "trickster metaphors [that] are contradictions not representations of culture" (p. 170). Shadow is a literary metaphor, then, embedded in and interpreted through complex Indigenous narratives which reveal the contradictions and ironies of Indigenous cultural production. Nonetheless survivance hermeneutics as an interrogation of these ironic moments is a productive project for changing the approach to education in Native culture-based curriculum. It is precisely this kind of engagement with the literary writings of Native novelists that can assist in contextualizing the shadow curriculum put forward by proponents and theorists of Native culture-based curriculum.

As Vizenor's (1989, 1994, 1998) body of work suggests, the choices of metaphors one makes regarding thinking and the building of social relations is a critical activity of/for Indigenous survivance. Where culture-based curriculum continues to run the risk of containing and domesticating Indigenous knowledge, Vizenor's survivance literature provides opportunities for teachers to cast a shadow curriculum as disruptions to the domesticating metaphors and narratives of constructivism. Engaging Indigenous narratives and literary traditions should not be understood as a soothing or contenting activity; narratives are both settling and unsettling as they foster new systems of thought. Indeed, through a more sustained engagement with Native American literary figures, teachers can think curricular practices differently, striving to foster classroom spaces for Indigenous youth survivance hermeneutics. In doing so, classrooms can become sites for the active presence and memoric practices of Indigenous youth wherein their own complexly layered stories of thinking and learning can lead to systemic educational and curricular changes.

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NOTE

1. The work of Gay (2000), Nieto (2004) and Sleeter and Grant (1991), for example, all draw on social constructivist theories of learning to advance culture-based curriculum and culturally relevant pedagogies.

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