

# A Tale of Two Educators: A Case Study

Molly E. Hall-Martin

Carrie L. Wilbert

Summer, 2019

EPLS 7373

## The Educators' Tale Begins...



- *[Students generally] react in one of two ways. They're really surprised, I guess, that they didn't know any of this stuff. Second is they're almost angry that they've lived 20 years and have never learned this stuff even though they grew up in South Dakota or Minnesota. Their reactions to some of the content, especially when settlement occurs and the government's role in the treaties and all of that stuff, they're like, "I had no idea any of this happened." That's the most common feeling from them.*

*—Jon Snow, participant*

# Landmarks for the Tale

Positionality

Research  
Question

Case  
Description

Literature  
Review

Methodology

Content  
Analysis

Emergent  
Themes &  
Findings

Implications

# Positionality of the Tale's Researchers

## Carrie

- White
- Father
  - Career Air Force Officer
- Lived in 10 states and 3 countries
  - Rome, Crete, Germany
- Interpreter
  - American Sign Language
- 20-year break in education
- Counselor Education
- Outsider

## Molly

- Kul Wicasa Oyate Citizen
- Child of an elementary school teacher
- Product of South Dakota public schools
- American Indian Studies degree
- Higher Education
- Former SDBOR staffer
- Former IEAC member

## The Tale's Research Question

What are the experiences of faculty who teach a state-mandated course in American Indian Studies in teacher preparation programs in South Dakota?

# Case Description of the Tale

- South Dakota Indian Education Act, 2007
- INED 211 & INED 411, SDBOR
- Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings & Standards




## The Participants

- Sansa Stark
  - Dakota
  - University administrator turned full-time faculty
  - INED 411, online
- Jon Snow
  - White
  - Minnesotan
  - Middle school teacher turned faculty
  - INED 211, online and in-person

## Oceti Sakowin


Essential Understandings & Standards

Adopted by State Board of Education Standards March 19, 2018



Oceti Sakowin [oh-CHEH-tee shaw-KOH-we] means "Seven Council Fires" and refers collectively to the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota people.

## The Seven Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings

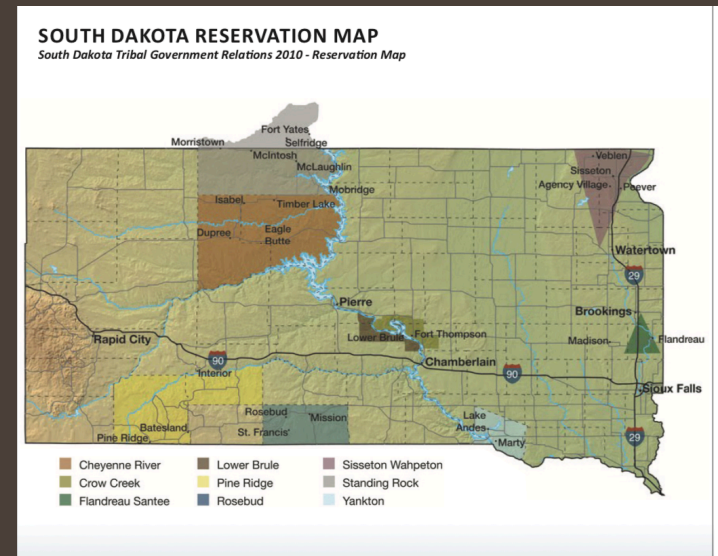


**Wolakota**

"That's the way I try to live my life— in **Wolakota**—in peace, in balance, in harmony. It's a philosophy, it's a way of life...every day, when you walk on earth, you try to live in balance with whatever task you have at hand."

—Oceti Sakowin Elder, Jace DeCory

- OSEU 1: Lands & Environment**  
The original land base and natural resources of the Oceti Sakowin were under communal stewardship prior to immigrant settlement. Oceti Sakowin have a distinct and unique interrelationship with the environment that is essential to South Dakota.
- OSEU 2: Identity & Resiliency**  
There is variety and resiliency among individuals within the Oceti Sakowin Oyata (people) as identity is developed, defined and redefined by entities, by organization, and by people. A continuum of tribal identity, unique to each individual, ranges from assimilated to traditional lifestyle. There is no "generic American Indian."
- OSEU 3: Culture & Language**  
The origin, thought and philosophy of the Oceti Sakowin continues in the contemporary lifestyles of Tribal members. Tribal cultures, traditions and languages are incorporated and observed by many Tribal members both on and off the reservations.
- OSEU 4: Kinship & Harmony**  
Oceti Sakowin kinship systems provide a framework for both individual and group behavior. Its unwritten rules promote harmony, compromise, a sense of order, and group cohesion.
- OSEU 5: Oral Tradition & Story**  
History told from the Oceti Sakowin perspective, through oral tradition and written accounts, frequently conflicts with the stories told by mainstream historians. An analysis of multiple perspectives reveals history in a more inclusive and accurate way.
- OSEU 6: Sovereignty & Treaties**  
Federal policies and treaties put into place throughout American history have affected Oceti Sakowin people adversely. Tribes as sovereign nations have the authority to enter into government to government relationships. Currently, the relationship between each tribe, their states, and the federal government is not the same for each tribe.
- OSEU 7: Way of Life & Development**  
The essential philosophy of the Oceti Sakowin (Way of Life) is based on the values of the Oceti Sakowin which have created resiliency of the Oyata (people). Tribal communities have put considerable effort into education and economic development. Tribal universities and colleges, wellness centers, cultural traditions, and language revitalization.



# Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings

Tribal Crit and  
Critical Race  
Theory  
provides the  
lens to view  
the Tale

TribalCrit (Brayboy,  
2005)



Multicultural  
Education (Williams  
& Evans-Winters,  
2005)

*"But what can I do?"*  
(Pollock et al., 2010)





Methodology  
for analyzing  
the  
Educators'  
Tale

1. Purposive Sample
  2. Interview Format (Virtual)
  3. Open, Axial, Selective Coding
  4. Compare Coding
  5. Themes Emerge
  6. Look for Disconfirmation
- Memoing Throughout

# Triangulation of the Tale

## Content Analysis: Course Syllabi

**Table 1. Content Analysis of Stated Learning Objectives**

Required Course Component	Institution 1	Institution 2
Culture & Language	0	14
History	3	11
Educational Theory & Background	0	4
Implementation & Strategies	6	4

**Table 2. Content Analysis of Course Topics & Major Assignments**

Required Course Component	Institution 1	Institution 2
Culture & Language	9	0
History	6	1
Educational Theory & Background	2	1
Implementation & Strategies	4	3

Themes  
&  
Findings  
from  
The Educators'  
Tale

## Manifest

- Personal Background
  - “So being Dakota and growing up on the reservation, I think it helps me because I can give them my own experiences.”
- Course Content & Purpose
  - “I would say a goal living in South Dakota or being in South Dakota is to change their perceptions.”
- Students
  - “So many are like ‘I had no idea.’ Then they get mad at their K-12 experience.”



Themes  
&  
Findings  
from  
The Educators'  
Tale

Latent

- Law/Policy
  - *"They [administration] said, 'You don't have to take this course, but if you want to work in South Dakota you have to take this course because it is required.'"*
- Racism
  - *"I don't want my students to have those, I don't know if they're racist thoughts or just those negative thoughts about this culture because they haven't learned it."*



# Implications from the Educators' Tale

When the goals for a class involve behavioral change such as those that discuss topics of

Race

Culture

Policy

face-to-face discussion needs to be considered.

- Educators need to be willing to call out racism in their classrooms.
- If Educators are unwilling to call out racism, it seems unreasonable to expect teachers to be willing to address the education system's structural racism and colonialism.

## The Educators' Tale Concludes...



*I also keep track of students who email me at the end of the course and say,*

*'Thank you. I have never heard of this before and I'm so thankful that I get to have this course.'*

*They go on and they tell me that they're going to teach it in their classes, so that's very rewarding...I just think it's a great course. I am so glad that South Dakota requires their teachers to take it." -Sansa*

# References

- Brayboy, B. M. J. (2005). Toward a Tribal Critical Race Theory in Education. *The Urban Review*, 37(5), 425–446.
- Certain teachers required to take course in South Dakota Indian Studies, SDCL § 13-1-58 (2008). Retrieved from [https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified\\_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=13-1-48](https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=13-1-48)
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288.
- Lune, H., & Berg, B. L. (2017). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (9th ed.). New York: Pearson.
- Office of Indian Education. (2018). *Oceti Sakowa Essential Understandings & Standards*. Retrieved from <https://doe.sd.gov/contentstandards/documents/18-OSEUs.pdf>
- Office of Indian Education. (2019). SD Indian Education - History. Retrieved June 4, 2019, from SD Indian Education website: <https://indianeducation.sd.gov/history.aspx>
- Pollock, M., Deckman, S., Mira, M., & Shalaby, C. (2010). “But What Can I Do?”: Three Necessary Tensions in Teaching Teachers About Race. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), 211–224.
- South Dakota Department of Education. (2018). South Dakota Report Card. Retrieved June 5, 2019, from State Report Card 2017-2018 website: <https://doestatereporting.sd.gov/Nimble/asp/Main.aspx>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Thank you

Questions and Comments?