

Title of Presentation: Achieving Thriving Indigenous Communities: colonization as a determinant of health

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Student Submission: No

Topic/Target Audience: Students, educators, program developers, researchers, community

Abstract: Indigenous dispossession and environmental devastation are intertwined outcomes of settler colonialism's cycle of violence. However, indigenous people continue to draw from cultural and spiritual teachings to resist such forms of violence, and engage in what Leanne Simpson calls "radical resurgence." Our paper analyzes the Yakama elders' teachings about Tma'áakni (Respect), to examine principles and forms of indigenous resistance and resurgence, demonstrated by indigenous students in support of the NoDAPL(No Dakota Access PipeLine) and community-led Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls movement. Elders' teachings, which are rooted in spiritual traditions held by indigenous peoples since time immemorial, are useful for understanding and articulating the importance of the contemporary indigenous student activism, and addressing settler colonial white spaces that seek to erase Indigenous peoples and uphold white superiority. As a consequence, public health is lacking deep and meaningful understanding about colonialism as a determinant of health, and its role to undermine Indigenous health. We assert that indigenous people, drawing from intergenerational forms of teaching and learning, provide systemic alternatives that can simultaneously protect the sacred, and heal social and ecological devastations by reclaiming indigenous cultural teachings and traditions that resist settler colonial paradigms. We offer recommendations to address the limitations of current public health training, to promote a workforce, applications, and policies that consider and meet the needs of Indigenous peoples. We will draw on our pilot study into Indigenous values among a sample of Native American participants for the Northwest region.

Objectives:

1. Articulate settler colonial frameworks vs. Indigenous values frameworks
 2. Describe steps the field of public health can take to produce a future workforce that centers Indigenous health, and is equipped to support decolonization
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