

EDST 561A
Reading Assignment
Hisayo Saito

Maracle, Lee. 1996. I am woman: A native perspective on sociology and feminism. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.

I heard this book from a Canadian outdoor educator. I have noticed that First nations, called natives, indigenous people, or aboriginals in other ways, are special in Canada because of colonial history; Especially year 2017 is Canada 150th anniversary, how to do reconciliation has been talked at events. Also, they have a big role of the environmental issues and resource management field, in Canada. We, educators of sustainability, also experienced and aware that first nation's culture is important component in our education. Even though I have attended First Nations' events and heard their stories, I have read their writing not enough. Also, I have a trouble understanding feminism, especially, the connection between sustainability and feminism. The feminism and indigenous perspectives sounded interesting combination for me.

“To destroy life without necessity was a crime.”

This quote applies for everything about the environmental related issues. It explains the problem of consumerism, capitalism; how our economy system, society, our lives are run. The necessity is possibly different depending on how each individual, institution, county, and world define it. However, it is the truth that we are facing the problems because we take the resources from the earth more than we need. As the results we are destroying not only other species, but also ourselves. Criminal is identified and charged by law. In the reality, without law we are committing a crime; it is not only for governments or corporations. Individual is also, for example, when we do not share the foods to others and dump them into garbage bins. It is important to tell this concept to ourselves as educators and pass the concept to our audience/students.

“Nowhere in the white, male conception of history has love been a motive for getting things done. That is unnatural. They can't see love as the force which could be used to move mountains, change history or judge the actions of people. Love/spirit is seen as a womanly thing and thus is scorned.” P23

In this book, the author mentioned grandmothers a lot. She says the needs of woman leader among her people. It is saying in Japan also used be a woman administrated a country. I heard when man gets power, it tends to be a military regime. An Ayurveda doctor also told me, 'Female is heart oriented, and male is brain oriented.' Accepting female power might be the feminism. Instead controlling and influencing certain way, loving and caring can be the solution of every problem.

“Without a firm understanding of what our history was before the settlers came to this land, I cannot understand how we are to regain our birthright as caretakers of this land and continue our history into the future. This understanding cannot

come from the children of my generation alone. It must come from our elders' generation and the memories they cherish of their own grandmothers' words. The translators of the knowledge of our grandmothers must be well versed in their own language and in the language of the English people. And they must possess a deep sense of loyalty to our people." p40

This paragraph represents intergenerational learning is needed to be happened since elders their own learning experience and memories of indigenous traditions. As the land caretakers, the native people need to learn the history even before the land was taken by settlers. As she was mentioned in the earlier chapter, she was writing this book for her people, their traditional knowledge should be collected from their elders and be shared in their community first. As we are outsiders of indigenous community, we should respect their culture and we need to understand their shared knowledge for use in our class or events.

"Success is the by-product of what knowledge a person applies to life; it is the satisfactory achievement of something. Too often success is seen as synonymous with wealth, useful employment or a regular salary." P89-90

I notice myself getting a stable job, higher paid job, high grade at the school, are considered as success rather than satisfaction of gaining knowledge and using it in the real life. It is the reminder of how our society affects our education system. Having stable income is important to sustain our lives financially. But educators, especially, in our field where need harmonized communities for our society to be sustainable.

"In the process of trying to free ourselves, we will learn. Change must be the basis for education and cultural development. It begins with learning. Learning begins with objectifying our condition and the condition of our homeland. To learn "how we are to live among them" does not mean that we should segregate ourselves from or subordinate ourselves to them. It means that we must build a new society based on the positive histories of both. A critical examination of the history of settler society is in order. Likewise, a critical examination of our society is in order." p92

This paragraph explains natives learn their culture when they free from colonization. But the concepts, is useful when people learn something new or something needs to be change. We, educator for sustainability, aim people to change their behavior towards more environmental friendly. We need to build a new society with not only western education, nor first nation's tradition, but also from different background of the culture since we have new immigrants from all over the world in Vancouver.