

Review of: "In the Spirit of Dr. Betty Bastien: Conceptualizing Ontological Responsibilities through the lens of Blackfoot Resilience"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The two aims of providing reference points for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and educators to shape university teaching and learning in ways that are consistent with Niitsitapiyssinni, Blackfoot way of life is surely met within this article that celebrates the ancestral wisdom and vision of Dr Betty Bastien. The notion of ontological responsibility stemming from Bastien's research and elaborated in your paper struck me deeply. As someone who has been attempting to create a bridge of communication between westernised and Indigenous worldviews^[1], I greatly welcome the reference points in this paper and the opportunity to engage in open dialogue, and I wonder if we can extend the boundaries of knowledges associated? While I am mindful that to create universalising generalisations over the specific goes against the values of the particular and may threaten deeper local knowledge, I hope nevertheless that it might be possible to ascertain some commonalities to explicate the problems associated with the history of Western thought. Specifically, that mode of thought arising from the development of the Enlightenment project to associate knowledge with a particular form of reason, which has of course been taken as the only form of reason and has justified the appalling colonialism and genocide of Indigenous peoples the world over.

Positioning your research more widely in this way might allow those of us in non-Indigenous cultures to offer to meet Indigenous scholars such as yourselves for dialogues on how to address the nature of what constitutes knowledge not only in an academic context but also more widely. My own ethnographic research was initially based on working with British Pagans and those following a magical nature-based spirituality, which is in accord to the Blackfoot tenets that you elucidate but which does not, of course, have the embedded ancestral wisdom. I have documented elsewhere my own battles with academia over many years in trying to get knowledge from such an inspired perspective to be taken seriously. It has therefore been a delight to come to know more about Indigenous epistemologies that are relational through participation within secular and sacred relations into an embodied knowing and, as you point out so clearly, how knowing and being are the embodiment of experienced knowledge within relationships of continuous transformation. It is this last point that has the most significance for me, and which is deserving of more scholarly attention in relation to conceptions of time, place, and the 'expanded present'^[2].

So, I'm hoping that you might, in the process of fulfilling your aims for this paper in the honouring of Dr Betty Bastien and her wisdom and vision, extend it so that it encompasses a more general perspective that might be constructive for those of

us that are from and working within Western cultures, those of us that are angry and deeply critical of our cultural histories and the roles that they have played in decimating Indigenous peoples' relational and sacred worldviews?

[1] Susan Greenwood 'Building Bridges of Communication: Seeking Conversation between indigenous and Western Cultures through Magical Consciousness' in *Journal of Consciousness Studies, Indigenous Philosophies of Consciousness edition*, Vol. 30 nos. 5-6 June 2023, pp. 218-231.

[2] Giovanna Parmigiani 'The Spider Dance: Tradition, Time, and Healing in Southern Italy'. Equinox Publishing, forthcoming.