

Re-visiting Vaines: Toward a decolonizing framework for home economics

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Abstract

Dr Eleanore Vaines, was an influential scholar in the field of home economics whose scholarly writing is known throughout the world and many consider her ahead of her time. While it is difficult to create a succinct rendition of the totality of Dr Vaines' scholarship, it is probably fair to say that from the beginning she set out to articulate a new professional orientation for home economics, one that would transform professional practice. She maintained that we must continue to transform home economics professional practice by: recognizing ecology as a unifying theme; understanding many ways of knowing and spheres of influence; seeking wholistic approaches to everyday life; and exploring the sacred nature of our place in the world. In this paper, I argue that implicitly she was challenging the canons, norms, and cognitive imperialism of settler colonialism and its influence on home economics. I focus on the synergies between Vaines' theorizing and post-colonial studies suggesting the ways her work can inform a decolonizing framework for home economics.

KEYWORDS: VAINES, ECOLOGY, DECOLONIZING

Introduction

As a Canadian home economics educator, my values and beliefs regarding home economics have been profoundly influenced by the work of Dr Eleanore Vaines. Since I enrolled undergraduate home economics professional practice course she taught at the University of British Columbia, in the mid-1980s, I have considered her a mentor. I found her arguments for reflective practice in home economics, for accepting an eco-centric philosophical position, and seeking more holistic approaches to everyday life, compelling. In this paper, I review her work in light of current international initiatives to decolonize the academy. I begin with setting the theoretical context by reviewing the literature on decolonization, then I examine Vaines' texts particularly her use of textual strategies to represent reflective practice, and I make the case that the sub-text of her theorizing overlaps with the key actions of decolonization and therefore can assist in beginning the decolonizing of home economics.

The context: A written statement that precedes

Theoretical perspective

I locate this study in post-colonial studies (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2006). Post-colonialism addresses the effects of colonization. Post-colonial theory takes a basic position against imperialism and promoting patriotism to the Motherland and Euro-centricity (de Zwart, 2005). It is important to note that the *post* in post-colonialism does not imply that colonialism has ended, but rather its ongoing consequences are contested (Hickling-Hudson, Matthews, & Woods, 2004). I begin with a short discussion of the concept of decolonization. Then I do a "post colonial reading" (Ashcroft, Griffiths,

Smith, M. G. (2019). Re-visiting Vaines: Toward a decolonizing framework for home economics. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 12(2), 11-23.

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& Tiffin, 2013, p. 173) of Vaines' (1988, 1997a) notion of a reflective practice journey. While most post-colonial readings tend to interrogate with the intent of drawing deliberate attention to the profound and inescapable effects of colonization, I do the opposite and take an appreciative inquiry approach (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003; Whitney & Cooperrider, 2011) focusing on the best of what is implied in Vaines' work that implies decolonization in order to build a foundation for the future. Appreciative inquiry is a more positive form of inquiry that is generative, building on the qualities that are already available to us (Norum, 2008).

I have chosen to use *decolonizing* rather than *indigenization*. As I am not indigenous (see note 1. pp. 21) and I believe *indigenizing* is the role of indigenous scholars. While attending to Indigenous thought is crucial, a focus on *Indigenizing* might encourage the avoidance of self-critical work required of decolonization allowing colonial institutions to maintain their power and affirming Eurocentric superiority (Battiste, 2016; Hill, 2012). Decolonization puts the colonizer at the center of attention and has the potential of resisting re-colonization, a subsequent colonization and exploitation on the part of institutions that exploits Indigenous peoples' knowledge in pursuit of neo-colonial goals. As a white settler, I can address my role and the role of my profession in colonization.

The context: A situation in which something exists

Colonization and decolonization

In order to understand colonialism one needs to understand its history. According to Said (1978), colonialism is a consequence of imperialism. The term colony comes from the Latin word *colonus*, meaning farmer which indicates that typically the practice colonialism involved the transfer of people to a new territory, where they lived as permanent settlers but maintained political allegiance to their country of origin. Imperialism comes from the Latin term *imperium*, meaning to command. Thus, the term imperialism draws attention to the way that the country of origin exercises power over the new territory. The term colonialism is frequently used to describe settlements in North America, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, and South America that were controlled by a large population of permanent European residents.

The field of postcolonial studies was influenced by Edward Said's (1978) book *Orientalism*. He conducted a discourse analysis of the production of knowledge about the Middle East and used the term orientalism to describe a set of concepts, assumptions, and discursive practices that were used to produce, interpret, and evaluate knowledge about non-European peoples. This mindset of the colonizer which characterizes the colonized as exotic, primitive and inferior allowed and continues to allow, the colonizer to rationalize imperial conquest. Said's analysis made it possible for scholars to deconstruct literary and historical texts in order to understand how they reflected and reinforced the imperialist project. Attention is directed to the philosophical, political, economic and sociocultural consequences of colonialism and questioning claims of academic knowledge and intellectual authority.

Indigenous Peoples all over the world have faced a similar fate at the hands of colonizing powers. This includes loss of their land; assaults on their language and culture; subjugation and enslavement; dismissal of their spirituality; economic exploitation of their art and plant knowledge without consent, acknowledgement, or benefit to them; and the imposition of the superiority of Western knowledge, rationality, science and civilization (Bradley & Herrera, 2016; Hall & Tandon, 2017; Patel, 2015).

My ancestors came from Ireland, France, Norway, and Scotland to settle in Canada for access to land and a better life. They were settler colonialist. Settler colonialism is a distinct type of colonialism in which outsiders come to a land inhabited by Indigenous people and claim it as theirs (Tuck, McKenzie, & McCoy, 2014). Settler colonizing involves the replacement of indigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity of political dominance over Indigenous peoples (Barker & Battell Lowman, n.d.). As Tuck (2016) explains:

Settler colonialism is different from other colonial formations that focus on extractions of labour and resources: often, in addition to these extractions, settler colonialism is ultimately about the pursuit of land for settlement. Settler colonialism requires the destruction of Indigenous communities to clear the land for settlement. Through

genocide, assimilation, appropriation, and state violence, Indigenous presence is erased.
(p. 150)

Colonial educational institutions have been and continue to be, complicit in the colonial project of normalizing Western epistemologies and erasure of Indigenous presence (Ball, 1983; Khalifa, Khalil, Marsh, & Halloran, 2018; Tuck, 2016; Willinsky, 1998). Academies have been dominated by epistemologies that have devalued Indigenous ways of knowing and set the context for continued marginalization of Indigenous students, communities, culture and histories. For example, Griffith (2018) describes education in Canada as

riddled with ideologies and colonial constructions that extend the project of imperialism, and white supremacy. Consequently, Indigenous knowledge has been eliminated, leaving the Canadian education system to be one that thrives on placing significance on Western Eurocentric knowledges, thus only encouraging students and educators to further negate the value of Indigenous knowledge. (p. 29)

Using processes such as *orientalism* (Said, 1978), *cognitive imperialism* (Battiste, 2011), *neo-colonialism* (Ryan, 2008), *epistemicide* (Hall & Tandon, 2017; Hall, 2016), and *invisibilizing, normalizing, and othering* (Khalifa, Khalil, Marsh, & Halloran, 2018) educational institutions have systematically ensured the dominance of the colonizers. Orientalism involves essentializing societies as static and undeveloped, inferior and primitive that can be studied, depicted and reproduced by the dominant society, which is superior (Khalifa et al., 2018; Said, 1978). Cognitive imperialism seeks to validate one source of knowledge and the result is assimilation of the dominant values and norms, languages. Neo-colonialism refers to actions that continue to maintain the colonial influence, either those of the colonial rulers or new practices of capitalism, globalisation and cultural imperialism. Epistemicide refers to the killing of Indigenous knowledge systems. When epistemology of the colonizer becomes *normal*, indigenous knowledge becomes the *other* and is invisible. These frameworks operate and are reproduced in the social and structural organization of educational systems, in curriculum, instructional practices, assessment and evaluation, and so on.

Although there is great diversity and depth in decolonial theories (Battiste, 2013), there is fairly common agreement that decolonization is “the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms” (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 56). Here, decolonization is understood as “an intensely political transformative process” moving from awareness to responsibility “with the goal of regenerating Indigenous nationhood and place-relationships while dismantling structures of settler colonialism” (Battell Lowman & Barker, 2016, p. 111).

Aside from de Zwart’s (2005) use of *white sauce* as a metaphor for colonialism in home economics, Bermúdez, Muruthi, and Jordan’s (2016) call for decolonizing research in family science, and McDowell and Hernández’s (2010) framework for supporting decolonizing practices family therapy, I found little evidence of attention to decolonization in the home economics (see note 2., p. xx) literature. There are many reports in other areas of actions to address decolonizing particularly education at all levels (Battiste, 2016, 2013; Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002; Griffith, 2018; Hall & Tandon, 2017; Mbembe, 2016). There are on-going discussions in other disciplines and fields of study, for example, social work (Clark et al., 2010; Coates, 2016; Gray, Coates, & Hetherington, 2016; Ibrahima & Mattaini, 2019), health (Darroch & Giles, 2014), psychiatry (Sherwood, 2009), science (Aikenhead, 2006; Ryan, 2008), food studies (Bradley & Herrera, 2016), citizenship education (Smith & Rogers, 2016), and research methodology (Aveling, 2013; Patel, 2015; Smith, 2013) to give but a few examples. These studies illustrate that more scholars are adopting the process of decolonizing to challenge colonial paradigms and research methods.

As a cautionary note, Tuck and Yang (2012) have critiqued the recent proliferation of decolonization warning of the danger of it becoming a metaphor that, “kills the very possibility of decolonization; it resettles whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler” (p. 3). They echo Popkewitz (1980) who used the term *slogan system* to describe when an initiative becomes a rallying cry without regard for the underlying values or social interests being served.

The text: Information supplied by a source

The theorizing of Eleanore Vaines, an invitation to decolonizing?

I now turn to the scholarship of Dr Eleanore Vaines, professor emeritus of the School of Family and Nutritional Sciences at the University of British Columbia. Dr Vaines taught the professional courses in the home economics degree program from the early 1980s until her retirement in 2000. Her writing could be characterized as an on-going systematic examination of professional practice. In the early years, she advocated the role of a professional home economist as a “transforming actor” concerned with “social action because we are concerned with improving the social condition,” emphasizing critical thinking that supports the “possibility for every person to participate in and realize meaning in their lives and to live in harmony with other global citizens” (Vaines, 1983). In order to make this view, which she labeled reflective practice, clear, she originally contrasted it with “customary practice” (basically an atheoretical approach preserving the traditions of the profession), “instrumental practice” (applying the laws of science, guided by empirical theories), “interactive practice” (seeking to understand using interpretive theory and historical analysis) (Vaines & Wilson, 1986; Wilson & Vaines, 1985). Over the years she continued to conceptualize what reflective practice could mean for home economics, with the last documented version in 1997 (Vaines, 1997a), describing *the Reflective Practice Journey*.

For the sake of space I share Figure 1, *Becoming a Professional Home Economist: Finding Our Way of Being in the World*, published in 1997 (Vaines, 1997a, 1997b). Vaines called this figure “another stage of translating Reflective Practice for HE” (1997a, p. 12) and it was published near her retirement.

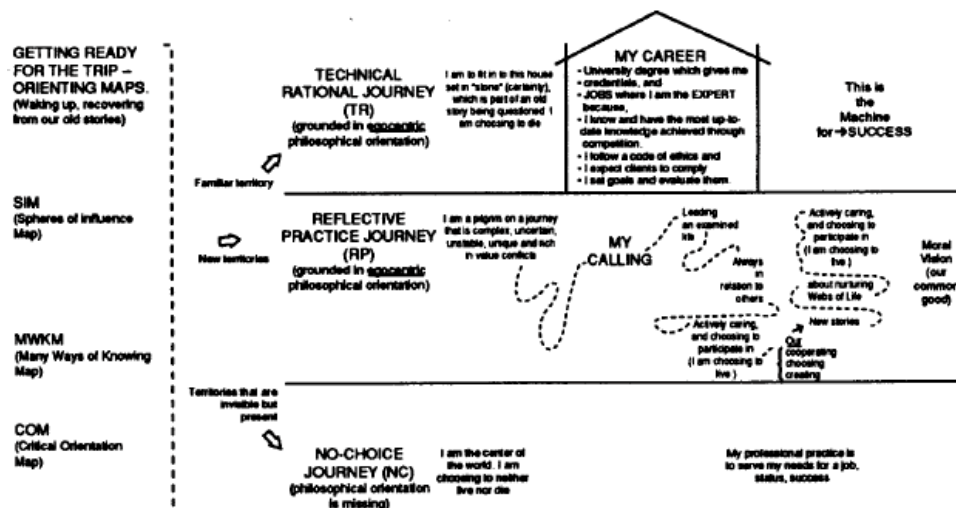


Figure 1 Becoming a Professional Home Economist: Finding Our Way of Being in the World (Vaines, 1997a; 1997b)

She introduced the figure:

When I discovered Reflective Practice in the early 1980s I was immediately drawn to it as a way of being in the world. Grounded in the metaphor the WORLD IS OUR HOME, I felt “at home”. I still do not fully understand Reflective Practice. To say that I do would mean that I am practicing RP fully. But I see my life and my work as more of a calling than a career. I believe I must learn to think in wholes and honor the details that help sustain webs of life. I believe the role of a professional is to listen, facilitate and learn together with those we seek to help (Vaines, 1997a, p. 1).

She contrasts a Reflective Practice Journey located in eco-centered philosophy to two other common perspectives on professional practice. One she labels *No Choice* corresponding to her earlier view of customary practice. It has no particular philosophical underpinning, while the other; a technical rational journey is informed by ego-centered instrumental philosophy.

Getting ready for the trip: Spheres of Influence Map

In the left margin of Figure 1, Getting Ready for the Trip, three Orienting Maps are provided to prepare home economics professionals for the Reflective Practice Journey. The first is the Spheres of Influence Map (Figure 2).

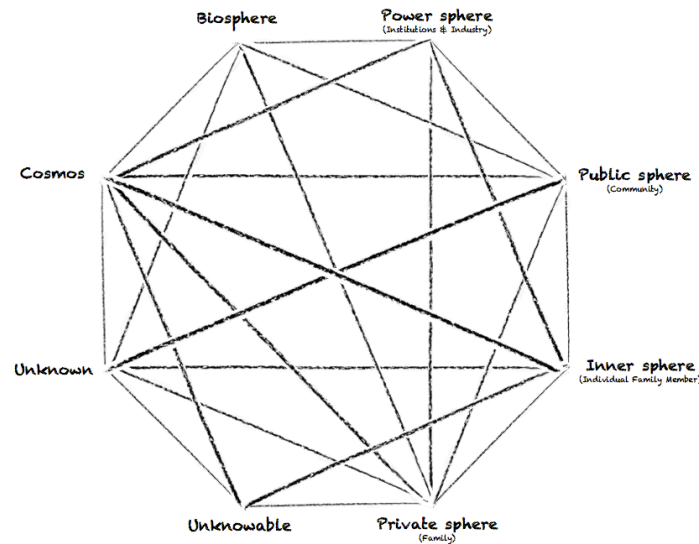


Figure 2 Spheres of Influence Map (Vaines, 1996).

In an unpublished paper, Vaines (1996) describes the different spheres and why it is important to acknowledge their significance for the home economics professional. She claims

every system is related to every other system in some way and to some degree and the whole of these parts is greater than the sum of their parts. The Spheres of Influence integrated as a whole interactive interdependent system provides a way for the HMEC community to examine and critique fundamental changes. It energizes a movement...to a view, which reflects a more complex lived reality [necessary] to participate in shaping a culture of decency. This new story is about working together to live a moral vision of what it means to be human and live together in harmony. It is a harmony full of diversity, mystery and complexity. (n.p.)

She goes on to explain the spheres are grounded in metaphor(s) that are intimately inter-related.

The metaphor that underlies cosmos and Biosphere is World as Home. The metaphor that is the foundation of the Power Sphere is World as Machine. The Public, Private and Inner Spheres are situated in three interrelated metaphors: Home as Factory, Home as Interrelationships and Home as Moral Center. These are lived out in the street, the home, and within the self. The Known/Unknown Sphere of Influence is affected by all the underlying metaphors and the tensions these create between and among them. (p. 15)

She concludes:

If only one metaphor dominates, long-term consequences are manifested in pathologies and impoverished human understandings and experiences. Lived as a coherent whole, these metaphors provide rich possibilities for a moral vision guiding thought and action. (p. 15)

Getting ready for the trip: Many Ways of Knowing Map

The second orienting map is Many Ways of Knowing Map is actually presented in two parts: Part 1 an image (Figure 3); and Part 2 a chart (Table 1).

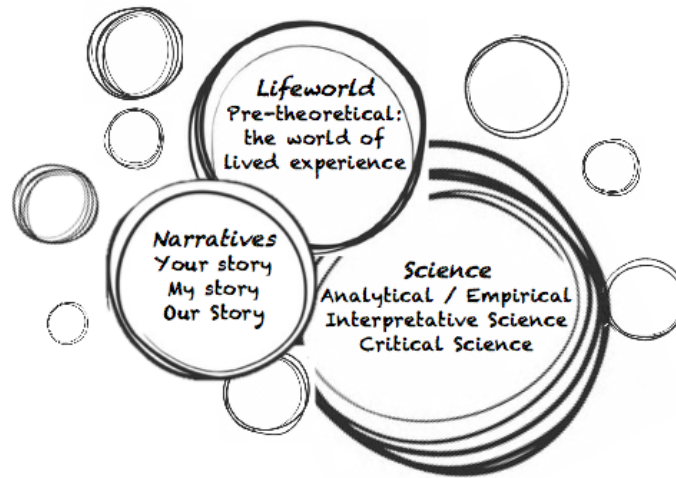


Figure 3 Many Ways of Knowing Map (Vaines, 1993)

The *Many Ways of Knowing Map* demonstrates that relying on scientific, positivistic, ways of knowing which has dominated the field is incomplete. She identifies at least two other ways of knowing that we should consider: lifeworld, the knowing of lived experience; and narrative ways of knowing, the knowing from storying. But her diagram also indicates that there are also many other as yet named ways of knowing to be explored.

To elaborate what the *Many Ways of Knowing Map* means for Home Economics, she created an additional “map” in the form of a chart, *Many Ways of Knowing Map 2* (Vaines, 1996). I only reproduce the section of that chart related to the *Reflective Practice Journey*, which she describes as a “wholistic view” and a “family perspective on everyday life” (Table 1). In it, she outlines some of the underlying beliefs and concepts and shows what using many ways of knowing might look like in professional practice.

Table 1 Excerpt from *Many Ways of Knowing Map 2* (Vaines, 1993)

Family Perspective on Everyday Life (Wholistic View)	
Worldview	World is an intimately interrelated, organic whole; our Home
Way of Knowing	<i>Integrating</i> : knowing, seeing, becoming, grounded in ethics of caring and a search for wisdom
Meaning of the Everyday	A family view, the world a complex, WEBS OF LIFE, “transactional”, community; intersubjective and interdependent
Story Theme	Empowered through active participation in shaping our new story together
Sphere(s) of Influence	All Spheres of Influence as an interdependent whole
Language	Brings together all the above to discover a way of being sustainable and meaningful users who are in intersubjective, intergenerational relationships
Time	Temporal
Place/Space	Family as environment, and Family in the near environment, Home in relation to the World as Home
Reveals	A wholeness rather than fragmentation of everyday life (politics, institution, and language are intimately interrelated); moral vision of everyday life is revealed together. WEBS OF LIFE.

Vaines (1993, 1995, 1997a, 1997b) believed that the valued end of reflective practice was to seek ways of realizing a moral vision which brings together many ways of knowing in order to view the work of the profession as part of an interconnected whole. She was concerned that when knowledge and stories are viewed as separate and estranged, oppression and contradictions blind participants

to the full possibilities of what it means to be human and live together in harmony. She claimed that when ways of knowing are interwoven, our comprehension of the everyday lives of families opens up to richer and fuller meanings. This can result in more meaningful curriculum development, more relevant research and better questions in the guiding of practice and policy formation.

Getting ready for the trip: Critical Orientation Map

In the late 1980s, Eleanore Vaines began to explore ecology as a unifying theme for transforming Home Economics and the reflective home economics professional. In 1988, she created a chart, *Contrasts Between Two Reality Modes*, demonstrating the tensions between two philosophical positions: ego-centred and eco-centred reality modes. The eco-centered reality mode is based on an ecological worldview where: everything is related to everything in some way; organisms are embedded in community, they are interdependent, in reciprocal relation; persons see themselves as part of a whole; there is a blending of past/present/future; and the world is our home (Vaines, 1990). She continued to develop this line of philosophical reasoning and in 1994 published an article in the *Canadian Home Economics Journal* suggesting that the field of Home Economics could become “a leader by living the metaphor, World As Home” (Vaines, 1994, p. 62) if it adopted the notion of ecology “as two inter-related generalizations: Every living system is related to every other living system in some way and to some degree, and the whole of these systems is greater than the sum of their parts” (p. 60). In articulating ecology as unifying theme for home economics, Vaines (1994) asks us to “imagine ourselves in harmony with air, water, people, plants and events” and to see that “our actions come to reflect our connectedness, our symbiotic relationship with everything and everyone” (p. 10). In doing so, the ordinary, the mundane task of everyday life such as food provision, acquiring water, taking care of children and the elderly, all the “perennial practical problems” of families, become meaningful and sacred. Thus, ecology, for Vaines, is also a way for home economics professionals to talk about a particular quality of life worth living, a moral vision of everyday life related to the common good. In an early version of the *Critical Orientation Map* (Vaines, 1990) (this map was also presented as Characteristics of Philosophical Positions by Vaines in 1990) she outlines three philosophical positions that appear to be providing the foundational values and beliefs for professional practice: the ego-centric position; the eco-centered position; and the uncommitted position. In a later version, titled Modes of Practice Map (Vaines, 1997b), she linked these positions with reflective practice, technical rational practices, and no choice mode of practice respectively. It is clear that Vaines considers the eco-centered/reflective practice orientation the most ethically defensible position for home economists to hold so I include an excerpt from the map that provides a description of that orientation.

Table 2 Reflective Practice from Modes of Practice: Three Territories And Their Boundaries (Vaines, 1997b).

Mode of practice	Reflective Practice
Philosophical Foundation	Practical science as a moral basis. Axiology (what is good?) is the focus of theory-practice activities. Eco-centered.
Grounding Metaphor	The World is our Home (organic wholeness)
Historical Grounding	Everyday life is in harmony with pre-theoretical, the natural attitude which engages persons in making choices (organic worldview)
View of the Field	A complex and sophisticated field with a mission grounded in a moral vision. HE/FCSE is a profession that is informed by a mission.
Being a Professional	A calling one is socialized into in order to share gifts with others in the community context to fulfill the mission of the field in socially responsible ways.
Dominant Way(s) of Knowing	A blending of science (analytical-empirical, interpretive and critical), narrative, and lifeworld ways of knowing. Theory and practice are interrelated.
Place of Values/Moral	The meta-theoretical assumptions show that the setting aside of truth in favor of morality is one of the distinguishing features.
Place of Power	Through each person's active participation in everyday life, they can choose to empower themselves by working with others. They define their own needs and the best answer for them.
Everyday Life	The extraordinary nature of everyday life is discovered in the mundane, the taken-for-granted. Everyday life is sacred.
Vision of End of Practice	For individuals and families to empower themselves as active participants in shaping a new story. A moral vision involving seeking a common good for all living systems in socially responsible ways.

According to Vaines (1997b), Reflective Practice can be manifested in many ways. Embracing Reflective Practice is not simply a matter of acquiring and utilizing new ideas and techniques. It is rather a matter of becoming a person *choosing to make visible and open to examination all that one believes, knows, and does*. Reflective Practitioners must *see themselves and others as a community of learners rather than passive students*. Central to learning communities is listening because it enhances relationships with others and is as important as the telling of scientific knowledge. Dialoguing then provides a means of working together and growing to care for and appreciate other viewpoints.

Sub-text: Reading between the lines—What is implied?

A decolonized home economics?

In re-reading Vaines' work, it struck me that in it there were aspects of her work that could be considered decolonizing. According to Battiste (2004) "postcolonial is not only about the criticism and deconstruction of colonization and domination, but also about the reconstruction and transformation" (p. 2). It is possible to consider the "maps" Vaines created as a form of deconstruction and reconstruction. Deconstruction in the form of conscientization (Smith, 2003) making the profession aware of, and challenging, the two common views of professional practice—the technical-rational journey and the no choice journey. Vaines points out the weaknesses of a technical rationale approach such as transmitting accumulated scientific knowledge with knowing as remembering information, telling people how to achieve a good life, accepting that the profession is compartmentalized in to separate spheres, and setting out to solve problems that the professional defines to fulfill clients' perceived wants and needs—all forms of cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2013). She outlines the limitation of a no choice attitude such as using the profession to serve one's own interest for status and success, maintaining current norms, responding to what is, and doing the job in the most economically beneficial way—all values associated with settler colonialism. Then she offers a *reconstruction*—the reflective practice journey. The reconstruction was a vision of a transformed home economics that resonates with the deconstruction literature in that it moves beyond the technical rational view (Munroe, Borden, Murray Orr, Toney, & Meader, 2013), emphasizes the co-construction of knowledge (Khalifa et al., 2018 and a shared collective vision (Smith, 2003), eschews the dominant ways of knowing and being (Ibrahima & Mattaini, 2019) in order to *change the order of the world* (Tuck, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Intertextuality: The recognizable echoes of other texts in a text

Possibilities for decolonizing home economics

Although Vaines does not describe her work as decolonization and there is no mention of Indigenous perspectives, there are aspects of her work that resonate with decolonial scholarship and Indigenous studies. In this section in the spirit of appreciative inquiry, I ask "in what ways can Vaines' theorizing of the Reflective Practice Journey assist us with decolonizing home economics? What concepts are available to us that we can build on?"

I suggest that there are at least five characteristics of Vaines' Reflective Practice Journey that echo recommendations in decolonization literature the could set the stage for decolonizing home economics: the world as home; recognizing ecology as a unifying theme; understanding many ways of knowing and spheres of influence; seeking wholistic approaches to everyday life; and exploring the sacred nature of our place in the world. They are not mutually exclusive but I discuss each separately.

By making clear that the *home* in *home economics* is the "World as Home" (Vaines, 1994, p. 62), Vaines' theorizing echoes a shared Indigenous value with respect to their relationship with the natural world- the unification of the human community with the natural world (Miller, 2008; Royal, 2002). Thus, implies taking a decolonial stance against the settler-colonial anthropocentric point of view that privileges human/nature separation.

By identifying ecology as a unifying theme Vaines was echoing one of the earliest founders of home economics Ellen Swallow Richards, who said "The quality of life, depends upon the ability of society to teach its members how to live in harmony with their environment—defined first as family, then the community, then the world and its resources" (as cited in Zack, 2002, p. 23). Thus both advocate

home economics as the study of how the Earth Household works and the relationships that interlink all members of the Earth Household. This resonates with Indigenous conceptions of being as connected to the earth's rhythms and Mother Earth and thus can be interpreted as a decolonizing movement questioning the individualistic view of Western superiority that sees the earth as a resource to be exploited for material gain (Hill, 2012).

By acknowledging many ways of knowing, including lifeworld, narrative/storytelling and several additional unnamed possibilities (Fig. 3), Vaines was challenging the dominant Euro-western narrative or *regime of truth* of scientific empiricism as the only legitimate source of knowledge (Smith, 2013) and opening the door to validating Indigenous knowledges, epistemologies and ontologies (Battiste, 2013; Hill, 2012; Regan, 2010; Smith, 2005). This could be interpreted as an decolonizing action aimed at avoiding erasing, excluding, trivializing or devaluing Indigenous ways of knowing as has been so common in colonial literature (Battiste, 2013; Brown & Strega, 2005; Smith, 2013).

Her use of wholism/wholesight is similar to the importance that Indigenous knowledges place on life and being as wholistic, complex, and interdependent (Archibald et al., 1995; Patel, 2015; Pidgeon 2016). It resonates the decolonial move of challenging the abstraction and decontextualization so characteristic of modernist scientific knowledge and Western epistemic traditions that claim detachment of the known from the knower (Patel, 2015). In critiquing compartmentalizing a whole into its parts, Vaines echoes Battiste (2013) who claims such compartmentalization is endemic to colonization and control.

Vaines' notion of the sacred nature of everyday life also resonates with Indigenous philosophies. Miller (2008) poignantly affirms that an Indigenous paradigm holds that "because everything in the cosmos is sacred, all human activities are sacred" (p. 28).

For Aboriginal people the future is predictable, we will survive to the extent that we believe we are the breath of life and thus hold the essential knowledge of living in a sacred trust for those that follow. There are many Aboriginal legends and teachings cautioning us against believing we are the embodiment of life. (Blackstock, 2007, p. 69)

In an Indigenous approach, there is "an inseparable weave of secular and sacred dimensions" (Hoffman, 2013, p. 190). Vaines' acknowledgement of the spiritual could also be interpreted as decolonizing.

Decolonizing home economics: Where to start

In this paper, I have highlighted the scholarship of Dr Eleanore Vaines and its contribution to the field of Home Economics cautiously suggesting that her maps are both normative and pedagogical tools with a decolonization sub-text and her key concepts—the world is our home; ecology as a unifying theme; many ways of knowing; wholism; and the sacred nature of everyday life—could be the starting point for continued decolonizing the profession.

Decolonizing is not an event that happens once for all at a given time and place, but an ongoing process (Battiste, 2013, Smith, 2013). In a previous paper (Smith, 2019), I have suggested that decolonizing home economics would require a multi-pronged approach that could involve the following: beginning with self-work; seeking methods to decolonize curriculum and pedagogy; and decolonizing research.

Begin with self-work

Decolonizing needs to begin within the mind and spirit of professionals so that they can seek to accept that there are worldviews that exist other than the dominant Western perspective and acknowledge that many current practices exist within a Eurocentric framework (Smith, 2016). Much history has been hidden or suppressed unintentionally and intentionally, and there is so much ignorance that needs to be overcome (Battiste, 2013). What do we know about colonialism? How have we been complicit in the colonial project? Do our goals, purposes and mission statements have traces of imperialism and assimilation? Do they assert the presence and humanity of Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2013; Smith, 2013)? Do they advocate restoring Indigenous control over their lands, and support Indigenous rights to control and possess their knowledge, languages, and cultures (Hill, 2012; Khalifa et al., 2018)? Do they support action in the struggle for a fairer and healthier world? (Hall &

Tandon, 2017). Decolonial praxis is the processes, methods, and practices of unsettling the “everyday routines that reassert colonial social relations” (Gahman & Legault, 2017, pp. 8).

Our responsibility is to make a commitment to both unlearn and learn –to unlearn racism and superiority in all its manifestations, while examining our own social constructions in our judgments and learn new ways of knowing, valuing others, accepting diversity, and making equity and inclusion foundations for all. (Battiste, 2013, p. 166).

Seek methods to decolonize our curriculum content and pedagogy

We need to seek methods to decolonize our curriculum content and pedagogy (Archibald, 2008; Battiste, 2013, 2016; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003; Tejeda, Espinoza, & Gutierrez, 2003). Is our curriculum Eurocentric? Does it require unmasking whiteness (de Zwart, 2005; McKay, 1999)? Is the portrayal of Indigenous peoples fragmented, distorted, tokenistic, othering? (Kivel, 2002; Said, 1978). Do they explain the impact of colonization? (Battiste, 2013). Do they undo the racist legacies of the past? (Mbembe, 2016). Do they foster many ways of knowing? Do they include eco-spiritual approaches? (Coates & Hetherington, 2016b). Have we worked with Indigenous communities, their leaders and elders to articulate Indigenous knowledge for a culturally responsive place-based curriculum? (Battiste, 2004; Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002).

Educators must reject colonial curricula that offer students a fragmented and distorted picture of Indigenous peoples, and offer students a critical perspective of the historical context that created that fragmentation. In order to effect change, educators must help students understand the Eurocentric assumptions of superiority within the context of history and to recognize the continued dominance of these assumptions in all forms of contemporary knowledge. (Battiste, 2013, p. 186)

Decolonize our research

So much research with/on Indigenous people has perpetuated colonial relationships among people, practices, and land (Patel, 2015) that research for indigenous people has been a negative experience, a metaphor for colonialism (Smith, 2013). Therefore we need to learn to conduct research “in ways that meet the needs of Indigenous communities and are non-exploitative, culturally appropriate and inclusive, or we need to relinquish our roles as researchers within Indigenous contexts and make way for Indigenous researchers” (Aveling, 2013, p. 204). References such as *Decolonizing Methodologies*, outlined by L. T. Smith (2013) and others (Bermúdez et al., 2016; Brown & Strega, 2005; Darroch & Giles, 2014; Dawson, Toombs, & Mushquash, 2017; Patel, 2015) can provide guidance.

Conclusion

Decolonization is not easy, especially since this movement is occurring in a world with a deeply seated colonial structure and a long history the colonization of Indigenous peoples (Pidgeon, 2016) and many of us are caught in-between as we remain “implicated by our own participation in systems that are rooted in Eurocentric, colonialist and oppressive traditions” (Asher, 2009, p. 8). Stirling (2015) points out we will be “caught in political and practical conundrums as [we] attempt to engage in decolonization” (p. xi). However, if we believe, like Vaines (1997) that we must take the Reflective Practice Journey,

grounded in ecocentric philosophy, where we are pilgrims on a journey that is complex, uncertain, unstable, unique and rich in value conflicts [guided by a] calling [that requires us] to lead and examine life always in relation with others, actively choosing to participate in creating new stories about nurturing webs of life in the world our home, guided by a moral vision of our common good (p. 12)

we can do no other.

Biography

Mary Gale Smith is a sessional lecturer in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. She is a retired home economics teacher with experience teaching K to 12, in home economics and general teacher education programs, and graduate-level curriculum and instruction and research methods courses. Her current research

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Author notes

1. In this paper, I use the terms *Aboriginal*, *Indigenous*, *First Nations*, and *First Peoples* interchangeably. I recognize that there are subtle differences and each has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, *Aboriginal*, when used in the Canadian context refers to the first inhabitants of Canada, and includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and is not to be confused with the common term for the Indigenous peoples of Australia. The term *First Nations* is useful because the emphasis is placed on the plural recognizing the diversity of people but it doesn't recognize Metis. *Indigenous* is a term used most frequently used in an international, transnational, or global context, for example, UN documents. I do not use the term *Indian* preferring instead to name the nation identity, e.g., Gitksan, Blackfoot, although the term *Indian* in Canada can be used as legal identity of a First Nations' person who is registered under the Indian Act.
2. My preference is to use *home economics* as a keyword but in my searches, I also used *home science*, *family science*, *human ecology*, *family studies*, *family and consumer science* and *domestic science* as other descriptors used for the field of study.

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