Chapter 11

Indigenous peoples, sport and sustainability

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Introduction

Sport in the Indigenous context of Canada is a complex and diverse cultural space. It is a space rooted in modernist, Eurocentric philosophies and values, and deeply connected to the history of settler colonialism that sought to erase Indigenous physical cultural practices and the philosophies that informed them. Within this space, Indigenous peoples' participation has been marked by struggles to gain access to a colonized terrain that worked to normalize racialized notions of Indigenous inferiority and European superiority. This history, in turn, informs both the ostensible need for "development" in Indigenous communities as well as the ways in which sport has been integrated into such development programs. Indeed, the emergence of contemporary Sport for Development (SFD) programming directed at Indigenous communities – including, for example Right to Play's Promoting Life skills in Aboriginal Youth Program (PLAY) – are in many ways part of this history, and bespeak broader questions about power, resistance, and the reproduction of cultural values and societal norms that muddy the already complex landscape of Indigenous identities and cultural resurgence.

Within this milieu of sporting practices and socio-cultural tensions exist instances of Indigenous communities mobilizing to revitalize traditional land-based physical cultural practices built upon an Indigenous understanding of *relationship* (Wilson, 2008). Such a notion of relationship articulates an Indigenous philosophy of how to exist in the world as human beings, in a manner that often differs from Eurocentric conceptions of development and that may better account for "sustainable" relationships with the land and "traditional" culture. These tensions between sport, development and sustainability in turn highlight broader points of conflict surrounding Indigenous philosophies of relationship and Western notions of sustainable development.

In this chapter, we aim to address some of these tensions and challenges regarding Sport for Development and environmental sustainability in the Indigenous context. It is our contention that SFD programs in the Indigenous context are often problematic given the role of sport

within histories of colonization and the potential of sport to perpetuate neo-colonialism. We further argue that SFD is often situated within notions of modernity in ways that make it difficult for such approaches to appreciate sustainability in the Indigenous context. We also suggest that, at this juncture, the discussions surrounding Indigenous knowledge within such programs create more questions than answers because of the fragmentation of knowledge that has occurred through colonization. As such, we attempt to privilege Indigenous perspectives that expose the tensions within Western knowledge and practices, and further Grande's (2011) call for a "resurrection of intellectualism and a resuscitation of the dialectic" (p. 42) that opens space for dialogue and criticism of Western values and knowledge that have become normalized. As such, this chapter attempts to highlight some of the questions, challenges and tensions that exist between Indigenous knowledge, sport and notions of environmental sustainability.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to offer a note on terminology. A major challenge in discussing Indigenous peoples and knowledge is how to appropriately identify and represent a diverse group of people whose lives and cultures have been affected by colonialism. In this text, we use the term "Indigenous peoples" in reference to those who self-identify as Indigenous and to those cultures that existed on the North American continent prior to the arrival of European settlers. As Smith (2012) articulates, the term "Indigenous peoples" has allowed for a collective voice for those who:

> share experiences as peoples who have been subjected to the colonization of their lands and cultures, and the denial of their sovereignty by a colonizing society that has come to dominate and determine the shape and quality of their lives.
>
> (p. 39)

It is crucial that the term not be construed to mean that Indigenous cultures are monolithic or that contemporary Indigenous experiences are akin to the popular perception of an impoverished group of peoples that reside solely on reserves in the remote northern geographic regions of Canada. Instead, our usage is intended to situate Indigenous peoples within a colonial reality that has critical implications for discussions of sport and environmental sustainability. As such, it must be stated that any criticism within this text comes from an Indigenous scholarly standpoint that starts from a place of opposition and critique of colonialism inasmuch as it draws from specific cultural knowledge.

Another challenge within the Indigenous context is related to how to discuss and contextualize sport. As Kidd (2008) discusses, international development through sport has a long history, and most recently has been conceptualized as a "movement" known as Sport for Development and Peace

(SDP). In an overview of the history and landscape of this movement, Kidd makes a distinction between sport development (SD) and Sport for Development. He argues that SD is mostly connected to sport organizations that take as their goal to develop the capacity of sports in various contexts, whereas SFD is primarily concerned with utilizing sport as a vehicle to advance broad social development goals. He states, however, that the defining line between SD and SFD is "often blurred in rhetoric and practice" (p. 373). This point is especially pertinent within the Indigenous context, where SD and SFD have often occurred simultaneously, and with similar goals of social development. Further, while the provision and expansion of sport opportunities, along with other forms of Eurocentric leisure, was conducted ostensibly as a way to support the "development" of Indigenous people, sport was also being utilized to supplant Indigenous cultural practices (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006; Fox, 2006, 2007) with the implicit and explicit goals of assimilation. It is thus important to acknowledge that Indigenous critiques do not necessarily make a hard distinction between SD versus SFD because both have been – and can be – complicit in colonial practices. With these caveats in mind, the chapter proceeds by offering a brief word on the historical use of SFD in the Indigenous context before tracing these histories through the contemporary context. We then offer a discussion of sport and modernity and examine how modernist underpinnings continue to inform SFD and sustainable development in Indigenous communities. The chapter concludes by providing some insights into how sustainable relationships through sport – informed by Indigeneity – might take form in future.

A brief history of sport and SFD in the Indigenous context

To understand Indigenous critiques of SFD, it is crucial to have at least a basic understanding of the history of European conceptualizations of leisure and physical cultural practices and the ways in which these were implicated in the project of colonization. Leisure is a European concept that is broadly discussed in relation to concepts of work, time and freedom (Heintzman, 2007). Within the numerous histories of colonization, Indigenous peoples, their physical cultural practices and the meanings associated with such activities were often misinterpreted through a European lens that privileged Eurocentric notions of leisure, as well as work, the use of time, and philosophies related to progress and modernity (Fox, 2007). For example, Fox (2007) notes that the definition of "game" was often left as self-evident; Indigenous practices were studied through a Eurocentric lens and then classified as "games of chance and skill or dexterity" (p. 219) while misinterpreting or dismissing any ceremonial and spiritual significance attached to such practices.

Such misinterpretation of Indigenous cultures was often accompanied by moral and racist judgments about Indigenous cultures that led "to

repression of Indigenous practices and governance structures, to forced-labour in the service of Eurocentric leisure practices, and to commodification and objectification of Indigenous peoples and practices" (Fox, 2007, p. 219). In Canada, such judgments resulted in the creation of the Indian Act in 1876 and the Department of Indian Affairs in 1880 which, in turn, led to the banning of practices that did not fit within the government's goals of expanding capitalism (Paraschak, 1998). For example, the Potlatch, a gift-giving ceremony that was part of the governance practices for the Indigenous peoples on the west coast of Canada, was banned for this reason. At the same time, while cultural practices were banned, European leisure and sport practices were promoted. It was also during this era that sports and other forms of European leisure were introduced to Indigenous children within the Residential School system, which was itself created for the purpose of assimilating Indigenous children into Canadian society. Residential Schools have since been revealed as the site of egregious abuses and as an institutionalized form of cultural genocide. These histories illustrate how colonial mindsets, policies and practices violently dismissed Indigenous physical cultures, and in turn raise questions about the notion of Canada as a bastion of democracy when it in fact utilized Eurocentric leisure practices as a weapon of colonization.

For Indigenous peoples who voluntarily participated in the burgeoning landscape of Euro-Canadian sport, Paraschak (1989a, 1989b) notes that such experiences were most often marked by encounters of racism, exploitation and ethnocentric distortion. For example, during the Canadian Lacrosse Tours of 1876 to 1883, Indigenous peoples were exploited and put on display for their skills and to the benefit of those who exploited them. Such Indigenous experiences illuminate the contested nature of sporting practices whereby Indigenous peoples "acquiesced to, resisted, or accommodated the imposed expectations" (Paraschak, 1998, p. 122) of colonial Canadian society. As such, sport has been the site for important questions regarding power relations between Indigenous people and the Canadian Government, about the hegemony of positioning Eurocentric leisure as natural and legitimate, and about the agency of individuals and communities who attempted to engage in sport under their own terms.

As an example, in 1970, the Government of Canada, through the Department of National Health and Welfare, released "A Proposed Sports Policy for Canadians" (Paraschak, 1995) and in 1972, this policy led to the development of the Native Sport and Recreation Program (NSRP). This, in turn, was administered by Fitness and Amateur Sport, the unit responsible for sport, physical fitness and recreation at the federal level. The NSRP was a funding program to support various sport and recreation projects in Indigenous communities and was specifically "aimed at raising performance levels to the point where Native athletes could compete alongside other Canadians in elite

competitions, while also providing services to a disadvantaged population" (Paraschak, 1995, p. 1). However, as Paraschak (1995) notes, government officials maintained ethnocentric assumptions about the "'legitimate' nature of sport, the rationale for providing government-funded sport opportunities and the relationship between sport and Native politics" (p. 4). Government officials operated under the assumptions that Euro-Canadian sports were the only legitimate form of physical activity, that competitive sports were the desired goal of physical activity participation and that Indigenous peoples aspired to participate in the Euro-Canadian sport system. Not surprisingly, such assumptions were challenged by various Indigenous leaders who utilized their funds from the NSRP to create "all-Native" sport competitions. These competitions reflected a viewpoint within the Indigenous community that such competitions could stand as legitimate alternatives to the mainstream sport system and were even necessary for sport development (though not necessarily Sport for Development) in the Indigenous context. As a result, these competitions, and an all-Native sport system, emerged as a response to government actions to control Indigenous participation in sport, and created a space whereby Indigenous peoples could access sporting opportunities, define the eligibility requirements to participate, and control the values and cultural elements to be privileged and incorporated into the competitions.

The creation of the all-Native sport competitions had some positive outcomes; Indigenous peoples gained access to sport on their own terms where otherwise they might not have had the opportunity. For example, women in the Six Nations of the Grand River community in Ontario, were able to participate in "All-Indian" sport competitions that created a safe space and resulted in empowering experiences (Paraschak, 1990). There is also the example of the North American Indigenous Games, a multi-sport competition in which Indigenous peoples have infused elements of Indigenous culture and values.

At the same time, and complicating the notion of sport as an inherent means of self-determination, sport also became a way for Indigenous people to survive amidst the violence of colonialism, particularly within Residential Schools. Residential Schools aimed to indoctrinate Indigenous children with the values and belief systems of Euro-Christian Canadian society; during this time, many Indigenous children were subjected to multiple forms of physical and emotional abuse and cultural erasure. The schools were part of Canada's broader "Aboriginal policy" that had the central goals of eliminating Indigenous governance, terminating historical treaties and removing Indigenous peoples' rights. Ultimately, the assimilatory aims of such policies were to "cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 1). It should come as no surprise, then, that many Indigenous cultures and languages have become irrevocably fractured, leaving individuals and

communities to deal with the effects of such prolonged efforts to destroy Indigenous cultures.

Through an exploration of Residential School survivors, Forsyth (2013) found that sport and games played a crucial role in their ability to cope with the devastation of being removed from families and subjected to abuse and assimilation. She also noted that while sports provided Indigenous peoples with "avenues for positive self-expression and identification … the techniques used to monitor and control their bodies also transformed Aboriginal physical practices" (p. 32). Such programs were also highly gendered and often only available to boys. Using notions of disciplinary power and the internalization of self-control, Forsyth (2013) posits that sport and games within the Residential School system "can be understood as forms of discipline because they provided a clear set of methods and principles to inculcate a new docility into the pupils – a docility that would presumably facilitate their integration into mainstream society" (p. 21). As such, systems of sport, the disciplining of the body and the erasure of Indigenous cultural practices within Residential Schools – including those related to sport and play – raise significant questions about systems of control, power and hegemony, and the effect on Indigenous peoples' agency and autonomy over their participation in sport and other forms of leisure activity.

Contemporary SFD programming in Indigenous communities

It is against this backdrop, we argue, that many contemporary conceptualizations and practices of Sport for Development should be viewed. In Canada, SFD activities occurring in the Indigenous context include initiatives by national multisport service organizations (MSOs), national and provincial sport organizations (NSOs, PSOs), provincial and territorial Aboriginal sport bodies (PTASBs), corporations, and in some cases by Indigenous communities themselves. It is a varied landscape where partnerships are often developed to implement SFD initiatives. For example, the Aboriginal Sport Circle, a federal MSO that provides political advocacy for sport and recreation, may work with other MSOs and PTASBs to develop capacity for the provision of sport. In another instance, Right to Play, a global leader in international SFD for nearly two decades, implements programs that utilize games, play-based activities and sport to promote health and educational social development within Indigenous communities. Specifically, Right to Play currently delivers a program called Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) that partners with Indigenous communities and various organizations to train youth mentors to deliver "play-based programs that promote healthy living, healthy relationships, education and employability life-skills" (Right to Play, n.d.). NSOs and PSOs also engage in SD activities by organizing various initiatives for their respective sports. These initiatives are made

possible through the Sport Support Program, the funding program to support sport and athlete development in Canada. Any initiatives by these respective organizations are thus subject to the objectives of the current Canadian Sport Policy which was first announced in 2012 and is effective until 2022.

Within this context PTASBs, the organizations that represent the interests of Indigenous peoples at the provincial level, deliver programs that support SD and SFD objectives, or they work in partnership with other MSOs or PSOs. The PTASBs are also part of a collective that is represented by the Aboriginal Sport Circle, the national organization that represents Indigenous interests regarding sport and recreation development to the federal government. It is important to note that PTASBs also provide support for Indigenous communities to train for and attend national "all-Native" championships such as the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships, the Canadian Native Fastball Championship and the North American Indigenous Games.

Taken as a whole, these initiatives point to the significant current deployment of sport to support the "development" of Indigenous peoples in Canada. At the same time, and in recognizing the history of colonialism and genocide, such programs call for critical analysis. While a plethora of approaches can be taken, in the remainder of this chapter we discuss two issues worthy of such attention when critiquing SFD from an Indigenous perspective: modernity and environmental sustainability.

Sport and modernity

Sport resembles, replicates and mimics our broader social and cultural landscape (Besnier & Brownell, 2012; De Wachter, 2001), and as such modern sport is implicated in the project of modernity (Clevenger, 2017). Modernity here is defined as the privileging of notions of equality, democratic systems and capitalistic ideologies, in which merit and performance are key instruments driving a push towards supposed egalitarian arrangements. For its part, modern sport – in contrast to earlier forms of sport – is often characterized by "rationalization, standardization, secularization, specialization, quantification, and records" (Breivik, 1998, p. 107). There are clear expressions of the measurement of performance, winners and losers can be clearly marked, and excellence quantified with exacting precision. Sport is thus compatible with modernist thinking, as understood in the following:

> One's place in society is not inherited at birth: it must be earned. He or she who performs will be held in esteem. But performance means something only if it can be measured against that of others: everyone is thus in constant competition with everyone else.
>
> (De Wachter, 2001, p. 93)

As a result of such thinking, the presumed transition from folk/traditional sports towards those deemed to be modern has come (often unproblematically) to be seen as simply a matter of historical phases, in which traditional physical cultures (including those of Indigenous peoples) have been overwritten with and by modern sporting forms (Besnier & Brownell, 2012, p. 448). In the Canadian context, the sport and recreation practices of many Indigenous groups were viewed as primitive, owing to a lack of standardized rules or clear contest, and therefore requiring modernist improvement. As Michael Heine (2013) recounts, games and sport of the Inuit and Dene primarily reflected the kinds of land-based practices that tested technical skills, strength and endurance required for daily life. In this context, sport and games "served to extend cultural logic of practice that focused on cooperation in subsistence production and other domains of social life" rather than strictly on the "symbolic validation of the outcome of the games contest" (Heine, 2013, p. 164). In contrast, modern sport aimed to override such approaches in deference and service to hierarchical and competitive relations of power and, even more poignantly, to colonialism and globalization (Besnier & Brownell, 2012; Jonasson, 2014; Roche, 2000). Attempts were made to supplant and rearrange traditional physical cultures in order to ensure privilege, hierarchy and dominance.

In sport, the "leveling" required for establishing such rules and regulations – and creating a fair, equitable and equal method of evaluation – tied sport to the tenets of modernity in ways that were compatible with capitalism. Modernity's democratic principles also entrenched equality within concepts of "fairness" that were central to sport, through the language of a "level playing field," performance-based measurement, and ideologies and narratives of success versus failure, in which winners could be exalted and losers chastised for their inadequacies. Through mastery of uncontrollable conditions – weather, infrastructure, physiology, competitors – sport exemplified both control and chance in ways compatible with the "illusion of modernity" (De Wachter, 2001, p. 95).

These perspectives are crucial to understanding current practices of SFD. Particularly from an Indigenous perspective, contemporary SFD is significantly limited by its overarching inability and/or unwillingness to escape from or reject discourses of modernity and modernist development. While there have been important calls for Indigenous knowledge in SFD (see Mwaanga & Mwansa, 2013), notions of modernity still tend to underpin the conceptualization of development throughout the SFD field. This is particularly the case when it comes to capitalism and its effects on the environment. The "promise" of development for Indigenous peoples in and through sport and SFD largely remains the promise of modernity and modern life. It is one in which Indigenous people can access the boons of modern capitalism by exploiting, taming and overcoming the

natural world and, in so doing, overcoming the limits of their traditional cultures. From this perspective, SFD programs still tend to pride themselves on facilitating, and even "allowing," Indigenous people to claim the benefits (material, spatial and discursive) of full participation in contemporary society, all the while keeping the logic and practice of capitalist exploitation of the environment firmly in place (see Millington et al., 2019). That such promises are both the result and continuation of colonialism and colonial practices represents phenomena and issues that are still too rarely discussed in the field of SFD, and therefore call for ongoing critical analysis.

Sport and sustainability

In the face of such modernist exploitation, the notion of environmental sustainability assumes renewed importance. However, the notion of sustainability is itself far from neutral, historically, politically or socially. Sustainability has also often been a project of modernity, one in which a focus on preserving a harmonious way-of-being aligns with the romanticism, or even pathologizing, of Indigeneity. In this way, while sustainability's search for a different way of doing and being with the physical world may align with Indigenous cultures that are noted for stronger ties to the environment, "the very notion of sustainability is embedded in an essentially modern framework, entailing a number of contradictions and paradoxes, which can be interpreted as epistemic and normative diversions and obstacles" (Benessia et al., 2012, p. 75). Indeed, many contemporary notions of sustainability recall modernist understandings of progress and value because they share a belief in humans controlling nature. Just as control over Indigenous peoples was central to the mission of settler colonialism, so too was dominion over the natural world. For some, the very idea of sustainable development is predicated on such human intervention into nature. As Rist (2002) argues:

> Development consists of a set of practices, sometimes appearing to conflict with one another, which require – for the reproduction of society – the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations. Its aim is to increase the production of commodities (goods and services) geared, by way of exchange, to effective demand.
>
> (p. 13)

Further, from a postcolonial perspective, Gidwani (2008) notes that land deemed to be "unproductive," "uncultivated," "idle" – as judged through the lens of modernity – has long served as justification for colonial

interventions that could make "rational" use of it. In this way, sustainable development through modernization has often entailed a need to enact control over both humans and the landscape they occupy (Gasteyer & Butler Flora, 2000). As Gasteyer and Butler Flora (2000) recount, there is a pattern to such modernizing practices in a colonial context, whereby settlers move into a new landscape and (violently) claim ownership, establishing dominion over "wild," "harsh" and "unsettled" landscapes:

> Marshes are tiled and drained to create farm land for growing straight rows of corn, gains, or legumes; deserts are irrigated to grow horticultural crops the year rand. Rangeland is confined by fences, rather than driven by nomadic herders … Even for significant parts of the subjugated indigenous population, the domination of nature as defined by the colonizers could come to symbolize progress, modernity, and rationality.
>
> (p. 129)

Such remaking of the environment was central to both colonial and development projects in which land and peoples were deemed to be in need of civilization and increased productivity (Gasteyer & Butler Flora, 2000). Rhetorical commitment to sustainable development does not necessarily overcome such traditions of exploitation.

The notion of environmental sustainability therefore invites critical scrutiny in order to examine and even expose its modernist underpinnings, while also challenging any homogeneous, single meaning of development. The critical task then becomes how to consider a range of tendencies, values and behaviors concerned with environmental stewardship and resilience, while exploring "the potential to maintain the long-term well-being of communities based on social, economic, and environmental requirements of present and future generations" (Cutter, 2014, p. 73). Admittedly, this is no small chore. Western scientific approaches to sustainability still predominate, and tend to limit contributions from Indigenous sources of knowledge, epistemologies and practices of inquiry. Indeed, the very notion of sustainability can do an injustice to Indigeneity by "rendering Indigenous peoples as anachronistic sources of insights, information and knowledge that can be used by science to produce authoritative, authentic and useful universal knowledge in the present, for the future" (Johnson et al., 2016, p. 2).

Overall, this challenge of pursuing sustainability while critiquing its modernist residue represents something of a crossroads for SFD research and researchers. On the one hand, there is a growing body of literature within mainstream sport sociology which explores how settler colonialism and development-as-modernization overlap with global sport in ways that become the basis of much SFD activity (see Darnell, 2010; Darnell & Hayhurst, 2011; Hayhurst, Giles & Wright, 2016). Such criticisms have only

become more significant given the increasingly pervasive discourses regarding sport's ability to contribute to meeting the goals of international development, particularly environmental sustainability. This is perhaps best illustrated in the United Nations (2016) Sustainable Development Goals that not only foreground environmentalism as a key development issue, but have attached sport to the achievement of all 17 goals, calling it "an important enabler of sustainable development" (Article 37).

What is arguably missing from this growing field of critical SFD researchers, though, is a central place for Indigenous voices, cultures and ways of thinking and being. The environmental issues tied up in SFD are of particular relevance – and concern – within an Indigenous context, particularly as SFD programs continue to be positioned as development strategies for Indigenous peoples in Canada. In this way, sustainability and/as Indigenous development is (again) being used to justify capitalist exploitation of natural resources. A particularly illustrative example is the ways in which companies in the oil, mining and gas industry fund SFD programming in northern Canada as a means of offsetting the deleterious social and environmental impact of extractivism, a trend that may align more closely with "greenwashing" and public relations strategies for corporations than a genuine commitment to social and environmental justice (see Millington et al., 2019). A fuller appreciation of these processes from an Indigenous perspective is still needed. While sport sociologists like Millington and Wilson (2013) have expressed recent concern over how the sporting industry is driven by a "modernizing project" that entrenches a division between humans and natures, and the belief that "human 'progress' can be equated with 'mastering nature'" (p. 143), Indigenous perspectives have been making such claims for generations.

In sum, in the face of critical assessments of sustainable development in and through sport, the question remains as to what extent – or whether at all – sustainable development through sport and SFD is possible, and how this could be better rooted in, and respectful of, Indigeneity and Indigenous peoples. In the final section of this chapter, we ruminate on what kind of relationships might be possible and necessary to support Indigenous-led sustainability in and through SFD.

Conclusion: Indigenous approaches to sustainable sport

While sport has recently been cast as an agent of sustainable development on an international scale by organizations like the United Nations, Indigenous leaders have long perceived sport as a means to bolster social development and to demonstrate their cultural distinctiveness, with physical cultural practices offering a means to "highlight the great diversity among North American Indigenous peoples, to create a sense of unity from this diversity and to promote the resurgence of Indigenous cultures

and cultural identities in non-Indigenous society" (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006, p. 304). This occurred despite the complicity of sport with colonialism and modernist development in ways that worked to undermine Indigenous culture and self-determination. In recognizing this, we see an opportunity for the current field of Sport for Development to acknowledge and support Indigenous self-determination, particularly in ways that are compatible with more sustainable environmental relations. Doing so will require attending to the tensions and contradictions of sport discussed in this chapter. One of the most important of these tensions is that the types of sport being promoted through SFD, supported by government and corporate sponsors, and even called for within the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, continue to take place on colonized land. The North American Indigenous Games are perhaps an example of this, in the sense that traditional cultural practices of Indigenous peoples have been interrupted, and rendered inaccessible through (neo)colonial practices of settler colonialism, practices that are now attempting to be reconciled through Euro-Canadian sport development. Conversations about land, as both a material and discursive basis for contemporary sport, need to be had, and in so doing, can help to open up critical conversations about Indigenous approaches to sport and sustainability.

Berkes (2018) argues that "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (TEK) may offer a means to promote better understandings of ecological processes and relations with the environment through knowledges, practices and a "sense of place." TEK is viewed as a "cumulative body of knowledge, practice, and belief, evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living, being with one another and with their environment" (Berkes, 2018, p. 7). Such an approach may go some distance in responding to Eurocentric notions of development-as-modernization by embedding environmental knowledge in local culture, promoting the importance of community, and attempting to break down the barriers between nature and culture so as to promote more sustainable relationships between people and nature.

To push forward such an agenda, there is also a critical need to emphasize how an Indigenous notion of *relationship* can inform the development of sustainable sport. Wilson (2008) puts forward the idea of a "relational way of being" (p. 80) that is predicated on the foundational belief that:

> knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all of creation. It is not just interpersonal relationships … but it is a relationship with all of creation. It is with the cosmos, it is with the animals, with the plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge.
>
> (Wilson, 2008, p. 74)

He argues that "rather than viewing ourselves as being *in* relationship with other people or things, we *are* the relationships that we hold and are part of" (Wilson, 2008, p. 80). Such an orientation has the potential to expand current notions of sustainable development, as well as challenge how we envision Sport for Development. Such a change would shift the priority of SFD towards attending to a "relationship way of being" in the world, one that might prove to be healing and more sustainable in the long term.

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