"HERE TODAY, GONE TO MAYO":
An Emotional Geography of the Keno Hill Silver Mines

by
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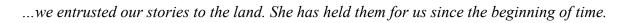in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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...we entrusted our stories to the land. She has held them for us since the beginning of time.

- Lianne Charlie, 2016, p.22.

ABSTRACT

Nestled high in the sub-arctic mountains of the Central Yukon Territory, the Keno Hill silver mines have closed and opened their doors three times in the past three decades. From a sudden closure in 1989, to a short-lived redevelopment in 2012, to a possible re-reopening in 2020, the mine site is emblematic of the cyclical nature of mining in the Canadian North.

Within a framework of emotional and spectre geography, this thesis explores the lives of the people who live in the nearby communities of Keno City and Mayo, including the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. While many of these people have depended on the mines for their economic livelihood, the redevelopment of the mines proved both beneficial and detrimental to their way of life and their economic, social and environmental well-being. Using oral history and Indigenous methodology, I share the stories of long-time residents of the region, delving into the emotional impacts of mine closure and redevelopment. I suggest that these historic emotions did not dissipate, but instead hung like a spectre over the mine site, continuing to influence residents' opinions regarding new mineral developments. Indeed, the Keno Hill case demonstrates that emotional invalidation has serious, long-lasting consequences for all parties involved in mineral (re)development, and, if ignored, negative emotions can cast a long shadow that haunts lands and communities, easily evoked by new or redevelopments and requiring remediation in the same way as the land.

Subject Terms: Historical Geography, Cultural Geography, Emotional Geography, Spectre Geography, Indigenous Methodology, Oral History, Mining, Yukon

DEDICATION

Dedicated to Alfred William Winton

(December 20, 1947-December 8, 2008)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

STATEMENT OF CO-AUTHORSHIP

Sections of Chapter Three of this thesis were originally co-written with Joella Hogan (MA, former Manager of Heritage and Culture, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun) and appeared in the book *Mining and Communities in Northern Canada: History, Politics, and Memory*, eds. Keeling and Sandlos, 2015. The concept, direction and research development for this work were my own, as was the revision and adaptation of the manuscript for this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

This time in my life I was flying in circles…
- Leanne Simpson, 2011, p. 104

I thought I'd take a moment to introduce myself. It is not only my ego that urges me to do so; I am also acting on the good advice of Indigenous scholars such as Kathy Absolon and Cam Willet, who suggest that "one of the most fundamental principles of Aboriginal research methodology is the necessity for the researcher to locate himself or herself," during and within their work (2005, p. 97). An Indigenous researcher I am not; however, this reflexive methodology aligns with my own views of research and allows me to explain my emotional connections to this work.

Here goes: I am a settler, who was raised in the Yukon, on the traditional territory of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. My research took place within the neighbouring traditional territory of the Na-cho Nyäk Dun. I am grateful to both First Nations for stewarding these beautiful lands on which I live and work. My mother, a teacher from southern Ontario, met my father, a millwright from Zambia, at Clinton Creek, an asbestos mining town in northwestern Yukon. When the mine closed in 1979, my parents built a cabin on the Fortymile River, where they lived for five years without running water or electricity, but with goats and chickens, until they moved into Dawson City to raise their three children. In my youth, I worked as a heritage interpreter for Parks Canada, sharing the exciting tales of the Klondike gold rush, giving tours of abandoned mine camps, gargantuan gold dredges, and generally espousing the tropes and stereotypes of a wild boomtown for the entertainment of tourists. Beginning in 2006, I was fortunate to be employed by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government (a self-governing First Nation, based in Dawson City), where I worked on many traditional knowledge projects and earnestly began to question the

popular narratives of the Yukon's mining history. I became more aware that Yukon history and culture were much deeper, complex, and more fascinating than a singular event, such as the Gold Rush—but a blip in the Indigenous timeline.

In 2008, my father was working at the soon-to-be redeveloped Keno Hill Mine in Elsa, Yukon, when he suffered a sudden heart attack and passed away. I had just applied to conduct my master's research concerning the very same mine site. Overtaken by trauma and sadness, I deferred my acceptance to MUN to help my family and grieve the loss of my father…little did I know that grief is life-long. After a year of consideration, I decided to continue with the project, hoping that my personal connections to the mine site might enrich my work and perhaps help in comprehending the loss of my father. Given the nature of this work and writing (an emotional geography, framed by Indigenous and Feminist methodologies), it seems impossible not to acknowledge this connection and the role it has had in complicating and prolonging this project.

Years of challenge and change followed, including marriage, travel, home-building, self-employment, and two babies. I am not the same person I was when I began this work, but my goals and interest in it remain. While I hope to honour my father with this thesis, it is not about him, nor is it about myself. This document is about the people living near Keno Hill and how their relationships with each other, their communities, and the environment have been impacted by those mines. I am afraid, however, that there will be occasional appearances from those close to me, for the Yukon is small and there have been many personal/professional overlaps during this undertaking. As such, I admit that the influences of my friends, colleagues and family are found within these pages, amongst the stories of the people from the Keno/Mayo area. Of course, my father is here as well. I can hear him now, banging his fist on the table and bellowing, "Ah, you've been indoctrinated by that damn university!" Let's hope not.

CHAPTER ONE

HILLS OF SILVER: INTRODUCTION AND STUDY AREA

"Here today, gone to Mayo" is an expression often used by Yukoners when referring to the

village of Mayo, located on the banks of the Stewart River, approximately 300 kilometres

southeast of Dawson City. While the Yukon is well-known for the Klondike Gold Rush, it was,

in fact, silver mining in the Mayo region that sustained the territory's economy for many

decades. After the discovery of high-grade silver ore in the Wernecke Mountains in 1913, the

town of Mayo grew up as a support and supply centre for the nearby Keno Hill Silver Mines,

which also created the boomtown of Keno City and later, the company town of Elsa (Cathro,

2006). These three communities and the mines are all encompassed within the traditional

territory of the Na-cho Nyäk Dun (NND).[1] Many NND people, while generally omitted from the

mining history narrative (Aho, 2006), were in fact integral to the development of the industry

and many NND families have long mining histories. The now self-governing First Nation of Na-

cho Nyäk Dun (FNNND)[2] is involved in the redevelopment and reclamation of the mines today;

however, FNNND citizens remain critical of both past and present mining developments.

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[1] Traditional Territory is an area of land defined within the UFA and Land Claim Agreements. It is a modern concept of Indigenous land stewardship and group boundaries, based on oral history information from First Nation elders. Each Traditional Territory has significant overlaps with neighbouring First Nations, reflecting the historic nature of Yukon First Nations mobility and inter-relatedness. The boundaries and concept of a Traditional Territory have been strongly adopted by most Yukon First Nation people and governments. Nadasdy (2002, 2003) has argued that these defined boundaries may serve to reinforce colonial concepts of governance and land ownership. Lianne Charlie (2017) has also questioned the impact of these modern treaty agreements.

[2] There were no early treaties signed in the Yukon. The 1960s Yukon land claims movement finally led to the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), signed by Yukon First Nations, Territorial and Federal Governments. 11 of 14 First Nation groups in the Yukon negotiated individual Land Claim and Self Government Agreements, under the UFA. FNNND signed their agreements in 1993. FNNND refers to the Government of the NND.

Figure 1 Northern Abandoned Mine Program, showing Keno Hill in relation to other mines, communities, and First Nations (Map, CIRNAC, 2019).

"Here today, gone to Mayo" also signifies the cyclical and sometimes fickle nature of the mining industry. While the Yukon Territory still memorializes and glorifies the Klondike gold rush, the event itself lasted only two years. The colonial and cultural implications of such a sudden influx of thousands of newcomers, however, continue to reverberate in the Yukon today. As anthropologist Julie Cruikshank has stated, "[t]he most permanent effect of the gold rush was a new regional infrastructure, comprising forms of legal, political, economic, and social administration that continue to have far-reaching consequences for everyone living in the Yukon," (Cruikshank, 1992, p. 25). The same is true for the NND of the Mayo area, who have been navigating the ups and downs of the silver mining industry within their traditional territory for over one hundred years—first as a dispossessed people, pushed to the margins of their traditional lands and rarely credited for their involvement in the industry and now, as a self-governing First Nation, with which mining companies must consult and negotiate.

When the Keno Hill Silver Mines were suddenly shut in 1989, the flaws of the economic and political structure imposed by colonial settlers were exposed—the failure of the single industry led to a decline in the population and services provided to the Mayo region. Indeed, it was the Indigenous methods of governance and livelihood that prevailed. Most of the non-Indigenous people employed by the mines left the area and many of the NND individuals who had worked for the mining industry relied on hunting and trapping to get by—methods of sustenance taught by their parents and grandparents. In 2006, during a new era of settled land claims and First Nation self-government in the Yukon, the Keno Hill mine site was purchased by Alexco Resource Corporation, a Vancouver-based reclamation and exploration company. The redevelopment of the mines created rifts between and within the communities of Mayo and Keno

City, due to the unequal distribution of benefits and consequences from the redevelopment as well as the disparate opinions regarding the work.

The closure and redevelopment of Keno Hill during two different eras of mining also created a complex layering of emotions that are suspended, like a spectre, hovering over all conversations and actions regarding the mine redevelopment, yet rarely acknowledged. It is the geography of this emotional spectre that this thesis seeks to examine. Here, I use emotional and spectre geography, as well as Indigenous, feminist, and oral history methodologies, to explore the fraught nature of mine closure and redevelopment in the central Yukon. In this introductory chapter, I first describe the problem this thesis explores: the emotional and social impacts of mineral closure and redevelopment at the Keno Hill Mines in the context of settler-Indigenous relations. I then provide historical context for the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun and the Keno Hill and Mayo regions. Next, I describe my research process and methods. Finally, I outline the organization of the thesis chapters to follow.

1.1 A VERY EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHY

"For this love of place is not like other loves, of people or animals, artefacts, activities, causes..." - Freya Mathews, 2005, p.7

I spent the summer of 2011 dividing my time between Mayo and Keno City, Yukon: two communities close to my hometown and my heart. Despite my personal and familial ties to the area, I had maintained an illusion of conducting a modest study of the socio-economic and cultural impacts of mine closure and redevelopment at Keno Hill. However, after a period of immersion in the Keno Hill region, it was the un-explored emotional geography of the mining district that I found most in need of investigation. An emotional geography, as defined by Kearney and Bradley (2009), "has the capacity to charter the sensory and affective qualities

4

surrounding place, as manifest in human relationships with place, oral traditions and expressions, kinship, narratives and cultural habitus" (p. 83). Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to examine the conflicts arising from contemporary redevelopment of the historical Keno Hill mining district and the affectual impacts (Pile, 2009) felt in the adjacent and nearby communities of Keno City and Mayo, Yukon.

The necessity of this project was demonstrated not only by the very real need for emotional and social rehabilitation locally, but also by the paucity of literature on this subject in the academic world (Ey, Sherval, & Hodge, 2016; Bainton & Holcombe, 2018). Despite the fraught and disputed nature of the mining industry globally (Ey et al., 2016), new mining developments in the Canadian North and elsewhere are still characterized as a space devoid of emotion. In their 2016 paper, Ey et al. examined this contradictory framing of the industry, taking issue with "the pre-dominant representation of the extractive sector as a mechanised, economic and rational space, with little room for emotion," suggesting that "this characterisation is remarkable for a sector that has long been marked by intense contestation" (p. 1-2). This thesis seeks to address the lack of focus on the emotional geography of mineral closure and redevelopment in northern Canada by using Keno Hill as a case study.

The closure of the Keno Hill mine was an important moment in many local people's lives, but it is not an entirely unique event in the context of northern Canada. In fact, there are approximately 80 abandoned mine sites throughout northern Canada (Keeling & Sandlos, 2017). While these sites may represent environmental hazards, economic burdens and colonial legacies for nearby residents (Keeling & Sandlos, 2009), in some cases they also represent resilient communities that have survived mine shut-down and adapted to landscapes left by mining, as well as new social and economic realities (Robertson, 2006; Keeling 2010). During the summer

of 2011, the Canadian North, especially the Yukon, was witnessing a boom in exploration and re-investment as old mines and mineral claims once again became profitable, due to diminishing mineral deposits, improved mining technology, and high mineral prices (CBC North, 2011; Keeling & Sandlos, 2009). Consequently, former mining regions were again facing the social, economic, and environmental changes brought about by mineral development, this time during a new jurisdictional era of Yukon devolution[3] and First Nation self-government. While new First Nation governments were still coping with past impacts of mining, they were also engaging with mining companies in Impact Benefit Agreements, joint ventures, and in socio-environmental assessment processes (Neil, Tykkyläinen, & Bradbury, 1992; Clementino, 2008).

There has been much written on the history of mineral development (Morse, 2003; Baldwin & Duke, 2006; Wilson, 2004; Piper, 2007, 2009) and on the abandoned mining towns left behind (Francaviglia, 1991; Robertson, 2006; Cronon, 1992; Wyckoff, 1995; Rollwagen, 2007). The social impact of mine closure and abandonment, however, is just now being discussed (Pini, Mayes, & McDonald, 2010; Ey et al., 2016). Thanks to the Abandoned Mines in Northern Canada project (Keeling & Sandlos, 2015), of which my work was a part, there has been some research conducted exploring the remediation and redevelopment of once-closed mines in the Canadian North, or "zombie mines," as Keeling and Sandlos have termed them (2017). However, a gap in the research remains, regarding the emotional plane of this "zombie mine" phenomenon. Bainton and Holcombe identify this gap in research needs in their 2018 study, *The Social Aspects of Mine Closure: A Global Literature Review*. The authors directly call for more case studies in transition and post-mining and in particular, case studies that detail the

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[3] The 2001 *Yukon Northern Affairs Program Devolution Transfer Agreement* transferred responsibility for land, water, forestry and mineral resources from the Federal Government to the Yukon Government. In 2003, the "Yukon Act" was signed, giving the Yukon Government more province-like powers.

complexity of social impacts of mine closure (pg. 31). This research addresses this gap, by exploring the emotions expressed by settlers and Indigenous residents of the Mayo region, regarding both the closure and redevelopment of the Keno Hill mine.

As the work of the Abandoned Mines project demonstrated, cyclical mineral development has brought people, money, and environmental change to the North in waves. While these developments are controlled by external market forces, through shareholder influence and global mineral prices, the emotions and memories of those directly affected by the developments are intensely local (Keeling & Sandlos, 2015, p.9). A town or mine may officially close, but it lives on through the memories, stories and dreams of those who lived and worked there. More recently, this continuation is enabled by social media, through Facebook groups, virtual communities, reunions, forums, and even art media projects, such as the interactive web documentary, *Welcome to Pine Point* (NFB, 2011).

In the Yukon, nostalgia and anticipation are some of the more acceptable emotional expressions regarding mining. Nostalgia, for the heady days of the Klondike Gold Rush, and the following industrious decades of corporate mining in the Keno Hill Silver district and Copper Mine regions. Anticipation and excitement, for the next big mineral discovery, a new mine, or redevelopment. Meanwhile, emotions such fear, anger, and sadness evoked by new mining developments have been met with fierce opposition and branded as 'anti-mining' sentiments—a serious insult in the Yukon Territory, which is portrayed as a mining friendly district (Fraser Institute, 2019). While in the Keno Hill region, I heard substantial debate regarding the large scale, hard-rock mining industry and the revival of the Keno Hill silver mines, which was creating significant emotional and social upheaval. While this debate was well-covered by local media, it was underreported and generally ignored by government and industry. Assessors at the

Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) acknowledged the controversy and distress caused by the mineral redevelopment, but they lacked the tools and systemic mechanisms to evaluate these affectual impacts and incorporate them into their assessments of the project (Loralee Johnstone, personal interview, 2011). As residents lacked an appropriate forum to express the affectual impacts of this tumultuous time, I found that my interviews became the venue for such expression. During our long-form interviews, research participants channeled their emotions and therefore directed the theme of my inquiry. Hence, I view this as a community-directed research project (Thorpe, 2016; Leddy, 2010, 2016) and offer full credit to all research participants for their important role in guiding this work.

I did not enter 'the field' (or as I saw it, return home to the Yukon) with specific research questions in mind. I spent a summer in Mayo and Keno City, hoping to build relationships with local people and with the land. In the Keno Hill region, I heard and saw what happens when a loved place is threatened with change. Whether that change was mine closure or mine redevelopment, the altering of the physical and social landscape was difficult for both Indigenous and settler residents. In the process of listening to all the stories shared with me and writing up this research, the questions that surfaced were: how is emotion expressed in oral history of mine closure and oral accounts of mineral redevelopment? And what are the emotional and social impacts of closure and redevelopment in the context of settler-Indigenous relations in the post land-claims era of the Central Yukon? In other words, how does love of land and love of place manifest in the face of mineral redevelopment and how is the expression of that love translated and evaluated?

Drawing from recent scholarship on community experiences of mine development and closure (Pini et al., 2010; Robertson, 2005; Wilson, 2005; Keeling & Sandlos, 2015) and using

feminist, postcolonial, and Indigenous methodologies, this thesis will examine the social impacts of mine closure and redevelopment, as shared by the residents of Keno City and Mayo, both settler and Indigenous. This work will contribute to the understanding of relationships between First Nation governments, local communities, industry, regulators, and the effect of local emotions during this new era of resource development. In the chapters that follow, I explore these questions by tracing the family histories of two individuals who indeed love the land and their hometowns deeply—Mike Mancini and Herman Melancon. I incorporate the voices of other long-time residents, as well as company officials and assessment officers, to provide a broad spectrum of emotions and experiences, which portray the varied social aspects of mine closure and redevelopment.

The main contention of this thesis is that a failure by Alexco, Yukon Government, and Yukon regulators (such as YESAB) to anticipate, acknowledge, and attend to emotional reactions to mine redevelopment at the Keno Hill mine, led to a fraught relationship between the communities and the company as well as continued stress and tensions that severed relationships between and within residents of Keno City and Mayo. Together, the literature, theoretical writing, and research presented here help to demonstrate the conclusion of this thesis—that the affectual (including emotional reactions, memories, and sentimental stories) dimensions of (re)development are important in historic and contemporary mining landscapes. In the Yukon, social experiences and emotion should be valued and evaluated in the assessment of resource development proposals, such as mining and exploration; and may require remediation measures in the same way as the land.

1.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND STUDY AREA

While the Indigenous people of the Yukon are now grouped into political First Nations, each with a separate land claim agreement, traditional territory and government, the separation between groups was not always so distinct. First Nations people of the central/north Yukon generally lived in extended family groups and travelled throughout a broad territory in time with seasons and game animals. In the past, community and family ties were more fluid, with the clan system of wolf and crow dictating much of familial, governmental, and political decisions and interactions (Cruikshank, 1990; McClellan, 1987; Legros, 1999).

BIG RIVER PEOPLE

The Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, or Big River People, are Athapaskan descendants of Northern Tutchone-speaking peoples whose traditional territory consists of over 160,000 square kilometres of land spanning the central Yukon and Western Northwest Territories, (First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, n.d.). The Na-Cho Nyäk Dun have strong historical and modern-day connections to the Gwich'in to the north, the Sahtú Dene to the east, the Southern Tutchone to the south, and the Hän to the west, (Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006, p. 86). Traditionally, the NND travelled throughout this vast area to take advantage of seasonal harvests and lessen their impact on the land. In the summer months, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun families gathered on the banks of the McQuesten River and Nacho Nyäk gé (Stewart River) to fish for Łyok det'aw (Chinook Salmon) and Thí' (Chum salmon); in the fall, they moved into the mountains to hunt gophers and caribou, pick berries and gather medicinal plants; and in winter, they returned to the low-lands to hunt for moose and ice-fish in the region's many lakes, (Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006, p. 86-89; Legros, p. 244-308). As Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Elder Helen Buyck has asserted, "the land

was their teacher, and the knowledge they have of it is far greater than most people can

appreciate," (Bleiler et al., 2006, p. 87).

Figure 2: Modern Traditional Territories of Yukon First Nations, as defined by the Umbrella Final Agreement (Map, Government of Yukon, August, 2013)

There are few archaeological remnants of ancient Na-Cho Nyäk Dun life on the land, as most of their material goods were left to biodegrade when no longer useful. One of the most enduring Na-Cho Nyäk Dun artefacts are the copper knives traditionally used in hunting. Many of these knives sit in museums in southern Canada or in European countries, collected by early explorers and traders. The knives were well-made: sharp and straight, with beveled blades and ornately designed Y-shaped handles, often wrapped with sinew or strips of moose skin for comfort, and curling into concentric circles at either end (Rogers, 1965). The copper for these knives may have been obtained through trade with Southern Tutchone people or collected from the White River area, where nuggets of native copper can still be found (MacBride Museum, n.d.). The knives are a testament to the complex material culture developed in the central Yukon prior to the arrival of newcomers and speak to the intimate knowledge the original inhabitants had of their lands—not only the plants and animals growing above ground, but also the minerals and metals below.

Figure 3: Copper knife (Tagé Cho Hudän Interpretive Centre, n.d.)

When, in the 1880s, explorers, fur traders and prospectors began to penetrate the central Yukon, their work was aided by First Nations guides and hunters, who provided essential knowledge of how to survive off the land. First Nations women who married such newcomers played a particularly important role in integrating them into the society and culture of the area; they also provided food, medicine and clothing appropriate for local conditions (Coates, 1991; Bleiler et al., 2006). In this way, the First Nations people were active and adaptive participants in the expansion of settler and newcomer networks throughout the territory, as well as the new social and economic orders they imported. The Klondike gold rush of 1898, which brought 30,000 newcomers to the central Yukon, was to have the most severe impact on the Indigenous people of the region (Cruikshank, 1990; Morse, 2003). As the Klondike gold rush unfolded, Yukon First Nation people recognized that fortunes were being pulled from their un-ceded lands and their way of life was being threatened. Despite the protests of First Nation leaders, the Canadian government refused to discuss the possibility of a treaty with Yukon First Nations people, as they did not want to waste time and resources in such a far-flung part of the country, during a gold rush that they believed would soon be over (Coates, 1991, p. 162).

After the gold rush, prospectors flooded into Na-Cho Nyäk Dun territory in search of the next bonanza (Coates, 1991). There was gold in the area, but more often silver-rich galena was found. In 1903, Jacob A. Davidson discovered the first high-grade galena, a lead mineral often associated with silver, near the headwaters of the McQuesten River. Hoping for gold, Davidson abandoned the find, unaware that he had stumbled upon one of the largest and richest silver deposits in the world. Ten years later, Davidson's acquaintance, Henry McWhorter re-staked the claim and named it the Silver King. McWhorter and four other men mined the area by hand throughout the winter of 1913-1914, making nearly five thousand dollars each. Over the next

four years, individual mining continued, and smaller discoveries occurred, which resulted in several small fortunes. In the fall of 1919, Louis Bouvette discovered a rich silver vein on Keno Hill (named after a popular gambling game), attracting corporate interests to the area. It was Bouvette's discovery that sparked the first real staking rush, bringing hordes of men and new development into the traditional territory of the NND. Mining techniques rapidly progressed from individual miners collecting float, or surface chunks of galena, to mechanized underground mining, with corporate financing from the likes of the Guggenheim brothers. Soon, miners blasted into the hillsides, excavating the glittering ore by hand and then machine, creating a huge network of tunnels, caverns, and small-gauge rail lines with thousands of kilometres of track, extracting some of the richest silver mines in the world, with ore that assayed at an average of three hundred dollars of silver per ton (Bleiler, McDonald, & Mayo Historical Society, 1999; Aho, 2006). These mines, up to thirty-five in total, with names like Keno, Onek, Lucky Queen, Elsa, and Silver King—each with varying grades of silver-lead-zinc ore—were spread out across the region, now called the Keno Hill mining district, measuring approximately 230 square kilometres. Eventually, they were all consolidated under one company—United Keno Hill, which was the main operator in the area until 1989 (Cathro, 2006).

As the mines proliferated below ground, so too did the communities above, bringing immense change for the Na-cho Nyäk Dun, who in 1915, were settled in a reserve on the Stewart River, now called Dän Ku, or the Old Village (Bleiler et al., 2006, 87). The first non-First Nation community in the region was Mayo, named for a well-known early Yukon trader, Alfred Henry Mayo. A sedate town built beside the Stewart River, Mayo was the transportation and service hub for the region—shipping the silver, lead, zinc ore out on paddle wheelers and sending supplies up to the mines. Next came Keno City: set high in the silver-laden mountains, it was a

14

wild boom town and the supply centre for the individual mines. The population of Keno has been as high as three hundred and as low as nine people, yet its residents (now approximately twenty-five) cling fiercely to the name "Keno City." Lastly, Elsa was created in 1928. A company town built by United Keno Hill Mines, Elsa was a model mining community, with a school, beer hall, curling rink, sports events and housing for families and single miners. Some people have fond memories of Elsa as a safe, friendly community, where the company provided housing and free steam heat, as well as discounted groceries; while others remember the town as rough and starkly divided between salaried employees and wage earners, single and married men, or management and staff. There was even more separation along cultural lines. While Euro-American settlers who worked at the mines lived in company housing in Elsa, most NND individuals who labored at the mine sites lived in the separate town of Millerville, approximately ten kilometres away and without running water or any of the services provided by the company in Elsa. Despite these differences, Elsa was one of the longest lasting mine towns in the Yukon, operating from 1928 to January of 1989, when the mine was suddenly closed, and employees were given two weeks to relocate (Aho, 2006; Bleiler and Macdonald, 1999; Bleiler et al., 2006; Cathro, 2006).

When the mines closed, the entire region suffered, with Keno sinking to a population low of nine and Mayo stabilizing at about five hundred people. Elsa, meanwhile became a true ghost town as United Keno Hill declared bankruptcy and ownership of the site eventually reverted to the Yukon government. Virtually no remediation or environmental reclamation was done at the mines, leaving numerous boarded-up mine adits, the buildings in Elsa and the industrial infrastructure (mill, machine shops, railways), and various mining detritus (rusted equipment, wires, claim posts, core boxes, etc.) spread throughout the mining district, as well large volumes

15

of mine waste leading to high metal levels in many streams and water courses (Kwong, Roots, Roach, & Kettley, 1997).

The 1990s were quiet times in the Mayo region, though there was much work done to convert the economy to one based on tourism. A mining museum was developed in Keno, along with hiking trails, campgrounds and a snack bar, and the town began to attract hikers, artists and musicians. Meanwhile, the NND and other Yukon First Nations were busy working on a monumental self-government agreement, called the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), which would settle the issue of aboriginal title in the Yukon. In 1993, after decades of negotiation and the ratification of the UFA, the NND signed their individual land claim and self-government agreements with the Federal and Yukon Governments. The land claim, while a vast improvement for the former Indian Act Band, required the First Nation to give up title to the majority of their traditional territory, parceling off small amounts of 'settlement land' to the First Nation. Settlement land is divided into Category A and Category B land; on the former, the First Nation retains sub-surface (mineral) rights, while on the later, they hold only surface rights. The agreement also gave the FNNND a seat at the table in terms of development and governance within the Yukon; as well as the right to self-government, a form of self-determination which had not been possible under the Indian Act (Nadasdy, 2003, 2017; First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, 2020).

In 2006, Alexco Resource Corporation (Alexco), a junior mining and reclamation company based in Vancouver, purchased the Keno Hill mines site, including the town site of Elsa, from the Yukon Government. After the 2003 devolution agreement between the Yukon and Federal governments, Type A, or abandoned mines and their reclamation became the responsibility of the Territorial government. As such, the Yukon Government awarded Alexco's

subsidiary, the Elsa Reclamation and Development Company Ltd., a contract to remediate the mine and town sites, while simultaneously allowing the parent company to conduct an exploration program to assess the possibility of redeveloping the region once worked by UKHM. In the summer of 2011, Alexco Keno Hill Mining Company (another subsidiary, incorporated for the purpose of mineral extraction) officially reopened their first mine in the area, along with a new regional mill, barely a kilometre from the town of Keno. While Alexco branded itself as bringing new life to the region (Alexco, n.d.), there has been much controversy over the location of the mill and the trucks, noise and dust that came along with it. Some Keno residents protested the new development, while the municipality of Mayo has publicly supported the mine (Village of Mayo, 2009), as has and the FNNND, having signed an impact benefit agreement with Alexco in June 2010 (Alexco, 2010).

Thus, Keno Hill became, what Keeling and Sandlos (2009) would term a "zombie mine"—a closed or abandoned mine that creates new issues when reopened or remediated, while reviving those of the past. Adding complexity to this situation is the fact that the two main settlements in the Keno Hill area (Mayo and Keno City) were each affected differently by the renewed mining activity. As the following chapters show, Indigenous and settler residents within the Mayo region may feel differently about the mines and the mining history; however, there is also much common ground, when it comes to the nostalgia about the heady days of UKHM, and concern about new developments. Many residents of the Mayo region, both settlers and Indigenous have formed their identities around the mining history, thus making the issue of mine redevelopment so complex and emotionally charged. As my research discovered and as others have confirmed elsewhere (Ey et al., 2016, p. 12), there is no appropriate forum for these intense emotions, so they continued to cloud relationships between the communities in this region,

residents, the mining company, and the environment. While the Keno Hill mine sites may one day be environmentally remediated, much needed social repair (Smith, 2016), or "emotional remediation" has not been considered.

In the Keno Hill Silver district, the experiences of mine closure continue to haunt people long after the mine shutdown. These experiences affect local opinions about industry, development, and the environment. Now, emotional reactions to the mineral redevelopment of the area pit friends, neighbours and communities against one another and threaten the stability of their governments and local organizations. These affectual impacts are difficult to quantify, comprehend, express, and perhaps remediate; but they do have long-lasting consequences, and as this thesis demonstrates, they continue to hover, as a spectre, over the mining landscape long after mine closure. For Keno Hill, it has been a long haunting, with reverberations that continue to be felt today.

1.3 RESEARCH PROCESS

"Academics too often frame the experiences of others with reference to scholarly norms. Yet, unless we put ourselves in interactive situations where we are exposed and vulnerable and where these norms are interrupted and challenged, we can never recognize the limitations of our own descriptions. It is these dialogues that are most productive, because they prevent us from becoming overconfident about our own interpretations." - Cruikshank,1998, 165

RESEARCH JOURNEY

In the early summer of 2011, I drove my father's 1999 Toyota Tacoma 230 kilometres from my hometown of Dawson City to Mayo, Yukon. I felt excited, yet exposed and vulnerable, as I bedded down at the Bedrock Motel for my first few nights on the "Silver Trail." This was not my first visit to the Mayo area. As a life-long resident of the Yukon, I had visited both Mayo and Keno on many occasions and had some familiarity with the region and its residents. Having

begun my field work the previous summer, with preliminary visits to the communities of Mayo and Keno City and a tour of the Elsa town and mine sites, I had already connected with some of my main contacts in both communities and within the Alexco Corporation. Prior to my 2011 field season, I had established a research agreement with the FNNND (Appendix III) and obtained a research permit from the Yukon Government (License # 10-49S&E, April 2011 – License # 11-19S&E). The Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) approved my research and provided ethics clearance in the spring of 2011 (ICEHR Ref. #: 2010/11-128-AR). Due to this early preparation and continued communication throughout the winter of 2010/2011, I had already arranged meetings with employees of FNNND.

My first stop in Mayo was the NND Government building, a beautiful log structure, with carved wolf and crow pillars at the front entrance and windows overlooking the Stewart River Valley at the back. There, I met with NND Heritage Manager Joella Hogan and NND Mining Liaison Josée Lemieux-Tremblay. We discussed our research interests and shared priorities, the potential community outcomes for my project, as well as how my work within NND traditional territory could benefit the First Nation. I also met with NND Heritage Assistant, Kaylie-Ann Hummel, who would be an invaluable research assistant for me while conducting interviews in Mayo. Throughout the summer of 2011, I worked closely with the NND Heritage and Lands offices, participating in visits to abandoned mine sites, culture camps, and community meetings.

After a week in Mayo, I turned back onto the Silver Trail Highway and continued sixty kilometres north, up the gravel road to Keno City. Along the way I passed the new Alexco mining camp (a collection of ATCO trailers) and the once-abandoned community of Elsa, being simultaneously revived and dismantled by Alexco, as they used some of the buildings for their company operations and demolished others in the process of mine site remediation. Elsa is a

19

collection of 1950s and 1960s era buildings perched vertically on the mountainside. Driving past slowly, I viewed the old Elsa school, the yard now filled with core sample boxes, and the Elsa Curling Rink, now re-purposed as the Alexco headquarters. To the left was an over-grown pullout, the brush almost hiding an old, peeling Yukon Government sign, discussing the mining history of the area. Spying through the willows, I could see a once-expansive view of the McQuesten Lakes flats, ancient hunting grounds for the NND until the area became contaminated after years of mine run-off during the United Keno Hill era. Pulling back onto the road, I passed the last of Elsa's buildings visible from the road—the Elsa Snack Bar and the men's bunk house, where long-time Elsa resident Mike Mancini lived with his father, when they worked together during the dying days of United Keno Hill's operation.

I continued along the narrow, twisting dirt road until I reached the end—Keno City. Upon my arrival, I turned left at the one stop sign in town, and pulled into the Keno City Snack Bar, owned and operated by Mike Mancini himself. I had been in contact with Mike in months previous, and he had guaranteed me a place to stay in one of his many "shacks." The shack turned out to be an old Blue Bird school bus, converted into a tiny apartment, complete with a little single bed, a small table, a wash stand and basin, and even electricity, thanks to an extension cord running from Mike's Snack Bar. I strung up my hammock outside and felt right at home.

Figure 4: My home in Keno City for the first few weeks. Author photo

In Keno City, there is no "view from nowhere," to use Donna Haraway's term (1991).

The tiny population of Keno City (approximately 25) and the Mayo region (approximately 500)

make it impossible for an outside researcher to remain anonymous. Being from a small Yukon

town myself, I knew that as soon as I parked my truck at the Keno City Snack Bar, I was noticed

and would soon be known about by the entire community. Attending Alexco's community

update meeting (detailed in the Interlude) solidified this sense. I was expected by residents of

Keno to be an ally— "take notes," they said, "it makes them nervous!" I found myself scribbling

furiously, seated beside Andrea Mansell, an Alexco employee and acquaintance from Dawson

City, feeling as through we were dueling note-takers, working for opposing sides of a conflict.

There simply was no pretense to objectivity. Thankfully, as a student of feminist and Indigenous

methodologies, I had no intention of framing myself as an objective, outside researcher. In the

days following the Alexco update meeting, I took some time to acclimatize, touring the museum

and the mine sites, wandering on the trails, poking about in the various abandoned buildings, getting to know folks, and finally I began to conduct interviews.

RESEARCH METHODS

Using primarily oral history and ethnographic research methods, I employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and a "deep hang-out" (Geertz, 1998) immersion experience in the communities, during which I used photography, field notes, and personal journaling to record my research journey. I also made use of traditional archival research and general background research from both secondary and primary sources.

Throughout the length of this project, I worked to develop long-term relationships with the communities of Keno City, Mayo, and the FNNND, which I still honour. Building these sincere relationships allowed research participants to explore their feelings, stories, and memories regarding mineral development on their lands. The relationships that were developed during this research project continue to this day and have assisted me, as a researcher and Yukon resident, not only in the completion of this project but also in my personal development and understanding of my home territory.

Informed by feminist and Indigenous research theories, as described in Chapter Two (Wilson, 2008; Smith, 2013; Leddy, 2010; Kovach, 2009; Tuck, 2009), I employed a variety of archival and ethnographic research methods, which is a common approach in feminist geographies and is welcomed by Wilson's Indigenous Research Paradigm (Desbiens, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Both research paradigms emphasize the importance of the research process as well as the results and encourage reflexivity throughout the collection, analysis and write-up of research. As such, information was collected from archival sources, contemporary government documents and websites, media reports, local residents, and past and present mine employees.

I used the ethnographic methods of interviewing and participant/field observations to document local knowledge and experiences of historic and contemporary mining. I spent three months in the communities of Mayo and Keno, dividing my time between the two communities and contributing to both through volunteer work. I volunteered with the NND Heritage Department, assisting in the archiving of oral histories and training of a research assistant. While in Keno, I volunteered with the Keno City Community Club, helping with landscaping efforts around the Keno City Museum as well as at the Keno City Snack Bar, doing dishes and taking orders. These volunteer opportunities not only introduced me to the communities but also allowed me to give back to these small towns, where I was welcomed and accommodated. I also attended as many public meetings and community events as possible, observing the relationships between locals, company representatives, and government officials.

Employing in-depth, semi-structured interviews allowed for individual interpretation and expression of information (Shopes, 2002; Ward, 2012). In Keno, I started with my initial contacts and then used "snowballing" techniques to seek out new interviewees, eventually speaking with nearly everyone in the tiny community. In Mayo, Joella Hogan and Kaylie-Ann Hummel assisted me in contacting appropriate NND interview participants. Due to interview fatigue amongst NND community members and the age of some NND elders, it was beneficial and respectful to have Joella and Kaylie-Ann help determine appropriate knowledge holders (Leddy, 2010; Tuck, 2009; Tuck & Yang, 2014). In terms of Alexco, after a few emails and phone calls, I was eventually able to interview Tom Fudge, then manager of the mine site. I was also able to interview the YESAB assessor who worked on most of the Alexco applications, and one of her supervisors, then head of the YESAB board. Afterwards, interviews were transcribed word for word, adhering to oral history standards, with printed copies and digital recordings

provided to individual interviewees. All interviewees were offered honoraria ($20/hour) in accordance with Na-cho Nyäk Dun protocols and standards, though some did refuse. At the end of each interview, I asked if interviewees had any questions for me, if there was any additional information they would like to add, and if they had suggestions for other research participants. During subsequent visits to the communities, in the summer of 2012, I visited each participant to receive feedback about their experience with the project, and to share a jar of home-made, Yukon raspberry jam, as a token of my personal thanks for their contribution.

I interviewed twenty-nine individuals in total, including First Nation elders, community members, government officials and corporate managers. All interviewees were provided with a project summary and completed a consent form (Appendix II), and they were given the option of anonymity. Most interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and written notes; two interviewees declined use of the recorder, so only written notes were used. Interviews ranged from forty-five minutes to nearly two hours long, and the same broad topics and timelines were covered in all interviews, varying slightly to suit the age and experiences of the interviewee. All interviews used the same general outline, wherein I asked the interviewee to introduce themselves and tell me how they came to be in the area. I also explored their family history and historical association with the Keno and Mayo regions (if applicable), which eventually led to an exploration of their emotional responses to the mine closure and redevelopment (as appropriate), as well as their perceptions of change both within between the communities of Mayo and Keno City.

In addition to interviews, I recorded field observations in a research journal, and noted my own reactions to landscapes, interviews and experiences in the region—a thoroughly reflexive process, which assisted me in interpreting the information I had gathered. I further

familiarized myself with the historic record of the Keno Hill and Mayo regions, using historic books, archival records, and collections in both the Keno City Mining Museum and the Binet House Museum in Mayo as well as at the Yukon Archives in Whitehorse and National Archives in Ottawa. I also utilized numerous online databases to search for historical and contemporary media coverage of the mine closure and redevelopment. The YESAB online registry was helpful for exploring the views shared during Alexco's redevelopment as well as the assessment process.

After my field season, I returned to St. John's, where I transcribed all the interviews I had conducted and developed a personal coding system to highlight relevant information. During this long process of transcribing and coding, I relived not only my brief field season, but also the stories and memories shared by all research participants. I had asked them about their connection to the area and the mining history, and about the former mining company, United Keno Hill. I had asked them what it was like when the mine shut down in 1989 and in the years that followed when most people left the area, and I asked them how they felt about the mines being redeveloped and how they had been affected. What they shared was a wave of emotions—anger, sadness, excitement, pride, frustration, and more. There were layers upon layers of emotion, laid down over the years of living in a region dependent upon and ravaged by the extraction of ore from the ground on which they lived. What I heard was a geography of emotion, underlain by the narrative of environmental, social, and economic impacts of several decades of mine closure and redevelopment. It was this emotional geography that had not been documented, acknowledged, or understood. Indeed, as I spent more time with the words of my research participants, it became obvious to me that they were all asking for the same thing—help with processing the affectual impacts of mining, both historic and contemporary. Mine remediation or reclamation is often defined in environmental terms, but as others have shown, it also has important political

25

and social dimensions (Becket & Keeling, 2019). In the case of Keno Hill, it was attention to the

emotional impacts of mine redevelopment and reclamation that was required—I call this

emotional remediation. I hope that the articulation of this emotional story will assist the

communities and research participants in their relationships with each other, as well as the

history and landscape of their region (Tsosie, 2015). Perhaps this work will also, in some small

way, help other communities in dealing with similar events. In the following chapters, I explore

this emotional geography, guided by interview participants, who generously shared their

personal stories and their family history, both of which had become intertwined with the history

of the Keno Hill Silver Mine.

1.4 THESIS ORGANIZATION

The remainder of this thesis is divided into four chapters. Following this introductory chapter is

Chapter Two, a Literature Review and Methodology, which traces the evolution of mining

literature to include work on mining towns, mine closure, and finally, mine redevelopment.

Then, the chapter explores feminist, Indigenous and oral history methodologies; finding a place

for this work amongst the genres of emotional and spectre geography. Chapter Three traces the

development of the Keno Hill Mines, using First Nation family history and specifically, the lives

of Herman Melancon, an NND miner, who has worked in both iterations of Keno Hill, and Alice

Buyck, an NND Elder who observed the fluctuations of the mines and the impacts on her

community. Chapter Four is an examination of the Keno Hill closure and redevelopment,

through the memories and emotions of Keno City residents, highlighting Mike Mancini, who

was raised in Elsa, and Yvonne Bessette, who has been enchanted with the community since the

1970s. This chapter focuses on the nostalgia felt by Keno residents for the old era of mining and

the fraught relationship that has developed between them and the new owners of the Keno Hill mine. Finally, Chapter Five is a conclusion, which reiterates the main points of the substantive chapters and discusses the main contention of this thesis, which is that local residents' emotions and stories about the initial closure of UKHM hover like a spectre over the redevelopment of the mine site, impacting the relationships between local residents, communities, and development corporations and evaluating agencies. The lack of attention given to this emotional spectre exacerbates the fraught relationships between local residents, assessment regimes, corporate mining interests, and the land, reinforcing the need for emotional remediation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW & METHODOLOGIES

"Don't fall in love with it…we might want to mine it one day," - Shawn Ryan, 2011 Yukon Prospector of the Year.

"A loved being or thing or idea is held by us . . .but a loved place holds us, even if it exists only in memory . . .A loved place is not encompassed by us, we are encompassed, loved, breathed into life, by it," - Freya Mathews, 2005.

This thesis examines the emotional geography of mine closure and redevelopment in the Keno Hill district of the central Yukon, including the communities of Keno City, Elsa, and Mayo; all located within the traditional territory of the Na-cho Nyäk Dun First Nation (NND). Throughout this examination, I utilize feminist, Indigenous and oral history methodologies to explore the complex ways in which emotion is expressed and evaluated in historic and modern contexts of northern mineral development. Geographical, historical and anthropological scholarship on mining landscapes, towns, mine closure, and redevelopment are used as a platform for this work, helping to develop a basis for my examination of the current situation at Keno Hill, while the sub-fields of emotional and spectre geography inform the lens through which I view this case.

The following literature review summarizes and engages with the academic writing that has led me to this point of inquiry and directed my research questions, which are: how is emotion expressed in oral history of mine closure and oral accounts of mineral redevelopment; and what are the emotional and social impacts of closure and redevelopment in the context of settler-Indigenous relations in the post land-claims era of the Central Yukon? The methodology section, which comes next, delves into broader theories that have defined my research. The means of thinking explored here have shaped my modes of inquiry as well as my ethical and moral examinations of storytelling within a complex mining environment, involving both Indigenous

and settler voices. The broad spectrum of people who shared their stories and life histories with me necessitated a comprehensive view of academic thinking. Therefore, I have drawn from feminist, Indigenous, and oral history research methodologies. Finally, I describe my own positionality in reference to the aforementioned literatures.

Together, the literature and theoretical writing presented here create a framework for the main contention of this thesis—that emotional reactions and memories are important in historic and contemporary mining landscapes, for both settler and Indigenous communities and that in the Yukon, emotional impacts of mineral development must be valued and evaluated in the assessment throughout and beyond the life cycle of a project.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. ON MINING GEOGRAPHY

There is a vast literature on mining from Georgius Agricola's *De re metallica* to Homer Aschman's treatise on the life cycle of a mine (1970), to Liza Piper's discussion of a mine as a living, breathing entity (2007), to Traci Brynne Voyles' work on uranium mining on Navajo lands and environmental racism (2015). For this project, I have focused on the geographic literature regarding mining towns and, in particular, mine closure and redevelopment. The scholarly work I was drawn to for this study speaks to the human nature of mining and mining communities and was led by the voices of local people. For instance, I was captivated by June Nash's exploration of dependency and exploitation in Bolivian tin mines (1993), Katharine Rollwagen's examination of the closure of Britannia Beach (2007), and the work of Pini, Mayes, and McDonald on the emotional geography of mine closure in western Australia (2010). All this

29

writing, disparate though it is, resonated with the stories I heard in the Mayo area and contributed to my approach to the Keno Hill case study.

THE MINING CYCLE AND MINING TOWNS

Since the 1970s, Aschmann's linear "natural history" of a mine has been used to describe the life cycle of mining developments in four stages, beginning with prospecting and ending with mine shutdown. Throughout these stages, Aschman describes declining profits leading to final exhaustion of the resource (Aschman, 1970, p. 172–89). This classic concept is still used by the mining industry to portray a smooth, predictable operation, with a neat beginning and end. In modern practice, mining operations have rarely transitioned through these stages in a linear fashion, because of course, they are subject to the global processes of capitalism, unstable mineral markets, and political shifts (Cronon, 1992; Finn, 1998; Morse, 2003; Bridge, 2004, Wilson, 2004). This lack of stability and certainty often leads to the heartbreak of sudden mine closure, the uprooting of families, and the enduring environmental destruction left behind when mines suddenly close. In northern Canada, Indigenous peoples have borne the brunt of these consequences when mines close and the scars of an extractive industry are left on their lands (Sandlos & Keeling, 2016).

Traditionally, the exploitation of resources was viewed as a positive means of development. Countries with mineral wealth, such as Canada, the United States, and Australia, were expected to convert these minerals into economic wealth and social benefits, initiating development (Davis & Tilton, 2005, p. 234). In his well-documented and extensive discourse on mining and the environment, *Contested Terrain*, geographer Gavin Bridge refers to this as the "treasure chest theory of resource-based economic development," which is still applied today. This theory is justified through many different intellectual traditions, including comparative

advantage, resource-based industrialization, geopolitical theories of national security, and growth

pole theories, which all view mining as a means to foster economic development (Bridge, 2004,

p. 225). In Canada's North, and in the Yukon in particular, this form of economic rationale has

been applied since the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, with expectations that mineral development

would "open up the North." This thinking prevailed into the 1960s, with Diefenbaker's "Roads

to Resources" program (Southcott, Abele, Natcher, & Parlee, 2018). Despite a solid body of

knowledge that critiques such programs, this manner of economic development is still promoted.

Witness the recent Trudeau announcement of the "Resource Gateway" program, which plans to

improve and further develop roads throughout the southern and central Yukon, with the intention

of servicing mines and exploration (Yukon Government, 2017; CBC, 2017; Yukon News, 2018).

In the 1970s, sociological works such as Rex Lucas' *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*

(1971) examined the social and economic dynamics of single-industry communities, and

numerous studies of mining towns and company-owned towns were conducted (for example,

White, 1969; Laatsch, 1972). The disciplines of geography and sociology accounted for the

majority of the literature on northern resource towns as it continued to develop, including work

by Robert Bone, "Resource Towns in the Mackenzie Basin" (1998), and Roy Bowles' "Single

Industry Resource Communities in Canada's North" (in Hay, 1992). Recently work in this

tradition, such as *Building Community in an Instant Town: A Social Geography of Mackenzie

and Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia* (Halseth & Sullivan, 2002) and *Boom Town Blues: Elliot

Lake: Collapse and Revival in a Single-Industry Community* (Mawhiney & Pitblado, 1999), has

focused on the social impacts of living in a single-industry community. These case studies of the

social aspects of mine town life help to provide a solid platform for the ethnographic exploration

of social impacts of mining in the Yukon.

More recent work in the fields of environmental history, anthropology, and historical geography has critiqued the economic benefits of mining and instead explored the lasting environmental and social impacts of mineral development. Many of these studies influenced my approach to the Keno Hill case study, such as Janet Finn's *Tracing the Veins: Of Copper, Culture, and Community from Butte to Chuquicamata* (1998), which follows the paths of capitalism and community in two very different but inextricably linked mine sites. Using both social history and ethnography to explore community, class, and gender in both the Rockies and the Andes, Finn demonstrates the usefulness of these research techniques in distinct case studies. Meanwhile, *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* by Katherine Morse (2003) and William Cronon's "Kennecott Journey" in *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (1992) demonstrate an understanding of the global nature of events such as mineral rushes, showing how seemingly isolated areas in the American and Canadian norths were in fact dependent upon and connected with the 'outside,' or the southern regions of the nations that governed them, both through a need for supplies and labour and through the export of valuable minerals and resources. By linking these localized events to chains of capital and supply, the authors reveal global processes of capitalism and colonialism, and allow for an examination of the nation-building strategies employed through northern mineral development.

In recent decades, scholars have taken a critical view of the environmental impacts of corporate mining. Environmental historian Timothy LeCain, for instance, examines the myth of 'eco-efficiency' in the mining industry. LeCain argues that while there have been some technological advances in terms of pollution mitigation at extraction and smelting sites, these technologies merely capture toxic waste, which is then deposited elsewhere or can end up in

byproducts such as pesticides and wood preservatives, thus passing the toxicities down along the line (LeCain, 2000, p. 336). Gavin Bridge provides a similarly critical examination of the relatively recent ideal of sustainability espoused by mining corporations. Bridge points out the ironies of concepts such as "corporate social responsibility" and "environmental management capacity" within an industry which, by its very nature creates environmental and social upheaval (Bridge, 2004, 247). Further work in environmental history has addressed the destruction of lands surrounding mine sites and explored themes of corporate/community clashes (Baldwin et al, 2005), "cyclonic" development patterns (Keeling, 2010), and the failure of corporate and colonial forces to bring lasting 'development' to the Canadian North (Keeling & Sandlos, 2009) and (Sandlos & Keeling, 2012).

In the 1980s, many large mines were closed due to low mineral prices, bringing an end to the era of company-built mine towns and leaving behind abandoned mine sites and communities, some of which managed to diversify or survive on tourism, while others descended into ghost towns (Wilson, 2004). This ghost town phenomenon has been explored in books by Richard Francaviglia (1991) and David Robertson (2006). Francaviglia wrote against the 'declensionist' narratives that had become common amongst historical geographers and painted mine closure as both environmentally and socially disastrous (Keeling & Sandlos, 2015, p. 9). William Wyckoff (1995) and Ben Marsh (1987) have also questioned this "mining imaginary," or purely negative view of mine closure, to demonstrate through various case studies that communities have survived closure and gone on to thrive with economic diversification (Keeling & Sandlos, 2017). Meanwhile, geographical work on mining and resource towns has further examined this 'boom and bust' cycle. Work by Leslie Robertson (2005), Rollwagen (2007), and Harner (2001) took a more creative approach by examining the issues of memory, identity, and sense of place that

occur in and are affected by such circumstances. Meanwhile, research on abandoned mines in the Canadian North by LeClerc and Keeling (2015), Sandlos (2015), and Boutet, Sandlos and Keeling (2015) discussed how, for local Indigenous people, these mine sites serve as evidence of poor relationships with industry and government.

The traditional image of the mining cycle has been further challenged in recent years as many abandoned mines and brownfield sites have seen redevelopment or renewed mineral exploration (Wilson, 2004). Due to rising commodity prices and new extraction technologies, such sites have become profitable once again (Keeling and Sandlos, 2017, p. 379). Mine remediation and mineral redevelopment can inadvertently raise the spectre of an historical mine, once thought abandoned. Keeling and Sandlos have termed such sites "zombie mines," recalling their undead nature: "[w]hile the closure of mining communities may leave behind 'ghost towns,' zombie mines emerge where renewed activity at former mine sites threatens to reawaken or reproduce the negative experiences and out-comes of previous mining operations," (p. 407). Traci Brynne Voyles has also explored the "zombie mine" phenomenon in her book *Wastelanding* (2015), with specific attention to the mining of uranium in Navajo, or Diné, territory. This upending of the mining cycle raises new issues in terms of both environmental and social impacts. How are the new operators to account for the lasting social impacts of the mine's previous life? How are new operators to deal with local attachment to moribund mining infrastructure, such as old mine headframes? And how will assessment processes account for the additional environmental strain on an already disturbed site?

Bainton and Holcombe identified this gap in research in their 2018 study, "The Social Aspects of Mine Closure: A Global Literature Review." The authors directly called for more case studies in transition and post-mining and in particular, case studies that detail the

complexity of social impacts of mine closure (p. 31). There has been some work done on the

emotional and social impacts of mine development and closure (Pini et al., 2010; Ey et al.,

2016). It is this emerging body of work to which this thesis seeks to contribute. By exploring the

emotions shared by settlers and Indigenous residents of the Mayo region, regarding both the

closure and redevelopment of the Keno Hill mine, this research addresses this gap in knowledge

regarding the emotional plane of the "zombie mine" phenomenon.

　　　To explore the affective dimensions of the Keno Hill closure and redevelopment, I

employed both emotional and spectre geography, the latter of which I discuss next. I find spectre

geography apt for the study of mining, as mining entails removal—the excavation and

disappearing of a resource, creating an environmental absence, the impacts of which are felt

physically on the land and by local people. Furthermore, the zombie mine phenomenon

occurring at Keno Hill and other sites, calls out for the application of spectral theory, which

employs the undead, the haunted, or the ghostly to explore the sort of loss that remains.

2.2 ON SPECTRE GEOGRAPHY

"…they are always there, spectres, even if they do not exist, even if they are no longer, even if they are not yet," – Derrida, Spectres of Marx, p. 176.

Spectre or spectral geography is the exploration of absences, exclusions, and omittances from the

places and spaces we inhabit. Peeren and Blanco, writing in *The Spectralities Reader*, suggest

that "the publication of Jacques Derrida's Spectres de Marx in 1993 […] is commonly

considered the catalyst for what some have termed the 'spectral turn'…" (2013, Introduction).

Spectre geography is not about literal ghosts; instead, this so-called spectral turn has allowed

geographers to explore exclusions—the underlying, lingering, and un-spoken phenomena, which

can be said to haunt our spaces and daily lives (Matless, 2006, p. 337). By using spectres as a conceptual metaphor, used to perform theoretical work or to "do theory" (Peeren and Blanco, 2013), academics have begun to view political, social and ethical questions through the lens of spectrality—what is seen and what is not.

Geographer David Matless (2008) proposed that spectre geography can be traced back as far as Livingstone's *The Geographical Tradition*. Meanwhile, Maddern and Adney have discussed "ghostly geographies," which "warp perceptions of time and space. Fears and phobias disturb the ordinary and the expected as projections of objects, things and events cast long shadows," (2008, p. 293). By connecting spectro-geographies to the affectual, Maddern and Adney create space for my work, which blends both emotional and spectre geography.

Environmental geographer Tim Edensor has employed spectre geography to investigate the concept and the materiality of the industrial ruin in the United Kingdom (2005b). He suggests that a focus on ghosts that haunt ruins and the "affective and sensual memories" they conjure up provides an "antidote to the fixed, classified, and commodified memories purveyed in heritage and commemorative spaces" (pg. 829). Spectre geography has also been used to explore historic sites, such as Ellis Island, where Jo Frances Maddern (2008) discusses ghosts and migration spectres, suggesting that restoration work at Ellis Island served to both recall and reify ghosts. She writes that "the process of restoration involved simultaneously exorcising and conjuring ghosts, excavating and burying histories and material assemblages: judging absences and presences of knowledges and commemorative objects" (Maddern, 2008, p. 369). Meanwhile, Sophie Tamas has invoked spectre geography to discuss "the exclusions and invisibilities that haunt academic subjectivities, spaces, and research practices" (2016, p. 40).

Recalling Edensor, I suggest that the 'ruin' of Elsa and the abandoned mine sites that litter the Keno Hill area similarly conjure ghosts, which attest to a history different from the one told by government, corporate, and popular literature. This concept is explored further in chapters three and four of this thesis. Edensor's exploration of the ruin has allowed for a conceptual investigation of memory and story, which served as the main source of 'data' for my work. Thus, the redevelopment at Keno Hill, and particularly the remediation work done at Elsa (tearing down old buildings, etc.) has done much to resurrect the ghosts of the community, literally dismantling and burying some of the material history of the corporate mining era of the Yukon. For this study, I propose that the ghosts or absences in the Keno Hill landscape (both the physical landscape and in the historical record) are the emotional reactions and feelings regarding the mine closure and redevelopment. It is these affectual reactions of local inhabitants that were denied during the initial closure of the mines, and now, during a period of supposed optimistic redevelopment, those feelings have returned to haunt the spaces from which they have been excluded (Derrida, 1993)—the formal assessment process and the social license sphere of the Yukon. While spectre geography has been used sparingly to explore the phenomenon of abandoned mines and redeveloped mines (Keeling & Sandlos, 2017), it has yet to be used in conjunction with emotional geography to explore the affectual spectre left behind by mining and revived by redevelopment.

EMOTION AND/AS SPECTRE

Here, I suggest that the emotions felt and expressed (yet unheard) by residents of Mayo and Keno and members of the Na-cho Nyäk Dun, are a form of spectre, hanging over the redevelopment process, colouring the experience for all those involved, but not considered by

37

industry and regulators. Coupled with emotional geography, spectre geography allows me to explore both past and present emotions brought about by mining in the region and to comprehend how those emotions affect and influence the opinions of residents and life within their communities. Scholars like Nigel Thrift and Emilie Cameron have employed spectre and emotional geographies to explore postcolonial views of Indigenous ghost metaphors, exploration and empire in the Arctic and spatial relations and politics. I take Emilie Cameron's (2008) caution regarding the use of spectre geography to relegate Indigenous peoples to the past. As Cameron suggested, "allegorical representations of Indigenous peoples as ghosts haunting the Canadian state reinscribe colonial relations even as they are characterized as 'post' colonial expressions of recognition and redress, raising questions about the politics of postcolonial ghost stories" (2008, p. 384). Instead, I suggest that it is the *emotions* felt by NND citizens (and others), regarding past and present mining that are the spectre, certainly not the people themselves.

Furthermore, this is not a "damage narrative" (Tuck, 2009). This work attempts to honestly share the hardships and inequalities experienced by NND people; however, it does not cast them as downtrodden victims. I hope to demonstrate the very real, very alive, and very active nature of NND individuals in the historical mining industry (see Chapter Two), the mine redevelopment process, and the active debate surrounding its benefits and consequences. The NND have been effective and essential participants in the Keno Hill Mining district since its inception and NND members experience all the complex and conflicting emotions that occur with mine development and redevelopment. Certainly, there is nothing ghostly or defeated about NND Elder Jimmy Johnny, who still harvests medicinal plants in the Keno Hill region and speaks openly at public meetings about the impacts of mining; or NND member Herman

Melancon, whose real blood and sweat went into the mines daily, as did his father's. Their materiality is undeniable, as is their involvement in the local mining industry and their emotional reactions to it.

Indeed, it is the emotions of these people that hover at the mine sites and in the edges of the archival record of Keno Hill. And it is these emotions that create difficulty for those who wish to reclaim and redevelop the old mine sites. No amount of environmental remediation will rid the mine sites of the past hurts, injustice, or melancholy felt by local residents. The archival record hints at the intensities of such times, but it is the glaring omittance of emotional reactions that contribute to the spectre of the past mining era. Hence the necessity of an oral history method of inquiry, which allows for the rich and intricate geography of emotion to be exhumed.

As Avery Gordon has suggested, "haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impact felt in everyday life, especially when they are supposedly over and done with…or when their oppressive nature is denied" (2008, xvi). At Keno Hill, the abusive system of colonialism still clings to the mine sites and communities, even in this new era of Yukon First Nation self-government. Indeed, it is the emotional spectre, the affective ghosts, that will not allow the Keno Hill Mine to be neatly closed, remediated and re-opened. Ghosts, as Derrida reminds us, trouble any efforts to finish and close; it is only by living with, talking with, and accommodating our ghosts that we might 'learn to live' in these 'post' colonial times (Cameron, 2008, p. 383). If it is the spectre of emotion that lingers, unacknowledged at the Keno Hill Mine sites and within the pages of its archive, then that spectre must be examined to fully understand the current debate surrounding mine redevelopment.

2.3. ON EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHY

"On the surface, the discipline of geography often presents us with an emotionally barren terrain," – Davidson, Smith, & Bondi, 2007

Emotional geography is a sub-field within human geography, dealing with the relationships between emotions and places, and their environments. Specifically, emotional geography can focus on how human emotions relate to, or affect, their surrounding environment. As defined by Amanda Kearney: "an emotional geography concerns the social and sensory relations that define homelands. Patterns in human engagement have an effect on place, the individual and group. The experiential processes of cultural habitus, that ultimately shape cultural identity, are dominant in shaping emotional encounters," (2009, p. 209). Historically, emotion has not been welcome in traditional academic, public, or political discourse (such as an environmental assessment). Today, people are still counselled to keep emotions out of "rational" debate (Garde-Hansen & Gorton, 2013, p. 37). This traditional privileging of certain types of knowing (rational, scientific thought) over others (emotional, intuition, subjective feelings) serves to discredit emotion and banish it from the public, political, and academic realm (Boyle, 2017, p. 41). For many years, therefore, emotion remained on the outskirts of geographical research, due to the historical relegation of emotion to the female realm and reasoning and scientific thought to the rational world of men. Recently, due to the work of feminist geographers, the gender binary of emotion is being dispelled (Bondi, 2005; Johnston & Longhurst, 2009; Longhurst 2001) and in the early 2000s, emotional geography began to distinguish itself as a legitimate sub-field. Feminist scholar, Sarah Ahmed has said that "emotions do not shape people and objects, rather contact with objects and people shape emotions" (2004, p. 4), demonstrating the importance of emotion in our daily lives.

Scholars such as Bondi and Davidson, Steve Pile, Nigel Thrift, and Sarah Ahmed have been pioneers in the field. Laura Smith has used a moral-emotional critique to explore the "Emotionality of Environmental Restoration" (2014). Meanwhile, Amanda Kearny (2009) has used emotional geography to examine how cultural groups are connected to their ancestors and homelands through place names, suggesting that it is "emotions and sensory experience [that] affect the way that cultural groups sense the substance of their past, present and future" (Kearny, 2009, p. 209). This work is particularly relevant to Chapter Three of this thesis, which addresses the NND experience of Keno Hill closure and redevelopment.

For emotional geographers, it has been important to distinguish between emotion and affect, as they represent quite different theoretical leanings. This debate is dealt with in Pile (2009) and Bondi and Davidson (2011). For my purposes, I employ Alexandra Boyle's (2017) delineation of "emotions as social, and affect as biological" (p. 45-46). Furthermore, Bondi and Davidson attest that "emotional geographies made the case for studying emotion precisely because of its potential for offering important new insights into relationships between and among people and environments" (2011, p. 596). Discussing the accuracy of emotional representation, the authors write that "language—whether spoken or written—is always performative…a core theme within the broad field of emotional and affectual geographies should continue to engage with the performativity of language" (p. 596-597). This note is important to my study, as my 'data' is based almost solely on stories told and memories shared by willing research participants. Language was incredibly important to this work. My search for the emotions expressed through the language of storytelling and memory was made inherently complex by the reality that all stories shared and all interviews I conducted, were performative. Performed by me, a woman who grew up in the neighbouring town, walking a thin line between outsider and

insider (at times adopting and at others eschewing the guise of a southern academic) and performed by research participants, who shared stories and personal memories that may have warped over time and that were influenced by recent events and my presence. My research participants (or partners, or guides, as I consider them) shared their emotional stories while aware of their neighbourly, familial and stewardship relations; wary of disrupting community bonds; and mindful of the company and government representatives looming over them. Of course, this experience is not unique, many other researchers have found the delicate method of storytelling to be similarly both rich and challenging (de Leeuw, S., Parkes, M., Mitchell-Foster, K., Sloan Morgan, V., Christensen, J. and J. Russell, 2017).

At times, I was overwhelmed by the attempt to portray these stories and emotions accurately, but was heartened by the words of Bondi and Davidson, who suggest that "efforts to pin down ideas and experiences too precisely necessarily decontextualizes them, and cuts away the meaning-making, meaning-giving richness that flows from the very contexts excluded. Such cutting does violence . . ." (2011, p. 597). Indeed, my utmost goal was to not harm or "do violence" to either my research participants or research location. I hoped to provide an opportunity for research participants to voice their concerns, share their stories and perhaps heal from some of the emotional trauma of the mine closure and redevelopment. Thus, I use emotional geography here not to firmly tack certain emotions to places or events or to define the emotions associated with mine closure and redevelopment in a prescriptive manner, but instead to allow for an airing of these emotions and to highlight the natural fluidity and complexity I found in emotional accounts throughout the Keno Hill area.

Further to this, Sarah Ahmed pointed to the circulatory nature of emotions, noting the etymology of "the word 'emotion' is from the Latin *emovere,* referring to 'to move, to move

out'" (2004, p. 11). I see the emotional accounts of mine closure and redevelopment moving outwards in concentric circles, from the epicenter of the mines, to the communities of Keno City, Elsa, and Mayo, and echoing throughout the entire Yukon as the territory works to balance our mining history, present, and future, with the stated goals of Indigenous-settler reconciliation and environmental protection, outlined in the Umbrella Final Agreement. Perhaps, in sharing their stories here and naming the emotional reactions they felt, residents of the Keno Hill region are calling down the spectre of overlooked emotion surrounding the mine closure and redevelopment. By naming and speaking of that which is ignored (a spectre), perhaps we can help to dispel it.

EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF MINING

"A focus on emotion opens up space for thought and reflection for a geography dealing with issues of community and identity in a post-industrial landscape" - Katy Bennett

Of particular interest to this research are a few studies looking at the emotional geography of mining communities. As this is a relatively new field, there is little literature amassed on the subject; however, work by Katy Bennett, such as "Telling Tales: Nostalgia, Collective Identity and an Ex-Mining Village" in *Emotion, Place and Culture* (Smith & Bondi, 2016) explored the effect of nostalgia on individuals coping with a changing community after mine closure. Bennett argued that the use of nostalgic events, such as parades, "helps people to feel a sense of continuity regarding their identity in the face of apparent discontinuity" (p. 189) and suggested that a people's sense of collective identity is recreated during times of transition. Further work has been undertaken by Australian scholars Barbara Pini, Robyn Mayes, and Paula McDonald. Their 2010 paper, "The emotional geography of a mine closure: a study of the

Ravensthorpe nickel mine in Western Australia," examined the emotions expressed during mine closure and the strategies employed by the mining company to suppress or neutralize those emotions (Pini, Mayes, and McDonald, 2010, p. 559). The authors used emotional geography to explore mine closure and the ways in which emotions connected to such events become highly politicized as they encounter corporate interests.

Halvaksz (2008) explores mine closure in Papua New Guinea and how community concepts of time (the past in the present) and emotions within landscapes affect opinions on closure and future development. In this poignant work, Halvaksz describes mining landscapes as unique spaces, which are difficult to reclaim, even with the best environmental practices because "mines are not merely extracting minerals, but are also marking time and space with their appearances," (2008, p. 21). Such marking of time and space blurs the "linear 'progression' of history," (p. 22), as local residents never quite view the mine site as closed, but always as a future possibility. Most relevant to my study, is the recent work of Ey et al. (2016), who explore the emotional geographies of the extractive sector. The authors suggest that "in order to understand the often immense disputes and abject responses to mining, it is essential that we turn to emotion" (Ey et al., 2016, p. 10), first to understand the local impacts of resource extraction better and second, to see how dismissing emotional responses serves to disempower those voicing opposition to such projects.

The work of Halvaksz; Pini, Mayes, and McDonald; and Ey et al., may take place on the other side of the earth (in Papua New Guinea and Australia for example), however, due to the global nature of corporate mining processes and culture, there are stark similarities between these case studies and that of Keno Hill. Such literature is just beginning to examine the emotions surrounding mine closure; however, in Canada's Yukon Territory, communities are now

experiencing mine re-development, while still attempting to deal with the social consequences of mine closure two decades earlier. By exploring this new phenomenon, this research will make important contributions to the literature on the social impacts of northern mining, and in particular, the emotional geography of mineral redevelopment.

Furthermore, there has been very little academic work done in the field of emotional geography in the Canadian North (with the recent exception of Christiansen, Cox, & Szabo-Jones, 2018). In her book, *Finding Dahshaa*, Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox does touch on something similar, which she calls a "suffering narrative"—the failure of Canadian and Territorial authorities to recognize narratives of social suffering during Délı̨nę self-government negotiations. As Irlbacher-Fox suggests, narratives of suffering are difficult to make relevant or applicable in any engagement or evaluation processes—they simply do not fit. In the Yukon, when expressed at public meetings or in public avenues such as newspapers and though the YESAB evaluation process, such narratives invoke unease or disregard. Sympathy may be expressed, but there is no means of quantifying the fear, anger, or sadness expressed by community members and, therefore, such emotional reactions are discounted. Thus, those stories and the emotions that go along with them have nowhere to go; they are not dealt with, so they continue to hover, as a spectre in the room. In this thesis, I suggest that they become ghosts, haunting the landscape: ghosts that were released and revived during the mineral redevelopment of Keno Hill.

The exploration of the scholarly work above—in mining, spectre, and emotional geographies—demonstrates how my research fits into recent discussions of the social impacts of mineral development in the Canadian North. These literatures also confirm that the Keno Hill site is an appropriate and unexplored case study, which contributes a rich variety of voices,

pushing the discussion of northern mineral development further towards an understanding of the

relationships between settler and Indigenous peoples and the lands they live upon. It was through

studying the literatures described above that I was able to find a place for the inquiries posed by

my research questions: how is emotion expressed in the oral history of mine closure and oral

accounts of mineral redevelopment; and what are the emotional and social impacts of closure and

redevelopment in the context of settler-Indigenous relations in the post land-claims era of the

Central Yukon? In other words, how does love of land and love of place manifest in the face of

mineral redevelopment, and how is the expression of that love translated and evaluated? I turn

now to the methodological framework, which I used to explore these questions.

METHODOLOGY

To help explore my research questions, I employed feminist, Indigenous, and oral history

methodologies. The very personal and situated nature of conducting an emotional geography

case study based on oral history, using community-directed research methods was a deeply

feminist work. My research was informed by my position as a feminist ally for Indigenous

people in the lands differentiated by settlers as the Yukon Territory. Indigenous academics

such as Shawn Wilson, Lianne Leddy, Margaret Kovach, Eve Tuck, and Leanne

Betasamosake Simpson have also informed my approach to research and work within Yukon

Indigenous communities (Wilson, 2008; Leddy, 2010; Kovach, 2009; Tuck, 2009). This thesis

bears the mark of the land and people who helped create it. Indeed, there was an element of

methodology directed by the mountains and lakes of the NND traditional territory, as well as

by the people with whom I worked—the terrain and lifestyle of the area dictated a certain

intimacy and a slow, casual approach. I also cannot overstate the impact that my colleagues

and many elders at the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation have had on my thinking and personal ethos for research and work. Mähsi cho/many thanks.

2.4 FEMINIST RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Building on second wave feminism of the 1960s, feminist geography developed in the 1970s as a radical geography that explored unequal gender roles in society. Early feminist geographers revealed the relations between gender and power, demonstrating the evolution of gender relations in different times and places. Importantly, feminist geography has made significant changes to the conduct of research, allowing for and creating new methodologies and epistemologies that challenge the objective, neutral stance of science and instead suggest the positionality and situated nature of all knowledge. This work allows for the expansion of participatory, community-based research development as well as use of qualitative research methods, such as oral history and ethnographies (McDowell, 1992). Indeed, feminist methodologies have spread across the discipline of geography and have been used to explore much more than gender. Feminist geographers have examined varied subjects from transnational migration (Pratt et al., 2017) to the politics of knowledge production (Rose, 1993).

The research techniques that I used required a great deal of reflexivity and self-critique (Pain 2009), which "entails consideration of a variety of factors: personal biography, social situation, political values, situation within the academic labour structure, personal relationship to research respondents, relations of authority within the research process and so on" (Johnston 2000). I was both excited by and wary of conducting research in a community very close to my hometown. However, I was encouraged by the work of scholars such as Leslie Robertson (2005) and Janet Finn (1998), who both conducted research in the mining communities in which they

47

were raised or had roots. Finn speaks to "the meaning and power of engaged research, where the author is deeply implicated in her subject of study" (1998, p. 2). This view aligns well with Shawn Wilson's Indigenous Research Paradigm (discussed below), which stresses relational accountability in all research.

As with many feminist geographers, I am interested in the situated nature of knowledge (Haraway, 1988; Johnston, 2000). Using participatory and community-based research, I hoped to capture some of the richness of the local experience with the land and history of the region (Pain, 2009). For Desbiens (2010), feminist geographical work allows for a broad, open approach to research, which includes methods such as ethnography and emphasizes community involvement. Julie Cruikshank summarizes this approach in her book, *The Social Life of Stories*, suggesting that "unless we put ourselves in interactive situations where we are exposed and vulnerable…we can never recognize the limitations of our own descriptions" (2000, 165). Both feminist and Indigenous research paradigms emphasize the importance of the research process as well as the results and encourage reflexivity throughout the collection, analysis and write-up of research (Tuhiwai Smith, 2013, p. 138-142).

Haraway's concept of "situated knowledge" (1991, p. 188) is an important one for this study, as it stresses subjective and reflexive research values. Such reflexivity allows a researcher to recognize their role in "world-making", by writing themselves into the story, thus avoiding the status of "modest witness" (1997, p. 3). Writing oneself into a story eludes the fallacy of objectivity in an obvious, yet natural way, as if to say, "here I am, a character in this story, like all the rest." Instead of striving for scientific objectivity, Haraway suggests that situated knowledge is a form of objectivity that allows for the agency of both the knowledge producer and the object of study; in other words (Shawn Wilson's words), it allows for a relationship—

between researcher, knowledge holder, land, history, and even spectres or spirits, which we cannot see.

The recognition of positionality is frequently used by ethnographic researchers (DeLyser, 1999; Chouinard & Grant, 1996; Weiss & Haber, 1999). For DeLyser, this work pays "particular attention to placing oneself in the research, to recognizing one's own subject position, to critical examination of one's own body as research instrument, to participating actively in the researched community, and to studying a community of which one is part" (1999, p. 605). Living in Keno City and Mayo for three months, and being a life-long resident of the Yukon, I certainly did feel a part of the community. Indeed, as DeLyser suggests, I was aware of the impact of my presence as a female in the field—particularly in the traditionally male-dominated mining industry (Mayes & Pini, 2010, p. 236). Furthermore, in emotional geography, the female body is important as the historical keeper and originator of all things "irrational," such as emotions. As Alexandra Boyle (2017) has discussed, historically, there has been a gendering and compartmentalization of emotions, relegating them to the female body (therefore silencing them) and privileging the positivistic concepts of reason, rationality, and the mind, to the realm of men.

Acknowledging the positionality of the researcher allows us to dispense with the fallacy of objectivity and, therefore, expose the webs of knowledge that make up our worlds, both the dominant, settler reality and the parallel, Indigenous reality. By exposing the strands of these webs, we inadvertently highlight the connections between them. Haraway emphasized that "the point is to get at how worlds are made and unmade, in order to participate in the processes, in order to foster some forms of life and not others …The point is not just to read the webs of knowledge production; the point is to reconfigure what counts as knowledge" (1994, p. 62). As a feminist researcher, creating an emotional geography of an historic and modern minescape, these

49

words are particularly heartening. The goal of this work is to portray emotions, memories, and personal stories as serious and important forms of 'data' or knowledge that must be incorporated into any assessment of a resource development project.

Gillian Rose has discussed the delicate nature of such work, which inherently understands its own shortfalls. For Rose, admitting that we are not all-seeing is a modest yet radical move, which allows us to "inscribe into our research practices some absences and fallibilities while recognizing that the significance of this does not rest entirely in our own hands," (in Thrift & Whatmore, 2004, p. 260). Certainly, we cannot understand all the characteristics and movements of power, but by eschewing the "role of the cool interpreter" (Anderson & Smith, 2001, p. 9), we move closer towards tracing the lines of power, to reveal its interconnected web, of which we, as researchers, are a part.

There is much overlap between feminist geography and emotional geography, as emotional geography is viewed as inherently feminist work. Liz Bondi has suggested that it is feminist geography that "emphasized the fluidity and pervasiveness of emotion in the context of situated approaches to knowledge-production, in which researchers are understood as intrinsically connected to their research subjects" (2005, p. 445). Furthermore, feminist geography has allowed for first person accounts of research, which help to locate emotion within our own biases. As Bondi (2005) and Pile (2010) have demonstrated, feminist work has also helped to extract emotion from the realms of female-only and anthropocentric discourse, thus transporting emotional understandings to our views on the construction of space and place.

Recent work in de-colonial research theory by scholars such as Jocelyn Thorpe and Eve Tuck point to the connections between Indigenous research and feminist research methodologies, suggesting that a common element between the two are the insistence on situated and partial

knowledge and sources (Thorpe, 2016, p. 138; Arvin, Tuck, & Morrill, 2013). Furthermore, many Indigenous scholars, such as Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, use Indigenous theorizing to dismantle not only male/female binaries, but "the heteropatriarchy of settler colonialism" in general (Simpson, 2017, p. 141). It is here, within a theory of relational, situated, emotional experiences, that I found connections between feminist and Indigenous methodologies. As a settler living in the Yukon, a feminist research methodology, deeply informed by Indigenous ways of thinking and doing, was necessary to explore the conflicts arising during the redevelopment of the Keno Hill mine for both settler and Indigenous residents.

2.5 INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (BY A NON-INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER)

I am not an Indigenous researcher. Therefore, I have frequently questioned my ability and right to use an Indigenous research methodology. When Indigenous scholars write about "Indigenous research" and "Indigenous methodology," do they intend for non-Indigenous researchers, such as myself, to benefit from the knowledge they share and utilize the techniques they outline? Renee Pualani Louis provided some solace when she wrote: "I would much rather see non-Indigenous researchers working with Indigenous communities possessing the tools they need to ensure that their research agendas are 'sympathetic, respectful, and ethical from an Indigenous perspective'," (2007, p. 134). I am aware that in the modern context of reconciliation in the Canadian settler state, there is a fine line between being an effective ally for Indigenous peoples and appropriation. I understand that my use of this theory is problematic. After much personal introspection and discussion with Indigenous colleagues, I have decided to include this theory here, as it has been so influential in my research; however, I would now suggest that my

51

methodological approach was a decolonizing one, rather than an Indigenous one (see Held, 2019).[4]

During my previous work experience with northern First Nations, I was taught to work within a First Nation ontology, using non-Indigenous, anthropological, historical, or archival methods. For example, we documented elders' oral history with digital voice recorders, then transcribed and archived them according to ethnographic practices, and we collected and stored First Nation "artifacts" according to museum standards. These inherent contradictions were not lost on myself, my colleagues, or First Nation elders; however, we used these established tools as steppingstones, to help us work towards developing new Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in-informed ways of doing and knowing. Indeed, this challenging work continues, as many Yukon First Nations continue to assert their means of operating within their governments and their (relatively) new self-government agreements (Nadasdy 2014, 2017). During more recent employment with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in heritage department (both as an employee and a consultant), I have been further educated on the evolving nature of traditional knowledge work in the community, much of which involves the adaptation or outright abandonment of standard archival, anthropological, and museum standards and practices, some of which place more importance on the act of storytelling/knowledge sharing/oral history than the words themselves. Many thanks to Jody Beaumont, Sue Parsons, Georgette McLeod, Debbie Nagano, Jackie Olson, Madeleine deRepentigny, Joella Hogan and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders J.J. Van Bibber, Percy Henry, Edward Roberts, Julia Morberg, Ronald Johnson, Angie Joseph-Rear, Peggy Kormendy and others for providing continual insight into this evolving work.

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[4] Many thanks to thesis examiner Julia Christensen for drawing this distinction and sharing Mirjam Held's work.

Having worked in such an environment, I was accustomed to a set of research ideals, ethics and methods that were seen as standard practice with First Nation governments throughout the Yukon but were in opposition to many of the standard academic research processes I was encouraged to use while preparing for this project. Academic research standards and norms, such as lack of payment for research participants, guarantee of anonymity, and rigid research plans simply did not fit with the local research standards for Yukon First Nations. In the Yukon, common research practices include gifting honoraria, honouring knowledge holders by acknowledging them and crediting their stories and information, sharing full interview transcripts with participants and First Nation Heritage Departments to allow for editing and restrictions, and having a research plan flexible enough to adapt and change with direction from local elders and knowledge holders. For myself and many other scholars (Leddy, 2010, 2016; Tuhiwai Smith, 2013; Thorpe, 2016) the crux of this exercise has been to find a methodology that would be accepted and applicable within both the academic setting and the Indigenous community in which I was working.

At first, I struggled in the academic setting to find a methodology that allowed for the research techniques and philosophy that I had learned and that I knew were expected by Yukon elders and First Nations. There was a burgeoning literature on post-colonial, de-colonial, and anti-colonial research (Cameron, 2011; Helen Verran, 2001; Blunt & Wills, 2000; Markey, Halseth, & Manson, 2010) and interesting connections between this work and the "situated mess" explored by Science and Technology Studies (Latour, 2012). Studies of ontological differences and world making, such as the work of Mario Blaser (2014) were fascinating; however, I had yet to find a particular theory that I felt I could bring home with me—one that the elders who I had and would be working with would allow and in which they would see

themselves reflected. One day, when feeling particularly disillusioned, Amazon.ca kindly

suggested that I check out Shawn Wilson's 2008 book *Research is Ceremony*. While not the

most orthodox recommendation, I took it, and was immediately rewarded (reluctant thanks to the

Amazon algorithm). The research methodology outlined by Wilson fit well with the techniques

and ethos of research I had been taught while working in the Yukon—research viewed as a

journey, a ceremony, in which relationships with research participants (human and otherwise) are

of the utmost value.

AN INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Shawn Wilson, an Opaskwayak Cree from northern Manitoba, defines Indigenous

research as "the knowing and respectful reinforcement that all things are related and connected.

It is the voices from our ancestors that tell us when it is right and when it is not. Indigenous

research is a life changing ceremony" (2008, p. 169). Furthermore, in "What is Indigenous

Research Methodology," (2001) Wilson discusses what he calls an "Indigenist research

paradigm." Wondering how to share or teach this paradigm to others, when the use of academic

language extracts the information from its real context, Wilson's suggestion is that

> Researchers and authors need to place themselves and their work firmly in a
> relational context. We cannot be separated from our work, nor should our writing
> be separated from ourselves (i.e., we must write in the first person rather than the
> third). Our own relationships with our environment, families, ancestors, ideas, and
> the cosmos around us shape who we are and how we will conduct our research.
> Good Indigenist research begins by describing and building on these relationships.
> (Wilson, 2001, 194)

Therefore, an Indigenous research paradigm emphasizes "relationality" above all else (Wilson,

2008). Wilson asserts that all research is a ceremony of building relationships with people, with

ideas and with the environment. Certainly, I have found this to be true in my own experience –

relationship building is key to good, equitable research. Moreover, these relationships do not

simply end when the project is complete. Before conducting work within an Indigenous community, a researcher must be prepared for a life-long relationship with project participants. Indeed, I have returned to Mayo and Keno City at least once a year since I began this project and I am still expected to visit the people I worked with and discuss the continuing impacts of the mine and my work on their lives.

If there is no prior and continuous relationship built with community members, First Nation government, and elders then research conducted can be lacking in context and viewed from within the community as a theft, rather than a mutually beneficial work (Louis, 2007, p. 135). It is experiences like this, and the complex colonial implications they have, that led Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith to declare that "research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary" (Tuhiwai Smith, 2013, p. 1). I was loathe to repeat those mistakes and felt myself well-positioned to avoid them. As a Yukoner, who had worked for a neigbouring First Nation, I was welcomed into the NND community and may have enjoyed an initial level of trust that a complete outsider may not have been granted. However, as my work progressed, I was again reminded of the complexity of communities and my status as an outsider was brought into focus. I also frequently questioned my own positionality as both a local Yukoner, a settler, and an outside academic.

In her article, "Interviewing Nookomis and Other Reflections: The Promise of Community Collaboration", Lianne Leddy of the Serpent River First Nation discusses similar, but far more complex issues, as she examines the moral implications of conducting research within her home community and with family members, such as her grandmother. Leddy stated at the outset that "aboriginal scholars from within the community and non-Aboriginals from beyond the community face fundamentally different issues in negotiating the research process" (2010, p. 2).

Truly, I considered myself somewhat close to my research participants, as a fellow Yukoner from a neighbouring town; however, as I observed my research assistant, Kaylie-Ann Hummel, an NND citizen who grew up in Mayo, it was obvious that I was indeed an outsider and that she had a far more complex relationship with research participants than I ever would. Moreover, scholars like Leddy have questioned the ethical and cultural implications of the many and varied academic research requirements, such as an ethics board review (Leddy, 2010, p. 3).

Leddy continues to discuss the inconsistencies between "aboriginal ways of knowing" (2010, p. 13) and community trust, and the academic concept of free and informed consent, which always requires a written consent form. Frequently, elders do not understand the words and concepts expressed in these forms and often sign them out of expediency or trust of the interviewer, as was Leddy's experience. I have often witnessed this and have seen the awkward, embarrassed, or angry reactions of elders when presented with yet another "verbose and legalistic" (p. 13) document to sign. Many Yukon First Nations, such as the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in have since moved away from this process, to embrace oral consent as a standard practice for work conducted by their own government departments.

Beyond specific methods for conducting research in Indigenous communities, an Indigenous research methodology also necessitates a different way of working with Indigenous knowledge. Importantly, Indigenous research methodologies are so much more than simply incorporating the words and knowledge of Indigenous peoples into traditional academic writing or environments. The difficulties of incorporating scientific or "Western" knowledge with Indigenous knowledge has been explored by many scholars (Deloria Jr., 1999, White, 2006; Christensen & Grant, 2007; Cruikshank, 1998; Ellis, 2005; Nadasdy, 2003, 2005; Spak, 2005; Tester & Irniq, 2008). For decades, many Indigenous scholars, such as Shawn Wilson, Linda

56

Tuhiwai Smith, and Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, have been doing the difficult work of transporting not just Indigenous knowledge, but also Indigenous ways of knowing and doing into the academic world. Recently, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2011, 2014, 2017) and others have critiqued the movement to "Indigenize the academy," suggesting that decolonization cannot be carried out within the "western academic industrial complex" but rather must be done on the land by "a generation of land based, community based intellectuals and cultural producers" who are accountable to Indigenous nations and communities themselves (Simpson, 2014, p.13). For Indigenous scholars like Simpson, it is the accountability in these relationships that bring about theory, as it is "generated and regenerated continually through embodied practice and within each family, community and generation of people" (p. 7-11). "Theory," for Simpson is not just an intellectual pursuit, it is also woven into "kinetics, spiritual presence and emotion, it is contextual and relational. It is intimate and personal, with individuals themselves holding the responsibilities for finding and generating meaning within their own lives" (p. 7). Most importantly, Simpson writes, theory is for everyone (2014).

Indigenous scholars continue the work of revitalizing their communities and enriching future generations of Indigenous knowledge keepers, helping to cultivate the "Indigenous excellence" recognized and celebrated by Betasamosake Simpson. This work is ongoing and is transforming the ways in which settler scholars, such as myself, engage with Indigenous communities, Indigenous thought, and Indigenous stories. Personally, I continue the work of ally-ship—treading lightly, making mistakes, and continuously expressing gratitude for knowledge shared with me by Indigenous peoples. Having lived my entire life on Indigenous lands, my path as a settler is evolving and uncertain, but is filled with gratitude and respect.

2.6 ORAL HISTORY METHODOLOGY

"I've tried to live my life right, just like a story," – Angela Sidney, in Cruikshank, 1998.

Generally used in anthropology, ethnographies and by scholars of history, oral history methodology uses in person, one-on-one, or group interviews to collect first-hand knowledge from research participants. Oral history methodology has been used in recent decades in scientific and interdisciplinary studies in an attempt to incorporate local voices or "Traditional Knowledge" (also described as Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Indigenous Knowledge, Local Knowledge, etc.) into scientific studies.

In this work, I dispense with ideas of 'incorporating' one type of knowledge with another; instead, stories are the main source of 'data'—individual stories from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This means that the information shared within this thesis comes from personal accounts within recent memory, family history, decades old, and even ancient stories passed on from NND elders. Much of this information may be classified as family history, personal anecdotes, or Traditional Knowledge, but here it is all used and treated similarly—as stories—the basis of information for this thesis. And here, I focus on stories about emotion.

Stories, as Julie Cruikshank tells us, have the ability to transcend boundaries (1998, p. 4). When Indigenous people, people from an oral culture, share stories, they are not just telling about an event in their life. Along with the story, comes insight into how their community operates, how they relate to their environment, and their place within their world. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson has said, that "storytelling is at its core, decolonizing" (2011, p. 33), and recently Lianne Leddy has called oral history an "essential part of Indigenous research" (2016, p. 94). Therefore, I suggest that oral history work is akin to Indigenous methodology, and I used it here in my work with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous research participants.

Using oral history, combined with Indigenous and feminist research methodologies allows me to employ a 'human geography without scale' (Marston, Jones, & Woodward, 2005) and focus on the local, situated, and specific nature of the Keno Hill situation. In her book, *Far off Metal River*, Emilie Cameron examines story as material practice and storytelling as modes of relation and intervention. Invoking sociologist John Law, she argues that "stories are complex assemblages of people, places, and things; some may be narratively performed by humans, but they must be understood as relational networks of humans and non-humans, not as representations that somehow sit apart from the materials they represent" (2015, p. 25). As tools that do more than teach, stories also bring with them an environment of their own. When a storyteller wraps their words around us, we are transported to a particular time and place in their lives, either observing as if a spectre, or imagining ourselves embodied as a character in the story, or the storyteller themselves. This is the dynamic nature of storytelling—an active listener can decide how to participate and envision themselves in the tale.

Long-time Yukon ethnographer Julie Cruikshank has thoroughly explored the nature of oral history and storytelling, both in times past and in the present day, in her book *The Social Life of Stories.* Pointing to the relational nature of stories, Cruikshank says that "narrative storytelling can construct meaningful bridges in disruptive situations" (1998, p. 4). Cruikshank has continuously demonstrated the ability of oral history to share not only direct information, but also world view and social systems, which are embedded in narratives (1992, 35-36). Therefore, oral history work can be viewed as a decolonial research technique, firmly based in Indigenous methodology. Meanwhile, Laura Cameron has encouraged oral historians to view their research as a "fluid community process rather than simply material to be mined for fact and 'preserved' by storage. Such an approach brings to oral history an awareness that the process of oral

communication is not something that can be separated from nuggets of truth" (Cameron, 1997). I draw on this statement not only for its apt use of mining metaphors, but also because it helps to illustrate my philosophy on oral history and the type of research I have done. This thesis is but a part of an ongoing conversation between me, a company, two communities, and the human and nonhuman actors involved. Certainly, it is frustrating to freeze these relationships and this conversation in time by writing it down; however, this also allows us to stop and take stock of a situation in one particular state and time. My hope is that this work will serve as a record of time for the communities involved and perhaps for other communities experiencing similar upheaval.

ORAL HISTORY IN GEOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

William Cronon's 1992 article "A Place for Stories" points to the value of stories in academic work, as well as their social importance in our modern world. Cronon wrote that "narratives remain our chief moral compass in the world" (1992, p. 1375). Inspired by Cronon, Laura Cameron suggests that "geographers have always 'told stories'" (2012, 586). Some geographers certainly view oral history and storytelling as a valid and essential aspect of knowledge production and transfer; however, oral history methodology remains rare in geographic research. Ashley R. Ward (2012) lists a scant few examples and discusses the issues of using oral history, as pointed out by geographers. Ward asserts that "geographers can use oral histories to understand how memory shapes ideas of place" (2012, p. 138). Discussing the work of Riley and Harvey (2007), Ward suggests that inserting the traditional geographical themes of place, scale and identity into oral history work provides an opportunity to expand the relevance of a very specific narrative, while still portraying the intricacies of an individual's lived experience. Furthermore, she suggests that both geographers and oral historians are in a position to benefit from the incorporation of each other's techniques into their work (p. 138).

60

This is particularly relevant in a northern mining landscape, where Indigenous communities have often experienced the impact of environmental destruction wrought by mining on their traditional lands, and yet their voices have generally been left out of the archival record (Neufeld, 2008). Keeling and Sandlos (2015) have discussed oral history research as necessary to portray the rich variety of voices, opinions, and memories in relation to historic mining landscapes (p. 13-17). Similarly, my use of oral history methodology in this thesis is not intended to present objective, specific facts about the Keno Hill mine site, but rather to fill this gap in the historic and present record, as well as provide an outlet for that which is subjective, situated, and often silenced—the emotions associated with connection to land and in relation to resource development.

Oral history work is by nature collaborative, as it takes both a listener and a teller for a story to come alive. Similarly, environmental historian Jocelyn Thorpe (2016) has noted a common thread in decolonizing research is the need for collaborative research and the acknowledgement of knowledge as partial and situated. The oral histories I present help to construct meaning and provide insight into the importance of place and land, while offering "greater subtlety" in geographic research, as suggested by Ward (2012, p. 141). Recalling the quote at the beginning of this section, the fact that a respected Indigenous Elder and matriarch like Angela Sidney would proclaim her life's goal is to "live like a story" demonstrates the importance of narrative and oral history in laying out social expectations, right-relations, and emotional experiences in Yukon Indigenous societies.

2.7 DISCUSSION

By exploring literature on historical and current mining practices, the mining cycle, mining towns, the social impacts of mining, and the emotional geography of mining as well consulting numerous case studies of the social impacts of mining, I found a gap in the research concerning the emotional geography of mineral redevelopment. The methodology I constructed to explore this research gap was chiefly informed by Indigenous, feminist and oral history theories. As a white, female settler, I was guided, inspired and cautioned by the writing of Shawn Wilson, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Lianne Leddy, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Margaret Kovach, Eve Tuck, and others, including local Yukon elders, heritage workers and First Nation colleagues and friends.

As a life-long Yukoner, who has worked for Yukon First Nation governments for nearly two decades, I was privileged to gain some understanding in terms of how to conduct research within a Yukon community. Certainly, this gave me a foot in the door, but not a free pass. I also am lucky enough to live close to the communities where this research was focused; therefore, it is economically and physically feasible for me to return frequently and continue to build the relationships that were started with this project. In some ways, this made my work more difficult. Admittedly, I felt added pressure to produce something useful for the community, to "help" my research participants in some way. There was an added level of responsibility, as I could not just complete the project and walk away. Conducting deeply relational work was difficult and often I was tempted to resort to a more traditional, 'objective' form of writing, from which I could remove myself and write "from above". Though this may have resulted in a much speedier project, it was simply not possible for me. Having heard so many poignant stories, shared by generous and wonderful people, and having developed a relationship with the land of the central Yukon; to pretend that I hadn't been there at all would have been impossible.

CHAPTER THREE

"IT'S JUST NATURAL":

FIRST NATION FAMILY HISTORY AND THE KENO HILL SILVER MINE[5]

THE NA-CHO NYÄK DUN AND THE KENO HILL SILVER MINE

For Yukon First Nation people, family history is intertwined with the history of the land. As the late Yukon First Nation Elder Kitty Smith once told anthropologist Julie Cruikshank, "I belong to Yukon. I'm born here. I branch here. My grandpa's country, here. My grandma's. That's why I stay here…My roots grow in jackpine roots" (Cruikshank, 1992, p. 1). This sentiment holds true for the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (NND), or Big River People,[6] of the central Yukon Territory, even though their relationships to the land and to each other have been transformed by over one hundred years of silver mining within their traditional territory.

This chapter examines the connections between a few NND families and the Keno Hill Mines, exploring themes of Indigenous identity, stewardship, and emotional reactions to mineral development, in both historic and modern eras. The changing relationship between mining companies and the FNNND, now a self-governing First Nation, is also discussed, showing the evolution of NND involvement in industrial development within their traditional territory.

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[5] Sections of this chapter were originally co-written with Joella Hogan, MA, Manager, Heritage and Culture, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and appeared in the book "Mining and Communities in Northern Canada: History, Politics, and Memory", eds. Keeling and Sandlos, 2015.

[6] This literal translation omits much of the meaning held within the name. Northern Tutchone elders speak of a much more nuanced definition, in which "Na-cho" translates to "our elders," thus Na-Cho Nyäk Dun means "flowing from our elders," demonstrating the direct connection between the words of the elders and the Stewart River, which has sustained the Northern Tutchone people.

By exploring the stories and emotions of different NND generations, regarding past and present mining operations, a rift is revealed within the NND community, regarding modern mining development. Both emotional geography and spectre geography are employed to explore that rift and make visible that which has been hidden in traditional, archival accounts of the Keno Hill region—the emotional turmoil caused by decades of mineral development, sudden closure, and recent redevelopment. Sophie Tamas has reminded us that "when we write about exclusions and invisibilities, we are telling ghost stories" (2016, p. 41). The "ghost stories" told here are not the sort that recall Indigenous peoples as spectres from the past, haunting a modern, settler-dominated reality (Cameron, 2008, p. 384). Instead the stories below are told by Indigenous people themselves and demonstrate that the NND are very much still present on the land, as they have been since time immemorial, working in relationship with human and non-human relatives, to ensure the continuation of all life (Legros, 1999). Their continued presence on the land is evidence of the successful teachings of ancestors and the ever-important sharing of stories filled with emotion, subjective truths, and lessons for listeners (Simpson, 2011; Legros, 1999). As Boutet, Keeling and Sandlos suggest, an examination of the personal stories of local northern peoples, such as the ones presented here, can reveal truths that are not told in the archives (2015, p. 200).

Using feminist, Indigenous, and oral history methodologies, I worked closely with the NND Heritage department to conduct community-directed oral history work in the Mayo area, with NND citizens and elders. The information collected below came primarily from long-form, semi-directed interviews conducted during the summer of 2011. All interviews were done with the help of an NND research assistant, Kaylie-Ann Hummel, to whom I am very grateful. Mussi to the NND Heritage Department for their assistance with this work, to the NND Government for

welcoming me onto their traditional territory, and to the NND people who sat down and shared their stories with Kaylie-Ann and myself. Mussi cho to Joella Hogan, a wonderful collaborator and friend.

By allowing NND individuals to share their stories here, in long, uninterrupted interview excerpts, I have attempted to create a direct dialogue between these people and the reader. Using oral history techniques pioneered by Julie Cruikshank and following the lead of Emilie Cameron, who argues that "story can productively be thought of as material" (2015, p. 113), the narrative and personal recollections shared here are the main source of 'data'. Indigenous scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson has stated that Indigenous story telling "is at its core decolonizing, because it is a process of remembering, visioning, and creating a just reality" (2011, p. 33); therefore, one goal of this work is to allow NND people to share their own realities and life experiences.

The principal people featured in this chapter are Herman Melancon, an underground miner of First Nation and French ancestry and Alice Buyck, an NND Elder. Their recollections and stories help to illustrate how modern NND identity has been affected by the nearby mine sites and how the First Nation has been involved with mining in an historic and modern context. Their interviews revealed a complex story of intertwined cultures living on the NND traditional lands: creating communities, hunting, harvesting, and working within an industrial mining complex to exhume the rich minerals of those lands. As will be demonstrated below, this complexity is even more apparent in the post-land claims Yukon, with self-governing First Nations, who are working to assert their stewardship over land and resources within their traditional territories. In the case of Mayo and the NND, when Alexco began to breathe life back into the old Keno Hill Mines, issues of nostalgia, emotional connection to land, community

cohesion, and the impacts of colonialism all rose to the surface (Million, 2009; Keeling &

Sandlos, 2015, p. 379).

For the Na-cho Nyäk Dun, the redevelopment of the Keno Hill Mine represented a

potential economic boon and a complete role reversal from the former era of the mine, when

the NND were only involved on the periphery of the project. As the NND are now a self-

governing First Nation, they were consulted throughout the process of redevelopment and

negotiated an Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) with Alexco, which provides economic

contributions, employment strategies, scholarships, and training programs for NND citizens

(First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun Elders, 2019, p. 48). This form of "direct dialogue"

(Howitt & Lawrence, 2008, p. 100) was not even considered in the first life cycle of the Keno

Hill Mines and is evidence of the hard work of Yukon First Nations to assert their land claim

and self-government rights. The following sections explore the development of the

relationship between the NND and the mining industry as well as how that relationship has

affected their connection to their traditional territory, and the intergenerational impacts of the

mining industry on their community.

3.1 BEFORE THE MINES

At the heart of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun traditional territory is Et'o Nyäk Tagé,[7] or the McQuesten

River watershed, a region rich in fish and wildlife populations that sustained the Northern

Tutchone-speaking people on their seasonal round throughout the rugged landscape.[8] From

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[7] All Northern Tutchone language and place names courtesy of "Nacho Nyäk Dun Northern Tutchone Dictionary"
https://www.nndfn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NNDFN-Dictionary.pdf

[8] Northern Tutchone is an Athabascan language, traditionally spoken by First Nation people of the central Yukon,
whose descendants still identify as Northern Tutchone people. Although they are now divided into three separate

salmon fishing in the summer months, to hunting moose, caribou and gophers in the winter,

traditionally, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun people were always on the move, following seasonal harvests

and animals (Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006, p. 86-89; Legros, 1999, p. 244-308).

Movement was a constant. Alice Buyck recalled elders traveling into the Wernecke Mountains to

hunt for dẹndi (arctic ground squirrels, or whistlers) and pick berries:

> Old people go up there for whistler. Just the post, what you call? [Signpost at top of Keno
> Hill] …Yeah, you go up that way. And the whistler, we call them whistler, but I don't
> know how they call them…I remember they bring some home and eat it. …So sometimes
> they, two night they gone and come back with lots of blueberries. (Buyck, personal
> interview, 2011)

It was near the headwaters of the McQuesten River that high-grade galena, or silver ore, was first

discovered in 1903. Two years later and approximately one hundred kilometres downstream

from the discovery, Dave Hager was born in E'to Nyäk Kezhi (McQuesten Village), a seasonal

Na-Cho Nyäk Dun settlement at the mouth of the McQuesten. Although the NND were already

dealing with challenges to their social, cultural, and economic systems, imposed by the influx of

newcomers—missionaries, fur traders, and more recently, prospectors—who had come to their

lands, the silver discovery would bring even greater changes for Hager, his family, and for the

Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.

These complex connections are embodied by Dave Hager's grandson, Herman

Melancon—the son of Dave's daughter Irene and Maurice Melancon, a non-First Nation miner

from Quebec. At the time of writing, Herman was forty-nine and had spent more than half his

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communities and First Nations – Mayo (First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun), Pelly (Selkirk First Nation) and Carmacks
(Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation), there are still many historical, cultural and familial ties between the
Northern Tutchone. Na-Cho Nyäk Dun was the name chosen by the Northern Tutchone people of the Mayo area,
for their government, during the land claim and self-government process. Here, I use the term Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to
represent the Northern Tutchone people living in the Mayo area, both historically and today.

life underground working as a miner. When asked to introduce himself, Herman quickly acknowledged his mining background:

> I'm Herman Melancon, from Mayo. I lived here most of my life, but I also lived in Tungsten, Northwest Territories, for a couple years, it's another mining town. It's running right now, that mine, and I been mining for twenty-six years. I first started in the Keno Hill Mine. …I learned just from, probably from, coming from my Dad being a miner, see? It's just natural. I grew up around it, eh? (Melancon, personal interview, 2011)

Just as Kitty Smith likened herself to the Jack pine, "I branch here," her family and her history growing and diverging like the southern Yukon tree, Herman Melancon's family has grown and expanded with the development of the Keno Hill Silver Mine. Like the roots of a tree seeking water, the shafts, caverns, and tunnels of the mines have spread underground, following the silver-rich mineral veins. So too have Herman's family and the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun culture grown, so that both are now irrevocably intertwined with the history of the mine.

Similar to Herman's family but not as closely aligned with the mine, Alice Buyck's life and family have nevertheless been impacted by Keno Hill. Alice introduced herself as an elder and simultaneously expressed the modesty that is associated with such a position in an Indigenous community. As she said, "I'm an Elder, I'm Alice Buyck, I'm eighty-four year old. So, those girls they come here they wanna ask me question, I can answer some of them, but uh, some of them, I dunno," (Buyck, 2011). Alice belonged to the last generation of NND people to live at the Old Village. "Since we leave, we never did go back," she said, continuing:

> I think 1950, we leave the Village for the highways. Highway open and we move up here to Mayo, because they said we been drinking bad water. Used to be hospital here and Chateau [Chateau Mayo, a local hotel] and two hotel, all their sewage all run into the river and from the hospital, all those blood, all into the river and below we stay, we been drinking water. (Buyck, 2011)

Since then, Alice lived in Mayo, where she raised thirteen children and worked as an assistant in the Mayo hospital and as a chambermaid at the Stewart Crossing Café. A well-respected Elder, Alice participated in language and heritage revitalization efforts and contributed beadwork to countless projects. Some of her work is now included in the Yukon Permanent Art Collection.

While many of Alice's family members worked at the mine, her involvement was always peripheral, yet she closely watched how the nearby mine affected her hometown of Mayo. In July of 2011, Kaylie-Anne Hummel and I sat down at Alice's kitchen table to interview her. During our discussion, she commented on how Mayo had expanded and contracted with the fortunes of the mine and was nostalgic about the busy days of United Keno Hill Mines (UKHM), while also being wary of the environmental legacy of the mine. Meanwhile, a home-support worker busied herself in the background, tidying, doing dishes, and reminding Alice to take her medication. In the middle of our discussion, one of her sons came in to discuss salmon fishing with her. The Chinook salmon were running, and despite low numbers, FNNND had hired some local men to harvest a few fish for cultural purposes.

The summer of 2011 was busy in Mayo, with Alexco operating and several other exploration camps in full swing. There was a lot of talk about who was working where, as Kaylie-Ann and Alice discussed the youth of the town and who was involved with which mining operations. Alice mentioned a few NND women who had worked briefly for Alexco and who had either been fired or left for personal reasons. She expressed some despair about a lost generation of older youth, who were living with their parents and were lost in a fog of drug and alcohol use. She then proudly mentioned her grandson, who was working for Alexco at Keno Hill's latest incarnation.

While for Herman, the mine is central to his family history and identity, for Alice, the mine was always an oddity at the margins of her life. Keno Hill was a place where her family members occasionally worked, where she visited—and experienced the changes brought to Mayo by the mine—but about which, she seemed to have mixed feelings. Alice reminisced about the fun and busy days when the mine was open and her community was lively, but she worried about the environmental degradation left behind by the mining and seemed perplexed about the recent mine redevelopment and other mineral exploration taking place in the region.

The words of Herman and Alice provide a glimpse into the complex reality of a northern First Nation community with a long history of mining, which was in the midst of the revival of a once abandoned mine. Knit together in a complex pattern of mutual involvement and unequal impacts, the story of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Keno Hill Mine is illustrative of how Indigenous people across northern Canada have been both affected by and involved in one of the most destructive forms of industrial development in their traditional lands.

DOCUMENTING CHANGE

On September 27, 1905, Herman's grandfather, Dave Hager, was born at McQuesten Village. Known his entire life as "Big Dave," Hager was an amateur photographer, who both took part in and recorded a time of great change for the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. His photographs can be found in the homes of his children as well as in the Yukon Archives. Dave documented his life and the people in it through the lens of his camera. His photographs show a young man in the early days of mining, when he was working on the steamboats. These wooden paddle wheelers pushed

barges loaded with ore from the Keno mines, down the Stewart River towards Whitehorse.[9] Ore

would then be shipped out on the White Pass Railway to the port of Skagway, Alaska, and then

out to a smelter in southern Canada. The Stewart and Yukon Rivers were lined with wood

camps, where many First Nation families worked, providing the thousands of cords of wood

needed to fuel the steam-powered boats. "Big Dave" worked as a deckhand, loading the wood

from shore onto the boats. Later, when the highways replaced the steamships, Hager worked for

the Yukon Territorial Government, conducting highway maintenance between Mayo and

Whitehorse (Bleiler & MacDonald, 1999, p. 275).

Figure 2. Dave Hager on the S.S Keno ca. 1930s. Yukon Archives/Dave Hager fonds, 80/22, #8875.

[9] The S.S. Keno, which was primarily used to ship ore along the Stewart River and which Dave Hager would have worked on, is now permanently dry-docked in Dawson City and maintained as a National Historic Site by Parks Canada. The larger ships, such as the S.S. Klondike, which resides in Whitehorse, could not fit under the new highway bridges and so could not be transported to Dawson for this purpose. Many people feel that the S.S. Keno ought to be in Mayo and the S.S. Klondike ought to be in Dawson City. The S.S. Whitehorse and the S.S. Casca were located in Whitehorse until 1974, when they were destroyed by arson.

Dave, like many Na-Cho Nyäk Dun men, engaged in the new economy but did not catch gold—or in this case, silver—fever. He managed to keep a foot in both worlds, by maintaining traditional pursuits, such as hunting, trapping, and raising his family on the land as much as possible. An anecdotal account, which appears in *Hills of Silver*, the only book dedicated to the Keno Hill silver mine, reveals Dave's attitude towards the mining activity. After watching a crew of miners struggle for three days to move a large piece of mining equipment just one thousand feet, Dave, who was repairing a nearby bridge, is purported to have remarked: "those white men will do anything for money" (Aho, 2006, p. 58).

In 1929, Big Dave married Alice Louise, a Dene woman from Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories. Together, Dave and Alice raised six daughters in the Mayo area: Martha, Rosie, Jenny, Irene, Laura and Mary. The Hager girls all married non-Indigenous miners, or men involved with Keno Hill in some way. As Herman's wife Bobbie-Lee said, "they were all attracted to miners." One of these daughters, Irene, met and married Maurice Melancon, who was originally from Quebec. From a mining family himself, Maurice came north to work as an underground miner for UKHM. While Maurice was transplanted to the Mayo area, like many others, he gained acceptance in the community and knowledge of the land from his First Nation wife and her family. The skills to operate in both worlds were then passed on to their son Herman, who learned to hunt and trap from his grandfather and learned about the mining industry from his father.[10]

For a brief time, Maurice worked at the Tungsten mine, located in the southern Yukon. Tragically, Maurice was killed in a car accident while driving to work on the Tungsten road. Herman recalled the accident:

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[10] Much of this family history information came from personal conversations between Joella and local elders, throughout 2012 and 2013.

He was driving to work in Tungsten, after he got called back there to go to work. And he was driving back there and there was only about, I don't know, bad pass there and he went over the bank. He drove right from Mayo too, that day, it was too far. …I was nineteen. I went mining after he died, right after. (Melancon, personal interview, 2013)

Herman became a miner himself at the age of twenty and his brothers have all been involved with mining either directly, or in supportive industries. When asked why he continues to mine, despite the dangers of underground work, Herman replied: "well, it's part of me, it's in my blood. My Dad, probably to in some way, make him proud a' me. And then, plus for the money, I like the money" (Melancon, 2013).

Herman is just one of many Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens in the modern community of Mayo who are of mixed ancestry, due to the influx of young, Euro-Canadian men who came to work in the mines. As single men, with no family or local affiliations, many of them married local Na-Cho Nyäk Dun women, who brought with them knowledge of the local land and resources that both legitimized and supported these newcomers. According to the enfranchisement policies of the Indian Act of 1876, these Indigenous women and their children then lost their status as Indian people and the few rights it provided. Years later, they fought to regain their status and take part in the land claim agreements that were occurring across the territory (Coates, 1991).

Alice Buyck's daughter, Debbie, was one of the NND women who married a settler and lived in Elsa (the UKHM company town) while he worked at the mine. Alice explained that she would occasionally travel to Elsa to help her daughter: "When my daughter was stay up there, I used to go up often to go visit her, yeah. And then, they always got the dance halls and everything yeah, dancing. People from here used to go up to dance" (Buyck, 2011). Alice would babysit while her daughter attended the dances. She also enjoyed visiting the local store, which had products not offered in Mayo, and watching the action at the mine site. "I like to see those

men," said Alice "…they come up from the mine, in the little buggy. [Chuckles] …Yeah, come out from that hole, go across and…yeah (Buyck, 2011).

Debbie Buyck has noted that even while living in Elsa—a predominantly non-First Nation company town—Na-Cho Nyäk Dun women managed to practice many of their traditional activities. In an interview published in "Heart of the Yukon," Debbie said,

> We did continue in our traditional ways outside of work, we went berry picking, hunting and fishing. We would go out on the weekend for drives or day hikes and would scout out old places our parents had taken us when we were kids…the mothers and kids would go berry picking and fishing while our husbands worked in the mines, we took lots of picnics and some of the old First Nation ladies in camp taught us our traditional ways. (Bleiler, Burn, and O'Donoghue, p. 92)

Many of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun women who lived up at Elsa talk of picking berries, hunting, and snaring small animals in the region, all attempts to maintain aspects of the seasonal harvest and supplement the diet of their families. The increased mining activity in the area and a more sedentary lifestyle affected the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun's ability to hunt, fish, and pursue traditional activities; however, they did not disappear entirely. Men and women both found ways to balance this new life with traditional ways of living, which were passed down to the generation currently in Mayo.

Alice's brother and brother-in-law also worked at the mine, as a miner, and a mechanic, respectively. Her brother-in-law lost three fingers during his work at the mine. It was not only minor injuries that Alice recalled from the days of UKHM. One day, Alice was working in the Mayo hospital when the bodies of three men, killed in the mine, were brought in. The deaths made an obvious impression on her:

> I know it's quite a few people killed there. Was working there, hospital, three got killed, they bring 'em in hospital, next room to me, I was working there. [Gasp] I seen a white [sheet], take it off! [Chuckles] And they said, 'don't be scared, they're not gonna hurt you, they just like they're baby again. Just like you take care of baby again, you know,'

he said, 'they not gonna hurt you.' But I wouldn't go back again in there. …Yeah, they killed in the mine. There's quite a few, quite a few got hurt in the mine, there. Yeah. Benny too [Alice's brother]. Ever since that winter, he's having trouble with head, eh? Benny, he hurt in the mine. (Buyck, 2011)

As Alice recalled the bodies of miners killed at Keno Hill and her brother's injury, she invoked not only the spectre of the destruction caused by the mines, but also the colonial attitudes of her youth—a time when she worked at the Mayo hospital as a nurse's aide and was condescendingly told to overcome her concerns about working with the bodies of those who had passed on. Her mention of the lasting damage done to her brother is evidence as well of the dangerous work, which has altered NND citizens as individuals and as a community.

These affective images and memories are not found in the written history of the mine or the Mayo region and yet they haunt Alice and Herman—for Alice, the bodies of the dead miners and the injuries sustained by family members; for Herman, the loss of his father. This haunting reveals what Avery Gordon has called "abusive systems of power" (2008, xvi), where the historical relationship between NND individuals and colonial agencies and industries were unequal. The unfairness of that system is embodied in the memories of people like Alice and Herman and was unearthed by the recent redevelopment of the Keno Hill mines. Similarly Keeling and Sandlos have previously discussed how, even within a new era of Indigenous-settler relations, exploring the historical issues associated with mining in Indigenous lands can raise the spectre of colonial legacies (Keeling and Sandlos, 2015, p. 379).

For Herman's grandparents and parents, the mine was a new development: an oddity which altered their environment, brought newcomers into the area, and drastically reshaped their relationship to land and to others. Alice talked about the mine and the community of Elsa as though it were an outlier, a place where some of her children and family members worked, a place where one of her daughters lived for a while, but not a place central to her identity or

history. The mine did provide benefits, like a busier community, which she enjoyed and now misses.

As Joella Hogan has said, for younger NND generations (like hers and Herman's), it is hard to imagine these hills without mining, as it has been a constant in the area for over one hundred years. For Herman, the mine has always been there: it is a part of his family history, and his work there began at an early age. As Herman's father was a non-First Nation man, working for UKHM, his family was able to live in the company town of Elsa, where UKHM provided housing, recreation facilities, free steam heat, and discounted groceries. While Herman has fond memories of a busy youth in the community, not everyone was able to live in Elsa. Most First Nation men who worked for the mine lived a few kilometres down the road in a small cluster of houses called Millerville. It is unclear whether they were forced to live there, rather than in Elsa.[11]

Jimmy Johnny is a well-known NND Elder and environmental advocate, who worked in the mill for UKHM from the age of twenty, doing seasonal hunting guiding as well, like his father. Jimmy lived in Millerville and recalled it as "good":

> …you know, pack your water from the creek and summertime you go up in the hillside, pick berries and then you go…flat area, see some moose. …you know, where that creek coming down and, it was good, good water and clear. …We used to walk from Millerville up to Elsa to go to work and then one of the older workers started complaining about Keno Hill is not doing a proper job of picking up employees, so we had the bus come down there and pick us up. (Johnny, personal interview, 2011)

It is clear from Jimmy's description that the people living in Millerville did not have running water, not to mention the modern houses and free steam heat that UKHM employees living in Elsa received. Kaylie-Ann and I also asked Jimmy about relationships between the NND and the

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[11] I only learned about Millerville through oral history, as it is not mentioned in any of the written documents about the Keno Hill area.

newcomers in those days. "I think to me it was okay," said Jimmy. "You know, if you get along with people it's okay, but I can't speak for anybody else, just for myself. Far as I know, I got along with a lotta people, but some guys, you know, they talk about native people and get mad and then start fighting" (Johnny, 2011). The mention of fighting suggests that there were certainly some racial tensions at the time, and the very existence of Millerville—a separate and poorly equipped community for First Nation employees of UKHM—is a demonstration of the segregation of the era. For a young man of mixed ancestry, like Herman, life in such a racially divided mining camp must have been somewhat difficult, but, like many people now living in Mayo, he is reluctant to speak about the segregated past.

3.2 From Minor to Miner

When Herman's father got better-paying work at the Tungsten mine, the Melancon family moved from Elsa back to Mayo. After his father's sudden death, Herman began working for UKHM himself. His first job was digging trenches but, having proven himself capable, Herman quickly moved up to the position of trammer. As he explained, there was a natural progression in the training of an underground miner and a gradual increase in pay:

> **HM:** Trammer. …that's where you drive around little trains for the miners, go outside and dump it [the ore], then you come back and help them, have to help them. …And then you go to miner helper, later, from that. And then eventually you can do your own minin'. But now, it's all trained differently, they're all trained on heavy equipments, eh? Right off the bat, usually.
> **AW:** So, they didn't have those sorts of training programs when you were young?
> **HM:** No, you learn different. …I went underground, they get you diggin' ditch, eh? And they start you off from the bottom. (Melancon, 2011)

Herman has worked as a miner ever since and now, as he said, "I run everything underground. Yeah, anything that moves, I run it, eh? I have to," (Melancon, 2011). While he is known

77

throughout the community as a good miner, his career has not been without its dangers. When Herman was twenty-seven, he was in a horrific accident that occurred when a co-worker, drilling into the rock face beside him, accidentally hit a hole pre-loaded with dynamite:

> Well, we were drillin', I was in Bellekeno [one of the mines at Keno Hill] …So I was just pulling that drill down off the backhoe on the left side, I only had three holes left to go and then it went off…just when my arm was in the air, I guess. And it blew me back or wherever, by the time I woke up I was probably about thirty feet from the face, landed about thirty feet away. Banged my arm. I could see something happened, 'cause I was laying on the ground and it was all quiet, you couldn't hear nothing. And then I could hear [Herman's co-worker] moaning away, way up at the face there. But I was lookin' around for my arm, 'cause I couldn't see it on my side. And something was hurting on my right side. And I was looking around, bending over, look around on the ground for my arm, 'cause I thought it was blown off, like that bending over and then all of a sudden, my arm…come flying, fell off the back of my neck and come, was hanging there. Then I was happy, 'cause it was still there. But I couldn't do nothing, I had to hold it up, it was broken, broken right off, eh? The bone was busted right off. (Melancon, 2013)

Fortunately, both men survived the explosion and, after just two months off work, receiving worker's compensation, Herman went back underground. "I had to," he said "'cause workers comp bother me. …I still got pins in here, pins there and screws…I was scared for a while, to work underground, but it actually was a good therapy. …It helped me become stronger, after a year or two it didn't bother me no more" (Melancon, 2013).

This accident and others have left physical imprints on Herman's body. After so many years of working with loud, heavy machinery in a poorly-ventilated, underground environment, his hearing is diminished, his lungs are damaged, and he bears the scars from potentially deadly accidents. These corporeal impacts are easy for Herman to discuss. Intangible impacts on his community and his culture are more difficult to express. While Herman is quick to acknowledge the history of the mine, he struggles to articulate how it may have affected his ancestors. Kaylie-Ann asked Herman about his feelings regarding the mining history in the area:

HM: I uh, there's a lot of history there. I think it goes back right to 1900s, so there's still silver up there. There's still silver there for a while. And there is a lot of history there, you can just tell by that old museum in Keno, eh? Just by going through there...
AW: …And how do you think that mining history has affected the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation?
HM: I'm not sure how it affected…I know they're getting more um, native people involved in mining, with their training, eh? (Melancon, 2011)

Instead of discussing the past impacts of the mine, Herman spoke about the future, pointing out that there are more First Nation people working within the mining industry. Perhaps this is because Herman has never known the area without mining—the history of the mine and Herman's family story are so intertwined; it is impossible to separate one from the other in order to examine it. Alternatively, perhaps it is because Herman prefers to look towards a positive future, rather than engage in what Eve Tuck would call a "damage-centered narrative" (2009, p. 415).

For Alice, who is of an older generation, the broader impacts of the mine on her community are more obvious. When asked what it was like when the mine was operating, she answered easily:

> Was good, people having fun! [Laughter] Bar open, everything. Two bar and now – nothing! No bar, no restaurant, no more now, no hotel. …Elsa people come down and the bar, drinkin', yeah. I remember there was lots of load a' silver come down and they all load up down there, down there, when the boat come in, yeah. Lots of fun. Now nothing. No place to go. [Laughter] I hope that it start again, but at least they should build a big hotel now, because lot of people come in now, then drive around, look for store, look for…to coffee shop and, no, it's, it make me shame, make me shame because no place to go, they just drive around, drive around, look and, yeah. I always see the big motorhome go by and up the dead end. (Buyck, 2011)

Alice easily recalled the busy times of the mine with fondness and hopes for the return of the economy to Mayo. Meanwhile, for Herman, whose family history has revolved around the mine, mining is just his work and there is much more to his life. Herman also learned how to hunt and trap from his grandfather, Dave Hager. Herman happily discussed how he hunts for moose each

fall and maintains a trap line near Mayo. Hunting and trapping are important activities that, along

with mining, tie Herman to his traditional territory and keep him connected to the land. They

were also important skills that Herman was able to rely on to keep him afloat when the mining

industry went into an inevitable decline.

3.3 MINE CLOSURE AND SELF GOVERNMENT

In January 1989, when UKHM suddenly announced the indefinite closure of Keno Hill, the

mines were shuttered, with just a skeleton crew of loyal employees left to treat run-off water

from the mines and guard the buildings from vandals. Herman was not immediately affected by

the mine closure, as he had already moved on to contract mining work to support his young

family, while supplementing his wages with trapping. Kaylie-Ann asked him about this time:

> 1989? When it shut down? I quit before it shut down. I worked there for six years
> and then I went to work for contractors, so I was already gone, outta there. Like I
> say, I guess it shut down, everybody moved out, all to B.C., all the families
> moved right outta there. And they just had a skeleton crew there, eh? That's what
> I remember from the closure, how it shut down there. (Melancon, 2011)

Eventually, Herman also had to leave his home community, to seek work in mines in the

southern Yukon and British Columbia. Herman hinted at the difficulties of this lifestyle,

saying: "…you're always gone, eh" (Melancon, 2011).

The sudden closure of the mine left an impression on Alice Buyck, as it has for many

others, who were living in Elsa, Keno and Mayo. "…Everything's happen so soon," she said,

"…just shut-down like that, oh, used to be two, two load a' school kids come down from Elsa,

go to this Mayo school" (Buyck, 2011). The closure affected Alice's family, such as her

daughter Debbie, who had to move back into Mayo with her three children. Alice suggested

that this was a difficult time for Debbie and others in Mayo: "people don't work, no work,

have a hard time, no money like that, yeah." When asked what people did to get by, she said, "nothing. Survive anyways. [Chuckles] Yeah. Moose, they get moose, fish, yeah" (Buyck, 2011). Alice's comments point to the fact that NND people, unlike many of the non-Native workers at Elsa, were still able to survive in the area by relying on traditional skills, such as hunting and fishing, and perhaps in this way, were more adaptable than people who moved to the area primarily to work in the mines. Most NND people did not move when the mine shut down, they just went back to a more traditional way of life, whereas mine workers who had come from Europe or southern Canada had no way to survive in the area without the mine, it was their livelihood and their tie to the area and the land. Boutet, Keeling, and Sandlos (2015) have discussed similar findings in other northern mining contexts, emphasizing that historical interactions between the mining industry and local Indigenous peoples cannot be characterized by one-way, purely detrimental impacts. "Indeed," the authors note, "mining and wildlife harvesting at times coexisted in a mutually supporting relationship, with hunting providing a safety net during downturns in metal prices and wage labour an alternative to subsistence when wildlife was scarce or fur prices low (p. 199). For many NND people, the mine was a place to work occasionally and supplement their incomes—it was not the centre of their existence, but a blip in the view of their landscape.

When UKHM shutdown, most Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens moved back into Mayo to be with their extended families, but this was a quiet time for the Mayo region. While there was some employment to be found with the territorial government and the Local Improvement District,[12] there was little other work to sustain the population. However, long-awaited land claims and self-government processes were finally beginning to take shape.

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[12] This became the municipality of Mayo.

When the mine was in its final years, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun elders and a team of land use technicians and negotiators were working on a monumental self-government and land claims settlement, under the Umbrella Final Agreement. During the land claims process, blocks of land were selected in a large range of sizes throughout the 160,000 square kilometres of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun traditional territory. These lands were selected for traditional pursuits, harvesting, protecting heritage sites, future housing and development, as well as economic development. Much of this land was selected with future generations in mind. Many young Na-Cho Nyäk Dun men were charged with surveying the lands, interviewing elders and documenting these sites for land claims. Those who were involved with self-government had hope for a brighter future, while others were able to maintain a subsistence lifestyle by cutting wood, trapping, or working as hunting guides.

As Na-Cho Nyäk Dun people began the long process of reclaiming the land, both on paper and in person, they became more aware of the environmental degradation caused by years of mining. There had been very little reclamation or remediation work done at the mine sites, thus the relics left from mining activity were a danger to wildlife, such as moose, which were found tangled in wire left over from the mine. People became cautious about hunting, fishing, and berry picking near the shuttered mines and concerns were raised about the quality of water and the impacts on fish and wildlife. These environmental concerns persist today (Kwong et al, 1997). When discussing the mine sites, Alice Buyck talked about the dangers of large holes in the area, which they have been warned about. Despite there being plenty of berries in the area, children and elders are afraid to pick in those traditional harvesting areas, she said, afraid that if they fall in those holes, they will never get out (Buyck, 2011). Therefore, even as the NND were reclaiming their traditional lands through the land claims process, they were also learning to

avoid historic harvesting regions, due to lasting environmental damage wrought by historic

mining throughout large swaths of the region, their relationships to those traditional lands were

shifting in multiple ways (Nadasdy, 2003; Charlie, 2016, 2017).

Throughout these years, Elsa remained abandoned, the small settler community of Keno

City shrank to approximately twenty residents, and Mayo fell into an economic downturn as the

need for services greatly diminished and the town dwindled to approximately eight hundred

people, half its former population, (Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006, p. 122). The Yukon

Government regarded tourism as an important economic alternative to mining and, along with a

local tourism organization, adopted a significant mining-related theme to market the Mayo area.

The name "Silver Trail" was given to the Yukon highway #11, which links Mayo, Elsa, and

Keno City with the Klondike Highway, and wilderness tourism was suggested as a

complementary attraction to the region's mining history (Yukon Territory, 1989, p. 1). Many of

the region's old mining roads were repurposed as hiking trails and used for years by locals and

visitors to explore the unique alpine environment of the Keno area.

Although life was economically difficult in the Mayo area during the 1990s, there was

reason to celebrate, as in 1993, after decades of negotiations, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk

Dun signed their land-claim and self-government agreements with the federal and territorial

governments (Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006). This ushered in a new era for the Na-Cho

Nyäk Dun, who again have a measure of control over their traditional lands. Self-government

also brought a new form of authority to the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, as they were now required to be

consulted regarding development within their traditional territory. Some academic and local

Indigenous people have questioned the bureaucratization of First Nation communities that occurs

with self-government regimes (Nadasdy, 2003; Charlie, 2017). Paul Nadasdy has argued that

Yukon First Nation self-government has been accompanied with colonial concepts of property and knowledge, which serve to reinforce colonial power dynamics between Indigenous governments and federal and territorial governments (Nadasdy, 2003). Many Yukon First Nation citizens, however, continue to celebrate the victory of land claims and view the accomplishments of their governments with pride; while others view the land claim agreements as just another tool adopted by Indigenous people to allow themselves to continue their unaltered stewardship relationships with the land (Debbie Nagano, personal communication, October, 2018).

To ensure that their citizens benefit from future development, FNNND created the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation, a business arm of the government, which can enter into agreements with mining and exploration companies. Now, FNNND must act as stewards of the environment and the economy, contributing to environmental assessments of new development projects while at the same time supporting work and training opportunities for their citizens.

3.4 A NEW ERA OF MINING

In 2006, after sitting abandoned for nearly twenty years, the Keno Hill Mine site was purchased by Alexco Resource Corporation, a junior mining and reclamation company based in Vancouver. The Yukon Government awarded Alexco a contract to remediate the mines and the Elsa town site, while simultaneously allowing them to conduct their own exploration work and assess the possibility of redeveloping the mine. In 2010, the Bellekeno mine, one of United Keno Hill's top producers, was reopened by Alexco and the first trucks of silver, lead, zinc ore began to run through the Keno Hill region in over twenty years.

With a settled land claim and the implementation of self-government, the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation was eager to create economic opportunities for its citizens and the region of Mayo and has done so by supporting the redevelopment of the Keno Hill Mine. For Herman, this new relationship was inevitable for his First Nation, but it also creates a new form of responsibility:

> **AW:** What do you think about Na-Cho Nyäk Dun being involved in the mine up there?
> **HM:** Well, I guess they probably have to keep an eye on them, what they do up there. I dunno, make sure they keep the area clean and everything, and treat the water. I guess they gotta keep treating the water steady there, eh?
> **AW:** So how do you feel about the First Nation being involved in the mining industry as a whole?
> **HM:** Well, if they're, eventually they will have to, eh?
> **AW:** Yeah?
> **HM:** They'll have to uh, know about mining and have more people trained.
> (Melancon, 2011)

Herman soon returned to work at Keno Hill, first for Alexco directly, and then for their mining contract company, Procon. Even though twenty years had gone by, Herman found little difference between his work for UKHM and his work for Alexco; however, he easily draws contrasts between the communities—the old Elsa and that of the new Alexco operation. Under UKHM, Elsa was a real town, with families and an air of permanency, whereas the new incarnation of Elsa is simply a work camp:

> **HM:** Elsa, when it was a town site, when people, families lived there, it was more busy. Now it's more like a work-camp, eh, basically. It's pretty quiet up there now. Like, this is just a working camp, eh?
> **AW:** And what's it like for you to be working around Elsa, now, a town that you sorta grew up in, that you spent some time in? When you see the old school and buildings like that, how does it feel?
> **HM:** Well there's probably lots 'a memories in there, yeah, when you're a kid. I remember playing hockey there all the time and that. And it was a pretty busy little town, eh?
> **AW:** Yeah. Do you miss it? Like, do you miss living there, or having that town around?
> **HM:** I dunno, yeah, a little, in a way, but I just like quiet places, eh? Quiet towns,

I don't like very big places. I could stay in a big place, but not very long. 'Cause see here, some days you still, you don't even have to lock your door. (Melancon, 2011)

For Herman, there was an emotional connection to the town of Elsa, but his life is now in Mayo. With eight daughters to care for, Herman is less concerned with the changes in Elsa, an abandoned mining town, than with the possible changes in Mayo, where his family now lives.

AW: So how do you think the mine reopening there, how do you think it's affected the community of Mayo?
HM: It probably bring a little more money into the community, more than anything, and some jobs. Yeah. But the majority jobs always go to outside [people], eh?
AW: Why do you think that is?
HM: Um, they're more qualified. (Melancon, 2011)

As Herman suggested, he is one of the few Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens working as a well-paid miner at Keno Hill. As in the previous era of mining, most of the more lucrative management and technical trades positions are awarded to people from outside the Yukon, who work on a fly-in, fly-out basis (ReSDA, 2016, p. 1). Much like the UKHM era, the influx of young, predominantly male workers at the mine has elicited concerns about alcohol, drugs, and social changes in the community. However, it was just such an influx of young men that brought Herman's father to the Yukon and created a comparable situation for Herman's grandfather, Dave Hager. Both Herman and his grandfather Dave managed to balance traditional subsistence work while engaging in a modern economy and both were living in a time of cultural and social upheaval—for Dave it was an influx of newcomers and industrial development, while Herman has witnessed the revival of such development, in a new era of First Nation self-government. Like his grandfather, Herman also has a large, primarily female family to look after—Herman has eight daughters and Dave had six. Herman continues to drill away at the same mineral veins his father worked on, expanding the underground maze of tunnels and shafts, some of which are

86

supported by timbers cut by his grandfather, but while his family history may be intrinsically

linked to that of the mines, Herman appreciates the world above ground much more than the

dark, damp mines below:

> **AW:** ...So what's it like working underground, what are your days like there?
> **HM:** If you keep busy, it go by fast. Yeah, I like that. Sometimes you get tired of
> the dark, I like to come out in the daytime when it's nice outside, I'll come all the
> way outside to eat lunch, yeah, like if it's real nice.
> **AW:** Just get some sunlight?
> **HM:** Yeah, to come see some daylight, eh?
> [Laughter]
> **HM:** 'Cause you know, I don't wanna spend all day down there, like to come out
> at least once, eh? …So, you see a lot 'a dark, eh? Feel like a mushroom.
> (Melancon, 2011)

Herman also sees an important distinction between his work life and his home life. Mining may

pay the bills, but most important for Herman is the rural, northern lifestyle, which he is able to

maintain, despite physically demanding shiftwork. Herman's love of sheep and moose hunting

was evident and interestingly, he cited the Elsa area as a favoured hunting area, despite the

numerous mine sites. Perhaps this is due to the easy road access created by exploration. Herman

did point out that there are fewer moose in the area, due to the increase in mining activity, which

causes locals like himself to hunt further afield (Melancon, 2011). Hence, Herman, a man who

has spent more than half his life mining, who sustains his family and his traditional pursuits

through mining, is still critical of such development.

While Herman is not given to public speaking, his wife, Bobbie-Lee, has represented him

at community meetings, speaking out about certain mineral development projects to which he is

opposed, such as a proposed hard rock mine near Mayo[13]:

> **HM:** …But see they're gonna open that Victoria Gold too, and that's in huntin'
> country there, boy. Yeah, that's out McQuesten Flats there, and all that, that area.
> **AW:** How do people feel about that one?

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[13] This is a reference to the Eagle Gold Mine, operated by Victoria Gold Corp. The largest gold mine in the Yukon it
opened in 2019 and poured its first gold brick that September.

HM: I'm not sure. Me, myself, I don't care much for open pit mining, 'cause it makes a big hole, eh? And too, when they start using heap leach, eh?
AW: Right. So, do you think that kind of mining, up at Keno Hill is better for the environment?
HM: In a way, eh? Yeah, because it's one hole in the side of the mountain, not compared to a open pit. Open pits are huge. When they, they can affect the area way more, yeah, so but they still, it still goes on all over, eh?
AW: Do you feel like you have a say? Like as a First Nation person in the area, like your First Nation has sort of a say in that kind of mining?
HM: Uh, yeah, yeah, they must have some kinda say, 'cause that's all Band land over there [First Nation settlement land], on this side of it. But they usually go ahead anyway, eh? (Melancon, 2011)

Both dependent on the mining industry and critical of it, Herman personifies the complexity of the mining and development debate in the Yukon. In spite of the occasionally fierce rhetoric surrounding contemporary mineral development in the territory, few Yukoners are completely against or completely in favour of mining, instead there is a spectrum of what people view as acceptable. Herman, like all of us, is mired in the modern, industrial world, which is still dependent on non-renewable resources, such as metals and fossil fuels. Meanwhile, for her part Alice Buyck expressed wariness about modern mining. She seemed conflicted, echoing what we heard from other local elders: that they do indeed want jobs and a steady economy for the younger generation, but they do not understand the language of modern mining and are still wary of the environmental damage it brings.

3.5 "LONG AS IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE YUKON TOO MUCH"

The United Keno Hill Silver Mine has left its mark on the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun traditional territory. The largest environmental scars are hidden deep within the Wernecke Mountains, where there are hundreds of kilometres of hollowed-out mining shafts and, as local people say, more timber below ground than above.

The social and cultural effects of the mine, however, can still be seen, heard and felt in the community of Mayo and among the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. For Herman Melancon, who has worked at the mine nearly his entire adult life, this work has not only shaped his family history, it will also leave a permanent, physical impact on his life. Indeed, with each scar and injury, the story of over one hundred years of underground mining is slowly being inscribed on Herman's body. Herman did confess that he was concerned about his health and would eventually like to stop working underground:

> **HM:** I'd probably like to quit, uh, stop from it, you know, stop mining eventually, try something else, maybe placer, maybe placer mining. 'Cause sometimes all the diesel smoke underground, I get tired of it, coughing that black stuff up.
> **AW:** Right. You're worried about your health?
> **HM:** Yeah, I'm starting to get worried about my lungs, actually. I start trying to wear mask more, you know? I wear mask more now, 'cause some equipment, you know, you got lots a' equipment moving underground and the ventilation is not good enough then you, you get too smoky and breathe too much of that diesel fumes in, eh?
> **AW:** Right, right. Do you notice any effects, any like physical effects yet, from working down there, or…?
> **HM:** …my hearing is less, eh? Percentage. It's still pretty good, but it's, as years go by it's gonna get less, eh? (Melancon, 2011)

Herman is critical of the environmental degradation caused by mining and of the physical impacts on his own body, but mining is a part of his life. A career change for Herman would mean shifting from one form of mining (underground) to another (placer). Herman has been a miner since he was twenty years old and while he is realistic about the boom and bust life cycle of the industry, he is confident there will always be another mine where he can find work. Speaking about environmental regulation and the mining cycle, he said:

> **HM:** …Don't open it up too much. There's a lot a' nice country, eh, up in the Yukon. But I dunno how long the mining boom will last, eh? Maybe it'll last ten years.
> **AW:** Do you think about that, like, what you'll do if the mine shuts down again?

HM: Keno Hill? I'd probably just go out, more out in B.C. again, eh? But there's another mine open, there's another one at Minto anyway, Minto too. There's how many mines going in the Yukon – one, two, three, eh? I think. (Melancon, 2011)

There may always be another mine at which Herman can work, but with each new mine, or redevelopment, there are social and environmental consequences to bear. One of the most significant social impacts of the Keno Hill redevelopment has been a polarization of opinions between people in the surrounding communities. For the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, differences in opinion about the mine have served to widen the gap between elders and the younger generation who, like Herman, grew up with mining. Alice spoke to this gap in understanding, when asked how people in Mayo felt about mining in general:

> I don't know, everybody feel good about that, but some people, when the meeting they have, the meeting like that, just only few go. Only Jimmy Johnny [NND Elder] do lots of talking, but other rest, they never been to school you know, they never been to school and they don't understand English good and stuff like that. But it's good, this camp going again, for me anyway. (Buyck, 2011)

Near the end of our interview, Alice read a flyer to us that she had received in the mail. The flyer was from Alexco and invited her to a community meeting about the mine reclamation process. Mrs. Buyck read the flyer out loud to us in a stilted manner and at the end appeared baffled as to what it was about, asking us to explain it to her. Kaylie-Ann and I felt that Alice had read the flyer to us to demonstrate how little elders like herself understand when it comes to modern communication with corporations such as mining companies. She ended by saying that it is all well and good for industry and governments (both Federal, Territorial and First Nation) to host meetings for elders and attempt to explain their operations, but many elders do not truly comprehend the information shared. Thus, few elders attend such meetings and when they do, they end up feeling alienated, or worried that their presence is taken as complicity. Alice

suggested this misunderstanding is mostly due to unequal education given to First Nation and non-First Nation students in her youth, recalling the racist policies of the past (Buyck, 2011).

Herman also spoke about the gap in generational understanding and priorities. He felt that for many elders, protection of the land is of the utmost importance, while for a younger generation, who are now running the First Nation government, economic development is also a high priority:

> **AW:** …do you think there's a difference between the way elders in Mayo feel about the mining and the way younger people feel about mining?
> **HM:** Yeah, there's probably a difference. Elders never like it very much, eh? ...in the old days, elders didn't bother with mining very much. That's 'cause long time ago, Indian people, they used to find gold in the river and they just threw it back in there, didn't they?
> **AW:** Yeah.
> [Laughter]
> **HM:** Didn't bother, but now, I'm not sure how elders feel about it now. But you see more younger people working at mines, now, eh? …Long as it doesn't change the Yukon too much, eh? The Yukon should be left the way it is, see. You uh, shouldn't overpopulate too much, here, shouldn't change very much, 'cause they'll just ruin it. (Melancon, 2011)

Herman was also able to demonstrate an important similarity between the opinions of elders and those of younger Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens. While they may strive for economic development and recognize their historical connection and economic dependence on the Keno Hill Mine, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens, old and young, value the land and feel that they belong to it, they are stewards of the land. Meanwhile, Alice demonstrated the confusion, and, in some cases, the futility felt by some elders when it comes to contributing advice and opinions regarding mineral development, re-development, and reclamation in their traditional territories. At the same time, she also longs for the prosperous times that accompanied the operation of UKHM and is happy to see a younger generation, like her grandson, working for Alexco.

Speaking about NND ancestors, NND Elder Helen Buyck has said that "the land was their teacher, and the knowledge they have of it is far greater than most people can appreciate"

91

(Bleiler, Burn, & O'Donoghue, 2006, p. 87). However, when the land and the modern Na-Cho Nyäk Dun culture have been affected by over one hundred years of underground mining, this relationship between the NND and their traditional territory is fraught with complexities. If the land remains in a mined-out or continuously mined state, what does that demonstrate for young generations of NND people? Has mining become so naturalized and such a part of the recent NND story, that is it difficult for the NND government and citizens to be critical of the industry? FNNND Chief, Simon Mervyn recently discussed this fraught relationship: "The mining is not going to sustain the nation into perpetuity, right? It's not. It comes and goes. But yeah, mining and our people go back long ways, long ways! And as the world demand increases, we're going to have to find some way to tap into it, because many other self-sustaining activities don't exist for us," (First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun Elders, 2019, p. 51). Chief Mervyn acknowledges the finite nature of mining, but at the same time references the NND's long relationship with the industry and its importance for his nation's economic future.

3.6 DISCUSSION— "IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THESE HILLS WITHOUT MINING"[14]

Elements of Herman Melancon's and Alice Buyck's stories have been shared here, in an attempt to explore the burgeoning gaps between generations of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens, as well as those between the experiences of settler and Indigenous Yukoners. Of course, as Julie Cruikshank points out, this is not to say that all NND citizens would or should have the same opinions about issues as complex as mining. "That a culture is shared," Cruikshank wrote, "does not mean that all individual interpretations will be the same" (Cruikshank, 1998, p. 43). Indeed,

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[14] A quote from Joella Hogan

this is not a definitive representation of contemporary Na-Cho Nyäk Dun opinions or culture; it is simply an interpretation of a select few NND citizen's stories, which are particularly poignant and illuminating. These stories are shared with an understanding of the unique value and limitations of individual truths, or as Justice Murray Sinclair has termed it, the "plurality of truth" (Sinclair, 1994, p. 19). The very act of sharing stories such as Herman's and Alice's may serve to create understanding between generations and demonstrate the ability of narrative to unravel the complexity of modern relationships between northern Indigenous peoples, industrial development, and the land that they share.

Throughout this chapter, I explored how the impacts of historical and current mining at Keno Hill have informed NND relationships with their lands and identities. Having examined similar issues at the Hidden Valley Gold Mine in Papua New Guinea, Halvaksz, suggested that "mines are not merely extracting minerals, but are also marking time and space with their appearances," (Halvaksz, 2008, p. 21). In the case of Keno Hill, I argue that the mines have also marked the people—Herman Melancon, for example, is physically altered by his time working in the mines. Like many other NND citizens, Herman describes himself as a miner and links the history of the Keno Hill mines with that of his family and First Nation. Meanwhile, Alice Buyck lived with images of dead miners permanently etched in her mind. She also marked the phases of her life, family, and community by the ups and downs of the local mining industry. As Alice noted, NND people have come to see the hustle and bustle associated with the mining industry as a sign of good economic times—busy, happy times. Indeed, historic mining at Keno Hill transformed the NND concept of how their community should look and operate.

Furthermore, these stories showed that mining has also altered the NND relationship to a portion of their traditional territory. UKHM transformed the Keno Hill landscape from a

traditional gopher hunting and berry picking area, into a mining zone—a source of curiosity, potential danger, lasting environmental destruction, and economic opportunity for the NND. The many decades of mining also informed NND concepts of economic and resource development. These concepts continue to influence NND views of modern mining. For NND people, it is not only their lands that have been altered, but their culture that has shifted to allow for mining, just as they adapted to accommodate newcomers and settlers to their lands. As Joella Hogan has said: "for this current generation [of which she and Herman are a part] …it is hard to imagine these hills without mining" (Hogan, personal communication, 2013). This generational shift is illuminated by Herman Melancon's family—whereas his grandfather Dave Hager remarked on the futility of mine workers and participated only in the supportive industries, Herman has been a miner since the age of nineteen and did not consider other careers.

During the recent redevelopment of the Keno Hill mine site, the NND had a very different relationship with the industrial actors in the area—with an IBA in place, the FNNND is assured of financial benefits and social opportunities (First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun Elders, 2019). However, are they better prepared for closure? The unequal relationships between Indigenous communities and resource development corporations has been explored by Howitt and Lawrence (2008), who suggest that the myopic corporate strategy—to create wealth for shareholders—can be a deeply colonizing space (p. 99), even when Indigenous peoples are themselves the shareholders. The NND are well-aware of these imbalances and the inevitability of mine closure. Referring to the investment in training programs and employment, made by mining corporations, FNNND Chief Simon Mervyn said that "mining as a whole has been beneficial in a sense that we learnt a lot—I mean we got welders and electricians and all that sort of thing. But during a bust, industry is not supporting that, our children, our trained people they

94

got nothing to come home to" (First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun Elders, 2019, p. 48). As Chief Mervyn expressed, the NND are aware of the finite nature of the mining industry and have experienced the impacts of mine closure.

As this chapter has demonstrated, there is much more to the history of the Keno Hill silver mines than what can be found in the written record. NND voices have long been left out of the historic discourse, yet they have an extensive and important history of involvement with the mining industry in their traditional territory. For the NND, the emotional geography of the Keno Hill Silver mine was historically one of exclusion, hardship, and adaptation as colonial policies were forced upon them. The family histories, as shared by Herman Melancon and Alice Buyck, have revealed the complexly layered relationship between the NND and the mining on their lands, as well as with the settlers brought to their lands by the industry. While the future of the Keno Hill Mines remains uncertain, the NND are now in a position to share their views and concerns and at the very least, be heard within an industry that once silenced them.

INTERLUDE

I was initially hesitant to separate this thesis into a Mayo/NND chapter and a Keno City chapter, but as I sat with the words of research participants it became clear that there were two distinct, but interconnected stories being shared. Indeed, the people of Mayo and the people of Keno City have all been impacted by the closure and redevelopment of the Keno Hill Mines, but their experiences are as unique as their communities. This Interlude serves as a transition between the stories of the two communities. After a week in Mayo, formulating a research plan with the FNNND, I travelled to Keno City. Upon my arrival in Keno on May 22, 2011, my first stop was the Keno City Snack Bar, where I chatted with the proprietor, Mike Mancini and noticed posters for a community meeting with Alexco, which was happening in a few days. What follows are my field notes from the meeting.

THE ALEXCO UPDATE MEETING—FROM FIELD NOTES, MAY 25, 2011

The meeting was held in the Keno City Snack Bar, which consists of two Panabode or pre-fabricated cedar log homes, put together. The old Panabode buildings are common in Keno, all of them having come from the Elsa town site, sold cheap when UKHM shut down in 1989. Despite the single poster advertising the meeting, the entire community of Keno was aware of it and seemed to have been bracing themselves for some time. In fact, the Keno Community Club, which operates many of the community services in lieu of a municipal government, held a meeting the night before, in the little community library (a former church) to prepare their stance. There was certainly an adversarial vibe to the affair.

It was late May, but there was still snow in the hills surrounding the town, it was spring time in Keno and that, coupled with the upcoming grand opening of the Bellekeno District Mill, seemed to have created a nervous energy that hung about the town like an intense bout of spring fever. Eleven Kenoites were assembled in the Snack Bar long before the Alexco representatives showed up. There was Mathias, a self-taught prospector and trapper in his early thirties, originally from Germany, who settled in Keno around 1998. Yvonne, in her late 50s, who used to work in the mill for UKHM and is now one of three employees of the Keno City Museum. Insa Schultenkotter, also originally from Germany, had been living in the area since the '90s and is married to Bob Wagner, a former equipment operator for UKHM, who had been in Keno since the '70s. Together, Bob and Insa built up a cabin rental and tourist business in the '90s and have been some of the most vocal opponents of the new mill opened by Alexco. Then there was Dick Brost, a tall, solid man in his 60s, who had been in the North since the 1960s, working at various mines, living in the bush and using Keno as his home base since the '70s. He and Yvonne had raised a child in Keno, Alice, who was one of the last children to live in the town.

Sonya, a friendly and outgoing woman in her early 50s, was then the president of the long-running Keno Community Club. She and her partner still spend much of their time trapping in the bush near Keno, but she maintains their home in Keno – a handsome, false-fronted structure with dark stained clapboard siding, purple trim, and flower boxes at the windows.

There was also Milos, a Yugoslavian immigrant who, to the best of anyone's knowledge had been working in mines in Canada since the 1950s or early 1960s and had been at UKHM since the '70s. Apparently, he was a very good equipment operator in his day. Unfortunately, Milos is not in the best of health these days – drinking too much, eating poorly and smoking constantly. Milos is a source of amusement, pride and annoyance for many people in Keno, but

97

they always ensure he is well-taken care of, as he bumbles around the Snack Bar doing odd jobs – painting trim, collecting recyclables etc. At one point, the residents of Keno even banded together and built Milos a little house, right across from the Snack Bar, in the centre of town. It is clear that Keno is Milos' family.

Finally, there was Mike Mancini, the proprietor of the Snack Bar. Mike grew up in Elsa and has remained incredibly attached to the region, helping to start up the museum and working to promote Keno as a tourist destination. In the media, he has been proclaimed Keno's unofficial mayor. The recent conflict with the mine seemed to have split the community, however, and Mike attempted to stay out of the controversy. For most of the meeting, Mike busied himself in the kitchen, having already set out pop, water and cookies, courtesy of Alexco, which had called the meeting.

As each of these community members entered the snack bar and took a seat around the various mismatched 1950s Formica-topped tables, they were greeted by the group. When Dick walked in everyone remarked on his nice new shirt, which made him blush. Indeed, it appeared as if everyone had dressed up to some degree – there were more tucked in shirts and combed hair than was usually seen around Keno.

Four Alexco employees arrived in two big, four-door F150s. The Alexco employees filed into the snack bar and after everyone had settled in, Tom Fudge, Alexco's Senior Vice President, introduced them all – Tim Hall, Operations Manager at Alexco, Shervin Teymouri, a young mining engineer from Vancouver, and Andrea Mansell, in Human Resources. Tom Fudge immediately took control of the meeting and announced that Alexco had three things to present. First, he noted the community's concerns about the amount of mine-related traffic through town and the associated dust issues. "So we're going to go ahead and install the bypass road this

summer," said Tom. This bypass road seemed to have been in the works for some time, as everyone was aware of it. Following this announcement, there was general silence.

A discussion about a new mine portal followed, with people quietly studying maps of the area. Fudge said that the preferred location for the portal was not possible, due to possible water leakage, unfavorable geology and lack of a bridge across Lighting Creek, meaning that haul trucks would still have to drive through town. Insa asked about the location of the fan for this new portal and how noisy it would be (in decibels). Tom then brought up the issue of the contentious lot 960 – a portion of land which had been in dispute for many years. Long assumed to be a part of the Keno town site, some residents owned homes on the lot, but when Alexco bought the mine site, they also assumed ownership over this parcel of land. "So I've got a proposal that might make everyone happy," said Fudge. After a tense moment of silence, he continued: "We're going to go ahead a make a subdivision out of lot 960." "Oh great!" exclaimed Yvonne immediately. "Yes, a 12-acre subdivision," said Tom. There was a noticeable change in the atmosphere after this announcement. Some Kenoites seemed pleased, others seemed deflated, while others still appeared uneasy, glancing skeptically at the Alexco representatives. After a bit of commotion died down, Tom took control again, to say that of course, this decision was subject to "condemnation drilling", as they are "paranoid" and must make sure they're not missing out on the "mother lode" in the area. The company would also retain surface rights to the land. As Keno is unincorporated, the community would also have to set up some sort of legal entity, which could receive the lot from Alexco. This entity would then decide how to subdivide the lots.

Insa, picking up on the fact that this decision was not yet set in stone, asked about the time frame for the decision. Tom said the company was presenting the next phase of their project

99

to YESAB in the next couple of weeks, so the decision would be made after that. "I want this to be the year of speaking with our actions," he announced proudly. Insa asked for the proposal in writing.

Sonya, asked if now is an appropriate time for Kenoites to give some feedback. "Sure, let me have it," said Tom, who seemed the most at ease out of the Alexco employees. A detailed discussion of the new proposed mining ensued, with Insa and Bob asking most of the questions. Insa became quite emotional when speaking about the roads and trails that had been closed to the public, by Alexco. Most people seemed uncomfortable about this show of emotion, shifting in their seats and looking down at their hands. Tom couldn't answer many of the questions. At one point, Tom did defer to Bob, suggesting that he probably had the most experience out of anyone on a certain topic. This created a definite change in the dynamic, and Bob softened as he offered his opinion. Everyone in the room listened respectfully. I admit to feeling a measure of pride for Bob and the rest of the Kenoites present.

After an intense hour of back and forth, Sonya thanked the Alexco representatives for coming and there was a brief discussion about the grand opening of the mill, which was the next day. The meeting ended with jokes about Alexco employees being heartless. Tom laughed and joked back, but the other three employees did not. Bob and Tom shook hands at the end of the meeting. After the Alexco employees left, most people filed out of the snack bar. Mike returned from the kitchen for a briefing on the meeting and seemed impressed with the lot 960 suggestion. The hockey game was turned on and a few people remained to watch and order pizzas for dinner. Once everyone had headed home, I rushed back to my little school bus and, by candlelight, began to type up my notes.

CHAPTER FOUR

"KENO CITY JUST IS!"

CLOSURE, REDEVELOPMENT AND EMOTION

Keno City is a misnomer: it is not a city at all but a tiny hamlet in the mountains of the central Yukon with the audacity to keep the word city in its official name and with enough fans to continue using it. In the summer of 2011, population estimates varied from twelve to twenty-five year-round residents. As the town is unincorporated, there is no municipal government. Instead, there is the Keno Community Club, an elected, volunteer-run board, which organizes most of the local services, such as water delivery, campground maintenance, shower and laundromat, the recreation hall, library, and the Keno Mining Museum. The closest law-enforcement, banking, and medical services are located in Mayo, eighty-five kilometres away. Keno has no store, no ATM, no post office and until recently, no cell service. Most Keno residents are euro-Canadian settlers, who are all very independent and yet constantly work to support each other.

Figure 6: Keno City Novelty License Plate in the Keno City Snack Bar. Author photo

Tucked into a hollow in the Wernecke Mountains, Keno City is a collection of historic buildings and approximately twenty cabins, small homes, and shacks of a more recent, but still rustic vintage, scattered along a few dirt roads that wind through the community and often lead to old mining sites in the hills. Lightning Creek runs swiftly behind the town, creating a loud, but soothing soundtrack for the community-run campground situated there. While Dawson City is a well-known destination for Yukoners and tourists alike, Keno City is like a well-kept secret, a quirky, hidden gem that is literally at the end of the road (or Silver Trail Highway) but has a loyal group of Yukon fans. Some of these admirers include artists and writers, such as musician Kim Barlow, who wrote a concept album ("luckyburden," 2004) based on Keno City, and Yukon film maker Andy Connors, who has created many short films about or based in the town. Much of the fascination is attached to the dramatic story of Keno City as an historic mining town, situated in the heart of the Keno Hill silver district—one of the highest-grade silver districts in the world, which consists of thirty-four abandoned silver mines spread over roughly 230 square kilometres of mountainous, sub-arctic terrain. Between 1914 and 1989, 6.8 million kilograms of silver were mined from the area by several operators and Keno's fortunes rose and fell with that of the mines. As a wild boom town, Keno City first supported the independent silver miners working in the hills during the 1920s to 1940s, then acted as a sister community to the company town of Elsa during the decades of corporate mining by United Keno Hill Mines (UKHM), and finally survived the sudden mine closure of 1989 by reinventing itself as a tourist destination. Keno City has since helped to tell the region's mining history as an almost-ghost town that time forgot.

Figure 5: Keno City viewed from above. Author photo

In 2006, the Yukon Government sold the abandoned Keno Hill mines site, including the

old town site of Elsa, to Vancouver-based mining and reclamation company Alexco Resource

Corporation (Alexco), along with a contract for the reclamation of the environmental damage

from the historic mining. When I visited in the summer of 2011, Alexco had just re-opened the

old UKHM Bellekeno Mine as well as their new district mill, which was located just one

kilometre outside of Keno City. Silver-lead-zinc ore was being crushed in the Keno Hill area for

the first time in nearly thirty years. Since 2009, there had been much unrest and public debate

regarding the mine redevelopment and the location of the district mill. Yukon media outlets had

publicized the controversy and Yukon newspapers had printed dueling letters to the editor, either

complaining about the mining and mill or about the mine's detractors. MiningWatch Canada, a

mining industry watchdog group, had been covering the development and was updated by Keno

residents. Furthermore, the Alexco Reclamation Company was responsible for reclaiming the

abandoned mine sites, including the company town of Elsa, where the most cost-effective method of reclamation meant dismantling many of the historic structures that were deemed unsafe, but still held nostalgic value for many local residents. Each stage of the project was evaluated by the Mayo district office of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB)—an independent agency, responsible for assessing all development projects in the Yukon, in accordance with the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act (YESAA). Yet, many residents of Keno expressed frustration, feeling that they had either not been heard, or had been misunderstood throughout these processes. Residents struggled to reconcile Keno City's historic reputation with a modern mineral redevelopment, as well as their emotional connections to that sense of place.

In this chapter, long-time residents of Keno City share their stories, which I have assembled to tell the history of the Keno Hill Silver mines, the dependent communities of Elsa and Keno City, and the mine's recent redevelopment. I focus on the conflict brought to a head in 2011, which was the summer that Alexco formally re-opened the Bellekeno Mine and a new district mill, creating what Keeling and Sandlos would call a "zombie mine"—one brought back to life in a new era of mineral development, but which "continues[s] to haunt communities with many of the same issues—environmental risks, unequal wealth distribution, decision making by outsiders—that emerged in the original development," (Keeling & Sandlos, 2015, p. 11). At Keno Hill, the resumption of exploration and mining in a brownfield, or abandoned mine site, twenty years after shut-down, created social and environmental upheaval for residents who had grown accustomed to a quiet and peaceful community. As controversy over the mining and location of the new mill (on the outskirts of Keno City) erupted, relationships were strained— between the communities of Mayo and Keno City, between the company, residents, and

government, and between all these actors and the landscape. Using a framework of emotional and spectre geography, the following sections examine the social impacts that arise when a dormant mine reopens and an abandoned town is re-inhabited.

This chapter uses emotional geography, as pioneered by Davidson, Smith, and Bondi (2007), Anderson and Smith (2001), and Davidson and Milligan (2004) to explore the emotions experienced by residents of Keno during the initial closure of the Keno Hill mine and the recent redevelopment and to demonstrate how those emotions hovered over the project like a spectre, disrupting relationships between residents, the company, and the Keno Hill region. Emotional geography explores how emotions relate to, are affected by, and affect the environment. Davidson, Smith, and Bondi suggest that a genuine emotional geography "cannot just deal in feelings," rather, it must try to express "a sense of emotional investment with people and places, rather than emotional detachment from them" (2007, p. 2). Pini, Mayes, and McDonald (2010) and Wheeler (2014) employ emotional geography to explore mine closure in Australia and former mining communities in the United Kingdom, respectively, suggesting that intense emotions occur during mine closure, which can become political in nature (Pini et al., 2010); yet over time, the emotional connection to mining relicts prompt and create social and personal place-related memories (Wheeler, 2014).

Here, I use emotional geography to focus on how residents of Keno City relate to their environment and their history and how these emotions impact their sense of place. After all, as Amanda Kearney suggests, "people and place bring each other into being" (Kearney, 2009, p. 87). The exploration of these connections between people and place reveals a spectre of unaddressed affectual impacts—an historical emotional geography—which was exhumed by the Alexco redevelopment. Therefore, I also use spectre geography (Edensor, 2005a, 2005b;

Matless, 2008) to explore how these un-acknowledged emotions (both historic and recent) lingered over the project, creating difficulty at every stage. Maddern and Adey (2008) remind us that "understanding spectrality can not only help us come to terms with the 'impassible' mess of these ties, connections and relations – but also how people do come to terms with the erosion of an over-determined sure footing of certainty" (p. 292). Indeed, the situation at Keno Hill was complex, with multiple layers of emotion related to mine activity to sift through, as Kenoites reckoned with the affectual impacts of the redevelopment, as well as the revival of once buried emotions associated with the UKHM years and the closure in 1989.

I employed oral history methodology (Ward, 2012; Shopes, 2011) and ethnographic methods of location and participant observation as well as archival research to explore these complex emotions and memories. As discussed in Chapter Two, the use of personal, local stories to examine the political and cultural implications of such resource development work is not new (Wheeler, 2014; Perreault, 2017), but as demonstrated by Cameron (2012), it can help to illuminate an issue in a way that is not possible with a larger-scale view: "It may be that it is precisely in small, local storytelling that political transformation becomes possible, even if we cannot know in advance where our stories lead" (Cameron, 2012, p. 588). Furthermore, Shopes has suggested that oral history work has the potential to help democratize the historical records (2011).

Figure 7: Street Signs in Keno City. Author photo

As in Chapter Three, the family history of one person is used to anchor the narrative and chronology of the writing. Here it is Mike Mancini, long-time resident and proprietor of the Keno City Snack Bar. I draw from numerous other interviews conducted in Keno City during the summer of 2011. Although I interviewed nearly everyone in the tiny community, the primary participants here are Mike Mancini, Yvonne Bessette, Joseph Volf, and Insa Schultenkotter, all residents of Keno City at the time. I addition, I also interviewed Tom Fudge (then manager of Alexco's Keno Hill operation) and Loralee Johnstone (Manager of the Mayo YESAB office). While this is just a handful of the people who embody the emotional geography of the Keno Hill region, for a town of twenty, they provide a representative sample of the types of emotions and stories shared. Limiting the number of participants also allows for the reader to develop a relationship with each narrator. In this chapter, excerpts from these interviews are woven chronologically to provide an historical background, to discuss the recent controversial redevelopment, and to explore the interconnected nature of people and place at Keno Hill, which is established through the memories, experiences and emotions shared here. In sharing their stories, residents of Keno City portray their intimate relationship to the Keno Hill area, its

history, and their hopes for its future.

This chapter concludes that the failure of corporate and government assessment processes to anticipate, acknowledge, or validate the depth of relationship between people and place in the Keno Hill region led to further tensions and a failed relationship between the community and the company during the mine redevelopment. Thus, the main argument of this chapter is that mineral redevelopment can evoke a complex set of emotions for local inhabitants, and the emotional impact of such projects must be considered during planning and evaluation, in the same way that environmental and economic impacts are assessed.

4.1 HILLS OF SILVER -1950S TO 1980S

"…it's a desolate, frozen and windblown, empty space. Now I can't imagine living anywhere else. Goodbye Italy, now I am home," - "Madonna Mia", Kim Barlow, *luckyburden*.

Many of the present-day residents of Keno City lived in the area during the UKHM days and once lived in Elsa or worked for the company. This section traces the history of UKHM from the 1950s up to the closure of the mine in 1989 using Mike Mancini's family history to anchor the narrative and chronology. Here, I focus on the nostalgia felt about the days of UKHM and the emotions associated with the sudden closure of the mine.

Figure 8: The Keno City Snack bar, with local patrons out front. Author photo

Mike Mancini is well-known throughout the Yukon as the proprietor of the Keno City

Snack Bar, where he makes his famous pizzas from scratch, using one of his mother's recipes.

Mike is a self-described collector and savior of vestiges from the golden age of silver mining at

Keno Hill. His collection spills out from the Snack Bar into the surrounding yard, where 1950s

automobiles are parked, old signage hangs from the walls, and canvas tent sheds are filled with

vintage and antique items such as old wood cook stoves, barber chairs, milkshake makers, and

baby carriages. It was in the back of Mike's Snack Bar that he and I first sat down for an

interview at one of the 1950s Formica tables collected from the old houses of Elsa.

When asked to introduce himself, Mike began by discussing his family connection to the

Keno region. Josephine and Pete Mancini, Mike's parents, were both from southern Italy and

came to the Yukon in the 1950s. As Mike explained, it was his father who came over first:

> ...he was working in the coal mines in Belgium, then he and a friend heard about all the
> jobs that were in Canada, so they came over and ...he heard about all the money that
> could be made in the Yukon, so he came to Whitehorse with his friend…he worked for
> White Pass [Railway] for many years. And then he was getting lonely in Whitehorse, so

he called up my mom, they were childhood sweethearts, and he asked her if she still loved him and wanted to come to Canada and marry him. And she said 'yeah, sure.' So, he sent her a plane fare and she came to Whitehorse and they got married at the Catholic Church in Whitehorse. (Mancini, personal interview, 2011a)

Soon after their move to the Yukon, Mike's father was offered a job on the tramline station with UKHM, beginning his long career with the company. The Mancinis moved to the Keno Hill area, but Josephine quickly returned to Italy to give birth to Mike, their first child. Thus, while Mike was born in Italy, he already had roots in the Yukon. Mike's mother brought him north at the age of three and the area has been his home since. Mike's three younger sisters—Lucrezia, Rosella, and Anna—were all born in Mayo. The Mancini family first lived in a tiny mining settlement called No Cash, then another UKHM mining town called Calumet, and eventually moved to Elsa, where they stayed until the 1980s.

Mike recalled Elsa as a great place to grow up. "It was before TV," he said, "and our imaginations went wild. …it was just like a fantasy land for kids. There was always something to do, we were never bored (Mancini, 2011a). Even as a teenager, Mike said he and his friends were always outdoors, "going out to lakes, fishing, celebrating life one way or another" (Mancini, 2011a). Starting from the age of 16, Mike, along with most of his friends began working at the mine in the summers. UKHM would provide employment for the children of their employees, often allowing young people to apprentice in different trades. Mike tried a little bit of everything:

> I worked in the carpenter's shop, I worked welding, I worked in the blacksmith shop, in the mechanical shop, in the mill…I never did find something that I really wanted to do. Well, it was basically because I had the dream of going to the city, so my work here was always four or five months and made enough money to leave. So, I was actually blackballed at one point from getting re-hired because my shifter at the mill said that I had a bad attitude, because I was always talking about leaving. They liked to have people that just dedicated their lives to their jobs. I was a rebel. [Chuckles]. (Mancini, 2011a)

Unlike Mike, Yvonne Bessette, a long-time resident of Keno City, enjoyed her work for

UKHM, especially her last post: working in the mill. "I loved it," she said, "…probably because

it was a really physical job, like you had to keep all the ore running on the belts, you had to keep

all the crushers happily crushing away…it was dusty and noisy and smelly, (Bessette personal

interview, 2011). I interviewed Yvonne in the historic RCMP barracks, a yellow two-storey

house in the northern corner of Keno City. The barracks is protected by the Keno City Mining

Museum, where Yvonne has worked for many years, so of course she had the key. It was pouring

rain that day and Yvonne suggested we take refuge in the enclosed porch of the building, where

we sat on old wicker chairs listening to the rain battering the tin roof, as Yvonne described her

first impression of Keno City:

> Oh, I just totally fell in love with it. Soon as I was coming down the mountain and
> I could see Keno in the distance, it was just this little tiny town and it's so
> beautiful, all the mountains and just the smallness of the town. I'd never lived in a
> place that small, I was totally intrigued with it. Yeah I've never lost that feeling.
> Still, when I come around that corner and I see Keno in the mountains, it's just so
> beautiful, I just love it. (Bessette, personal interview, 2011)

When she first came to Keno in 1976, UKHM would not employ women in the mill or mines, so

Yvonne worked as a bull cook at the Keno 700 mine, on top of Keno Hill. Over the years, she

worked as a labourer, in kitchens, and eventually in the mill. Although both Yvonne and her

partner worked for UKHM, they continued to live in Keno, commuting to Elsa for work with

approximately 50 other residents. I asked Yvonne what Keno City was like at that time:

> It was excellent, because of course nobody was without a job. …for the people that lived
> in Keno, they'd come and fill up their tanks with heating fuel and if you burned wood,
> they're give you hundreds of dollars a year to go and get your own wood. …It was real
> cooperation between the communities at that time. And at our rec hall we'd have dances
> and a lot of the people from Elsa would come over and also Mayo, it was sort of three
> communities, all interacted together, we all went to each other's functions, course a lot of
> people in Mayo worked for the mine so it was like a big community. (Bessette, 2011)

Yvonne described Falconbridge, the parent company that operated UKHM, as very generous and said she felt lucky to have lived in an era of company towns, when "the company took care of everything" (Bessette, 2011). Other interviewees shared this perspective, remarking on how the company gave out free televisions to everyone in town (Rentmeister personal interview, 2011), loaned out heavy equipment (Mease personal interview, 2011) and contributed to local medical, transportation and energy infrastructure (Roberti, personal interview, 2011). This paternalism, of course, had a dark side. Though the company was characterized by most people as supportive, it was not lost on those who lived in Elsa that UKHM owned everything— their homes, the rec hall, the bar, the store, everything except the school, which was operated by the Yukon Government. Mike Mancini learned this lesson at the age of eight, when he and some friends witnessed the company destroying Calumet, his first hometown:

> well, it was quite emotional for a bunch of us kids that grew up there. We heard through the grapevine that they were gonna go up and burn everything, so a bunch of us hitchhiked up and we sat on the utilidors [above ground plumbing] and basically, that was our first shot of reality…that the mines or life in general doesn't go on forever. For us, I mean, it was very emotional, we were just basically crying most of the time we sat on the utilidors, because a lot of what we knew as young kids was disappearing. (Mancini, 2011a)

Although Calumet had once been a thriving community, with a population of a few hundred people, a coffee shop, barber, recreation hall and movie theatre, when the Calumet mine ran out of ore, the town was closed and UKHM moved all the employees into Elsa. The town site was considered a liability, so it was torched. I wondered what it felt like to grow up in a town and then see it all burned down in a day. Mike explained how, at a young age, it forced him to see the paternalistic nature of life in a company town; and how these emotions have resurfaced recently:

> I basically felt like it was my town, I felt comfortable there…sometimes the reality was that you didn't own your own house, or whatever, but they made us feel pretty secure

112

and, you know, they took care of everything, but it's only the last few years I've felt that, the reality is that it wasn't ever my own town, I mean it was the company, the company owned everything. (Mancini, 2011a)

Despite this recent realization, Mike says that most people enjoyed living in Elsa, there was a certain loyalty to UKHM, which allowed the company to "get away with a lot of stuff" but "for the most part, it was like one big, happy family," said Mike (Mancini, 2011a).

The malleability of memory, as described by Mike, has been discussed by Tim Edensor. In relation to ruins, Edensor suggests that "like memory, [ruins] are in a condition of perpetual change," and that objects found in ruins (like the artefacts Mike Mancini collects) can serve to highlight the radical difference of the past— "a past which can haunt the fixed memories of place proffered by the powerful" (2005b, p. 847). Perreault's (2018) concepts of "productive nostalgia" and "collective memory" may also contribute to Mike and Yvonne's rosy view of the past. These happy recollections were not universal. Joe Volf, for instance, grew up in Elsa around the same time as Mike, but he had quite a different opinion of UKHM. Joe's parents Joseph and Louise Volf ran the UKHM grocery store at Elsa from 1966 to 1989. In the summer of 2011, his mother was still working occasionally at the grocery store in Mayo. A mechanic and artist, Joe is quiet and reserved and while he is less vocal about his love of the Keno area, it was obvious, nonetheless. In between bouts of college, travel, and mine-related work Joe has been carefully restoring an historic Keno City cabin, from the tin roof to the hardwood floors. This is where Joe and I sat down for an interview, surrounded by historic photographs of the region. Joe saw UKHM as authoritarian and described Elsa as quite regulated compared to Keno City:

> the mine didn't own Keno, right? They owned Elsa, so you kinda felt like you're in a communist camp there…you really couldn't do anything without them eyeballing you every time. …But if you came to Keno, it was a government town and you could do what you want, you could go to the bar or, you could do whatever you want and no one's gonna get all bent outta shape." (Volf, personal interview, 2011)

113

The difference of opinion or difference in memory demonstrated by Mike and Joe is important here because it demonstrates the "multivocal dimensions of place" (Metheney, 2007), or how one physical landscape can have multiple meanings. Therefore, the town of Elsa can mean different things to different people, and the re-development of the mines has a different emotional impact for each individual. In her book, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, Anna Storm also discussed the way people can share conflicting stories about the same place. For Storm, scars—such as the abandoned town of Elsa, or the shuttered mine adits scattered throughout the Wernecke mountains—have the ability to express these "manifold meanings." Such scars "tell of losses and betrayed dreams, they highlight ideas about nature and organized growth…they make visible persisting spirits of community as well as repressive hierarchical structures" (Storm, 2014, p. 156). Similarly, Ward (2012) has discussed the concept of multitudinous place identity, suggesting that while places have distinct meanings for individuals, there are broader political, social and economic elements that connect those individuals to that place (p. 139).

Therefore, while Mike and Joe offer differing views of Elsa, both accounts provide insight into the broader economic and social factors that brought their families to that place, impacted their childhoods, and keep both men attached to the area. For someone like Mike, who was very emotionally connected to Elsa, the new ownership of the town and his loss of access (discussed below) was very difficult and framed the re-development of the mine as something with negative consequences. Joe Volf, who claims to be less nostalgic about Elsa and who found work in the redevelopment of the mines, was more ambivalent about the mine reopening and Alexco gaining ownership of his hometown. However, both men's perceptions were shaped by their experiences of historic and modern mining in the region and both formed their identities around the Keno Hill landscape and its mining history.

114

4.2 SHUTTING 'ER DOWN—UKHM CLOSURE IN THE 1980S

"I don't know what I'd do if I didn't work here. I've had the same job for the last thirty years. There's always been rumours about shutting 'er down. There'll always been silver under the ground." – Kim Barlow, "Silver under the Ground," *luckyburden*.

After graduating from high school, Mike got his chance to escape to the big city. He attended university in Alberta for a few years, returning to Elsa to work in the summers. As Mike described, it was during this time that the first mine closure occurred in 1981:

> the whole family was on holidays in Italy and we got the call that the mine had shut down. My dad was devastated. But in Italy, my mom made a decision that she would move the family to Nanaimo B.C. …the mine shut down for about a year and then my dad got called back, so he was coming back every six weeks and then two weeks off, kind of thing. (Mancini, 2011a)

During the late 1980s Mike returned to Elsa and worked at the mine alongside his father. They were even living in the same bunkhouse until the initial mine layoffs in 1988, when Mike was let go:

> The first layoff, there was a bunch of us that were working in the Silver King and we got off, went into the mine dry and we just got out of our showers and the shifter came by and handed us an envelope and she says 'well your pay is in the envelope and you're laid off'. …Yeah, we were done…so what I'm saying, we, the first crew that got laid off, knew the reality of it, but the rest of the people, they thought they were safe. (Mancini, 2011a)

At that time, Elsa had just been recognized as a hamlet by the Yukon Territorial Government, so funds were offered to renovate old structures and work on the sewage and pipeline systems— aging infrastructure that had previously been built and maintained by UKHM. As such, Mike and six others who had been laid off were hired by the Yukon Government to renovate the Elsa recreation hall. After the UKHM layoff, Mike could no longer live in Elsa, so he moved to Keno and lived in an inherited cabin.

In January 1989, UKHM suddenly closed the mine for good, giving residents of Elsa two weeks to vacate the community. Most interviewees described the final closure of Keno Hill as a

surprise, an upset, or a shock (Rentmeister, 2011; Bessette, 2011). The mine closure made

national headlines (Globe and Mail, 1989; Calgary Herald, 1989), with the *Globe and Mail*

reporting in April of 1989 that "the village has died," referring to the town of Elsa, where just 11

of the former 220 UKHM workers were still employed (Robinson, 1989). Even for Mike

Mancini, who was involved in the initial layoff, it was a blow when the mine shut for good:

> it was a shock, definitely. You know they shut down right in the middle of the winter. So,
> right after Christmas. A bunch of people had come back from holidays and they got a
> layoff notice, so it was really a strange decision to be made. I could see it shutting down
> in the summer or spring, but right in the middle of winter, when it was the coldest part of
> the winter? And everybody was in shock, I mean a bunch of people came back from
> holidays and laid off, but it was a decision made in Toronto, or wherever. (Mancini,
> personal interview, 2011b)

What Mike Mancini calls "shock," Pini et al. (2010) have described as grief, or "an acute sense

of betrayal and abandonment" (p. 563), when people who enjoy their work and are loyal to a

company for so long are let go. Having worked for the company for over thirty-five years,

Mike's father was particularly affected. Pete Mancini had started out working on the tramline.

He moved on to work at the compressor house for many years and then as a labourer in the

electrical shop. Finally, he worked in the mill as a crusher operator. His work at UKHM had

been a huge part of his life. Of his father's employment, Mike said "…he was kept on actually,

right to the end, he was one of the last people to be let go, 'cause he had so much seniority. But

then yeah, he got some sort of a package too" (Mancini, 2011b). Unfortunately, Pete Mancini did

not enjoy much of a retirement, as he passed away at the age of 62, just a few years after the

mine closed.

4.3 KENO CITY BLUES—1989-2006

"Got the Keno City Blues, they never go away…This is the only place that I know. I gotta stay," – Kim Barlow, "Keno City Blues," *luckyburden*.

As compensation for employees living in Keno who did not want to move, UKHM offered a one-way trip anywhere in Canada. Yvonne and her family decided to go on holiday to Vancouver Island and, as she described, they returned to a very different Elsa and Keno City. "It was sad," she said. "Because Elsa was pretty well dismantled. A lot of people in Keno had left to go and find work elsewhere. It was a sad time. And of course, my daughter was down to only a few playmates at the time, which didn't last long. They ended up leaving too, same thing, the families had to go and find work" (Bessette, 2011). Joe Volf called the closure of Elsa "strange," describing how his family watched the moving trucks come up and all the families slowly trickle away (Volf, 2011). Joe hesitantly discussed the suicide of one long-term employee, which was attributed to the mine closure and demonstrates the depths of despair felt by residents of Elsa, who had lived by and for the mines for so long. Such "violations of place" (Pini et al., 2010, p. 564) are common at mine closures, when suddenly, the familiar noises, rhythms and comradery cease and a community is physically removed from the landscape.

While most non-Indigenous people immediately left the Keno Hill area, some people, despite being transplanted to the area, had grown roots there and try as they might, they could not make their home elsewhere. These people could no longer live in Elsa, so Keno City became the next best thing. As Joe Volf put it: "Elsa and Keno were kind of buddy communities in the old days right, so there's no Elsa anymore so…anyone who was attached to Elsa had nowhere else to go, but Keno, right?" (Volf, 2011). Mike Mancini was one of the hardy souls determined to stay in the area. As he said, "…there was a handful of people that really loved the area and they wanted to make do with what was left here, old cabins here and stuff. There was a bunch of

kids still here, about five or six kids, so…everybody sort of joined together and it was a feeling of, 'let's survive'" (Mancini, 2011b). Perhaps because of that independent spirit, there was a sense of enthusiasm in Keno, despite the mine shutdown. This new community of Kenoites came together and contacted the Yukon Government, asking for assistance. At the time, Piers MacDonald was the Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Mayo region. MacDonald had once worked as a miner at Keno Hill, so as Mike explained, he was eager to help the citizens of Keno City. "So, the option became, let's turn Keno into a tourist town and let's play up the history," said Mike. "One hundred years of mining history that took place here. So, through grants and stuff, we got different projects going here, that handful of people that needed work got work, carpentry work or labourer work, equipment work, or whatever, so things kept going" (Mancini, 2011b). Mike described the economic turnaround from mining to tourism as "fairly immediate," with the Keno City Mining Museum being the main project.

Keno City's old Jackson Hall had been used as a small museum since 1979, but it was in need of renovation and new exhibits. In 1990, work began to bring the building up to code, including a new foundation, floor, roof, and electrical wiring. Yvonne remembered the years of effort that went into developing the museum and the excitement when it reopened. "We did more advertising," she said, "we built a campground that attracted people. People in town built cabins for rentals, for the tourists and that was very popular. So, that all helped to keep the town going" (Bessette, 2011).

Figure 9: The Keno City Mining Museum. Author photo

The grand opening of the new exhibits in the Keno City Mining Museum took place in

1994. There was excitement around the Yukon about the new attraction and many visitors came

up to Keno to experience this new iteration of the place. When Mike Mancini noticed the lack of

services for visitors and locals, he rented a vacant building across from the museum to use as a

café. Within the year, Mike had purchased the building and turned it into the Keno City Snack

Bar. Slowly, Keno developed a reputation for being a cool, quiet place where one could escape

for a while (*New York Times*, 2017). A few artists began to work in the area and the Yukon

Government promoted the community in tourist publications. The museum expanded to include

two additional buildings, which house large artifacts from the mining era, such as 1950s cars,

Keystone drills, and historic pumps. There was also an Alpine Interpretive Centre constructed

next to the main museum building, which displays some of the rare alpine plants that grow in the

high hills surrounding Keno, as well as a huge, taxidermied grizzly bear. This building

119

symbolizes the slow shift that was occurring in the region, from a focus on mining and mining history, to an appreciation for the unique ecosystem of the Keno Hill area.

New residents, like Insa Schultenkotter were drawn to the area. Originally from Germany, Insa first came to Keno City in 1990. "I spent a winter in the bush, 30 kilometres out of Mayo," she said "…and I didn't even know there was such a community like Keno. So, we drove up here in March and…I looked around, took two pictures and on my way back to Mayo I said, 'that's the place I would like to live.' I instantly knew that's a good place" (Schultenkotter personal interview, 2011). Insa fell in love with the quiet and natural beauty of the area, and in 1992 bought property in Keno. Insa married her Keno City neighbor, Bob Wagner, a long-time Keno resident and former equipment operator at UKHM, who had been trapping and prospecting in the Keno area since the mine shutdown. Together, Insa and Bob built rental cabins and an artist studio and, with Insa's European connections, began to attract international tourists to the area. According to Insa, these visitors came not for the mining history, but for the hiking, fishing, and wilderness experiences the region had to offer: "I didn't promote it as a mining town," she said (Schultenkotter, 2011).

With all the hard work of Keno residents, there was enough visitation to create two part-time summer positions at the museum and a bit of employment maintaining the campground and visitor services. Meanwhile, some residents of Keno waited for the mine to reopen and wanted to be involved when it did. As Mike put it, "in the back of everybody's mind was the thought that the mine was gonna open up any day, because it had shut down several times over the years and within a year or two, it was open again. So, I think everybody sort of thought, well this is only temporary, it's gonna open again" (Mancini, 2011b). Indeed, there were numerous false starts, with various companies attempting to reopen the mine, but all faced various struggles of

120

permitting, securing financial backing, and the aging infrastructure at Elsa (Bagnell, 1997; Globe and Mail, 1995).

In the late 1990s, Keno City hit a population low of nine people and very nearly became a ghost town. Yvonne described this time as "very scary. …We thought our town was going to die," she said (Bessette, 2011). Still, for Yvonne and her family, it made sense to stay in Keno. They were always able to find enough work, and as Yvonne said, "it's very inexpensive to live here, because we have no stores! [Laughter]" (Bessette, 2011). Eventually, Yvonne's daughter, Alice, was the last child living in Keno City, and although she did well with correspondence schooling, her parents began to worry that she was being socially deprived. So, when Alice was in Grade Ten, they temporarily relocated to British Columbia, where she finished high school. Alice now lives in Dawson City, where she is married to the high school sweetheart she met on her first day of school in B.C. (McCauly, personal interview, 2011).

Meanwhile, in the years after the shutdown, the former company town of Elsa became a ghost town, cared for by a small crew of three or four people, who were employed to treat the mine runoff water and provide a semblance of security (Roberti, 2011). Elsa became what Edensor would term a ruin—an indeterminate place, "[where] the attempted erasure of the past is incomplete and the ghosts have not been consigned to dark corners, attics, and drawers, or been swept away, reinterpreted, and recontextualised" (2005b, p. 836). For Mike Mancini, however, Elsa continued to feel like his hometown. "I mean, every time I drove by it sort of tugged at the heart strings," he said (Mancini, 2011b). What eased some of that homesickness was the fact that Elsa was still accessible. Although the town was now empty, many of the buildings remained and, in a way, it became even more personal and intimate for Mike, as he described, he often had the entire community to himself:

121

there was a skeleton crew of guys that worked there since the '50s and stuff, who I knew very well, and they basically gave me the key to the town. Anytime I wanted to go into town. And then there was lots of stuff that we needed for the museum and stuff, and they basically says, 'you know, help yourselves,' 'cause they knew themselves that that era was gonna disappear, so they helped us every which way. So, even if it came down for me to just go and sit in one of the buildings and just sort of reminisce, they saw no problem. (Mancini, 2011b)

To an extent, Mike had more control and ownership over Elsa when the community was abandoned than when it was owned and operated by UKHM. In this way, the access to a somewhat-preserved Elsa held Mike in the past, in a suspended state that was bound to be disrupted by the redevelopment of the mine. Storm (2014) has explored similar emotional attachment to postindustrial landscapes, suggesting that the result of the "unpredictable abandonment of emotionally loaded places like one's home and the school of one's youth" is that they represent a simultaneous presence and absence, a "reconstructed home" (p. 157). Elsa was no longer a viable place to reside, but for many people, it remained an important part of their identity and was still considered home, even in its dismantled state. For some, Keno City was just the next-best thing.

4.4 REDEVELOPMENT

In the years since the mine shutdown, although Elsa felt like Mike's private little town, the corporate reality was that it was always owned by some other entity. UKHM declared bankruptcy in 1999 and creditors attempted to sell the mine until 2004, when it was deemed abandoned and placed into receivership. Under the 2003 devolution agreement between the Yukon and Federal governments, Type A, or abandoned mines, and their reclamation became the responsibility of the Territorial Government. In 2006, the Yukon Government sold the Keno Hill mines, including the town site of Elsa, to Alexco for 410,000 dollars. As a part of the sale,

Alexco inherited all former assets of UKHM and the remaining environmental liabilities of the

sites. The Yukon and Canadian governments subsequently awarded Alexco's subsidiary, Alexco

Environmental Group, a contract for the care, maintenance, and eventual reclamation and closure

of the sites. Alexco Environmental Group was tasked with decommissioning the former mine

and community sites, which includes the stabilization or removal of dangerous contaminants and

historic structures (buildings in Elsa, old mills, etc.), implementation of water management and

treatment facilities, and recontouring/revegetation of disturbed land (Alexco, 2015, p. 26).

Simultaneously, Alexco was able to conduct its own exploration program and assess the

possibility of reopening the mines once worked by UKHM (Alexco, Minister of Indian Affairs

and Northern Development, 2008).

I interviewed Tom Fudge, then operations manager for Alexco, at the old Elsa

administration building, which Alexco had taken over for use as its main office. He began by

describing some of the aspects of the area that make it a unique mine site:

> Well first of all its location, being in a sub-arctic region and being in a sparsely populated
> area. …We are a camp operation, so about 70% of the people employed here, maybe
> 80%, come in and out by charter aircraft. Now our employment is about 50% Yukon,
> 50% outside, but the surrounding communities of Mayo and Keno City don't have a large
> enough work force to provide all our requirements here, so this camp operation is a bit
> unique…It's one of the highest-grade silver districts in the world and so we can mine at
> lower volumes. …And it's challenging ground conditions…the rock we have here is not
> as competent as some of the mines and mining districts in the world, so there's a lot of
> challenges associated with safely mining in those conditions. Plus, any mining district
> more than twenty or thirty years old usually has pretty interesting history in it. …we're
> sitting here in Elsa, which still has a postal code…but it no longer has any full-time
> residents. …we're right in the middle of this historic mining town and that makes it pretty
> interesting. (Fudge personal interview, 2011)

Fudge had been involved with Keno Hill since January 2009, helping with de-watering and

exploration at the Bellekeno Mine, then putting together a development plan, and eventually

planning the redevelopment of the mine and construction of the district mill. He explained the

current activities of Alexco as four-fold. First, it operated the Bellekeno Mine and district mill (through a mining contractor, Procon). At the time, the mine was producing approximately 250 tonnes of silver-lead-zinc ore per day, which was all processed into concentrates at the district mill and shipped to a smelter for processing. Second, Alexco was heavily involved in surface exploration, looking for additional resources to develop. Third was the "district development activities," meaning exploration work at historic UKHM mines (such as Lucky Queen, Onek, and Silver King), with an eye to future resource production. Finally, Alexco is continuing the reclamation of historic environmental liabilities, left over from UKHM (Fudge, 2011).

Initially, many residents of both Mayo and Keno were excited by the new development. After years of failed attempts, it seemed that their mines would finally reopen, the mess left behind by UKHM would be cleaned up, and the region would again be economically viable. However, as the new company moved onto the site, some residents of Keno began to feel a loss of control over the region and their home community. When Alexco began its reclamation work and exploration program, there was a sudden shift in the pace of life in Keno City. With large mining trucks driving through the town, new roads constructed, and drill crews working twenty-four hours a day, some Kenoites were forced to re-evaluate their work or retirement plans in the new, not-so-quiet Keno City (Schultenkotter, 2011). Coupled with this shift in community dynamics was the frustration felt by many Keno residents about the lack of consultation and involvement in the development. As Mike Mancini explained,

> it was basically said at the beginning that when it came down to any planning and stuff, that Keno didn't really have a say in what was gonna be done. Basically, they said that YTG [Government of Yukon] and NND [Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation] would be the ones that Alexco would talk to and they didn't really have to talk to us to get any approvals or whatever, so that was a little upsetting at the beginning. …we tried to call meetings with them, and they said, 'you know, we don't really have to talk to you, you're not part of our mandatory discussions.' So, everybody felt quite offended at the time. (Mancini, 2011b)

124

It became clear to residents of Keno that they would not be involved or even consulted in the new development. Even the local enthusiasm for the project was ignored, leaving Keno residents feeling disempowered and alienated from the mines that many of them knew well and from a company that they might have been keen to support.

The initial excitement about the re-opening of the mines turned to feelings of fear and anger for some residents of Keno, as well as a loss of control over the community they had worked so hard to keep alive. Halvaksz (2008) has explored community ideas about mine closure as informed by history, memory, and imagined futures, arguing that expectations of future mining work are very much about the engagement of humans with their physically transformed landscape (p. 21). Such engagement enacts the continual "folding of the past into present practices," meaning for Keno Hill, that any resumption of mining or redevelopment of the site, must consider the history of the area and how it impacts the motivations of local residents. The resurrection of the mining town of Elsa and the mines by a new company, in a modern era, caused former residents of Elsa and employees of UKHM to question their own memories and their place within this new, modern iteration of the Keno Hill mining district: as former mine workers, residents of Elsa, or tourism operators, how did they fit into the new reality brought to their community by the redevelopment? What is the place of their memories and emotions in the new mining landscape? And finally, how were these affectual impacts incorporated into both formal and informal evaluations of the project?

4.5 CONFLICT

After a few years of strained community relations, controversy erupted in January of 2009, when Alexco announced its plans to re-open the Bellekeno Mine and build a new district mill within

the vicinity of Keno City (Unrau, 2009; CBC, 2009a). According to Yvonne Bessette, news of

the mill came as a surprise to residents of Keno:

> There was absolutely no consultation. Actually, what happened was, they were putting some power poles in and they had three huge blasts of dynamite right on top of the ground for these poles and it just shook the entire town, like I thought my cabin was gonna fall apart. So, we called Alexco and asked them to come over here, we wanted to find out what the heck was going on. And it was when Alexco came over and was saying 'oh sorry, we should have told you about that'… 'oh, by the way, we're going to be building a mill over here.' …That was first time they'd mentioned it and it was already a done deal, like their YESAB application was all ready to go in. …We were shocked. …If they had asked us where we would like the mill to be located, we certainly would not have chose right beside our town. (Bessette, 2011)

Insa Schultenkotter recounted a similar story and was particularly vocal about her opposition to

the location of the mill (Schultenkotter, 2011). Regarding the initial interactions with the

company and government regarding the redevelopment, she said she felt "betrayed."

> So, it came as an absolutely surprise when we first hear rumours that they were about to go into YESSA [sic: YESAB] and propose a mill right here in town, under our nose. First, I didn't believe it. …I thought it was a rumour, but then we asked directly, and it turned out it was not a rumour, it was bitter reality. …And then we thought at the beginning 'no, government wouldn't allow it, it's impossible, there would be an outcry in the Yukon itself,' because all the Yukoners always kept saying 'oh, we love Keno.' …it turned out, nobody cares. …And then we were battling it. When we went into YESAA [sic.], we tried to kind of turn it around. We tried to get cooperation with Mayo and NND …because we were never involved in any planning…but it didn't work out. …we don't really exist here. I think we're just bugs in the big picture. (Schultenkotter, 2011)

Pini et al. (2010) have explored the same emotions of "betrayal" (p. 563) regarding mine closure;

however, here these emotions were the result of a mine redevelopment, with which local

residents had hoped to be involved.

Alexco did operate according to the Yukon regulations, obtaining all necessary

development and water-use permits from the Yukon Government, navigating the YESAB

assessment process, and consulting with the Na-cho Nyäk Dun First Nation, with whom they

signed a comprehensive Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA) in June 2010 (Alexco, 2010).

126

However, residents of Keno City were upset that they had been left out of the planning process and were surprised that the company did not consider them stakeholders who should be consulted with before plans were ready to be submitted to YESAB (Brost, personal interview, 2011).

A vocal group of Keno residents wrote letters of protest in Yukon newspapers, spoke out on local radio stations, and opposed the mill in all stages of its YESAB evaluation process (Tobin, 2009; Wagner, 2009). The controversy can be traced through the YESAB online registry, which tracks all proponents' submissions, comments from the public, government agencies and advocacy organizations, and reports submitted for historic and active projects. The initial Alexco project (YESAB # 2009-0030) proposed underground development and operations at the Bellekeno mine over a period of ten years, including building a conventional flotation mill at the Flame and Moth site, a dry-stack tailings facility, and eventual reclamation and closure. The project files contain over eighty comment submissions, many of them from residents of Keno City requesting the mill location be changed, but also some from residents of Mayo advocating for the project, including a supportive petition signed by forty-five residents of Mayo. Despite the public controversy and local opposition, YESAB approved the mill with a few mitigations for local residents, such as by-pass roads for ore trucks, limited hours for ore crushing, and an enclosed crushing site to keep toxic lead dust from contaminating the air (CBC, 2009a). However, many residents of Keno cited numerous occasions of off-hours ore crushing, ore trucks driving through Keno, and the lack of an enclosure for the crushers (Bessette, 2011; Schultenkotter, 2011; Rentmeister, 2011).

Meanwhile, the Yukon Government, then controlled by the Yukon Party (Yukon's conservative party) publicly supported the Alexco project. In a Yukon Government press release,

then-Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Patrick Rouble, called the redevelopment "great news for Yukon's economic future," and suggested that Alexco's "creative approach" would "bring new life to a historic mining district by addressing remediation of the old mine sites, while at the same time providing new jobs and economic development" (Yukon Government, 2010). These expressions of governmental support gave weight to the belief of Kenoites that they were being ignored and only served to fuel their discontent with the project and anger towards Alexco and government regulators (CBC, October 2009).

By the summer of 2011, the mill had been constructed and the Bellekeno mine had been in operation since January. The mill site is about a ten-minute walk from the centre of Keno City, with a dry-stack tailing facility constructed around the mill. The dry stack method uses a mechanical dewatering process and compression to convert mineral waste into a dense block, which should not become air or water borne. However, with the high concentration of lead and zinc in the mill tailings, Yvonne and other Keno residents were still worried about the impact on the air and water surrounding Keno. During interviews, residents repeatedly expressed concerns about the health impacts of having such an industrial development so close to their homes (Mancini, 2011; Schultenkotter, 2011). Yvonne described the location of the mill and tailings in relation to Keno, and explained her concerns:

> Okay, well, let me see, we have the little tiny town of Keno and on the very edge of our town we have a garbage dump, and directly beside the garbage dump we have the mill. …So it is, I think, something like 900 metres from the centre of town. …What concerns me about the mill is the dust, because when it went through the environmental assessment, the assessor said that the dust could be an ore-grade concentration and it would be bad for our health. So, that is my biggest objection. Because the crushers were supposed to be in a building and they're not. And the dry-stack facility, I have no idea. I'd be perfectly happy if they put the crushers in a building and moved the dry stack facility. (Bessette, 2011)

Although the controversy had died down somewhat by the summer of 2011, there was still a general sense of unease, simmering anger about the mill, and worries about how it would affect the tourist economy of Keno. Initially, the company did not consult with Keno residents at all, but after such a public outcry regarding the mill, Alexco appeared to be making an effort to inform Kenoites of their plans (Nauman, 2009). Alexco's Tom Fudge confirmed this new effort. "I hope we look back on this year in our relationship with Keno as the year that we communicated with our deeds as well as with our words," he said. However, Fudge argued that the impact of the mill was much less severe than described by residents of Keno City. "You know, basically you can't hear the mill, see the mill," he said, "but the fact that it's there does bother some people and you know, you don't live in Keno if you're not an independent spirit [chuckles] …I think one of the things I've learned in my thirty-some-odd years in the business is that you're not gonna make everybody happy" (Fudge, 2011). Fudge acknowledged that Alexco had not lived up to all its obligations (such as the mitigations proposed by YESAB and informal consultation promises with Kenoites), but was hopeful that the company could do better in the future and suggested that the relationship between Alexco and Keno City was "maturing." He continued: "…some people have obviously taken our presence very hard and dislike it, and I can only feel some sympathy for 'em. I don't really feel like we have that much of a negative impact and part of it is, they just let it bother 'em [chuckles]. I feel very confident that with time the majority of people in Keno will see our presence as a positive thing" (Fudge, 2011).

Fudge described the relationship between Alexco and Keno residents (represented by the Keno City Community Club) as a mutual one, in which both parties are on equal footing. Such a characterization ignores the power dynamics and socio-economic differences between the two entities—Alexco is a large corporation, run for the benefit of share-holders, by well-paid people

129

from outside the Yukon, while the Keno Community Club consists of a handful of volunteers elected by the tiny population of Keno, with no real governmental authority. Many residents of Keno are retirees, living on fixed incomes, with limited access to internet and other modern services. As such, the effort of communicating their concerns was substantial—they contributed many unpaid hours writing letters, attending meetings and making phone calls—particularly when compared with the numerous paid and specialized staff members that Alexco employed to participate in the assessment process. Barbara Pini has explored such "asymmetries of power" between mine employees and members of a small rural community in Australia, suggesting that they allow large corporations to "effectively sanction, negate and control the emotional responses of workers, family and community" (Pini et al., 2010, p. 571). As Kemp, Owen et al. (2011) and others have demonstrated, these power inequities can shape the dynamics of community-company relations throughout the lifetime of a project and beyond (Owen & Kemp, 2017; Kirsch, 2014).

The controversy about the mill location also affected the relationship between Mayo and Keno, two communities that are historically linked and co-dependent. "Things were much friendlier in the past," said Yvonne Bessette. "Because this town [Keno] has been ignored, we're not stakeholders, the village of Mayo is more of a stakeholder than we are, meanwhile, we're the ones that are sitting right here in the middle of these projects, so it does cause some resentment, that we're considered to be a third party and nobody has to speak to us" (Bessette, 2011). Many residents of Keno explained the main issue between the two communities as one of nuanced misunderstanding—that those who were opposed to the mill were also opposed to the redevelopment of the mines (Mancini, 2011b; Bindig personal interview, 2011). In other words,

there was a perception that there was a hypocritical "anti-mining sentiment" in Keno City, an historic mining town.

While individual residents of Mayo and citizens of NND may have had mixed opinions about the Keno Hill redevelopment (see chapter three), formally both the FNNND and the Village of Mayo had publically supported the project (NND, 2006; Village of Mayo, 2009). In a letter to the editor published in the *Yukon News*, Kris Pavlovich, a resident of Mayo and member of the City Council, described Keno City as "a mining town with more than 100 years of mining history." The letter, titled "Mining Built the Yukon," suggested that all of Keno's community infrastructure (roads, powerlines, etc.) was created to support mining. Pavlovich then went on to write that he was:

> …tired of a few self-interested hypocrites trying to dictate what goes on in Keno City and the surrounding area. The majority of these people have made a good living from mining companies over the years. These people are trying to take over an active mining area using government grants to make hiking trails, butterfly sanctuaries, claim reclamation, etc. without any consultation with claim holders, yet expect consultation at every turn from the mining industry. …I am confused why environmentalists would choose to live in a historical and active mining area. (Pavlovich, 2009)

Pavlovich complained about the level of regulation now faced by the mining industry, adding that "a handful of people shouldn't be adding to that expense," and concluding that "the whole Yukon benefits from mining and will continue to benefit from mining as long as it is allowed to continue" (Pavlovich, 2009).

Pavlovich's letter speaks to the power of mining history and the pervasiveness of mining culture in the Yukon. Mining work is held in such reverence that any attempt to disrupt exploration activity or question mining practices can be viewed as "anti-mining." To be anti-mining in the Yukon is to disrespect the hard work of past and current miners, many of whom are small-scale placer miners, who do live in Yukon communities.

Himley (2014) and Perreault (2018) have discussed such displays of "collective memory" in the context of Bolivian and Peruvian mining respectively, where "official narratives" (Perreault, p. 239) (such as "mining built the Yukon") necessitate selective remembering and selective forgetting, to construct and mobilize mining history for the benefit of future extractive industries. Whether intentionally or not, such narratives seek to dispense with any questioning of mining, particularly in an historic mining district, which is not viewed as "pristine" (Aho, 2006; Gaffin,1980; Cathro, 2006; Berton, 1972).

Pavlovich's letter and the strong language used above by Yvonne and Insa demonstrate the depth of emotion that was evoked by the mine redevelopment and the mill controversy, as well as the lasting social impacts of such upheaval. Mike Mancini said that such strong public displays had created "awkwardness" between Mayo and Keno City; however, he did enjoy the novelty of being called an environmentalist for the first time (Mancini, 2011b). Although the controversy between the two communities had settled somewhat by 2011, Mike continued to worry about the expansion of Alexco's industrial complex (the growing tailings piles encroaching on his property, the constant background noise of the mill) and how much further that would disrupt his livelihood and lifestyle in Keno. "From a sleepy little town, we've become sort of a mill town," he said:

> …and that's been the line, 'we'll you've always lived in a mining area,' yeah, but we didn't have the industrial part of the mine on the outskirts of town. So, that's where a lot of people say 'well, you know, you live with it, or if you can't, move away.' …I think anywhere else, you wouldn't have that industrial part of a mine right beside the community. They got away with a lot. (Mancini, 2011b)

In this way, Keno City was transformed from the boomtown of an historic mining district, to a "fence line community" (Browne, Stehlik, & Buckley, 2011, p. 707), with a new mining company operating right next door. This occurred during a new era of

132

mining, when residents expected that their health and socio-economic wellbeing would

be considered, but instead, felt they had been ignored and demeaned.

4.6 "LONELY MOUNTAIN"—EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF REDEVELOPMENT

"Lonely mountain. Maybe you feel like I do. Lonely mountain, all scarred up and hollowed right through." - Kim Barlow, "Lonely Mountain," *luckyburden*

Mike Mancini is a curator, a collector, an emotional person who loves his home deeply and has

spent the past thirty years trying to preserve it, both in memory and in material form. The interior

of his Snack Bar is an eclectic feast for the eyes, full of salvaged and preserved artifacts from the

past century—pop bottles, china, match boxes, ball caps, posters, and mining memorabilia. Much

of this ephemera was collected from Elsa in the post-UKHM, pre-Alexco days, when Mike was

free to wander through his old, abandoned hometown, reliving the past and in a way, bringing it

into the present (Wheeler, 2014). However, the history that Mike and others so badly wanted to

preserve was doomed to repeat itself when the Keno Hill Mine site and town of Elsa were

purchased and revived by Alexco Corporation. Once again, the residents of the area faced the

paternalism and power of a corporate mining entity, which had huge impacts on their lives and

landscapes. The physical access to Elsa has changed since Alexco began to operate, because the

company does not allow unauthorized visitors into the community for liability reasons, and it is

actively working to demolish many of the buildings that have been deemed unsafe. For Mike,

this has created a disconnect from his hometown:

> in the last few years, with the new company taking over, Alexco, I felt almost awkward to go there…there's so many restrictions going there. And it was a strange feeling because before it felt like my town and now it doesn't…when the mine was going, back in the '70s, we always thought 'Elsa's our town, we're so proud of our community' and then all of a sudden it's just totally taken away from you. Your home that you grew up in

is gone…you can't go back and sit on your front porch and reminisce. It's really weird…there becomes a big void in your life. (Mancini 2011b)

Mike's experience and emotions speak to the way in which redevelopment served to redefine the past for former residents of Elsa and to release the emotional ghosts that had been housed in the abandoned community. Edensor characterizes this as an "uncanny sensation," when "the ghosts of ruins [also] force us to confront the limitations of narrative remembering...Memory is thus not always articulate but is located in the habitual and the sensual, realms typically divorced from sense-making practices" (Edensor, 2005b, p. 846). Thus, memory and the emotions evoked by it are difficult to make sense of, and difficult to articulate and evaluate, particularly for technical assessment processes such as YESAB.

I did not fully understand the extent of Mike's emotional connection to the area until I went on a tour of Elsa with him and Yukon film maker Andy Connors. We drove to Elsa together, where we met with a representative from Alexco, were given hard hats and high visibility vests, and then were driven around the site by the Alexco employee. We visited the tiny Catholic church, where Mike was baptized, the larger homes of the UKHM management, and took a peek at the old Elsa Snack Bar. When we stopped at the site of Mike's childhood home, he was almost brought to tears and I realized the somber mood of the trip, which was heightened by the reason for our visit—Andy Connors had received permission from Alexco to film Mike at some of the buildings that were scheduled for demolition. After the trip, Mike was shaken and took a few days to return to his normal, cheerful self. Mike later described the day as "quite emotional," suggesting that it was the loss of history that bothered him:

 basically, they're wiping out a whole era…A very significant era that made a big difference in the Yukon. And nobody seems to care…nobody has put any sort of importance on a mine, a community that's served the Yukon for a hundred years or more. …So, that's quite upsetting for me…it's very frustrating. It's almost like taking your soul away. (Mancini, 2011b)

134

While much of Elsa's physical landscape has been demolished, overgrown, or abandoned, Mike suggested that the memories of the town live on, particularly through the hard work of former UKHM employees, who organize annual Elsa reunions in British Columbia and manage a very active Facebook group, creating a virtual space for former residents, in the absence of a physical one. This form of virtual community revival through social media is characteristic of mining towns, which tend to create a very strong sense of place (Shoebridge & Simons, 2011; Goin & Raymond, 2012). For his part, Mike feels as though he has done as much as he can to save the town of Elsa and the history of the Keno Hill Mine, and he no longer has the energy to protect it. "I've fought a lot over the years," said Mike. "I'm just sort of at a point right now where I've taken lots of photos, I've encouraged the government to take a lot of photos, they've actually done quite a good inventory of the site. So, I really don't have the time and energy to fight it as much…It's become a financial thing too, the more they [Alexco] take down, the more money they make" (Mancini, 2011b).

While Mike has been in the forefront, working hard to promote and preserve the history of Keno Hill, residents like Joe Volf have also been keeping the town alive with their presence, maintaining an historic home in the area, and working in the mining industry when he can. For Joe, Elsa is no longer. "It used to feel strange," he said "Now I don't really even think about it anymore, just 'cause more time has gone by and I've kind of left it in the past. So, it's not really alive for me. Plus, the town is kind of gone anyways. There's still a few industrial buildings that were there before, but it kinda pretty much died in '89 for me" (Volf, 2011). For Wheeler (2014), it is the vestiges of mining past on the landscape that help create a sense of place, lending an air of historic mystery to places like Keno Hill and Elsa, which so intrigue visitors and keep the communities alive in the minds of former residents. Despite his apathy towards Elsa, Joe did

confess that the community was still an important part of his identity. "I dream about it," he said "…sometimes in my dreams I'm there somewhere, in the streets, or whatever. …because it stays alive in your mind, right? You could still go back to those places, just because, they're not there. So, you move on, to find new places (Volf, 2011). For Joe, who still walks through the streets of Elsa in his dreams, and for Mike, who spent so much time walking those abandoned streets, and for all the former Elsa residents who keep the community alive via social media and annual reunions, Elsa still exists. Even as it is slowly erased from the landscape, the spectre of the community is there, ready to be revived by anyone who once knew it.

Tom Fudge, who is not as emotionally invested in the town of Elsa, was still struck by the uniqueness of the location and the long history of the mine. "In some ways it's almost like living inside a museum. So, that's kinda fun," said Fudge. He went on to tell a few stories about current Alexco employees who used to work at Keno Hill in the days of UKHM and tourists who worked for the company and stop by to check out the town and share stories about their time in Elsa, (Fudge, 2011). For Insa, who never saw Elsa as an inhabited community, or the Keno Hill mines in operation, the emotional impact for her has been the disruption of her lifestyle (a love of quiet and nature) and business. Insa and her husband Bob took on lead roles in the effort to change the location of the mill, and this work created an emotional and physical toll. I asked her to describe some of these effects:

> when we started to battle it, or find some kind of compromise with Alexco, or put our concerns into YESSA [sic], it was so stressful, you couldn't sleep anymore, you wake up at two o'clock, 'oh! I have to write this down, I have to word it this way, maybe then they will understand what we tried to say.' No.
> [Tears. Sobbing noises.] (Schultenkotter, 2011)

When Insa broke down in tears, we took a break from the interview. When she was ready, we continued to discuss the stress of the situation and what it had done to her mental and physical

health, her relationship with her husband and with others, particularly the feeling of helplessness. Insa blamed health problems (aggravated high blood and asthma) on the stress caused by the work and said that these were also reasons they had decided to relocate.

For Keno residents like Insa, one of the most stressful aspects of the redevelopment was participating in the assessment process. As they were not considered official stakeholders in the project, Keno City community members turned to the YESAB public commenting process, the media, and MiningWatch Canada, in order to provide input and draw attention. Kenoites attended countless meetings, read through large technical documents, wrote letters, made phone calls, and submitted formal comments to YESAB, all in an attempt to be heard and have a say in how their environment would be treated. This work was done on personal time, using individual resources, without payment, and the emotional toll of this effort is evident in the submissions to YESAB and the media (YESAB, 2009). In one letter to the editor, long-time Keno resident Bob Wagner, wrote directly to Clint Nauman, President and CEO of Alexco, calling the company not only a bad neighbor, but a bully, which had made Keno a dysfunctional community (Wagner, 2009b). The situation became so intense that in 2012 Kenoites requested the presence of the RCMP at a local YESAB update meeting (Kerr, 2012).

Certainly, it was not only Kenoites who exhibited emotional reactions to this controversy; indeed, many people were affected, including residents of Mayo, assessment workers, and Alexco employees. Tom Fudge suggested that the most affected staff were Alexco upper management, some of whom were Yukoners and had the closest dealings with the people in Keno City. He told his staff "that we're not gonna please everybody, so don't take this personally and have confidence that we are gonna try and do the right thing." Fudge mentioned that behind Alexco's corporate image are people who bear the brunt of accusations made about the company,

but that he tells his staff "you gotta be prepared to deal with that, and again, sometimes we deserve a good chewing out…[Laughter]…we have to take that too" (Fudge, 2011). Fudge did acknowledge the difficulty of measuring and mitigating the social and emotional impacts of the Alexco operation. When discussing the issue of noise from the mill and crushers, for example, Fudge pointed to baseline noise monitoring that the company had been doing for the past three years, which suggested that there has been no "discernible impact from noise." Fudge concluded that "everybody's perception of impact is personal" (Fudge, 2011). Certainly, emotional impact is very personal and therefore has been difficult to evaluate in such debates.

The legitimacy of emotion in mining conflict and socio-economic assessments has been explored by Pini, Mayes and McDonald (2010) at the short-lived Ravensthorpe mine in western Australia, where she discussed how "the owner of the mine, BHP Billiton, worked to suppress and regulate affective reactions to the closure and thus reveals the highly political nature of emotions" (p. 559). Fudge does not necessarily demonstrate a suppression of emotions, but instead an attempt to rationalize and delegitimize them. By declaring the Keno residents' emotional reactions personal perceptions, Fudge relegates them to the realm of affect, which is not measurable in the YESAB assessment process. Loralee Johnstone, then Manager of the Mayo District YESAB office, who worked on the Alexco file, discussed this gap. "So, for example," she said "'I don't like this,' is just not something that we have the ability to address within our mandate, and what we do. However, 'this parcel of land is where my family has been hunting and fishing for the last twenty-five years…' well that's got weight" (Loralee Johnstone personal interview, July 2011). Johnstone did suggest that local people were "getting better" at being involved in the YESAB process. I interviewed Johnstone at the Keno City Snack Bar, where she admitted that working on the file was an emotional process. "You know, it wasn't

easy," she said "…you live here and care about the people and do the very best that you can within the parameters that you've been given and no it wasn't easy; it wasn't easy at all. But it is a part of the job…you are the person in the middle in this case and it's your job to take in everybody's concerns" (Johnstone, 2011).

Johnstone suggested that much of the local frustration about YESAB came from a misunderstanding of the process and the scoping mechanisms for evaluating projects. At that time, for example, YESAB could not consider future aspects of a large project (like Alexco's); instead, it evaluated each stage of work separately. She admitted that it was a complex project: "there's a lot of things going on right now, like there's an abandoned mine, there's an overall site closure going on, there's exploration activity, there's mining, so it's not an easy thing for us to narrow down how to scope a project, so there is frustration for the public for sure" (Johnstone, 2011). Since that time, YESAB has committed to better evaluating the cumulative effects of multi-stage projects (YESAB, 2019). However, there remains a gap in evaluating the emotional aspects of resource development (Clementino, 2008; SENS, 2009).

Indeed, the perceptions of the impact of mine redevelopment are deeply personal, as are the memories, emotions, and stories shared by residents of Keno in this chapter—it is all very emotional and was difficult for them to discuss. Strong emotional reactions to such intense community conflict wrought by mining are not unusual. Such "emotion-laden experiences of environmental suffering" have also been explored by Perreault (2018, p. 237). Meanwhile, Pini (2010) described the similar feelings of "disempowerment, anger and frustration" (p. 563) experienced by community members near the Ravensthorpe Mine. That such emotions and "affective reactions" (Pini et al., 2010) are subjective and can be difficult to name and evaluate does not make them any less real or important. In fact, such difficulty suggests that these

139

emotional impacts are significant and worthy of further study and inclusion in mineral development assessment processes.

4.7 DISCUSSION

Using the words of local residents, this chapter has demonstrated how the mining past of the Keno Hill region, including its abandoned communities (Elsa, Calumet, No Cash), industrial ruins, artefacts, and altered landscapes, were incorporated into the identities of the people who live there, through the interweaving of both social and personal recollection (Wheeler, 2014; Edensor, 2008). When the abandoned nature of the landscape was altered—when the mines and towns were brought back to life by an outside entity—this created disruption for the local people, who had weathered so many lean years without major economic activity and had come to appreciate their quiet post-mining environment. Their daily lives were not only impacted by the increased industrial activity surrounding them (the mill, exploration, increased air and road traffic, an influx of new people, etc.), but their very identities and connections to that once abandoned and 'empty' landscape were also altered. Residents of Keno City were no longer the champions of historic mining, keeping the Yukon's tiniest town alive; now they were in the way and impeding mining activity, in which they could not be involved. Having waited so long for the mines to reopen, Kenoites were shocked, frustrated and saddened to find how disruptive that redevelopment would be. This altering of local identities created an emotional upheaval for residents that was not addressed or accommodated during the redevelopment process.

With the resumption of mining at Keno Hill, residents of Keno City felt left out of the consultation process. Controversy erupted in 2009, when Kenoites discovered Alexco's plans to build a mill and dry-stack tailings facility on the outskirts of their community. Meanwhile, most

residents of nearby Mayo, as well as the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun were publically supportive of Alexco's plans. A heated debate took place on local media, at community meetings, and within the YESAB assessment system, which divided the historically interconnected communities of Mayo and Keno City, and pitted friends and neighbours against each other. Life in Keno City changed enough to deter tourists and caused some people (Bob Wagner and Insa Shultenkotter) to move away from the community, which had been their home for decades (Ronson, 2012). For residents of Keno, the dismissive attitude of some Alexco staff and lack of consultation with their community left a lasting sense of bitterness and anger towards the company. These strong emotions evoked by the redevelopment of the mines and accompanying reanimation of the Elsa town site were either ignored or downplayed by Alexco and the Yukon Government.

Furthermore, the reopening of the historic Keno Hill mines and the re-habitation of Elsa by Alexco revived buried ghosts of the past and caused people to relive the shutdown of 1989 and the associated emotions. The changes to their local environment (noise, traffic, dust and the dismantling of buildings in Elsa) also altered or severed local connections to built and natural landscapes. For some, like Mike Mancini and Insa Schultenkotter, this was a deeply emotional experience. The related stress had real physical and emotional effects for many people involved in the controversy, and for some local residents, it altered how they felt about their home community and their neighbours, disrupting community cohesion. In her book, *Postindustrial Landscape Scars*, Anna Storm calls the uncertainty surrounding industrial redevelopment "liminal, like scab, vulnerable and easily turned into a wound once more" (Storm, 2014, p. 154). Indeed, while the redevelopment and reclamation of the Keno Hill mine sites were portrayed by outsiders as positive for both the environment and the economy, deep emotional scars remained

141

at the community level, from both the initial closure of the mines and the process of redevelopment.

As this chapter has discussed, the failure to acknowledge the emotional impacts of mine redevelopment at Keno Hill led to a poor relationship between Alexco and the community of Keno, as well as continued stress and tensions that severed relationships between residents of Mayo and Keno City. These damaged relationships are taking time to heal, just as it will take time to repair the damage done to the land by mining. While the federal government pays Alexco to clean-up the mess left by UKHM, there are no funds or resources to help the people of Keno and Mayo heal from the stress and sadness caused by the initial closure or the redevelopment. Therefore, the act of performing environmental remediation served to highlight the need for and lack of emotional remediation in the Keno Hill area. Smith (2014) has suggested that such environmental restoration can restore connections between society and nature and thus, bolster a sense of stewardship (p. 300). Perhaps it is time to apply the same practices and mentality to repairing the social relationships damaged by the mine closure and redevelopment at Keno Hill.

The emotional geography at Keno Hill has only become more complex since 2011. After eighteen months in operation, Alexco temporarily closed the Bellekeno mine, thus reenacting the "resource roller coaster" (Wilson, 2009) that residents have been experiencing for decades. Once again, there is a "skeleton crew" operating at Elsa, working to treat run-off water from the old mines and provide security for the site. Alexco continues the work of remediating the environmental damage left by UKHM, while continuing with exploration work and insisting that the mine will reopen soon—words the residents of Keno have heard before. Sophie Tamas has written that "if your constructs have never come undone, and you cannot (or will not) see ghosts, you're unlikely to learn from them" (Tamas, 2016, p. 43). Proponents of future mineral

development and re-development projects in the North would be wise to acknowledge the spectre of emotion surrounding abandoned mine sites, and will hopefully learn from the mistakes of the past, by mitigating the emotional impacts of their work.

CHAPTER FIVE

"KENO CITY WELL NEVER GOES DRY"

EPILOGUE AND CONCLUSION

Figure 10: Concession stand at the abandoned Keno City Baseball field. Author photo

EPILOGUE

"Yukon's Bellekeno silver mine to shut down for winter—Alexco Resource Corp. temporarily closing mine due to low metal prices,"- CBC News, July 17, 2013.

"Yukon's Keno Hill district 'far from' mined out, says Alexco Resource Corp.—Company hopes to hire dozens of people this summer to develop Bermingham deposit,"- CBC News, May 16, 2017.

"Alexco looks to resume silver mining near Keno City, Yukon, this year—Company says its Bermingham deposit compares favourably to those found near Keno City a century ago," - CBC News, January 22, 2018.

"Alexco nearing production at Keno Hill mines,"- Jackie Hong, Yukon News, June 28, 2020

This thesis is based on fieldwork conducted in 2011 and 2012; however, the headlines above demonstrate the continued relevance of this work in light of ongoing developments in the Mayo-Keno region. In September 2013, Alexco suspended operations at the Bellekeno Mine and mill, citing low mineral costs and promising to reopen the following summer. At the time of writing, the mine had yet to re-open, but Alexco was in the permitting process for its new mines in the Keno Hill area, claiming that they would open in the fall of 2020. Care and maintenance of the historic mine sites and town site of Elsa continues, with Alexco retaining its main office in the Elsa recreation centre. Thus, in the years since my fieldwork, the economic and social "rollercoaster" of mineral (re)development (Wilson, 2004) and its attendant uncertainty for the communities continues in the Keno Hill area.

In Mayo, the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun (FNNND) remains busy with other exploration and mining developments within their traditional territory, including Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Mine, Canada's newest gold mine and the Yukon's largest. FNNND was one of the main proponents in a multi-year battle to protect the Peel River watershed from development during the Yukon land use planning process (*Globe and Mail*, 2017). The First Nation is also focusing on social projects, such as a heritage centre, a community farm, and cooperative research (Saxinger & Gartler, 2017; Saxinger, 2018; NND, 2019).

Among the people I spoke to from Mayo, Herman Melancon was laid off by Alexco in 2013 and began to work for FNNND. He and his wife Bobbie-Lee continue to live in Mayo, raising their daughters and contributing to the community. Wonderful NND Elder, Alice Buyck, who was so generous with her time and knowledge, passed away in the spring of 2014, after having been widowed for eighteen years. She leaves behind a legacy with her stories, beadwork and grandchildren. Jimmy Johnny continues to be an environmental

advocate and well-known Elder throughout the Yukon. Joella Hogan and I became collaborators on several projects, including a book chapter based on this research (which formed the basis of Chapter 3) and other oral history projects. Joella recently left her position at FNNND to focus fulltime on her side-hustle—creating beautiful hand-made soaps with local botanicals and herbs—she continues to bolster the community of Mayo by creating employment opportunities, incorporating language and local knowledge into her products, and ongoing heritage work.

Keno City is quiet these days. When the mine and mill stopped operating, there was once again just a skeleton crew of employees conducting care and maintenance work at the Keno Hill sites. Nevertheless, a few hearty souls cling to Keno City and hope to ensure its survival. Mike Mancini is one of these very determined people. Despite teenage rebellion, multiple mine shutdowns, numerous shifts in economy and culture, and the closure of Elsa, Mike has always been drawn back to the Keno Hill area. Reinventing himself to keep up with the changing economy, Mike has worked as a carpenter's helper, a welder, a mechanic, a miner, a construction worker, the director of the Keno City Mining Museum, the proprietor of the Keno City Snack Bar, and he is now colloquially referred to as the Mayor of Keno City. Mike, the rebel, who always wanted to move to the city and get away from Elsa, is the one who ended up coming back to stay, dedicating his life to preserving the history of the area. Most important for people like Mike was that they kept their town alive. Near the end of our second interview, I asked Mike what he saw for the future in Keno City. "I see that there will be younger people coming here," he said. "I see the possibility of families starting here again, which would be great to have kids running around again, a real sense of renewal. There's several new businesses that are on the

verge of reopening. I think it'll all be good, …I'm really excited in a way" (Mancini, 2011b).

Mike also spoke about the visitors who are still coming to Keno and what they see in the place:

> the people that come here, there's still a sense of awe, they still go 'wow.' To even know that there's all this mine stuff happening, they still get the sense that Keno is a unique, comfortable community and there's still a lot of people that come to get away from it all, whether it's from Dawson or Whitehorse, they still look at this area as being sort of a getaway spot. I think it'll always maintain that sense of 'wow.' It's a special spot, even with this many changes. (Mancini, 2011b)

Mike's words continue to resonate, as a small music festival (Keno City Music Festival, established in 2016) and filming for a reality TV show (Gold Rush) have contributed to the economy and attraction of the area.

Yvonne Bessette was close to retirement at the time of our conversation, and she recognized the difficulties of growing old in such a small, isolated community with few facilities. However, Keno City will always be her home, she said, citing the small population, remoteness, and connection to nature as some of the things that tie her to the community and the area (Bessette, June 2011). Despite the controversy and stress caused by Alexco's mill and operations in the Keno area, Yvonne is happy about the resumption of mining at Keno Hill and she believes that the ghosts of Keno Hill are happy too:

> I am really happy that the mine is reopening because I think it has everything to do with the life of this town. …we went twenty-one years without any mining, and it was very scary to think that might not return. …Even the spirits are excited about the resumption of mining. [Laughter]…Well, they're all proud of themselves, because they're the ones that found all this ore. And where is the company going? Right back to where the old-timers were. Bellekeno, Lucky Queen, Silver King, Onek, those were all found by the old-timers, so now they're going back to get some more out of those mines. (Bessette, 2011)

For Insa Schultenkotter, the emotions brought to life by the controversy were still at the surface, even as she planned to move. "[I]t hurts to leave this place," she said. "I like this place, I liked it right away" (Schultenkotter, 2011). Insa and Bob were hoping to find a similar place to

live within the Yukon and spent the rest of the summer traveling around, hunting for a new home. Eventually they settled just south of the Yukon border, in another historic mining town—Atlin, British Columbia. Joe Volf was characteristically ambivalent about the future of Keno, suggesting that the town will "just charge on like it always does and, I mean, maybe a few different people move to town. Who knows? Be alright here" (Volf, 2011). In this way, Joe summed up a bit of the independent spirit that has kept a town of twenty-or-so people alive.

In 2011, Alexco's Tom Fudge was optimistic about the future of mining in the Keno Hill region. He mentioned heavy investment in exploration and mineral development and a plan to operate for decades. "I definitely see us here for a long time," he said (Fudge, 2011). This was not to be. Fudge's employment with Alexco came to an end in 2012 and as noted, the mine shut down soon after. Thus, the Bellekeno mine, which created such controversy and emotional upheaval, operated for approximately two of its projected 10-year life span, and has been silent since. In the years following, I have tracked Alexco's progress, following their YESAB applications and press releases, which often announce the results of a drill program, or their plans to reopen one of the mines.

In 2019, the reclamation plan for the Keno Hill mines was approved by YESAB. The ten-year project aims to transition the abandoned sites into a reclaimed site, requiring minimal care and maintenance, while reducing health, safety and environmental risks. In the summer of 2020, Alexco was granted a renewal of its water license by the Yukon Water Board and announced the Keno Hill Mine would be reopening by the fall. However, the public comments on the YESAB assessment reflect a continued mistrust of the company and dissatisfaction with the project (YESAB, 2018), demonstrating the lingering effects of a fraught relationship between mine operators, government, local residents, and the land.

CONCLUSION—EMOTION, MEMORY, AND MINING

"For memory is born of strange and uncanny associations, inexplicable connections between times and places that erupt into the present without warning" - Hill, 2013, p. 379

Figure 11: Welcome Sign at Mayo. Author photo

INTO THE "HEART OF THE YUKON"

I did not go to the Mayo region with specific questions that I sought to answer. I went to hear what the experts—local Indigenous people and long-term residents—had to say about mine closure and redevelopment in the area. I went to witness and develop relationships, with people, land, and the substance that the latter held and the former wanted—galena, the glittering silver-lead-zinc ore that brought hundreds of newcomers to the area, created and sustained a large-scale corporate mining industry for over a century, and permanently altered the lives of the Indigenous Na-cho Nyäk Dun people. What I found when I arrived was the revival of industrial silver mining at Keno Hill and with it, a complex layering of memories, pain, joy, sadness, anger—a geography of emotion.

During the summer of 2011, my research inquiries were formed by the people I met, the landscapes I observed and became part of, and my own positionality in the region (a settler, a

Yukoner, with an emotional tie to the Keno area). For the purposes of this thesis, these questions were formulated as follows: how is emotion expressed in oral history of mine closure and oral accounts of mineral redevelopment, and what are the emotional and social impacts of closure and redevelopment in the context of Indigenous-settler relations in the post land-claims era of the Central Yukon?

Through in-depth ethnographic and oral history research methods, the answers to these inquiries became clear—emotion matters. Affective ties to the land, history and future of the Keno Hill area influenced how both settler and Indigenous residents reacted to the initial closure of the Keno Hill mines and their redevelopment thirty years later. The reopening and reclamation of the mines evoked strong emotional reactions, as residents felt excited, worried, angry, frustrated, and a whole host of other emotions that were not or could not be evaluated and incorporated into public consultations and assessment processes. Nor were these affectual impacts considered by government and mining agencies. The Keno Hill case reveals the intense emotional geography of mine closure and redevelopment experienced by both Indigenous and settler communities.

Therefore, the main contention of this thesis is that the failure, or inability of Alexco, Yukon Government, and Yukon regulators (YESAB) to anticipate, acknowledge, and incorporate emotional reactions to mine redevelopment at Keno Hill contributed to a fraught relationship between residents and the company, as well as continued stress and tensions that severed relationships both between and within the communities of Keno City and Mayo. Together, the literature, theoretical writing, and research presented here help analyse these relationships and demonstrate the conclusion of this thesis—that the affectual (including emotional reactions, memories, and sentimental stories) dimensions of (re)development are

150

important in historic and contemporary mining landscapes, both abandoned and active; and they must be incorporated into assessment, closure and remediation planning.

5.1 RESEARCH AS CEREMONY

During this research project, I employed feminist and Indigenous methodologies and incorporated elements of the Indigenous Research Paradigm outlined by Shawn Wilson (2008). According to Wilson, research is a ceremony. An Indigenous research paradigm emphasizes "relationality" above all else and stresses participatory and community based research, which fits well with feminist and de-colonial theories from which I drew (Arvin, Tuck, & Morrill, 2013; Simpson, 2017). I found that Wilson's Indigenous Research Paradigm and other Indigenous research methodologies, outlined by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2013), and others (Leanne Leddy, 2010; Margaret Kovach, 2009; Eve Tuck, 2009; Million, 2009) fit best with my personal ethics and the research techniques I had been taught while working for northern First Nation governments. These techniques were the most appropriate for the research I conducted in conjunction with and on the traditional territory of the Na-cho Nyäk Dun.

Along with traditional archival research, I used in-depth, semi-structured interviews to allow residents of Keno City and Mayo to share their stories, memories, and emotions associated with the UKHM mine closure and the Alexco redevelopment as well as their relationship with the Keno Hill history and landscape. The interviews revealed both past and present emotions associated with mining in the region, as well as the difficult contemporary relationships that redevelopment created between residents of Keno, Mayo, and Alexco employees. Most of all, both settler and Indigenous research participants shared their deep love of and connection to their

homelands; despite the varying depth of the roots tying them to the land, all were affected by the changes wrought upon it by mining.

This thesis also made use of emotional geography to explore the oft-ignored emotional plane of mineral development and in this case, re-development. Emotional geography has been used by scholars such as Sarah Ahmed (2004) and Farhana Sultana (2011), Ben Crewe et al. (2013), and Amanda Kearney (2009) in recent years to explore varied themes—language and bodies, prison life, pregnancy, work, and homeland. However, there remains a dearth of information on the impact of emotion in the extractive sector, with a few exceptions. The active invalidation of emotion in discussions of resource development has been noted by Pini, Mayes and McDonald (2010), Ey et al. (2016), and others (Skeard, 2015; Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003). As Ey et al. (2016) suggest, "the majority of research in geography on the extractive sector has failed to acknowledge and integrate the powerful dimensions of emotion that pervade much of the sector and its impacts" (p. 4). I used this relatively new field of emotional geography to provide a method of inquiry for this work, encouraging research participants to share their experiences of mine closure and redevelopment through the memories and emotions evoked by these events.

This research provided empirical and theoretical insight into the role of emotion in mine closure and redevelopment in the central Yukon Territory. The literature review revealed a knowledge gap regarding the emotional impacts of mine redevelopment. Using Keno Hill as a case study, I explored this phenomenon and demonstrated the very real consequences of the emotional and social disruption caused by redevelopment of a once-closed mine. With nearly 30 recorded and transcribed interviews, this work assisted both the Keno City and Mayo/NND communities in the documentation of their stories of engagement with industrial development;

and therefore, has contributed to community historic resources. In addition, this research explored examples of community responses to mine abandonment and redevelopment that may assist industry and government in developing best practices around environmental remediation, social impact assessment and community relations. Such an analysis may assist in the future mitigation of social impacts of mineral development and redevelopment in this and other regions.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS

As the region's long mining history continues to haunt and colour the mining landscape today (both on the ground and in the minds of residents), I invoked "spectral geography" (Maddern & Adey, 2008; Edensor, 2005; Gordon, 2008) as a tool to explore the impact of past affectual reactions to mine development and closure at Keno Hill. I suggest that these historic emotions did not dissipate, but instead hung like a spectre over the mine site, continuing to influence the opinions of long-time residents regarding new mineral developments. Indeed, the Keno Hill case demonstrates that emotional invalidation has serious, long-lasting consequences for all parties involved in mineral (re)development, and, if ignored, negative emotions can cast a long shadow that haunts lands and communities, easily evoked by new or redevelopments and requiring remediation in the same way as the land. Unlike other northern mineral developments, the Keno Hill mines are located very close to Keno City and 80 kilometres from Mayo, so the impacts of the redevelopment were felt immediately, but unequally between the communities. An industrial complex was built around Keno City, without consent of residents, while those living in Mayo were further removed from the work, although frequent land-users, like many NND citizens, were impacted. As such, many residents of the Keno area experienced strong emotional reactions to the reopening, which served to divide the communities, pit neighbours against one another, and in some cases, ruin decades-old friendships. Similar to Rebecca

153

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153

Wheeler's (2014) work in Askam-in-Furness, a former mining village in Cumbria, UK, emotions evoked during the sharing of these stories illustrate a passionate connection to the region, as well as to the ephemeral stuff of mining: the old company houses, the former school building, mining equipment, and other artefacts, to which residents cling, in an attempt to keep the community of Elsa alive in their memories and to keep the tiny modern-day community of Keno City functioning. This all serves to demonstrate the importance of sense of place and connection to landscape—both human-made and otherwise.

For the NND, the Keno Hill region was a traditional hunting and gathering area, rich in fur-bearing mammals, berries, and fish. During the early mining and UKHM era, many were alienated from this landscape and the sustenance that it provided. It was the NND wives of miners who, through their inclusion in the realm of mining, still managed to gather berries and trap small animals in the Keno Hill area. Eventually, many NND men became involved with the mining industry in some respect, adapting work and living patterns to accommodate the mining economy. Later, after land claims, the NND First Nation was able to revive their role as stewards for this land despite it being completely altered during their period of exclusion. Now, subsequent generations of FNNND members have differing views of and connections to this area, leading to disparate concepts of its role in sustenance and its historical importance. The land has changed, but it still has the ability to sustain them, whether through industrial development, harvesting, or other means. The First Nation of NND, like many northern Indigenous groups, is faced with a supposed dichotomy—development or conservation (Charlie, 2017)—and various agencies and corporations who also have vested interests in the land work to influence the NND either way.

The non-Indigenous residents of Keno City have gone through the opposite process—most of them came to the area for mining and originally viewed the landscape as part of a large-scale industrial mining complex. After the mines shut down a handful of residents continued to live in the area, reinventing it by showcasing its history and unique environment, and they began to view the region as a homeland, valued for characteristics other than mining—quiet, solitude, history, and nature. The revival of mining was disruptive for them, though not in any way close to the disruption the NND originally experienced.

These changes illustrate the complex ways that the impacts of cyclical resource extraction in the Canadian North can be experienced by both settlers and Indigenous people. As governments and development corporations tout a new mining regime, with promises of capital investment, benefits, and improved environmental outcomes, local people are wary as they recall the 'long shadow' cast by events such as the closure of the Keno Hill mine and now, the nearly ten-year saga of redevelopment and remediation. The local environment still shows the scars of historic mining, even while new developments are proposed. As demonstrated by interviews conducted for this work, the remediation and redevelopment of abandoned mines in northern Canada is not a straightforward, simple exercise. In fact, in many cases it may be more complex than the development of a new mine or new industrial development. Redevelopment unshutters old mines, releasing the ghosts of unresolved emotional, environmental, colonial, and social violence (Gordon, Hite, & Jara, 2020)—this "haunting" (Gordon, 2008; Edensor, 2005b; Tuck & Ree, 2013) and the emotional geography it represents must be considered during all planning, assessment and consultation processes.

In summary, the key finding of my research was that it is essential to consider the emotions associated with mine closure and redevelopment during evaluation and operation of

155

mine-related work. In the Yukon and more broadly, social experiences and emotion must be valued and evaluated during the assessment of all resource development proposals. Therefore, companies and regulators must work to understand local history and this emotional geography when assessing and preparing for new developments or even remediation (Beckett & Keeling, 2019). Furthermore, the concept of "emotional remediation" must be built into all stages of development projects, alongside requirements for environmental remediation. As people are connected to and a part of land and landscape, all environmental developments have social and emotional impacts, which must be weighed, evaluated and assessed.

5.3 GOING FORWARD/LOOKING BACK—IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REFLECTIONS

First, and most importantly, further research in the Mayo region should be directed by and involve the FNNND and NND citizens, as much as possible. I acknowledge the issues inherent with me, a settler, seeking to examine the social impacts of mining on behalf of a First Nation community, through the lens of an Indigenous methodology. That said, there are a number of areas that, given consultation with the FNNND or other local Indigenous groups, may be beneficial continuations of this work and I detail them below.

In this thesis, I have used the term emotional remediation. Work by Laura Smith (2014) has examined narratives of environmental restoration and the concept of redemption to provide a new outlook for understanding the power of "emotionality" (p. 304). Such a lens could be applied to communities impacted by resource development to create a framework for incorporating emotion into concepts of remediation. Further research could explore this concept more deeply by examining what such emotional remediation might look like in practice,

156

particularly within an Indigenous cosmology. How do Yukon Indigenous peoples view the connection between land disturbance and community disturbances, and how can both be remediated together? Regarding emotional geography and the concept of emotional remediation, a detailed study exploring the physiological impacts of emotional reactions to resource development might be illuminating, in terms of demonstrating the tangible, bodily impacts of stress hormones and other physical reactions that are produced within communities facing development processes.

In the Yukon, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board (YESAB) has tools for measuring environmental and socio-economic impacts but has difficulty evaluating emotional and cultural impacts. While YESAB has begun to incorporate cumulative effects into its assessment procedures, the process still struggles with giving equal weight to scientific data and "traditional" or "local" knowledge (SENES, 2009; Clementino, 2005). While there has been a reasonable amount of work done exploring the incorporation of "traditional knowledge" into environmental assessment processes (Ellis, 2005; Usher, 2000) the aspect of emotion in environmental assessment has been quite neglected. Further research should be directed at the ability to incorporate emotional impacts into development assessments at YESAB and environmental assessment regimes more broadly.

Fruitful research might also examine the internal conflicts experienced in Indigenous communities faced with dueling pressures from both environmental preservation groups and development corporations. With the largest traditional territory of all Yukon First Nations, FNNND balances several development and preservation pressures on their lands. Modern First Nations and Indigenous groups navigate a fine line between economic support for citizens and upholding the stewardship values of elders and community (Charlie, 2017; Nadasdy, 2017;

157

Irlbacher-Fox & Mills, 2007). Yukon Indigenous people must ensure there is enough un-fragmented land to sustain themselves, both physically and spiritually, while also engaging with resource development, which creates tensions that are unique to self-governing Yukon First Nations (Natcher & Davis, 2007). Furthermore, an exploration into the feelings and opinions of young Yukon Indigenous peoples about resource development in their territories would be revealing and might prove useful for the older generation of elected officials and government administrators currently working in First Nation governments.

Throughout Canada, Indigenous groups and governments have identified similar issues with environmental assessment regimes; as they attempt to participate in resource development and extraction assessment processes, their cultural, or ancestral ties to a region are not quantifiable and therefore, rarely fit into the assessment mechanisms (Land Back, 2019). This demonstrates an incongruity between Indigenous—in this case, Yukon First Nation—concepts of land stewardship and the current environmental/social assessment regime. It also points to a gap in the assessment process, where intangible impacts of projects, such as alienation from land, social upheaval, and disruption of both emotional and physical connection to land and sites are difficult to quantify and are, therefore, often not included in assessment reports. Further research could explore this methodological gap in the Yukon's assessment regime—what would environmental, socio-economic assessment look like from an Indigenous perspective? Such work is not unprecedented (Land Back, 2019), however, it has not been done in the Yukon, despite YESAA emerging as a result of the Umbrella Final Agreement between Yukon, Canada, and 14 Yukon First Nations.

5.4 WHAT NOW?

In reality caring is always "wet, emotional, messy" - Haraway, 2011, p. 102

This research has shown that mineral redevelopment in the Canadian North, and in the Yukon Territory in particular, can be more fraught than development of new mineral resources on 'virgin' ground, because such redevelopment revives the spectre of colonialism and all of the environmental and cultural damage lingering in the land from previous developments. Mineral redevelopment invokes the ghosts of past environmental and cultural wrongs. In an era of attempted reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, the story of the Keno Hill Silver Mine provides a powerful lesson to developers, First Nations, and Territorial and Federal Governments—that mineral (re)development is emotionally complex for those who love and live on the land and that these emotional aspects cannot be ignored by those who wish to extract resources from the land.

This project was lengthy and difficult for me. I chose to study a community close to my home and heart and indeed, it was emotional and rather messy. Despite these challenges, I believe the work was productive, in terms of providing a voice for local people, a venue for the truth in their stories, and a discussion of the power of emotional connection to land. This work was always about relationships—recalling, building, and honouring relationships. The goal now (for myself and residents of Keno City and Mayo) is to maintain these relationships, despite the emotional turmoil they have suffered. For agents of resource development, government and assessment, the goal is to create and uphold such relationships with local people and land in an honest and authentic manner. Certainly, my life has been enriched by the relationships I developed with the people, stories, and the land of the Keno Hill region. I hope that this work will contribute to the preservation of relationships between and within the communities and lands in which it took place.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

NAME	DATE	INTERVIEW TYPE	LOCATION
Yvonne Bessette	14.06.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Insa Schultenkotter	17.06.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Mike Mancini (A + B)	29.06.2011/02.09.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Jim Milley & Jordan Therioult	30.06.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Joseph Volf	02.07.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Alice Buyck	29.06.11	In person	Mayo
Pat Van Bibber	03.08.2011	In person	Mayo
Ralph Mease Sr.	04.08.2011	In person	Mayo
Richard Brost	05.08.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Jimmy Johnny	10.08.2011	In person	Mayo, Yukon
Herman Melancon	10.08.2011	In person	Mayo, Yukon
Kris Pavlovich	11.08.2011	In person	Mayo, Yukon
Trevor Ellis	12.08.2011	In person – no audio recording	Mayo, Yukon
Shirley Ellis	12.08.2011	In person – no audio recording	Mayo, Yukon
Mathias Bindig	13.08.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Dirk Rentmeister	15.08.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Johnson and Bella Peter	16.08.2011	In person	Mayo, Yukon
JJ Van Bibber	18.08.2011	In person	Dawson City, Yukon
Tom Fudge	25.08.2011	In person	Elsa, Yukon
Fulvio Roberti	25.08.2011	In person	Mayo, Yukon
Leo Martel	01.09.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Lucien Roy	02.09.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Emma Lange	02.09.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Walter Malacki	02.09.2011	In person	Keno City, Yukon
Robert Wagner	18.09.2011	Skype	St. John's, NFLD/Keno City, Yukon
Steven Buyck	29.09.2011	Skype	St. John's, NFLD/Mayo, Yukon
Loralee Johnson		In person	Keno City, Yukon
Kim Barlow	4.12.2011	In Person	St. John's, NFLD
Tim Falconer	29.06.2012	In Person	Dawson City, Yukon

APPENDIX II: PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Memorial University of Newfoundland
Department of Geography
St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador
A1B 3X9

Prior Informed Consent Form

You are being asked to participate voluntarily as an interview participant as part of the research project outlined below. This research is a part of the larger *Abandoned Mines in Northern Canada* project at Memorial University of Newfoundland. You are free to choose whether or not to take part in the interview and are free to withdraw from the interview at any point, without negative consequences.

Research Project: "Here Today, Gone to Mayo": Community Responses to Mine Closure and Redevelopment in the Yukon

Principal Researcher: Alexandra Winton, Master's Candidate, Memorial University, PO Box. 885, Dawson City, Yukon, Y0B 1G0, awinton@mun.ca, (867) 336-0888

Advisor: Arn Keeling, Memorial University, akeeling@mun.ca, (709) 864-8990

Project Purpose: To explore the social impacts of the historic mineral development, mine closure, and contemporary mine re-development in the Mayo Mining District. This research aims to explore emotional responses to mine closure and redevelopment, while helping to document local history and furthering understanding of relationships between communities, First Nations, industry and environment.

Use of Information: The information collected during this interview will be used for the above research project and the Abandoned Mines Project, of which it is a part. These uses may include a written thesis, academic publications, conferences, and communication of results to the communities involved.

Access to Information: If desired by interviewee, interviews may be shared with a First Nation or local organization to contribute to their Traditional Knowledge / Oral History holdings. The principal researcher and/or Dr. Arn Keeling will securely retain copies of all interviews and transcripts for up to ten years, after which they will be destroyed. All interviewees will be provided with a copy of their interview and transcript for review and their own records.

Project Review: The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 737-2861. This project has also been approved by the Yukon Government under the Scientists and Explorers Act (License # 11-19S&E), and it adheres to the Na-cho Nyak Dun Traditional Knowledge Protocol.

Memorial University of Newfoundland
Department of Geography
St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador
A1B 3X9

Interviewee: _____

Address: _____

SIN (for honorarium): _____

Please check all that apply:

☐ I would like to remain anonymous

☐ The information I share during this interview may be used for academic publications and conferences

☐ The information I share during this interview may be used for the larger Abandoned Mines in Northern Canada Project (Dr. Arn Keeling and Dr. John Sandlos and team)

☐ The information I share during this interview may be used for public displays and interpretation of research

☐ I would like a copy of my interview and transcript shared with the Na-cho Nyak Dun First Nation, or another organization: _____

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research and understand what the study is about
- You have been able to ask questions about this study
- You agree to be audio taped to ensure accuracy in transcription
- You understand that you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights, and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

I have explained this study to the best of my abilities. I invited question and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date

APPENDIX III: NND LETTER OF SUPPORT

First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun
Heritage & Culture Department
Box 220
Mayo, Yukon Y0B 1M0
Tel: (867) 996-2265 ext 116
Fax: (867) 996-2107
E-mail: main@nndfn.com
Website: www.nndfn.com

May 31, 2011

Dear Ms. Winton;

The First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun is pleased to express support for "Here Today, Gone to Mayo": Community Adaptations to Mine Closure and Re-Development in the Yukon. Your application for conducting traditional knowledge research has been reviewed and approved.

The First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun Heritage and Culture Department has identified several areas of importance for research and it includes documenting life stories of our people. We believe that this project will assist us with our priorities.

We request the following:

- Continued partnership with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun Heritage and Culture Department to identify the proper way of working with Elders using culturally appropriate methods;
- Participants have the opportunity to verify traditional knowledge data that has been collected and documented;
- Researcher acknowledges sources of traditional knowledge;
- Researcher reports findings back to community;
- Researcher provides copies of research materials and final products to First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun Government;
- Researcher obtains appropriate authorizations for conducting research;
- Researcher uses and applies appropriate language and dialects;
- First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun Government determines appropriate compensation rates for traditional knowledge interviewees;
- Researcher provides compensation to participants.

If you have any questions, please feel to contact me and thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Joella Hogan,
Manager, Heritage & Culture