

Title: Deepening ecological relationality through critical onto-epistemological inquiry: where transformative learning meets sustainable science.

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Abstract

Indigenous worldviews remain at the margins of education, science and sustainability efforts. The emergence of sustainable science holds promise as a means of advancing deep sustainability and re-centering Indigenous knowledge. Transformative learning's engagement with sustainable science has the potential to play an integral role in this paradigmatic shift which necessitates a broader legitimation of our ecology as a deeply interconnected living system. An important part of this project is learner-centered critical onto-epistemological inquiry—the critical study of one's own reality, and implications for ecological relationship. Drawing on Intuitive Inquiry and Kaupapa Māori research, this paper illuminates the partial decolonization of my own Life-World and arrival at a deepened sense of ecological relationship. Initially focusing on 'the dreaming', it integrates my visceral experiences of the land and Indigenous constructions of reality through interviews with Ngāi Te Rangi and Woodland Cree elders. The implications for transformative learning and sustainability are discussed.