

# Baawaajige: Exploring Dreams as Academic References

Turtle Island Journal of Indigenous Health  
Vol. 1(1), 37-47  
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<https://doi.org/10.33137/tjih.v1i1.34020>

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Baawaajige: my ideas for research are often revealed while sleeping. We as Anishinaabe People are able to connect to the spiritual realm through dreams. I will explore how Anishinaabe People utilize dreams and validate Indigenous ways of knowing without feeling shy and to be proud of where we obtain our knowledge. We need to normalize our dreams and visions within our writing. My conference presentation explores the use of dreams in academic writing as validated research. I want to privilege Indigenous research method and methodology that appears within our dreams, visions, and through fasting. How do we reference these in our academic writing? How do we provide context to such intimate moments between us and the Spirit World? How do we honour that knowledge in colonial academic papers? I will explore these questions while contributing to Indigenous research methods, and methodologies.

## Keywords

Baawaajige, Dreams, Academics, APA, References, Storytelling

## Introduction

This article blossomed from my presentation at the Canadian Indigenous/Native Studies Association (CINSA) Conference hosted by Trent University. In this article, I tackle the literary gap of dream citation guidelines because the academy has not viewed dreaming as a valid source of knowledge. The article is from an Anishinaabe kwe (woman) perspective and weaves in the Indigenous academic practice of storytelling. Eurocentric ideologies often ignore Indigenous Knowledges, more specifically, Dream Knowledge, because the colonial narrative questions

the validity of spirituality within Western academia.

This article aims to:

1. Address the literary gap by understanding Dream Knowledges as a valid source of knowledge for Indigenous students and scholars, and justifying it from an Indigenous perspective,
2. Encourage Indigenous students and scholars to include their dreams within their research and writing, and
3. Provide guidelines to referencing dreams for Indigenous students and scholars within their academic writing.

To accomplish this, I will share my Dream Knowledges that have impacted my scholarly understandings and writings. I propose several citation formats based on dream specifics and by first citing who visited within the dream. Citation formats will engage with either Ancestral Accounts, Unknown Ancestors, and Nii'kinaaganaa (All my relations). I have also created six subcategories based on descriptions of the type of dream and how the collected knowledge occurred within the dream: dream conversation, dream

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**Acknowledgements:** I would like to acknowledge Manulani Meyer for having the discussion around dreams and the spiritual world. I want to say chi-miigwech to my mother Nancy for assisting me with language translations as well as watching my children so that I continue my academic journey. I want to say miigwech to my sister for ensuring the my children were always busy and helping access books when it was needed. Lastly, I want say chi-miigwech to my cohort Malinda, Marisol, Cathy, Gabe, and Jason to consult, critique, and support my writing.

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visitation, dream message, dream interpretation, day-dream, and prophecy/vision. I have utilized the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style because it is used in multiple disciplines. I conclude this paper by encouraging Indigenous students and scholars to incorporate their Dream Knowledge within the literary framework.

## **Baawaajige**

Baawaajige means to dream. The understanding is that when we are sleeping, we are "...travelling in the form of spiritual light when the body is at rest" (Horton, 2017, para. 13). Through thought, prayer, ceremony, and dreams, it is where we can access information because the belief is our spiritual light is a central tenet to the cosmological dimension (Spiritual Realm). The Anishinaabek believe in the metaphysical world, and dreaming is an element within our intellectual framework. Our dreams are part of our methods as we co-create with universe and the Ancestors. When we are asleep, we receive dreams, which could be just dreams, but we also receive guidance and messages from the Spiritual Realm (Da Silva, 2010). Smith (2012) writes that the power of dreams is essential to Anishinaabek identity and survival. Dream Knowledge is integrated into our daily lives as we continually bridge two knowledge systems: the spiritual knowledges gained in dreams and the scientific knowledges gained through empirical observations. This knowledge, obtained through dreaming, has allowed us to sustain our Nations and ways of being for thousands of years.

When Indigenous People pray to access the Spiritual Realm, it is very common to receive information in the dream state. Smith (2012) explains that remembering our dreams is important as we receive vital instructions either implicitly or explicitly because we have communicated with the manidoog (spirits). The information that is transmitted can range from a variety of things such as medicinal plant use, healing instructions, ceremonial guidance, finding their lost items/people, conversing with the animate and inanimate, and the knowledge of future events (Deloria Jr., 2006). Dreams that are prophetic provide another layer of understanding when the People accepted that "the living universe came forward to urge them to take certain well-defined paths of behaviour... infor-

mation they could not possibly derive from the most intense observations of the physical world" (Deloria Jr., 2006, p. xxv). All of the information acquired is Dream Knowledge.

## **Anishinaabemowin**

Generally, in Anishinaabemowin, it is all about context. My mother is fluent in Anishinaabemowin, she assisted with the translations so that I could better demonstrate the similarities in sounds of Anishinaabe words. I want to discuss in my language "nbaa" is used in reference to sleep and "nbaa" refers to he/she is sleeping. If an Ojibwe speaker were to come over to my place and ask "aapiish beebeenhs?", I would reply "nbaa," and they would understand I am referring to him as "sleeping" most likely in another room. I just want to provide a bit of context as the Anishinaabe language heavily relies upon it. In "nbaa" the baa is similar to the nursery rhyme song "baa, baa black sheep".

If you had spoken to someone who has walked the Earth and you had known them, then you would refer to the person "'their name' -ba or -baa" (the hyphenated indicates they have walked on to reside in the Spiritual Realm and acknowledge that they have passed on). As emphasized earlier, context is everything. For example, when I discuss grandmother Alice-ba or Alice-baa (pronounced buh), many Anishinaabe speakers would understand she has passed on and I am acknowledging her. The single "a" or a double "aa" will be used interchangeably to demonstrate there is no right or wrong way, but it is the author's preference. I am explaining this because I do not want to have someone sleeping confused with someone passed on.

## **Anishinaabe Ontology**

For the Anishinaabek, dreams are important as they remind us that we are entangled within the cosmological energies. We understand our relationships extend beyond the material world. Ultimately, cosmology shapes our perception of who we are, how we come to know, and why we are here. Furthermore, in Anishinaabe ontology, the Creation of the universe begins with a dream by Gzhe Mnidoo (Great Mystery). Elder Doug Williams (2018) shares, "way back in time, it was total darkness. There was nothing. At this time Gzhwe Manidoo had a dream. In that dream, Gzhwe

Manidoo saw the world that we know today” (p. 13). Our Creation story describes that we are a gift from Gzhe Mnidoo’s vision and we were created from zaagi’idiwin – love (Peacock, 2020). Through this teaching we get our Spiritual Knowledge. It is where the plants, animals, or even the metaphysical Spirits will share their giikendaasowin (knowledge) within dreams. We can obtain Dream Knowledge throughout the day and at night, as well as through vision quests, ceremonies, rites of passage, healing, prophecies, and when looking for guidance. Simpson (2011) elaborates on the importance of dreams, writing that our Anishinaabe intellect is grounded within the ability to dream. Gzhe Mnidoo was “demonstrating that the process of creation – visioning, making, doing – is the most powerful process in the universe” (Simpson, 2011, p. 42). The Anishinaabek understand that when we sleep at night, we have the ability to return to our previous metaphysical state of existence. For example, Nanaboozhoo, the first Anishinaabe, has the ability to transform into any being because he was half-human and half-spirit (Smith, 1995). Our stories of Nanaboozhoo provide the foundational teachings of the human and spirit relationship and other life lessons and exemplify our paradigm of living Mino Bimaadiziwin – how we interact with the environment around us while trying to live a harmonious life. Dreaming gives us the capability to transcend into Sacred Space and return to our Ancestors’ land. Here, time is not linear, so dreaming allows us to co-exist within the same domain as the Ancestors, that is in the past, present, and future simultaneously. We have the unconscious connection and can draw parallels of Nanaboozhoo transformations to our gift of dreaming. The Dream World is where we can be anything and see almost everything and everyone. Moreover, Gzhe Mnidoo ensured if we ever forgot our way that the spirits could always access us through dreams.

### ***Baawaajige Giikendaasowin (Dream Knowledge)***

Kovach (2009) articulates that “[s]acred knowledge is not really (sic) accepted in Western research, other than in anthropological, exotic, kind of way” (p. 67). This is not new knowledge to Indigenous Peoples as they often face criticism when trying to incorporate Indigenous Knowledges into their work because it is not scientifically grounded in Western ways of know-

ing. I have had conversations with my peers as to why we need to take a stand within the University by challenging Western knowledge to expand Indigenous Knowledges and understandings to be included within the academy. Again, Kovach (2009) conveys this as “[t]he proposition of integrating spiritual knowings and processes, like ceremonies, dreams, or synchronicities, which act as portals for gaining knowledge, makes mainstream academia uncomfortable” (p. 67). Some Indigenous students are using dream experiences within action, which brings Indigenous Knowledge to Western institutions.

I will illustrate a few Indigenous authors who had dreams that had impacted their research. To start with, Archibald (2008) dreamed about bringing oral narratives into the Western educational setting because our stories are an essential part of Indigenous pedagogies and epistemologies. Another example, Absolon (2011), who describes her research concept of petal flower that presented itself after she followed Indigenous protocol of offering tobacco and prayed for guidance. She reveals that, “a gift of a dream was sent to me – I dreamt of a petal flower... I drew out the petal flower and identified its components in relation to Indigenous methodologies” (p. 48). Furthermore, Absolon (2011) reimagined an Indigenous Knowledge Framework by utilizing a flower that would incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing through metaphors; thus, allowing Indigenous students and scholars to build their research with an Indigenous paradigm. Simpson (2000), shares that she is continuously guided by her dreams and her own volition to do community work. When she is doing community work and needs assistance from the Spiritual Realm, she will make tobacco offerings to the manidoo to provide guidance. She explains the information received often assists her work to move forward. Lastly, Noodin (2014) utilizes Bawaajige as the entry point of her book and later explains the importance “to reverse-engineer the Native critical landscape, to create paradigms and methodologies that stem from indigenous (sic) systems of thinking” (xvii). When Indigenous students and scholars include Dream Knowledge within their academic writing, they are reverse engineering the Western methods of accessing information because we are infusing traditional knowledge that honours our ways of knowing. I want to add that this is not an exhaustive list as there are many more

Indigenous students and scholars who are guided by their dreams.

Knowledge is shared within dreams and when we are awake it is up to us to take action to share that information. I will illustrate this by providing a few brief examples of famous scientists who not only had dreams but took action such as René Descartes – philosopher and mathematician – who resigned from the army because his dreams altered his path, which placed him on a pursuit of human knowledge; Albert Einstein had a dream about the Theory of Relativity; Dmitri Mendeleev had a nap and he formulated the Periodic Table, and Srinivasa Ramanujan was able to produce more than a thousand of new mathematical calculations because of the dream he had (Roland 2018; 20 Famous Scientists, 2015). There are many other scientific breakthroughs along with modern inventions that appeared in dreams.

If one is well-versed in Anishinaabek stories they may know we often stray away from the *Mino-Bimaadiziwin* path, therefore we require assistance from the Spiritual Realm to find our way back. Dokis (2018) recalls that she was hired for a water project, which was suspended because of the questionable research goals and methodology. As she embarked on a canoe trip with colleagues and a First Nation youth group, she dreamt of serpent emerging where she was paddling through the water. She was not fearful, but rather felt peaceful and reassured on how they should proceed in the water project. However, when she awoke she wondered if it was a warning about potential water dangers. It was not until she met a grandmother who shared the knowledge of the serpents responsibility to care for the water (pp. 230-233) that Carly shared in detail how her dream manifested and reflected that it was the sign she needed to move forward in protecting the water and with the research. Similarly, Miller (2013) explains that war leaders would access the Spiritual Realm to see how they should engage in war or what the possible outcomes would be. There were many interpretations of what war leaders had dreamed about so it was cautionary.

Oral narratives illustrate that the realm of dreams creates new knowledges essential to maintaining human life because they are “born in the worlds of waking experience and dream, are true because they are meaningfully real to their owners” (Smith, 2012,

p. 20). Johnston-baa (1976) reflects that the dreamer could be afraid of the messages shared. An example of this is a story shared about Weegwaus who approached Elder Chejauk for interpretation because it was so alarming. In this narrative, Chejauk assisted with unpacking the dream and described the dream as the Four Hills of Life teachings; these have since been described as the ups and downs of life’s journey. This teaching was a gift to Weegwaus who was to share these new understandings of how people progress and how life can be challenging for them. The Four Hills of Life teaching is now shared amongst the Anishinaabek.

### **Anishinaabek Children**

Many Indigenous children are encouraged to dream so that they may continue to be guided in their relationship with the cosmos. Pomedli (2014) expands that through our beliefs as Anishinaabek that the metaphysical stories come alive and it is where “Ojibwa children go to school in dreams” (p. xix). Densmore (1979) recounts how a Chippewa Elder described the importance of the knowledge gained from dreaming: “in the old days our people had no education. They could not learn from books or teachers. All their wisdom and knowledge came to them in dreams. They tested their dreams, and in that way learned their own strength” (p. 78). Anishinaabek children learn a great deal by observing their parents, listening to stories, and by helping their community. They also learn that their community extends beyond the people and beings they physically see. Dream Knowledge requires patience because we may not always remember right away, and the knowledge will unfold when the time comes. For example, when a baby is born, an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, or a family member is approached to name the baby, which may take a few days as the person may rely on dreaming so that they can access the Spiritual Realm to assist in naming the new spirit. It is the one who is responsible for the baby’s name to ensure that they interact with the spirits and honour their joint vision in a good way.

Our traditions have adapted over time to maintain our spiritual connection to our traditional Anishinaabe teachings by various pedagogies. For instance, the dreamcatcher is hung above the child to protect them from nightmares and provide the child



with a sense of security when they go to sleep. My community knowledge of the dreamcatcher is that it is designed to catch the bad dreams in the webbing and only allow the good dreams to funnel through the central gap. It is part of the child's sacred bundle to encourage dreaming and not to be afraid of the bad dreams. When my child shares that he is having nightmares, I will help him light sage and tell him to reactivate the dreamcatcher's power by cleaning out the bad dreams with the smoke. By taking care of our bundles, we facilitate the ongoing traditional teachings of co-existing within the Sacred System, which is understood to be the "entire cosmos [that] cannot be contained in our daily lives, we learn that sacred places represent the power by showing us that we can become part of a pre-existing set of relationships" (Deloria, 2006, p. 202).

### ***How Did This Research Come to Be?***

Since childhood, my dreams have been so vivid and profound – so much that they remain with me to this day. I am able to recall what has been prophesized unto me, and everything I sensed – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This includes those who have left this realm through the western doorway before us. When Manulani Aluli Meyer came to visit at Trent University we had conversations about dreams and how it relates to the holographic epistemology (2013) in great detail, which was particularly relevant to me as a dreamer and as an Indigenous scholar. Our conversation on that day planted the seed to write about Dream Knowledge.

As mentioned, Indigenous Knowledge and dreams are valid sources of knowledge that Western academia has disregarded for generations. We started to share similarities of how Indigenous students and scholars have had conversations on how they could incorporate dreams into their work. How do we infuse our spirituality into the current literature to support the next generation of Indigenous studies scholarship? I continued to think about this question for months, but it was not until the CINSA put a call out for papers that my thoughts returned to the importance of Dream Knowledge. Inspired by my conversation with Manulani Aluli Meyer earlier that Spring, I was determined to ensure students and scholars had a reference guide for Dream Knowledge. I wanted to create something meaningful so my peers would have something to use

because I know the difficulties of referencing dreams. I believe that a reference guide for Indigenous students and scholars is crucial for an expansion of Indigenous Knowledge to validate Dream Knowledge by Western academia.

### ***Why Do We Need Dream-Based Scholarship?***

Dreaming is an important and a Sacred form of knowledge; it is a part of the Anishinaabe Knowledge Framework. Deloria (2006) explains that non-Indigenous people would explain away our experiences; that our dreams were coincidences; or the way we encountered our dreams through ceremonies was through some form of exhaustion. Knudston and Suzuki (1993) add "science seems destined to 'de-sanctify' the universe, to, in effect, systemically suck the 'sacred juices' from the Earth" (p. 123). Indigenous People understand the role that science plays, but we also understand the natural world would communicate with us within the Sacred Realm. We want to share our Indigenous voices, but not sever our spiritual connection, as such when an Indigenous student incorporates their Dream Knowledge, they are challenging conventional Western knowledge.

### **Methods**

It could be argued that we are creating another layer of contentious ground, but I want to discuss that citing dreaming is similar to citing an Elder or Knowledge Holder/Keeper that has shared teachings with you. Within the Anishinaabek points-of-view, we are not reproducing other's work but rather we are co-creating with our Ancestors. By having a method to cite dreams and teachings it can help mitigate some of this tension in Western academia. In developing a dream related citation method, I followed my intuition and employed an Anishinaabe research methodology to shape this work. Anishinaabe research methodology was given the breath of life because it is similar to Grounded Theory (GT); GT is one of the more flexible methodologies that allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon through data inductive analysis. I had enough raw data from my own experiences as well as listening to the dream experiences of the Elders, Knowledge Keepers, peers, and friends. It was obvious that I began to analyze the data through my own Anishinaabe epistemology and I realized I

already had a framework in place. It is distinct from Western research methodology and methods, allowing Indigenous students and scholars to organize their experiences in which the knowledge was received in a Sacred Space.

This article was guided because of my own dream visitation with my grandmother. We were sitting by a brook watching the water flow by, and she was speaking Anishinaabemowin. When I awoke, I went about my day oblivious about my dream, but a few days later, I sat with my computer trying to think about how Dream Knowledge could be articulated. The information began to flow within my writing, and then I was able to recollect most of our conversation. My grandmother was my instructor, and she gave me the information I needed to move forward.

## Results

After the presentation at Trent University, I received great feedback and interest from the conference attendees. They were impressed with my idea that dreams could be referenced as sources of knowledge and information and appreciated the citation guide that I provided. Many scholars and students did not have a reference guide especially when inspired to write about the Sacred Dream Knowledge. Before we begin, I need to distinguish who the Ancestors and Spirits are and how these terms will be used throughout the remainder of this paper. I will provide an explanation about the use of Anishinaabemowin. Since my presentation, I have expanded the information and created three different ways of citing dreams that are recognized through an Ancestral Account, Unknown Ancestors, and Nii'kinaaganaa (All my relations). Six unique descriptions of detailing your collected knowledge are also shared below.

### **Who Are the Ancestors?**

Anishinaabek believe that the Ancestors are those that reside in the Great Unknown. The Ancestors are part of our metaphysical thinking as we understand that “the fluidity of Ojibwe life-world... a landscape inhabited by metamorphosing people – human and otherwise... present a web of associations and patterns that is distinctively and consistently Anishinaabe” (Smith, 1995, p. 17). Our Ancestors could have walked the Earth in the early days with Nanaboozhoo,

could have taken part in the various migrations, lived through times of war, witnessed treaty-making processes, and participated with anything in-between. Our Ancestors do not necessarily have to go that far back; they could be part of our more recent histories where they had contracted colonized diseases or viruses, been the children that attended Indian Residential Schools, or those that are missing or murdered that caused them to reside in the Spiritual Realm. I want to distinguish that I utilize the term Ancestors to signify that they are from the past because we are the descendants of those strong, resilient lineages.

For this article, I have chosen Spirits to represent a future, those that are unborn or those that we have not met yet. I provide this for the reader not to confuse the past and future. Unless the way you describe your dream does not require you to specify who is in your dream at that moment in time.

The term Nii'kinaaganaa “All my relations” is our connection to our relatives that are animate and inanimate. Anishinaabe teachings share that all things are imbued with Spirit and made from the Creator's love. The Elder brothers and sisters have existed since time immemorial and make up the physical landscape such as the mountains, plants, trees, water, animals, birds, insects, and water dwellers and more. They have so much to teach us and will remind us of their teachings through dreams.

The Ancestors are also part of the metaphysical connection. They are the ones that co-existed at the time with Nanaboozhoo including the Animikiig (Thunderbirds), Mishiginebig (Serpents), Saabe (Big foot), Pahiinhsag (Little People), and Niibinaabe (Mermaids). Although, these Ancestral Spirits may not often be seen, we acknowledge their presence and the gifts they share with us. I have intentionally called them Ancestral Spirits because they resided here since Nanaboozhoo, and yet their life cycle seems to be infinite and live longer than the plants and animals.

### **Ancestral Accounts**

Since my deceased grandmother helped with the creative process, I will use her as an example along with my great-great-great-grandpa to illustrate what I mean.

Shawanda-ba, A. (2015). Anishinaabe Stories. Dream conversation. Sudbury, ON.

When you know who the person is in your dream include the first initial of their name. It is important to include the year you had the dream in this physical realm. I place this information here because that is when you had the dream and have come to know that knowledge. In the dream state, time is non-existent in the way we record it. Next, you would describe the general theme or message of that dream followed by the Dream Intention descriptor. When I am discussing dream intentions, I want the readers to understand how the information came to be because there are several ways our Ancestors communicate with us within the dream. I have listed the following: dream conversation, dream visitation, dream message, dream interpretation, daydream, and prophecy/vision. You could utilize more technical terms such as telepathic dreams, where we visit or have had conversations with the Ancestors or with other Spiritual entities. Also, there are pre-cognitive dreams meaning they are prophecies, visions, and premonitions in both good and bad connotations. However, I do not bundle them altogether because they are unique in the way we experience them and retrieve the dreams.

If you remember where you had this dream, it would be important to include the city of where your dream took place. In my own dreams I may not always know the location of where it took place as sometimes the background could be in someone's home I've never been, a meadow, by a lake, or simply in a solid black space.

My great-great-great-grandpa did not have a last name but rather a singular Anishinaabe name. Since he resides in the Spiritual Realm and there are many others with a single name or that may have “-kwe” (woman) or “-nini” (man) attached to their Anishinaabe name.

Naakwaam-baa. (2017). Way of Knowing. Dream conversation. Wikwemikong, ON.

Naakowaam nini-baa. (2017). Medicines. Dream message. Sudbury, ON.

When describing your dreams and you are visited by one of the Ancestors but you are unsure if it is a conversation or a message, you can describe it as a visitation. I distinguish this because this situation is still playing out in your present time or that you cannot describe it as either. An example would be of the

time I was thinking of my grandmother for two days and questioned whether or not I was doing meaningful research, and then in my dream, I was looking at the mirror from an angle where I could not see my reflection. She was walking by in her patterned blue dress with her blue eyes and she looked exactly as I remembered her from when I was a little girl. She simply nodded in the mirror and kept walking. I was able to complete my Master's thesis because of her visitation.

Shawanda -ba, A. (2016). Strength of your future. Dream visitation. Sudbury, ON.

### **Unknown Ancestors**

This citation format allows the inclusion of Ancestors from the past and future Spirits, who await in the Great Unknown. For those future Spirits we have not met yet, they can be anyone from a partner, neighbour, unborn children, friends, etc. Even though we may not have met them yet, they guide us in the direction we are meant to be in. They could be eager to meet us and will appear in our dreams to signify that we are on the right path or provide clarity in times of need. Also, our Ancestors watch over us and send us their wisdom, light, and remind us of our intimate spiritual connection. They remind us of the dynamic relationship we hold within the Sacred Space because we can sit with our past Ancestors and future Spirits within one dream.

I will provide a broad citation format of many Ancestors gathered together. This citation format can be used for this type of Dream Knowledge. I had a dream about Anishinaabek Kweok (women) at a powwow who kept inviting me to join, but I was unsure if I should because I was shy. They grabbed my hand and gently pulled me into the circle, when I looked down, I was wearing my childhood purple jingle dress and started dancing with them. I woke up with my legs in a kicking motion and blankets on the floor because I was dancing in my sleep. This is how I recommend citing many Ancestors:

Anishinaabek Kweok. (2012). Jingle Dress dancing. Dream visitation. Sudbury, ON.

Alternatively, it could be cited as:

Chi-Anishinaabek. (2012). Jingle Dress dancing. Dream visitation. Sudbury, ON.

Similarly, if you have a conversation with two or more Ancestors/Spirits they would look like this:

Anishinaabe Kweok. (2012). Healing Dance. Dream conversations. Sudbury, ON.

If you know the Ancestors visiting you it could look like:

Shawande-ba, M. & Roy-ba, H. (2013). Kitchen conversations. Dream Conversations. Wikwemikong, ON.

In certain circumstances involving Dream Knowledges you might be unaware of who, specifically, your Ancestors are, or you might be unsure of their names. I recommend using the following formats, and that they be cited as Unknown Ancestor or for an in-text citation (this is a similar citation to an unknown author in APA):

- Summarizing a dream would look like: I was at the old Indian Day School by my mother's house. I am playing in the yard with the children. An older lady approached me to give me this bright white fancy shawl. I looked at her puzzled because I am a jingle dress dancer. I asked her repeatedly why she is giving me the shawl? She handed to me and I accepted it (Unknown Ancestor, 2015). To this day I am still uncovering the meaning of the dream.
- This also applies to quotes from a dream if there was a quote it would look like, "Women are like canoes on the water, they hold their own paddles and can steer their destinies into any direction" (Unknown Ancestor, 2020).

Referencing this in your bibliography would look like:

Unknown Ancestor. (2015). Fancy Shawl. Dream visitation. Wikwemikong, ON

Unknown Ancestor. (2020). Canoe destiny. Daydream. Sudbury, ON.

Now to discuss an Unknown Spirit (future). I had a dream about my son. At the time I did not know who he was. He told me he wanted to come into this world but was waiting for me. He was continuously sending me messages in my dream about pregnancy and motherhood. He is from the future and if I had

written about it at that time it would have looked like:

Unknown Spirit. (2008). Mother. Dream interpretation. Orillia, ON.

Now that he is born and has a name, I could refer to him with his Anishinaabe name:

Sheminankwat-nini. (2008). Mother. Dream message. Orillia, ON.

### ***Nii'kinaaganaa (All my relations)***

There is yet another category of sources of Dream Knowledges. How do we reference those that have been here long before we walked the Earth? I gave it some thought and it would be best to refer to "All Our Relations/Relatives" in your Indigenous language. I had a daydream going to a hockey game one night. I was staring out at the dark highway when my heart raced and three waawaashkesh (deers) galloped across the road. I was shaken. I did not say anything because I knew I was daydreaming and thought it is probably just my fear of driving at night and dismissed my daydream. However, after the hockey game the three deer jumped onto the highway, where we almost got into a collision. It is this type of premonition or daydream that became reality. I wanted to honour the waawaashkesh as we have interrupted and altered their landscape. This is how I would reference Elder brothers and sisters in both animate and inanimate form:

Waawaashkesh. (2000). Caution. Daydream. Sheguindah, ON.

In this example, the Giizhig (cedar tree) came to me in a vision. I was searching for this knowledge for over a year. I was not being patient with the medicine. I sat staring blankly at my computer when the vision came strong. I utilize it in my own research.

Giizhig. (2018). Storytelling. Vision. Peterborough, ON.

Here is the last important citation source example of Dream Knowledge. I was sitting in ceremony listening to the singing and drumming until this image appeared in my mind. I remember seeing these black figures fly to the mountain top. I felt reassured about everything in my life in that point in time. It was my clan giving me the sign to keep on my journey. I did not know what I was looking at as they were majestic and flying at the mountain peaks. I knew in my



heart they were Animikiig (Thunderbirds). I would catch a brief glimpse of light and see the outline of them. They were magnificent and I could feel their spiritual energy radiating. I believe it is important to utilize Anishinaabemowin when we are referring to the original brothers and sisters. This is so we honour the spirit of our language and acknowledge our connection to them.

Animikiig. (2013). Mino-Bimaadiziwin.  
Vision. Atikameksheng Anishinabek, ON.

There are many ways we can obtain dreams such as ceremonies, healing, and through other personal accounts. I wanted to refrain from the specificity of ceremonies because I did not want Indigenous People to feel obligated to state where they received it such as sun dance ceremony, rain dance ceremony, sweat lodge ceremony, rites of passage, etc. In the last example, I provided a summary by stating general account of a ceremony that I attended. With ceremonies being a Sacred Space, I did not want to state which ceremony because that is between me and the Ancestors and I want to keep my vision without severing the Holistic Knowledge. It is up to each writer to identify if they would like to disclose which ceremony that was attended; however, they should not feel obligated to do so.

## Limitations

The first limitation of this approach is that I did not consult with the non-Indigenous academic community. I believe the academic community will dismiss Dream Knowledge because it is a new approach that infuses spirituality into academics, as such there will be criticisms from the Western academics as the generation of information is not from the Western scientific method. However, if Indigenous students adapt this into their papers regularly, it will eventually become a standard just like how Personal Communication is now accepted into the citation style. This approach allows for the citing of Traditional Knowledges and Oral Knowledges of Indigenous Peoples. It took years for the Traditional Knowledge of Indigenous People to be included within APA citations. Therefore, this was produced from an Anishinaabe kwe Spiritual lens; it is imperative that this work be written through an Indigenous perspective as it is important to cap-

ture that spiritual element and to identify the various energies that communicate with us, which may not be understood by Western academics or may elude that dreams are not real academic references.

Another limitation is that I did not seek out Elders within the Indigenous academic community as dreams are personal medicine. I am thinking broadly and optimistically that including dreams could also be beneficial to our Nations. It is up to each individual to decide on what they want to share, but we do run the risk of severing that Spiritual connection. However, use your discretion on what you would like to share.

I employed an APA style because many Indigenous students within the social sciences often utilize quantitative writing style. Although, this is written in APA, it leaves out other referencing styles such as MLA, Chicago, etc. Dream referencing would be supported within any discipline because it allows Indigenous students to incorporate their dreams as part of their own knowledge journey.

This information is from an Anishinaabe kwe point-of-view. I hope that Indigenous students and scholars will utilize their own languages and consult with their Knowledge Keepers. The outline of citing your Dream Knowledge would look like this:

Ancestor/Spirit. (Year). Theme. Dream intention. Location.

The last limitation is about those that cannot recall their dreams. How do they reference their dreams if they do not remember or are removed from Indigenous Knowledges? I would encourage dream journaling. Dreams do not have to come only from sleep. You can have a daydream or a vision within ceremony, whichever the case maybe it is still a part of your spirit accessing the Sacred Space.

## Discussion

In the original presentation I shared, "How do we reference dreams in our academic writing?" I explained my dreams and how and what we have obtained in the Dream World is important. Most of our dreams may need to be interpreted or discussed with a trusted person who has good insight. They could help you dissect the dream and various interpretations.

How do we provide context to such intimate

moments between us and the Spirit World? We use our discretion on what we want to share because we open ourselves up to criticism like I have done in this article. It is important that what you share, is your truth and to request permission from the Ancestral Spirits as well. It is always a good practice to give thanks and seek guidance from the supernatural world as they have knowledge that we are not privy to.

How do we honour that knowledge in colonial academic papers? Again, as part of Anishinaabe protocol we use tobacco to communicate our knowledge to the Spiritual Realm. It is important we give thanks once we receive that information. Through this, we honour them, our truth, and connection to Creation. Alternatively, if you cannot do that, have your own ceremony, to say a prayer that acknowledges that you have received the message and to give thanks in your Indigenous language. This is part of the reciprocal nature so that we are honouring that connection and the transformative shift that is about to take place in our writing.

What if people are dishonest about their dreams? This is part of academic integrity, which is similar to the Anishinaabe teachings of the Seven Grandfather Teachings which are: Truth, Honest, Respect, Brave, Wisdom, Humility and Love. There are many Nanaboozhoo stories that caution us to live by the Seven Grandfather Teachings. This is very important to not make up stories about dreams and pass them off as knowledge. Indigenous People have had this issue happen to their culture, in terms of identity claims or appropriation. Also, it has occurred in the anthropology discipline where anthropologists were documenting a “vanishing” culture. If you can feel that truth and sincerity coming from the written word, then you can feel the writers’ intention.

## Conclusion

The citation formats described in this paper are intended to encourage Indigenous students and scholars who want to include Dream Knowledge and utilize dream referencing within their written work. We will continue to honour our Ancestral Knowledge by sharing and speaking about our gift of dreams. We do not need to be validated from academia because our Ancestors hear us, see us, and communicate with us.

It is a privilege to have such communication within the Spiritual Realm to access Sacred Knowledge. This is our living truth and we embody those cosmological connections. Lastly, I hope you are able to manifest Dream Knowledges into reality because they have given us the means of putting the vision into action.

Miigwech.

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