

“Are we DP’d?”
Indigenous understandings of (Dis)Place(ment)
narrated by a textbook revision

Yun-Csang GHIMN
with Crystal Buffalo, Janine Lightning, Charlene R., et al.

The Idea of Place: *Space and Culture* 20th Anniversary Conference
Edmonton, AB

A post secondary course held on Maskwacis—the First Nations community previously known as Hobbema—began modifying *Introduction to sociology: 2nd Canadian edition* (Little 2016), an open education resource digitally via aboriginal perspectives.

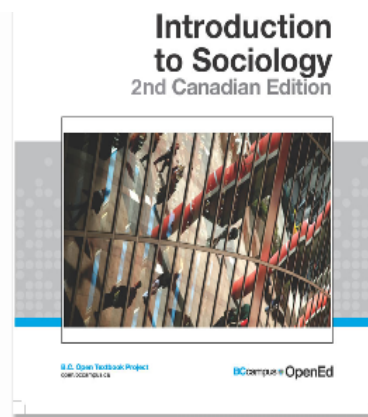
Introduction to Sociology – 2nd Canadian Edition

William Little

Sally Vyain, Gail Scaramuzzo, Susan Cody-Rydzewski, Heather Griffiths, Eric Strayer, Nathan Keirns, Ron McGivern

Introduction to Sociology adheres to the scope and sequence of a typical introductory sociology course. In addition to comprehensive coverage of core concepts, foundational scholars, and emerging theories, we have incorporated section reviews with engaging questions, discussions that help students apply the sociological imagination, and features that draw learners into the discipline in meaningful ways. Although this text can be modified and reorganized to suit your needs, the standard version is organized so that topics are introduced conceptually, with relevant, everyday experiences.

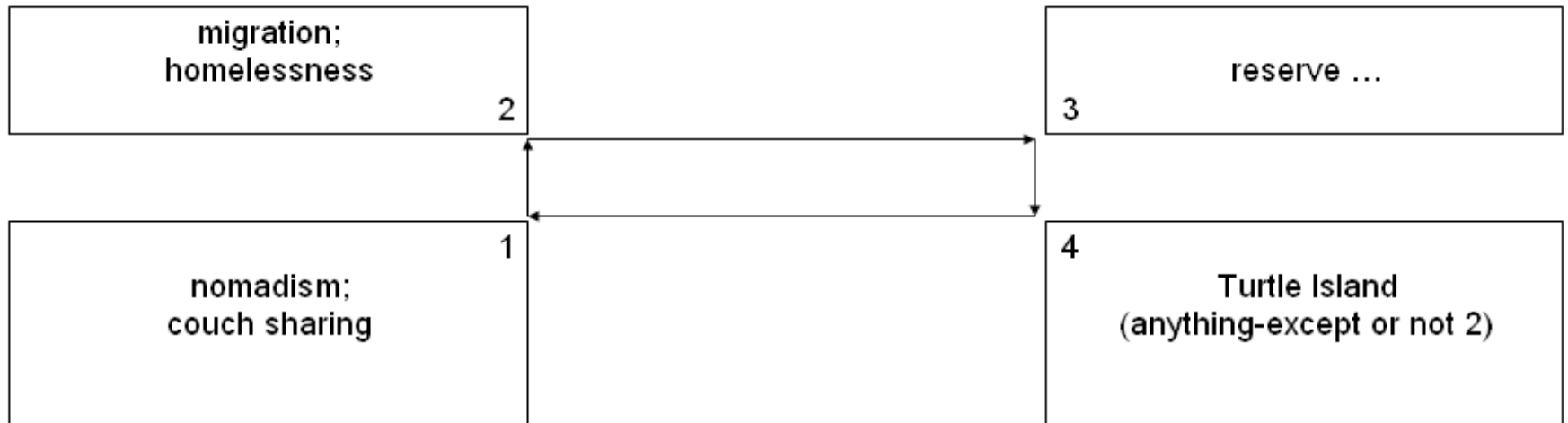
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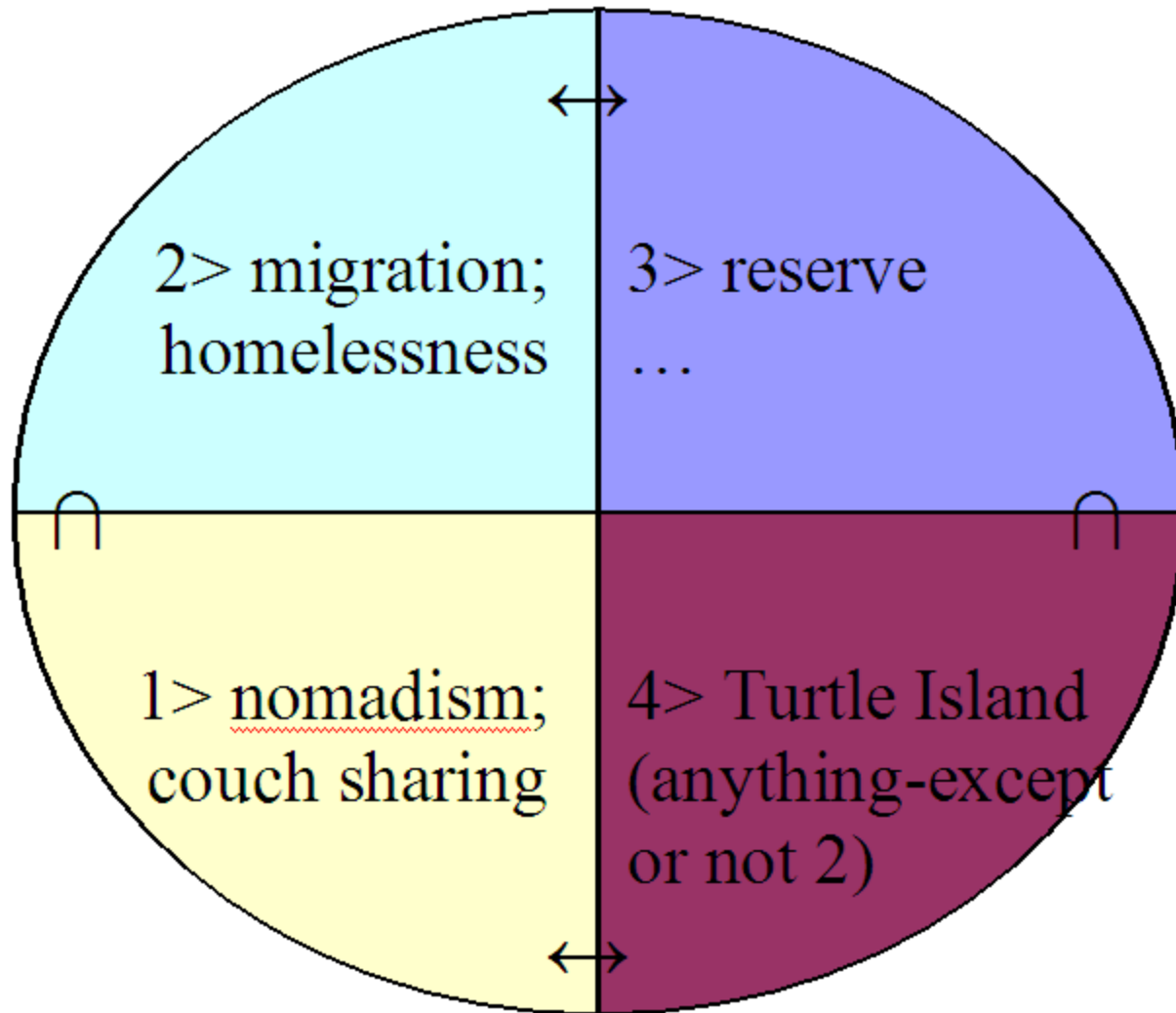
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The instructor has since January '17 framed registrants' idea of place using a Greimas(s)ian square ...

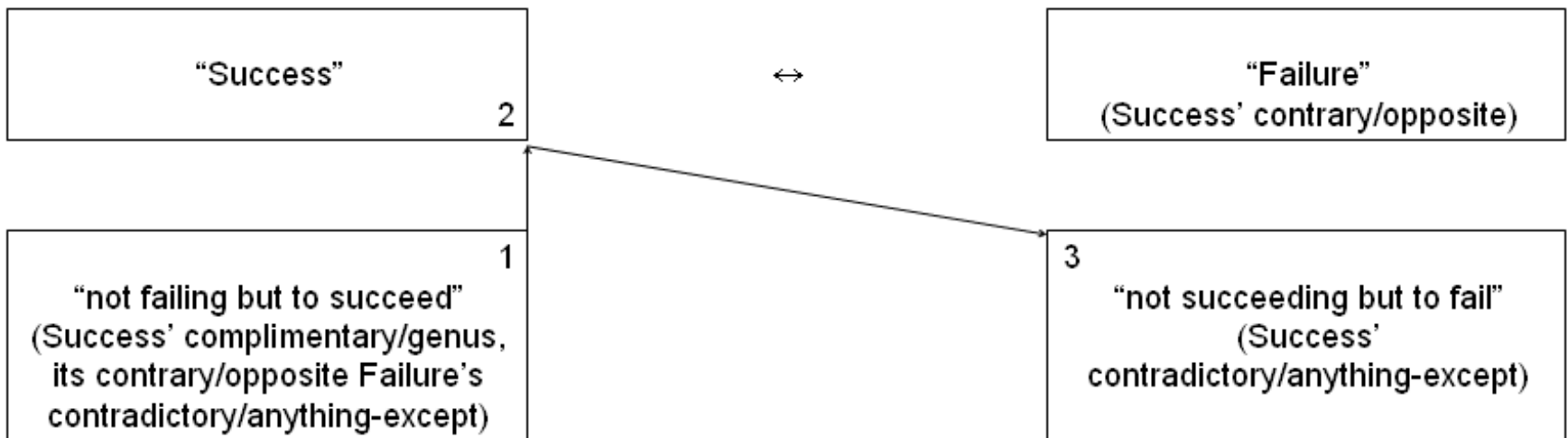


... drawn like their own cultural medicine wheel that includes quadrants running semantically clock-wise ...



... no diagonal jump.

“Some are pessimistic about the future of the Mooc. Critics have pointed out that these free courses are likely to follow the traditional trajectory of the ‘hype cycle’ – 1> from technology trigger, 2> to peak of inflated expectations, 3> to trough of disillusionment before finally going up the slope of enlightenment and reaching the plateau of productivity – all of which sound more like a children’s adventure story than a trajectory for education” (Chalabi, 2014).



Indigenous understandings of (Dis)Place(ment) ... 6

1, from bottom left > My ancestors used to be **nomadic** hunter-gatherers

Hunter-Gatherer Societies



Figure 4.4. The Blackfoot or Siksika were traditionally nomadic hunter-gatherers who moved camp frequently during the summer months to follow the buffalo herds. (Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada)

Of the various types of preindustrial societies, **Hunter-gatherer societies** demonstrate the strongest dependence on the environment. As the basic structure of all human society until about 10,000–12,000 years ago, these groups were based around kinship or tribal affiliations. Hunter-gatherers relied on their surroundings for survival — they hunted wild animals and foraged for uncultivated plants for food. They survived on what nature provided and immediately consumed what they obtained. They produced no surpluses. When resources became scarce, the group moved to a new area to find sustenance, meaning they were nomadic. The plains Indians of North America, moved frequently to follow their main source of food. Some groups, like the Haida, lived off of abundant, non-depleting resources like fish, which enabled them to establish permanent villages where they could dwell for long periods of the year before dispersing to summer camps. (See “People of the Far Northwest” below).

Most of the caloric intake of hunters and gatherers came from foraging for edible plants, fruits, nuts, berries, and roots. The largely meat-based diet of the Inuit is a notable exception. Richard Lee (1978) estimated that approximately 65% of the hunter-gatherer diet came from plant sources, which had implications for the gender egalitarianism of these societies. With the earliest economic division of labour being between male hunters and women gatherers, the fact that women accounted for the largest portion of the food consumed by the community ensured the importance of their status within the group. On the other hand, early reports of missionaries among the Algonquins of the north shore of Lake Superior observed women with their noses cut off and small parts of their scalp removed as punishment for adultery, suggesting that (at least among some groups) female subordination was common. Male Algonquins often had seven or eight wives (Kenton, 1954).

... narrated by textbook revision, 7

“men did both roles, woman as far as I know only gathered. On a bigger scale, the tribe (which is the community that **travelled** together) worked together for everything [...] Hunting and gathering was more than just hunting and gathering; it was the way my ancestors lived day to day [...] In today’s society, there are still hunters and gatherers: my uncles are hunters and share what they got whether it be moose or deer meat and it all depends how much they kill, which determines how much they give us. I’m thankful that they think of us. Gathering in modern days is a bit different, still using and harvesting the land for berries, herbs, and other more sacred herbs for healing and praying, then giving back in prayer and tobacco. The other way is **going to the grocery store, I guess you can call it hunting also: it combined both your picking the meat you want (hunting) and getting the produce you want also (gathering). The only difference is your giving money to society instead of prayer.** Therefore I am a hunter/gatherer Native American Plains Cree woman, like my ancestors.”
– S. M.

2, a specific/top of 1> They became Plains Nehiyawak here in Central Alberta by **migrating** from the Swampy, Oji Cree and Northern Quebec regions (e.g. last year's census was translated into four dialects)

“An example of horticultural societies is the First Nations people after the settlements in the 1600's. The indigenous peoples taught the settlers how to grow crops in soils and the times in seasons. The indigenous peoples had a huge part on the survival of settlers and how we all survive today.” – Crystal Buffalo

“Awhile later **when most aboriginals were introduced to using the land differently like farming, they learned to grow their own food and learned to settle** in one place for a long while.” – K. E.

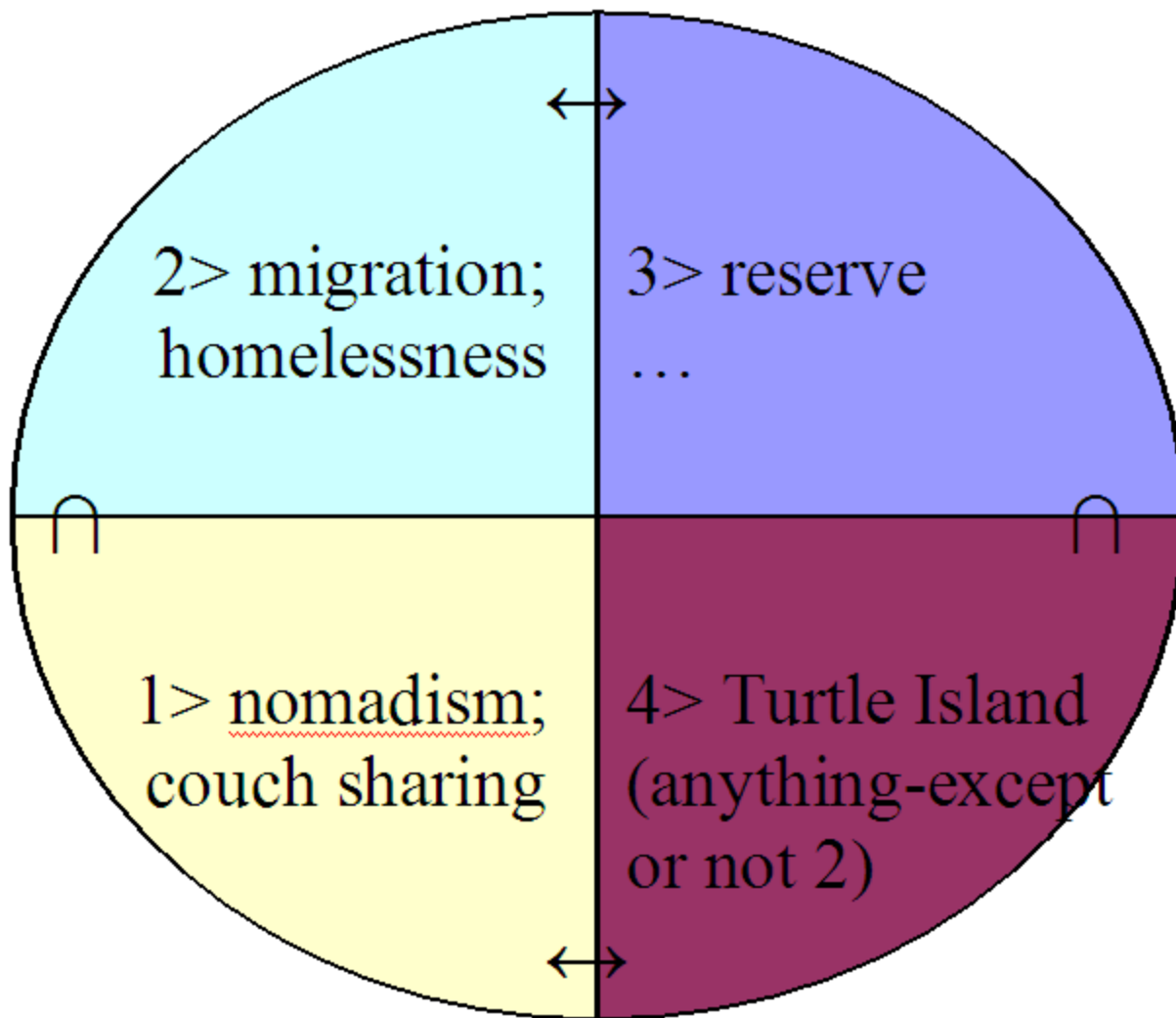
“Often our people had to go into these small towns to work, shop, and learn about how industries worked. As the years went by, the country and people were growing.” – J. J.

3, opposite/right to 2> but unfortunately have been **segregated** onto Treaty 6 reserves

“In Canada’s society, many reserves are still **isolated** and lack the necessary resources needed to develop essential life skills for today’s economy [...] The reserves were created to limit and control every aspect of life on and off the reserves. As a result, poverty has become a norm for many Aboriginal people.” – K. W.

4, genus/below 3> Turtle Island historically or North America is our land

“One of the more recent movements that took place within North America was ‘Idle No More’. A grassroots movement started by Nina Wilson, Sheelah McLean, Sylvia McAdam, and Jessica Gordon in November 2012; this movement sparked many rallies and protests to fight against Bill C 45 that was proposed by the Harper Government. This is one example of social movements within **First Nations communities across North America** that was heard across the globe. It is proof that groups of people when they come together can affect change.” – Janine Lightning



1 revisited, contrary/left to 4> **We surf on couches**

“I can recount a recent in-depth discussion with a Non-Aboriginal male, and he had some very valid concerns about how First Nations communities work [...] One question stumped me when he asked ‘we contribute to our community through taxes off our wages, so what do First Nation community members contribute back to their community?’ I had to think a bit to come up with an articulate response and when I did, it flawed. As First Nations, we contribute back to the community in ways that cannot be understood or measured within Western society. Collectively as First Nations people we support our own people through compassion, love and support. In my opinion, we would give the shirt off our backs for someone in need. It sounds alien to some, but it’s an example of how misunderstood we have become.” – Charlene R.

and 2, particularly> must fix **homelessness** ...

“homes in such bad shape because instead of hiring actual contractors we hired our own people which in a sense seems like a great way to save money but instead ended up costing more and more because **our own people weren’t trained right or cut corners to pocket extra money.**” – E. E.

Social Work, Bachelor of Arts & Education students get more conscious by doing homework every Friday regarding **at what micro-to-macro level their geographical identity stands**: which neighbouring band/tribe among four located 100 kilometres south from Edmonton, or Cree speaking indigenous groups federally off James Bay westward? Are they **FN versus Métis and Inuit**; or native peoples of Canada and worldwide?

Ghimn, Y.-C. (forthcoming). *Canadian aboriginal introduction to sociology* (Vol. 1). To be retrieved from the Alberta OER web page

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