



# Two Spirit History



## Land Commitment

We recognize that this workshop is being held on Treaty 6 territory. We are grateful to be on Blackfoot, Cree, Dene, Nakota Sioux, Saulteaux and Metis Nation territory; specifically the ancestral space of the Papaschase Cree. Furthermore, as a guest to this territory, I will always seek the consent and offer protocol before imposing my nation's or personal ways of doing and I pledge to take care of this land and uplift its people for future generations.



wâwâskêsiw ᑭᑭᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦ NA elk, wapiti; deer, **red deer**

» <https://247reddeer.ca/red-deer-alberta-history/>

» Gathering place

» History of displacement, erasure and of history of two spirit non-existent



# Two Spirit History



*Mi'kmaq petroglyphs:  
two spirit*





## **OSH-TISCH**

**Crow**

**Osh-Tisch is a Badé:**  
“an AMAB person in a Crow community who takes part in some of the social and ceremonial roles usually filled by women in that culture.”

They received their name  
“**Finds Them and Kills Them**”  
during the  
1876 Battle of the Rosebud

1890s - a settler agent tasked with forcing the Plains Indians to assimilate into the colonial culture, jailed Osh-Tisch and the other badés, and forced them to get masculine haircuts, wear masculine clothing, and perform manual labor.

The Crow consider their Badés valuable members of their community and found these actions as an act of abuse and direct violation of their culture and their nature.



# HOSTEEN KLAH

Navajo/Diné

**Hosteen Klah is Nádleeheh**  
Translates to "one who is transformed"  
"one who changes"

Hosteen Klah is a skilled weaver and singer

"The world is beautiful and  
we are going to put the spirit into it."  
Quote from Klah's text  
Navajo Creation Myth

Recognized as an  
Medicine Man by 1917,  
Klah had an important role  
in ceremony. Klah is known for his sand  
painting weavings.

Sand painting weaving  
was a way of keeping the  
chants from being lost.

Klah formed the  
Museum of Navajo  
Ceremonial Art in 1937  
(Wheelwright Museum)

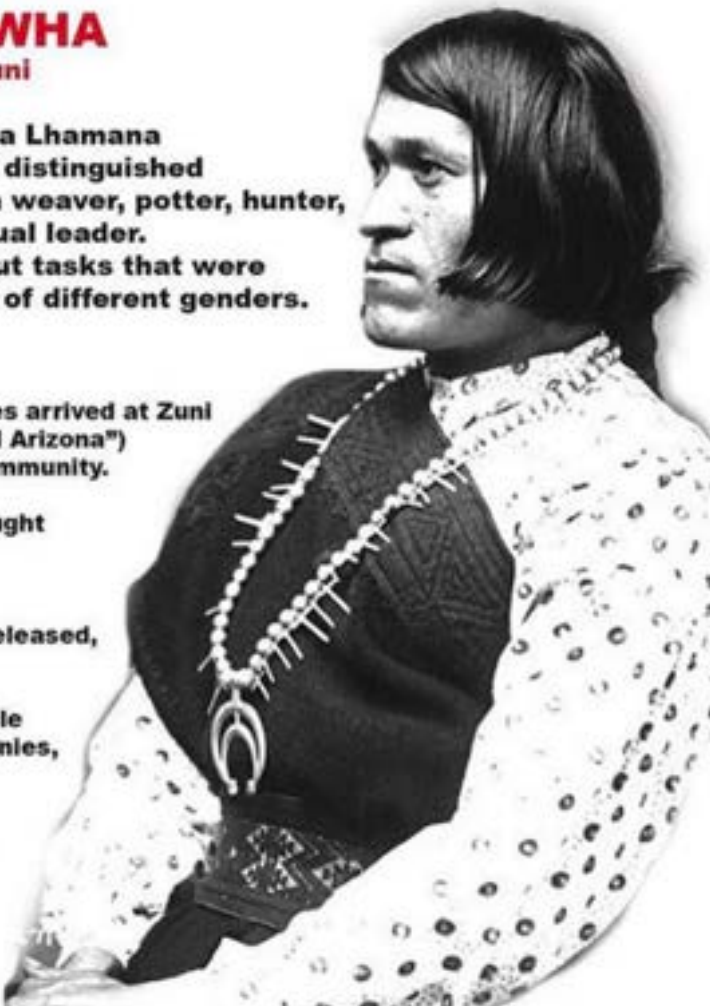
## **WE-WHA**

Zuni

**We-Wha is a Lhamana  
They are well distinguished  
in their community as a weaver, potter, hunter,  
and spiritual leader.  
We-Wha carried out tasks that were  
performed by people of different genders.**

**1877 - Christian missionaries arrived at Zuni  
(so-called "New Mexico and Arizona")  
intent on converting the community.  
The Lhamana were  
imprisoned and the Zuni fought  
for their eventual release.**

**We'wha was imprisoned  
amongst others and once released,  
walked 40 miles  
back to the reservation.  
They returned to their people  
to continue leading ceremonies,  
making pottery,  
weaving with the women  
and hunting with the men.**







There are hundreds of Indigenous languages in Canada alone.

**There are dozens of languages that fall under the ALGONQUIAN language family, within this language system, there were NO GENDER PRONOUNS, everything was simply ANIMATE or INANIMATE.**





# The creation of Two Spirit

- Coined in 1990 at the Native American Gay and Lesbian Conference in Winnipeg
- From nij-manidowag gifted by Myra Laramie in a vision through pipe ceremony in 1989
- Unite a word to combat negative stereotypes (berdache) and to empower urban NDN youth disconnected from their languages





\*WEHEE'AHIIKEN\* \*KUUYAT\* \*LHAMANA\*  
\*WINKTE\* \*NÁDLEEHÍ\* \*BOTÉ\* \*DILBAA\*  
\*KOTOISE\* \*NAPÉW\* \*ISKWÉWISÉHOT\*  
\*ISKWÉW KA NAPÉWAYAT\* \*MEXOGA\*  
\*IKWEKAAZO\* \*ININIKAZO\* \*HEMANEH\*  
\*ELXA\* \*KWERHAME\* \*AGI\* \*WIKOVAT\*  
\*HAXU'XAN\* \*KUXA'T\* \*YAAWA\* \*NUDALE  
ASGAYA\* \*NUDALE AGEHYA\* \*HE'EMAN\*  
\*HETANEMAN\* \*ELHA\* \*WARRHAMEH\*  
\*ATHUTH\* \*MAHU\* \*MIATI\*

## TWO SPIRIT

\*HO'VA\* \*IWAP KUTI\* \*QUARIWARMÍ\* \*KWIT\*  
\*ALYHA\* \*TUDAYAPI\* \*KU'SAAT\* \*FA'AFAPINE\*  
\*GATXAN\* \*CLELE\* \*WOS\* \*ARANARUAQ\* \*MUXE\*  
\*TUWASAWITS\* \*SHIANGE\* \*TUVA'SA\*  
\*KU'SAAT\* \*OKITCITAKWE\* \*TAI'UP\* \*OSABU\*  
\*NDE'ISDZAN\* \*ILYAXAI\* \*GEENUMU  
GESALLAGEE\* \*KOK'WE'MA\* \*MONAGUIA\*  
\*SIPINIQ\* \*HATUKIKLANNA\* \*HATUKHOLBA\*  
\*AAKÍ'SKASSI\* \*SAAHKÓMAAPI'AAKÍKOAN\*  
\*HATANE'MANE'O\* \*HETANEMAN\* \*TAYAGIGUX'\*  
\*BLOKA EGLA WA KE\*



## History has Erased Us and We are Still Invisible

- » Indigenous accounts of history are omitted from our text books as are queer, trans and two-spirit accounts
- » Invisibility and Assimilation are still primary tools on ongoing colonization (google: native clothes or cherokee)
- » Awareness, representation and visibility are important first steps



## Intersectionality of Settler Colonialism & Cisheteropatriarchy

- Settler colonialism is the form of violence that manifest itself as: settlers are better than Indigenous people, therefore Indigenous people must be Christianized and colonized via their gender roles, family structures, systems of governance, values and norms be eradicated and replaced with European ones
- Cisheteropatriarchy manifest as the violence that says: Cisgender, Heterosexual and Male/Masculine folks are better than Transgender/Gender Diverse, Queer and Female/Feminine & Non/binary/Androgynous folks and therefore, Trans/Queer/NB/Femme folks need to be invisible, irrationalized, not be given positions of authority, be villainified and coded as morally wrong or ambiguous, isolated and face isolation and ostracization to criminalization if they step outside of the boxes of societal norms and be themselves

A watercolor illustration on the left side of the slide. It features a vibrant green leaf with detailed vein patterns, positioned above a hand holding a carrot. The background is a soft, light blue and white wash, suggesting a natural, outdoor setting. The style is artistic and textured.

## Barriers we face in today's society”

- Having to navigate between the racism in the LGBTQ+ community and the homophobia/transphobia in the Indigenous community
- Having to do emotional labour to educate our co-workers, classmates etc
- Being the token native and token LGBTQ+
- Having to conform to western society's expectations, when our roles are outside this system
- Higher rates of suicide, addictions, poverty, murder etc



## What you can do!

- Donate space, time, money, experience
- Hiring equity
- Pronouns
- Intake forms
- Bringing in elders, two spirit people, knowledge keepers
- Policies and procedures to empower two spirit folks
- Research on two spirit led and directed by two spirit
- Decolonizing structures (hierarchies, consensus decision making etc)





## Resources

- Native Youth Sexual Health Network
- Edmonton 2-Spirit Society
- Pride Centre of Edmonton
- ASPECC- Alberta Sex Positive Education and Community Centre
- HIV Edmonton
- Men's Health Collective
- Alt View
- Please also check out the resources package for more useful tools and articles
- Queer and Trans Support Services through Edmonton Sexual Assault Support Centre

# Chi miigwetch! Hiy hiy!

**Any questions?**

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## Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- » Presentation template by [SlidesCarnival](#)
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