Full Length Article

"Home has always been at the heart of our self-government": Housing, home and Indigenous self-determination in Fort Good Hope, Canada

Aimee Pugsley [a], Julia Christensen [b,*], Arthur Tobac [c]

[a] Memorial University of Newfoundland, 230 Elizabeth Avenue, St John's, NL, A1C 5S7, Canada
[b] Queens University, 99 University Avenue, Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6, Canada
[c] K'ásho Goṭ̲įne Housing Society, PO Box 68, Fort Good Hope, NT, XOE OHO, Canada

ABSTRACT

The colonial geographies of northern and Indigenous housing have long been the focus of research attention, particularly the transformative and destructive role the assimilative power of social welfare has played in State interventions into Indigenous lives at the bodily, familial, community and national scales. Recent literature in the areas of northern and Indigenous housing has underscored the need for increased community self-determination over housing in order to uproot structures of colonial domination and attend to specific cultural and contextual realities, visions and needs—necessary for the sustainable alleviation of a longstanding "housing crisis" in northern Canada. This paper examines differing discourses of Indigenous self-determination through recent efforts by the K'ásho Goṭ̲įne Housing Society (KGHS) – an Indigenous community housing organization – and the territorial and federal governments to promote Indigenous self-governance of housing. Drawing on critical analyses of self-determination led by Indigenous scholars, and engaging a series of qualitative interviews with Indigenous and settler policymakers and housing administrators at the community, territorial and federal levels, we examine how differing Indigenous and settler conceptualizations of the self-determination of housing are evident in critical barriers presented by the governance of land and the "compartmentalization" of home. Ultimately, we argue that full self-determination of Indigenous home through housing is fundamentally impeded by current housing governance processes, though the multiscalar nature of Indigenous home simultaneously challenges the capitalist, settler-colonial structures holding up these processes, and also cultivates the everyday, placed-based resistance of the individual, family and community by creating space to imagine housing through Indigenous epistemologies.

1. Introduction

"Our Dene sense of home has always been at the heart of our self-government. We have always been clear that housing and home are at the center of everything for our communities." - Edwin Erutse, President of the Yamoga Land Corporation, the governing body for all Sahtu Dene

In 2016, the K'ásho Goṭ̲įne Housing Society was incorporated in the community of Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories, Canada to address persistent housing need in the community. Using funds acquired through the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (SDMCLCA), the Society was to work with Fort Good Hope's Chief and Council to build consensus around community housing objectives and strategic planning. This development was part of a long trajectory of community resistance to colonial housing policy, and the welfare colonialism introduced by the settler State in northern, Indigenous communities in Canada since the mid-20th century. Deliberate efforts on the part of the State to undermine Indigenous home through housing policy, as well as specific policies directed at the disintegration of Indigenous families and cultural modes of knowledge transmission (for example,

residential schools and the child welfare system), have rendered home a particularly profound site of settler colonial intervention in the lives of Indigenous peoples (Christensen, 2017; De Leeuw, 2016). Home in this context captures values, feelings, and the relations of homemaking that support wellbeing, extending beyond the physical infrastructure and material space of a dwelling to which housing refers. It is no surprise, then, that the self-determination of Dene homemaking and housing delivery has been central to the visions of self-government offered by Sahtu Dene leaders for decades, as home and its nuanced meanings across scales is seen as the defining nexus point for the intersection of all components of Dene life.

The need for Indigenous self-determination of housing as a critical and sustainable response to persistent, systemic failures in northern housing delivery has been repeatedly highlighted by Indigenous leaders and housing advocates. Refusal to continue waiting for meaningful response from settler State governments – at the territorial/provincial level where issues such as housing are governed locally through specified programming, and the federal level where the higher State power over housing is held and exercised through national policies and funding – has led to the development and implementation of community housing

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* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: alpugsley@mun.ca (A. Pugsley), julia.christensen@queensu.ca (J. Christensen), ndl_manager@yamoga.ca (A. Tobac).

strategies in a variety of Indigenous community contexts across northern Canada. These powerful gestures of Indigenous resistance vis-a-vis housing and home have signaled a critical turning point in northern housing policy, with increasing attention given from the State to facilitating direct working relationships with Indigenous communities in the self-governed delivery and administration of housing.

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), the territorial government department responsible for housing delivery, Housing NWT (formerly the NWT Housing Corporation), released a Strategy for the Renewal of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation in 2021 that directly targeted the persistence of the territorial housing crisis, highlighting the cultural shift required to decolonize the Corporation's approach to housing delivery. In particular, the Strategy for the Renewal underlined the social role of the Corporation in providing housing to northerners, acknowledged the role of housing as a tool for colonial social policy in the NWT, and committed the Corporation to facilitating Indigenous self-government of housing. In this study we engage with self-government, which provides an Indigenous nation the autonomy to administrate their services and societal relationships, as the Canadian state-defined pathway to Indigenous self-determination, which is the broad and fundamental right of Indigenous peoples to have control over their choices.

The commitment of Housing NWT (2021: 8) to facilitating Indigenous self-government of housing included a specific call to "advance self-government, even where Indigenous governments have not yet chosen to exercise their law-making powers under a self-government agreement". How, exactly, these commitments are being realized, and ultimately what Indigenous self-determination of housing means from an Indigenous perspective on the one hand, and a State perspective on the other, is a central focus of this article. In particular, we attend to the inextricable relationships between housing and home within Indigenous ways of knowing and being, suggesting that Indigenous housing cannot be truly self-determined without a governance framework built around Indigenous conceptualizations of home, which ultimately depends on Indigenous land sovereignty. Home, we argue, is cultivated and experienced at multiple scales–the same scales of operation that the settler colonial project has deliberately and skillfully engaged in Canada. Indigenous self-determination of home, therefore, is a necessarily multi-scalar initiative that requires not only profound transformations to housing priorities, design and governance at the local community level, but simultaneously profound transformations in northern, Indigenous housing policy and governance at all scales of settler State governance. Such multi-scalar change is required in order to ensure the sustainability of Indigenous self-determination of housing (see Corntassel, 2012).

Thus, this paper seeks to interrogate the possibilities for Indigenous self-determination of housing by engaging specific challenges and barriers the KGHS has encountered in its efforts to self-govern housing in Fort Good Hope. We first provide some context for this research and the remote methods used, before exploring the scholarly foundations in and contributions of this research to geographies of home, and critical analyses of self-determination. We then draw on a series of qualitative interviews with Indigenous and settler policymakers and housing administrators at the community, territorial and federal levels, to examine critical barriers to the self-determination of housing presented by the governance of land and the siloing of home through colonial structures of sectoral governance. Ultimately, we argue that full self-determination of Indigenous home through housing is fundamentally impeded by the continued control of the territorial and federal governments over the administration of land, funding and policy; signs that ultimately the self-government of housing will be facilitated by the State only insofar as it does not ultimately threaten continued settler State control over Indigenous resources. Finally, we suggest that a multi-scalar, resurgent approach to cultivating Indigenous home is required in order to meaningfully and sustainably transform the housing landscape for northern, Indigenous peoples.

2. Context

Fort Good Hope, or Rádeyıłı Kǫ by its Dene name meaning 'where the rapids are', is a K'ásho Goṭı̨ne Dene community on the east banks of the Mackenzie River in the Sahtu settlement region of the Northwest Territories. The community gets its Dene name from its connection to the Ts'udé Nilı̨né Tuyeta – known in English as the Ramparts River and wetlands – which is a sacred harvesting site for the K'ásho Goṭı̨ne Dene and an Indigenous and territorial protected area as of 2019.

The settlement of Fort Good Hope was established by the North West Company in 1805 as a fur trading post at the center of a vast trade network in the region. As the trade expanded northwards, Indigenous peoples in Denendeh were encouraged to maintain their ancestral way of life, sustaining trapping and bringing in furs to the trade posts. However, with the discovery of minerals and oil in the Yukon and the NWT through the 20th century, the settler colonial administration needed to control the land in northern Canada and the Indigenous peoples who had inhabited it since time immemorial.

Treaties provided the Crown a mechanism for gaining this control and were offered to Indigenous peoples as protection for their traditional way of life and from increasing encroachment by white trappers, prospectors and miners. In the Mackenzie District, the Dehcho, Tłı̨chǫ, Gwich'in and Sahtu peoples signed Treaty 11 with the Crown between 1921 and 1922 in order to, in their minds, formalize their rights to the land and their freedom to trap and hunt on it. However, like other numbered treaties signed between the Crown and Indigenous peoples, this agreement was presented to Indigenous signatories with concealed terms and consequences. The Crown increasingly imposed limitations on Dene hunting and harvesting practices and coerced leaders into giving up title to their ancestral territory.

After translating and revealing the written terms of Treaty 11 to an assembly of Dene chiefs in 1969, a long fight ensued for the rights to land their ancestors had called home since time immemorial. During this time, the K'ásho Goṭı̨ne Dene in Fort Good Hope demonstrated their strong political will to protect their land, traditions, and values. From 1974 to 1977, Justice Thomas Berger led the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry to investigate the impacts of a proposed gas pipeline running through the Yukon and Mackenzie River valley. During the consultation process, Chief at the time and now Elder of Fort Good Hope Frank T'Seleie delivered a powerful address:

> Whether or not your businessmen or your government believes that a pipeline must go through our great valley, let me tell you, Mr. Berger, and let me tell your nation, that this is Dene land and we the Dene people intend to decide what happens on our land … Our Dene nation is like this great river. It has been flowing before any of us can remember. We take our strength and our wisdom and our ways from the flow and direction that has been established for us by ancestors we never knew, ancestors of a thousand years ago. Their wisdom flows through us to our children and our grandchildren to generations we will never know. We will live out our lives as we must and we will die in peace because we will know that our people and this river will flow on after us. (Watkins, 1977:12–18)

The continued fight for their rights and values gained significant ground in 1993 for Fort Good Hope and the other four Sahtu Dene communities with the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (SDMDLCA). The signing of this agreement provided the Sahtu Dene and Métis with title to 41,437 square kilometers of land and 1813 square kilometers of subsurface rights, whilst also providing for the negotiation of community-based self-government agreements by all five communities. This trajectory of resilience and political will to protect K'ásho Goṭı̨ne Dene rights in Fort Good Hope continues today with the ongoing pursuit of self-determination through the negotiation of self-government, and indeed such efforts as those directed by the KGHS to manage their own housing.

Today, Fort Good Hope is home to 601 people, 545 of whom (91%)

are Indigenous, while Sahtúot'ine and English are the primary languages spoken. The people of Fort Good Hope connect strongly with their Dene and Métis traditions and values, with almost half the population engaging in hunting and fishing, three quarters consuming country foods, and all taking great pride in self-sufficiency and resilience – principles in which the community has a rich cultural history. The strength of cultural connections in Fort Good Hope shapes the community's housing needs, demonstrated in their housing strategy's commitment to providing cultural support such as traditional, land-based healing for members experiencing homelessness. Strong social networks and values of sharing reduce the visibility of homelessness in the community, which presents as couch surfing or living with parents instead of the rough sleeping that is more frequently found in urban areas. Additionally, as a non-market community the private housing market that dominates housing provision in southern Canada is almost absent in Fort Good Hope, whose residents are subsequently reliant on the public or government provision of housing options.

Housing delivery in Fort Good Hope is shaped by a specific governance landscape in the NWT that is transitioning from the settler government administration of services towards First Nation self-government. While the formation of the KGHS has meant significant advances towards community self-determination of housing, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) – specifically Housing NWT – remains responsible for administering many existing housing services in the community, with the Local Housing Organization branch in Fort Good Hope managing around 80 public or rental housing units. The federal government meanwhile provides funding to the territorial government and directly to the KGHS through Service Canada or the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Moreover, housing governance in Fort Good Hope is shaped significantly by the strong political will of the community to protect their rights and way of life. The resistance and resilience reflected in Frank T'Seleie's words to the Berger inquiry would later characterize Fort Good Hope's decision to self-govern the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in the 1980s, following the community's dissatisfaction with the GNWT's inadequate delivery of housing. The community-led delivery of HAP housing in Fort Good Hope illustrated the determination with which residents elevated their core value of self-sufficiency to build their own homes. Indeed, the KGHS cites these efforts as the inspiration for the incorporation and direction of its work.

3. Methods

In engaging with Fort Good Hope and the KGHS to examine the self-determination of housing, the decision was made together to focus this study on northern housing policy and governance structures rather than the community and residents impacted by the systemic failings of housing delivery in the NWT. Due to this research being conducted during the global COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent access limitations to the NWT, the first stage of data collection included a scoping review of archival and current policy documents, gray literature, and media commentaries to understand the NWT's housing delivery trajectory and process. Then, employing a purposive sampling strategy, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted remotely via video conferencing or telephone with ten key personnel selected for their involvement in housing governance at the community, territorial, and federal government levels. This group of interviewees consisted of five females and five males, half of whom were Indigenous community members or representatives, and half territorial or federal government representatives.

Open questioning permitted interviewees to story the ways they interact with and make sense of the housing governance system in the NWT in light of Indigenous aspirations for self-determination. Creating this space allowed participants to engage with the NWT's barriers to community-led housing through their personal frameworks of experience and understanding, and subsequently shed valuable light on their conceptualisations of self-determination. An emphasis on storytelling with respect to individual experiences of home governance has the potential to be, as Simpson (2011) has articulated, decolonizing, as it provides a critical lens through which Indigenous peoples can envision their way out of cognitive imperialism, mapping out the home spaces of freedom and justice.

The process of data collection and indeed the anti-colonial research methodology in this study was shaped and continuously modified through online consultation meetings with the KGHS. Listening and responding to ongoing feedback not only around the research but also pertaining to life in Fort Good Hope and the NWT was especially critical for ensuring ethical conduct during the pandemic, when the governing actors implicated in this research were faced with navigating the urgent realities of the northern housing crisis alongside the ever-evolving challenges of the pandemic.

Our analysis is rooted in the diverse positionalities we bring to this research. Aimee Pugsley is a UK citizen who came to Memorial University to pursue a Master of Arts with her then-supervisor, Julia Christensen, who was already engaged in collaborative research with KGHS on various housing-related issues its members sought to address. Julia is a settler Canadian; born and raised in Yellowknife, the capital city of the Northwest Territories, a growing community situated on the traditional, unceded homelands of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. Critical to driving this collaborative research process has been Arthur Tobac, Sahtu Dene, the Director of KGHS and a member of community council in Fort Good Hope. Arthur's contributions to this work extend well beyond his participation as an interviewee, as he has provided considerable insight into the data analysis and theoretical reflections offered here. Together, the three co-authors on this paper have engaged deeply in discussion of the data Aimee collected and its significance, building on the investigations pursued in her thesis to focus on the implications of KGHS' experiences on broader momentum around the need for Indigenous self-determination of housing as a response to the housing crisis in northern Canada.

4. Indigenous home & colonial housing legacies

Colonial transformations in northern Canada were greatly accelerated in the 1950s during the Canadian government's post-Second World War 'northern vision' that sought to bring capitalist development and EuroCanadian ways of living to northern and Indigenous peoples (Tester, 2009; Wenzel, 2008). Following the disruptive decline of the fur trade, the colonial government sought to settle First Nations, Inuit and Métis in centralized communities with the promise of services such as housing and medical care as well as more coercive tactics such as the establishment of residential schools (known as "hostels") in the new settlements (Damas, 2002; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994)–all with the aim to assimilate northern Indigenous peoples into Canadian society and the wage economy (Bone, 2003).

Housing has been a particularly powerful tool of the social welfare arm of settler colonialism precisely because of its impact on the very intimate scale of home–in other words, on the ways in which Indigenous peoples live, including how they relate to one another and to the land. In this way, the domicide of Indigenous home (see Porteous & Smith, 2001) has been a critical focal point of settler colonialism and its efforts to dispossess and displace Indigenous peoples (Christensen, 2017). Housing units were designed in southern Canada according to non-Indigenous cultural values and design standards, with no input from northern and Indigenous residents. The units had no areas for the cutting and storing of meat, or for working on skidoos and boat motors, with spatial designs instead prioritizing the EuroCanadian nuclear family as well as separate spaces for sleeping and eating. Houses were also physically inadequate, constructed poorly, with insufficient heating methods, and thus unable to withstand the northern climate. Meanwhile, the rental schemes that accompanied the provision of these housing units discouraged participation in such informal economic

practices as hunting and sharing food, instead promoting wage labor and Indigenous dependency on market goods. At the same time, northern public housing policies have also undermined Indigenous cultural priorities and kin relations through the disruption of culturally valued caring practices such as hosting (Christensen, 2017) and sharing (Stern, 2005). Government-provided housing failed, and continues to fail, northerners by employing culturally inadequate designs and inappropriate policy, using unsuitable construction materials, and imposing the linear spatial orientations of EuroCanadian planners (Carter, 1993; Robson, 1995).

Housing policy has served to reorganize the ways in which Indigenous peoples organize themselves temporally and spatially, separating the material structure of shelter from other core elements of Indigenous ways of life and making home. The late Dene storyteller and Elder George Blondin (1997: 18) wrote, "we are people of the land; we see ourselves as no different than the trees, the caribou, and the raven, except we are more complicated." Drawing on Blondin's work to elaborate on Indigenous conceptualizations of home, Christensen (2017) suggests that this interdependence runs counter to Euro-Canadian individualism and speaks not only to a reliance on all living things but also to the fact that being in relation with the Land and all living beings is central to Indigenous concepts of 'home'. These lived forms of Indigenous self-determination of home at all scales speak to what Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Coulthard and Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson (2016) refer to as "grounded normativity"; in other words, the ethical frameworks provided by Indigenous place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge relating to the sustainable governance of people, lands, and water.

Scholarship in the critical geographies of home fittingly conceptualizes home as not only multifaceted, but also multi-scalar (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Marston, 2004). Blunt and Dowling (2006: 254) suggest that the meaning of home arises through the relationship between material and imaginative realms and processes—home is lived as well as imagined. In her efforts to examine the multiscalar geographies of Indigenous homelessness within their homelands in northern Canada, Christensen (2017) engages with the rich testimony of diverse Indigenous contributors to center land and family squarely within Indigenous home. Meanwhile, Métis scholar Jesse Thistle (2017) proposes an Indigenous conceptualization of 'home' understood as "circles of interconnectedness that together form the heart of healthy Indigenous social and spiritual emplacement", and positions this at the forefront of orienting more sustainable, contextualized responses to chronic housing need in Indigenous and northern communities.

Today, policy decisions, design choices and regulations that exclude Indigenous voices perpetuate the northern housing crisis,[1] and continue to undermine Indigenous homemaking (McCartney, 2016; McCartney et al., 2018). For example, public housing policy in the NWT stipulates that adult guests may stay with family or friends in public housing units for no longer than two weeks, hindering the ability of lease-holding residents to fulfill their cultural obligation and care for family or community members in need (Christensen, 2016). Furthermore, Indigenous values of intergenerational dwelling and sharing are threatened through an emphasis on nuclear family-sized units and problematized by universalizing overcrowding measures that rigidly define overcrowding with a person per room metric (Lauster & Tester, 2010). In fact, all the evaluative frameworks used to assess the state of northern and Indigenous housing, diagnose problems, and subsequently shape responses to the housing crisis, use standards and metrics that justify interventions of

technical 'best practice' to align northern and Indigenous housing and home environments with a standardized model of Canadian housing. Such technical rendering of shelter needs and priorities by the State overrides Indigenous traditions of homemaking that center relationships between kin and within community as well as connections on and with the land (Christensen et al., 2023). Critical policy scholarship illuminates policy as an important site of interrogation in the context of settler colonialism, particularly the policies targeting the intimate spaces of Indigenous lives that become sites of regulation and violence masked by the discourse of good intention and their framing as acts of care (Strakosch, 2019, 2024).

5. Self-determination, self-government & Indigenous housing

Settler colonialism, in Canada and elsewhere, is characterized through relations of domination (see Wolfe, 2006). As Coulthard and Simpson (2016: 6–7) writes, these relations of domination are defined by a relationship of power where:

> interrelated discursive and nondiscursive facets of economic, gendered, racial and state power … [have] been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority.

Relations of domination are so deeply embedded in the structures of settler governance in Canada that state-sanctioned processes of self-government have deliberately truncated the scope of Indigenous self-determination. In particular, Indigenous scholars problematize the constraints of settler-colonial State legal frameworks and imaginaries on the way self-determination is discussed, arguing that the possibilities of self-determination in Canada are currently dictated by state-defined parameters, structures and arrangements–namely self-government (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Borrows, 2016; Daigle, 2016; Deloria Jr, 2004; Hunt, 2014; Simpson, 2011). Moreover, Coulthard and Simpson (2016) and Irlbacher-Fox (2010) have criticized the current self-government framework in Canada for not only its limited authority but more fundamentally, for allowing colonial structures and policy frameworks to remain unchanged while self-management of poverty and social problems are downloaded to Indigenous communities without the necessary resources.

Indigenous self-determination, according to Sami scholar Rauna (Kuokkanen 2019: 2), is "a foundational value that fosters the norm of integrity manifested in two central forms, integrity of the land and individual integrity, including freedom from bodily harm and violence." Similarly, Secwépemc theorist and leader George Manuel (1974) writes that settler colonialism is a project enacted simultaneously at the intimate, local, familial, national, global scales. As such, he argues that the violence of colonialism must be actively resisted and dismantled at all scales of operation, relating directly to (Kuokkanen's 2014: 22) multi-scalar articulation of Indigenous self-determination as a sustained initiative that "requires nondomination in all relations, ranging from state relations of dispossession and removal, oppressive relations of colonial policies and law, to the most intimate relationships." Yet Kuokkanen's critique of state-recognized forms of self-government is directed in part at the tendency to view self-determination predominantly in connection to Indigenous lands and resources, and not the social, cultural and gendered dimensions of Indigenous self-governance, including the contested materiality of Indigenous bodies. This includes, then, the systemic and structural dimensions of settler colonial modes of governance with respect to Indigenous housing and the multiple scales of Indigenous home. In her contribution to Constantinou et al. (2024), she elaborates on this point to assert that while self-determination is typically conceptualized through the framing of collective human rights, this discussion delimits discussions of Indigenous self-determination to a framework of unequal legal and political rights relative to the State (see Mercer, 1993, 1997). Thus, moving beyond State limitations to fully

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[1] While the current housing crisis arises directly through modern housing programs, housing itself is not a contemporary or colonial entity. Indigenous peoples have built and maintained shelter since time immemorial. Prior to the extension of the Canadian social welfare State and its interventions into Indigenous lives, Indigenous peoples constructed homes not as material entities but as a nexus between the earth and spirit worlds (Christensen, 2017).

encompass Indigenous vision and practice is critical in order to "recover and reconceptualize the hopeful, emancipatory, and aspirational politics that have always underpinned self-determination" (Constantinou et al., 2024: 2). What then does fulsome self-determination that extends beyond the settler colonial State mean in the context of Indigenous home? This question is central to the aim of this paper.

While there is a significant lack of scholarly work that connects Indigenous self-determination to housing governance, the literature does examine self-determination in relation to Indigenous health, wellbeing and quality of life, positioning self-determination as essential to altering the structural conditions of Indigenous lives and allowing an approach to the governance of health and wellbeing that responds to interconnected Indigenous conceptualizations of home (Johnson et al., 2021; Nelson & Wilson, 2021; Richmond et al., 2007). Moreover, in their scholarship on human rights and Indigenous health, Nelson and Wilson (2021) critique the ways in which politico-legal, settler colonial rights-based frameworks, which privilege rights at the individual scale, fail to account for Indigenous conceptualizations of health, which not only seek to nurture health at the collective scale but also view land as critical to Indigenous health and wellbeing. Meanwhile, Kuokkanen (2019) stresses that fully restructuring relations of colonial domination requires the scope of self-determination to include the intimate/familial scales–without doing so would mean, in her view, advancing something other than self-determination of Indigenous nations and communities: "we are in fact constructing exclusionary forms of self-determination and upholding heteropatriarchy as part of our vision and in our everyday social and political relations" (53). It is precisely these State recognized processes of development and implementation of Indigenous self-government that support (Coulthard's 2014: 15) critique that in the Canadian context, "colonial relations of power are no longer reproduced primarily through overtly coercive means, but rather through the asymmetrical exchange of mediated forms of state recognition and ac-commodation." In response, Iralu and Kikon (2024) advocate for what Castree (2004) terms a "differential geography" of Indigenous self-determination; one that dismantles settler colonial hegemony in knowledge production, with its focus on top-down governance and metrics-oriented evaluative frameworks, and returns in its place self-governance nourished by Indigenous values of community, reci-procity and relationship. Indigenous self-determination, then, necessi-tates a full Indigenization of self-governing institutions in order to resist "institutional path dependency" and ensure that Western values of governance are not perpetuated even in self-government (Kuokkanen, 2019).

Particularly relevant to our discussion here are three critical values that Cherokee scholar Jeff Corntassel (2008) identifies as limiting the scope of state-recognized Indigenous self-determination: 1) the compartmentalization of Indigenous powers of self-determination by separating questions of land and natural resources from political/legal recognition under the existing framework of the State; 2) the de-emphasis of cultural responsibilities and relationships that Indige-nous Peoples have with their families and the natural world; and 3) the establishment of ad-hoc restrictions that attempt to limit Indigenous Peoples ability to decolonize institutions. In order to address and move beyond these limitations, Corntassel (2008) believes that Indigenous views of self-determination need to be reframed to address contempo-rary challenges to Indigenous nationhood; namely that any effort of self-determination must be sustainable to avoid becoming another right in name only. Sustainable self-determination, he writes, is both an in-dividual and community-driven process that ensures:

> … indigenous livelihoods, food security, community governance, relationships to homelands and the natural world, and ceremonial life can be practiced today locally and regionally, thus enabling the transmission of these traditions and practices to future generations. (2008: 156)

For this to be successful, Indigenous Peoples need to reposition their focus away from a State-driven, narrowly constructed rights discourse towards "… a responsibility-based movement centered on sustainable self-determination." (Corntassel, 2008: 124). Indeed, the agency of Indigenous communities participating in the available pathways to self-determination cannot be ignored, and suggests a politic of refusal which, following Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson (2014), fundamen-tally repudiates colonial dispossession and violence on Indigenous lands and bodies and makes up the very foundation of Indigenous nationhood. Indigenous self-determination of housing is therefore a self-determination of home. It is an approach to centering Indigenous home in a constellation of critical relations in Indigenous individual, familial and community life–a constellation that includes the material infrastructure of housing but extends beyond that to encompass broader geographies of Indigenous home to include culture, health and well-being, sovereignty, Land, parenting and intergenerational relations (see Daigle & Ramírez, 2019). The settler colonial project has been so powerful in Canada through strategies of dispossession, displacement and genocide that have operated at all scales of Indigenous relations–-from the intimate spaces of the body and shelter, to shared spaces of community, territory, resources, knowledge and ontology. Thus, the assertion of Indigenous home as multiscalar through an approach to Indigenous self-determination that encompasses the intimate and the collective is essential to the decolonization of housing and housing governance, and indeed speaks to ways of reimagining self-determination in Indigenous contexts (see Constantinou et al., 2024). Indeed, such acts of assertion have been persistent through ongoing resistance against the settler State and the case is no different when it comes to the multiscalar resistance of settler interventions in the homespaces of northern, Indigenous peoples (see Nowicki, 2014).

In this paper, we engage with the experiences of the Kʼásho Goʈʇne Housing Society in their efforts to implement community self-government of housing through the assertion of Dene values of home – self-determination that we see supported through territorial and fed-eral policy and discursive gestures that nevertheless continue to limit Indigenous-led housing governance. In turn, we also identify the ways in which Indigenous self-determination of housing in the community illu-minates how refusal engages the dismantling of multiscalar systems of oppression vis-a-vis housing governance. Housing in Fort Good Hope, and in the Sahtu in general, has for decades been positioned as integral to the meaningful implementation of self-government, for home is so central to all facets of Dene life and wellbeing (see Blondin, 1997). Yet differing Indigenous and settler conceptualizations of what self-determination ultimately means are evident in the ways in which the self-government of housing has been implemented in Fort Good Hope, and the kinds of barriers that KGHS encounters.

6. Findings

> *"We look at all these things that impact our community. We're losing people to suicide–young people. Our people are suffering from addictions, [from] family violence. And, you know, all these things happen … because you don't have control over your housing situation. With self-government of housing … you're also addressing everything else that is critical to our sense of place and belonging, our sense of home." – Interview with James Caesar, KGHS, 2021*

Self-determination is increasingly being positioned as the necessary solution to the northern housing crisis in Canada, albeit at varying scales from small expressions of community control to self-government of housing to full Indigenous self-determination, by First Nations, settler State governments, scholars (see Christensen et al., 2023), and similarly in other Indigenous contexts globally (Anthony & Hohmann, 2024). Attention though is required to understand what the self-determination of housing means and how it is to be realized. The perspectives offered by interviewees in this research provide critical insights into the different and often conflicting ways in which Indigenous

self-determination of housing is understood and aspired to within the current housing governance system in the NWT.

At the center of community-based interviewees' aspirations for self-determination of housing is a holistic, Indigenous conceptualization of home, with housing positioned as a space in which home is actively cultivated and sustained, and home as a way-of-being that is nurtured within the physical structure of a house, but also in relation to and on the land, with education and self-sufficiency, and by connecting to family, community, language and cultural traditions. Alternatively, State perspectives on Indigenous self-determination of housing illustrate a belief that self-determination is possible within the current system of housing governance, through the devolution of responsibilities for housing to Indigenous communities with support from territorial and federal government agencies. While representatives from the territorial and federal governments indicated in interviews a deep, ideological commitment to supporting Indigenous community-led housing, they nevertheless identified many ways in which the existing framework for housing governance limited their ability to fully and sustainably support Indigenous self-determination. Corntassel (2012) has warned that the under-resourcing of self-determination renders it a concept in name only and highlights the particular challenges to sustainable self-determination of state recognition frameworks. Exploring KGHS efforts towards the self-governance of housing in Fort Good Hope alongside the interviewee accounts here, this paper supports these concerns, exposing the settler colonial forms and foundations that impede community-led housing and ultimately repress Indigenous self-determination of home.

6.1. Governance of land

The barriers to community-led housing in Fort Good Hope surrounding access and relation to land expose the impact and strength of ongoing settler colonialism in current state forms and mechanisms. Despite the existence of a Sahtu land claim, the majority of land within Fort Good Hope's community boundaries is Commissioner's Land administered by the territorial government's Department of Lands. Acquisition of this land by the community involves lengthy and bureaucratic application processes to either lease land and pay a percentage of its assessed value annually, or purchase land by obtaining fee simple title. Both avenues have their barriers, with community interviewees expressing concern for the government's unjust assessment of land value in Fort Good Hope, which prices residents out of acquiring residential leases, as well as the cost-prohibitive requirement that land be legally surveyed for fee simple title. Besides the resulting difficulties in accessing land to build on, one GNWT employee observed further implications for housing, in that without titled land and homeowners insurance, it is impossible to get a mortgage from a bank.

Another GNWT employee expressed significant concern over the inaccessibility of land and the resulting barriers to community-led or self-governed housing efforts:

> We need to decide if we're looking at [land] as a resource or a right … and I think the policies that the government has in play right now point to it as more of a resource that can be a source of income. We haven't even sorted out how people can live on it yet. (Interview with GNWT employee, 2021)

Meanwhile, the realization of Indigenous conceptualizations of home presents an entirely different approach to land governance. Jason Snaggs, then-CEO of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), spoke to such possibilities as he contrasted the YKDFN's community-led housing efforts with the territorial government's approach to housing delivery. Demonstrating a process of land administration and acquisition that aligns with YKDFN epistemology, Jason explained that land in the YKDFN communities of Ndilǫ and Dettah is assessed as suitable for home-building using Indigenous knowledge to determine the geology and ecological function of the land and its spiritual or community

significance. The development of YKDFN's community housing plan has been anchored around the input of Indigenous knowledge holders through an entirely place-based and culturally-oriented process for setting housing needs, priorities and community vision. Snaggs' illustration effectively demonstrates the ways in which the State's framework for designating land for housing construction through a complex, bureaucratic process and the approval of a land surveyor profoundly undermines the advancement of Indigenous self-determination of home. However, the case for Indigenized land administration would require the acceptance of land as an Indigenous right and relation rather than a capitalist resource, highlighting the underlying epistemological assumptions that must be challenged to make way for the decolonization of housing governance.

Canadian planning regulations also limit the control that community members of Fort Good Hope can assert over their dwelling relationship with the land. James Caesar suggested that Canadian building codes and procedures fail to consider the contextual and cultural nuances of northern Canada, and as a result have forced the KGHS to abandon the self-building ways of previous generations and instead hire architects, electricians, and carpenters to conduct planning and construction in order to meet Canadian government requirements. Traditional practices of building and homemaking for example, including the use of local materials for construction and culturally specific methods of heating a dwelling, are not legible within building codes that are oriented around the use of technology – particularly technological approaches to energy efficiency – and industrially processed materials.

For James, the disconnect between State policy and community priorities is entrenched in the colonial ways in which the community was initially planned, arguing that no regard was given to the K'ásho Goṱ̓ne peoples' relation to and knowledge of the land:

> Community planners built all these lines and the road and everything … they were being drawn out by planners from Edmonton of all places! None of them ever came to the community here. You know, see the actual physical topography of our community, thinking that all the land here is flat just like down in the prairies, but it's not, it's all hills and valleys and the riverbank on a 45° angle. So you know, they drew all these lines without really knowing where they are drawing their lines. (Interview with James Caesar, KGHS, 2021)

The lines drawn by planners who have never stepped foot in Fort Good Hope established the material foundations for a present-day lack of control the community has over its land, and is ultimately a visual representation of the persistent challenges faced by KGHS in its efforts to self-govern housing delivery in a system effectively designed elsewhere according to State priorities (see Christensen, 2020).

One Housing NWT employee expressed frustration in their interview with the regulations framing lot development and housing design and delivery in the territory, that fail to embrace the unique northern context and resources available in small and remote communities like Fort Good Hope:

> There needs to be a northern Indigenous focus around how you roll out housing programs because when you look at what is in place right now, it's really just taking policy, federal CMHC policy, and just trying to implement it in a context that doesn't have the resources and it's not built for that type of context. So, it really needs to be something that is developed based on what resources exist in the community and then adapting policy and adapting funding. (Interview with GNWT employee, 2021)

One mechanism that would aid such a process, they suggest, is the development and implementation of northern building standards as opposed to importing them from southern Canada. Subsequent housing policy and procedures could then be somewhat more contextualized to the nuances of northern living, accounting for climatic and cultural needs in housing design, as well as available labor, skill sets, and access to construction materials.

Angela Grandjambe (Fort Good Hope LHO) meanwhile expressed a vision for the self-determination of housing in the community that centers on self-building, and increasing opportunities for residents to develop their own homes as they did under the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in the 1980s. For Angela, self-determination is ultimately reflected in the sustainability of the log homes that were self-built under this program and have been lived in for over 35 years. She also described the significant pride that community members have in these houses, stemming from the independence the HAP afforded through home ownership rather than renting.

The lack of community control over land in Fort Good Hope, and the State's continued efforts to dominate land in Denendeh (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016) demonstrate the continued oppression of Indigenous self-determination by settler colonialism, and ultimately impede the core forms of integrity that Kuokkanen (2019) argues are essential to Indigenous self-determination. Land is fundamental to Indigenous self-determination, and in turn, home: without full control over Indigenous lands and resources, sustainable self-determination is impossible. Canadian regulations that impose state forms and dictate Indigenous dwelling relationships with the land by restricting self-building, or enforcing technical processes on the assessment of land suitability, clearly repress the ability of Indigenous communities to shape their own relations. Moreover, the unjust maintenance of state control over land in Fort Good Hope through the land claims agreement points to the governance of land in the NWT as a capitalist resource rather than a relation, and highlights the specific structural commitment of the State to capitalism that undermines Indigenous self-determination. The same State commitment to capitalism informs the income-based provision of housing that is heavily criticized by community members. Thus, it is clear that the colonial-capitalist agenda framing the dispossession of Indigenous lands also drives a socio-cultural order that has sought to erode Indigenous self-determination of home.

The colonization of Indigenous forms for dwelling was driven in large part by the settler State's desire to dispossess Indigenous peoples of their lands for the purposes of resource extraction and development (see Alfred, 2005; Coulthard & Simpson, 2016). The self-determination of home, then, is inextricably intertwined with the self-determination of land. And yet, as we have sought to convey in this section, real self-determination is ultimately enacted in name only when Indigenous control over land, and relational geographies to and within it, still very much operate through settler colonial forms of governance.

6.2. Compartmentalization of home

A profound barrier to the aspirations for self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope is the governance of housing in the NWT as a distinct sector, separated from other areas such as health, education, or employment. Former GNWT and CMHC employee, Sandra Turner recognized the practical implications of this approach to governance: "we work in siloes far too much, that's part of the problem, there's no question everybody knows their piece, but nobody knows how to pull it together" (Interview with Sandra Turner, 2021). In Fort Good Hope's efforts to move towards self-government, the KGHS is forced to operate within this sectoral system of governance, grounded in settler colonial ways of thinking, despite the fact that community values of home are ultimately inter-sectoral. Housing policy and funding is siloed from other sectors and directed by the federal and territorial governments to specific areas of housing need. Meanwhile, housing need itself is assessed through questions and surveys created within a government framework of rigid housing metrics, that ask community members to communicate housing needs within state-determined, predefined categories (see Christensen et al., 2023). These metrics focus heavily on a material understanding of housing, measuring factors such as income, occupancy, ownership, and physical qualities of a shelter against nationally accepted housing standards; in so doing ignoring the real place-based, culturally specific, and interconnected homemaking needs

of northern and Indigenous residents, and the broader role shelter plays in home and wellbeing.

For Angela Grandjambe and other interviewees, communities need control over housing need assessment in order to mobilize their inherent capacity to understand the responses required, and determine housing options accordingly: "If you make that decision in the community, seeing the needs and what needs to be done and what needs to be fixed up, I would say we'd be much better" (Interview with Angela Grandjambe, 2021). Community consultation that allows space for peoples' stories of homemaking to be heard would produce a more contextually- and culturally-relevant understanding of community housing needs, superior to compartmentalized responses to survey questions.

A sectoral approach to governance, not to mention the privileging of decontextualized and colonial housing metrics and needs assessment tools, prevents the KGHS from governing housing in line with an Indigenous conceptualization of home:

> I think for years we've been relying on the territorial government … and they're always separating themselves … the health department separates itself from housing or education … and yet they're all interlaced between each other. (Interview with Arthur Tobac, KGHS, 2021)

The institutionalized divisions between elements of the relational constellations that community interviewees articulated as comprising a sense of home, were positioned at the root of many of the community's self-identified social problems. For example, low employment and educational opportunities, poor health outcomes and persistent challenges related to intergenerational trauma, and youth suicide were all linked by community interviewees to housing governance that entrenches the material structure of home as separate from all other areas of Dene homemaking.

Not only does a holistic approach to governance grounded in an Indigenous epistemology offer the necessary scaffolding for sustainable self-determination, but for the community of Fort Good Hope, it is already known to be a successful approach to contemporary housing governance. The innovative and popular system of housing delivery that unfolded under the community's self-management of the short-lived Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) utilized a holistic approach to governance, engaging with the expanded social role housing takes on within the community's conceptualization of home. Through this housing program, the community succeeded in meeting multiple social, economic, and cultural objectives beyond the isolated provision of physical shelters: in addition to the delivery of culturally supportive, high quality log homes still beloved in the community today, expanded outcomes included the training of local administrators, the provision of jobs and valuable construction experience, the contribution of locally spent wages to boosting the community's economy, and an increase in community pride and independence (Rees & Hulchanski, 1990). This confirms the benefits to be reaped in northern and Indigenous communities when the governance of housing takes on the relational interconnectedness central to Indigenous epistemology, rather than the compartmentalization characteristic of the NWT's current governance system. Centering Indigenous epistemology in the community-led governance of home as opposed to housing, is a critical step towards Indigenous self-determination and necessary to the decolonization of the systems that shape the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples.

Interviewees also reinforced the need for community control over reliable and flexible source funding, as opposed to funding that has already been funneled into separate departments and programs which limits the ability of communities to address the relationships that connect housing to health, wellbeing, education, and employment (see Christensen et al., 2023). For example, funding is required in Fort Good Hope for the training of people in construction and labor skills so housing units can be maintained – training that also falls into education and employment sectors and is subsequently not provided for when

funds are rigidly assigned to specific housing programs and services. For Jason Snaggs, the combination of a holistic, integrated approach to housing governance, and funding that is reliable and flexible in terms of its application and timeline, would facilitate First Nations' expansion of housing programming beyond the physical provision of units. Such an approach to funding, he asserted, would allow for the inclusion of manual and financial training, education, and wraparound cultural wellness supports that enable community members to participate in the building of their houses and the cultivation of home through cultural connection, autonomy, and pride.

One employee of the GNWT suggested that an integrated service delivery model is essential to recognizing the interdependency of the NWT's social landscape within which housing provision is situated. As an example, the interviewee drew attention to the fact that northerners experiencing homelessness often have combined challenges relating to the inaccessibility of housing, health care, and education and employment supports. However, all of these areas of individual wellbeing are separated between different departments: "unfortunately, the government, the way the system is right now, it's very divided in terms of how it delivers programs so it's not really compatible with holistic approaches" (Interview with GNWT employee, 2021). The result is that communities are forced to apply for separate funds, all with their own policies, timelines and reporting requirements, which act as a significant barrier to holistically servicing their residents. Indigenous communities across the territory have long advocated for consistent and direct federal funding, free from sectoral parameters, in order to address housing priorities according to community-identified needs and values.

Indigenous self-determination of housing and home is threatened by the allocation of funding, released through one-off funding announcements by the federal government and generally limited to the fiscal year. This effectively cripples the ability of Indigenous governments to plan long-term, and to be assured that their efforts to implement responsive programming will be supported from year to year. It also burdens community housing staff with excessive reporting and funding application requirements, diverting already-constrained human resources away from fulfilling community housing needs and towards the tangled bureaucracy created by the system. Furthermore, the urgency of the northern housing crisis itself is mobilized discursively and through policy channels to justify short term funding responses, which divert attention away from the long-term shifts required for self-determination (see Corntassel, 2012). Such funding responses may appease self-governing desires to have control over aspects of the governance process, but fail to get to the crux of true Indigenous autonomy over housing.

The sectoral governance of housing discussed in this section, characterized by governing siloes, compartmentalized funding provision and state-sanctioned housing need assessment, effectively prevents programming centered around Indigenous conceptualizations of home that connects the material spaces of dwelling with the relational values and practices of individual, familial and community homemaking. Such compartmentalization of Indigenous homemaking thus serves to uphold relations of colonial domination through the separation of core, interconnected modes of relation inherent to Indigenous home (Kuokkanen, 2019). In order to bring the cultural and contextual interconnections of home into the design, development and administration of housing, the KGHS needs access to consistent, sustainable funding provided directly to the community and unencumbered by the system of sectoral governance that currently separates housing from other key areas of Indigenous homemaking.

6.3. The multiple scales of home and self-determination

While the KGHS works towards community self-government, the maintenance of State control over land and the compartmentalization of home challenges the possibilities available to the community within the current system of housing governance, effectively delimiting Indigenous self-determination of home within the confines of the State (see Constantinou et al., 2024). In fact, the continued territorial government administration of land in Fort Good Hope, the suppression of self-building by Canadian building codes, the siloed provision of funding, and the state-sanctioned assessment of housing needs, are all symptoms of the State's unwillingness to fully relinquish the control that allows for the preservation of State power over Indigenous resources. Within a system that offloads housing responsibilities in their current form from the State to communities, and at the same time withholds the resources communities require to effectively and sustainably self-govern their own housing, self-determination cannot be fully realized according to Indigenous aspirations.

To respond to the structural limitations of settler colonial forms that impede the self-determination of housing, is to attend to the often-conflicting meaning of self-determination from Indigenous and State perspectives and the possible pathways to sustainable self-determination. Interviewee accounts elucidated in this paper repeatedly underline the need for a system of housing governance that centers Indigenous values and practices of homemaking. Indigenous conceptualizations of home capture the interconnected and multiscalar nature of relationships between social, physical, economic, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing (Christensen, 2017; Thistle, 2017). For community interviewees, home is the space in which these interconnections are nurtured through the maintenance of relations with oneself, with kin, and with the land. Moreover, for these interviewees home is deeply connected to Indigenous self-determination, and it is Indigenous conceptualizations of home that must drive sustainability in the self-determination of housing. Following Daigle and Ramírez (2019), illuminating constellations of interconnected relations guides us toward decolonial futures.

To this end, the centering of Indigenous home unsettles settler colonial values attached to housing. Home as a guiding principle in any Indigenous housing strategy provides the language and conceptual framework to see and govern connections, such as those between housing and employment, education, or culture, rather than approaching nodes of the connected network as separate, isolated entities–in other words, the material as well as the imagined (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). If colonial structures and imaginaries give rise to a set of available solutions by bounding the way a problem is framed and storied (Murray Li, 2007), Indigenous home provides a necessary framework or set of imaginaries through which housing landscapes can be storied and subsequent solutions can be developed, with Indigenous epistemologies and multiplicity at the core.

As such, this paper offers Indigenous home as a rejection of the settler colonial forms that impede the self-determination of housing in the NWT, and that continue to entrench a state-driven ideology of housing as a commodity and tool for the disciplining of Indigenous subjects. Essential to positioning home in this way is recognizing that home as a feeling, a housing strategy, or an ideology is multi-scalar, and by engaging with the multiple scales of Indigenous home we can use scale to better understand the dynamics between home, settler colonialism, and self-determination. As this paper reveals, the multiscalar nature of Indigenous home simultaneously challenges the large-scale, capitalist, settler-colonial structures and processes of housing governance by showing their inadequate support for self-determination, and also cultivates the everyday, placed-based resistance of the individual, family and community by creating space to imagine housing through Indigenous epistemologies. The everyday transmission of Indigenous knowledge and ways of life offers an alternative and immediate politics for self-determination that is enacted through the everyday geographies of resilience in the face of colonial modes of governance over Indigenous peoples' lives (Daigle, 2016). We heed these reflections as well as Simpson's (2014) assertion of a politic of refusal here as we consider how the everyday practices of caring, sharing and interconnectedness of home speak to the lived Indigenous self-determination that operates outside of formal state assemblages.

Indeed, the multiple scales of Indigenous home have been well recognized by the multi-scalar, settler-colonial agenda (Manuel & Posluns, 1974). Housing has, historically and in the present-day, been a particularly strategic colonial tool used to disrupt Indigenous modes of homemaking across scales and the everyday lived experience of the home, through housing governance, policy and design, housing rules and regulations, and the intersecting roles of the child welfare system, criminal justice system, capitalist economy and health and social services. The multiscalar nature of both Indigenous home and the settler colonial project then allows us to understand why the barriers to self-determination are so hard to overcome, in operation at both the scales of State governance as well as the more localized control of land, dwellings and family. Moreover, the multiple scales of cultivating and limiting self-determination can be both visible and invisible. For example, housing needs assessments, building codes, and construction protocols operate beyond the purview of most community members, not to mention government employees, lending to a discourse of technological innovation that is privileged as a universal language and challenging to supplant through other, more contextualized forms. Illuminating this weaponizing of policy (see Strakosch, 2024) and the subsequent barriers to Indigenous home and self-determination evident in the particular interaction between the KGHS and the State, is an important contribution to reducing the power in harmful spaces of state dominance masked as good intentions of care.

7. Conclusion

Indigenous self-determination of home has been unfolding, and continues to unfold, at multiple scales in spite of an oppressive settler colonial system. As the activities and advocacy of KGHS have demonstrated, self-government is but one element of what is a much larger, more profound pursuit of self-determination of home–one that as Edwin Erutse stated at the outset of this paper has been a core, defining element of self-governance in the Sahtu since time immemorial. In Fort Good Hope, we have seen the ways in which home is actively cultivated along Dene priorities at the scales of regional and community self-governance and the planning and development of culturally- and contextually-appropriate housing policy and design, at the scales of relations to Land, and at the scales of individual, familial and community health and wellbeing.

The research in this paper presents a significant difference between the self-government of current state-led housing delivery bounded by the existing system that is discussed by State interviewees, and the self-government conceptualized by community-based interviewees which centers home and acts as a pathway to greater self-determination. Although increased community control over current housing delivery would provide communities the space to design and deliver housing programs around an Indigenous understanding of home, the foundations of housing governance remain in a system that reflects the norms and ways of the settler State and offers little recognition for Indigenous land sovereignty or the epistemological interconnections that underpin Indigenous values of home and aspirations for self-determination. And yet efforts on the part of KGHS to advocate for structural change, to voice their frustration with barriers, and to share their own experiences and strategies with other Indigenous communities across Canada making efforts to self-govern their own housing, speak to the kind of alternative forms of political relationality that, following Coulthard and Simpson (2016) and Simpson (2014), seek to build solidarity within and across Indigenous communities.

Thus, this paper invites reflection on the suitability of currently assumed self-government pathways to Indigenous self-determination in the NWT, and beyond. The utility of home, articulated throughout, in changing the values given to housing and capturing the multiple scales of interconnected relations at the heart of self-determination, is a key contribution to both the geographies of home and self-determination. Engaging with home as resistance, and as a governance concept,

makes way for Indigenous epistemologies to inform housing delivery processes, and offers the means through which to reimagine with more autonomy the space in which Indigenous Peoples encounter the State as they move towards self-determination.

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