



RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

UAKN Atlantic

Name of Project:

The Stories in my Blood

Research Start-up Summary and Abstract:

This research project further explores the experiences of urban Aboriginal people who live away from their communities, how do they find their own unique ways of (re)connecting and how does growing up off-reserve impact identity?

This research aligns with the core UAKN research themes of social cohesion and civic engagement in that my novel outlines the difficulties that off-reserve people often face when they are not part of a community and how belonging to a community profoundly impacts well-being and identity. My dissertation aims to promote sovereignty, identity, and well-being for off-reserve people as well as educating people about some of the experiences of off-reserve people by sharing the history of my family and my own experiences and struggles with belonging and identity. By tracing the history of my family, my novel tells the story of how and why my father, and then myself, ended up living off-reserve, who we are as urban Aboriginal people, how we have negotiated our identities as off-reserve people, how we have found ways of connecting to who we are as Indigenous people, and where we hope to go. By using story as a research methodology I hope to reach a wider audience and to touch people not only intellectually but emotionally in order to leave a lasting impact.

Methods:

This project will utilize Indigenous research methodologies in both the critical introduction component of my thesis and also in the novel itself. These methodologies will be used in hopes of transforming and indigenizing not only the research process, but also the university. In universities, Indigenous research methodologies are often supported in theory but not always in practice.

Collaborating Friendship Centre and/or other urban Aboriginal organization:

Although a community partner has yet to be confirmed, the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples' Council and with Under One Sky Head Start will influence this work. As facilitators of community, their work and insights are unsurpassed. If they are interested, I would be honoured

to consult with members of both organizations throughout the research process, especially on issues such as community, belonging, and identity.

Research Benefits

By fighting to have an Elder on my graduate advisory committee, this research aims to give the community increased participation in academic research processes. I also hope that this research will be useful to other Indigenous scholars and students working with Indigenous research methodologies, especially ones who are trying to find their own ways to indigenize their research processes and their universities. In terms of the community, my research hopes to improve well-being by sharing a story that celebrates identity, community, and decolonization through finding one's own sense of belonging.

Main contacts:

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