
Trickster Chases the Tale of Education. Sylvia Moore. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. 184 pp. ISBN 978-0-7735-4907-4.

In *Trickster Chases the Tale of Education*, teacher and scholar Sylvia Moore explores “the intersection, the confluence, and the common ground” among diverse epistemologies and worldviews, reflecting on how this space is to be harnessed in research, learning, and teaching (p. 112). She eloquently demonstrates how decolonization, or the *Idea*, is anything but a moment in time to be captured or missed. Instead, Ideas require the time and space to propagate and grow before they will blossom and flourish. The reconciling or ‘rebalancing’ of Indigenous knowledge in a Eurocentric academy will require prolonged struggle, the site of which is not only the classroom, or the research location, but also our minds. Through her own experiences as a community-engaged teacher and an academic, Moore offers valuable teachings for engaged scholars and invites us to join her in challenging our biases and decolonizing our relationships.

For the mother and grandmother of Mi'kmaw children, Moore's personal struggle to counter the colonial by balancing the Indigenous is the backdrop for this iterative, critical, self-reflection on community-engaged pedagogies and research approaches. Her use of autobiographical narrative demonstrates how researchers can balance academic protocols with Indigenous storytelling and establishes her “not as the object of, but rather as the site of, the inquiry” (p. 10). Now assistant professor of Aboriginal community-based education at the Labrador Institute at Memorial University in Newfoundland, Moore centres her own experience of the encounters between, and her efforts to reconcile, Mi'kmaw knowledge and Western logic. By sharing with us her own vulnerabilities as an anti-colonial, anti-racist researcher, she includes us in a re-enactment of her own research process and the many ‘self-interrogations’ therein. Moore recognizes the importance of mistakes, of allowing ourselves to question our beliefs and feel uncertainty about the truth. It is this challenge to our ego that enables us to dismantle our pre-conceived notions and learn to embrace multiple truths.

Moore shows how decolonial methodologies can be harnessed to privilege Indigenous voices in scholarship and unveil the location from which the scholar speaks. A multitude of Indigenous scholars are referenced in *Trickster*, but Moore takes the crucial step of naming and *locating* the thinkers *within* the text. This style ensures the reader knows who is speaking and from what positionality. Importantly, Moore also identifies listening and silence as decolonial method. Engaged scholarship in particular is a journey of relationships, where academics must listen more than talk, respect the validity and relevancy of multiple truths, and have patience in the process. As different stories are told, a variety of truths arise, and it is through collaboration and partnership that these perspectives are reconciled as many parts of one whole. Moore reflects, “I now think of collaboration as intentionally and diligently weaving together our stories by repairing and strengthening the fabric of our lives” (p. 144). For her, some of the most important work takes place during the process of building and sustaining relationships with the ‘other,’ of excavating biases and denying the distance between ‘others’. She writes: “After I recognized the narrow limits of my understanding, I could listen with humility. In opening myself to the truths of those other voices, I learned from their teachings”

(p. 134). Collaboration, therefore, is about respect, reciprocity, relationship, and reconciliation.

As important as listening is respecting the silent, which, for Moore, enables the sacred to emerge. Blank pages are inserted in *Trickster* at crucial junctures in the story, representing the silence and time required for critical self-reflection and cognitive decolonization. For Moore, “silence took form through a quieting of the self, an absence of voice, and the place of the sacred” (p. 131). Her insights offer important lessons for engaged scholars:

When we collaborate, we are responsible for quieting ourselves and respectfully listening to others so that we hear their words and honour their truths. I think back to Charlie Labrador’s teaching on speaking our truth. I realize that it is my place to offer what I know, not to push as if I have ‘the truth’ but simply to speak my truth while knowing that some will hear it, some will challenge it, and some will negate it (p. 132).

Opening and holding space for multiple truths to be equally represented, and for power to be shared, is a necessity for authentic community-campus collaborations and community-engaged teaching.

Trickster also serves as an example of how to meaningfully include the non-human, the mythological, and the cosmological in research and as method. Throughout the book Moore engages in an ongoing dialogue with the Mi’kmaw trickster character *Crow*, who plays a sort of devil’s advocate to her process of iterative self-reflection. For the reader, *Crow* comes to represent her critical consciousness, pushing her at every turn to disrupt and decolonize her way of thinking about teaching, learning, and research. Moore writes, “Trickster, in all the forms, convinced me that knowledge can come through many means, challenged me to embrace opposites, contradictions, and ambiguities as catalysts for thinking in new ways” (p. 140). Excerpts from her dream journal also bring questions from the non-human cosmos to the fore, as the Salmon People visit Moore while she is sleeping and challenge her to confront her taken-for-granted relationship with the non-human realm. Moore’s encounters with the non-human highlight the need for engaged scholars to reflect on their individual process of decolonization within the broader context of decolonizing knowledge production.

As a Hungarian-Acadian woman working in the Wabanaki education system in New Brunswick, I was especially drawn to Moore’s efforts to use Indigenous-inspired pedagogy in the community and the provincial school context in Nova Scotia. Navigating the process of decolonizing elementary and secondary education is extremely complex, often frustrating, yet always rewarding. In *Trickster*, I found a comfort that can only come from knowing that others are engaged in the struggle too. For me, it is within those allied spaces of struggle that the Idea of decolonization becomes the reality of Treaty reconciliation.

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