
Creating a Sense of Belonging in the Academy: An Example of a Métis-Centred Space

Lucy Delgado, Laura Forsythe

ABSTRACT As post-secondary institutions continue the slow move towards Indigenization and reconciliation, more Indigenous-centred spaces are created. But how many of those spaces are Nation-specific? In this article, we describe one example of a Nation-specific gathering, the Métis Research Symposium, and the impact that the gathering had on the mostly-Métis audience, including the enhanced sense of belonging and connection that the respondents reported. We advocate for institutions and administrators to shift towards creating more Nation-specific opportunities for students, faculty, and staff at all levels.

KEYWORDS Decolonization, Indigenization, Métis Research, belonging

Researcher Positionality

Daañ lii Michif leu teeraeñ d'niikinaahk eekwaa daañ lii Anishinabek, Nehiyaw, Anishinew, Dakota, and Denesuline nishtam leu peeyii, lii kampos d'yuniversitii di Manitoba pi d'yuniversitii di Winnipeg ashtewak. The University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg campuses are located on the original lands of the Anishinaabe, Nehiyaw, Anishinew, Dakota, and Denesuline Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation; this is where we live, work, and study. We also want to acknowledge that the power provided to write this paper was created in Treaty 5 territory and that the water in our tea came from Shoal Lake First Nation. It is crucial in academia to locate the researcher in relation to the research (Absolon, 2011; Graveline, 2000; Kovach, 2009, 2017, 2021; McGregor et al., 2018). Positionality is addressed through the location of our nations, cultures, lands, and personal experiences (Absolon, 2011; Moreton-Robinson, 2017). Kovach (2009, 2017, 2021) stresses that knowing these details about a researcher makes biases explicit and adds credibility. As such, we will introduce ourselves first.

Laura: Laura Forsythe d-ishinikaashon. My name is Laura Forsythe. Ma famii kawyesh Roostertown d-oschiwak. My family was from Rooster Town a long time ago. Anosh ma famii Winnipeg wikiwak. Today, my family lives in Winnipeg. Ma Parentii (my ancestors) are Huppe, Ward, Berard, Morin, and Cyr. My ancestors worked for the Northwest Company and the Hudson's

Bay Company. My ancestors once owned Lot 31, the site of Rooster Town. I am descended from buffalo hunters. I am descended from voyageurs. I am descended from the victors at Frog Plain. I am descended from farmers, ranchers, teamsters, seamstresses, and tradesmen; I come from the working class that built Manitoba and the Métis Nation. I am a Manitoba Métis Federation citizen and a first-generation university student.

Lucy: Lucy Delgado (née Fowler) d-ishinikaashon. My name is Lucy. I am a Two-Spirit Métis woman, born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am a citizen of the Manitoba Métis Federation. My family were Sinclairs, Cummings, Prudens, some of whom took scrip in St. Andrews and St. Johns, and I also have other family and ancestors from Red River, Oxford House, Norway House, and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, and settler family from Ireland and the Orkney Islands.

The Importance of Creating Community

The challenge of creating community within the academy for Métis scholars (a term that we view as including both faculty members and students) scattered across the country echoes in scholarship looking at their isolation (Devine, 2010; Forsythe, 2022b). The number of Métis students, staff, and faculty within post-secondary institutions continues to rise and yet Métis inclusion programming lingers behind (Forsythe, 2021). According to the 2006 census, 39.81% of Métis completed a post-secondary program; in the most recent 2021 census, there was a significant increase in Métis who had completed a post-secondary program, with the percentage rising to 56.3% (Melvin, 2023; Wilk et al., 2009). This percentage includes bachelor, master, and doctoral level degrees, with the number of Métis with a bachelor's degree doubling in the past fifteen years from 7.04% to 15.7% (Melvin, 2023; Wilk et al., 2009), the number of completed masters increased from 0.98% to 2% (Statistics Canada, 2023) and the obtainment of doctorates went up from 0.16% to 0.20% (Statistics Canada, 2023; Wilk et al., 2009).

Forsythe (2022a) explained the majority of those recently joining the academy were first generation university students who did not have kinship ties or direct family members to mentor them through their degrees or in their future academic positions. This absence of Métis mentorship within the academy creates a need for community connections and networks beyond one's traditional kinship ties and an expansion of Métis community in the academy. Identifying impactful Métis inclusion that creates community, a sense of belonging in the institution, and long-lasting relationships assists post-secondary institutions in the next steps towards reconciliation and Indigenization. In this article, we share an example of a Métis-specific academic gathering, the Métis Research Symposium, and explore the impact that this Métis gathering had, as well as the implications of this impact in the academy for both academics and community.

Background

The Métis are one of the three recognized Aboriginal Peoples in the *Constitution Act* in Canada. Their traditional homeland spans five provinces and a territory in Canada, and three states in the United States of America. In the context of this research, each participant in this survey is a “self-identifying Métis” because there was no requirement to offer proof of Métis Citizenship or historical ties to the Métis Nation to participate in the survey. According to the Manitoba Métis Federation constitution, “Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation” (Manitoba Métis Federation, 2022). The Supreme Court of Canada states: “Self-identification, ancestral connection, and community acceptance are factors which define Métis identity for the purpose of claiming Métis rights under s.35” (*R. v. Powley*, 2003). It is in accordance with these two statements that participants self-declared their nationhood.

Forsythe and Fowler (2024) explored over forty years of Métis gatherings discovering four emerging types of gatherings: 1) politically driven gatherings offered by either provincial Métis governing bodies or the Métis National Council (MNC); 2) language gatherings centered on Michif hosted by either by a Métis governing body or the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), an organization which supports research and knowledge mobilization centered on Métis history and culture; 3) culturally focused gatherings meant to educate the wider community and hosted by GDI; and 4) academic conferences. Over the past decade, there has been an increase in Métis-specific conferences or symposiums in post-secondary. Notably, the University of Alberta, in partnership with the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Rupertsland Institute, an education, training, and research institution affiliated with the Métis Nation of Alberta, offered two conferences dealing with Métis-specific content at the post-secondary institutional level: in 2017, the *Daniels Conference: In and Beyond Law*, followed in 2019 by the *Métis Land Rights & Scrip Conference*. In 2022, a collective of 32 Métis thinkers created the *Mawachihitotaak: Let's Get Together Symposium* held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic featuring four days with over 2000 attendees. We must honour the work that has come before, which has allowed for the evolution in decolonizing the academy to create space to bring Métis ways of knowing and Métis understandings of self into academia.

Decolonizing Academic Spaces

Studies from Canada and abroad reveal the issues involved in embedding our methodologies, theories, and epistemologies in colonial institutions in an effort to decolonize. For example, Potlotek First Nation scholar Battiste's (2005, 2011, 2017) work acknowledges Indigenous knowledges and strategies used by scholars, stating that “a generation of Indigenous scholars has successfully exposed the Eurocentric prejudices against Indigenous ways of knowing” (2005, p. 3). Battiste is one of many Indigenous scholars who have been calling for spaces of our own to highlight our ways of knowing and being in the academy. Forsythe (2021, 2022a) speaks to the importance of the creation of Métis-specific spaces to combat the foreign academic environment students, staff, and faculty are subjected to when entering the academy. McGregor (2005, 2007) speaks to the struggle of an Anishinaabe assistant professor to walk

between two worlds and have an Indigenous worldview accepted in scientific disciplines. This struggle is echoed by Métis grandmothers and aunts in Forsythe's (2022b) work, highlighting the need to create spaces where one does not have to explain who they are.

Work exploring the process of attempting to decolonize the academy through the creation of curriculum and space is highlighted by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars' work in Canada (Louie et al., 2017; Korteweg & Russell, 2012; Wilson, 2004). Internationally, Sámi scholar Kuokkanen has dedicated much of her career to the academy and student experience issues. For example, Kuokkanen (2007a, 2007b) shares Indigenous knowledge with the academy, followed by later work which describes the icy reception extended by the academy to Indigenous people (2008a, 2008b), and explores ignorance, benevolence, and imperialism in institutions (2010). Māori scholar Stewart's contribution to Anderson et al. (2019) asserts that the mere presence of Indigenous scholars in the academy Indigenizes that space. In gathering Métis peoples, and creating spaces with intention, we address the ignorance, benevolence, and imperialism of which Kuokkanen writes, and respond to Stewart's call to, at the very least, Indigenize the academy through the inclusion of more Métis scholars. All these Indigenous women scholars' work also speaks to the toll that Indigenizing and decolonizing can have on those seeking to create a better space for future generations.

Decolonizing the academy and creating space for our people to thrive, while important work, is grueling. Saulteaux and Anishinaabe scholar Ottmann (2013) reflected on 17 years in the academy and asked *why* they are spending time Indigenizing the academy when it was so detrimental to their well-being and resulted in only small changes. Pedri-Spade (2020), an Anishinaabe scholar, shared the lived struggle of Indigenous women in the academy after five years as an assistant professor, where she related feeling both emotionally and physically unsafe through intentional acts and stresses the need for space to be created for Indigenous scholars to be open about their experiences. Internationally, Moreton-Robinson (2000a, 2006, 2021) wrote about how Indigenous scholars experience hardship at the hands of white academics, with little change over the two decades between her publications other than terminology. Moreton-Robinson (2015) also demonstrated the power dynamics between white and Indigenous scholars in the academy and shows how white possession and power operate through myriad practices in the academy. In a statement that grounds much of her future work, Moreton-Robinson (2000b) asserts that "patriarchal whiteness surreptitiously works to support white feminists" in the academy (p. 351). We strive to create spaces that are just ours and for our people who also experience struggles such as these shared by other Indigenous scholars.

In an effort to address issues of pan-Indigeneity highlighted by Scott (2021a, 2021b), Métis women have shared their experiences being negatively affected by history and culture presented as pan-Indigenous and have called for a validated Métis space inside institutions (Forsythe, 2022). Distinction and specific spaces for other peoples, such as the Inuit, have been called for by Jessen Williamson (2014), an Inuk from Greenland who questions the use of the Inuit philosophy of equity to pursue academic achievement while honoring and expressing other women's educational experiences, and stresses the need for collaborative work to decolonize the academy. Kovach (2009, 2010, 2015, 2017, 2021) advocates for changing

research methodologies in the academy to align with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. However, there is a need to create nation-specific space and one of those spaces, the Métis Research Symposium, is the focus of this research.

Métis Research Symposium

In September 2023, Métis scholars Jennifer Adese, Canadian Research Chair in Métis Women, Politics, and Community from the University of Toronto Mississauga, and Laura Forsythe from the University of Winnipeg hosted the Métis Research Symposium in Winnipeg, Manitoba, often called the heart of the Métis homeland. The symposium's theme centered on Métis methodologies and the 1.5-day event featured three keynotes from esteemed Métis scholars Emma LaRocque, Brenda Macdougall, and Chantal Fiola. The symposium opened with a keynote from Dr. Macdougall, followed by a Métis kitchen party hosted in partnership with the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba Opera, and the Manitoba Métis Federation Bison Local. The evening event invited symposium participants and the larger Métis community to join for a lineup of contemporary and traditional Métis entertainment. Over 350 attendees came to witness the celebration of Métis culture, including both Métis academics and the wider Métis community, with Métis artisans given a free opportunity to sell their creations in a vendor space.

The next day's full-day event started with Chantal Fiola speaking about the evolution of Métis methodologies in the academy. The first two panels featured Anna Flamino, Janice Cindy Gaudet, Cathy Mattes, and Sherry Farrell Racette speaking to *kiyokewin* and Kitchen Table Theories, and "Approaching Métis Literature as Methodology," featuring Celiese Lypka, Michelle Porter and Matt Tétreault. Prior to the luncheon provided by the Métis catering service Elsie Bear's Kitchen, the Circle of Editors of *Pawaatamihk: Journal of Métis Thinkers* debuted the inaugural issue of the first-ever nation-specific journal in Canada, surrounded by Métis scholars and community members. Numerous contributors to the journal were in the space to witness the warm embrace of the community with whom they write. The afternoon had two panels "Exploring Digital Storytelling as Method" with Yvonne Poitras Pratt and Amanda Lavalée, followed by "Multidisciplinary Methodologies Exploring Spirituality" with the leads of the *Expression of Spirituality and Religion Across the Métis Homeland*, a SSHRC-funded research project. A 45 minute visiting session with attendees followed each panel which prompted the audience to discuss the presentations and ways in which their work connects or could include these methods. This space allowed attendees to internalize the knowledges shared with them and ask questions of others around their tables, practicing the visiting principles of Métis ways of being.

The final keynote was by Emma LaRocque, who spoke about the ways in which Métis scholars have worked toward decolonizing the academy and making space for Métis. Prior to the closing, the attendees honored a grandmother of Métis studies with a standing ovation that honored Lorraine Mayer's 18-year commitment as editor to the *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*. Elders Charlotte Nolin and Barbara Bruce concluded the symposium by leading a prayer circle and asking all in attendance to join together and hold hands and acknowledge the significance of what had occurred.

Both the Kitchen Party and the Symposium were organized with Métis ontologies at the forefront. Several Métis scholars write about *kiyokewin* (or visiting) as part of research methodologies (Forsythe, 2022b; Fowler, 2022; Flaminio, Gaudet, & Dorion, 2020; Gaudet, 2019; Lussier & Denford, 2023) but also as part of Métis cultural practices. The Mamawi Project Collective (2019) shared a teaching from Métis Elder Maria Campbell, who “spoke about how colonialism divided and separated our people, our cultures and laws, and our languages” and how, through visiting, “we put the pieces back together” (p. 2). This attention to visiting and (re)building kinship relationships amongst Métis peoples was foundational to the design of the gathering. Where social aspects of conferences are often accidental, the intention inclusion of visiting provided opportunities for attendees and presenters alike to speak with others, build relationships, and bring established academics into conversation with community members and students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to cross paths. This embodied practice and shift in priorities in an academic gathering is a demonstration of these Métis values at work.

Methodology

To document the impact of this Métis-specific space, we created a post-event survey for all attendees that was approved by the University of Winnipeg Research Ethics Board. This survey, distributed through SurveyMonkey, was a mix of multiple choice and open-ended questions, and we received 39 responses, with 30 of those having attended the Métis Methodologies Research Symposium, indicating a response rate of 27% of the total symposium attendees. The other nine responses were from individuals who had only attended the Métis Kitchen Party the evening before. The survey consisted of five multiple-choice and five open-ended questions, with the former determining the demographics of the respondents (including identity, location, and attendance during the 2-day event) and how they had heard about the event. The multiple-choice questions also determined the cultural identity of the respondents, asking whether they were Métis, First Nations, Inuit, non-Indigenous, Indigenous to a place other than Canada, or ‘Other’. Respondents were able to select multiple responses to reflect the multitude of identities held by those within the Métis Nation. Responses to these demographic questions can be found in tables one through five. The open-ended questions were designed for the quality of the qualitative responses to allow us to determine whether Métis events were important to the attendees, and which aspects of the event were successful, and which were unsuccessful.

Our analysis focused on the qualitative responses of all responses, including the perspectives of both community members who had only attended the Kitchen Party and those community members and scholars who attended the Symposium. We co-created our analysis, first by examining the responses individually, and then creating word clouds and discussing our impressions, and finally by discussing each of the five open-ended questions. When creating the word clouds, high frequency words (‘the’, ‘but’, and so on) were removed automatically, and we manually removed words that were contained in the prompt, as well as the names of any of the attendees or presenters that might have been included. In this paper, we have only included names of presenters who were advertised as being part of the symposium.

This analysis was driven by Métis methodologies of visiting (kiyokewin), as we sat in relationship with each other and the data. Our identities as Métis women and scholars are integral to our understandings of the world and our interpretations of data, and within a Métis methodology we do not attempt to separate our researcher identities from the research as visiting is an embodied practice (Flaminio et al., 2020). We visited over Zoom and shared these impressions and ideas, building our analysis off of each other and words shared by survey respondents.

Results

While we will concentrate our discussion on the qualitative questions, we share the responses to demographic questions for clarification and to establish who answered this survey.

Table 1.

Question 1: Which group(s) do you identify as?		
Category	n= (total = 39)	%
Métis	38	97.44
First Nations	3	7.69
Inuit	0	0
Non-Indigenous	1	2.56
Indigenous other than Canada	0	0
Other	1	2.56

Q1, which determined cultural or ethnic identity, indicated that all but one attendee was Métis, and four attendees identified with either First Nations and Métis as cultural identity markers (n=3) or Métis and French Canadian (n=1). These are self-declared identities, as we did not request proof of Métis citizenship either during the survey or to register for the symposium. Assuming those self-declared Métis are registered, it is likely that they are not also band members in a First Nation community, as current Canadian legislation prohibits registration in both a Métis and First Nations government simultaneously. This does, however, highlight the importance of different elements of Métis identity and could perhaps also indicate the need for a shift to allow dual membership.

Table 2.

Question 2: In what capacity did you engage with the Métis Research Methodologies Symposium? (Choose all that apply).		
Category	n= (total = 39)	%
Attendee	39	100
Presenter	3	7.69
Symposium Planner	1	2.56

Table 3.

Question 3: Where did you travel from to join us?		
Category	n= (total = 39)	%
within Winnipeg	29	74.36
Manitoba (outside Winnipeg)	2	5.13
Saskatchewan	2	5.13
Alberta	4	10.26
British Columbia	1	2.56
Ontario	1	2.56
Other options (Quebec, Maritimes, Territories, United States, Other) received no responses.		

Many of the attendees joined from Winnipeg or the province of Manitoba more broadly, although just under 20% of the respondents indicated they had travelled from out-of-province. The research symposium and associated events were free to attend, but travel costs are often prohibitive for graduate students, under-employed academics, and community members. Organizers had also been asked to make the symposium available online, which might have shifted the representation of audience members. The choice to remain in-person only was made to ensure attendees felt they could speak freely with the knowledge of who was in the room and hearing their words.

Table 4.

Question 4: What parts of the symposium were you able to witness? Select all that apply.		
Category	n= (total = 39)	%
September 28 Métis Research Methodologies Symposium Opening Keynote with Brenda Macdougall	16	41.03
September 28 Métis Kitchen Party	30	76.92
September 29 Métis Research Methodologies Symposium	23	58.9
None of the above	0	0

When examining the events that respondents participated in, more indicated that they had joined the community-facing Métis Kitchen Party than the Research Symposium itself.

The high attendance for the Kitchen Party is also demonstrative of the outreach to Métis community members, Manitoba Métis Federation local associations¹, and through social media, in that those who had no particular interest in research still felt interested (and welcomed) to attend. A concerted effort was made to connect with community members, through invitations to Métis fiddlers, musicians, singers, and drag artists to perform, as well

¹ Within the Manitoba Metis Federation governance structure, local associations act as a Local Métis governance on behalf of Métis in their respective communities.

as to Métis artists to set up tables as vendors in the art gallery space at no cost to them. By redistributing university resources to support musicians and artists, the organizers worked to support Métis peoples outside of the academy. Advertisements were shared with Métis locals for the Kitchen Party, and a choice was made to advertise the event as just the Métis Kitchen Party, without mention of the Methodologies symposium within the title or description of the event. According to Forsythe (2022) and Scott (2021a, 2021b) many Métis people, like other Indigenous peoples more generally, have conflicting relationships with academia, universities, and research in particular (Brunette-Debassige, 2023; Cote-Meek, 2014; Thobani, 2022). While the Kitchen Party and symposium had separate ads, they were promoted in the same spaces to ensure that community members were aware of and could attend one or both of the events. The organizers were intentional with the messaging in order to create an event space where all Métis community members felt welcome.

Table 5.

Question 5: How did you find out about the symposium?		
Category	n= (total = 39)	%
University email list	5	12.82
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	19	48.72
Word-of-mouth	8	20.51
Other (please specify)	7	17.95

This attention to outreach is also reflected in the responses to question five, which asks how the respondent learned of the symposium. Almost half indicated they had heard of the symposium through social media, and several of the “other” responses were also related to social media.

The primary focus of our analysis has been the narrative responses to questions six through ten. The questions posed to respondents were:

- Question 6 (Q6): Why did you attend the symposium?
- Question 7 (Q7): How would you describe your experience at the symposium?
- Question 8 (Q8): Was there anything that you were hoping to see at the symposium but didn't?
- Question 9 (Q9): What was the most impactful aspect of the symposium for you?
- Question 10 (Q10): Are Métis-centered events important to you? Why or why not?

While all respondents answered all of the multiple-choice questions, these longer answer questions had lower response rates overall (Q6 n=39, Q7 n=38, Q8 n=34, Q9 n=38, and Q10 n=38). Some of the responses were also single word (yes, no, n/a) responses. For each of

Métis specific spaces, Métis methodologies, Métis community, Métis kin, or Métis students and faculty as being the pieces that had resonated with them the most. Six respondents named specific Métis scholars: Drs. Emma Laroque, Chantal Fiola, Brenda MacDougall, and Yvonne Poitras-Pratt all made lasting impressions on those in attendance. One respondent shared that the most impactful aspect for them was the “opportunity to listen to and meet with Métis scholars whose scholarship has been integral to my graduate studies.” Another stated that “Seeing all the heroes and friends in one place was incredible, I don’t know how to narrow it down much more than that.”

It was not only the prominent Métis scholars that respondents were eager to hear from, though; three respondents specifically mentioned the visiting time at the tables that was built into the schedule of the symposium. Instead of having panel presentations followed directly by questions, as is customary at most conferences, the symposium included scheduled time to visit with those at the table following a panel, with prompts related to the panel itself provided on the table if there was a lull in conversation.

Research methodologies were another key factor for some (n=4) respondents. Half of those who mentioned methodologies named the Kitchen Table methodology (presented on by Anna Flamino, Janice Cindy Gaudet, Cathy Mattes, and Sherry Farrell Racette) as one that resonated with them. Another mentioned the Métis literature panel and its focus on “place, home and land” from a Métis-centred perspective to be “grounding.” A variety of methodologies were presented at the symposium, and one respondent stated:

The specificity of each method presented that all were so different, in the way they centered the personal, to the family, to community, to nation and yet each unique method was completely interwoven. It has inspired me to be true to my experience as a displaced urban Michif, and that does not make me less than or outside of but a part of a rich tapestry of experience that can be mobilized into critical methods of research for the betterment of Métis kin.

The variety of methodologies, as well as the different Métis community connections that the presenters embodied, demonstrated some of the complexities of Métis nationhood and the academic thought development within Métis communities.

A Lesson for the Academy

The Métis Research Symposium held at the University of Winnipeg created an inclusive atmosphere which welcomed Métis from across the country to gather with other academic including Métis community members. Respondents spoke to being able to be unapologetically Métis in the space, stating “I feel like I can be myself” and there was “space to be myself.” The space created was one where respondents felt “recognized,” “validated,” “included” and that they “belong.” Within the academy fraught with impostor syndrome and isolation, this space created a Métis-centred sense of home, with one respondent stating it was as if to be “called back” to their roots.

As administrators and faculty members attempt to Indigenize and decolonize the Academy, we must ensure that nation-specific gatherings and learning opportunities exist (Forsythe et al., forthcoming). The reason for that call can be seen in the respondents' answers to our questions. With words such as homecoming, welcoming, inspiring, uplifting, amazing, and relatable shared in the responses, perhaps within this Nation-specific Métis space we have identified a solution to the isolation identified by Métis students, staff, and faculty expressed in the research over the past two decades. The institution and all those committed to increasing the success of Métis scholarship must also put energies into the creation of Métis specific spaces (Forsythe, 2021). The number of Métis post-secondary students has steadily increased over the past 15 years (Melvin, 2023), increasing the number of Métis academics who are in disciplines across the Academy (Forsythe, 2022). If post-secondary institutions want to stand behind their strategic plans to truly Indigenize the Academy, their actions must include the creation of spaces where Métis can gather to discuss research methodologies, ethics, and results with likeminded academics for the betterment of academia as a whole.

Conclusion

In light of Métis in the academy seeking bachelor's degrees more than doubling in the last fifteen years, creating a sense of belonging within the Academy for the most significant percentage of Indigenous scholars from one nation in Canada should be a priority for all post-secondary institutions, not just those in the heart of the Métis homeland. This research study demonstrated what is possible when these spaces are created, even if only for eight hours of programming. Now imagine the potential within an institution that dedicates time and resources to a multiday, multi-term, multi-year strategy to create space for Métis. That is the future of Métis inclusion in post-secondary institutions that our Nation deserves.

Acknowledgements

The authors want to extend our appreciation for those who have championed creating nation-specific spaces in the academy; it is due to your tenacity and hard work that we can actualize these types of spaces. We would like to also thank the generosity of Jennifer Adese and their SSHRC funding that made this specific gathering possible.

About the Authors

Lucy Delgado (*corresponding author*) is a Two-Spirit Métis scholar, educator, and community organizer. She is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, with a research and teaching focus on Métis youth identity, Indigenous education, queer theory, hip-hop pedagogies, and youth cultures.

Laura Forsythe is a Métis scholar at the University of Winnipeg in the Faculty of Education. Forsythe's research focus is Métis-specific contributions to the academy, inclusion efforts, and educational sovereignty. Forsythe's contributions include five edited collections, the editor of two Indigenous journals, and numerous peer-reviewed publications.

References

- Absolon, K. E. (2011). *Kaandossiwin: How we come to know*. Fernwood Publishing.
- Anderson, K., & Cidro, J. (2019). Decades of doing: Indigenous women academics reflect on the practices of community-based health research. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, 14(3), 222–233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/155626461983570>
- Battiste, M. (2005). Indigenous knowledge: Foundations for first nations. *WINHEC: International Journal of Indigenous Education Scholarship*, 1, 1–17. <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/winhec/article/view/19251>
- Battiste, M. (2010). Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous peoples' education. In S. Subramanian, & B. Pisupati (Eds.), *Traditional knowledge in policy and practice: Approaches to development and human well-being* (pp. 31–51). United Nations University Press.
- Battiste, M. (2011). *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*. UBC Press.
- Battiste, M. (2017). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. UBC Press.
- Brunette-Debassige, C. (2023). *Tricky grounds: Indigenous women's experiences in Canadian university administration*. University of Regina Press.
- Cidell, J. (2010). Content clouds as exploratory qualitative data analysis. *Area*, 42(4), 514–523. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2010.00952.x>
- Cote-Meek, S. (2020). *Colonized classrooms: Racism, trauma and resistance in post-secondary education*. Fernwood Publishing.
- DePaolo, C. A., & Wilkinson, K. (2014). Get your head into the clouds: Using word clouds for analyzing qualitative assessment data. *TechTrends*, 58(3), 38–44. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11528-014-0750-9.pdf>
- Devine, H. (2010). Being and becoming Métis: A personal reflection. In L. Peers & C. Podruchny (Eds.), *Gathering places: Aboriginal and fur trade histories* (pp. 181–210). UBC Press.
- Flaminio, A. C., Gaudet, J. C., & Dorion, L. M. (2020). Métis women gathering: Visiting together and voicing wellness for ourselves. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 16(1), 55–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180120903499>

- Forsythe, L. (2021). Becoming the Métis Inclusion Coordinator. In J. MacDonald & J. Markides (Eds.), *Brave work in education* (pp. 181–187). DIO Press. <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/aps/index.php/aps/article/download/29405/21421>
- Forsythe, L. (2022a). Easing the culture shock of being in a space dominated by the educated. *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, 10(1), 90–96. <https://doi.org/10.5663/aps.v10i1.29405>
- Forsythe, L. (2022b). *It needs to be said: Exploring the lived realities of the Grandmothers and Aunties of Métis scholarship*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Manitoba]. FGS – Electronic Thesis and Practica. <http://hdl.handle.net/1993/37131>
- Fowler, L. (2022). *Where learning happens: Conversations with queer, Métis youth who engage in hip-hop cultures*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Saskatchewan]. Harvest. <https://harvest.usask.ca/handle/10388/13941>
- Gaudet, J.C. (2019). Keeoukaywin: The visiting way – fostering an Indigenous research methodology. *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, 7(2), 47–64. <https://doi.org/10.5663/aps.v7i2.29336>
- Graveline, F. J. (2000). Circle as methodology: Enacting an Aboriginal paradigm. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(4), 361–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/095183900413304>
- Jessen Williamson, K. (2014). *Umasuvisvisuaq: Spirit and Indigenous writing in education*, 20(2), 135–146. <https://doi.org/10.37119/ojs2014.v20i2.168>
- Korteweg, L., & Russell, C. (2012). Decolonizing + Indigenizing = Moving environmental education towards reconciliation. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 17, 5–14. <https://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/article/view/1226>
- Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. University of Toronto Press.
- Kovach, M. (2010). Being Indigenous in the academy: Creating space for Indigenous scholars. In A. M. Timpson (Ed.), *First Nations, first thoughts: The impact of Indigenous thought in Canada*. (pp. 51–73). UBC Press.
- Kovach, M. (2015). Emerging from the margins: Indigenous methodologies. In S. Strega & L. Brown (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Revisiting critical, Indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches* (2nd ed., pp. 43–64). Canadian Scholars Press.
- Kovach, M. (2017). Doing Indigenous methodologies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 383–406). SAGE.
- Kovach, M. (2021). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. University of Toronto Press.
- Kuokkanen, R. (2007a). The gift logic of Indigenous philosophies in the academy. In G. Vaughn (Ed.), *Women and the gift economy. A radically different worldview is possible* (pp. 71–83). <http://gift-economy.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/womenandthegifteconomy.pdf#page=83>
- Kuokkanen, R. (2007b). *Reshaping the university: Responsibility, Indigenous epistemes, and the logic of the gift*. UBC Press.
- Kuokkanen, R. (2008a). Globalization as racialized, sexualized violence: The case of Indigenous women. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 10(2), 216–233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616740801957554>

- Kuokkanen, R. (2008b). What is hospitality in the academy? Epistemic ignorance and the (im) possible gift. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 30(1), 60–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410701821297>
- Kuokkanen, R. (2010). The responsibility of the academy: A call for doing homework. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 26(3), 61–75. <https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/262>
- Louie, D. W., Poitras-Pratt, Y., Hanson, A. J., & Ottmann, J. (2017). Applying Indigenizing principles of decolonizing methodologies in university classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education/Revue Canadienne d'enseignement supérieur*, 47(3), 16–33. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1043236ar>
- Lussier, D., & Denford, J. (2023). Kîyokêwin (Visiting), leadership, and consenting to learn in public: Indigenizing social sciences and humanities at the Royal Military College of Canada. *Critical Studies in Education*, 65(3), 256–275. <https://doi-org.uml.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/17508487.2023.2261472>
- Mamawi Project Collective (2019). *Kîyokêwin: The act of visiting*. <https://themamawiproject.medium.com/k%C3%AEyok%C3%AAwin-zine-15b075907901>
- Manitoba Métis Federation. (2022). Constitution. https://www.mmf.mb.ca/wcm-docs/freetext/mmf_constitution_2022_final_20220510134210.pdf
- McGregor, D. (2005). Traditional ecological knowledge: An Anishinaabe woman's perspective. *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice*, 29(2), 103–109. <https://journals.msvu.ca/index.php/atlantis/article/view/1057>
- McGregor, D. (2007). Traditional ecological knowledge: An Anishinaabe woman's perspective. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 32(3–4), 193–199. link.gale.com/apps/doc/A184429054/CPI?u=winn62981&sid=bookmark-CPI&xid=2726f072
- McGregor, D., Restoule, J. P., & Johnston, R. (Eds.). (2018). *Indigenous research: Theories, practices, and relationships*. Canadian Scholars Press.
- Melvin, A. (2023) *Postsecondary educational attainment and labour market outcomes among Indigenous peoples in Canada, findings from the 2021 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-006-X. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00012-eng.pdf?st=sZ5pb3IL>
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2000a). *Talkin' up to the white woman: Aboriginal women and feminism*. University of Queensland Press.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2000b). Troubling business: Difference and whiteness within feminism. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 15(33), 343–352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713611977>
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2006). Whiteness matters: Implications of talkin' up to the white woman. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 21(50), 245–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08164640600731788>
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2015). *The white possessive: Property, power, and Indigenous sovereignty*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2017). Relationality: A key presupposition of an Indigenous social research paradigm. In C. Andersen & J. M. O'Brien (Eds.), *Sources and methods in Indigenous studies* (pp. 69–77). Routledge.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2021). *Talkin' up to the white woman: Indigenous women and feminism*. U of Minnesota Press.

-
- Ottmann, J. (2013). Indigenizing the academy: Confronting “contentious ground.” *The Morning Watch: Education and Social Analysis* 40(3–4), 8–24.
- Pedri-Spade, C. (2020). Centering the lived struggle of Indigenous women in the academy: A performance autoethnography. In S. Cote-Meek, & T. Moeke-Pickering (Eds.), *Decolonizing and Indigenizing education in Canada* (pp. 91–113). Canadian Scholars Press.
- R v Powley*, (2003). 2 SCR 207. <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/2076/index.do>
- Statistics Canada. (2023). *Highest level of education by census year, Indigenous identity and Registered Indian status: Canada, provinces and territories* [Data set]. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/tbl/csv/98100413-eng.zip>
- Scott, B. (2021a). Métis women’s experiences in Canadian higher education. *Genealogy*, 5(2), Article 49. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy5020049>
- Scott, B. (2021b). *Reconciliation through Métissage in higher education* [Doctoral dissertation, Lakehead University]. Knowledge Commons. <https://knowledgecommons.lakeheadu.ca/handle/2453/4802>
- Thobani, S. (2021). Introduction: Present pasts: The anxieties of power. In S. Thobani (Ed.), *Coloniality and racial (in) justice in the university: Counting for nothing?* (pp.3-46) University of Toronto Press.
- Wilk, P., White, J. P., & Guimond, E. (2009) “Métis Educational Attainment” *Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International (APRCi)*. 21. <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/aprci/21>
- Wilson, A. C. (2004) Reclaiming our humanity: Decolonization and the recovery of Indigenous knowledge. In D., A. Mihesuah & A. C. Wilson (Eds.), *Indigenizing the academy: Transforming scholarship and empowering communities* (pp. 69–87). University of Nebraska Press.