



The Answer is in the Land

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Domain of Research Interest

A strong contribution to the Western creative thought process is possible by learning from Indigenous Teachings and Knowledge, opening new ways in creative thought and sustainable solutions.

The Indigenous creative process, deeply rooted in the land, can be applied to the Western structure of formulaic techniques aimed to elicit diverse solutions, to form new pathways for problem solving and innovative thinking, in a similar way that Indigenous Seven Generations Principles propelled the sustainability movement forward.

These are sacred teachings. I believe my research will contribute to bringing Indigenous creative knowledge to the Western mainstream, while altering the Western gaze.



A. Creativity in Western Practice

Thesis question: Creativity in Western practice is based on a series of pre-determined logical steps that encourage divergent/convergent thinking rather than true inner self-reflective creativity. Western 'creative' thought is linear and governed and shaped by a settler top-down pedantic attitude to problem solving and creative thinking. There is another approach to creativity, Indigenous based, that will open new sustainable leading ways in the Western creative and innovative thought practice.

B. Creativity in Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Thesis question: What is Indigenous creativity? What makes the Creator creative? Creativity, as per Indigenous knowledge and contrary to Western views, is not something you do, or a skill to be learned. Creativity is life and forms a part of all daily interactions, stories, histories, learning and ways of nature. Indigenous ways of knowing teach that creativity begins with respect and relationships with all living elements. True creativity is holistic, not prescriptive, and necessary to discover innovative thinking for the creation of sustainable solutions for our planet.



Methodology

Grounded in respect, reciprocity, and responsibility, Indigenous methodology and axiology emerge from the Indigenous paradigm's epistemology and ontology of relationships. The Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM) I will employ is one of connections and relationality. By developing a logic of inquiry that embraces a methodology of relationships, I plan to juxtapose a Western colonist capitalistic quest that is very detached from, and disrespectful of land, nature, and the teachings of Indigenous law, ignoring the spirit and personhood of the land, with Indigenous ways of knowing, of respect, reciprocity, and relationships, that are founded in the land.

Methods: Literature Review

I am applying a multiplicity of approaches to research design and process, juxtaposing Western literature with Indigenous literature. Thereby termed 'meta-analysis', with both quantitative and qualitative data collected in the literature. The Indigenous literature, based on historical stories and ways of knowing, is primarily qualitative. Literature reviews form the solid base for most forms of research, as a grounding point, a firm foundation upon which to build.

C. The Land: The Source of Creativity

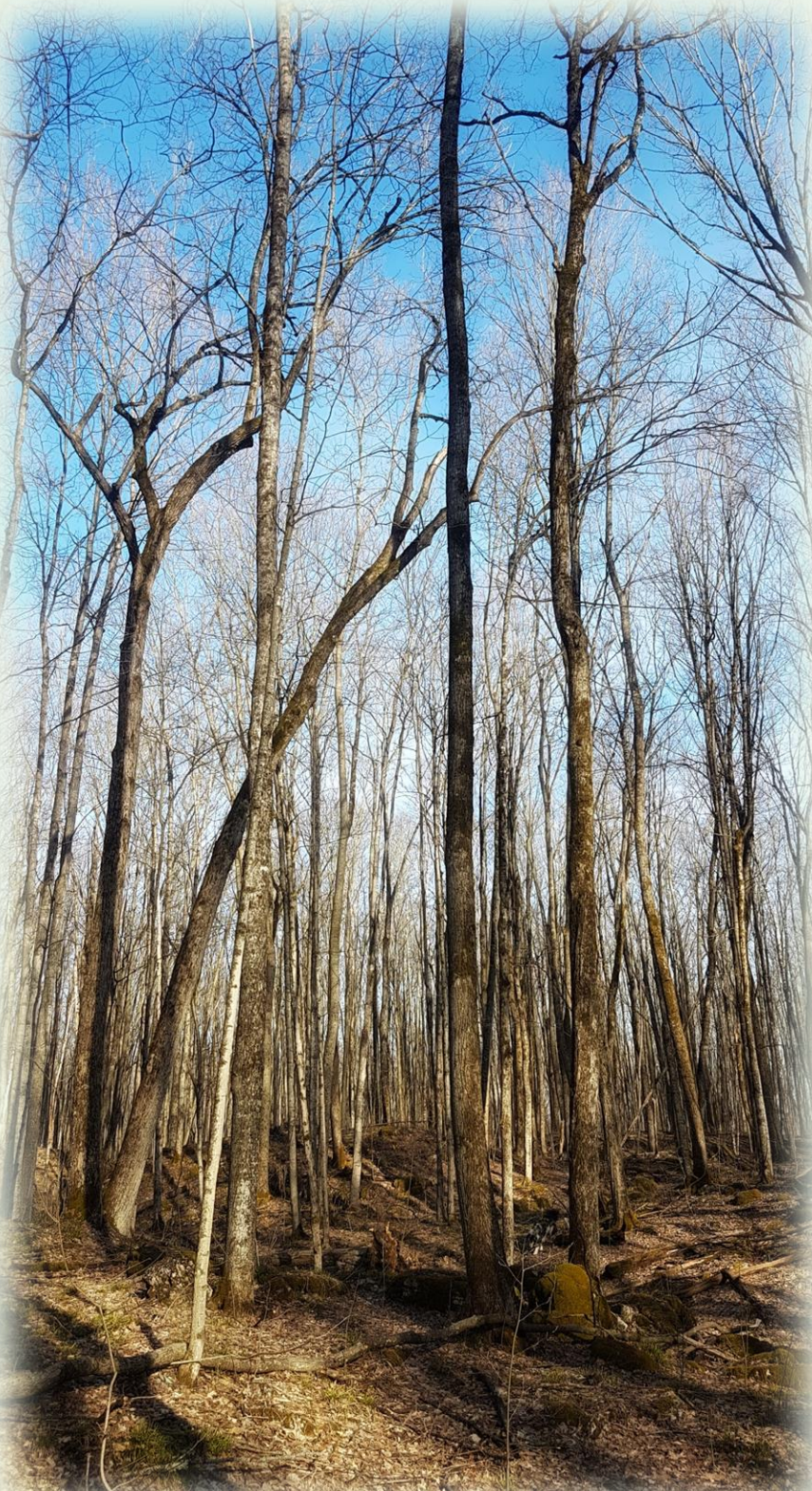
Thesis question: The land is the answer, and all answers lie in the land. Indigenous knowledge stems from the land, law emanates from the land, creativity arises from the land and the land is the base for all knowledge. Creativity lies within our relationship to the natural world. The Western dynamic quest for a purely capitalistic model has shaped a viewpoint very detached from, and disrespectful of, land, nature, and the world we live in. The time has come for us to respect and listen to the land and the messages she is sending us as she is family. The land has much to teach us.

D. Sustainability

Thesis question: Environmental sustainability cannot be attained without changing the way we think, innovate and perceive the world around us by listening to the laws of the land, the messages, the stories. Indigenous knowledge within the Indigenous paradigm offers the solution for a better planet, world, and shared living, holistically and sustainably.

E. Indigenous Methodology and My Journey

Thesis question: What is it like for a settler scholar to not only learn Indigenous ways of knowing, but to also work within a holistic Indigenous paradigm? What is it like to focus on relationships and not objectification of the world?



I feel solid in my positionality, strong as an indigenist researcher, staying firmly in the settler space, learning from the other side of an expansive snow globe in front of me, bigger than my arms can reach, with the Indigenous Ways of Knowing within. To look, to learn, but not touch. I like it. I aim to find a place to bridge the Western / settler / colonist attitude and perspective towards Indigenous ways of knowing.