

Steering through Métis Feminism

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Abstract

Indigenous feminisms are concerned with addressing power imbalances particularly at the intersections of sexism, racism and colonialism. These lived, felt and flesh-based theories allow for more contextualized analyses of women's lives and help us to dream and realize more just ways of being in relation. The experiences of Métis women, trans, and Two-Spirit people are not disconnected from the experiences of people in other Indigenous nations; however, how sexism, racism and colonialism intersect in Métis communities is distinct in many ways. This article celebrates diverse sites of knowledge production, contributing new ideas to the constellation of Métis feminist texts we live (and dream) daily. The article discusses the need for a Métis-specific articulation and actioning of feminism that responds to the patriarchal oppression taking place within settler societies and within our own communities.

Key words: Métis feminism, Indigenous feminism, knowledge production, heteropatriarchy

Introduction

Diverse strands of feminism have emerged with varying relevance to Indigenous life and sovereignty. Although they are rooted in similar commitments to addressing gender-based power imbalances, Indigenous feminisms necessarily differ from the narrow interests of mainstream feminist movements that “often ignore and even perpetuate Indigenous erasure, settler ascendancy, and antiblackness” (Tuck &ocollet, 2016b, para. 1). Indigenous feminist theories aim to account for the pervasiveness of colonialism and allow for coalition building and more contextualized analyses of women's lives (Ross, 2009). These theories help us to understand not only how settler-colonialism and heteropatriarchy have impacted Indigenous communities but also to dream and realize alternative modes of nationalism (Adese, 2021; Arvin et al., 2013; Morgan, 2018) and more just ways of being in relation (Deer, 2015; Grande, 2015; Murphy, 2017; Simpson, 2007; TallBear, 2011; Wilson & Laing, 2018).

While some may critique Indigenous feminisms for homogenizing the experiences of Indigenous women, others emphasize the need for solidarity. Allegiance across Indigenous feminists is paramount, especially given that, in some community contexts, sexism, racism, and colonialism have been internalized (Green, 2017). Some Indigenous feminist scholarship has explained this internalization by asserting that settler colonial governments have forced Indigenous communities to engage in heteropatriarchal systems to cope with and survive occupation (Tuck &ocollet, 2016a). Other theorizing has focused inward calling for accountability (Dear Métis Leaders, n.d.; Monchalín et al., 2020; Mussell, 2021; Starblanket, 2018) and challenging romanticized notions of Indigenous traditions, noting that certain cultural practices and attitudes have long reflected misogyny (Laroque, 2007; Wilson, 2018). In this article, written by two Red River Métis women (Lindsay now living in Saskatoon and Lucy in Winnipeg), we argue that there continues to be a need for maintaining alliances and producing knowledge under the label of Indigenous feminism, and that there is also a need for a Métis-specific articulation and actioning of feminism that responds to the patriarchal oppression taking place within settler societies and within our own communities.

The experiences of Métis women, trans, and Two-Spirit people are not disconnected from those of people in other Indigenous nations; however, how sexism, racism, heteronormativity, and colonialism intersect in Métis communities is distinct in many ways. These distinct experiences are entangled with Métis specific histories of poverty and land dispossession (Kermoal, 2021; Macdougall, 2017) and are impacted by how Métis identity, nationhood, and peoplehood have come to be understood (Adese, 2021; Supernant, 2021). Métisness is so much more than the politics of state recognition and the racial rhetoric of mixedness and blood quantum (Adese, 2016; Andersen, 2015). We are bounded political communities with a collective culture, social history, deep kinship ties, and relationships to place across the Métis Nation's historic homeland (Andersen & Adese, 2021). We lean into Métis feminism here with the desire to encourage more discourse on the distinct histories and contemporary concerns of Métis women, trans, and Two-Spirit people.

This article celebrates diverse sites of knowledge production and contributes new ideas to the constellation of Métis feminist texts we live (and dream) daily. We aim to challenge the hierarchal divide between academic theories and community-based knowledges (Nxumalo & Villanueva, 2020) through testimonies of our own experiences and references to relevant scholarship. We ourselves work across academic and community-based spaces, thinking and feeling through our lived experiences as Métis women, early-career academics, community organizers, moms, and aunties. Our relationship has been built over a decade of friendship and collaboration related to community-based education, digital pedagogies, Indigenous health, and Métis knowledge production. Our families have significantly contributed to our theorizing, including our young children, who emphasize the importance of attentiveness, care, balance, and play in how we engage with knowledge (DuPré, in press).

The next section of this article takes the form of an email exchange over several months where we first started explicitly thinking through the need for Métis feminism. This exchange draws insights from the felt (Million, 2009) and flesh-based knowledge underlying our experiences (Archuleta, 2006; Belcourt, 2019; Lethabo King, 2021). We have deliberately

referenced by incorporating multiple ways of sourcing feminists and their ideas. Some of these theorists may not identify themselves as feminists (or theorists) but are doing work that attends to gender-based power imbalances or are promoting healthier ways of being in relation to other human, non-human, and more-than-human kin. You will also notice that some parts of the text have been redacted. These redactions emphasize the legitimate fears and hesitations Métis women, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people have in bringing forward feminist critiques as we speak back against power structures that some Métis people benefit from maintaining.

From: Lindsay DuPré
To: Lucy Fowler

Taanishi friend,

I'm writing to you later than intended, but I know you have a lot of other things you're dealing with right now and so you probably wouldn't have had a chance to look at this right away anyways. I guess by now, we trust each other to get things done when/how we can, given all that we are both juggling. Writing always seems to get pushed to the end of the to-do list, but I'm glad we are finding ways to put our ideas down so that we can invite others into thinking with us.

Over the past decade of knowing each other, we've been doing a lot of theorizing together. I don't think we've always made sense of it in this way but really, we've been building our research methodologies and pedagogies alongside each other—albeit usually from completely different territories and with lots of help from other friends and digital technologies. A lot of our work has focused on challenging harms we've witnessed in academic and community spaces. I'm excited about the ways we are bringing care into our work and creating opportunities for alternative ways of collaborating, engaging in leadership, and showing up for one another.

When we were visiting (online) the other day, we talked about something I would love to hear more of your thoughts on. We were playing with the idea of Métis feminism(s) and considering whether it might be useful to lean into that language and theoretical framing to do some dismantling and rebuilding amongst our people. What do you think? Could a Métis specific strand of feminism be useful? Or might this distinction from broader Indigenous feminism contribute to bureaucratic and nationalist categorizations of ourselves?

Lindsay

From: Lucy Fowler
To: Lindsay DuPré

Taanishi! You do know how much I appreciate you and your friendship, right? You make space for those parts of life that are dark and haunting and allow me (or encourage me) to be kind to

myself by the way you name those elements that are getting in my way. Writing does get pushed to the end of the to-do list—I think you and I both are so focused on praxis that we tend to rush over the documenting of our theoretical underpinnings.

This idea of Métis feminism has also been on my mind since we spoke. It's hard for me to think of a nice, neat response to your questions, but maybe that's because the theories and practices of our peoples are never nice and neat. We have always been people who move seasonally, live diasporically, and push back, both within our community and outside of it¹. Métis women have always been at the centre of this work, and the documented erasure of historical and contemporary Métis women's contributions to our Nation² is most certainly cisheteropatriarchy in action. That is not even to speak of the almost complete erasure of Métis Two-Spirit histories³ perpetuated by leaders equating Métis-ness with Catholicism and Eurocentric worldviews.

I am wondering about the purpose of naming this work and bringing it together. Certainly, it could be seen as a restrictive, bureaucratic box, but it could also be a guiding mast for all of us working towards dismantling heteropatriarchal structures in our Nation. How do you see the work we've done together as part of (or outside of) a Métis feminist lens?

Lucy

From: Lindsay DuPré

To: Lucy Fowler

Hmmm...I like what you said about our people moving seasonally and diasporically, and the pushing back piece, too. I think it's important for people (especially our own people) to understand that there's always been intention behind our movement. Métis people haven't adapted our lives for no reason. Our resistance has always been intentional with firm grounding in who we are and the futures we want for ourselves and our families.

I watched a recording online the other day; it was the Indigenous Feminisms Super panel⁴ from 2016 with Kim TallBear, Kim Anderson, and Audra Simpson, hosted by Alex Wilson. They talked about their journeys engaging with Indigenous feminisms and how they think this work can support decolonization. They all discussed the different historical and contemporary contexts that have contributed to the necessity of Indigenous feminisms. Their own stories of coming to understand the world as Indigenous women anchored this discussion with specific references to their particular nations and cultural contexts.

¹ Adese, 2016; MacDougall et al, 2012.

² Forsythe, 2022.

³ Scholars like Two-Spirit Métis/Anishinaabe Kai Minosh Pyle are studying these erased and ignored histories. See Pyle, 2022 and their forthcoming work.

⁴ Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/-HnEvaVXoto>

It reminded me of the recurring conversations you and I have been a part of with other Métis thinkers and how we have made sense of the power dynamics we're seeing in our Métis communities. My understanding of—and witnessing to—Métis feminism has come a lot from the spaces we have facilitated together and how we've paid attention to knowledge produced in many different places. Whether it's been through organizing events and helping develop community texts/content with The Mamawi Project⁵, working on the Mawachihitotaak Symposium and Pawaatamihk journal, doing presentations and writing together, supporting each other's teaching, sharing funny content over social media, or just hanging out and supporting each other as moms, we're doing a lot of theorizing and transformation work.

In Métis scholar Kim Anderson's part of the panel (who I'm fortunate to have as a PhD committee member and academic auntie) she talked about why many Indigenous people are cautious about the "F" word. She named that there has been pushback because feminism has been seen as separate from—and less important than—work toward Indigenous sovereignty. Feminism has often also been perceived as a white women's issue and a threat to our understanding of traditional roles. Some have also critiqued feminism led by white women as being fixated on rights when, within our communities, we are more concerned with responsibilities. In the recording, Kim also goes on to explain how Indigenous women (with her work being focused a lot on Métis and Cree gender roles) traditionally have held a lot of power in our societies. This includes having economic authority and control over resource distribution, political authority, and spiritual authority. Métis women have also held power in managing kin networks and supporting knowledge transmission between generations. The colonial capitalist economy we now operate within negates Indigenous women's leadership, which in turn has created what Kim describes as gendered fault lines in our homes, communities, and political institutions.

In a more recent written piece⁶ I read about Indigenous maternal knowledges, Kim and Mohawk scholar Jennifer Brant (a friend and former colleague I've also been fortunate to learn from) name that "the imposition of heteropatriarchal models of mothering was a colonial strategy, and it resulted in generational disruptions of home." They go on to talk about how these disruptions have involved sophisticated campaigns to push the gender binary, which has served as a significant attack on Indigenous maternal knowledges and nation building today. I really appreciated how they talk directly about gender binaries here, especially because I know this is an area some of Kim's previous work has been critiqued on. I think that's a crucial part of being a Métis feminist scholar, being open to feedback and carefully evolving our understanding of power imbalances.

So, going back to your guiding mast metaphor, I think that's a great way to think about it. Our people continue to face hostile waters, and we're in a moment where redirection is critical not only to protect the safety and well-being of Métis women, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people,

⁵ Both zines are available for free on our Medium: [k%C3%AEyok%C3%AAwin-zine-15b075907901](https://themamawiproject.medium.com/k%C3%AEyok%C3%AAwin-zine-15b075907901)) and owning ourselves (<https://themamawiproject.medium.com/owning-ourselves-zine-d5bb73ec5e4e>). We also have content available on YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@themamawiproject1134>

⁶ Brant & Anderson, 2021.

but also to protect the integrity of our knowledges. Métis feminism is needed to address epistemic threats and injustices, too.

Lindsay

From: Lucy Fowler

To: Lindsay DuPré

That adaptation piece is so key—often when I hear people explaining the ethnogenesis of our people, the narrative of “Métis as mixed” emerges, even if not directly stated. (Did you read Karine Martel’s master’s thesis? She wrote beautifully about it!⁷) That we are blended cultures, blended languages, wove fabric—all of these mixing elements seem to reinforce the idea of Métis culture being two things together, oil and water swirling. When really, we were an emulsification of cultures, a pressure cooker with new elements emerging—and it was intentional, as you say, with intentions of our future generations in mind.

I think your last sentence is so fucking integral. Kim is right that many see feminism as being secondary to Indigenous sovereignty, but I see them as tied—we can’t possibly have Métis sovereignty without the return of power and safety to Métis women, and Métis 2SLGBTQ+ people. Those two concepts are just antithetical—if we have anything in this moment, it is a recreation of the patriarchal systems forced on Indigenous communities, and for me that has been exemplified over and over. The push back against ██████████ when she was elected was just one instance, but I can think of fifty more. As Audre Lorde said, if we don’t move outside of the patriarchal, racist structures that we currently have when seeking changes, it “means that only the most narrow parameters of change are possible and allowable.”⁸ We certainly won’t get anywhere new, and we won’t be creating a sovereign Métis Nation without interrogating the structures that got us here and that have kept us here for decades.

I keep coming back to a chapter by Emma LaRocque where she talks about our unique positioning as Métis feminist scholars: we “offer new ways of seeing and saying things, but we also provide new directions and fresh methodologies to cross-cultural research; we broaden the empirical and theoretical bases of numerous disciplines, and we pose new questions to old and tired traditions.”⁹ We have the opportunity (the obligation?) to centre community members that aren’t always allowed a voice.

That is something that I always appreciate working with you—it can almost go without saying in our work that we centre and attend to racialization, class, gender, sexuality... although these attentions are not a given in feminist discourse, we both believe they are inseparable.

Lucy

⁷ Martel, 2020.

⁸ Lorde, 2003, p. 1.

⁹ LaRocque, 1996, p. 12.

From: Lindsay DuPré
To: Lucy Fowler

So fucking integral. I'm happy we're getting some swearing in here because I think Métis feminism calls for some (or maybe a lot lol) of swearing to push back against pressure to engage in respectability politics. It's fucking draining having to keep describing the ways in which Indigenous women experience violence in this country, and it's fucking maddening that we're expected to be polite about the ways we talk about it. I heard respectability politics being talked about in some Indigenous activist spaces and media after the colonial statue toppling events happened in response to the children's remains being found at the Kamloops Residential School. (I'm familiar with Black theorist Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham and bell hooks' writings on respectability politics, but I'll have to look into if there are any Métis or Indigenous scholars who have written about it).

Sadly, though, from my experience, the worst policing of how we talk about sexism and gender-based violence is actually taking place within our own communities. I'm tired of seeing many of our people and our Métis political structures [REDACTED]. It feels like every time [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] is in the news, they are being [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for their own [REDACTED]. I also hate that those of us who are critiquing these realities are made to feel unsafe for doing so or are attacked for bringing forward alternative ways of doing things. You gave a good example with [REDACTED] and the backlash she's received since being elected. [REDACTED], who is a Two-Spirit leader, has also faced enormous attack during her time in leadership. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also haven't had smooth journeys. Whether or not we support all these leaders' political perspectives, it is important to acknowledge that these women (and others) face different pushback than men in similar positions, some of whom have [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. Even just commenting on this is a risk. I've heard many stories of Métis women who have faced retaliation after offering critiques of power imbalances or sharing their experiences of marginalization and violence. I remember myself going to my first [REDACTED] meeting and being incredibly uncomfortable and nervous about being in a room with [REDACTED]. I've had that same feeling at Back to Batoche, being uneasy and trying to avoid the area of the grounds where I knew [REDACTED] was camped. We've seen violence being encouraged and taking place online as well, which affects how many of us engage in virtual spaces.

Métis feminists are positioned as threats within nationalist discourse, and it isn't just our men who are letting this happen. This reminds me of something else Emma LaRocque said: "neither colonization nor poverty explains everything about why or how Native men (and societies) may assume sexist attitudes or behaviours. This point has to be emphasized because male violence continues to be much tolerated, explained or virtually absolved by many women

of colour, including Aboriginal women, usually in defence of cultural difference, community loyalties or nationalist agendas, or out of reaction to white feminist critiques.”¹⁰

By raising this, I don’t suggest we should be blaming ourselves, but I do think we need to consider the ways that many of us have internalized heteropatriarchy and perhaps have accepted certain dynamics as being a part of our culture. Métis feminism can support us all to be in better relation, not just men, and dogmatic thinking about culture and governance is interfering with our ability to adapt to our current realities.

Lindsay

From: Lucy Fowler
To: Lindsay DuPré

It is maddening, isn’t it? When you mention hearing stories of Métis women who have faced retaliation, I had to pause to count (on more than two hands) how many women, Two-Spirit, and non-binary people I know who have had the same experience. It feels like we’re shouting into an abyss at times, doesn’t it, when there isn’t a wide call for change in our governments and communities. Our work is seen as fringe or radical, even when it’s just calling out organizations for supporting violence on our bodies and violence on the land¹¹ through resource extraction, pipelines, and policing. I am not sure if I will ever be able to get the image of [REDACTED] denigrating and belittling Métis women and non-binary people simply for questioning these alignments and the use of Métis Nation funds towards supporting them. It was the moment that I realized [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and they have decided who they will listen to.

Harm and gendered power dynamics also exist within academic spaces. Our friend and Métis scholar Laura Forsythe’s work¹² was on my mind this week as I sat with these ideas of dominance and erasure. I found Laura’s dissertation incredibly powerful, as she spoke with thirteen grandmas and aunties of Métis scholarship about their experiences in academia and coupled that with an exploration of the ways and places these women were cited (as well as the places they weren’t). Through those conversations, Laura identified eleven points of erasure, or ways in which these grandmothers and aunties of Métis scholarship had been ignored, pushed out, or had no support (is it more worrying or calming to know that Métis women have faced these same obstacles since the 1970s in academia?). Reading her work both inspires me to hear of these incredible women and reminds me that heteropatriarchy, along with colonization, has been institutionalized. Not only in the academy, but in our Métis governments as well—and so much of the erasure that these grandmothers and aunties faced came and comes from our own people! We tell the stories of Riel and Dumont and not Annie Bannatyne, and citational practices often favour citing Métis men over Métis women and Two-Spirit people¹³.

¹⁰ LaRocque, 2007, p. 61.

¹¹ Native Youth Sexual Health Network, 2017.

¹² Forsythe, 2022.

¹³ Forsythe, 2022.

There's also been attempts by [REDACTED] and scholars like [REDACTED] to control Métis research being done by Métis researchers, for and with Métis peoples, under the guise of [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] mination and oversight over research impacting our communities; however, I'm also very nervous about how this is taking shape. It doesn't seem like a coincidence that researchers we know who have pushed back against you know the drill and know exactly who I am talking about are the ones having their work most closely monitored and challenged.

What does it mean for us as a Nation to face the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy? How do we turn that critique of the ivory tower inward and face our own structures and systems? What are our duties as Métis community members? How do we tackle this work?

Lucy

From: Lucy Fowler
To: Lindsay DuPré

Hey you,

Checking in to see how you are doing—no rush to reply, but I'm curious if you have had a chance to think some more about this. See you in our gathering planning calls this week with Justin and Erin¹⁴!

Lucy

From: Lindsay DuPré
To: Lucy Fowler

Ahhh, sorry, it has been a hectic few weeks with grading and family stuff. I haven't been feeling well, and I'm trying to balance my life out a bit better—but you know how challenging that can be...I'm off for some play time with Kîsik (we need some one-on-one time together, and playing with him seems to help me work through ideas, too). I will get back to you with a more thorough response soon.

Lindsay

From: Lindsay DuPré

¹⁴ Justin Wiebe and Erin Konsmo co-founded the Mamawi Project with us and together we collaborated to host the Mamawi Project's *Living Métis Knowledges* gathering in August 2023 in Winnipeg, MB and surrounding areas.

To: Lucy Fowler

Thanks for your patience!

It really is overwhelming thinking about the expansiveness of these issues and the threats we face by steering them to the forefront of academic and community discussion. We've barely scratched the surface here, but I'm glad we are trying.

If we are going to embrace Métis feminism as a guiding mast though, I think it is important to let aspiration and gratitude steer us rather than fear or despair. We can document the painful and unjust realities we are witnessing while also celebrating the wisdom and joy that is flourishing as well. Eve Tuck (Unangaâ) talks about this in her theorizing on desire-based (as opposed to damage-centred) approaches, emphasizing that we can understand ourselves as so much more than just broken and conquered.

When I worked at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, I was fortunate to work closely with Eve and other scholars and staff dedicated to the work of Indigenous and Black feminisms. This also included Jeffrey Ansloos (Cree), Jennifer Brant (Mohawk), Julie Blair (Anishinaabe), Alexis Daybutch (Anishinaabe), Jacque Lavallee (Anishinaabe), and Black scholars Rosalind Hampton and Fikile Nxumalo. Through our collective work with the Indigenous Education Network, they helped me think through what it means to be in good relation on lands and waters of territories outside of the Métis Homeland, and generously showed me how to enact care in institutional spaces that are not always so deserving. My experience working with them, and my relationships with graduate students Megan Scribe, Sandi Wemigwase, MJ Laing, Fernanda Yanchapaxi, Marleen Villanueva, Shanna Peltier, Sefanit Habtom, Desmond Wong, Susan Blight, Kristen Bos, Diane Hill, Kayla Webber, Jade Nixon, and Riley Kucheran (some of which have since graduated and are now full-time academics and/or community theorists) in many ways laid the foundation for my understanding of Indigenous feminism.¹⁵

Actually, I want to quickly express gratitude for my experience working with Shawn Wilson (Cree) here, too. We first started working together when we co-edited the book *Research and Reconciliation* with our friend Andrea Breen, and later, he became my supervisor when I

¹⁵ While Lucy didn't reply to this final email in the chain, she does want to point out some of her own mentors and important relationships:

I can't start anywhere except with Dr. Alex Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree Nation)—a brilliant and kind human who embodied all of the things she talked about. I aspire to be half as supportive a graduate supervisor as she was with me! I am indebted to academic aunties like Jennifer Markides (Métis Nation of Alberta), Marlyn Bennett (Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation), Michelle Driedger (Manitoba Métis Federation), Carmen Gillies (Saskatchewan Métis), and others I'm sure I am forgetting.

I am also just so thankful to be part of an academic community that values collaboration and lifting each other up (no scarcity mindset here!) and celebrating others' achievements. Shout outs to Laura Forsythe, Erin Konsmo, Nicki Ferland & Chantal Fiola & Mireille, Amanda Burton (all Manitoba Métis Federation), Warren Cardinal-McTeague (Métis Nation of Alberta), Tasha Spillett (Ininew/Trinidadian), Ashley Richard (Métis), Melody McKiver (Obishikokaang Lac Seul First Nation), Black scholars Delia Douglas and Maya Simpson, and non-Indigenous academic accomplices like Chris Campbell, Anny Chen, Joe Curnow, & Ee-Seul Yoon. Academia can be such a shitty place but with people who are also working from love and joy, it is a whole lot more beautiful.

(This is not to say anything about all of the incredible people I work with in community, who shape my worlds and ideas every day! Maybe our next article will have to be about them all.)

decided to take on my PhD at the University of British Columbia Okanagan. Shawn has encouraged me to bring playfulness to my research and teaching, and we've been thinking through ideas related to academic kinship and knowledge protection (we have a piece about this almost ready to go for publication). As you know, while doing full-time PhD studies I've also been working full-time as an Assistant Teaching Professor at the University of Victoria (where I've also been fortunate to work with some wonderful people). Having a supervisor/academic uncle like Shawn who cares about my well-being and recognizes my life outside of academia as integral to my theorizing has been an amazing support... Hey—I guess since his sister Alex was your PhD supervisor, that also makes us academic cousins, haha!

I think it's critical to find (and be) mentors and collaborators who not only write/speak about Indigenous philosophies and feminisms but who embody them in praxis. Praxis is at the heart of Indigenous feminism, and I think it is critical for us to foreground this in Métis feminism as well.

Lindsay

We share our email exchange as a glimpse into the ways in which we parse out our roles as community organizers, as educators, as mamas, and as Métis theorists working through ideas of Métis feminisms. The lines between these roles blur, and we don't often make explicit the underlying theoretical frameworks that guide—and emerge from—our work. We are inspired by the work of countless Métis feminists who have come before us.

Within the community spaces where we co-produce knowledge, we intentionally reduce barriers for Métis women, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people to not only participate in community gathering and organizing work but to thrive within these (and other) Métis spaces. At times, this might look like direct action and fundraising for people doing frontline work, or it might be less direct, like intentionally taking trauma-informed approaches and attending to accessibility in how we plan events. It includes considering the diverse needs of people we invite to visit and build knowledge with (Gaudet, 2018), for example, offering rides and inviting parents to bring their children instead of requiring them to find childcare. We also take our relationships to place and other kin seriously and demonstrate this by intentionally welcoming people into the spaces we host who can expand our thinking on better relations. By viewing these approaches to organizing as essential, we work to create nourishing knowledge production spaces that reflect our ethic of care and the “rootedness of Métis in [our] maternal homeland” (Adese et al., 2017, p. 11).

Just as Métis feminist scholarship guides our community work, so too does it guide how we navigate the academy. Through this article (and in our individual scholarship), we practice academic kinship through purposeful choices about what we are writing about and how we are writing. This includes being deliberate about whose works we cite and teach in our classrooms, prioritizing Métis women and Two-Spirit voices and scholarship where possible. We also highlight knowledge produced by other Indigenous, Black, and Third World feminist theorists and queer scholars, keeping in mind that queer and BIPOC women's voices are some of those

least likely to be cited (Smith et al., 2021). We reference with respect and gratitude for how diverse people, places, and ideas have informed our interpretations of Métis feminism.

Our respect and gratitude extend to those who have dedicated themselves to building these Métis governance structures. Generations of care have been put into these organizations, solely for the benefit of our people. We have immense gratitude for the aunts, grandmas, and other citizens who have worked and continue to work tirelessly to keep our governing organizations afloat. We have benefitted from these organizations in many ways and have experience participating in Métis governance structures, with Lucy as the current Chairperson of the Two-Spirit Michif Local (Manitoba Métis Federation) and Lindsay having formerly held a Women's Representative position of a local council (Métis Nation of Ontario) when she lived in Toronto. We mention this to make clear that we do not critique from the sidelines; we are committed to bringing these conversations into Métis government and other community spaces and remain open to evolving our perspectives as we learn from others leading within these structures.

While our frustration is palpable, we ask you to remember that this frustration comes from love for our people, our homeland, and our Nation. We argue that part of a Métis feminist praxis is the ability to hold both a deep, unwavering love for our people, and also to hold ourselves and our leaders accountable. We do not assert that we have the solution for perfect governance (or that we even have a clear view of where we are headed as a Nation), but we look to Métis feminism as a mast to help guide us in a direction that creates safer, more joyful futures for our Nation.

Biographies

Lindsay DuPré is a Métis thinker, community collaborator, mom, and auntie. She was born and raised in Ontario on Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Wendat territories with Red River Métis roots in Manitoba. Her son Kísik and partner Dallas are members of Waterhen Lake First Nation, and their family currently lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Treaty 6 territory and Homeland of the Métis. Lindsay is a Vanier Scholar completing a PhD at the University of British Columbia while on leave from her role as an Assistant Teaching Professor at the University of Victoria. Her teaching and research interests include Indigenous health and education, digital and trauma-informed pedagogy, Métis knowledge production and Indigenous knowledge protection. Lindsay is on the Circle of Editors for the *Pawaatamihk: Journal of Métis Thinkers* and co-founded The Mamawi Project. She co-edited the text *Research and reconciliation: Unsettling ways of knowing through Indigenous relationships* (2019).

Lucy Fowler, PhD, is a Two-Spirit Métis woman, born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and an active member of the Two-Spirit Michif Local of the Manitoba Métis Federation. Lucy is an educator, a community organizer, and an academic. She is a co-founder of The Mamawi Project and a founding member of the Circle of Editors of *Pawaatamihk: Journal of Métis Thinkers*, and also serves on several boards, including the board of directors of Two-Spirit Manitoba and Full Circle for Indigenous Education. Lucy 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.

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