

English 4260: Métis Canadian Literature

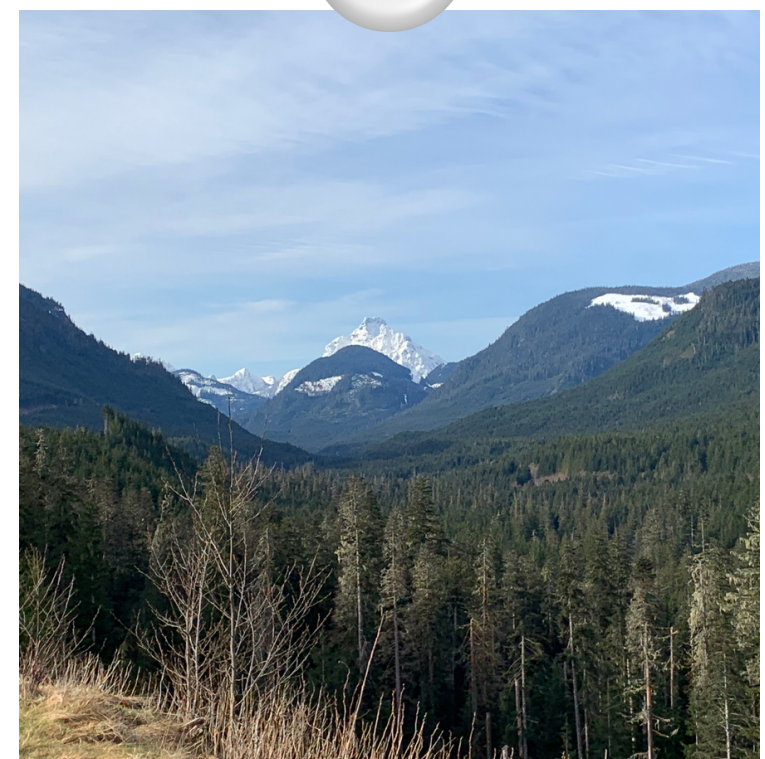
Winter 2024

Land Acknowledgement

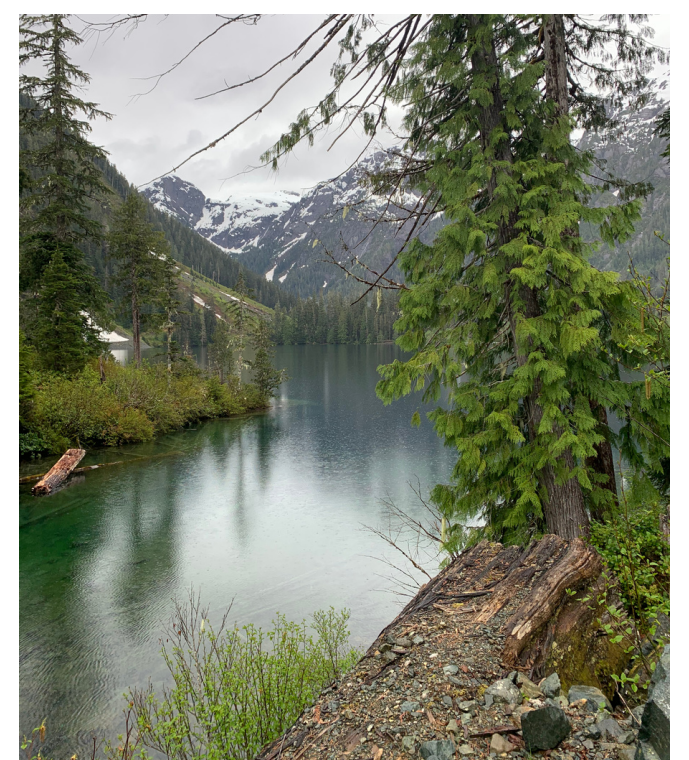
I was born on Vancouver Island. My grandparents on my mother's side settled there from the Netherlands. My grandparents on my father's side settled there from New Zealand.

During my studies, I now live on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc.

I am a trespasser. I'm sorry.



Peaceful



Places

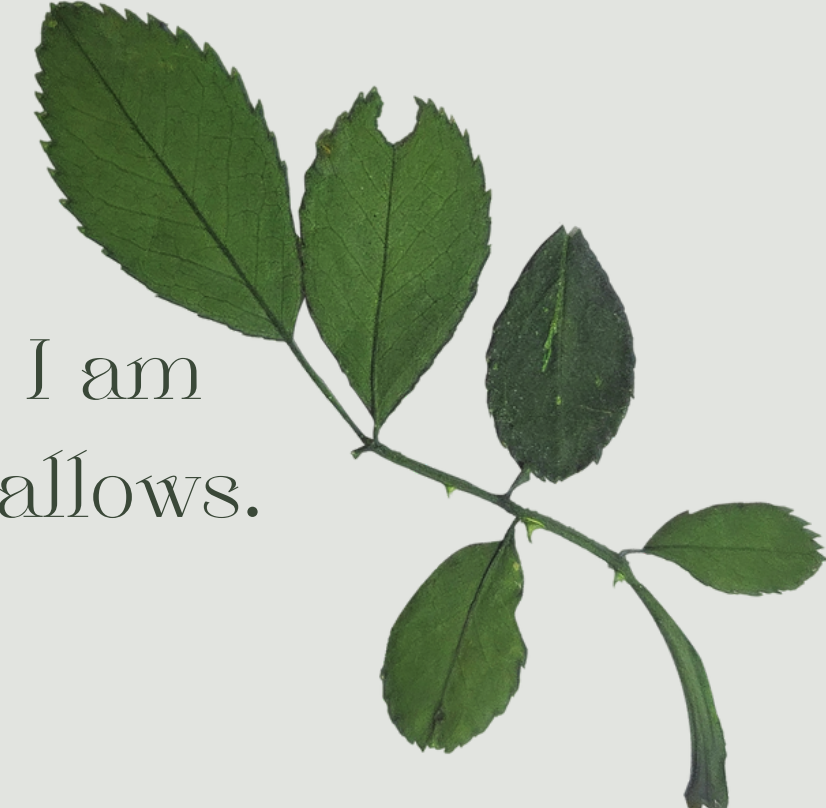
The settlers had built their houses as solid as they could, unaware of the earth below them, holding fast to custom as if what they were could slip forever from their grasp down that long slide to darkness (Archibald-Barber 398).

This spoke to me because it is revealing of the fragility of the societal structure I am a part of.

The place I find peaceful is also where others have lived, walked, hunted, fished, won, celebrated, lost, died.



Archibald-Barber captures the feeling of aw. The way I am
always powerless to the earth and as it shifts, turns, swallows.
Nothing is permanent.



Privilege

I feel obliged to acknowledge my privilege as a White settler. I have entered someone else's story uninvited. I don't know the land as part of my family. Though I have sat quietly and listened in the woods. The land tells a story too long to hear in completion.

"The Bowl Game" reminded me of that feeling of being small. My home, my life, my creations are just a tiny point in time. I was born White in Canada, out of chance. My home is not my family's graveyard.

Out of all the moments
happening in the world...



We



Connected

He must have held one last image as his vision blurred, the Great Plains rising at the edges all about him, the unending horizon upturned toward the sky, as he hit the ground, bullet in temple and in heart, yellow hair now crimson (Archibald-Barber 394).



I drifted with the words of a song on the radio and remembered playing the bowl game with my parents as a child. I imagined my father's madness, leaving with the wind and swallowed up, my mother remarried, moving on, stone figures balanced on the bowl (Archibald-Barber 398).

Works Cited

Archibald-Barber, Jesse. "The Bowl Game." *Kisiskaciwan: Indigenous Voices From Where the River Flows Swiftly*, edited by Jesse Rae Archibald-Barber, University of Regina Press, 2018, pp. 393-398. PDF. Moodle.tru.ca.



Archibald-Barber connects the change and loss he experienced as a child with the change and loss of his ancestors.

Addiction, abuse, and mental illness run through my family, swallowing multiple of my relatives and sometimes me. Life changes all around me but the remembrance of old memories do not go away. They're in my DNA.