

In Pursuit of Life's Purpose

The proceedings are a critical reflection of my time leading PMUSER Journal. Financial support, professional development, community reputation, and conflicts of interest are discussed. After a year at the helm of a research publication platform, I consider what defined 2019 for me. Professional and personal lives are kept separate mostly but the inherent political burden of being a full-status Indian under the Indian Act is an additional layer of complexity in leading interprofessional teams. This complexity offers integrity but also a limitation on what is achievable for those who come next.

Not-for-profit and student led, PMUSER Journal offers a glimpse into the forefront of research across the province of Manitoba. This platform is desperately needed in our University community, yet it is funded by very few. Special thanks to Dr. Jay Doering and to the Faculty of Science, their financial support of Volume 5 is most appreciated. Others are encouraged to reach out with resources as Volume 6 will be coming soon.

So many were unable to make this Volume's deadline. The work done just to translate their research into English, execute their work, and translate it back to their original language is a burden I must acknowledge. There is a heavy and unnecessary sacrifice of language, culture, storytelling, and journalism that comes with research publication, but the University of Manitoba offers a culturally safe place to explore ways to transfer this knowledge.

In 2015, I was laid off from my career as a heavy machinery operator in the oilfield. My love of physics led me to a lot of injuries, so I chose a medical degree in Nursing. By 2017, I found proficiency in analyzing policy and legislation. Summer of 2017 and 2018 when I wasn't studying Nursing, I worked at Health Canada. A decade after middle school, my passion in journalism returned when I read *Medicine Unbundled* by Garry Geddes. I was reminded to go beyond just "doing my job"; the most important values within my family cannot be bought.

Practicing as a Nurse, working at the federal government, reading empirical data on my culture and bloodline; I began to ponder what my descendants will know of me and how I will make the world a better place. For the first time in my adult life, I was in a psychological space safe enough to choose where my energy is spent. The opportunity to act as Editor-in-Chief of PMUSER Journal is one most-privileged. It doesn't pay the bills at all but the experience to lead a team

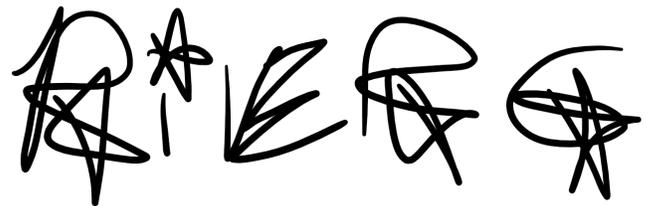
and contribute to Manitoba-based research I'm proud of.

I must acknowledge my own potential conflicts of interest. Earlier I spoke to my Indian status as jury selection, among other Canadian practices, screen us from participation for "political bias". I can assure you my contributions to a higher knowledge are not propaganda to benefit corrupt or otherwise political entities in Canadian society. Policy in Canada, however, refers to me as permanently disabled due to my expressions of autistic and AD/HD traits. Health Canada provided summer employment and an Indspire bursary at the start of my Nursing education. My Nursing tuition in 2018 and 2019 is sponsored by the Indian Act chief and council to whom I am a member with.

I most recently won UMSU's 2018 Award for Indigenous Community Leader. I am also part of the inaugural cohort for the President's Student Leadership Program. Most grateful, but my yearly income averages \$7,900 with personal care-taking, clinical rotations, Nursing studies, Two-Spirit research, journal management, community events, volunteerism, etc. I participated in the five-year strategic planning of the Aboriginal Nursing Cohort Initiative, and even sat on the Student Advisory Council for the Dean of Nursing in 2018/2019. I want to help save the world, but my biggest conflict is impoverishment and financing. I've spread myself too thin helping everybody else and forgot about me.

To conclude, my involvement with PMUSER Journal was life changing and I see much potential going forward. I hope my work, and that of PMUSER Journal, has challenged you to pursue a higher truth. I also hope openly sharing some of the more intricate parts of who I am serves both the community and my own self-growth. Certain visions haven't reached fruition yet, but I never imagined a reality like today. I hope my legacy with PMUSER Journal lasts longer than my tenure.

Thanks for reading,



River Steele, UMSNIV
PMUSER Editor-in-Chief

