

2023 INDIGENOUS GRADUATE STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

Witnessing the Journey through Indigenous Youth Storywork: A Spiritual Awakening

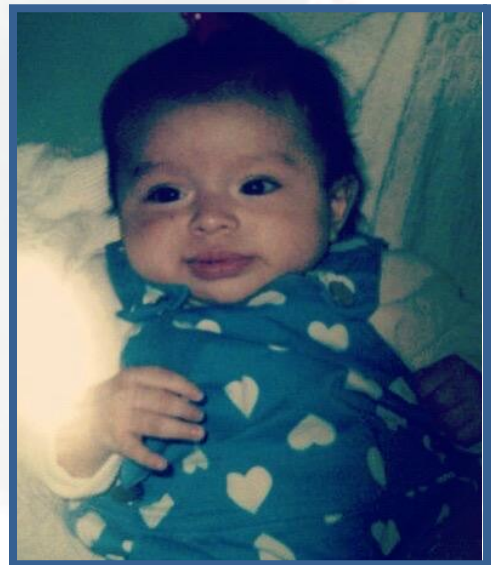
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Indigenous adoptee scholars across Turtle Island and beyond have done good work in coming to understand their identity through community connection, culture, education and practice. A plethora of research has guided young Indigenous interracial adoptees on their journey, yet there are few stories focused on the experiences of interracial Maya adoptees reconnecting to their culture in KKKanada.

Currently there is limited research documenting Maya adoptees' experiences of displacement and cultural reclamation in KKKanadian adoption studies. Research must make more space for these stories and the stories of local Indigenous communities supporting them. In this story (thesis), through engagement with current literature and ten research questions, I explored what it meant to live as an interracial adoptee in West Coast Indigenous communities. An Indigenous Youth Storywork methodology was applied to bring meaning to relationships I have with diverse Indigenous Old Ones, mentors and Knowledge Keepers, and their influence on my journey as a Maya adoptee returning to my culture.

My personal story was developed and analyzed using an Indigenous decolonial framework and Indigenous Arts-based methods. This storying journey sheds light on the intricate intersections of interracial adoption, specifically for Maya Indigenous Youth who currently live in KKKanada. The intention of this Youth Storywork research work is to create space for Indigenous, Interracial, Transracial and Maya adoptees in Child and Youth Care, Social Work and Counseling Psychology education, policy and practice.



(Ana at 6 months old, 1996)