

# MASTER OF EDUCATION THESIS DEFENSE

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**Tuesday, September 14, 2010, 3:30 p.m.**

Location: Main Boardroom, Room 208-A & 208-B, PEI Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Holman Building, 250 Water Street, Summerside

## **The Truth About Stories: An Autoethnography Towards an Earth Consciousness**

### **ABSTRACT**

The present ecological crisis reflects a crisis in human consciousness, especially in the western world, where our relationship with the earth and cosmos has been largely shaped and influenced by the stories we have been told in our culture. The old stories, as manifested in the myths and world views of our western cultural, philosophical and religious belief systems, emphasized humanity's dominion over nature and the benefits of economic, scientific and technological progress that regard the earth as having instrumental value in meeting our own ends. A series of autoethnographic narratives and reflections argue that instrumental stories will not curb the current ecological destruction of the earth. There is a need for new stories; for a re-storying about the earth that includes our interconnectedness with the planet. Earth consciousness is described as a relational and embodied understanding of ourselves vis-à-vis the earth. Earth consciousness fosters an understanding that humanity is part of the earth, part of the universe, not a separate entity. Respect, relationship and reciprocity are suggested as our best hope for the future, lying in our capacity for an attitude of wonder and awe at the creative, life-sustaining power of the universe.