

## **Proposed Title**

Once upon a time: an anthropological exploration of two Gwich'in stories (Man in the Moon; The Old Woman and the Brushman)

## **Abstract**

This MA thesis research focuses on Gwich'in stories. It seeks to better understand how similar the versions of two stories are when each is parsed into units representing themes within the stories. Inspired by Lévi-Strauss's understanding of the similarity of myths across the world and applying it to the Gwich'in stories discussed in this research, I will demonstrate that several versions of a story contain identical themes, though levels of detail vary. This occurs when (1) a story is told by the same person at different times, and (2) when a story is told by two or more people. While each version of a particular story may differ in the amount of detail, resulting in shorter and longer versions, my research shows that the main themes of a story are identical even when several people narrate the same story or when the same person tells a story more than once, but several years apart. There is a gap in the academic literature pertaining to Gwich'in stories. Recent projects have been conducted including Gwich'in stories focused on documenting narratives, but no one has investigated whether the content of those tales is actually identical. My research complements these projects by shedding light on a neglected aspect of Gwich'in storytelling.