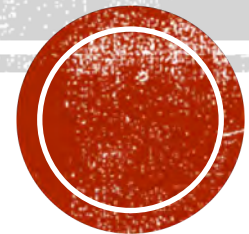


# THE RAVEN PROJECT AND ACTIVIST RESEARCH

Susan O'Donnell, UNB Sociology

Works in Progress presentation, UNB Faculty of Education

Fredericton, October 30, 2019



# MY RESEARCH BACKGROUND

MA Journalism, Cardiff University, UK (1995) - Indigenous news on the internet and solidarity building

PhD, Communications, Dublin City University (2000) – social movements and alternative media on the internet

Researcher in Dublin (1995-2003) then Fredericton (2004-ongoing)

Senior Researcher, National Research Council, UNB campus, 2004 to 2017

Adjunct professor, UNB Sociology and SSHRC research funding continuously since 2004



# MY ACTIVIST BACKGROUND

Environment:  
Campus radio,  
Eco-Chamber,  
1975; Pollution  
Probe Ottawa  
1982; Green  
Party currently

Feminism: U of  
Ottawa  
Women's  
Centre, 1985-  
1987;  
Concordia U  
Women's  
Centre, 1987-  
1989

Social justice /  
anti-war  
protests

Union:  
President of  
the PIPSC NRC  
researchers  
2014-2017

Independent  
media:  
Manushi  
(1989), Kinesis  
(1990),  
Indig.Canada  
(1991-2) NB  
Media Co-op  
now



# RAVEN PROJECT BASIC INFO



- Funded 2018 to 2022 by SSHRC and NBIF
- Office: #354 Marshall D'Avery Hall
- 3 community research partners
- 4 UNB co-investigators (including Matt Rogers and Casey Burkholder)
- 4 UNB collaborators
- 3 students this term
- 12 students in 3 previous terms



# RAVEN RESEARCH & PRODUCTIONS



- Research focus is alternative (independent / cooperative / community) digital media for rural and environmental activism in NB
- Production and reception of cell films, photovoice productions, participatory video
- Reception of news articles published online by partner NB Media Co-op



# RAVEN PUBLICATIONS TO DATE

## *Presentations*

- 1 at Qualitatives 2019 (PhD student)
- 1 at Canadian Communication Assn 2019 (PhD student)
- 1 at Environmental Studies Assn of Canada 2019 (Masters student)
- 3 at Canadian Sociological Assn (2 PhD students + me)
- 1 at international Our Media conference 2019 (PhD student)
- photovoice exhibit, STU, Sept. 2019
- many informal presentations at various community events

## *Publications*

97 RAVEN-supported articles or videos published online by the NB Media Co-op

Mary Aspinall, Susan O'Donnell, Tracy Glynn, Tom Beckley (2019, Dec). "Manufacturing Consent for an Extractive Regime in Rural New Brunswick" *Journal of Rural and Community Development*

Kim Reeder, Susan O'Donnell, Adrian Prado (in peer review) "Leadership and mobilization for climate change adaptation in a rural region"

Amy Savile, Tracy Glynn, Susan O'Donnell (in drafting) "Environmental activism in a monopoly news media setting: Social movement media in a rural Canadian province."





# RAVEN PROJECT ACTIVISM

Supporting the  
Fossil-Free UNB  
Orange Square  
Campaign

Partnering with  
Fridays for Future  
Fredericton Climate  
Strike and  
Extinction Rebellion  
protest Sept 20

Organizing  
speakers on activist  
topics such as  
keeping the mining  
industry out of your  
community, teach-in  
on non-violent  
direct action for the  
climate crisis

Supporting training  
for: spoken-word  
poets on the climate  
crisis, making  
memes



# RESEARCH AS ACTIVISM

- Cushman, Ellen, "Opinion: The Public Intellectual, Service Learning, and Activist Research" (1999). *College English*, 61(3)
- <http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slceslgen/84>

1) public intellectuals

2) service learning  
(students enter  
communities as  
participant-  
observers)

3) activist research /  
praxis (students are  
not 'saviours' but  
rather ethical  
learners to facilitate  
social change)





# BEYOND ACTIVISM / ACADEMIA

- Russell, Bertie (2015). Beyond activism/academia: militant research and the radical climate and climate justice movement (s). *Area*, 47(3), 222-229. (refers to Colectivo Situaciones)

the most important principle for academics committed to social change is to make strategic interventions collectively with the social movements we belong to

militant research does not take the university as a referent... its is irrespective of the university

militant research is the conscious and deliberate attempt to make movements MOVE - through a reflexive critique of their own praxis

militant research 'impact' is its capacity to disrupt, discredit and dismantle [neoliberalism] and instead open up new possibilities for hope in what the future(s) could look like

