

CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES



The Gift is In the Journey

DECOLONIZING DIET PROJECT

BACKGROUND

"If I wanted to eat the foods my Native ancestors ate, what would I have to know and do?" This is the question that came to the mind of Dr. Martin Reinhardt following the annual First Nations Food Taster at Northern Michigan University (NMU) in November 2010. *How did we eat prior to colonization in this region?*

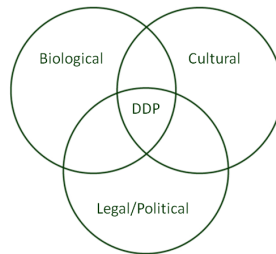
In the following months, this became the topic of many discussions around the Center for Native American Studies, and blossomed into the Decolonizing Diet Project (DDP) approved by NMU's Internal Review Board (project # HS11-415).

ABOUT

The DDP is an exploratory study of the relationship between people and Indigenous foods of the Great Lakes Region. Very few studies have ever been conducted on this subject matter, and studies that examine the physical, cultural, and legal/political dimensions are practically non-existent.

The DDP chronicles the year-long experience of 25 voluntary research subjects as they adhere to a diet consisting of 25-100% Indigenous foods from the Great Lakes Region, and an exercise regimen developed in consultation with an exercise science specialist and/or their personal physician.

The DDP incorporates self-monitoring by the research subjects using video, photo, audio, and written journals/logs. The DDP staff is seeking answers to questions, such as: will this improve health, and what kind of social barriers will be encountered, if any?



Access to Indigenous foods comes from the local economy, foraging, hunting, fishing, and gardening. A database of Indigenous foods and availability has been developed by DDP staff and is available at the DDP group site. To access the master food list visit: <https://share.nmu.edu/moodle/course/view.php?id=33>.

THE FUTURE

This study will provide important data for ongoing research in multiple discipline areas. We anticipate the generation of products such as scholarly articles, curriculum materials, a recipe book, and a documentary video. More importantly, the DDP staff believes it will serve as a catalyst for the revitalization of interconnections between humans and the world around us.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The DDP staff is seeking the following donations:

- * Dried or frozen Indigenous food items
- * Indigenous seeds
- * Gardening equipment
- * Hunting/fishing/gathering supplies
- * Storage equipment (small chest freezers, shelves, containers)
- * Recording equipment

Cash contributions would also be greatly appreciated to purchase the above items. Send a check to: Northern Michigan University, and indicate in the memo or check-stub that it is intended for the DDP. Checks can be mailed to the address below.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

E-mail: mreinhar@nmu.edu

Blog: <http://decolonizingdietproject.blogspot.com>

Dr. Martin Reinhardt, Principal Investigator
Center for Native American Studies
Northern Michigan University
1401 Presque Isle Avenue
Marquette, Michigan 49855



Upper Peninsula of Michigan

Phone: 906-227-1397

Fax: 906-227-1396

Email: cnas@nmu.edu

Web site: www.nmu.edu/nativeamericans
Find the Center on Facebook and FLICKR.