Indigenous populations reside all over the globe and Rankin Inlet, with a population of roughly 2,500 certainly qualifies as an area with a small indigenous population. Tucked up high in the Far North subarctic region near Hudson Bay, this desolate territory of Nunavut, Canada, falls above the tree line and temperatures stay below freezing from late September into early June. Like many indigenous populations across Canada, there is a high rate of suicide and a higher rate of alcohol abuse. It was out of this environment that Jordin and Terence Tootoo were raised along with their sister, Corinne, by their parents. While dedicated hockey fans will recognize the name of Jordin Tootoo, they may be surprised to learn that it was Terence Tootoo who was the first Inuk to skate in a North American professional hockey game (Jordin was the first Inuk to ever be drafted by an NHL club). Jordin’s autobiography, All the Way: My Life on Ice is an amazingly raw accounting of his journey from the desolate solitude of life “on the land” to the bright lights of National Hockey League (NHL) star.

Jordin Tootoo, along with his siblings, learned from an early age how his father could be the epitome of community leadership when he went out “on the land” or even in managing his daily affairs and yet, with an infusion of alcohol, transform into a volatile vessel of anger and discontent. The home life of the Tootoo household was messy, which is an all-too-common occurrence among First Nations people. Both Jordin and Terence learned that hockey provided not only hours of enjoyment, but it also opened multiple opportunities and alternate living arrangements as they traversed the junior and major junior hockey leagues. While the Tootoo boys progressed well throughout the competitive junior circuit and grew up in a variety of billet housing situations, things at home never really changed, at least not significantly.

Jordin chronicles his rise through the hockey development process, moving from the “outpost” of Rankin Inlet to making $500 a week plus living expenses while playing for the Opaskwayak Cree Nation as a fifteen-year-old, and on to major junior hockey which then allowed him the honor of suiting up for the always formidable Canadian national team. These were just precursors to “big time” successes that would come. Nevertheless, throughout his journey, there were three constants: an alcoholic household, a special bond with his “big bro” Terrence, and hockey. Jordin learned quickly as his own alcohol consumption increased to problematic levels that hockey, and his skills on the ice could compensate for nearly anything. As he noted “I knew that when push came to shove, hockey made up for anything I did in my personal life” (p. 53-54).

The Tootoo family legacy would change forever in the late summer of 2002 after a night of partying between brothers in the offseason. Both brothers had been looking forward to the upcoming fame and fortune of professional hockey in the U.S., but Terrence got a DUI on his drive home that night. It appears that shame, guilt, and numerous other known and unknown factors coalesced into a personal maelstrom that ended in suicide. The death of his best friend, closest confidant, mediator of the domestic violence at home, and role model had a profound
effect on young Jordin who had been drafted by the Nashville Predators. Jordin’s career was blossoming as he quickly established himself as a dynamo of energy who used his well-crafted hockey and pugilistic skills to create a fan-favorite following. While the fame, money, and lifestyle were different, his growing alcohol addiction and pressures from the ever-tumultuous home life persisted and these seemed to be compounded by the added pressure of his brother’s suicide.

The candor and, at times, crass storytelling that is the narrative of Jordin Tootoo makes *All the Way* a compelling and essential story for anybody who addresses or wants to address suicide in cultures with exorbitant suicide rates. Suicidality permeates the fabric of the Inuk and other First Nations cultures with Nunavet often being noted as having one of the highest suicide rates in all of North America. Jordin notes that his “dad pushes my mom to the brink of taking her own life some days, and she talks about suicide” (p. 104). The Tootoo family’s divergent paths of adapting to the loss of Terrence highlight how grief, grieving, and perseverance take different forms for people who have been confronted with this painful loss. As Jordin has entered into a new phase of his life, suiting up for the New Jersey Devils with a clear head (sobriety has had a powerful positive impact on his game and life which started before he left the Predators’ organization), and embarking on his own life with his wife, it is clear that *All the Way* may not be the “end” of Jordin’s story. It is a compelling resource for suicide prevention specialists, suicide loss survivors, and those who love a good sports-related mental health book. Jordin continues to live life and is going all the way in trying to reach people with his own message of hope and healing. In his own way, the small-town Inuk from the Far North is touching lives around the globe.