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Transmotion

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‘Old Meets New’ – Brent Learned

We are grateful for the support of the University of Kent, the European University of Cyprus, California State University, San Bernardino, and the University of Georgia. *Transmotion* is hosted by the University of Kent.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Transmotion will publish new scholarship focused on theoretical, experimental, postmodernist, and avant-garde writing produced by Native American and First Nations authors, as well as book reviews on relevant work in Vizenor Studies and Indigenous Studies.

The broad use of Vizenor-created theoretical terms in many different academic fields (e.g. law, literature, anthropology, sociology, museum studies, etc.) highlights the fact that Vizenor Studies represents a significant interdisciplinary conversation within the broader field of Indigenous Studies. As such, the editors of *Transmotion* will look for submissions that do any of the following:

- Look at Vizenor's work directly, as well as the work of related authors and theorists in the field
- Employ Vizenor's theory to look at other writers
- Continue Vizenor's project of bringing together traditional indigenous knowledges and Asian or European continental philosophy
- Explore the inter-relation of image and text, art and literature, in Vizenor's work

- Contribute to recent developing conversations in contemporary Native American art and literature, in relation to questions of visual sovereignty, visuality, and ethics.
- Offer innovative, surprising, unexpected and creative critique of American Indian literatures or other creative arts
- Emphasize experimental, theoretical, and avant-garde Native North American work

The journal will also accept creative or hybrid work, provided that such work aligns aesthetically with the aforementioned editorial emphasis. The editors particularly welcome submissions of innovative and creative works that exploit digital media.

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Enquiries regarding submission are welcome and may be sent to the editors at transmotionjournal@gmail.com Scholarly articles should be 20-25 pages in length, prepared according to the MLA Style Manual. Creative work can be of any length. We are also very keen for scholars to put themselves forward as potential book reviewers and to volunteer to be anonymous peer reviewers.

Information regarding on-line submissions of full drafts can be found at: http://journals.kent.ac.uk/index.php/transmotion/about/submissions#onlineSubmissions

To contact the editors: transmotionjournal@gmail.com

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Book Reviews

Editorial

We pen our greeting to you on the day before that feasty, yeasty American November holiday of "horrorshow buffet," the one full of myths of friendship and sacrifice, of journeys, bounty, and loss, and of sanctuary and exile. Cathy Coevell Waegner leads us through an intense and welcome consumption of selected works of Vizenor and Stephen Graham Jones, a post-Halloween pre-Thanksgiving discussion of incarceration and interstates, complete with cannibals, clowns, and *wiindigoo.* In anticipation of the upcoming season, here read "blockbuster releases," we offer Olena McLaughlin's essay that looks at the influence of *Star Wars* in the works of a variety of artists from Susan Folwell to Ryan Singer and Andy Everson, among others, and focuses in particular on the Pop Art and insights of Bunky Echo-Hawk and Steven Paul Judd. Karen Poremski gifts us a careful consideration of a Trevino Brings Plenty poem from his collection *Wakpá Wanáği.* "Little, Cultural, Teapot Curio Exposes People" is a poem of woven creation and other containers, stained with blood and history and the theft of culture and celebration of conquest. Within a basket though, Brings Plenty reminds us is a weaving of links and DNA in other kinds of captivity, the ones no NAGPRA act can loosen. With those bonds unbound however, outside of laws and policy, Poremski shows family and relatives moving beyond the confines of museums.

Moving from notions of history to imagining ourselves into the future, Deborah Madsen provides an analysis of "Indigenously-determined" gaming and "the mechanics of survivance," eloquently building on what she sees as an oft-overlooked nuance of survivance, reminding us that is "not a static object or method but a dynamic, active condition of historical and cultural survival and also of political resistance." Her incisive read of Never Alone / *Kisima Inŋitchuŋa* through this particular lens of survivance and projection resonates in a quote she provides from Ishmael Angaluuk Hope, who "'remarks that the game story is about how to be the kind of person who can bring about a return to "true living in the community.'"

For a contribution to and as a community of scholars, we provide in this issue "Red Pens, White Paper: Wider Implications of Coulthard's Call to Sovereignty," a roundtable discussion of Glen S. Coulthard's *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, which descends from a plenary session at the Native American Literature Symposium in 2016. The membership of the panel, Carol Edelman Warrior, Brian Burkhart, Billy J. Stratton, David J. Carlson, and Theodore C. Van Alst, Jr. is made up of specialists in Literature, English, Philosophy, and Native American Studies, and provides a lively and multi-faceted discussion of this seminal work in Indigenous Political Science.

Finally, our creative section in this issue provides us with world views that move us through a cycle, and the incidental structure of this volume bookends itself in this regard. Echoing Coevell Waegner's initial work here and its use of carceral theory, David Groulx via praxis gives us a look at "the world" from the inside out, one set in a different kind of tomb; a sort of Easter yet concluded. Crisosto Apache writes of a world contained in "*this* specific moment and time / no different than the odious *Big Bang,*" and we wonder at the mark made on the universe when that moment in an

"envelopment of toiling flame engulfing in

combustion”
meets ice and snow as winter in season (and increasingly in spirit) approaches. We are grateful that Carter Meland provides us with a critical reflection on *Wiindigoo* “presence” in the world even as we recognize winter’s necessity, though we perhaps already wait for spring in season (and spirit) to return.

Until then, enjoy.

Theodore C. Van Alst November 2017
David J. Carlson
James Mackay
David Stirrup

Old Meets New, or Arting: Editorial Statement

> "The materialist presentation of history leads the past to bring the present into a critical state." – Walter Benjamin. *The Arcades Project,* (N7a, 5), 1927-1940.
>
> "I sometimes wonder how anything is accomplished by Indians because of the apparent overemphasis on humor within the Indian world." – Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins*, 1969.

I don't want to write a longer and verbally gymnastic introduction, describing personal relationships, histories of publications, digital disagreements, or memeish he said she saids.

But I do want to talk briefly about this art thing. This "Quality and Control: How Native Artists Have Failed to Criticize Each Other" from June 8, 2017 in *ICMTN* (R.I.P.).

I am grateful to Terese Mailhot for beginning this conversation, and suspect I'm not the only one.

(Note—The business, *this* business of addressing the business of art is actually for another series of discussions.)

This one here is about movement and movements, I think.

Native art *is* moving forward, moves forward all the time, reflects the movement of us all. At least in a perfect world. That is, we are all moving, in that perfect world. We don't all always see it though, I think. That? That's the fault of the media, usually, and less so, but still guilty, our own lazy search habits.

Typically, critiques of art and artists relate to the particular movement that the artist is situated in, and often, that artist is one of the founders of that movement. After critiquing the movement and its founder(s), while somehow, somewhere in the piece noting that critique is not an implicitly bad thing, nor is the practitioner of the art an implicitly bad person (unless you are writing as say, Evelyn Waugh, who signed off letters "Death to Picasso," but hmmm, still said "Señor Picasso's paintings cannot be intelligently discussed in the terms used of the civilized masters," so, hah, I guess only critiquing the work with that one), the critic often holds up a new artist or movement as the replacement for what the critic perceives to be a tired or obsolete style or movement.

This is not happening at the moment.

And in the rush to make the type of art being critiqued (whether pop, NDNpop, or what I'll call *RetroShop,*), representative, in broad, if not absolute ways, of the current field of "Native American Art," we have missed something, I think.

Mailhot mentioned a sketch comedy piece with thousands of likes. I'm not sure which one it is, but I can guess the sketch comedy troupe that made it, and say that some pieces have more likes than others. Often by the thousands. Humor is subjective, of course. Humor finds its way into successful sketch "comedy" (using those marks obviously says there might be another meaning to the word, and here, if we are feeling particularly generous, we can note that "comedy" is often insightful "critique"), and humor finds its way into the visual arts as well. Some of those RetroShop photos are…funny. And *intelligently* funny for a variety of reasons. To be sure, the "we're still here" and the "Indians in Unexpected Places" is part of the attraction, but for the same reason that some segments of *Drunk History* are hilarious is because both turn upon the pairing of completely unrelated anachronistic items. The work is accessible because of its style and content, and also because of social media. This type of work lends itself well to Instagram, and Facebook, and Tumblr, and others because it's visual, often arrestingly so. It spreads virally because it has the chops and format to do so. Ultimately it does so because, well, people *like* it.

When we look at, for instance, Steven Paul Judd's films like *Neil Goes to the Moon, RoundDance, Six-Pack and Gas Money, Search for the World's Best Indian Taco,* or his graphic work in *Dr. Sioux,* or *The Warriors, or Lego My Land*, that's a body of work. Do all his productions hit the mark? No. Of course not. But did Judd revise *The Warriors* after folks pointed out the lack of women in the piece? You bet. And that level of engagement between artist and audience ain't gonna happen in a gallery in NYC. The work he is producing now, while not limited to "Photoshopped images of old photos of unnamed Native men in regalia within some contemporary setting," reflects a long engagement with a variety of artistic traditions, including "Native Pop." He works to expand his vision of art in the worlds he knows well. And there are others (thinking here of Brent Learned) who come from other artistic traditions or schools and find something here that relates to their own artistic vision. They contribute their styles and views. That expansion reaches others outside the field, and brings them in as well. (This happens all the time. It can even happen with horrible consequences. Think of KISS's "I Was Made for Loving You," or the Rolling Stone's "Emotional Rescue.")

That's a movement, good or bad, whether you like it or don't. That's an art movement that builds upon the ideas and structures and most importantly, *urges* of the art of Edmonia Lewis, or TC Cannon, or the Kiowa Six, or Helen Hardin, or James Luna, or B. Yellowtail, or Jeremy Singer, or…name your favorite artist here, and see if they are part of a movement, or might even be founding one. That's where it gets really good. Because I think we can marvel at what we have, and work hard to identify what's next. This is progress. We can move forward. We are obligated to do so. This is what Mailhot has pointed out. I'm looking forward to so many future conversations, especially those ones "that will inevitably make us better."

Theodore C. Van Alst, Jr. November 2017

Consuming, Incarcerating, and "Transmoting" Misery: Border Practice in Vizenor's *Bearheart* and Jones's *The Fast Red Road*[1]

CATHY COVELL WAEGNER

Drawing on Gerald Vizenor's complex notion of "transmotion" and concepts from carceral theory, an intertextual reading of two rich debut novels by first and second-generation postmodern Native writers, namely Gerald Vizenor's seminal *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* (1990; first published in 1978 as *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart*) and Stephen Graham Jones's *The Fast Red Road: A Plainsong* (2000), reveals systemic miseries and strategies for combating them. In the two novels, brutal imagery and experience of cannibalization, enclosure, and displacement menace the Native protagonists, but, paradoxically, these strong images also offer modes of resourceful and imaginative action—for my purposes here particularly at borders: territorial, historical, and ethnic—which enable totemic laughter and viable Native "survivance," to use Vizenor's own much-quoted term.

In *Bearheart*, the invasion by authorities of a sacred Anishinaabe venue of cedar trees at what is now the US/Canadian border jumpstarts a perilous journey by cross-ethnic Native pilgrims south and west to the states carved out of former Mexican territory. Desperate misery, sexual violation, and devouring of all types reign in the post-apocalyptic landscape as the thirteen pilgrims are eliminated one by one in a novelistic instrumentalization and challenge of the infamous "Ten Little Indians" ditty. The journey climaxes in enslavement and Inquisition in the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, the adobe building constructed in 1610 for the first Spanish Governor of the colonial area, which has flown a sequence of national flags as probably the oldest public building still in use in the Americas. In Vizenor's novel, five hundred years of conquest and oppression in the New World threaten to repeat themselves.

In *The Fast Red Road*, the characters voraciously consume drugs, alcohol, diverse products of popular culture, even "beef-fed-beef" and (hallucinated?) body parts. The young man of indeterminate indigeneity appropriately named Pidgin and other characters are constantly imprisoned in trailers, bathroom stalls, bedrooms, bomb shelters, or padded cells. Pidgin invariably loses grotesque bets he is drawn into, an ironic riff in the novel being "the Indian always loses." In his dizzying zigzag journey back and forth across the Southwest, particularly

crossing repeatedly the border between Texas and New Mexico, Pidgin heads "towards the fugitive myth of Old Mexico" (44) to find the hideout of the "strange outlaws" (319) in a sepiatone photo, among others the mysterious "Mexican Paiute" and Pidgin's dead but frequently re-embodied mother, named Marina Trigo, the outlaws' "Indian princess" (90). Pidgin passes through actual and virtual sites significant for the Native history of oppression and achievement, thus having the opportunity to draw strength from his ethnic past and to break out of the constraints that hinder and haunt him.

Recent carceral theory tells us that the mapping of imprisonment must include a differentiated study of *practice* as well as of enclosed space and enforced borders. The border crossing in the two books at hand enfolds centuries of efforts to separate and eventually eliminate Indigenous people, as well as discriminatory practice based on dangerously fixed stereotypes, demarcation of ethnic boundaries, and binary "terminal creeds" that Gerald Vizenor has critiqued in his oeuvre. Pidgin's miserable but epiphanic realization in yet another 'win-or-lose' trap that he "was consumed" (153) reverberates on levels of imagery, narrative strategy, historical figuration, and imaginative protest in a synergetic analysis of the two experimental and engagé novels.[2] The legitimacy of such an analysis is perhaps supported by Jones's remarks in a newly published interview, in which he emphasizes that he has long venerated Vizenor as his "hero of heroes"; when attempting to publish his first novel, Jones dedicated it to Vizenor: "Then [the publisher] got back and said, 'Hey, look, Gerald Vizenor is blurbing this!' Because he was my hero of heroes, you know, I had to sneak in and change the dedication away from him because I thought that looked too much like I was trying to lure him in or something, when really I was just trying to impress him, I guess. I still am, I suppose" ("Observations" 46-47). Jones has, however, clearly pointed out generational differences; in his address to NALS 2016, published in *Transmotion* 2 (1-2) 2016, he advises a "just-starting-out Indian writer" not to feel obliged to repeat the themes and approaches of the "Native American Renaissance" from the late 1960s - 80s: "You're not resisting the invisibility that comes from colonial myth-making so much as you're resisting the voicelessness that comes from commodification" ("Letter" 124). Thus *The Fast Red Road*, published more than two decades after *Bearheart*, places more explicit emphasis on the Native as commodity, 'media-tivized' in film, television, popular song, and advertisement or logo.

Although both authors and their wide-ranging canons resist easy classification, these two novels bear strong postmodern thrusts with their dark playfulness, narrative inventiveness, and genre mixture. Vizenor (Anishinaabe, White Earth Nation) overtly indigenizes the postmodern mode in his applications of "trickster discourse," the "trickster" being both a version of Naanabozho, the disrupting, liberating "woodland trickster" of oral Native tale-telling (*Narrative Chance* 192) and a sophisticated narrative strategy: "The trickster is a chance, a comic holotrope in a postmodern language game that uncovers the distinctions and ironies between narrative voices" (192); combined, these two applications project a "comic tribal world view" (191).[3] In the first scholarly volume devoted to Jones's works, *The Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones: A Critical Companion* (2016), editor and chapter-author Billy J. Stratton reveals Jones's novel to be a "loosely based counterpart" to Thomas Pynchon's postmodern 'classic,' *The Crying of Lot 49* with its ironic quest and conspiracies, "intersections of chance events," radical intertextuality, and parodic humor, which Jones (Blackfeet) "indigenizes" through his crossblood characters and Native reterritorialization (Stratton 94-95).[4] A. Robert Lee's contribution to the *Mediating Indianness* volume (2015) has elegantly argued in favor of calling much of Jones's canon "Native postmodern" (e.g. 73)—as well as Vizenor's—because of its "re-mediation of [Native] past into present" (86) and such features as "time-fold and overlap of voice," often with "storytelling whose Native implication takes on added, not less, strength from its postmodern styling" (Lee 78, 82). In Stratton's dialogic interview with Jones, referenced above, in the 2016 *Fictions* volume, Jones isolates a productive "uncertainty" ("Observations" 56) as the guiding feature of postmodernism: "We always know literature is a construct, so we can never trust it. I do believe in that: I think stories are constructs. What else could they be? But just like in math, if you multiply two negatives, you get a positive. I think in fiction, on the page, if you multiply two lies, you can get a truth" (56). In both novels, this productive "uncertainty" is profitably exacerbated by the narratorial preference for porous borders over fixed boundaries with regard to characters' ethnic identities, time frames, narrating voices, genre choices, and objects of satirical treatment.[5]

After a discussion of relevant concepts of incarceration in connection with border practice, I will consider five venues of comparison between the two novels, analyzing them in the light of the thematic complex of consumption, imprisonment, and border transgression, finally relating them to Gerald Vizenor's evolving notion of "transmotion." The comparative

venues bear these labels: "Cedar Circus and Trailer amid Bomb Shelters: Sanctuary and Entrapment"; "Clovis: From Origin to Border"; "Governors' Palace in Santa Fe and Horrorshow Buffet: 500 Years Revisited"; "Public Space of Interstate and Rodeo: Cannibals and Clowns"; "Wounded Knee: Does 'the Indian always lose'?"

In Scott Christianson's historical account of the American carceral system, tellingly titled *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America*, he traces the way jails have served to enforce the practices of cross-ethnic or gender bondage and the authority of EuroAmerican masters or lawmakers. As an early instance, during the Massachusetts Standing Council's 1636-37 war of dominance over the Pequots, the Puritans held a Pequot ally, Chaussop, in Boston's prison, then removed him to Castle Island for a lifetime sentence of slavery (40). Christianson reminds us that "colonial America had more jails than public schools or hospitals" (60), a priority that supported the legalized dispossession of Native lands and the lucrative global economic system based on slavery. The development of the modern prison system, which Michel Foucault's influential study *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) sets forth as emerging in the late 17th-century, arose from—among other developments like the reduction of corporal punishment as public spectacle—the urge to draw a strict border between transgressors and the society at large through close surveillance; in general the undesirable offenders were the hegemonically disadvantaged. Foucault's accompanying theory of "heterotopias" draws attention to "counter-sites" that simultaneously represent, contest, and invert "other real sites" in a culture ("Of Other Spaces" 24); particularly his "heterotopias of deviation" (25) such as prisons and asylums underline the porousness of the thick walls encircling the inmates: "Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable" (26).

The agency, albeit severely limited, of the oft subaltern prisoners, and subtle ways they can take advantage of that porousness has moved into the focus of recent carceral theory. In her 2015 study *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration*, Dominique Moran stresses "embodied practice and perception" on the part of the prisoner to analyze "the intertwinings of self and [prison] landscape" and the "performance [of these intertwinings] via everyday practices such as walking and visualizing" (130). Such "embodied practice and perception" thrive in liminal or intermediary spaces like the prison visiting room, or "transcarceral" events such as home furloughs, or even "mobile" transcarceral events like

transportation to and from the prison and electronic monitoring (93). The carceral experience inscribes itself on the bodies of the prisoners as stigmas that extend beyond the actual period of imprisonment; one of Moran's examples is the "blank 'yard face'" (100) that might have functioned during the actual time in prison as an expression of concealed aggression, fear, or resignation. The blank expression can also cover up a confusion about 'inside' vs. 'outside'; incarcerees use the idiom 'on the inside,' although they are 'on the outside' of normative society. Moran refines the notion of the mutual interpenetration of 'inside' and 'outside' in her understanding of "the contested nature of the prison boundary" in "bordering *practices*" related to the prisoner as a legal entity, for example "legal status, disenfranchisement, and restriction of citizenship" (102, emphasis in original).[6] Jennifer Turner suggests that the dialectical inside/outside axis has been complicated by the historical transition from visible to invisible modes of penal punishment in which the connective "interface" (for example, visiting areas or encounters with guards as spaces of exchange for legal and illegal goods, 8) plays an increasingly complex role, while simultaneously the ubiquitous appearance of penality in film and television has provided a meta-level of high visibility (2). Furthermore, Turner pays attention to the entanglements of the temporal ramifications of incarceration with the spatial: In the prisoners' perception, "on the 'outside' the world progresses—technology develops, children age—but on the 'inside' there are connotations of time standing still, a lack of progress, or even backwardness" (12). For prisoners with life sentences or, by extension, for ethnic groups that might perceive themselves as entrapped in ghettos or reservations, the absence of temporal limitedness increases the strength of the bars and the taint enclosing the 'inside' prison environment, despite the presence of interstices with the 'outside.'

The social, political, and even economic determination of the border between ethnic transgressors and the dominant society has been well documented in *The Punitive Turn: New Approaches to Race and Incarceration* (2013), particularly with regard to the high numbers of prisoners of ethnicity, especially African American prisoners, in the United States. The volume traces the historical path from the rise of the highly profitable international slave trade to (repeated) trends in disproportional incarceration of African Americans that the book views as a contemporary form of forced bondage, legally sustained. Marlon B. Ross describes the volume as focusing on the "macro-narrative of the institutional, discursive, and historical development of the prison as an apparatus of state power or dominant ideology" (qtd in McDowell, et al.

"Introduction" 15). In his contribution to the volume Ross points out that, as the editors put it, the prison has become a "cultural commodity, the imagery of which is marketed for mass consumption" (McDowell, et al. 4). Mass media traditionally played an influential role in propagating a "carceral divide": "The scripts of prison dramas—loaded with a history of class, gender, and racial biases—inevitably insist on alien insiders (the imprisoned abnormal) versus familiar outsiders (we the normal)" (Ross 241-42). However, a literary tradition deconstructs the 'them' vs. 'us' division; 'Chief Bromden' as the narrative touchstone in Ken Kesey's 1962 novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* set in a heterotopic, imprisoning asylum is a prime example.[7] Ross claims that the ever increasing presence of a differentiated "carceral imaginary" in literature, film, and television is currently having the effect of lending fluidity to the barrier, moving toward a recognition that the imprisoned and the 'free' possess "a common culture across and despite the carceral divide" (258).

A 19th-century incarceral strategy particularly directed toward subduing resistance by Native American peoples to westward colonizing expansion involved the shipping of Native 'renegades' to military forts on the East Coast, removing them from hotspots of confrontation and imprisoning them closer to administrative power centers. Black Hawk (Sauk) and other war leaders of the "British Band" were incarcerated in "Fortress Monroe" in Hampton/Virginia after their defeat in the 1832 so-called Black Hawk War centered in what is now Illinois.[8] Fort Marion in St. Augustine/Florida was utilized for three waves of imprisonment: in 1837 Osceola and other fighters and family members in the Second Seminole War;[9] in 1875-78 Plains captives from the Red River wars—72 Arapaho, Caddo, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa people; 1886-87 more than 490 Apaches from the present-day state of Arizona, many belonging to Geronimo's Chiricuhua band. Especially for the latter two groups from the West, disorientation and illness in a new and debilitating climate, after the traumatic transcarceral transport in fetters or with train windows nailed shut, claimed many of the prisoners' lives. The Plains warriors were supervised by Richard Henry Pratt, who had engaged in crushing Native rebellion in the West in 1867-75, including fighting with African American 'Buffalo Soldiers.' Paradoxically, the captives' removal to and isolation in a physical heterotopia was gradually intended to serve the purposes of educative assimilation. Pratt thus encouraged the two-way porousness of the prison walls, inviting educators to teach literacy classes in the Fort and encouraging the prisoners to take on paid-labor tasks in the vicinity of St. Augustine and tout handcrafted artifacts in the town,

including their precious "ledger drawings," which I will refer to later when presenting Vizenor's "transmotion" theory.[10] For Pratt, the logical extension of this 'pedagogical' incarceration was the establishment of boarding schools for Native children, and he actively solicited boys and girls from reservations in the West to attend his now infamous Carlisle Indian Industrial School founded in Pennsylvania in 1879, yet another institutional heterotopia designed to re-form Indigenous people. Indeed, Pratt's illogical and pernicious watchword distinctly announced a veritable capital punishment: "Kill the Indian in him and save the man."[11] We can view the permeability of the walls of seaside forts and the boarding schools as being imposed programmatically by the hegemonic surveiller-practitioners, placing the Indigenous inmates in the quandary of how to negotiate this porosity in ways which could allow them worthy transcultural development in identity and community.

Drawing on Homi K. Bhabha's potent concept of a porous and liminal "third space" at the interstices of colliding cultures, Kevin Bruyneel (*The Third Space of Sovereignty*, 2007)[12] bases his recommendation for the postcolonial politics of U.S.-Indigenous relations on an understanding of boundaries between national and Indigenous sovereignties as productively fuzzy; despite the settler state's historical attempts to isolate and control Native American nations on sharply determined reservations, contemporary Native Americans can call for and implement practices of sovereignty that work against strict binary distinctions on both spatial and temporal axes: "In resistance, indigenous postcolonial politics seeks to resignify settler-state boundaries as the domain of *subaltern, anticolonial activity* rather than as sites of connection and separation between seamlessly bounded states, people, structures, and histories" (20, my emphasis). I will argue that the concept of transmotion supports just such a dynamic resistance to binary thinking and politics, thinking that promotes a battle of sovereignties and containment—including control of the practices and directions of the leaks in that containment—of groups and ideas considered threatening or undesirable by those wielding power. Patrick Wolfe's new warning, however, in *The Settler Complex: Recuperating Binarism in Colonial Studies* (2016) needs to be taken into account: a warning that deep binary distinctions are merely camouflaged by society's "recurrent cycle of inducements" offered to Indigenous individuals and groups to break down the walls of enclosure, inducements that in fact seek "to neutralize the Native alternative" (5). Nonetheless, as I hope to show, the transmotive hoist of the two novels at hand

is foregrounded and counters the potential of defeat programmed into a head-on confrontation between binary opponents with unequal power quotients.

My first comparative venue in the two novels, Vizenor's "cedar circus" and Jones's "trailer amid bomb shelters," concentrates on the slippage between protective sanctuary and consuming entrapment. *Bearheart* begins with an urgently lyrical preface, a "Letter to the Reader," in which the narrator St. Louis Bearheart recapitulates his abusive Indian boarding school past in Minnesota. During his questionable schooling following Pratt's model of forced assimilation through 'educative' isolation from Native home-culture, Bearheart seems to have spent more time locked in dark closets than in the classroom, cruelly "chained at night to a stone in the cowshed" (viii).[13] To counter this, he heightened his Anishinaabe Clan's totemic association with the bear, growling and laughing *as*—not "like"[14]—a bear. In the "Letter to the Reader," the first-person singular "I" of the narrative voice is intermixed with a tribal "we," fusing the otherwise stark switch to the narrative proper, which recounts Bearheart's "heirship" from the four generations of human-bear ancestors all named "Proude Cedarfair." The Cedarfairs and their families live in a circle of ancient cedar trees in the headlands of the Mississippi River situated in a tribal pre-US/Canadian-border territory. Vizenor telescopes past, present, and future in the struggle of the Cedarfairs to maintain and protect their ceremonial sanctuary from early missionaries, national and state governments, later from "treekillers" (7) in general, and finally unscrupulous authorities seeking basic fuel in the chaotic landscape of a dystopian North America that has exhausted all other natural resources. To escape from the authorities' claiming the trees in the cedar refuge at all costs, including their setting fire to the Cedarfairs' cabin with the Native family supposedly entrapped within, crossblood Fourth Proude and his wife Rosina trick these murderous consumers and begin a quest to locate the transcendent "fourth world" in which "evil spirits are outwitted in the secret languages of animals and birds" (5). Louis Owens' perceptive understanding of Vizenor's employment of the "metaphors" of the "mixedblood and the trickster" is still incisive. The mongrel-hybrid trickster with his "harsh laughter" is a "central and unifying figure in Vizenor's art," an "imaginative weapon," that seeks "to shatter static certainties," to "overturn all laws, governments, social conventions," a trope that "soars to freedom in avian dreams and acrobatic outrage" (*Other Destinies* 225-227).[15] Granted, a spectrum of manifestations of the "tricker" paradigm is embedded in the novel, from the Evil Gambler (to be mentioned below) to Owens' paragon, mixedblood shaman Fourth Proude, who

is "transcendent in [his] goodness, wholeness, wisdom and courage" ("'Ecstatic Strategies'" 141).

Fourth Proude and Rosina liberate themselves from their now lethal homespace through trickery; the slide between refuge and entrapment is also emphasized in Jones's *The Fast Red Road* in Pidgin's trailer home encircled by bomb shelters rented out to random sojourners. Pidgin's mother Marina died right before his birth and, following his father Cline's death by suicide in the adjacent shed, Pidgin's uncle Birdfinger, his father's twin, moves into the trailer and appropriates both the space and Pidgin himself, along with having claimed Marina's preference. The adolescent Pidgin temporarily escapes for seven years, but finds himself back in the wretched, foul-smelling trailer when he returns for the interment of his father's corpse, which has been used in scientific experiments for a decade. The majestic marijuana plant that has grown through the roof of the trailer, the fast-food trash, and the countless empty beer cans attest to the consumption of drugs, unhealthy food, and alcohol that lame the inhabitants of the trailer. In the nearby field is buried an unlikely landlocked submarine, pointedly named the USS TommyHawk, in which Pidgin seeks refuge before returning to the trailer and in which he later finds himself imprisoned for days unable to open the hatch, desperately "licking wetness off relict fiberglass" (56). It is in one of the bomb shelters that a traveling salesman named Litmus Jones gives Pidgin the sepia photograph showing Pidgin's parents with their band of 1970s postal outlaws posed in front of the adobe wall of their hideout. Pidgin hopes to locate this elusive hideout, which we could call the "cedar circus" of his heritage and which might provide a more satisfying psychological sanctuary than the trailer home of devouring and death.

As an overall pattern, the colonial exploiters and settlers, whom Wolfe rightly insists on calling invaders,[16] disrespected the spatial territories, intruding upon the 'sanctuaries' of Native American groups, and subsequently aimed to enclose, often at a distant location, these groups, fixing them spatially, temporally, legally, and identitarially in what the settlers saw as—for themselves—safe enclaves. Through the protagonists' peripatetic, back-and-forth experiencing of safe spaces and traps, Vizenor and Jones strikingly demonstrate the two-way, negative and positive slippage between sanctuaries and prisons. Despite the overarching historical pattern of the colonizing consumption of Native land, food sources, and environmental resources, Fourth Proude (and his narratorial inventor Bearheart) and to a certain extent Pidgin can stand for the

agency of Native individuals and groupings to instrumentalize this slippage in their favor as they seek or create their "cedar circuses."

The town of Clovis provides a second comparative venue. During their pilgrimage to the ancient cultures of what is now the American Southwest, the pilgrims of *Bearheart* join a so-called Freedom Train in New Liberty, Oklahoma, traveling to Santa Fe, "the place where the new nation and government would be declared" (218) by dangerously right-wing "whiterulers" (220). When the train with its illegally hoarded fuel crosses the Texas-New Mexico border near Clovis, it passes by impoverished, uprooted migrant hordes wandering west, pursuing the faint shadow of the outdated paradigm of "Go West" to seek economic opportunity: "From Clovis the freedom train followed the highway where thousands of people were walking" after the failure of the US federal government (220). Vizenor's allusion to Clovis recalls the archeological findings near that town in the 1930s documenting the "Clovis Man," among the earliest prehistoric Indigenes, back to which 80% of North American Native peoples can trace their ancestry.[17] The distinctive "Clovis points" or spearheads, chipped or "knapped" from stone or chert, and fluted, evidence the skill with which the ancient hunters obtained their subsistence from mammoth meat. The *Bearheart* train stops at nearby Fort Sumner in what was the parched Bosque Redondo reservation where, as Vizenor tells us, 8,000 tribal people were incarcerated for five years, with Kit Carson having forced "the tribes on the long walk to Bosque Redondo where thousands died" (220). The juxtaposition of post-apocalyptic, displaced, walking persons with the Southwestern Native 'trail of tears' against the background of the nomadic prehistoric hunters breathtakingly creates, within a few sentences, a narrative cross-section of the past and future history of mankind as one of developing oppression with crescendos of violence. This impression is reinforced when the freedom train turns out to be an unconscionable trap to import slaves into the revitalized government seat in Santa Fe: "'We have become prisoners on a freedom train,' Proude said while he pulled and chipped at the siding in an effort to make an escape hole" (222), the image of "chipping" linking back to the ancient Clovis hunters' craft. The cedar pilgrims' story moreover exposes the constructedness of the imposed geographical borders, which cut up the Indigenous homelands into straight-sided federal states and in doing so displaced Native peoples.

Jones chooses Clovis/New Mexico as the main setting of his novel. The protagonists, a number of whom are based in Clovis, constantly arrive in and leave the town; their journeys

north to Utah, east to Texas, west to the Pueblo areas, for instance, always return to the node of Clovis. The town is presented on one diegetic level as a center of stereotypical "redneck" consumption with its sleazy bars or restaurants such as "The Gorge" and a grocery store cum drug-dealing center called "Squanto's," the customers cruising along the main street in pick-up trucks, radios blaring western/country evergreens. Pidgin searches for the refuge of his parents' "Goliard"[18] band in his hometown of Clovis, but it seems to be an unlikely venue for the formation of a 1970s activist, post-office robbing band that writes medieval poems signed with an Indigenous logo as graffiti on public restroom walls. While looking for the clandestine Goliard hideaway, Pidgin damns stifling Clovis for being geographically and culturally *nada*, and thus the source of his own insecurities: "But there was nowhere, there was Clovis" (59).

The narrative contrasts Pidgin's underselling of Clovis with the venue's archeological importance. One of the law-breaking Goliards, the Native "skunkheaded" Larry (147), whose tribal identification seems to be Laguna (90), at other times Acoma (e.g. 127), is currently called Atticus Wean and owns a large construction company in Clovis. Now an economic opportunist, he attempts to sell, for the highest immediate price, the gigantic snail fossils that his bulldozers uncover. Yet this devious "skunk" Larry is also a masterful tale-teller, recounting a tribal myth that references the Clovis Man crafting arrows with "knapped" points. Larry describes how the Indigenous "Knapping Man" (249) wants to free his people from the darkness of a solar eclipse, shooting an arrow that "leaves a hole of light in the sky" (249). This strong image weaves the Indigenous strands of the novel with the Goliard outlaw band, who are associated in the narrative with such apocalyptic typology as a glowing disc of atmospheric light, and the 'Clovis comet impact theory' that has given rise to such science fiction novels as *Aliens in Clovis* (2004). Narrow-sighted Pidgin does not realize that Clovis, for him the "Unemerald City" (269) of childhood frustration and pain, is not a dead-end dungeon, but rather hovers in the liminal space between worlds and borders.

Light can be cast on Pidgin's discomfort in Clovis by considering the affective component of imprisonment, including the relationship of the prisoner and the prison with its dialectic between 'inside' and 'outside' addressed by Moran and Turner. Society's valuation that those 'on the inside' of the prison are 'outsiders' seeps through the porous walls of the heterotopia to the inside—along with articles of consumption, notably drugs ("Displacing Criminal Bodies" 11)—and adds to the prisoner's disorientation. For Native Americans, not only

the settler and military revenge of open warfare but also painful physical displacement—which Vizenor evokes with the references to Fort Sumner and Bosque Redondo—as a solution to Native resistance to land-grabbing and destruction of environmental resources such as the buffalo transitioned to less visibly punitive but confounding strategies like the land allotments and boarding schools. Unsure of his ethnic, family, and community filiations, Pidgin has internalized the inside/outside disorientation and, at one level, keeps returning to Clovis, for him a dystopian and simulated hometown, in a form of self-punishment, not cognizant of his deeper connections to the ancient site; after a nightmare ride as a hitchhiker, Pidgin leaps out and "stumbled from mile marker to mile marker to home, to Clovis (130), the "Land of Disenchantment, The Greatest Medicine Show on Earth" (269).

Pidgin is not bodily present at the Clovis "horrorshow buffet" (17) that opens *The Fast Red Road* and that I am matching with the Governors' Palace in Santa Fe in *Bearheart*. Both venues incorporate the five hundred years marked by the controversial 1992 quincentennial. The misnamed "freedom train" brings Vizenor's starving pilgrims to the historic Governors' Palace in Santa Fe, where they are enslaved by the white leaders striving to replicate post-Columbus imperial history; those dangerously ambitious leaders claim: "Four hundred years after Santa Fe was founded we are going back like the first governors and captain generals to build an empire in the new world… To declare a new nation from the old ruins" (219, Vizenor's ellipsis). To eliminate incipient transgressive behavior, these new "captain generals" interrogate the pilgrims one by one, physically and psychologically torturing them, slicing off ears, pulling out eyeballs, asserting betrayal of one pilgrim by another. A climax of ingenious transmotion—as we will see—enables their escape, ushered in by the seven "clown crows" and encouraged by the intake of a Native halogenic plant drink: In a spectacular exemplum of visualizing the intertwining of "the incarcerated self and landscape" (*Carceral Geographies* 130), the group imaginatively moves back through the many generations of the users of the Palace in a swirl of time and space to reveal a formerly used fireplace and smoke hole, through which all of the surviving cedar pilgrims but one escape.

In Jones's novel fragments of the quincentennial constantly resurface. The grotesque opening chapter of *The Fast Red Road* portrays ravenous travelers engorging at an all-you-can-eat buffet in Clovis. Only two of them realize, however, that the cuts of meat are human, for instance a "tawny forearm" with the word "punta" tattooed on it, or, at second narrative glance,

the word "pinta," the name of one of Columbus's three original ships (16). This beginning chapter with its "horrorshow buffet" (17) of cannibalization as well as the final chapter in the book are narrated largely from the third-person point of view of Litmus Jones, the white vacuum-cleaner salesman who, oddly enough, of all characters most effectively engages in ethnic practices, performing a sweat lodge ceremony, drawing pictograms, winning dog-fight bets, leaving a red "coup" handprint on Pidgin's shoulder, and winning a blues contest. In a commentary on *The Fast Red Road*, author Jones has written that the character Litmus Jones "was getting to kind of be the Puck [in the novel]" (*Faster, Redder Road* 7), a jester-trickster figure who significantly propels the narrative and initiates transformations and insights.[19] The (crossblood) Natives in the novel, in contrast, avoid answering the ubiquitous question "What tribe are you?" (e.g. 138), or proffer contradictory responses in different contexts.[20] In the buffet scene, "five hundred years of history were slipping away" (17) for Litmus Jones, who locks eyes across the meat troughs with an old Shoshone man, Seth, while the latter has just forked the "tawny forearm" onto his plate; but it is "pasty-faced" (20) Litmus Jones who re-envisages the figurative consumption of the 'New World' Natives by Columbus and the following waves of European colonizers. Litmus Jones mouths "*Not again, please, not again*" (17), whereas Seth relives a wartime survival event 34 years previously in which he traumatically ate "human flesh in bite-sized portions" (17)—while trapped in that now landlocked submarine TommyHawk where "man ate man ate man, according to rank" (280). Furthermore, it is traveling salesman Jones, not Pidgin, who joins the expert car-stealer, Native Charlie Ward, wheeling out of the novel in Pidgin's dubious inheritance, the beloved Ford Thunderbird that belonged to Pidgin's deceased father Cline and was the location of Cline's suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning.

The parodic surfacing of limbs of the Columbus crew is a striking element in author Jones's project of, as Stratton puts it in the title of his 2016 book-article, "reterritorializing the American West," to free it from the EuroAmerican conqueror/settler overlay of what Vizenor calls "manifest manners,"[21] "the continuance of the surveillance and domination of the tribes in literature" (*Manifest Manners* 4), in discourses that prioritize European perspectives of dominance, such as, in Stratton's argument, the binary between European civilization and Native savagery ("'For He Needed No Horse'" 92). Columbus's presumption, as recorded in his writings, of cannibalism being practiced by the Native Caribe people is referenced in author Jones's horrific smorgasbord and then dramatically reversed in Litmus Jones's 'hallucination' to

imply the *colonizers'* 'cannibalism' of Native cultures, part and parcel of the conquering and settling of the American continent to fulfill the supremacist political ideology of Manifest Destiny. Stratton perceptively takes his reading of the cannibalism image a step farther, seeing that "the colonial narratives of discovery and conquest [that led to] the theft of land, to the warfare and massacres that inescapably form the backdrop to American frontier history and the West [were] fed back to Native people as a hegemonic form of sustenance" (93-94). Shoshone Seth's participation in World War II, probably as a code talker (17), and the trauma of the trapped crew could not begin to change the fixed hierarchies and internalized prejudices of the participants after the soldiers "filed [back] into this [unchanged] world through a hole," the submarine hatch (280).

Of the many 'horror shows' in both novels, the abject events taking place in Vizenor's *Bearheart* on the freeways "where millions of lost souls were walking to nowhere" (98), might remain most vivid in the mind's eye of the reader; I pair these interstates with the public space of the rodeo in *The Fast Red Road*, both peopled with cannibals and clowns. The actions "walking and visualizing" that theorist Moran suggests as ways to transcend the boundaries of incarceration become a visceral free-for-all on the freeways in Vizenor's novel as a plethora of deformed humans, body parts eaten away by toxic rain or congenitally missing because of chemically poisoned nutrition, wander along the interstates; a group of them attacks and gnaws one of the pilgrims to death. In other cases, victims are routinely but viciously murdered and cut swiftly into pieces, their flesh devoured or bartered. The "Witch Hunt" restaurant captures women it marks out as witches, and, after torturing them and hanging them from the rafters, sells their ground-up bodies in takeaway orders. The cannibalistic wiindigoo figure of Anishinaabe oral telling appears to have become 'everyman.' Christopher Schedler has developed a convincing reading of *Bearheart* as a strong critique of "wiindigoo sovereignty," a model of Native sovereignty based on "exclusion/assimilation" that Vizenor "associates with the cannibalistic consumption of the wiindigoo" ("Wiindigoo Sovereignty" 41). Surely the self-serving and literally blood-oriented human consumption by the interstate stalkers in *Bearheart* denies any form of solidarity or affiliation that is non-binarily "community-mediated and practice-based" (41).

In contrast to the brutally exploitative freeway cannibals, the clown figures in Vizenor's novel play a systematically more positive role: the "clown crows" guide and warn the pilgrims,

not only on the treacherous interstates; the cedar wanderers themselves, many of them with caricatured body figurations such as huge feet, are frequently called "clowns";[22] and the wise Pueblo fools, flaunting corn tassles and oversized penises, painted contrastingly for "opposite directions and seasons" (236), brazenly tease the weary pilgrims near the end of the journey and give them the unwelcome advice to travel "backward" (238) or upstream—this propitiously leads the remaining pilgrims, however, to the entry to the fourth world in the ancient Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon, an area of high pre-Columbian significance. Proude appears to recognize it as "the ancient place of vision bears"; "the tribes traveled from here with bears" (241). The impertinent clowns and fools serve to subvert fixed order, using raucous laughter as a key tool. Vizenor has asserted the significance of these figures: "The idea is to balance adversity with humor; thus the important function of the clown or fool in tribal cultures" ("Gerald Vizenor: Ojibway/Chippewa Writer" 168).

The rodeo in Jones's *The Fast Red Road* is only slightly less dangerous than Vizenor's highways. Hungry Pidgin eats all the leftovers of "beef-fed-beef"—hawked as "double the flavor" (146)—that he finds in the stands as he watches the star attraction end in bloody death for both horse and rider. Despite his compulsive gobbling, Pidgin is as horrified by the vision of the "solipsistic food chain, self similar at every link" (146) as he is by the gruesome battle in the rodeo ring. His discomfort at having been pursued by taunting heyoka clowns and pinned down by a face-painting woman is increased when he realizes that he himself appears as an incongruous postmodern clown; Pidgin is dressed in overly large stolen clothes, his face not painted Native style but rather like the hard-rock icon Paul Stanley with Stanley's signature white face and black star surrounding one eye (162). Pidgin has come to the rodeo in the hopes of finding the Mexican Paiute who exhumed and carried off his father's corpse, but the ineffectiveness of Pidgin's foolish and erratic behavior prevents him from confronting the Paiute. Rather than 'tricking' others through self-confident laughter, Pidgin is himself the butt of others' scams and mocking; as such he is vulnerable to the assimilative and controlling power of wiindigoo-suction.

As jeopardous as the interstate and rodeo are in the two novels, the fifth and final venue of comparison with its double historical resonance is even more chilling: Wounded Knee. The Wounded Knee Massacre on 29 December 1890 has become the marker in the national imaginary of the closing of the American frontier, the presumed subduing of the Native people,

and the supposed justification of the federal government's at least two major violations (1877, 1889) of the land settlement agreed upon with the Sioux in the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie; each violation drew smaller and smaller circles around the Sioux nations' allotted living space.[23] Second Proude Cedarfair, the protagonist's grandfather, was killed at Wounded Knee in 1973, the time of the American Indian Movement's declaration of "a new pantribal political nation" there, for the gratuitous reason, according to the tribal government policeman who relentlessly shot him in the face, chest, and back of the head, that "he would not stop walking toward Wounded Knee" (14). Second Proude "fell forward on the stiff prairie grass and moaned his last vision of the bear into death" (14). Surely, for many readers the searing iconic pictures of the Native people murdered at the historical Wounded Knee massacre in 1890 come to mind, literally frozen in the December snow in postures of motion as they fell, mowed down by the 7th Cavalry's rifles. I believe that Vizenor, with this strong visual image of Second Proude's death, wants to both underscore the blatant and inhumane injustice of the federal government's actions leading up to and during the 19th-century Wounded Knee Massacre *and* to criticize the American Indian Movement's 20th-century strategies, including adherence to the rhetoric of "tragic victimry," which Vizenor has always abjured.[24] Tribal government officials, depicted as often corrupt and opportunistic, and their police are also castigated in *Bearheart*; it is the tribal chairman himself with the telling name of Jordan Coward and his "assistants" who light the fire in the cedar circus, the chairman screaming "'Burn those goddamn cowards… burn those cedar savages out of here,'" his face turning "pale from the exhausting pleasure of his evil" (33). Surely it is no coincidence that Second Proude is shot by a tribal policeman, recalling the murder of Sitting Bull by Indian police on 15 December 1890, just days before the first Wounded Knee.

But trickster Fourth Proude manages to dismantle the association of Wounded Knee with the end of free-living Native Americans and to reject the cloak of "tragic victim" through his besting of authorities who seek to eliminate him. He outwits his pursuers, including Jordan Coward, when he leaves the cedar circus on his ancestral lands in Minnesota, and indeed through his connection with the tribal cosmos and a "teasing whistle on the wind" (132)[25] he outplays the powerful Evil Gambler in a central confrontation in the novel in Good Cheer, Iowa. After ceremonial preparation, he manages to enter the fourth world via the "vision window" during the winter solstice and to leave tracks in the snow for Rosina to follow. Fourth Proude is accompanied on his "magical flight" (242) by the fellow pilgrim Unawa Biwide, "the one who

resembles a stranger" (first mention 75), who has demonstrated Moran's carceral practices of "walking and visualizing" in preparing for the "flight," as Vizenor/narrator Bearheart lyrically recounts: Biwide "practiced walking in darkness and listening to escape distances and the sound and direction of the winds" (242). The other pilgrims have fallen prey to the dangers along the way, exacerbated by their own weaknesses of greed, one-sided lust, fear, and adherence to fixed stances detrimental to Native vitality, what Vizenor calls "terminal creeds," such as the hegemony of the official written word over tribal orality, essentialist notions of Native identity, or belief in an inevitable vanishing of Native culture.

I have subtitled (with a skeptical question mark) the Wounded Knee venue with Jones's ironic refrain of "the Indian always loses"; Jones alternates this with a bawdy version that Pidgin, as a Native porn-film actor, finds particularly relevant: "The Indian always gets it up the ass" (115, 165). The semantically passive form "gets it" is of significance, since Pidgin is remarkably passive and indecisive throughout the novel. Things happen to him; his momentum is that of inertia, not proaction. He views himself as a cinematic victim: "He could feel it all behind him, pushing him forward, and it was like he was a movie hostage, a damsel tied to the front of a train, the train collision-bound" (139). In an ominous situation Pidgin adopts the mask of Moran's incarceral "blank 'yard face'": "Pidgin looked straight ahead, just waiting, preparing himself for whatever miscarriage was next" (140). His most trenchant action is to pull the trigger on a threatening Custer morph, but ironically he shoots the wrong person. At the end of a long chapter in the novel stressing Pidgin's incapacitating inner struggles with its title "Pidgin Agonistes," he follows the Mexican Paiute, who is carrying the remnants of Larry's corpse, to a quonset warehouse in Clovis; Pidgin discovers that the corpses of all the Goliard outlaws are half buried in an expanse of white Styrofoam, with a "mummified arm reaching up" (271), restaging one of the photos taken the day after the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890 with the frozen bodies partially covered by snow. The narrative implies that the Paiute locks Pidgin in the quonset hut with the appalling scene, in perpetual incarceration. It is difficult to imagine a more graphic narrativization of a life-denying "terminal creed": Pidgin's consuming obsession with his parents' past leads him to the fatal statis of a grotesque Wounded Knee tableau, which, if allowed to have the last word in the novel, could connote the final enclosure of the last free Natives, in which Pidgin is permanently bound. Still, the novel continues on for two more chapters and the Mexican Paiute, who escapes through a secret trapdoor, carries an enigmatic

"canvas roll" with him (272), here and at other points in the novel. The reader of the two novels at hand could speculate that this is a ceremonial medicine bundle, like the one that Fourth Proude carefully keeps by his side and draws strength from throughout his travels until his movement into the transmundane fourth world. By himself Pidgin cannot find energy in totemic ritual or in imaginative action or in bear-clown laughter, but through his connections with story-telling Atticus Wean, ethnic boundary-violating Litmus Jones, joy-riding Charlie Ward, and possibly the ritual-staging Mexican Paiute, he can be viewed as having the potential to do so in a bizarre team, along with Vizenor's narrator Bearheart and his protagonist Fourth Proude Cedarfair.

Vizenor wrote *Bearheart* before he had verbalized his powerful and productively slippery theory of "transmotion," which encodes border crossing and imagination on a number of levels. I venture to say that writing this novel and subsequent ones, as well as his early volumes of haiku poems, urged him to amalgamate the prongs of his concept of "transmotion." He describes a genesis of the notion in a 2013 essay titled "Native Cosmototemic Art": "The shadows [of movement] in native stories and painted scenes give rise to the theory of transmotion, an *inspired evolution of natural motion, survivance and memory over time, and a sense of visionary sovereignty*" (42, my emphasis). The ledger paintings by the imprisoned Plains Natives in Fort Marion on the coast of Florida serve in "Native Cosmototemic Art" and elsewhere in Vizenor's writings as exemplary of this combination of movement, vision, and continued Native presence,[26] as do other cultural products—both material and oral—which encode vital "creases of motion": "The criteria of transmotion are in the stories of trickster creation, the birch bark documents of the *midewiwin*, song pictures, beaded patterns, winter counts, painted hides, ledger art, and other creases of motion in virtual cartography" (*Fugitive Poses* 178). These material and oral products are listed in chapter 5 of *Fugitive Poses* (1989) called "Native Transmotion," probably Vizenor's first complete essay on the topic.

In that chapter, Vizenor assures his readers that vital "creases of motion" do not only manifest themselves in visual, material, and oral art, however; the triad of movement, vision, and continued Native presence that appear in oral narration surface in contemporary literature too: "Native stories sustain the reason of survivance and traces of transmotion endure in contemporary literature" (184). His term "performative transmotion" (183) implies that the continual practice of reiterating and remixing that triad of movement, vision, and continued presence is what lends it "shared power" (183). Authors should be wary of relying on similes

using "like," however, which cannot have the transforming and transmotive power of the metaphor: "The literal similes [using 'like'] are mere comparisons of generic animals and humans, not a wise or tricky perception of native transmutation or aesthetic figuration" ("Native American Literature, Introduction," n.p.).

"Motion is a natural human right that is not bound by borders" (*Fugitive Poses* 189), Vizenor tells us, seeming to refer to all people. But his focus with regard to "motion" is on *Native* "cultural motion" ("Literary Transmotion" 27) which was curtailed in basic ways by historical removals to bounded areas or by the establishment of ever diminishing reservation spaces. As important as "motion" is in and of itself, in a recent essay titled "Literary Transmotion: Survivance and Totemic Motion in Native American Indian Art and Literature" (2015), Vizenor clearly draws the distinction between Native "motion" and "transmotion," the latter of which incorporates an imaginative meta-level: "Walking is a natural cultural motion, and walking in a song is visionary transmotion" (27). "Aural transmotion" ("Native American Literature, Introduction" n.p.) also emerges in the telling and altered re-telling of a story, a process central to Native oral narration: "The stories of native creation and trickster scenes were seldom told in the same way" ("Unmissable" 67-68). In the transferral of cultural practices and knowledge into aesthetic, communicable forms such as songs, stories, artwork, poems, or novels, *motion* thus takes on sharable meaning. I believe we can heuristically although tentatively distinguish between (a) transmotion in literature and (b) literary transmotion: (a) meaningful motion—such as wandering becoming a pilgrimage[27]—can appear intrinsically within a work of art; (b) transmotion is also reflected in the process of literary creation and genre 'transgression,' for instance in the conversion of the framed snapshot of transience in a haiku poem into the non-linear strategies of a postmodern novel.[28] The importance of *irony* in producing incongruous humor[29] is both culturally and literarily of productive significance for Vizenor's Native transmotion. Irony is an effective tool for countering "the crave of cultural victimry," which must be "outwitted, ridiculed, and controverted" ("Unmissable" 65). "Academic, artistic irony" is even specifically protected in the Constitution of the White Earth Nation, which Vizenor principally drafted and which was approved by the White Earth Nation through referendum in November 2013 (although not yet implemented).[30]

Traversing mapped borders is basically motion, but the *freedom* to traverse these borders, a freedom Vizenor often terms "native liberty,"[31] is a component of transmotion, and provides

the basis of "sovereignty" that, as Schedler apprehends it, encompasses mobility, affiliation, and community. Likewise, the liberty to cross notional lines emerges in transmotion, which Deborah Madsen epitomizes as "the freedom to move across physical and conceptual boundaries" ("The Sovereignty of Transmotion in a State of Exception" 23). Blaeser eloquently champions Vizenor for applying this transmotive freedom as a disrupter of "false frames of separation":

> Literal boundary lines such as international borders across tribal homelands or demarcations between reservations and the rest of the United States; racial barriers encountered by Native People, including Vizenor's Anishinaabeg ancestors; and the invented breech between reality and imaginative experiences [as well as the boundaries of language] are among the several separations or confinements he investigates in his writing. ("The Language of Borders, the Borders of Language in Gerald Vizenor's Poetry" 1)

Motion as meaning, the transcendent momentum of motion, the resistance to inertia: Vizenor does not shy away from the abstract word "transcendence"[32] in his discussions of the creativity, the transformation, the imagination involved in crafting and enabling transmotion. Vizenor defines a "Native literary aesthetic" as the transmoting, even riskily "pretentious" defiance of imposed boundaries and enclosures, enabling a "mighty turn": "Native literary aesthetic transmutes by imagination the obvious simulations of dominance and closure, and that mighty turn must be shamanic, godly, and pretentious" (Vizenor, "Native American Literature, Introduction" n.p.).

Imagination transmutes the Native visionary—both as artist and as figure in artworks—who, like Fourth Proude, can transport himself through ritual, ceremony, meditation and/or imaginative creation into another, a more free realm and location. Through the solidarity of imaginatively rescrolling centuries of prejudicial history (and ceremonially imbibing Native drink), Vizenor's pilgrims can transmotionally escape from the misery of their captivity in the Governors' Palace of the Spanish conquest. In Jones's novel, the apparently aimless driving in a "joy ride" ends in Palo Duro Canyon, where the whispers of spectral horses surround Pidgin and Charley, transporting Pidgin (and the reader) into corporeal awareness of the infamous historical massacre of one thousand Native ponies there and working against Pidgin's deracination;[33] Pidgin's initiation to the atrocities of Palo Duro makes him a conceivable (though, as we have seen, ultimately failed) candidate for the transmotive experiences from fugitive to quester or

shaman, which Fourth Proude through his immediate Native "heirship" has readier—though never easy and automatic—access to. The wisefoolery and convention-cracking of the clowns and tricksters—as well as that of the authors Vizenor[34] and Jones—give them the freedom to critique fixed, dominant attitudes that have driven and sustained colonialist superiority, attitudes challenged in recent writing on the carceral, and to act in transmotional defiance of illegitimate, authoritarian border-guards and energy-sucking cannibals. In Jones's book a stolen Pontiac Trans Am takes on a cartoonlike but transmotive life of its own, defying hundreds of police cars and helicopters, leaping over a roadblock, sliding into a secret entrance to Pueblo country, dramatizing the line in a quoted TV script, "get back on that good red road and burn some serious rubber" (258). The scriptwriter's comment on his paradigm for "burn[ing] some serious rubber" on the "good red road" is telling: "'They got around,' he said, 'the old old Indians'" (260). As Vizenor's and Jones's novels so abundantly and complexly demonstrate, the 'new new Indians' too "*get around*" in their own vibrant and meaningful ways.

Notes

[1] The original version of this paper, containing numerous visuals, was presented at the American Studies Association annual meeting in Toronto/Canada in October 2015; the theme of the conference was "The (Re)production of Misery and the Ways of Resistance." The paper was embedded in a panel organized by Dorothea Fischer-Hornung (Heidelberg University) and chaired by Gerald Torres (Cornell University) titled "In/cisions and De/cisions: Oppression and Resistance in Native and Latino American Border Narratives."

[2] The manifold images of incarceration in the two novels could support a fruitful reading of the works as postmodern forms of the "captivity narratives" of early American literature, recently critiqued by Stratton in *Buried in Shades of Night: Contested Voices, Indian Captivity, and the Legacy of King Philip's War* (2013).

[3] The scholarly discussion as to whether the "trickster" in "trickster hermeneutics" can be considered indigenous is summarized valuably in David J. Carlson, "Trickster Hermeneutics and the Postindian Reader: Gerald Vizenor's Constitutional Praxis," specifically 13-14 and 37 (note 1).

[4] Stratton's sagacious chapter titled "'For He Needed No Horse': Stephen Graham Jones's Reterritorialization of the American West in *The Fast Red Road*" is, as far as I know, together with Grace L. Dillon's erudite contribution to the *Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones* volume, "Native Slipstream: Blackfeet Physics in *The Fast Red Road*" (343-356), the first academic treatment of Jones's initial novel.

[5] In a conscientiously structured book article, Breinig points out the traps involved in labeling *Bearheart* a "satire." The contradictions manifested in "the multidimensionality of myth and the concept of the grotesque" (98) productively complicate the characters', author's and reader's

ability "to take a satirical stand against what is destructive on a personal or communal level" (100), although this stand is called for by Vizenor's project.

[6] Vizenor was intrigued by the complex case of "Ishi," ostensibly the last of his tribe (probably Yani), who was imprisoned because of his indefinable legal status and his (to his captors) incomprehensible language: When Ishi appeared in Oroville, California, at the age of about 50, the sheriff "put the Indian in jail not knowing what else to do with him since no one around town could understand his speech or he theirs" (quoted in *Manifest Manners* 131). Ishi as a border-crosser embodied worthy survivance despite his unworthy treatment: In Vizenor's words, "Ishi came out of the mountains and was invited to a cultural striptease at the centerfold of manifest manners and the histories of dominance; he crossed the scratch line of savagism and civilization with one name, and outlived the photographers" (*Manifest Manners* 127).

[7] Ross does not mention Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, but Michael Greyeyes ("Inside the Machine: Indigeneity, Subversion, and the Academy") bases his autobiographical account of seeking liberation within his professional career on a re-telling of Bromden's perceptions and insurgent actions.

[8] Fort Monroe sensationally illustrates a transformation from prison to sanctuary. Less than three decades after the Virginia military fort served as a prison for Black Hawk, it became a federal free-space refuge, a heterotopia of protection, for thousands of slaves fleeing from nearby plantations during the Civil War years.

[9] During Seminole leader Oseola's highly publicized incarceration, touted in postcards for the burgeoning Florida tourist industry, approximately 19 warriors and family members mysteriously managed to escape from the well-guarded fort.

[10] I deal much more thoroughly with the phenomenon of Native imprisonment on the East Coast in my essay titled "'Digging a hole in the water': Re-functionalizing Seaside Forts on the Ethnic Shore" presented at the MESEA conference in Warsaw in June 2016, with possible publication in the MESEA conference volume. The presentation was part of my double panel called "Littoral Loopholes: Palimpsestic Trajectories on the Ethnic Shore." An important component of the essay was a comparison of Pratt's description of the Native prisoners' attitudes and adjustments to the littoral in comparison to Diane Glancy's moving re-imaginings of the Plains captives' alienation and liminality in her *Fort Marion Prisoners and the Trauma of Native Education* (2014).

[11] This motto for complete assimilation of Native children into mainstream American society is found in an address to the "Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction" in 1892: "…all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man" (first paragraph). Available online: for example, http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929/.

[12] Bruyneel is referencing Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) with its development of a "third space" approach to literary and cultural productions that opens up "these structures to readings that work against pressure to homogenize or unify representations and identity" (Bruyneel xviii-xix); Bruyneel states that he "similarly aims to resist the idea that boundaries stand as homogenizing or unifying impositions on identity, agency, and sovereignty" (xix).

[13] In the 1978 publication, the introductory chapter is not framed as a "Letter to the Reader," but rather bears the title of the book, *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart*. The revised (1990) introductory chapter, in addition to taking on the double narrative function of (1) an intrinsic letter to the reader of Saint Louis Bearheart's manuscript and (2) a letter on a meta-level to the reader of Vizenor's novel, weaves in more "Vizenorisms" such as "interior landscapes" (ix) and

"terminal creeds" (xi); generic "birds" becomes Vizenorian-trademark "crows" (e.g. viii) and "mixedbloods" becomes "crossbloods" (e.g. ix). Elizabeth Blair's comparison of the two works unearths other changes, and her close analysis is still very useful. The rest of the novel, the text of Saint Louis Bearheart's *The Heirship Chronicles: Proude Cedarfair and the Cultural Word Wars*, has not been changed, although it is called *Cedarfair Circus: Grave Reports from the Cultural Word Wars* in the 1978 edition.

[14] Vizenor takes the stand that a simile with 'like,', which tends to compare animals and humans in "a mundane similitude," is, in contrast to metaphor, rarely transmotive ("Native American Literature, Introduction" n.p.; "ordinary comparative similes" in "Unmissable" 63). For further discussion, see my section on transmotion later in this paper.

[15] Owens bases his delineation on Vizenor's own claim that the "crossblood" is a trope of boundary-crossing strength and survivance, consonant with that of the trickster: "The crossblood, or mixedblood, is a new metaphor, a transitive contradance between communal tribal cultures and those material and urban pretensions that counter conservative traditions. The crossblood wavers in myths and autobiographies; we move between reservations and cities, the stories of the cranes with a trickster signature" (*Interior Landscapes* 262-263).

[16] In *The Settler Complex* (2016), the late Patrick Wolfe reiterates his long-term insistence on "invasion": "Behind all the indeterminacy, the frontier is a way of talking about the historical process of territorial invasion – a cumulative depredation through which outsiders recurrently advance on Natives in order to take their place" (1).

[17] A recent report has been published by the Smithsonian: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-clovis-point-and-the-discovery-of-americas-first-culture-3825828/?no-ist. I am aware of the skepticism with which material-culture finds and archeological/ethological treatments can be greeted, as summarized by Stratton: "…the meaning of Native material culture in the human sciences…has the effect of eliding Native subjectivities" ("'For He Needed No Horse'" 91). But in this case, Native Larry's "tribal story" (249) of the "Knapping Man" in Clovis times as told to Pidgin might be seen as injecting a measure of this subjectivity.

[18] The Goliards of medieval times were peripatetic, renegade clerics and students who wrote satirical and bawdy poems, mostly in Latin, often with political protest. The largest collection of their poetry is *Carmina Burana*; Larry "transposes" the *Carmina Burana* texts to graffiti on bathroom walls (222). It is tempting to see Jones's novel as a grand collection of such carnivalesque, irreverent, obscene songs.

[19] The 2015 volume of Jones's short stories edited by Theodore C. Van Alst Jr., provocatively named *The Faster Redder Road: The Best UnAmerican Stories of Stephen Graham Jones*, contains an excerpt from *The Fast Red Road*, indeed, the "horrorshow buffet" scene. The excerpt is followed by a comment Jones wrote for *The Faster Redder Road* in which he reveals that Litmus Jones became more and more important to the narrative as the novel was being written. The surname Jones is apparently not coincidental, since Stephen Graham Jones also tells us in his commentary that *The Fast Red Road* can be seen indirectly as an "autobiographical novel," even a "memoir" of sorts, and that he wrote it when he was "a lot more certain" than today that he could "change the world, man, with just words" (7).

[20] When the Native truck driver Tallboy asks "what tribe" he is, Pidgin says "Piegan, pronouncing it like pagan… He [later] told Tallboy he wasn't really Piegan, and Tallboy told him he wasn't really from Jemez, nobody was" (138-9). Similarly, Pidgin asks Charlie Ward

"what tribe he was"; Charlie responds "Peruna, then changed it to Old Crow, then shook the question off" (32). Pidgin tells the rodeo clown's seducing wife that he is "Kutenai" (159). At age 16 Pidgin searched for his tribal roots in vain; he "followed his mother's surname to a dead-end at Browning Montana" (132). The author Jones acknowledges his Piegan Blackfeet ancestry. The Piegan Nation was divided by the national border line between Canada and the USA.

[21] The *locus classicus* of the term is Vizenor's *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*. Vizenor includes the carceral "surveillance" in his explanation, quoted above.

[22] The cover of the novel as originally published features an astonishing historical photo (1906 [apparently not 1900 as indicated in the novel's imprint]) of an elaborate Fourth of July parade in Little Fork, Minnesota. Grotesque clownlike people with painted faces wearing outlandish outfits and playing makeshift instruments in addition to what appears to be a large standing bear (person in costume?) pose for the camera. Surely Vizenor imagined his circus pilgrim-migrants in similar carnivalesque garb and posture. The photo can be viewed in the Minnesota Historical Society's online archives.

[23] In his eminently knowledgeable contribution to *The Routledge Companion to Native American Literature* (2016), David J. Carlson has shown how the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie has played a central role in much Native activism, treaty literature, and autobiography, particularly beginning in the 1970s with the "Trail of Broken Treaties" march to Washington, D.C. organized by the American Indian Movement in 1972 (Chapter 9, "U.S.-Indian Treaty-Relations and Native American Treaty Literature," 111-122, specifically 118-120).

[24] Vizenor's chapter called "March 1973: Avengers at Wounded Knee" (229-241) in his *Interior Landscapes: Autobiographical Myths and Metaphors* (1990) reveals the affectations and dishonorable underside of many of the AIM members and their movement. Vizenor mercilessly satirizes the arrival of 600 AIM militants at the Leech Lake reservation ostensibly to fight for treaty rights; one "shy student with a gun" from Kansas, named Delano Western, dressed like a red-neck bandito with a bayonet, repeatedly and ridiculously uttered "his death wish": "We came here to die" (232-233).

[25] Chris LaLonde begins his carefully woven article on Vizenor's literary activism with an analysis of the trope of the teasing whistle as the signature of the trickster (Madsen and Lee, eds., *Gerald Vizenor: Texts and Contexts*).

[26] Vizenor's "Native Transmotion" chapter in *Fugitive Poses* praises the ledger drawings as "the continuance of a new warrior tradition" (178): "Native transmotion races as a horse across the page, and the action is a sense of sovereignty" (179). The recent essay "Literary Transmotion" shows unabated interest, with the long note 1 supplying historical depth. In 2005 Vizenor published a poem called "Prison Riders" based on several drawings of colorful mounted horses by one of the Fort Marion captives, Matches (Chis-i-se-duh), Cheyenne, in which the first-person persona achieves a transmotive escape from incarceration and anthropological fixity through imagination and art: "I ride out of prison / on a painted horse… / My visionary mount / always captured / in prisons and museums…" (Williams, et al. 59). In *Blue Ravens* the artist-protagonist Aloysius is introduced to ledger drawings: "The blue horses were totems of native visionary artists. …Making Medicine [O-kuh-ha-tuh, Cheyenne prisoner in Fort Marion]…had created an art book of seven paintings with many horses, red and blue, in a magical gallop above the earth" (77).

[27] Vizenor describes N. Scott Momaday's journey to see his grandmother's remembered landscapes as "a story of native transmotion, a pilgrimage" (*Fugitive Poses* 184).

[28] See my book-article "Gerald Vizenor's Shimmering Birds in Dialog: (De-)Framing, Memory, and the Totemic in *Favor of Crows* and *Blue Ravens*" in Däwes and Hauke, eds., for a discussion of this conversion.
[29] A spectrum of culturally-anchored Native humor is put forth perceptively in Gruber, *Humor in Contemporary North American Native Humor* (2008). The incongruous and often grotesque Native humor involving the trickster is documented impressively with regard to visual art in Ryan, *The Trickster Shift* (1999), and to oral tale-telling in Ballinger, *Living Sideways* (2004). Louis Owens's astute Afterword to the 1990 edition of Vizenor's novel (247-254) furnishes a valuable summary of "the compassionate trickster – outrageous, disturbing, challenging" (253).
[30] "The freedom of thought and conscience, academic, artistic irony, and literary expression, shall not be denied, violated or controverted by the government" (Chapter 3, Article 5: "The Constitution of the White Earth Nation." Gaa-waabaabiganikaag / Constitution of the White Earth Nation). http://www.thecwen.com/cwen. Accessed December 5, 2016.
[31] One of Vizenor's books published in 2009 is titled *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance* (University of Nebraska Press).
[32] In "Literary Transmotion," for example, Vizenor writes that "Native American creation stories, totemic visions, sacred objects, dreams and nicknames are heard daily and forever remembered as transcendent traces of cultural survivance and continental liberty" (2); "[s]acred objects are perceived in transmotion, spiritual transcendence, and inspired by heart and spirit, not by the mundane cultural notice of provenance and the fixity of museum property. Sacred medicine bundles, for instance, are singular sources of shamanic power" (15).
[33] Stratton reads the haunting Palo Duro event as one of Jones's many "reminders of colonial history and traumatic events that are embedded and inscribed on the land," woven into a multi-leveled novelistic tapestry ("'For He Needed No Horse'" 102).
[34] In an early piece (1980), Vizenor's relays his response to being called a trickster: "The idea of tribal trickeries suggests corruption to non-Indians, but in tribal societies, the 'trickster' is a culture hero. …It has been said that I play the role of trickster in my writing, but I do not impose my vision of the world on anyone. I feel a compulsion to write, to imagine the world around me, and I am often surprised by what I write" ("Gerald Vizenor: Ojibway/Chippewa Writer" in Katz, ed. 168).

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Native Pop: Bunky Echo-Hawk and Steven Paul Judd Subvert *Star Wars*

OLENA McLAUGHLIN

Most representations of American Indians in American culture confine Indigenous peoples to the stereotypical roles of the savage, the environmentally friendly, the sidekick, the vanishing race, and other derogatory and diminishing portrayals. Philip J. Deloria (*Playing Indian*, 1998), Elizabeth S. Bird (*Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Culture*, 1996), Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor (*Hollywood's Indians: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, 2003), Louis Owens (*Mixedblood Messages*, 1998), Jacquelyn Kilpatrick (*Celluloid Indians*, 1999), and others have generated provocative discussions concerning portrayals of American Indians in media, press, and film. The relationships between whitestream society and Native American nations have largely been guided by cultural appropriation. Peter Kulchyski points out that "the culture field is a critical domain of intellectual and social struggle" (606) and argues that "we are in an era in which appropriation has become the dominant cultural tendency informing all relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in the Americas" (615). According to Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao, cultural appropriation is often viewed as an ambiguous term by the dominant cultural groups, as something that happens naturally when different cultural groups come into contact. Yet to the minority groups and the Indigenous peoples, cultural appropriation poses a threat not only to their material goods and subsistence, but also sovereignty and cultural integrity. The misrepresentation of the heritage of a people may have detrimental impact on their cultural identity (9).

Yet, as Cynthia L. Landrum and John W. Troutman point out, appropriation can be a two-way street. Native Americans have not been silent and complacent in cultural appropriation. Kulchyski identifies appropriation and subversion as two sides of the same coin: appropriation implies the use of the cultural texts of the dominated group by the dominant group for its own interests; subversion, on the other hand, involves employment of the cultural texts of the dominant group by the marginal group as a means of cultural resistance. Such resistance is opposition to the commodification that is the essence of appropriation. Dean Rader further explains that Indigenous nations have been participating in cultural "engaged resistance," which

can be used to expand the notion of Indigenous subversion. Rader defines "engaged resistance" as Indigenous acts of communication and expression through written, spoken, or visual language, which control the depiction of identity and creation of Native image and destiny by linking them to Native cultures, beliefs, and histories (179). To the definition of subversion provided above, I also find it necessary to add that Native artists aim to often engage in subversion in order to undermine the mainstream power and its claimed authority over Native identities and cultures. Native artists engage in subversion in all aspects of popular culture including music, film, performance, fashion, comic books, and literature.

In this article, I will explore the work of two contemporary Indigenous artists, Bunky Echo-Hawk (Pawnee/Yakama) and Steven Paul Judd (Kiowa/Choctaw), who employ the diverse sources of their backgrounds to practise subversion. They subvert iconic images of *Star Wars* as a means to address dominant American culture's understanding of Indigenous identities and histories, thus engaging in contemporary art and political conversations. Their works re-imagine what it means to be Indigenous in the 21st century and create affirmative visuals for Indigenous peoples. Here, I will examine Echo-Hawk's painting *If Yoda was an Indian* (2007) and Judd's piece *Hopi Princess Leia*. Through humorous and clever mashups of iconic *Star Wars* characters and Indigenous visual languages in these works, the artists explore the complex relationship between Indigenous peoples and the film industry. At the same time, while engaging subject matter that is not perceived as "traditionally Native," they defy stereotypical expectations of the mainstream audience about Native art and create images that represent their personal experiences with contemporaneity. By merging American pop culture with Native experiences, Echo-Hawk and Judd encourage their audiences to reconsider Native American history and position Indigenous peoples as active participants in the present. Although one might argue that employing *Star Wars* imagery is a response to market demand and the large fan base of the franchise (which is true to an extent), such moves also allow Echo-Hawk and Judd to draw attention, with humor and wit, to social criticism and make the non-Native audience question stereotypes, as well as raise issues of self-representation and visual sovereignty. In the process of subversion, images of popular culture the artists use become props for Native discourse. While exploring Native comic books, for instance, C. Richard King refers to such process as reclamation projects that aim both "to interrupt imperial idioms" and create space "to reimagine themselves and reclaim their cultures" (220).

Bunky Echo-Hawk and Steven Paul Judd are not the only Indigenous artists utilizing *Star Wars* in their works to make the popular franchise imagery serve an Indigenous purpose. Wanting to critique the state of current affairs in an easily accessible form that would reach a wider audience seems to have led to a recent trend among Indigenous artists to subvert *Star Wars* imagery. One might wonder why Native American artists chose to employ *Star Wars* in their work. *Indian Country Today* asks the same question: "Why do American Indians like *Star Wars* so much?" ("The Native"). The number of works and artists who use *Star Wars* imagery and motifs seems to be growing. Some examples are Susan Folwell's (Santa Clara Pueblo) jar *Star Wars* (2013); Ben Pease's (Crow/Northern Cheyenne) paintings *Buckskin Storm Troopers* (n.d.) and *Honor Your Elders* (n.d.); Ryan Singer's (Navajo) *The New Ambassadors* (2015) and *Tuba City Spaceport* (2012); Andy Everson's (K'ómoks First Nation) *Star Wars* (2011, 2012) series which he uses to criticize the treaty process; Nicholas Galanin's (Tlingit/Aleut) *Things Are Looking Native, Natives Are Looking Whiter* (2012) and many others. *Indian Country Today* argues that *Star Wars* is "a huge race-crossing, culture-crossing phenomenon" and many groups enjoy working with *Star Wars* imagery ("The Native"). They point out that in their fascination with *Star Wars*, Native Americans are no different from any other group of people, "hip hop fans, Millennials, and Irish Americans," who grew up participating in the contemporary world. It seems the stereotype of the American Indian stagnating in the past prevents many from seeing them as part of contemporary American culture. After all, many Native artists such as Andy Everson admit to being huge fans of *Star Wars* simply because it is the popular culture in which they grew up. William Lempert argues that *Star Wars* resonates with a variety of audiences, both Western and Indigenous (169). It is worth mentioning that in 2013, the Navajo Nation Museum in collaboration with Lucasfilm, Fox Home Entertainment and Walmart released *Star Wars, Episode IV – A New Hope* dubbed in the Navajo language as part of the language revitalization project. Jeana Francis and Nigel R. Long Soldier's sci-fi film *Future Warrior* (2007), meanwhile, draws its

Bunky Echo-Hawk. *If Yoda Was an Indian,* acrylic on canvas, 2007

inspiration directly from *Star Wars*. The plot resembles that of the epic: the protagonist is the last hope of his culture and has to learn and train with the last surviving elder because other elders were killed by a masked man. Lempert argues that the film both parallels and subverts *Star Wars* by introducing Indigenous and culturally specific elements (169).

In his piece *If Yoda Was an Indian,* Echo-Hawk indigenizes one of the most prominent *Star Wars* characters to make him celebrate Pawnee culture, affirm its values, and provide a new vision of Pawnee identity. The painting depicts Yoda against the background of ocher land and starry sky, and he is dressed like an Indian. However, it is not the stereotypical pan-Indian image that usually portrays Plains Indians clothing. His outfit is specifically Pawnee. By choosing to depict Yoda in Pawnee attire, Echo-Hawk is expressing his own cultural heritage. Yoda's clothing is decorated with geometric designs; he is wearing a Pawnee roach headdress; he is adorned with multiple earrings and a necklace of bear claws and holds a feather fan. All of these attributes reference the traditional Pawnee dress. The roach headdresses are not as widespread in popular culture as feather warbonnets; however, they were the most common headdress worn by a variety of tribes in the US. They also generally did not have a particular spiritual significance such as the warbonnet headdresses. Roaches were mostly worn by warriors into battle or by dancers. So, on the one hand, by dressing Yoda in a roach, Echo-Hawk positions him as a warrior. Yet, on the other hand, the roach can also be viewed as a reference to contemporary Native American cultures, and even more specifically to pow-wows, where roaches are often an integral part of the dancers' regalia.

Similarly, the bear claw necklace on Yoda signifies a strong leader and a powerful warrior. It was worn by Pawnee men as a symbol of honor and accomplishments (Hansen). The bear claw necklace often acknowledges the men's roles as leaders. The claws on the necklace are attached to an otter hide. According to Emma Hansen, "while the claws represent the bear's strength and courage, the otter hide signifies power over both land and water. Both animals' qualities guided the wearer during warfare, treaty negotiations, and other important events" (Hansen). Hansen also points out that Pawnee men believed that the necklace would protect its owner from bullets and arrows in battle.

Other small Pawnee regalia details depicting Yoda as a warrior and a chief are the earrings and the feather fan. In Echo-Hawk's painting, Yoda has multiple piercings on both ears with many hoop earrings. Among the Pawnee, earrings were worn in abundance by men and

frequently signified war honors. According to Brian Frejo (Skiri Pawnee, Seminole), a DJ and Culture Shock Camp[1] founder, the Pawnee "wore earrings in both ears traditionally, not just one piercing, but many in both ears for war and decorations. Each chief and warrior had his own unique style and flair. There has always been a balance in all things, so earrings in both sides!" (Manning). According to Paterek, the feather fan, which Yoda also flaunts, would usually point to a special status in the tribe as only men of distinction carried fans with turkey or goose feathers (130). The quill-work choker and celestial designs on Yoda's clothing also add authenticity to his dress (Paterek 130-1). By detailing Yoda's regalia, Echo-Hawk encourages his non-Native audience to reconsider the pan-Indian stereotype of the Plains warrior reinforced in every Western film; yet, most importantly, he creates a positive Pawnee image for Pawnee youth while celebrating his Pawnee heritage.

The image discussed here belongs to Echo-Hawk's series *Weapons of Mass Media* and is not the only work that employs Yoda's character. Echo-Hawk's other interpretations of Yoda include *If Yoda was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief*; *Peyoda*; and *If Yoda Was an Indian, He Would Dance the Tail Every Time.* Every painting draws attention to one of the Native realities such as dancing the tail or ceremonial use of peyote. *If Yoda Was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief* is likely the most recognizable and well-known piece out of the four. In this piece, Yoda is wearing a feathered headdress, which seems somewhat more pan-Indian. At first glance, such depiction also seems to cater more to non-Native audiences. In this piece, Echo-Hawk uses the stereotype of the 'Indian chief' and simultaneously plays on it. While exploring the use of stereotypes by American Indian Movement activists, Maureen Trudelle Schwarz discusses the occurrences when activists dressed in Native attire for meetings with media and played on the stereotypical understandings of American Indians by reusing common stereotypes and drawing attention to the particularities associated with them. In other words, they subverted "red-face performances" by embodying "both the stereotype and its critique so integrally that no safe barrier [could] be erected between the two" (16). The activists used the stereotypical Indian icons to support and further their cause. Schwarz insists that such images can be potent in social and political critiques because they are easily recognizable by the mainstream and do not require additional explanations. She urges that "in the absence of lobbying power or economic influence, the 'symbolic capital' of cultural identity is one of American Indians' most valuable political resources" (25). Similarly to AIM activists' performances of stereotypical images to draw

attention to their cause, *If Yoda Was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief* uses the stereotypical envisioning of an Indian, namely the pan-Indian image in Plains Indian attire, to point out Native American contemporaneity, persisting presence, and participation in American mainstream culture.

Nevertheless, if one considers Echo-Hawk's cultural identity and the details of the painting, it is possible that in *If Yoda was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief*, like in the other three pieces depicting Yoda, Echo-Hawk is referencing his own heritage. While the piece in focus in this paper explores the artist's Pawnee heritage, *If Yoda was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief* concerns his Yakama heritage. Although originally Yakama men did not wear headdresses, with time they were influenced by the Plains style of dress, like the Sioux dress, and borrowed the headdress for ceremonial purposes. Thus, this piece can be both pan-Indian and tribally specific. According to Schwarz, it is possible for Native Americans to combine both tribal and pan-Indian identity without contradiction (16). *If Yoda was an Indian, He'd Be a Chief* is readily available not only to the Yakama audiences, but Native Americans in general, as well as non-Natives. While the Native audiences might recognize the details that the non-Native audience will overlook, the latter will be able to acknowledge the association of Native Americans with the Jedi, the light, the force, i.e. the 'good guys,' for which Yoda stands. In other words, Echo-Hawk subverts one of the *Star Wars* hero characters, with which both Native and non-Native audiences tend to identify themselves.

Echo-Hawk's painting *Darth Custer* comes into play with *If Yoda Was an Indian*, relying on the narrative logic of *Star Wars* to encourage audiences to rethink the history of Federal-tribal relations. The painting portrays General Custer, instrumental in Indian wars, as Darth Vader. The word play of the title is not lost upon the viewer. Anyone even slightly familiar with the *Star Wars* epic will recognize the parallel drawn in the painting: General Custer relates to Native Americans the same way Darth Vader relates to the imaginary universe of *Star Wars*. The reference is obvious visually as well in the way elements of the two characters are combined into one image. The character is portrayed wearing the Darth Vader mask and breastplate, yet also has auburn hair and mustache. The outfit is navy-blue, typical of the Union Army officer, with stars on the shoulders of the cape representing the rank. He is also outfitted with light brown fringed gloves in which Custer is often pictured. The only missing object of Custer's typical outfit is his non-regulation red scarf.

Darth Custer disrupts the artificially constructed myth of the heroic General Custer, which persisted in the American historic narrative for some time, and presents the Native vision of the historic figure. Echo-Hawk subverts the *Star Wars* narrative to engage the American myth of Indian wars. Yoda and the Rebel forces represent resistance to the Empire, while Darth Vader with storm troopers are the face of oppression and erasure. This logic translates to federal-tribal relations. Native audiences will easily catch the historic reference; yet, the non-Native audiences will be able to recognize the message and criticism as well because they also seek to identify with the Jedi and the rebels while acknowledging the evil of the Empire and Darth Vader.

Bunky Echo-Hawk. *Darth Custer,* acrylic on canvas

Although it is within the stream of Native Pop, Echo-Hawk's work leans more towards Pop Surrealism or Lowbrow, a movement that emerged in the 1970s after Pop Art. It engages popular culture, but in a more concrete story-telling way with slightly less ambiguity. Matt Dukes Jordan identifies cartoons and satire as some of the most prominent features of Lowbrow: Lowbrow is inspired and powerfully influenced by cartoon art, which serves as its philosophical and stylistic base with "a carnivalesque sense of satire and humor" at its center (11). Jordan explains that artists working in Lowbrow "revel in the ribald, love the lurid, and turn the everyday world upside down" (11). Lowbrow was also inspired by the spirit of romanticism, which led artists to explore emotional extremes and often turn to the grotesque and the decadent. According to Jordan, the outsider and underground subcultures of the twentieth century also had an impact on development of the Lowbrow. He explains that many defining images of Lowbrow first appeared as graffiti, skate, hot-rod and other subcultures (12). Yet the most defining feature of Lowbrow is the narrative. Lowbrow paintings usually tell a story which may rely on comic books or movie scenes (Jordan 12). Such reliance on the narrative adds representational quality to Lowbrow; the paintings represent particular places and people and are mostly not abstract (Jordan 12). Echo-Hawk's art borrows quite a few elements from Lowbrow and often tends to exhibit a cartoon-like

nature, but most importantly it usually speaks to contemporary people with urgent issues (for example, consider his series *Gas Masks as Medicine*, which, according to the artist, explores "environmental racism and injustice in Indian Country" (bunkyechohawk.com), and carries a narrative.

In his *If Yoda Was an Indian*, Echo-Hawk relies on the audience recognizing Yoda's story and its significance. It is important that in *If Yoda Was an Indian*, Yoda, a Jedi elder and warrior, becomes a Pawnee elder, an acknowledged leader, and an honored warrior who evokes respect and reverence. Although Echo-Hawk means to include all possible audiences in his art, who are willing to listen (hence the easily-recognizable character of *Star Wars*), he wants, first and foremost, to "paint for the advancement of [his] people… with a positive message" (Longhousemedia4). He considers his ties to the community in all of his work. Echo-Hawk suggests that he works to make empowering and healing art for the community (WBEZ). Having a dialogue with his community and his audience is vital for the artist; he stresses the reciprocating relationship that serves as the basis for his art. While he produces traditional fine art for galleries and exhibits, he also does live art or live painting, which, according to Echo-Hawk, is a modernized form of the traditional winter tribal recounting of significant events that took place throughout the year. In the latter, the artist would capture the most important stories on a hide painting that would also serve as a memory site for the community (WBEZ). In a similar manner, in his live painting performances, Echo-Hawk engages in a conversation with his audience to create a unique piece that is rooted in the comments and ideas derived from the viewers. He asks the audience to imagine that they are creating their story and they need to consider what they want it to say. The resulting piece is then auctioned at an affordable price to the audience. Many of the audience members claim that the paintings which come out of such dialogue between the artist and his audience are highly relatable. Susan Froyd calls Echo-Hawk's art "community-building art-oeuvre" (Froyd).

As in the case of his live paintings, Echo-Hawk carefully considers the story he wants to tell in *If Yoda Was an Indian*. The artist draws a parallel between the wisdom of Yoda, who, in Episodes IV, V, and VI, is the only remaining keeper of the knowledge about the magical force of the Jedi and the last representative of these people, and the cultural knowledge of the elders of the Pawnee tribe who are also tasked with preserving and continuing the tribal culture into the future. Echo-Hawk's comparison of the Pawnee culture to the Jedi culture is empowering for the

Native communities. It references sacred knowledge that can be healing both for the community in particular and society in general. This parallel is also productive because the Jedi are considered a dying culture that makes a comeback with the newly regained "force." It is able not only to withstand the attack of the Empire, but also to defeat it and persevere. In addition, *Star Wars* portrays the Jedi culture as advanced and spiritually developed, and although its primary focus is on development of the mind and connection to the universe, there is no hint of primitivism which is often stereotypically ascribed to many Indigenous cultures that are believed to be "close to nature." Quite a few Indigenous peoples of the *Star Wars* universe are portrayed as primitive. For instance, the Ewoks, the fictional race of the *Star Wars* universe indigenous to the moon of Endor, whose name resembles Miwok, the name of a Native American tribe, whose village, according to George Lucas, was just outside his office (Miller 146), are a simplistic and gullible hunter-gatherer society living in the wilderness (for a full description of the race see Wookieepedia). Although George Lucas intended to stress the advantages of such a race that defeats the technologically advanced society, its simple-mindedness and primitivism are what stands out the most. Some might draw parallels between Ewoks and Native Americans because of the belief spread across the Internet that the name of the race is derived from the Miwok (which Lucas indicates only as coincidental) and the fact that the Endor scenes were shot in the California redwood forests to which the tribe is indigenous (McMillan). Another example of the primitive Indigenous people of the original trilogy are the Tusken Raiders or the Sand People native to Tatooine located in the Outer Rim territories of the galaxy. These nomadic warrior people are portrayed as uncivilized savages who attack small settlements of colonists. Echo-Hawk works against such stereotypical comparisons by creating a positive image in *If Yoda Was an Indian* that both younger and older generations of Pawnee can relate to. He conjures an interpretation of *Star Wars* iconography that lifts the Indigenous peoples to the status of heroes. Such affirmations of Indigenous values are important especially to Native youth as they create inspirational images and models that counter the absence of positive Native imagery in American popular culture.

Many Native artists, Echo-Hawk and Judd among them, define the purpose of their art as educating the public about contemporary Native American issues, but most importantly they want to remedy the lack of positive representation of Native peoples in popular culture and create experiences Native youth can relate to. Alaka Wali, anthropologist and co-curator of the

exhibit *Bunky Echo Hawk – Modern Warrior*, which took place in Field Museum, Chicago, Illinois[2], notes that Echo-Hawk "sees himself as fighting for the dignity and wellbeing of his people" (WBEZ). One of the ways he pursues this purpose is by creating inspiring images for younger generations. Kathryn Shanley argues that images of Native Americans in popular culture have an enormous influence on "determining the quality of the lived experience of American Indians" (29). Dean Rader points out the negative effects of stereotypes in media on Indigenous populations:

> Where place names and laws and raids robbed Indians of cultural identity 100 years ago, so too have Westerns, team mascots, comics, Tonto and other caricatures stolen Native cultural identity and sovereignty. Contemporary visual culture—movies and television in particular—have erected identities for them. So effective have the modern media been in altering how Indians see themselves that many Native writers talk about growing up sympathizing with cowboys and ridiculing the Cheyenne and Arapaho. (183)

Rader encourages and praises Native American artists' resistance to harmful stereotypes through their works. Such resistance is the discourse of today's reality in their works, the reality that is shaped by "popular culture, politics, current events, and the changing social mores of the 21st century" (Baker at al. 7). Explaining his artwork, Steven Judd points out, for instance, that he is indeed Native American, and he went to an all-Native college, and he is inspired by his "Native stuff"; yet he is also a part of the larger American culture and likes "cool pop stuff," movies, and music (Mormann). In an interview with *Santa Fe Reporter*, Judd elaborates:

> I live in the same world that other people live in, and I just found that there wasn't what I felt was cool, pop culture stuff made for me—stickers, toys, action figures—I didn't feel like they were necessarily speaking to things that I saw or that my family saw, so I decided to do my best to try to make my own. (Limón)

Judd creates alternative images to those with which he had to grow up such as Iron Eyes Cody, who was Italian and whose commercials romanticized the "noble savage" stereotype. Judd expresses the sentiment familiar to many Indigenous artists and points to the lack of positive and accurate representations of Native Americans that could have served as role models in his childhood. Tonto and any other Native Americans in Hollywood Westerns certainly did not serve as good examples in American popular culture. That is why Judd's images often incorporate

superheroes from comic books and portraits of famous Native Americans. One of his projects is his series *LEGO My Land* (2015) which transforms LEGO figures into American Indians.

Steven Paul Judd's works are different in style from those of Echo-Hawk. Although he has some works that are similar to Lowbrow, the artist created his piece *Hopi Princess Leia*, like many of his other works, in a style more common for American Neo-Pop of the 1980s, which in its turn was a rebirth of American Pop Art that emerged in the 1960's as a reaction to the elitist Abstract Expressionist scene. Its aesthetic reacted to the cultural and industrial changes, centered on contemporaneity, and strived to be socially relevant (Osterwold 7). Pop Art served as a reflection of the capitalist consumer culture that arose in the US in the 1950s and 1960s. This art movement was largely characterized by the images derived from popular culture and consumerism. It relied on and reflected the power of television and borrowed its images from comic strips, celebrities, advertisements, everyday objects, and consumer products. It was interested in mass culture and mass production. According to David Katz, Pop Art "appropriated and transmuted traditionally commercial and 'low' art into 'fine' art that was instantly recognizable, archly self-referencing, clever and witty, and yet easily understood, since it sprang from common images" (21). Its characteristics made it highly marketable and quickly accepted by both collectors and critics. Katz notes American Pop Art's "apolitical, non-confrontational content… its irony, its coolness and the hip detachment with which it mirrored the youth culture of the early Sixties" (21). It played with the surfaces and expressed ambivalence. Artists avoided making clear statements in their works.

Steven Paul Judd. *Hopi Princess Leia*

Judd jokingly calls himself "Andy Warrior-hol" (Murg) because his use of pop iconography is similar to Andy Warhol's, one of the most iconic Pop-artists of the

20th century. Similarly to Warhol, who challenged boundaries between media and merged together printmaking and photography, as well as objects of mass-production to create new meanings (Museum of Modern Art), Judd often employs film celebrities and movie scenes, uses bold block colors, creates multiples, and experiments with combining media. Although *Hopi Princess Leia* lacks some of the prominent elements of Pop Art and Neo-Pop aesthetic, it is conceptually Pop. In this piece, Judd brings together Edward Curtis's 1921 photograph "Pulini and Koyame-Walpi" from his multivolume collection *The North American Indian*, Volume 12: "The Hopi," and a still shot from *Star Wars* of Princess Leia pointing a gun. It is a Photoshop piece depicting two Hopi maidens in their traditional dress with the squash blossom hairdo that was typical for unmarried women in a sepia photograph. Princess Leia is Photoshopped in front of the two maidens. She is pointing a gun at someone who is not in the picture, but who obviously poses a threat.

Hopi Princess Leia may invite different interpretations from Native and non-Native audiences. Due to the nature of Pop Art, it might merely be pointing to one thing only—the resemblance between Leia's costume and Hopi girls' outfits. The non-Native viewer may notice the witty play of the piece, but not go any further in her attempts to scrutinize its underlying political logic. At times, it is difficult for the non-Native audience to decide whether the artist intends to initiate political discussion. Judd's piece is such a case. In his seminal work *The Trickster Shift: Humor and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (1999), Allan J. Ryan discusses the art of Bill Powless, Grand River Mohawk, whose attitude seems to be similar to Judd's. He points out that Bill Powless takes "definite delight in pure play and juxtaposition, with seemingly little interest in provoking political debate" (14). The artist enjoys the look of bewilderment on the faces of his non-Native viewers who are uncertain whether they are expected to smile and laugh, and whether the piece in front of them is meant to be humorous. Ryan explains that Powless's *Beach Blanket Brave* and *Home of the Brave* (1984) mean to depict "Native participation in contemporary consumer society and possibly their bewilderment with it;" yet, both pieces also highlight stereotypes about Native Americans, which, engrained in the minds of the non-Native audience, prevent them from recognizing Native participation in contemporaneity, which the author intends (15). Similarly, it is difficult to say what Judd's intention is in *Hopi Princess Leia* as he might be merely pointing to and playing with the striking resemblance between the maidens and Leia. Like Powless, he might not intend a political

conversation, but wants to observe the reactions of his audience to an image they did not anticipate.

Yet, on the other hand, the Native audience may refer to the narrative logic of *Star Wars* and see the Hopi women as participants in the Rebellion alongside Princess Leia. In such a way this piece manages to write Hopi women into the *Star Wars* narrative, working against the narrative of erasure by affirming Indigenous presence and identity. In such interpretation, Judd's choice to modify Curtis's photograph is not coincidental. Edward Curtis's photographs were instrumental in their time in establishing stereotypes about Native Americans, especially the "vanishing Indian" stereotype. The latter presupposes that all Indians are objects of the past that need to be captured before they disappear completely; their knowledge, traditions, ceremonies, and land "should" be passed down to the whites in order to preserve them. Judd's insertion of Princess Leia into Curtis's photograph counters the idea of the Indian of the past as he is consciously placing a character of contemporary popular culture into the image of Native Americans as opposed to Curtis's editing out of any objects and signs of contemporaneity from his photographs of the Indigenous peoples. In such a way, *Hopi Princess Leia* questions authenticity of Curtis's photographs.

By manipulating Curtis' photograph, Judd draws the viewer's attention to the history of representations or rather misrepresentations of Native Americans in media. The artist has a number of works where he alters Curtis's photographs in some way to portray Indians depicted in them not as artifacts, but as contemporary human beings. Judd adds color to some of the photographs and Photoshops images of popular culture into others. As Gyasi Ross puts it, Judd creates positive images and healthy images instead of ranting about the mainstream imagery of Native Americans. Ross exclaims: "That's powerful, my friends. That's self-determination. That is the power to influence generations of Native people. Instead of angrily protesting popular images of Natives, he's consistently showing the many ways Native life is beautiful" (Ross). In such ways, Judd reclaims representational agency. Rader further argues that such works are "both a measure and a means of Indian sovereignty" (180) and hold the key to resistance by participating in contemporaneity and subverting the imagery of erasure into imagery of presence:

> [C]ontemporary writers, directors, and painters battle against the near-totalizing forces of American cultural inscription and misrepresentation. The most provocative practitioners of Native discourses resist the imperial colonizing thrust of contemporary

> culture through participation in it. Their inventive use of the lyric poem, the collage, and the movie transforms both public and private discourses and allows them not only to counter prevailing establishments of identity but also to tell who they are in their own languages. They resist cultural erasure by attacking those armaments designed to annihilate their ability to speak themselves into being. Yet, through art they recoup the performative energies of enactment, ritual, and oration and engage both Anglo and Native discourse. (180)

Rader's argument supports the claim that by engaging popular culture in a way which addresses cultural erasure and the stereotype of the vanishing Indian, Native artists rewrite representations of Indianness and Whiteness by simultaneously subverting traditional pop-cultural icons and images that have become an embodiment of the American spirit. In the spirit of Cynthia Landrum's discussion of Native artists as countercultures, Rader stresses that Native artists undermine the authoritative voice of the mainstream society, the colonizer, by exposing the mechanisms of "how a culture thinks about itself" (182). Rader argues that collaboration with stereotypes, idioms, and images of the colonizer is meant to push for change (184). Such sites of engaged resistance involve issues of sovereignty, self-portrayal, image, and identity.

The caption Judd provides on his Facebook page for the piece suggests another interpretation of *Hopi Princess Leia*, which makes it offer multiple readings that do not necessarily agree with each other, yet also do not deconstruct the piece. The caption declares the following: "For the last time, my great, great, great-grandmother was a Hopi Indian Princess, that's what makes me a Princess! - Princess Leia" (Judd, "Hopi Princess Leia"). It seems difficult not to notice the issues of cultural appropriation and self-representation underlying *Hopi Princess Leia*. In this piece, Judd makes Leia representative of "imperialist nostalgia," which according to Renato Rosaldo "uses a pose of 'innocent yearning' both to capture people's imagination and to conceal its complicity with often brutal domination" (70). Judd is evoking the concept of a "wannabe" and critiquing the white man's desire to "play Indian," which according to Shanley has become "an American pastime" (28). In this piece, Judd makes Princess Leia seem a "wannabe" wrongfully appropriating everything Native including the dress and the hairstyle. According to Neil Diamond, a Cree filmmaker, Hollywood has created a mythological appeal around Indians placing them in a magical land desired by everyone (*Reel Injun*). This desire to "occupy" Indianness reflected and intensified in the New Age Movement, which turned

sacred Indigenous ceremonies and traditions into commodities available for mass consumption, and led to an appearance of a tribe of "wannabes."

Although there are multiple theories where George Lucas got his inspiration for some of Leia's most iconic hairstyles and outfits, in Judd's piece, there is a striking resemblance of Leia's look to that of the Hopi maidens including the world famous side buns. Some have observed before that it is possible to assume that some characters, ideas, and even scenery of the *Star Wars* drew inspiration from Native American nations. Appropriations and influences from different cultures are abundant in *Star Wars*. For example, the Jedi costumes were inspired by the Japanese samurai, the stormtroopers by medieval armor in costume and World War II German Nazi troops in name; and queen Amidala's throne room gown was influenced by the Chinese Imperial Court dress (Rebel, Jedi, Princess, Queen; Henderson 123-161; for detailed discussion of *Star Wars* costumes see Brandon Alinger's *Star Wars Costumes: The Original Trilogy*, 2014). Some of these influences are acknowledged in the new travelling exhibit of the Smithsonian *Rebel, Jedi, Princess, Queen: Star Wars and the Power of Costume;* others, however, remain a conjecture of fans (Geek in Heels; Barder). Judd's piece seems to suggest that appropriation of the Hopi fashion took place. Although there is plenty of speculation that the sidebuns were inspired by "cootie garages" hair style of 1920's; sci-fi and fantasy comic book portrayals of women; or the scientist Barnes Wallis' wife's hairdo in the 1955 film *The Dam Busters*, it is difficult to deny the resemblance with the Hopi squash blossom buns (McRobbie). The buns Padme Amidala flaunts in her Senate landing gown look even more like the Hopi hairstyle, thus bridging the prequels with the trilogy through fashion (*Star Wars: Fit for a Queen*).

In addition, Judd is toying with the widespread stereotype of the Indian princess grandmother so often employed by white people attempting to pass for Indians. His *Hopi Princess Leia* vehemently calls for critical thinking and opposes settler-colonial desire to "play Indian." It is a theme that can be traced through many of his works. Recently, an Atari-like game "Invaders" was developed based on the art he designed for T-shirts with the NTVS clothing company. He comments that this is his way of "countin' coup," and "it's the only acceptable way to play Indian!" (Luger).

Both Echo-Hawk and Judd explore Indigenous experiences of contemporaneity in their works. Their two pieces discussed here cleverly join Indigenous imagery with pop-cultural icons, which situates them as participants in contemporary art and popular culture. As Wilhelm Murg

notes, in many of his works, "the pop culture references give an immediacy to Judd's seemingly simple statements" ("Andy Warriorhol" 34). Echo-Hawk, Judd, and multiple contemporary Native American artists work in the genre of Native Pop, borrowing images from popular culture as it lends itself well to reaching a wider audience in a language familiar to many. If one goes to a Native American art market of any kind, the majority of works that one will find are what is deemed "traditionally" Native. Yet, Native Pop is becoming more prominent and draws more attention in the contemporary art world. In his blog post "Pop Go the Indians," Scott Andrews notices that there are more Native artists working in this genre that engages the themes and images of everyday life every year. Speaking about Indigenous art and Pop Art, he notes that there is:

> a growing trend in contemporary American Indian art that combines visual vocabularies from two fields generally thought of as distinct from each other (at least in the art marketplace and mainstream art criticism). They combine the signs and symbols from American Indian representational traditions that predate contact with Europeans with signs and symbols that came after that contact. (Andrews)

It is worth noting that such categorization into pure "authentic" Native art that is rooted in pre-contact tradition and post-contact Native art "modified" by European influences is artificially constructed, mostly representing the collectors' belief in the vanishing race stereotype. Works of Native artists and craftsmen have been informed by environment, trade, contact with other tribes, and later contact with Europeans since time immemorial and have always reflected changes taking place in the community. However, historically, multiple "patrons" of Native arts such as Dorothy Dunn have imposed the idea of pre-contact authenticity on Indigenous artists who have been attempting to escape limitations of said authenticity ever since.

The growing number of exhibits and critics who focus on contemporary Indigenous art that re-thinks and even deconstructs the notion of "traditionally Native" speaks to Native artists' ever more successful attempts to re-imagine Native art as a category. Museums (although with caution) start exhibiting a trend to incorporate Indigenous artists' works engaging in the Native Pop conversation. For instance, the Heard Museum held an exhibition "POP! Popular Culture in American Indian Art" in 2010 highlighting the work of Ryan Singer and Lisa Telford, who can hardly be classified as traditionalists, among others. The Philbrook Museum of Art can boast several pieces of Native Pop such as beaded bracelets "Lone Ranger and Tonto" by Marcus

Amerman. The 2012 Santa Fe group art show of Native artists working in Pop Surrealism "Low-Rez: The Native American Lowbrow" deserves a mention as well. The press release for the art show speaks of the Native Pop movement with its focal point in Santa Fe,

> in which artists use pop imagery to explode non-native fantasies of Indians such as the timeless "Noble Savage" and to establish entry points for audiences who might not be familiar with tribal histories or imagery. The subversive humor of Native Pop and Lowbrow Art provides a perfect vehicle for social commentary without becoming preachy or propagandist. (*Low-Rez*)

As mentioned earlier, Indigenous artists are concerned with issues of sovereignty and self-representation. They defy the mainstream collectors' expectations of Native American art with value in authenticity and limited to primitivism and Studio style. It is not merely about aesthetics, but about activism and making the viewer aware of contemporary Indigenous issues. Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., Director of the Heard Museum, suggests that "there is a commitment by the younger generation of artists… to get beyond the traditional artistic obsession with Native identity and tribal customs. Their commitment is to a "post-Indian world"—without the limitations or expectations of earlier times" (Baker at al. 7).

Contemporary Indigenous artists reference world art movements and speak of their identity as shaped not only by tribal traditions, but also film, music and popular culture. Their works explore their Indigenous identity as in flux and influenced by the multicultural globalized world; their art finds crossings and intersections of the tribal customary and traditional and the contemporary. Robert Jahnke (Māori) defines contemporary Indigenous art as "trans-customary" which exhibits "visual empathy with customary practice," but is neither hybrid nor somewhere in-between customary and non-customary (48). Jahnke stresses empathy with traditionally accepted forms, but not strict correspondence to them. Such empathy may reveal itself either in "customary" art genres with "non-customary" materials (such as Shan Goshorn's traditionally woven baskets made from a variety of documents pertaining to Federal Indian policies) or vice versa. April Holder asserts that "if Native Americans live in two worlds, then Native Pop is the bridge between those two worlds. Native pop art is the combination of the essence of traditional identity and the embrace of the ever changing world around us" (as qtd. in *Low Rez*).

In this vein, both Echo-Hawk and Judd focus on expressing contemporary issues in contemporary media. While Echo-Hawk acknowledges the importance of tradition, he also

points out the importance of defying the stereotypical expectations of what Native American art should be. He creates art that is not about "buffalos, and buffalo robes, and sunsets, and the Indian slumped over on his horse at the end of the trail" (SiWatson), the topics that dominate the mainstream society's view of Native art, but about Native Americans and cell-phones, skateboards, and Nike shoes. Judd is also known for producing images for subcultures. Eleanor Heartney discusses how the myths and stereotypes popularized by Hollywood and popular culture limit Indigenous artists. She insists that such kinds of generalization have the potential to freeze Native artists into what James Clifford terms the "ethnographic present," "a state that fixes ethnographic groups within the traditions that existed before the disruptions caused by the incursions of modernity" (Baker et al., 37). She explains that "such romanticized formulations ignore or diminish the adjustments Native Americans have made and the transformations they have undergone in partaking of the complexities of contemporary American society. It also threatens to strip Native identity from those who have moved too far from Native traditions" (Baker et al., 37). Echo-Hawk and Judd work with the themes that position the Native American as contemporary, with a vision of a future. Wali rightly points out that Echo-Hawk supports the vision that "Indians are not about the past; they are about the present and the future" (WBEZ).

Native Pop borrows from American Pop Art, Neo-Pop, and Lowbrow, but it is distinctly Indigenous as it voices Indigenous concerns with visual sovereignty. It incorporates the everyday life and the subcultures. It is gaining momentum with collectors and galleries due to its ironic mashups of Native experiences and mass culture and is often seen as "cool" due to its refreshing and "out-of-the-box" exploration of Indigenous identities. Native Pop is also often political and anchored to reality. Its purpose is to re-examine Native American history, Federal Indian policies, and stereotypical non-Native representations of American Indians. Yet, first and foremost, it aims to forge positive self-imagery for Native nations.

Native Pop focuses on resistance and cultural perseverance and aims to counter the stereotypical beliefs about and images of Native Americans in the US. Adrienne Keene curated the *Native Re-Appropriations: Contemporary Indigenous Artists* (2015-2016) exhibit at Brown's Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America that featured five Native American artists with Judd among them. She noted lack of exposure of the general public to American Indians and contemporary issues in Indian Country, as well as absence of images countering stereotypical portrayals that the mainstream could draw upon (Mormann). According to Keene,

artists like Judd create pieces that "offer a critique through humor, bold statements, and the reimaging of recognizable images in pop culture, which… gives… a better sense of contemporary Native identities" (Mormann). Landrum asserts that "Native people have historically used popular culture as a means to contest stereotypical notions of "Indianness" and to define their identities on their own terms" (185).

Through Native Pop, which defies expectations of traditional Native art, artists like Echo-Hawk and Judd engage in visual sovereignty and subvert stereotypical representations of Native Americans in media, which to this day largely inform the mainstream audience about Indigenous nations. By tackling American popular culture in their works, such artists establish their engaged presence in contemporaneity. C. Richard King urges "[to] push toward embodied individuals in Indian country who actively engage with modernity, often resisting and reworking its projects, and that demand recognizing the centrality of (cultural) imperialism to popular culture and the need to decolonize it" (216). Echo-Hawk and Judd are such artists who rework the projects of popular culture to make them serve Native communities by creating "powerful and positive alternatives to dominant media image" (King 219). Simultaneously, their use of pop-cultural imagery, *Star Wars* iconography in particular, invites non-Native audiences to reconsider their assumptions about Native Americans.

Notes

[1] Culture Shock Camp or Created 4 Greatness provides entertainment and educational services to Native American communities to promote healthy lifestyles, leadership, and artistic expression. See http://www.brianfrejo.com/.

[2] The choice of place for one of Echo-Hawk's exhibits, the Chicago Filed Museum of Natural History, is simultaneously ironic and representative of the artist's desire to reach wider audience. His presence in the museum speaks to the long history of museum misrepresentations of Native Americans in general and Native American artists in particular. Echo-Hawk's exhibit in a natural history museum asserts his Indigenous representational sovereignty. It also counters the long-standing tradition of exhibits about Native Americans in natural history museums which portrayed Indigenous peoples as an obsolete part of the natural world, i.e. "vanishing" species.

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Basket Becomes Codex: A Poem by Trevino Brings Plenty in the Portland Art Museum

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Before it was published in *Wakpá Wanáği / Ghost River*, the poem "Little, Cultural, Teapot Curio Exposes People," by Trevino Brings Plenty (Lakota), was available on film as part of the Portland Art Museum's exhibit "Object Stories." The poem works to redefine the meaning of its subject—a Tlingit basket made for the tourist market circa 1920, acquired by a collector, and donated to the Portland Art Museum; the basket currently sits in storage as part of the PAM's permanent collection. As an object made for sale to the tourist and collector market, the basket falls outside the scope of NAGPRA's guidelines for repatriation: it will not return to the family and people who made it. Yet its meaning can be reclaimed, and the poem becomes an act of survivance through that reclamation. Through redefining the meaning of the basket, the poem creates a story of survivance that steps out of the colonial story of the basket as decorative item for a non-Native consumer and instead posits it as a holder of knowledge and means of connecting generations of family across space and time.

Reading through Native theory

In his essay "Aesthetics of Survivance: Literary Theory and Practice," Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) sets forth some of the guiding principles of how survivance is created through Native storying, and what difference it makes to Native presence. He argues that "The character of survivance creates a sense of native presence over absence, nihility, and victimry" and that "Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion; survivance is the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent" (1). Amidst the influences and acts of colonizing institutions, Native literature posits a different story from that of the colonizers. Most useful for this essay is Vizenor's idea that "Survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, detractions, obtrusions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy of victimry. Survivance is the heritable right of succession or reversion of estate and, in the course of international declarations of human rights, is a narrative estate of native survivance" (1). I am particularly interested here in the language of succession and inheritance,

as the Brings Plenty poem refigures an object that is owned by a museum. While the poem cannot give the object back to the family whose ancestor made it, as a survivance story it can give back to that family—and other Native people—the object's meaning and significance. As a survivance story, the poem reclaims the basket from the meaning assigned to it by the colonialist operations of the collector and museum and instead writes it as a form of art, knowledge, and relationship.

As Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo) writes in *The Sacred Hoop*, "The significance of literature can be best understood in terms of the culture from which it springs…" (54). Allen calls for placing Native literature in its contexts so that scholars do not misunderstand or misconstrue a work's significance. She also calls for bringing things together rather than separating them: "the non-Indian tendency to separate things from one another—be they literary forms, species, or persons—causes a great deal of unnecessary difficulty with and misinterpretation of American Indian life and culture" (62). In this essay, I bring together several ideas to examine the teapot basket poem: Native material rhetorics (stories about objects and what they mean when connected with their communities), Tribalography (how stories bring ideas to life), Brings Plenty's latest book of poetry, museum collection history, the history of spruce root basketry, and the policies and programming of the Portland Art Museum. I bring together these contexts—some from a number of different Indigenous nations—because these ideas inform Brings Plenty's work as a Lakota poet who has lived a significant portion of his life in the city of Portland, Oregon, in a post-Relocation atmosphere of people from different communities and traditions coming together to resist colonization and express Indigenous art. When the poem resonates in all of these contexts, it works as a powerful revision of how museum objects have been understood in the past, and becomes a new storying of suvivance that redefines the significance of even the most seemingly trivial objects.

Objects can be read as things that, at least in part, communicate possession, "havingness." Objects are also important communicators of meaning. The field of Native material rhetorics helps us see the relationships between objects, community, and storytelling in an Indigenous context. In her article "Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice," Angela M. Haas argues that wampum belts and the recitals connected to them serve as a form of hypertext; the essay thereby "positions American Indians as the first known skilled multimedia workers and intellectuals in the

Americas" (78). Haas shows the multiple processes through which a wampum belt connects people in a community: making a wampum belt, presenting it at the ceremony of agreement it signifies, witnessing its meaning (by an audience), and periodically reciting the story of its creation to renew the agreement. All of these processes contribute to the ways in which the object represents the needs and priorities of the people who participate. In other words, wampum belts such as the Two Row Treaty Belt (Haas 85) speak to commitments and agreements, and tell stories of relationship through their symbolism, physical materiality, and connections with people who know and tell their story. In Haas's essay, rather than an art object whose value is primarily aesthetic, the wampum belt becomes a sign and tool of sophisticated networks of meaning and relationship. The essay helps contextualize wampum belts for people not familiar with them, revealing them as complex and communicative texts that resonate with meaning. We can then think about how other objects made by Native people might serve similar functions.

Another article that helps us understand the importance and meaning of objects appears in the journal *Museum Anthropology*: Martha Graham and Nell Murphy's "NAGPRA at 20: Museum Collections and Reconnections." The article details several case studies of Native people working with the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) on repatriation efforts. In the article Graham and Murphy describe an incident in which representatives from a Tlingit village came to the AMNH in order to identify objects that may have come from their village that should be repatriated. One elder, Harold Jacobs, spotted a carved prow piece, an object that had *not* been identified as an item for possible repatriation; in fact, the cataloguing information was very vague, only saying that the item had been acquired from Alaska by a Lieutenant Emmons (109). The prow piece and its canoe had been revered in the village several generations before the visit to the AMNH; it had been the only one not destroyed in a bombardment by the U.S. Navy, and therefore became the means of the village's survival (109).[1] Rather than belonging only to the clan who created it, the canoe became the property of the whole village, and the men used it to "hunt, fish, and gather fuel" (109). Because of this history, the prow piece became much more important than it normally might have been: when the canoe developed a crack and could no longer be used, it was disposed of in a ceremony more like "a relative's funeral rather than […] dismantling an old canoe" (110). But information about the prow piece was unknown to the museum staff. Graham and Murphy note, "Neither the AMNH nor the [Tlingit] delegation knows how or when Emmons acquired the prow piece. Because the

catalogue description and provenience were nonspecific, the museum had no knowledge of its role in Angoon's [the village's] history. Jacobs' discovery was a surprise for everyone" (110). If the elders had not recognized the prow piece as they toured the museum's storage area, it likely never would have been repatriated—both because it was poorly catalogued and because a prow piece typically is not considered to be a sacred object or object of cultural patrimony, and thus would not be eligible for repatriation.

After the village elders told the museum staff the history of the prow piece, the museum repatriated the piece, which is now featured in ceremonies at home. It has a special relationship with the village, as recounted by Daniel Johnson, Jr. (Tlingit), one of the people interviewed for the article: "when it is out, our fathers, grandfathers, children, and/or grandchildren acknowledge its presence—and speak directly to it—granting it the status of being one of our leaders of the tribe—or more importantly—viewing it as being one of their father's people, or grandfather's people, or their child, or grandchild" (117). The prow piece participates in such community events as mourning a loved one's passing (118). When asked about whether repatriation has led to healing, Johnson responds: "a huge resounding 'Yes!'—for the Prow Piece and for all other artifacts that have been returned. All have been 'brought back to life' and are now fully integrated within the framework of our culture—as was intended by the 'creators' of the respective items" (117).

From this story, we can conclude that objects are more than just objects, in many cases. They are linked to stories, sometimes of survival, and they help to communicate a people's identity and philosophy. They are expressions not just of Native aesthetics, but also of Native history, technology, knowledge archives, and belief systems. And sometimes they are relatives. Of course, different nations have different beliefs and practices, and we cannot assume that all objects will carry the same status as this prow piece or an Iroquois wampum belt. What I'd like us to notice, in these examples, is that the objects resonate and mean much more when considered in the context of their nation of origin. These two examples show that it can be extraordinarily important that an object be connected to its people if it is to be understood fully; this connection will also bring the object to life, wake it up from its sleep in the museum and give it voice so it can fulfill its purpose for being.

Giving voice makes a difference. In "The Story of America: A Tribalography," LeAnne Howe (Choctaw) lays out a theory of connection and storytelling that helps to explain a Choctaw

perspective on how the world works. In one section of the essay, she describes the importance of storytelling through a closer look at one aspect of the Choctaw language:

> My tribe's language has a mysterious prefix that, when combined with other words, represents a form of creation. It is *nuk* or *nok*, and it has to do with the power of speech, breath, and mind. Things with *nok* or *nuk* attached to them are so powerful they create. For instance, *nukfokechi* brings forth knowledge and inspiration. A teacher is a *nukfoki*, the beginning of action. *Nuklibisha* is to be in a state of passion, and *nukficholi* means to hiccup, or breath that comes out accidentally. (15)

In this Choctaw way of thinking, telling a story about something gives it breath, which in turn gives it life. Furthermore, Howe tells us that storytelling "brings forth knowledge and inspires us to make the eventful leap that one thing leads to another" (18). A story can help the listener, the audience, understand something new, and therefore be able to imagine something that may not yet exist.

In "Tribalography," Howe also argues that other forms of art can be understood as storytelling: the genres of "novel, poem, drama, memoir, film, history" (31), even a painting or a scientific theory. Howe notes that various forms of storytelling carry the power of creating something new, "Whether they [the storytellers] [are] speaking them into audio tapes, writing them by hand, typing them into computers, or recounting them to future generations of storytellers…" (36). If this is true, then Brings Plenty's poem and video can be stories that help to shift what the museum visitor thinks about an object on display; they can be stories that help change the viewer's understanding of an object, and therefore create a new possibility, one that falls outside the colonial mindset.

Basket becomes codex

As part of "Object Stories," Brings Plenty's poem/video "Little, Cultural, Teapot Curio Exposes People" (and his commentary on the video after he performs the poem) focuses on changing the language around the object in order to change viewers' minds about what the object means and how it means. He reconnects the object with family and culture, shows that it is a form of sophisticated technology, and demonstrates its interconnection with its region and family of origin. Despite its appearance and purported definition as a decorative object for tourists and

collectors, the teapot basket is also a holder of knowledge and the means to carry that knowledge into the future.

Brings Plenty's "Object Stories" film, with photographs of the poet and the teapot basket, can be accessed through the museum's YouTube channel, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFpPA6drD34. Here is the poem as it appears in the book *Wakpá Wanáği / Ghost River*:

The thought codex of a culture is in the object.
My cells are in the weave,
DNA strands of story.
The neuron mapping of us,
familiar dialogue as concrete as dream.

I gave this tome to your mom,
who turned into your grandmother,
who is your daughter's love
unraveling at the kitchen table.

We story ourselves to ancestors
for they are us to a future
who wondered at our language.
The structure of hand contains
schematics to that which we reimage.

We are everything all the time.
As story as people, we turn home.
I stitched coordinates,
systems, pathways.
The hues of age bind us.
It is simply love my people.

The title of the poem expresses the teapot basket as an insignificant thing, a "curio," or item of curiosity, a cute oddity; but the poem's first line negates this idea, calling it the "thought codex of a culture." The teapot basket belongs to its culture in a meaningful, non-trivial way. The term "codex" resonates with the Aztec and Mayan texts that were burned by conquistadors, complex works that contained knowledge and that, according to Damián Baca, were intricately connected with their communities.[2] In his book *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*, Baca argues that the writing in codices was "a pictorial system consisting of images structured to create visual messages" (68). These messages were read by a special person who was able to decode and interpret them for the audience; such readings "constituted a communal ritualistic and ceremonial event" (73). Like the wampum belt, the codex connected symbols (writing) and objects with people, and forged connections among people and between those people and an event.[3] So the basket, because it is a codex, becomes also a means of connection and meaning-making. When asked about the term, Brings Plenty said "The word 'codex' is a combination of coding and decoding, from computer language. Using code and information works on both sides—on the part of the maker, but also the viewer. I was also taking the idea of a knowledge base in something that's not a book, putting cultural knowledge into a form that is available to you" (Brings Plenty, personal interview). The teapot basket as text is also echoed in the term "tome" used in the next stanza, which brings to mind a heavy, serious book. In direct contrast to the actual weight of a teapot basket, these metaphors invite the viewer to see it as heavy with meaning. The basket can be read as a document of the maker's philosophy, an object that represents knowledge traditions gathered over multiple generations, not just a decorative frivolity for a tourist's home or a beautiful object in a museum display.

The poem's next lines bring into focus a particular speaker: "My cells are in the weave, / DNA strands of story." With parts of its maker left in the object, the teapot basket becomes personal and particular, working against the anonymity communicated in the information card that the museum provides, which says the basket's maker is unknown.[4] The poem gives this maker a voice, and she is now speaking, describing the intimate connection between herself and the object. This line also draws our attention from the teapot basket resonating on a very large scale—the representative of a culture—to the level of the personal—so personal as to be absolutely unique, in the speaker's cells left on the basket. The two lines complement each other

in scale, and claim for the teapot basket a significance that has nothing to do with its buyer or owner.

The next stanza also continues the idea of narration—that the object tells a story—in the reference to "*familiar* dialogue" (emphasis added), a verbal exchange between family members. The poem's references to relatives—mom, grandmother, daughter—echo the idea of exchange, and even show people morphing into one another, the mom becoming the grandmother, then being expressed in the daughter's love. These lines create family bonds that are so tight, they make the women part of each other. The teapot basket performs a kind of magic: it is able to connect people over time and space, beyond the normal limits of human being.

The poem then shows us the exchange that happens between these generations, between ancestors and descendants: "We story ourselves to ancestors / for they are us to a future / who wondered at our language." Here again, we travel through time thanks to an object that will last beyond the maker's time and preserve the family's story into the future. These lines also carry the sense of a lost language—perhaps the descendants do not know how to interpret or speak the language of the ancestors, or perhaps their "wonder" conveys being in awe of their ancestors. Making this object might allow the artist to speak that language again, to make that connection with the ancestors. It also creates an object that can be passed to succeeding generations, even those that will not be seen by the narrator.

Placed throughout the poem are references that turn what seems to be a simple, whimsical object into an example of technology, of sophisticated method and significance. The teapot basket holds the maker's DNA and is also the holder of "neuron mapping." In stanza three, the relationship between the body and object is expressed in another way: "The structure of hand contains / schematics to that which we reimage." In these lines, the maker's hand—and those of her descendants—contains the plans needed to make more baskets, more objects that hold the stories of family and culture. The ability to make such an object is special; as Brings Plenty and I shared that we both were impressed by our friends who make things, he noted, in reference to the basket, "The technical knowledge needed to make this thing takes a lot of skill and preparation" (Brings Plenty, personal interview). In the fourth stanza, the speaker says, "I stitched coordinates, / systems, pathways." These images suggest a map, and a system of navigation in the time travel that these family members will engage in. Such complex

situations—mapping, time traveling, reading schematics—help to communicate the idea that this basket represents knowledge.

Because the teapot basket is a form of technology that aids in navigation to the future, the poem suggests that objects themselves can rebuild links that have been severed between Native people and the repositories and expressions of their knowledge. In other words, Native people must have access to the objects their ancestors have made in part because these objects are their knowledge base, their codices, their libraries. Even if the objects are not ceremonial or sacred in nature, they still contain information that must be accessible to the people so that these particular ways of thinking and knowing and being in the world can inform and help the next generation.

The poem also expresses the sense that, when you engage with this system of knowledge, you engage in a different way of thinking about the world: a teapot basket becomes a codex. In his video commentary after the poem, Brings Plenty talks about language and relationship. He notes that the maker of the teapot basket and her family would have had a special relationship to the beings in Nature who provided the materials for her work, and her Native language would have created a connection between herself and those beings, a connection that was not just about taking resources but working with each other in a relationship of mutual respect and reciprocal care. When you practice making a basket, you are not just making a basket, you are engaging with the resources available in a specific place, with the language, and with a worldview derived from existing in an ongoing relationship with these things.

The ways of life that created this basket, this language, created a home that supported all of the beings who lived together, including the non-human ones. In the last stanza of the poem, we return to this home through the technology of the basket. In the poem's last line, "It is simply love my people," the multivalent referent "it" could point to a number of things: the object itself; the making of pathways and coordinates and maps so that the next generation can find their way; or the impulse to make such an object so that future generations will have a vocabulary for the expression of self and culture. Or perhaps the "it" refers to the tendency to turn homeward, like the maker's ancestors did, and create something that would represent the people who are "everything all the time."

The word "everything" here reminds us, finally, of the interconnection of all beings that is expressed in the worldview of many Native tribes, including the Lakota, Brings Plenty's ancestors. As I have noted elsewhere, Brings Plenty's *Wakpá Wanáği* brings the Lakota

philosophy of *mitakuye oyas'in*, "all my relatives," to bear on the varied subjects of the poems in this volume. We see speakers and subjects—patients in a group home, uncles and grandfathers, a suicidal girl, a celebrity—brought together through love and relationship despite the difficulties that inevitably come with being in relationship (Poremski). The poem's line "We are everything all the time" provides an expression of Lakota philosophy in a poem about a Tlingit basket on display in a museum.

In the end, it does not matter whether this object is seen as a "curious" decoration; it is, in fact, something else: the holder of a way of thinking and expression, the way to learn the past and pass it on to the future, the way to find home and self and family, the way to speak among all the generations. The poem's title states that the object *exposes* people; the basket, in the eyes of the right viewer—namely, the poet Trevino Brings Plenty—performs the work it was made for: communicating between generations, telling a story about a culture, representing knowledge. The poem brings to life and to purpose this artifact, placing it in relationship, redefining how and what it speaks. In this way, the poem becomes a survivance story that speaks against dominance and Native victimry, in Vizenor's terms, and reclaims the basket as a Native estate, signifying wholly different views and priorities from the basket's definition in a typical museum context, a colonial context. In the space of the poem, the basket, like the repatriated prow piece, becomes alive and is able to fulfill its purpose. Even though the actual physical object "sleeps" in a storage area at the museum, the poem and video in the "Object Stories" exhibit bring it back into relationship, back to life.

Museums and Native people

Saying something meaningful about museums is tricky; they have changed so much since their beginnings, and they also have not changed. Museums started out as an important tool of colonization that was part of the effort to characterize Native people as savage, backward, untouched by the processes of civilization, and standing in the way of American progress and therefore in need of being removed from their land. Museums were both the result (product) of Manifest Destiny and the means (process) of carrying it out. In her book *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*, Amy Lonetree (Ho-Chunk) provides an overview of the history of museums and their part in the process of colonization, along with the establishment of boarding schools, land loss and language loss, and the

criminalization of religious practices.[5] There are countless stories in the historical record of how museums have participated in U.S. efforts to destroy Native people and culture even as they worked to preserve and display Native objects. I would like to share a few here as a way to ground the discussion, bring our focus to how these events affected human beings.

In the 19th century, U.S. soldiers decapitated the Native people they killed—including those at Sand Creek (Mihesuah 2)—and sent the heads to researchers back east for a study on crania. The purpose of this study was to prove that non-white people of all kinds had smaller brains and therefore were less capable of higher thinking and civilization and, therefore, less worthy of citizenship. In 1868, collecting Native bodies became official policy, which "directed army personnel to procure Indian crania and other body parts for the Army Medical Museum" (Trope and Echo-Hawk 126). After the study was completed, the "specimens" were sent to other museums. Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw) reports that "In 1900 at least forty-five hundred skulls and bones were transferred from the Army Medical Museum to the Smithsonian Institution" (2).

In another version of people becoming objects, Native people themselves sometimes became exhibits and items of study. Many have heard of Ishi, the Yahi man who lived in the University of California's anthropology museum and became a resident subject of study for Alfred Kroeber and others (Kell), but in the essay "Bones, and Other Precious Gems," Linda Hogan (Chickasaw) tells of six Native people from the Arctic "taken to the Museum of Natural History in New York for what was called a scientific study" around the turn into the 20th century; among them was a boy named Minik and his father (181). These men "stood naked for scientists, anthropologists, photographers, and others whose work it was to compare races" (182). The scientists wanted to know things like whether Native skin behaves the same way as white skin when you burn it (182). Minik's father died while they were objects of study; years later, Minik returned to the museum to discover his father's skeleton on display, an experience that "traumatized him for the rest of his life" (182).

Even when Native bodies are not on display, their objects can still tell a story of violent colonization. Two Lakota people have told me the story of the Blue Water Creek massacre and the artifacts taken afterwards, but I have rarely heard anyone else mention it, or write about it. In this event, G. K. Warren, an army surveyor, was sent out with several campaigns in the 1850s against the tribes the U.S. called the Sioux. His job was to make maps and collect items of scientific interest as he accompanied the army (Hanson 4). After a massacre carried out by troops

under the command of General William S. Harney in which more than 150 people (including children) were killed or wounded (Hanson 13), Warren ordered his men to empty their supply wagons and fill them up with things the Lakota left behind as they ran for their lives. Hanson's book provides photographs of some of the items: men's leggings, men's shirts, women's dresses, hair ties, moccasins; storage bags, blankets; saddles and headstalls; lariats, bows and arrows, knife sheaths; pipes and pipe bags; children's toys, dolls. Even lodges (tipis) were taken. Hanson notes: "Warren [the surveyor] subsequently deposited the bulk of the floral, faunal, paleontological, and ethnographic collections he gathered with the Smithsonian, as was the custom of other U.S. army expeditions" (5).[6] *He emptied their supply wagons in order to take "artifacts."* Those items, some of them stained with blood, remain in the storage area of one of the Smithsonian museums.

There were others collecting Native objects. Ohiyesa (Charles Eastman) (Dakota) traveled in Ojibwe country in 1910 to collect stories and "to search out and purchase rare curios and ethnological specimens for one of the most important collections in the country" (94). Eastman had long acted as a go-between, trying to convince the U.S. government to do right by Natives, and trying to convince Natives that adopting "civilized" practices was the best way into the future. On his visit to the "Sugar Point band," in which he hopes to see a war club that is said to be the instrument their chief used to fight his enemies, he notes: "I made use of the old-time Indian etiquette, as well as of all the wit and humor at my command, to win a welcome, and finally obtained from the old man the history and traditions of his people, so far as he knew them, and even the famous war club itself!" (96). Despite his eloquent and pointed critiques of non-Native people elsewhere, Eastman's participation in coercing leaders to relinquish their important tribal objects here is haunting.

Building the collections of museums meant stealing Native people's belongings, buying them at rock-bottom prices when Native people were desperate for food and other resources, taking them as the spoils of war, or buying them from collectors who had done these things. The rich resources in museums are the visible evidence of the violence of colonization. Behind the beauty of these objects lie pain and loss, grief and trauma.

Native people have always known this, and have always spoken out about it.[7] The efforts of activists, lawyers, and legislators finally resulted in the enactment of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990, which ultimately resulted in many

items being repatriated, and established a process to make repatriation more easy and systematic. During the discussion leading up to the Act's passage, many anthropologists and museum staff reacted with alarm, predicting that its enactment would result in empty museums. This has not happened. Large loopholes in the legislation—among them, a clause that states items can remain in museums if they are of significant scientific importance—have meant that museums can refuse to repatriate some objects and even human remains. The results from NAGPRA's implementation have been mixed: museums still have collections, and Native people are getting some of their objects back.

NAGPRA is not perfect, but it has created real change in the world of museums, and in the relationships between Native people and museums. Museums are being decolonized through the institutions' efforts to collaborate with Native communities in exhibitions, collections, and display practices. Viewers who are accustomed to the colonial story are getting something different, depending on where they go. Lonetree outlines the practices through which museums engage in decolonization, which has become more commonplace as a result of Native activism: "they do this through honoring Indigenous knowledge and worldviews, challenging the stereotypical representations of Native people produced in the past, serving as sites of 'knowledge making and remembering' for their own communities and the general public, and discussing the hard truths of colonization in exhibitions in an effort to promote healing and understanding" (25). Yet, as Lonetree also points out, we should be careful; if we "celebrate" that museums have been decolonized, we "[obscure] the glaring power imbalances that remain" between Native people and those institutions (24). As Brings Plenty stated in an interview in April 2016, "In the last decade, we've been viewing things differently; but for the most part, museums are about whiteness and old money." This is still the prevailing mode of museums in the world, despite the work of decolonization being done. While I would be uncomfortable claiming that Brings Plenty's poem single-handedly (single-versedly?) decolonizes the PAM, I believe we can say that a viewer who listens to the poem experiences a shift in the meaning of the object, a view of what that object means according to Indigenous priorities and worldviews. A visitor who hears this poem is invited to think about the object in a Native context rather than a traditional museum context.

Basket as knowledge

In addition to museum history helping us consider the poem in context, we can also gain an appreciation for how special its subject is—the teapot basket—through learning more about the history of basket-making in Tlingit culture. Made around 1920, the teapot basket of Brings Plenty's poem represents an era when Tlingit women were adapting their art to new purposes.

Basketry had been one of the longest-practiced arts of the Tlingit before contact with non-Native people; both everyday items (used for cooking, storage, etc.) and ceremonial items (capes, hats) were made out of spruce roots and grasses. In Tlingit culture, baskets are so important that they have a place in their origin stories. In her book *Spruce Root Basketry of the Haida and Tlingit*, Sharon Busby shares the Tlingit story of the first basket: in the days when Raven [the trickster] was active on the earth, and before he "disappeared into the unknown, taking with him the power of the spirit world to mingle with mankind," a maiden becomes the wife of the sun, and goes to live with him in the sky (19). They are happy and have many children, but she worries about her children, who are more like her (more human) than their father (19). As she worries and twines together some roots, she inadvertently makes a basket (19). It becomes the means of their return to earth: "Her husband, the Sun, had divined her fears and perplexities. So he took the basket […] she had unknowingly made and increased its size until it was large enough to hold the mother and her eight children. In it they were lowered to their homeland, the Earth" (19-20). As in Brings Plenty's teapot basket poem, this story shows a basket being made while a woman is thinking about her children and how they will live, and that basket becomes the means to carry them to safety, to home. To this day, Busby notes, some villages still hand down from generation to generation an enormous "mother basket" that is present at ceremonies (74-75). So, in Tlingit culture, baskets are an everyday object, a ceremonial object, and a means by which they came to live on earth. Their significance cannot be overstated.

Basket-making requires a serious commitment on the part of the maker. The process of harvesting the material for the woven object was as labor-intensive as its creation: "Many weavers say that over half the work of making a basket is in gathering, preparing, and splitting the spruce root and the decorative grasses. Moreover, the quality of the basket is absolutely dependent on the quality and regularity of the spruce root. Even a great weaver cannot make up for poor materials" (Busby 30). The tradition of gathering materials implies that Tlingit people developed a working relationship with the beings in their environment—in this case the spruce

trees and grasses—that supplied their needs. They make efforts to treat those organisms well: "Before leaving the site, the diggers return the ground cover [taken away to dig out the root] to its original position, taking care that no roots are left exposed, and thank the tree for its gift. Treasuring this renewable resource, the weavers are careful to let an area recover before visiting it again" (Busby 27). As careful stewards of the trees and grasses, the Tlingit weavers show respect through their art and its processes. And this practice goes back thousands of years: according to Busby, the oldest basket found by archaeologists is 6000 years old (23).[8] Given the technical and artistic skill displayed in the baskets and the length of time they have been made, we can infer many centuries of careful observation, experimentation, stewardship, and care in harvesting. Before colonization, the Tlingit had a rich and far-reaching working relationship with the spruce trees that resulted in beautiful objects that helped the people live well.

As the economy shifted and their way of life was severely disrupted by the influx of outsiders, the Tlingit did not abandon their relationship with spruce trees, but adapted it. Rather than making everyday cooking equipment or ceremonial hats, the women shifted the bulk of their production to items they could sell to tourists and collectors (Busby 77-82). Despite the relative remoteness of the villages, in the early 20th century, tourists were encouraged to seek ethnographic treasures as souvenirs in their trips to the new wilderness. Busby notes, "In 1906 the Alaska Steamship Co. of Seattle published a pamphlet on Alaska Indian basketry that begins, 'No home is complete now-a-days without a neat and artistically arranged Indian basket corner.' The pamphlet encourages people to 'wander about in the quaint Indian villages which still have the primitive charm' and to search for 'rare and curious relics.'" (88). Native people made changes to both the shapes and construction of their work to meet the new demand and new tastes in what the buyers wanted:

> The average tourist wanted an attractive, inexpensive basket to admire rather than a basket sturdy enough to withstand heavy use. In fact, the typical tourist was not knowledgeable enough to appreciate the differences between the traditional forms and new ones developed by the weavers to save time and materials… During this period, fine weaving and decoration were prized over strength and functionality. (Busby 88-94)

With the disruptions of colonization, Tlingit women adapted their traditional practice to their modern needs while retaining relationships with the beings in their homeland, and retaining the art of making baskets. Even in the face of drastic changes to their way of life that caused

challenges and hardships,[9] Tlingit people used baskets to maintain important relationships and create connections between ancestors and descendants.

Native objects at the Portland Art Museum

Some museums would not designate a basket made for the tourist trade in 1920 as an "authentic" Native object. Older objects, uninfluenced by non-Native forces, are seen as more "purely" Indian. The Portland Art Museum helps change some of these assumptions as it influences museum practices. The PAM includes not only ancient or pre-contact objects in its Native American exhibit, but also objects made in the 20th century and up to the present.[10] The contemporary pieces invite non-Native viewers to think in nontraditional ways about Native objects and their makers—namely, that they are still here, still creating beauty, still using art to speak about their lives, and still practicing their cultures, bringing them into the future.

In the PAM, an older exhibit of Native American art that was once largely based on ethnographic materials collected in the late 19th / early 20th century now includes contemporary pieces as well as traditional ones. For example, a display of baskets in one glass case includes a piece woven by Gail Tremblay (Mi'kmaq and Onondaga) in 2011 entitled *In Great Expectations, There is no Red Leader* ("Online Collections"). This basket is made in the strawberry style, but uses strips of 35mm film rather than grass or roots or reeds. It becomes a traditional-style piece that comments on images of Native people created by the film industry. PAM's Native American collection also features a piece called *Sits With the Stars*, a satin dress made by Wendy Red Star (Apsáalooke). While the dress uses a traditional visual motif seen in star quilts, its materials—satin fabric and metallic fringe that catch and return all the available light in the dimmed room—create a strikingly contemporary piece. The space-age metallic fringe and star quilt motif combine traditional and contemporary ideas about stars and astronomy, bringing Native images in the museum forward to today and into the future. The PAM's innovative policies change the way Native people are represented in museums, and lead visitors to a more informed understanding of Native art.

In addition to the changes in how objects in the permanent collection are presented in the Native American gallery, in fall 2015 the museum added a gallery for temporary exhibits of works by contemporary Native artists, as described in the blog post "New Directions—New Connections: Revitalizing a Museum's Approach to Native American Art" (Murawski). Deana

Dartt (Chumash), who was the curator of the Native American collection until mid-September 2016, created this gallery as a way to feature new works by Native artists.[11] The PAM has hosted significant exhibits of Native art in its main galleries as well; recent shows included "Contemporary Native Photographers and the Edward Curtis Legacy" and "Native Fashion Now: North American Indian Style." With each exhibit related to Native people and Native creations, the PAM does community outreach and hosts events at the museum, drawing people from underrepresented groups in Portland. In the PAM's efforts to bring together community and museum, Dartt says,

> We want to show the whole spectrum of artists and art practice in Indian Country, from customary or 'traditional' to the edgy contemporary, seamlessly woven together in a way that is meaningful to our community as a whole as well as empowering for young Native visitors as they walk through the galleries. I'm always thinking about—and always inspired by—the power of art to heal historic wounds and restore hope. (Murawski, "New Directions")

These efforts show an understanding of Native art as vital and current, and as connected to the community. Native art and artists are not frozen in some pre-historic past that has disappeared with the vanishing of the frontier; contemporary artists continue to find inspiration in traditional materials and forms (baskets, dresses, etc.), but use them to make a contemporary statement about their lives. The museum's engagement with community shows that Native art is lively, dynamic, and looking to the future as it brings the past forward, and helps bring non-Native visitors a more complex and meaningful understanding of Native art and Native lives. Brings Plenty's poem, then, is one example in a multivalent effort to decolonize the PAM.

Interlude: visiting the museum, April 2016

As part of a long-term project on objects in museums, I have been visiting museums in person, putting my body in those spaces and observing carefully the relationships set up between the visitor and the objects on display. I believe this is an important part of understanding the stories that museums tell, and the stories that Native people tell about their objects. I go to these places to see the objects, but also to notice what it feels like to walk into the institution, to enter a gallery, to travel through an exhibit.

During a 2016 visit to Portland, I went to the PAM several times to view the exhibit "Contemporary Native Photographers and the Edward Curtis Legacy." Like other museums noting the 100th anniversary of Curtis's appearance in the art world, the PAM mounted a retrospective of his work. But the exhibit at the PAM situated Curtis's photographs within the context of three contemporary Native artists: Zig Jackson (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara), Wendy Red Star, and Will Wilson (Diné); these artists and their works explicitly or implicitly engage with Curtis, the most (in)famous photographer of Native people. The entrance of the exhibit featured a giant enlargement of a photograph from Zig Jackson's "Indian photographing tourist photographing Indian" series: a young man stands in pow wow regalia, a white tourist facing him, holding a large camera mere inches from the young man's face. The image forces the viewer to think about representation—about who's pointing the camera at whom, for what purpose, to tell what kind of story. The fact that the PAM's rendition of the photograph was taller than me also said: "visitor, we will not let you look away from this issue." I noticed two things: the boy being nearly assaulted by the camera takes it in stride (perhaps he is used to it, or perhaps he is brave; probably both); and there's a younger boy in the frame, too, escaping the scene, on the lower left of the shot. He is laughing.

In addition to centering questions of Native representation, this exhibit also called into question what many have been taught about Curtis. When I toured the exhibit with friends, I told them that I had heard (like many others) that Curtis's regular practice was artificial to the point of deception, making his subjects don costumes from a hundred years ago, and long-haired wigs. I did not trust Curtis's representations of Native people. Because of the exhibit, and a lunchtime public presentation given by Mike Murawski, director of education and public programs at the museum, I learned that the story is more complicated. Curtis was in a position of negotiating with his subjects, not just ordering them around; they chose whether and how they wanted to be presented. Murawski shared the response of one subject's grandson, who said: how dare we assume that Native people had no will, no say, no power in these transactions. Yes, the power relations were complicated, and were partially determined by race and economic status, but Native people were not pawns, not dupes ("Midday Art Break"). And some aspects of Curtis's portraits changed over time despite his consistent use of sepia tones. At the beginning, the photographs tended to portray an anonymous Native figure striking "stoic" poses, or riding into harsh landscapes and sunsets, or serving as a representative of their people, identified only as a

"type" (a Kiowa maiden, a Nez Perce man); these images echo and repeat the "Vanishing Indian" narrative of the late 19th and early 20th century in the U.S. In the photographs made toward the end of his career, however, some of Curtis's subjects appear in their "normal" clothes (non-buckskin, non-beaded, non-exotic). Some of them are smiling. They have names. They are individuals.

On my visits to the PAM with friends, I steered them towards a couple of my favorite works in the exhibit: the gorgeous panoramas of a poisoned landscape by Will Wilson, post-apocalyptic and yet utterly contemporary, beautiful and scary at once; Zig Jackson's portraits of elders in their living rooms, complete with photographs of ancestors who were alive during Curtis's time and descendants whose smiling faces speak of survival, a family reaching into the future; Wendy Red Star's photographs of contemporary Apsáalooke women in their brightly colored trade cloth dresses on a backdrop of a huge black-and-white allotment map covering a whole wall, showing plots of land with names of families on them. These works speak volumes of the context that Curtis's work has been said to erase. They reinscribe the various ways in which colonization has taken its toll on the land, on people, on families. The vague and romantic gestures at the edges of Curtis's early work are here fully visible, demanding acknowledgement. These contemporary photographs, most importantly, speak volumes about how Native people *did not disappear*. They are reviving Native populations, cultures, languages. Native presence and Native art, as acts of survivance, negate the narrative Curtis's photographs echoed and amplified a hundred years ago. Like Brings Plenty's poem, the exhibit told a new story, a Native story of survival and persistence, perseverance despite terrible odds.

"Objects have stories"

The ongoing online exhibit "Object Stories" at the Portland Art Museum, not overtly linked to the museum's Native American collection or exhibits, seeks to explore how people feel about objects that are important to us. The exhibit's tag line tells visitors: "Objects have stories. Tell us yours" ("About"). "Object Stories" features videos in which a person describes an object and why it is important to them. In some videos, staff members point out the compelling features of a favorite item in the museum's collection; in others, members of the public talk about a favorite object from home. The objects cover a wide range of categories: paintings, a purse, a contemporary reproduction of a medieval musical instrument, ceramic figurines, a pair of pants.

The variety is stunning, and invites the viewer to think about the range of objects to which we give meaning—not just works of art, but the everyday things around us.

In online materials, the exhibit is described as "an open-ended exploration of the relationship between people and things, the Museum and the community, and the subjective and objective" ("About"). The exhibit seeks to encourage museumgoers to rethink the relationship between viewer and object: "By […] calling attention to the things we overlook in our lives, Object Stories ruminates on the ways objects make us as fully as we make objects, and the myriad ways objects speak to and shape who we are—our ideas, emotions, values, relationships, and aesthetics" ("About"). In this way, the museum makes patrons into co-curators of the exhibit, and storytellers in their own right, rather than passive consumers of art. So, in addition to rethinking their relationships to objects, the museum asks visitors to rethink their relationship to the museum. Though Brings Plenty's poem appears as one of the stories in "Object Stories," the exhibit as a whole does not focus on Native objects, and does not overtly engage questions about acquisition of museum objects, or the relationship between Native communities, their objects, and the museum.

However, the connections between museum objects and Native people are more overtly shown through a subset of the Object Stories collection, "Listening to the Ancestors," a project that arose from a collaboration between the Portland Art Museum and the Native American Youth Association Family Center's Early College Academy in Portland. In this project, Native high-school-age students chose an object in the museum's Native American collection, conducted research on it, and presented their information in a video similar to the ones in the rest of the Object Stories exhibit ("Listening"). In addition to the benefits of giving high school students some experience in researching, writing, and presenting information to the public, the project resulted in other benefits as well. According to a brief audio commentary from Deana Dartt on the PAM web site, those benefits extend to the museum and its visitors, who gain in hearing "alternative voices" in the information provided about the object (Dartt, "About"). And there are less obvious benefits to the students, among them cultural pride (Dartt, "About").

Dartt is most likely pointing to the same studies cited in the White House's *2014 Native Youth Report*, studies that suggest "incorporating Native languages and culture into academic settings can improve educational engagement and outcomes" (Executive 20). One other thing to note: most of the programs connecting Native children to their cultures are located on or near

reservations; it is highly unlikely that urban schools would be able or willing to add such material into their curriculum. So the project at the PAM was a unique way to address the needs of urban Native youth. It is not difficult to imagine that if a young adult feels pride in her culture—if she admires the art and science and philosophy created by her ancestors—she feels better as a human being and wants to learn more. In this scenario, museum objects are much more than beautiful things, aesthetic expression; they make it possible for young Native people to see their lives as worthwhile. The objects come alive, and help people.

Conclusion: what poems can do

Because it is included in a museum exhibit, the poem "Little, Cultural, Teapot Curio Exposes People" becomes a way to make change, to speak in the museum against the "normal" practices of objectifying Native people, to inform an audience about the truth of Native art and knowledge. In that place, the poem becomes a survivance story—a way to recover Native knowledge *as knowledge*, to recognize the technical and artistic skill of ancestors, and to honor the ways in which they changed what they were making yet kept alive their relationships with the natural world (however limited, however damaged, however hemmed in). They made do and made art; they continued forward and survived.

Brings Plenty's poem has brought me this idea, which I am sharing with you, hoping to give it breath and life: even when it is appropriate and legal that a museum own and display an object, we need for that object to be accessible to the people who made it, and to their descendants, as a way of continuing culture. It is not just sacred objects that need to be reconnected to their people, as Brings Plenty's poem shows us. The poem does the work of revealing the true import of this teapot basket codex, and connecting its technology and its philosophy to its people so that future generations can keep these alive. If the Tlingit descendants of the basket's maker cannot get the object back, at least a Native person's voice can say what that object means and why it is important—not for its aesthetic value to a white collector, but for its expression of complex relationships between human generations, some of whom will never meet each other, and between humans and the plants that supply them with the means to live. It can speak about sophisticated knowledge, and values of reciprocity and beauty.

Reconnecting people with objects so that the people can regain or relearn ways of life lost to colonization can take many forms. Sometimes it happens through legislation; sometimes it

happens through policy changes at museums. And sometimes it happens through literary art, through a poem whose words create a survivance story of relationships between objects, people, values, land. A poem can give objects and people a voice to tell their stories so their stories can come true.

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Notes

[1] What was destroyed: 40 out of 45 homes, a building that stored food and heating oil, and all the canoes on the beach (109). In other words, the attack destroyed their shelter, their food, their heat in the wintertime, and their means of survival.
[2] I first learned of Baca's book through Haas's article, which also compares wampum belts to Maya codices.
[3] Baca points out that, during the era of conquest, in addition to ordering the destruction of codices, the invaders ordered new codices to be created that presented knowledge according to European ways of thinking (73). One duty of the people creating these new works "was to reconstruct Mesoamerican memory by literally rewriting codices that had been systematically destroyed" (73). And further: "Under Spanish rule, the early colonial codices were converted to something closer to 'artifacts' instead of the living commemorative manuscripts they once were in the hands of the *Amoxoaque* and their fellow performers" (73-74). This process reminds me of what happened with many objects that were acquired by museums: they became overwritten and redefined by the meaning that outsiders placed on them.
[4] Busby notes that the weavers of most baskets collected in the 19th and 20th centuries are unknown; it was not common until recently to keep track of who had made the piece.
[5] There are many resources available on the history of museums and exhibitions. Here are some that I have found particularly helpful, in addition to the works of Lonetree and Erikson: the essays in Mihesuah, *Repatriation Reader*; Riegel, "Into the Heart of Irony"; Simpson, "Native American Museums and Cultural Centres"; and Sleeper-Smith, *Contesting Knowledge*. Also notable are *Exhibiting Cultures*, ed. Karp and Lavine; Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*; and Clifford, *Routes*.
[6] Hanson's book includes journals written by Warren as well as an introductory essay to the volume. Hanson explains that "Because the property was destined for destruction [under orders

by Harney], it could not have been considered stealing to take it as loot of war" (16). Hanson also speculates on the sources of Warren's later regret over participating in the expeditions.

[7] Suzan Shown Harjo tells a number of remarkable stories in the article "Protecting Native American Remains, Burial Grounds, and Sacred Places: Panel Discussion." See Riding In et al.

[8] Busby also cautions that there may have been much older examples that disintegrated because they're made out of organic material, and that archaeologists are always finding more things, so it is plausible that even older examples could be found someday (23).

[9] Lonetree points out the complex status of items made for the tourist market: they were "objects that tribal communities either sold or voluntarily parted with… However, even when objects were sold voluntarily, we must remember the deeper historical context. Extreme poverty and ongoing colonial oppression permeated tribal life at the time, as it does for many Native people today" (12).

[10] When I asked Dartt if she thought that some of the PAM's more innovative practices were possible because it is an *art* museum rather than a *history* or *anthropology* museum, she said: absolutely yes (Dartt, personal interview). Indeed, art museums have been engaged in presenting Native art that decolonizes the space of the museum for decades, most notably in the work of James Luna ("Artifact Piece," "Take a Picture with a Real Indian," and many others) and Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco ("The Couple in the Cage").

[11] Dartt's contributions to the PAM were significant and numerous. According to a retired museum director who attended Dartt's send-off celebration, her accomplishments as recognized at that celebration include: adding 300 objects to the Native American collection; indigenizing the curatorial care of objects, including implementing ritual to honor ancestors in the curatorial process; establishing a Native American advisory board and expanding the Native American council to support programs; establishing the Center for contemporary Native American Art (the new gallery on the 3rd floor); securing a $1 million endowment for Native American art; securing a $325,000 NEH grant for "Art of Resilience," a Tlingit art exhibit (with catalog book and programming through 2018); creating alliances between the museum and regional educators (Smith).

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The Mechanics of Survivance in Indigenously-Determined Video-Games: *Invaders* and *Never Alone*

DEBORAH L. MADSEN

Survivance as a legal concept names the right to inheritance and more specifically the condition of being qualified to inherit a legacy. In his essay "Aesthetics of Survivance" (2008), Vizenor describes survivance as "the heritable right of succession or reversion of an estate" (1). This aspect of survivance is overlooked by those scholars of Vizenor's work who focus rather on the conjunction of the terms "survival" and "resistance," terms that are important most fundamentally as they intersect with the capacity to transmit and to accept the inheritance of the past that is itself the intersection of survival and resistance.[1] That is to say, acts of resistance and survival form the axiology (or ethical action) of survivance; the preservation of tribal languages, for example, or the transmission of traditional stories, are acts that ensure the continual availability of the tribal values of knowing and being in the world that are encoded in those words and stories. These Indigenous lifeways constitute the inheritance that motivates survivance. Thus, survivance is not a static object or method but a dynamic, active condition of historical and cultural survival and also of political resistance, practiced in the continual readiness of Indigenous communities to accept and continue the inheritance passed on by elders and ancestors. In this sense, claims made by recent Indigenous video-game developers to speak to youth through digital media by creating games that transmit tribal legacies of language, stories, ontologies, and ways of knowing and being in the world, speak to the practice of survivance. Indeed, the particular capacity of video games to engage active participation in the making of stories offers a powerful means to encourage and sustain survivance. In what game designer Elizabeth LaPensée (Anishinaabe/Métis) refers to as "Indigenously-determined" video-games, then, survivance is both a substantive dimension of the experience of playing a game and also the underlying structural principle that governs the game mechanics that are determined by Indigenous epistemologies.[2]

This essay focuses on the analysis of game mechanics: the rules of the game that prescribe the opportunities made possible for, and the limitations imposed upon, player interactivity. The term "game mechanics" refers to all the rules or conditions that govern

interaction with the game. They determine both the means by which the player can act within the game world (for instance, pressing a designated button on a video-game controller to move from one kind of reality to another, or throwing dice in an analogue game) and also the constraints imposed on potential actions by the player (the legitimate movement of various chess pieces around the board, for example). Ian Schreiber suggests additional questions that can be posed concerning the functions of game mechanics: "What actions can players take, and what effects do those actions have on the game state? When does the game end, and how is a resolution determined?" (n.pag.). These aspects of game mechanics are closely related to the structure of the story or game narrative: most clearly the conditions for an ending but also the intermediate actions that a player can (or cannot) take to advance the story through a succession of episodes towards that final resolution. Thus, game mechanics not only control the "rules of the game" but more fundamentally the conditions for a player's interactivity with the game. This emphasis on interactivity and action characterizes the definition of games and game mechanics offered by Robin Hunicke, Marc LeBlanc, and Robert Zubek in their influential 2001 essay, "MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research" where they write: "Fundamental to this framework is the idea that games are more like artifacts than media. By this we mean that the content of a game is its behavior not the media that streams out of it towards the player. Thinking about games as designed artifacts helps frame them as systems that build behavior via interaction" (n.pag.). The "behaviour" of a game is conditioned by its mechanics, which they define as "the particular components of the game, at the level of data representation and algorithms (inc. actions, behaviors, rules/control mechanisms)." Game mechanics work with "dynamics"—"the run-time behavior of the mechanics acting on player inputs and each others' outputs over time"—and "aesthetics"—"the desirable emotional responses evoked in the player, when she interacts with the game system" (n.pag.)—to produce the total gaming experience. Both the player's experience of interaction with the game environment and the emotional impacts of the game arise from the crafting of the mechanics that control the behaviour of the game system.

Mechanics are thematized in the context of the game narrative, through a combination of "dynamics" and "aesthetics." As Elizabeth LaPensée (whose game *Invaders* is discussed below) told Vicki Moulder in a 2017 conversation: "Ways of knowing and game mechanics always inform one another in anything I work on" (n.pag.). LaPensée explains this relation at greater

length in a contemporaneous interview with Patti Martinson, in terms of her interest in the interaction between Indigenous culture and gaming. LaPensée distinguishes games that use representational "pan-Indian" characters from those Indigenously-determined games that are created from and by the Indigenous epistemologies that generate the fundamental game mechanics:

> I grew up playing games and looking for myself as a player character, but of course an Indigenous young woman wasn't there... I went with the close seconds like *Nightwolf*, which were these pan-Indian characters called the "keepers of their people" or "protectors of their people" but not actually represented in relation to land and communities and elders. I first started off critiquing these representations but recognized that if I was ever going to get to play a game that I wanted to play, I'd have to do it myself. I'm interested mostly in how Indigenous ways of knowing can be transferred into unique mechanics. That is, I want to go further than simply representing Indigenous culture through a game character, I want to see Indigenous cultures infused in the gameplay itself. (Martinson, n.pag.)

The transference of "Indigenous ways of knowing" into "unique mechanics" both thematizes game mechanics and goes beyond this content-based relation to encompass the interactivity that characterizes the player's structural engagement with the game system. In their study of the psychological dynamics of digital games, *Glued to Games* (2011), Scott Rigby and Richard M. Ryan argue that the degree of agency attributed to a player is enacted by the availability of opportunities to make choices, to act on them, and to see the consequences of those actions in the game-world (7). By emphasizing the creative role of the player, Rigby and Ryan de-emphasize the fact that player-input is always limited to the potentials for action encoded in the game mechanics by the game designer. This function (action-potential) thematizes player interactivity as one of the ways in which mechanics determines the meaning(s) of the game. Further, as LaPensée's remarks suggest, the capacity of interactivity to thematize issues like who has the capacity to assert authority within the game-world, and who is responsible for specific actions and their consequences, has a distinctive valence in Indigenous game design.[3] Rigby and Ryan link the concept of player agency with a need for personal autonomy; in contrast, a powerful motif that runs through LaPensée's conversation with Vicki Moulder (and indeed all of LaPensée's work) is relationship with community:

- "To me, human-computer interaction and the well-being of all life must be interwoven";
- "Another important aspect of Indigenous game development involves creating the game and then gifting it to the community fully or partially";
- "Choices always come down to making sure I'm meeting the needs of the community I'm collaborating with." (n.pag.)

In these assertions, LaPensée crystallizes a recognition of the inseparability of human-digital interaction and "the well-being of all life" or the web of relations that characterizes Indigenously-determined games: relations among player agency, interactivity that is shaped by design choices that both enable and limit player-actions, respect for community rights and needs expressed through collaboration, and the orientation of the game design through Indigenous ways of knowing.

LaPensée is essentially talking about survivance as the principle that generates and thematizes Indigenous game mechanics. Vizenor's concept of survivance enhances understanding of the powerful decolonizing potential of mechanics in Indigenously-determined video-games and these game mechanics illustrate in particularly clear ways the workings of survivance as an active engagement in the politics of what Vizenor calls "native presence." In an interview with Jöelle Rostkowski, Vizenor remarks: "The character of survivance creates a sense of native presence, a critical, active presence and resistance, over absence, historical and cultural absence, nihility and victimry" (xlvii). Native presence, then, in the fullness of Vizenor's concept, captures the essence of the tribal inheritance that is passed down as a potential for decolonization, from one generation to the next. In the discussion that follows, I seek to show how the sense of a critical, active Indigenous presence is created, by analyzing the mechanics of two very different types of Indigenously-determined video-games: the downloadable 2-D fixed shooter casual game *Invaders* (2015 Steven Paul Judd, Elizabeth LaPensée, Trevino Brings Plenty) and the Iñupiaq puzzle platformer video-game *Never Alone* (2014 Upper One Games). The mechanics of these games are designed to compel players to enact survivance, and understanding of this relationship underlines the importance of the decolonizing potential of Indigenous video games.

Invaders (2015): Survivance, Loss, and Resistance

The aspect of survivance that enacts resistance to "historical and cultural absence, nihility and victimry" (Vizenor) is explored through the 2-D fixed-shooter video-game *Invaders* (2015). The artwork is by Steven Paul Judd (Kiowa/Choctaw), the music by Trevino Brings Plenty (Lakota), and the game is designed and coded by Elizabeth LaPensée based on the Unity platform. This free downloadable game is available for a variety of platforms: Web, WebGL, Android, iPhone, and iPad.[4] In the 2011 interview with Vicki Moulder cited above, Elizabeth LaPensée discusses the necessity of making her work available to communities where "access is so limited that I'm focusing mostly on mobile, Web, and museum games that I'm sure will reach community members. I've been back and forth between living where there's very limited Internet access, so really, why would I make games I can't even play myself?" (n.pag.) This accessibility locates *Invaders* as an instance of what in the industry is known as a "casual game." In *A Casual Revolution* (2010) game theorist Jesper Juul identifies several distinctive qualities of casual games: that they are easy to learn to play and can be played in a variety of different situations; they use mimetic interfaces—"the physical activity that the player performs mimics the game activity on the screen" (5)—and they do not require a great deal of time or investment: they "can be played in short time bursts, and generally do not require an intimate knowledge of video game history in order to play (5). The casual game genre of *Invaders*, then, meets precisely LaPensée's need to reach and involve communities in her work of survivance.

As the title suggests, *Invaders* is based on the 1978 classic arcade game *Space Invaders*, the aim of which is for the player to save the Earth by preventing the alien invaders from landing, by shooting them down using a laser base. *Invaders* uses the same basic game mechanics as *Space Invaders* but re-thematizes them in axiological ways that express a powerful sense of survivance: indigeneity is inscribed as persistence and resistance to historical erasure, and the subject position of the victim. This re-thematization of mechanics is achieved both through the game's dynamics (the player's interface with those algorithms that determine the behavior of the game system) and most obviously through the emotional impact on the player of the game's visual and musical aesthetics. In a well-designed game like *Invaders* the dynamics and aesthetics work inseparably with game mechanics—and in this game, they create performative relations of survivance. As designer Elizabeth LaPensée explains,

> The game is meant to be played in quick bursts for the attainment of a high score, much like the original *Space Invaders*. However, in the context of playing as an

> Indigenous warrior, the design takes on another meaning—no matter what, the aliens eventually obliterate your character and community. Lives are represented not as numbers or even as your own, but instead as the warriors who stand side by side with you. If you get hit, you permanently lose a community member. This mirrors the very real losses experienced as colonizers attacked and decimated Indigenous communities during invasion. ("Indigenous Game Design" n.pag.)

The evocation of loss as "tragic wisdom" is achieved through the game's axiological resistance to "victimry," a feature that is encountered as soon as the game starts. The launch screen offers the player only two options: to play or to quit. After the player fails to stop the alien invasion and is defeated, the only option offered is to "play again," which returns the player to the launch screen. Each time the game is played a conscious ethical decision to engage actively in the scene of conflict and to reject surrender or the position of the defeated victim is demanded.

The significance of this demand for survivance-as-resistance is highlighted by the differences in game design between *Invaders* and the original 1978 arcade game. The laser base that in *Space Invaders* is used for shooting becomes in *Invaders* a Native warrior-avatar, which the player moves horizontally across the bottom of the screen. The impersonal firing of a laser weapon in the original game is replaced by the personalized manipulation of the digital warrior-character. The haptic interactivity—literally a "hands-on" relation—between the player and the character (rather than a direct relation between player and weapon) suggests at least a minimal identification through the subject-position of the warrior-avatar. Standing behind the active avatar there are three more, which move in succession to take the place of the active warrior when he is "killed"; thus, the player has a total of four "lives" with which to play each game. The significance of the warrior-avatar is explained by LaPensée in an interview with Chad Sapieha to mark the showing of *Invaders* at the 2015 Toronto *imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival and the Digital Media Art+Cade*:

> *Invaders* is inspired by original artwork by Steven Paul Judd that depicts warriors facing off with sprites from the arcade game *Space Invaders*. The game calls into question the term "invaders" and what an "alien encounter" can mean for Indigenous people. Lives in the game are represented by images of community members rather than numbers, hopefully causing players to recognize the real lives lost because of colonization." (n.pag.)

The warrior-avatar shoots arrows (not lasers) at the invading spacecraft, which appear in increasing numbers, with each successive level or "wave" moving horizontally across the screen while at the same time advancing towards the bottom of the screen. Thus, the basic game mechanic is very simple: using the arrow-keys on the keyboard, the player moves the warrior-avatar horizontally across the screen while using the up-arrow to shoot. This mechanic is thematized in the desktop version of the game by the mirroring of the player's use of keyboard arrows and the avatar's shooting of arrows. By playing on the double significance of "arrows" the mechanic instantiates the subject position of the player while suggesting a further gesture towards Vizenor's concept of "wordarrows" as discursive weapons in the ongoing struggle for Indigenous cultural self-determination.[5]

Invaders uses the same pixelated "vintage" icons for the four varieties of spacecraft, though Columbus's *La Santa María* makes occasional appearances. The destruction of each type of invader earns the player points, earning more points for destroying the larger spaceships that fire more powerful weapons. As in the original game, different kinds of weapons are used by the invaders but in *Invaders*, rather than moving uniquely, the weapons are increasingly destructive culminating in the rockets, bombs, and super-charged bombs that are fired by the Mystery Ships. The player controls the warrior-avatar's shots but the invaders' shooting is generated randomly by the game system. The "wave" ends when the player has destroyed all the alien spacecraft, thus averting the invasion, but the next wave starts immediately with the appearance of an even greater number of invaders to defeat, in a loop that is endless and relentless. The pace of the game is significantly faster than in *Space Invaders* where each of the player's shots must reach the top of the screen before the next shot can be fired. In *Invaders* there is no limit on the speed of shooting and if the player has received the "rapid fire" bonus then s/he can fire continuously for the duration of that bonus power. Adding to the relentless pace of the gameplay in *Invaders* is the absence of the stationary protective shields or bunkers arranged in *Space Invaders* along the bottom of the screen, just above the laser base. There is no refuge at all to be had in *Invaders*. The warriors have nowhere to shelter from the bombardments, which become extremely intense in the later waves when many invading spacecraft are firing at the same time. The player's dexterity is severely tested by the need to move the warrior-avatar in increasingly precise ways to avoid the incoming missiles, with no shelter or shield to offer respite.

Conditions for ending each game also differ significantly: in *Space Invaders* the game

ends when the invading spacecraft reach the bottom of the screen, indicating that the invasion has been successful; the game also ends when the last of the protective bunkers has been destroyed. *Invaders*, in contrast, ends when all four warrior-avatars have been killed; if an invader reaches the bottom of the screen, the next wave of the invasion continues. Unlike *Space Invaders*, there is no maximum limit placed on the number of points a player can score: in the original game this was limited to 9,999 because this is the largest number that can be seen on the four-digit arcade display (*Space Invaders Manual* n.pag.). While there are no "extra lives" to be won as a bonus for acquiring a specified number of points, on the more advanced levels of *Invaders* the power of "rapid fire" is gifted when a ghosted quiver of arrows appears at the top of the screen; the player must move the avatar to "catch" the arrows as they move down the screen, acquiring this temporary power that lasts only a few seconds. The game's dominant shooting mechanic requires that, in order to survive, the player must balance the winning of points (firing arrows at the invaders) with the need to play defensively (evading the invaders' weapons). In this way the game mechanic integrates acts of resistance and survival in its performance of survivance.

In *Space Invaders*, the speed of the invasion and the tempo of the music increase linearly as more alien spacecraft are defeated; in *Invaders* the sheer number of invaders increases while the circularity of the music continues in an infinite loop. Such a comparison, however, belies the complexity of Trevino Brings Plenty's composition for *Invaders*, which represents an intricate reinterpretation of the original game music within the context of survivance. The function of music in the original *Space Invaders* significantly advanced the role of sound in subsequent video games, as Andrew Schartmann argues in *Maestro Mario: How Nintendo Transformed Videogame Music into an Art* (2013): by enhancing player interactivity by providing auditory feedback, by providing stimulus through the continuous four-note loop, and by demonstrating the potential of sound effects so that "[o]ver the years, analogous strategies of variation would be applied to pitch, rhythm, dynamics, form, and a host of other parameters, all with the goal of accommodating the nonlinear aspect of video games."[6] Trevino Brings Plenty's strategy of variation is based on the indigenizing of the original music. In his fascinating short video, "Tutorial on composing music for the game 'Invaders'," Brings Plenty describes in detail his method of composition for the game. He started with the various elements of the game mechanics that required different kinds of music and auditory feedback: the launch screen and

opening/ending sequence music; sound effects for the player's shooting and player death or invader death; and to signal the appearance of the Mystery Ship or other invaders. His strategy is based on the layering of musical lines that then play on infinite loop throughout the game. In his account, he began with the set bass-line music that speeds up throughout the game (1:19). The four-note C- bass line, he describes as "ominous"—in classical music, he notes, C- is the key for death (3:07)—and the tempo of 90 beats per minute based on the hand-drum sound (3:50) emphasizes the sound of "live artifacts" (5:08). To the bass-line and drum beat he added "a soft, almost ethereal harmonic line" to increase depth, and then added a "choppy" electronic beat that alternates with the drum beat. Four bars are repeated over and over (10:45), with live music complementing the use of the synthesizer and computer-generated plug-ins to avoid a sound that would be "too electronic." The drum beat unifies all the musical pieces; the same bass drumming line is deployed throughout but with variations. In the opening/closing sequence he added extra percussion (bass and treble) for emphasis, with handclaps to mark the turn-around of the loop. This "human element" is complemented by the fragmented reverberating "yell" that Brings Plenty added to the down beat (20:45) and the voiced reverberating "Oh" on the offbeat with the drum. The tension that is generated between the chords introduced by the voice and those of the bass line, together with the treble line characterized by a "sci-fi" quality, produces a complex musical experience to which Brings Plenty modestly refers as: "some stuff happening there that I think is pretty interesting" (22:23). A musical gesture to the extra-terrestrial, science-fictional nature of *Space Invaders* is retained in the eerie treble-line, while the base-line and the human-voiced themes emphasize the indigeneity of *Invaders.* Thus, Trevino Brings Plenty creates a musical score that underlines the player's participation in a game that is, as Elizabeth LaPensée describes, "a message of reflection, of pointing out that we, as Indigenous people, have already experienced the apocalypse. Now we survive to thrive." ("Indigenous Game Design" n.pag.).

The musical fusion of the futuristic with the Indigenous in *Invaders* works with the game's artwork to thematize the survivance ("survive to thrive") "message" of the game mechanics. The game was initially inspired by a T-shirt designed by Steven Paul Judd for the Native American Rights Fund in which the original *Space Invaders* alien spacecraft are ranged opposite four Indigenous warriors posed to evoke "classic" photographs of "Indians," like those of Edward Curtis. Judd's sometime collaborator, Simon Moya-Smith, describes Judd as "one of a wave of Native American artists who use contemporary tools to make salient the modern Native

American experience, from pain to prosperity. His medium of choice: paint and ink (which he refers to as 'war paint'), as well as graphic design programs in which he will superimpose an image of, say, a flying saucer onto a centuries-old photo of a Native American camp." He quotes Judd: "'I just want to make cool stuff for Indians to have, and that gets white people to think,' said the Kiowa and Choctaw artist. 'I want to make the stuff I never got to see as a kid'" (n.pag.). Moya-Smith's example of Judd's "War Paint" series—images of cans of spray paint labelled "War Paint"—is described by Wilhelm Murg as an "Andy Warhol-esque blend of pop culture, street art and reverse cultural appropriation" (Murg n.pag.). This combination typically generates the visual and aural puns that characterize Judd's work—another instance would be the series "LEGO My Land" that shows "Indian" figures in the form of LEGO dolls, or Judd's characters Siouxperman and Siouxperwoman.

Figure 1. Steven Paul Judd, *Invaders*. 2015. [iOS]. Digital art. Screenshot 8 Sept. 2016.

The visual art of *Invaders* presents a powerful pun on the concept of the frontier, specifically "space as the final frontier," by juxtaposing two frames of reference: the historical settler-colonial frontier through the warrior-avatars and the futuristic icons of alien space-craft. However, the iconography of the invading aliens is not "futuristic" in the sense that, in terms of the history of video-games, *Space Invaders* effectively belongs to the past. Thus, there is a dramatic irony at work in the complex image that brings together two sets of "historical"

symbolism. Judd has explained something of this interplay: "With *Invaders*, it is also a two-part thing… I loved *Space Invaders*, and the second part is, well, I think you can read into it: Someone is trying to invade where you are living, you know, peacefully. I tell people it's the only time you're allowed to play Indian and not get in trouble" (Murg n.pag.). The shift from the past tense in relation to *Space Invaders* ("I loved") to the present continuous tense ("Someone is trying to invade") suggests the same dynamic temporal relation that is achieved in *Invaders*: where *Space Invaders* belongs to the past, *Invaders* engages with the continuing present moment of colonial invasions that have never stopped. The iconography used by Judd takes the twentieth-century space-craft of *Space Invaders* back to the nineteenth, and brings the nineteenth-century image of "the Indian" into the twentieth, to dramatize the ongoing nature of settler-colonialism. Indeed, the T-shirt design that inspired the game introduces to this dynamic further historical moments: the Native American Rights Fund design features a "high score" of 1970 (the year when the NARF was founded) and in the reissue of this design for "The NTVS," an online Native American clothing company, Judd changed the "high score" to 1491. Thus, the present reality of settler-colonial invasion is traced not just to the nineteenth century but right back to the first invasion of the fifteenth century. This complex historical point is crystallized by the juxtaposition of resonant visual icons, avoiding an overt statement but creating the potential to interpret the Indigenous figures as victims of colonial history.[7] The warrior-avatars, however, engage with this inherited history as active, ethical agents of resistance and survival. Gyasi Ross underlines this quality of survivance in all of Judd's work in the review, "Man Crush Monday: The Audacious Genius Art of Steve Judd, Kiowa Love Machine" (2014):

> instead of going the route that many seem to be infatuated with nowadays—constantly protesting and whining about the mainstream imagery of Native people (and thereby reaffirming the white supremacist power structure that makes Natives the objects that react to the white/male/patriarchal subject), Judd goes in the complete opposite direction! He creates HIS OWN positive and healthy Native images. Imagine that—Native people can actually create our own healthy (or unhealthy!) images instead of simply crying about what non-Natives give us.
>
> That's powerful, my friends. That's self-determination. That is the power to influence generations of Native people. Instead of angrily protesting popular images of Natives, he's consistently showing the many ways Native life is beautiful. (n.pag.)

Judd's images substitute agency for reaction and Indigenous presence for absence, performing survivance in the sense described by Vizenor in "Aesthetics of Survivance" as "an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion; survivance is the *continuance* of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent" (1, emphasis added). To play *Invaders* is to recognize that settler violence has not ended; that Indigenous people still exist with their tribal integrity intact. Playing is the active participation in a history of survivance through the interconnectivity of aesthetics (art and music), dynamics (the player's experience of interacting with the game system), and mechanics (the rules of the game, including the possibilities for winning, losing and ending the game).

This is not to deny that the fundamental activity in which the player of *Invaders* participates is losing. The game mechanics dictate that the player will always and inevitably lose; this is a game that cannot be "won" in any straightforward way—and that is the point. In his study of losing in video-games, *The Art of Failure* (2013), Jesper Juul explains:

> the paradox of failure is unique in that when you fail in a game, it really means that you were in some way inadequate. Such a feeling of inadequacy is unpleasant for us, and it is odd that we choose to subject ourselves to it. However, while games uniquely induce such feelings of being inadequate, they also motivate us to play more in order to escape the same inadequacy, and the feeling of escaping failure (often by improving our skills) is central to the enjoyment of games. Games promise us a fair chance of redeeming ourselves. This distinguishes game failure from failure in our regular lives: (good) games are designed such that they give us a fair chance, whereas the regular world makes no such promises. (7)

In fact, *Invaders* refuses to offer the player "a fair chance." The game mechanics ensure failure because more and more enemy invaders appear, and they are increasingly powerful, while the player is powerless to control their behaviour. In this respect, and also due to the lack of defensive actions that the player might take, the game itself seems intrinsically unfair. But the injustice built into the game environment through the mechanics is balanced by certain compensations that include, as Juul writes, the chance to try to escape the feeling of failure. Each wave of invaders challenges the player to improve their response-speed and accuracy of shooting, holding out a promise that the player might perform better next time, both with practice and as the game mechanics become more familiar.

This motivation to improve is enhanced by the implied relation between the fictional world of the game and the extra-diegetic world of the player or what Juul calls "the regular world." As he observes, the frustration of losing can take the form of an emotional bond with the game because "[w]e are motivated to play when something is at stake" (13). What is at stake in *Invaders* is precisely the complex historical homology created by the artwork, musical score, and game mechanics between fictional invasion by alien space-craft and actual settler-colonialism. Elizabeth LaPensée emphasizes this relation as a fundamental aspect of her design of the game: "in the context of playing as an Indigenous warrior, the design takes on another meaning—no matter what, the aliens eventual obliterate your character and community. Lives are represented not as numbers or even as your own, but instead as the warriors who stand side by side with you. If you get hit, you permanently lose a community member. This mirrors the very real losses experienced as colonizers attacked and decimated Indigenous communities during invasion" ("Indigenous Game Design" n.pag.). Playing as an Indigenous warrior demands effort to save the community and the other warrior-avatars, as well as to preserve one's own virtual life. Jesper Juul describes this in-game experience where "the goals of the player are… aligned with the goals of the protagonist; when the player succeeds, the protagonist succeeds" (27).[8]

The player-response that is privileged by the game mechanics is not avoidance of loss but awareness of the proper use to which the anger and frustration of losing are directed. In *Invaders*, the player can simply quit the game—when all four warrior-avatars have been killed a screen appears that offers the stark options: quit or play again. Since the ostensible goal of the game—to destroy definitively all of the invaders—is impossible to achieve, the effort to "play again" is, in itself, an escape from the feeling of failure and a qualified measure of success. The determination of success is qualified by the causes to which failure are attributed. Three possible causes identified by Harold K. Kelley are: a person, an entity, and circumstances (qtd. Juul 15). A person may be held accountable for failure due to inadequate skills (the player's ability to shoot, for example); an entity can be seen as the cause of the occasion for failure (the power and relentless appearance of more and more invading aliens, in *Invaders*); and circumstances that cause failure, according to Kelley, may include bad luck or chance (qtd. Juul 16). In *Invaders*, the player's lack of skill can be improved with persistence but neither the seeming invulnerability-through-numbers of the invading aliens, nor the historical circumstances evoked by the game—through the homology among (first) the diegetic world of the game, (secondly) the

historical world evoked by the artwork, and (thirdly) the present world of ongoing colonization in which the player is located—can be changed for the better. An ethical act of resistance in the face of overwhelming odds (the axiology of survivance) is the only positive response made available to the player of *Invaders*. This is, as noted above, Elizabeth LaPensée's intention for the game; the recognition that, as she says, "we, as Indigenous people, have already experienced the apocalypse. Now we survive to thrive" ("Indigenous Game Design," n.pag.). Playing this game involves frequent endings and continual experiences of loss that pose the questions of how and why the player has lost. The feedback from the game itself is clear: the player loses because of the superior numbers and firepower of the invaders. This leads directly to Juul's question: "Is there a difference between failing inside and failing outside a game?" (10). The answer, in *Invaders*, is clearly "no." There is no fundamental difference, in historical terms (because Indigenous lands have in fact been colonized) or in subjective terms, because the imperative of survivance under which Indigenous people have lived since 1491—to resist, to survive, to preserve and continue the cultural inheritance passed on by elders and ancestors to their heirs—has never ended.

Never Alone (*Kisima Ingitchuna*, 2014): Survivance, Indigenous Epistemology, and Native Presence[9]

Like *Invaders*, the Iñupiaq puzzle-platformer video game *Never Alone* (*Kisima Ingitchuna*, 2014 Upper One Games) enacts survivance as the epistemological practice of a living, tribal presence that is sustained in the past, enacted in the present, and transmitted as the inheritance of the future. Simple physical survival in a group environment is not survivance; survivance names a manner of living with indigenous integrity while resisting by transcending the assimilative pressure applied by the dominant settler-colonial community. This is why Gerald Vizenor calls the relation between Indigenous nations and the US federal government "paracolonial" (*Manifest Manners* 77). What is left after the onslaught of active territorial colonization is the parallel existence of tribal nations alongside the settler-nation. Survivance then is grounded in the cultural and political values that must be passed on in order to sustain an Indigenous community that functions on the basis of inherited tribal values. The fundamental cultural values shared by Alaska Native peoples, which motivate *Never Alone*, are described by Yupiaq philosopher Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley in *A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit* (1995).

He identifies four primary values: harmony, responsibility, reciprocity, and learning. Harmony he defines as "an intricate subsistence-based worldview, a complex way of life with specific cultural mandates regarding the ways in which the human being is to relate to other human relatives and the natural and spiritual worlds" (8). Responsibility as an "attitude was thought to be as important as action; therefore one was to be careful in thought and action so as not to injure another's mind or offend the spirits of the animals and surrounding environment. For one to have a powerful mind was to be 'aware of or awake to the surroundings'" (8). Reciprocity signifies that "all of life is considered recyclable and therefore requires certain ways of caring in order to maintain the cycle. Native people cannot put themselves above other living things because they were all created by Raven, and all are considered an essential component of the universe" (9). Perhaps even more fundamental than these three principles is the value of learning: "Alaska Native worldviews are oriented toward the synthesis of information gathered from interaction with the natural and spiritual worlds so as to accommodate and live in harmony with the natural worlds and natural principles and exhibit the values of sharing, cooperation, and respect" (11).

These values are taught through an Indigenous pedagogy that departs from European understandings of education in almost every respect. Both Kawagley and Tewa philosopher Gregory Cajete emphasize interactivity or active participation by the learner in a process that is: fundamentally place-based, nature-centered, community-focused, spiritually-oriented, and indebted to the wisdom of the elders. Cajete describes the nature of traditional Indigenous education as "[t]he cultivation of one's senses through learning how to listen, observe, and experience holistically by creative exploration… all tribes highly regarded the ability to use language through storytelling, oratory, and song as a primary tool for teaching and learning. This was because the spoken or sung word expressed the spirit and breath of life of the speaker and thus was considered sacred" (32). These forms (storytelling and oratory) and concepts (place, nature, community, spirit, inheritance) of Iñupiaq traditional knowledge guide the design of the game-play mechanics in *Never Alone*.

The fundamental aim of *Never Alone* is twofold: the preservation of Iñupiaq language, story, and ways of knowing; and the dissemination of Iñupiaq values of resiliency and survival, cooperation, intergenerational wisdom, and the interdependence of land, people, and animals. The structure of the game requires the player to perform these values while moving across the computer screen, thus going beyond the static modes of telling made possible via the printed

word and the passive reception of story through media such as film, video, and television. The game is able to recreate the conditions of oral storytelling, with the additional advantage that the player becomes the active narrative protagonist. The identification between the player and the game avatar is the primary vehicle for empathy, as the player experiences something akin to Sam McKegney's view of community as the sum of culture and politics, where culture is "a lived series of acts within actual political units of community" (56). This emphasis on acts, action, and activism serves an "ethical commitment [to] the survival, enrichment, and eventual self-determination of Indigenous communities." And in *Never Alone* the player is the active agent of this axiological process of survivance.

The objectives of the game—the preservation and dissemination of inherited traditional knowledge—are actions realized through the game narrative, which retells the ancient story "Kunuuksaayuk," recorded by Iñupiaq storyteller Robert Nasruk Cleveland who passed it to his daughter, Minne Aliitchak Gray, one of the cultural ambassadors who shaped the video-game. *Never Alone* is narrated in Iñupiaq (with subtitles available in another ten languages) by James (Mumiġan) Nageak. The story is about a young boy (though in *Never Alone* the protagonist is a young girl, Nuna) and his journey to discover the source of a never-ending blizzard that is threatening his village. This is the quest on which the player embarks: the search for the knowledge that will lead to truth is realized through continual ethical action. Thus traditional knowledge is experienced as a verb or a set of behaviors rather than a tool or noun. In this respect, the story performs what Jace Weaver describes as a communal identity-producing role at the same time that the communally-developed story is passed down as cultural inheritance to the next generation within the Iñupiat community (and beyond). These qualities of the story are thematized in the game, as Ishmael Angaluuk Hope suggests when he remarks that the game story is about how to be the kind of person who can bring about a return to "true living in the community." This lesson in survivance is essentially what the game teaches the player.

Never Alone, then, performs important work of cultural inheritance, passing on the key values of a living, thriving Iñupiat traditional community. Nearly forty Iñupiaq elders, storytellers, and community members contributed to the development of the game, working with Cook Inlet Tribal Council and the non-Native educational publisher E-line Media. However, responsibility and accountability for the Indigenous direction of the game were firmly located with the traditional tribal custodians of knowledge, who had the power of veto over all aspects of

the game's development. Sean Vesce, the Creative Director at E-Line, describes an incident when the community exercised this power to correct a proposed game mechanic that contradicted traditional values:

> What was really important for us [was] to portray [the Iñupiaq] spiritual worldview within the game, and it's a really complicated subject… The game designers at the time, we all were in favor of a model… where the player can hit a button and basically move from a regular environment, a regular realm to the spirit realm, and there was a lot of gameplay involved in crossing between those by virtue of the player hitting the button to change modes. And when we showed an initial prototype of that to members of the community, they said, "You've got it all wrong… The spiritual world is not something that is on demand. We can't will that into existence and go back. You have to embody the values. You have to demonstrate a level of competency in order to experience that, and it's a gift that's given to you. It's not something that you control." So that was a really core mechanic that we were starting down a path of, that was really representative of misunderstanding from us, that comes from being raised in a Western ideology. (qtd. Scimeca n.pag.)

As Vesce indicates, the performance of Iñupiaq values through the player's interaction with the game relies primarily on the design of the game mechanics.

Sean Vecse has suggested how the design of the mechanics of *Never Alone* had to take careful account of traditional Iñupiaq ways of learning, knowing, and acting on the level of physical interaction between the player, the game controller, and the game world. Contextualization of the mechanics impacts the game on every level. In terms of the genre of the game: *Never Alone* is a side-scrolling puzzle-platformer, requiring that the player continually moves the avatars Nuna and Fox across the screen from left to right, advancing forward in a way that follows the linear narrative of the storytelling. The story is narrated in continual voice-over, with foreign language subtitles appearing on each screen. As the narrator's voice is heard, the player is performing the story in a combination of passive and active modes of reception that replicate and advance the oral tradition of storytelling. The inheritance of tribal orature is a key element of survivance, counteracting the colonialist erasure of living Indigenous cultures. Weaver explains: "Limiting consideration or admission to the canon to orature is a way of continuing colonialism. It once again keeps American Indians from entering the 20th century and

denies to Native literary artists who choose other media any legitimate or "authentic" Native identity" (23). If orature is the only expressive form available to "real Indians" but orature has become "extinct" then so too must those "authentic" Indians have become extinct in the modern world. The orature constitutive of video-game mechanics offers a powerful oppositional response to the myth of Indigenous "vanishing." Not only is the oral tradition alive and thriving in a game like *Never Alone* but the digital medium of the game contradicts the assumption that "Indians" belong only to the historical category of the primitive and have not survived into the contemporary period. James (Mumiġan) Nageak's oral narration of the story "Kunuuksaayuk," in Iñupiaq, is not only evidence of Indigenous cultural continuity but actively works to preserve and disseminate the tribal language that encodes in the story traditional Iñupiaq values and ways of knowing and being. To emphasize the importance of orature to the building and unification of community, Weaver turns to the words of Pueblo poet Simon Ortiz:

> Noting the coterminous nature of orature and contemporary culture, Simon Ortiz declares, "The oral tradition is not just speaking and listening, because what it means to me and to other people who have grown up in that tradition is that whole process… of that society in terms of its history, its culture, its language, its values, and subsequently, its literature. So it's not a simple matter of speaking and listening, but living that process." (qtd. 47)

Living the process of the story is what the player does by interacting through the avatars Nuna and Fox, switching between these two characters or playing in two-player mode with each player controlling one of the avatars, in order to complete successfully the challenges presented by the game. Each avatar-character has unique capabilities: Nuna can climb, move objects, and throw her traditional bola; Fox can fit into small areas, jump high, and moves faster. Neither Nuna nor Fox can proceed if either is left behind, so cooperation between the human and other-than-human animal is a fundamental game mechanic. Together, Fox and the force of the wind help Nuna to jump onto a spirit's back; Fox's movements help to guide where Nuna must move, and Fox is able to guide the spirit helpers. Trees come alive and reach out to greet Fox. This cooperative behaviour is coded into the mechanic that governs the assistance offered by other animal and spirit entities who will, for example, lift Nuna and Fox across the screen, from one object to another; but these helpers cannot be summoned at will by the avatar-player, their help being a gift freely given. However, from mid-point in the game, when he transforms into a boy-

spirit, Fox can move freely by "swimming" around the screen to access objects that are inaccessible to Nuna, and he is able to activate "Helping Spirits" to overcome obstacles so the characters can proceed from screen to screen.

The completion of the challenges that comprise episodes of the story is rewarded with the unlocking of "Cultural Insights" in the form of interviews with Iñupiaq elders, storytellers, and cultural ambassadors. These short embedded documentary videos must be earned and they then provide cultural information that helps the player to overcome subsequent obstacles and threats. By using this inherited information, the player transforms data into experiential knowledge, in a learning process that enacts traditional Iñupiaq educational forms. "Cultural Insights" relate to the main game narrative in several ways besides offering information. Some "insights" explain or interpret narrative events that have already taken place. For example, in one of the most distressing episodes of the game narrative, Fox is killed by the man, "the terrible one," who wants the bola. We move to a cut scene in which Nuna and Fox fall down into a snowy forest landscape; Nuna grieves the loss of her companion but then Fox is reborn into a different form, the form of a boy-spirit, who "swims" in the air around Nuna. The narrator puts into question the ontological distinction between the other-than-human animal and the humanized spirit-being by asking, "was it [the boy-spirit] who he [Fox] really was this whole time?" In the Cultural Insight that follows, "Animal Spirits," Ishmael Angaluuk Hope explains how the Iñupiat do not recognize a hierarchy of creation with humans separate and "on top." In Iñupiaq cosmology, all animals have or can be seen in a human form but the animal must want to be seen in its human form. From this point, a game mechanic offers the player a button which when held down allows interaction with spirits. The narrator underlines the interrelatedness of the animal, human, and spirit entities by remarking that Fox continued to reveal "the beauty of the helping spirits." By acting on the traditional knowledge that is gained, the player-avatar is rewarded with increasing ease of movement, a greater capacity to overcome obstacles, and a greater sense of belonging in the Iñupiaq diegetic world.

The challenges presented in the game are puzzles, primarily spatial obstacles (such as unstable ice floes, caverns, or precipices) or entities that may be animals or spirits, that block the progress of Nuna and Fox. Navigating the story space of the game demands close attention to all aspects of the environment, in the manner of Cajete's description of traditional Indigenous education: by "[t]he cultivation of one's senses through learning how to listen, observe, and

experience holistically by creative exploration" (33). Many of the features of the diegetic world are neither "good" nor "bad" but must be understood and accommodated by the player. For example, one of the mechanics introduced early in the game is the behaviour of wind (remember, the crisis engaged by the story is a never-ending blizzard). A strong gust of wind will push Nuna off an ice precipice or into a chasm so when the player hears the wind approaching, s/he must manipulate the controller so that she crouches protectively; however, in subsequent scenes, the only means by which Nuna can jump across ice floes is by harnessing the power of the wind to give her distance as she runs and jumps. The wind, a natural phenomenon, is not presented pejoratively. Rather, the player acting through the avatar is required to learn to read and respect environmental conditions, and then adapt their behaviour accordingly. This mechanic illustrates the importance of learning to watch closely and to interpret accurately the diegetic space of the game, which is underlined in the Cultural Insight entitled "Reading the Weather." As the game narrative progresses new mechanics are introduced through the reading of the diegetic space. For example, when a sparkling spirit ball appears Nuna is able to call a spirit helper if she hits the ball with her bolo. Or entities in the environmental background, like the owl early in the game, can later become actors such as when that owl takes human form to give Nuna a side quest—finding and returning his drum—which is then rewarded with the empowering gift of the bolo. Here, the Iñupiaq value of interrelation among all elements of creation works with the game dynamics and aesthetics within the diegetic space to thematize the introduction of the mechanic of the bolo, which Nuna learns will not only enable her to call spirit helpers but in more practical terms allows her to break down ice walls that block their path. The mechanics that determine game action work closely together with the game dynamics of challenge and fellowship or cooperation, and the game aesthetics, to produce a covert level of meaning that is resistant to paraphrase. Located in the player's experience of reading the diegetic world through Nuna and Fox, and receiving reward in the form of cultural insights, this covert meaning can be equated to the adoption of an Iñupiat subject position within the diegetic community of creation.

The ultimate objective of the game is to discover the source of, and resolve, the mysterious blizzard that afflicts Nuna's village. To achieve this, Nuna must cooperate with Fox, primarily, but also the entire game-world environment that comprises beings of all ontological kinds: plants, human and other-than-human animals, ancestors and spirit beings, and mythological monsters. In this respect, *Never Alone* enacts Weaver's "linkage of land and people

within the concept of community... lands populated by their relations, ancestors, animals and beings both physical and mythological" (38). In *Never Alone* the Iñupiaq concept of such a community of creation is named "Siḷa": the space that connects the land, the moon, sun, and stars, and the weather. Siḷa has a soul, and spirit helpers reside within Siḷa. Amy Fredeen, lead cultural ambassador and a Cultural Insights contributor, explains in "Siḷa Has A Soul" that "[i]t's not one way of seeing things, it's one way of knowing you're connected to everything." In the game, then, Siḷa is the shared network of relationships among all entities in the game environment. Even the destructive "Manslayer" who is causing the devastating blizzard is part of this network of relations. This character is a recurring villain in traditional Iñupiaq stories where he threatens the survival of individuals and the whole community. But in the final Cultural Insight ("Kunuuksaayuka") Ishmael Angaluuk Hope explains that Manslayer or the "blizzard man," is like "the physical embodiment of an element of nature." The protagonist who confronts Manslayer represents a return to order on a cosmic scale and to "true living within the community" of all creation. Amy Fredeen adds that the moral of the story's conclusion is "don't think only of yourself but always keep the community in your heart." This is the community that is Siḷa.

The interconnectedness and interdependence that characterize Siḷa are related to the Indigenous understanding of kinship that is key to the experience of survivance. As Weaver reminds us, "[n]ature, an understanding of which was essential to Native survival, is viewed and characterized in kinship terms. More than simply a sense of place, though it is often that as well, this view of 'creation as kin' imbues the work of Native writers, in different ways, with a potent sense of interrelatedness" (163). At one point in the game, Nuna and Fox are trapped in an ice-cave with an angry polar bear. If the player-avatar tries to break the ice, s/he dies. If the player-avatar tries to kill the polar bear, s/he dies. Through the repeated experience of failure, the player must learn to control Nuna as she evades the bear, allowing it to break the ice and open an escape route for Nuna and Fox.

Figure 2. Upper One Games & E-Line Media, "Ice Floes." *Never Alone*. 2014. [PC]. Digital art. Screenshot 8 Dec. 2016.

The game mechanic here demands that the bear-character be the agent that breaks the ice wall; if Nuna tries to break the ice or kill the bear the player-avatar spends too much time in that part of the game-world exposed to the bear's anger and so is killed. The obstacle to progress, the ice wall that encloses the cave, can be overcome only if the player respects the "bear-ness" of the bear and does not try to impose control on the bear's actions but allows it to express its anger and frustration by attacking the ice wall and knocking it down. Later in the game, the bear reappears as a "helper" but, again, behaving according to its ursine nature, to which the player must adapt. In both instances the bear assists Nuna and Fox when these avatars respect the bear's role within the totality of Siḷa.

As the game progresses, the player must act with an increasingly complex understanding of the game mechanics that govern Siḷa and of being appropriately "human" in the Iñupiat world, by collaborating respectfully with weather, environment, animals, trees, ancestors and spirit beings. In the *Aurora borealis* sequence, a Cultural Insight "Northern Lights" has passed on the story that the beautiful but mysterious green lights dancing and swooping through the air are, in fact, children who have died in childhood, and are now playing in the sky. The story warns that if these spirit beings are encouraged to come too close or if someone goes outside without wearing a hood, they will cut the heads off their unsuspecting victims and use the severed heads to play with as balls. This story contextualizes the following game segment, in which the primary hazard is the animated spirit lights (the "Aurora people") who threaten Nuna and Fox. The narrator warns that the player-avatars Nuna and Fox are located in an environment hazardous to those who do not heed the wisdom of the elders, evoking the story that has just been told. With the inherited knowledge of the story and the capacity to move cooperatively within the diegetic space, Nuna and Fox are able to evade the Aurora people just as they did the polar bear. If they are touched by one of the spirit beings they will die; if their actions respect the nature of these beings then they can progress in the narrative.

The Cultural Insight "Northern Lights" is the seventeenth of the twenty-four embedded videos. At this stage of the game, the interpretative relation between the videos and game play is familiar but the *Aurora borealis* sequence underlines the importance of inherited knowledge; it is

juxtaposed with the immediately preceding "King Island" sequence and the relation between the two creates the potential for a level of covert meaning to emerge from the game narrative. The Cultural Insight "King Island" describes the Iñupiat community that historically lived on this rocky outcrop (*Ugiuvak*) in the Bering Sea; the embedded video explains the nature of the distinctive stilt housing built high against the steep rocky cliffs as preparation for the following game-play sequence in which Nuna and Fox must navigate an unstable environment of abandoned and collapsing structures evocative of King Island houses. The narrators emphasize the fact that these stilt houses remain in place today and mention in passing that "it's a growing community as the people return back to their island." What is not explained is why the island was abandoned, to be re-inhabited only recently. Alice Rogoff, in a recent article published in the *Alaska Dispatch News*, provides the history that is missing from the Cultural Insight:

> In 1959, just before Alaska's statehood, the Bureau of Indian Affairs decided summarily to close the island's school. In so doing, a bureaucratic decision effectively ended their lives there, forcing several hundred families to become new residents of Nome, a foreign place with a gold mining past, not predisposed to embrace an ancient island Iñupiaq culture that had lost its island. And the transition was not administered with care: young children were forcibly separated from parents in the name of school "truancy" laws; older ones were sent to boarding schools thousands of miles away, with no way of communicating with families left behind. In short, the fabric of King Island extended family life was shredded without cause. The stated reason for the move, from the BIA, was that a boulder was about to roll down the hill and crush the school.
>
> More than 50 years later, the boulder still hasn't moved. (Rogoff, n.pag.).

This direct colonialist intervention of the US Federal government, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, achieved a number of things: the vacating of the island, the collapse of the traditional Iñupiat community, the weakening of family and community relations through forcible separation, and the removal of Indigenous children into assimilative mainland schools. Recall the point made earlier: survivance is grounded in a complex network of interrelationships among the people, the land, other-than-human animals, mythological entities, spirit beings, and ancestors. The removal of the people from their traditional lands breaks this network and commits what Weaver calls "a kind of psychic homicide" (38). Juxtaposed with the "King Island" sequence and the suppressed history of forced alienation of the people from their land is the "Northern Lights"

sequence that is motivated by the story of dead children. From this juxtaposition emerges a covert narrative of violent colonization and historical trauma. But the overt narrative communicates the resilience and continuance of the Iñupiat people. It is at the end of these two juxtaposed sequences that Fox dies and transforms into a powerful boy-spirit. The Cultural Insight "Rebirth & Naming" that follows shortly—after "Animal Spirits" which also provides context relevant to Fox's transformation—focuses on the key value of interrelatedness. Elder Ronald Aniqsuaq explains the Iñupiat understanding of life, death, and afterlife: at the moment of death *timi* (body) returns to *nuna* (the Earth); however, the spirit of *atiq*, a name that is passed down over generations, lives on for as long as the name is remembered. When the spirit returns to Siḷa, it may be reborn if the name is passed on to a new child who retains some of the memories of the original name. The name Fox is retained in both forms of the avatar (as boy-spirit and other-than-human animal) seemingly along with memories of the mechanics of the diegetic world and relations among all the inhabitants that comprise the community of Siḷa.

In *Never Alone* the narrative of colonial trauma is muted, emerging covertly though the juxtaposition of narrative sequences and, even then, within the context of Iñupiaq resilience and continuance—a context that is transmitted as the inheritance of the wisdom of the elders. This is a powerful gesture of Indigenous decolonization. The game narrative of *Never Alone* insists on the autonomous expression of traditional Iñupiaq cultural values. By its very existence, this video-game contradicts the colonial mythology of Indigenous peoples as doomed and vanishing; the voice-over narration spoken in Iñupiaq gives the lie to the extinction of traditional Indigenous orature; the expression of a traditional story in a digital medium opposes the notion that Indigenous cultures are "pre-modern." Indeed, the medium of the interactive digital narrative allows for the effective communication of Iñupiaq traditional knowledge through what, in *Look to the Mountain* (2010), Gregory Cajete calls an "ecology of indigenous education" that serves the concept of survivance. Cajete's place-based and nature-centered education is realized in the diegetic world of *Never Alone*, which is resolutely the Iñupiat world of Siḷa; learning to overcome obstacles by being fully "human" in Iñupiaq terms means learning to live with, and respect the interdependence of, everything that makes this world as it is. Cajete opposes Indigenous interrelational, holistic reality to Western European traditions of objectivism, dualism, and reductionism: to play the game in dualistic (such as human versus animal) terms is to fail to meet the challenges of the game-play and to "die." The quest for knowledge and truth in

Never Alone is collaborative, not competitive; for example, to refuse to collaborate with Fox and other beings in the game world—to play competitively—is, again, to "die." The aim of Indigenous education, according to Cajete, is wholeness, self-knowledge and wisdom; in *Never Alone* the increasing demands of the game, as the player learns to behave as a member of a virtual Iñupiat community, requires the synthesis of all that has been learned into a holistic understanding of Siḷa. This is education for decolonization, eschewing settler-colonial epistemological and ontological forms in favor of the performance of inherited Indigenous values that evidence the ongoing sovereignty of Indigenous communities.

Conclusion: The Mechanics of Survivance

While they are very different kinds of video-games, both *Never Alone* and *Invaders* constitute creative acts of Indigenous "representational sovereignty": "a declaration that the Native is self-defining, producing an 'autovision' and 'autohistory' in the face of Amer-European heterohistory… It reverses assimilation and dispels the myths of conquest and dominance. It aspires to participate in the healing of grief and sense of exile" (Weaver 163-4). At the end of *Never Alone*, while gliding around Nuna's seated figure, the player hears the narrator's voice-over:

> The Fox said to the girl,
> "If you ever need to find your way home again,
> just look up for me."
> and [sic] floated up through the night sky.
> I have heard Nasruk tell the story that way.

The game's teaching is that of the traditional story, a story told and retold down through the generations and now told powerfully in an interactive digital form that replicates the primary principles and processes of traditional Iñupiaq values. Siḷa is the diegetic world of the game and the world of the Iñupiat people; to succeed in the game the player must learn to live in a proper relationship with Siḷa. This is possible by learning to adopt a virtual Iñupiaq subject position within the game narrative. This learning process is managed by the player's responses to the constraints imposed and possibilities afforded by the game mechanics, which are determined by Iñupiaq traditional knowledge. Player-avatars who do not adapt to the rules of the Iñupiat diegetic world simply "die." Amy Fredeen, one of the Iñupiaq cultural ambassadors who

contributed to both the game development and also the narration of the Cultural Insights, explains that "[a]daptation has been a cornerstone of survival for Alaska Native People… *Never Alone* is another way We can share Our values and culture with future generations and the world [by p]assing on wisdom and values… Bringing our traditional wisdom to a modern world that has changed the path of Our People forever" (qtd O'Connell n.pag.).

The game mechanics of *Never Alone* provide for the possibility of success on the part of the player; this potential is foreclosed by the mechanics of *Invaders*. Yet in both games resolution is achieved progressively and performatively as the player learns the consequences of possible actions for the state of the gameplay. In *Never Alone* "death" is the consequence of actions that are not consistent with the Iñupiaq values that inform the game mechanics; success is a measure of the player's adaptation to the values of Iñupiaq survivance. The conditions for ending the game in *Never Alone* are made clear; with the defeat of Manslayer, the final "boss," and the ending of the blizzard the game concludes. Effectively, we come to the end of the sequence of side-scrolling screens—although the narrator reminds us that the story endures. *Invaders* both continually ends and never ends: the historical narrative constructed by Steven Paul Judd's juxtaposition of iconic figures and informed by Trevino Brings Plenty's musical score underlines not only the continuous present of settler-colonialism but the sustained survivance that, as in *Never Alone*, ensures that the story does not really end. The nature of player-interactivity in these games, determined by the constraints and possibilities imposed by the Indigenously-driven game mechanics, requires that the games be played from Indigenous epistemological positions.[10]

Fundamental to these epistemologies is survivance, performed in the games as a right to inherit Indigenous stories, histories, and cultural lifeways while dramatizing the point made powerfully by Amy Fredeen in the Cultural Insight, "A Living People: A Living Culture": "One of the things I think a lot of people need to understand is we aren't a museum piece. The Iñupiat people are a living people, and a living culture." Fredeen's point is developed by Elizabeth LaPensée in the specific context of survivance and video-games: "survivance refers to recognizing Indigenous communities as thriving rather than merely surviving. An act of survivance is a work that arises from the practice of survivance, meaning an 'active sense of native presence.' Games, which are made of varying levels of code, design, art, and audio, can provide spaces for expressing self-determination so long as, within the context of Indigenous art,

they stand 'against colonial erasure… [and mark] the space of a returned and enduring presence'" ("Games as Enduring Presence" 180). LaPensée's emphasis here on Indigenous presence is realized in the games she designs through the creation of mechanics that prescribe player interactivity as the performance of survivance. In Indigenously-determined video-games, like *Invaders* and *Never Alone*, indigeneity is present in the artwork, music, and storytelling that work to thematize game mechanics that require the respectful adoption of Native presence as the player's subject position.

By resisting "colonial erasure" with sovereign Native presence, these games function as digital weapons in what Vizenor has called the "word wars": the multifaceted discursive battle for control over the meaning of the actual events of colonization. In *Wordarrows* (1978) he describes how the "arrowmakers and wordmakers survive the word wars with sacred memories" (viii).[11] In the conflict between "white" words and tribal memory what is at stake is the inheritance of Indigenous stories that express ownership of or belonging to the land and living tribal traditions. In very different game genres, *Never Alone* and *Invaders* oppose ongoing settler-colonial attempts to eliminate traditional systems of culture and identity in favor of assimilation to imposed settler-colonial discourses. Indigenously-determined games are discursive weapons in the struggle to defeat colonial stereotypes and simulations of "the Indian" by dispatching (literally in *Invaders*) "word arrows" to engage the continual onslaught of settler-colonialism. "The heritable right of succession" is asserted in *Invaders* as the inheritance of histories of resistance and, even more importantly, the Indigenous values that motivate resistance to victimry and promote the integrity of enduring tribal nations. The "Cultural Insights" of *Never Alone* bring into the game-world inherited wisdom in the form of information and advice that has been passed down by elders and ancestors, and in this way the game performs "the heritable right of succession" that motivates survivance. Both *Invaders* and *Never Alone* demonstrate the decolonizing potential of video games by performing survivance-as-resistance and survivance-as-survival as ethical actions. The mechanics of these games determine not just the "rules of the game" but crucially shape the ethical decisions that guide the ways in which a player can interact with the game-world. By controlling the potential for action, game mechanics shape what I am calling here the "axiology" of survivance. This axiology (or system of ethical action) is both the consequence of inherited tribal epistemologies and is the instantiation of inherited tribal lifeways.

Arising from inherited values, stories, and wisdom, present-moment actions become the inheritances of the future in the dynamic process that is survivance. To focus only on the terms that comprise Vizenor's neologism—"survival" and "resistance"—is to analyze at the level of action (important though that is) rather than engage with the dynamic relations between action and the deeper structure of cultural inheritance that motivates ethical acts based on inherited values. Moving beyond cultural preservation (or "surviving"), these video-games use the mechanics of game design to engage player-interactivity and create lived experiences of enduring Indigenous presence (or "thriving"). Vizenor suggests that the decolonizing power of survivance is fueled by the concept of inheritance when he describes survivance as "the heritable right of succession *or reversion of an estate*" (1, emphasis added). The reversion of an estate defines the return of property ownership to the original owner (or grantor) after a temporary period that ends with the expiry of pre-agreed conditions or an agreed period of time; "reversion" also names the right of the grantor to succeed to the reverted estate. Read in this context, survivance does much more than describe a legacy; it is a radical call to readiness for a decolonized, reverted estate in which original owners or custodians will reclaim possession of their Indigenous estate. Virtual opportunities to experience this post-colonial reversion are offered by the Indigenously-determined game-worlds of *Invaders* and *Never Alone*, through the decolonizing power of the mechanics of survivance.

Notes

[1] Vizenor's interest in the concept of inheritance can be seen in the titles of such novels as *The Trickster of Liberty: Tribal Heirs to a Wild Baronage* (1988; rpt. 2005), *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991), and *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* (1990; first published as *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* [1978]).

[2] See Elizabeth LaPensée, "Indigenously-Determined Games of the Future" for a discussion of Indigenously-determined games as "a path for passing on teachings, telling our stories, and expressing our ways of knowing"; "[g]ames with our people represented in our own ways, with our placenames, with our stories, with manidoo" that are constructed from technology adapted to create "game engines that comprehend our ways of knowing – game engines with Blackfoot physics, game engines with Lakota star knowledge, game engines designed from structures of ongoing non-linear storytelling" (n.pag.).

[3] See Rigby & Ryan, in particular chapter 4: "Games and the Need for Relatedness."

[4] http://survivance.org/invaders/. In the discussion that follows, I describe the game as played using a keyboard; the mechanics of the mobile versions (for iPad and iPod) use in place of the arrow keys a sliding cursor with which to move the avatar and to fire his arrows. The movement and firing take place simultaneously in the mobile versions; pressing the cursor in order to move

the avatar is the same mechanic as firing an arrow. Moving the avatar and firing an arrow are distinct mechanics in the keyboard version of the game.

[5] See Vizenor, *Wordarrows: Indians and Whites in the New Fur Trade* (1978). Reprinted as *Wordarrows: Native States of Literary Sovereignty* (2003). As noted above, this is not the case in the mobile version of the game where the mechanic for firing is different.

[6] Qtd. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Invaders.

[7] While Judd's choice of images—especially the photographs that are reminiscent of Edward Curtis's work—evokes the history of US settler-colonialism specifically, the historical relations proposed by his artwork in *Invaders* are relevant more generally to the logic of elimination proposed by Patrick Wolfe as characteristic of settler-colonialism.

[8] Juul further explains that "play theorist Brian Sutton-Smith has proposed that play is fundamentally a 'parody of emotional vulnerability': that through play we experience precarious emotions such as anger, fear, shock, disgust, and loneliness in transformed, masked, or hidden form" (26-7).

[9] Parts of the following analysis will appear in German translation in *Subjektivität und Fremdheit in demokratischen Gemeinschaften: Beiträge am Schnittpunkt von Literatur und Politischer Philosophie*, edited by Michael Festl and Philipp Schweighauser, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2018.

[10] This is not to say that all players must "play Indian" in order to engage with these games; rather, the game mechanics are determined by Indigenous epistemological principles that in turn determine the ethical possibilities for a player's actions and the outcomes in the game-world of those actions.

[11] A relation between the concept of inheritance and the "word wars" is suggested by the title of the embedded narrative—"The Heirship Chronicles: Proude Cedarfair and the Cultural Word War"—that comprises most of Vizenor's *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*.

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Red Pens, White Paper: Wider Implications of Coulthard's Call to Sovereignty

BRIAN BURKHART, DAVID J. CARLSON, BILLY J. STRATTON, THEODORE C. VAN ALST, CAROL EDELMAN WARRIOR

The following began as a plenary roundtable at the Native American Literature Symposium at the Isleta Resort and Casino in Albuquerque, NM, on Thursday March 17, 2016. Participating were Theo (Ted) Van Alst (Uof Montana), Carol Edelman Warrior (Cornell University), Brian Burkhart (California State University, Northridge), Billy Stratton (Uof Denver) and David J. Carlson (California State University, San Bernardino). The material printed here consists of revised versions of the remarks made by the panelists at NALS, reflecting ongoing conversation that continued, over email, after the conference ended.

Abbreviations used throughout: Theo Van Alst (TV); Carol Edelman Warrior (CW); Brian Burkhart (BB); Billy Stratton (BS); David Carlson (DC).

TV: It's such an honor to be here, and to be assembled with these amazing scholars. I'd like to thank them all for being part of this panel.

The publication of Glen Sean Coulthard's *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* on New Year's Day in 2014 (arriving little more than a year after the recognized beginning of the Idle No More movement) gave many scholars a longer than usual pause at the addition of another book that might fall into the growing canon/canyon of Native sovereignty approaches. However, the text itself provides a number of moments that question the legitimacy of settler states' sovereignty, and we naturally apply that question of legitimacy and legitimation to Native literary production—who or what decides that "Native American Literature" is a genre, a subheading, a college course, an exceedingly small shelf or two in most bookstores?

This ultimately liberating text makes me see through the fallacy of colonial structures, and rage at the fact of their existence, while the colonial state's recognition of my animosity only brings a smile to the face of the settler society that realizes far better than I that my undying enmity is necessary for its survival, my baleful recognition of them and theirs cementing their malignant place in the order of things. But that dance is the easiest one.

So then, how to extricate, expand, elude, or elide? Coulthard's work makes plain the ephemeral nature of the colonial superstructure, and calls us to, in effect, change the base. How do we do this via artistic production, for many of us then, via writing, and particularly for those of us who write in English?

Coulthard says, "At the heart of Hegel's master/slave dialectic is the idea that both parties engaged in the struggle for recognition are dependent on the other's acknowledgement for their freedom and self-worth. Moreover, Hegel asserts that this dependency is even more crucial for the master in the relationship, for unlike the slave he or she is unable to achieve independence and objective self-certainty through the object of his or her own labor." (39)

The fact aside that without us, without this hemisphere, there is no modernity, only a backwater province of the Ottoman Empire, who *are* these arbiters of genre/label/consumption, and do we *recognize* their position when we write "Native Lit" and in "Native Studies" that we publish with "Native Pes" for distribution onto "Native Shelves" in "Native Sections" of libraries and the few remaining bookstores? Do we dispossess ourselves of artistic/literary sovereignty in acquiescing to the requirements of the publishing world? (*Might it be useful to ask, "What if white people wrote books and no one read them?" What would they do? Do we do what they do? Should we / could we do what they do?*)

Coulthard continues: "Fanon's position challenges colonized peoples to transcend the fantasy that the settler-state apparatus—as a structure of domination *predicated* on our ongoing dispossession—is somehow capable of producing liberatory effects." (23) One of those disingenuous liberatory effects is the belief that Indigenous empowerment via literary production is somehow a stage, a phase even—that leads to what? we ask. Grown up big boy/big girl status as Literature That Can Stand On Its Own Two Feet? Or that the Indigenous cultural worker can or should make the leap into a non-Native world and find fame and fortune? Coulthard addresses these questions in part, saying: "Indigenous peoples tend to view their resurgent practices of cultural self-recognition and empowerment as *permanent* features of our decolonial political projects, not transitional ones." (23)

Here then, we move to apply constructions of "Nativeness" to literature, arguably one of our permanent features of decolonialism in the current realm. To be sure, Fanon's discussion of "culture" encompasses much more than merely literature, but importantly for its producers, Coulthard tells us, "one of Fanon's lingering concerns is that the cultural forms and traditions

exuberantly reclaimed and affirmed by the colonized no longer reflect the dynamic systems that existed prior to the encounter: rather, 'this culture, once living and open to the future, [has become] closed, fixed in the colonial status.'" (147) Do we do this? Are we beholden to ready semiotic devices, to "corn pollen and feathers," to relentless mentions of NDNess, of Native things, of cloddy authorial reminders that this is a story written by an Indian? Are there certain calcifying tropes that absolutely must be retained in the service of authenticity, of clear Indigenous literary demarcation? Coulthard answers, albeit from a more generalized position, saying: "The problem here is that the cultural practices that the colonized passionately cling to as a source of pride and empowerment can easily become a cluster of antiquated attachments that divert attention away from the present and future needs of the Indigenous population." We turn then to a brief look at the function of this colonial recognition.

The discussion of Hegelian dialectics in this passage from the first chapter, "The Politics of Recognition in Colonial Contexts" is particularly germane to our colonial literary conversation:

> "Thus, rather than leading to a condition of reciprocity the dialectic either breaks down with the explicit *non*recognition of the equal status of the colonized population, or with the strategic "domestication" of the terms of recognition leaving the foundation of the colonial relationship undisturbed." (40)

And while literary domestication is our contemporary concern, I think (aptly enough) it is worth noting that "domestication" in all sorts of interpretations has underpinned almost every single colonial project concerning the Indigenous nations of this hemisphere from the moment of contact to, say, any meeting likely taking place right now between a Native student union and a college administrator somewhere in this country.

To begin to close our discussion then, Coulthard tells us that by Chapter 4 of "Red Skins" the futility of "Hegelian or liberal politics of recognition" applied to colonial situations will be evident in its absence from Fanon's discourse, though of whom he says while not rejecting outright either of those approaches, he did in fact work to focus our attention on "the host of *self-affirmative* cultural practices that colonized peoples often critically engage in to *empower themselves*, as opposed to relying too heavily on the subjectifying apparatus of the state or other dominant institutions of power to do this for them (23)." And here, for literary, theoretical, and critical production, we name the museums, the Pes, the media, and the academy, among others,

and I'm hopeful that the role of those institutions will be continuously questioned, starting this morning. Related to such, I have some questions:

Have we been domesticated, has our written production been domesticated?

Despite our efforts, are our colonial foundations "relatively undisturbed?"

What might an absence of colonization have done to and for Native literary production? Would Native literature have absorbed English?

What impact would Native writers have on global literature?

What might true sovereignty do for Native literary production?

How does Native literature offer insights into "reevaluating, reconstructing, and redeploying Indigenous cultural forms" and presenting "radical alternatives" to colonial domination? (48-49).

Finally, what are the book's implications for U.S. tribal sovereignty, for policy, for literary theory, for nation formation?

Does Native literature offer models of Indigenous praxis and present "radical alternatives" to colonial domination? If so, how?

I would like to end my segment with what I see as the beginning of our conversation, that of Coulthard's main argument, which is:

> "the liberal recognition-based approach to Indigenous self-determination in Canada that began to consolidate itself after the demise of the 1969 White Paper (note*abolishment of The Indian Act) has not only failed, but now serves to reproduce the very forms of colonial power which our original demands for recognition sought to transcend. This argument will undoubtedly be controversial to many Indigenous scholars and Aboriginal organization leaders insofar as it suggest that much of our efforts over the last four decades to attain settler-state recognition of our rights to land and self-government have in fact encouraged the opposite—the continued dispossession of our homelands and the ongoing usurpation of our self-determining authority." (23-24)

Where is our self-determining authority in our literary and artistic production, and what does it mean? Who defines it, and how?

I look forward to everyone's answers to these and other questions.

DC: The particular topic that I wanted to throw into the mix for discussion is Coulthard's engagement with Karl Marx. The Marxist concept that matters most to Coulthard in *Red Skins, White Masks* is that of primitive accumulation. In Marx's usage, primitive accumulation refers to the historical processes of violent dispossession whereby the "commons" possessed by non-capitalist producers are transformed and privatized in ways that facilitate the emergence of capitalist society. For Coulthard, the full utility of the concept in understanding and critiquing settler-colonial society can only be realized through its dialectical re-interpretation. Marx's insights must be revised in light of indigenous experience and critique. Doing so leads to abandoning certain problematic aspects of Marx's theory. These would include: (1) the idea that primitive accumulation took place and ended in the historical past; (2) the idea that primitive accumulation is part of an inevitable evolution towards communism *through* industrial capitalism; and (3) the idea that primitive accumulation only takes place through overtly coercive means. Indigenizing "primitive accumulation" suggests, instead, that the co-optation of the commons (in the form of land, in particular) is an ongoing, and often more insidious process, one that should not be accepted as a historical inevitability. For Coulthard, this insight stands at the heart of the theory and practice of the Idle No More movement, among other examples of recent activism.

In picking up and re-purposing a key Marxist concept, it seems to me that *Red Skin, White Masks* productively re-starts a conversation about the relationship between indigenous epistemologies and the Marxist and Post-Marxist left, one that has been rather dormant for the last twenty or thirty years. The fact that Coulthard does so in a work that is so clearly critical of the dangers involved in superficial or overly conciliatory engagements with discourses emerging from settler-colonial societies is equally striking. As I read it, *Red Skin, White Masks* picks up a debate that largely dead-ended with Ward Churchill's 1983 collection *Marxism and Native Americans* and tries to breathe new life into it. It does so by suggesting that a truly dialectical relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous "theory" can yield both new critical concepts and new forms of political praxis. Personally, I think this insight derives from the fact that (many) indigenous epistemologies are extremely dialectical, in ways, quite frankly, that western theories often only aspire to be (despite their pretensions). In my own work on Gerald Vizenor, I've regularly tried to suggest that what Vizenor calls "natural reason" is, in many respects, a form of dialectics that is arguably consistent with Marx's methods of inquiry. Frank

Black Elk's contribution to Churchill's volume, "Marxism and Lakota Tradition" makes a similar argument in picking up on the centrality of the concept of "relation" in both systems of thought.

The first suggestion I'd like to throw out here, then, is that Coulthard's book reminds readers of how far many of us in the field of Native Studies are from truly taking tribal epistemologies seriously as philosophical systems and sources of critical activity. While his explicit focus is on the concept of "primitive accumulation," the deeper connection he points out between Marxist and indigenous thought is at the level of *method*. If we build on that insight, I think *Red Skin, White Masks* further suggests that western theory can itself be dialectically transformed when brought into contact with indigenous experiences and knowledge. We need to dispense with Bering Strait models of theoretical transmission, in other words. This was a point made thirty years ago by some of the contributors to Churchill's book, and it is an insight that is relevant to *all* forms of theory, including literary theory.

This leads me to the second suggestion. As some of you may know, my own critical work tries to focus on the ways that literature intersects and interacts with politics and activism, and on the manner in which indigenous ways of thinking, writing, and telling represent meaningful forms of resistance to settler colonialism. As such, I am someone who feels a degree of sadness and anxiety as I watch the ways in which Native Studies recently seems to be turning its back on literature and literary studies in favor of the social sciences. Ask yourself what the big books in the field are in recent years. You are likely to call to mind titles like *Red Skin, White Masks* or Audra Simpson's *Mohawk Interruptus* (innovative works of political science and anthropology). I don't want to let the fact that I am part of a panel discussing the first of these at NALS suggest that I am throwing in the towel. What I would suggest instead is that there is great value for us, as literary scholars, in wrestling with a book like *Red Skins, White Masks* at the level of method. Read in that way, Coulthard's book reminds us that Native literary study benefits from deep, sustained efforts to interrogate and transform its very language and methods. For all its flaws, I admire much of Craig Womack's work for his efforts along these lines. To the extent that we here ARE doing that kind of work, we need to tell the story better, and encourage younger scholars in the field to experiment boldly. And to the extent that we aren't satisfied with our efforts along these lines, we might, perhaps, try to take inspiration from the way Coulthard revisits and sublates an old concept from Marx to make new thought. I'm eager to see more and

more of this transformative work coming out of NALS. I want to see us experiment more boldly with our own concepts—with ideas like symbolism, or the reader, or the book.

Recently, I was considering some examples of the potential that can be released through the dialectical transformation of literary, legal, and political concepts. I'll just mention a few here, as a vehicle for spurring further discussion. Consider, for example, how both Vine Deloria and John Mohawk, in different works, draw attention to the political power of reimagining what is meant by "The People." Deloria develops this idea in terms of U.S. constitutionalism in *We Talk, You Listen*. Mohawk's essays on the nature of Haudenosaunee political life (most readily accessible in the *John Mohawk Reader*) make interesting points about how the nature of political authority and the sense of how it is exercised is shaped by our sense of the relationship between individuals and the broader polity, mediated through the concept of peoplehood. There are further points of connection here with the work of Mark Rifkin and Kevin Bruyneel, all of which, taken together, reveal interesting ways that literature, storytelling, and political theory can come together.

For a second example of the importance of the dialectical transformation of concepts, we might consider a term like "claims" (I think this ties in with some of Carol's thoughts. Maybe "resentment" is also a key element underlying dialectical change in the present moment?) In his recent book on the federal Indian claims process in the U.S., *Hollow Justice*, David Wilkins offers up an interesting definition of a claim. "A claim is neither a request, nor a demand," he notes. "It is an appeal to a standard of justice, but also an assertion of willingness to back that appeal up with action." That's clearly not exactly the way the U.S. Court of Indian Claims has defined the term, of course, for there, it is more or less a form of tort (the payment of compensation). This, of course, calls to mind much of what Coulthard dislikes about the discourse of reconciliation in a Canadian context. Wilkins' counter-definition represents an interesting and important provocation, though, in a spirit that I think Coulthard would appreciate. In places, *Hollow Justice* seems to call for the start of a dialectical transformation of the concept of the claim, a process that literature and literary study can certainly play a role in, in part at least by advancing different types of narratives that underpin "appeals to standards of justice."

There are other examples I could throw out here. What about the concept of "reading" when that act is understood in dialogue with the oral tradition? Might Native Studies offer ways of thinking about text/reader that potentially transforms reader-response paradigms? What about

figures like Gerald Vizenor, or N. Scott Momaday, or George Morrison, whose work suggests how indigenous writing, art, and theory can redefine modernism, and by extension "modernity," an important topic indeed for indigenous peoples who continue to be disadvantaged by the discourses of western temporality. I'll stop here, though, with the hope that some of these points will strike others as worth picking up for further discussion.

CW: My responses are to the chapter called "Seeing Red," in which Coulthard writes about the relationship between the politics of recognition and the trend of nation states to offer official apologies to surviving victims of state violence and other systemic abuses. The goal is to elicit forgiveness from the survivors—ostensibly, to foster "healing" between the parties, so that the nation can "move forward," and of course, moving forward in this case means to proceed to control a population, but with more willing subjects. It's like an abusive spouse who, after knocking their partner around, says, "I'm sorry, honey, I'll never do that again. Please forgive me." What if the partner were to say "no"? The apology is accompanied by a demand, rather than a request. And, like an abused spouse, the colonized population is expected to acquiesce—to forgive, and to forget—and they risk retaliation if they don't comply.

Using the discourse of reconciliation, settler colonial states Pure Indigenous peoples to accept conciliatory overtures, but only on the states' terms. These demands are underpinned by what Thomas Brudholm, writing on transitional justice, and quoted by Coulthard calls, the "logic of forgiveness"—which is the "normative assumption"— that forgiveness is "good," and anger is not only "bad," but is something that is sure to fester, preventing the wounds from healing (107). Of course, the roots of the "logic of forgiveness" are also familiar in everything from Christian dogma, to Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*, as Coulthard points out to both medical psychiatry and pop psychology. Individuals and collectives who won't or can't forgive are seen as being backward, reactive, and irrational—or, to trace it further, childlike and primitive (111). It's the source of the judgmental comment that we've all heard, "Why can't you people just get over it and move on?"

But Coulthard is an advocate of resentment as a necessary, transformative step toward decolonization. He differentiates resentment from anger, explaining that there are any number of things that a person or a people can be angry about, but *resentment* is a particular kind of anger

that's always political—that is, it is concerned with power, and is generated in response to a perceived injustice (110).

Like Fanon, Coulthard thinks that resentment on the part of colonized people has a powerful "transformative potential," that "can help prompt the very forms of self-affirmative praxis that generate rehabilitated Indigenous subjectivities and decolonized forms of life in ways that the combined politics of recognition and reconciliation has so far proven itself incapable of doing" (109). Though Coulthard doesn't present a rosy picture of Indigenous resentment that is in any way immune from turning inward to self-hate and lateral violence—in fact, he explicitly warns that resentment can get stuck at this stage—he *also* demonstrates that resentment in response to injustice "represent[s]" a "coming-to-consciousness of the colonized," allowing the colonized to *exorcise* internal colonization. He writes that resentment, then, is the *externalization* of that which was previously *internalized:* a purging," of what the colonized had formerly accepted as "one's own deficiencies" (114).

So—what does this have to do with Native literature? Well, Coulthard is interested in the resurgence of Indigenous transformative praxis, and I would argue that Indigenous literary "traditions" play an important role in that process, first, because they depict ways to be in respectful place-based relationships, or, they depict the devastation that occurs when those relationships are *disrespected*. In an earlier chapter, Coulthard also explains that, "Indigenous struggles against capitalist imperialism are best understood as struggles oriented around the question of *land*—struggles not only *for* land, but also deeply *informed* by what the land as a mode of reciprocal *relationships* […] ought to teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and our surroundings in a respectful, nondominating and nonexploitative way. The ethical framework provided by these place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge is [called] 'grounded normativity' (60)."

Second, in many cases—from origin stories to contemporary Indigenous fiction—coming to a place of "grounded normativity" is something Indigenous storytellers have their characters perform, in something like an Indigenized *bildungsroman*. Such characters *also* go through transformations from colonized subjectivities to decolonized subjectivities. They pass through a phase of internal colonization, which then, through the movement of the plot, becomes externalized—and the resulting resentment that the character bears is, not always, but often enough, depicted as a righteous, slow-burning rage that's prevented from being turned against

the self through experience, and through training. Eventually, we see characters enact that thing that Coulthard refers to: place-based "grounded normativity." These characters' transformations occasionally precede their participation in "direct action" against colonization. Reading a character's transformation through resentment can actually be inspirational, opening up the readers' conception of a possible self or possible selves as decolonized subjects.

Native literatures draw clear connections between settler colonial praxis and Indigenous suffering, and thus the literatures participate in consciousness-raising of Native readers. Indigenous readers experience an affective response when learning, through literature, that the subjection they (or we) experience isn't limited to our own family or our own tribe. When learning through such literatures that the abuse is systemic and systematic, readers respond in ways that line up precisely with what Coulthard calls an "externalization of that which was previously internalized." Most of us have experienced this process ourselves, and as I look out in this audience, I bet all of us repeatedly witness this same consciousness blossoming in our students as well.

In this way, Indigenous creative works inspire Indigenous readers and audiences to produce and sustain justifiable, and hopefully utilizable resentment against state- or settler-inflicted dispossession and colonial abuses, and such literature can thus prepare and arm people to *resist* narratives that Pure Indigenous peoples to forgive and reconcile before material change in the structures of colonial dominance is secured.

After becoming conscious of this clear connection between Indigenous literature and the transformation Coulthard elucidates in "Seeing Red," the question that I'm left grappling with, is how, exactly, does Native literature offer insights into "reevaluating, reconstructing, and redeploying Indigenous cultural forms," and present "radical alternatives" to colonial domination *without* redeploying the romantic tropes of being "children of nature," or, as Ted has said, without reminding the reader every twelve lines that "this is an Indian book" (48-49).

BB: The indigenous struggle for decolonial liberation has become increasingly a struggle for recognition by settler states, which of course ironically are the source of continued colonization. In *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* Coulthard argues that "the liberal recognition-based approach of Indigenous self-determination in Canada" not only fails but actually "serves to reproduce the very forms of colonial power which the original

demands for recognition sought to transcend" (23-24). Coulthard conceptualizes the liberation from this vitiating circle of domination of colonial power through the politics of recognition as beginning by bracketing the legitimacy of the settler state and its power to recognize Indigenous nations as itself a function of settler colonial power. Through this bracketing of the legitimacy of the settler state and settler state power, one can perhaps analyze the manner in which the settler state is able to reproduce the very colonial power that is supposed to be renegotiated in the process of recognizing the legitimacy of Indigenous nations. One might come to see how the process of recognition redirects Indigenous liberation strategies into movements that reproduce settler power rather than liberate Indigenous people from it. As Mohawk philosopher Taiaiake Alfred puts it, "our nations have been co-opted into movements of "self-government" and "land claim settlements," which are goals defined by the colonial state and which are in stark opposition to our original objectives… Large-scale statist solutions like self-government and land claims are not so much lies as they are irrelevant to the root problems. For a long time now, we have been on a quest for governmental power and money; somewhere along the journey from the past to the future, we forgot that our goal was to reconnect with our lands and to preserve our harmonious cultures and ways of life" (2005, 31).

Coulthard also recognizes the origin of Indigenous liberation in the land. As he puts it, "[t]he theory and practice of Indigenous anticolonialism is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around the question of land—a struggle not only for land in the material sense, but also deeply informed by what the land as system of reciprocal relations and obligations can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world in nondominating and nonexploitative terms" (13). Coulthard calls "this place-based foundation of Indigenous decolonial thought and practice grounded normativity," or "the modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and nonhuman others over time" (13). This foundation of Indigenous liberation in the Indigenous meaning of land is transformed into a foundation of Indigenous liberation as a struggle for land itself, which is a conception of land fundamentally at odds with the Indigenous meaning of land that was at the foundation of Indigenous liberation in the first place. Thus by the end of Coulthard's chapter on his own Indigenous nation's (the Dene) struggle regarding land he shows that "the meaning of self-determination" for many Indigenous people has "reoriented from

Indigenous struggle that was once deeply informed by the land as a system of reciprocal relations and obligations (grounded normativity) to a struggle now increasingly for land" (78). The problem with Coulthard's position regarding the transformation of the foundation of Indigenous liberation in the Indigenous relationship *with* land into a struggle *for* land is that it only looks for the source of this transformation in the colonial power of the settler state itself. It is my claim that the nature of the transformation is not housed in the power of the settler state but in the very conceptions of land and being in the Western philosophical imagination. It is only through an engagement with the philosophical concepts of land and being that one can grasp the nature of Indigenous liberation through the land and the manner in which coloniality operates to transform that liberation into settler power.

Coulthard uses Fanon to challenge "colonized people to transcend the fantasy that the settler-state apparatus is somehow capable of producing liberatory effects" (23). In Fanon's conception, without a break from the structure of colonial power, the best the colonized can hope for is "white liberty and white justice" (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 221). Fanon claims that without establishing themselves as the creators of their own values and conceptions of their identity and its political relationship to the colonial state, colonized peoples will eventually be subtly shaped by the "seep" of colonial values that will undermine the possibilities of their liberation (The Wretched of the Earth, 9). The problem is that the recognition-based subjectivity is founded in a fundamental irrationality in the first place. The "seep" of colonial values and concepts happens at the level of the very concept of being human, of being a human subject in the first place.

Enrique Dussel details in a number of his works the foundation of the modern human subject in the ego conquiro (I conquer) that is a prototype of the Cartesian ego cogito (I think). Descartes' ego cogito appears as a mere rational principle that attempts to defeat skepticism regarding knowledge of the external world. But as Nelson Maldonado-Torres argues the ego cogito arises from the ego conquiro as responses to "Manichean misanthropic skepticism," which "is not skeptical about the existence of the world or the normative status of logics and mathematics," but is "a form of questioning the very humanity of colonized peoples" (2007, 245). The ego conquiro and ego cogito overcome this skepticism of the humanity of the other through the creation of an ego that is undoubtable or unquestionable. The Manichean other to this undoubtable or unquestionable ego is relegated to the savage state. The savage other is no

longer doubtable or questionable (as he or she is in the Inquisition) but is completely known as the dominated other. The domination of the savage other solidifies the claim to confidence that is placed in the undoubtable and unquestionable ego. This domination is what brings the unquestionable ego into being. Its logical unquestionableness is manifested into an actual unquestionableness through the initial and continual domination of the savage other. It is through colonial domination that the ego of European humanness is fully actualized and the skepticism regarding the humanity of the Indigenous other is fully determined in the oppositional savage or non-human, dominatable other.

The irrationality of the Indigenous being becoming recognized as fully human is here exposed. The ego of European humanness exists only in relation to the non-human other. Thus, Indigenous being can only become human by becoming what it is not: European. Alternatively, Indigenous being can become an approximation of what it is not through the approximation of European being by approximating the ego conquiro. This is why even though Hegel's recognition-based subjectivity seeks to situate human subjectivity, in contrast to the seemingly solipsistic ego cogito, in relations of recognition that are constitutive of human subjectivity, the ego conquiro is maintained in recognition-based subjectivity and politics of recognition. Dialectically the colonizer/colonized relationship is supposed to move beyond the ego conquiro through mutual relations of recognition. Relations of recognition must move beyond the master and slave, "beyond the patterns of domination" (Williams, 16), a seemingly impossible task even in concept. Hegel's dominating subjectivity cannot move beyond this domination in relation to the savage other, I would argue. The savage other has become essentially savage and so can only become the kind of subjectivity that can recognize the colonizer in so far as he or she becomes something she is not. The only way the savage can hope to even approximate the kind of being that could give the colonizer the mutual recognition that Hegel claims he or she desires is to approximate the subjectivity of the colonizer, the ego conquiro.

Fanon sees the trap of the master/slave or colonizer/colonized through a lens of struggle. The liberation of colonized people through Hegel's dialectical progression to mutual recognition is undermined by the lack of struggle in present colonial contexts. Unlike Hegel's master/slave story, colonizer and colonized are not locked in a life or death struggle. In colonized societies, "the White Master, without conflict, recognize[s] the Negro slave" (Fanon, 1952, 217). "The black man," he writes is "acted upon." Values "not created by his actions" or "born of the

systolic tide of his blood" are thrown upon him from without. Thus being set free by the master here means nothing to the slave. The slave goes "from one way of life to another, but not from one life to another" (220). For Fanon, it is through struggle and conflict, which he understands as often necessarily violent, that colonized peoples can shrug off the coloniality of their being. This kind of conflict is necessary on Fanon's account in order for recognition to achieve self-transformation for the colonized subject, for her to achieve the "inner differentiation" at the level of her colonized being that is necessary to achieve the realization of freedom (Turner, 146). This is what Fanon understands as the break that is necessary for colonial struggles for "Liberty and Justice" to not merely be struggles for "white liberty and white justice," a non-alienated identification with the recognition conferred upon the slave by the master (Fanon, 1952, 221)

Coulthard rightly questions Fanon's instrumental view of the decolonial struggle. Coulthard points out that this view of colonial resistance does not match the views and practices of Indigenous people in their decolonial liberation strategies, particularly in the context of First Nations in Canada. Fanon does not see a deeper Indigenous resistance that already exists in the Indigenous relationship to land. Fanon thinks struggle is necessary for the colonized to differentiate, to begin to become aware of the deepest manners in which his being is colonized. But from the perspective of Indigeneity and its ontological connection to land, Fanon's claim is not true. What creates the alienation from the coloniality of being that is necessary to manifest true acts of decolonial resistance is our ontological kinship, as Indigenous people, with the land. In this way, our being is never colonized to the point at which we do not experience the alienation of coloniality that Fanon thinks often requires a life or death struggle with the colonizer to achieve. No matter how powerful the colonial operation on human subjectivity through the ego conquiro, there is always a remainder of our Indigenous being that quite literally is in the land. Being is itself, in the context of Indigeneity, an orginary and continual manifestation out of the land. It is thus this core of our being as Indigenous people that originates out of and continues to exist in the land, that provides the differentiation necessary to begin decolonial resistance—and not, as Fanon says, the struggle itself. Because of this lack of understanding of the intersection of Indigeneity and land that both creates the capacity of coloniality in the first place and means that colonialism will necessarily always be incomplete, Fanon cannot see the scope of the possibilities of decolonial resistance that can exist outside and

transcend the vitiation circle of human subjectivity, the politics of recognition, and the life or death struggle between the colonizer and the colonized.

BS: Glen Coulthard's *Red Skin, White Masks* serves as an especially prescient elaboration of the concern that Louis Owens exPed in his essay "As if an Indian Were Really an Indian: Native Voices and Postcolonial Theory" (adapted from a chapter of the same name in his 2001 book *I Hear the Train: Reflections, Inventions, Refractions*), which appears in Gretchen Bataille's edited collection, *Native American Representations: First Encounters, Distorted Images, and Literary Appropriations*. Writing on the inherent challenges of being a scholar or teacher whose work focuses of the native American literature he states:

> We are very properly expected to have and exhibit a crucial knowledge of canonical European and Euro-American literature; if we fail to be familiar with Shakespeare, Chaucer, Proust, Flaubert, Dickinson, Faulkner, Eliot, Joyce, Pound, Yeats, Keats, Woolf, Tolstoy, Tennyson, and so forth—not to mention the latest poststructuralist theory—we are simply not taken seriously and probably will not earn a Udegree in the first place. That, it is presumed, is the foundational knowledge, the ''grand narrative of legitimation'' in our particular field. (12)

Red Skins, White Masks is a work that not only addresses the theory and praxis of decolonization and postcolonial theory, but also articulates a critical stance that is self-reflexively positioned as an intervention that grapples with the dynamic valences that exist between global indigenous studies and continental philosophy.

In chapter one, for example, Coulthard interrogates Charles Taylor's widely influential essay "The Politics of Recognition," published in Amy Gutman's edited volume, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (1995). Coulthard utilizes a deconstructive approach in his analysis to show that Taylor's conception of identity formation is "shaped not only by recognition, but also its *absence*, often by the misrecognition of others" (30). One of Coulthard's primary concerns extends from the observation that structures of explicit colonial domination cannot be eliminated through the vehicle of "state recognition and accommodation," and are, in fact only transformed in the process (32). This insight is offered as the provocation for his challenge to opPive epistemologies that function to reduce "a man among men" to "an object [among] other objects" (32).

While this critique is deeply informed by indigenous knowledge, giving substance to Coulthard's commitment to the praxis of First Nations/native sovereignty his broader claims are bolstered by support drawn from the work of Taiaiake Alfred. In Alfred's *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (1999), self-determination is conceived as the "asset of values that challenges the homogenizing force of Western liberalism and free-market capitalism," while "honor[ing] the autonomy of individual conscience, non-coercive authority, and the deep interconnection between human beings and other elements of creation" (quoted in Coulthard).

Seeking to address the resistance to such ideas on a wide plane of political, social, and philosophical fronts, Coulthard also explores the work of continental philosophers and cultural critics such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Michel Foucault, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Louis Althusser while drawing on Franz Fanon's critique of "psycho-affective attachments" to "master-sanctioned forms of recognition" to help formulate an essential foundation for his ideas (26).

For Coulthard's more sophisticated readers, especially those working within the fields of Native American/Indigenous studies, this philosophically engaged approach raises some complex questions about the relationship between Indigenous knowledge and western knowledge, as well as the relevance and applicability of the latter for Native/Indigenous scholars, activists and communities. Representing a provocative incursion into these discursive fields it seems that Coulthard's deep and sustained engagement with such discourse, which is both transhistoric and transcultural, could, perhaps, be seen as the philosophical equivalent of what Gloria Bird and Joy Harjo have termed "reinventing the enemy's language."

Furthermore, Coulthard's text can also be seen as a call for the unification of anti-colonial and de-colonial knowledge in the form of classic Marxist theory, as well as neo-Marxist and structuralist orientations that have tended to be overlooked, or under-utilized in Native/Indigenous studies as it has thus far been formulated and applied. The reliance upon these Western forms of knowledge by critics such as Taylor, Nancy Fraser, and others, demands Coulthard's engagement and offers a particularly fertile opportunity to return them to their origins, as it were.

In terms of postcolonial theory, Coulthard likewise extends the critiques offered by other Native/Indigenous and Indigenous studies scholars such as Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Louis Owens,

Jodi Bryd, Chadwick Allen, and Dale Turner who have addressed the long history and after-effects of colonialism in ways that have inexplicably escaped the notice of critics such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, while being conspicuously overlooked in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's seminal postcolonial text *The Empire Writes Back* (1989).

Louis Owens was among the first native American critics to address the perplexing absence of native/indigenous historical experience and literary perspectives from the growing body of postcolonial theory. Returning again to his observations on the absence of Native perspectives in this discourse, Owens provocatively states: "It is difficult to take seriously any cultural or critical theorist who is ignorant of this rapidly growing body of work, or who, if he or she is aware of it, clearly relegates it to a 'minor,' 'subjugated,' or 'deterritorialized' knowledge worthy of only silence or erasure" (13-14). As a rejoinder to this, Coulthard reminds us that "colonial powers will only recognize the collective rights and identities of Indigenous peoples insofar as this recognition does not throw into question the background legal, political, and economic framework of the colonial relationship itself" (*Red Skins* 41).

These points of contact, of course, offer particularly fruitful avenues for the consideration of Native storytelling/literature as an essential domain for the manifestation of collective *self*-recognition through "the establishment of relationships within and between peoples and the natural world built on principles of reciprocity and respectful coexistence" (*Red Skins* 48). Works such as Gerald Vizenor's *Blue Ravens*, Gordon Henry's *The Light People*, Franci Washburn's *Elsie's Business*, as well as the poetry of Luci Tapahonso, as typified by her work, "That American Flag" and "In 1864," and many others, bespeak the capacity of native writers and scholars to reflect on the postcolonial experience in significant ways. At the same time, such work highlights the foundational role that native American/First Nation and indigenous storytelling, in all of its previous and modern forms, plays in the continuation of such discourse.

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Gigawaabaa-bye-bye

MARGARET NOODIN

Jim Northrup's words are like the *zizigwad,* the sound of jack pines, ever alive and reminding us of who we are. He wrote stories for every season of the year and every season of our lives, as individuals and as a community. He left a legacy of humor and storytelling that will be remembered for a long time. He also left a few things unfinished.

What he definitely accomplished is a body of work that memorializes Anishinaabe life. His poems, stories and plays will be read for many years in *Walking the Rez Road*, *The Rez Road Follies, Anishinaabe Syndicated, Dirty Copper* and *Rez Salute*. His newspaper column, the Fond du Lac Follies, ran for a full quarter of a century, tracing the scandals, shenanigans, politics and rezperspective of the real people who make up a sovereign North American nation.

The Follies first appeared in August of 1989. H. W. Bush was president. The Bingo Hall was small. The Community College was new. Fond du Luth Casino was only three years old and pow wow season was leaning into ricing time. Jim shared the view from his kitchen table. He cracked jokes about Columbus, commods, relationships and relatives. He asked questions: "Didja ever notice, bingo money doesn't seem to last as long as regular money?" And gave answers: "It's got an attitude of "easy come, easier go." Always with a sly wink to let you know he laughed just as hard at himself as he laughed at everything else: "Now what was that last bingo number?"

Behind Jim's lightning fast exchange of phrases was a subtle, yet scathing critique of capitalism, industry and people who don't know how to live right. He encouraged us to go to school, predicting "a few more generations of this and we will consider higher education a normal state instead of a rarity." And he challenged us to get involved, to carry memories, language and Anishinaabe knowledge forward into the future. He would hook us with an image of "canoes edging closer to the road, new rice poles gleaming in the sunlight" and whet our appetites by wondering who knows "how to cook moose ears?" Then he'd point us to "the weeds taking over more and more of the rice beds" and ask the real question, "who is watching the water level of the lakes?" (August Follies, 1989).

Twenty-five years later, he left us in the deep waters poling on our own as "the final curtain came clanging down on the Fond du Lac Follies." Never one to avoid reality, he said it was time to "step back and hang up the spurs and computer" (August Follies, 2014). Circling back to some of the same topics that filled the Follies first pages he commented:

> Monthly per capita payment has kept the lights on in some homes, made car payments and has put food on some tables, the rest of us use plates… Of course there have been some problems associated with gambling. One is we think money can solve anything. Two is we think money can solve anything (August Follies, 2014).

He taught readers that no single perspective is perfect and most importantly you need to hone your own points.

Jim was a veteran and a survivor of many battles. As a marine he served in Vietnam as part of India Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division. He survived the war and then came home to "survive the peace" ("Shrinking Away"). Part of the way he survived was through keeping many Anishinaabe traditions alive including spring syrup-making, summer basket-making, fall rice-harvesting and winter storytelling. But perhaps the most important tradition he continued was the art of healing through narration.

Many times Jim answered the query of under-paid public school teachers who wanted him to visit class. Off he would go, on the road sometimes for hours to do what he called "one for the people." Standing before a classroom of children, he told jokes and used laughter to lubricate creativity. He proved to future writers that every voice matters. Following his example, writers young and old have traced their own journeys, connected with others and dreamed themselves whole to recover their identities in a complicated, and sometimes downright cruel, world.

Jim often began a writing lesson with his "Character Building Recipe" which centered a person and brought the story and teller to life. His theory was that if you think around and about someone, you will find their story. He started with a simple list, sometimes adding and subtracting characteristics:

> Character Building Recipe
>
> 1. Name
> 2. Age

3. Skin
4. Height
5. Weight
6. Clothing
7. Tribe
8. Place
9. Voice
10. Language
11. Moves
12. Education
13. Goals
14. Fears
15. Secrets

The list could be used to write a short sketch of Chibinesi, James Warren Northrup Jr. who lived from 1943 to 2016. He had hair that would match a black bear and skin between *zhiiwaagamizigan* (maple syrup) and *maakademaashkikiwaabo* (coffee). According to his Fond du Lac Band Card which "certifies that the person identified is a duly-enrolled member of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and entitled to exercise hunting, fishing, and gathering rights in accordance with the laws of the band" he weighed 210 pounds, was 5' 9" and had firearms safety training. He typically wore jeans, a t-shirt, maybe a Pendleton jacket, soft traditional Corvette-driving moccasins and around his neck a set of claws or a 1960s era smiley face turned into modern regalia by his wife, Patricia. He wrote from what he called "headquarters" just south of *Chi'zagaa'iganing* (Big Lake) on Northrup Road in Sawyer, Minnesota, and his voice was as wide as the sky and deep as the rice roots sinking into the earth. Some of his best moves involved poling, knocking, tap carving and basket making. One might say he had an advanced degree in all of these. As for official education he attended several schools including: Pipestone Indian School, Brainerd Indian Training School, Carlton High School and Milwaukee Technical College. In 2012 he received an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. Goals, fears and secrets are hard to confirm or deny. In many ways, his writing is an accounting of the goal of living life well and working to heal himself and others, which he accepted as a continual task. Perhaps his fears were of failing

at this. And secrets are not secrets if they are broadcast, but there were a few things he didn't get done before changing his address from one world to another and those secret wishes are the ones I want to honor here.

Jim wanted the story of his grandfather to be summarized and shared, he wanted someone to consider the character of Joseph Anthony Northrup who lived from 1882 to 1947. Although their lives did not overlap by much, his persistence and powers as a storyteller always interested his grandson who recalled: "I met him once, when I was 3 or 4, all I remember was a man with a big nose leaning in to look at me. Later I learned he got frostbite on that nose walking nine miles to work and then nine miles home again" (Northrup, 2003.) Carlisle entrance reports note that in 1908 he was 5' 9" and weighed 151 pounds. The same strange document also indicates his resonance and respiration were "normal." He is described at that time as a Chippewa from Cloquet, Minnesota who attended the school with the Catholic YMCA of Northfield, Massachusetts listed as his patron. His secret, while at Carlisle, may have been that he was attending the school after pleading guilty to manslaughter, being sent to the reformatory and being eventually released through a pardon from the governor to accompany his two brothers to Carlisle Indian School.

This personal history came to light in 1911 when Joseph was expelled from Carlisle for behavior, but instead of returning home, he headed to Washington D.C. where he was arrested and placed in iron manacles at Union Station. According to the arresting officer, "he was wanted in Minnesota for shooting another Indian." Northrup explained "there had been a quarrel long ago… and he shot a man who he afterwards learned had died as a result of the wound" (Harrisburg Patriot). Supporters from Carlisle showed up to escort him home, promising to hand him over only to "the legal authority of his reservation." The complex affection between student and institution continued with records of correspondence at Carlisle indicating that Joseph had a practical view of his education. He spoke both Chippewa and English and school records note he was trained to work as a "disciplinarian, interpreter or forest guard." No records indicate exactly why he was expelled and that detail remains a secret.

In reply to the Record of Graduates and Returned Students filed later that same year, Joseph stated he was married, living in Sawyer and making $50 per month working for the Fire Patrol. He wrote, "my home is a happy one and I am improving it continually. We have eighty acres of land valued at $30.00 per acre, [we also have] pine and [as timber it is] valued at $1100,

a nice home and also $150 credit in the bank." Joseph continued, "I have had an uphill fight, but though only a short time at dear old Carlisle, I got the idea there to always "s-t-i-c-k" and make good. Yes sir, though expelled, Carlisle is ever dear to my heart and what I learned there I shall always treasure." He remained in touch with his alma mater and in 1914 received a kind letter from the Superintendent to which he replied "I can say that the training I have had at Carlisle has stood me in good stead. I am doing my utmost to uphold the Honor of my Alma Mater. May the good work you are doing for the uplift of the Indian continue."

Joseph went on to join the U.S. National Guard and was the founder of the Wanabosho Club, named for his own Grandfather, which served the 12,000 Chippewas in Minnesota at the time. He was a community leader who bridged nations and published clear political opinions. In 1921 he wrote: "Exploitation of the Indian must cease in order that this nation of the 'square deal' will not blacken its honor by regarding its treaties as mere scraps of paper. The Indians have well earned the right to administer their own affairs like other citizens instead of being held in subjugation while foreigners may come into this country and exercise rights withheld from the Indians." His rhetorical truth was echoed years later as his grandson, Jim Jr., wrote about using his treaty rights to hunt, fish, gather and govern as a citizen of a sovereign nation.

Across the generations, Joseph and Jim also shared a love of telling sweeping, dramatic, unforgettable stories. Using the pseudonym Chief Northwind, Joseph Northrup published the novel Wawina in 1937. Described by the publisher as a love story "based on personal records as handed down in primeval wigwam lore" it was also classic romanticism with a tragic ending between lovers of opposing ethnic traditions, in this case a Chippewa "princess" who kills herself and her Sioux lover. The Northrup tradition of writing stories likely began many generations before Joseph and will continue long after Jim Jr. Their contribution was to examine the effects of colonization and deforestation, to measure the impact of Anishinaabeg becoming American citizens. Both Joseph and Jim recorded the unspoken traumas, triumphs and daily trials of continuing against all odds. Each, in his own way, made an important contribution to Anishinaabe-American Literature.

This is the legacy Jim Jr., who had sons he named both Jim and Joe, wanted passed to the next generation. He understood people of many cultures are always healing from the tangle of history that ignites their existence. As he saw the end of his life grow near, Jim began writing and distributing healing phrases. In the *Chitwaa Luke Babaamajimowinini Aakoziwigamig* (Saint

Luke the Evangelist Hospital) he taught the doctors and nurses to say *maashkikinini indaaw* or *maashkikikwe indaaw*, reminding them they are people of medicine, because the word *maashkiki* breaks down into components meaning strength from the earth. Jim knew the power of words. He believed if he could say, *ninoojimo'iwe* (I am healing), it was more, likely to happen. He wanted the words to be heard in the world: *noojimo* (to heal, restore or cure someone); *nanaandawi* (to investigate, diagnose or doctor someone). He wasn't afraid to ask for help by saying *wiidookawishin* or *naadamawishin*. And always he would say, "*Ojibwemotawishin daga* (Speak Ojibwe to me please)." We would arrive and practice sentences, which became a small chapbook handwritten, copied and distributed to those in need. He included what he felt were the most important phrases:

Ginanaandawin. Ninanaandawi'iwe-nagamomin.
I am healing you. We are singing a healing song.

Ningiige, mashkowiziyaan. Be bangii ninganaandawiz.
My wound is healing, I am strong. Little by little I am being healthy.

Ningii-bimose miinawaa nengaaj wiisiniyaan. Onizhishin. Maamakaaj.
I walked and slowly I am eating. It is good. It is amazing.

Niwii-minogwaam. Niwii-nibaa gabe dibik.
I will rest. I will sleep all night.

I think he took on this task because *makwa odoodamaan*, he was bear clan. He understood the responsibilities of his clan to be *gikinoo'amaage* (to teach), *nagadawenjige* (to care for others), to *gizhaadige* (to serve as a guard). He was Marine, he was *Makwa*, he was a grandson, a son, a husband, a father and grandfather, he was part of a circle that he had the wisdom to see while many others view life as a line. Authors are often remembered for their "greatest" work, or most well-known, but as he planned his exit, Jim offered one more chance for readers to learn from him. The last few phrases of his book were written when he was simply trying to move from one place on earth, the hospital bed, to another, the kitchen table. But reading them again illustrates how a great poet writes lines to be read many ways.

Ninogimaakandaadiz.
I am telling myself what to do.

Nindaanjidiz.
I am changing myself

Ninzhaabooskaan.
I am getting through it

Aabdeg nindamaajaa.
I have to leave.

Boochigo niwii-giiwe.
I have to go home.

Gimiigwechwininim gii bi dagooshinoyeg.
I thank yous for coming here.

Giga-waabamin miinawaa.
I will see you again.

Giga-waabamininim.
I will see you all again.

I am not related to Jim by clan or family but as a writer who uses Anishinaabemowin we had a thirty year friendship that sustained and challenged both of us to do more than either one of us might ever have done. Looking back on his life I am reminded of another writing exercise:

Ingii-biinjise, makaak gii-izhi-temigag gaawiin da-saakonaasiimaan…
I walked into a room, there was a box I wasn't supposed to open…

Jim opened that box every time. He saw the worst of society, yet found a way to write stories of survival. He attended a boarding school where he was punished for speaking Ojibwemowin, but

became a writer so that his words could connect him to family and friends. He was sent to fight in Vietnam where he risked his life with no welcome home and endured a lifetime of PTSD as a result, but his stories and poems gave all of us a way to process and live with the scars of that war and many more. He last wishes were that we remember his Grandfather and tell stories of healing. Use his Character Building Recipe to write the story of your grandparents, grandchildren or yourself… *saakonaan makaak* (open the box). Last of all, be brave enough to say good-bye, or as Jim might say… "gigawaabaa-bye-bye."

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It Consumes What It Forgets

CARTER MELAND

Wiindigoo[1] is more than just a character in the stories of Anishinaabe Indian people; it is a presence in the world and so powerful that in uttering its name we risk calling it into our lives. It storms through the wintry woods and frozen swamps of the Anishinaabe homeland, as tall as the trees through which it hunts and monstrously gaunt as well, its lips chewed to shreds as it gnaws on itself in the absence of tender prey. Wiindigoo may have been a person once, someone who fell victim to the enticement of the cannibal spirit in the deep winter of the northern woodlands and who, lacking other food, turned on those family and community members with whom they lived for sustenance. Eating the ones they loved and lived with, who they once supported and by whom they were once supported, such a person becomes a monster, ever on the hunt, always hungry: they become the spirit that possessed them. Instead of living for and with others, wiindigoo lives only to meet its own needs. It consumes families and communities, yet no matter how much it eats, it always wants more and cannot stop its destructive impulses unless it is put to death. In speaking its name, we risk calling it into our lives, but naming it, calling it forward, may also be an act of love if the intent is to heal those the spirit has wounded.

#

"Wiindigoo."

#

Stories of this malevolent presence provide insight into Anishinaabe values concerning how people ought to relate to one another; they also provide insight into what happens when those values are perverted. Wiindigoo has a heart of ice; it cannot assess human relations with any sort of compassion. It is cold; unwilling or unable to see the pain others might feel, it is driven only to feed its own never satisfied appetite; it has forgotten the proper way of living with others in the world.

Forgetting seems to be part of what makes a wiindigoo a wiindigoo. It forgets the relationships that others cultivate and by which they are, in turn, cultivated. It forgets its bonds to the human and other-than-human relations that shape each of our lives, the interconnections with kin, clan, tribe, and lived environment by which we come to find out who we are and what we

will do for these relations. It forgets that it is part of something larger than any one person. It forgets the stories that make us who we are, regardless of tribe or nation. It forgets its embeddedness in a whole living complex of nurturing, sorrowful, banal, and joyful experiences; it forgets its humanity—these feelings and the ability to experience them—focusing solely on its hunger; it forgets to yearn for anything other than human flesh. It forgets to resist the temptation to indulge its appetite. It is tempted by those it should love. It forgets to love and consumes what it forgets.

Wiindigoo lives for itself.

#

Unable to ever get enough to eat, wiindigoo walks at the grim edge of starvation, its bones pushing against the thin layer of skin that stretches over them. Its skin is the pallid gray of death and papery dry. Its hunger has drained it of life, and though rank with the stench of death because it is rotting from the inside out, it is not dead.

When we die, the water of our bodies—our lives—is absorbed into the earth, but for wiindigoo the water of its life turns to a heart of ice; frozen, its heart is life suspended. It embodies the worst part of winter in the deep north: the scarcity of food which leads to hunger and which might lead some to the desperate thought of eating their kin, of putting their own needs ahead of those with whom they live. It embodies selfishness, in other words, an idea that the Anishinaabe scholar Basil Johnston finds in the etymology of the word itself. Wiindigoo breaks down into *ween* and *dagoh*, which Johnston tells us means "solely for the self" (222). In a community where the needs of the group as a whole are more important than an individual's needs, this kind of selfishness is horrific enough, and when that selfishness is fed by a hunger for human flesh, that horror is multiplied and stretches into a towering monster that sweeps down out of the cold north and threatens to pervert the lives of those in a stricken community.

Though found in Anishinaabe sacred stories, the wiindigoo is more than a spirit whose misdeeds are recounted from a mythic time before time. What is fearsome about the wiindigoo is the very real threat that someone may turn into one, that the spirit may come to possess a man or woman, corrupt their appetite, and with it their humanity. In thinking solely of the self, a person becoming wiindigoo forgets what it means to be a good Anishinaabe, forgets to think of others. Its notions of community, family, and love are perverted by its selfish hunger.

#

In 1823 George Nelson was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company outpost near Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan. He had been in the fur trade for more than twenty years, living almost always alongside Anishinaabe communities, and it was here he set down stories of his experience with the Anishinaabeg as well as offering his observations concerning the manidoog, the spirits that people the Anishinaabe homeland and the cosmos it is seated within. In 1988, the anthropologists Jennifer S.H. Brown and Robert Brightman edited and annotated Nelson's work from this era into the book *"The Orders of the Dreamed"*. In the nearly hundred page long letter-journal that is the centerpiece of the book, Nelson spends much time describing the wiindigoo and offers his ideas about the causes of the condition. "I look upon this," he wrote, "as a sort of mania, or fever, or distemper of the brain." He describes seeing the eyes of those afflicted with this distemper as "wild and uncommonly clear—they seem as if they glistened." He recounts other symptoms as well:

> They are generally rational except at short, sudden intervals when the paroxysms cease [seize] them: their motions then are various and diametrically contrary at one time to what they are the next—Sullen, thoughtful, wild look, and perfectly mute: staring, in sudden convulsions, wild incoherent and extravagant language. (91)

Nelson tells a story about one wiindigoo case from "a few years back" during his time at Lake Winnipeg. Evidence of the affliction started to present in late December of 1811 when a man "began staring at his [adult] daughter with an extraordinary intenseness." He gave voice to his feelings in an extravagant manner. He told her:

> "'My daughter! I am fond of thee! I love thee extremely.'
>
> "'I know thou dost,' replied the woman abashed, for she was then very young.
>
> "'Yes! I love thee—I think I could eat a piece of thee, I love thee so much'" (91).

Nelson reports that the young woman cried out at her father's "rashness," distressed by words that suggested he was forgetting what love meant. We can only wonder at the fear she and her husband must have felt when night fell and her father "stark-naked and uttering a strong tremulous noise, and his teeth chattering in his head as if thro' cold, rose up and walked out of the Tent and laid himself as a dog in a heap upon the wood that his daughter had that day bro't to the door" (91-92). In the morning he came inside, but that night he returned again to the woodpile.

#

Some irrational force masked as love seized this poor man and left his teeth chattering in his head. Imagine his "wild, uncommonly clear" eyes glistening as he tells his daughter he loves her so much he "could eat a piece of thee."

The coldness that gripped him in the tent and allowed him to survive what had to have been freezing nights sleeping on a woodpile is a common symptom of the wiindigoo disease. One who is becoming wiindigoo feels a strong pull to cannibalism and if they don't feel the ice forming in their chest, others in their community find evidence of it in their actions, moods, and behavior. The father in Nelson's story is cold enough deep in his body that he does not freeze to death when sleeping out in the Canadian winter. Perhaps his kin found this indicative of the ice forming.

Becoming wiindigoo often means that the afflicted person begins to hallucinate, to see their loved ones as an animal normally hunted for food. Nathan Carlson reports that in 1896 an Anishinaabe man, shuddering with the fear of his own thoughts, told his wife that one of their children looked to him like a "spring moose," which he wanted to kill and eat. Rather than let the man suffer, members of the community engage in ceremonial cures in an attempt to call him back to his life as an Anishinaabe man, but their interventions are overmatched by the spirit. The man's frenzy grows and during one particular outburst, the men who had been attempting to restrain him, fearing what he would do if he got loose, struck four blows to his head with an axe. Bullets from a rifle could not pierce a wiindigoo. After his death, Carlson tells us that the man's body was buried under a woodpile in order "to stop—or stall—his perceived impending resurrection" as the towering monster that would continue to stalk the Anishinaabe (369).[2]

While many Western scholars identify the wiindigoo condition as a psychosis, Carlson asks us to consider the condition as more of an anxiety about engaging in cannibalism than it is a psychotic break that causes someone to act on those destructive, self-serving impulses. The worry about turning cannibal becomes obsessive and all consuming (so to speak), disquieting to both the afflicted person and those around them. At the point in history that Carlson discusses, the late 19th century, the Anishinaabe lived in small camps and family groups during the long winters. In light of that isolation from others and living in close quarters with a limited number of kin and community, we can understand how, if one of the group began to exhibit wiindigoo symptoms, the anxiety would swell not just in the chest of the stricken one, but would grow throughout the group. Even if the afflicted one were dead, the group would need to worry about

what Carlson called the "impending resurrection" of the person, that is, their transformation into the roaming spirit of unending hunger and self-indulgence predicted by Anishinaabe cosmology. We can imagine the anxiety about this resurrection growing in such a group, stretching as tall as the trees, its skin pulling taut over its bones, its humanity forgotten.

The worry over becoming wiindigoo must surely have been a source of further anxiety—imagine what it must feel like to lose your sense of Anishinaabe selfhood and become this reviled creature. Brightman notes that most, if not all, "windigos were once human beings, transformed, usually irreversibly, into their monstrous condition" (337). Loosed from the bounds of their personhood by the craving for human flesh and loosed from their graves if not properly disposed of, wiindigoo is ever in motion out in the bush, and in the stories and minds of community members. The wiindigoo forgets its humanity, but the Anishinaabe anxiously remember its presence.

For those afflicted with wiindigoo impulses, the idea swells to monstrous proportions, intensifying certain negative aspects of the human character. The infection distorts the human spirit into a malevolent form that, though perverse and destructive, is useful to think with. The wiindigoo experience is horrifying, but wiindigoo stories are instructive engagements in cultural teaching.

In this light, the wiindigoo is a cautionary figure. Basil Johnston tells us that his mother warned him when he was young that there were wiindigoog in the woods that would grab and carry off children who failed to listen to their parents, but he also makes it clear that stories about the wiindigoo spirit should not be reduced to mere bogeyman tales. Like all stories about the manidoo, wiindigoo stories offer powerful tools to advance one's understanding of the world. Wiindigoo is more than a childhood fear. As one grows and matures, so does one's understanding of the nuances and layers within the stories. A wiindigoo tale to keep children from wandering off becomes something else when an adult uses it to look at the world.

When scholars of Native studies like Johnston and Jack Forbes turn the lens of these stories on the contemporary world they see evidence that the spirit has possessed modern institutions like corporations and drives political/economic ideologies like capitalist colonialism and imperialism.[3] In taking these forms, wiindigoo has "renounced" eating human flesh, as Johnston puts it, and instead now consumes human lives through economic exploitation or by eating the environments from which humans make their lives. Corporations clear-cut forests, for

instance, displacing their human and other-than-human inhabitants, making it impossible for those who relied on that environment to make a life there. They indulge their selfish hunger with the profit to be found in timber, insatiably moving from one stand of woods to the next and they feed their hunger for power over others, by forgetting the lives of those who call the forest home. They forget their relations in favor of self-interest. They forget they are part of a community. Riven with gullies and washouts, clear-cut landscapes reflect the erosion of principles that the wiindigoo embodies. Logging companies today even employ machines with massive jaws that grasp trees at their base and bite them off. These masticators, as they are called, literally chew their way through the forest. I cannot help being reminded that wiindigoo eats the flesh of its kin or that, in the absence of other food, it chews off its own lips: it is a tireless, obsessive masticator.

#

Johnston and Forbes point out that a society's institutions can become wiindigoo; institutions can forget their relations to their human and other-than-human communities, and can forget the principles and values which allow communities to develop and flourish in partnership with particular environments. Wiindigoo feeds on its power over others, whether those others are the felled trees of a clear-cut forest or the humans that live in anxious fear of what it might do—those who live in anxious fear of forgetting what it means to be Anishinaabe, to be a good relative.

The U.S. government instituted the federal Indian boarding school system in the late 1800s, based on the model of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, established by an Army officer named Richard Pratt in 1879. The schools were an immersion experience, with Native children removed from their families and taken off reservation to be instructed in the standards of Euro-American life. There they were given uniforms, had their hair cut, and were forbidden to speak their Native languages. The schools were an alternative to the heavy costs of war, but one with the same end in mind. The goal in bringing a Native child to the schools was, as Pratt infamously put it, to "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man." Less well known, is another description of his concerning how the schools should operate: "We make our greatest mistake in feeding our civilization to the Indians instead of *feeding the Indians to our civilization*" (qtd. in King 108, emphasis added).

Recall Nelson's description of those seized by the wiindigoo distemper. Their eyes he said were "uncommonly clear" and "glistened," perhaps in anticipation of the feast. He describes them as speaking with "wild incoherent and extravagant language."

I see Pratt's eyes glistening as he speaks extravagantly of killing the Indian "in" these children and feeding them to "our" civilization. From a humanistic point of view, his words, while clear, are incoherent. Killing children to save them, feeding them to civilization until, as he also said, "all the Indian there is in the race should be dead" ("Kill the Indian") only makes sense within a desiccated value system. Wiindigoo indulges in its power over others, pretending, as the father did with his daughter, that it is acting with love. It forgets the intrinsic value of others, and sees only that which will feed its own selfish ends.

Boarding schools were cheaper than war.

#

Ella Martineau was a woman I never knew, nor did I know her son, but her grandson is my dad. We never had contact with Ella or her son after he, to keep the story short, abandoned my dad, uncle, and grandma when my dad was not yet two and my uncle was not yet born. While my dad and uncle rightly have nothing but hard feelings for their father (to quote my fellow Minneapolitan, Paul Westerberg: "he might be a father/but he sure ain't a dad"), they also regard their grandmother Ella with indifference (in my dad's case) and with suspicions that she was a pathological liar (in my uncle's case). Perhaps coming from a later generation I am insulated from these raw feelings because I have found a different story in what I know of her experience.

Ella was born in 1895 in Isle, Minnesota on the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation in the northern part of central Minnesota. She was born to an Anishinaabe mother and a white father. Sometime between 1895 and 1910 the family moved to the White Earth Reservation.

In that same time period Ella also attended the Morris Indian Industrial School for three years where, according to an interview she gave to the Crow Wing County (Minnesota) Historical Society, she was "taught English, sewing, and cooking." As far as I can tell her entire adult life was spent off-reservation. In the 1910 U.S. Census her race is listed as "Indian." In the 1920 census she is listed as "White," as is her son, my dad's father. What had she forgotten in ten years?

"We make our greatest mistake," Pratt claimed, "in feeding our civilization to the Indians instead of feeding the Indians to our civilization." It was customary back in the treaty-making

days of the 19th century for Native people to refer to the President, with whom they were ultimately treating, as the "Great White Father." I am reminded of the father who loved his daughter so much that he exclaimed, "Yes! I love thee—I think I could eat a piece of thee." I am reminded that the Great White Father created boarding schools.

My dad did not raise my sister, brother, or I as Anishinaabe because no one remembered that part of our story. It is too much to say we forgot it because we knew nothing of it until the early 1990s. In some sense, wiindigoo ate that part of us.

"I love thee so much," said the stricken father to his child.

#

The goal of wiindigoo stories, like so many Anishinaabe stories, is to direct us towards healing. They seek to restore the afflicted to a healthy way of living *in* the world—and *with* the world. Wiindigoo stories are not fairy tales or yarns told around the campfire that capture the exotic and chilling strangeness of Native culture. They are instructions. They are alive and relevant when they are used to keep children from wandering off into the woods, which is, after all, preserving the coming generation from potential destruction, and the stories are alive and relevant when they are used to gain insight into ways to understand the destructive events unfolding in the world around us. They are alive and relevant when they are shared with the purpose of reviving values that may have become eroded over time. Along with a mythic and cultural life, Anishinaabe stories have a social life. They live in the world, not just the world of words and stories, but the world of social experience as well. Wiindigoo is not an abstraction, a symbol, or a metaphor; it is a presence.

Wiindigoo stories help us remember the importance of nurturing our relations to both the human and other-than-human world and by other-than-human I mean both the spiritual and natural world. They help me make some sense of the experience of my Anishinaabe ancestors (who are now all spirits) as they were fed to "our" civilization. They help me understand the distemper of an American mindset that thought it best to "kill the Indian" and clear-cut forests, which is, in my part of the world, a direct assault on the health of the woodland homelands of the Anishinaabe. Just as critically, clear-cutting, whether in Minnesota, Amazonia, or Thailand, is an assault on each one of us. There is a loss of beauty as forests are masticated and a loss of homeland for our human and other-than-human relatives that live there, of course, but there is a loss of a physical connection as well.

What the trees exhale, I inhale; what I exhale, the trees inhale. We are bound together in a positive feedback loop that is just one of billions of similar loops by which our other-than-human relations, our environments, and we create life for one another.

Wiindigoo, though, wants to steal our breath. Wiindigoo breaks the symbiotic loop, eroding the value of life, of creation, by forgetting its interdependence with others.

Once felled, the trees it consumes cannot scrub the air of carbon dioxide that comes from burning the strip-mined, fracked, and deep ocean drilled coal and oil that our economy feeds on. Climate change, driven in great part by the burning of fossil fuels, indicates a deeper distemper. Recall that one of the leading symptoms indicating that someone was becoming wiindigoo was the formation of ice in the person's chest or heart. Climate scientists regard the polar vortex that swept over North America in the winter of 2013-2014 and plunged most of the United States and Canada into one of the coldest and snowiest winters on record as an indicator—a symptom—of global climate change. In Anishinaabe teachings, wiindigoo storms out of the north bent on feeding its never satisfied hunger, utterly indifferent to the pain it brings its prey, and utterly indifferent to the fact that its actions threaten to destroy the communities with which it should have lived, suffering when they suffered, loving when they loved, remembering what they remembered: how to be good Anishinaabe, good people, living with others rather than off of others. Instead, we see:

Forests falling.

Fuels burning.

Vortexes spinning.

Winter deepening.

We see:

A father who loves his daughter.

A Great Father who loves his children.

Indian children fed to a hungry civilization.

A never known Indian grandmother becoming white.

We see:

Wiindigoo forgetting its relations are not food.

We see it sleeping stark naked in the freezing night.

We see it mistaking its heart for the ice all around it.

We see it stretch and grow, getting bigger, hungry for more, destroying more, thoughtless in its pain.

We see a threat to be sure, but one that still demands our compassion.

As long as we remember the Anishinaabe understandings of the stories, we will never be hopeless when facing the wiindigoo.

#

Wiindigoo stories come out of the social and cultural experiences of Anishinaabe people, but the insight and understanding they provide into the world are available to everyone. Native teachers and medicine people, scholars and writers, have been sharing stories like these with colonists and settlers since the earliest days of contact, and before that, they shared them among tribes that were as distinct from one another as the European nations were from one another. (Tribal nations continue to be distinct in this way, of course, and the sharing of knowledge across tribal cultures continues in the present as well.) Too often in the modern West tribal stories have been reduced to *objects*, evidence that Native people were different, that *they* were superstitious, that *they* believed odd things. Stories that were shared with the intent of providing healing to the settlers, of helping them, were too often lifted out of that context by Europeans and Americans and put into a box marked "Other." Thus reified, wiindigoo became a *representation* of incommensurable difference, rather than a presence we can learn from. While wiindigoo stories (in this case) may be most relevant to Anishinaabe communities, those who shared the stories must have felt it imperative to help other people learn to reflect on the need to think with Anishinaabe cultural and social teachings, of remembering Indigenous values in a world that thought to destroy them—to make them forgotten. Wiindigoo stories are more than simple monster tales or reports of potentially horrifying historical events. They are a complex means of thinking about and addressing injustices that storm through our world. Rather than a way to think about Native people, they are a means of *thinking with* Anishinaabe people. They are, in the context I lay out here, a means of recognizing a relationship between peoples, one that emerges from Indigenous knowledge and nurtures a way of seeing that helps all who engage with it.

#

The father of the young woman, the one who loved his daughter so much that he wanted to eat a piece of her, slept naked on a pile of wood. Nelson writes, "Thus he did every night for about a month and every time slept out naked; nor would he eat, excepting at times a little raw

flesh" (by which I suppose that Nelson means the meat of some game animal, not that of his daughter; still, he was eating raw meat). "In the day time," Nelson tells us that the man "was more composed, but his face & c, bore the appearance of one possessed of the Devil." Still, Nelson is able to report that the man "recovered and became as usual, composed, and good natured." He ends the story: "I knew them all well" (92).

The young woman and her husband, though no doubt disturbed and distraught at his behavior, do not lash out at her father. Rather, we can gather by implication that they wait to see what will happen, caring for him in the mean time, letting him eat raw meat if that is what will help him, but they do not allow him the human flesh that would complete his transformation. Since Nelson's record of the incident is so brief, I can only suppose they did this out of concern and compassion, and I can only suppose that their love melted that which had grown cold within him. They healed with compassion what the wiindigoo tried to take with its corrupted notion of love.

Nelson remembers their story for us.

#

Before 1970, U.S. census takers determined the race of the people they enumerated based on their observations. They may have asked a person about their racial identity, but they might just as well have made note of what they saw—or thought they saw. In the 1920 census, Ella Martineau and her children are counted as "White." In 1930, they are listed as "Indian." I do not know what happened between 1920 and 1930 that altered the opinion of the enumerators as to the race of Ella and her children. Ella's mother, who Ella describes as a "Chippewa squaw" in that interview with the historical society, was living with the family in 1930 and perhaps her presence in the household shifted the perception of the person taking the census. Regardless of what happened, Ella was no longer "officially" White. Whatever the wiindigoo of boarding school assimilation attempted, her transformation was suspended—at least in the story I am telling. Like the man who came inside from the woodpile, she remembered that good Anishinaabe make and maintain relations. She became Indian again in the 1930s.

Sometime after my dad was born in 1938, Ella borrowed his birth records from my grandma and enrolled him as a member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, a son and grandson of White Earth Anishinaabe people. She never really had any contact with my dad after that.

In the 1940 census she is enumerated as "White."

#

Wiindigoo is a powerful spirit moving through the northern woodland, stalking through stories of mythic and historic events; it lives as an anxiety that seizes an Anishinaabe person in winter; it also lives in the words that expressed the mission of the boarding schools and in the economic logic that forgives (and celebrates) the clear cutting of Anishinaabe homelands and the fracking of the earth, the homeground of all of us. It swirls about our lives in a whirling vortex of mind-numbing cold.

Wiindigoo has a heart of ice, but a daughter who loves her father doesn't forget to love. She remembers what the wiindigoo wishes her father would forget: love cares, never destroys. Just as the daughter remembers to love so does a grandmother who enrolls her grandson at White Earth because, I can only assume, it was important to her. Even though she was never an active presence in my dad's life, she wanted him—and us too, I suppose, her descendants—to be remembered by the Anishinaabe; she did not forget that she, her son, and my dad were Anishinaabe. Hers was only a love on paper as it turns out, but paper is warmer than ice—and paper remembers.

Wiindigoo stories are ways to remember what compassion means by asking us to look at what happens if we forsake that impulse. The stories are useless if we forget that they exist to help us heal the wounds we suffer in our lives and those we visit on a world that loved us enough to breathe us into life.

Notes

[1] I am using the double vowel orthography to spell Ojibwe words like wiindigoo in this essay. Not all scholars or writers use this system and so wiindigoo may also be spelled "windigo" or "wendigo." These variant spellings will only be used when quoting the works of other writers. In Ojibwemowin, words become plural when a –g is added to the end and so wiindigoo becomes wiindigoog.

[2] My summary of this story is drawn from pages 359-369 of Nathan Carlson's excellent article, "Reviving Witiko (Windigo)."

[3] Johnston explicitly identifies contemporary corporations as wiindigoo on p. 235 of *The Manitous*. Jack Forbes's *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The* Wétiko *Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism, and Terrorism* is a lengthy polemic that identifies the cannibalistic tendencies of colonialism and capitalist corporatism.

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-from Swift Cinder

CRISOSTO APACHE

from fire

from ignition

buckshot splitting air, cracking space, ricochets off tree bark, tree limbs

scattering brush climbing

high up into Bear Canyon, into the mouth

Wednesday, April 09, 2014, roughly around 3:00 in the afternoon

this specific moment and time

no different than the odious *Big Bang*

setting a single course a determinant event

billions of years in the making

first refractive light against stars

lifting split light against lit faces

bringing *this* moment facetiously forward

toward a series of collisions

envelopment of toiling flame engulfing in combustion

gas, subatomic particles obit out of control

nucleus circles expansion girds into guard rails flying fenders

in swift swirls oil sludge, petroleum, plastic and metal

the gestalt sending his ghost into nearby thickets.

t'eesh ash
flakes fall softly

t'eesh ash flakes fall in soft particles

t'eesh ash release soft particles

*t'ees*h ash release of all particles

leaving a gold vacuum of space

there *kú'yuu*

kú'yuu there

there *kú'yuu,*

kú'yuu and there

indiscriminate object strewn forming dash board,

quick shot echoing along

Highway 70

collision translates probability cohesion of metallic abrasion

of beauty

upon impact birds scatter, birds cease, shot gun blast

ricochets again off tree barks darting up the canyon again

again

again

again

and again

abbreviate oblique asymptote never meeting its predetermine

coordination

terminus

end point

destination

a formulaic mathematical formula

approaches a straight line

a given course of action

curving the only variable

bow of equation imminent infinity high rate of speed

this straight line continues,

approaching

never supposing to meet its camber

as significant the value of asymptote

we do not fall together

from ash

to ashes

not with fallen flesh

but to fall with flesh

asymptotic straight line finale skidding perpetual motion

in slow motion stills

slow motion still

preceding months

slow motion

long vowel continuation constant yearning of the letter ‘o’

late into disappearing night

dispersing into the blank wisps of air

absolve this swift cinder—

—past midnight the following night

eardrums ring over silence

extending artery encumbers

saintly candles burn their
somber sway

petrol sings scent of sanctifying beeswax

odorous incumbent

oh how, the flame flickers

leaning shadows cast against obscuring walls

warp shapes dance burns

consummate along minuscule granular surface

that chosen scuttle cupped light

an aspirate flux silence and amorphous

veils cascade

after tiny pirouette flares

Fragments, only fragments
I sink in the snow
shovel in the earth
in the road in the grass and mountains
—Tomaž Šalamun

second section, a slant shoulder impact,

his arm extends a patient persistent throw,

as flat river stone scathe surface, tapping flight

across calm water and mirror light, as though

each gripping rock inside his grasp grows tight,

muscles jolt in slow motion, gather in a slither,

docile stone glides through a sideways slide,

silence from a young waif toward moments come hither,

to a specific moment with rippling water collides—

wait, oh wait, particulates scatter a top laden fuel

mistaken for water, can anyone mistake a plausible

death defying scenario, to sever umbilical as dual
wake from dream a wish cannot want, to erase invisible
strains of scattering car parts, had he not driven so opposite
that hastened his departure, to such a thriving continent,

inside this cricket house,
into night, our body lies awake,
cricket songs assemble
against a judder of paper wings
when moth wing dust disperses,

light vibration
procures
a lure into a soaring
death flight,
twirling center light

ambient background wavers

absent

into night, our body lie
awake a top flagstone,
cricket songs assemble
scratching their paper wings
and chirrup into desert clefts

we both gather in our beds,
they stay to rub, some hiss,
some strike sparingly
or first gathers in masses,
sand covers arid slabs,
water is all around,
and slithers as old sediments

a crisscross tinder fist,
marks intersections,
white lines pass back and forth,
through and over,

then the white bear comes charging,
breaking through brush and thicket
musters old dirt into heaves of glass,
sprays sinew inside wrists and joints,
divulges over our toroid air mass

empty these demarcate calculations

[4.73-80]
relatives afar, in skeletal trailers houses, can see our saunter,
his small hands clench mine, there was no rain fall,
suckling the half empty bottle of apple juice,
over rocks and sand, the hum of power lines tremble,
leading us across, into the dusty land of *Canaan*

[4.81-88]
lights flicker at a gas station at Rio Puerco, night insects
swirl in 8mm film trails, erect in a makeshift glass ice case
a polar bear watches over us, from a distance they enter a bar,
late into the evening a few hundred yards away, our eyes leave
the stare of a white bear who oscillates loudly over the building

[4.89-96]
a few drinks in a condo just off a roadway, just off the reservation,
in the mountains, longer into a docile night we drank, just the two of us,
turmoil courses through our vein, a rage inside rivers, a slippage
of rocks and boulders, a reave of engine, a scale of head lamp,
a glare of vague human lumbers in a drive way, we could never
explain the splay of web oxidizing the windshield

[4.97-04]
early morning a crack through trees wake a lingering ghost,
it usurps into a misty tree line, silent we raise from our bed,
a quarter mile down the road, fire fighters pry his body,
a brisk morning calls the ghostly finger to pinch his aorta,
his body suspends, a mangle wreck, inanimate towards Albuquerque

[4.05-12]
he returns home after twenty years in a black Chrysler 300, it had deep
window tints, a shiny rows of crow eyes, he drives the hell out of that car

[4.13-14]
one long tire skid mark, burns tar, scorches earth, metal mesh with polymer,
blood vaporizes, no amount of liquid can extinguish the slow scald
but through boughs,
a forest is still a forest,
just as a door is still a door,
though a door,
through a forest,
exists or enters this child
in it,

from swinging hinge
cross the threshold,
this child small and grim
finds solace among the boughs

a gray hawk in flight,
the sedge wren does scatter
leaving one feather
in a tether as a falling leaf

pass over lower jaw bone
through esophageal aqueduct,
tiny surfeit saliva discharge,
detonates fireflies

every collapse of breath
surpasses a slither
of arid forest wind

septal septet mortar sings
as mute clay expels morsel lips,
hastens exonerate bars
that trudge pacing meadows,
just before expiry,
leaves in a hidden grove
a smudge of severed branches

night moves into diamond sparkle
that shimmers layers about our eyes,
immerse down into the cradle valley inside
a cluster of naked words, reassuring daybreak
is still coming, the Sandia Mountains steeple behind,
a cascade prediction of early bruise bluish light
ascends from the valley below, naked words
plucks a floating mimic muddle of silt river,
river surrounds phonetic carcass mask with new tongues,
we left ourselves behind,
let's call one *birth water*,
let's call the other *fire storm*,
we left them behind,

just as we were all left behind, somewhere between
bones of recession and a gullet of inflation,
simulating crane clusters,
where words chose us, when we lay still, motionless,
inside our helpless state,
you said to me, under whispers of blowing sands,
under whispers of two foolish boys,
walking the tight shadow of electric power lines,
electric in our need to wonder the outskirts
of limestone and the western Tularosa basin
plateaus, trying desperately to find a homestead
away from death's small grasp,
here we are walking,
no stagger, again a bewildering path
that leads us both to the same pile of ash,
a pile of ash that will eminently fluster

here are all the angles that fasten
to one path or another
here is the screw impaling beside the roof
here is the unreachable us who flail heavenly about
here is the path that rips through the back of this child
here are the small piles of ash, hidden,
to count when eluding the fiery man
who empties dried shells threaded on string,
by a corral sinking in manure,
here is the fool of a brother whimpering into fingers
on a bed full of fleeting words, coral and turquoise
here inside the pages, coral and turquoise shedding dust,
turning our eyes into red jewel branches

I crawl the tall sunflowers
where the ground is ardent, in the same way of baptism,
and a cross hatches lament, and the arduous
ends of hollow rods is an envious company of a false father
influences under a waste of trees. Wasted by a douse of lies
left under palms for decades, left as welts, forlorn dusk,
planks for ill fitted studs turning the hinges, over which
your casket remains an array at the moment of your lumber

execution of carcinogen

dust slithers over
someplace, binding its fang tracks
in pebbles and sand
we are still too arid to spawl,
too arid to wheeze,
as if I can huddle in a burrow fusillade
with roots of plants
we cannot modify

beneath a brush
a couple of *Hister Beetles* dig together
through the next world,
where no other, we sense,
crackles of decay for the fertile many
we grimace

but we still crouch below,
maybe, the entire basin squanders
or wastes, maybe the older beetle digresses
without progressing toward
the vast stretch, over the Tularosa Basin,
or how a bird cannot see those
blackened specks against the pebbles beneath it,
but keep soaring until its wings tire,
while the beetle eases lucidly outside their stranger air

as we both think this,
some roads we don't run leave tracks,
in the slinking dust, we both want
to mimic them, and see nothing,
the way a skink speeds though arroyos
not seeing the belly of birds

water rises and gushes
and it means everything will wash

we both want to be fistulous,

a vein or a vessel of powder,
impelling, particles into shards.

we both want to be beneath and dissolve back
into that sludge of birth,
and reform the urges of a bottle grip
so we can both run

while we both sweat, walking on a blustering trail,
suddenly many granules among us, in a white bloom,
streams fast toward White Sands,
among the immense cloud clogging white,
we both stream in its seriatim, never breathing in

forlorn and against ribs,
a fist sprays a bouquet inside bone gullies,
we both strains against bruises, it,

while thickening inside
mother, father, brother ties
graphs from skins,
the cells that harden long and centric,
a threatening impact since,
all the fists disrupt
us both, who keeps the face in forlorn

in forlorn, a bruise that spreads, that strains
and eases like bones, like

plain bones that decay and leans against the ribs

the nature of
our face presses up against
the glass, flat as an opaque
doll face, lucid in the moon
glow

who will say we are the pale
face, lost inside a loose box,
a box place on a grey shelf,

for *that* eternity,
which will never come

our face presses
up against the glass, round
and distorted
inside an everlasting smile

who will say
we are the pin hole
that allows dust to vacate
through vesicles unseen,
unseen by our opaque eye

who will say
our face distorts
as it presses round against
the lucid moon, never coming,
against the everlasting smile behind it

Lockbolted Letters to Turbo

DAVID GROULX

I hope your enjoying spring.

I know I'd be enjoying it much more
if I was with you.
Happy belated Easter,
you know I ain't much of a Christian.
I got your card today, it was wonderful I read it over and over again.
I sure do miss you guys,
I've been doing crosswords, I'm getting better at them.

There's this song in my head, *You wouldn't like it baby/ you wouldn't like it her/ there ain't no entertainment and the judgements are severe.* I'm sure Leonard Cohen was singing about this place because nobody likes it here. Even the guards.

I'm trying to relax,
trying to recapture the dream I had about you last night,
but the guards came and woke me up for work
it's a perverted sense of humor that runs through this place;

(they will be reading this of course)

Sometimes I can't wait for lights out, that I might get the chance to dream of you again.
I hoping to get a book change, this week I've read Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons* three times,

I guess it's his opinion on modern society, the family living in a military industrial complex.

Other than that, the kitchen is hard work, we're always busy,

I mean ALWAYS;
but most of the crew pull their own weight and we're always joking around.
The cooks don't mind as long as the work gets done.
This place is run around meal time.

I forgotten how lonely I was staying at home alone those weekdays. *All the time.*

Turbo is great company, as you and he both know,
but the conversation was all one sided.
I'm not good at making friends, but I am good at kidding around,
if presented with the opportunity. I will almost always walk through that door.

Don't worry. I'm being optimistic, I'd rather be with Turbo, listening to him burp, than here.

I'm happy you called last night, I was tired, this place is exhausting. I would have stayed up till *lights out* to talk with you, I would walk naked through a snowstorm to a pay phone to talk with you, *with the quarter between my butt cheeks*.
I saw this guard today he looks like Zach, he looks friendly enough with a baby face and very big. The strange thing is, that there is an inmate that looks like Jake. Their mom would laugh her ass off.
The radio is on all day, classic rock *ugh*, that song is on *White Hot- I need you to complete me/I'm white hot/ I can't take it anymore/ I'm white hot and I'm running to your door/ I need rain/I need rain.*
As for songs that make me think about Turbo, I'd don't know I'd have to leave that up to him. What would Turbo sing. I know he likes that tape, Solitudes: Songs of the loon.

And probably that Nelly song- *Hey baby do you wanna ride with me/We'll listen to MTV*. I remember when we heard that song and started singing the *do you wanna ride* part. Turbo would go crazy and we laughed.

I guess some of the other inmates think I'm unfriendly cause I don't say much, but the talk here is always the same,
How you got here?
How long you got to get out?
How much good time you lost?
Who makes the biggest deal?
Big Deal.

I hear the same conversation over and over again.
It's like that movie, Groundhog Day or Run Lola Run, except there is no way to change the outcome.

I hear "Meds Up" and most all of the inmates rush to the door for whatever pills the doctor has them on.

The nurse comes by twice a day for that, but she's not the head nurse, I looked at her knees.

I'm glad I have you to talk to and I'm happy that the future is so full of possibilities for us, together.

I know it is not easy to be apart like this, but this is what makes it matter, if it didn't matter, it would be easy.
I'm excited about seeing you and Turbo and frustrated at how I cannot express how much I miss the two of you.

I miss the two of you so much.

It is impossible for me to speak of. I suppose there are words, perhaps not, perhaps not in English to tell you how much I want to be with you, how much I miss, how much I need you. You complete me.

I got some good news. That two-faced fucker who worked in the kitchen got knuckled in the card room.
The guy was spreading a rumor that I was pissing in the food, when actually he was the one doing it.
Someone told me what was being said.
So I went straight to the range boss and told him it wasn't me and if he was going to beat me to do it there in front of the whole range,
(fuck I was scared) but I wasn't going to fuckin wait around to catch a beating.

The range boss found out the truth and the next morning, two-faced fucker was gone to PC and the card room was covered in blood.
Its hellishly boring and dangerous as hell here.
And order must be kept because the place is always on the verge of going under lockdown and order is the range boss's responsibility.
I was happy he got it. I really don't want to lose my good time. I could get out and be with you and Turbo sooner.

I try to keep to myself and try to hide it when I am happy or sad.

I can't stand hypocrites and there seems to be so many.
I don't understand how people can be cruel or why they like to see each other in misery.
I admit I'm glad that guy got it.

It was just.

He wanted to go to Stony, where his dad is, how fucking ambitious.
I'm here without you, that I deserve I suppose.
And sometimes when I'm lonely for you, I think the sentence is too severe. When I get that lonely; I can't eat, I just want to be left alone, sometimes I wish I could request to go to the hole, just for a bit of peace and quiet.

I get lonely here but the strange thing is you are never alone, there is always people talking, even in their sleep and the fucking radio is always on.
Sometimes a man needs that, needs to think about things. I only got to the gym three times this week.
The Easter holiday really fucked up the routine, there weren't enough guards so we couldn't go.

There is a French show on in the other room there is a man, a woman, and a dog all sitting together and I don't understand a word of it.
Next week the movie is Billy Jack, we'll probably watch it, since there only three White guys in here.
I like the movie, it was the first time I saw an Indian character as a hero instead of a villain, or a White guys lackey, but in the end, Billy Jack goes to jail, just like most of the guys here, including me.
Life here is desperately boring.
The inmates like to watch sitcoms I hate and there is absolutely nothing good to read. Even the magazines available, *cars and trucks*.
This place is a desert for me.
I hope to work on my play this weekend, since I got some fresh pencils now.
The kitchen today was chaos, they are already short of guys and they gave some of the others the day off. That's ok though, all I have to do is think of you and I start to feel better. I remember when we first met, you were drunk, but I found you enchanting. I believe you make me want to be something more, I want to be better when I'm around you. In the past few months you've become the marrow of my body.

You have become someone more, become part of me, you complete me.

Last night things were pretty tense around here because one inmate got bounced out. The screws shut off the TV because they get nervous, but that only increases the tension.
Nobody likes it because things can get really volatile really fast.
Nobody sleeps and everyone is exhausted, couple that with the mentally ill inmates and the predators, it's like living in a mental institution. Everyone is insane, the guards too.

Emotions run really high here, they are in overdrive all of the time.
People get punched out for the smallest things, bumping into someone accidently gets you punched out
and bounced out,
one guy got knuckled because he said he wanted to go to Penetang.

The rules around getting bounced are still kind of vague. I've seen guys get punched out for not doing their chores, annoying other inmates. Mostly though I think it's just respecting yourself and other inmates, privacy and property; making noise after lights out, snoring is another one that might get you punched out.
Who gets bounced is entirely up to the inmates. Most though get into trouble over favours, nobody does anything for free, same as out there, but here it is much more straight forward,

karma comes quickly. For me, no favours asked, none owed.

Some of the inmates think that our dorm is treated worse than the others because we've only got three White guys. At first I didn't buy that shit, but now I am starting to believe it.

Our TV gets shut off once a week, the other dorms; not once. And there are more White guys on the other dorms, although the entire jail is mostly Native, we got the least amount of White guys (I guess we haven't met our quota).

The jail is full of Aboriginal people, but the screws are all White. I have not seen one Indian working here and it really bothers me. I see it everyday, a reminder of us and them. I know this place ain't full of Indians cause we're all criminals, something is wrong in this country.

Statistically Indians get more time and more often than Whites. I'm not looking for an excuse, but a reason, racism runs deep in this country. I see it every day here.

This place runs on emotion, reason would not make any sense here.

Here there is nothing, no past, but that which we run from, no future, except that which we await.

This place is purgatory, you are neither alive or dead, it's living in the shadow of a real life a surreal existence.
I hate this place.
Here I feel dead,
like the world has forgotten about me and for the most part it has.
Your calls make me feel happy for a while and happiness is a rarity here as is anything else of value.
Here Maslow's pyramid is built on food, drugs and respect.
who has it,
who gets it

The only thing that seems to matter here are the basest of appetites, masturbation, fisticuffs and food.
We never go outside, I guess they don't have enough guards.
I go days without a breathe of fresh air.
Even walking was taken for granted while on the outside. I won't take either for granted again.
I mostly try to stay to myself, count the weeks and know that one day I'll look back on this and it will be so long and short ago and I'll be beside you saying "the past can't hurt us anymore" and I'll be holding you from the day I see you until the mountains fall into the sea.

Yeah, yeah and the dog too. I love you guys, I miss you guys. And I can't wait to see you guys.

From the Manuscript Always a Broken Sleep
in the days I was known as Papillon

James Mackay's interview with Jordan Abel

Jordan Abel is a Nisga'a experimental poet whose work with techniques of cut-up, erasure and found text marks him out as an entirely original voice in First Nations writing. At the same time, Abel's work engages deeply with both traditional methodologies and contemporary themes of being an Indigenous writer in a majority-settler society. Abel's work has recently been recognised in his being awarded the Griffin Poetry Prize.

This interview was carried out via Zoom on 6th October, 2017. Please note that a technical glitch has led to the omission of the first thirty seconds or so of the video – no questions were deleted.

The interview is available online only.

Two Spirit and Queer Indigenous Resurgence through Sci-Fi Futurisms, Doubleweaving, and Historical Re-Imaginings: A Review Essay

Qwo-Li Driskill. *Asegi Stories: Cherokee Queer and Two-Spirit Memory*. Arizona: The U of Arizona P, 2016. 210 pages. ISBN: 9780816533640

Hope Nicholson, ed. *Love Beyond Body Space and Time: An LGBTQ Sci-Fi Anthology*. Canada: Bedside Press, 2016. 120 Pages. ISBN: 9780993997075

Kisukyukyit, my name is Smokii Sumac and I am a member of the Ktunaxa nation. [1] I am two-spirit, which means I carry certain responsibilities within the many communities I am a part of. This term, in my understanding, does not define my sexuality, but is perhaps more closely connected to my gender. While some define this term based on a simplified narrative of both male/female spirits existing in the same body, I believe that we could ask a thousand folks who claim two-spiritedness to define it and we would end up with a thousand different responses. So I can only speak for my own experience. In my life, two-spirit has come to have a spiritual meaning, one that calls on me to be in two places (sometimes at once) while also existing in the "in between." On that note, there are a great many other terms I identify with as well, which are also important to my positionality. I am queer, nonbinary, transmasculine, and a poet. I am a writer, a PhD Candidate, and an instructor of Indigenous literatures and creative writing. I am cat-dad, an auntie, an uncle, a sibling, and a child. I am hyper-aware that even as I write this, my experience of gender is shifting, changing, and growing. I open this way to give you a sense of the person examining the texts at hand, locating myself as two-spirit, queer, and Indigenous as I discuss these two books which hold two-spirit/queer Indigenous stories. I also do this to follow protocols of introducing myself, to you, as we enter the relationship of reviewer/reader.

In my introductory Indigenous Literatures class this year, I opened with *Love Beyond Body Space and Time: An Indigenous LGBT Sci-fi Anthology* edited by Hope Nicholson, and including short stories from Richard Van Camp, Gwen Benaway, Cleo Keahna, and recent Governor General Award Winner, Cherie Dimaline. In the discussion following the assigned readings, a self-identified queer and Indigenous student spoke in a somewhat awestruck manner about this anthology, saying *"I can see myself in these stories*." I share this because it resonates deeply with why I choose to teach Indigenous literatures. Representation matters. This is argued by many scholars, including Adrienne Keene in her blog on cultural appropriation, Native Appropriations, and Daniel Heath Justice in his forthcoming book *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter*. It also becomes clear in thousands of tiny moments, like my own experience teaching *Love Beyond Body Space and Time*, where we can see how and why works that re-imagine two-spirit histories – and perhaps more importantly, futures – allow our students a new space to understand themselves, to see themselves within the texts we are teaching, many for the first time. When my student acknowledged their self-recognition, I nodded and held space for that moment in my classroom, remembering the tears in my own eyes as I finished Richard Van Camp's story from this anthology, "Aliens." With a simple and sweet queer love story, Van Camp opened up a world for me. In this world where so often queer, trans, two-spirit bodies are told we are wrong, disgusting, and worse, Van Camp's story tells us we are beautiful and deserving of love. This alone would be reason for me to recommend the text, though I have to admit it is far from perfect. As one example of this, I find Dimaline's statement that "if you see a White Buffalo in a

dream then you are truly Two-Spirited" (37) (in her story "Legends are Made, Not Born") troubling in its essentialism, and therefore I choose not to assign this text: However, I believe the anthology remains a worthy way to introduce students to new and exciting ideas that take us away from the stereotypical John Wayne "only good Indian" days (and let's face it, a majority of my students don't actually know who John Wayne is anymore), and into re-defining Indigeneity.

Love Beyond Body Space and Time imagines Indigenous people into futures where blood quantum troubles are explored in a universe of transgender robots and virtual realities ("Imposter Syndrome" by Mari Kurisato), where a transwoman is invited into ceremony by her Elders ("Transitions" by Gwen Benaway) and where queer boys who face violence in their communities continue to stand up and help transform the world into something beautiful (Daniel Heath Justice's "The Boys Who Became Hummingbirds"). Nicholson has done a good job of including important authors of the Indigenous literary canon, like Justice and Van Camp, alongside lesser-known writers, like Kurisato and Cleo Keahna, whose haunting story-poem "Parallax" closes out the collection. It is perhaps due to this inclusion of emerging writers, mixed with Nicholson's own experience as a crowd-funded publisher, that cause the weaknesses I see in the text; I can imagine someone more familiar with Indigenous literatures, or an Indigenous editor would have pushed the stories further than their sometimes draft-like current states. That being said, a quick look at Nicholson's publishing website for Bedside Press shows us that this endeavor was not about being part of the Indigenous literary world so much as achieving her goal of, as clearly explained in her "Letter from the Editor", sharing "the stories that need to be told" (8). In this way, I admire Nicholson's ability to see a project that deserved publication and get it created and into the hands, especially, of young queer Indigenous folks.

Nicholson's "Letter from the Editor" begins with her own clear assertion that "these are not my stories to tell," (7). which can be very helpful when teaching students about cultural appropriation, a topic we still must spend far too much time on, in my opinion, in the Indigenous literature classroom. Following this assertion of her positionality, it's an interesting choice, then, to include authors in the collection who are not LGBTQ or two-spirit. I am critical of this choice; just as I question non-Indigenous folks telling Indigenous stories, I question cis and hetero folks telling LGBTQ stories. While I can understand the decision, and to be honest, even appreciate the inclusions from those who I personally know as allies (Nicholson does not make the distinction and neither will I), I do hope to see future collections that solely support Indigenous LGBTQ and two-spirit writers, as these are some of the most marginalized voices within our communities.

Nicholson doesn't just give lip service to the idea that she shouldn't take up too much space. Following her brief introduction, she includes two essays by Anishinaabe scholars Grace Dillon and Niigaan Sinclair, centring Indigenous voices to set the tone for the stories that follow. These two essays alone, even in their brevity (just 10 pages together), are worth the minimal cost of this text. Dillon's "Beyond the Grim Dust of What Once *Was* to a Radiant Possibility of What *Could Be*: Two Spirit-Survivance Stories" gives us insight into the Anishinaabe concept of "Biskaabiiyang: Anishinaabemowin for 'returning to ourselves,'" (Dillon, 9), and how it can be used in examining two-spirit futurisms. Dillon goes on to give readers a brief bibliography of the Indigenous LGBTQ/Two-spirit writing tradition, nodding to those who have cleared a path for this kind of collection, speaking of them as forming "a tradition worth remembering and

recalling: Beth Brant's *A Gathering of the Spirit: A Collection of Writing and Art by North American Indian Women* (1984); [and] editor Will Roscoe's collaborative offering with the Gay American Indians (GAI) advocacy group, *Living the Spirit: A Gay American Indigenous Anthology* (1988)…" (Dillon 10). Dillon goes on to include scholarly sources by leading Queer Indigenous studies scholars like Daniel Heath Justice, Lisa Tatonetti, Mark Rifkin, and Qwo-Li Driskill. I can envision passing this essay to students who want to learn more about Queer Indigenous studies, pointing to this paragraph and saying, "start here."

Niigaan Sinclair's contribution to the collection, "Returning To Ourselves: Two Spirit Futures and the Now" builds upon Dillon's introduction to the concept of Biskaabying through an essay that I would argue illustrates the concept in action. Sinclair introduces us to Ozawwendib, a historical Anishinaabe two-spirit figure, through the use of ethnographic texts from the early eighteen hundreds. While these texts serve as a sort of "proof" of the existence of genders outside the binary in historical Anishinaabe contexts, Sinclair is careful to point out the flaws of the ethnographic analysis of Ozawwendib, instead calling on us to envision and reimagine the possibilities while acknowledging an important truth: "Defining an Indigenous LGBTQ and two-spirit tradition is as complicated as describing Indigenous people themselves" (14). Sinclair draws upon some of the important scholarship that Dillon has introduced in her chapter, to introduce, affirm, and validate Indigenous LGBTQ/two-spirit knowledges, stories, and futures. If you are looking for a way to introduce Indigenous queerness and two-spirit gender identities to your class, I believe this book (with the few caveats listed here) is a good place to start.

I open my class with *Love Beyond Body Space and Time* because it is about imagining. Imagining two-spirit futures. Moving *beyond* the trauma narratives and statistics that we must teach, and into exciting new ways of thinking, being, and moving in the world. I believe that Indigenous literature is perhaps the most important site of Indigenous queer imaginings at the moment. But I also don't think it should be taught alone. While Queer Indigenous Studies is a rapidly emerging field, there are some incredible scholars who have been doing this work for quite some time now. If you are new to this field, I'd say the top two texts to start with are *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics and Literature*, edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilly and Scott Lauria Morgenson, and *Sovereign Erotics; A Collection of Two-Spirit Literatures* edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Daniel Heath Justice, Deborah Miranda and Lisa Tatonetti. You'll notice a name in common there, and while I'm hesitant to make a limiting statement, (I'd prefer you go to Dillon's essay in *Love Beyond Body Space and Time* and read all the texts mentioned there rather than only the three I mention here), I'm willing to say that I believe Qwo-Li Driskill's newest work, *Asegi Stories: Cherokee Two Spirit Memory*, is one of the most important new works of Queer Indigenous Studies scholarship.

"When you weave a basket, you create the world." In the closing chapter of *Asegi Stories*, Driskill quotes this phrase from Peggy Sanders Brennan, a Cherokee basket weaver. Driskill is sharing a moment where the two were weaving together, a moment that I believe sums up Driskill's goals within this book; to create the world through the crafting and connecting of many threads; from historical texts, to stories shared in visiting, to re-imaginings and re-envisionings, Driskill creates the world with Cherokee two-spirit memory at the centre. The whole of this text centres on Driskill's creation of what I would call a Cherokee research methodology; that of the double weaved basket, a type of basket that is essentially two baskets, one inside of the other, attached by the rim at the top. Through this theoretical framework, Driskill shows us hir methods

of weaving, illustrating with a beautiful lived metaphor the ways in which we can re-imagine and re-story our lives, as Two-Spirit folks.

I claim this narrative here, as a Two-Spirit identified person, however, there is also much in this story that I do not know/cannot claim. Building on Driskill's methodology and theory of Cherokee double-weaving, I want to point to the fact that much of this book is created with a clear acknowledgement, or even an assumption of insider knowledge. That is not to critique Driskill, as I believe that hir privileging of Cherokee knowledge within this book is done deliberately and pointedly in order to create a sense of not only Cherokee intellectual sovereignty, but also as a sort of challenge to the reader: if you don't know the history Driskill is talking about, it is up to you to find it elsewhere. For my own purposes, I was able to glean what I needed from my experience reading and studying Daniel Heath Justice's *Kynship* texts, which my professor at the time, Deanna Reder (SFU), paired with a lecture on Cherokee history so that we, students at a Canadian university, were introduced to the Cherokee removal. While this is an extremely limited understanding of Cherokee history, I share this limitation to say that I do not think one needs a deep understanding of Cherokee knowledges to find this text beneficial, especially if you are reading it for insights into Queer Indigenous theory.

In this way, I think about the many different lenses that each of us will read this book through, depending on our own positionality, history, and knowledges. It's as if Driskill is sitting in a public place, weaving hir basket, and I have been invited to say hello, maybe sit and visit for a while. Myself, never having woven a basket, may be intrigued and curious, but I cannot do much more than appreciate the craft, perhaps learn a basic step or two, knowing it would take years and many baskets to get where Driskill is now. On the other hand, another skilled basket weaver would feel right at home here with Driskill, admiring parts of the creation that I would remain blind to. There are parts of this book that as a Ktunaxa person with little knowledge of Cherokee history, I remain blind to, though Driskill has done much work to, if we are continuing with this metaphor, gather the tools and rivercane necessary for me to be able to learn more.

There are parts of this book that as a two-spirit person, feel like home. I am reminded of my students seeing themselves in *Love Beyond Body Space and Time*, as tears come to my eyes when I read about Driskill learning to "press cedar against the inner wall of the basket and weave over [it]…so that the cedar can't be seen" (5). Driskill's gift to me, as I recognize that I am the cedar. A recognition that two-spiritedness does not have to be a liminal space; does not need to be a movement from *here* to *there*, but instead it is both a presence and an absence. All this gifted to me within the first few pages of the introductory chapter.

I believe this book holds many of these gifts for each one of its readers. Some of the gifts are given in harder ways than others, of course. Driskill calls upon Queer Studies to recognize Indigenous sovereignty and include two-spirit narratives and discussions in every conversation we have, "In short, I am asking all of us engaged in queer studies to remember exactly on whose land it is built" (23), Driskill writes in hir chapter "Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques." This chapter follows up with more gifts, tools I believe that can help us in taking up the challenges Driskill give us; seven "features of two-spirit critiques" serve as sub-headings throughout the chapter:

1. Two-Spirit Critiques see Two-Spirit People and Traditions as Both Integral to and a Challenge to Nationalist and Decolonial Struggles
2. Two-Spirit Critiques are Rooted in Artistic and Activist work and Remain Accountable to Overlapping Communities
3. Two-Spirit Critiques Engage in Both Intertribal and Tribally Specific Concerns
4. Two-Spirit Critiques are Woven into Native Feminisms by Seeing Sexism, Homophobia, and Transphobia as Colonial Tools
5. Two-Spirit Critiques are Informed by and Make Use of Other Native Activisms, Arts, and Scholarships,
6. Two-Spirit Critiques see the Erotic as a Tool in Decolonial Struggles
7. Two-Spirit Critiques see Two-Spirit Identities in Relationship with Spirituality and Medicine (Driskill, 33-7).

As with Sinclair and Dillon's essays in *Love Beyond Body Space and Time*, this chapter "Double Weaving Two-Spirit Critique" stands as reason enough for this text to be considered an important piece of scholarship in Indigenous Studies and beyond. It occurs to me as I wrote these critiques out that Driskill's text achieves all of the goals set out here. I say goals rather than features because I am reminded of Linda Tuhiwai Smith's "25 Indigenous Projects" in *Decolonizing Methodologies.* While these are identifiable features of two-spirit critiques, they also, I think, serve as a challenge to those in the field to ensure they are meeting all of these expectations—and I don't think this is limited to Queer Indigenous Studies. Instead these seven points should be used as tools to bring the decolonizing concepts that two-spirit critiques gift us with into all of our theory, all of our scholarship, and all of our communities.

Driskill's text is also important because it gives us new ways to imagine ourselves outside of the sometimes-painful shackles of "tradition." In academic circles, it may seem that queer Indigenous studies is thriving; that there are many of us here creating work and having that work published, and our voices heard. I would argue that for every one of us who is making it there are a hundred out there you don't see, who have brilliant things to say but are overwhelmed by homophobia, transphobia, racism and lateral violence. Our communities, while oft painted as open and welcoming, honouring "traditions" of multiple genders, remain, in many cases, violent places for us to be, where we face discrimination even (or perhaps especially) within ceremonial spaces. This is why these stories matter. Driskill's work challenges those heteronormative colonial ideas by drawing upon, and then "queering," historical records. S/he introduces us to the possibilities of two-spirit characters like Dragonfly having a presence in the creation story of fire (12). S/he spends a lengthy chapter ("The Queer Lady of Cofitachequi") examining a story of the De Soto expedition, introducing us to the "Lady of Cofitachequi," rendered "Within colonial accounts…as first within a male/female binary and then, as resistant to colonial patriarchal authority as an Indigenous non-Christian woman" (Driskill 55), and then making an argument for a queer reading of this historical figure—not because there is any historical record that illustrates her two-spritedness, but because "there is also no archival evidence that she was not" (55). In this way, Driskill gives insights into Cherokee stories that may already be well-known to a Cherokee reader and takes the time to identify, imagine, and read them as the eponymous "asegi stories." Asegi is a Cherokee word meaning "strange" and often read as "queer." By doing this, Driskill shakes up heteronormative practices of reading historical accounts through a binaristic lens that seeks to erase the presence of queer and two-spirit folks.

While those of us who are not Cherokee may not gain the same kind of illumination that a Cherokee person would in reading over these re-imagined stories, this work is vital for all two-spirit folks who have often searched far and wide, yearning for some sort of record of ourselves pre-contact. Driskill creates an imagining where any pre-contact text could be a record of ourselves, and this is a radical and necessary balancing of the historical lenses through which we research and read Indigenous stories. This is not to say it's all easy to read. Some of Driskill's work is very hard. Historical accounts, perhaps especially when they do explicitly include us, are often violent depictions of genocide and gendercide (a term Driskill borrows from Deborah Miranda). But, like many Indigenous scholars, artists, writers and activists, s/he refuses to leave us without hope. Indeed, I would argue that any of the traumatic and difficult stories included here are only included in order to create/re-imagine them, and empower not only two-spirit, queer, and/or Cherokee folks, but to empower all readers to challenge violent heteropatriarchial norms. Driskill illustrates ways to do this through hir third chapter, "Unweaving the Basket;" an in depth look at "how colonial concepts of gender and sexuality were internalized by Cherokee communities as Cherokee forms of governance shifted from autonomous, gender-egalitarian townships to a centralized, male-dominated Cherokee nation" (101). Using the metaphor of the basket that runs throughout *Asegi Stories*, this chapter illustrates how the original basket; Cherokee pre-contact society, was unwoven by colonization through chapter sections on Cherokee Law, Missionization, and Slavery. One important aspect to this chapter, which is also evident throughout the rest of the book, is Driskill's commitment to black/Indigenous solidarity throughout hir scholarship. "Unweaving the Basket" contains a section titled "Unweaving Splint Two: Slavery, Black Bodies, and Heteropatriarchy" which examines violence on black bodies in Cherokee society as a 'civilization' tactic of colonization, and how this lead to other gender-based violence.

The final three chapters of Driskill's book continue the re-imagining by calling for celebrations of diverse Indigenous bodies. Chapter 4, "Beautiful as the Red Rainbow: Cherokee Two-Spirits Rebeautifyng Erotic Memory," builds on Driskill's previous works with texts like *Sovereign Erotics* in lifting up the erotic as a site of decolonization. One perhaps more controversial aspect to this is the inclusion of photos of Cherokee pipes, which Driskill reads through an erotic lens. As a person who participates in ceremony, myself, I wonder about the inclusion of photographs of pipe relations, which Driskill has taken hirself at the Peabody Museum. This is a fine line, but I often wonder when I see this kind of work whether or not Cherokee ceremonial knowledge holders were consulted; should these pipes be photographed, or perhaps left alone and simply described? On that note, I also believe there is an argument to be made that Driskill's re-imagining could lead to dangerous places. While it seems from this book Driskill has strong ties to the Cherokee community through the folks he has visited with throughout his research travels (like the earlier-quoted weaver Peggy Sanders Brennan), there is a part of me that proceeds with caution, not about the well-researched and thought out discussion included here, but instead about the ways in which it might be read. I would hate to see this idea of re-imagining our historical narratives taken too far out of context. In other words, while I believe that there is a resurgence of two-spirit knowledges happening throughout our communities, I do not think that claiming two-spirit gives us license to simply make up our own stories. Again, I do not mean to say that Driskill does this. S/he is very clear to note that hir hypothetical asegi versions of Cherokee stories are but one telling, a re-imagining that allows for more possibilities. It is more how this text could be read as a justification for less responsible work that worries me. Of

course, perhaps especially in Indigenous Studies, we know that we have little control over what happens to our words once we put them into the world, and I do believe Driskill has been cautious, hirself, about opening up too much space for possible make-believe.

In closing, this is an important book for Indigenous Studies, Queer Studies, settler-colonial studies, for history, anthropology, gender studies, literary studies, and of course, Cherokee studies. I honestly believe it could also be useful in countless other disciplines where I would like to see more conversations on gender happening. The "Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critique" Chapter, perhaps especially, can be used to give insights into the woefully misunderstood concept of two-spiritedness. One field I think of especially is Indigenous Environmental Sciences, where binary concepts of "Mother" earth, male/female plant species (even when plants have so many more asegi/queer methods of reproducing) water as the "women's" medicine and fire as the "men's" still seem to carry so much weight. This text allows for a queering of historical records, of "tradition," and of our bodies, one that celebrates, affirms, and brings LGBTQ/two-spirit knowledges to the centre of our futures. The final chapter, "Epilogue: Doubleweave: An *Asegi* Manifesto" explains the importance of this centring, as two-spirit folks "carry memories for our people" (Driskill 170). Driskill calls on us to remember that Asegi space; the third space, the cedar between the walls of the double weaved basket, and I encourage you to answer hir call.

Both *Love Beyond Body Space and Time*, and *Asegi Stories* acknowledge and call upon us to pay attention to what queer and two-spirited Indigenous folks are doing. In my teachings, we have specific responsibilities within our communities as two-spirit people. And, as Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argues in interview when asked how to stop gender-based violence, our communities have responsibilities to us as well, needing to:

> Center Two Spirit, queer, and trans people in our nation building, in our movement building and in our world building. We need to collectively build and embody the alternative. Build communities and nations [where] interpersonal violence is unthinkable.

As I write this it is Trans Day of Remembrance. Later I will go to a candlelight vigil and honour all of the trans folks murdered in the past year. Mourning is a necessary practice. Grief must be felt and honoured. And yet, I call on each of us to do more than mourn and grieve. Let's celebrate and uphold Indigenous Queer, Trans and Two-Spirit voices. Support us while we are living. Read/watch/listen/see/support our work. As Driskill writes at the close of hir book: "Our stories reweave the world." (Driskill 170). I call on you to witness and be a part of this reweaving.

Smokii Sumac, Trent University

Notes

[1] Kisukyukyit is a greeting in Ktunaxa

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> "I don't know if it's about visiting another world, a dream world. I think what it's about is the fact that the world doesn't make sense to me. But I can write a story that's twenty-four pages long, and for those twenty-four pages I can make the world make sense. I need those injections of the world making sense. It allows me to fake my way through this world that doesn't make sense." Stephen Graham Jones, *The Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones* (17).

From red ford trucks to teenage Halloween horror, and from West Texas to Montana, Stephen Graham Jones writes complicated and affective narratives about the American West. As editor of *The Faster Redder Road*, Theodore Van Alst Jr. explains that Jones is an author who 'can wrench your gut with horror and humor, leave you wandering and wondering, and ultimately make you ask for more hours in the day' (xvi). In this collected anthology of Jones's work, Van Alst has worked hard to include some of Jones's most exciting and challenging writing. He brings together a wide breath of Jones's previously published work ranging from eight novel extracts to 27 short stories. Some works that appear in both Van Alst's collection and Billy J. Stratton's *The Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones* include *The Fast Red Road: A Plainsong*, "Captivity Narrative 109", *The Long Trial of Nolan Bugatti*, *Demon Theory*, *It Came from Del Rio*, and *The Last Final Girl*. If you have never read Jones, *The Faster Redder Road* is the place to start.

Part of the draw of this collection is Van Alst's introduction, where he sheds light on Jones's ability to write stories that explore more than what it means to be 'Indian in the twenty-first century' (xvi). He joyfully points out that 'finally, finally, when I read these stories, unless I am told otherwise, all of the characters are Indian. But best of all, very best of all, they're incidentally Indian'(xiv). This collection is as diverse as some of Jones's influences, which include Gerald Vizenor, Bret Easton Ellis, Louise Erdrich, Phillip K. Dick, and Stephen King. 'Infused with nostalgia', we travel with Jones to convenience stores, diners, playgrounds, and high schools (xvi). Reading like an all-access behind the scenes pass, Jones's story notes appear at the end of each narrative and explain Jones's writing techniques and thoughts when writing a particular character, place, or memory.

Two notable narratives that make us feel, as Van Alst explains, like we 'can't look away' or 'get away' are "So Perfect" and *The Last Final Girl* (xvi). "So Perfect" illustrates two murderous teenage girls and a gruesome tick infestation that is sure to make you queasy. Set on Halloween night, *The Last Final Girl* features a murderer in a Michael Jackson mask and turns the slasher genre on its head. Another of my favorites is "To Run Without Falling" a story of a 14-year-old boy and his friends' injurious teenage nights at a playground, where blood mixes with gravel and

'seesaws greased so quiet that we had to make up for it by screaming our presence, that we existed' (108). One of the most disturbing stories is "Father, Son, Holy Rabbit", which hauntingly portrays a father and son lost on a hunting trip. In a snowy wilderness, species boundaries are challenged as a father's love for his son turns deadly. Also, consider this from truck stop narrative "Paleogenesis, Circa 1970", one of the list stories in the collection: "This is how I say rain, in little grey drops of noise that roll down the face of the page, a silent patter that has been falling for years. But it's not raining now. Listen. This is how I say truck stop: a finger of neon light on the horizon; the feel of idling rigs in the stained concrete; the smell of diesel, grease, chiliburger, toys bought that will someday be the only thing a child has left" (135) . Followed by Jones's story note: "This one's just me sitting in a booth. Or, "me," I should say" (142). This is just one example of Jones bleeding onto the page as what he calls his shadow self. This is elaborated upon further by Jones in *The Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones*.

As editor of the critical essay collection, Stratton has orchestrated a timely and well-focused collection on an author whose work has previously not been given the scholarly attention it deserves. Reflecting on the ever-multiplying works of Jones and the variety of genres that he deploys, Stratton anchors the collection with an essay by Jones himself "Letter to a Just-Starting-Out Indian Writer— and Maybe to Myself". As an invitation to 'come for the icing, stay for the cake', Stratton's introduction hits right to the core of Jones's allure—empathy. It is precisely Jones's intense 'emotional core' and the authenticity of his work that pulls us as readers into each page (20). This is followed closely by a standout piece in the form of an interview with Jones titled "Observations of the Shadow Self". In the interview, Jones says when writing fiction he always is 'looking over at that shadow self, that other self that could have been' (21). Referring to his characters as his shadow selves, he says 'the way I make them real is by saying they're me'(21-22).

Genre bending and fusing 'literary territories' with memory, Jones's human and more-than-human characters resist categorization and often reveal the blurred boundaries between the living and the dead (4). Jones's fiction involves many forms ranging from 'slipstream, thriller, sci-fi, horror, detective fiction, the graphic novel, film treatments, short stories, microfiction, and even blogging' (4). As Frances Washburn notes, Jones's novels 'rupture' American Indian literature in the sense that he writes in a genre that is his own (68). Jones has done countless interviews, many of which can be found on his site demontheory.net, and Stratton's interview reveals the 'dark pathways' and the major themes of Jones work (259). He has organized the collection into three main sections, each centered on Jones's dialogue with survivance, history, and genre. I focus on a few selected essays that illustrate the diversity of Jones's writing.

Welcoming us into the 'brave red world' of Jones, Stratton's love and dedication to Jones's work is apparent (402). His chapter stands out amongst the strongest of the collection and he points us towards the unique nature of Jones's work at every turn. Focusing on Jones's first novel *The Fast Red Road*, Stratton points out Jones's ability to lead the reader 'into territories beyond the belief to face the mystery of storytelling and what it can teach us' (107). As a postmodern gothic, *The Fast Red Road* layers conventions common to genre fiction whilst illuminating the spectral hauntings of colonial invasion from West Texas to New Mexico. There is a particularly succinct comparative exploration of *The Fast Red Road* and Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49,*

which illustrates Jones's deconstruction of meaning and postmodernist influences. Intertextuality is central to Stratton's chapter and much of Jones's work. Also exploring Jones's postmodern fiction, Kristina Baudemann explains how Jones's formatting is postmodern creating 'a sense of direction, metafiction, and différance' (161).

Birgit Däwes's insightful chapter on *The Bird is Gone* uniquely explores the detective narrative perspective, ecological themes, and Jones's speculative future where the Great Plains is returned back into 'Indian Territories' (134). She is quick to point out that this novel is 'a Rubik's Cube' that has to be twisted and turned many times in order to tie together the narrative streams (68). John Gamber's chapter, which follows Däwes's, is also on *The Bird is Gone*, and offers an in-depth analysis of the legal implications of land re-allocation in Jones's novel. Pinpointing the central current of the novel, he asks 'what if Native American proprietorship were suddenly recognized by the United States' (133). He successfully argues how Jones further complicates the notion of wilderness space through the mythos of the Great Plains and the frontier offering an insight into contemporary Native land issues (135). Both Däwes and Gamber break down what is known as one of Jones's 'least accessible novels' with a zeal that proves that *The Bird is Gone* is worth exploring (116).

Analysis of Jones's novels are covered extensively but the sections dedicated to his short stories illuminate why more attention should be paid to Jones's 200 plus short stories. Chris LaLonde's "Cryptic Portrayals" discusses the short story collection *Bleed Into Me*. Noting that when reading Jones 'one is rarely far from death' (218). A. Robert Lee also discusses a few of Jones's short story collections together in "Dark Illumination". Notable here are some of Lee's readings from *The Ones That Got Away*; his short analysis of 'Monsters', which involves a young boy's summer vacation, a cadaver dog, and a vampire, underlines why 'memory again becomes haunt'(266). Lee pinpoints the often cyclical nature of Jones's writing and reveals how he transforms the most ordinary situation into a nightmare.

The third and final section of the book deals with Jones's genre fiction, and builds on earlier discussions. Van Alst explores the Old West and the New West in "Lapin Noir: To Del Rio It Went". Describing *It Came from Del Rio* as 'literary noir' and 'Texas twisted', he offers an analysis of the novel alongside films such as *Repo Man*, *Touch of Evil*, and *Navajo Joe* (328). Rebecca M. Lush discusses two of Jones's more recent novels, *The Last Final Girl* and *Zombie Bake-Off*, in her contribution "Dead Celebrities and Horror Archetypes". Layered with zombie apocalypse, horror, and humor, Lush's analysis develops an understanding of Jones's engagement with horror and pop culture. Although Jones's more recent horror works deal less explicitly with Native themes, Lush notes that 'the Native is never too far around the proverbial corner' (306). She delivers a reading of Jones's horror and speculative fiction that demonstrates his deconstruction of classic horror tropes. As Jones disrupts narrative conventions of the horror genre, Lush shows how Jones engages with the slasher theme and zombies in order to flesh out how the boundaries between life and death remain tenuous.

Bookending Stratton's collection is Grace L. Dillon's mediation on Native slipstream and science fiction "Native Slipstream: Blackfeet Physics in *The Fast Red Road*". She explores *The Fast Red Road*, where time bends and realities blur. The novel reads as an Indian road trip narrative with a 'Native shuffle step' that switches between time periods (352). Dillon defines Native

slipstream as alternative and multiple realities that promote 'cultural, economic, and environmental sustainabilities for self-determining Indigenous peoples' (344). She also links quantum physics and Indigenous futurism to the theme of the 'Native Glitch', where 'a series of defining moments or characters in Native history' are destined to repeat in an 'endless loop' (351). Demonstrating the relationship between speculative fiction, time-travel, and Native fiction, Dillon argues that these conventions are 'central to Native epistemologies' (345). Finished with over 20 pages of manuscript pages with Jones's notes scribbled in the margins, a glossary of terms, and an excerpt from the graphic novel of *Demon Theory,* this collection skilfully brings together essays that prove the many ways that Jones makes sense of living in the twenty-first century.

Entering the world of Stephen Graham Jones is an otherworldly experience and his characters live on in your mind long after the book closes. When read together, these collections insist upon how relatable and experimental Jones's fiction is. Reading Jones is certain to hot-wire your sight but, as both Van Alst and Stratton's collections show, the vision may not be quite what you had expected. Anything will happen; we just have to be brave enough to turn the page.

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Steve Friesen, with François Chladiuk, *Lakota Performers in Europe: Their Culture and the Artefacts They Left Behind*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017. 304 pp. ISBN 9780806156965.

http://www.oupress.com/ECommerce/Book/Detail/2199/lakota%20performers%20in%20europe

Buffalo Bill, his name and his legend, live on until the present day. He keeps re-appearing across a wide range of media in the United States as well as in Europe, in history books, in film (notably Robert Altman's *Buffalo Bill and the Indians: Or Sitting Bull's History Lesson*), in novels (like French novelist Eric Vuillard's *Tristesse de la Terre: Une histoire de Buffalo Bill Cody*). In the manner of so many stars of the international stage, he seems unable to take leave from the adulation of audiences who flocked to see his show in their millions in its heyday, roughly from the 1880s to the 1910s. Not even the trifling detail of his death prevented him from entering a long and successful afterlife. During his life as a showman he had set the parameters for the translation of the history of the American West into myth, turning recent history into the quintessential American narrative of "how the West was won," and how the Americans found their national destiny. Through the re-enactment of heroic high points in this narrative the message of "manifest destiny" and of the Indians as a vanishing race, where Anglo-Saxon whites kept winning and Indians kept losing battles, was hammered home to audiences that themselves were caught in the process of becoming Americans.

Not only that: Buffalo Bill's Wild West went on tour internationally, to England first, in 1887 on the occasion of the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria's rule, to other European countries in following decades. Rival shows, such as Pawnee Bill's Great Wild West, were cut of the same cloth and vied for the same audiences. They all combined to disseminate the story of the American West as spectacle and entertainment. Nor were they the only carriers of this information. Countries like Germany and France had a long infatuation with the romance of the American West and the American Indian. In France we can trace this back to the popularity of what is arguably the first "Western" in literature, Chateaubriand's *Atala*, or to later French fiction by Gustave Aimard. In Germany a similar long-standing sentimental involvement with the American Indian spurred initially by translations of James Fennimore Cooper's frontier tales, was being fed by Karl May's stories of white-Indian male bonding in the pristine open spaces of the American West. In addition, local entrepreneurs blended the appeal of the untamed "wild", whether animals or human beings, in what became known as "human zoos." People from the far reaches of the world, explored in the frantic competition for colonial expansion, were put on display in European countries and the U.S. for local publics to gaze at in a blend of anthropological and prurient interests. They could hail from the Pacific, from Africa, but American Indians were a prominent presence.

Thus, in these varied ways, European publics were exposed to forms of mass entertainment as these had recently been shaped, particularly in the United States. At the same time, they may have taken in the many implied readings of contemporary civilization. The rank order of human cultures as projected through these pageants and spectacles was from primitive and un-civilized to high, with white civilization at its pinnacle. It was a view that confirmed white audiences, on

both sides of the Atlantic, in their sense of global mission, what the French called their *mission civilisatrice*. This particular blend of entertainment and indoctrination led American author Mark Twain, centrally involved in the production of an American cultural vernacular, to re-assure Buffalo Bill, on the eve of his first European tour, that he would be offering Europeans a sample of something truly and authentically American, not – as had been the case all too often before – something at best derivative of European culture. The role the Indians were given to play In the Wild West show formed part of the larger message of American pre-eminence in the world order of civilizations. Most of them were Lakota and kept performing in the Wild West show even after images of the massacre at Wounded Knee, in particular of Lakota chief Spotted Elk's frozen body left out in the open following the carnage, had reached a larger public.

One is left wondering how a man like Mark Twain, a powerful voice in the international protest against Belgian King Leopold's reign of terror in his Congo colony, could at the same time ignore domestic atrocity visited upon native American Indians. Clearly a matter of selective observation and indignation. Yet there they were, Lakota performers in traveling Wild West shows. Why did they get themselves involved? This is the central question that the book under review tries to answer.

Toward the end of the 19th century American Indians had a limited number of options: a miserable life on reservations, forced Americanization imposed on Indian children at Indian Schools, or the chance to earn money and keep their own culture alive through its continuing re-enactment before eager publics. This may have made sense for those involved, although only limited numbers could avail themselves of this option.

Much of the story that the book under review tells has been told before. There is no original research for this book to report. In fact, although published by a university press, this is not an academic, or scholarly, book. It is a coffee table book, gorgeously produced. It is a fan's product in two ways. It lovingly orders and reproduces in beautiful color a collection of cultural artefacts that go back to what Lakota performers had left behind or had sold to a Belgian "collectionneur" after their last stay in Brussels. That, we might say, was the first fan's critical intervention. Subsequently, re-discovering this cultural hoard, cataloguing it and making it accessible to a larger public Is important cultural work in its own right, and we have to thank the instigators for it. Local fans have found a way of sharing their enthusiasm with the wider world. It is a triumphal act of resistance against the forces of entropy and oblivion.

Contributor Biographies

JORDAN ABEL is a Nisga'a writer from BC. Currently, he is pursuing a PhD at Simon Fraser University where his research concentrates on the intersection between Digital Humanities and Indigenous Literary Studies. Abel's creative work has recently been anthologized in *Best Canadian Poetry* (Tightrope),*The Land We Are: Artists and Writers Unsettle the Politics of Reconciliation* (Arbiter Ring), and *The New Concrete: Visual Poetry in the 21st Century* (Hayword). Abel is the author of *Injun*,*Un/inhabited*, and *The Place of Scraps* (winner of the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize and finalist for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award).

CRISOSTO APACHE is a Mescalero / Chiricahua Apache and Diné (Navajo), Salt Clan born for Towering House Clan, from New Mexico, USA. He is an alumnus from IAIA (AFA 1992 / MFA 2015) and Metropolitan State University of Denver (BA, 2013) for English Writing and Creative Writing. He teaches at several colleges in the Denver Metro in Colorado. He currently lives Lakewood, Colorado with his spouse of 17 years. His public work includes Native LGBTQI / 'two spirit' advocacy, board membership, and online poetry editorials.

Some of Crisosto's work is published in *Black Renaissance Noiré, Yellow Medicine Review (2013/2015), Denver Quarterly* (Pushcart Prize Nominee 2014)*, Toe Good Poetry, Hawaii Review, Cream City Review Plume Anthology, Common Place*, *Tending the Fire*, by Christopher Felver, and *American Indian Culture & Research Journal (ACRJ)*. Crisosto also appeared on MTV's *Free Your Mind* (1993) ad campaign for poetry.

Crisosto has book reviews for the Native American Anthology *Visit Tee-Pee Town* (Coffee House Press 1999), published in the *Poetry Project* publication, Issue 175, June 1999.

BRIAN BURKHART is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at California State University Northridge. He grew up on the Navajo nation in Arizona and is also from the Cherokee tribe of Oklahoma, where he still has a lot of family. He wrote his doctoral dissertation at Indiana University on environmental ethics and indigenous philosophy, and is in the process of having a book published by SUNY Press entitled *Respect for Kinship: Toward an Indigenous Environmental Ethics*.

DAVID J. CARLSON is Professor of English at California State University, San Bernardino. He is the author of *Sovereign Selves: American Indian Autobiography and the Law* (University of Illinois Press, 2006) and *Imagining Sovereignty: The Discourse of Self-Determination in American Indian Law and Literature* (forthcoming, University of Oklahoma Press, 2016).

DAVID GROULX was raised in Northern Ontario. He is proud of his Aboriginal roots – Ojibwe Indian and French Canadian. After receiving his BA from Lakehead University, where he won the Munro Poetry Prize, David studied creative writing at the En'owkin Centre in Penticton, B.C., where he won the Simon J Lucas Jr. Memorial Award for poetry. He has also studied at The University of Victoria Creative Writing Program.

David has had nine poetry books published—*Night in the Exude* (Tyro Publications: Sault Ste Marie, 1997); *The Long Dance* (Kegedonce Press, Neyaashiinigmiing, 2000); *Under God's Pale Bones* (Kegedonce Press, Neyaashiinigmiing, 2010); *A Difficult Beauty* (Wolsak & Wynn: Hamilton, ON 2011); *Rising With A Distant Dawn* (BookLand Press: Toronto, ON 2011); *Imagine Mercy* (BookLand Press: Toronto, ON 2013); *These Threads Become A Thinner Light* (Theytus Books, Penticton, BC 2014); and *In The Silhouette Of Your Silences* (N.O.N Publishing, Vancouver, BC 2014). *Wabigoon River Poems* is David's ninth title. (Kegedonce Press, Neyaashiinigmiing, 2015).

David won the 3rd annual Poetry NOW Battle of the Bards in 2011, and was a featured reader at the IFOA in Toronto & Barrie (2011), as well as Ottawa Writer's Festival (2012). David has appeared on The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and was the Writer-In-Residence for Open Book Toronto for November 2012.

David's poetry has been translated into Spanish & German. *Rising With A Distant Dawn* was translated into French; under the title, *Le lever à l'aube lointaine*, 2013.

Red River Review nominated David's poems for Pushcart Prizes in 2012, and David's poetry has appeared in over a 160 publications in 16 countries. He lives in Ottawa, Canada.

DEBORAH L. MADSEN is Professor of American Studies and Director of the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Geneva. Her research focuses on issues of settler-nationalism, indigeneity, and migration, exemplified by her work on American Exceptionalism and the white supremacist ideology of Manifest Destiny. She has written extensively on the work of Gerald Vizenor, including the monograph *Understanding Gerald Vizenor* (2009) and the edited books *Gerald Vizenor: Texts and Contexts* (co-edited with A. Robert Lee, 2010), *The Poetry and Poetics of Gerald Vizenor* (2012), and the *Routledge Companion to Native American Literature* (2015).

OLENA McLAUGHLIN is a PhD candidate in English with focus in Native American literature at Oklahoma State University. She also holds an MA in Native American Studies from Montana State University. Her primary research interests focus on manifestations and functions of memory in contemporary Native American literature, art, and film.

CARTER MELAND teaches American Indian Literature and Film courses for the Department of American Indian Studies. He received his Ph.D. in American Studies with a thesis that examined the role of tricksters in the works of contemporary Native novelists. His academic work has appeared in journals like *American Studies*, *Studies in the Humanities*, and *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. His fiction has appeared in numerous literary journals including Yellow Medicine Review, Lake, and Fiction Weekly. He also blogs at http://the-long-one.blogspot.com/. His debut novel, *Stories for a Lost Child* was published in 2017 by Michigan State UP.

MARGARET NOODIN is the author of *Weweni* (Wayne State University Press, 2015), a collection of bilingual poems in Anishinaabemowin and English, and B*awaajimo: A*

Dialect of Dreams in Anishinaabe Language and Literature (Michigan State University Press, 2014). She currently works as an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, where she also serves as director of the Electa Quinney Institute for American Indian Education.

KAREN M. POREMSKI is an associate professor of English at Ohio Wesleyan University, in the homelands of the Lenni Lenape people. She teaches classes in Early and 19th-century American literature as well as women's literature, Native literature, composition, and business writing. Her current research project examines the ways contemporary Indigenous writers portray the complex relationships between Native people, museums, and the objects in museums. She also enjoys writing creative nonfiction and poetry.

BILLY J. STRATTON (PhD, American Indian Studies—University of Arizona) is currently an assistant professor in the English department at the University of Denver. His teaching and research centers on contemporary American/Native American literature, critical theory and creative writing. His first book, *Buried in Shades of Night*, was published in 2013.

THEODORE C. VAN ALST, Jr. is Associate Professor and Chair of Native American Studies at the University of Montana. He is a former Assistant Dean and Director of the Native American Cultural Center at Yale University, and has been an Assistant Professor and Co-Chair of the Program in Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Connecticut. His most recent work includes "Lapin Noir: To Del Rio It Went" in *A Critical Companion to the Fiction of Stephen Graham Jones,* ed. Billy J. Stratton from the University of New Mexico Press as well as the chapters "Navajo Joe," and "The Savage Innocents," in *Seeing Red—Hollywood's Pixeled Skins: American Indians and Film* (2013), available from Michigan State University Press. His current book-length project is *Spaghetti and Sauerkraut with a Side of Frybread*, and his edited volume *The Faster Redder Road: The Best UnAmerican Stories of Stephen Graham Jones* was released in April 2015 by the University of New Mexico Press, who are also publishing a collection of his short stories in 2018. His fiction and photography have been published in *Entropy*, *The Rumpus, Indian Country Today, The RavenChronicles*, and *Yellow Medicine Review,* among others. He has worked as a consultant on multiple projects for the Disney Channel as well as on NPR's *All Things Considered*, and has recently appeared in multiple segments of the History Channel series *Mankind the Story of All of Us*. He has been interviewed by *The Washington Post*, Canadian Broadcast Corporation, *Native America Calling*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, and Al-Jazeera America Television on a variety of subjects, from Native representation and *Tonto* to Spaghetti Westerns, headdresses, and *Twilight*.

CATHY COVELL WAEGNER taught in the English Department of the University of Siegen in Germany until her retirement in July 2013. She obtained degrees from the College of William & Mary (BA) and the University of Virginia (MA, PhD). In addition to her work on William Faulkner and Toni Morrison, she has published on Native American themes, transculturality in the ethnic bildungsroman, minstrelsy, AfroAsian

"postmodernist passing," 400 years after Jamestown, "hybrid tropes" in film, new diasporas, palimpsestic trajectories on the "ethnic shore," and the interaction between American and European cultural phenomena. Waegner edited a volume in the American Indian Studies Series (Michigan State University Press) in 2015 called *Mediating Indianness*, co-edited a project volume with Norfolk State University scholars, *Transculturality and Perceptions of the Immigrant Other: "From-Heres" and "Come-Heres" in Virginia and North Rhine-Westphalia* (2011), as well as, with colleagues from Université d'Orléans, *Literature on the Move: Comparing Diasporic Ethnicities in Europe and the Americas* (2002). She served as MESEA (Multi-Ethnic Studies: Europe and the Americas) treasurer for four years. Her current research focuses on contemporary Native American literature, specifically in connection with issues of globalization.

CAROL EDELMAN WARRIOR joined the Cornell community as a Postdoctoral Mellon Fellow in the Department of English, and is currently an Assistant Professor. She is enrolled with the Ninilchik Village Tribe (Dena'ina Athabascan / Alutiiq), and is also of A'aninin (Gros Ventre) descent. Before coming to Cornell, Warrior taught in the Departments of English and American Indian Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. Among her research and teaching interests are Indigenous critical theory, Indigenous philosophies, futurisms, ecocriticism, activism, literature, film, music, material culture, and sovereignty.