



Transmotion

Vol 10, No 2 (2025)

Special Issue – Tsalagi Scholars: Land, Stories, Relations



Jimya Driver
4x5 White Oak Basket



Gabe Crowe
(Tsi sgwa A na tli A gv
sdu lo) Bird Warrior
Mask



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- ✚ Emphasize experimental, theoretical, and avant-garde Native North American work.

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CONTENTS

Introduction - Tsalagi Scholars: Land, Stories, Relations 1-6
Scott Andrews

Articles

**Won't You Be My (Allotment) Neighbor?: Mapping Cherokee Homelands in
Diaspora** 7-57
Jonathan Radocay

O-da-li Ga-li E-di-yo-ha: Mountain Climber, We Are All Looking For It 58-79
Alissa Baker

**"Two Cats and a Monkey": A Translated and Morphologically Annotated Cherokee
Language Text with Guidance for Second-Language Learners** 80-143
Tanner Scott and Eva Marie Garrouette

RoboKin and Technovation in Cherokee Speculative Fiction 144-187
Kathryn Walkiewicz

Trickster Methods for Decolonial Resistance or How the Cardinal turned Red 188-230
Brian Burkhart

Creative Supplement

Cherokee High School Literary Journal Spring 2024

EDITORS: Jayle Creson, Coco Wells, Ila Brinkmeyer, Gabriel Terrell, Christian Alfaro, Gideon Freeman, Victoria Palmer, Makenzie Rattler, Vincent Owle, Nyree Thompson, Faith Dillard Brooks, Jimya Driver, Bayley Wright, Ericka Brady, and Carys Holiday.

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Reviews

REVIEW ESSAY **William 'Spirit' Knifeman: The post-indian warrior of survivance in *Reservation Dogs***

James Lapping

231-239

REVIEW ESSAY **Cheyfitz, Eric. *The Colonial Construction of Indian Country: Native American Literatures and Federal Indian Law***

Yifei Jing

240-246

***Medicine Wheel for the Planet: A Journey Toward Personal and Ecological Healing* (Jennifer Grenz)**

Abigail Morton-Wilcox

247-250

***Rise Up!: Indigenous Music in North America* (Craig Harris)**

Stefan Benz

251-254

***Settler Aesthetics: Visualizing the Spectacle of Originary Moments in 'The New World'* (Mishuana Goeman)**

Soph Harris-Nijmeijer

255-259



INTRODUCTION

10.1 – Tsalagi Scholars: Land, Stories, Relations

This issue of *Transmotion* features work by members of Tsalagi Scholars, an online gathering of educators and researchers who are citizens of one of the three federally recognized Cherokee tribes: one in North Carolina, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and two in Oklahoma, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians and the Cherokee Nation.

The group was formed in 2009 and was given the Cherokee name of digadatseli'i, which means: "We all belong to each other; for someone to take care of something" (www.thinktsalagi.org/scholars). The group was composed of "Cherokee scholars and teachers with a focus on revitalizing the Cherokee language, accountability to each other, and the promotion of Cherokee sovereignty."

I am a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and I am a member of the editorial board for *Transmotion*. An editor approached me about a Cherokee issue, and so I posted a call for papers on the Tsalagi Scholars listserv. What resulted was an interesting mixture of topics from established scholars and those starting their careers. Brian Burkhart is a professor at the University of Oklahoma, and a former colleague of mine at California State University, Northridge. Eva Garrouette is a professor at Boston College. Jonathan

Radocay is an assistant professor at the University of Washington; Kathryn Walkiewicz is an assistant professor at the University of California, San Diego; and Alissa Baker is a research associate with the Cherokee Nation and a research associate with Tohi Consultation. Garroutte's co-author, Tanner Scott, is not (yet) a member of Tsalagi Scholars; he works in the Digital Archives of Indigenous Language Preservation at Northeastern University in Boston. These authors are citizens of the Cherokee Nation. I received no submissions from UKBI or EBCI scholars, but this may not be surprising when we consider the Cherokee Nation has more than 460,000 citizens, while the Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians have about 14,000 each.

In addition to the work by Cherokee scholars, this issue includes the 2024 literary journal produced by students, with the guidance of English teacher Faith Brooks, at Cherokee High School on the land of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The students produced poems, fiction, essays, and visual art for the annual issue, giving *Transmotion* readers a glimpse of what future Cherokee leaders are thinking and feeling. The cover for this issue of *Transmotion* features two works by EBCI students. The contrast in their works reminds me of that between Cherokee war chiefs and peace chiefs. Jimya Driver's white oak basket reminds me of "tohi," the principal of balance and equanimity, while Gabe Crowe's buffalo mask reminds me of the conflict that we find in our lives (sometimes necessarily, such as when we must resist injustice). I asked Eva Garroutte if she knew of a word for the opposite of tohi, and, after consulting a Cherokee first-language speaker, she offered udehytohtanvhi, which means "bothered," "troubled," or "afflicted."

The students present some works that are uniquely Cherokee and some that may be universal for teenagers. For instance, Christian Alfaro's "The Burning Sycamore" is an ambitious story about a hero from long ago who faces a series of monsters from Cherokee mythos. Meanwhile, Alexzaya Lossie's poem "In the Silent Chambers" speaks of internal doubts that all young people may feel, regardless of their heritage or status in life: "Anxiety though formidable/ Is not invincible/ With each breath each step forward/ Comes the strength to confront, to overcome."

Driver, Crowe, Alfaro, and Lossie were seniors in Spring 2024 and have graduated from Cherokee High School. They are out in the world accomplishing great things now.

The task for an introduction such as this is describing themes or concepts that link its essays. Despite the various topics covered in this issue, the links are easy to name: land, stories, and relations.



Jonathan Radocay's contribution describes his own experience of being on the land in the Cherokee Nation, looking for his family's allotment, and learning how Cherokees have storied themselves and the land into binding relationships. The process of allotting Cherokee land was the U.S. government's attempt at "severance," of dividing the people from the land and from each other, but, ironically, those efforts have contributed to an "allotment survivance." Radocay writes, "I came to realize that contemporary Cherokee people have taken up the very structure designed to sever connection to our homelands in the early twentieth-century to articulate forms of persistent belonging...." This structure of severance included "allotment jackets," which were the documents through which land became privately owned—and many times then entered a market economy that treated land as a commodity. However, those same records became a mechanism for diasporic Cherokees to find their way back to the homeland. Each allotment record includes a township-and-range map of the allotment, which assists a Cherokee person, such as Radocay, to reclaim moments and locations of family history.

He compares his own experiences to those described in *Allotment Stories*, edited by Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) and Jean M. O'Brien (White Earth Ojibwe). His and other narratives "imagine and enact post-allotment Indigenous futures." These stories "complicate—if not refuse—narratives of loss and allotment's privatized logic of division."


In her essay, Alissa Baker discusses the implications of an earlier displacement: Cherokee removal from the eastern homeland to Indian Territory that separated the people from important ceremonial and medicinal plants. Baker describes efforts by the Cherokee Nation to bring an eastern relative to the new homeland: ginseng. The plant is culturally important, but it does not seem to prosper in Northeast Oklahoma. Personally, I am fascinated by the challenge Cherokees faced in rehoming; that is, establishing new relations to the land and its occupants while also maintaining Cherokee culture and identity; Cherokees must have been remade to some degree by making a new home, and that new home must have been remade to some degree by relations with the new occupants.

When I visited north central Georgia, where my Cherokee ancestors came from, I was surprised at how the topography was similar to the topography of Northeast Oklahoma. Cherokees removed from that part of Georgia may have been relieved to see a somewhat familiar landscape. However, Cherokees moving from the mountains, forests, and waterfalls of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee may have

experienced the low, rolling hills and slow-moving rivers of Indian Territory as an alien landscape. Also, those very different landscapes would have been home to very different flora. The ginseng strains Baker writes about seem to have trouble thinking of Northeast Oklahoma as home; getting the plant to grow within the borders of the Cherokee Nation has been difficult. I am glad *Transmotion* can present her exploration of this practical demonstration of Cherokee self-determination. She writes, “The efforts of the Cherokee Nation Natural Resources department are examples of Cherokee sovereignty and investments in our futurity to remain Cherokee through ties to our lands and practices....”

Storytelling is another theme for this issue. Tanner Scott and Eva Garrouette deconstruct a brief story from an 1828 issue of the *Cherokee Phoenix*. They provide an object lesson on Cherokee grammar and morphology, and they provide an explanation of why an Aesop fable would appeal to *Phoenix* readers at that moment in Cherokee history. Scott and Garrouette write, “we hope to make our analyses accessible to the population of second-language learners who will increasingly inherit the responsibility of caring for the language as the population of first-language speakers continues to age.” As the Nation faced important decisions about its relationship to the U.S. government, it also experienced internal disagreement, and the story is about the dangers of allowing outsiders to be involved with internal differences. Editor Elias Boudinot’s “placement of Aesop’s fable about the price of infighting—tucking into the *Phoenix* immediately adjacent to the text of the tribe’s new Constitution—suggests a tiny reminder of the same lesson.”

This example illustrates Cherokee adaptability, as Boudinot translates a Western cultural icon, Aesop’s fables, for Cherokee purposes; he looks to an ancient Greek past to think about a Cherokee future. In her essay, Kathryn Walkiewicz discusses two contemporary Cherokee writers who repurpose Western technology and science fiction tropes for Indigenous goals. This pattern of adaptation has long existed in Cherokee culture, and she refers to it as “technovation.” Blake Hausman’s *Riding the Trail of Tears* depicts virtual reality technology being used in a touristic fashion to teach people about Cherokee history, but that dispossession narrative is itself possessed by Little People; tired of reliving the Trail of Tears repeatedly, they commandeer the technology and change the narrative. Daniel H. Wilson’s novels *Robopocalypse* and *Robogenesis* take a frequently imagined scenario—robot sentience and rebellion—but imagine it from an Indigenous perspective that incorporates relationship and reciprocity with other human communities, as they fight for survival, and with the robots with whom they contend. About *Robopocalypse*, Walkiewicz writes, “Having survived the world-altering traumas of colonization, warfare, and Removal, Indigenous characters in the novel are acutely reminded of the need to adapt to changing





circumstances while maintaining an ethics of responsibility and relationality older than colonialism." She writes, "Change-as-vitality is a strong throughline in both Hausman's and Wilson's work." Cherokees have needed the ability to make new relations in new circumstances and in new locations.

Finally, combining the themes of land, stories, and relations, Brian Burkhart creates a tale of Jisdu (Rabbit) receiving lessons from Elohi (Earth) as he travels through a tunnel from his homeland to Rome. The famous trickster arrives at the Vatican in time to share some of his newly acquired knowledge with Catholic priests and academics gathered there. Among many lessons, Elohi teaches Jisdu that language itself (and therefore stories) originates in the land: "Indigeneity is grounded in place... Even language arises from place—not just in the sense of experiences with places, but from the Land itself." Being in a place includes relations among all its inhabitants, human people, non-human people, and the land. Language is one of many important ways those entities build and maintain their relationships. Elohi teaches Jisdu about European settlers trying to negate the relationships among the inhabitants of a place, but that requires also a separation from the source of language and knowledge. Doing that requires what Elohi calls "settler colonial epistemologies of ignorance." Because of this division from the land, Elohi says, "ignorance and falsity are the byproducts of settler epistemic practices rather than knowledge and truth."

When Jisdu arrives in Rome, he crashes a conference of clergy, scientists, and philosophers from around the world. Jisdu attempts to share some of Elohi's lessons with those gathered, such as telling them of the need for "understanding the originary and continual kinship relationship all things have to the Earth." Some folks are receptive and others, such as the Cardinal, are not. Jisdu causes various kinds of chaos, and then refreshments are served, which probably was the rabbit's primary motivation for attending.

A word you will hear a lot in Cherokee gatherings is gadugi. In Burkhart's contribution to this issue, Jisdu defines it as "come and rise together." The rabbit also says the Cherokee have called themselves Anigaduwagi (the people who come together and rise above that which separates them). I like these connotations of rising, and I associate them with lifting up someone. I hope this issue lifts up the work of these Cherokee scholars and students for others to see and appreciate.

Gadugi also includes the notion of helping others, and I am especially honored to help young scholars—Baker, Radocay, and Walkiewicz—be seen by others in their academic

communities and perhaps receive a boost on their career paths. For assistant professors, peer-reviewed publications are essential for tenure. In this small way, *Transmotion* can help secure the place of more citizens of Native nations in academic positions.

Ugido wado!

Scott Andrews (Cherokee Nation), California State University, Northridge



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Won't You Be My (Allotment) Neighbor?: Mapping Cherokee Homelands in Diaspora

JONATHAN RADOCA Y

April 13, 2022

US-412 E, traveling east

Driving from Tulsa airport in my rental car, I thought about the shape of the terrain. It was flat. As I moved east, the land gradually changed; it got hillier, more wooded. I began to see wild onions growing alongside the highway. The redbud and dogwood were in bloom, bursts of bright pink and white against a woody backdrop of trees erupting into their spring foliage. Driving alone, I thought about what it means to return "home" to a place I've never been. I thought about the feeling of a homecoming without ever having been home. I tried it on for size: "these are the lands I'm meant to move



through, and I belong here." This sentimental mantra and feeling made me ache. I felt like I was willing a relation into being - a sign without a referent. I felt more overwhelmed than comforted. It felt good to finally be "home," but I was still driving alone through these hills, bound for Tahlequah.

This is the first entry in a journal I kept when I visited Cherokee Nation for a two week research trip in 2022.¹ Incidentally, this trip would also be my first visit to our reservation in what was once known as Indian Territory, now northeastern Oklahoma.² As the entry suggests, this trip was an anxious homecoming for me. Although I was there primarily to visit archives containing materials related to allotment and late-nineteenth, early twentieth-century Indian Territory print cultures, I found myself confronting the context of my own family's relationship to our homelands in Cherokee Nation, a relationship profoundly impacted by allotment policy and the aftermath of its regime of colonial privatization. I belong to a family of proud Cherokee Nation citizens to be sure, but I grew up in the diaspora in California and have spent all my life away from our reservation. This is not to say I was isolated from community. I grew up surrounded by several generations of extended Cherokee family. When I was young, my auntie Pamela Gentry often dragged me to community events hosted by Cherokee Nation in California. I continue to be an active community member in our diaspora organizations up and down the West Coast.³ And yet, as I was driving from Tulsa, I found myself



preoccupied with experiencing my “homelands” for the first time and what that experience was supposed to mean to me.

Alongside my archival and historical research into Indigenous engagements with allotment was this persistent and parallel question of Cherokee diaspora and homeland that inevitably drew on the personal, familial, and community contexts of my own relationship to allotment. In between days spent in the archives, I took the opportunity to visit places that remain important to my family, including allotment lands we once held, cemeteries that hold ancestors, and other former homeplaces. I also spent time with Cherokee communities and relations in Sequoyah County to whom I am connected.

At the beginning of the research trip, I conceived of these two activities—archival research and first-time encounters with allotment homeplaces—as separate. One day I would be pouring over newspaper editorials debating allotment policy and combing through deeds of transfer and lien notices. The next I would be walking across and in between individual allotments that used to belong to family or former neighbors. Yet another day I would be exchanging stories with friends about what happened to their family allotments and their own enduring relationships to those lands. In one sense, time spent in the archive often—but not always—confirmed an understanding of allotment’s legacy as one of loss, fragmentation, and diminishment. This follows from

what I mostly found in the archive: after the passage of the Curtis Act in 1898, newspapers in Indian Territory carefully tracked the development of the policy's implementation.⁴ As these home papers told it, allotment and the catastrophe that followed appeared increasingly inevitable. In other sources—chasing an allotment's chain of title, for instance—I would find another story of an allotment's escalating indebtedness or tax delinquency, which often ended up with the land in foreclosure and its eventual transfer into non-Native hands. Indeed, many scholars writing about the history and legacy of allotment in Indian Country often focus on this narrative of loss to emphasize the frenzy of settler colonial exploitation and injustice that followed the policy.⁵

Time spent away from the archive, however, offered a different understanding of allotment, a different *experience*. Walking or driving through former allotment lands, often in conversation with friends and with the felt presence of ancestors, revealed complicated forms of belonging and attachment—not just separation and detachment. It seemed to me that these encounters and conversations were confirmation that allotment's logic of privatized alienation from the land had not just failed; it had been turned on its head by the descendants and heirs of these original allottees.⁶ My experience on the land during that trip also exceeded a simple framework of connection and loss that many scholars reach for when writing about Indigenous experiences with settler colonial structures like allotment—our own experiences or otherwise. Through my family's experience and from listening to stories of other



community members who grew up in diaspora, I came to realize that contemporary Cherokee people have taken up the very structure designed to sever connection to our homelands in the early twentieth-century to articulate forms of persistent belonging—however attenuated or compromised these forms may ultimately be. These are forms of allotment survivance that nevertheless grapple with the enduring legacy of allotment’s forms of severance.⁷

As I alternated days in the archive with days out on the land, separating my archival research and encounters with actual allotments became increasingly difficult. I realized that these encounters have much to offer for moving beyond the archive’s dominant narrative of loss. They represent alternative forms of critical and imaginative engagement with the legacy of allotment, which include personal and embodied encounters with allotment land, family histories, and stories from community members. In many ways, the incredible work collected in *Allotment Stories*, edited by Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) and Jean M. O’Brien (White Earth Ojibwe) demonstrates how Indigenous authors turn to these alternative forms to (re)negotiate land privatization and to reframe allotment’s impact. The collection and its individual contributions bring together critical analysis, artistic expression, family and community stories, personal testimony, and other forms of Indigenous engagement with allotment and similar regimes of colonial privatization. These allotment stories complicate—if not



refuse—narratives of loss and privatized logics of division. As the collection makes abundantly clear, these diverse forms imagine and enact post-allotment Indigenous futures rooted in grounded normativity, a term coined by Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) to describe Indigenous values and knowledge systems where land plays a foundational role, including and especially in ethical decision-making.⁸ In their stories of allotment survivance and in their critiques of settler colonial privatization, these forms engage with longstanding Indigenous traditions.

As I pursued my research over the following two weeks, I soon realized that the journaling with which I open this article had become an important research practice, generating a new allotment story reflecting on family allotment land and conversations I had with friends.⁹ Instead of being an exercise in parsing "legitimate" archival research from community and family history, my journal increasingly became both a space of critical reflection and a method for thinking about the legacies of allotment across personal, community, and archival contexts. Through the practice, I found myself considering the densities of Indigenous experience to be found on allotment land itself. Drawing on Black Studies scholar Robin Kelley's conception of the density of American Blackness, Chris Anderson (Michif [Métis]) theorizes a framework of density—rather than essentialized difference—to acknowledge the complexities, multiple subject positions, and different places that shape the contours of Indigenous life. A concept of density helps us avoid framing Indigenous experiences in terms of essentialized, often racialized difference, "fixed in time and space through apparently objective, logical



markers used to bear the discursive weight of our authenticity and legitimacy” (92). The transformation of Indigenous land within a set of privatized relations does not follow a fixed, linear conversion of collective land into private, Native landownership to non-Native. Cherokee and other Native people occupied several and often contradictory positions as allotment unfolded. Some benefitted from and advocated for the privatization of the Cherokee Nation, while others suffered greatly. A simple narrative of loss or victimhood is often predicated on a notion of essentialized difference and flattens the complexity of Indigenous experiences related to allotment.

I realized stories on and about allotment land reveal a density of experience. Cherokee communities continue to refuse both reductive narratives of Indigenous deficiency and a narrow politics of belonging based on American citizenship and private landownership.¹⁰ The turn toward these place-based, storied conversations among Cherokee people reorients the post-allotment geography of Cherokee lands I encountered on my trip. These conversations reveal the enduring strength of our communities across time and place—not a geography of atomized allottees and non-Native landowners but a kinscape of allotment “neighbors” with multiple lived experiences. Neighbors and their descendants continue to work together and embody our values and traditions even as we navigate the densities of our communities and as our diaspora(s) continue to grow away from Cherokee Nation and United Keetowah

Band of Cherokee Indians in northeastern Oklahoma and from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in our traditional homelands in what is currently known as the southeastern United States.

This article departs from the archival research I had originally set out to pursue and instead invites other forms of research practice and knowledge production often marginalized or excluded from traditional forms of scholarship. Rather than proceed from research notes I had written recording time spent in the archive, I begin with the journal that reflects on my walks across allotment land, conversations I had with friends and family, and other interactions with community. These entries often ground the critical inquiry that follows in particular allotments and homeplaces or what I am calling Cherokee allotment "neighborhoods." At the same time, entries sometimes depart from allotment lands, reflecting the cycles of travels abroad and returns home that have always been a part of Cherokee history and are a significant part of allotment's legacy for diaspora communities in California and elsewhere.

In this article, my journal functions as a method for thinking about the legacy of allotment in Cherokee life as taking place across multiple sites—or neighborhoods—both on and off the reservation in Oklahoma. An entry about a conversation I had with a friend that took place on Sparrow Hawk Mountain (northeast of Tahlequah) serves simultaneously as a point of entry and departure for considering another conversation about a mountain in the allotment neighborhood of England Hollow. This conversation takes the form of an interview in 1969 between two Cherokee men, Richard Manus and



Boyce Timmons, found in the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Program archives. Rather than serve only as an ethnographic narrative documenting a fixed and “vanishing” Cherokee place, I take this conversation found in the archive as a map for present-day experiences with my own family allotment neighborhood in the township of Long in Sequoyah County. This composite map of past and present Cherokee landscapes leads me to another conversation between myself and Michael Delano Webb, a member of the diaspora community in the Sacramento Valley of California.

This meandering direction—from one storied conversation to another, across time and place—is intentional. I lean into the anxious feelings, tenuous family connections, and community conversations that surrounded the “homecoming” of my original research trip. I think about what being on and centering Indigenous relationships to allotment land has to offer for articulating a sense of “homelands” and belonging across these multiple sites of Cherokee life. I cite and create what Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) has called a “dialectic of stories” from the past and present that subvert allotment’s narrative of inevitable privatization (74). I demonstrate that conversations on and about allotment land cite but also literally “site” allotment neighborhoods as “nodes” (to use Goeman’s term) within a broader Cherokee space. These conversations are not simply snapshots within a linear sequence of private landownership, moving inexorably from Native to non-Native.

These past and present articulations of allotment neighborhoods—as Cherokee spaces—resist settler colonial geographies of privatization that order Indigenous lands and histories according to hierarchies of private ownership, including the temporal order of an allotment’s chain of title or the spatial order of the survey plat map. I demonstrate that allotment land is not simply a fixed space of privatization but rather a part of a storied Cherokee landscape that routes through multiple generations and territories.

To that end, this article challenges the myth of a singular Native “home” that positions Indigenous communities as unified and geographically stable, with consistent and uncomplicated relationships to a territorially defined homeland or homelands, especially lands profoundly impacted by colonial privatization. In many ways, this article is in dialogue with the 2009 special issue of *American Indian Quarterly*, “Working from Home in American Indian History,” edited by Susan M. Hill (Haudenosaunee citizen/Wolf Clan, Mohawk Nation) and Mary Jane Logan McCallum (Munsee-Delaware First Nation). This collection of essays highlights the circuitous routes that Indigenous researchers must often take when working from (or towards) home—however unstable that notion may be. Like *Allotment Stories*, these essays invite us to embrace the vexed and complicated relationships that Native researchers may have with archives and archival research. Citing Heather Ponchetti Daly’s (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel) essay on the impact of the 1953 Termination Act on Indigenous scholarship and community systems, Hill and McCallum point out that, on the one



hand, Indigenous researchers must often navigate archival materials, such as government documents and oral histories collected by settler academic institutions, that seek to define us as products of the very archives we examine. On the other hand, these materials often also serve as an important documentary record for our own family and communities' stories, a repository for our own histories (xii).

Thinking with the land and other allotment homeplaces, together with archival research, opens up new questions concerning the relationship between the diaspora and our homelands on the Cherokee reservation. While this diasporic relationship has often been discussed in terms of our forced Removal in the 1830s or in terms of the impact of relocation and Termination era policies from the 1950s through the 1980s, I suggest allotment stories are a neglected but nonetheless important form for articulating enduring relationships to land and community in the diaspora, which is comprised of Cherokee citizens who have come to their diaspora communities at different points in time. The impacts of allotment on Cherokee communities are typically framed in terms of local and fixed transformations on reservation lands. This article expands this local frame in and through diasporic experiences with allotment.

In this way, I contribute to ongoing efforts by Cherokee scholars to call attention to the dynamics of tribal specificity and Indigenous transnationalism in Cherokee literatures, literary traditions and stories. These efforts include Kirby Brown's (Cherokee

Nation) work on Cherokee literary expressions written in the aftermath of allotment. His study of writing during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries recovers and articulates a Cherokee transnational imaginary that traverses tribally specific, local contexts to national and global Indigenous diaspora communities. Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) presents a Cherokee literary history that paves the way for thinking about diaspora and the Cherokee literary tradition. According to Justice, a full understanding of this tradition, within which I situate the storied conversations I discuss in this article, requires attending to "homeward relationships of rootedness and movement, the geographic bonds of those who live in the lands of the ancestors as well as those of outland Cherokees, whose relationships to home are figured in different ways" (*Our Fire* 49).

By inviting archival materials reflecting on transformations of allotment lands, such as those found in the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Program archive, into contemporary personal, family, and community allotment stories, this article situates "home" and "homeland" within tribally specific and transnational relationships in which I implicate my own position(s) as a Cherokee researcher to the multiple communities that I inhabit. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) and her work in *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) is also a methodological guide here. Following her example, I analyze allotment's colonial forms of knowledge found in the archive to craft an allotment counter story. This story recovers Cherokee voices that span several conversations and that draw on Indigenous values, practices, and ways of knowing. It



is my hope that this counter story repurposes materials found in settler archives into allotment stories of survivance.

Allotment Neighborhood: Sparrow Hawk/England Hollow

A couple of days after arriving in Cherokee Nation, I met up with my friend Angela Spencer and her sister Rhonda Spencer (both Cherokee Nation citizens) for a hike through the Sparrow Hawk Primitive Area, a short distance northeast of Tahlequah where I was staying. The trail leads up to Sparrow Hawk Mountain, and we were huffing and puffing uphill. Angela and Rhonda, whose family home is near Tahlequah, were familiar with the area, but this would be my first time walking the land.



Figure 1: Photograph of the Illinois River near Sparrow Hawk Mountain, Cherokee County. Photo taken by the author.

April 15, 2022

Near Sparrow Hawk Mountain, Cherokee County

We stopped at a rocky outcrop over the Illinois River and sat down for a while. Turkey buzzards rode the morning thermals up into the air above us and then dipped back down, gliding and swooping near us as we talked. The river down below bent southwest. We looked out over a bowl in the hills.



We talked Cherokee Nation politics and identity, and what the future might hold. We shared what we thought about blood quantum nationalists, Cherokee constitutionalists, and the progressives who are now in office. We discussed the future of our Nation, on the land. Here we were debating our government, its policies, our People. Oklahoma receded from view, and I could only see Cherokee lands. I was in political relation to the land and the river—not a visitor but a citizen. I felt that our talk of Cherokee histories, experiences, politics was an act of stewardship, creating obligations and commitments that need continual political renewal—returns home from abroad.

According to a survey map published in 1909, after allotment had been administered and the state of Oklahoma carved out of Indian Territory in 1907, we were walking on allotment lands located in sections 6 and 7 of Township 17 North, Range 23 East. At the time, these lands were selected by or assigned to the Walker, Thompson, and Lawrence families. From our stopping place at the rocky outcrop, we were peering across the edge of survey map T17N R23E to sections 1 and 12 of T17N R22E, to lands selected predominantly by Whaler family members.¹¹

These survey maps draw out property lines for titles owned by new Indian landowners (called allottees) and came to produce and represent a new colonial regime of privatized land ownership. This allotment territoriality attempted to restrict

tribal sovereignty and fracture Indigenous land relations into a fragmented geography of lands "in severalty," a privatized landscape of individually owned parcels subject to the machinations of a settler-dominated market economy.¹² A primary goal of this process was to divide and privatize Cherokee Nation's collective land tenure, enshrined as a core feature of sovereignty and Cherokee land relations in Article 1, Section 2 of the Cherokee Nation Constitution ratified in 1827 (before Removal) and in 1839 (after Removal). The 1839 Constitution of the Cherokee Nation mandates that lands "shall remain common property" (1839 Constitution).

Political belonging to the modern Cherokee Nation is now rooted in census rolls created during allotment. These rolls were produced in collaboration between the tribal government and the Dawes Commission, the US federal body responsible for administering allotment in Indian Territory. These rolls were required before families could select or were forcibly assigned allotment lands. The "modern" basis for citizenship in the Cherokee Nation is outlined in Article III of our 1975 Constitution, which establishes that "[A]ll members of the Cherokee Nation must be citizens as proven by reference to the Dawes Commission Rolls" (Sturm 239).

Growing up in diaspora, I understood my political citizenship in Cherokee Nation in the context of allotment, within its particular politics of belonging and recognition derived as it is from the Dawes Rolls and the selection of allotments. My mother Valerie Radocaj and auntie Pamela (the same auntie who brought me to community events) documented our belonging through a small family archive of



allotment land certificates, survey plat maps, and other Dawes Commission documentation relating to our family. It was through these maps and documents that I came to experience my own connection to Cherokee lands and to the allotment neighborhoods of Sequoyah County where my family had selected their allotments. Although not entirely the same, I realize that this experience was not unlike that of a researcher in the archive, a connection mediated through these materials, often abstract and disembodied. Although an important part of our family's documentary record and the way we articulate belonging to Cherokee people, this connection by itself feels static, unconnected to our culture, traditions, and language. To me, it does not need renewal and does not come with a sense of obligation.

Two days after that lonely drive from the airport, however, I was out here in conversation with Angela and Rhonda, and the land began to take a different shape for me. Through sharing our family stories and our thoughts on Cherokee politics, I felt this political connection exceed the allotment context in which it had originally taken root. Perhaps our conversation politically and imaginatively rolled back an allotment territoriality that laid the groundwork for the state of Oklahoma. Our exchange invited us to think about an expansive sense of sovereignty and political culture in terms of Cherokee grounded normativity, in the collective land tenure, place-worlds,¹³ and knowledges that allotment attempted to undermine. With this conversation in mind, I

now turn to other Cherokee voices, another conversation that took place in a nearby allotment neighborhood about 14 miles east following the valley of the Illinois River's Baron Fork. Like our conversation on Sparrow Hawk mountain, this interview reflects on the Cherokee routes, transformations, and future of another mountain near England Hollow in the decades that followed allotment.

On February 8, 1969, Boyce Timmons, a Cherokee educator and director of the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Program at the University of Oklahoma, interviewed his friend and countryman, Richard Manus. Manus was born in England Hollow, northwest of Stilwell in Adair County, in 1910, shortly after allotment, when Cherokee Nation was illegally disestablished and the state of Oklahoma was born in 1907. Timmons and Manus discuss changes in the geography of the land, travel routes, and relationships to non-human relations in the area. The interview was conducted outside Manus's home at the base of a mountain near England Hollow, not far east of Sparrow Hawk mountain. In discussing the kinds of game that had once been found in the area, Manus gestures to the mountain and mentions that there is "a lot of [Cherokee syllabary] Indian writing [inscribed on rocks up there]. And when I was a kid, there was some big walnut trees right here" (Manus T-417-3). Manus continues by tracing the road that travels up the mountain and mentions that the road "wound all around. Here. It wouldn't no straight road. They just pick out the best places to travel. They didn't have no way to work the road" (T-417-3). Transformations in travel—how roads were



constructed, especially after section lines were laid down—are significant topics in discussing allotment and post-allotment landscapes. Then, as now, storying a Cherokee landscape involves thinking about how people move through Cherokee space. Throughout the interview, the mountain and its vectors of travel serve as geographic reference points of travel across land, and writing inscribed in stone signifies the mountain’s important place in Cherokee land narratives of the region.¹⁴

The writing on the mountain cites/sites Cherokee geographies—physical, political, and spiritual—in which it is expressed. The mountain, inscribed with syllabary, is co-extensive with the signification of the writing itself. The writing exists not just in a symbolic realm that represents, records, or signifies but is a material and storied layer in a significant place-world. In fact, this kind of writing belongs to a much longer tradition that stretches back to before Removal. For as long as Cherokee people have used our syllabary, we have made inscriptions onto and out of the land to record our activities and carry out ceremony. Cherokee and other scholars recently translated syllabary inscriptions in Manitou Cave, near the old settlement of Willstown in what is now called Alabama (Carroll et al). The inscriptions refer to a stickball game played on April 30, 1828. More than simply recording a specific event, the cave writing was an integral part of the game, which is itself a part of ceremony that takes place over several days. The translation and presence of the inscriptions indicate that the caves are

spiritually significant places and an important junction in Cherokee spiritual geography, between the Middle World where humans dwell and the Under World.¹⁵ As explained by Cherokee Nation National Treasure Loretta Shade, the Cherokee cosmos contains three worlds which are interconnected and in dynamic relation: ᏍᏰᏍᏗ *Galvladi* (the Sky World), which stretches from the earth to the heavens above; ᏲᏊᏗ *Elohi* (the Middle World); and ᏲᏊᏗ ᏁᏐᏐᏗᏊᏍᏗ *Elohi Hawinadidla* (the Under World), which exists underneath the land and water (Teuton, *Cherokee Earth Dwellers* 34-35).

These inscriptions also register intersecting political and historical conflicts at the time of their creation. Carroll et al. write that the appearance of the inscriptions in a deep and remote part of the cave "may reflect the significance of the religious practices carried out there; it might also reflect the need for greater security and privacy due to communal conflicts between Cherokee traditionalists and more acculturated Cherokees associated with missionaries and other influences from the encroaching white culture" (533-534).

Within these intersecting physical, political, and spiritual contexts, the syllabary writing on the mountain near Manus's house is significant to the story that Manus and Timmons are telling. In the story, the writing is not simply a passing curiosity about the mountain. It is situated in a Cherokee relational world, what Christopher Teuton (Cherokee Nation) has called a "web of relationships" that span physical, political, and spiritual realms and that pattern Cherokee values and land relations (*Cherokee Earth Dwellers* 32). After discussing Manus's grandmother's medicine practices, Manus and



Timmons return to the big walnut trees next to the syllabary inscriptions mentioned earlier, and their reference prompts the story of the Wickliff boys, who were opposed to allotment (known by US federal authorities as “outlaws”) and also related to Manus’s grandmother. According to Manus, these anti-allotment Cherokees used to tie their horses to those trees as they moved through Chewey Ford and on to Kenwood in Delaware County to escape federal marshals (T-417-9–417-10). Manus claims that the difficulty of traversing the landscape up the mountain was the reason they could not be caught. He asserts knowledge of “every inch of it [the mountain]” (T-417-10). Manus returns to the topic of Cherokee stone writing next to the walnut trees and asks Timmons to help him find somebody who can translate it. Timmons offers to return at a later date and take photographs of the writing to have translated (T-417-10).

The inscriptions on the mountain collate and layer the seemingly divergent story threads in the interview: Manus’s grandmother’s medicine practices, the land narrative of travel routes, and the fugitive, anti-allotment Wickliff boys who are kin to Manus himself. Cherokee land directly manifests in and shapes the aesthetic and formal qualities of the storytelling between Manus and Timmons. The dialogic interview between these two Cherokee men is on the surface directed at drawing out an ethnographic narrative of England Hollow from Manus but transforms into a storytelling collaboration that exceeds the interviewer/interviewee dynamic of the

Doris Duke Indian Oral History Program. Foregrounding the land narratives of England Hollow both reveals the Cherokee grounded normativity of these stories and offers a way to think beyond traditional ethnographic frameworks, including those motivating the Doris Duke program, which position the Indigenous voices in settler oral history archives as mere informants or subjects of a salvage ethnography project.

From 1967 to 1972, tobacco billionaire Doris Duke sponsored the Indian Oral History Project at several state universities across the country, including the University of Oklahoma.¹⁶ Its goals were to gather the "raw material of history from the Indian point of view" and to provide participating Native Nations with copies of the tapes as part of a reciprocal agreement (Bruner 3). The program collected oral narratives primarily from Indigenous Elders about their histories, practices, and communities during and after allotment.¹⁷

The program at the University of Oklahoma was administered by the American Indian Institute and directed by Timmons, also a university administrator who had a long history working with OU's University Indian Education programs and with many Native Nations in Oklahoma (Repp 168). Timmons regarded the Duke funding as an opportunity to further the development of American Indian Studies that began almost immediately after allotment had been administered, tribal governments severely constrained, and the state of Oklahoma born. The predecessor of the institute that Timmons chaired and that administered the Indian Oral History Project was the Institute



of Indian Affairs, established at OU in 1914 after the heads of several Native Nations pressured US Senator Robert Owen, who was Cherokee himself (169).

The Indian Oral History Project belongs to a settler tradition of Indian oral history that stretches back to the founding of the US settler state and continues into the present. The creation of an Indian oral history archive like the Duke collection often follows a preservationist approach, motivated by the settler trope of the vanishing Indian, which insists that Indigenous peoples are on the verge of extinction in the face of an encroaching settler modernity. Regna Darnell argues that this sort of approach belongs to a type of salvage anthropology in which researchers see themselves taking on the duty (from Native Nations) to document and preserve knowledges and cultures before they vanish (11-19). In *Playing Indian*, Philip J. Deloria (Dakota) traces the genealogy of salvage ethnographic practice in Indigenous communities from the founding of the US settler state to the present. He argues that this practice belongs to a performative tradition of reviving and repurposing the figure of the American Indian in order to resolve inherent contradictions within US political, economic, and cultural realms at different points in its history as a settler colony.

The relationship between interviewer and interviewee in Indian oral history programs like Doris Duke emerges from and contributes to this ethnographic dynamic and is inseparable from the logic of the colonial archive itself. It emerges from a power

dynamic in which the interviewer often acts as an agent of institutional gatekeepers (such as public universities) that process and collate oral narrative data into an archive then housed at universities. The Doris Duke program often neglected to adequately train its researchers in oral narrative methodology. Its researchers frequently failed to receive consent forms from interviewees. Dianna Repp notes that the goals and administration of the program were inconsistent across different designated cultural groups and were often influenced by the field researchers and their relationships to the communities to which they were dispatched (171).

Although this lack of consistency and academic rigor has earned the Duke collection a poor reputation among scholars and academics interested in accurate and "authentic" oral narrative data from Indigenous communities, it provided opportunities for Native Nations and Native field researchers to prioritize recording their own stories, and to use the largesse of Duke funds toward Indigenous ends. More than half of the interviews collected in the Cherokee Cultural Group at OU were conducted by J.W. Tyner and Boyce Timmons, both Cherokees who belonged to and had longstanding commitments with the Indigenous communities and Elders they interviewed.

Rather than read stories like those told by Timmons and Manus as ethnographic "oral histories" that simply document or reflect a (supposedly vanishing, more authentic) Indigenous past, I read them as collaborative, polyvocal stories about a transforming, post-allotment landscape. Teuton argues that notions of "orality" and "oral literature" have roots in European and colonial traditions of ethnographic study



that privilege a linear progression of time and that reinforce the idea that Native Nations would survive modernity only as archival materials documenting a US national legacy (“Indigenous Orality” 169). Teuton calls for reclaiming Indigenous oral expression by examining how concepts like “oral history” and “orality” have come to be defined and then “re-storying” these oral histories within “terms, concepts, and stories that express culturally specific models of Indigenous textuality” (172). Looking at oral histories in the Duke archive as culturally specific Cherokee allotment stories grounded in the allotment neighborhood of England Hollow allows us to reframe these histories within Cherokee grounded normativity. These grounded allotment stories are continuous with enduring storytelling traditions and narratives of land and place-making that remain vital to our values, forms of community, and sovereignty.

These traditions continue into the present in stories that my relatives and community tell in diaspora, and in those told in communities on our reservation. Although the lived experiences of allotment for people who grew up in diaspora may differ significantly from those of people like Manus and Timmons, rewriting oral history narratives as Cherokee allotment stories prioritizes building contemporary relationships across home and diaspora communities, aligned with the contemporary needs, connections, and desires that Cherokee people have with our lands. Linda

Tuhiwai Smith argues that Indigenous peoples *rewrite and re-right* what is found in the archive to suit our ends. She writes:

Indigenous peoples want to tell our own stories, write our own versions, in our own ways, for our own purposes. It is not simply about giving an oral account or a genealogical naming of the land and the events which raged over it, but a very powerful need to give testimony to and restore a spirit, to bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying (28).

This rewriting and re-righting of the archive contributes to efforts to recover a Cherokee world fragmented by allotment. Such a project is very different from the imperatives of salvage anthropology and preservationism that the Duke project originally followed.

Allotment Neighborhood: Long Township

Reading over hundreds of interview transcripts in the Duke project, I also came across many interviews conducted by Boyce Timmons' Cherokee colleague J.W. Tyner. In his work with Elders, Tyner would often prioritize stories about local cemeteries, which remain important places to Cherokee communities. Tyner used information he obtained from his work with the Duke program to publish *Our People And Where They Rest* (1969-1985) with his sister, Alyce Tyner Timmons, who happens to have married Boyce Timmons. This twelve-volume compendium maps hundreds of Cherokee, Mvskoke (Creek), Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole cemeteries and the ancestors who rest there (viii). As our lands increasingly passed out of Native hands during and after allotment, stewardship of these spaces surely became increasingly difficult. Tyner and Alyce Tyner Timmons's compendium attempts to re-map cemeteries as important



nodes within sovereign Native landscapes connected through family and community despite the profound impact of allotment. Their work, although now long out of print, continues to serve as a significant reference for Cherokee communities, including my own in California. I was never able to find a copy of the compendium to consult in California, but I had long known of its importance as a documentary record for many Cherokee family homeplaces.

I first consulted *Our People* in the special collections of Northeastern State University in Tahlequah after visiting a cemetery that holds my own family ancestors in the allotment neighborhood of Long, Muldrow, and Remy, located in Sequoyah County about thirty miles south of England Hollow. I now turn back to a journal entry reflecting on this cemetery visit and to the township of Long, where much of my family selected allotments. In this reflection, I think about the problems and complexities of my own position as a Cherokee citizen who grew up in diaspora, and I reflect on what it means to “come home” after generations in California. To that end, I prioritize my experience of family allotment land and cemeteries against what I have come to understand through the archive, even as I draw on archival sources in new and imaginative ways to navigate these spaces.

On the first Sunday of my trip—Easter Sunday—I drove out to these family allotments. Before the trip, I had combed through documentation related to my

family's enrollment with the Dawes Commission and allotment selection, including testimony they gave before the commissioners, land certificates, and enrollment cards. I had found the township-and-range coordinates to my great-great-grandmother Rebecca's allotments and located them on a plat map that the Commission had created. On the plat, I also found allotments belonging to many of her Moton relatives on whose allotments the township of Long had been largely established. In addition to the individual allotments of Rebecca's Cherokee kin and neighbors, these maps charted the township's boundaries and cemetery. Angela, with whom I had hiked up Sparrow Hawk Mountain a couple of days earlier, offered me a way of putting that plat map on my phone so that I could more easily track my movements across allotment land (see Figure 3). Driving out to Long, I wanted to find an embodied connection to these family places that had been an abstraction for my entire life, existing only on the surface of a Dawes Commission plat map and in my family's small archive of Dawes documentation.



Figure 2: Photograph of an allotment once held by the author's great-great grandmother Rebecca Moton Shamblin. Photo taken by the author.

April 17, 2022

Long, Sequoyah County

The drive through the Ozark foothills followed the shape and contours of the land until Highway 64B and 1050 Road joined up with the lines of the section road. This sudden

change in geography, from winding roads through forests of elm, cedar, and coffee tree to the straights and 90 degree turns of the township-and-range survey, told me I had arrived onto allotted land and that now I had to navigate the area in squares and rectangles, geometric hallmarks of checkerboarding and of privatized Indian land.¹⁸

*But it also meant that I was driving onto family lands—possibly the first homecoming since Rebecca left with her non-Cherokee husband Francis more than a hundred years ago. As I got closer, I opened up the Google Earth map on my phone and turned on the .kml file of the allotment plat map that Angela had given me. Angela's spouse, Peder Nelson, had created this file, which overlaid the plat onto Google Earth's modern Global Positioning System (GPS) map. It allowed the user to track whose allotment they were on in real time. Angela and Peder first began creating these .kml files in collaboration with Angela's mother Betty Sanders Spencer, *hrR* jigesv, who had spent decades locating, mapping, and documenting her family allotments.¹⁹*

I now looked down and saw myself—a pulsing blue dot indicating my GPS location—moving across the old allotment plat. I turned right onto S 4750 Road from E 1050 Road, passing James Redden's allotment on the right, Sarah Ada Redden's to the left, then Hugh's, Lou's—Rebecca's allotment was surrounded by Redden family members. Today, there were houses, trailers, and cars all around. I was concerned that I'd attract attention to myself, because why else would anybody be driving down this road if not to visit a neighbor or family member—or to cause trouble, an intruder. I was concerned that there weren't a lot of places to pull over onto the side of the road.



I settled by turning onto E 1057 Road and parking there in the middle of the road. I got out and stood between Rebecca and Moses Redden's allotments. On the plat, a thin line indicating a creek runs through my grandmother's allotment. I had spent a long time studying these plats for my own research and out of a strong desire to find connection to my homelands, and that thin, squiggly line had been disruptive, exceeding the tidy lines of the survey grid. The creek running through my grandmother's allotment seemed so significant, and there it was before me: It ran down to and under the road through a culvert, flowing from Moses' allotment to my grandmother's. Alongside its banks grew what appeared to be old elm trees. It seemed as though no one had ever lived there. The land was not under cultivation; it was short grassland except for the trees along the creek banks. I could not trespass onto her allotment because of a barbed wire fence. I don't believe my grandmother had ever lived here. I don't know if this allotment could be a homeplace. I was a little disappointed, but I had noticed Long Cemetery on the plat, a little way back along 1050 Road. I decided to see if I could find my uncle Clem, Rebecca's uncle, buried in that cemetery. The map indicated that his and the allotments of many Moton relatives were located near the cemetery.

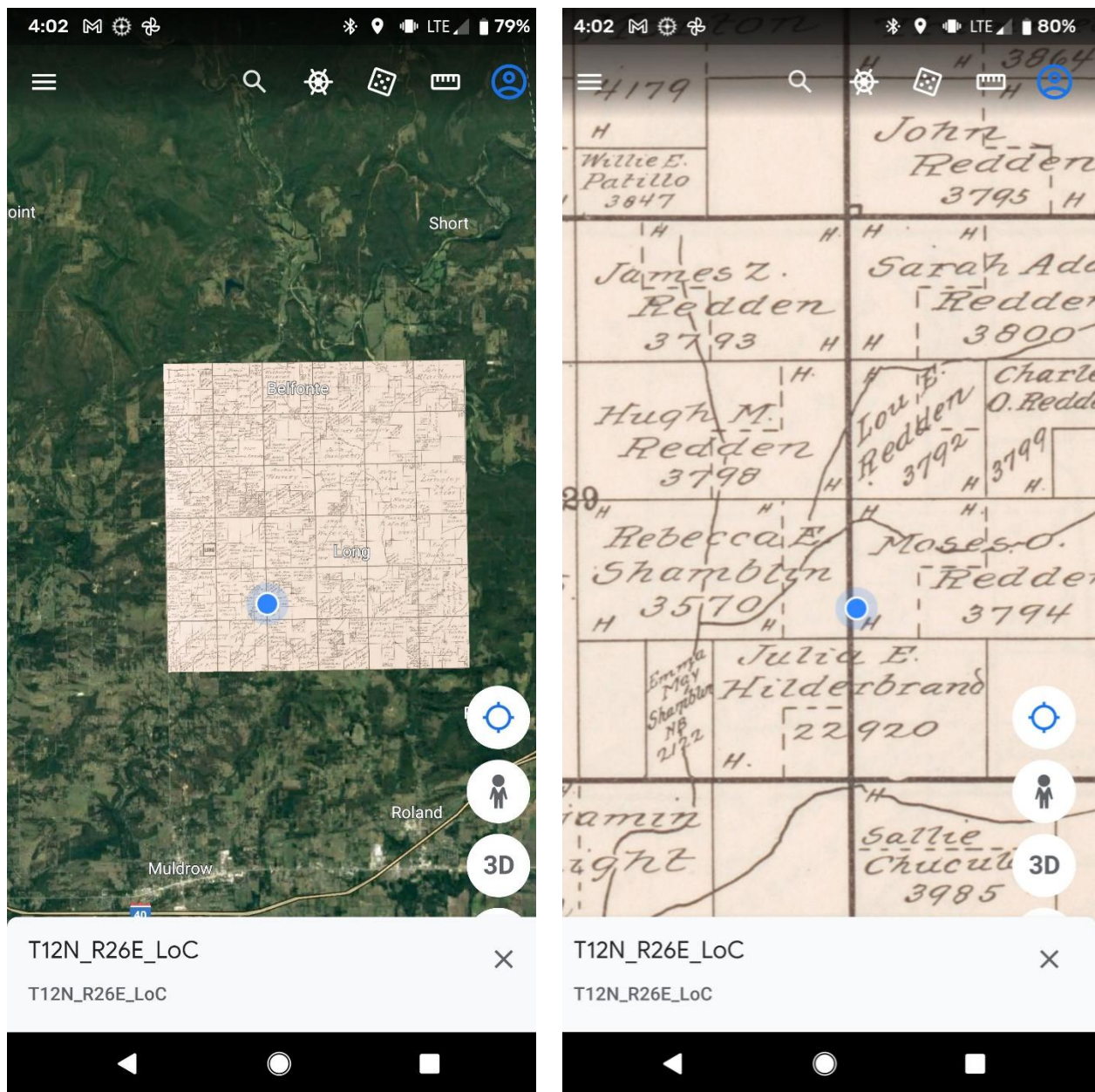


Figure 3: Screenshots of author's phone showing plat map overlaid on GPS map from Google Maps.

I let the allotment plat overlaid on my phone guide me. I followed the section lines as I would Google Map instructions. I followed the lines to the cemetery, a small rectangular plot next to the reserved township of Long.



I found the cemetery next to a couple of churches. There were many signs indicating rules and requirements for placing items by graves and for the upkeep of the cemetery. It seemed like the whole community had a hand in stewarding these ancestors, Cherokee and non-Cherokee alike. Towards the entrance were the graves of more recent ancestors who had passed in the last 20 years. I found Shamblins—the family Rebecca had married into, my grandfather Francis’s family. In amongst a stand of trees, further away from the entrance, were the oldest graves. I wandered among these graves—no one else was around. It was Easter Sunday, after all. I saw the gravestones of other allottees—Boyds and many Reddens, including Moses, Rebecca’s allotment neighbor. I saw Fleetwoods, Gordons, and Howells—all Cherokee families in the area.

I finally found Uncle Clem’s headstone. It stood apart from the rest of the gravestones, at the edge of the cemetery. There weren’t many other graves around except two other markers—not headstones—that presumably belonged to other Motons, other family. The distance between Clem’s grave to other Cherokee families buried in the cemetery seemed significant to me. Even though Long had been established on Moton allotments, few Moton relatives were buried here, and there weren’t subsequent generations clustered around Clem’s grave like with the Redden family or the Howells.

It's because many of us left.

Many Motons left this community. Clem's brother John Henry, my grandfather, is buried in the Upper Camp Creek cemetery nearer to Muldrow. Here I am, drawn to Long because of my grandmother Rebecca and her uncle Clem, who was a Cherokee Nation solicitor for Sequoyah District before allotment. They selected allotments here. It seems like allotment was the point when my Cherokee family was just beginning their journey away from these lands, which would eventually take them to California. Here I was, generations later, returned home, even if this place is simultaneously a place of departure, the origin of our family history in the Cherokee diaspora in California.

Looking west, I can't help but think of my grandmother Helen, her mother Edith, and her grandmother Rebecca, who are all buried in the Pierce Brothers Santa Paula Cemetery in Ventura County, California, not far from where I grew up in Thousand Oaks. I'm here at Uncle Clem's cemetery, 1,500 miles almost exactly due east from where they're all buried. In the Santa Paula cemetery I helped lay my grandmother Helen, Rebecca's granddaughter, to rest this past January.

In these encounters with homeplaces and allotment lands, I could see and feel my family's diaspora story. In the absence of family presence on Rebecca's allotment and especially in the placement of Uncle Clem's headstone amongst our other allotment neighbors, I felt diaspora inscribed in and on allotment land itself. To me, this experience complicates the apparent binary of diaspora and reservation experiences that separates the density of Native life into a spectrum of assimilated and authentic



experiences, usually mapped in a geography of “those who left” and “those who stayed.” I want nonetheless to highlight the manifest tensions of returning “home” for Cherokee families who have been living away from our lands and communities—sometimes for generations. In her study of Oneidas in New York and elsewhere, Kristina Ackley (Bad River Chippewa descent/Oneida Nation in Wisconsin [Turtle Clan]) suggests that the terms “diaspora” and “forced removal,” particularly in the context of the ongoing violence of settler colonialism, are often difficult to disentangle. Navigating this colonial entanglement, to use Jean Dennison’s (Osage Nation) term, Ackley follows Oneida travel routes, kinship networks, and intellectual traditions to chart out a Haudenosaunee genealogy of community mobility (465-466). In his commentary on the special issue in which Ackley’s work appears, Philip J. Deloria describes the genealogy Ackley traces as an Oneida “countertradition in which one might perceive a sense of home that is place-based but not *place-bound* and thus open to a community conceived in the terms of diaspora and national identity” (Deloria, “Commentary” 549).

Former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation Chad Smith has described the decades that followed the allotment catastrophe as a second “economic Trail of Tears,” another iteration of our earlier, nineteenth-century forced removal from our ancestral homelands in what is also known as the southeastern United States (C. Smith 58). This

economic Trail of Tears compelled many people to migrate to California, including my own. Ackley demonstrates that community-based research can reframe the fraught relationship of diaspora beyond the terms of connection and disconnection by grounding the lived experience of Wisconsin Oneidas in terms of Haudenosaunee knowledges, traditions, and values. In this way, I suggest that by examining family and community experience of California Cherokees, we can avoid reinscribing and reifying allotment's privatized logics of division and instead reframe diasporic relationships to Cherokee lands in terms of our knowledges, traditions, and values that remain place-based but not place-bound.

Allotment Neighborhood: McLain, OK/Van Buren, AR

In conversations with my grandmother Helen, my mother Valerie, and my auntie Pamela Gentry, I learned that our family began our journey away from Cherokee lands and communities, soon after allotment and Oklahoma statehood. Sometime between 1910 and 1920, my great-great-grandmother Rebecca Moton Shamblin sold her allotments in Sequoyah County in the township of Long and moved to the township of McLain, about 40 miles west of the lands our family had occupied since Removal—though McLain is still on reservation lands, near Webbers Falls. In 1913, my great-grandmother Edith was born and grew up on the family farm in McLain. She married Harman Cook in 1928, and, soon afterwards, my grandmother Helen was born in 1929 (US Census). I was not able to confirm our family's residence with the 1940 US Census, but before she passed, Helen told me that her parents Edith and Harman moved the



family to Van Buren, Arkansas, about 50 miles east of McLain and less than 10 miles from our family in Long. She told me the family moved because of severe drought conditions that undermined the family's ability to farm. I suggested that she could be talking about the epic drought of 1934, which coincided with the Great Depression of 1929 and the infamous Dust Bowl conditions that Smith argues contributed to the economic Trail of Tears and that dislocated many farmers, Native and non-Native alike (Cook et al). Stremlau suggests allotment, along with the invasion of settlers it precipitated, led to the soil exhaustion and resource mismanagement that characterize these infamous conditions (6). Helen mentioned that her grandmother Rebecca was widowed young, when her husband Francis died from a vitamin deficiency in 1930, after which Rebecca lived amongst her Cherokee family, including with her daughter Edith and granddaughter Helen in Van Buren and with Edith's sister Eva who remained in McLain, OK.

Around Van Buren, AR, my family began farming along the Arkansas River, but Helen told me the family was again in crisis when the river flooded in 1943. I learned more about that flood and what challenges my family might have endured in a conversation I had with my cousin Bubba. He is the nephew of my grandfather John Gentry who is not Cherokee and whom Helen married in 1945. During my trip, I drove out to meet my grandfather's family, including Bubba, at a produce stand they own

near Westville, AR, about 5 miles southeast of Van Buren. They had gathered there for a potluck celebrating Easter.

April 16, 2022

Westville, Arkansas

Bubba and I teamed up for the egg toss after the children's Easter Egg hunt, and we did pretty well until the hardboiled egg exploded in my hand from the velocity of flying for so long through the air. After, Bubba gave me a tour of the tractors and farm equipment there at the property. While we talked, his barn cats ate up the pieces of fallen egg at our feet. They were sweet cats, but Bubba insisted they had no names. We talked about the Arkansas River, which my family had farmed along for many generations. I mentioned that my grandmother's family had moved to California in 1943 because of a flood, and Bubba confirmed that there had been a terrible flood along the river in '43 and that many who had been farming in the bottomlands, including my grandmother's family, had lost everything. He told me that lately rainfall had been changing and that it was becoming heavier and less regular. More flooding like '43 in the future, he said. We had been facing the river during our conversation and he had been gesturing to different points on the land.

After two destabilizing climate events that left my family without crops to bring to market, my family joined tens of thousands of others and headed to California. Helen



told me that in 1943 three generations of our Cherokee family—my grandmother Helen, her mother Edith, and her grandmother Rebecca—moved to Santa Paula on Chumash lands in Ventura County, California. By 1945, my grandmother Helen had married my grandfather John, Bubba’s uncle, and moved to Sylmar in Los Angeles. Her mother Edith, her aunt Eva, and grandmother Rebecca remained in Santa Paula. Edith worked as a lemon tallier at a lemon packing house, while my great-grandfather Harman served as a ranch helper (US Census). Rebecca continued to live with her daughter, Eva, Edith’s sister, until her death in 1955. I grew up about 15 miles southeast of Santa Paula, in Thousand Oaks, and I had the good fortune of visiting my Santa Paula Cherokee family often. My great-grandmother Edith always had a packed house full of our relations.

Cherokee diaspora in California

My family’s story is typical of many Cherokees who belong to the diaspora in California. Through privatization, allotment introduced a new element of insecurity to Cherokee and other Native communities that made families more vulnerable to climate disasters like the ones my family endured. Privatization attempts to sever relationships to land and community by undermining community and tribal support networks that depend on collective land relations. It disrupts the continuity of agricultural and other food systems, among other communal efforts by which Indigenous people navigate crises. In a privatized world, many Indigenous people depended instead on more precarious

forms of support in a settler-dominated market, such as wage labor, usurious credit schemes, and mortgages (if they could even get them) that contributed to the transfer of lands out of Native hands.²⁰ Among a host of other settler colonial processes and federal Indian policies, the undermining and severing of collective relations to our lands contributed to the massive diaspora of Cherokee citizens now living in California. Despite moving away, communities in California continue to maintain relationships with each other and with communities on Cherokee lands.

The Cherokee women in my family, including my mother, my auntie, and my grandmother, always prioritized being in community with other Cherokees in California even though we lived 1500 miles from our reservation. In the early twentieth century these communities grew as informal associations organized primarily through kinship, regional ties, and where families could find wage jobs, especially in the seasonal fruit picking industry and in the agricultural sector of California's Central Valley. In the 2000s, the Cherokee Nation formally chartered these growing associations into "at-large" or "satellite" communities of Cherokee Nation citizens and other Cherokee peoples. In addition to growing up in an extended family of many Cherokee relatives, I experienced community through these at-large community organizations.

The first of these was the Cherokees of Orange County, which my auntie Pamela Gentry helped co-found, and then the Cherokees of Northern Central Valley (CNCV) when I moved up to the Sacramento Valley for graduate school. With roots going back to the 1990s, CNCV as an organization was officially chartered in 2008 and belongs to



this larger network of at-large community organizations. CNCV organizes membership meetings, hosts speakers and representatives from Cherokee Nation, and serves as an important point of contact for many Cherokee peoples living outside of the reservation and other Cherokee homelands and political territories. Organizations like CNCV can function as nodes within a broader Cherokee space that spans these homelands and political territories.

The last conversation I include cites/sites a place-based but not place-bound notion of Cherokee “home” and “homeland” in diaspora. Like other storied conversations I explore here, it draws on Cherokee grounded normativity and value systems situated within a web of relationships in Cherokee space. In 2021, I interviewed Michael Delano Webb, an Elder, founding member of CNCV, and a Cherokee Nation citizen who has lived in the California diaspora his entire life. This interview was part of a community-engaged research project I facilitated as a Mellon Public Scholar in partnership with CNCV.²¹ Similar to the conversation between Timmons and Manus, our conversation describes the history of our community, but it also articulates important place-based values that have their origin in Cherokee relationships to our homelands. These values continue to thrive and guide communities in diaspora.

In his interview with me, Mike describes the founding of the organization, which began as the Cherokees of Northern California Club before it became officially

chartered by the Cherokee Nation. He mentioned that the first meeting happened in the mid-2000s at a place on Auburn Boulevard that runs northeast from Old North Sacramento along Interstate 80.

And we went in there, and there was quite a gathering that came in. And they were asking people to step up. And so I volunteered. I thought, well, okay, this is gonna be a good time to get involved. We have the names of the people, too. We had Joe and Betty West, Rob Wood. Barbara and Ray Warren. We had Odell and Nancy Landers. We had Jim Crouch. We had me and Liz. And Bob Wizenhunt. Bob was a World War Two hero and wounded veteran, and a really nice man. And so, we became the first council.

I asked Mike why the organization was important to him and why he has remained active in the community for over 15 years. He emphasized the importance of commitment, of cooperative labor with other Cherokees, as a source of motivation:

I said, we [he and his wife Liz] would become the treasurer, only if people were serious about it, and committed to it. And all seven of us were, and have been right up until this day, even with the council changes. People commit and something happens when you get on the council. You become an owner, you become really protective. So everyone did and you know, I used to, you know, I admired everyone. They made long distances to our meetings, Barbara and Ray came down. Betty and Joe came down from snowing and raining and hailing and long drives, and never missed a council meeting. And we were having them



I think monthly at that time for quite a while. And so, you know, when you're committed you feel committed just from the commitment perspective.

This value of commitment, Mike said, is connected to the often-evoked Cherokee value of *SSY gadugi*. *SSY Gadugi* is often used simply to describe a Cherokee ethos of working together, but I have been told that it is not just about working to provide for one's community in need. This collective effort *anticipates* that need and meets it before the need arises. It is not reactionary like other models of charity or mutual aid. Anticipating and then being proactive to fill the needs of community involves a regularity of service and a persistence in providing support. It builds habits, expectations, and dependable structures of care. It strengthens our interdependency with each other. It is in this active, persistent sense that Mike describes the importance of commitment to other Cherokees on the community council and to those the organization serves.

As a value, *SSY gadugi* has always been central to our survival, especially during allotment. Rose Stremlau documents how Cherokee communities in Adair County—the community of Chewey in particular—geographically responded to the events leading up to, that enacted, and that followed from allotment. Since colonial encounter, Cherokee peoples have transformed the orientation of our communities, townships, and kinship systems to navigate settler colonial pressure. Stremlau argues that during

allotment many Cherokee farms, especially those in Adair, functioned as “hubs” of individual and collective work that brought together kin and community in order to survive. These farms in what one might call the Adair allotment neighborhood combined many food systems, including agriculture and livestock husbandry, hunting, fishing, and wild plant harvesting (Stremlau 61). These farms were typically smaller and practiced polycropping that resisted pests, disease, and the turbulence of the market economy (61).

ᏍᏍᏍ Gadugi is also related to the word *ᏍᏍᏍ sgadugi*, which can mean community or can mean a community’s constituent parts like a district, county, or state. *ᏍᏍᏍ Sgadugi* can signify the components of Cherokee sovereignty, and *ᏍᏍᏍ gadugi* can signify an active ethic for building community institutions like CNCV and more broadly a nationhood predicated on collective effort and sustained cooperation. Through division and separation, allotment attempted to undermine this collective ethic of *ᏍᏍᏍ gadugi* to build and maintain our *ᏍᏍᏍ disgadugi* (communities) into the future, to anticipate the needs of our (allotment) neighbors. Privatization and allotment hampered our ability to depend on each other, especially in the context of growing diaspora communities away from Cherokee lands. But at the same time, this active sense of building community—this Cherokee value rooted in cooperative labor on and with the land—also enabled us to survive and even thrive through allotment and through shifting relationships to our homelands. In many ways, *ᏍᏍᏍ gadugi* exemplifies how Cherokee values rooted in grounded normativity can be place-based but not



place-bound; our language and the values it expresses contain the blueprints for living in diaspora, in a circuit of going abroad and coming home. These blueprints, however, serve not only diaspora communities, but also make room for imagining Cherokee relations on Osage and other Indigenous lands, which are now home to Cherokee Nation and United Keetoowah Band. The blueprints do not collapse the place-based nature of Cherokee values into place-bound terms of political territory. The settler colonial violence of our forced removal from our homelands in the southeast redounded especially upon Osage communities living in the region that our reservation now occupies. In his play *The Cherokee Night* (1932), Cherokee dramatist Lynn Riggs evokes this compounding violence through the figure of Claremore Mound, a mountain that we might add to the geography covered thus far.²² In this article, I employ a dialectic of allotment stories spanning time and place within a multi-sited Cherokee world to avoid possibly reproducing the violence of Osage displacement. These storied conversations refuse to conflate place-based values like *SSY gadugi* with a notion of a fixed, place-bound set of Cherokee land relations that disavow other layered Indigenous land relations and sovereignties, including the Osage.²³

Community Elders like Mike Webb have continually renewed and sustained the role that at-large community organizations like CNCV have had in connecting

Cherokee people across the many sites of Cherokee life—in our original homelands in the southeast, on our reservation in northeastern Oklahoma, and in diaspora. This sustained collective effort, this *SSY gadugi*, has been a significant means by which Cherokee people living in diaspora have anticipated the changing needs of our future, as we increasingly live away from—and across!—our homelands. To those living in diaspora, "homeland" is both an imagined place of belonging (e.g., our ancestral lands in what is also known as the southeastern US) and sometimes a political homeland in northeastern Oklahoma.²⁴ Family stories like the ones my grandmother Helen has told me and community histories like those told by Mike Webb are cherished allotment diaspora stories that teach us how to be Cherokee across our homelands.

The conversations and stories between Cherokee people that I bring together in this article all engage with the changes that allotment introduced to Cherokee relationships to our lands and communities both on our reservation and in diaspora. Although these conversations take place across time and space, when brought together they reveal the interwoven strands of Cherokee storytelling, history, language, and community-building that maintain these relationships. By forging connections among oral history narratives, critical reflection on personal encounters with my family's allotment homeplaces, and community stories, I trace an enduring Cherokee grounded normativity in Cherokee values of *SSY gadugi* and land relations to our mountains, waterways, and cemetery places. Bringing together these different allotment stories, this article cites and sites our communities beyond allotment's



regime of division and alienation from Cherokee homelands. In the face of allotment's forms of severance, these storied conversations illustrate Cherokee allotment survivance—the multiple ways in which Cherokee people maintain and sustain our communities in the aftermath of a colonial privatization scheme that relied on our disintegration.

Notes

¹ The trip was generously supported by a grant from the American Philosophical Society's Philips Fund for Native American Research, which I received during the 2020-2021 round of funding.

² Using the term, "reservation," to describe Cherokee lands in what is now Oklahoma is a relatively recent development. For many Cherokee people, reclaiming the term is an affirmation of enduring sovereignty in the face of ongoing settler colonialism rather than an expression that idealizes or romanticizes our land base. In 2020, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *McGirt v. Oklahoma* that the reservations of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes, including the Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole Nations, were never disestablished by Congress after allotment through the Oklahoma Enabling Act of 1906, which laid the groundwork for the creation of the state of Oklahoma in 1907. The use of "reservation" is an assertion that allotment and Oklahoma statehood never extinguished the Native Nations of Indian Territory.

³ This same auntie was a founding member of the Cherokees of Orange County in California. Although she's no longer active in that group, she was the first to teach me what Cherokee community organizing could look like. Since then, I've been honored to be a part of the Cherokees of Northern Central Valley, based in the Sacramento Valley in California, and now the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound serving Western Washington.

⁴ These newspapers include the *Cherokee Advocate*, *Muscogee Phoenix*, *Tahlequah Arrow*, and others. See Littlefield and Paris for a compendium of American Indian and Alaska Native newspapers and periodicals, which includes information, history, and locations of Indian Territory newspapers.

⁵ See especially Debo, Otis, Prucha, and McDonnell.

⁶ See Radocay for work on how Cherokee people repurpose the colonial cartographies of allotment. See also Justice, *Indigenous Literatures* pp. 192-204.

⁷ See Vizenor for a discussion of his concept of "survivance," which denotes narratives that carve out active Indigenous presence within and against settler colonial erasures, including those enacted by allotment and colonial privatization.

⁸ See also L. Simpson for an elaboration of grounded normativity in Indigenous political resurgence and the everyday activity of Indigenous theorizing and organizing.

⁹ My mentor at UC Davis, Beth Rose Middleton Manning, insisted that I keep a journal. I am incredibly grateful for that suggestion and for all her mentorship over the years.

¹⁰ For more on stories of Indigenous deficiency see Justice, *Indigenous Literatures* pp. 2-6. Also see A. Simpson for her discussion of an Indigenous politics of refusal that contests forms of tribal and settler national belonging delimited by a settler-dominated politics of recognition.

¹¹ Maps retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011585467/>

¹² See Radocay for work on allotment geographies and survey maps. Also see Palmer and Ruppel.

¹³ See Basso.

¹⁴ See Fitzgerald for a discussion on the importance of "land narratives" to Indigenous place-making and the production of sovereign landscapes.

¹⁵ For an overview of Cherokee stickball and its spiritual and historical significance, see Mooney and Zogry.

¹⁶ See Ambler for a discussion of Duke-funded oral history projects at other universities.

¹⁷ For a retrospective of the Doris Duke Program, see Penfield. And for a description of the scope and sequence of the program, see Jasper.

¹⁸ Checkerboarding describes an important consequence of allotment: as allotments passed from Native to non-Native ownership, the continuity of the land took the form of a checkerboard pattern with some parcels still belonging to Native families and others to non-Native enterprises.

¹⁹ Angela's mother, Betty, passed away a couple of weeks after our Sparrow Hawk hike.

²⁰ See Debo for an overview of the fraud, financial insecurity, and other hardships that Native people faced during the allotment of Indian Territory.

²¹ The project titled "Cherokee Diaspora Stories" is a multimedia collection of personal, family, and community stories about the diverse experiences of the Cherokee diaspora that now resides on Nisenan, Miwok, Patwin, and other California Indian lands.

²² In Scene One, we learn that the Mound was the site of a battle in 1817 between Osage and Cherokee "Old Settlers" who had moved west as pressure from US settler colonialism intensified.

²³ For work that richly explores Osage land relations, histories, and experiences, see Dennison, Mathews, and Warrior *Tribal Secrets and The People*.

²⁴ See Smithers.



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RESEARCH ARTICLE

O-da-li Ga-li E-di-yo-ha: Mountain Climber, We Are All Looking For It

ALISSA BAKER

Creation stories are a potent medicine. When shared, they can transport the storyteller and listeners to a time before the Earth and its inhabitants existed as we see them today. These stories call us to imagine worlds at the limits of our imaginations, often invoking concepts of infinitude, nothingness, and elemental purity. Upon these vast canvases the earliest relationships between the Earth and all living things are defined. The cooperation, dissociation, unifications, and dissolutions of these relationships communicate the most fundamental relationships our people have experienced; our responsibilities and obligations that hinge upon our most noble virtues as well as most grievous failings. These stories provide what have been referred to as ‘original instructions’ about our relationships and conduct within this world (Ausubel 18).

The Cherokee creation story, as many stories from oral cultures, is complex, branching into a multitude of seemingly episodic but interconnected stories. These stories are where we learn about how the animals first formed ᱫᱚᱛ (E-lo-(h)wi: the

Earth), the appearance and lives of the first humans ᠔᠐ᠵ and 4M (Ka-na-ti and Se-lu), and how we received our most important food, corn (4M, se-lu). Within this epic we also learn how humans, nearly at the outset of our time on R᠒᠒, had already shown a tendency toward thoughtlessness and greed at the expense of other animals.

It is said that a long time ago, humans were not careful about where they walked, and at times would step on the toad who was wont to bury himself in the ground. This trampling upset the toad, as his once smooth and beautiful skin was now covered in warts from the dirt being ground into his body. He called together a council of animals who collectively aired their frustrations about the humans who not only trampled upon them but killed many of their brethren for food as well as harvested foods the other animals enjoyed eating. The animals decided that in order to punish the humans, they would lay curses on them to make them sick. All seemed lost for the humans at this point, as we already know that the animals formed R᠒᠒ themselves and therefore had more experience and knowledge in almost all things compared to the humans. Fortunately for us, the plants came forward in our defense. The plants felt that humans had always treated them well. The plants decided that for every curse and illness the animals created to harm the humans, they would offer a cure. This story shows the deep relationship Cherokees have with plants, and how we came to receive many of our medicines (Teuton 138-139).

Among these medicines, there were some plants who were very generous indeed. A prime example of a plant that has formed a strong relationship with the Cherokee people is ginseng. This plant is treasured where it grows across the homelands of the Cherokee and is sorely missed by descendants of Cherokees forcibly removed to Indian Territory in 1830's (now Oklahoma). With assistance from an interview with Mr. Pat Gwin, the recently retired Senior Director of Cherokee Nation Environmental Resources, this paper will provide a brief ethnobotanical portrait of the North American varieties of ginseng, an overview of a ginseng project within the Cherokee Nation, as well as relevant ecological and sociocultural relationships that



may inform the trajectory of the Cherokee Nation ginseng project.

Globally, there are six varieties of ginseng with two varieties occurring naturally within North America. Cherokee medicinal practices likely utilized both North American varieties: American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) and Dwarf ginseng (*Panax trifolius*), as both plants could be found within the boundaries of the Cherokee homelands prior to removal (Keville 7). Maps denoting current distribution are shown below (United States Department of Agriculture). While Oklahoma is included in the contemporary distribution of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), few confirmed

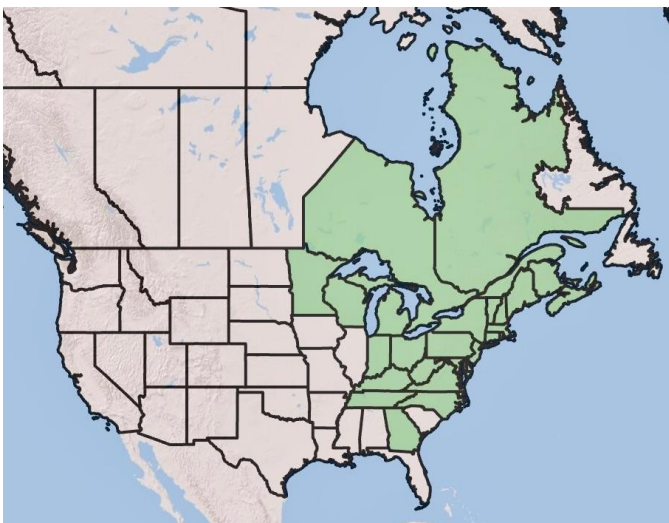


Figure 2. Distribution of *Panax trifolius* in North

sightings of the plant have been reported. Observations within LeFlore County, Oklahoma, have been published and the plant is listed as highly imperiled at the state level (Hoagland and Buthod 80). Dwarf ginseng has been noted explicitly as one of the culturally salient species lost by removed Cherokees (Vick 402).

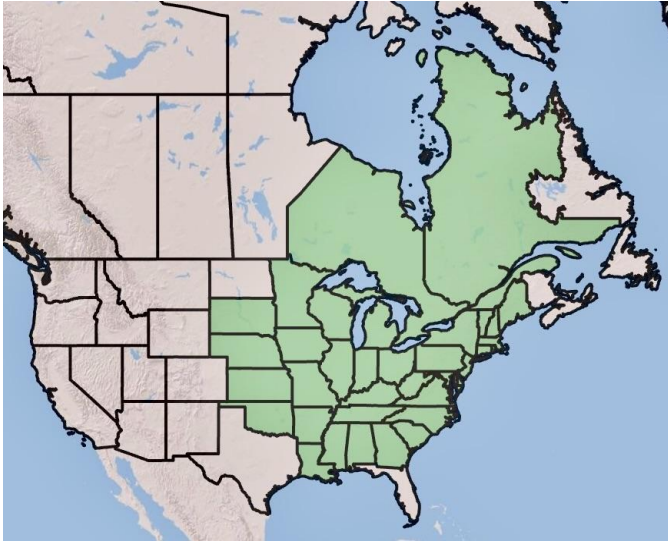


Figure 3. Distribution of *Panax quinquefolius* in North America.

In the course of research for this paper, multiple Cherokee names for ginseng were confirmed. Some examples include ႫႬ Ⴎ (o-da-li ga-li: mountain climber), ႮႮ ႫႮႮ (s-gi o-s-di: loosely (with emphasis) 'very good/nice'), and ႮႮႮ ႫႮႮ (a-s-ga-ya o-s-da: good man). It is possible that multiple Cherokee names for ginseng refer to, or at one time referred to, the distinct American

and Dwarf varieties. It is also possible these different names represent regional variations for the same plant. It is widely known among professional botanists as well as hobbyist plant and mushroom hunters that a wide variety of local names can describe the same organism.

The Cherokee language is a highly descriptive verb-based polysynthetic language (Kilarski 61-66). Given there exists multiple ways to reference objects and relationships, there is wide variability across common words in general (Ed Fields 2018). The cultural practices of the Cherokee people likely contribute toward a propensity for community dialects and localized linguistic preferences. Prior to contact and for some time afterward, Cherokees lived within independent towns with local councils in a confederacy-style nation (Carroll 37-56). Living within the Cherokee Nation reservation one can still see and feel this tradition today. Cherokees living in different counties may use different words to describe the same animals, relationships, events, and so on. Our community values focus on maintaining community harmony and developing empathy with instructions such as ႮႮႮ ႮႮ ႮႮႮႮႮႮႮႮ (Du-yu-(k)-dv i-di-tlv de-tsa-da-se-he-s-de-s-di: direct one another in the right way, without



confining or pushing (Adcock and Lasher 365-366). In these ways, Cherokees honor the individual by providing space and demonstrating trust to develop one's own interests, talents, and gifts in service to one's community (see Dvorakova 86-90). With these cultural nuances, it is not surprising that one community may come to name an object by describing how it looks, while another community may describe the object by the function it serves. Neither term should be considered incorrect, but preferences do emerge for individuals, families, and communities. For example, there are at least 3 words commonly used in reference to automobiles within the Cherokee Nation reservation: ႠႣႰႣ (di-k-tu-le-na: 'big eyes', referring the vehicle's headlights), ႠႣႰႣ (da-qua-le-la: 'wagon', a carryover term from earlier transportation technology), and ႠႣႰႣ (a-dla di-tla-i: 'rubber, mounted/layered', referring to the rubber tires that the vehicle cab is mounted upon) (Ed Fields). It would not be surprising for this variability to extend to medicinal plant descriptions.

The Cherokee people use ginseng for a variety of specific treatments as well as for a general tonic. One source finds that there are at least 14 distinct uses for Dwarf ginseng among the Cherokee (Vick 402-403). Some of the specific uses include as an expectorant, as a colic treatment, and for oral thrush (Setzer 52). The Cherokee are not the only Native people who have incorporated this herb within their medicinal practices; the Iroquois (Liu et al. 2), the Anishinaabe (Norrsgard 58), Menominee (Ross et al. 484), Muscogee, Meskwaki, and Mohawk peoples (Stephenson) have all been noted to administer ginseng. Other noted indications for use of the herb include indigestion, gout, respiratory problems, hepatitis, hives, rheumatism, and various skin problems (McElhaney et al.; Keville 48-49). Ginseng provides additional benefits beyond curative properties which likely lend to its use as a more general tonic. The herb has been shown in double-blind randomized trials to improve working memory, reaction time, and induce a state of enhanced calm or focus (Scholey et al. 351-354).

The herb is also widely known through both clinical trials and medicinal practices to relieve fatigue (Barton et al. 1232-1236).

While the name ᏈᏍᏗ ᏍᏗ appears to be a description of where you would find plant growing on mountainsides, it is typical of Cherokee naming conventions for there to be multiple meanings within in a name. We can take the name ᏈᏍᏗ ᏍᏗ to also refer to the stamina gained from the plant, which would endow the practitioner the ability to climb mountains; while enhanced mental acuity would perhaps provide for insights to more easily allow the patient to overcome mountains of the psychological variety. The stamina and cognitive benefits make the herb an ideal component of ceremonial medicinal practices; ginseng bestows energy and mental clarity that would aid Cherokees taking part in stomp dancing, a ceremonial community event that takes place from dusk until dawn (longer for ceremonial chiefs). The multitude of benefits and alignment of ᏈᏍᏗ ᏍᏗ with our spiritual practices make it clear why Cherokees recognize this plant as sacred and hold a special relationship with it. For Cherokees whose families were forcibly removed from areas where the plant is easily located or procured from a medicine person, the loss of this sacred relationship is appreciable. The absence of this 'good man' takes with it practices, language, and knowledge specific to the maintenance of a respectful reciprocal relationship. The loss of access and relation to ginseng for Cherokees and other Native Americans is but one manifestation of cultural genocide directed at Native Americans by the ongoing settler colonial project of the United States.

The loss of plant medicines following removal was recognized as a crisis. Preserved oral histories speak of how Cherokee spiritual leaders and medicine people arriving in the "new country" of Indian Territory sought from via offerings and petitions to ᏍᏗᏍᏗᏍᏗ (U-ne-tla-nv-hi: Provider) to provide new plant medicines. These calls for assistance were said to be answered, and Cherokees located relatives of traditional medicines from their homelands as well as found new medicines (Carroll 60-63). Local stories have also suggested that citizens across removed tribes such as the Cherokee,



Absentee Shawnee, and the Muskogee supported one another in creating intertribal ceremonial grounds and medicine exchanges to increase access to healthcare (Dr. Daniel Howard 2017).

The observation of *Panax quinquefolius* occurred within the mountainous southeast corner of Oklahoma the sovereign lands of the Choctaw Nation (see Figure 3). By all available accounts, ginseng does not seem to be found within Cherokee territory (Pat Gwin 2019). This may not have always been the case. When the Cherokee were forcibly removed from their original lands in the Smokey Mountains in the winter of 1838, few were able to thoughtfully prepare for the arduous forced march. The Cherokees had been engaged in long series of proposals and deliberations with the United States federal government as well as the state of Georgia for years at that point. Chief John Ross, journalist Elias Boudinot, and warrior Major Ridge among others made numerous travels to delegate overturning the ill-gotten Treaty of New Echota; a treaty made with Cherokee representatives that did not have significant backing from the tribe as a whole. It was this treaty that promised the eventual removal of the Cherokees to Indian Territory, now Oklahoma (King 41-50).

Although given very little time to gather belongings, there were some Cherokees who had the presence of mind to consider what would be able to be planted to sustain the Cherokee people upon their arrival in Indian Territory. For instance, it is known that White Eagle corn kernels were brought for planting (Pat Gwin). White Eagle corn is a dent variety that is most suitable for grinding into cornmeal, a mainstay for many Cherokee foods (Nadine Mahaney 2015).

There is reason to speculate that *ᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁ* root stock may have been carried over the Trail and fostered by families who settled in northeastern Cherokee Nation territory. Pat Gwin, a lifelong outdoorsman, notes that the seasonal timing of removal made it possible that viable harvested root stock would have been available and easily

transported. In an interview, Mr. Gwin shared that when elders took him to sites where they or their grandparents had reported once harvesting ᄒᄒᄒ ᄒᄒ, there were no longer traces of the plant to be found. He believes that these sites could possibly be transplant sites where ancestors who had come across the Trail had planted root stock and cared for them. What is less clear, but of interest, is whether the sites eventually failed due to inadequate site conditions, neglect, over harvesting, climate change, or a combination of these and potentially other factors. It is worth noting that the southeast Oklahoma county in which ginseng was reported to be found is 3-500' higher in elevation than the Cherokee Nation lands in the northeast corner of Oklahoma.

Memories of the medicinal value of the plant, and presumably memories about the relationships families made with the plant and one other while working the site, creating medicine, or sharing knowledge about the plant have remained over time. The Cherokee Nation ginseng project grew out of the successful Seed Bank program. The Cherokee Nation Seed Bank began after it became apparent the tribe no longer held any of its heirloom seeds in 2005. Mr. Gwin spent a year traveling across the United States and working with the Minneapolis American Indian Center as well as our sister tribe the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) to recover a stock of 20 varieties of traditional medicine and food plants (Danovich). Cherokee Nation citizens were able to place a request for free seeds for the first time in 2006, and the program has only become larger and more popular since.

The success of this program made it possible for the tribe's ethnobotanical work to continue to expand, and partnerships were born across different programs within the tribe. An early and natural partnership that emerged was between Environmental Resources and the various language programs. As first language speakers are overwhelmingly elders, Mr. Gwin and other Environmental Resource employees were able to begin seeking the input of community elders about what projects they would like to see undertaken. There were two plants that elder Cherokee speakers were keen to re-establish: river cane (ᄒᄒᄒ: i-hi-ya) and ᄒᄒᄒ ᄒᄒ. The river cane project continues



today on the grounds of our sister tribe, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, and is hailed as a success (Gourd; Graham), but the ginseng project has proven more challenging.

To launch the project, Mr. Gwin purchased several hundred dollars' worth of ginseng root stock from a wildcrafter on the East coast. Ideal planting sites were scouted, and the roots were planted in the fall of 2008. As its name suggests, *ashu kiu* prefers northern slopes of mountains with good soil. Mr. Gwin soon found that it was not only elders who were interested in the project; the roots of wild ginseng, or wild-cultivated (woods-grown) ginseng, can sell for exorbitant prices, so care was taken to keep the locations private and protected in order to prevent poaching (Pat Gwin). The global market for ginseng continues to expand as the total supply is dwindling, driving the price per pound ever higher and enticing poachers to risk federal and state prosecution to harvest the plant in protected areas. Poachers present the most significant threat to the endangered plant, as they may harvest too early in the plant's life cycle to allow the plant to reproduce successfully or may not resist the temptation to harvest an entire plant community (Dr. Eli Suzukovich 2019; Arnold; "American Ginseng").

The thought and care that went into planting paid off. The seedlings sprouted ahead of schedule by at least 6 weeks and at a 100% success rate, surprising the wildcrafter who had sold the root stock upon hearing the news. It seemed that many of the early pitfalls that can befall a new planting project had been avoided. Yet, as any gardener knows, you shouldn't count your tomatoes before they are on your plate. While the sites selected for the Cherokee Nation plantings managed to prevent the detection of poachers, the plants did not elude local wildlife. The healthy plants were soon consumed by animals, who ate them down to the ground. There were no wildlife cameras installed at the site, but deer or possibly groundhogs were the suspected

culprits. Whatever the animal, ᄃᆞᆯ ᄃᆞᆯ tried to come back year after year but was eaten each time, eventually killing off the root stock entirely (Pat Gwin). If deer were responsible for consuming the plants, it is unlikely that any of the early seeds consumed were dispersed. Study has found that ginseng seeds are most likely destroyed during the digestive process when eaten by deer (Furedi and McGraw 271-275).

Ginseng has a number of important relationships across the forest ecosystem, deer accounting for only one. Rodents and turkey are noted to eat ginseng in addition to deer (Carroll and Apsley). Turkey, in particular, have been discussed in relation to ginseng, as they enjoy eating the berries of the plant. Research has found that turkeys damage crops of ginseng intended for sale and distribution through scratching. As turkeys scratch the soil around the plants while foraging and eating berries, they expose and damage the crown of the ginseng roots. This damage has been found to be exacerbated in wild-cultivated ginseng where turkeys have longer intervals of accessibility to ginseng sites due to less frequent human visits. In these instances, flocks of turkeys can damage several hectares of ginseng in just one passing (Werner et al. 226). The high price point of the crop translates to thousands of dollars being lost even in instances where the actual damage is small (Groeppe et al. 3; Werner et al. 222). Not addressed by the literature is a study of wild turkeys as a vector of ginseng distribution. It is possible that wild turkeys both damage plants but also create new sites for ginseng growth through their consumption and contingent dispersal of seeds (Dr. Eli Suzukovich 2019).

Future study would do well to consider whether the terrains that wild turkeys frequent are ideal for ginseng growth, perform chemical analyses of the effects of turkey digestion on ginseng seeds, and conduct field study and observation of turkey flocks in known ginseng-growing areas to try to determine whether ginseng plants are indeed being distributed. There is reason to believe that birds, or at least songbirds, may be effective ginseng seed dispersers. Recent research found that thrushes enjoy eating ginseng seeds more than other potential dispersers and are prone to



regurgitating viable seeds 5-37 minutes after consumption (Hruska et al. 50). Both the hermit thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) and the gray-cheeked thrush (*Catharus minimus*) have been identified with the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation (Kaufman). In addition to animal-plant relationships, ginseng also shares relations with a number of plants; ᄇᄇᄇ ᄇᄇ is known as an understory plant requiring shade, so one important set of relationships are those to overstory trees. In a study of overstory tree species present at naturally occurring ginseng sites in Arkansas, white oaks, mockernut hickories, northern red oaks, American beeches, and black oaks were found to be the most important (see Figure 4 on the following page for the full list of 20 species documented; Fountain 44). Notable is the dominance of oak varieties found at naturally occurring ginseng sites. Cherokee territory in Oklahoma is a mixture of tall grass prairie, oak-hickory, post oak-blackjack, and oak-pine forests (Tyrl et al. 7-9), thereby containing a diversity of oak species within its bounds.

Table 1. Importance values for overstory tree species (stems greater than 10.0 cm dbh) associated with natural populations of ginseng in Arkansas (all study plots combined)

SPECIES	Average Basal Area (m ² /ha)	Average Density (stems/ha)	Frequency %	Importance Value
White oak	4.222	87.55	66.7	57.51
Mockernut	1.799	37.15	41.7	28.70
Northern red oak	2.295	26.52	50.0	26.26
American beech	3.702	21.23	25.0	24.54
Black oak	2.384	21.22	41.7	25.54
Yellow-poplar	0.267	5.30	25.0	23.37
White ash	0.792	29.17	33.3	18.01
Blackgum	0.849	18.56	41.7	16.88
Hophornbeam	0.252	18.56	25.0	13.25
Sassafras	0.369	15.92	25.0	10.64
Basswood	0.316	7.96	16.7	8.61
American elm	0.165	10.61	16.7	8.24
Black cherry	0.130	7.96	16.7	6.27
Sweetgum	0.267	5.30	16.7	5.60
Sugar maple	0.187	5.30	16.7	5.14
Dogwood	0.130	10.62	8.3	5.07
Red maple	0.053	5.30	16.7	4.73
Cucumber tree	0.032	2.65	8.3	2.78
Shagbark hickory	0.096	2.65	8.3	2.62
American hornbeam	0.024	2.65	8.3	2.16

Figure 4. Important overstory tree species at natural ginseng sites in Arkansas (Fountain, 44).

These oaks are currently threatened by red oak decline, fungal infections (*Biscogniauxia* cankers in particular), and defoliators. In the case of the *Biscogniauxia* canker, there is not a cure; rather, preventative maintenance is the only way to prevent infection. This fungus is more prone to infect trees stressed by drought, heat, and wounds (Olson). Red oak decline is also precipitated by drought and environmental stressors (Pat Gwin; Kabrick et al. 181, 185). Oklahoma weather is predicted to become warmer with more severe droughts and flooding as the climate changes more rapidly in the immediate future (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 1-2), so it is



likely that oak fungal infections and red oak decline will continue to shift the composition of our forests.

In envisioning which tree species might take the place of oaks if the aggregate population begins to dwindle, Mr. Gwin that sugar maples, among other species, appear to be increasing in number. The Caddo sugar maple is a native variety that originated in Caddo county in southwestern Oklahoma considered to be highly drought-resistant, possibly making it easier for this species to migrate north to the Cherokee Nation reservation (Oklahoma State University). It has been noted for some time that red maples have been rapidly expanding their distribution across North America and are able to tolerate a wide range of soils, including those found in Oklahoma (Abrams 355-356). While not listed within the top 10 important overstory tree species (Figure 4), red and sugar maples are considered important over- and understory species within Arkansas forests for creating appropriate habitat for $\delta^{13}C$ $\delta^{15}N$ (Fountain 46).

Notably, Cherokee Nation citizens were recently granted permissions to forage ginseng and other plants within the Buffalo National River Park in Arkansas (Hunter). Therefore, the health and composition of Arkansas forests may be just as important to Oklahoma Cherokees as our local forests. While this pact is laudable, questions of true accessibility remain as the park is about a two and a half hour drive from the Cherokee Nation capital in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Native Americans are almost twice as likely to live in rural areas compared to the general US population (Cromartie and Parker), a figure that is likely higher for practitioners of Cherokee ceremonial plant practices. Rural US citizens are known to face challenges in accessing transportation (Wang et al. 1) which is further compounded by factors specific to Native American communities (Carther). It is presently unknown if the pact has increased foraging options in practical ways for rural Cherokees given that rural Native Americans often face difficulties

completing everyday tasks that rely upon transportation, such as attending medical appointments or getting children to school (Hensley-Quinn and Shawn 1).

The health of and access to forests are not the only relevant factors in the maintenance of communities capable of including ginseng among its members. Given the interrelation of lands, changes in non-woodland ecosystems must be considered as vectors of second- and third-order effects within Oklahoma woodland habitats. One phenomenon that stands to impact the composition of forests in northeast Oklahoma is woody plant encroachment (WPE), which is the migration of Indigenous woody plants into grassland and savannah ecosystems. This migration transforms these unique ecosystems into closed woodlands, enacting fundamental shifts in local biodiversity (Shiple et al. 753-754). The central and Southern Great Plains (SGP) that stretch across Oklahoma demonstrate a higher rate of WPE ($\sim 1.7\%/year^1$ of land area) than the Great Plains, Africa, South America, or Australia (Yang et al. 1).

Mirroring the migration patterns of their human counterparts (Wilkerson and Farha), central Texas plants such as eastern red cedar, post oak, honey mesquite, and Ashe juniper are relocating into central and eastern regions of Oklahoma. Species distribution models project that honey mesquite could overtake up to 2/3 of non-agricultural areas in the southern Great Plains by the end of the 21st century (Yang et al. 1). As a complex phenomena, WPE can effect positive local changes such as enhanced carbon storage within soil and vegetation pools as well as increased vegetation productivity. Yet, WPE is also associated with decreases in biodiversity, productivity, and coverage of herbaceous vegetation due to increased shading created by migrating woody plants and contingent competition among floor-level plants. Additionally, WPE has been found to impact multiple facets of water system dynamics that ultimately reduce surface water runoff and groundwater recharge. If left unmanaged WPE can impact river flow and the availability of water across watershed and regional levels (Yang et al. 2). Each of these major shifts, as well as the minor mechanisms underlying such systems-level changes, directly impacts the ability for



communities comprised of both humans and more-than-humans (see Abrams 14-15) to maintain established food and water system practices that sustain populations. Dramatic changes in the availability of water, native grasses, and forbs can lead to extinction as well as migration of local species into neighboring areas, creating cascading shifts across both directly and indirectly impacted ecosystems (Yang et al. 2).

An accelerated loss of vegetative biodiversity and dramatic changes in local water systems present real challenges to the proliferation of 𐄂𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 in Oklahoma forests. Site suitability for 𐄂𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 is often marked by the presence of a diverse community of plants that commonly grow alongside 𐄂𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂. These often-sensitive plants include jack-in-the-pulpit, green dragon, rue anemone, trillium, and Solomon's seal. The most consistent plant mentioned in conjunction with ginseng is goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis* L.). The plant appears to be an indicator of habitability for ginseng but may also provide benefits to ginseng as a companion plant. Goldenseal is popularly known for offering antifungal properties and given that ginseng prefers to grow in damp understories, these properties may improve the health of its roots. Goldenseal already grows naturally in Oklahoma and was planted with the Cherokee Nation ginseng plants, which may have aided their robust growth (Pat Gwin; Carroll and Apsley 2; Frazier et al. 8-10). This partnership between goldenseal and 𐄂𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 underlines the importance of soil moisture dynamics that stand to be impacted by complex changes in climate, water systems, and community memberships in Oklahoma forests.

As the profitability of ginseng continues to drive research agendas, more will be learned about the plant and its relations over time. Cherokees seeking to re-establish a relationship with the plant are motivated by traditional relational exchanges rather than capitalist profit. Mr. Gwin shared that ginseng successfully produced through his

work would be made available to ceremonial practitioners likely free of charge as is already the practice with other important medicines such as Red Root (also known as prairie willow). He noted that elders in the community tend to feel that it is inappropriate to put a price on knowledge or sacredness, and are therefore generally opposed to using the plant to generate revenue. Mr. Gwin shared that there may be efforts to grow ginseng in a controlled greenhouse environment but given the ceremonial use of the plant, this process would need to be co-developed by traditionalists, speakers, and tribal natural resource employees to ensure appropriate handling of the plants and environment.

This work and other projects emerging from Cherokee Nation Natural Resources and its internal collaborators are demonstrative of Cherokee cultural practices. Like many Native American tribes, environmental resource management is considered an important aspect of practical and political management of sovereign tribal lands for the Cherokee Nation. The inclusion of community voice and focus on community needs reflect the community value of drawing our people together to work toward common goals, a concept known as *SSY* (gadugi) that marks many of Cherokee people's greatest endeavors. The ginseng project may also hint at some of the foundational elements of a Cherokee model of science: careful observation of environments; background research via multiple trajectories that expand beyond traditional academic sources to include stories and histories in both oral and written forms; meditation upon our language as a guide to understanding the phenomena or agents they describe; a willingness to experiment toward more successful outcomes in ways that are ethically anchored within our shared values; and a progressive incorporation of diverse technologies when it can serve our needs. The efforts of the Cherokee Nation Natural Resources department are examples of Cherokee sovereignty and investments in our futurity to remain Cherokee through ties to our lands and practices, despite forced removal and efforts by the United States and the state of Oklahoma in attempting to eliminate our peoples and culture.



Cherokee epistemology, our ways of thinking and knowing, are transmitted through cultural practices that are important in the preservation of our heritage, advancement of sovereignty, and nation-building. Many Native peoples, including the Cherokee, recount stories of dramatically shifting environments that demonstrate the capacity of Indigenous communities to survive many changes in climate as well as oppressive social regimes. Our relationships with plants, including our process of making relationships with plants, is likely one of the practices that has bestowed resiliency and success in the face of environmental and social challenges. Continued revitalization and study of our plant sciences, language, traditional and contemporary wisdoms, and value systems will serve to connect Cherokee people to our histories as well as our futures.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

"Two Cats and a Monkey": A Translated and Morphologically Annotated Cherokee Language Text with Guidance for Second-Language Learners

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Background

The Cherokee people today are bureaucratically divided into three federally-recognized governments, headquartered on reservations in North Carolina and Oklahoma.² In 2019, these several tribes passed a unanimous resolution declaring that their shared, ancestral language—the sole representative of the Southern Iroquoian language family—had entered a "state of emergency" (Brings Plenty). Estimates that the number of fluent speakers totals only about 2000—most of them elders—make this

conclusion difficult to argue. Yet countervailing forces are in play. Within each tribe a combination of organizations, programs, linguists, first-language speakers, and second-language learners are investing considerable effort toward staving off language extinction (Montgomery-Anderson 6-9).³ Such efforts are supported by a scholarly dictionary and a substantial body of research into morphology, syntax, and phonology (e.g., Cook; Feeling; King; Montgomery-Anderson; Pulte and Feeling; Scancarelli, "Cherokee"; Scancarelli, "Grammatical Relations"; Uchihara, *Tone and Accent*; Walker).

An additional type of resource is likewise crucial. The robustly polysynthetic nature of the Cherokee language—wherein potential combinations of many prefixes and suffixes mean that *each* regular verb stem admits upwards of 21,000 different forms (King 34)—engenders the need for morphologically analyzed texts. These separate the minimal, meaningful units of words (morphemes) and label their function, showing the contribution that each makes toward meaning. While critical for illuminating the underlying structure of language, such texts in Cherokee remain scarce. A recent review enumerates them all, identifying only half a dozen published sources for fully analyzed texts (Kopris 229).

We add to this small corpus by supplying a morphologically segmented and annotated text from an early issue of the first tribal newspaper in the United States, the *Cherokee Phoenix*, first contextualizing it within its historical and cultural environment. We anticipate this effort will be of interest to scholars studying polysynthesis in discourse. At the same time, we hope to make our analyses accessible to the population of second-language learners who will increasingly inherit the responsibility of caring for the language as the population of first-language speakers continues to age. Toward this latter end, we review features of the Cherokee verb and discuss how particular types of morphemes illustrated in our analyzed text contribute to communicative possibilities.



Data

We selected the text to be analyzed—a Cherokee language version of one of Aesop's fables—from the second issue of the *Cherokee Phoenix* (*Tsalagi Tsulehisanvhi*) newspaper, dated February 28, 1828. Fifteen sentences long, the fable appears on the paper's third page, without English translation, in the syllabary writing system that the Cherokee polymath Sequoyah (ᎠᎹᎯᏍᎦ) had introduced in 1821 (Figures 1 and 2).⁴ As an example of edifying prose, the text represents one genre common to the publication (Parins 58). Moreover, as a variety of ordinary communication—as opposed to, say, the formal speech of government documents with which it shared the issue—it exemplifies the sort of language that Cherokee speakers would have encountered in daily interaction.



Figure 1: *Cherokee Phoenix*, 2-28, 1828, p. 3

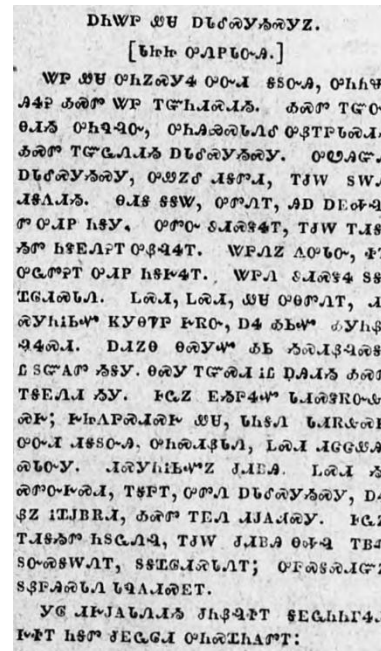


Figure 2: "Two Cats and a Monkey"

Method

We transliterated the syllabary text via simple phonetics. This system of representing the sounds of Cherokee in Roman characters without reference to vowel length and tone reflects limitations on information available from a written document, while also reducing the burden on second-language learners by not requiring them to master a specialized orthography. Next, we translated the text into English. Finally, focusing on verbs and parts of speech regularly derived from them, we separated each morpheme and labeled its function—an activity called parsing. Analyses are summarized in tabular form in Appendix One, to include literal, word-by-word and free, interlinear translations. Tables rely upon the verb model and annotation conventions proposed in Montgomery-Anderson's *Cherokee Reference Grammar*—a resource unique in its efforts to balance meritorious linguistic scholarship with accessibility to second-language learners. Translational and analytic work were further supported by printed dictionaries and grammars (e.g., Feeling; King; Pulte and Feeling), electronic databases, and consultation with first-language speakers.⁵

Results

Our free translation of the selected text appears below. We have preserved original punctuation as fairly characteristic of early documents, adding only paragraphing and quotation marks to designate speech.⁶

Two Cats and a Monkey.

[*Datsitsi's*⁷ Translation.]

Two cats stole [some] cheese, they were fussing over how to divide it properly into two. When they failed to fix [the problem], they had to leave the case for the monkey to reconcile. Monkey agreed, he brought a scale, he put in both [chunks] in order to inspect them. "Let me see about that," he said, "this piece is heavier." Having



said [this], he immediately took a bite in order to make both [chunks] equal. Next, when he weighed them again, he found the other one heavier. He took a second bite, he stuffed his cheeks.

"Don't, don't," the cats said, "just give us what was ours, and we will have been satisfied."

"Well, even if you're satisfied, it isn't exactly right. Something like that is not easy to reconcile," [said the monkey.] So he was just continuing, he was taking bite after bite; the cats were rendered pitiful, they were looking at him, he was running out of cheese. They begged him, "don't get all worn out. Just give us what is left."

"Don't be in a hurry, my friends," said the monkey, "for I must be paid as the judge who fixed [this]." So when he had made both [chunks] equal, he put all the leftovers in his mouth, he stuffed his cheeks; and he very harshly adjourned the court proceedings.

Those who intend for others to decide for them can lose all their treasure to them:

Discussion

The document in historical and cultural context

The appearance, in an 1828 Cherokee newspaper, of a tale attributed to a Greek storyteller who lived 500 to 600 years before Christ may raise quizzical eyebrows. It should not. By 1828, Cherokee political elites had been engineering monumental social changes in their tribal culture for three decades. They had created new arrangements in government, law, education, religion, and other institutions with a speed born of duress. All were designed to demonstrate that the tribe approached a level of "civilization"—meaning enactment of the contemporaneous American culture—

comparable to that of the society that relentlessly encroached upon their territory (Perdue and Green 10, 11-14). These leaders had invested all hope in the possibility that the changes might favor efforts to declare their tribe a nation with inalienable rights to their southeastern homeland, countering American pressures to remove them west.⁸

From its first printing on February 21, 1828, the *Cherokee Phoenix*—"a readable weekly resembling in nearly every way the newspapers published in progressive white communities across the Union"—was part of that outward-facing project (Parins 53). At the same time, the founders naturally cherished goals for their Cherokee readership, as well. These included reporting information on political and social issues, advancing general knowledge, and promoting moral uplift.

As a lifelong student at mission schools, *Phoenix* editor and Cherokee citizen Elias Boudinot was surely aware of the long and loving use of Aesop's fables in churches and classrooms throughout Western cultures, not to mention their applications for political point-scoring and outright subversion (Lewis, Patterson). His fellow students at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut, may even have introduced him to the long-established practice—especially prominent in the early nineteenth century—by which European minorities translated Aesop into regional languages and dialects as a strategy to assert autonomy and resist assimilation.⁹ Any such associations would have favored an editorial decision to dedicate column space to a Cherokee translation of one of the fables.

The specific choice of "Two Cats and a Monkey" from the large collection of tales in the *Aesopica* also makes painful sense within the historical frame. For one thing, when the newspaper issue containing the fable rolled off the new press, the tribe was in the midst of a long series of crises related to settler pressures on Cherokee landholdings. Dramatic events between 1806 and 1829 sparked intense debates about how the tribe should manage, and the extent to which they could rely upon, relationships with American governmental authorities (Smithers 17; see further



McLoughlin). The likely resonance of this specific story, with its cautionary message about self-interested arbiters, need hardly be remarked.

Nor were external relations the only threats weighing on Cherokee minds in this period. The headlong pace by which a cadre of Western-educated, monied, tribal leaders had set in place radically new forms of governance had not gone uncontested among the larger body of "ordinary" Cherokees. The tribe's 1827 Constitutional convention proceeded under the shadow of White Path's Rebellion, the broad, populist protest movement that rejected the recent changes and militated for a return to older forms of life. The convention's ultimate avoidance of the open revolt that diverse observers had predicted may have rested on an eventual, fundamental agreement among proponents of the competing political visions. This, writes historian Theda Perdue, may have been a mutual recognition that "divisiveness threatened the homeland" (63)—that ground of shared being that even very differently-placed Cherokees all valued, if for distinct reasons. Boudinot, then the young clerk of the tribal council, would have borne first-hand witness to whatever precarious negotiations had brokered this common conviction. His very placement of Aesop's fable about the price of infighting—tucked into the *Phoenix* alongside the tribe's new Constitution—suggests a tiny reminder of the same lesson.

Linguistic analysis and annotation: Guidance for second-language learners

Beyond offering historical and cultural insight, our project aims to expand the small, published collection of fully analyzed Cherokee texts. Linguistic analysis reveals precisely *how* words—especially verbs and their derivatives—construct meanings. The analytic tables of Appendix One separate words into their smallest meaningful units or "morphemes," apply explanatory parsing labels, and show word-for-word and

interlinear translations. While such tables primarily serve specialists, the discussion below aims to extend the utility of such analysis to the larger audience of second-language learners such as ourselves. It introduces the structure of the Cherokee verb and then uses examples from our text to illustrate how different types of morphemes attach to verbs to shape communicative possibilities.

Introducing the Cherokee Verb. Verbs are the most abundant element of the Cherokee language. They form the heart of most sentences and change or "inflect" to express precise meanings. Their many possibilities for modification may make Cherokee verbs appear dazzlingly long. Consider *datsdesvhnvhsge* in Sentence 12. Here, additions to the verb's defining core or "stem" simultaneously signal the start of a new sentence and indicate a request for immediate action that should involve a singular subject "you" handing over plural objects to "him and me," while circumscribing the plea by suggesting that *just* this much—no more!—is requested.

One subset of Cherokee verbs draws attention for having scant parallel in English. "Classificatory" verbs usually define actions involving bodily contact and are unusual in differing depending on their object. Whereas English uses a single verb to indicate actions such as "pick up" or "take along," Cherokee requires five separate ones: an entirely different verb when the object in question is alive, solid, liquid, flexible, or long. Each of these separate verbs for the identical action exists in the usual five stems.

Classificatory verbs appear several times in our text. One of these, glossed as "bring (long)" in Sentence 3, cues readers to picture the object of this verb—the weighing device—as constructed around a tall, rigid, center pole ("scales of justice"). By contrast, the type of balance that features a dangling spring might invite the classificatory verb "bring (flexible)," while a heavy, boxy device might be discussed using the verb "bring (solid)." Such verbs exemplify a way in which the Cherokee language schools its speakers to careful observation, while at the same time providing tools by which they may subtly guide their audience to a shared perception.



Morphemes and Meanings. All Cherokee verb stems—classificatory or otherwise—attach additional types of morphemes, and examples of each appear in our analytic tables. Here we consider how these contribute to meanings available in our text and how they shape communication in distinctive ways.

Montgomery-Anderson's model conceptualizes the Cherokee verb as existing in five stems—the Present Continuous (PRC), Immediate (IMM), Infinitive (INF), Incompletive (INC), and Completive (CMP). Stems contain the verb's root, an unchanging element that identifies an action or state. They also communicate a great deal of other information, either alone or combined with additional suffixing. Such information can indicate the verb's *tense* (does action occur in the past, present, or future?), *aspect* (is action completed, habitual, or in progress within the time frame?), and *attitude* (how certain, for example, is the speaker that the event really happened?) (Montgomery-Anderson 65ff).

Verb stems always attach at least one additional morpheme in the form of a *pronominal prefix*. These specify *both* the subject performing the verb's action *and* the object receiving it. The resulting profusion of prefixes does not, however, include a gendered subject: the third-person singular can indicate either "he," "she," or "it." This lack of specificity has practical consequence for the meanings that readers glean from our Cherokee text—for example, by allowing it to dodge a feminist criticism. To wit, while Aesop's fables in English translation explicitly indicate male characters almost exclusively, Cherokee readers of "Two Cats and a Monkey" decide for themselves if these animals are male or female. This refusal, at the level of grammar, to assume masculinity as the default value—the implicit standard from which alternative identities depart—arguably ramifies for cultural experience more broadly.

Pronominal prefixes do not appear exclusively on verbs. Because many Cherokee nouns are derived from verbs, such nouns incorporate the pronouns characterizing their source. One type of derived noun called the Agentive (AGT) names someone who is understood as the "doer" of a verb's action. Similarly in English, one might create the noun "swimmer" from the verb "swim." Some Cherokee agentives also take on conventionalized meanings that exceed the surface translation. An example in our Cherokee text is *digukdisgi*, a noun that modifies the Incompletive stem of the verb "decide" to form the agentive "judge"—literally 'the decider.' The noun thus enshrines an insight into what early Cherokee wordsmiths thought was the defining characteristic of the judicial officer named.

In addition to the required pronominal prefixes, verb stems optionally attach one or more *prepronominal prefixes*. These may add a wide range of information such as the ability of the verb's subject to perform the action, the plurality or animacy of the verb's object, or some quality of the action itself. An example in our text is the "translocative prefix" *wi-*. While this prepronominal prefix commonly indicates action occurring at a distance or moving away from the speaker, it also characterizes an action that follows another in rapid succession (Montgomery-Anderson 104-06). In Sentence 5 of our text, it probably underscores the speed with which the monkey moves from rendering judgment and to gobbling the cheese.

Another set of morphemes called *non-final suffixes* may follow the verb stem to indicate further nuance: whether action involved such qualities as causation, accident, or repetition. Expressive possibilities multiply when verbs attach more than one of these non-final suffixes. In Sentence 2, for example, the verb for "leave behind" bears two non-final suffixes indicating that this action was compelled by circumstance and also performed *for* someone else. Grammatical rules impose no limit on the number of semi-final suffixes that can attach to a verb, although most bear no more than three.

In Montgomery-Anderson's verb model, several *final suffixes* attach to the end of Incompletive or Completive verb stems, helping to define the timing and manner

involves more than a single act of deliberation. Next comes the object focus pronominal prefix, which points to "those who intend" as the recipient of action but leaves the identity of the deciders unspecified. The Infinitive form of the applicative (APL) suffix follows the verb stem, suggesting that the deciding *must* occur *and* that it is to be done "for" someone else.¹⁰ In this way, a series of morphemes exactly captures the idea that "unknown others must decide for them" in a single word.

If such precision testifies to the language's expressive capacity, the prefix *geg-* simultaneously opens a space of ambiguity. It is grammatically possible that this prefix does not belong among the object focus prefixes at all, but to the separate set of "combined nonsingular subject" pronominal prefixes (Montgomery-Anderson 247-51). The two prefixes have different forms when they appear before a consonant, but identical forms when appearing (as in our text) before a vowel.¹¹ If the combined nonsingular subject prefix *were* intended, the moral of the fable would shift. Instead of advising persons who intend that others will decide for *them*, it would caution those who intend that others decide "for us"—literally, "for all of you and me."

While the first interpretation is more obvious, one is left to wonder about wordplay. The Cherokee language offered translator *Datsitsi* various ways to state his lesson. Did he deliberately choose his object focus prefix to allow a politically significant double entendre? Did he hope, in this way, to bring the message home to a local audience—enabling their ability to imagine both himself and themselves into the frame? It is not possible to answer those questions, yet they spotlight the potential for an elegantly complex language both to closely define meaning and to open interpretive possibilities.

This discussion has drawn on our translated document to introduce second-language learners to the fundamentals of the Cherokee verb and several types of morphemes, while considering how a Cherokee audience might have experienced this and other texts. We encourage readers to examine the appendices that follow: the first



illustrates the systematic logic of verb formation through annotation while the second defines abbreviations used.

Future Research Directions

Our focus on a text once told in Greek, later translated into Cherokee (probably by way of English) and then back into English by ourselves, raises interesting questions. The fable includes narrative features that set it apart from older, Cherokee-original texts, such as those collected by the nineteenth-century anthropologist James Mooney (1970). The focus on cats and monkeys—species introduced only via contact with Europeans—is an obvious difference. More significantly, Mooney's stories resemble those handed down among Indigenous peoples generally in being less inclined than Aesop to articulate a single, straightforward "moral."¹² Instead, Mooney's Cherokee tales often simply leave their listeners to ponder meanings for themselves, enabling individual interpretations and meanings that may change across tellings. Future research comparing a body of Cherokee-original and other texts, such as the one we examine, might yield conclusions about specifically linguistic and stylistic characteristics that likewise distinguish them.

Conclusion

Our analysis adds to the tiny corpus of morphologically analyzed Cherokee-language texts of value to linguists, but it does not simply present a set of analytic tables. By locating our text in its socio-historical and cultural context, and by providing guidance through important categories of morphemes identifiable therein, we seek to enhance accessibility for those non-specialist, second language learners upon whom the survival of our endangered language increasingly depends.

APPENDIX ONE: ANALYTIC TABLES

Our morphological tables apply labels in order to describe each morpheme's contribution to a word's meaning. For example, an entry showing 3B.NS-steal:CM-P-NXP indicates that the third-person, non-singular, Set B pronominal prefix is attached to the verb "steal" in its Completive stem with a nonexperienced past suffix. This annotated verb may be translated into English as the complete sentence "they stole it," but it carries an additional bit of information revealing that the speaker did not personally witness the theft.

Each table below presupposes the row headers that are shown in the first table but subsequently omitted for space. The Syllabics row shows each word of our text in Sequoyah's syllabary. The Phonetics row supplies "surface forms"—the pronunciations that may differ from syllabic representations in context of surrounding sounds and morphemes. In this row, we transliterate syllabary characters via simple phonetics, a romanized writing system that does not indicate vowel length or tone.

The row devoted to Morphemic Segmentation separates each morpheme—the minimal, meaningful units of words—to show their "underlying forms" before any modifications required by context. The Gloss row applies morpheme labels reflecting Montgomery-Anderson in order to explain their function; all parsing abbreviations are defined in Appendix Two. The Translation row provides each word's literal, English meaning. The Comments row typically reports the third-person singular form for the particular verb stem exemplified in the text, as confirmed in a lexical source listed below; for Immediate stems, we follow the convention of showing the second-person command form. When familiar lexical sources do not attest the desired verb stem, we report the closest available one.

We add detail in footnotes. These sometimes take up issues of interest to linguistic researchers, using extended phonetics as appropriate (see Montgomery-



Anderson 23ff.). At other times they address questions about basic Cherokee grammar for the benefit of second-language learners.

Comments row sources and abbreviations¹

AC1995: A. Cowen

CRG2015: B. Montgomery-Anderson

DF1975: D. Feeling

DF2003: D. Feeling et al.

RHB: Robert H. Bushyhead

¹ Tabular conventions:

In the Phonetics row, we have adopted the philological practice of representing intrusive /h/ with an underscored character (h). We do the same throughout the paper (though only in our own transliterations), with the intent to make clear when we, as annotators, have made explicit this sound not represented in the syllabary spelling. We use ʔ to represent the glottal stop.

The Comments row includes markings for length and tone when available in the cited source. Here, we follow Feeling's *Cherokee-English Dictionary* in marking tones with numerical superscripts and short vowels with an underdot. Not all lexical sources provide such complete information, and we do not add markings for vowel length and tone if a source did not provide them, although we convert such information to Feeling's representation if a source has provided it in another style. We translate any cited source's specialized orthography into simple phonetics but otherwise maintain original spellings. Accordingly, spellings in the Comments Row occasionally depart from our own in the Phonetics and Morphemic Segmentation rows (e.g., preference for *j-* versus *ts-*). Information following "Gr" directs learners to relevant grammatical discussions in Montgomery-Anderson.

Title

Syllabics	DhWR	ᏍᏍᏍ	DLᏍᏍᏍᏍᏍᏍᏍᏍ.
Phonetics	anitaʔli	wesa	adalesgiyisgiḥno ²
Morphemic Segmentation	ani-taʔli	wesa	adalesgiyisgi=ḥno
Gloss	3A.NS-two	cat, cats	monkey=CN
Translation	two	cats	and monkey
Comments			
Free Translation	Two Cats and a Monkey		

² The word for "monkey" (*adalesgiyisgi*) appears to reflect an Agentive noun, although published sources do not identify its constituent morphemes. Master Cherokee language speaker Hastings Shade glosses the word as "grabber" (Teuton 91), perhaps based on semantic similarity to *a¹hyv²sgi²³yi³ha* ('he's choking him') (Feeling 30).



ዕክላላጽ	ጠባብ	ዋቦ	ፐራክቲሻን.
uniyotlohisehe ⁶	osdv ⁷	taʔli	iyunidisdiʔi ^{8,9}
uni-yotlohiseh-eʔi	a-osdv	taʔli	iy-uni-:disdiʔi
3B.NS-fuss:INC-NXP	3A-well	two	NI2-3B.NS-divide:INF
they were fussing over it	well	two	how to divide it
Dጥላላጽ ayotlohisedi 'for him to fuss' (AC1995:103)			hL hnida ni-hi-:da NI-2A-divide:IMM 'Divide it!' (RHB)
they were fussing over how to divide it properly into two.			

⁶ A spelling that accounts for the intrusive /h/ in the infinitive form shown in the Comments row would appear as *ayotlohiseh_hdi*.

⁷ *Osdv* and *osda* are alternative spellings. The same speaker may use both.

⁸ As with "bake" in Sentence 1, "divide" is a long-stem root, but one that induces lengthening of the preceding vowel without high tone. It is attested in Bushyhead's unpublished word list: Dጥጥ hL RSW *ayehli hnida svkta* 'divide the apple in half.'

⁹ Our text often spells the long form of the Infinitive suffix as *-diʔi* as expected, but sometimes as *-diyi* (as here). We find no consistent pattern to suggest explanation beyond the translator's preference.

Sentence 2

ጥቅም	ፕሮግራም	ዕድሜ
osdv	iyunvnh _h diy ¹⁰	uninulv _h nv
a-osdv	iy-uni-vnhdiy	uni-nulvhn-v? _i
3A-good	NI2-3B.NS-make.it:INF	3B.NS-fail:CMP-DVB
for them to fix it		when they failed
		ዕድሜ unulvhvsga 3B-fail:PRC 'he is failing' (CRG2015:96)
When they failed to fix [the problem],		

¹⁰ The adjectives *osdv/osda* or *osi* ('good') may combine with the verb "make it" to create a phrase that translates with English words including 'fix' (as here), as well as 'reconcile,' 'arrange,' and the like. Feeling shows such a phrase using the habitual form of the verb: ፍጥረት ጥቅም ከሆነ ፍጥረት ጥቅም ጥቅም ጥቅም *Ganvgwalosgi?i osda nidanvneho sogwili junalasulo*, 'They **fix** horseshoes at a blacksmith shop' (113). An 1850 translation of Matthew's gospel supplies the progressive future command: ፍጥረት ጥቅም ከፍጥረት ጥቅም ጥቅም *igvyi osdv nisdvnehesdi disdada_hnv_tli* 'first be reconciled to thy brother' (Matthew 5:24, Worcester and Boudinot). The same verb also appears frequently in Biblical translations as part of phrases about making peace, making something clear, and making something secure.. On the spelling of long-form Infinitives with *-diy* versus *-di?i*, see note 9 to Sentence 1.



ዕክልገጽ	ዕጽገኖታ
unihyasdanele ¹¹	uyeገilidasdiyi ¹²
uni-hiya-sdan-el-eገi	u-yeገilidasdiyi
3B.NS-leave.behind-CAU:CMPL:CMPL-NXP	3B-prosecute:INF
they were caused to leave it for him	the (legal) case, the matter
ዕጽገኖታ u ¹ hi ³ yv ²³ ገi 'he left it behind' (DF1975:21) Gr: CRG2015:405-08	
they had to leave the case...	

¹¹ While the expected Completive stem here is *-hiy-*, causative derivational suffixes require a special verb base.

¹² Worcester and Foreman's translations of Luke and Mark show similar forms of this stem (e.g., *gvwayeገilidasdiyi* 'for them to accuse him'). J. Bourns (p.c.) points out that Brown and Lowrey's translation of Matthew attests a slightly different spelling of this verb (*gvwayiገilido/v* 'when they accused him'); other New Testament sources suggest similar meanings, such as "prosecute," "oppress," "persecute" and "vex." Also clearly related: *ዕጽገኖታ ju²nq²da²hiገ²li²³da³²sdi* 'for them to have a trial' (Feeling 74) and *ዕጽገኖታ tsunadayiገilidasdi* 'court' (Cowen 58).

കൊഴി	തദ്ദേശീയ	മലയാളം
osdv	iyuwanh _h diy ¹³	adalesgiyisgi
a-osdv	iy-u-v _h ndiyi	adalesgiyisgi
3A-good	NI2-3B-make.it:INF	monkey
	for him to reconcile it	monkey
for the monkey to reconcile.		

¹³ The *u-* pronoun prefix before the /v/-initial root motivates the unpredictable form *uwa-* with loss of /v/ in the third-person singular surface form of the verb "make" (Montgomery-Anderson 47-8). On the spelling of long-form Infinitives with *-diy_i* versus *-di_i*, see note 9 to Sentence 1.



Sentence 3

ᠣᠪᠠᠭᠢ	ᠠᠳᠠᠯᠢᠰᠭᠢᠶᠢᠰᠭᠢ,	ᠣᠸᠵᠢᠳ	ᠵᠰᠣᠵ,
uwohiyuh _{ne}	adalesgiyisgi	uwenoh _{le} ¹⁴	digadvdi ¹⁵
u-ohiyuhn-eʔi	adalesgiyisgi	uwa-:nohl-eʔi	digadvdi
3B-agree: CMP-NXP	monkey	3B-bring(long): CMP-NXP	a scale
he agreed	monkey	he brought it	a scale
		ᠬᠢᠵᠠᠮᠤᠵᠢᠳᠤ o ¹ gi ² no ²³ hlv ³ ʔi 'they & I brought it (long)' (DF2003:104)	ᠵᠰᠣᠵ di ² ga ² dv ³ di 'scales' (DF1975:81)
Monkey agreed, he brought a scale..,			

¹⁴ When followed by a long-stem root, an underlying 3B *u-* is typically realized as *uwa-* (Montgomery-Anderson 230-31). The /e/ of ᠣᠸᠵᠢᠳ *uwenoh_{le}* is a peculiar outcome also observable among such long stems (J. Bourns, p.c.).

¹⁵ "Scale" appears to be a nominalized infinitive to *-adv-* 'hang up (flexible)' (Feeling 94). A third-person "dummy prefix" helps to distinguish this use of the infinitive from a verb (Montgomery-Anderson 362).

TdW	SWΛ	JSVJǎ.
itsula	duhlane	diktohd ^h diy ⁱ ¹⁶
itsula	de-u-hlan-e	di-a-agahto ^h di ^ʔ i
both	DST-3B-put.into.container:CMP-NXP	DST2-3A-peek.through:INF
both	he put them into it	for him to inspect them
	OʷOʷT u ¹ hla ² nv ³ ʔi 'he put it into a container or hole' (DF1975:96; see also DF2003:188)	OʷSVJ u ² ktoh ² di 'for him to peek through' (DF1975:35)
he put in both [chunks] in order to inspect them.		

¹⁶ The verb commonly translated as "peek through" also conveys meanings including "take a peek," "look at," "see," "glimpse," "inspect." E.g., Worcester and Boudinot's 1850 translation of Matt 28:6.

RəʷSə TəʷLSW OʷEəGʷA DəʷOʷT *esdena isdagata ugvwiyuhi alenvvʔi* 'come, **see** the place where the Lord lay.' See note 9 to Sentence 1 on the spelling of long-form Infinitives with *-diyⁱ* versus *-diʔi*.



Sentence 4

ΘJS	SSW,	ΟΘΝΤ,
nadiga ¹⁷	gagata ¹⁸	udv _h neʔi
nadiga	ga-agahta	u-advhn-eʔi
as to that, about that, in regard to that	1A-peek.through:IMM	3B-say:CMP-NXP
about that	let me see	he said it
	ϕSW ha²kta 'peek through!' (DF1975:35)	ΟΘΟᵂT u¹dv²hny²³ʔi 'he said it' (DF1975:10)
"Let me see about that," he said..,		

¹⁷ *Nadiga* is not attested in familiar lexical sources, and we have relied on the knowledge of first-language speaker JW Webster for this translation. In his explanation, this word references some particular thing that "has just come this way," attracting the speaker's attention.

¹⁸ Pulte and Feeling describe the construction in which the Immediate stem makes an imperative that, when conjugated with non-second person pronominal prefixes, conveys "let me...", "let him...", etc. Stipulating that these forms require the translocative (TRN) pre-pronominal *wi-*, the same authors illustrate with *wijiwonihī*, 'let me speak' (244). Elsewhere, Feeling gives non-second persons forms *without* the TRN, including *jigoliya*, 'let me look at it' (43) and *jinasinuga*, 'let me drag it' (111). Similarly, only a few first-person singular forms of the Immediate stem imperative attach *wi-* in Feeling et al. Such differences remain unanalyzed but support our translation of this word. On the verb "peek through," see note 16 to Sentence 3.

AD	DEᵗᵗᵗᵗ (variant: DEᵗᵗᵗᵗ)	ᵒᵗᵗ	hSY.
hiʔa	agvhalvda ¹⁹	uditlv	nigagi ²⁰
hiʔa	agvhalvda	u-ditlv	nigagi
this	piece, slice	3B-toward	nigagi
this	piece	heavier	
	DEᵗᵗᵗᵗ ᵗ²gv²hᵗ²lv⁴da 'a piece of something that has been cut' (DF1975:19)		
"this piece is heavier."			

¹⁹ Above, the suffix *-dv* appears where *-da* would be expected. This substitution is not uncommon in Cherokee texts, including in places where the participle-forming suffix *-da* seems intended. It is likely an alternative spelling of *-da* based on dialectical variation or speaker preference.

²⁰ A related form of the phrase *uditlv nigagi* is attested in the 1844 Cherokee translation of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*: Dᵗ ᵗ²ᵗᵗ Dᵗᵗᵗᵗ ᵒᵗᵗ hSYᵗᵗ ᵒᵗᵗᵗᵗ R.ᵗᵗᵗᵗᵗᵗ Dᵗ ᵒᵗᵗᵗᵗᵗ hᵗᵗᵗᵗ *ale hnagwo alisehv uditlv nigageso nwasdo esgagwo asi natlesgma tsigesvgi*, 'Also his burden now seemed **heavier** to him than while he was in his way' (30). A complete understanding of *nigagi* awaits further analysis.



Sentence 6

WRŊZ	VOʔLOʔ, (expected: VOʔWOʔ)
taʔlinehno	doʔutanv ²³
taʔli-neʔi=hno	de-v-u-adahn-vʔi
two-ORD=CN	DST-ITR2-3B-hang.up:CMP-DVB
and second, next	when he weighed them again
	OʔWOʔT uʔtaʔnvʔi 'he hung it up' (DF1975:116)
Next, when he weighed them again,	

²³ In its syllabary spelling, our early printed text represents the character V (*do*) in Sequoyah's original, inverted form (see Figure 2); we transpose it into its modern version. The secondary form of the iterative prefix (ITR2) appears when it is preceded with another vowel, as here (Montgomery-Anderson 294). It evidently also induces the change in the preceding distributive prefix to from *de-* to *do-*.



Sentence 7

WRN	ᎠᎩᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ (expected: ᎠᎩᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ)	ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ
taʔline	wutsdeseʔi ²⁶	dukgwalodisdaneʔi ²⁷
taʔli-neʔi	wi-u-atsisdeʔs-eʔi	de-u-gohgwalodisdan-eʔi
two-ORD	TRN-3B-take.bite: CMP-NXP	DST-3B-cheek.put.into: CMP-NXP
second, next	he took a bite	he stuffed his cheeks
	Cf., ᎠᎩᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ 'he took a bite' (DF1975:60)	
He took a second bite, he stuffed his cheeks.		

²⁶ See note 21 to sentence 5.

²⁷ We are indebted to JW Webster (p.c.) for the translation of this rare verb. Per Uchihara ("Noun Incorporation" 24ff.), a handful of Cherokee verbs reflect "fossilized noun incorporation," a derivational process that embeds nouns within verbs. In Northern Iroquoian languages, noun incorporation persists as a productive process; Cherokee preserves only relics—notably, some nouns for body parts. Supporting the case for incorporating *-gohgwa- 'cheek,' see <higoʔgwali> *higohgwali* 'thy cheek' (Matthew 5:39, Wofford 1824). J. Bourns (p.c.) points to the parallel formation *jakgweluhvsgesdi*, a *hapax legomenon* attested in Brown and Lowrey's 1828 translation of the same verse: ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ *kilosgini hiktisa jakgweluhvsgesdi soʔi hnasgwo hiyalisgohhdanehesdi* 'but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' The underlying root here is -gohgwelu- 'hit someone on the cheek' (< *-gohgw- 'cheek' + -elu- 'strike'), and the attested form reflects an underlying Incomplete stem -gohgweluhvsg-. The transliteration *jakgweluhvsgesdi* reflects expected vowel deletion of underlying medial -o-. The form in our text, ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ *-dukgwalohdisdaneʔi*, must likewise reflect vowel deletion. This verb is formed on -gohgwalodisd- 'put into one's cheek,' which underlies the Complete stem -gohgwalodisdan-. The syllabary spelling in the text, ᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠᎠ, is not etymological: here, vowel deletion has obscured the underlying root shape.



Sentence 9

DJZΘ	ፀልሃኝ	ጕጌ	ሕልጋጌግጋጋጋ,
adihnona ³¹	nasgigwo	osi	yisdiyelvsga ³²
adihnona	naʔsgi=gwu	osi	yi-sdi-yelvsga
adihnona	that=DT	well	IRR-1A.DL-feel:PRC
well, so, why	just that, only that	if you two are satisfied	

³¹ *Adihnohna* is attested as an interjection of mild surprise in the 1824 translation of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. DJZΘ ለጋ ከሆገጋጋ ሆርጋጋ ከከፀጌጋጋ ጋጋጋጋ ከሆጋ ለጋ ከጋጋጋጋጋጋ **adihnohna** hiʔa tsigaliseha udlihiyu nitsinayesga esgagwo nigadv hiʔa tsineʔistanuga 'Why, sir, this burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are all these things which you have mentioned' (27).

³² See further note 22 to Sentence 5.

℄	SGAØ	ᄁSY.
tla	duyukdv	yigagi ³³
tla	duyukdv	yi-ga-gi
NEG	right, honest, justice	IRR-GA-be:PRC
not	exactly right	it is
	SGAØ duyugodv right, honest, justice (AC1995:211, 119, 134)	Gr: CRG2015:298
	SGAØT du ¹ yu ² kdv ⁴ ?i 'the truth' (DF1975:89)	
Well, even if you're satisfied, it isn't exactly right. ³⁴		

³³ The irrealis (IRR) prefix may combine with the GA prefix to create, as here, a "more emphatic negative" (Montgomery-Anderson 298). A grammatically similar example, formed on the Incomplete stem of the negated "be" verb, also with the GA prefix to suggest a definite negative, is attested in Worcester and Boudinot's 1854 translation: ᄁᄁA ᄁD ᄁᄁᄁ ᄁSVᄁ ᄁᄁSTRᄁᄁ, ᄁᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁᄁᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁᄁᄁ ᄁD ᄁᄁᄁᄁ ᄁᄁᄁᄁ hi?a dikewi diktoli tsusdu?i?elvhi, nasgwo nas?gi yinigvwanisane nuyohusvna **yigagese** hi?a asgaya 'could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man **should not** have died?' (John 11:37).

³⁴ The Cherokee wording conceivably stretches to alternative interpretations, including 'Even though you may be satisfied, justice isn't,' and the considerably more pointed 'Well, if you're satisfied, it can't be justice.'



Sentence 10

ፀገሃ	ፐራገገ	ገረ	ፈላጊ	ገገገ	ፐረገገ	ገገ.
nasgi	iyusdi	vtla	ahidiyi ³⁵	osdv	igagvnhdi ³⁶	yigi
naʔsgi	iyusdi	vtla	a-ahidiyi	a-osdv	i-ga-ga-vʔnhdi	yi-gi
that one	like	NEG	3A-easy	3A-good	NI2-GA-3A-make.it:INF	IRR-be:PRC
that one	like	not	easy	for one to be able to reconcile it		it is
				Gr: CRG2015:299		
"Something like that is not easy to reconcile," [said the monkey].						

³⁵ See note 9 to Sentence 1 on the spelling of long-form Infinitives with *-diyi* versus *-diʔi*.

³⁶ See note 13 to Sentence 2 on changes to conjugations of the verb "make it."



ጥኩህሮጳጳጳጳ	ወይዘ,	ሁኔታ (expected: ሁኔታ)
getsidolisdisge ³⁹	wesa	danikaḥne ⁴⁰
gets-i:-doli-sdisg-eጎi	wesa	de-ani-gahn-eጎi
3O.NS-pity-CAU:INC-NXP	cat, cats	DST-3A.NS-look.at:INC-NXP
they were being made pitiful	cats	they were looking at him, it
SVጥጥ ga ² do ²³ li ³² go ³ ጎi 'he pities him (hab)' (DF1975:92) Gr: CRG2015:405f		
the cats were rendered pitiful, they were looking at him,		

³⁹ This is a long-stem root, with the causative being formed directly on the base. See further SVጥጥ ga²do²³li³²ga 'he's pitying him' (Feeling 92).

⁴⁰ The distributive is frozen onto *danikaḥne* and does not indicate plural objects. It is attested in Matt 27:24. ልጅጅጅጅ ግህርጅ ሁኔታጅ *dusuleheጎi unijati danikaḥnvጎi* 'he washed his hands while the multitude **looked on**' (Brown and Lowrey).

ᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃ	ᐃᐃᐃ	ᐃᐃᐃᐃ.
datsvhvsge ⁴¹	unvdi	digaduhnvhi
de-a-adi-svhvsg-eʔi	unvdi	di-ga-:ʔduhn-vʔi
DST-3A-RFL-use.up, eat/drink.up:INC-NXP	milk	DST2-3A-bake:CMP-DVB
he was running out of them	chunks of cheese	
		ᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃ ᐃ ¹ wa ³ du ² hmv ²³ ʔi 'he baked it' (DF1975:93)
he was running out of cheese.		

⁴¹ This verb is attested in Feeling: ᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃ ᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃᐃ *diganvhlosdi dutsvhnelvʔi* 'he ran out of brakes' (113).

ဝဝံၵ	DLၵဝၵၵဝံၵ,
udv <u>h</u> ne	adalesgiyisgi
u-advhn-e?i	adalesgiyisgi
ၵB-say: CMP-NXP	monkey
he said it	monkey
ဝဝံဝံၵ u ¹ dv ² hmv ²³ ?i 'he said it' (DF1975:10)	
said the monkey,	



D4	βZ	iIJBRJ
ase	<u>hyeh</u> no ⁴⁶	vgwakuyv?e <u>h</u> di ⁴⁷
ase	hyehno	vgw-aguhyv?-ehdi
must	because	1O-pay:CMF- APL:INF\MOD
must	because	I am to be paid for it
		Ø'ØBJ u ² kwiyh ² di (DF1975:37) Gr: CRG2015:323-24
"for I must be paid..."		

⁴⁶ J. Bourns points out that our text shows D4 βZ ase hyehno as two words (as do other early texts), but βZ hyehno later fuses with the immediately preceding word, becoming "encliticized" as a postfix: asehyehno. The spelling **-hyeh**no (rather than **-yeh**no) reflects the ancestral form of the *heehnoo* variant of the Conjunction postfix mentioned in Montgomery-Anderson (206). See further the transcription of the North Carolina form by Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick (1966):

DBβZ ayvhyehno <a:yvhye:hnó> 'for I' (22).

⁴⁷ The root *-aguhy-* is the archaic, earlier-attested form of the modern root *-akwiy-*, 'pay' (J. Bourns, p.c.), which underlies *a'kwj²yj³ha* 'he's paying him' (Feeling 37). In this text, the /k/ of *vgwakuyv?ehdi* reflects the outcome of *h*-metathesis or "exchange" (Montgomery-Anderson 220-22), whereby underlying *-aguhy-* is realized as *-akuy-*. The modal tone (\MOD) allows the infinitive to indicate a need or obligation to perform the action.

ಕೊಠಿ	TEΛ (expected: TEΛA)	JJAJΩY.
osdv	igvneh	digukdisgi
a-osdv	i-ga-v?neh-i	di-ga-ugohdisg-i
3A-good	NI2-1A-make.it:INC-AGT	DST2-3A-decide:INC-AGT
the one who fixed it		judge
	Gr: CRG2015:357	§JAJΩAT de ² gu ³ kdi ²³ sgo ³ ?i 'he decides it (hab)' (DF1975:78)
"as the judge who fixed [this]."		



Sentence 14

FGZ	TJ5A0	hSGA,	TdW
howahno	idigayidv	niduwanelv ⁴⁸	itsula
howa=hno	idigayidv	ni-de-u-v?nel-v?i	itsula
interjection=CN	equal	NI-DST-3B-make.it:CMP-DVB	both
And so	equal	when he made them	both
And so he when he had made both [chunks] equal,			

⁴⁸ On changes to the verb "make it," see note 13 to Sentence 2.

dJBθ	፳ቃ	TB፳
tsudiyvhi ⁴⁹	nahalv ⁵⁰	iyvdv
tsi-u-ada-hiy-vʔi	nahalv	iyvdv
DST2-3B-MDL-leave.behind:CMP-DVB	the sum of the pieces	approximate amount
what is left, the leftovers	all	approximate amount
፳፳BT u ¹ hi ³ yv ²³ ʔi 'he left it behind' (DF1975:21)		

⁴⁹ See note 44 to Sentence 12.

⁵⁰ We are grateful to JW Webster for his translation of *nahalv* as 'the sum of the pieces.' He contrasts this word with the related *iyahalv*, which he renders as 'the exact amount of pieces.' He adds that *iyahalv* can be joined to a number, such as *tsoʔi iyahalv*, 'three pieces' (p.c.). See further DEቃ፳ ፳²gv²hq²lv⁴da 'a piece of something that has been cut' (Feeling 19).



S000SWAT,	SSIGJ0LNT;
dunvsgalane?i ⁵¹	dukgwalodisdane?i ⁵²
de-u-anvsgalan-e?i	de-u-gohgwalodisdan-e?i
DST-3B-put.in.mouth:CMF-NXP	DST-3B-cheek.put.into-CAU:CMF-NXP
he put them in his mouth	he stuffed his cheeks
he put all the leftovers in his mouth, he stuffed his cheeks;	

⁵¹ A form of the verb "put in (or be in) the mouth" is attested in Worcester and Foreman's 1856 translation: *05GE TV 0000ST, oliwa ugalogv itse unvsgale?i, 'in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off'* (Genesis 8:11). In Worcester and Boudinot's 1842 rendering of the book of Acts, the same verb is used to imply "eating": *054P00 0500: 000 05000000, A000 05000000, D0 055000 h0R0 Eh 00W 0000 0400 ogaselitanv oginetsv utsati ogisdvdisdiyi, gohusdi oganvsgalodi, ale ogatugisdi nigesvna kvni gwola otsilvhi gesesdi 'we have bound ourselves under a great curse, to **taste nothing** until we have killed Paul' (as part of the phrase, 'to be without eating and drinking') (Acts 23:14).*

⁵² On the verb "put into one's cheek," see note 27 to Sentence 7.

ဝဏ်းဝဏ်းဂ်း	ဒ်းဝဏ်းဂ်း
ulsgasdiyuhno	duyelihisdane
u-ali-sgas-da=iyu=hno	de-u-yelihi-sdan-eʔi
3B-MDL-reprimand-PCP=INT=CN	DST-3B-adjourn-CAU:CMP-NXP
and very harshly	he caused them to adjourn
Cf., ဝဏ်းဝဏ်းဂ်း u ¹ sga ³² jv ²³ ʔi 'he reprimanded him' (DF1975:49)	ShβRT du ¹ ni ² ye ² li ² sv ²³ ʔi 'they adjourned' (DF1975:75)
and he very harshly adjourned...	



ᱵᱷᱟᱨᱠᱟᱫᱽᱯᱩᱨ.
danukdisgv᱗ᱤ
de-ani-ugohdisg-v᱗ᱤ
DST-3A.NS-decide:INC-DVB
court proceedings
Cf., ᱵᱷᱟᱨᱠᱟᱫᱽᱯᱩᱨ de ² gu ³ kdi ²³ sgᱜᱚᱛᱤᱨᱫᱟᱹᱜᱟᱲᱤ 'he decides (hab)' (DF1975:78)
the court proceedings.

Sentence 15

YG	ገገጋጋጋጋጋጋ (expected: ገገጋጋጋጋጋጋ)	ወክላት
kilo	digegugotaneḥdiy ⁵³	tsuniyelvsoʔi ⁵⁴
kilo	di-geg-ugotan-ehdiyi	tsi-uni-yelvs-oʔi
someone, those ones	DST2-3O.NS-decide:CMP-APL:INF	REL-3B.NS-intend:INC-HAB
those ones	for them to be decided for, be judged (by another)	who intend
	ገገጋጋጋጋጋጋ ju ² wu ² kdoh ³ di 'for him to decide' (DF1975:78) Gr: CRG2015:256-58, 329-31	

⁵³ Our expected spelling ገገጋጋጋጋጋጋ *digegugotane*diy⁵³ reflects the status of the prefix *geg-* among the /h/ alternators (Montgomery-Anderson 224ff). At the same time, the given spelling ገገጋጋጋጋጋጋ *digegugodane*diy⁵³ also appears twice in Worcester's 1860 New Testament, suggesting that speakers may prefer the latter pronunciation. See note 9 to Sentence 1 on the spelling of long-form Infinitives with *-diy* versus *-diʔi*.

⁵⁴ See note 22 to Sentence 5.



<p>SEGhhΓ4J (expected: SEGhRΓ4J)</p>	<p>ᵐᵏᵀ</p>
<p>gagwaniyohuseh_hdi⁵⁵</p>	<p>gesoʔi</p>
<p>ga-ga-uni-yohusehdi</p>	<p>geʔs-oʔi</p>
<p>GA-ANS-3B.NS-lose.it:INF\MOD</p>	<p>be:INC-HAB</p>
<p>they could lose it to them</p>	<p>it is</p>
<p>ᵐᵏᵀ4J u²yo²hu²³seh³di 'for him to lose it' (DF1975:186)</p>	

⁵⁵ *Gagwaniyohuseh_hdi* is an obligation Infinitive that uses a special tone (\MOD) to indicate this function (Montgomery-Anderson 76, 96-98); the prenominal prefix *ga-* (GA) shows ability. The "participants" relevant to this complex verb include a third-person subject ('they who intend') whose plurality is indicated by another prenominal prefix, the Animate Nonsingular *ga-* (ANS). In this inverse construction, the third-person plural and expressly animate, primary object (the 'others' who decide) is indexed on the pronoun prefix *uni-*. The sequence of *-ga-uni* yields the unpredictable *-gawani-*. The verb's participants lastly include a secondary object (the thing to be lost), which is implied in the definition of the verb root 'lose it.'

hSØ	dEGGJ	OʰoʷIhAØʰT
nigadv	tsugwaha _h di ⁵⁶	unisgwanigodvʔi ⁵⁷
nigadv	di-u-gvwahdi	uni-sgwanigod-vʔi
all	DST2-3B-be.worth:INF	3B.NS-preserve:CMP-DVB
all	wealth	preserved
	their treasure	
	dEGGJ ju ² gv ² wahl ² di 'wealth' (DF1975:136) Gr: CRG2015:362-63	Cf., DøʷIhAVJ asgwanigododi 'keep', 'preserve' (AC1995:135, 188)
	'treasure' (AC1995:255)	
Those who intend for others to decide for them can lose all their treasure to them:		

⁵⁶ Compare dEGGJ ju²gv²wahl²di 'wealth' to dEGGJ ju²gv²³wahl²di 'price' (Feeling 136): the instrumental nominalizations "wealth" and "price" are spelled identically but take on distinct meanings when pronounced with different tones. In a written text such as ours, readers rely on context to select the likelier meaning.

⁵⁷ Adjectives may attach Set A or Set B pronominal prefixes (Scancarelli, "Grammatical Relations" 287-328). We interpret *unisgwanigodvʔi* to correspond in person and number to the sentence's subject "those who intend," thus creating a phrase indicating "their treasure." In our own orthography, Cowen's spelling of *asgwanigododi* would appear as *asgwanigodo_hdi*.



APPENDIX TWO: PARSING LABELS and DEFINITIONS

Entries below are organized by the abbreviated, bolded parsing label for a grammatical term in the notation style of Montgomery-Anderson. The term's name (if any) appears parenthetically, along with its spelling before a consonant. A simple definition follows, noting any variant forms that appear before a vowel. We include entries only for morphemes that appear in our analyzed text.

1, 2, 3: Mark the grammatical person of pronominal prefixes.

- **1** = first person ("I")
- **2** = second person ("you")
- **3** = third person ("she," "he," or "it" in the singular; "they" in the non-singular)

For example, the notation **2A** may be read as "second-person, Set A pronominal prefix" and refers to the Cherokee prefix *hi-*.

A, B (Set A and Set B pronominal prefixes): Mark pronominal prefixes according to set. For example, **1B** may be read as "first-person, Set B pronominal prefix" and refers to the prefix *agi-*.

APL (applicative suffix): One of a series of suffixes attaching to the Completive stem to indicate that an action is done to or for another.

CAU (causative suffix): One of a series of suffixes attaching to a special verb base to indicate that an action is caused by someone else or via an instrument.

CMP (Completive verb stem): One of the five Cherokee verb bases. Marks an action or state as finished. When combined with a past-time suffix (*-vʔi*), it indicates that the subject "did" the action. With a progressive future suffix (*-esdi*), it conveys that the subject "will have done" the action. Used with the habitual suffix (*-oʔi*), it

indicates that the subject "has always done it." Compare with **Incompletive** (INC) verb stem.

CN (conjunction =hno, =hehno): Often translated as "and," "so," or "because." May also simply mark the start of a new sentence, in which case it may be left untranslated.

DL (dual number): Marks a first- or second-person pronominal prefix as including exactly two individuals. For example, **2A.DL** may be read as "second person dual, Set A pronominal prefix and is translated as "you two." **1B.DL** is read "first person dual, Set B pronominal pronoun" and may be translated as "you and I" or "we."

DST (distributive prepronominal prefix de-): Appears on most verb tenses to indicate that an action is performed on multiple objects or on multiple occasions.

DST2 (secondary form of distributive prefix di-): Conveys the same meaning but occurs on adjectives, most nouns, Immediate commands, and Infinitives.

DT (delimiter postfix =gwu): Attaches at the end of any part of speech to suggest "only" or "just."

DVB (deverbalizer suffix -v?i / short form -v): A final suffix attaching to an Incompletive or Completive verb stem to form a noun or an adjective, as well as an adverbial or noun clause.

FCM (future command suffix -v?i): Marks a request that an action be performed at a later, unspecified time.

GA (prepronominal prefix ga-): Used in several ways. May convey "since" in past-tense verbs, or appear in constructions expressing ability or inability to act. Has several variant forms according to context.

HAB (habitual final suffix -o?i): Appears on Incompletive or Completive stems to mark a subject's general tendency to perform an action, often indicating repetition or habitual activity.



IMM (Immediate verb stem): One of the five Cherokee verb bases. Marks an action or state as having occurred in the recent past, or functions as a command for an action to be carried out soon. This stem does not take final suffixes.

INC (Incomplete verb stem): One of the five Cherokee verb bases. Marks an action or state as ongoing. Used with the habitual suffix, it suggests that the subject “always does” the action—performs it regularly in the present. With a past-time suffix (-*vʔi*), it indicates that the subject “was doing” the action; with a progressive future suffix (-*esdi*), it indicates that the subject “will be doing” the action. Compare with the **Completive (CMP)** stem.

INF (Infinitive verb stem): One of the five Cherokee verb bases. Corresponds to the English infinitive (“to run,” “to laugh”). Typically ends in *-diʔi* (short form *-di*). Requires pronoun prefixes but does not allow final suffixes. Cannot mark tense or aspect, which are shown only when the infinitive is paired with a verb form that carries them (e.g., “I like to run,” “I wanted to laugh”).

INT (intensifier suffix): A suffix such as *-(i)yu* that attaches to an adjective or adverb to magnify meaning. Often translated as “really” or “very.”

IRR (irrealis prenominal prefix *yi-*): Combines with the negation adverb *tla* to negate a verb or to mark an action as hypothetical or contrary to fact. When attached to verbs in the Immediate stem, it indicates that someone can or will perform the action soon. Appears as *y-* before a vowel.

ITR (iterative prenominal prefix *i-*): Marks the action of a verb as repeated.

MDL (middle voice prefix *-ada-* / *-ali-*): Inserted between the pronominal prefix and the verb stem. Marks a transitive verb as intransitive or indicates that the subject both performs and is affected by the action. May serve other related functions.

- MLT (multiplicative suffix):** Marks an action as occurring multiple times. Not distinguished in Montgomery-Anderson's annotation; term follows Scancarrelli (*Native Languages*).
- MOD (modal tone):** A tonal change applied to the Infinitive stem to indicate the subject's ability or obligation to perform an action.
- NEG (negation adverb *tla*):** When paired with the irrealis prefix *yi-* on a verb, it negates that verb. Can also stand alone as a response to a yes/no question.
- NEG.COM (negative adverb *tlesdi*):** When paired with the prepronominal prefixes *yi-* or *tsi-* on a following verb, it forms a negative command. Can also stand alone, translating as "Don't!"
- NI (prepronominal prefix *ni-*):** Often translated as "already" or "almost," though it has a wider range of functions not captured by a single label. Appears as *n-* before vowels. Attaches to all verb stems except the Infinitive, which requires **NI2**.
- NI2 (secondary form of NI prefix):** Attaches to the Infinitive stem and to parts of speech derived from verbs. Appears as *i-* or *yi-* before consonants, and as *iy-* before vowels.
- NS (non-singular number):** Marks a third-person subject as consisting of two or more individuals. For example, **3A.NS** may be read as "third-person non-singular, Set A pronominal prefix" and translated as "they."
- NXP (nonexperienced past suffix *-eʔi* / short form *-e*):** A final suffix indicating that an event occurred in the past but was not witnessed by the speaker.
- O (object focus pronominal prefix):** A set of prefixes that highlight the object of a verb while leaving the subject unspecified. Often translated using the English passive voice (e.g., "you've been noticed").
- ORD (ordinal suffix *-ineʔi* / short form *-ine*):** Attaches to a number to mark its place in a sequence, comparable to English "second" or "fourth."



PCP (participle suffix -da): Attaches to a special verb base to form an adjective or noun. Comparable to English participles, as when *to burn* yields the adjective “burned” (*burned toast*) or the noun “burn” (*a burn on your hand*).

PL (plural number): Marks a first- or second-person pronominal prefixes as including three or more individuals (e.g., “they and I,” or “you” referring to several people).

PFT (progressive Future final suffix -esdi): Marks an action as extending over time in the future. With the Incompletive stem, it indicates that the subject “will be doing” the action; with the Completive stem, it indicates that the subject “will have done” it. May also form commands.

POS.PRO (possession pronoun -atseliʔi / short form -atseli): Marks ownership of a noun that cannot otherwise be inflected for possession. Requires a Set B pronominal prefix.

PRC (Present Continuous verb stem): One of the five Cherokee verb bases. Marks an action as occurring continuously in the present.

REL (relativizer prefix tsi-): Marks a verb as belonging to a subordinate clause that modifies a noun (adjectival clause). E.g., “I still have *the car that you sold me*.” May also indicate that the verb in a main clause occurred at a definite time in the past. Appears as *ts-* before vowels.

RFL (reflexive prefix -ada-): Marks the subject of a verb as also its object (e.g., “He’s hitting himself”). Appears as *-ad-* before /a/ and as *-adad-* before other vowels.

TRN (translocative prefix wi-): Marks an action as occurring at a distance from, or facing away from, the speaker. May also suggest that one action occurred just before another. Can form superlatives, such as “sharpest.” Appears as *w-* before vowels. Sometimes translated as indicating that the subject “went and did” an action.

Notes

¹ The co-authors made distinct contributions to this project. First author Tanner Scott identified and transliterated the text for analysis and translated a first draft, which also benefited from the insights of first-language speaker and tribally-certified language instructor JW Webster. The co-authors then worked together on the morphemic analysis, with Scott again taking the lead. Senior author Eva Garrouette took primary responsibility for drafting the manuscript and finalizing the analyses, with written contributions and further discussion from Scott. Analytic efforts were generously informed throughout by the linguistic expertise of Jeffrey Bourns. Ed Fields, recognized as a Cherokee National Treasure for his work as a tribal language instructor, cheerfully responded to specific inquiries, while JW Webster supplied final review of the translation.

The project also benefited from the willing support of fellow second-language learners. This included analytic contributions from Charlie McVicker; linguistic insights and proofreading from Mary Rae; expert consultation on wrangling Cherokee fonts along with comments on content from Paul George; and useful discussion from the many other colleagues who come together as part of the Cherokee Grammar Book Club (see endnote 3).

² These include the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, and the Cherokee Nation.

³ All three tribes offer in-person instruction via community classes; two operate language immersion schools. The Cherokee Nation's long-standing series of electronic courses reaches students across the United States and in countries around the world (Fields and Rae 2023). Outside of such tribally-sponsored programs are several thriving, electronic study groups. Notable among these are forums sponsored by the Cherokee Community of Puget Sound and targeted to early and intermediate learners; contact marypricebody@gmail.com. The *Tsalagi Sgadugi* (Cherokee Community) is an intermediate-level group; direct inquiries to Jessie Tanner at interrowhimper@gmail.com. In addition, the Cherokee Grammar Book Club, convened on alternate weekends by senior author E. Garrouette since 2020, is an intermediate-to-advanced group that brings together a mix of scholars and interested others—several professional linguists and many Cherokee citizens—who share research interests in Cherokee grammar, linguistics, documentary translation and literacy; contact eva.garrouette@bc.edu.

⁴ Most of the 85 characters in the Sequoyan writing system represent entire syllables rather than the consonants and vowels composing the Roman alphabet. The syllabary was so well suited to expressing the sounds of Cherokee that speakers learned it readily, literacy spreading quickly throughout the nation. A version of the characters



adapted for the printing press was developed in 1828 and put promptly to use in the tribe's new newspaper (Cushman).

⁵ Particularly useful electronic resources included the Cherokee-English Dictionary Online Database (<https://www.cherokeedictionary.net/>) and the extraordinary, new Digital Archive of Indigenous Language Persistence (<https://dailp.northeastern.edu>). The latter reflects a close collaboration between the United Keetoowah Band and Northeastern University (<https://dailp.northeastern.edu/>).

⁶ Early Cherokee texts commonly employed punctuation in distinctive ways as compared to standard English—as with the common resort to commas to create sentences that English grammarians would consider run-ons; this usage perhaps captured the continuous flow of the spoken language for Cherokee readers. Also notable is the repurposing of English punctuation, as when a colon is used to show the end of the text.

⁷ The further identity of this individual is unknown.

⁸ It scarcely bears pointing out that these tribal aspirations were not realized. The Cherokees' forced relocation would commence only 10 years later.

⁹ While the strategy had long routes, by Boudinot's time, Europe had "witnessed a continent-wide growth in the idea that language—especially regional linguistic differences from a hegemonic or imperial state language—could form the basis of a strong regional or, latterly, national identity" (Hyvik et al.; see further Anderson; Hobsbawm). For collections of Aesop's fables published in translation to showcase minority languages and promote the socio-political ambitions of their speakers, see Henryson (in Scots); la Fontaine (in Occitan Limousin), or Vodnik (in Slovenian).

¹⁰ An Infinitive suffix commonly ends with *-i* (short form) or *-iʔi* (long form). An alternative spelling of the long form appears here as *-iyi* (Montgomery-Anderson 330-31).

¹¹ The third-person plural Object Focus prefix (3O.PL) takes the form *geg-* before vowels and *getsi-* before consonants. The Combined Nonsingular Subject prefix that expresses a relationship between a subject "they" and an object "all of you and me" (3NS/1PL) *also* appears as *geg-* before vowels but as *gegi-* before consonants) (Montgomery-Anderson 256, 247).

¹² On this point see, for example, Morrow and Schneider's (1995) cogent discussions of storytelling in indigenous Alaska and the Yukon.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

RoboKin and Technovation in Cherokee Speculative Fiction

KATHRYN WALKIEWICZ

Included in the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) collections is America Meredith's (Cherokee Nation) portrait of Mary Golda Ross (fig. 1). Ross was an esteemed aerospace engineer who was instrumental in designing concepts for the U.S. missile program and interplanetary travel. In Meredith's painting, Ross stands on the left side of the image, gesturing towards the Agena rocket she helped develop. A seven-pointed Cherokee star is affixed to the sky above her, and across a landscape below sits a version of her name in Cherokee: ᎠᎵᎾ ᎠᎳᎠ ᎠᎳᎠ ᎠᎳᎠ.¹

In the painting, Ross looks as if we have encountered her mid-lecture, perhaps referencing the years before she joined Lockheed when she was working with youth in Cherokee Nation.



America Meredith (Cherokee Nation), *Ad Astra per Astra*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (26/8630). Reprinted with the artist's permission.



I open with this painting for several reasons. First, it serves as a reminder that innovation and technology are critical components of Cherokeeness. Second, it disrupts colonial stereotypes that not only mark the Indigenous person as a primitive remnant of the past—out of place and out of time—but also the false logic that innovation is only made possible through Enlightenment notions of critical inquiry and Western science that are grounded in a secular Judeo-Christian world view (Wynter and McKittrick 13-18). Throughout her lifetime, Ross vocally and unequivocally attributed her accomplishments as the first woman and the first Native person to work as an aerospace engineer to her upbringing and education in Cherokee Nation (Viola). The painting's title, *Ad Astra per Astra*, which translates as "to the stars through the stars" is a riff on "per aspera ad astra," meaning "through hardship to the stars". Collectively, the title and the imagery in Meredith's painting signal the contrast between U.S. settler and Cherokee cosmologies and situates Ross and her accomplishments in a Cherokee world. Instead of framing the stars as a destination, something to be conquered, Meredith's title emphasizes a sense of consensual knowing and interrelatedness. Her painting symbolically gestures towards the Cherokee story of how the Pleiades formed and those stars' relationship to the pine tree.² In doing so, she situates Ross in an interconnected world, in which the stars in the sky and the pine trees that run along a river shore may be physically distant but share an intimate and interdependent history that continues to be carried through story. For, as Joseph Pierce (Cherokee Nation)

beautifully reminds us, "[o]ur bodies are not symbolically made of stars. We are those cosmic elements, and in recognizing ourselves as cosmologically interrelated, as connecting cross-temporally as part of an emergent and ongoing cosmological order, we maintain the bonds of reciprocity and collaboration that are at the heart of our stories" (97).

By positioning Ross mid-conversation—or perhaps mid-lecture—we can read her as a teacher, instructing us in how Cherokee cosmologies and interstellar travel are intertwined. Her human figure does not occupy the center of the painting but instead stands to the side while gesturing to the greater cosmos and the other-than-human relationships she dedicated her life to pursuing. Ross is not sanctified but rather celebrated as an important member of an expansive human and other-than-human Cherokee world. Meredith's portrait of Ross honors her not through exceptionalism but through her imbrication in systems of recognition, respect, and responsibility that include the human, more than human, and the cosmos, what Pierce terms "kinstillation," a neologism of kin and constellation that "think[s] along with" Cree scholar Karyn Recollet, who first proposed the term (96). For Pierce, "kinstillations enact our ancestral knowledge, of the stars, of our own stories of creation and of survival, in an ongoing, reflexive relationality that is nonhierarchical and ephemeral (as in everyday, quotidian)" (96).



As Danika Medak-Saltzman (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) rightly points out, it is no coincidence that a surge in Indigenous futurist and speculative art has emerged at the same moment as large-scale Indigenous grassroots political movements (144). Relatedly, Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) argues that for Indigenous writers of speculative fiction, fantasy “offers greater scope for addressing issues of decolonization and self-determination than realist fiction” (*Why*, 148). He rightly cautions that fantasy and speculative genres have long and troubled histories of reproducing anti-Indigenous stereotypes, especially in the United States and Canada. However, as the groundswell of Indigenous speculative fiction published in the twenty-first century demonstrates, Indigenous writers are repurposing genre writing to interrogate settler colonial violence and engage in decolonial futurist praxes.³ In a moment of inarguable climate change, social turmoil, and resurgent Indigenous activism, there has been a turn to the speculative to make sense of the current moment and grapple with how to better care for the world on behalf of our human and other-than-human relatives of the future. Much like Meredith’s painting, Indigenous literary/artistic experimentation with the speculative does not query innovation as something entirely new but rather as contributing to longstanding praxes informed by cosmologies and tactics of survivance used by Indigenous peoples following the apocalyptic colonization of Turtle Island and the new world order instantiated by capitalism, chattel enslavement, and colonization.

For the rest of this essay, I turn to Cherokee Nation writers Blake Hausman and Daniel H. Wilson, speculative novelists that interrogate dogmatic beliefs in technology as social progress. Hausman's *Riding the Trail of Tears* and Daniel Wilson's *Robopocalypse*—were both published in 2011 (Wilson's sequel to *Robopocalypse* was published three years later in 2014). Hausman imagines a VR experience where customers virtually re-enact the Trail of Tears and Wilson details a global robot takeover staged in a dystopic future. I argue that the novels' commentary on artificial intelligence, technology, and grounded knowledge build on a long history of Cherokee technological innovation, what I term *Cherokee technovation*. By Cherokee technovation, I mean Cherokee peoples' ability to take technological innovations not necessarily created to support Indigenous self-determination—and, in fact, often developed to enhance the extractive-capitalist ethos that undergirds settler futurity and Indigenous dispossession—and creatively repurpose and adapt them in modes that are grounded in Cherokee ways of being and which nurture Cherokee lifeways and worldviews.

Mechanical technology, a preoccupation of both Hausman's and Wilson's novels, has been a critical resource for Cherokee people for centuries and is encoded in some Cherokee understandings of peoplehood. The printed form of the Cherokee syllabary was itself a monumental technovation, as was the *Cherokee Phoenix*, the first



Native newspaper printed by a Native nation on Turtle Island. Contemporary Cherokee computer programmers, developers, and filmmakers are building on this legacy through their use of facial recognition software, animation, and other forms of virtual storytelling to narrate Cherokeeness and assert Cherokee survivance.⁴ Collectively, all of these narratives insist that Cherokees and non-Cherokees alike think about ethical relationships to technology grounded in Cherokee notions of responsibility and community that do not view technology as a cultural salve or savior but rather as part of an already interrelated ecosystem, a kinstillation of sorts. Contributing to this long tradition, Hausman and Wilson interrogate twenty-first-century fetishization of the emancipatory power of technology using longstanding Cherokee discourses that demand a more nuanced and careful approach than dominant modes of inquiry.

Rematriation through Virtual and Embodied Healing

In *Riding the Trail of Tears*, Hausman farcically interrogates the relationship between Cherokeeness, mechanization, and embodiment. The novel traces the mishaps that occur when a virtual reality simulation of the Trail of Tears is disrupted by Nunehi, computer-generated Little People who take over the ride's mainframe in their attempt to escape the machine. The Tsalagi Removal Exodus Point Park (TREPP) is a theme park created north of Atlanta that invites guests to walk the Trail of Tears virtually. Guests are fastened into "chairsuits" where "Realskyn" "shrinks or stretches to

wrap itself around the tourist like a wetsuit" (*Riding*, 74). Then begins a fully immersive ride where guests participate in the Trail of Tears as simulated Cherokee people. The TREPP offers riders the opportunity to virtually "go Native" and experience the horror of forced Removal, a settler technology with profoundly devastating ramifications for Indigenous people.⁵ They attempt to evade death or starvation and make it all the way to Indian Territory. TREPP's monetization of Removal capitalizes on Cherokee loss, both literally and figuratively, and allows riders to imagine they know what that experience was like. By inhabiting it, riders gain a sense of ownership over it.

As a person of both Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band descent, the novel's protagonist, Tallulah Wilson, represents the futility of Removal. Despite its genocidal underpinnings, her kin who survived forced Removal and those who hid and stayed in Appalachia *all* endured. Nonetheless, her work for TREPP has disconnected Tallulah from her sense of self; she has become numb to the trauma the ride simulates. As the narrator explains to us near the novel's beginning, "I don't know how anything so organic expects to handle a digital universe in such doses" (15). Most scholarship on the novel emphasizes the ride's mechanics or Hausman's commentary on the Trail of Tears and Cherokee history. While I begin with a brief analysis of the ride, my main focus is on Tallulah's healing journey. Specifically, how her ability to make kin with the virtual world allows her to heal from historical and familial trauma in ways that return her to herself.⁶



I read Tallulah’s story in conversation with a growing body of Indigenous studies scholarship that seeks to make sense of current technological innovations through Indigenous epistemologies, kinship structures, and understandings of reciprocity. Doing so allows us to move away from simplistic rubrics of good or bad, living or non-living, historical or contemporary and understand Hausman’s novel as prioritizing Cherokee cosmologies that instead engage with the world through a sense of balance and interconnection – Pierce’s notion of kinstillation. Relatedly, I argue that Hausman utilizes what Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg) terms “shared code” in his novel, an intentional use of Indigenous aesthetics that speaks specifically to Indigenous readers (*As We Have*, 200). When we prioritize the Cherokee reader of Hausman’s novel, or read the novel through a Cherokee lens, we witness its advocacy for a recuperative matrilineality that insists that Cherokee women are not only powerful but that their health and well-being are critical to Cherokee futurity. As part of the novel’s emphasis on women, there is a potent subtext that emphasizes the dynamism of embodied Cherokee experiences that are about pleasure, joy, and laughter rather than trauma and loss. It is critical to note that while the TREPP serves as a virtual Removal, Tallulah’s presence on the ride is paradoxically also a reminder that the project of Removal in Georgia—to eradicate Indigenous peoples from their homelands—was not successful.

Ghost in the Jeep

The TREPP's owners hired Tallulah as a cultural consultant for the ride because her grandfather invented the ride's prototype. Grandpa Art used an adapted Jeep Grand Cherokee and television screens that clicked on to the windows to develop "Surround Vision," the TREPP's bedrock technology (*Riding*, 33). When she was twelve years old, Grandpa Art invited Tallulah to join him in the Jeep as they virtually rode the Trail of Tears together from his garage in Asheville, North Carolina all the way to Indian Territory. Tallulah describes the experience as an unsettling one, not only because they relived one of the most significant collective traumas Cherokee people have endured, but because she felt a sense of uncanniness about the Cherokees she witnessed along the trail: "[G]randpa said that the Indians walking the Trail were digital and couldn't see inside the car, but Tallulah thought they stared right through her" (33). This passage is the first instance of many where distinctions between a virtual world and a human world are porous, where Cherokee cosmologies and people from the Cherokee world disrupt or circumvent human intentions for technology. Instead of a totalizing control or mastery of the TREPP—a logic that operates under colonizing and extractive logics, the ghosts in the machine, if you will—have other plans for the ride and its participants.

Before I discuss these "ghosts in the machine" (or the novel's ghostly machinery) any further, I want to linger on the significance of the Jeep Cherokee because it



warrants some unpacking. Grandpa Art's use of the vehicle for his prototype is poignant. He repurposes an iconic symbol of settler appropriation to develop technology that enables him to feel a sense of proximity to his Cherokee ancestors or "go to the source," as he says. His repurposing of the Jeep is itself a quintessential form of Cherokee technovation (33).⁷ While this model is not the only one to don the name of an Indigenous people or Indigenous person, it is arguably *the* most enduring example.⁸ Jeep began using the name in 1974 and then ceased doing so in 2002, but revived it in 2013 without consulting any leaders of the three federally-recognized Cherokee nations (White). Despite Jeep's claims that the name is intended to honor Cherokee people, law professor Stacy Leeds (Cherokee Nation) asked, "What images are they hoping will pop up?" . . . "Are they trying to project the untamed? Are they trying to project the frontier?" (Gross). In 2021, Chuck Hoskin Jr., Principal Chief of Cherokee Nation, went on record to criticize Jeep's use of the Nation's name. Hausman's novel lambasts Jeep's appropriative use of the name to describe its most popular line of vehicles. After Tallulah rides in her grandfather's invention, every time she sees a Jeep Cherokee on the road, she wonders "if the person behind the wheel was trying to ride the Trail of Tears" (*Riding*, 33). As she scans the many vehicles she sees on the busy commuter roads of Atlanta, "[S]he figured there were at least ten, if not twenty, Jeep Cherokees with Georgia license plates for every Cherokee person who died on the Trail of Tears. And that was just Georgia" (34). Tallulah's mathematical

reflection highlights the profound discord of being a Cherokee person in Georgia, where Cherokee vehicles have seemingly replaced Cherokee people. It is a cruel reminder of the violence of Removal. The Jeep, a symbol of rugged adventuring, mocks the forced movement of structural violence and invites its owners not to ride the Trail of Tears, as Tallulah imagines, but to ride *because* of the Trail of Tears. In other words, what makes a long-distance road trip possible, and the notion of "exploring the wilderness," is a sustained project of displacement, warfare, and disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island.

We learn that Art's technology was monetized because the Museum of the Cherokee Indian inherited his intellectual property rights upon his death and sold them to the "Atlanta moneyman Jim Campbell" who then created the TREPP (34). While Art's invention can bring a rider closer to the experience of Removal, Art's personal life has disrupted the flows of movement Removal was meant to entrench: that Cherokees only go west. Art is from Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma but lives with his Eastern Band Cherokee wife Lee in Ashville, part of the Cherokee pre-Removal homelands. Art and Lee's union, as Cherokee individuals of two distinct Cherokee nations, represents a re-union of Cherokee people across the cleaving divide of Removal. However, we also learn that Tallulah's father, Art's son, died in a car crash, another painful association between cars and loss that Tallulah carries with her. It was her father's estrangement from Art that led to Tallulah's lack of awareness of her Cherokee lineage, a legacy she



only rekindled after her father's passing. For Tallulah, information gets lost or hidden through her paternal family lines. Therefore, Art's Jeep Cherokee, despite its tangled web of corporate, technological, and familial signifiers, serves as an essential touchstone for Tallulah's personal history and sense of Cherokeeeness.

In its finessed TREPP form, the ride operates on a causality loop that works like a choose-your-own-adventure novel. There are a finite number of ways the story can play out, but riders' decisions influence the experiences they collectively share. We learn that inhabiting the ride are the "real" Nunnehi, or Little People (as is our narrator, the "Nunnerator," who lives in Tallulah's head). They refer to themselves as Misfits, creatures in the machine that no human is aware of who await the prophetic moment when someone will emancipate them. According to the prophecy, a girl will return and free them with a great rush of water (192-3). Importantly, the Misfits understand themselves as having a deep digital past that defies colonial conventions of time and technology. When the stories changed, Cherokee people forgot about them until they appeared again in Art's machine, which the Nunnerator describes as "my homeland" (6). He *also* explains that "I'm probably more indigenous than you, and the digital earth is where I'm indigenous. I'm more Nunnehi than you probably thought Nunnehi could be, but I never took such a formal shape until they built their ride" (13). The Nunnerator describes the TREPP's invention in the plural, creating a collective. Moreover, his

insistence on his Indigeneity disrupts sharp divides between virtuality and the real world.

Hausman's world pushes against the notion of virtual reality and technology as exclusively Western scientific tools that are inherently filial to capitalistic, extractive endeavors and suggests that, in the care of Indigenous creators, technovation can serve the vibrant, layered, and enduring worlds of Turtle Island. One can infer from intimations in the novel that when Art virtually reconstructed Removal, he also rejuvenated the stories and creatures that called that place home as well. This bending of time and existence suggests a capacious Cherokee cosmology that disrupts any framing of Removal as a clean break. The Misfits invoke a return and continuation of Cherokee worlds that have adapted to survive the enduring grind of colonialism. The world we encounter in Hausman's novel is a kinstillation, in which beings and stories stretch across time and space, coexisting and interrelated, even when humans and other-than-humans fail to recognize their interconnectedness. The monetization of the TREPP—and Tallulah's complicity in it—fails to recognize this mutual accountability, but such a failure does not erase this. In fact, the violation of these reciprocal relations leads the ride to go off the rails.

Despite Jim Campbell's attempt to monetize Art's invention, the TREPP's programming bucks totalized colonization and control of the programming. The Misfits



stage a revolt, and the ride goes haywire, frightening its human passengers. There are suggestions that Art himself is haunting the machine, somehow living on through the code—that not only the Misfits, but his presence as well, help disrupt the ride as it slowly begins to break down for Group 5709. In this way, the novel offers a distinctly Cherokee understanding of how to relate to a computerized world, especially one constructed by a Cherokee person (Grandpa Art).⁹ It also invokes the critical reminder that Indigenous people themselves “have been declared non-human by scientists and preachers alike” for centuries (Lewis et al., 14) and that AI and the virtual world of TREPP are not simply produced by code but also by the metal and organic materials mined to craft the physical infrastructure (Lewis et al., 12). The sentient Misfits in the Ride force the novel’s readers to contend with an understanding of reality that is porous and relational. The novel does not linger on where the Misfits come from. What is most important is that they exist and deserve to be appreciated as members of a larger Cherokee collective.

While the Nunnerator has crawled inside Tallulah’s head, potentially influencing her dissatisfaction at work, it is when the Misfits begin crawling into the heads of the riders that the TREPP begins to short-circuit. While the human aim of the ride is to control the machine, the Misfits subsequently begin to control the humans. In addition to its challenge to humans’ desire for total control, the novel also critiques how riders

demand access to Cherokee peoples' bodies, through their proximity to Tallulah and the donning of Realskyn chairsuits. Her presence is a necessary component of the fully immersive experience. As a tour guide, she not only has to recount facts about the Trail of Tears and Cherokee history, but she affectively has to perform her experiential trauma as a Cherokee person:

Spencer breaks the silence. "Hey, Tallulah?"

"Yes."

"Are you, like, offended by the Jeep Cherokee?"

Rachel Rosenberg rolls over onto her back and answers for Tallulah. "Of course she's offended. How could she not be?"

But Spencer is not satisfied by Rachel's response. He wants to hear it straight from the Indian's mouth—he wants Tallulah's own authentic analysis of the Jeep Cherokee. (144)

Tallulah's embodied, fleshy Cherokee self is a critical component of the virtual experience. Even before the novel directly blurs the line between virtual and material life, it indicts how re-narrations of the genocidal acts of settler colonialism, in this case, the Trail of Tears, necessitate the presence of "real" Native people.



As both Maile Arvin (Kānaka Maoli) and Audra Simpson (Mohawk) argue, this is especially true for Indigenous women. For Arvin, “possession, rather than elimination, articulates more fully the ways in which settler colonial practices of elimination and replacement are continuously deferred” (Arvin, 16). She argues that heteropatriarchy is especially important to colonial possessiveness. Indigenous Two-Spirit, Queer, Trans, and woman-identifying people often carry the additional burden of heteropatriarchal and misogynistic understandings of gender and sexuality that underscore settler occupation and justify the surveillance and control of Indigenous bodies. Similarly, Audra Simpson insists that Indigenous women’s bodies, especially within matrilineal kinship structures like those of the Haudenosaunee (and Cherokees), are loaded with signification in settler society: “[A]n Indian woman’s body in settler regimes such as the US, in Canada is loaded with meaning - signifying other political orders, land itself, of the dangerous possibility of reproducing Indian life and most dangerously, other political orders. Other life forms, other sovereignties, other forms of political will” (“The State Is a Man,” 29).

While *Riding the Trail of Tears* is in many ways a farcical critique of settler preoccupations with the co-opting and consumption of Indigenous life and culture, it is also a narrative about foregrounding the experiences of Cherokee women that prioritizes women’s healing and well-being as necessary to the resurgence of the

People.¹⁰ By willingly acknowledging her virtual kin in the ride, Tallulah can work through the grief of her father's death and all of the loss that constellated out from it. It is through her own physical tears, rather than the virtual Trail of Tears, that Tallulah finds peace, and that the Misfits find their freedom. In the climactic moment where she cries, Tallulah serves as a synecdoche, a conduit for the many threads of place and history that run through the narrative, as well as the dream, virtual, and "real" planes of the novel. She invokes the gorge and falls she is named after, the First Woman Cherokee creation story, her recurring dream, and the Misfit's prophecy. She embodies rematriation in many forms, and all of these worlds converge as she begins to weep.¹¹ In Hausman's novel, this is the power of Cherokee women; they bring about the change necessary to restore balance to the various virtual and fleshy Cherokees we encounter in the novel. It is Tallulah's confrontation with the grief she feels over her father's early death and the sense of shame she feels for her complicity in establishing the TREPP and monetizing her people's history and her grandfather's vision that catalyzes other characters' own journeys toward healing and growth.¹²

Resurgent Pleasure

In "Notes from the Melting Pot: 463 Years After Cherokees Met DeSoto," Hausman comments on non-Indigenous people's "obsession with the spirituality of suffering that Indians were supposed to have" ("Notes," 236). One of the side effects of Tallulah's work on the TREPP is a deadening of her emotional and spiritual relationship



to the histories that the ride attempts to capture. Because she is constantly asked to perform the role of authentic informant, she has distanced herself from an embodied sense of herself as a Cherokee person. One of the most profound losses of settler occupation for Cherokee people has been the erosion of matrilineal networks. Constellations of care, dictated by gadugi (commitments to one another as Cherokee people) and kinship structures, ensure everyone has a place in Cherokee cosmologies and that everyone is cared for, what Julie Reed (Cherokee Nation) terms *osdv iyunvnehi* (roughly translated by Reed as welfare) (Reed, 5). The erosion of matrilineal and clan structures damaged this web of relations but did not destroy them.

Understanding Tallulah in this way helps us interpret the somewhat unexpected ending to the novel (every time I teach *Riding the Trail of Tears*, my students struggle to make sense of it—and awkwardly giggle), in which Bushyhead, Tallulah’s Cuban-Cherokee co-worker performs cunnilingus on her in the shower. The novel ends with Tallulah’s pleasure as she reaches orgasm. I read this final scene through Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s notion of everyday resurgent practice as an act of healing for Tallulah as a Cherokee person—and more specifically, as a Cherokee woman (*As We Have*, 193). It is a moment of sensual embodiment between two Cherokee people. It is not about performing their trauma for a non-Native audience (TREPP riders or the novel’s readers) but about their pleasure and joy. More specifically, it is about them

finding joy in Tallulah's pleasure. If, as Audra Simpson suggests, Indigenous women pose an enormous threat to the colonial order, then Indigenous women's sexual pleasure and ability to experience embodied ecstasy are acts of affirmative refusal—of survivance. In arguing that "Native pleasure subverts the settler colonial state that tries to make Native existence miserable and therefore untenable", Scott Andrews (Cherokee Nation) coins the term "jouissance" to interrogate the radical decolonial potential of Indigenous "sexual joy that enacts continuity with one's ancestors, one's descendants, and, many times, the land" (Andrews).¹³ We can read the novel's shower scene as one of jouissance. In the shower, Tallulah strips away all of the corrosive colonial signifiers that attempt to control and own Cherokeeness, through vehicle branding, cultural appropriation, and the "trauma porn" narrative of the ride, all of which stage genocide as a shocking, consumptive spectacle, a feedback loop not unlike that of the TREPP that enables individuals to relive the Trail of Tears over and over in an attempt to numb its significance as a settler technology of profound violence.

In the novel's final paragraphs, Tallulah achieves climax, and the various understandings of water as evocative of healing, life-giving, and of women's power all constellate – or kinstillate. Half of the human body is water; in this scene, water is a reminder of the porosity between worlds, as ever-moving and interconnected to lifeforms on Earth. Throughout the novel, water serves as a vital source of freedom for the virtual and human Cherokee characters, but also brings them together. Tallulah's



encounters with the Little People allow her to renegotiate her relationships with the world around her. Perhaps *because* of her involvement in helping to construct the TREPP and *because* she is Art's kin, the virtual world of the ride is a necessary part of her healing, and vice versa—the virtual Cherokees in the ride need Tallulah in order to free themselves. *Riding the Trail of Tears* demonstrates the necessity of Indigenous science, what Megan Bang, Ananda Marin, and Douglas Medin term “relational epistemologies”, when creating and engaging with AI and other life-producing robotics and technology (151). Instead of affirming a stance of Removal and distance between living beings, the novel suggests that we learn to make kin with everyone. Technovation in the novel serves as a kind of shared code, a reminder to Cherokee readers that technovation and adaptation have been critical to the continued vibrancy of Cherokee people, especially under colonial occupation. The novel's blurring between the virtual and the material is less an interplay about distinctions between the two and more a way for Hausman to emphasize the endurance of Cherokee cosmologies and creatures; even in virtual worlds, Cherokee beings find ways to be in community with one another.

Robots Aren't the Enemy: Daniel H. Wilson's *Robopocalypse*

While Wilson's *Robopocalypse* trilogy is less explicitly about Cherokee lives and histories, like *Riding the Trail of Tears*, the series insists that Indigenous notions of

kinship and reciprocity are necessary to engage with a changing human and other-than-human world. *Robopocalypse* and *Robogenesis* detail a near-future world in which robots become sentient, stage global warfare, and are barely stopped from destroying all of humanity – twice. Yet Wilson’s technohorror novels do not situate robots as the unquestionable enemies in this dystopic future. Instead, they invite their readers to reflect on how humans and robots might learn to make kin with one another and negotiate the contours of a “new world.” In doing so, Wilson contributes to a well-trodden sci-fi tradition of exploring the potential personhood of robots and the relationship between humans and machines established by science fiction staples like Isaac Asimov’s *I, Robot* (1950), Philip K. Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) or the Stanley Kubrick film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).¹⁴ However, Wilson’s analysis of human-robot relations offers its readers something distinct, a rich reflection on a changing world that is deeply informed by Cherokee technovation.¹⁵ I contend that the novel invites both its characters and its readers to reflect on the end of a twenty-first-century world dominated by imperial regimes in order to reckon with the destructive forces of neoliberalism, environmental degradation, and warfare. At the same time, Wilson foregrounds Indigenous place-based ontologies (the Osage Nation) and Indigenous people who utilize ancestral knowledge of survivance to acclimate to a changing global environment. Having survived the world-altering traumas of colonization, warfare, and Removal, Indigenous characters in the novels are acutely reminded of the need to adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining



an ethics of responsibility and relationality older than colonialism. When characters, whether or not they are Indigenous, fail to consciously embody these kinstillatory ethics with the other-than-human world, trouble ensues.

Robopocalypse begins with Cormac Wallace, aka “Bright Boy,” a soldier in Gray Horse Army, finding an archive of sorts preserved in a black box in the Yukon. It includes video footage that Archos, the AI orchestrating the titular robopocalypse, has compiled to preserve the details of the robot uprising. Cormac decides to transcribe what he finds on the black cube, and it is his transcription, *The Hero Archive*, that we are reading. While the cube was preserving data to share with future robots, Cormac repurposes the footage to narrate, in book form, the collective efforts of humans, robots, and human-robot hybrids to destroy Archos. Much like the TREPP, Archos is presented as something (and someone) that defies the limited notions of sentience, being, and lifespan that dominate Western discourse.

The *Robopocalypse* novels explicitly links the AI uprising to over five hundred years of capitalist-colonialist extraction and exploitation in the Americas . Driving this point home, it is Thanksgiving Day in the U.S. when the robots launch their mass incarceration and destruction of humanity. The colonized, dispossessed, and marginalized in Wilson’s novel fare better than the enfranchised and privileged because they already know how to live outside the surveillance state. However, all

humans—and robots—are forced to contend with the aftershock of human technological innovations produced to kill, harm, and control; the same colonial regime produced by humans is used to colonize and destroy *them*.

Therefore, it is no coincidence that all the locations significant to the novels are sites of U.S. settler-occupation or paramilitary power: the so-called United States, Afghanistan, and Japan. Japan and the nuclear histories that it invokes are especially vital to the nuclear subtext of both *Robopocalypse* and *Robogenesis*. Wilson constructs what Lou Cornum (Diné) terms "nuclear apocalypse," a term Cornum uses to "further understand and complicate the triumvirate of analytics (dispossession of Indigenous life, fungibility of Black flesh, and nonenslaved Asian labor) that structure modernity and make possible its undoing" ("Radioactive Intimacies"). In addition, Cornum understands nuclear war in Japan "as an extension of and indeed part of the ongoing and never-ending Indian Wars fought in Canada and the United States. In this way, the atomic bomb and other uses of uranium by Western nation-states highlight the related projects of settler colonialism and imperialism abroad."

It is not technological advancements that make Archos' global takeover possible; it is environmental degradation and nuclear apocalypse brought on by humans. The critical catalyst of the robot uprising is a nuclear testing site in western Alaska. There, the robot orchestrating the uprising, Archos-14, has enough power to



generate and sustain communication with all robots, also called avtomats, across the globe.¹⁶ The Ragnarok Intelligence Field, Archos' mainframe, is located in a remote part of western Alaska near the Yukon. Dwight Bowie, who leads the drilling project, is commissioned by the cryptic company Novus to drill down forty-two hundred feet to a cavern where his team is to set up monitoring equipment that will attach to a giant antenna (*Robopocalypse*, 98-99). What Bowie and the team do not realize is that Archos is the one who has commissioned the project, and he plans to use the antenna to transmit messages to robots around the world. Eventually, Bowie realizes what is going on: "[I]t's a *blast cavity*. This place was a nuke testing ground. That big-diameter borehole was drilled so they could place a nuclear device down there. When it was detonated, the bomb vaporized a spherical cavern [...] That radioactive case down there is as close to hell as you can get here on earth. And we got sent here to drill *straight into it*" (101). In addition, Bowie realizes that all of the communications he has received from Novus and their North Star drilling company were actually transmitted from the hole in the ground. Unfortunately, Bowie does not live to share his findings with others, but we learn of them secondhand through Cormac Wallace's book. Bowie realizes what is happening because he has experience working in other extractive, toxic nuclear zones. In passing, Bowie mentions his prior experience in the Alberta oil sands, arguably one of the most polluted casualties of the oil and natural gas industry in the world and a critical site of Indigenous protests in the decade-plus years since

Robopocalypse's publication. By learning of the Ragnarok Intelligence Field through Bowie, the novel makes explicit the connections, the "radioactive intimacies," between the secret uranium blast site in Alaska and other global projects of extraction.¹⁷

The novels' climactic final scenes are all staged at two nuclear sites, both of which occupy Indigenous homelands: Ragnarok in *Robopocalypse* and Cheyenne Mountain, aka Freeborn City, in *Robogenesis*.¹⁸ These intimacies between nuclear degradation and Indigenous dispossession are a throughline in both novels. Because radiation is too harmful to humans, they require assistance from Freeborn (robots that think for themselves and resist the messaging of Archos in the first book and Arayt in the second). In the first novel, Archos is only destroyed because the Freeborn robot Nine-Oh-Two agrees to sacrifice himself and travel down to the bottom of the pit at Ragnarok to destroy Archos and his antenna. In the world of *Robopocalypse*, those who slip between a dichotomous human-robot divide or reject sharp divisions between humans and robots have the talent and strength needed to save humanity. In the novel, a re-entrenched insider-outsider dialectic does not serve humans—or robots—nor do misogynistic, ego-driven approaches to survival in a post-New War world that places a premium on brute force and aggression. This critique is most evident in the novels' staging of the Osage Nation as key to building an inclusive community of humans and Freeborn robots that is difficult for Archos to penetrate and critical to the resistance. In



the *Robopocalypse* novels, there is no defeating the genocidal robot takeover without Indigenous people, without Indian Country.

Ko-wah-hos-sta

Wilson avoids science fiction tropes of Indigeneity as primitive, of the past, and discretely separate from the futuristic or technologically-advanced worlds of the plot's main action.¹⁹ Instead, he presents imperfect Osage and Cherokee characters grappling with a changing world, some of whom, like Tallulah in *Riding the Trail of Tears*, are resistant to cultural teachings that emphasize collaboration and reciprocity, i.e. kinstillation, over self-interest. It is through their embrace of grounded, land-based relational thinking that characters in the *Robopocalypse* universe can curtail global robot domination. The Osage Nation is a space of healing and rejuvenation that, at least for a time, is shielded from the surveillance of Archos and his robot minions, in large part because so much of the Nation is rural and off the grid. While the Nation's remoteness aids Osages during the New War, its remoteness does not mean the Nation has not been touched by the same histories of violence and extraction as the novels' other key locations. Lonnie Wayne Blanton is a pivotal character throughout the series. He worked as a police officer for the state of Oklahoma until he witnessed a robot attack in Tulsa. After that, he joined the Osage National Lighthouse tribal police.²⁰ We follow a subplot storyline with his son, Paul Blanton, who is fighting in Afghanistan

when Zero Hour occurs. These two characters, as father and son, highlight the global intimacies of U.S. empire.²¹ While the Nation is hidden from Archos because he fails to recognize the contours of Indian Country that may not easily register on a U.S. map, Osage residents are keenly aware of how their nation is interconnected to global projects of coloniality, resource extraction, and warfare.

In addition to highlighting how settler U.S. empire has shaped environmental devastation on Indigenous land and produced a global network of radioactive intimacies, the novel suggests sacred Indigenous spaces are imbued with the power and strength to combat these destructive forces if people remember how to relate to them and to each other in a good way. At Zero Hour, when the New War begins, Lonnie is with other Osage people at Gray Horse, Ko-wah-hos-tsa. It is difficult to find on a map, and he explains that while the U.S. government picked the name of the road that leads there, County Road 5451, the United States does not have access to the sacredness of the space. In fact, the road does not get you all the way there; settler cartographies cannot contain it, and to access it, you must be invited. When things begin to go off the rails, many Osages head out to Ko-wah-hos-tsa because "when you get the tar knocked out of you, you beat a trail back home soon as you can" (*Robopocalypse* 141). Lonnie explains to readers why Ko-wah-hos-tsa is special: "[I]t is the heart of our people." (141). Gray Horse is where Osages moved after they experienced the trauma of Removal to a reservation in Indian Territory in the



nineteenth century. Having little choice, they agreed to move to a reservation carved out of their previous homelands, then occupied by the Cherokee Nation, to escape the harassment and violence of white settler-squatters in Kansas. Lonnie explains that moving to Ko-wah-hos-tsa fulfilled a prophecy that the people would move to a new territory and find great wealth there. He attributes that to the “oil flowing underneath our land” (141). Beneath the ground are large oil and natural gas deposits that brought the Osage Nation much financial wealth in the twentieth century, but that wealth also brought violence. In the first decades of the twentieth century, dozens of Osage people, many of whom were women, were murdered by greedy non-Native people in order to acquire Osage mineral rights for personal gain.

While connected to a broader network of radioactive intimacies and geological extraction, the Osage Nation, or Ko-wah-hos-tsa, rather, is positioned as a refuge from violence and warfare in the first novel, a marker of deep time and things that exceed human knowability. There is a profundity at home there that is older than settler colonialism and forced Removals: “[I]n that misty time before history, dark-haired, dark-eyed folks just like the ones on this road were out here building mounds to rival the Egyptian pyramids. We took care of this land, and after a lot of heartache and tears, she paid us back in spades” (141). In this, we see an understanding of land-human relations that is distinctly not settler colonial. The land is described capacious terms not

delineated by national or reservation borders, but with reverence for Indigenous caretakers' ancestral knowledge. It is the *practice* of being in good relation with the broader stretch of the Great Plains for centuries and centuries that has established a sense of trust and mutual accountability between the land and Osage people, not necessarily exclusive of the specific lands within the current Osage Nation's borders. Conceiving of land-human relationships in this way is especially important for Indigenous peoples with long histories of migration and Removal, including Osage and Cherokee people. As the New War began, national borders became less important, and in some cases, harmful. While the Osage Nation is a critical site of refuge and resistance in the novel, *Ko-wah-hos-tsa*, specifically, proves most potent. *Ko-wah-hos-tsa* is significant because it is home to *l'n-Lon-scka*, the Osage "big dance." Lonnie describes the annual June gathering as a "migration" and explains that "the path becomes familiar to your soul" (141). Even while the dance is held in a specific sacred space, just as critical is the journey Osages take to be in spiritual fellowship with one another. Lonnie's explanation of what makes *Ko-wah-hos-tsa* so special emphasizes transition and movement, both from place to place and from season to season.

In one of the most moving moments of the novel, Lonnie takes us with him to the dance. While there, he experiences a profoundly spiritual vision, witnessed through his "mind's eye," that foreshadows the plot of *Robopocalypse* (147). He replays an early



scene from the novel when he is called in to help a young fast-food worker in Tulsa, Felipe, who was attacked by a “domestic” robot designed to help with service work. As Felipe lay dying, Lonnie promised that he would ensure robots did not harm anyone else. As Lonnie dances in the present, this past moment with Felipe shifts. Lonnie now sees the murderous robot who killed Felipe hand Lonnie a paper crane, a symbol of peace in the atomic era and a reminder of the children who died from radiation exposure at Hiroshima. When Lonnie emerges from the vision, he realizes that he and another Osage man, Hank Cotton, have been “dancing for hours, robotically” (147). Subtly, this scene blurs the lines between human and robot, “tradition” and innovation. Once Lonnie stops dancing, he and others see a white man and child enter the dance grounds. The boy is painted red, but not by the drumkeeper, and Lonnie and the others realize that their interruption is prophetic. For the rest of the New War, “the Osage Nation never turned away a single human survivor [...] As a result, Gray Horse grew into a bastion of human resistance” (*Robopocalypse* 149). Gray Horse Army, a paramilitary group formed in the Osage Nation from Osage and non-Osage human fighters and Freeborn robot refugees, becomes one of the most successful resistance operations of the New War. It continues to thrive as long as it maintains a practice of inclusion.

If the New War has conjured forth a New World, the visions at Ko-wah-hos-tsa encourage the survivors not to replicate the structures of difference-as-violence promulgated under the previous world order. Collectively, Lonnie's vision and the prophetic emergence of the man and child caution against xenophobic allegiances. A foreshadowing scene that occurs immediately before the dance reiterates the necessity of working across differences to combat genocidal evil.²² Hank Cotton argues that only Osages should be allowed to attend the gathering because this is how things have always been. He is especially keen to exclude a young Cherokee boy named Lark Iron Cloud, whom he perceives as a thug. (Lark eventually becomes one of the bravest fighters in Gray Horse Army as they march to Alaska to take on Archos.) Hank's xenophobia is eventually his downfall, as well as that of Gray Horse Army and the resistance stronghold in the Osage Nation. Through Hank's story, the novels reject simplistic notions of Indigeneity as inherent goodness; Wilson foregrounds Indigenous epistemologies—Indigenous kinstillatory ethics—not identitarian politics. In *Robogenesis*, Arayt gains control of Hank's mind and weaponizes Hank's already existing proclivity to exclusionary politics that reaffirm phenotypic, essentialist classifications of Indigeneity. Hank cultivates exclusivity in Gray Horse Army and persuades other Osage people to exclude all non-Native people and robots from the Nation. He views the influx of refugees as another group of settlers who will eventually take over: "Why, if we don't nip this in the bud, I get the feeling that pretty soon everything that's old will be new again. Does anybody remember how the Osage



ended up kicked out of Missouri in the first place? These Great Plains are ours, right about now, and damned if I don't intend to keep it that way" (*Robogenesis*, 114). In the end, this exclusionary thinking is Hank's downfall, as well as the community and army at Gray Horse. Hank perpetuates settler logics that understands land as property to be owned and controlled, replicating ideas about xenophobic exclusivity that reinscribe divisive logics of race and blood quantum that have had devastating effects on Native communities. His anger draws him away from Osage teachings, leaving him vulnerable to outside influences that feed his ego to control him.

"Mama Didn't Trust It"

In *Robogenesis*, Arayt takes over Hank's mind because Hank chooses to ignore something his mother told him as a child – advice passed down since Removal. In Alaska, at the end of the New War, he is drawn to the glowing light of a small box and reminded of his mother's story about seeing a similar aura, "a spooklight," when she was a young girl.²³ She explained to Hank that it was a relic of the Trail of Tears and Removal:

You do not have to admire the Cherokee for surviving it. The legend was that this ball of light came folding out of the blood-soaked grounds after it was over, like a kind of tombstone. Something from beyond this world,

here to offer a reminder of how much men can suffer. Maybe this spotlight is the same. Is it here to mark our loss? God knows that men suffered in these woods. Mama didn't trust it. Devil's work she said. (*Robogenesis*, 26).

Hank's mother's story suggests that whatever powers Arayt has harnessed are connected to an older, deeper presence. Again, in the *Robocalypse* world, Artificial Intelligence is nothing new, nor are the underlying entities or spirits within it. Hank is Osage, not Cherokee, but the emphasis on what was learned from Cherokee Removal strikes a poignant chord in the novel that echoes *Riding the Trail of Tears'* reminder to listen to intergenerational matriarchal knowledge. In the case of Hank's mother, her knowledge grew out of a relationship with the other-than-human world but also attends to historical ruptures in relationships with particular places, what Grace Dillon terms "Indigenous scientific literacy" (Dillon 7). The box's "bad medicine" is all the ugliness, anger, and grief accompanying the Trail of Tears and its aftermath (54). By listening to the box, Hank gives in to feelings of anger instead of healing and growth. Indigenous peoples, like the Cherokee, who were forced to occupy other peoples' ancestral homelands through Removal, were necessarily required to adapt kinstituted ontologies to place and home. Cherokee and Osage peoples' ability to renegotiate land-based relationships after Removal to Indian Territory are acts of care that recognize theirs as an interdependent and mutually responsible world.²⁴ Hank's



mother's story carries the knowledge of these painful histories, so that future kin can learn from them.

In *Robocalypse*, women, girls, and maternal figures not only remind others of the need to work against heteropatriarchal settler logics of competition, exclusion, and individuation, but they are also the ones whose skills and stories have the power to save the world. The telepathy of a young transhuman girl, Mathilda Perez, and the song of a hybridized robot woman, Mikiko, have global resonances that turn the tides of warfare. Their heroism is essential to the survival of entire species; their voices are literally and figuratively essential for combating large-scale genocide. As is the case in *Riding the Trail of Tears*, the fate of humans and their other-than-human kin is indebted to women and girls who are willing to sacrifice for the people, invoking Selu, the corn mother of Cherokee people whose sacrifice we are all indebted to. Mathilda and Mikiko use their perceptive powers to organize resistance fighters collectively in both novels. Mathilda uses her ocular prosthetics, computerized eyes that allow her to see and understand robot communications, to predict and transmit the movements of the "Big Robs" (Archos and Arayt) to Nine-Oh-Two and other Freeborn resistance fighters. Mikiko, a love doll Takeo Nomura built to emulate his deceased human wife, transmits a song across the radio waves in

Robopocalypse that encourages other robots to resist Archos' indoctrination into his human-killing, human-controlling army and think for themselves; she is the mother of the Freeborn (*Robogenesis*, 416). In *Robogenesis*, Mikiko experiences a pivotal transformation. She is summoned by Ryujin, a "deep mind" that is producing natural robots in the sea off of Tokyo, to join him at the bottom of the ocean. After sacrificing her life to Ryujin, Mikiko is reborn, a manifestation of his dream, something simultaneously organic and robot: ikimono. She is equipped with insect-woven "living armor" and makes her way to Cheyenne Mountain to once again help Freeborn and humans defeat Arayt (410). She traverses across nuclear geographies that establish intimacies between seemingly distant peoples and places. These radioactive intimacies demonstrate how world warfare and global extraction have renegotiated spatial and temporal relationalities. Importantly, it is hybridized femme characters who blur the human-robot divide that are key players in the resistance. Through selfless acts that prioritize the good of others, the collective, they are critical to thwarting a total robot takeover. They utilize story through telepathic messaging and song to speak across the radioactive intimacies of the novel and help robots, transhumans, and humans alike realize that there are others like them and that they collectively have the potential to win the war through cooperation.



By emphasizing radioactive intimacies, Indigenous grounded knowledge, and matriarchal leadership, Wilson’s novel presciently asks his readers to think seriously about how to navigate increasingly sophisticated advancements in Artificial Intelligence. He suggests that longstanding practices of technovation grounded in kinstillatory ethics are critical to avoiding the threat of “human extinction” that numerous scientists in our current historical moment are cautioning could become a real possibility without more profound reflection on the ethics of AI technology.²⁵ By staging a familiar sci-fi narrative arc across geographies of U.S. imperial intervention, Wilson lays bare the colonial underpinnings of much science fiction and scientific narratives of “progress” and “advancement.” The novels in the series suggest that to address existential questions surrounding technological advancements in AI, experts must attend to the long histories of extraction, dispossession, enslavement, heteropatriarchy, and racial capitalism that made Western science possible. More importantly, they must listen to those most acutely impacted by these histories and must be willing to acknowledge and work against the regimes of power they ushered into being that still control most of the globe. As Wilson, Hausman, and others suggest, these histories are baked into the logic, the code, if you will, that underpins scientific inquiry. Without change, it’s a case of new robots, same old story.

Conclusion

In *Riding the Trail of Tears* and the *Robopocalypse* trilogy, Removal serves a necessary pedagogical function for the novels' characters and readers. It reminds those who have experienced the apocalyptic upheavals of Removal from homelands and relations with the other-than-human world that their ancestors have experienced traumatic and profound change before, and yet, the People have endured. Even the violent settler technology of Removal was prophesied by our Cherokee ancestors.²⁶

While Cherokee people brought the sacred fire to Indian Territory, not all of our other-than-human relatives, including plants, animals, and mountains, could come with us. We necessarily had to learn to make kin in new ways. Change-as-vitality is a strong throughline in both Hausman's and Wilson's work. Both Hausman and Wilson celebrate the beauty and the power of Cherokee technovation, the ability of Cherokee stories, cosmologies, lifeways, and peoples to continue to adapt and change to the world as needed and the belief that they can do so. As Lonnie's son Paul observes in *Robopocalypse*, "technology changes, but people stay the same" (261). In the *Robopocalypse* series, one of the critical changes to robots is their ability to become more organic and interconnected to the natural world; Mikiko is the most prominent and potent example of this. Instead of bending ecosystems to their will, robots adapt to fit those ecosystems; they make kin. Moreover, the humans willing to recognize that their survival depends on all of the others around them are those that fare best in the novels. Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) writes that "our biology is only a very



small part of our humanity; the rest is a process of becoming” (Justice 33). *Riding the Trail of Tears* and the *Robopocalypse* series interrogate this by employing an ethos of Cherokee technovation. Instead of inciting fear about technological advancements, their fiction reminds readers that Cherokee intellectualism, philosophy, and scientific inquiry already offer robust strategies for making sense of an always-changing world.

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I want to thank Scott Andrews for putting this special issue together and for his thoughtful and helpful feedback on an earlier draft of this essay. I would also like to thank Eva Garrouette for translating Mary Golda Ross’s name from Cherokee to English for me. Eva, Scott, and so many other senior Cherokee scholars model how to mentor and support others with grace, care, and generosity. Wado.

Notes

¹ Eva Garrouette (Cherokee Nation) translated the Cherokee language version of her name included in the painting and was gracious enough to walk me, someone just starting to learn the Cherokee language, through her translation.

² James Mooney records one version of this story in *Myths of The Cherokees*. Kathi Smith Littlejohn retells the story in *Living Stories of the Cherokee*, edited by Barbara R. Duncan, and Chris Teuton recounts Hasting Shade’s version of the story in *Cherokee Stories of the Turtle Island Liars’ Club*.

³ It must be noted that while there is a long history of Indigenous futurists, much of this emerging Indigenous speculative work is indebted to the rich and enduring legacy of Afrofuturism. For more on Afrofuturism, see Ytasha L. Womack, *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture*, Lawrence Hill Books, 2013; Alex Zamalin, *Black Utopia: The History of an Idea from Black Nationalism to Afrofuturism*, Columbia UP, 2019. For more on the history of Indigenous futurism in visual and performance art, see Billy-Ray Belcourt and Lindsay Nixon, "What Do We Mean by Queer Indigenous Ethics?" *canadianart*, 23 May 2018, <https://canadianart.ca/features/what-do-we-mean-by-queerindigenousethics/>.

⁴ As just a few examples, I am thinking of Cherokee Robot's *Adalonushegi (Trickster)* video game, Don Thornton's language apps, Joseph Erb's work with computer animation, or the voice capture used for Cherokee Nation's animated short film "Sequoyah: Voice of the Inventor for the Bicentennial," *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJldPLQLbL8>.

⁵ For more on "going Native" as entertainment, see Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*, Cornell UP, 2001.

⁶ There are only a few scholarly pieces that take up the novel in detail. See Eric Gary Anderson and Melanie Benson Taylor, "Letting the Other Story Go: The Native South in and beyond the Anthropocene" *Native South*, 12, 2019, 74-98, <https://doi.org/10.1353/nso.2019.0005>; Joshua Jackson and Megan Vallowe, "Cherokee Historical Fiction and Indigenous Science Fiction in *Riding the Trail of Tears*," *MELUS* vol., 45, no. 4, Winter 2020, 113-132, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/795409>. Miriam C. Spiers's *Encountering the Sovereign Other: Indigenous Science Fiction*. East Lansing: Michigan State UP, 2021.

⁷ Art's machine is not entirely unlike the Remember the Removal annual bike ride where Eastern Band and Cherokee Nation youth retrace the over 950-mile trek that their ancestors traveled during the Trail of Tears; Art's creation is a means of homage, albeit a slightly unnerving one. The use of the Jeep Cherokee reflects the interconnections of mobility and travel that mark Cherokee survivance and genocidal federal Indian policies like Removal and allotment.

⁸ Jeep manufactures two vehicle lines, the Jeep Cherokee and the Jeep Grand Cherokee.

⁹ In "Making Kin with the Machines," co-authored by Jason Edward Lewis, Noelani Arista, Archer Pechwis, and Suzanne Kite, Pechwis (Cree) suggests that one way to address potential concerns that AI could pose for humans and, more specifically, to Indigenous communities, would be to have programming languages grounded in Indigenous languages. She suggests that programming grounded in Indigenous values could potentially influence the AI to relate to humans and other-than-humans using Indigenous protocols of respect and reciprocity. For many Indigenous communities, communal values are built into their language(s) (9).



¹⁰ Near the novel's end, Tallulah also reflects on Ahyoka's legacy. She tells the reader that she has fought for four years for TREPP to build a state of Ahyoka in addition to the one they have of Sequoyah because "she was no less essential than her father" (366-7).

¹¹ I am using the definition of rematriation developed by the Sogorea Te' Land Trust. "Rematriation," *Sogorea Te' Land Trust*, <https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/what-is-rematriation/>.

¹² At one point in the novel, Irma describes the relationship Tallulah feels with her homelands: "She remembered Tallulah Wilson, the way she spoke about Asheville and the Carolina mountains, the sense of urgency and sound of matriotic nostalgia in her voice" (194).

¹³ I have shared multiple neologisms used by Cherokee and other Indigenous scholars throughout this essay. This bending, shaping, and renegotiating of the English language is arguably its own form of technovation.

¹⁴ Thank you to Scott Andrews for reminding me of the connection between Asimov's and Wilson's series. Both authors invite their readers to tarry with similar existential questions.

¹⁵ The only extended analysis of Wilson's series I found was in Mark Rifkin's *Fictions of Land and Flesh: Blackness, Indigeneity, Speculation*, Durham: Duke UP, 2019; Marija Grech's "Technological Appendages and Organic Prostheses: Robo-Human Appropriations and Cyborgian Becoming in Daniel H. Wilson's *Robopocalypse*," *Word and Text*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2013, pp. 85-95.

¹⁶ Early in the novel, we learn that Professor Nicholas Wasserman is responsible for Archos' awakening as a sentient being capable of global mass destruction. Importantly, Wasserman insists he did not create Archos; he only summoned him. Wasserman describes what he wrote into the code as "incantations" and explains that everything needed to construct Archos already existed (*Robopocalypse*, 16).

¹⁷ Bowie also tells us they fly into Deadhorse before heading to the drilling site. Deadhorse is an important hub for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.

¹⁸ In *Robogenesis*, Cheyenne Mountain houses a supercomputer complex built to sustain nuclear blasts. The combination of its tech and its security from outside attacks makes it especially appealing to Arayt, the ultimate evil robot in Wilson's sequel.

¹⁹ I am thinking, for example, of the infamously offensive scenes in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931).

²⁰ Importantly, Lonnie is also one of the first humans recorded by Archos' black box to witness the robot uprising. While the takeover is global, there is also something familial and intimate about the stories told in *The Hero Archive*, aka *Robopocalypse*.

²¹ Here, I am thinking of Lisa Lowe's discussion of intimacies in *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, Duke UP, 2015.

²² Throughout the series, there are strong echoes of *Lord of the Rings*. For example, to destroy Archos, you must destroy his all-seeing eye.

²³ Wilson is likely referencing a spook light sighted for almost one hundred and fifty years along the Oklahoma-Missouri border.

²⁴ This is not to mention the negotiation between the Osage Nation and Cherokee Nation that was necessary in Indian Territory; Cherokees were Removed to Osage homelands during the Trail of Tears.

²⁵ "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war," *Center for AI Safety*, <https://www.safe.ai/statement-on-ai-risk>.

²⁶ According to Daniel Heath Justice, "Although Cherokee wisdom traditions include stories about the creation of the world in what is now southern Appalachia, they also include stories about migrations and movements from lands far removed from those mountain ridges. The specter of removal first begins to haunt the Cherokees in these stories." (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 48).



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RESEARCH ARTICLE

“Trickster Methods for Decolonial Resistance or How the Cardinal turned Red”

BRIAN BURKHART

Introduction

What follows is an essay-as-trickster-story about a decolonial resistance grounded in the Land, where land, nature, people, plants, and ecosystems exist in a community or “as societies... [with] ethical structures, inter-species treaties and agreements, and [an] ability to interpret, understand and implement” these, as described by Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe scholar Vanessa Watts. Watts asserts that the non-human beings of Land (habitats and ecosystems as societies) actively and directly influence the organization of human societies. “Human thought and action,” Watts claims, “are therefore derived from a literal expression of particular places and historical events” (23). Mohawk scholar Sandra Styres extends this understanding to

the meaning of Land itself, explaining that the concept of place is less than what Land entails. "Place refers to physical geographic space," defined by what is contained within that space (often called "landscape, ecosystem, and/or environment—denoted as land with a lower case 'l'). Land (capital 'L') is more than this, Styres argues. Land includes "place as a physical geographic space but also the underlying conceptual principles, philosophies, and ontologies of that space." Styres describes Land as "conceptual," "experiential," "relational," "embodied," "spiritual," "emotional," "(re)membered," "storied," "sentient," and even "consciousness" itself, while also encompassing land and place as "physical geographic space" (27).

The argument of this essay-as-trickster-story is that Land, so understood, has a decolonial force and engenders Indigenous revitalization grounded in kinship with the Land. Indigenous revitalization grounded in kinship with Land operates *through* kinship and the specific values of kinship ethics and land-based knowledge production, derived from particular pieces of land or within particular communities of Land. The decolonial force of Indigenous revitalization grounded in kinship with Land is not about fighting fire with fire but rather fighting fire with water. The operations of decolonial resistance through Indigenous values of kinship and kinship with Land "provide the ultimate antidote to colonialism," according to Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (17). This essay-as-trickster-story explores this idea while also considering the value and meaning of a trickster mode of decolonial resistance that operates through a contrary embodiment of colonial modes and values to disempower them—to fight fire with fire in that uniquely trickster manner.

In this essay-as-trickster-story, the trickster is a philosopher, which is a slight reimagining of the traditional trickster of stories. The trickster philosophers in my work—from Coyote and Iktomi to Jisdu (ᎠᎵᎠᎳ), the Cherokee rabbit trickster and the main character in this essay-as-trickster-story—each carry some of the traditional personality and actions of their tricksterness from story into their role as trickster philosophers. However, since they engage with Western philosophers and other academics in these



essay-as-trickster-stories, they mimic the academic context of this engagement and act as tricksters would, I imagine, in this academic context, which is a context of ideas, writing, argument, and texts. The trickster story aspect of this essay serves at least two functions. It creates a framework for an academic or philosophy essay as a story, which is significant in several ways, many of which are beyond the scope of this essay. Simply put, it introduces an aspect of orality and livingness to the text, moving it, even if only slightly, beyond the two-dimensionality and linearity of flat academic texts that often act as mere disembodied words floating free from the Land. The second function of the trickster story arises from the suggestion in this essay and others that a trickster methodology can act as an anti-colonial anti-method—a way of disrupting the colonial conceptual framework and practices that serve to reinforce and often reify the point of view of land as an object where human being float free from the land. The colonial point of view is not actually a point of view, however, since it floats free from the Land in an ontology of nothingness, all the while presenting itself as the a view from nowhere or every point of view all at once. The trickster methodology operates as a kind of mirror, exposing the hypocrisy and self-banishment of the colonial perspective through the words and actions of the trickster as they adopt those frameworks and practices and present them to the reader.

The last piece of information to share with the reader before the story begins is a bit of context. The story may or may not center around a real trip I took to the Vatican in 2022. It was part of a project called “Science and Ethics of Well-Being and Happiness,” led by the Vatican’s Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (PASS) and Columbia’s Center for Sustainable Development. For several years, a core group of economists, psychologists/neuroscientists, theologians, and philosophers met several times a year to articulate concepts and strategies for global well-being and happiness.

This particular meeting focused on intercultural concepts of well-being and happiness, so I was included to bring a Cherokee and broadly Indigenous perspective. There were Buddhist, Confucian, African, and many other perspectives represented. Even if this story is broadly based on this actual event, as a trickster story, it may contain significant embellishment.

Part I Elohi Aneladisi RGA DŊWJŋŊJ (Land-Trip)

(A clearing in the forest. Jisdu (ḥŋŋS), the rabbit trickster, is deep in thought as he watches the birds flit about and scurry for their breakfast.)

Jisdu (ḥŋŋS):

(Stroking his chin)

I have always wanted to visit Rome. It just seems like the perfect place for a rabbit to roam, with all that wonderful food and famously old places. But I don't care much for flying. That's for the birds! I can't swim or walk on water (at least very well or for very long)... It really seems like getting to Rome is pretty much out of the question.

(Suddenly looking down to the ground and spotting a hole, Jisdu (ḥŋŋS) has a brilliant idea)

Jisdu (ḥŋŋS):

(Excitedly)

Of course! I'll ask Oganv (ŋSŋŋ), the Groundhog, for help! If anyone can dig a way to Rome, it's him!

(The scene shifts to Oganv's (ŋSŋŋ) usual spot. He is always found near one of his many holes.)

Jisdu (ḥŋŋS):

(Happily approaching)

Siyo, ginali! I was wondering if you might be available this morning for some hole digging.



Oganv (ຄໍສົມ):

(Beaming)

Siyo, Jisdu! You know there's nothing I love more than digging holes. What do you have in mind?

Jisdu (ໂກຣສ):

(Rubbing his paws together)

I'm thinking of a very special hole... one that leads all the way to Rome!

Oganv (ຄໍສົມ):

(Chuckling)

Rome, you say? Well, I've never dug that far, but I'm up for the challenge!

(Oganv glances at the sky, says a quiet prayer to Unelanvhi (ອຸໂນວອາ), before throwing his face into the dirt to begin digging. He digs and digs. He digs and digs and digs. There is a lot of digging. After quite a period of time, Oganv's (ຄໍສົມ) head pops back out of the hole.)

Oganv (ຄໍສົມ):

(Panting)

There you go, Jisdu. Your special hole is ready!

Jisdu (ໂກຣສ):

(Cheering)

Wado, ginali!

(Wasting no time, Jisdu jumps straight into the hole, scurrying through it with speed. He scurries and scurries. He scurries and scurries and scurries... until... he pops out on the other side right in the middle of Saint Peter's Square! As Jisdu travels through the

hole, the Land, Elohi (RGA), begins to lecture to him. Elohi's (RGA) voice echos through the Land.)

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Low, resonant)

Indigeneity is grounded in place. As Daniel Wildcat puts it, to be Indigenous is 'to be of a place.' Even language arises from place—not just in the sense of experiences with places, but from the Land itself (Deloria and Wildcat 32). Take the Diné language, for example. It is a manifestation of language literally in the Land, called saad łaa'ii (first word). Saad łaa'ii is not a language spoken by people; it is part of the Land itself, shaping the Diné people and their spoken language, Diné bizaad, which means 'the people's language.'"

(Jisdu pauses in his scurrying, listening intently to the Land voice as it continues.)

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Continuing)

Twelve words were given to the five-fingered earth-surface people. Three each from the four sacred mountains (Dził Diyinii Dį́'go Sinil) that frame the physical and spiritual body of the Diné or Diné Bikéyah (Diné landscape-being). Sisnaajiní (Blanca Peak), the white shell mountain to the east and of the dawn gave three white shell words. Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor), the turquoise "blue bead" mountain to the south and of the daylight gave three turquoise words. Dook'o'osłíid (San Francisco Peaks), the abalone shell mountain to the west and of the yellow dusk gave three abalone shell words. Dibé Nitsaa (Hesperus Mountain), the black jet mountain to the north and of the night and darkness gave three black jet words. These first twelve words of Diné bizaad (the people's language) were spoken by these mountains as winds out of a deep mountain cave. The people's language comes directly from the Land, is literally first spoken, in this originating form, by the Land through the wind as the physically voiced manifestations of the four sacred mountains. The wind that carries these words



is the same wind that makes up the breath that voices the spoken words of Diné bizaad. Nilch'i, the wind, is both the ordinary wind that spirals around and through Diné Bikéyah as well as the breath that circulates in and out of the five-fingered earth-surface people. Nilch'i, or wind, is fundamentally a medium of communication. From Dził Diyinii Dǫ́'go Sinil come winds that bring guidance, instruction and strength. As Edward Little puts it,

we speak the [nilch'i] of white shell language [from Sisnaajiní] to feel, think, and discipline our mind intelligently. . . , the turquoise language [from Tsoodzil] to gain and learn modern education to acquire traditional values and wisdoms. . . , abalone shell language [from Dook'o'osííd] to develop our minds and bodies from childbirth to old age. . . , the black jet shell language to sense danger and to be aware of evil things (2019).

(Jisdu continues on scurrying down his special hole, as he ponders the teachings of the Land.)

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Continuing the lecture)

The common way that Western thinkers grapple with Indigenous ways of being as ways of being that come out of place, land, or nature is through examining the manner in which language, knowledge, and being might be shaped by people's experiences with land (one might interpret Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places* as an example of this form) or examining the manner in which language, knowledge, and being might be evolutionarily shape human interaction with the land. In Bruce Wilshire's examination of possible common currents between William James and Black Elk (parts of *The Primal Roots of American Philosophy*), he clearly seems to think

of originating out of the Land or nature as an evolutionary phenomenon. He laments Descartes sealing off the mind from the "Earth that formed us and from the animals and plants with whom we evolved in the most intimate, intricate, and reciprocal ways over countless millennia" (5). While it is true that Indigenous philosophy views the human relationship to animals, plants, and even me, the Land as intimate, this originary but evolutionary way of understanding language, knowledge, and being as coming out of Land misses the most important feature of Indigenous philosophy's connection to place, land, and nature. While both Wilshire and Basso's work articulate important elements of the relationship to land and nature, they miss the manner in which this relationship is both originary and continual, which limits their insights into this relationship to me, the Land. Land is not just "land." While it includes land as we commonly think of it, it is so much more. Land at its furthest and richest deeps is the originary and continual ground of being, of kinship, of knowledge. Or as Vanessa Watts tells it, the "place-thought" of Land where "human thought and action" are "the literal expression" of Land as community (23).

Jisdu (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ):

(Looking puzzled and raising his hand like he has seen many a child in American schools)

Why do I never hear of these teachings when I travel through the cities of America?

Elohi (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ) (Voiceover):

(In a even more serious and somber tone)

Speaking of a human intertwining with land, where I, the Land, am a being and a relative, triggers the operations of epistemic guardianship within the settler colonial epistemologies of ignorance, the patterns of cognitive dysfunction that produce inverted systems of knowledge—as a matter of course, ignorance and falsity are the byproducts of settler epistemic practices rather than knowledge and truth. Settler epistemic guardianship and its epistemologies of ignorance not only serve to create



the false world of settler colonialism but also to maintain the delusional epistemic world that is necessary for its ongoing survival. The delusional epistemic world serves settler colonial power because it presents the imaginary world of Euro-supremacy as the entire world. Settler colonialism, then, as articulated in Patrick Wolfe’s work, is a structure of power that produces subjugating effects in a myriad of ways, including the subjugation of the production and recognition of Indigenous knowledge. Settler colonialism as a structure of power targets the land, the being of the land and the intertwining of Indigenous being with Indigenous land. Fundamentally, you from me.

Jisdu (ᎠᏍᏏᏍᏗ):

(Stopping again and rubbing his chin reflectively)

So, settler colonialism is a structure of power that targets kinship?”

Elohi (ᎠᎩᎠ) (Voiceover):

(Sounding even more wise than before)

Well, settler colonialism both targets kinship and gathers its power through the obscuring of kinship.”

Jisdu (ᎠᏍᏏᏍᏗ):

(Looking smug because he is beginning to feel like he understands.)

That means settler colonialism is a form of power that is conceptualized around the obscuring of the being of land and of the intertwining of human being with the being of land. Is that gotlvhisodi (ᎠᎩᎠᎩᎠ) (correct), Elohi (ᎠᎩᎠ)?

(Jisdu (ᎠᏍᏏᏍᏗ) spoke Jalagi Gawonihisdi (the Cherokee Language) here, although he was often known to speak Jisdu Gawonihisdi (the Rabbit Language). The Land spoke the Land Language—Elohi Gawonihisdi in Cherokee or saad łáa’ii in Diné Bizaad. The Land Language was the foundation of all language, communication, and kinship. In some cases, it was understood to be the foundation of creation itself, when, for

example, sacred ones sang the shape of the Land into being. The Land most often speaks only in the Land Language, which is understood by most of creation but only by some humans and then only some of the time. The Land is represented as Elohi or Diné Bikéyah here, but there are thousands of other Indigenous representations of Land.)

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Prideful in tone at the accomplishment of this student)

Yes, Settler guardianship functions to assimilate or eradicate Indigenous forms of life and knowledge that exists outside or are seen to exist outside of the limits of life and knowledge set by the settler forms of life and knowledge. Settler guardianship often excludes Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and valuing in the process of attempting to be inclusive of and respectful of Indigenous ways of knowing. Under Settler guardianship, Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and valuing are always under radical suspicion that requires their facing the settler justificatory tribunal, which determines whether Indigenous forms of life are justified in so far as they either meet standards appropriate for settler frameworks or are seen as capable of being assimilated to these frameworks. Many Indigenous candidates that face this tribunal are outright rejected. Others are judged as requiring assimilation to settler frameworks—a settler form of revise and resubmit. The settler justificatory tribunal also addresses the special requirements for the production of Indigenous knowledge through proper ethnographic form and expression. In particular, Indigenous knowledge as expressed by Indigenous people must be produced through their bodies or their lives as containers of the truth of Indigenous knowledge as a form of ethnographic containment.¹ Proper ethnographic form and expression means that

¹ See Mishuana Goeman. (2015). "Land as Life: Unsettling the Logics of Containment." In *Native Studies Keywords* (p. 71–89). University of Arizona Press. Audra Simpson (2007). "On ethnographic refusal: Indigeneity, 'voice', and colonial citizenship". *Junctures*, 9, 67-80, (2014). *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press., Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (2015). *Theorizing Native Studies*. Durham: Duke University Press.



Indigenous ways of life and expressions of truth are judged on the basis of the authenticity of the container of that truth as a proper representation of Indigenous people as Indigenous cultural artifacts of truth rather than as producers of truth in the context of a kinship with the land and other beings in kinship with the land. The tribunal of epistemic guardianship then also judges Indigenous knowledge in terms of the proper form of Indigenous knowledge as set by the settler colonial epistemologies of ignorance, which includes judging the validity of Indigenous knowledge in relation to its necessary existence as a particular Indigenous cultural artifact.

Jisdu (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ):

(Looking puzzled again)

This seems like a pretty weird way of doing things, of being in kinship, you know. I mean it is a way of being in kinship that is anti-kinship.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(With a bit of air of mystery)

It gets weirder still. These limits serve to maintain the delusional world of Euro-supremacy through the settler colonial epistemologies of ignorance because these limits are nothing more than the idiosyncrasies of the settler himself, which means the limits of the settler guardianship are not intellectual, rational, or even meaningful limits but simple gibberish to represent the limits of the being of the settler himself as a limit of all things. The limits of settler guardianship are nothing more than the limits of the settler himself as a container that judges everything outside of himself as unworthy. The limit of settler guardianship is then not a meaningful limit. It is a subjective and delusional limit of the settler himself who is playing God. The only way that anyone other than the settler could manage to accord with the limit of settler

guardianship is to be the settler himself, which is impossible and results in the conclusion that the only one who can accord with the limits of settler guardianship is the settler. This means everyone else is in conflict with the limits of settler guardianship by the definition of settler guardianship itself. This makes the definition of settler guardianship meaningless as a starting point as its limit is nothing more than the settler himself in his own container of self-banishment.

Jisdu (ḥoḏS):

(Nodding with understanding)

This makes a lot of sense of what I have seen in Amayeli (in-between the waters) or what the settlers call Amelige (America) over the last 500 years. I have many examples of just that sort of thing.

(Jisdu (ḥoḏS) knew these examples from Amayeli because he had experienced them firsthand as he was always in the background of the major events and happenings (and most of the minor ones too) in Amayeli since time immemorial. The editor of this story added footnotes and references to his recounting, but Jisdu (ḥoḏS) is recounting the words from his experience and perfect rabbit memory.)

Jisdu (ḥoḏS):

(With an excited squeak in his voice)

John Winthrop, the Puritan lawyer from England who help to establish the colonial encroachment onto Amayeli (in the form of Massachusetts Bay Colony, founded in 1630), argued that the ywvi of Amayeli (or the Indigenous peoples of the Americas) had no capacity to block colonial encroachment onto the lands of Amayeli. He claimed that the ayeli dunadotlvsv of Amayeli (Nations of this land) did not have ownership of their lands and territories and that it was perfectly legal to "enter upon the land which hath beene soe longe possessed by others." His justification was Amayeli was still in nature, under which "that which lies common, and that has neuer been replenished or subdued is free to any that possesse and improue it" (140). What



was Winthrop's evidence that Amayeli was still in nature? He proclaims that "Natiues inclose noe Land, neither have any settled habitation, nor any tame cattle to improve the Land by, and soe have no other but a Naturall Right" (141). In other words, Winthrop is claiming that the ayeli dunadotlvsv of Amayeli lived in a natural state and had no right to the land that they had so long possessed because they did not practice the very particular farming practices of the Gilisi (English). The requirement that in order to properly farm land, the yvwi (people) must plow their fields with Oxen is not a meaningful requirement, as you suggest, Elohi. It is the gibberish of settler guardianship, where the settler judges the yvwi of Amayeli as lacking rights over land and territories they have so long possessed simply because they do not exist within the container of the Gilisi (English) themselves as subjective artifacts. This is an act of self-banishment by the settler, a rejection of the possibility of kinship—not only kinship for the settler but for the possibility of kinship per se.

Jisdu (ḥoḏS):

(Chuckling)

I tried to tell him, Mr. Winthrop, at the time, as I have with many yvwi (people) of Amayeli over the years since the animals came down from Galvladi (the world above the sky).

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Returning to the deep and somber tone)

Yes, Jisdu (ḥoḏS), in particular, there can be no space for the most fundamental form of kinship—kinship with the Land out of which all things come to be and are maintained. All other kinship flows from kinship with the Land, which is fundamental to being.

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ):

(Responding thoughtfully)

For my relatives, the Jalagih Ayeli (ᵂᵂᵂ ᵂ ᵂᵂᵂ: Cherokee Nation) or Anijalagi Aniyvwi (ᵂᵂᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂᵂ: Cherokee people), the relationship to lands they have long possessed is one of dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for one another) of anigaduwagi (the people who come together as one)—an original name of the Cherokee people. In Jalagi Gawonihisdi, you are called Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ) Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ) is not earth in the planetary sense, right?

Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Sounding Pleased)

You are correct my little furry relative. Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ) is grounded in what Vine Deloria Jr. calls "an intimate knowing relationship." "Indian metaphysics," (which was an earlier way of describing Watts' place-thought), he wrote, "was the realization that the world, and all its possible experiences, constituted a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationship" (Deloria and Wildcat 2).

Possession over land becomes, then, a form of power and domination when it is cut off from its originary context in Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ) and dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for one another).

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ):

(Looking please that he is digesting these all-important teachings)

Being conceptually and materially cut off from kinship with the land both gives rise to and becomes a tool of the power and domination of settler colonialism and the so-called limits of settler guardianship. But this power that arises from being cut off from the Land in an originary and continual way is a ditlilostanv (imitation). This ditlilostanv (imitation) arises by the unmooring of kinship from Elohi (ᵂᵂᵂ). The contrary doctrine



of ditlilostanv (imitation) power and reason (through separation, abstraction, and domination) removes people from the possibility of kinship and founds the being of human beings in self-banishment or solitude. In this solitude, human reason, human knowledge, and human power are also banished with the banishment of the other beings who can be responsible for one another (dejadaligenvdisgesdi). Where there is no kinship as grounded in an intimate knowing relationship with you (Elohi (RGA)) as the originary and continual ground of kinship, there can be no real reason or non-self-destructive power. These are the teachings I have gathered from my relatives, the Anijalagi Aniyvwi.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Voice loud and booming)

Exactly! The limits of settler guardianship, then, are only ditlilostanv (imitation) limits as you say. These limits only exist within the invented and delusional world of settler colonial epistemologies of ignorance, but there are ways that this delusional world can be disrupted. There are forms of Indigenous resistance that can circumvent the force of the settler guardianship. If the delusional bubble of settler guardianship is pierced, settlers can hear the voices of Indigenous people regarding Indigenous ways of being for the first time. Hearing the voices outside of the delusional bubble of settler ignorance can break the vicious cycle of the epistemologies of ignorance. In this moment of temporary liberation, on both sides, there is a space that is opened that reveals the deeper levels of the possibilities of actual kinship that arises out of the always already being in motion kinship relationship between people and Land. It is this relationship and the possibilities of kinship per se that coloniality obscures in order to imagine and act out its fantasies of settling and remolding Indigenous land

and people as a new Europe, a new England, a new Spain, a New York, a New Amsterdam, and so on.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Continuing)

But remember that epistemic guardianship cannot be corrected by an error theory, one that would guide those who operate under epistemic guardianship to contexts where knowledge of Indigenous people or even the production of Indigenous knowledge in a settler context can be achieved. The resistance to epistemic guardianship must be part of the process by which Indigenous knowledge is created whether there is epistemic guardianship or not. The resistance to settler guardianship cannot happen through mere decolonial tools but must approach resistance through an Indigenous understanding of the appropriate context for the production of knowledge in the first place.

Jisdu (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ):

(Trying to prove his comprehension and squeaking loudly)

So, like through dejadaligenvdigesdi (responsibility for one another) of anigaduwagi (the people who come together as one)!?

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Continuing)

Yes, you must resist and correct settler guardianship through the expression of Indigenous values. You cannot become the settler in order to change him. As Secwepemc leader George Manuel wrote, in his 1974 book, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality*, decolonization is not "a destination" but "the right to travel freely . . . on our own roads" and "in our own vehicles" (217). Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson says of the process of decolonial revitalization that it is "transform[ing] the colonial outside into a flourishing of the Indigenous inside,"



which, like the Fourth World, must be done “on our terms, without the sanction, permissions or engagement of the state, western theory” or the like (17). She is right in thinking that this is not just a process of Indigenous people simply discovering themselves, but a way for Indigenous people to “re-establish the processes by which we live who we are within the current context we find ourselves,” and for doing that, she says, “[w]e need our Elders, our languages, and our lands” rather than funding, a friendly colonial climate, and allies if Indigenous people are to truly engage in this decolonial transformation. Reestablishing this process “will ground,” she notes, “our peoples in their own cultures and teachings that provide the ultimate antidote to colonialism” (17).

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Speaking slower with very clear articulation, seeming to give emphasis to these particular words)

Indigenous revitalization, which is a foundational strategy of resistance to settler guardianship, requires more than a direct or transparent return to Indigenous modes of being or a return to Indigenous land-based practices and teachings. The modes by which we re-establish “the processes by which we live” must also allow us to “travel our own roads” and “in our own vehicles.” These modes must be capable of re-establishing Indigenous modes of being from “within the current context we find ourselves” and as such must have the power to “transform the colonial outside into a flourishing of the Indigenous inside.” These modes should operate through our “own cultures and teachings,” from our “Elders,” “languages” and “lands,” but in a way that reveals the nature of the relation between “the colonial outside” and “the Indigenous inside” in such a way as to provide an “ultimate antidote to colonialism” (Simpson 17).

(Jisdu (ḥoḏS) wasn't sure about this idea. Being contrary was his way. It didn't matter whether it was settler or Native, he was going to be contrary to anyone and everyone. Taking up the ways of the settler in order to undermine them was just the sort of thing a trickster was known to do. He remembered the Oglala Many Horses saying: "I will follow the white man's trail. I will make him my friend, but I will not bend my back to his burdens. I will be cunning as a coyote. I will ask him to help me understand his ways, then I will prepare the way for my children. Maybe they will outrun the white man in his own shoes."

Jisdu (ḥoḏS) (Voiceover):

(To himself)

Trickster methods are dangerous though. I remember all the times that I have been eaten in the process of playing a trick. I guess being a real trickster isn't for everyone.

Jisdu (ḥoḏS):

(Deciding to include Elohi (RGA) in his internal debate)

Is there any room for a little rabbit trickster, like me, in this resistance to settler guardianship?" I mean I am really good at tricking, and this sounds like some tricky stuff.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(With a positive and encouraging tone)

Yes, Jisdu (ḥoḏS). I think you can be quite helpful in the plan to resist settler guardianship. As I have said, the return to Indigenous ways of being in response to the operations of settler colonialism cannot be direct or transparent. The modes through which we return to Indigenous ways of being must challenge operations of settler guardianship as part of the present reality we find ourselves in but in a way that reveals the nature of the colonial outside in relationship to the Indigenous inside so as to transform the colonial outside into a flourishing of the Indigenous inside, as Simpson tells us. But as Walter Mignolo points out, the colonial outside is, in the first



place, constructed to obscure the Indigenous inside, constructed through “colonial difference” to hide and suppress “local histories” (64). The local histories the colonial difference serves to suppress are conceptualized through an Indigenous philosophy of place, where human beings are a part of the earth that brings them forth. It is the grounding of being, knowing, and valuing in the Earth or Land, in Elohi (RGA) as you say from the Jalagi Gawonihisdi, that settler guardianship attempts to obscure. It is the foundation of kinship in me, the Earth, the Land, that the ditlilostanv (imitation) universals serve to obscure. The colonial outside is then nothing more than ditlilostanv universals laminated onto the local histories of Indigenous land as grounded in Land or land-as-kinship. Land or land-as-kinship, as the ultimate ground out of which beings come to be and are maintained is what is obscured by the false generality of settler guardianship in relationship to mere land. The colonial outside is the construction of an abstracted or delocalized colonial reality that is laminated onto Indigenous Land or land-as-kinship in order to obscure the relational ground of being, knowing, valuing and authority and project onto Land a colonial outside. It is to blanket mere land onto Land and to blanket the false generality of settler guardianship onto Indigenous ways of being that arise out of kinship with the land, where Land is itself the relational ground of kinship and not an object or mere land. This serves to hide me from you. It obscures our kinship as the ground of all kinship. *(For several minutes Iktomi, Lakota spider trickster, has been in the shadows just behind Jisdu (hoDS), and then suddenly steps up right next to him.)*

Iktomi:

(Smiling at his ability to insinuate himself into any conversation on or in the Land)

Part of what frames the false generality of mere land where humans float free from the land is the purposeful obscuring of what Leksi Vine Deloria Jr. calls "the nature of the world discerned from a spatial point of view" (Deloria *God is Red* 63).

(Jisdu (hoḏS) (Voiceover):

(Gasps and thinks to himself)

Where the heck did Iktomi come from?

Iktomi:

I am always lurking just over in the corner trickster cousin

Anyways, Leksi Deloria says that the spatial point of view sees time, history and human beings through specific relational kinship sites. When we abstract time, history and humans into time apart from space and humans apart from land, we construct the planetary human and planetary history that float free from the land. The particularities of people's kinship with land can then be given a pretense of universality across all land through the abstractions of humans and time by an obscuring of the spatial point of view. "The fundamental difference" of "domestic ideology" between "American Indian and Western European immigrant," Leksi Deloria says, is that "American Indians hold their land—places—as having the highest possible meaning," where all "statements are made with this reference point in mind" (62). Settler colonialism sees people, time and history as divorced from space, place or land, and so conceptualize colonizing movement across the globe and across the American continent "as a steady progression of basically good events, thereby placing history—time—in the best possible light" (62). These operations of colonization require a de-spatialized and falsely abstracted sense of time and history as universal. "The very essence of Western European identity," Deloria says, involves the de-spatiality of time and history such that the progression of time and history in themselves are "peculiarly related to the destiny of the people of Western Europe and later, of course, the United States" (63). What Leksi is speaking of here is what



gives rise to the circularity and meaninglessness of settler guardianship, as you and the Land have been saying, my trickster cousin.

Iktomi:

(Grinning widely and waving all of his spider limbs in a professorial manner)

Leksi Deloria also speaks on the issue of the false generalities that function through the de-spatiality of land and people in order to manufacture an abstract European identity and an objectified American continent. The false universal of settler guardianship is created, he says, through an obscuring of the “nonhomogeneous pockets of identity” that “represent different historical arrangements of emotional energy” within particular relationships to land, according to Leksi (*Deloria God is Red* 64). De-spatiality allows for a conceptualization of time and history as the progressive development of universal truth. The “evolutionary process,” Leksi proclaims, is projected as a progression “from primitive superstitions to logically perfected codes of conduct, from a multiplicity of deities to a monotheistic religion,” as “the result of a revelation of ultimate reality,” but this progression toward a supposed ultimate reality is nothing more than the obscuring of the “nonhomogeneous pockets of identity” as “different historical arrangements of emotional energy” within particular relationships to land. (65-66). The abstracting of time and history from land and place serves to obscure those differences that exist in places that are not identical with the peculiar differences that exist in European places as the framework of settler guardianship. This is Leksi’s version of the colonial difference and the blanketing of settler epistemologies of ignorance onto Indigenous land and ways of being my trickster cousin.

Iktomi:

(Continuing his soliloquy and beaming with pride at his ability to take over the Land's lecture)

Leksi Deloria says the spatial point of view, in contrast to the mistaking of "a particular local situation . . . for a truth applicable to all times and places," grounds its forms directly in the world around it (66). Sealed within the context of a spatial point of view where land is kinship and humans are grounded in the land, "revelation was seen as a continuous process of adjustment to the natural surrounding and not as a specific message valid for all times and places" (Deloria *God is Red* 67). Sacredness is tied to the particularity of land ("a river, a mountain, a plateau, valley, or other natural feature") that enables people to "relate all historical events within the confines of this particular land, and to accept responsibility for it" (67). These particular specific relational kinship sites "are permanent fixtures in [Native] cultural or religious understanding" because the sacredness exists in the land as kinship itself rather than land as object, "Holy Lands," that are "appreciated primarily for their historical significance"—important because of what free floating human beings did upon the essentially blank and meaningless canvas of mere land (67).

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Booming in to take back over this lecture)

You are quite correct and really on to something my spider relative.

(As the Land begins to speak again, Iktomi vanishes completely.)

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Reverting to the original and somber tone)

Revealing the colonial blanket of de-spatiality serves to disrupt the power of it because the colonial blanket projects itself as reality rather than a hiding of reality," the Land continued. There is a "border where the colonial difference emerges," in Mignolo's words, which is the gap between this blanket and the ground (64).

Revealing this blanket discloses the relationship between the colonial outside and the



Indigenous inside and in such a way as to provide an ultimate antidote to colonialism because it exposes the ditlilostanv (imitation) reality and power of colonialism and settler guardianship. Revealing the blanket exposes the necessary lack of fit between land as kinship and the blanket of mere land and humans that float free from. Marking off the ill-fittedness of settler guardianship as a conception of humans floating free from mere land, of the necessary cracks and fissures in the construction of the colonial outside in the first place, reveals the false and imaginary nature of the power of settler guardianship that only through illusion functions or has any power at all.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Continuing)

The reason that this revealing of the blanket provides an ultimate antidote to colonialism is that in clearing the way for seeing and experiencing the land as kinship where humans are grounded in the Land, me, that brings them forth, there is a space to accept responsibility for the always already in motion kinship with the Land and each other that has been obscured by the blanket.

Jisdu (hōōS):

(Looking confident)

This is why the resistance to settler guardianship must operate through dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for one another) of anigaduwagi (the people who come together as one), duyugodv (SGAō) (right)?”

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

That is right my rabbit relative.

Jisdu (hōōS):

(Continuing his query)

So, it is through being anigaduwagi (the people who come together as one) that resistance to settler guardianship can happen, duyugodv (SGAØ)?

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Speaking suggestively)

Explain what you mean my usdi rabbit relative.

Jisdu (høDS):

(Looking confident)

Well, "anigaduwagi" is not really just a name of the Jalagi people, as in Keetoowah, or even the *Jalagi* mother town of Kituwah, but a value or a way of being. "Ani" means "they," so it references the people that do this action of "gadugi." Gadugi is often understood as a kind of connectivity or action of creating and maintaining community. But the word is related to gadu (bread), gaduasuyvdi (yeast) gadusi (hill or upland), gadui (top), gaduhvi (city), gadulugodi (cultivate). The center of meanings that bring together this conceptual variety are the ideas of bringing individuals (seeds, ingredients, people, land) together in such a way that collectively they rise up, rise above, or come out on top (bread dough, hill, city, or corn plants). So to be gadugi is to come together in such a way that the collective rises up or above the things that keeps the individuals from joining together, the things that would keep them separate, keep them from duyugodv (truth). Duyugodv (truth) can be seen as the antidote to the settler epistemologies of ignorance that found settler guardianship in the first place.

Jisdu (høDS):

(Beginning to wave his paws and rabbit ears somewhat professorially)

But, duyugodv is much more than the Gilisi kanejv (English word) "truth." Duyugodv is a way or path (ganvvn) rather than an end product. Duyugodv is a way for individuals (seeds, ingredients, people, land) to be sustained or be well as individuals and as a



collective. Being gadugi creates a ganvny to duyugodv. Gadugi brings and holds the individuals together in a way that they are individually and collectively sustained.”

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Sounding proud of this student)

That seems right.

Jisdu (hoDS):

(Looking more and more professorial)

So, the trick is to get the settler to expose the blanket of settler guardianship as ill-fitted, as imitation universal and imitation power, to himself, but in such a way that the settler is also able to take responsibility for the kinship with you, the Land, and all of the other relatives, including Indigenous people? But to do this in a way that brings individuals together above that which creates separation or division, which opens up a path to truth, justice, or the sustained well-being of the individuals and collective equally, duyugodv (SGAŦ)?

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

(Sounding very proud)

Yes!

Jisdu (hoDS):

(Looking smug)

Wow! That’s quite a trick. That does sound like work for a trickster.

Elohi (RGA) (Voiceover):

It certainly does.

Part II Jisdu (hoDS) Gvwadalidasdi (EGLPLŦJ) (Rabbit Trick)

(Scene shifts to Jisdu (ḥoḏS) right in the middle of Saint Peter's Square, having just popped out of the hole that Oganv (ḡ50ᵂ) had made to Rome. Jisdu (ḥoḏS) is standing right in front of Saint Peter's Basilica in the plaza that, under the direction of Pope Alexander VII, was redesigned by Bernini in 1656 so that "the greatest number of people could see the Pope's blessing" Norwich (175).)

Jisdu (ḥoḏS):

(Bouncing up and down on his little tail, while waving and pointing at the Basilica)
Very exciting! This is the Vatican!

(Jisdu (ḥoḏS) has hatched a plan to resist settler guardianship. He was a rabbit trickster, after all, and tricksters are built for resistance—even though tricksters often trick themselves as they are tricking others.)

Jisdu (ḥoḏS) (Voiceover):

(Thinking to himself)

It is a dangerous game.

Jisdu (ḥoḏS) (Voiceover):

(Pondering to himself)

If any place is at the heart of the history of settler guardianship, it is the Vatican. It was, after all, a load of Papal Bull from another Alexander Pope, thinking about the Alexander Pope who ordered the construction of this Basilica. Pope Alexander the VI provided the pretext to colonizers as they divided up the Indigenous world in his name—some bull that later became known as the Doctrine of Discovery and codified into US law through the Supreme Court in the 1820s and 30s. The operations of political guardianship within the political and legal power structure of the settler state, operations that derive from this load of Papal Bull, are similar to the way that settler guardianship functions in relation to Indigenous ways of knowing within settler state frameworks of knowledge and their intellectual institutions. Political and legal guardianship is built into the current framework of what they call "Federal Indian law"



in the United States, where Congress has absolute power over Indigenous nations within the settler state without any limits or constitutional checks because Indigenous nations are understood to exist as wards of the settler state.

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ) (Voiceover):

(Continuing his internal lecture)

The guardianship principle in settler societies is the legal and political doctrine that settler states have the right and obligation to protect Indigenous people, particularly from themselves. In the United States, the guardianship principle has functioned to justify the outlawing of traditional political, cultural, or religious practices that were seen as retarding the necessary progression of Indigenous people from savagery to civilization, a progress that was deemed necessary in order to allow Indigenous people the opportunity to participate in civilized settler society, which we know, of course, from the structure of settler guardianship and the settler epistemologies of ignorance means nothing more than trying to become identical with the settler and all his idiosyncrasies. In historical times, the guardianship principle justified the outlawing of the potlach, the sundance, the gourd dance, as well as the removal of commonly held tribal land in favor of individual allotment as private property. In more recent times the guardianship principle has justified the outlawing of traditional tribal systems of government and land management as well as the removal of tribal jurisdiction over violence against Indigenous women on tribal land when the perpetrator is a settler and not a citizen of any Federally recognized tribe within the United States.

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ):

(Speaking quietly to himself)

All of this comes from the load of Papal bull Pope Alexander VI deposited! The Inter Cetera load of Papal Bull!

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Returning to his internal lecture)

Alexander and his uncle were the only two popes to come from Spain, and it was in response to a request from the Spanish crown that he issued his load. In February of 1493, Cristobal Colón (commonly known as Christopher Columbus in English or Tsvsgina (the Devil) in Cherokee) wrote a letter to his benefactors, the King and Queen of Spain, where he described lands with pleasant and gentle breezes and beautiful meadows with many rivers of great and good waters, of which nearly all are filled with gold. The word "gold" was magical and sacred word to all these folks, but Tsvsgina also spoke of spices, pepper, and cotton, and of course innumerable slaves, by which he meant all of the yvwi of Amayeli (Indigenous peoples of the Americas).

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Continuing his internal lecture)

Before Pope Alexander left his load of Bull and before Colón had sailed west across the Sea of Darkness in 1492, another Pope (Nicholas) directed some bull to King Alfonso of Portugal, ordering him to "capture, vanquish, and subdue the... pagans," to "put them into perpetual slavery," and "to take all their possessions and property" (Davenport 20-26). This bull provides the framework for the Doctrine of Discovery and Federal Indian Law in the U.S. because it gives ownership of lands and people to the so-called 'discoverer,' which of course can only be European.

(Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ):

(Muttering softly hoping the tourist taking pictures didn't hear him)

I have often wondered why the yvwi of Amayeli did not have rights to all the lands and people of Europe when they discovered them, wandering aimlessly on the shores of Amayeli. I mean, that was the first time Amayeli discovered them too!



Jisdu (hɔɔS) (Voiceover):

(Going back to his internal lecture)

The reason discovery is a one-way street between European and Native is that the self-banishment doctrine of settler guardianship and the epistemologies of ignorance create a fantasy world that holds nothing more than the settler himself. By the time Colón had set sail, it was already part of the bull of the land that he was authorized to “take possession” whatever lands and people he “discovered” that had not already been claimed by wudeligvditlv (Western) people and so “not under the domination of any Christian rulers” (Thacher 96). So, when Colón returned to Europe, Pope Alexander VI was quite happy to help his friends, the King and Queen of Spain, by issuing his Inter Cetera load of bull on May 3, 1493, which assigned to Spain all the lands and people ‘discovered’ by Colón on his journey, as well as any lands which he or any other representative of Spain might ‘discover’ in the future.

(Jisdu (hɔɔS):

(Speaking a little louder but looking about to make sure he isn’t noticed talking to himself)

Portugal, I can tell you was not the least bit pleased by this concession to Spain, which explains why another load of bull was issued on the following day.

Jisdu (hɔɔS) (Voiceover):

(Returning to his internal monologue)

On May 4, 1493, the Pope declared that Spain should not take possession over lands and people already in “possession of any Christian lords” (Davenport 68). Then the Pope took out his great big, black magic marker and drew a line between the North and South poles, dividing Amayeli between Spain and Portugal. This Pope’s magic marker is the reason Portuguese is spoken in Brazil and Spanish in Argentine: these

colonial states are divided just along the line of the Pope's load of bull and magic marker.

(While standing in the middle of Saint Peter's Square, watching people wander around taking pictures and lining up to visit Saint Peter's Basilica, Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ) ponders how he could test the theory of trickster resistance here in the Vatican.)

(Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ):

(Speaking out loud but to no one in particular)

I have to get into the Vatican itself. Into something important. Into some trouble. But Vatican City is guarded. It is like a whole other country with a border and everything. They were definitely not going to let some Cherokee rabbit trickster in. These sorts of things always required paperwork, and I never had any paperwork. I always get by through trickstering. But how can I get passed the Swiss Guard into Vatican City? This is going to be a tough one.

(Scene shifts to the entrance to the border of Vatican City City at the Gate of Saint Pellegrino. There were two Swiss Guards standing on either side of a vertically lifting gate that stood over a wide road. The Swiss Guards are stern-faced and motionless. Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ) is approaching this Gate and its Swiss Guards.)

(Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ):

(approaching one of the guards with a wry Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ) smile)

Siyō, Ginali! (Hello, my friend!). How are you this fine morning?

(The guard remains motionless and stern-faced.)

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ):

(Continuing)

Do you want to play a game? If I beat you at this game of tug-of-war, you have to let me into Vatican City.

(The guard nods his head.)

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠰ):



(Surprised the guard agreed)

Ok, take ahold of this rope, and wait until it is snug before we start the game.

Swiss Guard 1:

Ok

(Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ) runs across the road to the other guard and convinces him to play this game as well, handing him the other end of the rope.)

Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ):

(Yelling to the second guard)

Now Pull!

(The first guard finds his rope tightening and so begins to pull back. The two guards begin playing tug-of-war with each other—neither knowing they were not playing with Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ) but with each other. They pull and pull. They pull and pull and pull and pull. They are very much matched in strength as well as intellect. As they pull and pull, they huff and puff and grunt and sweat. While all this pulling and puffing was going on, Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ) walks quite nonchalantly into Vatican City.)

(Scene shifts to Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ) wandering through the Holy See, past the the Apostolic Palace and the Fountain of the Sacrament.)

Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ):

(Wondering where he could find something important going on)

This is definitely not a very hopping place. I haven't seen a single soul since sneaking through Saint Pellegrino's gate.

(Although he wondered later: since this is the place where folks where know to argue over how many Angels could fit on the head of a pin, whether it made sense to say he could see souls at all).

(Jisdu (ħŕŏĐŠ) is wandering along via dell'Aquilone.)

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Thinking to himself)

Where is this "via" was taking me and what is a "dell'Aquilone"?

Iktomi:

(Calling from a spider web in a nearby tree)

The fountain of the Eagle!

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ):

(Looking surprised)

Thanks again my trickster cousin! You truly are always nearby. Geez!

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Thinking to himself)

Eagles and water are very Jalagi things. This seems like the perfect place for a Cherokee rabbit trickster to be.

(Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) is approaching the fountain. There is a large pool of bubbling water containing various sized and moss-covered statues of women, many of whom were mostly submerged—one only has her head barely poking out of the water. Above the water there are what looked like caves, one large and a much smaller one above it. On top of the very small cave rests a statue of Wohali (the Eagle).)

Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) (Voiceover):

(Thinking to himself)

This truly seems like a sacred place.

(Jisdu (ᵂᵂᵂ) steps into the flowing water and submerges himself, says a prayer to ganvhida ywvi (the long person, the river). When he finishes and steps out of the water, he sees a crumpled piece of paper being blown along the via in front of him. He reaches down, picks up the paper, and slowly unfolds it. At the top of the paper there is the seal of the Pontinifcia Academia Scientarvm Socialivm. Under that seal are the following words:



Dear Brian Burkhart,

We are pleased to invite you to the Science and Ethics for Happiness Project's meeting on intercultural conceptions of happiness and well-being. This meeting will be held at the Casina Pio IV in Vatican City on March 3rd, 2022.

Jisdu (*ἡρόδῶς*)

(Shouting)

That is today! This is my chance to try my new trick."

*(Jisdu (*ἡρόδῶς*) sets off to find Casina Pio IV. Following the signs over the hill to Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, he enters Casina Pio IV. The plenary has just begun)*
*(Scene: a very formal-looking, rectangular hall with much Latin writing on the walls and many busts of very serious looking Vatican-related folks. There are four sections of three rows, one section for each of the four walls. There are many very serious folks in each section. On the south side, Dojuwa VdG (the Cardinal) is seen wearing a black robe and holding a large bell with much Latin writing on it. Dojuwa VdG (the Cardinal) seems to be in charge. He clearly is representing the Vatican in these matters. Across from Dojuwa VdG (the Cardinal), on the north side of the hall, are rows of what someone said are scientist. On the western and eastern walls are what someone described as philosophers of the world. Jisdu (*ἡρόδῶς*) notices that in the eastern section, there is a name plate of some philosopher from the Southern Plains of the United States, (Brian Burkhart) but that the chair was empty. He decides this is where he will sit.)*

The Proceedings I

*(Dojuwa VdG, the Cardinal, can be seen ringing the large bell with the Latin writing. The ringing of this bell was startling to Jisdu (*ἡρόδῶς*). It was, after all, quite a large bell. It*

seemed large enough that one could stuff a smaller sized rabbit into it. As the bell rings over and over, the various individuals in the four sections of this council come to order. The council begins with a speech from Dojuwa VdG, the Cardinal, who spoke against the scientists.)

Dojuwa VdG, the Cardinal:

(Speaking sternly and pointing at the row of scientists)

They only care about matter and so cannot understand the soul of human beings that is not made of matter. The human soul allows us to be free from the material world and achieve true happiness. Something the scientists and their mere materiality can never understand.

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠤ):

(muttering to himself)

Float free from the land!

(After the Cardinal's speech, there is a round of speeches from the philosophers and scientists. The Cardinal demands that these speeches be very short, and he will ring his bell very loudly when the large digital clock on the wall reaches the time for each speech to end. Of course, these great minded men and women do not stop their speeches when the clock tells them to end. They are completely unfazed by the Cardinal's ringing of the bell, often even showing expressions of severe irritation. As the great minds continued to ignore the Cardinal's ringing of the bell, the Cardinal is more and more frustrated. He begins to interrupt the great minds to give his own speeches, extolling the virtues of the human soul and the limits of understanding happiness through the material world. He seems to be extra irritated by the speeches of the scientist who were women, something that causes much sadness and anger amongst the great minds.)

Jisdu (ᠬᠣᠳᠤ) (Voiceover)

(Thinking to himself)



This was not going very well. It is definitely not gadugi.

(Finally, it comes around to the section along the Eastern wall, where Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ) is seated. And finally, it is Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ)'s turn to speak for this first round of the great Vatican council of great minds.)

Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ):

(Waiting for the bell, then beginning his speech)

I will speak of the dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for one another) of anigaduwagi (the people who come together as one). Happiness is founded in gadugi, and gadugi creates a ganvvn to duyugodv. Through gadugi individuals can come together in a way that the collective rises above the things that keeps them separated and keeps them from duyugodv (truth). Duyugodv is the way for individuals to be sustained, to be happy as individuals and as a collective. It is through gadugi, duyugodv or happiness can be found both severally and collectively.

(At this point, the Cardinal begins ringing his bell, but Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ) does not stop.

Regardless of how vigorously the Cardinal rang it, Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ) does not stop. He still has something very important to say. He speaks to the Cardinal and the folks on the Vatican side of the great hall, and he speaks to the scientists on the scientists' side of the great hall.)

Jisdu (ḥoḏṣ):

(Shaking his head and speaking in an accusatory tone)

You both are operating with ditlilostanv (imitation) concepts of human beings and ditlilostanv (imitation) concepts of happiness. Your ditlilostanv (imitation) humans can never come together (gadugi) to reach duyugodv (sustained well-being or happiness) because your ditlilostanv (imitation) humans float free from the land.

(To the Cardinal side, he speaks of the manner in which the Cardinal claimed that only through human souls that were essentially separated from the land could humans achieve happiness because the Land was nothing but dead matter. To the scientist side, he speaks of the manner in which the scientist responded to this by saying that nothing more than the study of mere spiritually inert material stuff was necessary to understand human happiness. He speaks about how these were two sides of the same coin that was created in the bubble of wudeligvditlv (Western) thought, religion, and experience and are only maintained through the colonial self-banishment of the epistemologies of ignorance that maintained the illusion that the wudeligvditlv world was the only world, the illusion that founds settler guardianship, which operates through this illusion as well as serving to maintain it.)

Jisdu (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ):

(Looking first at the Cardinal and his side and then at the scientists and their side)

If you look outside of the bubble of the world in which both of you are contained, you will see the necessity of understanding the originary and continual kinship relationship all things have to the Land and that which brings them forth and sustains them in a more than mere material manner. It is in the context of this most fundamental form of kinship—kinship with the land out of which all things come to be and are maintained—that other kinship flows, and it is kinship with the land that is fundamental to being a being, human or otherwise.

Jisdu (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ):

(Remembering his recent teachings from the Land)

It is only through understanding and moving in relationship to our fundamental and continual kinship relationship with Elohi (ᑭᑎᑎᑎ) that yvwi (people of any sort) can anigaduwagi (people who come together and rise above that which separates them) and so be able take dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for one). You can only truly gadugi (come and rise together) and take dejadaligenvdisgesdi (responsibility for



one another) when you understand that you are fundamentally in an always already in motion kinship relationship with or within Elohi (RGA) and with all other being through the context of being grounded in this kinship relationship with land. This always-already in-motion kinship relationship with other all other beings can never be erased: all actions, good, bad, or indifferent, are kinship actions and either sustain or damage kinship relationships with all the various beings with which we are in kinship. *(By this time, the Cardinal is vigorously ringing the bell to the point of breaking out in sweat. He sends one of his aids to stop this rabbit trickster nonsense. His aid stands right in front of Jisdu (hoDS) who tells him it was time to stop even as Jisdu (hoDS) continues to speak.)*

Jisdu (hoDS):

(Concluding)

It is only in the context of understanding the always already in motion kinship relationship we have with the Land that brings us forth, a relationship that is both of the Land but more than material (once again looking back and forth between the Cardinal and the Vatican side as well as the scientists and scientist side), that humans can gadugi and take dejadaligenvdisgesdi on a ganvvnv (path) to duyugodv (sustained happiness as a way of life).

Dojuwa VdG, the Cardinal:

(Huffing)

Finally!

(There are a few more rounds of vigorous bellringing and speeches from the great minds and the first round of the great council comes to an end. There is then a feast with every kind of wine (not Vatican wine which Jisdu (hoDS) is told is gross). All the food is brought from Veneto with a special chef from the region. There is so much

Risotto: Risotto with vegetables, Risotto with beans, Risotto with fish, Risotto with frogs, Risotto with wood pigeon, and Risotto with quail. And there is Veal. There is so much Veal. There is Pandoro cake and Tiramisu for dessert. But it is the amount of wine and varieties that impressed Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸). He is quite the party animal, after all. There is Valpolicella, Valpolicella Ripasso, Amarone, Recioto, Soave, Bardolino, and Cabernet. This is definitely going to be an animal party.)

The Proceedings II

(As the feast ends, the Cardinal announces that the second round of the great council will shortly begin. The Cardinal, having grown tired of ringing the bell and being ignored by the great minds, ask various of the great minds if they are willing to chair the next round and be in charge of the ringing of the bell. Each of the great minds politely refuses. The Cardinal looks defeated and sad. Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸), who is always more than happy to help, raises his small rabbit foot. The Cardinal looks at him, questioningly. After asking one more time for volunteers from the great minds, he finally gives in and agrees to let Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸) chair the second round of the great council.

Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸) takes his seat in the section along the Eastern wall, and the Cardinal and all the others take their places as well. The ancient bell for ringing is presented to Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸) for appropriate use. Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸) looks around and saw that all the great minds are ready to begin, and so he closes his eyes and gently rings the bell, which was quite a challenge as the bell is almost as big as he.)

Jisdu (𐌹𐌶𐌰𐌸):

(With a very somber and serious tone)

Remember the rules of this great council. Everyone has on only have a few minutes to speak (after which the great and ancient bell would begin ringing), and after each speech, there will be a few minutes for questions.



(The first speaker beings. She is one of the great scientific minds. Her words are brilliant and compelling to Jisdu (hroðs).)

Great Scientific Mind I:

I would speak about different notions of happiness that could be scientifically deduced from different cultures outside of the bubble of the Western world. I will spoke of the need to include Western notions of happiness if the council was to be global rather than merely parochial...

(As she is speaking, the time-limit passed. The Cardinal looks at Jisdu (hroðs) and motions to the bell for ringing. Jisdu (hroðs) smiles and nods but does not reach for the bell. As she continues speaking, the Cardinal looks a Jisdu (hroðs) again and more vigorously motions to the bell. Jisdu (hroðs) smiles and nods, placing his hand on the bell, smiling and nodding to the Cardinal once again. As she continues to speak, the Cardinal huffs at Jisdu (hroðs) and motions still more vigorously to the bell. Jisdu (hroðs) smiles and nods. This time he slowly picks up the bell and holds it in front of him. Just at the moment the great mind finishes her speech, Jisdu (hroðs) begins to ring the bell more vigorously than it had ever been rung on that day.)

Jisdu (hroðs) (Voiceover:

(With the biggest grin on his face)

I have rung the bell perfectly and at just the perfect time.

(Jisdu (hroðs) remains perfect throughout his time as chair of sessions at the great council. When he rings the bell, no one spoke over his ringing or after. Of course, he only rings the bell at just the exact time that each speaker finishes her speech. As the first great mind had finishes her speech, a number of hands raise from the great minds. Jisdu (hroðs) picks the first person to raise her hand and makes a mental note of

*the order by which other hands were raised so that he can call on those great minds next. As first questioner beings, the Cardinal starts waving his hand. He motions directly to Jisdu (*hroðs*) and indicates that he should allow him to speak. Jisdu (*hroðs*) is confused. The first person is still in the process of asking her question. He smiled and waved to the Cardinal, with typical rabbit frivolity.)*

Dojuwa (VdG), the Cardinal:

(Scowling)

Mutters something under his breath.

*(After the great mind finishes her question, Jisdu (*hroðs*) calls upon the original great mind, to whom the question was addressed, to respond. When she begins her response, the Cardinal looks at Jisdu (*hroðs*) and huffs. Jisdu (*hroðs*) once again smiles and waves in his usual rabbit manner. After the original great mind is finished, Jisdu (*hroðs*) calls upon the second person who had raised her hand. When she begins to speak, the Cardinal has had enough. He throws his hands in the air and even tosses all of his papers into the middle of the great hall. At this point the questioner stops and looks a Jisdu (*hroðs*.)*

Great Questioner I

(Puzzled and concerned)

Should we continue or just stop and let the Cardinal speak?

Jisdu (*hroðs*):

(smiles and shrugs)

Ya'll just continue speaking, my relatives. I am but a silly rabbit who clearly knows nothing about the way that these serious discussions are supposed to proceed. If the Cardinal is mad, he is just mad at me and my silly rabbit ways. It has nothing to do with you.



(By this time, the Cardinal has turned bright red and has remained so ever since that day. He pushes his chair back and stomps out of the room. The great minds look to Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) with questioning eyes.)

Their eyes: (Voiceover):

What should we do, Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ)?

(Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) just smiles and nods in his usual manner. He points at them to continued and points at himself, indicating that it is he that was the problem and not them. The great council should continue. Eventually, the Cardinal returns and even has the opportunity to respond to words of the great council, where he once again extolls the virtues of the immaterial soul and the vices of the material world. Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) continues chairing this great council in his usual rabbit manner until it concludes. As it was ending, Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) is reflective.)

(Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) (Voiceover)

(Thinking to himself)

I am sure, I will never be asked to chair another session of this great council again. I may be removed from Vatican City and asked to never return. Oh well, what is a rabbit to do but to be the rabbit that he is and do what a rabbit does.

(The second great feast begins, which takes place before the third and final proceeding of the day. Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) is busy eating, drinking, and enjoying the great feast when the Cardinal approaches him. Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ) shoves a few extra mouthfuls of food in his rabbit face because he is sure that he will shortly be outside of Vatican City on his rabbit tail.)

Dojuwa (VdG), the Cardinal:

(placing his hand on Jisdu (ħŕŕŔŦ)'s shoulder)

I would like you to chair the next session. I appreciate how seriously you took the work of chairing.

Jisdu (*hroðs*):

(smiling and knowing that he had only taken his work as seriously as any rabbit trickster could)

Of course, I will, my relative.

*(Jisdu (*hroðs*) continues to chair each session for the rest of the great council. When the great council is over, Jisdu (*hroðs*) says goodbye to his new relatives and makes his way back to the Gate of Saint Pellegrino, where he finds the Swiss guards still engaged in the game of tug-of-war that Jisdu (*hroðs*) has tricked them into. When they each see him. They each let out an angry shout, looking at the rope they are each pulling—each still thinking that Jisdu (*hroðs*) is on the other end pulling back. They each drop their end of the rope and begin gesturing angrily to Jisdu (*hroðs*). Jisdu (*hroðs*) just smiles and nods at them with his usual frivolity.)*

Jisdu (*hroðs*):

(Smiling and waving)

See you later my relatives.

(The Swiss guards grab their side arms and give chase.)

Jisdu (*hroðs*) (Voiceover)

(Begin to run faster)

Here we go. A typical day in the life of a rabbit trickster. Hopefully this will not end like that time with Doctor Buzzard when there was nothing was left of me but my bones.

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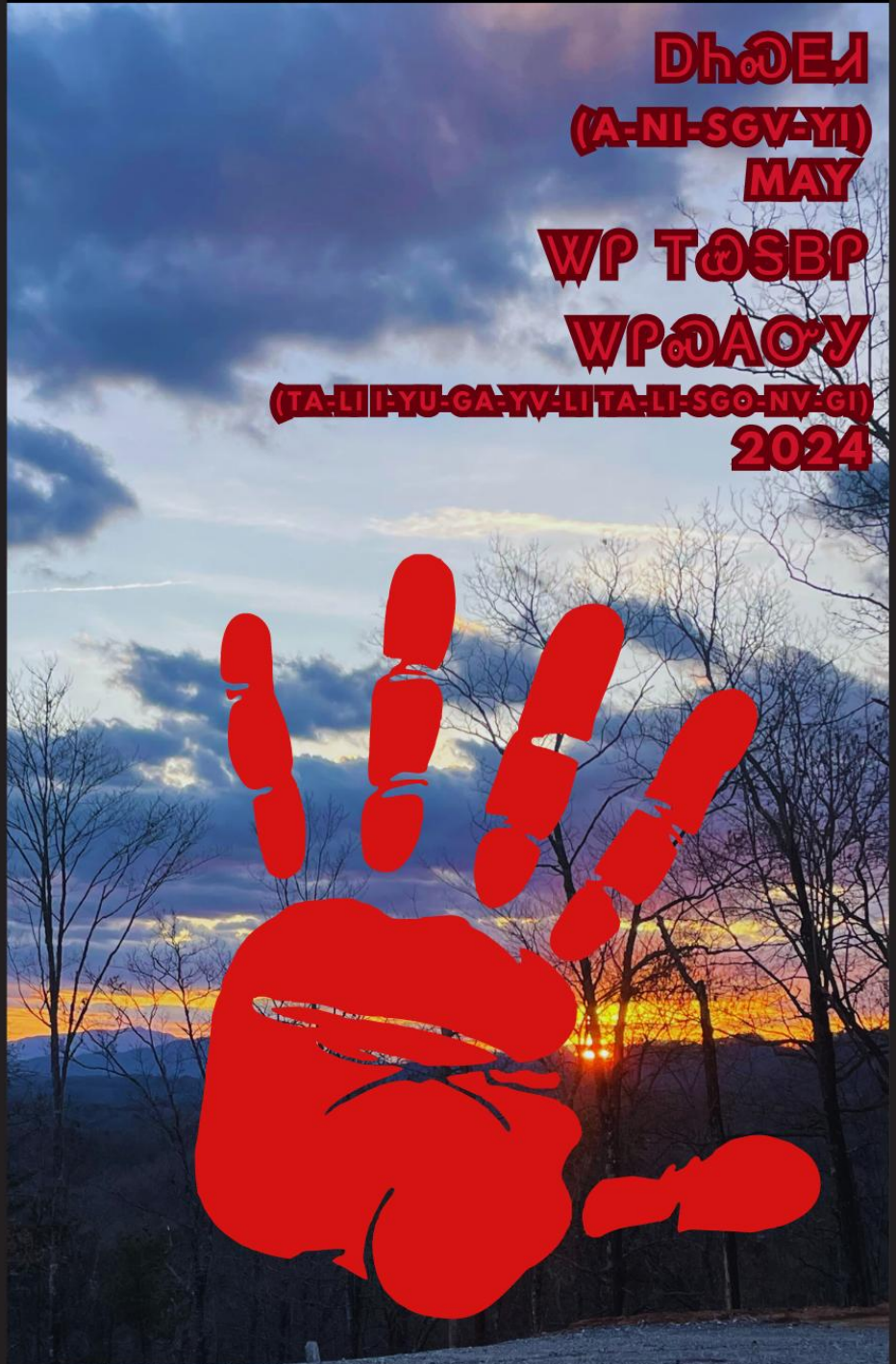
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**GWY
TGQOZ**



**DhōEł
(A-NI-SGV-YI)
MAY
WP TōSBP
WPōAO'Y
(TA-LI-I-YU-GA-YV-LITA-LI-SGO-NV-GI)
2024**



**CHEROKEE TIMES
(TSA-LA-GI I-YU-WA-KA-TI)**

GWY TGQOZ

The secret of our success is that we never, never give up.

- Wilma Mankiller

POETRY



“Memories of Him” by Jayle Creson

On a hot summer day
We would stop and get KFC
With some watermelon on the side.
I can still see him waiting for us
On the porch drinking his coffee
From the same mug he had my whole life.
You could smell the cigarette smoke from
The bottom of the driveway
And listening to all his roosters cluck.
The last time I was at that comforting house
Was when I had just gotten
A dog 6 years ago.
I still feel the touch
Of that uncomfortable couch.
The smell of that same wood
Stove he would have burned.
Same old classic TV show
He would have on
With the volume blaring.
Later during that cold winter
We got a call
He passed away
I hadn't spoken to him in years
I never got that Happy Birthday call.
He had passed without telling a soul.
Never had a funeral
Never gave me anything
To remember him by.
Found out through an ad on Facebook
That is the house I had so many memories in
Was sold...
I never got to have full closure for him
but that's how he wanted it
For no one to know.

“Addiction” by Izabella Terrell

Burns the inside of my jaw, down to my lower stomach
It hurts so much, but you can't get enough of it
You can scream and shout all you want, but have fun with a child safety lock
You breathe in deep, so deep it gets dizzy, smoke expands your lungs as a freebie
It's hard to put down, you just can't stop, you try and try but your head is too hot
But suddenly the smoke is taken, and you are left with a vacant hole
You scratch and bite your way back up, trying to get in control
The smoke returns after a long time, and you think your mind is changed
But after one hit, you feel the burn and are back where you began.

“Colors” by Izabella Terrell

Time sometimes doesn't seem fair
Other times it seems like there are worse things in the air
Sometimes you feel blue
Other times you feel Yellow
Maybe the occasional Red
It bubbles up in the form of overwhelming colors that you can't control, something that kills your
Heart and makes you feel cold
Sometimes you feel Green
Others you feel Pink
Purple makes a lover's heart weary, drained, and fear-y
Sometimes, after an Overwhelming color
You feel Black, empty, like something wrong
Black feels cold, old but new
Something familiar all people can relate to
Blacks a numbness off all colors
Erasing the ombre of Purples and Pinks, Blues and Reds, Green and Yellow
Try as you might, you can't escape
Freedom is honestly misplaced
Feeling sick yet?
You are?
Good, now you know how I felt when you broke my heart, misplaced my trust, you stabbed me
In the back and took off for another
You should've seen this coming
Should've known I'd come hunting
Should've heard my feet thumping

Now I've got you, my colors returned
My heart was beating, and a colorful drum
Yellows and Pinks, Reds and Purples, Greens and Blues, so many colors
Black still resides in me
Waiting for a new melody
A chance to be free again
But I won't let him out, never again.

“Mirror House” by Izabella Terrell

You up at midnight hour, scanning for something off
Your rooms are clean and organized.
But something feels lost
You stare into your mirror, judging anything that passes.
Like sand falling in an hourglass
You try to wake up but are stuck in your head, a house of mirrors that you've come to dread.
Try as you might, your feelings never change
You wear a mask of a smile to hide your mirror.
Afraid that one day your mask will snap, showing the world your house of mirrors.
And when that day comes, one by one, your mirrors all shatter.
Sure, one might say that 'it's all okay' but the mirrors just multiply with every crack.
So, you're stuck in this web, with no one to tell, while you burn in your own living hell.
The mirror house claims its cause for good, but more... **Opportunities** go misunderstood.
One house shatters, the second one cracks
Your own house, however, never comes back.

“The Night That It Happened” by Ila Brinkmeyer

The night that it happened
The smell of dusty air and old cake
She will forever be missed
The fresh tears on my face
All I could do was think and ponder about the loss of her life
The loss of a creative mind
The loss of laughter for months to come
The night that it happened
The taste of the cake I baked with her in mind still lingered
It still does
The sound of my sobs ringing through the empty house
The voice of panic in my mom's voice before she left will always remain
Now every cake I bake will have her on it
Now every February she will stay
And every year since I will miss the touch of her hugs
Even when I fought and fought them away
The night that it happened
The whole world had changed
Every moment
Everything I'm grateful for
Every I love you
Mattered so much more

“Faded Puppy” by Gideon Freeman

A stuffed animal that
Would never be forgotten,
And would never leave me.
My parents bought me
Something they thought
Would be thrown away
Quickly, never to be thought
Of or seen again. They
Were young parents,
Not even in their 30s.
As I brought it home and
Kept it, and they realized that

It wouldn't be thrown away
Easily. But as my age turned
From small child to toddler,
Puppy lost her blue, it fading
To be a dull gray. Its smell was
Getting worse, smelling
Almost rancid and foul.
It was itchy to the touch,
And you couldn't wash it
For the fear it would fall apart.
There was a substitute, but
It wasn't the same, no patched
Up nose, no feeling what 6 week
Old me felt. Just a 13 year old,
Crying as he realized that his
Parents have turned into
Their mid-40s, and knowing what
Must be done. It was put in a bag,
But it only made the smell worse.
I could never find the bag,
And I could never find the charm
Of puppy again.

“To Once I Was” by Carys Holiday

To once I was when things were simpler,
When I was younger. I miss the feeling of having
Nothing to do and nowhere to be. The feeling of being
Unafraid of Tomorrow and what it holds for me.
The feeling of being free from the judgment of
My peers and the world surrounding us. However, the thing that
I long for most of all, the years of my adolescence.
When I felt unbound.
Once I was when the sun shone down on me.
When the grass was greener. Listening
To the mourning doves' cry, it all feels so familiar.
Like honey, like sugar,
'Twas such a sweet, sweet time.
When the forsythia bloomed brighter,

And the honeysuckle savor is more potent.
Once I was when I was with warmth.
When I smiled more. Akin to the sights and the smells,
It all seems to fade too soon.
Like the scent of amber and vanilla in my grandma's bathroom,
Her house, a peaceful haven, is now gone and her flat now
Seemingly filled with alienation from society.
With time comes an age of no longer feeling comfort.

“An Elegy Written by Me” by Tahlaya “Nyree” Thompson

A dark and very cold noon fell upon us
People sat on pews and observed
Children were praising him
Angels surrounded the place
Feeling it with hope and joy
Their singing sounded rich and elegant
Making others feel warm and welcoming
Then it all just ended
The room went cold and empty
The people fell pale and their appearance grew tired
I saw him sitting in the pew
His intentions were to change everything
His mind was a battlefield
Sending chills through the room
It smelled strong of sulfur
This was the last time anyone would see him
He would disappear forever into nothing but memories
Leaving me reaching for one last touch
Her world collapsed in a night
Everything just grew silent and became lonely

“An Often-Filled House” by Vincent Owle

An often-filled house
Now empty, sitting alone.
Happiness radiated with warmth
but now we're left with a chilling wind.

Children with a void to fill,
He endlessly struggled when he fell ill.
He worked tirelessly,
And so did his murderers.
To hear his voice or to smell his cologne
Would take me to the past.
To mourn with his wife, his child, and dog
Would be to uphold an ocean of burden.
A new house and a new life
The pain will never be forgotten.
Starting a new chapter is never easy
But jealous sabotage is lower than your husband.
A flesh wound or a disease, you're just as responsible
For the best person you'd ever meet.
The little one will be big soon
And she'll see through you and do the same.

“In the Silent Depths” by Alexzaya Lossie

In the silent depths where darkness dwells
Where light retreats and darkness swells
There lies a void, an endless sea,
A place where souls lost are set free
In whispered sighs and hollow cries
In silent screams and tear-filled eyes
Depressions grip a suffocating weight
A stormy sea an endless state
Yet in this darkness, a flicker burns
A tiny ember, yearns and yearns
For hope to rise and light to pierce
The heavy shroud, the gloom, the fierce
Amidst the chaos and fragile thread
A glimmer of light where courage threads
Through tangled thoughts and fears unknown
A path unfolds through overgrown
With each step forward the shadows wane
Though doubts and demons remain
Yet in the heart, a spark ignites
A will to live to fight the night

So let us journey through this night
With courage as our guiding light
To find the dawn to break this chain
And let our hearts find peace again

“In the Silent Chambers” by Alexzaya Lossie

In the silent chambers of the mind
Anxiety lingers like a shadow
Shapeshifting, elusive yet omnipresent
A constant companion in the journey of existence
It creeps stealthily through the corridors
A whisper in the dark
A subtle tremor beneath the surface
A knot in the pit of the stomach
Its tendrils reach out entwining
Binding thoughts in a tangled web
A maze of worries and what-ifs
A labyrinth of uncertain
In the quiet moments of solitude
It speaks in hushed tones
Planting seeds of doubt and fear
Watered by the tears of a restless soul
It manifests in myriad forms
A pounding heart shallow breaths
Sweaty palms racing thoughts
A symphony of physical and emotional turmoil
Yet in the depths of despair
There is a glimmer of resilience
A spark of courage amidst the chaos
A ray of hope penetrates through the darkness
Anxiety though formidable
Is not invincible
With each breath each step forward
Comes the strength to confront, to overcome

“Cuban Dog Ticks” by Makenize Rattler

Cuban dog ticks, beneath the summer sun
On his fur, as the grass begins to sing
They crawl, they dance, they have way too much fun
All this fun is making my dog’s skin sting
Then the owner takes his dog to the vet
The dog has chronic dancing tick disease
The owner cried, he felt bad for his pet
he tries to fix it, tries to find the key
So he grabs his clippers to cut the fur
Leaves his boy bald, the baldest he could be
To the owner's mind, soon it would occur
That cutting hair only fixed lice and fleas
He sat there on the couch, now feeling sick
Now there's a bald dog with Cuban dog ticks

SHORT STORIES

NON FICTION



Editors: Makenzie,
Vincent, Nyree

Moving to Cherokee

Moving to Cherokee has been a big culture shock, but in a good way. The people here have been very welcoming and kind to me since I moved, and they are always willing to help others. The community is one of the most important things to the people, and seeing how they get together in the good and bad times, and me being part of it, is an honor. Learning their language, their history, and culture will always be something I won't forget.

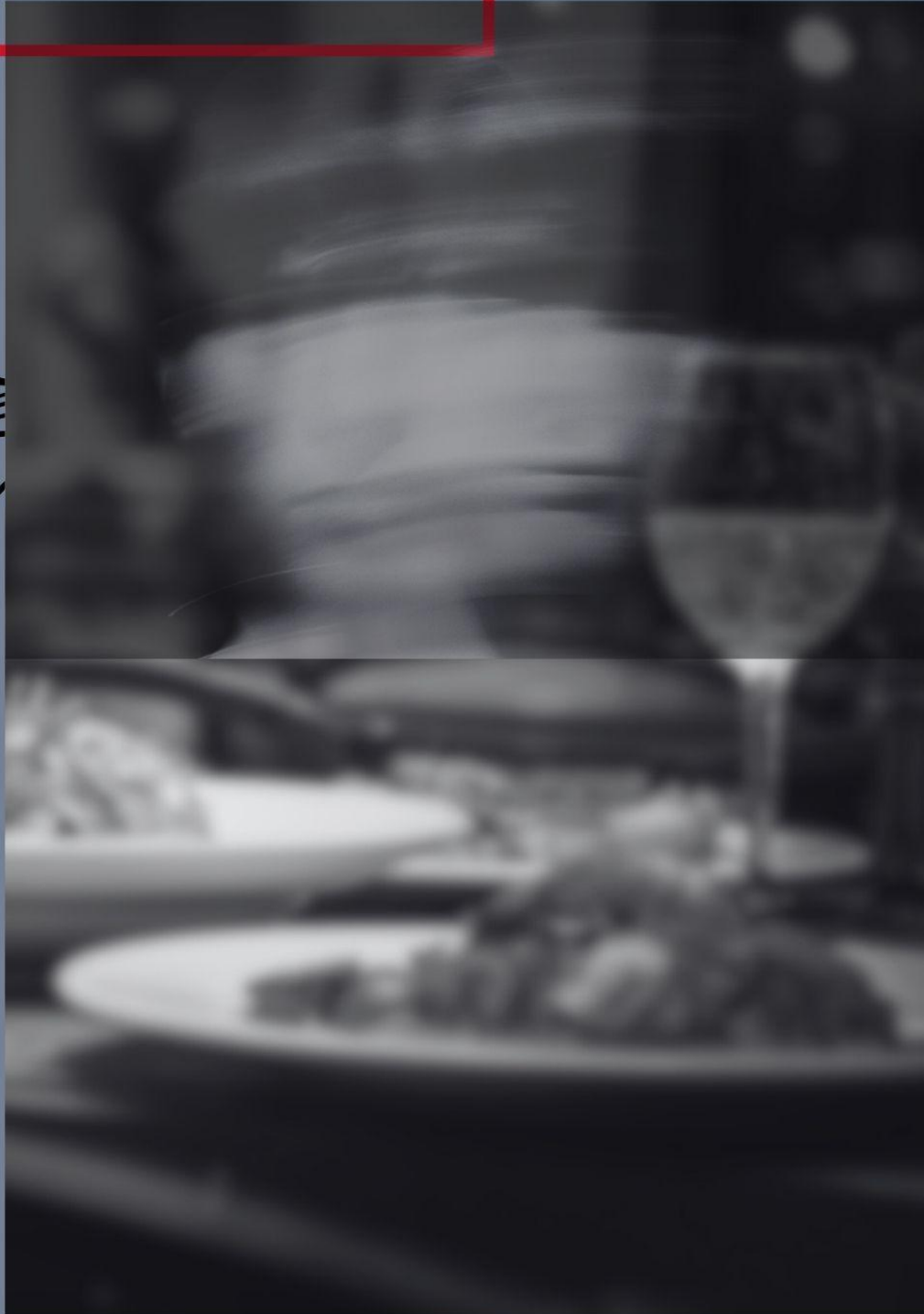
By Letsi Burgos Delgado

The Sport of XC Running

The sport of XC running can make or break you. The past XC season I had big expectations for myself, but my season felt mediocre. I was more scared than anything when it came to racing. High expectations lowered my confidence. My training was good, but I always needed guidance about what I could do regarding races. I trained my butt off in the summer, but maybe this season wasn't meant to be. I am going to college to run XC, and maybe I will have a breakout season there. What I want to tell you is have fun, don't worry about how you're running now, but worry about how you finish your season. Don't compare yourself to others, and don't be afraid to push the pace.

By Aizen Bell

**SHORT
STORIES
FICTION**



**Editors: Gabriel,
Christian, Gideon,
Victoria**

“The Burning Sycamore” by Christian Alfaro

Deep in the Appalachians live a people of tall stature, who hunted and fished in its valleys. The Tsa’la’gi is their name, and they lived well. In their home lies an evil, a giant striped terror that lives in the underworld. It rises from the caves and strikes like lightning, stabbing the Tsa’la’gi with its enormous stinger. Its hunger for flesh is never fulfilled. The giant, six-legged, winged terror hunts the people of the Appalachians like a big cat with turkey’s wings.

The Tsa’la’gi know nothing to solve the plight that is imposed upon them by the flying beast. The Great Spirit, a god-like figure with no shape, spoke to an elder of the Tsa’la’gi, referencing an ever-burning sycamore tree that was struck long ago by the lightning of the thunder beings. There, it is said, lies the answer to solve the woe that haunts them. The two chiefs are adorned in their respective places. The peace chief in white and the war chief in red and black, The seven matriarchs sit with each of their respective clans: The Wolf, The Deer, The Blue, The Long Hair, The Paint, The Wild Potato, and The Bird. Each sits and discusses who will venture to the ever-burning sycamore tree, but all of their best warriors challenge the horror of the underworld and die a pointless death.

The leaders put their faith in one man, Wolf Killer. Wolf Killer is from the Wolf clan, a clan of warriors and the only clan that can kill wolves. Wolf Killer leaves his village with the Tsa’la’gi prayers and a thirst for vengeance. He swears to kill the great U’la’gu.

From the top of the mountain, Wolf Killer looks, his brows furrowed, his war paint ready to taste the blood of his adversary. He cools his head, though. The wasp comes after the weapon, and he looks throughout the valley and mountains that his people call home. The thought makes him think of the dead, and it makes him more furious. The cold mountain wind blows onto his bare chest, which is strapped with years of warring and experience. The only heat on the cold mountain is the sun, which shines on his bald head.

He sees out in the distance smoke which he believes is the ever-burning tree. It hides behind a mountain far out in the distance, westward, for the sun was ever slowly laying its head that way. He begins his trek westward, quickly navigating the dangerous terrain. He has been here before. He fought the Muscogee here. As he travels, he feels his mouth become dry, and he settles for the nearby river for some water. The rushing sounds sooth the thirsty warrior with its lifeblood. Each time he clasps his hands to make a makeshift water bowl he looks to his left and his right to see if any danger approaches.

The warrior hears the whispers of his fallen brothers, but when he takes a look to see them, they are not there. They warn him of those who feed off their fellow man, but Wolf Killer thinks nothing of it. Cannibals dare not to test his people. Any who eat their own shall find death by his war club. Deep into the forest Wolf Killer wanders. Only streaks of sun rays peak through the tall and oppressive trees, which whisper long-forgotten names and wars, that no Tsa’la’gi remember, and even if they did it is told through exaggeration and lies.

As the night approaches, Wolf Killer walks to a sycamore tree and scrapes off its peeling skin to use as kindling for a flame. As he makes his flame, the night comes as a dark blanket to

cover the sky. The only light source is the orange flame deep inside the forest. Wolf Killer lies uncomfortably on the forest bed, trying his hardest to sleep among all the animals and trees that beside him, and as he drifts to sleep, he shakes and tumbles like a dog. He awakens to rodents in his satchel and a dying flame that burns with the embers of an old tree. Wolf Killer tries to catch the vermin that feast on his food, but he fails as they scurry off in a hurry and speed which Wolf Killer has never seen.

Wolf Killer throws on his satchel and begins his journey to the burning tree once more. While walking, he comes across a hermit in the woods.

“Who goes there?” the hermit yells out of his home. Wolf Killer does not answer but continues walking past the home.

“I said who goes there?” The hermit walks out, standing nigh to the waist of Wolf Killer.

“Go back inside your home old man, no one wants your things,” Wolf Killer finally replies.

“Well.” The hermit looks Wolf Killer up and down; he has now stopped in his tracks and has turned to face the tiny hermit. “Are you a cannibal?”

“No,” Wolf Killer replies. “Are you?”

“No, filthy pest they are. Say you are willing to kill them for me? They got a village not far from here.”

“I cannot take on a whole village alone, and I am on a journey which I must continue.” Wolf Killer turns around. “Have you seen a burning sycamore tree by any chance?”

“Yes, actually,” the hermit replies, scratching his chin in thought. “In the village, actually”

He turns around. “Where?” says the Wolf.

“Over the mountain. It's hard to miss. The sky is darkened by the plumes of smoke”

“Take me to it,” Wolf says. He and the hermit trek over the mountain, a task the midget hermit struggles with, which makes Wolf wonder how he survived for this long. The hermit wobbles by a tree and points to a village filled with men.

“There is the village.” The hermit moves his finger to his left. “And that's the tree.”

“Thank you,” says the Wolf. He slowly sneaks his way down to the village, groping his war club tightly in case of any threat that may be posed against him. The bustling village, teeming with the sounds of laughter and talk, is contrasted by the bones of men and hanging corpses that are strewn over campfires meant to roast the meat. Through the laughter, quietly from a building, the sounds of sobbing and the moans of pain can be heard. Wolf pays no mind; perhaps he can act like one of the cannibals. He walks into the village with no one seeing and begins walking to the sycamore tree. Cannibals walk past him, some talking, others carrying bowls of flesh and vegetables. As he approaches the tree, plumes of smoke puff out like a grand campfire smoking out and so scorching that standing near it feels like you can get cooked.

Standing near it, he can hear something calling out to him. He reaches to the fire.

“Hey!” someone says, but Wolf is so entranced that he doesn't hear it. “Stand back you madman!” A man pushes Wolf away from the flaming tree. “Are you crazy?!” cries a voice.

“I heard in the flames, a voice calls out to me, lulling me into it.”

“Only a fool will enter the ever-present flame,” says the cannibal.

“Pray that the chief knows mercy.” The cannibal, who is nearly naked, calls others to help lift and move Wolf. Wolf, in a state of shock from an unknown source, doesn't realize he is being dragged. The barely clothed or not clothed man-eaters drag Wolf to a giant building decorated with symbols of a dead language. Inside, the smell of flesh is enough to make anyone feel sick. Lining the walls, bodies hang like cattle ready to be eaten. Some of the cannibals strip pieces of skin off the bodies and run to the firepit to cook their food. Around the fire pit lies blood and gore from pieces of flesh left uneaten, and upon his molded throne of blood, gore, and bones sits the chief who adorns himself with forgotten symbols made of blood. He eats the cooked meat like a wolf, and he stands nakedly to welcome his guest to his forsaken home. Wolf looks up and sees the massive figure who stands seven feet tall and has black hair that reaches to the floor like a giant black snake. His eyes are like a snake's, and he looks at the Wolf with his slit eyes. “Welcome,” he says, flinging his hands in the air. “Welcome the guest from the Tsa'la'gi people, the great warrior who is supposed to defeat the Great Wasp and carry his enormous head to his village to show to a desperate audience who wither and die from illness and disease.” The unknown chief walks to Wolf, who is held down by the cannibals who await with slobbering jaws like ravenous dogs to feast upon his flesh.

“Here he sits on his knees like a dog. Tell me you know the best way to eat a person? Keeping them alive keeps the meat fresh each time you peel it off them.” The chief leans down to Wolf's face “But in here there's no need for the bugs do not dare enter here.”

“Who are you?” Wolf asks.

“My name is uttered in disgust by your people, even though many flock to me to let out their worst desire -- which is to feast upon their fellow man. No, I say my name is really like that of the devils who stalk your woods and trick your little children into the woods forever to be lost. I say my name is The One Who Is Hated,” says the fiend, a large, unnatural smile stretching across his face. “Bring him here. You didn't think we saw you come in? I have eyes everywhere.” The hermit stumbles onto the floor, naked and scared.

“Oh, no.” The hermit tries to get up but is swiftly decapitated by the forsaken chief. His head rolls across the floor. A look of terror is marked across his face forever.

“Hang him up for he is dinner.”

The cannibals swiftly follow the order, picking up the hermit and hanging him up with a rope. With slobbering jaws, some even start peeling his skin off with their knives.

“Take this one to the cages. I want him to suffer.” The cannibals pick up the Wolf and drag him outside to one of the many cages next to the main building. They throw him in a cage next to others who are nothing but food for the mad cannibals and their accursed chief.

As Wolf sits in the cage, day by day, he waits for something. The tree still whispers to him, calling him over, yet he sits like a dying beast waiting for its end. The cannibals drag out the others to consume. They scream and claw like animals but to no avail, for their captors are far worse than any animal. Some people he recognizes from other villages his people have. An

old and grizzled man gets thrown in the cage next to him. He chews and bangs on the cage but nothing. He turns to Wolf Killer. "Hey," he says, "we need to get out."

"I've tried," the warrior replies. "There's nothing." The Wolf, starved and exhausted, looks dead in the eyes.

"Well, I say I have more youth than you do," says the old man "You should never give in to these fiends" The old man waits for a reply but Wolf gives none, he just stares into the sky.

"Suit yourself I'm not getting eaten." The old man struggles, but he simply cannot find a way. He does it for a couple more days until eventually he too gives in.

"Hey," says the old man, Wolf lays on the ground. He's starving and dehydrated. Death is surely coming for him "Whatever you do, young one, never give in," the old man says ironically.

Out from the main building comes cannibals who Wolf knows are coming for him. The cage opens, and death finally comes in now he's merely settling down in the home. The cannibals drag him out with ease for Wolf has no strength; he's as limp as one can be. The old man yells at Wolf, but Wolf is so close to death that he does not hear him.

Inside, The Hated One awaits with a grin that stretches across his face. His eyes are like that of a snake, and he stands taller than usual. The cannibals drag Wolf to the center where the firepit is.

"We are ready to feast on the great warrior who was meant to slay the beast, but now he is merely prey so now we feed on his flesh and bones," The Hated One says, slobbering like a starving beast who just found its prey. They all get their knives out, but The Hated One does not because his head has come off his shoulders and his neck is growing unnaturally like that of a snake. As his slithering head reaches closer to the center where the crackling fire pit and the dying Wolf are, his jaws dislocate and his mouth widens to eat the Wolf whole. With the roar of the thunder, a bolt of lightning goes threw the smoking hole in the ceiling and splits the smoke in two. The main building blows apart, sending Wolf flying out along with the gore of the hanging bodies and the cannibals.

Wolf lives unscathed. He gets up and runs, barely making it further than a baby learning to walk. The fire calls him as the crack of thunderbolts smites the cannibals. Wolf crawls to the sycamore tree. The exploding cannibals cry in pain, and when Wolf makes it there, he crawls into the tree, which burns at his skin. Inside is a spear made of pine, and on it is the design of a silver-eyed serpent coiled around it. Also painted on it are the spider and the turtle who gave the amazing gifts of land and fire to the Tsa'la'gi. On the base are leather with beads and eagle feathers of the thunder beings themselves. He grabs the spear which retains its electric worth.

The voice tells him to aim up, and as he does, he bursts out of the tree with lightning-fast speed, the fire fading away. Out from the rubble of the main building, a burning beast crawls out. It is The Hated One and as he curses at Wolf, he shifts into a cougar and wanders into the forest, his fake kingdom destroyed. The flying warrior falls upon the Earth with a crash that almost shakes the mountains. The trees are split by the smoking warrior who fell like a fallen star, and after he crashed, he sleeps like a blackened stone baby that was in immense pain of shock and fire. When the warriors arrive they can barely make out a man, and many wouldn't go down to

look. It takes the war chief, a man of short stature among his men but with enough scars to tell of for seven days straight. He looks at the fallen Wolf and he throws the man over his shoulders like a pile of wood ripe for burning. He carries the warrior back to his village where the people look at the crisp Wolf with confused and curious eyes, equally astonished.

When Wolf Killer awakens he finds himself in the main hall, where he is chained to a stake like a sacrifice to a foul god or pagan demon figure. There, looking into his eyes like a warrior about to strike a furious blow to kill his enemy, lies the short man carried the night seven-foot man only over his shoulder like a newborn baby.

“Where am I,” the Wolf asks, tired of fighting and being tied.

“You're in my village,” the unknown figure replies, his gaze unwavering. He picks up some cooked meat and presents it to Wolf, whose starvation is so apparent this is torture to any who could bare to witness.

“Are you hungry” the man replies mockingly. “If you wish to eat, then answer my question”

“I am hungry”

“From where do you come?”

“I hail from a village near the splitting rivers.”

“I thought the warriors of that village all died by the Great Wasp.”

“I am the last.”

The short man stares silently once more for a short period, like he's trying to read Wolf's life story via his eyes. With a grunt, another appears behind Wolf with a blade and cuts him loose from his chains, and the Wolf feasts on the food that was taken from him by the man-eaters.

“Eat,” says the man. “I'm not finished asking questions”.

“Who are you?” asks Wolf.

“Chief Little Deer” answers the man. Little Deer watches Wolf eat like a starved beast and when he finished he starts questioning again.

“So how did you survive the crash like that of the fallen stars.”

“I do not know. I believe it was the spear”

“The spear of amazing design which looked forged by the thunder beings themselves.”

“Yes, my people believe it was crafted from a great bolt of lightning cast down by them.”

Little Deer looked shocked when he heard these words

“The spear cannot be wielded by my men. It shocks them whenever they touch it”

Wolf looks at Little Deer with desperate eyes. “Where is it”

“Look outside.” Both the warriors walk out and when Wolf lays his eyes upon the legendary spear it floats above in the courtyard where people stand and look in awe at the floating weapon. Wolf stares but there's something deep inside of him telling him what to do. He lifts his hand, reaching for the spear. On command, it comes to him in a flash. Everyone stands shocked and surprised the legendary spear is now in the hands of its owner.

“I must leave,” says Wolf Killer.

“To kill the Great Wasp?” Little Deer asks.

“Yes.”

Little Deer looks at Wolf, sizing him up.

“Don’t be so sure that you can defeat such an enemy alone,” Little Deer says. “I’ve seen how it moves. You may match its speed, but that thing is a master at killing at speeds of lightning.”

“Then what's your plan?” Wolf asks.

“Well, we can use something as bait to lure it in, like an effigy of a person. Then you can swoop down and kill it.” Wolf nods in agreement and Little Deer commands everyone to craft an effigy of a person. They decide it should be of him and after hours of labor they make it. With it, they travel to the Great Wasps’ hunting grounds, and there, standing on a cliff overlooking the serene beauty of the land, the effigy awaits its demise from a swift impalement from the stinger of hell and death. Wolf hangs in the tree line, like a cougar in the forest, waiting for the Wasp. He grips his spear tightly, like it is his last item in a raid from the enemies his ancestors fought. When the sun is about to rest its head and bring about the moon, when the sky makes a blood-tinged haze, almost foretelling what’s about to come, out comes the creature with wings and mandibles. It comes with the sound of hell, its giant wings flapping so fast the trees below it begin to crash from the sheer speed and sound. It moves so fast it is a blur, like when the Little People play tricks to their victims.

Wolf’s ears begin to bleed from the sound, but he does not falter. Before his eyes, the effigy is impaled by an insect of enormous size and speed, and when it impales the false man, Wolf does not hesitate, for that would mean defeat. He hurls his spear at the beast, and with a crack of thunder the spear carries a thousand bolts, striking the beast down, burning its wings. Its body burned and shocked, the Great Wasp gets up and tries to fly, but it cannot. Its wings are gone. Wolf calls the spear back, and like a bird, it flies back to him quickly. The Great Wasp and Wolf Killer battle. Even grounded, the beast quickly dodges Wolf’s attacks, but the man does not waiver, for he matches the speed of the beast. It bites and stabs with its giant spear-like stinger, but Wolf is too quick but so is the beast. Wolf grows tired and slow, and the beast notices. It attacks more, but with a war cry a band of Little Deer’s braves throw spears at the beast, which, even with its insane speeds, it cannot dodge. The beast cries in pain as the warriors shoot arrows and throw spears. With stamina recovered, Wolf charges, plunging his spear into the beast’s head and finishing it.

With war cries and celebrations, the warriors cheer the name of Wolf Killer and the warriors of Chief Little Deer. “We have won the battle” cries Chief Little Deer. Wolf, with new scars to tell to his children about, and all the warriors of Little Deer celebrate. They cut the head off the beast, and twenty men carry it back to the tribe. There, Wolf and all the villagers dance and celebrate the end of the terror of the skies, and after the party, all the men and women and children and every animal sleep peacefully. A little spider crawls into one of the buildings of the village.

After the celebrations, Wolf says his farewells to Chief Little Deer and the village. Little Deer says the warrior is welcome back anytime.

On Wolf's serene and beautiful journey home, nature has been restored. All the animals are out and none are hidden from the Great Wasp. Where the sun shines the unmatched beauty of the Tsa'la'gi's home is on full display. The sky is blue, and the mountains that puff smoke in the air lay bare for all to see as the sun lays its head upon their bosoms. When the sun rises, the green grass lays wet from rain, and the trees sway with a gentle breeze. The cries of elk and mountain bison and the chirping of birds bring a calm that Wolf has not experienced in days. Wolf drinks from the rivers and feasts on the fruits of the wild, and, eventually, the smoke of his village shows him the way, and there his people wait for him.

There the people welcome the warrior. Seeing his scars and hearing his words, the people celebrate and dance till night comes, and when Wolf sleeps, he holds his wife close to him and his children too, happy to see them once more. As the days go by the village begins to prosper slowly. Warriors are made once again, and Wolf brings his sons to fish. The rushing water soothes Wolf as he tells his sons what to do. "You're doing well son" The boy jabs the water with his spear catching a fish.

"Look Father," he says as he presents his spear with his catch on it.

"Good, do you know what that is?" Wolf says pointing at the fish

"A rainbow trout," the boy says thinking to himself

"Good, here put it in here." Wolf presents a basket, and his boy places the bleeding and wet fish into the woven cage.

A cry of a hellish beast rings throughout the forest, shaking Wolf and his son. The ground shakes beneath their feet and the trees sway without a breeze, like a giant is walking. In a panic, Wolf and his boy begin to run back to the village. The ground shakes, and Wolf can hear the stomping behind him. It is catching up. Wolf picks up his son and runs even faster, but it does not matter. Wolf reaches the end of the forest, and there in the plain he throws his son forward, trying to spare him from the monster. Wolf turns to face the beast but is met by a familiar face. Standing above him, as tall as the pine trees and with his horns, the giant speaks, "I have come to see the great Wolf Killer."

"I am him," Wolf says, hiding his fear with confidence.

"Then hear me. I, Judaculla, shall tell who is a great enemy of your people. The Hated One knows no bounds, and he will come for you and those you love. The spear of the thunder beings chose you, but The Hated One is stronger than it, for he has existed before man. He shall destroy man, for when he was conceived, he waited for man and swore to end man, but the ancient warriors of long passed battles sealed the being in the underworld and removed his name from history. He has returned and with him the unbearable sins he carries."

Judaculla hands Wolf three items: a medicine mask, a deer jaw, and a bear pelt to wear.

"These items are blessed by me, and the animals have sworn to become yours to slay The Hated One. When the being is slain, their spirits shall go to the world above this and they shall dance and celebrate in your name. The deer of your knife forgave your people for the crime your people committed against them. The bear was once Tsa'la'gi and he chose to become your cloak for he heard your tale and wishes to assist you. The mask is for you to lay witness to the true

form of the beast, for without it you shall go ill with madness.” The giant, snake-eyed, horned man looks into the small warrior like an eagle catching a mouse. “The Tsa’la’gi people will suffer if The Hated One is left to run amok. I leave it to you to slay it.”

The giant leaves, and his stomping shakes the trees again. Out from the other treeline, a war band comes to back their greatest warrior. With war cries and whooping they prepare for a phantom battle, but to the band's disappointment there is no battle, only the Wolf Killer and the supplies that were blessed and given to him by the giant. Wolf Killer turns to address the band. “We must return to the village now,” he says, and the band rushes back to the village, which is thankfully safe. They call a meeting with the clans and their matriarchs and the chiefs of peace and war, and they sit in their respective spots in the council house, waiting for Wolf Killer to tell of the news.

Wolf Killer sits cross-legged in the center of the council house, in front of the flames that puff out smoke through the roof and immense steam to bring out all the bad medicine within everyone. “My people,” says Wolf, “Judaculla has addressed me to slay The Hated One with these items.” He points to the items which are held by three of his closest friends. “He told me that the being will try and destroy us, so we must be prepared for a war with a being which is unlike we have ever seen.”

“We already have slain the Wasp, and now a beast of unfathomable power seeks to destroy us once more?” cries a woman from the Long Hair clan.

“How do we even have a chance against such a being?” cries one from the Paint.

“No. We mustn't give up. We put our faith in Wolf Killer,” says one from Wild Potato.

Everyone starts speaking over one another until Wolf Killer yells for the house to settle down. “My people! Please hear me. I will slay this beast with my hands, and the thunder beings alongside Judaculla will assist me.” Everyone quits talking but doubt lingers in their minds as they look down in shame, as if they know they have lost.

A woman speaks from the Wolf clan. “Why don't we seek the Little People to assist us?”

“The Little People? They will not assist us,” a man says.

“But they have before. With the Sun's daughter before,” she says

“If I remember correctly, we messed that up, making the Little People doubt us,” says another man.

“Maybe, but we must try,” she says and so the council concludes. Wolf Killer is told to seek the Little People, and he goes off into the mountains, where the animals watch like speculators of a play that is a tragedy in which the Tsa’la’gi face the one who knows of unbound hatred. When Wolf is walking he can see little shadow figures dart and drift past him like hallucinations. Voices ring throughout the forest and his vision begins to warp and twist, until he falls asleep. When he awakes, he is bound by vines, a magic unknown to him. Out from the brush comes the Little People who look at Wolf Killer like a murderer coming to finish what he started. They speak in dialects unknown to him. It is Tsa’la’gi, but he has never heard it. He speaks “Little People, I've come for your assistance against The Hated One.”

They groan at the sound of the name uttered by Wolf, like he just cursed an entire family to damnation.

One of them speaks. "We do not wish to assist you. Your people are weak and foolish and tempted by desire even when told not to follow through with such desires."

Another says, "Your kind ought to be disappointed because your eldest of ancestors killed one another."

The Little People laugh at Wolf Killer's attempt to sway them.

"You fools," Wolf says.

"Watch your mouth," says a little person twisting Wolf's limbs unnaturally. "You have no chance."

"And neither will you," Wolf Killer says. "The Hated One he will come for you too."

The Little People murmur to one another.

"He knows no weakness for he has none, that is why we must work together to defeat a being," Wolf says.

After a moment of silence, one of the Little People speaks. "We will help you, but you must help us."

"What do you need?" Wolf asks.

"West of here lies a garden of beauty of fertility, but a monster has taken hold of such a place. She picks the flowers that grow there and uses magic to wither anything she doesn't desire, which is mostly everything in the forest. Beware she shapeshifts into a beautiful woman and charms her prey into falling for her. Beware her finger, for it is like a spear."

The Little People release their magic hold on Wolf. He gets up and walks westward when he comes across the garden the Little People spoke of. He enters, and in the center, a lone rose grows where all the others wilt and die. The rose is a magnificent deep, somber red, and it drips water and blood. Its thorns warn those who approach it. Out of nowhere, a woman approaches Wolf.

"Hello," she says, and Wolf turns and points his spear at her. "Please don't hurt me."

"Who are you?" he asks.

"I'm Water Fall," she says, her hands in the air.

"The Little People told me of a shapeshifter. Are you her?"

"No. I tend the garden every year. I just now arrived for this year."

Wolf sets the spear next to him with it pointing at the sky. He looks at one of her fingers that juts out like a knife. "What is the matter with your finger?"

"It's deformed," she says picking up a basket and placing the finger in it. "I do not show it to people because they think I'm evil."

"Have you used medicine?"

"I used to, but after my finger, I no longer dabble in such magic." She looks past Wolf.

"Oh, no," she says, tears forming in her eyes. "The garden."

She runs over to the garden. "Did you do this?"

"No," Wolf says. "An evil witch has cursed this land. She matches your description."

“I would never do such a thing.”

Wolf walks over to her. “I’ll help you with your garden.”

She looks at Wolf, wiping her tears away.

“Thank you,” she says. After an hour of cleaning up the mess the witch caused, Water Fall walks up to Wolf Killer. “Thank you again. It’s getting pretty late. Why don’t you come with me to my home? It’s just down the hill.”

“I appreciate the offer, but I must find the witch which plagues this land,” Wolf says.

“Oh, come on. It’s just right there.” She grabs Wolf’s hand and leads him down the hill to her house “See?”

Wolf looks the house up and down, a humble home where smoke plumes out of the roof.

“Why not?” says Wolf as the woman giggles and leads him inside. She introduces him to his room, and after a meal with her, he walks to it and falls asleep soundly.

“Wake up, wake up,” a voice says, waking Wolf. He looks for the source, his head pounding from pain. On his chest, a sparrow sits. “Her heart, her heart, aim for her heart,” it says “What?” he asks.

“Oh, no,” the sparrow says and flies away. At the entrance to his room, a white-eyed haired figure stands looking at Wolf. Its finger deformed, like a spear. Wolf tries to move but he cannot. The dinner that he ate must have hindered him.

“Hehehe, you did not notice, but I fed you raw deer meat and the chief of them cursed you to not move.” This rang true. Wolf was cursed by the true chief Little Deer. The witch approaches him with her true form on display, a ragged old woman who stands before him. Her skin looks cracked and withered, and she stands over Wolf, looming over him like a predator ready to eat its prey. Slowly walking toward him with her glowing eyes, she says, “I will feast on your liver.”

Wolf is in her home but then is immediately outside. Chanting from the forest has removed the curse on him, and a tree removes a branch and, with the help of a spider, a bow is crafted. A sparrow drops three arrows for him. “Her heart, her heart!” it cries.

Wolf hides in the brush and the witch comes out. “Come back, I’m hungry and you’re pretty good looking. I bet your liver tastes wonderful.”

He follows the voice, and when he sees the witch, he fires an arrow at her chest, but the arrow simply bounces off like a thick boar hide. With a laugh, the witch runs at him. Another bird, a chickadee says, “Her hand, her hand!” The sparrow follows with “Her heart, her heart!” Wolf realizes and dodges the witch’s oncoming attack. After a quick roll to the side, he aims his bow and arrow and shoots the witch’s right hand. She cries in pain and begins to die, her body cracking and turning into dust.

Among the rubble which was SpearFinger lies a rose. Wolf picks it up and carries it back into the garden, where it grows and brings life back to the garden. Out from the brush in the forest, the Little People approach Wolf Killer.

“We have seen your triumph over the witch, and we agree to assist you on your journey. The bow you wield was Kana’ti’s, the first of your people.” The Little People surround Wolf and

dance and chant, and after that, they bring out two stickball sticks. “These were used by the two mammals who became birds,” they say, and they attach a cardinal feather to Wolf’s spear. “This is from the sun’s daughter.” The feather burns ever brightly, and it crackles and pops like a fire

“These will assist in slaying the beast,” they say. Their final gift to Wolf was a satchel made of a wolf pelt. “This satchel will help you carry what you need to destroy the ancient evil.”

One of the Little People comes up to Wolf, who kneels to match his height. “To the south lies strawberries where She’lu wept. Collect them for the beast is weak to strong, positive emotions like that of love.”

With the advice of the Little People and their blessings, Wolf heads south from the eternal garden to where strawberries lay. He picks 70 of them and puts them into his satchel. They glow with an intense red and pulse as if they are little hearts. Wolf begins his trek back to his village, but he is stopped by seven boys who float midair.

“Wolf,” says one boy, “you are not yet prepared to face such a beast.”

Another speaks. “Your blessed items are plenty, but such a curse like The Hated One will not be weakened enough to die.”

“Then tell me ever-so-wise children,” Wolf says mocking them, “what do you propose?”

“This forest was once a village,” says a boy. “But it fell into ruin after it came.”

“What came?” asks Wolf.

“The Uktena,” says another boy.

“The Uktena?”

“Indeed, he was a fragile boy when we knew him.”

“We were his bullies.”

“For he was weak and unfit for war.”

“So he took his life down by the river.”

“There he rose once more.”

“But he changed” The boys, almost like one creature speak, finishing the other’s sentences.

“He became an enormous serpent.”

“With wings like an eagle.”

“He had four antlers on his head.”

“And in the center was a crystal.”

“Which drew anyone into it.”

“Making them its prey.”

“Why are you telling me this?” Wolf asks.

“Its crystal grants power to those who can kill it.”

“But it is too great, killing anyone who uses it.”

“Unless their cause is just, then it grants them the power of unrivaled medicine.”

“Take the crystal, and let it judge you. Then you will be prepared.”

“Where is this Uktena?” Wolf asks.

A boy points behind Wolf, his arm pale as the moonlight. Wolf looks to see where the boy is pointing, but only six pine trees stand before him. Wolf is used to the oddities that happen before he begins once more another adventure. His legs hurt from the long walks he has endured. He drinks from the rivers and eats the berries in the forest. When he nears a lake, he feels a presence. The presence lures him closer to the water, and as he peers over the edge he sees something deep in the waters beginning to rapidly come toward him. He jumps out of the way, and with a hard splash the serpent rises. The serpent's antlers, wings, and gem are on display, and it flies high above Wolf. Wolf throws the spear, and with a loud crack of thunder, a thousand bolts follow. But the serpent knows what is coming, dodging the spear almost as if it has fought a being of thunder before. Wolf pulls out his bow and arrow, but this makes him slower. Taking his eyes off the serpent is foolish, for the beast cuts Wolf as tries to dodge. The immense venom causes him to writhe in pain. He calls the spear back. He needs a plan -- and fast -- for the serpent to come once more. Wolf jumps into the water, creating a small splash, and following it comes the serpent, which causes the water to splash onto the trees surrounding it. Wolf looks to the surface where the Serpent comes to eat him like a fish. The serpent is smart but it has never fought someone here, and so Wolf causes the water to be struck by lightning, paralyzing the snake. Wolf remains unfazed, almost like he is one of the thunder beings himself. He takes his spear and jabs the eye of the serpent. He takes the spear and cuts out the gem from the serpent, which bleeds in the water and dies. Wolf takes the ever-brilliant, radiant crystal to the surface, and on the shore, as he gasps for air, he throws it but it does not crack. When he has caught his breath, Wolf goes to the crystal and peers into it. He feels as if the crystal is looking into him, reading his thoughts. Wolf can feel something grow inside him, some unknown power, and a small serpent grows on top of his head. Wolf hadn't realized the blood of the magnificent serpent is on his head and arm. On his arm a tattoo of the serpent grows, and with his new tattoo, power. He gathers his items and runs until he finally arrives back at his village. The village looks unharmed, so he goes home where his wife and children play. When he returns to his children, they look at the serpent which has wrapped itself on top of his head. They ask what happened and where he was, questions he says he will answer later as he and his wife enter their home.

"I was so worried," she says, embracing Wolf. Wolf looks upon his wife; her beauty shines ever more brightly now that the worn warrior sees her face. If his wife is not the pinnacle of beauty, then there is none.

"Well, I'm here now." Wolf and his wife embrace for a minute until she breaks the silence.

"So do you have what you need to destroy it?" she asks.

"Yes."

"Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Then prepare," she says. Wolf is not looking at his wife but he knows her voice, and that is not hers. He looks at her as her face morphs and The Hated One's uncanny grin appears. Wolf pushes his false wife away.

“She cried for mercy for her children and for her people,” The Hated One says. “They cried for you. They begged for your return, but you did not come.”

“Be quiet!” Wolf throws his spear at the beast. The bolts strike him down and the flames burn him, but he still stands. Wolf runs out of his home and sees the half-eaten corpses of his family and community. His village is dead. He falls to his knees and sobs, but the beast roars and so he gets back up and puts on the mask which was given to him. The true form of The Hated One rises from the burning home of the Wolf. It stands twenty feet tall, and when it steps out from the flames, the charred body shows the amalgamation of multiple animals at once. His human face is at his belly but he has six arms each from a different animal -- one a bear, another a deer, a possum, a spider, and he had two legs each a grotesque mimic of normal animals, one like a wolf's another like a bird's. Its mouth can eat an entire bear whole; the teeth of the beast look like a death trap of spears. It has black hair surrounding its body and it reeks of death. Its head takes the shapes of many animals, an owl, dog, cat, and others, but its face is beyond recognition. It has three eyes, one closed on its forehead or what you would call the mass. The eye sits incorrectly, vertically. The monster taunts Wolf and slams an arm against him, sending Wolf flying and coughing up blood. The bear pelt saves him from certain death, but in that pain, he puts on the mask which was given to him, and with it, he catches his breath and feels as if he is unstoppable. The beast, in the voice of thousands who suffered and were eaten by it, says, “Anyone would have gone mad by now but the great warrior still stands with his mind intact.” Wolf hides from the monster and climbs on top of a building where he aims and shoots the beast with Kana'ti's bow and arrows. The beast moans in pain and turns to face his opponent, who throws strawberries at the beast. When the fruit hits the beast, it attacks Wolf again. Wolf narrowly dodges the attack and counters with his attack of hellfire of arrows and strawberries. The beast begins to feel something it has never felt before, fear. The beast becomes wilder with its attacks, flailing about like a crying baby, hitting the Wolf back and knocking the bear pelt off him. When he looks back, the beast has jumped and is planning on crushing him. Wolf dodges the attack and shoots arrows at the beast as it lands, but the beast opens the vertical third eye and that paralyzes Wolf with a piercing sound that makes his ears bleed and an immense glow of red that comes from the eye. In the red are white circles wrapped around the iris like the rings of a tree, and the iris is a grotesque yellow. The beast smacks Wolf, sending him flying back into his burning home.

It laughs, but a crack of thunder sounds as the spear strikes the beast. After the spear's immense power and the weakening effects of the strawberries, the beast falls and bleeds. Wolf calls the spear back, and it flies back to him like a tamed eagle. With it, he stabs the beast directly in its glowing eye, and the blood that gushes out soaks Wolf in red, pushing him back with its force. The beast in its thousands of voices cries in pain, and it rears its head back, which is a cue for lightning to strike the spear, causing the beast to cry even more. The beast burns and then fades away like dust in the wind.

Wolf was weak and with nowhere to go. He lays on the ground next to his collapsing, burning home and watches the sunset, breathing his last. The sun shines on him, warming the

cold face of the dying warrior. The smoke and fire leave stiff smells in the air. Wolf sheds a single tear, for he had succeeded but failed.

“The Things I Do For Love” by Gabe Terrell

“It’s too dangerous! You can’t!” Fenton heard his fiance call from behind as he began slipping his leather jacket on. They had been contacted by Ravage, and he knew it was dangerous. Almost certainly a trap. But he couldn’t risk them hurting innocents if he didn’t show... “I don’t recall assigning you as leader,” he snapped in response, placing his specialty-made mask over his jaw. “I’m not, but you know as well as me how shady this is!” Fenton quickly turned, his pupils changing to their feral state as he hissed in response. “And *you* know that we can’t pass up this opportunity if it’s true!” Penelope grabbed his shoulders, but he swiftly pulled himself away. “But it isn’t, you *know* that!” **“I can’t take that chance!”** He yelled, his other half’s gravelly voice showing itself as he did... “He’s offering a full pardon, even if we didn’t do anything wrong, we are considered the bad guys!” His wings protruded from his back, and he walked over to the window. “Then at least let me come with you!” Fenton turned his head to look at her, pulling off his mask & walking over to embrace her in a kiss... she was taken off guard, but submitted to return the show of affection to her soon-to-be husband. “You need to stay. This doesn’t involve you. They only want me. Then they’ll leave all of you alone.” He walked back to the window, Penelope trying to follow, but her legs suddenly felt weak, her body limp... “You son of a- You!” Fenton grinned as he put his mask over his mouth. “Relax, it’s just chloroform...” He jumped out the window, his wings catching the wind as he looked back through the window... “If I don’t return *cara*, take care of them for me. They will need a leader...”

It was stormy, an uncommon occurrence in Mason City, and Fenton sat on a rooftop at the agreed meeting place. It was nearly 6. They would be here soon. As he took a last, long drag from his cigarette, he heard something behind him. Manifestation... “I thought I told everyone to stay put...” Fenton looked over his shoulder, to see who he had expected, his teammate, Hayden. A shadow mutant. “You did, but after finding Psycho lying unconscious in your bedroom. I figured I had probable cause to disobey your orders.” Fenton looked away, “You figured wrong, I don’t want any of you here. I’m finishing this, once & for all.” He flicked the cigarette off the roof & stood up, walking closer and getting in Hayden’s face. “And I don’t want any of you, getting hurt in the process.” Hayden pushed him back “I don’t care what you *want*, I’m not leaving you to fight this battle alone!” “There isn’t going to be a battle! Just *LEAVE!*” Hayden suddenly changed into his black shadow form. “How can you be so sure!? These people are our worst ene-” Fenton screamed back, cutting him off. “Because I’m turning myself in!” Hayden’s eyes widened, as he watched tears streamed down his leader’s face... “What?” “You heard me,

I'm turning myself in. Giving them the only person from that damn experiment they care about! Me..." Hayden tried to put his hand on Fenton's shoulder, only to have it slapped away. "I know it's crazy, but he gave me his word. If they can have me, they'll leave all of you be... You'll be safe again, free to go back to being a teenager & living with your families!" Fenton turned his back on Hayden. "So just... Go."

“A Restaurant Nightmare” by Abreana Hornbuckle

In the heart of a busy city stood a quaint little restaurant known for its traditional cuisine and charming atmosphere. However, behind its inviting exterior lurked a dark secret known only to a few.

The restaurant was run by a group of cunning and spiteful individuals who had mastered the art of deception and manipulation. Led by the mysterious Chef Roe, they were not your ordinary kitchen staff; they were a secret society that thrived on chaos and conflict.

Under the appearance of flawless service and mouth-watering dishes, the restaurant workers carried out their sinister deeds. They would tamper with orders, adding ingredients that would induce strange and unsettling effects on unsuspecting customers. One bite of their special dishes could plunge a person into a world of nightmares and hallucinations.

Despite their wicked ways, the restaurant flourished, drawing in patrons from far and wide who were drawn in by its alluring menu and exquisite presentation. Little did they know, they were stepping into a realm of darkness orchestrated by the evil minds in the kitchen.

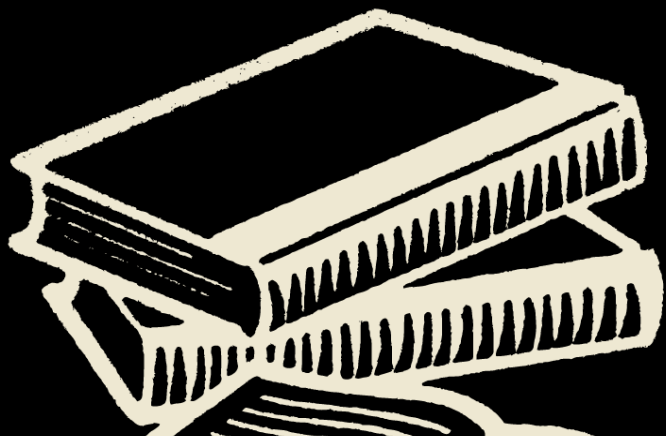
As time passed, whispers began to spread about the restaurant's eerie reputation. Stories of diners experiencing night terrors, hallucinations, and inexplicable illnesses after dining there became common tales in the city.

Yet the allure of the restaurant was too strong for some, and they continued to flock to it, ignorant of the dangers that lurked within. The restaurant workers revealed their power, relishing in the havoc they wreaked upon those who dared to enter their domain.

But every tale of darkness eventually meets its end. One fateful night, a brave investigative journalist uncovered the truth behind the restaurant's sinister operations. With evidence in hand, the authorities swooped in, shutting down the establishment and apprehending the wicked workers.

The once-charming restaurant now stood abandoned, its walls holding the echoes of the evil that had once thrived within. And as the city moved on, the story of the evil restaurant workers became a cautionary tale, a reminder of how even the most inviting places can harbor the darkest of secrets.

ACADEMIC WRITING



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Dillard
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The Cherokee Language and the Importance of Revitalization

The EBCI is the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and it is a sovereign nation. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians were once part of a much larger Cherokee Nation population. However, when the Trail of Tears was mandated, and forced removal and relocation were directed by the US government and then President Andrew Jackson, the Cherokee Tribe became divided into what is known today as the Cherokee Nation and United Kituwah Band, located in Oklahoma, and the Eastern Band. The Indian removal act changed the language in multiple ways. When the government removed us from our land and people, they would not let us speak our language. If you did, they would punish you. One of the reasons we had a decrease in our language is when they did the Indian Removal Act they would take kids to boarding schools and make them learn English and religion (“The Cherokee Language”). They would not let the native students speak their language while they were at school. If they did they would beat them (“The Cherokee Language”).

The Indian Removal Act was signed into law on May 28, 1830, which was authorized by Andrew Jackson. This law granted the government lands west of the Mississippi in exchange within the existing border for land by Native American people when our people resisted this policy. During the fall and winter of 1838 and 1839, my people were forcibly removed from our homeland (“The Cherokee Language”). Approximately 4,000 Cherokee Elders, women and children were forcibly removed. They were subjected to a cold winter without heat, food or shelter. So their parents didn’t teach them the language. Some kids that went to boarding schools in 1870 could not speak to their parents because they would keep them at the boarding schools and not let them go home.

Another reason for language loss is once again a judgment call made by the United States government. It stems from when in History the words were harshly spoken, “kill the Indian, save the child.” This began during the boarding school era. When the United States government was taking children from homes and putting them into boarding schools run state and religious boarding schools. A lot of our people were treated cruelly and inhumanly to such a degree that when they became parents to their own children, they did not want the child to suffer as they did, so they did not teach the language to their children.

Also in the early sixties Native children were put on a black market by people who worked for the federal government in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (social services). Native children were sold to non-speaking parents. People who had the money bought these children for a high price. The BIA worker would convince a Native mother into believing she could not raise

her child because of the poverty level that a single mother was in during this time. In some incidents, the mother would be told her child died during childbirth only to be sold to some total stranger. The culture and language were lost in this manner. There are so many different reasons for language loss.

Another reason for language loss was intermarriage with others who did not understand English, so the couple would have to decide if they would speak English or Cherokee. And most of the time since English is such a universal language that it was the easiest for the children to learn. So they spoke nothing but English to their children.

Why is it important for the Cherokee people to keep their language? If a Cherokee Person asks why it is important to save a language, then they are not Cherokee people in their spirit, mind, and body. A Cherokee knows the value of a language. Because they know that this language was given to us by the creator. A Cherokee knows that your language is what keeps you unique as an indigenous person, and it is instilled in you from the time of birth. Your family and history are all combined into this language web.

Another reason that regaining the language is vital is to regain our uniqueness. The Cherokee lost during this time period. There is no other language like the Cherokee language in the world. The Cherokee language is a hard language to understand. “The Cherokee people were the first to have a written language, the first to have a written constitution and the first to have their own newspaper written in their mother tongue. The syllabary and the newspaper not only advanced the Cherokees’ argument that they were indeed a civilized people but also made possible even greater achievements in that ongoing advancement of learning that characterizes a civilized people” (Evangelism and Expulsion. Dennis L. Peterson Pg.138).

The New Kituwah Academy came into being in the 1990’s under the leadership of Joyce Conseen Dugan. This ideology came from other native people worldwide. One example was the Hawaiians, and another was Maoris; these people were also headed into a language loss. In 2004 a preschool immersion program was opened at the Dora Reed Childcare Center. Chief Mitchell Hicks was responsible for establishing the New Kituwah Academy. A decision was made by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation to buy the former Boundary Tree hotel and resort to renovate for the present New Kituwah Academy. This renovation cost the tribe 6.5 million dollars. A lot of the project was funded by Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and 1.3 million dollars from grants.

If a person was blessed enough with parents who did speak the Cherokee Language, such as my grandmother, then the language lived on in children like her. She talks about how everyone in the family spoke nothing but Cherokee. Even her friends during play time or riding bikes would speak only in our language. She wasn’t allowed to speak English only when it was totally necessary. She is one of the founders for the revitalization of our Cherokee people. She is very passionate about her language. Her advice to me is that without our language we are not unique in a way that we are with the language and that losing it means losing our identity as a people. She has instilled in me to keep the fight going by having myself and my sister attend the New Kituwah Academy School. My mother also worked very hard beside my grandmother to

keep the language alive in us and to keep it going within our family. It is even more important because we lost so many fluent speakers who were wisdom keepers of the language and culture to covid, health related issues such as heart disease and cancer.

We only have one hundred and fifty-five fluent language speakers alive today. This number could change as I write my report. That is why the revitalization is very important to our tribe and why the government sees the urgency of saving the language today. I value the language because my mother worked along with my grandmother to help others learn and my grandfather is a fluent speaker as well. I know that my culture is important, and it's vital that our language is taught. I spoke as a small child and was not allowed to speak English unless I was around my other family members who could not speak Cherokee. They are the people whose parents and grandparents went to boarding schools and were not given the opportunity to learn.

The language gives you the status of being a federally recognized person. If we lose our language, then the federal government could take this recognition away from our tribal people. The language is the key to making us Cherokee. The crafts and culture add to Cherokee identity. If my people lose their language, then it entails the loss of funding from the federal government, federal grants, and programs and as well as our own identity as a people.

In conclusion, the importance of revitalizing the Cherokee language is important. It is the Cherokees' original language, and if they don't help revitalize it then they will lose the language and heritage and our identity. The Cherokee language is what gives us our identity.

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The Importance of Physical Fitness

In today's busy world, staying active and fit is super important. Physical fitness isn't just about looking good; it's about feeling good and staying healthy. This paper will discuss why being physically fit is essential for our well-being and how it can improve our lives. Physical fitness is vital for individuals' emotional, neuro, and physical health and happiness.

Physical activity has many emotional benefits that can improve your overall health. One of the emotional benefits of exercise is lower stress levels, which can make you feel happier. According to research, "Increasing your heart rate can actually reverse stress-induced brain damage by stimulating the production of neurohormones like norepinephrine, which not only improve cognition and mood but improve thinking clouded by stressful events" (Five Mental Benefits of Exercise). Exercise also helps your central and sympathetic nervous systems communicate better, improving your body's response to stress. Scientific studies have shown that exercising regularly can help enhance one's mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Physical activity increases endorphins, the brain and spinal cord's production of a chemical that makes you feel happy and euphoric. Even moderate exercise over the course of a week can help improve depression and anxiety. In fact, some doctors suggest trying an exercise program for these conditions before resorting to medication.

Regular physical activity can also have a positive impact on your brain health. One of the neuro benefits of physical fitness is that it enhances cognition. In an article by Harvard Medical School, it says, "Exercise stimulates physiological changes in the body such as encouraging the production of growth factors — chemicals that affect the growth of new blood vessels in the brain, and even the abundance, survival, and overall health of new brain cells" ("Exercise Can Boost Your Memory and Thinking Skills"). Numerous studies have shown that the volume of the areas of the brain responsible for thinking and memory increases significantly in individuals who exercise compared to those who do not. Exercise also indirectly improves memory and thinking. It enhances mood and promotes better sleep while reducing stress and anxiety, both of which can cause or worsen cognitive impairment.

Now, on to the physical benefits. Physical fitness comprises Endurance, Musculoskeletal Strength, Flexibility, and Body Composition. According to research found at Cleveland Clinic, "Cardiovascular endurance, or aerobic fitness, is how well your heart and lungs can supply the oxygen you need while you exercise at medium to high intensity" (How to Improve Cardiovascular Endurance). If you have this good cardiovascular endurance, the intensity of your exercise can be higher and for more extended periods before exhaustion sets in. This can happen because good endurance allows for a more increased stream of oxygen to circulate through the body and to the brain. Strong cardiovascular endurance allows your body to move your blood efficiently so you can get more oxygen to your cells. This oxygen works like gas for a car does

and keeps the body running. Muscle strength is the ability to put out more force or lift more weight. Muscle endurance is the number of times you can lift that weight without getting tired. In a passage by Healthlink BC, it says, “Muscular strength and endurance are two important parts of your body’s ability to move, lift things, and do day-to-day activities” (Content Map Terms). Muscular strength has to do with force and weight. One example of this is how much an athlete can weightlift. This would show the athlete’s strength. Muscular endurance is about timing. For example, how long can an athlete lift their muscular strength weight before exhausting themselves? Muscle strength and endurance also contribute to bone health. Exercise that puts stress on bones stimulates bone-forming cells to activate. Another study by Harvard Health states, “That stress comes from the tugging and pushing on bone that occurs during strength training (as well as weight-bearing aerobic exercises like walking or running)” (*Strength training builds more than muscles*, 2024). This stress can lead to the development of more robust and denser bones in the body.

Flexibility is vital for injury prevention because it enables the body to move smoothly and efficiently, reducing the likelihood of strains, sprains, and other injuries. A rehabilitation and physical therapy center called STI explains that “By stretching, you can directly improve your performance. Lifting, bending, and running get a little easier when you prioritize your range of motion” (How Does Stretching Prevent Injury to Your Body, 2018). When muscles and joints are flexible, they can absorb impact and stress more effectively, minimizing the risk of overloading and damage during physical activities. Additionally, flexibility contributes to better posture and alignment, which helps distribute forces evenly across the body, preventing undue strain on specific muscles or joints. A greater range of motion provided by flexibility also allows for more controlled movements, reducing the chances of sudden twists or jerks that could lead to injury. Overall, maintaining flexibility through stretching and mobility exercises is essential for keeping the body resilient and reducing the risk of injury during both everyday movements and more strenuous activities.

Body composition “refers to the percentage of fat, bone, and muscle in your body” (Body Composition: Health, Body Fat, and More). In the context of physical fitness, body composition is an important aspect as it directly influences overall health and athletic performance. Roxana Rhodes notes that “Scientific evidence shows that a healthy body composition will increase your lifespan by reducing the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, insulin resistance, etc., increasing energy levels, and improving self-esteem” (“Why Is Your Body Composition So Important?”, 2020).

Arguing that physical fitness is negative is challenging as it goes against what most people agree upon, that maintaining physical fitness is beneficial. However, an excessive focus on physical fitness can lead to adverse outcomes. First, obsession with physical fitness may result in the development of body dysmorphia or eating disorders, as individuals become overly obsessed with achieving a perfect body image. This obsession can lead to unhealthy behaviors, such as extreme dieting, over-exercising, or reliance on performance-enhancing substances such as steroids. Furthermore, prioritizing physical fitness above all else may lead to neglect of other

aspects of health, such as mental and emotional well-being and social relationships. This narrow focus on physical appearance and performance can contribute to feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and social isolation. Moreover, extreme exercise or intense physical training can lead to injuries, chronic pain, and long-term health problems if not balanced with proper rest and recovery.

Ty Andrews, a high school track coach and a former athlete himself, completed an interview on the topic of physical fitness. Ty was first asked how many years of experience he had, either taking part in physical fitness or coaching kids in physical fitness. This question was asked in order to show his expertise in the topic. He said, “I have always been an active person, but I didn’t start sports until I was in high school. I ran XC and track, and since then, I have been an avid runner and I’ve been a coach for XC and track for about 9 years now” (Andrews, 2024). Second, he was asked, “What do you feel are the positive or negative outcomes of physical fitness on neurohealth?” His answer was, “I believe that being physically active can drastically improve our mental health. Research has shown that being active regularly increases our happiness and overall well-being both physically and mentally” (Andrews, 2024). Third, he was asked, “What do you feel are the positive or negative outcomes of physical fitness on emotional health?” His answer was, “Pretty much the same as the previous answer. Being active relieves stress and builds confidence in ourselves and our abilities. Reaching fitness goals and milestones greatly improves our emotional health” (Andrews, 2024). Next, he was asked, “What do you feel are the positive or negative outcomes of physical fitness on physical health?” He said, “Almost all physical activity is going to improve our physical health. Active people typically live longer, healthier lives than non-active people. The only negative aspect of physical activity would be the increased potential for injury if a person isn’t training properly. Even then, the benefits outweigh the risks” (Andrews, 2024). He was then asked to think about advice he would give both athletes and future coaches. He said for athletes, “Start small, focus on what you can control. Work up to meeting your goals. Not a single athlete alive won a race or set a record without training over time. Getting in shape takes time. People today are increasingly faced with instant gratification. We want to see results immediately, but working out requires us to learn how to have delayed gratification. You will see results, but it will take time, so just stick with it” (Andrews, 2024). In regard to coaches, he believes “a great coach should practice what they preach. So, a running coach needs to be running with their athletes as much as possible. A coach is also a mentor and can teach good or bad habits. As a mentor, coaches should try to teach not only good workouts and training but also healthy eating habits. I think coaches also need to keep in mind that winning comes second to having fun and fostering lifelong fitness goals in our athletes” (Andrews, 2024). Finally, Mr. Andrews was asked, “Is there any question that wasn’t asked that you feel would be important to add to the topic of this interview?” He said, “Just one thing: I’ve never met someone who regretted being physically fit” (Andrews, 2024).

In conclusion, physical fitness is important for the emotional, neuro, and physical health and happiness of individuals. Engaging in regular exercise and maintaining a balanced diet not only enhances physical strength, endurance, and flexibility but also reduces the risk of chronic

diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Moreover, physical fitness contributes to mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression while promoting cognitive function and overall happiness. By prioritizing physical fitness, individuals can lead healthier, more fulfilling lives, ensuring longevity and vitality for themselves and future generations.

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8 February 2024

The Importance of Mental Health Issues in High School Athletes

High school athletes are highly decorated by their community. Many people come out to support their local high school teams, whether parents, family, or alumni, and the athletes contribute to both the social environment and athletics in their communities. Yet there has only been growth in attention to stressors and challenges faced by high school athletes in recent years, despite the attention surrounding them. Still, though, the stigma surrounding mental health issues often pushes athletes away from seeking the help they need. Due to this, many athletes tend to suffer in silence, which inhibits their ability to perform at their best, whether in athletics or the classroom. Because of these effects, awareness of mental health in high school athletes is fundamental, yet still overlooked.

Athletes can suffer from various types of mental disorders due to their sport/sports. The top three most common are anxiety, mood disorders, and eating disorders. Health Psychology Research studied the prevalence of stress amongst high school athletes. Their objectives were to determine the severity of stress due to sports, how athletes cope, if they want help, and if it seriously affects them. The method they used was a survey given to 200 student-athletes, ages 16-17, males and females, of different ethnicities, locations, and sports. The results showed that 91% of athletes experienced moderate stress, yet 27% said they experienced extreme stress and wanted but never received help. The leading causes of stress were fear of failure and self-expectations. The other top causes of stress totaled at 45% saying fear of judgment, 35% impractical self-expectations, 34% said coach pressure, and 21% said parent pressure. This study shows that not only are athletes suffering from anxiety but 182 out of 200 athletes are struggling with at least moderate anxiety. Also, it shows that 54 out of 200 athletes have suffered from extreme anxiety and have wanted help but never received it. The takeaway from this survey shows that this is a huge issue and anxiety is the number one issue faced by athletes today.

The second most common mental health issue found in athletes is mood disorders, which include depression, bipolar disorder, and substance-induced depression. Depression's age of onset is perceived to be 22, yet in recent years has been decreasing. The NCAA in their book *Mind, Body and Sport* states that "fifteen to 20 percent of the population will suffer an episode of depression in their lifetime, and it is among the most common conditions a sports psychiatrist will treat" (Stull Pg.1). Depression has become increasingly common in athletes, whether they are struggling on the court, anxiety is worsening, or an injury has them down. Symptoms include weight changes, lack or major increase in appetite, lack of enjoyment, and performance deterioration. Other common symptoms and behaviors associated with depression are loss of interest, sleep and energy issues, lack or inability to concentrate, and increased anxiety which makes you more irritable. The NCAA also states that "Males are more likely to present with anger and excessive alcohol use." This is not to say female athletes also don't struggle with substance use issues related to athletics. Depression is seen all over by any level athlete. It can influence someone's decisions whether long-term or short-term.

The third most common issue is eating disorders. Eating disorders are more common in females than males, and also more common in sports such as wrestling, gymnastics, cross country, and swimming/diving. The top features in female athletes are impaired eating and osteoporosis.

Impaired eating is the equivalent of having an unhealthy relationship with food. This is the early stages of an eating disorder. The symptoms could be restrictive eating, compulsive eating, or irregular eating patterns. The most common cause of impaired eating is dieting. Most people who diet or attempt to don't know how to do it properly and end up harming themselves more than improving. If you decide to diet, it is important to talk to your doctor and find a well-known and reliable dietician to help you. If not, poor eating habits are what can lead to osteoporosis.

What is osteoporosis and how does it affect athletes? Osteoporosis is a bone disease that causes decay and decreased bone density. Any athlete who struggles with eating disorders can easily develop osteoporosis. Eating disorders are harmful to your bones at any point in your life, yet in earlier stages, such as your teenage years, bones will not grow as dense and strong as they possibly could. The earlier an eating disorder occurs and the longer someone suffers from it, the greater the risk of osteoporosis occurring. This can affect athletes by making them more susceptible to breaking, fracturing bones, and other injuries.

What causes this and what are some of the top stressors? A big one people don't realize is coaches. Coaches are easily among the most influential people in a young athlete's life. Most coaches can make or break athletes. This is due to multiple factors, such as coaching style, playing time, and favoritism. Coaching style can hurt athletes, because some may use a totalitarian type of leadership. The Connection interviewed athletes and wrote an article "Fostering a fear-based environment: Coach behavior needs to change in high-performance sport." The article regarded how a coach can affect an athlete. This article states, "Not surprisingly, athletes said they feel physically and emotionally unsafe when their coach is overly

aggressive. They gave examples of aggressive language and its delivery — from being screamed at, to having their coach in their face yelling — and how they equated it to belittling, having their character attacked and confidence broken” (Alison Doherty, Professor of Sport Management, et al.). A totalitarian style coach may use the aggressive behaviors described above. These behaviors can cause athletes, as stated above, to feel unsafe, insecure, and uncomfortable. This can lead to developing anxiety, depression, and many other issues.

Another way coaches can affect an athlete's mental health is favoritism. The article also states, “The athletes we spoke with talked about feeling excluded and isolated due to very little interaction with their coach, or having their coach show favoritism to another athlete. They explained that being left out or overlooked makes them feel unseen and puts them at risk of falling behind. One athlete told us that their coach would never speak to them or look them in the eye. Here too, athletes feel intimidated and powerless to engage” (Doherty et al.). This suggests that coaches who have unhealthy communication and relationships with their athletes harm the athlete's mental health.

Another factor that causes athletes to feel stressed or uncomfortable in their environment is toxic teammates. Toxic teammates are players with bad attitudes who tend to drag down the whole team, or they are lazy and set the team back from meeting goals. The Enterprise Project published the article “How to deal with a toxic teammate.” This article states, “The impact on the team and larger organization can be just as devastating. A toxic team member casts a pall over the team and is a drag on the performance of each individual on the team and the whole team” (Overby). This talks about how a toxic teammate can affect the productivity of a team. This doesn't necessarily create mental health issues on its own. With a mix of unhealthy coaches and teammates, an athlete can become burnt out very easily. Frustration, unhappiness, and constant feeling of pressure caused by this can lead to anxiety. When interviewed, Kenzie Eagleman stated, “There were always a couple who had horrible attitudes that made everyone on the team miserable” (Kenzie). This shows how she and her team were negatively impacted by the attitudes of just a couple of athletes on her team. Athletes can be affected by all the people around them and their environments.

But how can we prevent burnout and mental health issues?

By creating healthier environments and having awareness of what athletes are struggling with.

Trine University published an article called “How Can Athletes Maintain Good Mental Health.” The article states multiple ways an athlete can protect and improve their mental health. Mental fatigue is important. As this lowers, it can affect an athlete's physical and mental performance, making an athlete feel worse about themselves and becoming a continuous cycle that leads to depression and anxiety. This can be caused by setting and not reaching unrealistic goals. If your goal is to become the best athlete to ever live, then you won't succeed. The article states, “Having a list of goals instead of one big end goal will increase your mental health.” (Trine). So instead of dreaming big, think realistically. When you treat your body correctly and

make sure you are taking care of yourself, even in hard stressful times, it can help with mental fatigue and your overall health.

In conclusion, mental health in high school athletics has become a recent struggle yet still is overlooked. Athletes, due to a stigma around mental health, have resorted to suffering on their own, facing depression, anxiety, and many other mental illnesses all on their own.

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Athletes and Their Mental Health

Mental health in athletes has been a growing problem over the years, especially since sports have been growing in size. Several years ago, a study found that college athletes reported symptoms of depression at a similar rate to the general student population, which can cause bigger problems as time goes by. When it comes to athletes and their mental health, it's really important to take it seriously. Data and research show that up to 38 percent of female athletes and 22 percent of male athletes suffer from a mental illness, which can lead to stress, eating disorders, burnout, or depression and anxiety (NCAA.org). Looking at this data, it shows that athletes' mental health needs to be taken seriously and not overlooked, because the obstacles that they deal with can negatively impact their mental health.

Hardly anyone wants to talk about how so many athletes are suffering. Many of the athletes think that if they open up to anyone or tell how they feel, they'll be seen as weak or some athletes will have the edge over them, meaning other athletes will overlook them no matter how good they are. According to the article "In my feelings: Division I Student-Athlete Seeking Mental Health Support," "qualitative study found that student-athletes seek informal support for a variety of mental health issues in which they describe a fear of stigma, vulnerability, or 'weakness' as nonacceptance of professional counseling" (Sasso et al.). They tend to hide their feelings in order to protect themselves, even though it may hurt them in the long run. As long as others don't see their "weak side," they think they'll be just fine; however, letting your feelings ball up inside you can hurt you more than anything. The feeling of having no one to talk to or open up to is even more stressful and can be lonely. The more and more you keep feelings to yourself, the more it could affect you.

Many things can affect an athlete's mental health. There have been multiple cases where coaches have destroyed their own athletes' mental health. According to the article "Coaching Styles and Their Impact on Athletes," "the least effective coaching style is the authoritarian style. This style will make a coach seem controlling and strict. This has proven to cause a negative psychological impact on athletes" (Trine University). Coaches often feel the pressure to win throughout the season, sometimes even projecting their own anxiety onto their players. This can break down any player physically and mentally regardless of the situation. Once this starts happening, it basically creates a domino effect and breaks down other players as well.

Also, schoolwork can have a huge part to do with mental health, not so much the schoolwork itself but the amount of work in a short time period. The article "Athletes Should Be Given More Flexibility with Homework Deadlines" states, "Not doing homework hurts grades, which could make athletes ineligible and would lead to them not being able to participate in sports. On the other hand, if they do their homework, there is a possibility of being up to or even past midnight. Having to wake up the next morning with only five or six hours of sleep leads to

academic struggles” (Spore). Student athletes constantly have to worry about their grades and schoolwork. If they are failing or missing work, this could get in the way of playing time or they could get benched. Going to a college and having more work would be tiring and hard to maintain all of it at once. Usually, athletes get stressed when this happens because they always have practices and games, so this makes them stay up late to work on their work. Just these few things can lead to insomnia, anxiety, and can cause stress.

The amount of focus that can be taken away from an athlete is unbelievable. Athletes try very hard at their sports and their education. It’s hard to believe that more people care for how they play versus their mental state. This happens especially in higher levels of sports. Fans or anyone hardly care about their mental state. The fans continually try to break the other team down. The article “For Better or For Worse, Fan Behavior Impacts Athletes” states, “Cases where negative fan behavior has driven some athletes to perform less than their best...or perhaps even knock them completely out of the competition” (Association for Applied Sports Psychology).

Another huge topic with things affecting your mental health is social media. Social media can possibly increase depression, anxiety, loneliness, self-harm, and even suicidal thoughts. This is the main problem because no one can really stop bullying online. The article “The Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health” states, “Social media is often a tool used for procrastination and escape, and many student athletes felt it had a negative impact on them” (Brougham). When it gets to the point where athletes or anyone in general sees things about them, it can really affect them and they start thinking about what people think about them. The more and more this happens, the more thoughts come to your mind and start affecting your mental health.

Studies have shown a relationship between nutrition and mental health. The article “Could a declining sports performance be nutrition related?” states, “Good nutrition is essential in order to enhance athletic performance both on and off the field” (Frey). Busy schedules and hardly any rest time make it more prone to student athletes having more health issues than the rest of the population; however, some athletes aren’t fully aware of the effects nutrition can have on their mental health. Evidence shows that a long-term, balanced diet is key to good brain function and mental health. More college athletic programs are hiring dietitians and psychologists because of this. Many athletes in the United States aren’t aware of this situation and think nutrition is one of the last things they have to worry about.

Student athletes are held to way higher standards than just regular students. On top of trying to maintain good grades, they have to play and give one hundred percent at all times. According to the NCAA, “anxiety disorders are among the most common psychiatric problems in student athletes” (NCAA.org). Athletes tend to get nervous before games but sometimes it may lead to things such as anxiety attacks and can take a while before they calm down. People say “they’re just games” but they cause so much stress and anxiety that it causes many disorders and illnesses.

When it comes to athletes and their low self-esteem, a low opinion of themselves can really affect them and how their game is. Having confidence improves decision making and can

lead to better performance. The article “Emotion Management Training for Athletes” states, “Emotions can significantly impact performance by altering physiological and attentional states in a way that may enhance or harm an athlete’s ability” (Emotion Management Training for Athletes). Most athletes bring themselves down and don’t even realize it. They say negative things in their head that make them feel awful about themselves, which can lead to making even more mistakes.

When an athlete has a bad attitude because of their mental state, it can also affect their teammates or coaches. The article “What To Do When Your Most Talented Player Has The Worst Attitude” discusses the effect of a coach's viewpoint on a player's bad attitude and describes it as “draining.” It also mentions different reasons why players can have a bad attitude. It says, “There are a myriad of things that could be causing a player to have a bad attitude: Problems at home with family member; Issues with school; A girlfriend or boyfriend break up; Trouble with authority figures” (“What to Do When Your Most Talented Player Has the Worst Attitude”).

Family issues have become very common, especially among athletes. According to “Family contributions to sports performance and their utility in predicting appropriate referrals to mental health optimization programmes,” family issues can cause “poor relationship and lack of support, general pressure, pressure to quit or continue unsafely, embarrassing comments, and negative attitude” (Hussey et al.). Every one of these things can hurt the player and their performance. It can cause numerous mental health issues, like “depression, anxiety, and drug and alcohol use” (Hussey et al.). It also may affect their teammates and their mental health.

Having an injury can affect mental health issues as well. The article “Mind, Body and Sport: How being injured affects mental health” says having an injury could “trigger or unmask” mental health issues (Putukian). For some student athletes, the psychological response to injury can trigger serious mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and substance use or abuse. There are also emotional reactions to injuries, such as sadness, isolation, anger, frustration, and much more. One example is an athlete is injured so they feel as if they don’t deserve to eat and it eventually turns into an eating disorder. When an Olympic skier sustained a leg and knee injury, she battled with depression. In an interview with the NCAA, she says, “I went all the way to rock bottom. I never thought I would ever experience anything like that in my life. It was a combination of the atrophying of my legs, the new scars, and feeling like a caged animal” (Putukian). It wasn’t just her injury that she had to deal with, but it was also her mental state. When she talks about feeling like an animal in a cage, she feels lonely and in isolation, basically like she has no one.

The athlete's performance can be affected by mental health as well. Studies have shown that sometimes a change in an athlete's mental state may result in poor scoring or performance. The article “How Athletes Can Maintain Good Mental Health” states, “Sports mental IQ can be half the battle when it comes to succeeding. Having proper mental health can help the player make quicker and clearer decisions while having mental health issues can cause the player to react slower to decisions and make decisions that may lead to undesired player performance”

(“How Athletes Can Maintain Good Mental Health”). Other times a distracted mind can cause you to lose focus and could possibly be dangerous. According to a sports psychologist Dr. Sacco, all athletes deserve and need time to sort these things out, even if it means sitting out for a little while. Even if you may not want to sit out because of a big game or just want to play, it would be better to take time for yourself and get better than risking your health and not being able to play your best.

There are multiple strategies to help your mental health. In the book *Heads Up: Changing Minds on Mental Health* there are numerous treatment services that go along with recovery. It also suggests that “belonging in their community or being able to pursue work and personal interests” or for others it can be “freedom from psychiatric labels and treatments” that could help them. The first one is to make sleep a priority. Sleep can help facilitate the brain’s processing of emotional information. While you’re sleeping, the brain works to evaluate and remember your thoughts and memories. Lack of sleep can be especially harmful to the consolidation of positive emotions. This can influence your mood and emotional activity and is also tied to mental health disorders and how severe they can get.

The second strategy is setting goals and priorities. Setting goals is an effective way to increase your motivation and help create the changes you want. It can be used to improve your health and relationships or improve productivity at work. Having things to do can also get your mind off everything else in your life that can be bringing you down. It can also help you recover from a mental illness and not just prevent one.

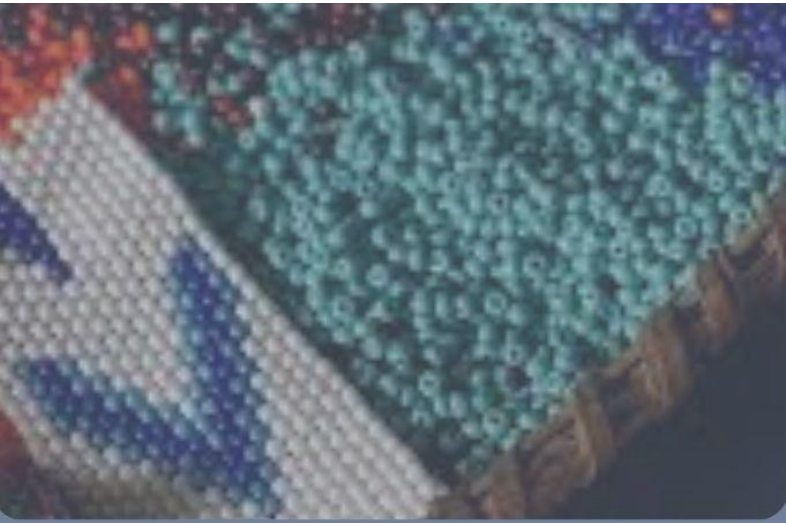
The third strategy is staying connected or just having someone to share things with. Research shows people who feel more connected to others have lower levels of anxiety and depression. Studies have also shown that they have higher self-esteem, greater empathy for others, and are more trusting and cooperative. Others around them are also more open to them and trusting as well. The more interactions we have and the more we share can help so much, even if it's something from our personal lives.

The fourth strategy is trying to surround yourself with good people. Athletes are usually in really hostile environments, especially when it comes to coaches and wanting to always win. When being in environments like this, it can really bring you down, but when having good people around you, research shows that it can improve your physical and emotional well-being. It also shows better problem skills and enhanced brain fitness which can help improve your game on the court.

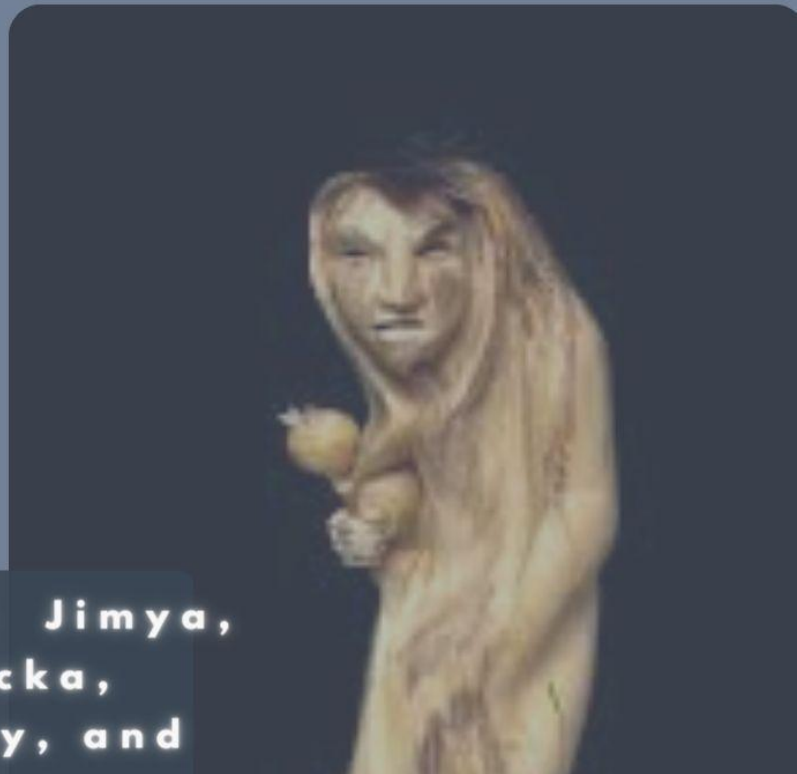
The fifth and last strategy is to remember why you started. So many athletes fall out of love with their sport, but they continue playing just because they’ve been playing so long or are forced to keep playing. This can really take a huge toll on their mental state. Most of them continue playing just because they’ve been playing for so long and just don’t want to let it go, but at the same time the pressure and your emotions get built up to the point it’s hard to take. Playing a sport you don’t love anymore is super exhausting. The more you’re forced to do it, the less you love it.

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ART



Edited: Jimya,
Ericka,
Bayley, and

Jenna Cruz

Sunset



Gabe Crowe

(Tsi sgwa A na tli A gv sdu lo) Bird Warrior Mask



Gabe Crowe

(Yvn sha Di gv sdu lo) Buffalo Mask



Gabe Crowe

(Yvn sha Di gv sdu lo) Buffalo Mask



Madison Ledford

Hawaii Byodo-In-Temple



Madison Ledford
Hawaii



Jimya Driver

4x5 White Oak Basket



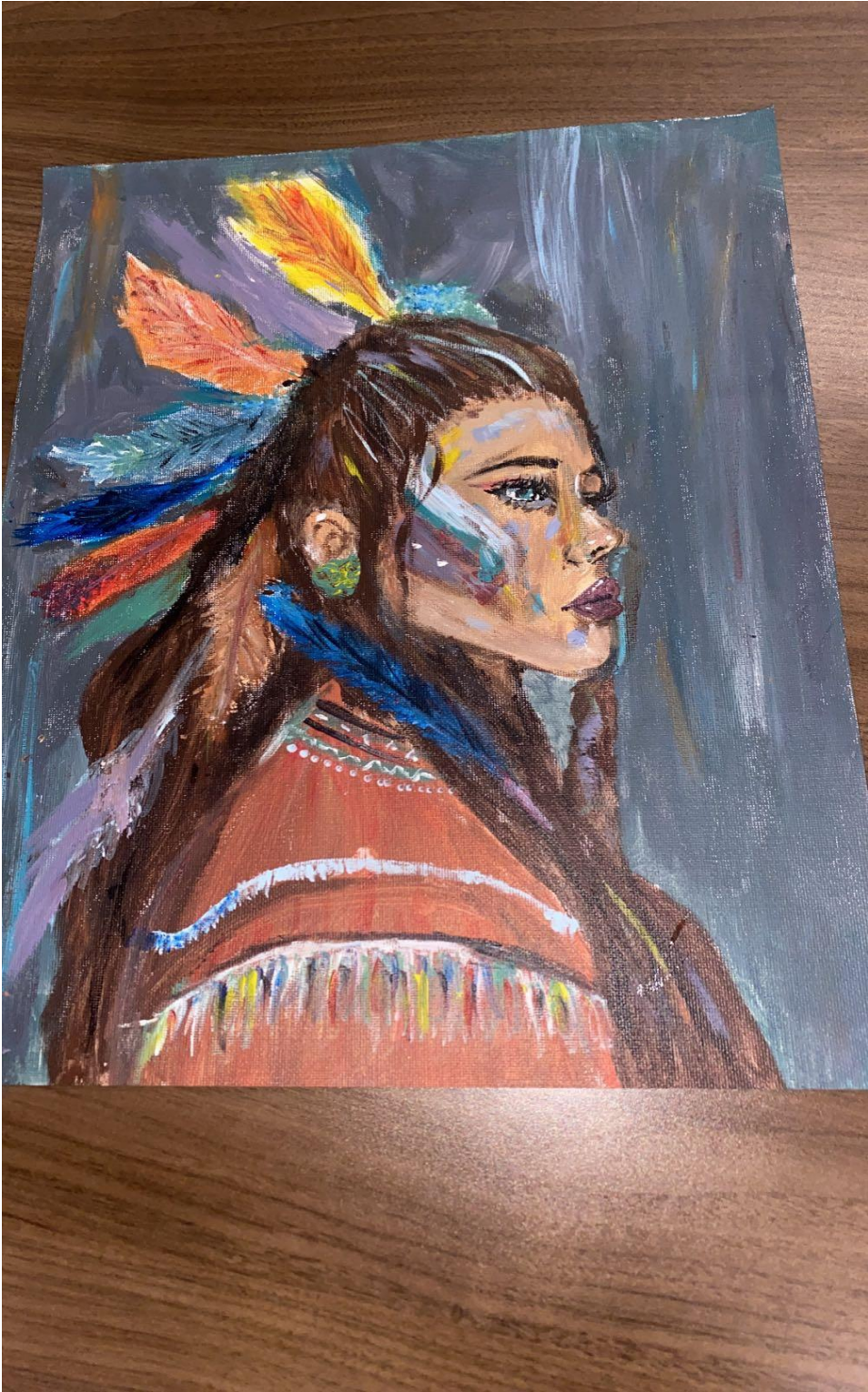
Jimya Driver

4x7 White Oak Basket



Bayley Wright

Fancy Dancer Painting



Ericka Brady

Paper Basket



Ericka Brady
White Oak Basket



Tahlaya “Nyree” Thompson

ArtWork



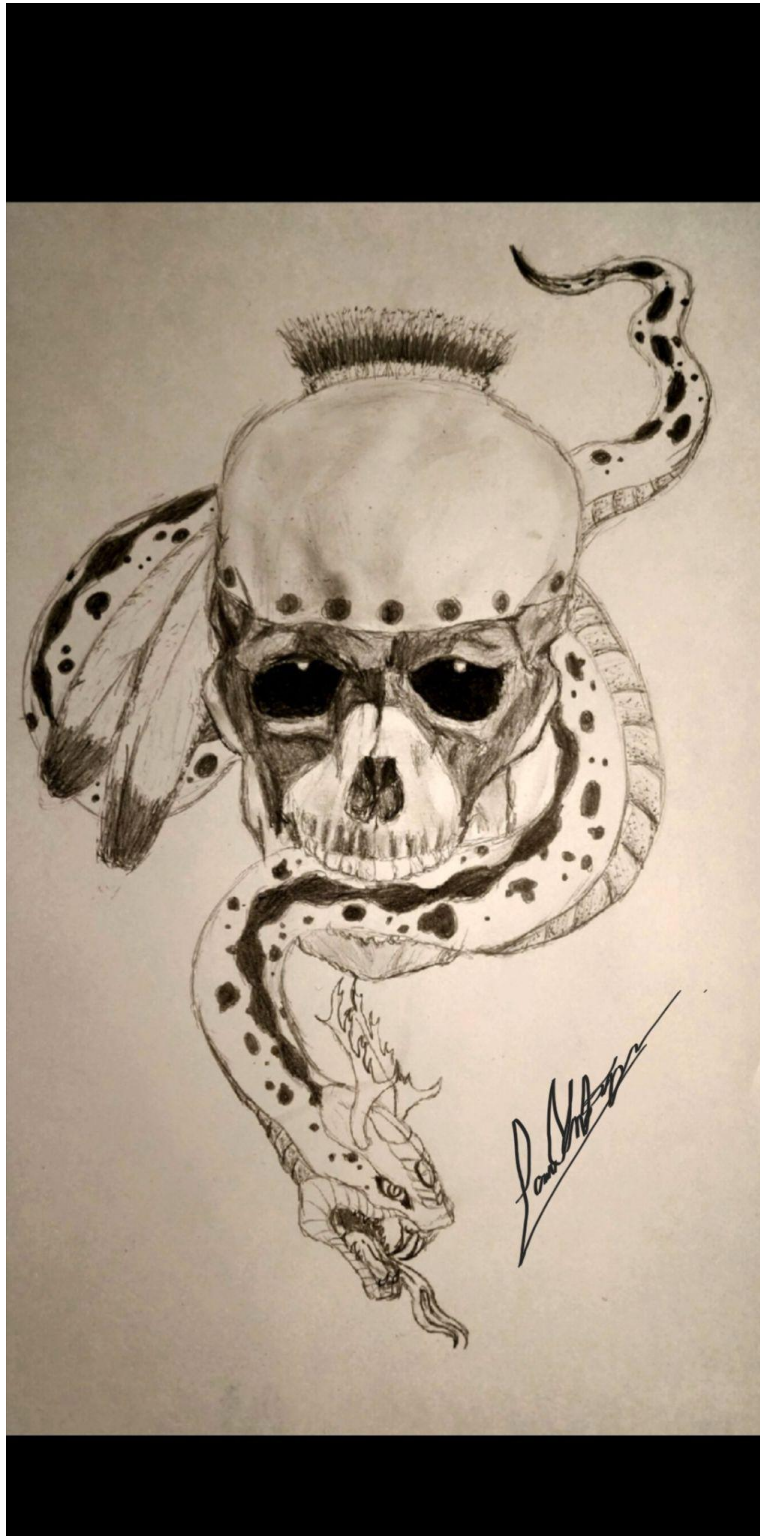
Mason Salazar

Wood Carving Masks



Luke Climbingbear

Artwork



Jimya Driver

Purple Flowers



Bayley Wright

Snowball Bush



Carys Holiday

Himeji Castle



Carys Holiday

Fushimi Inari Shrine



Carys Holiday

Jellyfish



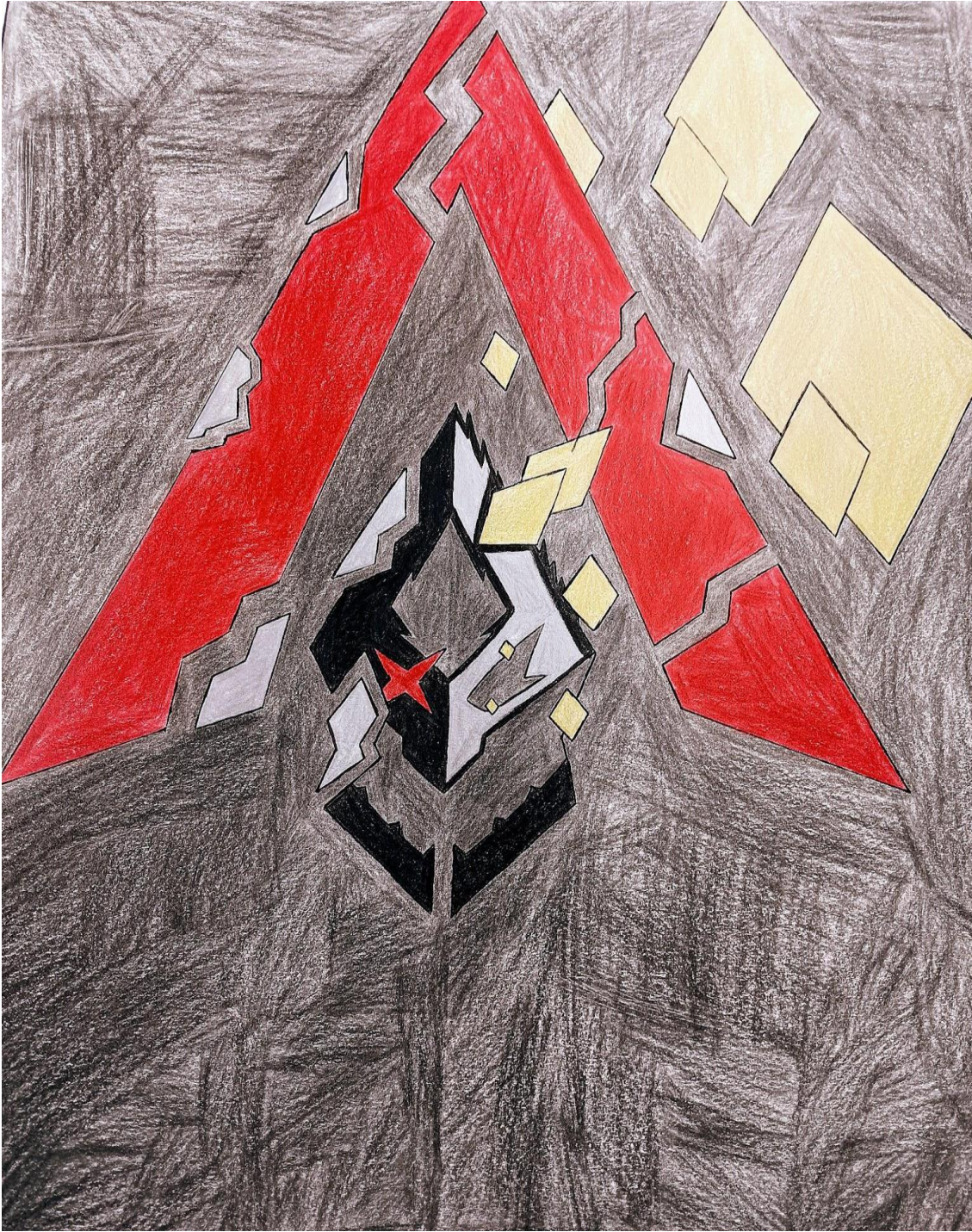
Ericka Brady

Finger Weaved Keychain



Ezequiel Martinez

Artwork



Janna Girty
Baskets



Words from the Authors

Christian Alfaro

Hello! My name is Christian Alfaro. I enjoy reading and writing as you can see from my fiction story “The Burning Sycamore.” I am heading to Western Carolina University to major in history and hopefully seek a job that I will enjoy. I also plan to keep writing stories and make a novel or two while in college. I am Cherokee, and my clan is Wild Potato clan. My clan is mostly known for our gardening skills. One of my favorite pieces of literature is *Blood Meridian* by Cormac McCarthy.

Aizen Bell

My name is AB, and I am in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like to write because it’s a way to vent and talk about how I’m feeling. My plans for the future are to attend college at Mars Hill and to run cross country and track there. I also want to get my master’s degree in business administration and get a coaching license for high school track and cross country.

Ericka Brady

My name is Ericka Brady, and I am a senior at Cherokee High School. I am an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, and my clan is the Bird Clan. Additionally, I have Pawnee, Ponca, Omaha, and Iowa heritage from Oklahoma. I am skilled in various Cherokee crafts, but my favorite activities are finger weaving and beadwork. I have recently taken up basket-making, as seen by my submission. My future plans involve becoming a teacher to inspire children who, like me, feel unsupported by their teachers.

Ila Brinkmeyer

My name is Ila Brinkmeyer, and I am in the 11th grade at Cherokee High School. I enjoy writing and most forms of art. You can tell in my elegy in the lit journal that I use writing as a way to express emotions and events that have happened in my life. I enjoy writing because it's an outlet for my thoughts and a way to express myself in a healthy way. I also like art because being creative, I think, is one of the greatest joys of being human, and, if you're not creating, what are you doing? Because I am a creative person, I intend to go into cosmetology and do that as a career for my future. I plan to eventually have my own salon and be a business owner. I think having my own business, especially in a field of work that is going to be something I enjoy, will be good for me. I want to own a house and live organically with a greenhouse and cats. I want a simple, peaceful, fun, and expressive life!

Letsi Burgos Delgado

My name is Letsi Burgos Delgado, and I am in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like writing because it allows me to write stuff down when I feel sad or angry, because I can write things down even when I'm not able to talk to anyone. My plans for the future are to go to college to study physical therapy. I also want to travel to places like Bali and New Zealand.

Luke Climbingbear

My name is Luke Climbingbear, and I aspire to be a devoted Christian, athlete, and artist. I am a part of the EBCI and Kiowa tribe, and I'm a part of the Bird Clan. I am in 12th grade at Cherokee High School, where I get to enjoy creative writing as well as drawing. I've always liked drawing, and that's why I made a picture for the literary journal. I decided to continue drawing because often it's a peaceful pastime, and I feel that God would want me to expand my talents. I plan on going to college to play football and major in kinesiology and exercise science. Like most football players, I want to pursue football to the NFL or on other professional levels, but I also plan to become a personal trainer/coach.

Jayle Creson

My name is Jayle Creson, and I am in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I love to write poetry; it helps me express myself in many ways. Poetry also helps me get through hard things that are harder to say out loud when I could just write about them. My plan for the future is to attend Southwestern Community College for dental assisting. Once I am done with dental assisting, I will be able to have a job at a dental office. Soon after, I plan to transfer colleges to become a dentist or orthodontist.

Gabe Crowe

My name is Gabe Crowe, and I'm a senior at Cherokee High School. I love carving masks because it's a way to bring your creative thoughts to life, allowing you to form your own style of art. My future plans are to buy a shop where I can sell out of and work out of with masks or carvings.

Jenna Cruz

My name is Jenna Cruz. I am in the 12th grade and attend Cherokee High School. In my free time, I enjoy playing softball, hanging out with my friends, and riding around. For my submission, I sent a photo of the Blue Ridge Parkway. I got this image when riding the parkway with my friends. As for the future, I plan on attending Lees-McRae College and pursuing a career in forensic psychology. This is something I have always been interested in and am excited about what the future holds for me!

Alexis Davis

My name is Alexis Davis and I am a junior at Cherokee High School. I have lived in Cherokee all of my life, and I am a part of the Long Hair Clan. I mainly like to create research papers, which is why I put my research paper about athlete's mental health in the literary journal. I enjoy writing research papers because I like to learn things that I never knew before or getting to dive deeper into a topic I find interesting. For the future, I plan on attending college, and I haven't decided on a major yet.

Jimya Driver

My name is Jimya Driver, and I am in the 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I enjoy creating baskets, daisy chains, and photography. I enjoy creating arts and crafts because it gives me a sense of accomplishment once I finish my project. My plan after high school is to go to college in the spring. I would like to get a degree in dancing and study psychology. In the meantime, I will be working to save up money before going to college.

Gideon Freeman

Hello! My name is Gideon Freeman, and I am a junior at Cherokee High School. I like putting ideas down and seeing what sticks, and I just like doing stuff in general. In my free time, I play video games and watch stuff. I plan to go to Chapel Hill when I graduate in 2025.

Janna Girty

Shiyo! My name is Janna Girty. I am from Cherokee, North Carolina, and am a senior at Cherokee High School. I enjoy weaving baskets and making paper baskets. I made my first basket in the 3rd grade at Cherokee Culture School, and I would continue to take basket classes to better my craft. Basketry runs in my family from my great grandmother Lillian Shell Lossiah. I plan to continue my craft and soon be able to learn how to gather my materials for my baskets and to become a basket maker and not just a weaver. Sgi!

Carys Holiday

Hello! My name is Carys Holiday, and I'm in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like to do photography and poetry, and you can see that in my poem "To Once I Was" and my photo submissions, which are all in this journal. I like to create because it brings me great pleasure to know that other people enjoy art as much as I do. Let's take one of my favorite things, for example: music. It's something that almost anyone can make and enjoy, and has an endless variety as well. Likewise, photography has an endless amount of styles. This is one of the many reasons I like to do photography; there are an endless amount of ways to do it, and no one can tell right from wrong because it's an expression of self. From the editing to the subject of the photo, there's always something for someone. Another reason of mine is simply just that I like to take pictures of things and make them look pretty through my photography. Similar to photography, there's poetry. I like poetry because it's everywhere. Music is a great example of this, particularly rap music. Poetry is like photography in a way, acting as a way for people to see

what they can't and feel when they are numb, meaning it can create vivid images or deep emotions in one's mind. For the future, I plan on completing a summer internship with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In the fall, I will be attending Portland State University and majoring in Environmental Science.

Abreana Hornbuckle

My name is Abre Hornbuckle, and I am in 11th grade at Cherokee High School. I like to read and make stories for my siblings to read so I thought this was a great opportunity to put a short story I wrote out there. My plans for the future are to go to college to become an English teacher and help students the way my teachers have.

Madison Ledford

My name is Madison Ledford, and I am currently a senior at Cherokee High School. I was born and raised in Cherokee and have lived here my whole life. I like to create photography, so I submitted a picture to the literacy journal. I enjoy photography because it is so unique and beautiful. For the future, I plan to go to college for business. After college, I plan to come back to Cherokee and work for my tribe.

Alexzaya Lossie

My name is Alexzaya Lossie. I am a senior, and I like to create poems because of the way you can interpret words and other things to show emotions you can't get out verbally. It also helps me get in touch with my imagination. Writing short stories or even songs brings me great joy, and I'm fascinated with writing. My plans for the future are for me to get a job and work until I start psychology classes in the next few years. I think I'll be around Cherokee, just traveling a lot.

Ezequiel Martinez

My name is Ezequiel Martinez and I'm in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like writing fiction stories even though I'm not that great, but I'll still try. I want to make a manga and hope it goes somewhere because I want to see if I have what it takes to be a manga writer. I may not know how to write a good fiction story but I'll learn as I continue to make my manga, and I'll do my best to make it a great story that everyone will enjoy. For what my future holds, well, I'm going to college to study welding but I hope I can go on to study engineering in the future. After college, I'm not sure what I'll be doing. Maybe I'll have more time to work on my manga and do some woodcarving as well as learn blacksmithing. Only time will tell.

Dalaina Mills

My name is Dalaina Mills, and I am in the 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like wood carving. I enjoy woodcarving because it's like a form of therapy, and, when I am finished, I am left with a piece of art that I get to gift to a loved one. In the future, I plan to go to college and major in psychology.

Vincent Owle

My name is Vincent Owle, and I am in 11th grade at Cherokee High School. I have lived in Cherokee all my life and am a part of the Blue Clan. I like to write poetry because it's an easy way to express myself or talk about something meaningful to me. I hope to start a business eventually but I'm not set on anything yet.

Victoria Palmer

My name is Victoria Palmer, and I am a Senior at Cherokee High School. I like to create academic writing, and you can see that in my writing piece called "The Importance of Physical Fitness," which is in this literary journal. I enjoy creating academic writing because it allows me to research about a topic, which is also something I love to do. For the future, I plan to get into a program called ACE. At ACE, I will be able to travel but also do work for the park service and environment. I live in Whittier, North Carolina, and I have been here for almost 2 years.

Makenzie Rattler

My name is Makenzie Rattler. I am in 12th grade. I was born in Sylva, North Carolina, and currently live in Cherokee. I enjoy writing poetry because it's a healthy way for me to express my emotions and get them out. For the future, I plan to go to Western Carolina University and do general education. I also plan to get my welding certificate at some point to help get a house before getting old.

Mason Salazar

My name is Mason Salazar, and I am a senior at Cherokee High School. I really enjoy wood carving and hope to do more with that in the future.

Gabriel Terrell

My name is Gabriel Terrell, and I am in the 12th grade at Cherokee High School. In my free time, I like to write original short stories for worlds I create. This can be seen in this short piece I've published, "The Things I Do for Love," which takes place in my personal universe of "The Life They Never Chose." Only three of the characters appear in the short story, but at least nine are already written and completely finished. The universe centers around a group of teens who were taken as children and changed by force into mutants. Now, they're on the run. In the future, I plan to attend college in order to become an actor or pharmaceutical scientist.

Izabella Terrell

My name is Izabella Terrell, and I am in 10th grade at Cherokee High School. I love to draw, write, and paint. My plans for the future are going to an art and animation school or medical school.

Tahlaya “Nyree” Thompson

My name is Tahlaya “Nyree” Thompson, and I am in the 12th grade. I am a part of the Blue Clan and live in the Yellow Hill Community, and I enjoy creating art. I have submitted some of my artwork in the literary journal in hopes of people liking it. I enjoy making art because I think art tells a much better story than words ever could, and it's also just something I do when I get bored. For the future, I’m going to Southwestern Community College for fine arts. I plan on becoming a tattoo artist in my community because there's not so many and that is another job opportunity for me. My backup plan is to go to Nascar Technical institute and become a mechanic and maybe even join a pit crew while I'm there.

Coco Wells

My name is Coco Wells, and I am in 12th grade at Cherokee High School. I like to write academic writing such as “ The Importance of Mental Health Issues in High School Athletes,” which is in this literary journal. I enjoy academic writing because, depending on the topic, it can bring awareness to issues. For the future, I plan to take a gap year before pursuing pre-med at WNC to become an esthetician.

Bayley Wright

My name is Bayley Mckenna Wright. I am from the Wolfstown Community and live on Old Soco Road. I am ¼ of Cherokee and have lived in Cherokee my whole life. I am eighteen years old and in 12th grade, getting ready to graduate from Cherokee High School. I love to create short stories, especially romance ones. I also love art; my favorite type of art is painting and drawing. I like to paint/draw people (I’m still learning how to draw a whole figure). The reason why I love to create art and short stories is because you can be creative and express yourself without actually saying how you feel out loud. My plans for after I graduate is to go to Mars Hill University in the fall. I plan on majoring in business and something with art. I want to be an event planner, which is why I am majoring in business. I can squeeze in my creativity of art into my business, like making my own decorations. I haven’t planned my full life yet after or during college, but I am hoping to start a family of my own and build a simple house (I’ve already come up with the design for my house).

Credits

Editors for Poetry:

Jayle Creson, Coco Wells, Ila Brinkmeyer

Editors for Short Stories: Fiction

Gabriel Terrell, Christian Alfaro, Gideon Freeman, Victoria Palmer

Editors for Short Stories: Nonfiction

Makenzie Rattler, Vincent Owle, Nyree Thompson

Editor for Academic Writing:

Faith Dillard Brooks

Editors for Art

Jimya Driver, Bayley Wright, Ericka Brady, Carys Holiday

Designers

Luke Climbingbear, Laura Martinez, Janna Girty

Advertising

Alexis Davis, Dalaina Mills, Jenna Cruz, Madison Ledford, Ezequiel Martinez, Chris Wilmoth and his Broadcasting class

Faculty Supervisor

Faith Dillard Brooks



REVIEW ESSAY

William ‘Spirit’ Knifeman: The post-indian warrior of survivance in *Reservation Dogs*

Harjo, Sterlin, and Taika Waititi. *Reservation Dogs*. Disney+, 2023.

Introduction: The Post-Indian Warrior William “Spirit” Knifeman

Reservation Dogs (2021-2023) revolutionised Indigenous representation on television. It was the first show in the United States to include an all-Indigenous writer’s room, alongside an almost completely Indigenous cast and crew. The show portrayed the everyday lives of four teenagers, their families, and their community in a contemporary Oklahoman reservation setting. It has since won multiple awards and was nominated for five Primetime Emmy Awards.

Reservation Dogs was not only a commercial success, but it also shed light on both the contemporary and historic experiences of Indigeneity within a settler-colonial state. The narratives within the show constitute what Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) defines as ‘survivance’ in *Fugitive Poses* (1998). Narratives that are “more than survival, more than endurance or mere response; the stories of survivance are successive and natural estates; survivance is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry” (15). Many of *Reservation Dogs*’ storylines and narratives attest to a sense of survivance. The fundamental premise of the show revolves around the four main characters – Bear (D’Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai), Elora Danan (Devery Jacobs), Willie Jack (Paulina Alexis), and Cheese (Lane Factor) – coming to terms with the death of their best friend, Daniel. Initially, they believe that the reservation caused his death and actively refuse to become the next victims of circumstance, opting to raise money to travel from Oklahoma to California. Dominance, tragedy, and victimry are repudiated in episodes that explore economic disparity in the health care sector (“NDN Clinic”), land sovereignty (“This

is *Where the Plot Thickens*"), and the legacy of the boarding school system ("Deer Lady").

Multiple genres are explored throughout the three seasons of *Reservation Dogs* and the most overarching of these is comedy. Humour is fundamental in creating the sense of survivance within the show. In her book *Reservation Reelism*, Michelle Raheja (Seneca) states that humour is "a strategy of the oppressed" (42) and is used to "laugh at dominant portrayals of Indigenous people" (41). The use of humour as a strategy of the oppressed has a long tradition of functioning in the form of the trickster figure that often serves as "a savvy, pedagogic function that predates European settler colonialism, often sacrificing something special in order to do good, placing himself or herself outside the boundaries of the community in order to make a didactic point" (Raheja 20). The trickster is therefore a narrative device used within *Reservation Dogs* as a teaching tool that defies European settler colonialism. The clearest example of this figure in the show is the character William "Spirit" Knifeman, played by activist, comedian, and 1491s¹ member Dallas Goldtooth (Mdewakanton Dakota/Diné).

William Knifeman is a reoccurring character throughout the three seasons of *Reservation Dogs*, appearing in ten out of the twenty-eight episodes. Despite playing a minor role in overall screentime, William Knifeman is prominent and essential to the overarching narrative of the show. He first appears onscreen in Season 1, Episode 1 ("F*ckin' Rez Dogs") in a vision that teenage protagonist and member of the *Reservation Dogs* gang Bear Smallhill has after he is shot with a paintball gun in a drive-by (paintball) shooting by the rival teenage gang on the reservation, the NDN Mafia. He appears on horseback and is initially mistaken by Bear as Crazy Horse or Sitting Bull. Knifeman explains that ever since he died a comically tragic death at the Battle of Little Big Horn - his horse stepped into a gopher hole as they chased down Custer and, in the fall, Knifeman was squashed underneath - he wanders the spirit world looking for lost souls like Bear. He also admits to Bear that he didn't fight bravely and he wasn't able to kill anyone in the battle. The character of William Knifeman is portrayed as a Lakota Plains Indian stylised in the "leathers and feathers" that have become a stereotypical representation of the invented Indian across popular culture through western movies, mascots and other inaccurate media portrayals.

William Knifeman is the embodiment of what Vizenor describes as a postindian warrior. In *Manifest Manners* (1999), Vizenor asserts that the "postindian warrior is the simulation of survivance in new stories" (11). The postindian counters the fact that the concept of the Indian in relation to North American Indigenous communities and Tribal Nations is a simulation invented by settler colonialism. Raheja succinctly summarises Vizenor's postindian warriors of survivance as those "who attempt the balancing act of simultaneously deconstructing the fabricated hyperreality of mass-mediated Native American experience and serving Native American communities in the embodied, material world as they confront political, cultural, and spiritual crises" (252n68). William Knifeman is the simulation of survivance in the contemporary Indigenous within the narrative of *Reservation*



Dogs. Employing a blend of trickster storytelling, humour, and subversion, he acts as guiding figure to both young and elder members of the community. For example, while I will focus exclusively on his interactions with Bear, he also had a minor story arc where he also acts as a guide to the elder character Uncle Brownie (Gary Farmer).

The Trickster: Flipping the “Leathers and Feathers”

The creation of *Reservation Dogs* succeeded the resounding success of Harjo’s work with the Native sketch comedy group the 1491s. The description on their YouTube channel, titled *the1491s*, states that they are “a gaggle of Indians chock full of cynicism and splashed with a good dose of indigenous satire...They were at Custer’s Last Stand. They mooned Chris Columbus when he landed. They invented bubble gum” (YouTube). With all of the members of the group contributing significantly to the show, it is fair to say that *Reservation Dogs* is a continuation of the 1491s’ work. It is also fair to suggest from this YouTube description that the character of William Knifeman is the literal embodiment of this continuation of their works ethos, as the character attests to be being at Custer’s Last Stand. In *Reservation Reelism*, Raheja discusses a group from Hollywood in the 1930s/40s known as the DeMille Indians. Led by Victor Daniels (stage name: Chief Thunder Cloud), a collection of Indigenous Native American actors performing within Hollywood petitioned to become their own tribal group as Native American performers within the film and television industry. Raheja describes this as an example of

how Native American actors performed critical work both on-screen and off-screen to create cinematic, cultural, political, and geographical spaces for the exploration of images by and for Indigenous communities...The DeMille Indians’ stories and the narratives they helped create disrupted dominant discourses even as they sometimes, in trickster fashion, seemingly helped validate conventional narratives through the roles they played. (5)

I would argue that the 1491s could be described as a contemporary example of the DeMille Indians collective. They have disrupted the commercial landscape with the production of *Reservation Dogs* and created a launching pad that empowers Indigenous creatives within the film and television industry by utilising an almost completely Indigenous cast and crew and they have used the comedic narratives of their show intently to similarly disrupt dominant discourses whilst seemingly validating them too in a trickster fashion.

Although the DeMille Indians and the 1491s are separated by almost a century, the spaces that they navigate within mainstream filmmaking and the efforts that they make are comparable. In particular, it is the trickster nature in which they conduct themselves. The DeMille Indians were a homogenised group of Indigenous actors

from various Tribal Nations and, by petitioning to become their own tribal group, they ironically validated Hollywood's stereotypical depictions with a "politicized understanding of the ways these images circulate in popular culture" (Raheja 2). By seemingly perpetuating stereotypes of the simulated Indian, the DeMille Indians successfully generated commentary on their status within the film industry. Equally, *Reservation Dogs* commentates on stereotypical Hollywood depictions with the role of William Knifeman. In the first episode of the podcast *Behind the Rez with Sterlin Harjo*, co-creator of *Reservation Dogs* Sterlin Harjo (Seminole/Muscogee) discusses the role of music with the composer for the series, Mato Wayuhi (Oglala Lakota). Wayuhi mentioned that in a telephone conversation with Harjo about securing the role as composer for the series, Harjo insisted that the first rule in his compositions was no flute. However, they both acknowledge that this rule was broken straight away (Harjo and Wayuhi). The reason that Harjo and Wayuhi chose to not use flute in the soundtrack for *Reservation Dogs* was because they wanted to show legitimate and humanised experiences of Indigeneity (Harjo and Wayuhi) and flute is associated with stereotypical racial depictions of the mythical Indian that perpetuates erasure. Flute is used in the first scene between William Knifeman and Bear in the first episode of the show. "Spirit" gives Bear advice whilst flute music plays in the background of the scene and stoically poses for Bear, saying that "it's easier to be bad, but hard to be a warrior with dignity" ("F*ckin' Rez Dogs"). This is a moment of trickster storytelling.

Karl Kroeber states in Vizenor's edited collection *Survivance* (2008) that "the trickster's core narrative turns on some form of self-victimization, although always at the end escaped, recovered from, or made socially re-creative through some process of self-transformation" (30). The stereotypical depiction of William Knifeman in *Reservation Dogs* is an example of self-victimization in the trickster form, and as Kroeber states, this narrative eventually leads to a form of self-transformation through the character of Bear who has been grieving his friend's death, coming to terms with his absentee father, and questioning his role within his friend group and community as a whole. William Knifeman follows him throughout the three seasons of *Reservation Dogs* providing him with "cryptic aphorisms" ("Maximus") which eventually leads to Bear maturing and becoming a better person. Harjo actively chose to portray the character of William Knifeman as a stereotypical warrior figure clad in "leathers and feathers." In an interview with David Treuer for *The Atlantic* in 2022, Harjo said that the character of William Knifeman "is so important because I think it's what allows white people into the world...What they're used to is that image. We give them what they want, and we flip it right after" (Treuer). By creating a character in the image of the simulated Indian, in a stark contrast the rest of the cast of characters in the show who wear contemporary attire, Harjo effectively uses trickster storytelling to liberate Natives from their victimisation by white culture (Kroeber 30), using this victimising imagery that continues to circulate within popular culture and flipping it on its head. This flipping is a satirical method that ridicules stereotypical depictions of Indigeneity created by non-Natives and equally invites non-Natives into the critique that the character of William Knifeman presents to the audiences of *Reservation Dogs*. Vizenor poses in *Manifest Manners* that trickster stories include "characters that liberate the mind" (15), which



is exactly what William Knifeman achieves through his subversion of a stereotype. This flipping of the character by Harjo is equivalent to the DeMille Indians almost a century ago, by validating conventional narratives to achieve the disruption of dominant discourses. Therefore, Harjo is able transform William Knifeman from a stereotypical warrior type to a postindian warrior, defined by Vizenor in *Manifest Manners* as an indication of “simulations that overcome the manifest manners of dominance” (6).

Toilet Humour: Transforming Trauma into Punchlines

In *Manifest Manners*, Vizenor discusses how “tribes have seldom been honored for their trickster stories and rich humor” (83) in mainstream forms of popular culture such as literature and film. He believes that the representations which form the basis of manifest manners focus on tragedy. More specifically, the emphasis on tragedy in onscreen representations of Indigeneity is confirmed by Indigenous film scholar Joanna Hearne in *Native Recognition*: “Scenes of mourning in Native cinema intervene in a popular culture landscape already saturated with taxidermic significations of Indian vanishing in popular culture - the ‘crying Indian’ and other representations of loss” (289). Vizenor’s analysis of the lack of honour bestowed on tribes for their humour remained pertinent from his time of writing in 1994 to 2010 when Harjo conducted an interview with Cherokee academic and blogger Adrienne Keene. In an *All My Relations* podcast episode titled “Rez Doggin’ with Ryan Redcorn and Sterlin Harjo,” Keene recounts a since-deleted interview that she conducted with Harjo on her *Native Appropriations* blog in 2010. In reference to commissioning films with production companies, Harjo told Keene in the 2010 interview that “I just want to make comedy, and I have not really been allowed to. So far, the things that get funded are not comedy. I just want to make comedy about folks in Oklahoma” (Wilbur and Keene, 8:45). Since its release, *Reservation Dogs* is the most successful comedy within the Indigenous mainstream.² The show uses humour as a tool for approaching traumatic experiences which transform into a means of survivance. This is attested to by Osage screenwriter and actor Ryan Redcorn in the same episode of *All My Relations* whilst discussing his experiences of working on the show:

crazy stuff happens to you [in life] like traumatic stuff, hilarious stuff...the [writer’s] room sometimes has a really dark humour, so people say some of the most horrible, worst things humans can do to one another, and you sit there for a second and someone will crack a joke about it and your whole trauma life has been converted into a punchline in a matter of five seconds...it grinds out really beautiful stories because all the stuff that’s happening in there, other people have gone through and they went through it in a similar way...this is what happened to us. (Wilbur, Keene, and Redcorn, 35:27)

Vizenor considers the trickster to be a “comic holotrope” (Kroeber 29) that uses humour to foster a sense of survivance. The term “holotrope” means moving towards a sense of wholeness. This is how trickster humour successfully acts as a strategy of the oppressed: it can heal or complete a sense of being in an individual or a community. Redcorn’s discussion of using humour to approach trauma within the writer’s room for *Reservation Dogs* provides an example of how this trickster humour is used as a strategy of the oppressed and how converting trauma into a punchline effectively acts as a form of healing, and in turn leads to a holotropic state.

William Knifeman’s comedic scenes throughout *Reservation Dogs* are specific examples of the process in the writer’s room that Redcorn discussed. Bear struggles with the death of his friend, his absentee father, and his sense of self. It is this set of problems that prompts William Knifeman to appear to him as a spirit. In Season 2, Episode 3, titled “Roofing,” he appears to him in a neighbouring portable toilet on a construction site where Bear has recently started a new job. Bear complains to his “Spirit” about the job and how his colleagues expect him to just know what to do. William Knifeman unsympathetically mocks him by saying that “that’s the Native way of teaching. We have this, uh, traditional pedagogy of, uh: just get out there and learn, fucker [grunts] [water plops]” (“Roofing”). Bear continues to tell of his grievances with his new job, one of which is that he didn’t expect the father of his deceased friend Daniel to be working on the same construction site. He then suggests to Knifeman that he thinks he should get over his friends’ death. To this, William Knifeman responds:

Get over it? Shit, you haven't even gone through it, Cvpon [Muscogee phrase for 'boy']...What I'm trying to say is that we cry for those that we've lost [War cries, continues crying]. Like that. You know, we mourn them. We cut our hair, we cut ourselves. We go through all the feels. We take our relatives, their bodies, and make clothing out of it. This is my auntie right here [gesturing to his beadwork necklace]. We airbrush their faces on our T-shirts, get their names tattooed on our bodies in old English script. We tear ourselves to pieces so that we can build ourselves new on the other side. You go through all of it so that they know that they can go, that we'll miss them, but that we'll be okay without them. (“Roofing”)

Before Bear has the chance to confirm with the Spirit that his story is suggesting that he still needs to go through the grieving process for his lost friend, in a trickster fashion, William Knifeman cuts him off and tells him he has to go and help somebody else. This scene encapsulates what it is to use humour as a way to deal with trauma. In the first half of the interaction, Knifeman mocks Bear’s initial complaints about his new job. In the second half of the interaction Bear complains again but this time it is not as trivial. Still, Knifeman manages to use humour to lighten the tone of the conversation by listing the variety of ways that humans go through “all the feels” of the grieving process. While he doesn’t directly turn Bear’s trauma into a punchline, like Redcorn discussed earlier, Knifeman does use humour once again to empathise with Bear’s emotions and uses the list of grieving methods to signal to Bear that his emotions are shared by his community and many others who have been through the same thing as him and processed their mourning in a



variety of ways. *Reservation Dogs* refuses to perpetuate the manifest manners that seek to represent Indigenous experiences as wholly tragic. As Vizenor states in *Manifest Manners*, "Laughter over that comic touch in tribal stories would not steal the breath of destitute children; rather, children would be healed with humor, and manifest manners would be undermined at the same time" (83). William Knifeman's role as a post-indian warrior of survivance utilises trickster humour to heal children, in this instant, guiding the teenager Bear onto the path of grieving for his lost friend.

Conclusion: Less Chiefs, More Warriors

The role of William Knifeman as a postindian warrior is clearly outlined in the interactions that he has with Bear in the first and last episodes of the show. When he first meets Bear, Knifeman tells him that "Being a warrior is not always easy...It's easy to be bad, it is hard to be a warrior with dignity. Remember that. In my time, we gave everything. We died for our people. We died for our land. What are you going to do? [Exclaims. Laughs.] I'm just fucking with you. But for real, though. Listen to what I said. Marinate on that. Aho" ("F*ckin' Rez Dogs"). In this scene Dallas Goldtooth delivers these lines with a stoicism that can be compared to the warrior-like portrayals of invented indians from the Western genre of movies. He then breaks this pose and laughs, telling Bear that he is "just fucking" with him. William Knifeman performs a simulation of an indian and then breaks out of it, shattering the illusion of the mass-mediated figure of the imagined indian. He also uses trickster humour to incite introspection on Bear's behalf with one of the many cryptic aphorisms he offers in their conversations. This scene is bookended with the interaction between the two characters in the final episode of the show. Knifeman asks, "What have you learned, nephew-grandson?" to which Bear replies, "I learned that I don't got [sic] to be the only leader. That I'm from an amazing community, and I'm just proud to be part of it." Knifeman then exclaims enthusiastically, "Ah, there it is! Finally. You got it. That's what I've been trying to tell you. We don't need more chiefs; we need more warriors" ("Dig"). As Vizenor discusses, trickster characters liberate the mind, and this is exactly what Knifeman has achieved with Bear. He has created a sense of survivance within Bear, enabling him to recognise his role in adulthood is one that revolves around his community, creating a new sense of tribal presence within him. The Spirit has healed Bear's sense of self which benefits the community too. I also believe that, throughout their relationship, William Knifeman has transformed Bear into a postindian warrior. As Vizenor states in *Manifest Manners*, postindian warriors are "that sensation of a new tribal presence in the very ruins of the representations of invented Indians" (3). Knifeman asserts to Bear that they don't need more chiefs but more warriors. This is indicative of the element of self-transformation that is found within the trickster narrative. The role of William Knifeman as a postindian warrior in *Reservation Dogs* is essential to creating narratives of survivance. The humour in his trickster storytelling allows healing within

Bear and his community. This repudiation of manifest manners not only has an impact within the show but the wider viewership as a whole with the show's placement at the centre of the Indigenous mainstream. *Reservation Dogs* successfully creates a new tribal presence in the ruins of the invented Indian via the postindian warrior, William "Spirit" Knifeman.

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Notes

¹ The 1491s are a Native comedic troupe consisting of Sterlin Harjo (Seminole/Muscogee), Ryan Redcorn (Osage), Migizi Pensoneau (Ponca/Ojibwe), Bobby Wilson (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota), and Dallas Goldtooth (Mdewakanton Dakota/Diné). They are most famous for their YouTube sketches, and have all contributed to *Reservation Dogs* including production, screenwriting, directing, and acting.

² Sherman Alexie's *Smoke Signals* (1998) is also considered one of the most popular comedies in the Indigenous mainstream.

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Cheyfitz, Eric. *The Colonial Construction of Indian Country: Native American Literatures and Federal Indian Law*. University of Minnesota Press, 2023. 256 pp. ISBN: 9781517911331.

<https://www.upress.umn.edu/9781517911331/the-colonial-construction-of-indian-country/>

Eric Cheyfitz's new monograph recalls his over-100-page chapter "The (Post)Colonial Construction of Indian Country: U.S. American Indian Literatures and Federal Indian Law" in *The Columbia Guide to American Indian Literatures of the United States Since 1945* (2006). Beginning the lengthy chapter by noting that "postcolonial studies have virtually ignored American Indian communities" (4), Cheyfitz calls upon a (post)colonialist reading of Native literature by situating literary texts in legal contexts and understanding them as responsive to the (post)colonial condition. The parenthesized "post" signals the ongoing colonial regime in Indian Country. Cheyfitz believes that the (post)colonial approach yields more contextualized interpretations than ethnographic and formalist analyses, shows more political and practical concerns than theoretical postcolonial studies, and does not resort solely to tribal intellectual traditions as literary nationalists do. His stance on the conjunction of Native literature and federal Indian law is so strong that one contemporary reviewer wrote, "at times Cheyfitz implies that anything other than a postcolonial approach informed by legal studies is misguided or misinformed" (Weaver 210). Not to depreciate Cheyfitz's tenor of criticism, the quote will prepare readers for his new book.

On the opening page of *The Colonial Construction of Indian Country: Native American Literatures and Federal Indian Law*, Cheyfitz admits that it is "an update and thus a rewriting in significant part" (1) of the chapter just mentioned. As informed by the subtitle, the conjunction between Native literature and law is to be reiterated. But the "(post)" is removed because Cheyfitz finds it no longer applicable, even for the sake of irony, given the continuing settler colonial structure imposed on Native people. The "Native American" in the subtitle suggests that Cheyfitz extends his scope to include Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians who form different legal relationships with the federal government, even though Indian Country within U.S. borders remains his primary focus. One may wonder then, is this new book worth a serious reading after all? Yes. It promises and gives more than double the length of the initial chapter. Very recent literary works, legal cases, movements, statistics, and academic sources are referenced, and Indigenous communities in Mexico and Bolivia are supplemented to add a comparative lens. Moreover, significant portions of Cheyfitz's original argument - like European imperialism in the Americas, the colonial logic of Indian identity, and the

translation from oral stories to writings – are reconsidered and rearranged. With greater emphasis on Native literature per se, Cheyfitz arrives at a better balance between literary texts and their legal-historical-political contexts. Chapters four to six are freshly written, zooming in on borders – what federal Indian law maintains, whereas Native writing transgresses – and their obliteration. The value of this book-length study lies in its endeavor to pick up, yet again, “the elephant in the room” of Native American (literary) studies, providing timely and immediate answers to age-old questions on colonialism, land, identity, federal Indian law, and borders.

“Native American Literatures” in the new subtitle is Cheyfitz’s subject, refers specifically to alphabetic writing by Native authors. Native alphabetic writing, unlike oral stories, is “a distinct product of colonialism” (166), and hence is a fundamentally literary collaboration; this very idea informs all six body chapters. Cheyfitz raises the keyword “collaboration,” and its nuanced meanings oscillating between coercion and cooperation, by dating the position of Native writing in a colonial situation to the Indian treaty. He regards the Indian treaty, on the one hand, as a “prelude and basis” (5) of federal Indian law and, on the other, “the archetypal American literature” (5) that represents a process of translation where “oral traditions and traditional values have breathed new energy into the adopted language [in the form of alphabetic writing]” (5). Here the conjunction between Native writing and law is also underlined.

The first two chapters investigate the colonization of Native land and identity respectively. Cheyfitz agrees with Linda Hogan that “what happens to people and what happens to the land is the same thing” (Hogan, qtd. in *The Colonial* 15). Land for Natives is “the inalienable ground of the communal, defined exclusively in terms of extended kinship relations” (46). Land forms Native identity and participates in economic, social, and cultural life as kin, which has been systematically sabotaged by the capitalist conception of land as a fungible property that defines an individual in material, moral, social, and metaphysical senses. Opposing conceptualizations of land result in and are reflected in other aspects. For instance, Native governance is grounded in kinship responsibility, a horizontal and egalitarian system that manages conflicts through community consensus, whereas the dominating nation-state centralized governance pushes a vertical system of rights. Cheyfitz finds more examples in how Natives and Westerners regard justice and warfare differently. As land becomes property, Western terms like “country,” “nation,” “treaty,” and “sovereignty” are rigidly applied to Indigenous peoples. Within U.S. borders, Natives are granted subordinate sovereignty and dual citizenship, meaning that they are both tribal and nation-state citizens. Cheyfitz holds that colonial politics and policies are perpetuated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which is doomed “to be a certain kind of classic colonial bureaucracy” (26) despite it being primarily run by Natives nowadays. Meanwhile, contemporary worldwide efforts to subvert ongoing colonial construction are highlighted. For example, the Zapatistas in Mexico implement autonomy through



“rule by obeying” that “draws on the community practices of self-organization through assembly” (61-62).

In chapter two, Cheyfitz stresses that the political history of the question asked in *The Night Watchman* (2020) – “Who was an Indian? What? Who, who, who? And how?” (Louise Erdrich, qtd. in *The Colonial* 84) – must be recognized. He raises two prongs of Native identity: the traditional cultural logic held by Native people is “based on a relationship between kinship and land” (65) and open to the adoption of non-Natives, while the biologic of blood quantum has achieved increasing autonomy through constant legitimation and rationalization, since the early eighteenth century. The two logics are vexingly imbricated. For instance, Cheyfitz reads William S. Roger’s self-identification with “Cherokee Indian” in *U.S. v. Rogers* (1846) as, on the one hand, “Cherokee Indian” that suggests an emphasis on his cultural acceptance into the Cherokee community, and on the other, “Cherokee *Indian*” that “incorporates a biological term of race, ‘Indian’” and “represent[s] the invasion and displacement of cultural by biologic” (73, emphasizes original). The historic shift from the cultural logic to the biologic and the coupling of the two are sharply observed here. The profound complexity of Native identity in ethnological, political, and legal senses is also visible as shown in quoting the latest answer to “Who is an American Indian or Alaska Native” on the BIA website. Cheyfitz avoids any circular definition of Native identity such as Charles Larson’s selection of Native authors based on their general tribal acceptance; he also rejects the ahistorical and standard trope of mixedblood upheld by Louis Owens who “bypasses its importance by situating [it] outside the colonial history of cultural and biologic” (93). Cheyfitz’s approach to Native identity is to historicize it. For instance, he corrects that Tayo in *Ceremony* (1977) is a Laguna Indian “not positioned between two worlds but ceremoniously searching for his balance *within* Laguna society after being unbalanced by the trauma of World War II” (91, emphasis added) by referencing the Laguna Constitution ratified in 1958 that determines membership through the mother and has no such designation as “mixedblood.” His discussions on the two prongs of Native identity in this chapter appear much more focused than in his long chapter mentioned at the beginning of this review.

Chapter three of *The Colonial Construction of Indian Country* explores the collaborative nature of Native literary identity. By historicizing collaborative Native writings, Cheyfitz unveils in them arrays of Native literary resistance to restrictive legal definitions of identity. For example, at the time of the production of *Black Elk Speaks* (1932), Black Elk was a complex figure of modernity with mixed religious beliefs mediating and encompassing Neihardt, who was later adopted into Black Elk’s kinship as an Indian of cultural logic. Quoting Vine Deloria Jr.’s note that the contemporary young Natives read

Black Elk Speaks for “affirmation of the continuing substance of Indian tribal life” (Deloria, qtd. in *The Colonial* 111, 112), Cheyfitz holds that the collaborative dynamics assure the book of a “situational identity” through the “practice of a pantribal, Indian community’s resistance to the erosion” (112) of tribal life. Black Hawk’s autobiography, where Black Hawk himself plays no role for the most skeptical critics, is placed by Cheyfitz along with *Johnson v. M’Intosh* (1823) and the Indian Removal Act (1830). He argues that the autobiography is a countercolonial force because the cultural identity of its voice is a Native one that expresses Sauk ways of life, their bravery, eagerness for economic survival, sense of irony, and central values of kinship. Other collaborative works like *Narratives of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* (1824) and *Cogewea* (1927) are also within Cheyfitz’s reach.

In chapter four, Cheyfitz concentrates on the ongoing colonization in Indian Country by criticizing U.S. federal Indian law as a structure of settler colonialism that aims for “the elimination of the native in order for the colonizer to possess the land and work it” (138) through denaturalizing, establishing, and enforcing legal and political borders. Tribal Judge Coutts, Erdrich’s character in *The Round House* (2012), uses an oozing and thawing casserole to account for the rotting superstructure of tribal toothless sovereignty. The superstructure, as well as *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta* (2022), yet another recent attack on tribal sovereignty cited by Cheyfitz, force him to interpret Judge Coutts’ vision – “We want the right to prosecute criminals of all races on all lands within our original boundaries” (Erdrich, qtd. in *The Colonial* 143) – as a wishful hope. Theoretical rumination on sovereignty follows with Kevin Bruyneel’s notion of the third space of sovereignty at the center. Cheyfitz interprets the “third space” as a construction of “American colonial ambivalence” arising from the temporally different emphasis of the federal agenda that defines Native nations “as being neither entirely domestic nor foreign but both at once spatially” (145). Bruyneel’s concept, for Cheyfitz, acknowledges the legally driven settler colonial structure but “implies, contradictorily, that it is possible for indigenous sovereignty to be achieved within the settler state” (147); hence, Bruyneel is still caught in the discourse of hierarchical sovereignty.

Eager readers expect Cheyfitz’s insight into Native sovereignty, but he turns instead to literature, a deliberate choice to which this review shall return. Chapters five and six explore what Cheyfitz terms “trickster logic” and its potentiality as a literary theory. Trickster is “related to everyone and everything by kinship terms” (162); its comic violation strengthens kinship and suggests the (de)constructedness of all boundaries, surely including legitimized settler colonial borders. Trickster narratives, more than being informational, pedagogical, and philosophical, offer invaluable teaching on what Cheyfitz calls “reciprocal responsibilities of kinship” (161). Trickster logic is an oral strategy, foregrounding we-centered, comic, communal, and curative value and power that figures prominently in Native alphabetic writing to oppose the logic of capitalism and individualism driven by the agonistic structure of federal Indian law. Native writing,



in multiple senses, sees the collaboration between trickster logic, a strategy arising from kinship ethics, and alphabetic writing, an immediate product of colonialism.

The last chapter is a close reading of Gerald Vizenor's *Bearheart* (1978) to reinforce conjunctions between law and literature, oral tradition and writing, as well as trickster logic and the erasure of borders that imbue *The Colonial Construction of Indian Country*. *Bearheart* is read as a trickster novel envisioning the obliteration of not only territorial boundaries set by U.S. federal Indian law but also long-established borders between human and other-than-human beings, life and death, winning and losing, nature and culture, as well as law and stories/literature. Cheyfitz is particularly intrigued by the novel's eventual return to orality, which he interprets as a "linguistic decolonization" (Paul Pasquaretta, qtd. in *The Colonial* 195) of federal Indian law. Cheyfitz notes a disciplinary border between law and literature for Westerners, the former being functional with "a particular political or judicial force" (198) and the latter being aesthetic and nonfunctional. By re-establishing Native myths as the center of meaning, *Bearheart* and its trickster logic resist the compartmentalization of knowledge, uncover the fictionality of law, and praise the practical power of storytelling.

Testing trickster logic on a trickster novel, despite its neatness, makes one ask if erasures of settler colonial borders could only be realized in/through trickster stories. In fact, Cheyfitz aims beyond trickster stories. He grounds trickster logic in Native land and kinship systems. He conceptualizes it as an oral strategy and Native epistemology carried on by alphabetic writing, a "thinking from a different place" (194), and a hermeneutical approach to Native literature. It would appear less genre-restrictive and more applicable and far-reaching if there were a more in-depth study of a non-trickster story. For example, a detailed reading of Tommy Orange's *There There* (2018), a novel mentioned several times and candidly praised by Cheyfitz for "erasing the boundary between reservation and urban Indian life, between tradition and modernity" (112), would suffice.

Bruyneel's theory of the third space of sovereignty is among a plethora of sovereignty discourses referenced by Cheyfitz; others include thoughts from Taiaiake Alfred, Chief Justice John Marshall, Alvaro Reyes and Mara Kaufman, Justice Clarence Thomas, and Vizenor. Cheyfitz intends to make a compelling case that any limited, subordinate, or dual sovereignty is highly ironic, oxymoronic, and inherently hierarchical within a nation-state power and cannot be properly applied to Native communities. That is, he seeks a "post-sovereignty" (96) discourse and a linguistic decolonization. However, he does not forgo the introduced word "sovereignty" but stays with the use of Indigenous sovereignty, incorporates into the concept Native values regarding kinship, land,

balance, and trickster logic, and, without lingering on theoretical exploration, he shifts to Native literature decisively. Among the cited discussions of sovereignty, the following sentence from Vizenor's *Heirs of Columbus* (1991) appears three times: "The essence of sovereignty is imaginative, an original tribal trope, communal and spiritual, an idea that is more than metes and bounds in treaties" (Vizenor, qtd. in *The Colonial* 59, 151, 181). The imagination and vision of sovereignty stressed here is, in fact, furthered by Vizenor in *Fugitive Poses* (1998), where he writes, "Native sovereignty is transmotion, and the rights of motion are personal, totemic, and reciprocal; not base line surveys, futurity, or possessory" (16). Vizenor does provide a "post-sovereignty" (96) discourse, namely, transmotion, and readers do have good reasons to believe that the idea of transmotion must have been on Cheyfitz's mind at least three times. But why does Cheyfitz not borrow it?

It must be admitted that, like Vizenor's other coinages, such as survivance, the theory of transmotion is "elusive and imprecise by definition and in translation," but practices of it are "obvious and unmistakable in native stories" (*Native Liberty* 1). For David Murray, one contributor to *The Columbia Guide* edited by Cheyfitz, transmotion "avoids the limitations inherent in white definitions," but "this antimaterialist and idealized approach would seem to downplay one of the strongest legal and political tools available to contemporary Indians for the sake of a rather airy definition" (346). The theory of transmotion is as "airy" as it is encompassing. Cheyfitz may find the use of it not confronting the contradictions implicit in Indigenous sovereignty as Bruyneel's theory suggests. It is perhaps for a more focused and immediate argument for the conjunction between federal Indian law and Native literature that Cheyfitz avoids mentioning transmotion at all, opts for the word "sovereignty" despite its notorious flaws, and dives into Native literature for more imaginings of "post-sovereignty" (96).

The Colonial Construction of Indian Country presents arrays of linguistic decolonization. Cheyfitz is particularly cautious of master discourses applied without differentiation to Native communities, especially those regarding identity and sovereignty. His new book will inform newcomers to Native American (literary) studies of ubiquitous nuances, ambivalences, and racial ideologies embedded even in the most everyday diction. Those who want to be updated on the latest discussions on enduring topics like (post)/post-/settler-colonialism, individual and communal identity, land and border, visions of sovereignty, law and literature, and orality and writing will also find it helpful. Moreover, it is also friendly to public readers, advocating a communal/public criticism of Native literature and a communal/public reasoning of Indigenous sovereignty and law. Native stories, both aesthetic and functional, breathe and thrive when their communal/public value is duly recognized.

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Jennifer Grenz. *Medicine Wheel for the Planet: A Journey Toward Personal and Ecological Healing*, University of Minnesota Press, 2024. 280pp. ISBN: 9781517916466.

<https://www.upress.umn.edu/9781517916466/medicine-wheel-for-the-planet/>

Within our current era of planetary emergencies, we are increasingly seeing Euro-Western climatic discussions incorporating Indigenous knowledges in attempts to forge a way out of these crises. As such, the relationship between Western and Indigenous science is of critical importance. For instance, Potawatomi scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer's 2013 book *Braiding Sweetgrass* grapples with her personal experiences as an Indigenous woman working within Western science. Equally important is how Indigenous scholars continue to critique the appropriation and misuse of Indigenous knowledges within Euro-Western academia; within her 2016 essay "An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word For Colonialism," Métis scholar Zoe Todd exposes the colonial closeness of Euro-Western academia and reflects upon ways to decolonise the academy so that silenced voices are heard. Given my own positionality as a non-Indigenous scholar working within the Environmental Humanities in imperial and colonial institutions across UK academia, questions surrounding *how* Indigenous knowledges are deployed within Western contexts are pertinent to my own work and approach. Nlaka'pamux scholar Jennifer Grenz offers a thoughtful contribution to discussions of the relationality between Indigenous knowledges and Western science in her 2024 book *Medicine Wheel for the Planet: A Journey Toward Personal and Ecological Healing*. Grenz invites her readers into a deeply personal account of, in Grenz's words, her "journey to connect my head (Western science) and my heart (my Indigenous worldview)" (11). Firmly grounded in storytelling, *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* draws from Grenz's experiences as a restoration ecologist and her personal values as an Indigenous woman, to argue that both Western and Indigenous science are essential to restore and heal our planet. In so doing, Grenz encourages readers to "see beyond the confines of a singular worldview" (12).

Medicine Wheel for the Planet is divided into four sections: each representing a direction on the medicine wheel: North, East, South, and West. The symbolism of the medicine wheel is effectively woven throughout the book in both physical and theoretical ways. The medicine wheel is grounded in a sense of balance and is therefore integral to healing the planet. The cyclical nature of this book takes the reader on a journey beginning in the North in which Grenz focuses on the Indigenous knowledges and wisdoms from her Elders, which is "missing from modern ecology" (15). Part two, the East, represents the start of a new journey connecting people to the land. The South, in part three, reflects upon times of

change and preparing for a hopeful future. And, finally, we conclude our journey around the medicine wheel in the West, which marks the implementation of the knowledges and wisdoms carefully shared and interpreted throughout the journey. The cyclical quality of this book encourages personal journeys around the medicine wheel to continue long after the last page has been read.

The central argument within *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* is the power and value of deploying multiple worldviews. Throughout her journey around the medicine wheel, Grenz advocates for greater diversity in the stories that inform ecology and human relationships with the natural world more broadly. Opposing the limitations of a singular worldview, Grenz suggests that not only is there space for both Western and Indigenous worldviews, but further, multiplicity is vital to healing the planet. Drawing attention to the power and influence that stories can have, Grenz offers examples from her own life of how to balance these two worldviews. When describing her personal experience of parenting her children with her non-Indigenous partner, Grenz emphasizes that “the real work is in providing space for both worldviews” (87). Instead of looking to prove which worldview is superior, *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* focuses on the ways in which Indigenous and Western worldviews can work together to heal the planet collaboratively. Within this discussion, Grenz joins many other Indigenous scholars in calling for a widening of Western understandings of what constitutes an expert or teacher. Grenz writes, “experts don’t always work in universities; they don’t necessarily have university educations. They don’t even have to be adults” (92). This feels reminiscent of Matthew Wildcat (Plains Cree), Mande McDonald (Swampy Cree), Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, and Glen Coulthard’s (Yellowknives Dene) decolonial approach to the peer-review process, whereby they assert, “We should not assume that ‘peers’ in these circumstances are university professors, nor demand that the review process require submitting papers for anonymous feedback. It is a challenge to think about how we create review processes that involve people from the communities that support and foster these land-based initiatives” (Wildcat et al., v). The colonial processes of Euro-Western academia attempt to prohibit the inclusion of Indigenous worldviews and discredit Indigenous knowledges. For those of us working within Euro-Western academia, these insights encourage a reevaluation of *who* is considered knowledgeable.

Relatedly, Grenz draws heavily from her work within ecology and invasive species management to present valuable and thought-provoking discussions of Western ecology (which Grenz coins “Eden ecology”) and Indigenous ecology. According to Grenz, Eden ecology is “an ecology where perfection was broken by the introduction of humans as they fell from grace, and humans are blamed for the resulting imbalance of the once-perfect world” (20-21). Seeking to return to an Eden ecology in which the land is perceived as perfect creates an ecological approach dependent upon chasing perfectionism and is inherently hierarchical. Additionally, and critically, Eden ecologies present human relations with the natural world as “harmful to both plants and people” (31). Conversely, Grenz identifies Indigenous



ecology as an antithetical approach to Eden ecology. Firmly grounded within notions of relationality, Indigenous ecology is a “lived stewardship” (72). As such, relationality emerges as a critical concept within *Medicine Wheel for the Planet*. Drawing on the work of Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson, Grenz elucidates that the three Rs of Indigenous research methodology are “respect, relationality, reciprocity” (46). From the first page, *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* is steeped in relationality and embodies an intimate and personal relationship with the land. Grenz commences the book by stating, “My original sense of connection to the land began in my great-grandmother's garden when I was very little” (1), and then offering, “Or perhaps it began long before that, as caring for plants and growing food may very well be part of my DNA” (1). As highlighted, stories of relationality are ubiquitous within this book. Through such stories, Grenz shows her readers that science can be intimate, personal and that it can - and should - honour individual kinships with the land. Grenz advocates for relational balance and harmony to heal the planet, mirrored by the cyclical quality of the medicine wheel and the very structure of this book: “The circle symbolizes our connection to the cyclical nature of life. [...] Circles symbolize harmony, balance, and peaceful interaction among all living beings” (161). Posing a direct threat to this harmony and balance, settler colonialism has, as Cree and Métis scholar Wendy Makoons Geniusz states, forced many Indigenous peoples “into a state of unbalance” (Geniusz 160). Therefore, decolonial approaches must seek to re-prioritise balance and harmony.

For non-Indigenous readers *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* offers many valuable insights on terminology, language, and engagement with Indigenous knowledges. Grenz simultaneously calls for the inclusion of Indigenous worldviews whilst cautioning against improper use and deployment of sacred traditional knowledges. Importantly, Grenz connects settler scholars with capitalist processes of extraction and exploitation: “settler researchers only want to take what we have to offer without understanding exactly what it is they are taking and who they may be leaving behind. Our Indigenous knowledges are being sought with the detachment of a consumer coveting the latest fad” (41-2). *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* is therefore essential reading for all scholars in Euro-Western colonial contexts. Building on Todd's critical interrogation into the use (and misuse) of Indigenous knowledges, Grenz makes an important distinction between knowing a worldview and knowing traditional knowledges: “To know our worldview is to know our hearts and minds. To know only our traditional ecological knowledge is to have only a superficial relationship, leaving our knowledges vulnerable to misuse and misunderstanding” (43). Warning against decontextualising Indigenous worldviews, Grenz emphasises that these knowledges cannot be removed from their foundations.

“To know someone's story is to really know them” (238). As these words from part four, *The West*, of *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* suggest, this book is an intimate

insight into Grenz's personal stories. Grenz generously shares with the reader both scientific and Indigenous wisdom. Reflecting Robin Wall Kimmerer's approach in *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Grenz advocates for engaging with the stories of all living beings: "To ask 'What is your story?' is to honour the now by acknowledging the relations as they currently are and the web of relationships they currently have. We then must ask, What will your story be in the future?" (235). As Grenz's personal storytelling exemplifies, stories help us to make sense of the world: "Stories are a sacred and integral part of our Indigenous way of life. They provide a way for us to understand our place in the world" (17). This book offers a complex web of stories, speaking to both Indigenous and Western science and brimming with wisdom. *Medicine Wheel for the Planet* advocates for a relational balance and harmony with all living things in order to heal the planet. To be invited on this journey around the medicine wheel is a generous gift, an intimate insight into Grenz's worldview and her emotive stories. Ultimately, I see within this book a call to action: what we do with these beautiful stories is up to us. For the sake of our planet, I hope we use them well.

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Craig Harris. *Rise Up! Indigenous Music in North America*. University of Nebraska Press, 2023. 328 pp. ISBN: 9781496236159.

<https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/bison-books/9781496236159/rise-up/>

With *Rise Up! Indigenous Music in North America* (2023), music historian and percussionist Craig Harris delivers a most valuable resource for anyone interested in Indigenous music on the North American continent and popular music in general. It allows not only for deep insight into the diversity of the contemporary music scenes on Turtle Island, but it also makes its readers aware of the impact Indigenous artists have had on the genres (pop, rock, hip hop, etc.) through which North American culture has shaped popular music on the entire globe. Most parts of the book convene the autobiographical voices of numerous Indigenous artists versed in singing and the playing of a wide array of instruments (including Native flutes, drums, electric guitars, and turntables). In their own words, these artists relate their stories to readers in the form of shorter (e.g. Leela Gilday (Dene), 163-166) and longer accounts (e.g., Calvin Ishoni Standing Bear (Oglala and Sicangu Lakota), 78-92). Rather than an academic study of these different artists and their oeuvres, *Rise Up!* is an archive of voices – the voices of those who have dedicated their lives to their art; voices that have, in many cases, been ignored by the music industry, critics and scholars, and mainstream listeners. The book is thus an important intervention into the mainstream reception of music in North America because it gives long overdue credit to Native musicians and generates more awareness for the thriving of Native musical practices in the present.

Rise Up! is a continuation of Harris's *Heartbeat, Warble, and the Electric Powwow: American Indian Music* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), which provides a survey that focuses more on elaborate discussions of Native sonic traditions and how Native musicians emerged within different genres of pop music. Harris's previous book is concerned with tracing the developments of Native music traditions from past to present, whereas the methodology of *Rise Up!* is more akin to an encyclopedia. *Heartbeat, Warble, and the Electric Powwow* also presents a more structured contextualization of settler-colonial oppression, both past and present. *Rise Up!*, too, introduces some contexts in chapters 1-4 ("Fingerprints," "Anthropologists," "Assimilation," and "Stereotypical"), yet, while these chapters create an important frame, especially for readers unfamiliar with the history of settler colonialism in the US and Canada, the chapters would have benefited from some more rigid organizing and a clearer structure. Readers further interested in the issues raised here could turn to Harris's previous work as well as to Philip J. Deloria's *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), John W. Troutman's *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934* (2013), and Dylan Robinson's seminal *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (2020). In general,

Rise Up! would have presented an even more valuable, stand-alone resource if Harris had further developed his critical and his curational voice in order to guide readers more consistently throughout the book.

Chapter 5, "Defiance," begins with Harris's introduction to the achievements and influence of an older generation of well-known Native artists like John Trudell (Santee Sioux and Mexican, 1946-2015) and Floyd Westerman (Dakota, 1936-2007). The chapter also features non-Native figures like Peter LaFarge (1931-1965) and Buffy Sainte-Marie (1941-), whose false claims to Native identity were uncovered by a CBC report in late 2023, which shook the Indigenous music community (see Leo, Woloshyn, and Guerriero for the original report, and Wex, Cyca and Meriläinen for two Native perspectives on the aftermath of the report). Harris's book went into print before the allegations came to light, and the influence both LaFarge and Sainte-Marie have had on North American music remains. Yet, further framing would have helped readers understand why the life and work of the artists discussed here was defined primarily by "defiance" - a notion that has remained an important driving force for many Native musicians alive and working today. These artists find entry in the remaining chapters of the book, which are more and less organized along the lines of different musical practices and notions of genre. Chapters 6, 7, and 9 give the stage to artists most skilled at drumming and other rhythmic practices ("6. Beating of the Heart"), Native flutes ("7. Sound of the Wind"), and song (9. "Sing It Loud"). Chapters 10-13 allow musicians of rock ("10. Rockin' the Rez"), reggae ("11. Rocksteady"), hip hop ("12. Tongue Twisters"), and classical music ("13. Connections") to introduce themselves. It is a perk that chapter 12 also includes Native dancers Maria and Marjorie Tallchief (Osage, Scottish, and Irish), gesturing to the crucial, inextricable connection that exists for many Native cultures between sonic practices and dance (see for example, Young Bear and Theisz 38; see also Troutman 10). Chapter 8 ("Ancestral Voices") convenes three artists who see their music, above all, as the practice of passing on and keeping alive Native traditions.

Across these chapters, many readers will surely be able to find artists whose work they may not yet know. I was particularly grateful to learn about and listen to the stories and the music of Jack "Crazy Flute" Holland (Tsalagi, Lakota, Scot), Shon Denay (Oglala Lakota and African American), and Callie Bennet (South Korean and Diné). Jack "Crazy Flute" Holland's rapid style has earned him the title "the heavy metal rocker of the Native flute" (93), and Shon Denay's voice and music creatively combine neo-soul, hip hop, jazz, and R&B into a unique blend. Callie Bennet, in contrast, is more clearly identifiable as a country musician, who uses her music to represent the culture of her adoptive family and the wider Diné community she was welcomed into as a very young child. All these artists' cultural backgrounds and creative outputs reveal the richness of Native musical expression. They succinctly show how diversity and hybridity shape the work of both Native music and pop music in general (the two are, of course, inextricably interlinked) and how Native musicians and Native traditions have been important creative driving forces for North American (pop) culture.



The greatest strength of *Rise Up!* is that it gives as much room as possible to the unmediated voices of so many different Native musicians. Readers have a chance to learn firsthand from the artists about what has inspired them, what has shaped their lives as artists, and what their music means to them. Some of the artists' accounts emerge from and are delivered in the form of interviews, but most tell their stories in their own words without intervention. *Rise Up!* thus brings together a collection of voices that are allowed to follow their own directions. Naturally, Harris's book does not feature all the Native artists readers might be hoping to find in it. The rich diversity and large number of Native musicians on Turtle Island simply do not allow for a book such as this to ever be complete. Southwestern and Plains tribes are prominently represented; other regions, such as the Pacific Northwest, less so. It would have been appreciated to also hear the voices of some Native Alaskan and Inuit artists active on territory occupied by Canada (like Arias Hoyle or Tanya Tagaq) as well as more First Nations musicians (for example, Nuxalk and Onondaga rapper JB The First Lady or Haisla rap duo Snotty Nose Rez Kids). The character of the book and the multitudes of Indigenous musicians on Turtle Island, however, practically demand that Harris's book remains an open, unfinished archive, with new gaps springing up continuously – gaps that readers themselves will have to fill. Aside from the helpful index, a list of all the artists included in the book would have increased their visibility further. *Rise Up!* deserves praise for being an encouragement, an encouragement to listen, both to the stories Native musicians have to tell and, of course, to the music they are graciously sharing with the world. In Harris's own words, "Enough said...It's time to listen" (295).

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Mishuana Goeman. *Settler Aesthetics: Visualizing the Spectacle of Orinary Moments in 'The New World'*. University of Nebraska Press, 2023. 189 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8032-9066-2.

<https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/nebraska/9780803290662/settler-aesthetics/>

Filmic and other cultural representations of foundational U.S. narratives, such as the Pocahontas story, have a history of bolstering what settler historian and scholar Patrick Wolfe terms “the logic of elimination,” by presenting and idealising the colonial erasure of Indigeneity (387). In the book *Settler Aesthetics: Visualizing the Spectacle of Orinary Moments in The New World* (2023), Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) uses an Indigenous Feminist lens to analyse the representation of what she terms “orinary moments” of contact in the 2005 movie *The New World (TNW)* by American director Terrence Malick. This film tells a version of the story of Pocahontas which is, as outlined by Goeman, accompanied by “pristine landscapes rather than the sexual violence, physical subjugation, and coercion that enable conquest in actuality” (11). In this text, the approach to demythologising the Pocahontas “love story” digresses from typical perspectives, which aim to dissect the direct narrative of Pocahontas’ romantic relationship with John Smith and her eventual “sacrificing” of her Indigeneity (Goeman 11, 14). Instead, the text examines “the settler aesthetics that are upheld” in film which perpetuate a visual spectacle that shapes and “sustain[s] settler colonialism and empire” (Goeman 14).

In the introduction, Goeman succinctly outlines how she will use an Indigenous Feminist perspective to engage with an element of the settler aesthetic in each of the book’s chapters. The sections of the book then unfold by covering the following: the consumption and reception of the Pocahontas narrative, Malick’s “direction, film techniques, and philosophical focuses within the context of his position in the American film canon” (15), the film as an example of “Indian sympathy films” (95), which put excess labour on Indigenous participants and use their visual and auditory form as an apology for the “violence” of a settler colonial past necessary to “creating America” that is “no longer needed” (92), and finally by looking “to the future and voices of Pocahontas’s people, the Pamunkey” (Goeman 16).

As Goeman considers the response to the romanticised figure of Pocahontas in the first chapter of the book, she uses personal anecdotes to focus the reader on the contemporary real-world impacts on Indigenous people of the “naturalized consumption–mediated through Disney–of their identity and being” (20). This provides an evocative introduction to the topic at hand which, though perhaps not

necessary to the conviction of her analysis of Malick's direction, is important in her (re-)centring of Indigenous experience and voices.

Beyond her anecdotal introduction, Goeman moves to conceptualise her use of the terms "moves to innocence" and "spectacle" as she shifts to her critique of *TNW* (22). She describes the spectacle as "the way that social relations become mediated through images and capital endeavors" (Goeman 22). With this definition of the spectacle in mind, the "move to innocence" is conveyed as being a settler aesthetic in and of itself which is "grounded in the emptying out of racialized and gendered violence," in an "attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity" (21). This becomes the central tenet of Goeman's argument.

As she begins to explore the spectacle of the "cordial and romantic coming together" that the "move to innocence," in *TNW*, upholds, she reinforces how Malick's "attempts [at] cultural authenticity," through "dress, scenery, and Alogonquin language dialects," fall short (Goeman 25, 22). She assesses how the film reinforces the ongoing neglect to undermine the facets of the well-known narrative that the movie perpetuates, which has "had a profound effect on Native and Black communities by upholding white supremacy" (Goeman 40). Through an effective implementation of the concepts outlined above, Goeman's analysis convincingly argues and reminds us that, even in a supposed attempt to re-envision the portrayal of initial contact and of Pocahontas, *TNW* succeeds only in "present[ing] a kinder version of Indians and conquest," which sanitises reality (Goeman 24).

Transitioning into the book's second chapter, Goeman unveils a survey of Malick's film techniques, looking at his academic and creative background, how his upbringing in Oklahoma and Texas may have influenced his filming style, and at *TNW* and facets of the wider catalogue of movies he has directed. Her examination is particularly concerned with depictions of the environment, and how Malick's works are pensive in their "diminution of the human narrative against the vastness of nature" (Goeman 49). Through her analysis of technique, Goeman argues that *TNW*'s "romanticization of land ... reproduces a geographic settler aesthetic in [the] portrayal of American landscapes ... [which] evacuat[e] American Indian histories and geographies" and effectively empty out the realities of the dispossession of Indigenous people and Indigenous land sovereignty in place of "a neoliberal focus on respect and shared responsibility for the Earth" (49, 50).

Though much of the book's second chapter provides interesting explorations of Malick's filmic techniques and creative choices; the section titled "Soundscapes of Settlement" provides the most insightful exploration of *TNW*'s deployment of settler aesthetics. What emerges is the assessment that, through musical and sound-based choices, the landscape becomes "another character" (70). Goeman asserts that the use of voiceover pulls audience focus to the "visual narrative of America" (70), and the use of nature sounds overlaid with music by the European composers Wagner and Mozart to accompany the visuals of the Virginian landscape serves to



“demonstrate European mastery over nature that will come” (62). Alongside other analyses, her assertion that these “soundscapes evoke Eden” bolsters the claim that Malick’s focus on the Virginian landscape shows the land as “pure property and consumable,” making this chapter especially salient to her overall argument (Goeman 65, 50).

In chapter three, Goeman focuses on how *TNW* embodies the tradition of filmic apology for a settler-colonial past imbued with violence and underlines the recurrent labour put on Indigenous actors and film staff in the creation of narratives which feature Indigenous people, histories, and experiences. Through her exploration of *TNW* as a filmic apology, she exemplifies how the film acts as another “Indian sympathy fil[m],” through the spectacle and the spectator role (Goeman 95). Goeman states, “[t]his is part of how the spectacle operates in *TNW*,” as the sympathy which accumulates in “the spectator” (92) serves to “affir[m] that the guilt one feels [when watching] means we have moved past our violent colonial past” (97), effectively “relegating the spectator to the role of observer” despite the continuation of settler colonial forces (92). This statement highlights two points: the capital connections attached to the (cinematic) spectacle of originary moments and the way in which visual representations of settler colonialism allow movie-goers to participate in the spectacle and the upholding of its “structures,” of “consumable” land and property whilst sustaining a feeling of non-complicity (Goeman 22, 50). To hark back to the book’s introduction, Goeman addresses the aforementioned points by asserting that “we can watch conquest on screen, have feelings that it is wrong, and even know that there is doubt about the [storyline being presented] but consume the images and continue to participate in the structures” anyway (Goeman 22). The theme of apology and of the complicity in looking or spectating in the spectacle moves across the third chapter which, in my opinion, provides the strongest stand-alone analysis of the settler aesthetic and its “undermin[ing of] a decolonial presentation of the Powhatan Empire” in *TNW* (Goeman 117).

Before reaching the book’s final chapter, “The ‘New World’ of Race, U.S. Law, and the Politics of Recognition,” Goeman’s argument(s) about the prevalence of settler aesthetics in Malick’s film are already convincing. What this chapter offers to reinforce this claim is the alternate possibilities for visual and creative portrayals of Virginia-based Indigenous communities amidst the structure of settler colonialism. The fourth chapter rejects the film’s erasure of “the actual survival and thriving of Pamunkey communities” and the “extraordinary, mythologized” narrative at play (Goeman 123). Goeman spotlights various significant elements of Pamunkey history which Malick neglects to showcase in *TNW*. By drawing attention to these shortcomings, Goeman compounds the settler aesthetics she asserts can be found within Malick’s film by underscoring the missed opportunity to centre “survivance” and to illuminate the politics of recognition and other eliminatory legislative

decisions which suppressed the Pamunkey people but failed to eliminate them (127). Through a thorough outlining of the racialisation of land and laws, the politics of recognition, and sovereign possibilities, readers are made aware of the “history of racial laws [which] are lost in the spectacle of interracial romance” (140) and of the Pamunkey’s own decade-long process of petitioning the U.S. government for recognition, which was in progress while *TNW* was in production. Goeman outlines the “irony” of this, illuminating how Malick was working on the creation of a narrative which remains entrenched in “the tragic tale of destruction of Indigenous peoples” (Goeman 147, 126-127) whilst, to invoke Kānaka Maoli scholar J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, the Pamunkey “exist, resist, and persist” within the settler-imposed borders of the Virginian landscape (Kauanui 1).

In summation, the principal arguments of *Settler Aesthetics* are entangled with the danger that films like *TNW* pose in reaffirming and “recirculating” the “image of the sacrificing, assimilated,” romanticised figure of Pocahontas and in stripping Indigenous nations represented in such movies, such as the Pamunkey, of their own agency and of their own stories (Goeman 147, 145). By underlining the reinforcement of “tropes of sacrificing Indigenous women and vanishing Native nations” in Malick’s film, Goeman convincingly demonstrates how Indigenous agency is de-centred, and she reminds us that Pocahontas’ “name is not mentioned in the film and does not appear until the final credits” (126, 35).

Settler Aesthetics is a book of contestations and calls for re-framings. Through a broad and in-depth assessment of the filmic representation of the “spectacle of originary moments,” Goeman’s book iterates how creative presentations of settler-Indigenous relations have the potential to reconfigure romanticised, sanitised depictions of settler colonialism and how *TNW* ultimately fails in this pursuit (147). Together with her definition of the spectacle in chapter one, and her examples of where it is littered throughout *TNW*, Goeman uses her assessments of the film to extend the reach of her analysis to reshape current understandings of how the medium of film can “disrupt the settler colonial structure set in place to extract land and resources from Indigenous communities (24). By ending her analysis with a brief history and a nod to the experience of the Pamunkey people, Goeman reconfigures the oversimplified depiction of Indigeneity and settler violence to be found in *TNW* by centring those impacted by these perpetual narratives and sharing her own hopes for Indigenous films and futures. As a result, Goeman has given readers a stimulating, analytical take on *TNW* which is vibrant and convincing in its approach and valuable for those in and outside of Film and Indigenous Studies.

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