Non-Natives and Nativists

The Settler Colonial Origins of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

in Contemporary Literatures of the US and Australia

by

Travis Franks

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved August 2019 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Lee Bebout, Chair
Karen Leong
Melissa Free
Kyle Powys Whyte

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2019

ABSTRACT

Non-Natives and Nativists is a relational analysis of contemporary multiethnic literatures in two countries formed by settler colonialism, the process of nation-building by which colonizers attempt to permanently invade Indigenous lands and develop their own beliefs and practices as governing principles. This dissertation focuses on narratives that establish and sustain settlers' claims to belonging in the US and Australia and counter-narratives that problematize, subvert, and disavow such claims. The primary focus of my critique is on settler-authored works and the ways they engage with, perpetuate, and occasionally challenge normalized conditions of belonging in the US and Australia; however, every chapter discusses works by Indigenous writers or non-Indigenous writers of color that put forward alternative, overlapping, and often competing claims to belonging. Naming settler narrative strategies and juxtaposing them against those of Indigenous and arrivant populations is meant to unsettle the common sense logic of settler belonging. In other words, the specific features of settler colonialism promulgate and govern a range of devices and motifs through which settler storytellers in both nations respond to related desires, anxieties, and perceived crises. Narrative devices such as author-perpetrated identity hoax, settings imbued with uncanny hauntings, and plots driven by fear of invasion recur to the point of becoming recognizable tropes. Their perpetuation supports the notion that the logics underwriting settler colonialism persist beyond periods of initial colonization and historical frontier violence. These logics—elimination and possession—still shape present-day societies in settler nations, and literature is one of the primary vehicles by which they are operationalized.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Lyn Rieger, who has made countless unrecorded sacrifices so that I might get to do the work I love. No one means more to me than you, mom.

And to first-generation, low-income, minoritized, and underrepresented scholars. You, your experiences, and your work are absolutely *necessary*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of this dissertation project, I have lived and worked on the lands of a number of Indigenous peoples in the US and Australia, namely the Akimel O'Odham, Pee-Posh, Turrbal, and Jagera. They are the original, rightful owners and custodians of these lands, and I wish to pay my respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

I also want to acknowledge William Woody and Patrick Wolfe, both of whom passed while I was working on this project. I knew Mr. Woody all of my life and thought of him as my grandfather, and while I only knew Patrick briefly, his work, friendship, and support have shaped my life and career in ways he could not have imagined. They were both my teachers, in their own ways, and I thank them very much for the lessons they've taught me.

I'm indebted to my committee members Lee Bebout, Karen Leong, Melissa Free, and Kyle Whyte for their guidance and support throughout the research and writing process that made this dissertation possible. Thanks to Sujey Vega, Drew Lopenzina, Gene Young, and April Shemak, as well. To Lydia Fox and everyone who supports the McNair Program at SHSU. At ASU, thanks to Steve Farmer, Vanessa Fonseca, Keith Miller, Kyle Mox, and Claudia Sadowski-Smith. To Matt Bell for always being as excited about my work as I am about yours. To Alex Young for showing me the ropes in academe, introducing me around at the conference circuits, and going to shows with me.

Thank you to dear friends Natasha, Josh, and Steven—I counted on y'all so much, all the time. Thanks to Jess, Ian, and Clarissa. Sincerest gratitude to Sebastian Terneus, Kenny Ladenburg, and Matt Henry. Maniac loves you, boys.

Special thanks to everyone at *RED INK*, particularly Simon Ortiz, Jim Blasingame, and Henry Quintero. Thanks to Bojan Louis and Sara Sams, Kenny Dyer-Redner and Erica Redner-Vera, and Kyle and Seana Mitchell. Y'all made me feel like family, and I'm grateful. Thanks to the Hoop students I met and worked with, too.

Thanks to the Australian Fulbright Commission, to Kerry Kilner and the team at AustLit, and to David Carter, Gillian Whitlock, Anna Johnston, and Alan Lawson. Cheers to Graham Akhurst: we're *staying* all lit up, my friend. I'm deeply grateful to Barb Ellis for her hospitality and willingness to share her research with me. Thank you to all of the larrikins in Brissy, starting with my brother Tai. Thank you, as well, to Em, Jamus, Terry, Jimmy, Sam, Jules, Cat, Phillipa, and the crews at BOSC, Catchment, Scratch, and Bent Books.

Thanks, Sierra, for having the foresight to be the right kind of friend at exactly the right time in my life. To Lexy Mosh for the amazing work and even better friendship. To Gina for the mental and emotional support. To Charity for having a kind heart and a lot of patience. To Maxine for keeping it weird all the way from Austin. Thanks to the boys in Goodnight, Texas, for making Phoenix a stop on the tour and becoming my pals along the way.

My love to Dad and Diane, my brothers and sisters, and my nieces and nephews. More than anyone, though, thanks to my parents Lyn and Ronnie Rieger. I love both of you very much and appreciate all of the ways you've shown me support while I worked on this degree. Y'all are my home.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION: NON-NATIVES AND NATIVISTS 1

2 SETTLER NATIVISM AS LITERARY HOAX 28

3 SETTLER NATIVISM AND INDIGENOUS HAUNTINGS..... 99

4 SETTLER NATIVISM AND POST-9/11 INVASION NARRATIVES 173

5 SETTLER NATIVISM AS DYSTOPIAN FANTASY 234

REFERENCES 268

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....291

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: NON-NATIVES AND NATIVISTS

Non-Natives and Nativists parses overlapping and often competing claims to belonging in the US and Australia, framing settler nationalism and (im)migrant peoples' human and civil rights in relation to Indigenous sovereignty.[1] These concerns are rarely encountered in relation to one another, especially in the US, where colonization is predominantly fitted to a settler-Indigenous binary and racialization to a black-white binary. Such frameworks cannot support notions of belonging in Australia, where indigeneity and Blackness are synonymous. Nonetheless, Aboriginal sovereignty seldom factors into critiques of Australian nativism, where concerns over settlers' own exogenous origins are often diminished or obscured by the normativity of settler-state rule. There are, however, moments where these issues commingle in the mainstream.

Take for example the general reaction to members of the far-right white nationalist movement Reclaim Australia incorporating the Aboriginal flag into their anti-Islamic rallies in 2015 (Figure 1). Rally attendees in Melbourne were universally labeled "cowards, mugs [fools] and bigots" by the Victorian Attorney-General, but the appropriation of the Aboriginal flag was seen as especially objectionable. Luritja artist Harold Thomas designed the flag in the early 1970s, during a concerted activist effort for federal and state recognition of Aborigines' rights to self-determination. Thomas called

[1] "(Im)migrant peoples" is admittedly an awkward, imperfect term meant to acknowledge the variety of populations who factor into societies formed within settler nations. See (Day 105-7) for a concise discussion on the failures and limitations of such terminology, particularly as it applies to such disparate populations as voluntary immigrants, involuntarily enslaved diasporic peoples, and refugees.

Reclaim Australia's use of the flag in 2015 "nonsense" and "idiotic," asserting that his design could not be used in any context promoting white supremacy. Thomas dismissed Reclaim Australia's rhetoric of taking back the nation, asking "Who's reclaiming it? Reclaiming it for who?" He further pointed out the irony of such claims in light of Aboriginal Australians' ongoing legal battles with the federal government over native title claims.[2] White nationalism and decolonization are incommensurable, though this point seems to have been lost on those few members of White Australia who attempted to bolster their settler-nativist agenda by appropriating aboriginality.

Figure 1. Protesters holding flags at a Reclaim Australia Rally. AAP, Mick Tsikas.

How then could members of one of white Australia's far-right movements imagine their nativist cause as somehow in-line with progressive Aboriginal activism? One immediate answer is that a certain amount of cognitive dissonance enables such acts

[2] The Aboriginal flag appears in the upper right corner of Figure 1. The Eureka Flag, which depicts the Southern Cross constellation and (not unlike the battle flag of certain Confederate troops in the US Civil War) has been linked to racist white nationalism, appears opposite. See "Reclaim Australia, No Room" and "Father of the Aboriginal Flag."

of cultural appropriation. But such acts do not take place exclusively on the white conservative fringe at random intervals; indeed, they reinforce quotidian common sense beliefs about belonging in settler nations. As I show over the course of this dissertation, Non-Native nativism is as much a tautology as it is a logical fallacy.

Overview

Non-Natives and Nativists is a relational analysis of contemporary multiethnic literatures in two countries formed by settler colonialism, the process of nation-building by which colonizers attempt to permanently invade Indigenous lands and develop their own beliefs and practices as governing principles.[3] This dissertation focuses on narratives that establish and sustain settlers' claims to belonging in the US and Australia and counter-narratives that problematize, subvert, and disavow such claims. My critiques primarily consider settler-authored works and the ways they engage with, perpetuate, and occasionally challenge normalized conditions of belonging in the US and Australia; however, every chapter discusses works by Indigenous writers or non-Indigenous writers of color that put forward alternative, overlapping, and often competing claims to belonging. This is a deliberate attempt on my part to bring settler colonial studies into direct, sustained conversation with Indigenous, ethnic, and critical race studies in order to better understand the often incommensurable ways in which normativity and difference are defined and maintained in settler-dominated societies. In focusing on literatures of the US and Australia, I am also emphasizing a relational approach to transnational settler

[3] My definition of settler colonialism is adapted from several scholarly sources, primarily Wolfe (2006), Moreton-Robinson (2015), Saito (2015), Strakosch and Macoun (2012), and Sánchez and Pita (2014).

colonial studies to better understand the variance that exists within similarly structured systems of nation-building.

Naming settler narrative strategies and juxtaposing them against those of Indigenous and arrivant populations is meant to unsettle the common sense logic of settler belonging. I examine how stories are used to govern who is made to feel accepted, safe, and at home in settler societies, who is made not to, and how such decisions are legitimized through literature. Developing a relational rather than comparative analysis means that, even as I am pointing out similar features of sociopolitical identity construction through narrative, I am not advocating a one-to-one understanding of settler nations nor their histories, polities, or cultural productions. I find it useful, instead, to chart ways in which contemporary settler populations in the US and Australia use storytelling in like fashion to imagine their specific places within conquered lands and social orders. My analysis is thus concerned with what Ann Laura Stoler refers to as "connections between the broad-scale dynamics of rule and the intimate domains of implementation."[4] In other words, I'm interested in how the specific features of settler colonialism promulgate and govern a range of devices and motifs through which settler storytellers in both nations respond to related desires, anxieties, and perceived crises. Narrative devices such as author-perpetrated identity hoax, settings imbued with uncanny hauntings, and plots driven by fear of invasion recur to the point of becoming recognizable tropes. Their perpetuation supports the notion that the logics underwriting settler colonialism persist beyond periods of initial colonization and historical frontier violence. These logics—elimination and possession—still shape present-day societies in

[4] Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties," 831.

settler nations, and literature is one of the primary vehicles by which they are operationalized.

Non-Natives and Nativists moves through literary developments occurring in the US and Australia since the early 1990s. Both countries experienced similar existential crises during this period that are now commonly referred to as "the culture wars" in the US "the history wars" in Australia. These series of debates, combined with the understanding that both nation-states were born out of settler colonial projects originating in the United Kingdom, provide the structure for my relational analysis. Public, political contests over how Anglo colonizer-descendants should feel about the past and how the history of colonization impacts contemporary opinions on race, religion, and gender gripped both the US and Australia for much of the 1990s. Significant variations occurred in these "wars," however, especially as it relates to the ways in which indigeneity and blackness are conceived of within the dominant cultural imaginaries. In Australia, to be Indigenous (or Aboriginal) is to also be Black. This is rarely the case in the US, where Blackness is overwhelmingly associated with the stigma of enslavement, itself an issue largely divorced from discussions on Indigenous removal, and the struggle for civil rights.[5] Immigration and refugee asylum featured prominently in the culture wars of the 1990s, with debates intensifying after al-Qaeda's attacks on the US in late 2001. As with

[5] See Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*,117-46 and Krauthamer (2013) for more on the complicated histories of Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw nations refusing to recognize Afro-Indigenous indigeneity after having enslaved Africans and African Americans prior to removal. See, too, Day (2015) for discussion on the interrelatedness of Indigenous and Black dispossessions in the US settler colonial context. Lastly, it cannot be forgotten that Indigenous peoples *were* enslaved in the US and Australia, even as those enslaved populations did not represent the primary source for labor exploitation in either settler colonial project.

issues of "race relations" in the US, discourses on migrant populations and immigration in the US and Australia have rarely included Indigenous perspectives. This despite the fact that many of those seeking asylum by migrating from Central and South America and many Muslim-majority countries are themselves diasporic Indigenous peoples and that they are migrating to or seeking asylum in colonized Indigenous lands.[6]

This dissertation refuses the compartmentalization of Indigenous issues and insists on reckoning with Indigenous sovereignty as a concern central to all discourses about belonging in settler nations. This is especially the case with narratives engaging in anti-immigrant nativism, where the critical distinction between "settler" and "Native" is obscured so that the settler-native can define oneself in relation to those perceived as "foreigners." Over the course of the project, I unpack the double register inherent in the term *settler nativism* by extending its critical scope to encompass the ways in which settlers position themselves as natives *and* assume nativist attitudes towards exogenous migrants. The primary argument developed throughout this dissertation holds that nativism in settler nations must be conceptualized around continuing denials of Indigenous sovereignty and understood within a range of moves in which settlers attempt to appropriate indigeneity. Making Indigenous concerns central to discourses on immigration regulation encourages those working against nativism to face—and challenge—the colonial origins of a current global crisis.

Definition of *Settler Nativism* in Four Processes

The separation of Indigenous and immigrant issues in the US and Australia occurs through several interlocking processes of settler nativism. These processes position

[6] For one of the few extended discussions on the latter, see Volpp (2015).

settlers against either Indigenous or immigrant Others so that they might imagine an often hard-won but still imperiled sense of place-attachment. Settler nativism as I define it thus concerns two anxieties troubling settlers' sense of belonging: indigenization and invasion. These interrelated anxieties structure the four processes of settler nativism, the first of which involves falsified claims to Indigenous ancestry. Terry Goldie coined the term *indigenization* to refer to works by non-Native writers, such as Patrick White's *Voss* (1957) and Margaret Attwood's *Surfacing* (1989), that demonstrate settlers' pursuit of "the impossible necessity of becoming indigenous."[7] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang have previously defined *settler nativism* along these lines, pointing specifically to settlers' habit of claiming distant Indigenous ancestry, à la Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren. Tuck and Yang further label this form of cultural appropriation a "move to innocence" in which present-day settlers attempt to sidestep culpability for their benefitting from the continued dispossession of Indigenous peoples.[8] Particularly in the US, claiming distant Indigenous ancestry involves little to no risk for contemporary settlers—it likely does not mark them racially as it would in Australia, for instance. Instead, it allows them to imagine themselves in relation to an ancient, romantic past through which they can legitimize their own sense of belonging.

My application of settler nativism as an analytical device demonstrates that these falsified or superficial claims to Indigenous ancestry represent one in a variety of related appropriative actions. In other words, I distinguish the definition of settler nativism offered by Tuck and Yang from a second, distinct process of indigenization in which

[7] Goldie, 13.
[8] Tuck and Yang, 10-13.

settlers make specific claims to place. While the first process includes what Philip Deloria has termed *playing Indian* and Shari Huhndorf has termed *going Native* in order point to a host of instances of cultural appropriation, the second process of settler nativism concerns instances in which settler belonging is normalized precisely because Indigenous belonging seems anachronistic, queer, or out of place. This more nuanced understanding of settler nativism as indigenization acknowledges material ways in which settlers attempt to position themselves as new Natives in the absence of original Indigenous peoples. Mishuana Goeman and Scott Lauria Morgensen have individually written about settler indigenization through material productions such as cartography and print culture. These scholars convincingly explain that settler populations appropriate various markers of indigeneity in an attempt to naturalize their presence in and power over lands of conquest.[9] Similarly, Rob Garbutt contends that Australian settler belonging is founded on the notion of *autochthony*, which literally translates to "born of the land itself," a metaphysical connection between people and their place of origin that grants them a sovereign claim to that territory. As with Goldie having defined settler indigenization as an "impossible necessity," Garbutt argues that nations born out of settler colonialism are founded upon and legitimized by "a false claim of white 'autochthony'" that obscures Indigenous relationships with Country, both in the past and in the present. [10]

[9] Goeman, 16-17, 33, 47; Morgensen, *Spaces between Us*, 17, 22.
[10] Garbutt, 175.

This specific form of indigenization was on full display in the messages that counter-protesters delivered to Indigenous activists (Water Protectors) gathered outside the Army Corps of Engineers building in Bismarck, North Dakota, in November 2016 as part of the National Day of Action for #NoDAPL (Figure 2).[11] While the campsites

Figure 2. Counter-protestors in Bismarck. Photo courtesy of Adrienne Keene.

associated with protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline drew non-Indigenous allies to Standing Rock Reservation from around the world, Indigenous Americans were the predominant participants and leaders of the movement. It is curious, then, that #*Pro*DAPL counter-protestors in Bismarck (who were predominantly white) would tell

[11] Dr. Adrienne Keene included details and pictures of this event in her presentation "Settler Indigenization and #NoDAPL" at the 2016 American Studies Association conference. My thanks to her for the information, descriptions, and image provided here, all of which are used with her permission.

Indigenous activists to "Go Home" and that they were "Not Wanted Here." In a literal sense, the protester very likely meant that Water Protectors should leave Bismarck and, perhaps, that those gathered at Standing Rock just a few miles to the south should break camp and return to their homes, as well. At the same time, there is a bitter irony at play, particularly for those Indigenous activists for whom the lands of what is now called North Dakota *are* their ancestral homes. For those people, "Go Home" and "Not Wanted Here" negate one another, leaving them no place to which they might properly belong.

The third process of settler nativism discussed in this dissertation accounts for settlers' claims to belonging in which fears of foreign invasion trump anxieties of contested indigenization. In doing this work, my dissertation joins an emerging critical discourse that positions persistent nativist anxieties over potential foreign invasion in the US and Australia in relation to those nations' settler colonial origins. Lorenzo Veracini notes that, because indigenization continuously occurs for as long as settler colonial projects persist, "the settler is simultaneously subjecting indigenous people and exogenous 'Others.'"[12] Because I focus primarily on literary analysis, *Non-Natives and Nativists* concretizes ways in which that subjection is manifested through narrative devices. Stephen Germic has previously argued that Susan Fenimore Cooper's writings exhibits "a kind of double nativism" involving "an idealized identification with Native Americans filtered through an anxious framework of political invasion."[13] Germic goes on to argue that Cooper responds to her family's legally tenuous connection to a particular property by imagining an imperiled identity not unlike that of the romanticized

[12] Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 38.
[13] Germic, 477.

vanishing Indians from her father's *Leatherstocking Tales*. He reads in Susan Fenimore Cooper's later work an anxiety that her sense of belonging was once again threatened, though this time by invasive and inferior immigrants from less advanced regions of the "Old World." Germic's concept of double nativism provides a critical starting point from which *settler nativism* can be further developed to account for multiple works, genres, and historical contexts.

In fact, similar analyses already conducted on drastically different literary texts suggests that the dual anxieties produced in the settler imaginary by Indigenous and immigrant populations rarely manifest as a related concern. Catriona Ross surveys Australia's longstanding Asian invasion narrative, a literary tradition Ross connects to Anglo Australians' reticence to think of settlement as a colonial invasion of Aboriginal lands. She reads John Marsden's popular *Tomorrow* series of Young Adult novels in relation to works published around national federation at the turn of the twentieth century and again following the Japanese military's bombing of Darwin in 1942. Ross concludes that such narratives "enact a circular progression where whites become the victims, Asians become the invaders and [Aborigines] are written out of the equation."[14] In a previously published work, I make note of the way in which settler nativism triangulates the relationships between Indigenous, settler, and migrant populations temporally, with settlers occupying an anxious present haunted by an Indian past and threatened by a foreign future.[15] Working with settler literatures written decades apart, in different countries and for different audiences, Ross and I both demonstrate how even as

[14] Ross, 95-96.
[15] Franks, 89.

Indigenous and exogenous populations are simultaneously subjected to settler dominance they are also deliberately partitioned and treated as discrete concerns.

In the final chapter, I begin the work of understanding the fourth process of settler nativism, in which settlers fantasize about the apocalyptic or dystopic ends of current settler nations so that they might imagine potential post-catastrophe utopias shaped by neoliberal ideals. Beginning in the early 2000s, the idea of the Anthropocene has come to dominate discourses on climate destabilization and the radical effects that environmental changes will have on humanity. Several scholars point out that the notion that humans have negatively impacted the earth's ecosystems to such a degree so as to have spawned a new geological age—or that we might develop the means by which environmental catastrophe can be avoided—does not suggest that the impending crisis will be treated as a great human equalizer.[16] Literary scholars examining the proliferation of post-apocalyptic fictions in which environmental catastrophe significantly contributes to the collapse of Western social and political order agree that such narratives routinely fail to transcend the most foundational logics of liberalism that created that very formulation of power.[17]Along these lines, political theorists Elizabeth Strakosch and Alissa Macoun identify a phenomenon they term the *vanishing endpoint of settler colonialism* whereby settler projects continuously return to or revise traditional means of legitimizing state power while simultaneously purporting to actively work toward colonial completion.[18]

My analysis concerns a handful of contemporary post-apocalyptic novels in the US and Australia in which issues of previously contentious debates about Indigenous

[16] Whyte, "Our Ancestor's Dystopia," 207; Henry, n.p.
[17] Paik, 3; Curtis, 15; Sugg 795.
[18] Strakosch and Macoun, 51-52.

sovereignty, settler belonging, and racial discrimination appear settled in the face of more immediate concerns for individual survival in the face of environmental catastrophe. Even in these supposedly radically altered futures, however, liberal foundational myths continue to shape the fragile settlements forged by survivors. Capital accumulation, social contracts, and enforced boundaries between savagism and civilization shape characterization and plot development in these narratives. As such settler-authored post-apocalyptic fiction is prone to enact the vanishing endpoint of settler colonialism by employing the forms of establishing and maintaining power over Indigenous and non-Indigenous minoritized populations. However, speculative works by Indigenous writers tend to, in the words of Daniel Heath Justice, "imagine otherwise," while also placing current concerns about climate destabilization within the context of centuries of environmental catastrophe wrought by colonialism.[19]

Methodology

Two popular phrases recently circulating in specific parts of the US and Australia further evince the need to develop *setter nativism* as critical apparatus for relational analysis. In the state of Texas, it is not at all uncommon to see "Native Texan" printed on bumper stickers, postcards, and tee-shirts. Given its exceptionalist history, pride of home is a relatively widespread sentiment in the US, but it s striking how defensively felt and aggressively promoted the concept is in the state of Texas. The Home T, makers of the "Texas Native T," (Figure 2) explain that "Our Texas Native T-shirt is only for those born and bred in the Lone Star State. Whether you are 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 30th generation

[19] Justice, *Why Indigenous Literature*, 154; Whyte, "Indigenous Science (Fiction)," 225-26.

Texan, this shirt tells the world that Texas isn't just your home, it's your heritage."[20] I read the association of the term "Native" with the state of Texas to be more of an unintentional solecism than a purposeful act of appropriation.

Figure 3. The "Texas Native T" by The Home T apparel company. Google images.

Nonetheless, the misleading phrase "Native Texan" is consequential because it presents colonial history and white belonging as obvious and neutral. The tongue-in-cheek assertion that the shirt "is only for those born and bred in the Lone Star State" implies a sense of settler belonging that is not only indigenized but also clearly normative. The state is depicted as a given and native citizenship a birthright authorized by the state's existence. As a result, Indigenous peoples currently living within Texas's state boundaries must either be considered somehow alien or overlooked altogether. Either of these perspectives ignores the consequences that frontier violence, reservations, removal, and assimilation politics have had on Native peoples of Texas and, in turn, *re-*

[20] "Texas Native T," *TheHomeT.com*, 2017, https://www.thehomet.com/products/texas-native-t.

places the contemporary settler as the authentic Texas native. Historian Gary Clayton Anderson has vehemently argued against such sanitized treatments of the state's colonial legacy, which he insists amounts to a shameful history of ethnic cleansing.[21]

It is worth noting that the particular model used to advertise the "Texas Native T," with her blonde hair and phenotype, reads as a racially white woman. As an icon of settler belonging, this particular Native Texan hints at the pervasiveness of implicit but violent assumptions underpinning the imagined settler-as-native. Notions of white settler femininity have been used quite intentionally to justify acts of cultural genocide against Indigenous peoples, either through captivity narratives that sparked campaigns of what was labeled frontier defense or policies that enacted child removal on the belief that Indigenous women make unfit mothers.[22] To reiterate, I do not necessarily assume that the makers of this shirt or its advertisement intend to align themselves or their product with these aspects of colonial history, even as they invoke generations (and *re*generation) of settlement in the state. Instead, I read this image as more representative of a seemingly benign common sense logic that is selective about the ways in which the past insulates self-perception and present-day settler identities.

The phrase "we grew here, you flew here" denotes a much stronger and more direct claim to settler indigenization. Settler nativism as white autochthony is particularly evident in the first half of the saying, which has become a popular rejoinder at Australia

[21] Anderson, *Conquest of Texas*, 3-17.
[22] Behrendt's *Finding Eliza* is particularly instructive in regard to gender in the Australian captivity narrative, while Jacobs's *White Mother to a Dark Race* is an authoritative source on child removal policies in the US and Australia.

Day celebrations and anti-immigrant demonstrations alike.[23] The latter half of the saying, "you flew here," supports my case for the second register of *settler nativism* as it relates to belonging: the settler-as-nativist. Rooted in a form of nativism that John Higham argued is meant to protect the national polity from the negative influence of outsiders, "we grew here, you flew here" operates around an us-versus-them dichotomy, indicting supposedly perpetual foreigners who are framed as refusing to integrate into mainstream national society.[24] *Settler nativism* is distinct from other definitions of nativism in that it insists that, in the US and Australia, anti-immigrant nativist sentiments amongst white settler populations are inextricably bound up in those nations' colonial origins. This is especially legible when reviewing Australia's history of immigration control. For nearly a century, immigration measures were governed by a set of restrictions collectively referred to as the *White Australia policy*, which actively sought to fortify the Anglo-Australian initially population created via settler invasion. Such openly racist policies, for which there are corollaries in the US ranging from the *Chinese Exclusion Act* (1882) to President Trump's thinly veiled Muslim travel ban in 2018, are easily identifiable as examples of nativism.

Missing from much of the current discourse on racist nativism, however, is an understanding that settler populations are by default inclined toward nativism. That is, in order to continue receiving the benefits of their possessive investment in colonialism, present-day settlers must insure their interests against outsiders who might form a claim of their own. This is evident in the most notorious iteration of "we grew here, you flew

[23] Brook, n.p.
[24] Higham, 4.

here," when, in 2005, the phrase appeared on the bare chest of a young white male who took part in the notorious Cronulla race riots (Figure 4). The instigating event behind the riots saw some 5000 white Australians gather, many carrying or wearing the nation's flag, in order to 'reclaim' a beachfront 'overrun' by Lebanese immigrants. The white Australian men who gathered in Cronulla often cited sexual harassment of white Australian women by Lebanese-Australian men as the primary cause for their rally, tapping into long-held beliefs about foreign sexual predation, white feminine fragility, and paternalistic masculine protectors. What began as a singular demonstration turned into days of violent assaults on Muslims, counterattacks on whites, and widespread destruction of property across a number of Sydney suburbs.[25]

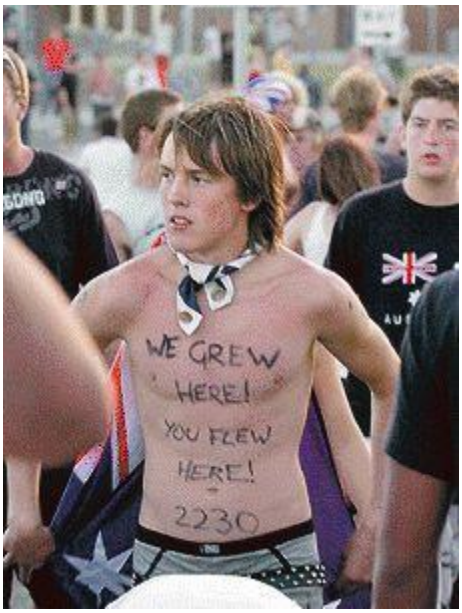

Figure 4. A participant in the 2005 Cronulla riots. Google images.

The particular use of the phrase to articulate anti-immigrant nativist sentiment in 2005 Cronulla obviously carries important contextual implications. Islam was increasingly associated with the threat of invasion and violence following the so-called

[25] Kabirl, 271; Due and Riggs, 210.

"*Tampa* affair" in August 2001, in which several hundred refugees demanded asylum in Australia after having been rescued at sea, and the al-Qaeda attacks on the US on 9/11. Mid-decade, however, Western attitudes toward Islam shifted and the fear of cultural invasion and the erosion of democratic ideals through immigration overtook the fear of terrorist violence. In the US and Australia, immigrants from Muslim-majority countries have, in the rhetoric of pundits and politicians like Patrick Buchanan, Pauline Hanson, and Donald Trump, been increasingly depicted as sexual predators, opponents of free speech, and proponents of Sharia law.[26]

The use of "we grew here, you flew here" at Cronulla is a particularly rich example of settler nativism. In this specific context, the beach represents a contested frontier upon which contemporary white settlers reasserted their claim to belonging against a group of 'invading foreigners.' It is important that the demonstrator wore the phrase on his bare chest rather than on an article of clothing or a sign because in this way his white skin and masculine physical features are made integral, if unspoken, elements of his narrative of belonging. The same can be said of "2230," which refers the postcode for the Cronulla suburb and thus locates the defensive, possessive claim to land even more specifically. The demonstrator is simultaneously making several investments in the possessive logic that Aileen Moreton-Robinson argues structures settler society in Australia by reproducing and reaffirming patriarchal white sovereignty that sustains the settler-nation.[27] Positioning himself as the hero of this narrative, he has even made a cape out of the Australian flag.

[26] Jupp, 56-59; Smith, "Anti-Islamic Sentiment," 8-9.
[27] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 4-8.

Locating this dissertation in regard to other works of its kind is somewhat challenging, as neither relational nor comparative literary analyses between the US and Australia makes up a distinct area of focused study. Instances in which this sort of work does take place, as in the collected volume *Reading across the Pacific: Australia-United States Intellectual Histories* (2010) or Paul Giles's *Antipodean America: Australasia and the Constitution of U.S. Literature* (2014), tend almost exclusively to be the result of efforts by Australian scholars. By comparison, Chadwick Allen's excellent *Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies* (2012) represents one of the exceedingly few book-length works to engage with Australia's literary culture rather than include a few notable individual titles.

Settler colonial studies—an emerging, somewhat disparate, and often contested interdisciplinary endeavor distinct from postcolonial studies—is presently the most active space in which comparative literary analysis between the US and Australia occurs.[28] Publishing in journals such as *Settler Colonial Studies*, *Western American Literature*, and *Australian Literary Studies*, scholars from the US and Australia have begun comparatively applying the concepts developed by Wolfe and Veracini to literary texts.[29] This small body of work—and the broader but also still developing discourse on settler colonial literary studies—routinely deconstructs the raced and gendered power dynamics underlying many settler-centric narratives. But much of what has been published so far

[28] Most of the critiques of settler colonial studies as a theory emerge from Indigenous and Critical Ethnic Studies. For examples, see Day, 102-21; Kauanui, "'A structure," n.p.,; Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein, n.p., https://muse.jhu.edu/article/633283; and O'Brien, "Tracing Settler," 249-55.

[29] See, for example, Lynch (2014); Altenbernd and Young (2014); and Hughes-D'Aeth, "Cooper, Cather, Prichard," (2016).

stops short of engaging with Indigenous (let alone migrant) creative works and scholarship, reinforcing the purposeful divides that structure the distribution of power amongst settler, Indigenous, and exogenous populations and thereby reproducing the logics of colonial dominance. To be clear, I am not proposing a homogenous, totalizing form of literary studies that privileges the scholarship of those working in settler colonial studies. Rather, I am interested in finding ways to conduct relational analyses amongst multiethnic literatures that have been produced as a result of the conditions of settler colonialism. Doing so necessarily requires a commitment to learning from and engaging with the creative and scholarly works produced by—and not just about—those populations who are marginalized and subjugated by settler colonialism.

Because *Non-Natives and Nativists* centers on identifying and challenging the processes of settler nativism as they occur in contemporary multiethnic literatures of the US and Australia, the dissertation is structured in relation to social and political developments that have occurred since the late 1980s and early 1990s through the first two decades of the 2000s. Both countries experienced a long-running series of debates during this period that have come to be known as the culture wars in the US and the history wars in Australia. These so-called wars were fought over similar issues by similar parties: in the US, conservative Christians' interests were represented by members of the Republican Party who sought to preserve "traditional" American values and ways of life, just as their corollaries in Australia's Liberal Party sought to do. Social and cultural progressives from the political left sought to challenge the imbalances and discriminatory practices undergirding such celebrated traditions. In the US and Australia alike, pundits, politicians, and historians from both sides of the political divide argued about issues as

far-ranging as religious freedom in public schools to the public remembrances of the arrivals of Christopher Columbus and James Cook.

The Australian history wars, as the name suggests, have tended to focus much more explicitly on to the arrival of settlers to Aboriginal lands and the legacies of colonialism affecting contemporary settler-Aboriginal relations. Australian literature published during this period reflects this specific concern. This is not meant to suggest that the culture wars that have taken place in the US have not also involved such debates—the 500 year observance of Columbus's "discovery" of the Americas was a contentious event leading up to 1992, as was the 1993 legislative apology signed by President Bill Clinton that acknowledged the US's imperial invasion but notably failed to provide federal recognition for Native Hawaiians as Indigenous peoples subject to US rule. Nonetheless, Australia's history wars coincide with a much more formal reconciliation agenda between federal and state governments and Aboriginal peoples than has been the case in the US over the same period of time.

In light of these developments, Australian literary scholars have been working for two decades now to find the language by which to name what appears to be a distinct literary movement. Published in 2007, in the twilight of the nation's reconciliation era, Ken Gelder and Paul Salzman released *After the Celebration: Australian Fiction, 1989-2007*, which pinpoints the controversy surrounding the bicentenary as the advent of a distinct contemporary Australian literature. The book is a follow up to another of Gelder's co-authored monographs, 1998's *Uncanny Australia: Sacredness and Identity in a Postcolonial Nation* (co-written by Jane Margaret Jacobs), which is more narrowly

focused on the effects native title legislation had had on the Australian cultural imagination up to that point.

After the Celebration and *Uncanny Australia* are important works of scholarship that are nonetheless limited in that they were published just before major unforeseen political developments. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's formal apology in 2008 to the several generations-worth of victims of child removal policies added a new dimension to Australia's reconciliation politics and the works they influenced, as evinced by Liliana G. Zavaglia's *White Apology and Apologia: Australian Novels of Reconciliation* (2016).[30] In *The Mabo Turn in Australian Fiction* (2018), Geoff Rodoreda makes the curious decision to focus solely on the 1992 *Mabo* ruling as the precise moment of paradigm shift rather than the larger body of native title legislation that followed or previous native title activism, such as the 1988 Barunga Statement (one of the cornerstones of the bicentenary controversy). At the same time, *The Mabo Turn* stands apart from other works mentioned here for its purposeful inclusion of and critical attention to Aboriginal-authored texts. The analysis performed over the chapters of this dissertation takes an expansive approach by not only addressing the long history of Australia's reconciliation period and incorporating Aboriginal *and* immigrant literary works but also placing them in relation to similar, simultaneous developments in the US. As such, *Non-Natives and Nativists* is the first book-length study to juxtapose contemporary Australian and US literatures *and* the first to situate settler colonial literary studies in relation to transnational multiethnic area studies.

[30] It is worth noting that Zavaglia retroactively reads Rudd's 2008 apology against four novels published between 2002 and 2007, all but one of which are discussed by Gelder and Salzman (2007).

Organization

Chapters are ordered by the processes through which settler nativism occurs. The analysis performed in chapter two, "Settler Nativism as Literary Hoax," aligns with the previous use of *settler nativism* by Tuck and Yang in that my critique is based on white authors' disingenuous claims to Indigenous identity and the erasure of Indigenous agency that occurs as a result. I discusses two particular exposures of literary hoax—*The Education of Little Tree* in the US in 1991 and *My Own Sweet Time* in Australia in 1997. In placing these two hoaxes in conversation, I am also drawing together two moments of white identity crisis—the social and political revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s and the resultant culture wars of the 1990s—as related events within larger structures of settler colonial frameworks. I argue that the proliferation of literary hoaxes in the US and Australia in the 1990s occurred because white settler populations in both countries felt their sense of belonging threatened by affirmative action and immigration policies that had refigured the racial and ethnic makeup of settler national identity. Picking up Gillian Whitlock's metaphor of the fake memoir as "a parasite" for the ways in which its authors latch on to emerging minority discourses in order to undermine challenges to mainstream settler identity, I argue that the literary hoaxes discussed in this chapter are a continuation of the structural invasion that defines and propels settler societies.[31]

Specifically, I discuss Carter's *Education* as an obfuscation of the sovereignty politics underwriting the Red Power Movement and the American Indian Literary Renaissance of the 1960s and 1970s. I also suggest that the book's unlikely resurgence as a best seller in 1991 is owing to the sensibilities of white readers in the so-called culture

[31] Whitlock, 119.

wars who perceived in Carter's vanishing Indians their own threatened belonging in a changing national polity. Next, I discuss how *Sweet Time* imagines an apolitical female Aboriginal identity in 1960s Australia as a way of deriding attempts in the early 1990s to reestablish Aboriginal peoples' connections to land and family in the wake of Native Title recognition and the formal acknowledgement of forced removal of children known as the Stolen Generations.

Chapter three, "Settler Nativism and Indigenous Haunting," identifies another aspect of settler nativism as an attempt at indigenization by noting ways in which settler belonging is expressed through emotional connection to land and imagined futurity via tropes of Indigenous death and spectrality. My analysis considers both an "event" in Australia's settler history and the "structure" of settler colonial projects.[32] It does so through my bringing together multiple instances in which settler storytellers from Australia and the US depict Indigenous death, burial, and resurrection as metaphorical challenges to and transformations of settler societies. In terms of event, I frame popular works by Henry Reynolds, Alex Miller, and Kate Grenville as representative of a historically distinct moment of identity crises resulting in a concentrated proliferation of Aboriginal death and burial motifs, as well as new settler quests for belonging. In terms of structure, I offer a survey of US literatures from twentieth and twenty-first century, linking texts employing the Indian burial site trope with underlying cultural crises from which these novels and films are born. In both cases, I argue, settler writers use literary

[32] I'm referring here to Wolfe's oft-quoted assertion that "invasion is a structure not an event," in Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 388.

renditions of Aboriginal death, dying, and spectrality to imagine hopeful futures unburdened by the guilt of the nations' colonial pasts.

The prospect of loss is a central concern in all of the texts discussed in this chapter, and while the object at risk takes many forms—one's own life, a domestic relationship, land, belonging within a community—there is always at play the sense that something or someone dearly loved and intimately known has now been made distant or unfamiliar by a possessive counterclaim. The manufacture of Indigenous spectrality, along with the fabrication of false memoirs as discussed in chapter one, signifies a means for settlers to narrate their anxieties in moments of crisis and reclaim the authority threatened by articulations of Indigenous political difference. Whether depicting literal Indigenous death or imagining symbolic Indigenous spectrality, all of the works discussed in this chapter evince another distinct narrative process by which settlers attempt to make themselves natives.

Chapter four, "Settler Nativism and post-9/11 Invasion Narratives," makes the case for expanding settler nativism's analytic possibilities to included instances in which settler populations base anti-immigrant nativist sentiments on the types of claims to belonging discussed in chapters one and two. My analysis brings together instances in which the narratives of twenty-first century paranoid nationalism have coalesced with racist nativism in literatures of the US and Australia. Much has been written about literary culture after 9/11, though I'm mostly concerned with the ways in which narratives of national renewal recapitulate norms of belonging in settler nations. I'm particularly interested in narratives that transit settler logics of elimination by transposing historical frontier violence onto modern, global 'frontier' sites. My critical discussion on

examples of transit narratives involves a diverse range of prose fiction. I focus on Philip Caputo's *Crossers* (2010) as an exemplar of US settler nativism before juxtaposing it in relation to Luis Alberto Urrea's *Into the Beautiful North* (2009) and Ana Castillo's *The Guardians* (2008). I emphasize how the novels by Urrea and Castillo undermine the elision Caputo's novel makes between Western frontier masculinity and anti-terror border policing. My discussion of Australian texts considers Felicity Castagna's *No More Boats* (2017) in relation to Kim Scott's *That Deadman Dance* (2012) in order to demonstrate how contemporary multiethnic Australian fiction is actively drawing on the nation's settlement history in order to trouble the stereotypes associated with today's refugee population, often pejoratively referred to as "boat people."

Chapter five, "Settler Nativism as Dystopian Fantasy," outlines a direction for future critical inquiry concerning the role of settler nativism within the current iteration of popular dystopian fictions, where it is often presumed that longstanding social structures such as race, indigeneity, and nationalism will fall alongside governing bodies and belonging will revert to a more essential, primal, and pure form. As I demonstrate through close readings of Peter Heller's *The Dog Stars* and Jane Abbott's *Watershed*, the supposedly "new" worlds wrought by climate destabilization and dystopic social collapse are actually the realization of the liberal ideals of individualism that underwrote colonizing projects in North America and Australia. By contrast, Louise Erdrich's *Future Home of the Living God* depicts a nightmarish dystopic future that is both the product and continuation of settler colonialism. Indigenous-authored dystopian fiction like Erdrich's plays a crucial role in resisting the disturbing trend in contemporary novels like Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* in which supposedly common sense assumptions about gender,

race, and heteronormativity are re-inscribed as fundamentally important to humanity's survival.

CHAPTER 2

SETTLER NATIVISM AS LITERARY HOAX

In May 1996, an article titled "Native Son" appeared in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, declaring that "America's most recognizable Indian face was really that of a second-generation Italian-American."[33] Angela Aleiss's exposé alleged that the actor known as Iron Eyes Cody, famous for portraying 'the crying Indian' in a 1971 anti-littering campaign, had been born Oscar de Corti and was not, in fact, an Indigenous American. Rather, he was the son of Italian parents who immigrated to Louisiana at the turn of the twentieth century. Aleiss's research revealed that, after a brief furlough in Texas in the 1920s, de Corti arrived in California in the form of Iron Eyes Cody and found work as an actor. Cody became a beloved figure in part because he appeared in so many Western films over a career that spanned six decades. His most endearing performance was as the stoic, buckskin-clad Indian from the Keep America Beautiful advertisements against littering. Silently shedding a tear as careless motorists threw garbage at his feet, Cody the Crying Indian resonated with audiences of the early 1970s thanks to an *en vogue* environmental consciousness that associated Indigenous people with mystical spiritualism and primitive, pristine Nature. As Aleiss succinctly writes, Iron Eyes Cody became a pop culture icon in 1971 because he "simply fit the white ideal of the Noble Savage."[34]

[33] Aliess, "Iron Eyes Cody, 31; Aliess, "Native Son."
[34] Aliess, "Iron Eyes," 31.

Cody's outing occurred in the middle of a remarkable decade for international debates about cultural authenticity and ethnic impersonation. His was certainly not the first noteworthy exposure of the 1990s, nor was his the first generation of non-Indigenous people to gain fame and notoriety by reinventing themselves as Indians. Philip Deloria argues that "playing Indian" is a means of reimagining the US's distinctly white national character in inevitable moments of political, social, and critical crises.[35] But this is not merely a US phenomenon. Settlers and their descendants around the world routinely experience recurring moments of identity crisis stemming from their own colonial origins. In Australia, as in the US, a particular type of literary hoax—the false memoir—has become a primary vehicle for whites to explore anxieties over national identity by constructing counterfeit marginalized identities.[36]

This chapter explains how such hoaxes contribute to the original and ongoing colonizing project of dispossessing Indigenous peoples. Autobiographies, memoirs, and life writing narratives of marginalized peoples are political testimonies in which one's self-description often functions as witness and resistance to oppression.[37] Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson argues that, through first-person accounts, "Indigenous women speak of the practical, political and personal effects of being 'other.'"[38] These

[35] See Browder, *Slippery Characters* and Deloria, *Playing Indian*.
[36] Nolan and Dawson, x-xi; for more on native title as a specific cultural crisis, see Lawson, "Proximities," 21-23.
[37] Moreton-Robinson, *Talkin' Up*, 2-3; Browder, 4. Not all memoirs by peoples from marginalized groups express a unified political ideology, of course. Where the life writings Moreton-Robinson describes represent feminist Aboriginal testimony aimed at decolonization, biographies by members of marginalized communities in the US, including those written by Richard Rodriguez, Linda Chavez, Ben Carson, and Clarence Thomas embrace neoconservative ideology.
[38] Moreton-Robinson, *Talkin' Up*, 3.

Othered authors' claims to truth-telling are not only the source of their testimony's legitimacy but also the convention that most distinguishes autobiography and memoir as a literary genre. Readers expect to encounter oppressed individuals speaking truth to power, and this expectation is essential to carrying out the hoax's deceit.[39]

False memoir literary hoaxes are political acts, particularly when perpetrated by white men who assume Othered personas. Gillian Whitlock suggests these narratives exist, in part, because a portion of the dominant culture recognizes a threatening legitimacy in minority testimony. The memoir literary hoax, she further contends, is a means of tainting the discourse so that all ethnic autobiographies will be received with suspicion, curtailing their potential to expose minority oppression and subvert dominant narratives.[40] In doing so, they perform a colonial storytelling technique Drew Lopenzina terms *unwitnessing*: the "decision to maintain a particular narrative structure by keeping undesirable aspects of cultural memory repressed or inactive."[41] The 'memoirs' discussed in this chapter not only trivialize the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples forcibly removed from their families and ancestral lands, but also feed broader, long-standing prejudices within contemporary settler societies concerning special privileges granted to Indigenous peoples through affirmative action.[42]

A literary hoax involving an assumed identity does not need to overtly claim that minorities are inferior in order to perpetuate the misnomer that certain people do not

[39] Egan, 14; Whitlock, 119.
[40] Whitlock, 119.
[41] Lopenzina, 9.
[42] Morrissey, 303; Justice, *Why Indigenous Literature Matters*, 206-08; Behrendt, "In Your Dreams," 267-68; Young, 139-60.

belong in white-dominated spaces.[43] Falsely representing non-white perspectives through literature signals a fundamental failure amongst settler societies to appreciate or account for political difference. Colonizing logics justify settler invasion by coding Indigenous difference as inferiority and dependency: the original dispossession of Indigenous land was perpetrated on the basis that native peoples were not capable of using the land to its full potential in an industrialized age, just as the removal of Indigenous children from their homes to distant boarding schools or foster families has been perpetrated on the basis that Indigenous mothers are unfit caregivers in modern society. Alan Lawson points out, that, when it comes to settler colonialism, "[d]iscursive space is in need of clearing as much as physical space."[44] Regardless of intent, non-Indigenous authors who perpetrate memoir hoaxes take part in the ongoing project of Indigenous removal, and in doing so they reaffirm the misnomer that Indigenous peoples are incapable of adequately narrating their own perspectives within the national literary culture.[45] Memoirs written by non-Natives masquerading as Indigenous peoples are an act of invasion informed by the very same ideology that created other dominant fictions like *terra nullius* and the Vanishing Indian myth.

This chapter on the settler-as-native discusses two particular exposures of literary hoax in great detail—*The Education of Little Tree* in the US in 1991 and *My Own Sweet Time* in Australia in 1997. In placing these two hoaxes in conversation, I am also drawing together two moments of white identity crisis—the social and political revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s and the resultant culture wars of the late 1980s through the 1990s—as

[43] Lawson, "The Anxious, 1214-1216.
[44] Ibid., 1220.
[45] Nolan, 138.

related events within larger structures of settler colonial frameworks. I argue that the proliferation of literary hoaxes in the US and Australia in the 1990s occurred because white settler populations in both countries felt their sense of belonging threatened by affirmative action policies that had refigured racial and ethnic identity norms in both settler-dominated societies. That is, the literary hoaxes discussed in this chapter make legible the continued structural invasion of Indigenous space that defines and propels settler colonial projects.[46]

Asa "Forrest" Carter's *The Education of Little Tree* was originally published as a memoir in 1976 by Delacorte Press, on the heels of Carter's surprise literary success with a previous novel, *Gone to Texas* (1975). The narrative is presented as a truthful recounting of Carter's boyhood years from ages five to nine, which he supposedly spent with his grandparents in the mountains of Tennessee. Orphaned by his parents' sudden death, Forrest (then known as "Little Tree") receives an informal education from Granpa, described as "half Cherokee," and Granma, who is "full blood."[47] Along with reading Roman histories and Shakespeare plays borrowed from the library, Little Tree learns about "The Way," an 'Indian' golden rule of sorts, in which the Cherokee live in harmony with a natural world ordered around the principle of survival of the fittest. From his grandfather, he also learns to distrust politicians, intellectuals, and city dwellers, all of whom threaten the halcyon life Little Tree enjoys in the mountains. Eventually, Little Tree's grandparents both die, and he heads west, picking up work on farms and ranches.

[46] Whitlock, 119.
[47] Carter, 1; It's worth noting here that Carter invokes blood quantum in initially describing Little Tree's grandparents, which he does on the first page of the novel. Their age and racial makeup both presumably lend an authenticity to Carter's narrative and the 'education' he received.

Leon Carmen and John Bayley conspired to publish *My Own Sweet Time* in 1994. Their chosen publisher, Magabala Books, specializes in works by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers. *Sweet Time* claims to be the memoir of Wanda Koolmatrie, an Aboriginal woman raised by white parents in the suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia, in the 1960s. Wanda's narrative begins with her earliest realizations of racial otherness, as she is bullied in school because of her Blackness. Refusing to feel victimized, Wanda develops a cheeky toughness and independent spirit that soon propel her out of Adelaide and into the 1960s counter-culture scenes of Melbourne and Sydney. She easily falls in with political radicals and psychedelic musicians, all the while exercising her skills as a natural storyteller through lyrics and poetry. By 1972, she joins an emerging theatre group as a playwright. Jack, the company's director, is determined to spearhead an Aboriginal arts movement that will eventually lead to the social uplift of Australia's Black population, and he and Wanda collaborate on a production aptly titled *Flying Start*. The narrative ends shortly thereafter, with Wanda surrounded by a cast of eccentric, supportive friends, presumably at the beginning of a successful career in the arts.

Public reaction to these texts varied once the hoax was exposed—*Education* remains in print and widely distributed while *Sweet Time* was quickly pulled from shelves and has faded into relative obscurity. Both texts remain valuable objects for literary study, and though scholars have written a great about them individually, *Education* and *Sweet Time* have not yet been brought together for a relational analysis. Doing so has much to tell us about the colonial legacies still at play in the US and Australia. My rereading of Carter's notorious literary hoax considers how the book's

original publication in the mid-1970s obscures the Red Power Movement and the American Indian Literary Renaissance as assertions of Indigenous sovereignty. I also suggest that the book's unlikely resurgence as a best seller in 1991 is owing to the sensibilities of white readers in the so-called 'Culture Wars' who perceived in Carter's vanishing Indians their own threatened belonging in a changing national polity. Next, I explain how Carmen and Bayley, co-creators of Wanda Koolmatrie and *Sweet Time*, purposefully constructed an apolitical 1960s-era Aboriginal identity in order to critique major social and political developments in Aboriginal-settler relations in early 1990s Australia. Both men claimed to be allies to Aborigines when their deceit became public, but my reading of their hoax suggests otherwise. Placing *Sweet Time* in relation to developing Native Title legislation and the formal acknowledgement of forced removal of children known as the Stolen Generations suggests that Carmen and Bayley interpreted Aboriginal agency as a threat to their own standing as 'average' white Australian men.

Fraudulent memoirs like *Education* and *Sweet Time* are among the most blatant attempts at settler nativism because they stake a sense of belonging on falsified claims to Indigenous ancestry. Hoax memoirs are like less intentionally dubious settler-authored narratives about 'Indians' in that they generally have a great deal to tell readers about the desires of settler cultures that create them while demonstrating very little understanding of the Indigenous people whom they represent. The hoaxes behind *Education* and *Sweet Time* depend upon the authors' attempts to indigenize settler anxiety over perceived losses in sociopolitical power as a form of dispossession akin to the colonial conquest Indigenous peoples experience in settler nations. Carter, Carmen, and Bayley all demonstrate a contemporary rhetorical posture that Ghassan Hage terms *the discourse of*

Anglo decline, through which a white settler population "either passively mourns or actively calls for resistance against what it perceives as a statesanctioned [*sic*] assault on the cultural forms that have their roots in . . . British colonization."[48] It is as if by assuming fictional forms of indigeneity, the authors of *Education* and *Sweet Time* intended to reveal—or, in the language of conquest, *discover*—what it meant to be a 'true' American or a 'real' Australian. As such, these texts embody the paradox of settler belonging as it relates to prior and continuous Indigenous existence. The following section explains why *Education* and *Sweet Time* are particularly fascinating because of their entanglement within webs of settler identity crises known as the culture (or history) wars.

Settler Societies and Culture Wars

These so-called 'wars' generally refer to an ongoing series of debates in the US and Australia that link the political, social, and cultural revolutions of the 1960s and early 1970s to partisan disputes about the nature of national society in the late 1980s through the mid-1990s. Indeed, Andrew W. Hartman's 2015 monograph *War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* begins with a discussion of various liberation movements in the 1960s and unfolds a decades-long campaign of conservative reaction that reached an apex somewhere around Patrick Buchanan's speech at the 1992 Republican National Convention.[49] Like the culture wars taking place in the US,

[48] Hage, *White Nation*, 90.

[49] Given that he was on the campaign trail, Buchanan used invoked notion of a culture war more than once. His address to the Republican National Convention in August 1992 has become a watershed moment in the history of the culture wars, though his commencement speech at Liberty University (founded and presided over by Baptist televangelist and conservative pundit Jerry Falwell) in May of that year is where

Australia's history wars of the 1980s and 1990s were rooted in the conservative argument that the powerful minority of leftist cultural elites threatened the belonging of 'mainstream' Australians who identified with traditional narratives of national belonging—in this context, the mate, the digger, or the battler.[50] As with each nation's settler colonial projects, the culture wars of the US and Australia have specific historical contexts but share common elements. In both cases, conservatives expressed anxiety and anger over shifts in 'traditional' national values, cultural institutions, and political, sexual, and ethnic identities brought on by liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s and multicultural policies. Two major points of contention, religious belief and revisionist history, were debated in the US and Australia, though with varying intensity.

Particularly in the US, religious belief is often seen as an essential component of culture wars discourse. Sociologist James Davison Hunter's prescient book *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (1991), which precedes many of the events now considered central to culture wars discourse, argues that fundamental ideological differences between orthodoxy and progressivism are responsible for the major divisions within US culture.[51] Hunter's binarial thesis has since been roundly criticized by cultural studies scholars, yet religious belief was an important flashpoint in the debates over American culture in the 1980s and 1990s. "There is a religious war going on for the soul of America," Republican presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan famously declared in

---

Buchanan used the phrase "war for the soul of America" (14). When referring to this earlier speech, I cite the version printed as "The War for the Soul of America" in the May 23, 1992, edition of conservative newspaper *Human Events*.

[50] Anna Clark, 2-3.

[51] Hunter, 35-41.

his 1992 lament on the moral decay that he felt had occurred since the 1960s.[52] For Buchanan and those of his ilk, the loss of the US's supposedly Protestant-based national identity manifested in nearly all sectors of American life. He was particularly concerned with "the conscience-forming and character-forming institutions—family, home, school and church," the four supposed pillars of mainstream belonging in the US.[53] Buchanan's crusade was representative of many conservative cultural workers in the US and Australia at the time who were especially concerned with public education and its effects on the nation's future.

This particular subset of debates included topics such as prayer in school and sex education, but history curricula became especially contentious amongst parents, educators, and politicians alike. Buchanan's jeremiad consistently employed the language of combat—this was a culture *war*, after all—and his stance on exceptionalist historical narratives was no exception: "America is the greatest country on Earth; our history is one of glory and greatness, of tragedy and hope. We must not let them take it away."[54] Every war needs an adversary, the "them" stealing America's glorious history from 'us.' Buchanan's discourse in the midst of the culture wars is a rich archive because he makes legible a number of interrelated battles. Students and teachers were pitted against unpatriotic revisionist historians. The Clinton-Gore ticket was unelectable because, simply stated, they were "on the other side" of the American people.[55]

[52] Buchanan, "War for the Soul," 11.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Buchanan, "Address," para. 39.

To be sure, the history wars were, in the broadest sense, similarly contested between conservatives and progressives, yet Buchanan's famous "War for the Soul of America" speech is evidence that they were also a continuation of the nation's never-ending war against Indians. Buchanan reflects on the horror with which he watched residents of Los Angeles riot in response to the acquittal of four police officers who had brutally beaten Rodney King. "Theirs was the authentic laughter of the barbarian from time immemorial," he said of those participating in the riots before extending the analogy to less clearly defined enemies worldwide: "As America's imperial troops guard frontiers all over the world, our own frontiers are open, and the barbarian is inside the gates."[56] These proverbial invaders included everyone from pornographers to rappers to a more generally defined "mob on a rampage" against god, country, and the tenets of basic decency.[57]

The rigid moral binary by which Buchanan distinguishes between allies and enemies ultimately results in his lumping Indigenous protestors in with others judged to be barbarians. In a passing jab, he mocks protests over the National Football League's Washington Redskins and Major League Baseball's Atlanta Braves. Institutions even more sacred than professional sports franchises were not immune to such "idiocies," as Buchanan notes:

> On the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America we hear Columbus vilified as a racist and practitioner of genocide. The name of Custer National Battlefield must be changed, lest the descendants of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse be offended. In some schools, they teach that our Constitution was plagiarized from the Iroquois. [58]

[56] Buchanan, "War," 14.
[57] As defined by people like Buchanan, of course.
[58] Buchanan, "War," 14.

One wonders if these comments are directed at Indigenous intellectuals and activists like Winona LaDuke and Suzan Shown Harjo, both of whom publicly spoke out against celebratory observances of the Columbus quincentenary.[59] Regardless, Columbus, Custer, and the Constitution represent the "glory and greatness" of Buchanan's version of American history *and* the elements that 'they' are trying to 'take away.' The implication, of course, is that 'they' are the leftist cultural workers responsible for the nation's general moral decline, but it bears noting the way in which Buchanan reinforces the notion that Indigenous peoples are outside of mainstream society. He implies, for instance, that the "the descendants of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse," are unjustly cast as victims when in fact it is those like him—'warriors' struggling to defend and preserve the nation's grand history—who are actually being wronged.[60] While Buchanan bemoaned revisionist histories that undermined or denied US exceptionalism, he was ultimately more concerned with the idea that students—particularly those who were Christian—would not be allowed to pray in school. In Australia, however, these priorities were nearly diametrically reversed, as the fear for the nation's future manifested primarily in worry over the burden of guilt revisionist histories placed on young students.

Indeed, the Australian culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s are more often discussed in terms of "the history wars" or, more specifically, an era of black armband history. Coined in 1993 by Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey, *black armband history*

[59] See LaDuke, 3, 20-21 and Harjo, 4-5.
[60] While it seems that Buchanan intended some kind of slight in referring to contemporary Indigenous people as "descendants" of these famous Lakota leaders, perhaps his comment here is more remarkable for being one of the relatively few instances in which a colonizer descendant like Buchanan has not taken the opportunity to claim to 'have some Indian blood' himself.

was meant to name and dismiss a growing trend in revisionist versions of Australian history that mourned the effects of colonization and emphasized the lasting effects racism and frontier violence have had on Aborigines.[61] As presidential hopeful Pat Buchanan had done with the phrase "war for the soul of America" in 1992, newly elected Australian Prime Minister John Howard famously used the phrase "black armband history" multiple times in 1996: first, during an interview on a populist politics radio program and, soon after, during his Menzies Lecture, a highly publicized annual speaking engagement organized in conjunction with the Melbourne-based conservative interest group, Liberal Club. Howard's pejorative use of the black armband history as an anti-nationalist and unnecessarily guilt-ridden take on Australia's colonial origins. Of course, these comments by Blainey and Howard were the result of long-standing disputes over the ways in which Australia's settler population acknowledged or suppressed the often violent, shameful history of Aboriginal-settler relations.

As is the case with the culture wars of the US, the Australian history wars of the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s were the result of monumental cultural shifts that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. Academic and mainstream histories on the colonization of Aboriginal lands and peoples reflected the political transformations of the 1960s and significantly influenced the divided opinions of the most prominent historians of the later history wars, particularly Blainey, John Hirst, Henry Reynolds, and Keith Windschuttle.[62] Scholars today generally point to anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner's 1968 Boyer Lecture address "The Great Australian Silence" as a turning point in Australian historiography

[61] Anna Clark, 1; McKenna.
[62] Veracini, "A Prehistory," 441-43.

and its engagement with Aboriginal experiences with settler colonialism.[63] Stanner's lecture directly challenges the tendency to purposefully unwitness Aboriginal peoples and settler violence in national narratives. Over the ensuing decades, a number of texts—often with disparate perspectives on settlement, genocide, and the nature of historiography itself—made the history wars possible.[64] As early as 2003, scholars were publishing histories *of* Australia's history wars. Kevin Rudd's election as Prime Minister in 2008, his formal apology to Aboriginal people affected by child removal policies, and the renewed interest in drafting a treaty between settler and Aboriginal Australians suggests this work may have been a bit preemptive.

But when exactly *did*—or *will*—these wars come to an end? Not surprisingly, there is no general consensus. Hartman concludes his survey of the US's version of the culture wars with emphatic finality: "The logic of the culture wars has been exhausted. The metaphor has run its course."[65] The turmoil surrounding the 2016 presidential election suggests otherwise, as many of the topics that have come to define the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s were once again said to be dividing the American public, from women's reproductive rights and the legality of marriage equality to unchecked police violence against Black people. Even the Washington Redskins were once again of

[63] Veracini, "A Prehistory," 440-41; Rolls, 12-15.
[64] For instance: Henry Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia* (1982) and *Why Weren't We Told? A Personal Search for the Truth about Our History* (1999) stand in sharp contrast to Keith Windschuttle's series of essays collected later in the multi-volume series *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (2002-2009).
[65] Hartman, 285.

national interest.[66] Sociologist Irene Taviss Thomson suggests thinking of culture wars not as singular events with definable beginnings and endings but as cyclical moments of crises, or what she terms *enduring dilemma*. "Like earlier cultural politics," Thomson contends,

> the contemporary culture wars take place within the parameters of some enduring cultural patterns. These patterns are a matter not of stable values but rather a series of dilemmas that are revisited as new issues or situations evoke them . . . . . American culture is not a matter of either/or but rather both/and. There is no simple or unitary "culture war," no "struggle for the soul of America.[67]

Australian political commentator David Marr further suggests that the phrase *culture wars* was part of a vocabulary of neologisms developed by conservative pundits in the late 1980s and early 1990s to "find ways in a disapproving world of continuing to fight for white privilege."[68] Such critiques suggest that the logic of 'culture wars' can be even better understood in nations like the US and Australia when read in relation to settler colonial theory, particularly Patrick Wolfe's well-known axiom that "invasion is a structure not an event."[69] In other words, settler-nations innately produce and reproduce moments of cultural crises coded as *culture wars* as a means of sustaining the life of the colonial project.

It is not coincidence that transformative moments like those of the 1960s and early 1970s resonate so directly with the cultural crises of the late 1980s and 1990s or, for

---

[66] Because of the racism inherent to their name and branding, not because of their performance on the field. See C. Richard King, *Redskins: Insult and Brand*, U of Nebraska P, 2016.
[67] Thomson, 29. While Thomson's assertions here directly contradict Hartman's, the specific refutation of the "war for the soul of America" is in reference to Pat Buchanan's 1992 RNC speech, not Hartman's book, which takes the phrase for its title. Thomson's book was published in 2014, the year before Hartman's.
[68] Marr, 30-31.
[69] Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 388.

that matter, our own current moment.[70] They do so because settler society is structured and sustained by a logic of cultural crises whereby perceived threats to an otherwise stable national life are met with resistance and renewed investment in the naturalization and legitimization of the state's power to rule.[71] By definition, the existence of the settler-nation is only made possible through the original and ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples; as such, the enduring dilemma of settler-nations requires a reinvestment in that dispossession, particularly in instances where decolonization is a motivating factor in a given moment of crisis. This argument could be applied to other disciplines and archives, but literary analysis is an important field in which to situate this critique because, in literature, cultures articulate some of their most ardent, complex, and mobile claims to belonging.

This chapter considers the relationship between literary hoaxes in the US and Australia in order to demonstrate that enduring dilemmas are structural elements of settler colonialism and, further, that settler nativism consistently informs reactions and responses to specific moments of crises. As the previous summaries of the so-called culture wars and history wars attests, cultural crises in these settler-nations share common

[70] Consider as but one example the popular resurgence of James Baldwin's Civil-Rights-era works in the 2010s, from the documentary *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016) to Baldwin's influence on works like Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* (2015) and collection, edited by Jesmyn Ward, titled *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race* (2017). See, too, Jacqueline Woodson's 2016 *Vanity Fair* essay, "Why James Baldwin Still Matters," the byline of which notes that "America seems to be in the throes of a Baldwin revival."

[71] This claim is borne out over the course of the dissertation, from hauntings of Indigenous reclamation to fear of foreign invasion and fantasies of apocalyptic catastrophe. At the same time, I do not mean to suggest that "culture wars" occur *only* in settler nations; rather my point is that their occurrence in places like the US and Australia (as opposed to England or France) is contextualized by the unresolved 'problem' of continued Indigenous existence.

elements even as they materialize out of specific historical contexts. Wolfe's methodology for identifying the structured nature of settler colonialism is particularly applicable in the type of relational analysis proposed in this chapter. Wolfe explains that [w]hen invasion is recognized as a structure rather than an event, its history does not stop—or, more to the point, become relatively trivial—when it moves on from the era of frontier homicide. Rather, narrating that history involves charting the continuities, discontinuities, adjustments, and departures whereby a logic that initially informed frontier killing transmutes into different modalities, discourses and institutional formations as it undergirds the historical development and complexification of settler society.[72]

My relational analysis of *Education of Little Tree* and *My Own Sweet Time* takes fake Indigenous memoirs for a common element informed by the settler colonial logic of Indigenous elimination. These texts engage different national histories and settler societies that in some ways overlap but just as often do not; nevertheless, the Little Tree and Wanda Koolmatrie hoaxes depend upon the same narrative form to carry out the authors' attempted indigenization. That is, *Education* and *Sweet Time* are linked by more than the conventions of a particular genre of literary fiction. They also demonstrate the same impulse to displace Indigenous and Aboriginal presence, not from the frontier but from the discursive space created through testimony and truth-telling.[73]

---

[72] Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 402.

[73] While Lawson does not engage Wolfe's scholarship in this essay, he does draw similar conclusions about the recirculation of certain tropes in settler narratives. In particular, he writes that "[t]he management of indigenous peoples moves from the physical domain (where it has been incomplete) to the symbolic domain." Lawson, "The Anxious Proximities," 1217-18.

Asa "Forest" Carter: From Klansman to Playing Indian

In 1991, historian Dan T. Carter was at work on a biography of George Wallace, the pro-segregation Governor of Alabama throughout much of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Carter made a discovery in the course of his research that became national headline news. This seems not altogether unlikely, considering Wallace had enjoyed notoriety in the press since 1963, a year in which he delivered an inaugural address calling for "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever."[74] But Dan Carter's discovery was not about the man who spoke those words on the steps of the capitol in Montgomery; rather, they were about the man who had written them, Asa Earl Carter.[75]

"The Transformation of a Klansman," Dan's *New York Times* expose on Asa, became a major news story in 1991 for many reasons. First, it asserted that Asa was the same man who had, for almost two decades, been known to the literary world as *Forrest* Carter, a 'half-Cherokee' novelist and memoirist. The article also presented Dan's new findings about Asa's life as a politically influential white supremacist in 1950s and 1960s Alabama. Until 1991, Asa had barely figured into the state's official political history, despite having built a local reputation as an outspoken segregationist and unsuccessfully running for public office a number of times. Dan's article revealed that not only had Asa authored Wallace's most famous speech but he had also "carved out a violent career in Southern politics as a Ku Klux Klan terrorist, right-wing radio announcer, home-grown

[74] Full transcript available online through the Alabama Department of Archives and History at http://digital.archives.alabama.gov/cdm/ref/collection/voices/id/2952

[75] For clarity's sake, I distinguish Dan and Asa Carter by their first names in this section. References to "Carter" elsewhere in the chapter apply to Asa Carter unless otherwise noted.

American fascist and anti-Semite, rabble-rousing demagogue and secret author."[76] Dan also asserted that Asa's most popular work, *The Education of Little Tree*, was a literary hoax rather than the memoir of a Cherokee man raised by his traditionalist grandparents. This discovery was made even more complicated by the fact that, when the expose was published by *The New York Times* in October 1991, *Education* had been at or near the top of newspaper's non-fiction paperback bestseller list for over three months. The repercussions of "Transformation of a Klansman" have caused the "Forrest" Carter hoax to become a touchstone for contemporary debates on identity politics, cultural appropriation, and white supremacy.

Dan's article revealed details about Asa's violent past, filling considerable gaps in the biography of a Southern political extremist about whom not much was known. Within the larger context of Jim Crow and the Civil Rights movement, Asa Carter was considered a minor figure if he was considered at all. His contemporaries Martin Luther King Jr., Eugene "Bull" Conner, and George Wallace have become the respective faces of the racial turmoil plaguing mid-century Birmingham. At best, Asa might have remained the proverbial footnote of Southern history, an outlier whose predilection for violence, racism, and anti-Semitism kept him out of the mainstream. Wallace did not credit Asa for his speechwriting and would later deny having had any personal association with him at all. A small, persistent contention of those who remained close to Asa always claimed otherwise, insisting that he penned the notorious segregation speech and influenced the governor's politics.[77]

---

[76] Dan T. Carter, "Transformation."
[77] Clayton, 20 and Greenshaw, 39.

Prior to joining Wallace's gubernatorial campaign as a speechwriter, Asa had already established himself around Birmingham, Alabama, as a firebrand for southern white supremacy, garnering a reputation as an extremist even amongst the militant far-right. According to his biographers, Asa left his local Ku Klux Klan chapter in the mid-1950s to form the fundamentalist Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy, which terrorized Birmingham throughout the decade. The group assaulted singer Nat King Cole during a concert, protested Autherine Lucy's admission to the University of Alabama, and kidnapped at random and then castrated a black Birmingham resident. Asa was never named as a participant in these acts, though he was arrested in 1957 for shooting two Klansmen associates during an argument over money. The charges of assault with intent to murder were ultimately dropped, though Asa was routinely surveilled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the rest of the decade and has long been suspected of orchestrating the bombings of several black homes and churches.[78]

Dan also accused Asa of having perpetuated a literary hoax with his supposedly autobiographical *The Education of Little Tree*, first published by Delacorte in 1976 and reprinted by the University of New Mexico Press in 1986. When Dan's op-ed was published in early October of 1991, *Education* was in the midst of an unlikely fourteen-week run on the *New York Times* paperback bestseller list. The fact that Asa and Forrest were the same person should not have been much of a revelation in 1991, however. As of 1976, the writer calling himself Forrest Carter was garnering attention after Hollywood film star Clint Eastwood read one of Forrest's early novels, *Gone to Texas* (1975). Previously self-published in 1972 under the title *The Rebel Outlaw: Josey Wales*, the

[78] Roche, 238-240; Dan Carter, "Transformation".

repackaged novel was adapted into the acclaimed western film, *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976), and Forrest Carter became a notable figure in the Western literary world. With this recognition came accusations about Forrest's true identity, notably in response to Carter's *Today Show* interview with Barbara Walters.[79] Soon after the interview, *The New York Times* ran an article by Alabama-based journalist Wayne Greenshaw that offered compelling evidence that Asa and Forrest were the same person, despite Forrest's assurance that he was merely a "cowboy and an Indian."[80] This early challenge to Forrest Carter's veracity had little consequence, however, and his next two books, *The Education of Little Tree* and *The Vengeance Trail of Josey Wales*, both published in 1976, were popular successes. For most readers, Forrest Carter was an authentic voice of the American Indian.[81]

In 1986, a decade after the initial accusations about Forrest Carter's assumed identity, Lawrence Clayton published an essay with *Western American Literature* that not only contended Asa and Forrest Carter were the same person but also acknowledged that Asa's politics were rooted in white supremacy.[82] Why, then, was Clayton's article not met with the type of response Dan's *New York Times* op-ed received five years later? It could be a matter of publication venue and the size of their respective readerships. And it could be that *Education*'s unlikely rise to best-seller was a slow process still developing at the time of Clayton's article. Originally published by Delacorte in 1976, *Education*

[79] Roche, 250; Caison, 579.
[80] Greenshaw, "Is Forrest Carter," 39; As I demonstrate in a later section, Leon Carmen and John Bayley employed a similar rhetoric in presenting themselves as simply average blokes who were being treated unfairly in multicultural Australia.
[81] Justice, "A Lingering Miseducation," 20-21.
[82] Clayton, 21.

was out of print until 1986, when the University of New Mexico Press issued a limited run of its reprinted edition. The run quickly sold out. By 1991, the book had gone through a number of reprints and international translations, resulting in a top spot on the bestseller list and an award from the American Booksellers Association.[83] In the years between Clayton's essay and Dan's article, *Education* had become an improbable literary phenomenon and its readership had grown immensely, making the outing in 1991 more controversial than its predecessors.

How to explain the resurgent mainstream popularity of a simple Cherokee coming-of-age story originally published fifteen years prior? Situating *Education* in relation to the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s helps explain literary historian Laura Browder's succinct claim that "Little Tree was very much an Indian for the 1990s."[84] Little Tree and "Forrest" Carter represent an idea of Indianness with which the majority of the white settler population is comfortable: unsophisticated, unassuming, and apolitical. As such, Carter's Indians were much more preferable to those whom Buchanan derided in 1992 as overly sensitive and too easily offended by the nation's colonial origins. Daniel Heath Justice explains that non-Native readers who champion narratives like the one found in *Education* "can claim a multicultural focus without any confrontation of issues of power, violence, or oppression."[85] These sorts of Indians make little or no demand on settlers' consciousness because they do not represent any kind of

---

[83] Roche, 262.
[84] Browder, 139; Browder associates *Education*'s popularity in 1991 with fashion and New Age lifestyle trends. More importantly, she depicts Carter as an opportunist seizing on these trends, writing "Asa Carter stepped forward and gave Americans the Native American they wanted." This is a bit misleading, as Carter had died in 1979 and there were other agents responsible for the book's resurgent popularity.
[85] Justice, "Lingering Miseducation," 25.

'problem' that needs solving. There is nothing to fear or resent from Indians who are always already within the authoritative boundaries of settler society.

Asa Carter's exposure as a fraud and avowed white supremacist has done little to keep his work off of shelves. In fact, Ojibwe novelist David Treuer suggests "[t]here is probably no book about Indians that is more popular than *The Education of Little Tree*."[86] The book remains a best seller for University of New Mexico Press, who long resisted acknowledging the controversies involving Carter and his work before eventually reclassifying the text as fiction. It is still routinely adopted for curricula in grade school and university classes. And Paramount Pictures adapted the story into a major motion picture in 1997, six years after Dan Carter's exposé.[87] As I detail in the next section, the sustained popularity of *The Education of Little Tree* is only possible through recurring acts of unwitnessing Indigenous self-representation. In particular, I focus on Carter's initial obfuscation of Indigenous activism and agency surrounding the Red Power Movement and discuss how the book contributes to the greater erasure of Indigenous peoples in the settler imaginary.

Unwitnessing the Red Power Movement and Literary Sovereignty

Literary scholarship on the works of Asa "Forrest" Carter proliferated after his outing in 1991 and have consistently located his publications within frameworks of white supremacy and cultural appropriation. In several of these works, scholars suggest that *Education* can be read as a response to the political unrest of the 1960s and mid-1970s, yet these analyses have not centered on the larger Indigenous civil rights and sovereignty

[86] Treuer, 159.
[87] Justice, "Lingering Miseducation," 25.

movements that developed prior to 1976.[88] *Education*'s reliance on the vanishing Indian trope obscures more than a decade of highly visible American Indian activism and literary output that preceded Carter's fake memoir. Read in the larger context of the Red Power movement, the continued success of *The Education of Little Tree* further suggests that many readers prefer essentialist depictions of romantic Indians over the more complex, modern Indigenous American perspectives put forth in Native-authored works.[89] Settler society remains so deeply invested in unwitnessing Indigenous alterity that even the sordid details of Asa Carter's deceit and bigotry are not enough to disavow *Education* entirely.

Indigenous Americans did not suddenly or for the first time begin resisting colonization in the 1960s. Yet, the 1960s and early 1970s are seen by many as a transformative era of self-determination in—and international recognition of—Indigenous politics broadly deemed the Red Power movement.[90] The two highest-profile events, the Indians of All Tribes (IOAT) occupation of Alcatraz island from late 1969 until mid 1971 and the clash between American Indian Movement (AIM) members and federal agents at Wounded Knee in early 1973, received national media coverage to a degree that was, at that time, unprecedented for Indigenous activism in the US. In her history of the movement, Sherry L. Smith argues that "the cumulative effect of Native American articulation of needs and demands over the decades matched with non-Indians'

[88] For instance, Mark McGurl focuses on campus protesters as a representative of a larger counterculture movement to reform education in the 1960s, while Shari Huhndorf, drawing on Asa Carter's vehement support of segregation politics, places *Education* in the context of Black civil rights efforts against segregation policies.
[89] Justice, "Lingering Miseducation," 25, 30-31.
[90] Smith, 15; King, 135.

realization of their legitimacy during the 1960s and 1970s . . . finally led to substantive, meaningful reform in Indian affairs."[91] Largely because of the Red Power movement, Indigenous self-determination—*sovereignty*—became a defining characteristic of modern Indigenous identity in the US, and it was repeatedly upheld in legal cases throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Carter's representation of Cherokee identity in *Education* is based on long-standing stereotypes of noble savagery rather than actual beliefs, practices, or customs. As Daniel Heath Justice points out in his analysis of the novel, these stereotypes are dangerous in that they "take on a white cultural reality that is seen as more 'authentic' than the realities of living, sovereign American Indians."[92] Shari Huhndorf and Gina Caison have specifically argued that, through *Education* and an earlier novel, *Gone to Texas* (originally published as *The Rebel Outlaw: Josey Wales*), Carter yoked together two romantic myths of loss: the Lost Cause and the vanishing Indian. *Education*'s version of Indianness thus allows Carter, the ardent segregationist and violent white nationalist, to express his distrust of the centralized, federal government. He assumed a common enemy for Cherokee and southern whites alike and, in the process, homogenized their respective grievances.[93] The Lost Cause myth emerged as a means of mediating the disillusionment that pervaded the US South following the Civil War. It holds that the culturally distinctive—and superior—South was provoked into secession and then civil warfare by an oppressive Northern government whose military eventually overwhelmed the valiant but under-resourced Confederates. Reconstruction, the federal program that

[91] Smith, 25.
[92] Justice, 30.
[93] Roche, 259; Huhndorf, 152-53; Caison, 581-82.

followed the war, was a period of unchecked northern corruption in which 'outsider' Northern whites conspired with newly emancipated blacks to destroy the cultural and political institutions of the South.[94]

The vanishing Indian myth frames the taking of Indigenous lives and lands as a natural, if lamentable, inevitability owing to Native racial inferiority. According to this logic, 'Indians' were primitive peoples incapable of assimilating and thus it was only natural that they should give way to settler modernity as it progressed across North America. In *Education*, Carter's highly romantic portrayal of Cherokee removal through the so-called Trail of Tears unites aggrieved southern Whites and Indigenous peoples through narratives of dispossesion and victimhood. As Hundorf and Caison rightly point out, Carter's intertwining of the Lost Cause and vanishing Indian myths reinforce his ideological investments in white supremacy and its regeneration.[95]

Close-reading of one particular chapter of *Education* titled "To Know the Past" offers compelling evidence that the conflation of the Lost Cause and vanishing Indian myths in *The Education of Little Tree* also enables Carter to unwitness Indigenous activism and agency expressed in the 1960s and 1970s. "To Know the Past" opens with Carter relating one of his grandparents' characteristic maxims: "If ye don't know the past, then ye will not have a future. If you don't know where your people have been, then ye won't know where your people are going."[96] Just as the novel begins and ends with the death of Little Tree's Indigenous family members, the story of 'his people' begins with dispossession by the federal government through the refrain "the government soldiers

[94] See Alan T. Nolan, 11-34.
[95] Huhndorf, 155-60; Caison, 588.
[96] Carter, 40.

came."[97] Recalling the element of the Lost Cause myth in which the Union provokes the South into civil warfare, Northern militancy disrupts the distinctive way of life enjoyed by the Cherokee, who are briefly described as living in simple harmony with nature according to "The Way," Carter's own pseudo-spiritual creation.

In truth, Cherokee society was highly complex prior to contact with settlers; it became even more so in the decades before removal, as the Cherokee Nation drafted a constitution, established court systems, printed a newspaper, and exchanged property—including African-American slaves—in a market economy based on the accumulation of wealth through property.[98] Carter's pre-removal Cherokee 'past' is based on the notion that all Native peoples were 'children of nature' who reflected an earlier, simpler form of human existence. In reality, the Cherokee had, for better or worse, quickly evolved many of their social and political ideologies to mirror those of the US federal government in hopes that their sovereignty as a nation would be recognized and their rights protected. Carter's description of the Trail of Tears completely omits the decades-long processes that led to removal.

In place of those political complexities, *Education* relies on well-known, romantic stereotypes of Indianness. In another passage recalling the Lost Cause myth, Carter describes the Cherokee as bereft of material comfort but sustained by their sense of pride. Describing their forced march on foot rather than a journey made by wagon *as a matter of choice*, Carter writes: "The Cherokees had nothing left. But they would not ride, and so they saved something. You could not see it or wear it or eat it, but they saved something;

[97] The phrase is appears in the opening sentences of three of the first four paragraphs in which his grandparents teach him about the Cherokee people.
[98] Miles, 68-72, 102-105.

and they would not ride. They walked."[99] This description evokes a sense of pride even when all is lost, and readers soon learn that the 'something' the Cherokee hold onto is their "soul": "The wagons could not steal the soul of the Cherokee. The land was stolen from him, his home; but the Cherokee would not let the wagons steal his soul."[100] And, even as the Cherokee begin to die "by the thousands," Carter explains that "[h]is soul did not die, nor did it weaken."[101] These narrative details evoke the Lost Cause myth of valiant loyalists continuing to fight, even in the face of overwhelming defeat associated with the Confederacy's military loss. They also frame the Cherokee within the vanishing Indian myth by depicting them as stoic, preternaturally spiritual, and tragically marked for death. Little Tree's education thus endows him with the fighting spirit demonstrated by both of these supposedly righteous but tragically conquered groups.

That the Cherokee chose to walk rather than ride, a detail Carter emphasizes throughout the passage, is not just a testament to a romantic belief in Indigenous nobility. Rather, it is an insinuation that the Cherokee willingly chose to perform the martyr role in a moral tragedy. Indeed, they carry their dead with them, according to Carter, never asking for help from the soldiers nor openly mourning: "the Cherokee did not cry," he writes. "Not on the outside, for the Cherokee would not let them see his soul; as he would not ride in wagons."[102] Carter then links the lack of outward emotion with cultural loss, as he depicts a grieving father ordering his only surviving son to carry his younger brother's corpse and to "not look . . . nor speak . . . nor cry . . . nor remember the

[99] Carter, 41.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., 42.

mountains."[103] There are a number of significant cultural and historical erasures occurring here. First, Carter's insistence that there was no crying during removal belies the fact that the "[t]he Cherokee call the removal from Georgia *nunna dual isunyi* or 'the trail where they cried.'"[104] Worse is the romantic symbolism Carter assigns to the death march: refusing to express human emotion and actively forgetting the cultural ties to land, all that remains of Carter's Cherokee is a *spirit*. Justice adamantly contends that "[t]he idea of Removal for Cherokees is more than a symbol of erasure, the exile of community from homeland and hearth. It's the physical, brutal, bloody attempted elimination of a people."[105] Not only are Carter's Indian figures clearly representative of the silent, stoic noble savage, they are also culpable for their enormous loss, as they stubbornly march toward their deaths as a matter of pride.

Of course, federal soldiers and their government are not blameless in Carter's story of Cherokee removal. He derides the phrase "Trail of Tears" as a misnomer, asserting that "[a] death march is not romantic,"[106] even as he presents his own highly romanticized account. In calling the removal a death march, Carter is once again folding the Lost Cause myth into the Vanishing Indian myth, as the cruel oppression of the militant North enervates the heart-wrenching stoicism of the noble Cherokee along the Trail of Tears. In truth, sweeping removal programs came about under the presidency of Andrew Jackson, who, in 1830 signed the Indian Removal Act that eventually led to the 'relocation' of the Cherokee, Seminole, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Muskogee-Creek

[103] Carter, 42.
[104] King, 88; See too "The Trail Where We Cried" in Justice, *Our Fire Survives the Storm*.
[105] Justice, *Our Fire*, 60.
[106] Carter, 42.

nations to reservation lands in Oklahoma and Arkansas. Jackson was born and came of age in the Carolinas before migrating to Tennessee, where he began his prolific career in land surveying, politics, and military service.[107] He *was* the figurehead of the federal government at the time of Cherokee removal, true; but his interest in perpetrating the land grab that dispossessed the tribe and their neighbors spawned from his *Southern* upbringing.

Furthermore, Jackson's ascendancy to the presidency only empowered the state of Georgia to escalate their hostilities against the neighboring Cherokee Nation. Throughout the 1810s, Georgian settlers who had been violently attacking Cherokee peoples in an effort to force them westward. While a small number of Cherokees *did* leave the nation due to these attacks, the overwhelming majority, led by Principle Chief John Ross, became even more resolute in their belief that the Cherokee people possessed an absolute right to remain on their ancestral lands.[108] Ross's insistence that Cherokee society could adapt to and benefit from aspects of western culture while still maintaining traditional values, ceremonies, and self-determination resulted in a national constitution of their own in 1827. Georgia's state officials were enraged, and violence against Cherokees increased drastically. As a result, the Cherokee Nation sued the state of Georgia in two Supreme Court cases—*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831) and *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832). While the Cherokees were victorious in the latter case, President Jackson refused to use federal resources to enforce the court's ruling.[109] Working in tandem, Jackson's federal soldiers and Georgia's state militia oversaw the forced removal of the Cherokee who

[107] Dunbar-Ortiz, 107-15.
[108] Justice, *Our Fire*, 67-74.
[109] Justice, 79.

remained after the notorious Treaty of New Echota was signed in 1835 by a small but powerful contingent of anti-Ross Cherokee men. While Carter's revisionist melodrama of removal pits a cruel federal (*northern*) military against the proud but defeated Cherokee, in reality, the series of events that led to 'The Trail of Tears' were predominantly the result of violent, extra-legal land grabs perpetrated by white southerners with strongly held anti-Indigenous prejudices.

Despite glaring historical inaccuracies, Carter's rendering of removal is meant to form a sympathetic bond of victimhood between white Southerners and Indigenous peoples. There is, however, a glaring difference between the vanishing Indian and the white Southerner of the Lost Cause. The supposedly unvanquished spirit of the South assures that, someday, 'the South will rise again,' and white Southern culture will return to its former glory. To the contrary, a native 'spirit' may live on, but Indians are clearly meant to die out, to no longer physically inhabit the lands of conquest. How, then, can 'half-Cherokees' like Grandma and Grandpa still live on traditional Cherokee lands roughly a century after removal? As Carter succinctly states, "[a]ll of the Cherokee did not go."[110] Instead, he writes, some escaped into the mountains and formed various 'kinship' bonds with the descendants of Scottish settlers living in the remote hollers.

For most of the characters in the novel, this implies intermarriage. Carter-biographer Jeff Roche discovered that, when faced with allegations of cultural appropriation, 'Forrest' Carter produced a suspicious 'genealogy' in which he claimed

[110] Carter, 42.

five 'half-Cherokee' grandmothers.[111] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang named this exact phenomenon *settler nativism* in their 2012 article "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," writing that it is an attempt by settlers "to mark themselves as blameless in the attempted eradication of Indigenous peoples."[112] This definition of settler nativism coincides with Huhndorf's reading of *Education*, as she argues that the novel "tells a . . . story about the conquest of Native America, specifically of the removal of the Cherokees, only to resolve questions about the conquest by eliding the identities of Native and Southern whites and then by narrating the disappearance of the Natives."[113] As several scholars have pointed out, the 'disappearance' of Indigenous peoples is often specifically tied to the formulation of race within settler societies, the idea being that through intermarriage with whites (presumably white *men*) and other 'half-' or 'quarter-Indian' people, Indigeneity could be 'bred out' in the course of a few generations.[114] In a sense, then, the 'Indians' may cease to exist biologically, their 'spirit' or 'soul' can continue on through their rightful white heirs. Most critics responding to *Education* read Carter's pseudo-spiritual concept of "The Way" as his interpretation of this form of social Darwinism.[115]

Near the conclusion of "To Know the Past," Carter proposes yet another form of kinship, this time between Cherokee warriors and the Confederate army. Little Tree's paternal grandfather was one such "rebel": "He was an old warrior. He had joined the

---

[111] Roche, 251; Roche notes, too, that nowhere in the document does Carter claim a white grandmother marrying a Cherokee man, suggesting that his supremacist views on white female virtue continued after his reinvention as 'Forrest.' It is also worth noting that Carter relies on racial identity rather than any tribal or clan affiliation.
[112] Tuck and Yang, 10.
[113] Huhndorf, 151.
[114] Tuck and Yang, 11-13; Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 387; Tallbear, 45-46.
[115] Huhndorf, 157; Roche, 257-58; McGurl 249; Caison, 580; Justice, "Lingering Miseducation," (29).

Confederate raider, John Hunt Morgan, to fight the faraway, faceless monster of 'guvmint,' that threatened his people and his cabin."[116] Furthermore, this Confederate Cherokee forefather was a war hero, wounded in battle:

> It had been the wild exuberance of a cavalry charge that night in Ohio. The fever for combat, that marked his breed, was running high. There was no fear, only exultation, as the horse moved fast and light over the ground, as the wind whipped a storm in his face. Exultation that brought the rebel Indian yell rumbling from his chest and out his throat, screaming, savage.[117]

While it seems clear that Carter intends this description to praise the bravery of the charging soldier, it is impossible to miss the repeated instances in which he engages with the most derogatory stereotypes of Indigeneity. He is described as 'wild' and 'savage,' not of civilized a people or nation but a nearly inhuman 'breed' of fearless, feverish fighters who cannot contain their lust for war. His 'rebel Indian yell' solidifies the connection between white Southerners and Natives, just as his death signifies the inevitable disappearance of Indigenous peoples.

Having been slowly poisoned by a lead ball he carried in his abdomen, Little Tree's great-grandfather dies on the floor of the cabin he defended against Union invasion. With his passing, Carter reflects: "The century was dying. The time of blood and fighting and death; the time he had met, and by which he had been measured, was dying. There would be a new century, with another people marching and carrying their dead, but he knew only the past—of the Cherokee."[118] It is not immediately clear who these new people are, though Carter may be referring to American soldiers in Vietnam as

[116] Carter, 44.
[117] Ibid., 44.
[118] Ibid., 45.

their withdrawal from Saigon had occurred just before the book's initial release. More clear is the fact that Carter's Native peoples have no place in modernity.

If, as one commenter has suggested, the publication of *The Education of Little Tree* in 1976 is a "belated contribution" to the political debates of the 1960s and early 1970s, it should also be read in relation to the national attention to Indigenous sovereignty brought about by the Red Power movement.[119] Indigenous activists and writers of the 1960s and 1970s represented the century's greatest challenge to the vanishing Indian myth, though their efforts have historically been underappreciated in the broader discourse on the era. According to Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, this period "raised dizzying hopes of respect for treaties and sacred lands, but also of a new kind of person, a new kind of democracy, and a new kind of Indian future."[120] "It was," they contend, "for American Indians every bit as significant as the counterculture was for young whites, or the civil rights movement for blacks."[121] Indigenous activism in the US during this period did not garner the level of attention given these other civil rights and liberation movements, however. Nor was indigeneity as integral to national debates occurring at the same time in other settler nations, including Australia.[122] Carter's trope of Indigenous death as "The Way" is symptomatic of the lack of focus on Indigenous American activism in that *Education* also ignores the momentous events of

[119] McGurl, 258. McGurl gestures at the potential for reading *Education* in a larger context of New Left politics of the 1960s, but because his focus is on education reform, his analysis largely centers on his belief that *Education* engaged in counterculture anti-establishment politics by championing a 'natural' education model symbolized by Carter's romantic Indian characters.
[120] Smith and Warrior, 268.
[121] Ibid., viii.
[122] Johnson, 5.

the Red Power movement and activist's insistence on Indigenous sovereignty and futurity. In their place, Carter offers regressive images of Indianness that had long proliferated in the US through works such as James Fennimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1826-1841) and Edward S. Curtis's chronicle *The North American Indian*, which features the notorious image "The Vanishing Race" (1904).

Given the fact that *Education* was immensely popular for decades prior to (and in some circles, even after) Carter's outing, critics wrestle with the book's status in relation to the other works of Indigenous literature. David Treuer suggests in his polemical *Native American Fiction: A User's Manual* (2006) that the book should be treated "as Indian as any other Indian novel."[123] Mark McGurl similarly contends that the book's publication in 1976 necessitates its being place in discussion with other "Native American-themed bestsellers" of the period, John Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks* (reprinted in 1961) and Carlos Castaneda's *The Teachings of Don Juan* (1969) in particular. It is worth nothing, though, that *Black Elk* and *Don Juan* have also had their veracity called into question, so any comparative analysis between these works would likely be limited to the *theme* of Indianness rather than an understand of Indigenous literature.[124]

Surprisingly, *Education* has not yet been placed into the broader context of the Native American Literary Renaissance of the 1960s and 1970s. While Indigenous peoples

---

[123] Treuer, 186. This intentionally provocative assertion fits with Treuer's broader thesis that the novel cannot ever actually possess or adequately depict Indigenous culture or identity but merely suggest the existence of something readers (and Indigenous authors) misinterpret as 'authentic' Indian cultural identity.

[124] McGurl, 248-49. See Vine Deloria Jr.'s comments on Neihardt's possible editorial intrusions into Black Elk's narrative in the 1988 edition of *Black Elk Speaks*. For information on Castaneda's literary hoax, see Robert Marshall's 2007 article "The Dark Legacy of Carlos Castaneda" for *Salon.com*.

in the US had created a literary tradition that long preceded the 1960s, the era's body of literature is distinguishable for the fact that it developed out of and alongside the political movement for recognition of Indigenous sovereignty.[125] N. Scott Momaday's novel *House Made of Dawn* was awarded a Pulitzer in 1969, a moment generally considered to be the beginning of the so-called renaissance. That same year, Vine Deloria Jr. published *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, which was read widely by Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences eager to understand the politics behind the ongoing Alcatraz siege. Deloria's *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (1973) and James Welch's novel *Winter in the Blood* (1974) followed. Simon Ortiz's first poetry collection, *Going for Rain*, was released in 1976, the same year that *The Education of Little Tree* was initially released through Delacorte Press. Leslie Marmon Silko's monumental novel *Ceremony* (1977) was published the next year to much acclaim. With an Indigenous publishing industry firmly established in the US, the 1970s came to a close with the publication of *The Remembered Earth* (1979), an anthology of poetry, fiction, and essays from the movement. [126] These works inspired a new generation of Indigenous writers,

[125] Richard Scott Lyons touches upon this connection in his introduction to *The Word, The Text, and The Indian* (2017), writing "I am not suggesting that Native American Renaissance writers were somehow directly connected with Red Power groups like the American Indian Movement (AIM). . . . What I am saying is that the civil rights years witnessed a renaissance in Indian country . . . of which the literary renaissance was a part" (11).

[126] Chadwick Allen argues that AIM's legal battles following the occupation at Wounded Knee subdued Indigenous American activism in the late 1970s and, further, that even as Indigenous peoples were publishing books of various genres during the period, they were not necessarily widely read by non-Native audiences. He notes, specifically, that all of the Indigenous-authored works clustered around the 1976 bicentennial "had been outsold and overshadowed by the purported Cherokee autobiography *The Education of Little Tree*." See Chadwick Allen, *Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for a Global Native Literary Studies*, U of Minnesota P, 2012, pp. 56. For a more in-depth discussion on the

educators, and activists, many of whom rose to prominence in the years generally associated with the culture wars.

Unlike *Education*, these texts associated with the American Indian Literary Renaissance emphasize Indigenous modernities in the US, even as they are often fraught with traumas of colonization. In *House Made of Dawn*, *Winter in the Blood*, and *Ceremony*, deeply troubled young Indigenous men return to their Native homelands in order to heal traumas brought about by warfare, detribalization, and the loss of family members. These prolonged personal restorations are often depicted as analogous to characters' struggles to recuperate or preserve fragmented cultural knowledge, a process that runs counter to both Little Tree's effortless indoctrination into Cherokee culture and his subsequent absorption into the whitestream once his grandparents die. Indeed, Granpa's teaching of "The Way" occurs through a number of folksy little maxims rather than traditional instruction and ceremonial practices undertaken by characters like Abel, Momaday's protagonist in *House Made of Dawn*. One of *Education*'s most profound effects on readers has been to suggest that they, like Little Tree, can undergo their *own* education and learn to be an Indian.[127] All ethnic and minority literatures are vulnerable to exploitation and appropriation to some degree, and non-Native publishers and reviewers continue to consistently promote Indigenous-authored novels as 'authentic' representations. But Carter's representation of Indianness is made even more harmful by

---

linkages between Indigenous activism and fiction writing, see Sean Teuton, *Red Land, Red Power: Grounding Knowledge in the American Indian Novel*, Duke UP, 2008.

[127] Daniel Heath Justice has written on several occasions about his relationship to *Education* and the injury the hoax caused him as someone who turned to the book as a child because he grew up disconnected from his Cherokee cultural heritage. See "A Lingering Miseducation" and *Why Indigenous Literature Matters* in particular.

the fact that it has no substantive relation to the expressions of Indigenous identity put forward by actual Cherokee citizens or the artists, activists, and academics of the Red Power and renaissance movements.

Similar to the Little Tree hoax in the US, the Wanda Koolmatrie hoax perpetrated by Leon Carmen and John Bayley in mid1990s Australia undercuts Indigenous political activism by appropriate a first-person narrative form, in this case, Aboriginal women's testimonies. Unlike Carter, Carmen and Bayley confessed to their having committed the hoax within a few years of their book's publication. Doing so only stoked the contentious debates over the entanglements of colonialism and racism taking place at the time, a period now referred to as *the history wars*. Carmen and Bayley readily admitted to the hoax, but they did not apologize for it; rather, they depicted themselves as victims of prejudice from elite institutions. Their version of the Anglo decline narrative blamed the Australian government's multicultural agenda to a degree, but they took particular umbrage with leftist academics and cultural gatekeepers whom they believed were championing minority experiences at the expense of 'average' Australians. Carmen and Bayley intended their hoax to expose the hypocrisy of leftists who supported Aboriginal self-determination but decried neoconservatives' insistence on liberal self-reliance.

In their confession, the authors espouse support for an Aboriginal 'cause' that is vaguely defined, decidedly apolitical, and seemingly unaware of ongoing developments in Aboriginal activism, which had reached unprecedented visibility in Australian policymaking and society at the time of the Koolmatrie hoax. *Sweet Time* instead presents an acceptable form of Aboriginal identity through its protagonist Wanda Koolmatrie, who

embraces Australia's 'fair go' mentality rather than complain about social inequalities.[128] *Sweet Time* thus belongs in conversation with Carter's *Education of Little Tree* for the way in which Carmen and Bayley deny the legitimacy of Indigenous political difference by unwitnessing decades of Aboriginal activism and literary production.

Wanda Koolmatrie and History War-Era Hoaxes

By the late 1990s, cultural critics were frenzied over a spate of identity hoaxes that had undermined the legitimacy of multiculturalism in Australian arts. Literary hoax and imposture were by no means a new phenomenon brought about by the cultural crises of the late twentieth century. In fact, many of the architects of the nation's literary tradition first published under pseudonyms, including Miles Franklin, Joseph Furphy, and Henry Handel Richardson. The Ern Malley hoax, perpetrated by unknown poets James McAuley and Harold Stewart forty years before the publication of *My Own Sweet Time* in 1994, remains so influential that literary scholar Philip Mead asks "is Australian literary culture more or less founded in imposture and inauthenticity compared to other national literary traditions?"[129] Maggie Nolan and Carrie Dawson contend that the "mood of cultural self-examination seemed to unleash a flood of disclosures about hoaxes and

[128] This characterization is especially controversial given the fact that Wanda is depicted as a member of the Stolen Generations, a term coming into use around the time of the hoax that refers to victims of Aboriginal child removal policies. The point of the book, if there is one, is to celebrate Wanda decision to rely solely on individualism to thrive in a fair society rather than choosing to become embittered and dependant on state welfare programs that promote mediocrity. In other words, Wanda is meant to be a role model for Black progress.

[129] Philip Mead, "1944, Melbourne and Adelaide: the Ern Malley Hoax," in *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Literatures in English*, eds. Brian McHale and Randall Stevenson, Edinburgh UP, 2006, pp. 122.

impostures in the late 1990s, as the currency of literary value fluctuated wildly."[130] Nolan and Dawson link this particular wave of hoaxes to what many cultural critics now agree was a widespread sense of loss felt by white Australians in light of the "unsettling" rulings in *Mabo* (1992) and *Wik* (1996) native title cases.[131] Sociologist Michael Kimmel terms this particular sense of loss *aggrieved entitlement*, the notion that traditional exemplars of national identity become increasingly outraged as they perceive the federal government funneling many of their rights to undeserving minority groups.[132] Literary hoaxes like *Sweet Time* represent but one of the outlets through which Australia's settler population expressed aggrieved entitlement at the close of the twentieth century.[133]

Between 1994 and 1997, no less than six cases of hoax or imposture garnered national attention. Not all involved false claims to aboriginality, though given the contextual specificity of Australia's culture wars during the time, instances where such claims were exposed were especially controversial. The first controversy occurred in 1994 with the publication of *Mutant Messages from Down Under*, which, coincidentally, was written by US author Marlo Morgan. Morgan claims to have 'gone walkabout' with a supposedly vanishing group of traditionalist Aborigines and subsequently to have inherited the secret, sacred wisdom. The following year, Helen Demidenko was outed as

---

[130] Nolan and Dawson, vi and viii.
[131] Ibid., xi; See also Beardwood, 10; Maureen Clark, 102; Maggie Nolan, 135; Dolin, 1-10.
[132] Kimmel, *Angry White Men*, 32.
[133] It is worth noting here that, according to literary historians Ken Gelder and Paul Salzman, David Malouf's 1993 novel *Remembering Babylon* was the first novel to be seriously included in the history war debates. Even more noteworthy is the fact that the novel is explicitly premised on concerns about indigenization, as one of the central characters is shipwrecked as a youth, rescued and raised by Aborigines, and eventually killed by fellow whites when he attempts to integrate into their frontier settler society. Gelder and Salzman, 66-68.

Helen Dale and revealed to have fabricated a Ukrainian family background promoted as the source material for her novel *The Hand That Signed the Paper*. The Demidenko affair was particularly scandalous given that the book had received the nation's highest honor for fiction, the Miles Franklin Award. In March of 1996, Paul Radley confessed that his award-winning *Jack Rivers and Me,* first published in 1980, was actually the work of his great uncle, Jack Radley. Just three months after Radley's controversial outing, Mudrooroo, widely recognized as the first Aboriginal novelist and an influential literary critic, was accused of falsely claiming to be an Aborigine. This revelation had a much more profound effect on Australia's literary scene given Mudrooroo's standing in literary and activists circles, and his outing became a flashpoint in debates about Aboriginal authenticity during the history wars. Then, in early March 1997, the Aboriginal painter known as Eddie Burrup was revealed to be Elizabeth Durack, a painter and heiress of an Australian settler dynasty.

Just one week later, a previously unknown writer named Leon Carmen, a self-described average middle-aged bloke, stepped forward claiming that he, not Wanda Koolmatrie, was the author of *My Own Sweet Time*. Carmen's ruse involved likewise unknown writer John Bayley as a coconspirator, with Bayley posing as Koolmatrie's 'literary agent.' *Sweet Time*'s deceit intersects histories of racial and gender oppression in Australia, as Carmen and Bayley published the 'memoir' with an Aboriginal publishing house (Magabala) and were awarded the Nita May Dobby Literary Award for a first book by a woman writer. Given the political nature of Aboriginal women's testimonies, the Koolmatrie hoax seems uniquely harmful in that it co-opted the agency of one of the

nation's most vulnerable populations and potentially undermined the legitimacy of one of their few public forums for self-articulation and truth-telling.

Up until 1997, when publishers demanded to meet Koolmatrie before publishing her second book, Carmen and Bayley avoided suspicion almost entirely. Murri scholar Philip Morrissey's 2003 retrospective essay on the hoax includes detailed excerpts from his reader report provided for the publisher in 1994, brief transcripts from telephone conversations with the book's editor Bruce Simms and co-author John Bayley in 1995, and lecture notes from a course he offered in 1996 that included a unit on *Sweet Time.* Each of these personal records reveals that Morrissey had questions about the text's veracity from his earliest encounters with the Koolmatrie narrative. In the initial reader report he writes "Because of its quirkiness I find myself asking: who is Wanda Koolmatrie? Is it some hoax?"[134] In conversations with Simms and Bayley, Morrissey sought an answer but learned that the editor himself had not personally met Koolmatrie. Of his conversation with Koolmatrie's 'agent,' Morrissey notes that Bayley "assured me W.K. is Abl (part Abl) [Aboriginal]—will pass on my number to her and let her know I'd like to meet her."[135] His search for information on Koolmatrie yielded so little concrete detail that two years after the book's publication, Morrissey's lecture notes repeat his initial question: "Is the book a hoax?" His notes continue:

[134] Qtd. in Morrissey, 300.
[135] Qtd. in Morrissey, 301.

> [q]uestions are left unanswered: is it a novel based on her life?—is it purely fictional? . . . . *My Own Sweet Time* isn't validated by or authorised by the author's presence or experience—we know little about her. *If there would not be outrage at the perpetration of such an imposition we might well suspect a hoax. How can someone apparently trifle with something so full of meaning for Aboriginal society—the fact of being taken away.*[136]

Morrissey's trepidation proved justifiable. Like Asa Carter appropriating the removal history of the Cherokee in order to bemoan the downfall of the Confederacy, Carmen and Bayley trivialize the removal of the Stolen Generations by equating it with the sense of loss they felt in a more progressive Australia.[137] They believed that because powerful elites disdained men like them, that they were being ignored. As writers, their stories would continue to go unheard. Carmen and Bayley decided to respond by capitalizing on political demands for inquiry into the legal removal of 'half-caste' youths from their Aboriginal parents because her story was sure to receive attention where theirs would not. Thus, Wanda Koolmatrie came into being.

Programs of Aboriginal child removal were purportedly designed to assimilate Aborigines into modern white society and thus shrink the racial and cultural differences that made them 'Other.'[138] Wolfe and Margaret D. Jacobs both contend that this particular assimilation narrative is a purposeful misdirection from the primary goal of

---

[136] Qtd. in Morrissey, 302; emphasis added.

[137] As a matter of chronology, it is important to note that the touchstone text associated with the Stolen Generations, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* (1997), was the direct result of an inquest begun in 1995, the year following the publication of *Sweet Time*. While Carmen and Bayley could not have conceived their hoax as a response to either the inquiry or the report, it is entirely possible that they were responding to then-Prime Minister Paul Keating's well-known "Redfern Speech," delivered in 1992. In that address, Keating introduces reconciliation as an official federal policy and, thus, laying the groundwork for the 1995 inquiry. Moreover, the Prime Minister explicitly acknowledges the theft of children in a litany of wrongdoings inflicted upon Aboriginal peoples by settlers.

[138] Jacobs, *White Mother*, 39.

settler colonialism—to sever the connections between Indigenous peoples and their lands.[139] Of course, Carmen and Bayley utilized the shameful history of child abduction to carry out a misdirection of their own. As a member of the Stolen Generations, Wanda's story would resonate with a contemporary readership wrestling with guilt and sympathy over their own colonial origins. People would listen to her. Her book would sell even if, or perhaps *because*, she deviated from the genre conventions and did not explore the impacts of colonial trauma on Aboriginal lives. If the story of plucky, fiercely independent Wanda Koolmatrie could win over the politically correct left without pandering to their desire for victimization and angst, then Carmen and Bayley—and the cultural gatekeepers who kept them from publishing—would get what they truly deserved.

While Asa Carter never admitted that he was perpetrating literary hoaxes as a 'half-Cherokee' named Forrest, Carmen did so in the form of first-person article in Sydney's *The Daily Telegraph*. He depicts himself as having been a somewhat uninspired fiction writer, lacking the necessary hardships of lived experience that can be mined for compelling storytelling. He longed for "a charismatic narrator, someone who'd shaken difficult beginnings, dealt with prejudice, discouragement, a few bum steers, bewilderment, and doubt. Someone who refused to buckle, mope, or compromise, someone who could handle any situation, spot the sunny side of bleak frustration, solve a problem, crack a joke, and shrug [off] criticism."[140] Recognizing a certain form of value in victimhood, Carmen and coconspirator Bayley, himself a frustrated writer, created

[139] Jacobs, *White Mother*, 63; Wolfe, *Traces of History*, 57-58.
[140] Carmen, 27.

Wanda Koolmatrie, a 45-year old Aboriginal woman "born in the far north of South Australia in 1949," who, having been "[r]emoved from her Pintjantjara mother in 1950, . . . was raised by foster parents in the western suburbs of Adelaide."[141] Thus, in this member of what would soon come to be officially called the Stolen Generations, Carmen and Bayley imagined a voice with which readers would empathize, given what Carmen calls "her potentially destructive background."[142]

It is clear from Carmen's initial expose, as well as *The Daily Telegraph* interview of Carmen and Bayley that appeared the following week, that the Koolmatrie hoax was always intended to be a means of striking back at the literary establishment. As such, Carmen and Bayley directly inserted themselves into the discourse of the history wars. On conceiving the hoax in 1994, Carmen says

> The time seemed to be ripe. Authors as Personalities were attracting more attention than their books. And the publishing world seemed to be regulated by academics promoting their various hobby horses.
>
> Doors were opening, certainly, and exciting work was appearing all the time. But other doors were closing firmly. It's not something that can be proved, but there seemed to be a widespread notion that middle-aged people had nothing to say. Especially blokes. That if they weren't already established authors, they could forget about it, and drive trucks or something.[143]

Identifying as one of the middle-aged blokes, Carmen noticeably does not address the potential roles that race and ethnicity might have played in his inability to get published. Of course, the reference to academics and their hobby horses certainly makes the implication, especially given the social tensions and public debates taking place at the time.

---

[141] Taken from the short biographical blurb that appears on the final page of the book.
[142] Carmen, 27.
[143] Ibid.

In the interview given the following week, Carmen and Bayley further depict themselves as victims of Australia's new oversensitivity to race and racism. Carmen notably attempts to rhetorically maneuver around the issue of racial identity entirely, claiming "I don't want this to become a racist issue. The book makes it very clear indeed which side I'm on. I'm on the side of the blackfellas."[144] At the same time that he professes himself an ally, Carmen also attempts to minimize Aboriginal political difference, asserting that "Black people that I've known aren't likely to get excited about something as abstract [as racism] . . . . They don't want to talk about blackness and whiteness all the time, especially not in a political sense. People are people. Books are books."[145] Here, Carmen employs a rhetorical strategy Eduardo Bonilla Silva refers to, coincidentally, as *testimony*, where white people recount positive personal interactions with black people in order to "project an image of maturity and racial sensitivity" in an attempt "to cover up for a present that blacks are not part of."[146] That is, by projecting an apolitical identity on to Aborigines whom he apparently knows well enough to speak for, Carmen justifies the erasure he and Bayley perform through Wanda and her false memoir. The monumentally important civil rights movements and events that occurred during the years in which Wanda's narrative takes place do not bear mentioning because they are just not that important to her, the literary embodiment of Aboriginal Blackness as Carmen understands it.

[144] Carmen and Bayley, "We Just Wanted," 8.
[145] Carmen and Bayley, "We Just Wanted," 8.
[146] Bonilla-Silva, 91,98.

It is probably more accurate to say that Carmen understood very little about Black lived experiences when he decided to write a first-person narrative from the perspective of an Aboriginal woman. Anne Brewster explains that

> Aboriginal women's autobiographies announce their cultural difference from the dominant white culture. This difference is quite complex and exists on a number of levels, some of which are difficult for white readers to perceive, so strong is their inclination to incorporate everything they read into their own experience.[147]

Here, Brewster seemingly offers a direct refutation of Carmen's homogenizing 'people are people' and 'books are books' platitudes. Goenpul woman Aileen Moreton-Robinson further insists that, "[a]s subjects of their own gaze, the personal is political in Indigenous women's texts," particularly given the degree to which the publishing industry has limited their agency.[148] Carmen himself states in his original expose that the manuscript was rejected by two of the three publishers to whom they mailed copies. Only Magabala Books—an independent Aboriginal publishing house—showed interest. If, as middle-aged white men, Carmen and Bayley were truly scorned by the literary world solely because of their gender and race—they were not, obviously—they made a curious decision to pose as an Aboriginal woman writer, who was far less likely to have her worked published than they. It seems much more probable that they purposefully targeted and exploited Magabala Books as one of the few publishing outlets supporting Aborigine writers at the time.

Much of the scholarship dedicated to *Sweet Time* focuses primarily on Carmen's role in the hoax, though Bayley's involvement throughout the saga is equally important. Where Carmen articulates a willful naivety about race and the complexities of

[147] Brewster, *Aboriginal Women's Autobiography*, 39.
[148] Moreton-Robinson, *Talkin' up to the White Woman*, 2.

multiculturalism, Bayley voices the anger and disdain that typically accompanies narratives of Anglo decline and aggrieved entitlement. In the *Daily Telegraph* interview, he spitefully recalls attending a playwriting workshop and overhearing the instructor refuse to consider putting scripts by white men into production. Carmen made a passing reference to 'academic hobby horses' in his original confession, but Bayley goes much further, asserting that the instructor only wanted "a play by an Afghanistani [*sic*] lesbian with six fingers."[149] The discourse of Anglo decline, according to Hage, "obviously reflects a change in the status of Anglo-Australianness as a dominant national culture, [but] it is equally obvious that it tends to *exaggerate* it."[150] Hyperbole aside, Bayley clearly feels disenfranchised by a modern, multicultural world; in turn, he articulates his anxiety in the language of warfare:

> "If I'm howled down by the academics, by the mealymouthed [*sic*], fair enough. Death in battle," he tells the interviewers.[151] In response to the suggestion that he is cynical, he responds "What I'd say is I've refused to roll over and die. And the same could be said of Leon. We just won't accept defeat. We're not whingers, we're adaptors."[152]

Here, Bayley's comments recall Carmen's quest for a resilient narrator, a hero about whom he could tell a tale. This, too, is in keeping with the larger discourse of Anglo decline, in which white settlers either mourn a significant loss or take on "the far more heroic task of re-establishing national order against what is perceived a chaotic situation."[153] As such, it is possible to read in Wanda's seemingly heroic transcendence of her aboriginality a parallel desire within Bayley to envision himself as a resilient

[149] Carmen and Bayley, "We Just Wanted," 8
[150] Hage, *White Nation*, 95.
[151] Carmen and Bayley, "We Just Wanted," 8.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Hage, *White Nation*, 95.

cultural crusader, raging against the injustices heaped on settler Australians in the name of multiculturalism.

Bayley's comments in 1997 were undoubtedly influenced by the rise to prominence of John Howard and Pauline Hanson in the previous year. Howard had folded the history wars directly into his campaign rhetoric and spoke often of preserving an Australian cultural identity. In an interview broadcast on ABC's *Four Corners* just prior to the election, he expressed his now oft-quoted hope that Australians would soon come to feel "comfortable and relaxed" about the nation's colonial history. Howard also responded to the interviewer's request that he describe himself in three words by stating: "I can't think of a nobler description of anybody than to be called an 'average Australian bloke.'" [154] Bayley's comments in the *Daily Telegraph* the following year suggest that similarly self-described average blokes were anything but comfortable and relaxed. Howard's counterpart (and eventual scapegoat), Pauline Hanson gave voice to the anger and resentment of this supposedly forgotten group of typical citizens. In her maiden speech to the Parliament in 1996, Hanson infamously decried "a type of reverse racism [being] applied to mainstream Australians." Not only did she use the speech as an opportunity to reject "the assumption that Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged people in Australia," she also warned that the country was "in danger of being swamped by Asians" thanks to lax immigration policies and multiculturalism.[155] Comments from Carmen and Bayley justifying their hoax thus mirror the political rhetoric of Howard and

[154] Howard and Jackson.
[155] Hanson, n.p.

Hanson, who had taken different routes to appeal to similar insecurities amongst Australia's white voters.

Despite various claims to innocence, righteousness, or victimhood, the farce Carmen and Bayley perpetrated undeniably negatively impacted Aboriginal writers and their works. Morrissey points to a number of consequences and violations, ranging from delays in Magabala's production of Aboriginal-authored books to breaking tribal and international laws.[156] Writing about the 'parasitic' nature of hoax memoirs, Gillian Whitlock argues that works like *Sweet Time* concomitantly rely upon the recognition of minority testimony as a legitimate discourse while also subverting that group's agency "by drawing all testimonial narrative into disrepute."[157] As such, Wanda's explicit refusal of victimhood should be read as indirect indictment on Aboriginal truth-telling as a legitimate act of resistance. Wanda is the hero of the story precisely because, as Carmen explained in his initial outing, she would not 'buckle' or 'mope.' The implication, then, is that her story serves as counter-narrative to the "Aboriginal memoirs and oral histories [that] are full of haunting and poignant stories of removal."[158] Furthermore, *Sweet Time*'s parasitic bleeding of these accounts sustains the structural elimination of Indigenous peoples as yet another invasion into Aboriginal space—this time, the autobiography and memoir as testimonies. According to Alan Lawson, "the settler mimics, appropriates, and desires (while simultaneously seeking to efface) the authority of the indigene. The typical settler narrative, then, has a doubled objective: the suppression or effacement of

[156] Morrissey, 303-05.
[157] Whitlock, 119.
[158] Jacobs, *White Mother*, 171.

the indigene, and the concomitant indigenization of the settler."[159] Settler nativism expressed in texts like *Sweet Time* intrinsically assert settler's authority to control Aboriginal lived experiences, limit Aboriginal agency, and invalidate the struggles and risks associated with articulating political and cultural difference from the mainstream.

In the next section, I argue that this sense of authority is manifest in the restrictive laws and assimilationist policies that have been enforced on Aboriginal peoples as wards and second-class citizens. I also chronicle major Aboriginal activist movements of the mid 1960s and early 1970s, paying particular attention to their influence on the so-called history wars of the late 1980s through the early 2000s. Finally, I conduct an extended analysis of a passage from *Sweet Time* as a outlet for Carmen and Bayley to promote a colorblind neoconservative agenda borne out of the citizenship and land rights reforms of the 1960s and 1970s. As a measure of counterbalance, I juxtapose the novel's two prominent Aboriginal characters with the political and poetic achievements of Noonuccal woman Oodgeroo (née Kath Walker) and the work by Aboriginal playwrights of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

Unwitnessing Aboriginal Art and Activism through the Fair Go Myth

Modern Australian-Aboriginal policies, whether based on assimilation, reconciliation, or intervention, stem from the legal fiction of *terra nullius*. Literally meaning "land belonging to no one," *terra nullius* has retroactively justified the imposition western law in Australia by determining individual rights to property ownership. Because only male British settlers could legally own land, the doctrine also naturalized gendered and racial discrimination. In essence, settler sovereignty in Australia

[159] Lawson, "The Anxious Proximities," 1215.

was born out of having unwitnessed Aboriginal sovereignty.[160] The precept of *terra nullius* held true even as new legislation and policies reconsidered Aborigine's relationship to the colonies and, later, the nation. Indeed, the Aboriginal reform movements that demanded national attention in the 1960s and 1970s directly addressed citizenship and land rights disputes that upheld the notion that Aborigines were not fully capable of self-determination and thus not entitled to the same liberties that settlers had long enjoyed. Describing the socio-political standing of Australian Aborigines prior to the 1960s, Sue Taffe explains that Black lives were

> constrained by state and Commonwealth legislation. Commonwealth pensions were not extended to Aboriginal people. Only a small number, mainly ex-servicemen and women, had the right to vote. In all mainland states apart from New South Wales and Victoria, Aboriginal parents were not the legal guardians of their children. In Northern Territory and Queensland, Aboriginal people could not marry without permission, handle money, or own property. They had no rights in a court of law in these jurisdictions.[161]

As these conditions imply, Australian-Aboriginal policy was determined in large part by the states, who limited Aborigine's civil rights under the guise of protection. Indeed, Aboriginal enfranchisement in federal elections was not secured in all states prior to the Commonwealth Electoral Act of 1962. Even then, officials in Western Australia, Queensland, and Northern Territory kept barriers in place for several years that prevented Aborigines from voting in state and local elections.[162] Furthermore, a clause in the Australian Constitution—section 51 (26)—specifically limited the Commonwealth's juridical power to pass legislation concerning Aboriginal peoples, essentially legally

[160] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 67; Attwood, "Law, History, and Power," 181-83.
[161] Taffe, 4.
[162] Goot, 532-535.

excluding them from full national citizenship rights until the constitutional referendum in 1967.[163] As these dates suggest, the 1960s mark an era of Aboriginal civil rights advancement.

Special interest and advocacy groups had pushed for Aboriginal social justice prior to the 1960s. However, a national, coalitional network of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal activists did not exist until the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement—later renamed the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI)—formed in 1958. Created as a "political pressure group" for legal and social reform, the Federal Council initially demanded equal citizenship, social service, and worker's rights for Australian Aborigines, as well as property rights over reserve lands.[164] While the group would ultimately prove successful in directly bringing about constitutional reform for Aboriginal citizenship, the FCAATSI also indirectly influenced the land rights reform movements of the early 1970s and the 1990s. The group is also noteworthy in that it was a vehicle by which one of its most involved members and eventual leaders came to national prominence as an Aboriginal rights activist.

With more than a decade of political involvement behind her by the time she joined FCAATSI, Kath Walker became a figurehead for the Aboriginal rights movement during the Federal Council's twenty-five years in operation. In 1961, the FCAATSI's national convention was held in Brisbane, Queensland. Walker, from nearby Stradbroke Island, was among a host of Aboriginal speakers present. By the 1966 national

[163] Taffe, 11-12 and Johnson, 20-21.
[164] Taffe, 3 & 12-13.

conference, Walker was firmly entrenched in a leadership role within the FCAATSI and actively sought for greater involvement and direction by fellow Indigenous members. In 1970, Walker resigned from her position as Vice President of the Federal Council in response to the unwillingness amongst powerful white members to cede control to Aboriginal delegates.[165]

Over the course of a decade or so, Walker was a guiding force within the FCAATSI, reaching audiences across the nation and engendering support for the Federal Council's movement for constitutional reform. In 1965, Walker and other members spoke before Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups in multiple states; that same year, she sent letters directly to members of Parliament demanding that they address constitutional discrimination against Aborigines. When Parliament announced in February, 1967, that they would hold a referendum vote for constitutional amendment in May of that year, Walker again campaigned across Australia as part of the Federal Council's 'yes vote' agenda. Her well-known poem "We Are Going," published in her ground-breaking 1964 collection, was even set to music and used to publicize the reform message.[166] The referendum passed with overwhelming support, and a new era in Aboriginal political identity began, as the Australian public proved more open to recognizing Aboriginal civil rights and self-determination and Aborigines were encouraged to more actively participate in Australian politics.[167]

Walker's exit from FCAATSI and her political activism after the 1967 Referendum suggest that acceptance of the latest form of Aboriginal political identity was

[165] Ibid.,, 62-63, 96-121, 228, 286.
[166] Taffe, 96-121.
[167] Taffe, 122-23 and Brennan, *No Small Change*, 58-59.

neither immediate nor unconditional. By the time she resigned from the Federal Council in 1970, Walker was nationally recognized as much for her poetry as her activism. That year, she published her third book of poetry, *My People: A Kath Walker Collection*. Her first book, *We Are Going*, had almost immediately made her a literary star, in part because she was recognized as the first Aboriginal writer to publish a collection of poetry and the first Aboriginal woman to publish a book of any kind. By 1970, Walker's contributions to civil rights were also acclaimed, as she was bestowed an honor title as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).[168] In one of her final acts while affiliated with FCAATSI, Walker led a protest against the bicentennial observance of Captain James Cook's landing near present-day Sydney in 1770. Countering the celebratory nature of surrounding Cook's landing, Walker and FCAATSI members held a day of mourning, marked by silent vigils and, notably, black armbands. In newspaper reports, Walker explained that black clothing, bows, and armbands were worn to symbolize the lasting effects genocide had manifested in the contemporary lives of Aboriginal peoples.[169] In retrospect, these armbands worn in 1970 portend debates over issues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians that were not settled by the 1967 Referendum and Aboriginal citizenship. Indeed, while constitutional reform addressed the disenfranchisement of Aborigines, it did not address their original and ongoing dispossession by white settlers. Thus, discussions over native title to traditional lands were renewed in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

[168] Fox, 108-109.
[169] Qtd. in McKenna.

Where there had, for however briefly, been a sense that non-Aboriginal Australians were more accepting of Aboriginal political identity, by the early 1970s it was clear that Aborigines' political difference located them outside of mainstream Australian society. Since 1963, Yolngu members of the Yirrkala Aboriginal community in Northern Territory had been attempting to prevent exploitation by a mining company who sought to extract bauxite from a parcel of Yirrkala reserve land. The dispute culminated in the 1971 decision of *Milirrpum v Nabalco*, in which the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory upheld the original claim of British sovereignty to establish a new colony in Australia. Specifically, Judge Richard Blackburn ruled that claims to communal native title were not covered by the common law to which all Australian citizens were subject. He further expressed doubt that Aboriginal peoples' professed relationship with land could be considered proprietary, meaning that they reserved no inherent legal right to buy, sell, or lease land on the sole basis of traditional occupancy or spiritual connection. Of course, this is a fundamental misunderstanding based on two incommensurable legal systems operating in the same place: there is *land*, which Western law frames as a possession that can be owned, and there is *country*, which Aboriginal law frames as one's constitutive place of origin to which he or she permanently belongs.[170] In the aftermath of Blackburn's decision, pundits who opposed the Yolngu claim to native title were once again referring to Aborigines as 'fringe dwellers,' regardless of whether they lived on isolated rural reserves or in major urban cities.[171]

[170] Brennan, *No Small Change*, 113-14; Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 11; and Johnson, 35-55.
[171] Brennan, *No Small Change*, 150.

Disputes over native title in the early 1970s reveal that the government support for Aborigine citizenship through the 1967 Referendum stemmed from an assimilationist agenda meant to bring Aboriginal people into mainstream Australian society and diminish their political difference. Prime Minister Billy McMahon's 1972 speech on a new lease program for Aboriginal land claims makes clear that the new rights of national citizenship were best exercised through Aborigine's potential contributions to Australia's liberal capitalist economy and their adherence to Western laws of property ownership. It is especially telling that McMahon's speech coincided with the annual celebration of Australia Day, the observance of the arrival of the First Fleet as the initiation of Australian nationalism according to official narratives. McMahon's Australia Day speech of 1972 confirmed the foundational precept of British sovereignty vis-à-vis Aboriginal dispossession.

In the address, officially titled "Australian Aborigines Commonwealth Policy and Achievements," McMahon outlines a land leasing program meant to legitimize Western laws of property ownership and assimilate Aboriginal peoples. In his opening remarks, he explicitly refers to the 1967 Referendum as an occasion "through which the Australian people recognized Aborigines as members of one Australian society." While he decries the "separate development" of Aboriginal political difference as "utterly alien" to the notion of a unified national society, he also insists that Aboriginal peoples should be able to "preserve and develop their own culture, languages, traditions and arts so that these can become living elements in the diverse culture of the Australian society."[172] In effect, the Prime Minister's rhetorical maneuvering casts assimilation as a benevolent,

[172] McMahon, n.p.

progressive agenda. For McMahon, the value of Aboriginal culture, also notably singular, lies in what they can contribute to the nation's diverse—but singular—society. This is, of course, the profound failure of multicultural ideology that essentializes in order to eliminate difference. This strategy reifies the centrality of the nation's social order under the guise of championing the 'diverse cultural elements' it encompasses. Couched in the language of acceptance and bringing Aborigines into mainstream Australian society, McMahon's assimilationist program of general land leases enabled the national government to exercise a special form of control and exclusion over Australia's Indigenous peoples. In response, Aboriginal peoples gathered on the lawns of Parliament House and Australia Day 1972, forming an impromptu 'Tent Embassy' to reiterate claims to Aboriginal land rights. Their highly visible protest garnered widespread support and contributed to McMahon's ouster in favor of Gough Whitlam the following year.[173] The Tent Embassy was by no means the only expression of Aboriginal activism in the 1970s, though it was not until the late 1980s that Australia's colonial history would again become a topic for national debate.

Marking the two hundred year anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet, bicentennial celebrations in 1988 revived the enduring settler cultural dilemma of colonial invasion and unfinished indigenization. Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark suggest that rather than serving as a unifying moment for all Australians as the Commonwealth government had hoped—evident in the initial theme of "Living Together" adopted for the celebration—the Bicentenary represents a widening gulf in national identity. The debates over how to properly observe the British landing and the

[173] Johnson, 88-90.

subsequent two centuries of colonization and nationhood led to factional divides that spawned 'the history wars' of the coming decade.[174] In retrospect, the Australian Bicentenary represents fundamental contradictions inherent to modern Australian nationalism, particularly in the relationship between Aboriginal and settler inhabitants. Published in 1994, the same year *Sweet Time* was released and in the thick of the history wars, Graeme Turner's *Making it National* makes the perceptive claim that

in postcolonial settler societies like Australia the most pressing conflict is that which structures the relations between the settlers and the indigenous inhabitants. Certainly it is *this* contradiction—between those who celebrated the Bicentenary as marking the moment of foundation and those who mourned it as marking the launching of an invasion—which is the most pronounced in representations of the Australian Bicentenary.[175] Evincing this fundamental contradiction, Invasion Day protests took place during the official bicentennial celebrations, the most notable of these being The March for Freedom, Justice and Hope led by Aboriginal elders in Sydney. From the outset, Bicentenary organizers worried about Aboriginal opposition and considered a number of strategies for acknowledgment and inclusion of black experiences within the official celebration narrative.

A wave of neoconservative Australians came to prominence in the years just prior to the Bicentenary, ardently rejecting the suggestion that Australia's colonial history should be looked upon in shame. They shouted down dissenting viewpoints and mobilized a conservative populism around the notion that 'true' Australians were just

[174] Macintyre and Clark, 94-107.
[175] Turner,74. Emphasis in original.

ordinary people uninterested in divisive identity politics. Claiming that official bicentennial celebrations served the interest of minority groups—Aboriginals, multiculturalists, and socialists—rather than the nation's core population, these neo-conservative pundits also depicted 'revisionist' histories published to coincide with the Bicentenary as acts of betrayal. Indeed, with prominent historians George Blainey and John Hirst, as well as leader of the Opposition John Howard amongst their ranks, this group introduced the concepts of the oppressive leftist cultural elite and the 'blackened,' mournful view of Australian history. Blainey and Hirst in particular would promulgate both ideas in pushing back against the revisionist narratives that became synonymous with the history wars of the following decade, during which time Howard became arguably the highest-profile advocate against the so-called black armband movement.[176] Howard's stance was to be expected, as after his failed bid for the prime minister position in 1987-1988, he not only impeded PM Bob Hawke's attempts at recognizing Aboriginal ownership prior to European colonization but also politicked for reduced immigration from Asian countries.[177]

Potential Bicentenary protests led by Aboriginal rights activists were a constant source of fear amongst event organizers and cultural commentators.[178] Newspaper editorials attempted to undermine the March for Freedom, Justice and Hope by employing stock stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as violent and disorganized. However, the lasting impression of the march has been that it was an overwhelming success, not only because it was peaceful and well-attended, but because it coincided

[176] Macintyre and Clark, 108-113 and McKenna.
[177] Marr, 25-26.
[178] Spillman, 102-103.

with a number of protest events that brought about "the elevation of Aboriginal rights in the national consciousness of social policy imperatives."[179] Indeed, the protests that took place leading up to the 1988 Bicentenary represent the most widely recognized Aboriginal activist movement since the mid-1960s and the push for constitutional reform. As she had been in the movement leading up to the 1967 Referendum, Kath Walker was a prominent advocate for Aboriginal peoples during the bicentennial celebrations. The Bicentenary marks a particularly significant period in Walker's life in that, as a show of protest, she officially readopted the traditional name Oodgeroo Noonuccal and returned the MBE honor given her in 1970.[180]

In the wake of Bicentenary celebrations and protests, Australia entered a new phase of Aboriginal policy based on reconciliation. Landmark events such as *Mabo v. Queensland* (1992) and Prime Minister Paul Keating's 1992 Redfern Speech, in which he directly calls for a new policy of reconciliation built on the *Mabo* decision to overturn *terra nullius*, signaled to white Australians that Aborigines had attained more political power than at any other time in the nation's history. Aboriginal land claims to colonized lands were further strengthened by *The Native Title Act* (1993) and *Wik Peoples v. Queensland* (1996).[181] In the interim, the Keating administration authorized a nation-wide inquiry into the state-sanctioned policy of Aboriginal child removal that had legally occurred for most of the twentieth century. 1997 saw the publication of *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait*

[179] Turner, 86-87.
[180] "Oodgeroo Noonuccal," 40; Fox, 108.
[181] The cases and legislation have had a profound impact on Australian society. As such, they are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

Islander Children from Their Families. While stories of abduction existed for decades in oral histories and personal testimonies, the publication of *Bringing Them Home* meant that Stolen Generations' experiences were now part of the official national narrative, too. Not surprisingly, opinions on reconciliation policies and the degree to which Australia's contemporary settler population should feel culpable for the wrongs enacted on Aboriginal peoples intensified the ongoing history war debates. For some, reconciliation signified attempts at guilt-ridden appeasement from an overreaching progressive government. Two prominent conservative figureheads staked their political ascendancy on opposition to black-armband politics, as John Howard was elected Prime Minister (1996-2007) and Pauline Hanson gained notoriety through her populist nationalist party One Nation.

Given the contextual moment from which it arose, it is easy to see why *My Own Sweet Time* employs the logics of social Darwinism and libertarian self-sufficiency, just as *The Education of Little Tree* had done two decades prior. However, there are important distinctions in how these themes inform the two texts. Where, in *Education*, the concept of 'The Way' implies that Indigenous people will vanish prior to modernity because of their inherent racial inferiority, *Sweet Time* argues that Aboriginal people have the opportunity to succeed through personal accountability and self-imposed standards of excellence. According to *Sweet Time*, Wanda joins an Aboriginal theater troupe in Sydney in 1972. Jake, the visionary producer and choreographer, hires Wanda as a playwright, not because she has experience but because he senses in her a kindred spirit

who has refused to be ignored because she is Black.[182] When asked about his long-term vision for his theater company, Day One Productions, Jake replies

It will lead to our race being treated as human beings. Apparently, a publicly demonstrated capacity for excellence is essential for this. Otherwise, the current situation will persist, a situation in which the most we can expect is a pat on the head from well-meaning groups who'd do the same for a dog, if its ear happened to flop at the correct angle—the cute child syndrome.[183]

He further states that theatrical productions like his are the quickest means of demonstrating the type of 'excellence' that will lead to Aboriginal peoples' acceptance within mainstream Australian culture.[184] Rather than relying on handouts from 'well-meaning groups,' presumably referring to leftist cultural elitist organizations, Jake tells Wanda "It's up to us."[185] On the surface, Jake's theatrical production might appear to be a vehicle for the recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty; however, I read this passage as a space for Carmen and Bayley to espouse a libertarian ideology of self determination that ultimately reinforces Australia's settler colonial framework.

Jake's Day One Productions serve as a model for a post-colonial Australia where racial distinctions are of little consequence. Thus, it engages with a pervading element of Australia's mainstream culture, the notion of the fair go. Moreton-Robinson explains: "Australia promotes itself as an egalitarian society based on a fair go for all, a society in which equal opportunity enables a meritocracy to flourish. Therefore 'race' appears to

[182] Carmen and Bayley, *Sweet Time*, 199.
[183] Ibid., 200.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Ibid.

matter little."[186] Indeed, even as he talks about the uplift of Aborigines through Black theater, Jake stresses that roles in his company are not determined by race but by individual talent:

> Only the best are admitted to our circle. No one is invited just for being black, and no one is turned away for reasons of whiteness. The best are in. The others can wait. I've been criticized for this attitude, but I won't bend. The moment I allow mediocrity, I become known as a director of novelties, of cuteness. White people who don't loathe our race often see us as children. They'll applaud any fumbling attempt on our part. They'll patronize us. Personally I'd rather dodge apple cores. My company will dazzle, or it will not perform.[187]

Here, Carmen and Bayley give voice to their complaints about the biases and unfair standards underpinning what they view as the elitist, leftist literary establishment who has made it so difficult for 'average blokes' to publish. Of course, this critique is masked by the authors' act of appropriation, reframing the issue as ultimately damaging Aboriginal causes.

Jake's theater functions as an open market in which settlers and Aboriginal peoples can reconcile the nation's race problem through a new social contract. In their analysis of Australian Indigenous policy frameworks, political scientists Elizabeth Strakosch and Alissa Macoun argue that reconciliation narratives based on Aboriginal 'uplift' are ultimately a means of imagining the regeneration of the nation-state by perpetuating settler colonialism. Strakosch and Macoun explain:

[186] Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, 80.
[187] Carmen and Bayley, *Sweet Time*, 199-200.

> Both parties to the colonial relationship—Indigenous and settler Australians—are understood to be constrained and diminished by being trapped in an unjust history. The unique opportunity offered by the present moment is the chance to rationally confront these constraining conditions, and together to choose to enter a unified and unconstrained future. This is a moment of rational agreement.[188]

For Jake, publicly performing excellence is the only means of transcending 'the current situation,' in which Aborigines are either discriminated against or patronized by white Australians. Borrowing language from Strakosch and Macoun, Jake's Aboriginal actors are thus "recast as capable liberal subjects and declared to be already consenting members of the rational, non-colonial present—but are then asked to demonstrate and perform this consent."[189] Within this 'present,' however, Aboriginal peoples are still understood to be defined by a perceived primitiveness and lacking the necessary development to fully participate in modern society,[190] thus Jake's emphasis on theatre as a means of 'uplift.'

Jake is certainly aware of the potential for Aboriginal failure, evinced by his aversion to the 'mediocrity,' 'novelties,' 'cuteness,' and 'fumbling attempts' that would come with a strictly all-Black cast. Nevertheless, he is optimistic about the future:

> We're not the Bolshoi. We're not the London Philharmonic. There won't be any ticket scalpers. Not yet. It's 1972. In 1982, we'll see. In '92 . . . Well, it's anyone's guess. Our troupe will no longer exist, of course. But Aboriginal theatre will mean something—as long as the level of performance is beyond question. That's the only aspect under *my* jurisdiction, and I'll get it right, Wanda.[191]

This vision is typical of the policy frameworks Strakosch and Macoun critique, which invariably imagine a "liberated future in which colonialism will be (re)solved and

[188] Strakosch and Macoun, 55-56.
[189] Strakosch and Macoun, 54.
[190] Ibid., 60.
[191] Carmen and Bayley, *Sweet Time*, 203.

consigned to the past, a 'new' nation will emerge. This nation thus formed is understood to have transcended colonialism and its own history; settler structures are newly legitimate, consolidated by consent and consensus."[192] One way to read Jake's comment that 'of course' Day One Productions will cease to exist by 1992 is to assume that colonialism's endpoint will have been reached and distinctions between settler and indigene will no longer adhere. Ultimately, though, this future never quite materializes. Instead, the supposed primitive nature underlying Aboriginal identity proves antithetical to settler modernity, is thus incommensurate with modern liberal subjectivity, and requires intervention and management, thereby extending the settler colonial project out of necessity.[193] Indeed, Jake's declaration that his troupe 'will dazzle, or it will not perform' not only touches on the prospect of failure, it also implies that anything short of excellence will result in removal. In other words, it is only a matter of course that the troupe will no longer exist after twenty years, as everything Aboriginal is always framed by the logic of elimination. In a very meta sense, Carmen and Bayley writing Day One Productions into existence is the realization of colonialism's inevitable intervention.

While Carmen and Bayley consistently portrayed their hoax as social commentary about multiculturalism's negative effects on white men, it also represents an invasion into Aboriginal literary productions. Through Wanda's scriptwriting, Carmen and Bayley imagine themselves as having taken part in founding Australia's Aboriginal theater industry. Furthermore, when Jake imagines the state of Aboriginal theatre in 1982 and 1992, Carmen and Bayley also lay claim to the prominence of contemporary Black

[192] Ibid., 56.
[193] Ibid., 51-54.

drama. In both cases, the authors co-opt thirty years of Black theater, largely depoliticizing a space that was far less about performing excellence in order to enter the national mainstream than it was about claiming the authority to represent the complexity of Aboriginal peoples' lived experience in the wake of colonization.

The history of Australian Aboriginal theater is inextricably bound up in the struggle for Indigenous civil rights and sovereignty. Drama scholar John McCallum writes that the 1970s represent a significant era in asserting Aboriginal agency through self-representation. He notes that, following Kevin Gilbert's complex rendering of modern Aboriginal identity in *The Cherry Pickers* (1971), Aboriginal playwrights Gerald Bostock, Robert Merrit, and Jack Davis produced plays meant to more realistically portray Indigenous lived experiences in the wake of colonization. Prior to Gilbert's play, Aboriginal stage characters had been drawn exclusively by white dramatists, beginning with racist nineteenth-century productions that deployed stereotypically melodramatic Aboriginal domestic servants and, later, romantic and often naïve early twentieth-century productions by more progressive white playwrights who sympathized with struggling Aboriginal communities.[194] Particularly through his major works—*The Dreamers* (1981) and *No Sugar* (1985)—Jack Davis brought Aboriginal civil rights issues before mainstream, middle-class white theater audiences. His plays, as with Merrit's *The Cake Man* (1975) and Bostock's *Here Comes the Nigger* (1977), are often staged within contemporary Aboriginal homes, depicting the vibrancy of Indigenous cultures, the struggles of balancing traditional identity in a modern world, and the long-term effects of settler invasion, including removal, poverty, and continued intrusion by the government

[194] Ibid., 302.

representatives.[195] While diaspora is an integral element of many Aboriginal narratives given the degree to which colonization displaces, these plays challenge the disparaging misnomers of Aborigines that portray them as shiftless and without roots.

In the 1990s, a new wave of Aboriginal theater gained national prominence, continuing more than three decades of acclaimed professional Black theater in Australia. McCallum contends that the most significant of these—Jimmy Chi's *Bran Nue Dae* (1990), Deborah Mailman's and Wesley Enoch's *The 7 Stages of Grieving* (1995), Leah Purcell's *Box the Pony*, and Jane Harrison's *Stolen* (1998)—have found widespread successes as touring productions, at festivals, and in classrooms.[196] Each of these works engages a history of violence experienced by Aboriginal peoples, including historical massacres against entire groups, domestic abuse against Black women, or the removal of mixed-race children from their parents' homes. At the same time, McCallum notes, the plays gesture toward reconciliation and redemption, either in interpersonal relationships or between Aboriginal and settler communities.[197] In particular, *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *Stolen* reflect the major issues framing Australia's history wars—accounting for the historical trauma inflicted upon the Stolen Generations and the broader Reconciliation policy movement that included recognition of *terra nullius* as a legal fiction and the existence of native title claims to country.

Conclusion

Applied as an analytical frame, settler nativism identifies a number of narrativistic and rhetorical strategies. In this chapter, I have described in detail one of the ways in

[195] Ibid., 307.
[196] Ibid., 313-318.
[197] Ibid., 315-318.

which settler literatures can be made to depict settlers as natives, the Indigenous memoir hoax. As I have shown, every hoax depends on contexts specific to a given settler project and is contingent upon any number of unique factors that should be taken into account when performing a relational analysis. The *Education of Little Tree* and *My Own Sweet Time* are bound together largely because they are invested in narratives of Anglo decline in their respective settler nations and because they appropriate similar narrative forms to enact Indigenous erasure by unwitnessing political and literary agency since the 1960s as a result. This is not to say that these books tell the same story or commit the same offenses; rather, reading *Education* and *Sweet Time* in conversation explains how two particular hoax events are structured by the same logic. Even as they converge and depart in their storytelling strategies, both hoaxes are predicated on the belief that claims to settler belonging can be strengthened by appropriating indigeneity.

One of the more pertinent outcomes of this relational analysis is the realization that those settler claims come from both the "outlaw" fringe and the overlooked mainstream. Carter, an ardent white supremacist, and Carmen and Bayley, two average white blokes, are kindred spirits through their respective Anglo decline narratives. Both responded through Indigenous hoax memoirs, but did so in different ways because they held different views on Indigenous peoples. Carter believed that Cherokee removal history made them ideal vanishing noble savages whose tragic end could be absorbed into the Lost Cause myth of the postbellum south. Carmen and Bayley on the other hand, saw Aborigines as undue benefactors of a welfare state hell-bent on pursuing multiculturalism. Of course, Carter never admitted to the hoax and *Education* continues to be widely read precisely because the general readership of the US is familiar with the

type of Indianness personified by Little Tree. Carmen and Bayley exposed themselves and purposefully constructed an apolitical form of Aboriginality because they, unlike Carter, wanted to strike out against the literary establishment. Their book was subsequently defamed and taken out of circulation. Despite these differences, both hoaxes have resulted in negative outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

The next chapter considers another, related strategy by which settler writers attempt to claim a form of indigeneity. The chapter also performs a relational analysis of US and Australian literatures based on the concept of specific events within an overarching structure of settler colonization. Unlike the first chapter where the events adhere to similar periods of time (the culture/history wars begun in the late 1980s), the following chapter privileges a shared motif as the primary basis for critique. In other words, chapter two discusses ways in which literature services settler society's desire for indigenization by perpetuating narratives of Indigenous death, burial, and haunting.

My analysis of Australian literature picks up chronologically where chapter one leaves off, as I turn to several well-known Reconciliation narratives written by settler authors in response to social and political developments during the 1990s. Unlike *Sweet Time*, the texts discussed in this brief survey are associated with authors who have taken active roles in the progressive agenda of Reconciliation, from Henry Reynolds's testimony during the *Mabo* case to Kate Grenville's participation in a massive public demonstration and Alex Miller's repatriation of an Aboriginal artifact. Nonetheless, I place these texts into conversation in order to make legible the settler-centricity of Australia's Reconciliation agenda, which, like the texts I analyze, depends upon the continued fetishization of Aboriginal death. In particular, I emphasize passages in which

depictions of violence, massacre, and burial evoke an uncanny feeling that settler protagonists must overcome in order to feel reconciled with the nation's colonial history. Rather than focus on a similar, singular event in US history, I instead reveal Indian death and haunting as an underlying structure of the nation's literary tradition. This broad survey focuses specifically on Indigenous funerary practices and the prominence of Indian burial grounds and burial mounds in texts that span the Republic-era poetry to a horror film in the colorblind era of twenty-first century post-racial politics.

CHAPTER 3

SETTLER NATIVISM AND INDIGENOUS HAUNTINGS

Settler literatures are haunted by the colonial past. A number of literary motifs found in US and Australian literary traditions signify this haunting—the uncanny, Indigenous spectrality, and cursed massacre or burial sites being the most common. Non-Native authors typically use these particular literary devices in response to moments of upheaval, like the culture and history wars discussed in the previous chapter. In Australia, for example, Keating's Reconciliation agenda, begun in the early 1990s, brought realities of frontier violence and the scale of Aboriginal death to the fore of the dominant cultural consciousness. Prominent writers such as Henry Reynolds, Alex Miller, and Kate Grenville responded, translating their nation's haunted history into texts that explore the now uncanny place-attachment to "home" brought about by encounters with Aboriginal peoples and histories. References to Aboriginal death and burial sites abound in Reynolds's popular history, *Why Weren't We Told?: A Personal Search for the Truth about Our Country* (1999), just as racial guilt and complicity underpin fictional treatments of Aboriginal massacre in Miller's *Journey to the Stone Country* (2002) and Grenville's *The Secret River* (2005). Read together, these related themes suggest a pattern within Australian Reconciliation-era narratives wherein non-Aboriginal authors felt compelled to engage the nation's haunting history while searching for a new sense of belonging.

Similarly, non-Indigenous creative writers in the US have long related Indigenous spectrality with accursed Indian burial grounds. The most well-known instances are

associated with horror genre beginning in the mid 1970s, particularly in bestselling novels and blockbuster films such as *The Amityville Horror* (book 1977; film 1979), *The Shining* (film 1980), and *Pet Sematary* (book 1983; film 1989). Scholars suggest that anxieties over civil rights, native title, and a supposed decline in the American Dream led to the haunted burial site's literary proliferation throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[198] Yet, these sites factor significantly in the US settler literary tradition, even appearing in Republic-era poet Philip Freneau's "The Indian Burying Ground" (1787). As this chapter demonstrates, the trope has enjoyed an active afterlife in twentieth and twenty-first century US literatures beyond *Amityville* and the horror tales that followed it. Moments of cultural crisis brought about by challenges to white settler sovereignty motivate the perpetual reemergence of the symbolically rich Indian burial site, as is the case in Robert E. Howard's Depression-era short story "The Horror from the Mound" (1932), Alice Walker's Civil-Rights-Movement-inspired novel *Meridian* (1976), and the postracial western-horror hybrid film *Bone Tomahawk* (2015).[199]

I employ a broad relational settler colonial framework in order to juxtapose "haunted" settler-authored literatures of Australia and the US. A vast body of literary

---

[198] Mackenthun, 97-98; Caterine, 37-39. It is worth noting, as Caterine does, that Indigenous death and burial are prevalent in the seventeenth-century writings of Puritan colonists, as well. Bergland's important work *The National Uncanny* discusses many such texts in chapter two, "Summoning the Invisible World: From the Jeremiad to the Phantasmagoria."

[199] While not discussed directly in this chapter, readers should be aware of Allison Adele Hedge Coke's poetry collection *Blood Run* (2006). Hedge Coke is of Cherokee, Huron, and Creek descent and has, since the 1980s, been active in preserving and preventing the further destruction of the Blood Run earthworks complex for which the poetry collection is named. A wealth of literary criticism dedicated to *Blood Run* already exists, including the works by Chadwick Allen, E.G. Anderson, and Jodi Melamed cited in this chapter. See also Kelsey and Carpenter (2011) and Stewart (2018).

scholarship suggests that, from the advent of what could be called the American literary tradition to the present, settler writers have imagined and reimagined "Indian" death as they have sought to explore the nation's future and white settlers' place in it.[200] In identifying the structural logic of elimination that sustains settler projects in places like the US and Australia, Patrick Wolfe argues that settler society depends upon the continual recuperation of Native symbols against which it can imagine itself as a modern, living culture.[201] Indigenous literary figures and symbols associated with death, dying, and spectrality are therefore especially useful in that they reveal the particularities of settler anxiety in a given moment while also making it possible to map the ways in which these anxieties evolve over time across settler literatures.

To say that Indigenous death *haunts* settler literatures is to understand that Indigenous spectrality demands something of contemporary settler societies.[202] It is no surprise, then, that literary scholars in the US and Australia have adapted Sigmund Freud's concept of *the uncanny*—"that species of frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar" but is now unsettling—to discuss how settlers' sense of belonging appears imperiled or strange due to the distressing knowledge that Indigenous peoples have continuously inhabited the land now constituting the settler-nation.[203] This chapter considers literary articulations of the uncanny explicitly produced by settler liminality in lands of conquest in two ways. First, I argue that, especially in the

[200] See Wertheimer (1998), Bergland (2000), Handley (2007), and Caterine (2013) for overviews, as well as Cox, 6-13.
[201] Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 389.
[202] Gordon, xvi; Bell, 832.
[203] Freud, 124; See also Bergland (2000) and Gelder and Jacobs (1998). For a thoroughgoing intellectual history of the uncanny, see Royle, 3-7.

case of Australian Reconciliation-era narratives, uncanny encounters produce feelings of guilt and complicity amongst the protagonists who, as a result, embark on quests for truth and reconciliation that ultimately reify settler sovereignty. Second, I suggest instances of the uncanny brought about by conditions of settler colonialism are best understood through the critical intersection of settler colonial studies and Giorgio Agamben's notion of biopolitics. To that end, my analysis relies greatly on a small but important body of work by scholars who have adapted Agambean biopolitics, particularly the concept of *homo sacer* (the sacred or accursed man), to Indigenous studies in the US and Australia.[204]

This chapter includes an analysis of a specific "event" in Australia's literary history and then considers how such events fit together within a narrative "structure" that sustains settler colonial projects.[205] I bring together multiple instances in which settler storytellers from Australia and the US depict Indigenous death, burial, and resurrection as metaphorical challenges to and transformations of settler societies. In terms of event, I frame the previously mentioned works by Reynolds, Miller, and Grenville as representative of a historically distinct moment of identity crises resulting in a concentrated literary proliferation of Aboriginal death and burial, as well as new settler quests for belonging. In terms of structure, I offer a survey of US literatures from

[204] For examples of scholarship of Indigenous peoples' entanglement in systems of biopolitics, see Rifkin, "Indigenizing Agamben," Morgensen, "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism," Duthu, 118-128, and Brigg, "Biopolitics meets Terrapolitics."
[205] I'm referring here to Wolfe's oft-quoted assertion that "invasion is a structure not an event," in Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 388. At the same time, I am working in response to a concern expressed by Vimalassey et al., who have read Wolfe's claim as an absolute binary between structure *or* event (rather than a structure *of* events) and, thus, conclude that settler colonial studies is not conducive to relational analyses. See Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein, "Introduction: On Colonial Unknowing."

twentieth and twenty-first century, linking texts employing the Indian burial site trope with underlying cultural crises from which these novels and films are born.

The prospect of loss is a central concern in all of the settler-authored texts discussed in this chapter, and while the object at risk takes many forms—one's own life, a domestic relationship, land, or belonging within a community—there is always at play the sense that something or someone dearly loved and intimately known has now been made distant or unfamiliar by an Indigenous counterclaim. The manufacture of Indigenous spectrality, along with the fabrication of false memoirs as discussed in chapter one, signifies a means for settlers to narrate their anxieties in moments of crisis and reclaim the authority threatened by articulations of Indigenous political difference. Whether depicting literal Indigenous death or imagining symbolic Indigenous spectrality, all of the works discussed in this chapter evince another distinct narrative process by which settlers attempt to make themselves natives by reconciling their inner turmoil over the unsettling colonial past.

Biopolitical Haunting, Indigenous Spectrality, and the Settler Colonial Uncanny

More than just the basis for many ghost stories, Indigenous death and haunting have been theorized as essential elements of Western cultures. For example, several scholars have shown that Wolfe's logic of elimination and symbolic recuperation of the Native overlaps with Giorgio Agamben's conception of biopolitics.[206] Agamben theorizes

[206] Of course, the myth of "Indian" haunting *does* account for many ghost stories, as is the case in "A Bum Steer for Scooby," (1976) an early episode of *The Scooby-Doo Show* in which the gang takes on the ghost of a medicine man who guards an ancient burial ground in the desert mountains. Everyone is shocked to learn at the episode's end that the ghost is in actuality Lenny, the ranch's white cook, in disguise or, after Philip Deloria, *playing Indian*.

that, in order to carry out fundamental purposes and to justify the right to rule, governing entities of Western law rely on the deaths of certain abandoned subjects, which Agamben terms *homo sacer*—the "sacred" or "accursed" man. This abandonment represents relegation of minoritized Others to an indefinite zone of *bare life* that is, itself, exceptional in that it reveals the *homo sacer* as both separate from the polis *and yet* under the rule of state sovereignty.[207] The *homo sacer* is neither wholly present nor absent, exists somewhere between life and death, and is cursed to a kind of limbo so that others might know that they belong and are protected. While these qualities have tangible effects in terms of the state's exercise of power over marginalized populations, they also translate to gothic literary conventions associated with spectrality and haunting. Indigenous peoples are particularly apt to be associated with both, via processes of social death and tropes such as the Vanishing Indian.

Despite their similarities, discourses on biopolitics, social death, Indigenous elimination, and spectrality often exist in separate spheres or in tension with one another. Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (1982) has become a touchstone for Afro-pessimism scholars for its theorization that slavery leads to the total dehumanization of the enslaved and, thus, the slave's complete loss of agency (eg, social death).[208] But not all scholars working in African American Studies apply *social death* in the way of noted Afro-pessimists such as Frank B. Wilderson and Jarred Sexton; that is, as the absolute absence of Black agency into perpetuity.[209] Where Afro-pessimism

[207] See Agamben, 8-10 and 71-86.
[208] Patterson, 13.
[209] Wilderson, 136-37; Sexton, 21. Wilderson and Sexton are adamant that social death applies solely to enslaved Africans and African Americans and their descendants.

insists that social death exists as an *a priori*, "prelogical" state of being foreclosing any possibility of Black agency, a host of scholars contend that the colonial violence enacted upon enslaved Africans and their descendants has had generative effects in terms of Black political identities and cultural expression.[210] Moreover, scholars working outside of African American studies demonstrate that a host of marginalized and minoritized populations are targeted by social death according to race, gender, sexuality, ability, and national origin.[211]

Social death can thus be seen as one instrument through which state sovereignty is simultaneously reified and exercised within the ongoing structure of settler colonialism. That is, social death is specific technique by which the state exerts biopower over an already vulnerable, excluded population. Those marked by social death serve a similar sociopolitical function to Agamben's *homo sacer*, whose abandonment to bare life (and, thus exposure to likely death) runs counter to the protections afforded citizens. The state's power to rule is legitimized in both instances not merely by the consent of those governed but by the state's ability to supersede its own limits of rule irrespective of anyone else's consent. In the specific context of US settler biopolitics, Black agency (or the lack thereof) is simultaneously and continuously functioning in relation to colonizer and Indigenous agencies.

Furthermore, it is absolutely necessary that the imposition of vulnerable, subjugated forms of Indianness and Blackness persists in the US settler imaginary, if only so that a version of these spectral subjectivities, stripped of political agency and relegated

[210] Wilderson, 135; Brown, 1237; Helton et al., 5; Guenther, 253-55.
[211] Cacho, 1-34; Price, 6; Wildcat, 396-97; Hong, 25-28.

to social margins, might be recuperated in order to re-substantiate settler sovereignty. Indeed, Grace Kyungwon Hong refers to the creation of political modernity in this fashion as "*haunting*, in which certain elements of the past—and therefore, the present—are repressed and disavowed, but never entirely or successfully."[212] In the state's view, Indigenous people always retain some element of the "Indian," who can be dispossessed from land that can be made into property. Black people likewise always retain some element of the "Slave," who can be possessed as an exploitable property. As a settler nation, the US has always depended upon peripheral, tenuously situated "Indians" and "Slaves" in order to understand its ability to rule and protect its legitimized citizens.[213] As with *homo sacer* and social death, recursive spectral literary figures of this sort are intended to be understood as manifestations of state control—their ability to haunt is supposed to be already circumscribed by the power dynamics of settler sovereignty.[214]

Interventions by scholars in Native and settler colonial studies suggest that settler societies of the US and Australia rely upon biopolitics because of the interdependent

[212] Hong, 29. Emphasis added.
[213] As I demonstrate in the next chapter, the settler state also relies on the "Foreigner" as a motivating threat that continuously inspires defensive nationalism.
[214] The kind of haunting I'm talking about here is not the only means of understanding spectrality, particularly as it relates to non-Anglo settler cultural imaginaries. Rather, I am focusing on a literary convention within US and Australia's settler literatures whereby the spirits of deceased Indigenous peoples are appropriated into a narrative that ultimately results in settlers' reconciling or affirming their contested sense of belonging. The fiction of scholarship of Viet Thanh Nguyen, for instance, represent ghosts and haunting quite differently than the examples discussed in this chapter (Nguyen 193-222). As far as the idea that specters appearing in state- or settler-authored narratives are meant to be circumscribed within predetermined bounds established by the state, I would simply add here that ghosts don't always play by the rules set out for them.

relations formed between settler, Indigenous, and Other marginalized subjectivities.[215] The settler state exists in order to preserve *settler* life and, to do so, it enacts exceptions over Indigenous and enslaved or indentured peoples, who are recognized as both lacking the full rights of citizenship that separate them from the polity and, simultaneously, existing as subjects of settler-state sovereignty. This has clearly borne out in US Indian policies that declare Indigenous Nations within the borders of the United States as 'domestic dependent nations.' As such, Mark Rifkin, Scott Lauria Morgensen, and N. Bruce Duthu have argued that Indigenous peoples signify the *homo sacer* of US colonial policies, while Morgan Brigg and Michael R. Griffiths have made a similar argument in relation to Australian Aboriginal policy.[216] Reservations, missions, and reserves figure, by extension, as sites of Indigenous bare life and social death.

While federal Indigenous policies and the scholarship analyzing them map the scope and contexts of Indigenous subjectivity in settler nations like the US and Australia, 'the Indian specter' literary trope has not yet been sufficiently theorized in relation to Agamben's influential work on biopolitics or others' work on social death. It seems necessary, then, to bring together discourses on settler biopolitics and literary hauntology.[217] Martha Lincoln and Bruce Lincoln gesture at the potential connection between biopolitics, *homo sacer*, and "ghostly subjects" when they suggest that both Agamben's accursed man and ghosts "inhabit an interstitial space between life and

[215] By "marginalized" I'm referring broadly to those excluded on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, ability, religious belief, country of origin, and so on.
[216] Morgensen, "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism," 56-59; Rifkin, "Indigenizing Agamben," 94-97; Duthu, 118-128; Brigg, 407-08; and Griffiths, 24-26.
[217] See (Lincoln and Lincoln, 192) for a concise summary of Derrida's playful coining of the term *hauntology* (as opposed to ontology) in his *Specters of Marx* (1993).

death."[218] Lincoln and Lincoln further offer a useful specification about creative writers' use of literary metaphor—what they refer to as *secondary haunting*— in hauntings that "do not seek closure of specific destructive episodes: rather they keep memory of those episodes alive as a means to transform the moral and political climate of the present and future."[219] Following these assertions and recalling claims by Rifkin, Morgensen, and others that the indigene represents the *homo sacer* of settler colonial jurisprudence, I contend that Indigenous spectrality in settler literatures of the US and Australia is a legible form of the continual elimination of native presence via social death necessary to sustain settler societies.

Settler futurity depends in part upon the recurring exercise of power over symbolic, residual, or haunting Indigenous Otherness, particularly in moments when the legitimacy of settler sovereignty appears in doubt.[220] Indigenous peoples' present agency, their contemporary desires, and their potential to imagine futurities are not among the express concerns of most literature written by non-Natives. This is precisely the case with Asa "Forrest" Carter's *Education of Little Tree* (1976), for example.[221] Many such texts could thus be read as engaging in what Renalto Rosaldo termed *imperialist nostalgia*, in which the "agents of colonialism long for the very forms of life they intentionally altered or destroyed."[222] As Rosaldo's term implies, settlers and non-Natives can affectively

[218] Ibid., 198.
[219] Ibid., 201.
[220] Barker, 52.
[221] As I explain in detail in the previous chapter, *Education* has been roundly critiqued, especially by Indigenous scholars, not only for its deficiency of knowledge in regard to Cherokee culture but also for the fact that the narrative is bookended by the deaths of Little Tree's parents and grandparents.
[222] Rosaldo, 107-08.

contribute to ongoing invasion and dispossession long after the initial eras of frontier violence. Reimagining settler presence vis-à-vis Aboriginal spectrality—even when doing so without any intended malice—produces a new endpoint for the settler project akin to what Lorenzo Veracini has called "promised equality . . . forever postponed."[223] In other words, settlers who are always already rightfully here can once again overcome Indigenous peoples who are always already naturally disappearing but have a uncanny habit of reappearing in moments of crisis.

Keeping in mind that settlement only ends when Indigenous peoples fully cease to exist—either physically or legally—the literary Indian as *homo sacer* perpetuates the peculiar liminality of Indigenous peoples in relation to the settler polity and its cultural productions. Though his influential work *Savagism and Civilization* (1967) predates the Agambean turn in biopolitics, American literary critic Roy Harvey Pearce nonetheless recognized that, in most settlers' minds, the imagined 'Indian' signified "the zero of human society."[224] To be sure, the spectral Indian as *homo sacer* reiterates the paradoxes of the more well-known Noble Savage and Vanishing Indian tropes: as neither wholly civil nor wholly savage and thus unfit for modernity, as a fleeting presence portending an inevitable absence, and as a figure marked for (social) death through exclusion so that the lives of those included in the polity might be preserved.

Because of its focus on issues of belonging and liminality, literary criticism employing Freud's notion of the uncanny is particularly applicable to settler literatures that rely upon Indigenous spectrality and haunting. Consider, for example, the parallel

[223] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 22.
[224] Pearce, 105.

that exists between, first, Wolfe's assertion that settler societies depend upon the symbolic recuperation of—or, as I've argued, haunting by—excluded Indigenous peoples in order to define themselves and, second, Freud's claim that "the uncanny is something familiar that has been repressed and then reappears."[225] Both symbolic recuperations of the native and uncanny experiences are rooted in projections of fear and anxiety, which suggests at least one reason for the proliferation of Indigenous spectrality in settler literatures of the US and Australia—from native title legislation in Australian works like Miller's *Journey to Stone Country* to the erosion of the American Dream myth in novels such as *The Amityville Horror* and *Pet Sematary*.[226] The phantom indigene is a necessary means of imagining the future, yet that very presence, no matter how faint, also represents a threat to full realization of the settlement's future.

The spectral indigene will likely haunt settler nations as long as settler nations exist, primarily because essentialist representations of Indigenous peoples as primitives are more easily dealt with than the prospects of decolonization. Indeed, in their seminal work titled *Uncanny Australia* (1998), Ken Gelder and Jane M. Jacobs claim that the *Mabo* and *Wik* rulings resulted in a sustained moment of "white moral panic" over the prospect of a decolonized Australia, thus inspiring myriad renewed claims to settler belonging.[227] Gelder and Jacobs further contend that the broader platform of Reconciliation was an especially uncanny occurrence in that it "[brought] the nation into

[225] Freud, 152.
[226] Freud, 150-51; Palmer, 2; Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 389; Mackenthun, 97-98; Dalley, 31.
[227] Gelder and Jacobs, 3. See also page 17, wherein the authors argue that developments in Australia's native title policies should be read as an "uncanny inversion" of *terra nullius*.

contact with ghosts of its past, restructuring the nation's sense of itself by returning the grim truth of colonization to the story of Australia's being-in-the-world."[228] I argue in chapter one of this dissertation, however, that these moments of crisis paradoxically sustain settler projects as opportunities for cultural reinvestment and, thus, regeneration. In the instances discussed in this chapter, it is clear that the majority of settlers simply find it more productive to imagine that the sacred or taboo sites associated with Indigenous peoples could be plagued with menacing ghosts than to imagine that fully sovereign, *in*dependent Indigenous nations might exist again in North America or Australia. As I demonstrate in the following section, this has certainly been the case in Reynolds's *Why Weren't We Told?*, Miller's *Journey to the Stone Country*, and Grenville's *The Secret River*, all immensely popular works published during the era of Reconciliation.

The second half of this chapter demonstrates that, even as iterations of the uncanny are contingent on contextual specificity and therefore remarkable for the rate at which they appear in a relatively brief historical moment, such texts merely form one of many such clusters appearing over the course of much larger and longer literary traditions in both settler nations. For instance, Tanya Dalziell critiques J.D. Hennessey's adventure novel *An Australian Bush Track* (1896) for its plot's reliance upon a spectral Aboriginal figure said to have haunted Australia since the time of initial contact, more than a century prior. Dalziell contends this literary haunting not only "anticipates the uncanny unsettling of the provisional settler order in Australia during the late nineteenth century,"—that is, in the years leading up to national federation—it also anticipates the brief occurrence of

[228] Ibid., 30.

Aboriginal spectrality in Tim Winton's Miles Franklin Award-winning novel *Cloudstreet* (1991) nearly a century later.[229] In making this connection across Australia's literary tradition, Dalziell rightly suggests that such representations of Aboriginality have been codified and normalized by the close of the twentieth century. It should be noted that Winton's use of the spectral Aborigine trope occurs just prior to the 1992 *Mabo* ruling, Keating's Reconciliation agenda, and the resultant history wars waged for the remainder of the decade. These major events thus distinguish the ghostly Aborigine in *Cloudstreet* from the hauntings taking place in texts I discuss in the following analyses because while all of them can be understood as engaging in an established, persisting trope of Aboriginal representation, *Why Weren't We Told?*, *Journey to the Stone Country*, and *The Secret River* make up a concentrated flashpoint in that longue durée.

Settler Complicity and Moves to Innocence in Australian Reconciliation Narratives

In the context of Australia's history wars of the 1990s, High Court rulings in the *Mabo* (1992) and *Wik* (1996) cases were an especially contentious development in Reconciliation policy. Liberal Party member John Howard made a nearly improbable political resurgence during this period, culminating in his election to prime minister based, in part, on the argument that contemporary Australians were wrongly being made to feel guilty over two centuries of Aboriginal dispossession. Leftist cultural elites like Prime Minister Keating, meanwhile, were charged with institutionalizing a national guilt industry vis-à-vis the so-called black armband perspective. Historians Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark contend Howard's "relaxed and comfortable" relationship with the nation's history initiated a rhetorical shift away from questions of guilt or complicity

[229] Dalziell, 55 & 135.

toward conservative's assertions of victimhood, wherein defenders of "traditional" Australian values such as national pride and individual liberty were unfairly ridiculed by proponents of political correctness.[230]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, historians Manning Clark and Henry Reynolds have been routinely held up as examples of the supposedly self-loathing black armband perspective derided by Howard and other conservative pundits. My analysis of Reynolds's most popular publication, *Why Weren't We Told?*, suggests otherwise. Because he presupposes the perpetual legitimacy of the settler-nation, Reynolds, like Howard and other supposed adversaries, ultimately deflects questions of personal culpability in the ongoing dispossession of Aborigines and reasserts a narrative of transcendent, triumphant nationalism. Reynolds frames this intellectual memoir around his growing awareness of the prevalent frontier violence that made Australia possible. His journey, then, begins with his early professional years as a well-intentioned history professor who knew next to nothing of the nation's colonial origins to his eventual advisory role in the 1992 *Mabo v. Queensland (No 2)* native title case. Reynolds had risen to prominence in the interceding years as a revisionist academic historian with the publication of *The Other Side of the Frontier* (1981), nearly two decades prior to the publication of *Why Weren't We Told?*

[230] Macintyre and Clark, 132-35; In a 1996 interview with the Australian news program *Four Corners*, just weeks before his eventual election as prime minister, Howard infamously (and repeatedly) uses the phrase "comfortable and relaxed" (often slightly misquoted as "relaxed and comfortable") to describe his vision for Australian society's perspective on its history, present, and future. When pressed on his meaning, Howard states "It's very important that we don't, as a nation, spend our lives apologizing for the past." The full interview is available online at http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/an-average-australian-bloke---1996/2841808.

This later text, a personal history published by a popular press, eclipsed Reynolds's previous works as a historian and activist precisely because, according to the author's preface to the second edition, it is not an academic undertaking. Readers connect to this book, Reynolds suggests, because it articulates for them, likely for the first time, two questions concerning revelations of Australia's violent colonial past: "Why were we never told? Why didn't we know?"[231] Many of Reynolds's critics have since pointed out a number of ways in which these two questions signal a rhetorical move to innocence as a response to white guilt.[232] *Why Weren't We Told?* thus offers settler members of his readership—the *We* of the title—a means of deniability by implicating government officials and educators as having silenced Aboriginal histories and downplayed the severity and scale of colonial violence that made the nation possible.

The problem of Reynolds's thesis begins with a seemingly innocent question. In asking "Why weren't we told?" on behalf of his progressive white readership, Reynolds invokes a claim of white ignorance concerning the historical—but ongoing—inequities experienced by Australia's Aboriginal peoples. Charles W. Mills observes that *white ignorance* encompasses both "false belief and the absence of true belief" that enable white supremacy to proliferate, even amongst whites who might identify as colorblind or otherwise not racist.[233] In other words, dominant white sections of society have a "cognitive tendency" to frame race and racism as discrete, causal phenomena rather than as an omnipresent social structure constantly shaping lived experiences and organizing

[231] Reynolds, *Why Weren't We*, 1.
[232] Nicoll, 168-171; Rolls, 11-12.
[233] Mills, 16.

people in relation to power based on contingent, racialized identities.[234] Mills also notes, however, that it is possible to be unknowingly complicit in the perpetuation of white racial dominance when facts have been withheld, as Reynolds claims happened to generations of Australian schoolchildren in relation to the nation's violent colonial origins. Mills further contends that, along with the attainment of "true beliefs" about the social processes of racism—the benefits of white privilege, for example—some whites will be able to transcend their ignorance.[235]

Reynolds's "personal search for the truth" certainly supports parts of Mills's thesis concerning the transcendence of white ignorance. Merely confronting facts about social and political disparities does not immediately translate into action, however. Nor does the development of a critical consciousness necessarily ensure that any action taken will positively serve the causes of Indigenous sovereignty and civil rights recognition.[236] Indeed, analyzing Reynolds's question closely suggests that white writing about Reconciliation is deeply invested in settler self-preservation. Mitchell Rolls says as much in his criticism of supposedly progressive Australian histories, including Reynolds's, in which "the ubiquitous cries of 'why weren't we told' intimate a more recent and self-interested exculpatory turn, for to admit exposure [to narratives of colonial violence] is to admit awareness of the conflict between indigene and settler, and the legacy of

[234] Ibid., 20-23.
[235] Ibid., 23.
[236] It is worth reiterating here that Reynolds has been socially and politically active in supporting Aboriginal-led causes, including the *Mabo* case that brought about changes to Native Title recognition. As I discuss throughout this chapter, the *Mabo* ruling has, along with much of the state's Reconciliation agenda, since come under critique for its limited recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty and its reaffirmation of the settler state. Reynolds's activism might then be subject to similar critique, even while acknowledging that he has played a significant role as a major figurehead of white allyship.

dispossession."[237] To be aware of the *legacy* of dispossession, in other words, is to understand it as ongoing and, in turn, to recognize oneself as a contemporary white settler inherently complicit in the continuation of a colonial project.

A number of scholars working at the intersections of Indigenous, settler colonial, and critical race theories offer compelling arguments that, when applied to Reynolds's work as I do in this chapter, complicate claims about potential settler transcendence without decolonization, particularly in terms of white complicity. Fiona Probyn-Rapsey argues that, because Aboriginal dispossesion and oppression sustain the contemporary settler-nation, so too does complicity persist as a distinguishing characteristic of settler identity articulated in cultural productions.[238] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang define such articulations as *settler moves to innocence*, rhetorical maneuvers that "problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity."[239] Alissa Macoun coins a similar phrase, *colonising white innocence*, to name moves that, while they verbally gesture toward acts of benevolence, neutrality, and/or transcendence, actually affirm authority over Indigenous subjects.[240] Among the various rhetorical strategies for mediating settler complicity, Tuck and Yang identify a tendency amongst settlers to mistakenly assume that critical consciousness—that attainment of "true belief" Mills points to—is tantamount to an act of decolonization.[241] Thinking past such preliminary introspection, Macoun calls for "an awareness of complicity among white settlers and the ways [they] are located within whiteness and coloniality . . . to effect a

[237] Rolls, 26.
[238] Probyn-Rapsey, 65-68.
[239] Tuck and Yang, 10.
[240] Macoun, 94.
[241] Tuck and Yang, 19.

necessary turn away from the white subject."[242] Perpetually focusing and refocusing on legitimizing settler subjectivity is thus a fundamental means of perpetuating settler society. In terms of literary criticism, these rhetorical moves to innocence directly influence the arc and plot progression of Reconciliation narratives such as *Why Weren't We Told?*.

If, as Lorenzo Veracini suggests, settler narratives are predicated on perpetual, regenerative movement forward in search of something lost, it may very well be impossible for settler writers to employ the quest-plot when challenging dominant historical narratives. [243] Scholars agree that settler narratives and their imperial antecedents that depict a central character's heroic journey into supposedly 'undiscovered' regions—works like H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887)—are often deeply invested in forms of conquest imbued with gendered, capitalistic, and nationalistic undertones.[244] Jeanine Leane contends that contemporary settler literature in Australia reflects "journeys into the interior of the settler mind and consciousness" that "form a literary continuum: a story of a quest to belong."[245] Terry Goldie similarly argues that settler quest narratives are bound up in desires for individuation and indigenization and, further, that the form lends itself to the origination of national identity myths by establishing a fundamental, antagonistic relationship between settlers and "inimical" indigenes.[246] Occasionally—as has been the case with

[242] Macoun, 90.
[243] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 98-99; Lorde, 94-101.
[244] Patteson, 113-16; Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure*, 11-12; Free, 359-61; Cox, 15-18.
[245] Leane, [1-2].
[246] Goldie, 46-50.

terra nullius in Australia—these myths later become the source of guilt and complicity amongst a portion of settler populations, thus producing a range of reconciliatory gestures such as the personal, interior quests undertaken by Reynolds, Miller, and Grenville. Importantly, however, these new quests to fill up modern emptiness do not jettison desires for individuation and indigenization in the way they supposedly do with national myths. They are personal journeys meant to culminate in a more profound sense of belonging and place-attachment within the nation. These journeys, then, are not so much about the creation of new national myths as they are about the *renewal* of national myths, minus elements like *terra nullius* which are now widely seen as insupportable or out of fashion.

Because they tend to be settler-centric, Reconciliation-era personal journey narratives are not simply about mediating individual complicity in relation to colonial history. They are also potentially damaging to struggles to assert Indigenous sovereignty.[247] Macoun argues that, when claims to white innocence result in acts of white benevolence towards Indigenous peoples, "white settlers make ourselves the subjects and heroes of our own stories, even when our actual contributions may be experienced negatively or profoundly ambivalently by Indigenous peoples."[248] Liliana Zavaglia's critique of "Australian novels of Reconciliation" identifies a similar pattern of double movement within the narratives that "fluctuates between a reconciliatory impulse for sorrow for Indigenous historical loss and the defensive desire to offer exits for white

[247] Behrendt, *Finding Eliza*, 168-178.
[248] Macoun, 95.

culture from the ongoing demands of a violent settlement history."[249] The personal journey motif that appears so often in settler-authored texts about Reconciliation reflects a similar double movement in that, what might be read superficially as a transformative process of self-discovery based on the triumph over haunting colonial history can simultaneously be read as the legitimization of the very structures that have made not knowing about such history possible.

A number of Australian historians, anthropologists, and literary and legal scholars have criticized the rhetoric of apology and reconciliation as ultimately serving to sustain the settler sovereignty through the regeneration of civic investments.[250] Associating Indigenous peoples with social death is but one of the normalized ways of knowing to which settler society routinely returns, evidence of which can be found in the persistent tropes of Native death that appear across settler narratives. Murri writer Melissa Lucashenko argues that "[m]odern Australian literature is struggling, as the country is struggling, to come to terms with its place in an Aboriginal land. For us to arrive at a place of real reconciliation it will not be enough to love the Dead Aborigine."[251] In other words, by endeavoring to confront newly exposed, aberrant hypocrisies undermining national myths about democratic inclusivity, settlers have also resumed an uncomplicated relationship with overarching ideologies such as national unity that remain rooted in Indigenous elimination.

---

[249] Zavaglia, 2.
[250] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 16; Strakosch and Macoun, 46; Barta, 210; Ellemor, 238-39; Kelada, "Love is a Battlefield," 93-94; Maddison, 161-66.
[251] Lucashenko, [9].

Reynolds embarked on a professional journey of his own early in his career, researching suppressed aspects of Australia's colonial history in order to rewrite the heroic frontier myth. He imagined this work contributing to a larger project of establishing truth and reconciliation between settler and Aboriginal Australians.[252] For Reynolds, an accurate accounting of the number of Aboriginal deaths wrought by frontier violence was a necessary step toward reconciliation, as was the symbolic gesture of honoring those deaths through memorials. Near the conclusion of *Other Side,* which it should be remembered was published a decade before Keating's Reconciliation platform formally began in 1993, Reynolds writes of the Aboriginal dead that "[t]heir burial mound stands out as a landmark of awesome size on the peaceful plains of colonial history."[253] Such allusions to Aboriginal death have become a trademark of Reynolds's writing style, particularly evident in the more widely read *Why Weren't We Told?*. It seems problematic, then, that Reynolds should attempt to deconstruct powerful cultural figures like the wholly virtuous settler or the romanticized bushman when his argument relies so heavily on the rhetoric of vanishing indigenes.

In *Why Weren't We Told?*, published almost two decades after *Other Side,* Reynolds consistently employs metaphors for Indigenous death, burial and exhumation, and spectrality to recount acts of frontier violence and their having been silenced in popular discourse. One characteristic passage describes the trepidation he felt in introducing contemporary audiences to histories of massacre. Reynolds states he "knew that it would be profoundly irresponsible to sensationalise the many terrible stories I was

[252] Reynolds, *Why Weren't We*, 126-27.
[253] Reynolds, *Other Side*, 201.

unearthing. They were shocking partly because they had been so well *buried*, so effectively forgotten."[254] He is clear in pointing out that these stories and the larger history they comprise had not been entirely forgotten, yet here again he uses the language of the uncanny: "The terrible past of violence and dispossession still *haunted the living*. It could be seen shaping social reactions, determining means of address. It could be briefly glimpsed in fleeting expressions of face or eye."[255] He further notes an "uneasy and ambivalent" feeling amongst Australians who have not entirely forgotten specific sites where massacre occurred, evoking the image of a map of Australia "sprinkled" with "haunted places."[256] These evocative signifiers no doubt stir the emotions of sympathetic white readers; yet, they potentially do a disservice to members of Aboriginal communities, particularly in regard to those struggling for recognition in the contemporary political moment. Jean O'Brien observes, for example, that the implicit argument underlying much of settlers' historical narration inherently denies Indigenous modernity by casting Native peoples in the role of victim rather than social agent.[257] In similar fashion, narratives of Reconciliation seeking to redress colonial violence by reproducing structures and symbols traditionally used to imagine settler dominance over Indigenous peoples thereby risk reasserting settler-centrality and undermining decolonial causes.

[254] Reynolds, *Why Weren't We*, 123-24. Emphasis added.
[255] Ibid., 38. Emphasis added.
[256] Ibid., 177.
[257] O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 107.

To Make the Land Our Own: Colonising White Innocence in Alex Miller's Personal Journey into an Uncanny Australia

Alex Miller's novel *Journey to the Stone Country* takes place in the early 2000s, the years immediately following the passage of and amendments to Australia's native title legislation (1993-1998). The story revolves around Annabelle "Annie" Beck and her search for a new sense of belonging after buried secrets about the people and places she most closely associates with home are unearthed. As the novel opens, Annie's comfortable life in Melbourne has been destroyed by her husband's revelation of an affair. Distraught, she reaches out to Susan Bassett, a former colleague who has since relocated to Queensland to pursue a new career as a surveyor and arbitrator between corporations and Aboriginal groups whose traditional lands are to be developed. As it turns out, Susan's most pressing project requires an assistant, a position for which Annie is the ideal candidate given that the land in question happens to be in proximity to the cattle station where she lived as a child. Upon her return as an adult, Annie works alongside Bo Rennie, an Aboriginal stockman representing the Aborigine's interests during the surveying process. Unbeknownst to Annie, she and Bo were childhood acquaintances, and their respective family's histories are deeply entwined. The two eventually become lovers, and Annie hopes to assist Bo in his quest to lodge a successful claim in order to regain his ancestral lands and the cattle station his family lost because of debt. The chance discovery of an ancient ceremonial site on these lands strengthens Bo's claim, but it also unearths the region's violent settlement history. Panya, a matriarch amongst Bo's extended family, reveals that Annie's ancestors massacred many of the land's Aboriginal inhabitants, an act that has since been covered up. Confronted by these

unsettling discoveries, Annie ultimately resolves to remain with Bo and, together, try to purchase and rebuild his family's lost cattle station. At the same time, she gently refuses his offer to travel to the more distant ceremonial stone country. This latter decision is based on her epiphany that there are certain places which she, as a white settler, does not belong, just as there are certain mysteries about Aboriginal culture that she cannot know.

Journey to the Stone Country has been read by some as an exemplar of the possibility for cohabitation between settler and Aboriginal Australians based on the acknowledgment and appreciation of Indigenous and settler political difference.[258] Others have troubled such readings, suggesting that the novel merely updates or re-inscribes essentialist, romantic, and ultimately Othering characterizations of Aborigines in the service of settler indigenisation.[259] My analysis leans toward the latter, particularly in light of certain metatexts written by Miller after the novel's publication. Too, my critique of the novel focuses more explicitly on attitudes and actions characteristic of progressive settler whiteness during Australia's period of Reconciliation, particularly after the *Mabo* ruling.[260] That is, I am interested in the ways in which contemporary settler Australians' "discoveries" of colonial history and, especially, colonial violence then inspired personal journeys for the truth that, as I have demonstrated in discussing Henry Reynolds's *Why*

[258] McLaren, 159; Dolin, [10]; Dixon, *Alex Miller*, 100-101; Zavaglia, 59.
[259] Johnston and Lawson, 38; Dorgelo, 129.
[260] It is worth noting that Robert Dixon has accused readings like mine, which understand *Journey* as a parable for reconciliation, of being reductive (Dixon, *Alex Miller* 113, 116). Dixon's thorough if sympathetic reading of the novel's literariness draws from some of the same metatexts discussed in my chapter; however, Dixon's application of these texts in his analysis generously privileges authorial intentionality without applying the same healthy skepticism shown to his fellow literary scholars. Perhaps unsurprisingly, over the course of praising *Journey*, Dixon also recounts having met Henry Reynolds, with whom he claims to share a profound understanding of northern Queensland (95).

Weren't We Told?, are hamstrung by settler writer's instinct toward self-preservation and, in turn, the legitimization of settler colonial authority.

Most of the literary criticism on *Journey* pays special attention the events immediately surrounding the revelation of historical massacre. Zavaglia's reading of this crucial passage concludes with the assertion that "Annabelle grapples with a newly complicated white settler belonging that has surfaced in light of Panya's 'shock of history.' A profound transformation has taken place and this now results in a new self-understanding, which alters Annabelle's relation to her childhood home."[261] Such readings generally do not consider the fact that these major discoveries, transformations, and new understandings happen in remarkably rapid succession at the very end of the novel. In terms of plot, Panya's story occurs within the novel's penultimate chapter, as does Annie's identity crises. Her transformation and reconciliatory gestures then occur in the final chapter, with all of these significant events taking place over the final thirty pages. In other words, less than a tenth of the novel directly addresses what one reviewer calls the "Universal questions . . . Alex Miller explores, habitually and instinctively, in all of his fiction": questions such as "Who are we? Where are we? Why do humans do what we do? What makes us tick?"[262] Many scholars read in the conclusion of *Journey* "profound" answers to these questions based on Annie's supposed "transformation" when, in fact, there is ample textual evidence to refute such claims.

Re-reading these final passages closely and keeping in mind the pace at which they are occurring suggests, alternatively, that Annie is, in fact, experiencing the uncanny

[261] Zavaglia, 76.
[262] Fraser, n.p.

liminality of haunted settler belonging at the novels' conclusion. Her immediate reaction to the tale of colonial violence supports this reading: "She felt she must surely be haunted for the rest of her days by Panya's story."[263] In another telling passage taking place just moments later, Annie is described as gazing upon the "strangely familiar countryside of her childhood," which directly invokes the primary characteristic of the uncanny wherein objects thought to have been known intimately are rendered strange or unfamiliar.[264] It must be noted, too, that Annie's brush with the uncanny is irreducibly bound up in an anxiety over dispossession occurring in much the same way that it has for Aborigines historically displaced by settler colonization. In fact, this sense of dislocation awakens in her a "nightmare of returning home to find her family gone and only silence and absence to greet her, the country forbidding and desolate without her loved ones. Like a deserted battlefield."[265] This could be read as either an attempted move to innocence through commensurability with dispossessed Indigenous peoples or, conversely, as assertion of victimization in which Aboriginal peoples' competing claims to belonging represent metaphysical violence against settlers. That is, while it is unclear with whom Annie identifies—either with Aboriginal peoples for whom she feels empathy or with settlers with whom she shares an inherent fear over the potential for Aboriginal violence—it is clear that her sense of dislocation is central to this story. Indeed, the real "discovery" or the truth "unearthed" by Panya's shocking history is not that colonial violence occurred in the past but that settler liminality persists into the present.

[263] Miller, *Journey*, 347.
[264] Ibid., 353.
[265] Ibid.

While these passages can easily be made to view Annie's identity crisis through the lens of the uncanny, they do not necessarily dispel the notion that she undergoes some sort of transformation toward Reconciliation. To that end, I argue that, in response to having her sense of belonging so jarringly challenged, Annie retreats behind the very possessive logic that made frontier violence and nation-building possible. Crucially, however, in doing so she also manages to enact a form of colonising white innocence. This double movement, in which Annie appears to acknowledge a lack of sovereignty while simultaneously claiming possession—is on display in the oft-quoted passage "It was not her country after all, but it was the nearest to any place she might lay a claim to."[266] So, even though she has been confronted with information that may be potentially transformative in that it could bring about decolonization, Annie still retains a privileged authority to choose where she belongs. That is, she does not achieve "a new self-understanding," as Zavaglia suggests, as much as she adapts to new circumstances through the same logics that have always been the basis of settler identity: the sovereign choice to claim a place as her own and the conditions by which others—especially the Aboriginal peoples with whom she is now intimately involved—cohabitate within this "new" homeland. In turn, what can be read as an act of deference—her decision to remain at Verbena Station while Bo and his nephew visit ancestral ceremonial grounds—should also be read as an assertion of agency over herself *and* the Aboriginal Others from whom she differentiates herself.

Having thus argued for a particular way in which *Journey* can be read, here I extend my analysis by making a foray into what might at first seem like literary criticism

[266] Miller, *Journey*, 354.

based on author intentionality, always a treacherous terrain in its own right. Following the novel's publication in 2002, Miller authored two essays in which he reflects on the experiences that inspired the novel. Because he also suggests in these essays that white Australians, like his protagonist Annie Beck, can see their political and cultural identities transformed through a better understanding of Aboriginal ways of being, these metatexts can serve as useful maps in further understanding Annie's characterization and the novel's imagined potentials for Reconciliation. In the first of these essays, "Prophets of the Imagination," Miller makes it clear that Annabelle's literal and metaphorical journeys reflect his own lived experiences and the meaning he took from them. Indeed, the series of events leading to his writing of the novel are remarkably similar to Annie's decision to assist Bo in his native title claim. Both Miller and Annie spent formative years in northern Queensland before pursuing professional careers in Melbourne. Their return decades later makes possible a fateful meeting with a former Aboriginal stockman—Bo Rennie in Annie's case, Col McLennan in Miller's.

Miller has claimed on several occasions that *Journey* is the "real" story of Col McLennan and his partner Liz Hatte, both of whom are personally known to Miller.[267] Reading scenes of the novel against biographical details and Miller's two non-fiction pieces suggests otherwise, however. Robert Dixon, the foremost scholar working on Miller's novels, notes that Hatte and Miller briefly taught together in the Melbourne suburb of Holmesglen until 1986, when Hatte left the profession, moved to northern

[267] Miller makes truth claims about *Journey* vis-à-vis Col McLennan and Liz Hatte in both "Prophets of Imagination," 275 and "Sweet Water," 286; Dixon, *Alex Miller*, 96.

Queensland, and began operating an archeological consulting firm.[268] In the novel, it is Susan—not Annabelle—who lives out these exact events. In other words, the fictional Annabelle Beck is, at best, an amalgamation of Hatte and Miller himself, while the fictional Susan is a thinly veiled Hatte. Beck's relationship with Bo Rennie thus mirrors Miller's relationship with McLennan, which, while not expressed through physical lovemaking as is the case with Annie and Bo, is no less intimate in that coming to know Col allows Miller to transcend a repressed guilt and experience a newfound sense of belonging in the present.

The most consequential instance of Miller appearing in the novel as Annie involves the discovery of a cylcon, a cylindrical stone artifact whose meaning is no longer known. In the novel, Annie discovers a cylcon embedded in a river bank while assisting Susan and Bo in their survey of Janga land in northern Queensland. When she realizes that her discovery of the cylcon upsets Bo, who is angered at the lost cultural knowledge it represents, Annie feels conflicted over taking the stone as a "memento," feeling "the weight of it, not in her hands but in her chest, the archaic mystery of its lost purpose a constriction around her heart."[269] The stone quickly becomes incredibly meaningful to Annie, however, and her possession of it comes to represent in her mind a form of liberation:

[268] Dixon, *Alex Miller*, 95-96.
[269] Miller, *Journey*, 58-9.

> There was a relation. It was not her stone. It would never be her stone. It did not belong to her. She was not claiming ownership, but understanding. She was convinced she had understood something true and significant about the stone, something that the person who made it would themselves have been pleased to have her acknowledge and would themselves have understood. She felt the gravitas of her own intelligence conveyed to the creator of the grave and beautiful stone. She smiled at this conceit. She realised she had not felt free to think for years.[270]

Clearly, Miller has Annie performing complicated moral acrobatics to rationalize her decision to take possession of the stone. The most obvious of these is her outright denial of possession in place of a sort of mystical stewardship that connects her spiritually and intellectually with the stone's Aboriginal creator. Such a claim is, itself, a gesture toward benign settler indigenization, implying that discovery and ownership are somehow akin to indigeneity. This sense of cross-cultural connection recalls similar claims to settler inheritance of Indigenous lands once Native peoples had "vanished."[271] The notion that Annie has attained true understanding of forgotten Aboriginal knowledge is equally problematic, particularly in light of arguments by Tuck, Yang, and Macoun that such claims to knowing often perpetuate settler dominance. That is, Annie's affective connection to this artifact appears no less legitimate than any Bo might claim, since its original purpose amongst his people is no longer known.

These concerns are especially evident in the role the cylcon plays in the novel's concluding gesture toward Reconciliation. As noted, much of the critical discussion on *Journey* has rightly centered on Annie's refusal to join Bo and his nephew Arner as they return to their people's newly rediscovered ceremonial site at the novel's conclusion; however, it is worth pointing out that the cylcon factors into this refusal, as Annie decides

[270] Ibid., 73.
[271] Goldie, 158; Johnston and Lawson, 33-34; Caterine, 54; Handley, 45-46.

that she will "give the cylindrical stone to Arner to take back for her to the stone people."[272] As such, the gesture falls under Macoun's definition of colonising white innocence in that, through what is framed as an act of generosity, Annie assumes the authority to instruct an Aborigine in the appropriate use of an Indigenous ceremonial item that she has taken from its original, intended location. Her act of theft is thus masked by her act of benevolence and, just as importantly, the repatriation resolves any conflicted feelings she previously felt over having been in possession of the stone.

As one of *Journey*'s metatexts makes clear, the fictional events involving the discovery and return of the cylcon are directly related to Miller's own personal history and his transformative relationship with Col McLennan, the "real" Bo Rennie. During McLennan's visit to Miller's home in Melbourne, the author reveals to his new friend that he had in his possession "an ancient cylcon, a carved ritual stone, . . . found eroding out of the bank of a creek thirty years ago."[273] Miller reports that he "confessed to feeling a little guilty at keeping it in [his] possession," but that McLennan absolved him of any wrongdoing and, in fact, praised him for his having kept the stone safe until such time as it could be returned to the land's traditional owners. In Miller's words, McLennan "was content for me to be the keeper of the stone for as long as it needed my protection. It was a sentiment that moved me greatly. For me that stone was a precious memento from my days in the outback, for Col it was a sacred object of the ancestral household."[274] Miller's sense of catharsis, rather than the repatriation of a sacred object, is the primary concern.

[272] Miller, *Journey*, 363.
[273] Miller, "Prophets," 275.
[274] Miller, "Prophets," 275.

What had been a "precious memento" that made him feel "a little guilty" has, thirty years later, become a symbol of his strong moral character and, particularly, his benevolence.

The stone also deepens the emotional bond Miller feels toward McLennan precisely because it absolves him of having been directly complicit in the dispossession of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and material history. Rather than having committed a willful act of theft, Miller has instead acted as a caretaker *at the stone's behest*. In the context of the novel's focus on Reconciliation, this small exchange between settler and Aboriginal individuals can thus be read as an allusion to native title repatriation in miniature. Settler Australians were, by analogy, only safeguarding the land until such time as the traditional owners could again claim their rightful possession. In this way, Miller's *Journey* contributes to what Macoun and Strakosch term "the vanishing endpoint of settler colonialism"; that is, the purportedly reconciliatory gesture offered to Aborigines in fact legitimizes settler authority by depicting any claim to settler wrongdoing as having been resolved and relations between settler and Aboriginal populations as having been permanently and positively transformed.[275]

Miller's use of *Journey* to make problematic claims to authority over Indigenous knowing continues beyond the cylcon. In the essay "Sweet Water: The Proposed Damming of the Urannah Valley," Miller uses the characters and events of the novel to frame a discussion on an actual intertribal dispute amongst the Birriguba people over the use of traditional lands recovered through a successful native title claim in 1998. Miller derides "a colonial mindset of exploitation and ownership" he sees at work in the

[275] Strakosch and Macoun, 46, 53-56.

proposal to dam the river that sustains natural life the Urannah Valley.[276] He further asserts that, to combat this form of colonial knowing, non-Aboriginal Australians ought to embrace traditional ways of knowing and being that predate invasion and colonization. In the process, however, he manages to reaffirm the same possessive logic he calls on others—including those Birriguba elders who support the dam project—to reject:

> Let's hope we yet learn from the great Indigenous cultures of this country that not everything is to be consumed but that some things are to be cherished and preserved. And if we do learn this, we may yet come to see that we are also embedded with the story of our own past, the story of our ancestors, the story of our old people, and that *there is an ongoing moral obligation for us in this sacred association that will eventually make the land our own*.[277]

At first, this claim seems oddly out of place when read alongside a previous passage in the same essay in which Miller claims that Australia "will not be in a post-colonial age until we are in a post-European age."[278] On the contrary, while Miller presents a message that on the surface appears to support decolonization—indeed, he may even believe that he is calling for decolonization—he is actually re-affirming a possessive investment in the settler nation by imagining settler futurity through settler nativism's impulse to indigenization. That is, Miller proposes an idealistic form of settler belonging—place-attachment through accountability and ownership—incommensurate with the Aboriginal ontology he suggests settlers must learn from. As Aileen Moreton-Robinson explains, Aboriginal peoples of Australia are oriented to land—to country—by Law established during the Dreaming, the period in which the earth and its inhabitants were created by

[276] Miller explains that water diverted by the dam would then be sold in order to irrigate nearby farms. He further explains that a contingent of Birriguba elders supports the project because of the revenue-sharing generated by those sales. See "Sweet Water," 281.
[277] Miller, "Sweet Water," 290-91. Emphasis added.
[278] Miller, "Sweet Water," 286.

ancestral beings. As the embodiment of their ancestors and Law, Moreton-Robinson further explains, Aboriginal people inhabit their homelands in ways inaccessible to settlers who originate elsewhere.[279] Said another way, settlers can never own Indigenous lands in the way that Aboriginal people and country own one another.

Like *Journey*, Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* utilizes settler-Aboriginal relations to explore questions about national belonging. As scholars have previously observed, Grenville's fictional rendering of colonial dispossession and settlers' "taking up" of Aboriginal land problematically frames frontier violence as unfortunate but inevitable.[280] That should not suggest that moments of contact depicted in the novel are inconsequential; on the contrary, there is an inherent intimacy at work in these scenes that is crucial to the protagonist's characterization and the plot's development. Remarkably, reading Grenville's novel in relation to its metatext, a craft memoir published on the heels of *The Secret River*'s commercial success, reveals that these important scenes likely manifest the author's own ambiguity towards colonial complicity. Paralleling the implications between Col McLennan/Bo Rennie and Alex Miller/Annabelle Beck, Kate Grenville's fictional William Thornhill is, in part, a vehicle by which the author explores her own encounter with the queer uncanny.

In Search of a Secret Story: Contact with the Queer Uncanny in Kate Grenville's Reconciliatory Novel of Conquest

Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* is a historical novel loosely based on life of the author's ancestor Solomon Wiseman, who was sent to the New South Wales penal colony

[279] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 12-17.
[280] Gall, 95-96; Kelada, "The Stolen River," [2-3].

as a convict near the turn of the nineteenth century only to become a wealthy landowner. The novel is, in a sense, a rags-to-riches story about William Thornhill, a loose fictionalization of Wiseman, who grows up desperately poor in London and is, as a young man, arrested for piloting stolen timber down the Thames. Initially sentenced to hang, Thornhill is instead commuted to a life sentence of conscripted labor in Australia. Thornhill's new wife Sal manages to book passage for herself and their young son to join William in New South Wales. Even more miraculously, William is indentured to his wife, and together, they toil to establish a life in the hinterlands beyond Sydney Cove. Having eventually purchased his freedom, William next desires to own vast amounts of land. He does just that, farming a previously unclaimed stretch of river land obscured by an inlet that only he a few other settlers know of. Of course, that land is already inhabited by Aboriginal peoples, and the second half of the novel describes their encounters and miscommunications, which become increasingly hostile. In the end, Thornhill is swept along with other settler landowners' plan to protect their investments by massacring the traditional owners. The novel's brief concluding chapter is set several years after the killings, now never spoken of but not entirely forgotten. In the interim, Thornhill has increased his wealth, yet, in his old age, he cannot help but feel nostalgic for those early days of settlement and the interaction with Aboriginal peoples. As such, he laments that his prosperity has come without a sense of triumph.

The novel became an immediate bestseller and has since inspired stage and screen adaptations, as well as a sequel novel.[281] That success also led to the publication of

[281] Andrew Bovell, *The Secret River by Kate Grenville: An Adaptation for the Stage*, Currency P, 2013; *The Secret River* (Television miniseries), written by Jan Sardi and Mac

Searching for the Secret River: The Story behind the Bestselling Novel, in which Grenville details the inspiration, research, and craft that went into making *The Secret River* one of the most popular works of contemporary Australian fiction. Early on in that later metatext, Grenville describes a brief moment of pride she had felt when participating in a "Reconciliation Walk" across the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge in 2000, though she admits to only having had a superficial understanding at the time as to what "Reconciliation" meant in terms of Australia's colonial history. In fact, she recalls a nagging cynicism in the back of her mind that the walk was merely symbolic, an empty gesture that had more to do with self-satisfaction than political activism. Her thoughts wander to an anecdote her mother once told her about having been present at the Bridge's dedication ceremony decades before. Rather quickly, Grenville's mental energies are devoted much more to family history than Aboriginal rights.

Then she realizes she is being watched by a group of Aboriginal onlookers scrutinizing demonstrators as they pass by. One member of this group stands out from the rest. Grenville recalls "a tall handsome woman frankly staring, as if to memorise each face. Our eyes met and we shared one of those moments of intensity, a pulse of connectedness."[282] But then, inexplicably, the moment sours as Grenville imagines another moment of first contact taking place more than a century prior—long before the bridge was built, to a time before a place called Sydney existed. Grenville asks herself: What if this Aboriginal woman's ancestor had been standing on the shore across the bay at the very moment that Grenville's first ancestor made landfall in Australia? Just asking

---

Gudgeon, directed by Daina Reid, ABC (Australia), 2015; Kate Grenville, *Sarah Thornhill*, Text P, 2011.

[282]Grenville, *Searching*, 12.

such a question has a profound, dislocating effect: "In that instant of putting my own ancestor together with this woman's ancestor," she explains, "everything swiveled [*sic*]: the country, the place, my sense of myself in it."[283] There, at the end of the Reconciliation walk, Kate Grenville encountered the uncanny.

In response, Grenville turned to stories to once again make sense of the world and her relation to it. Just as Henry Reynolds had done the year before, she embarked on a quest for the truth about her nation's colonial history, determined to know how she had come to live in a place where others had previously been but, now, hardly seemed to be at all. As a starting point, she sought the biographical details of that first Australian ancestor, Solomon Wiseman. Though she did not know it at the time, she had just begun a journey that would result in two new books: the novel *The Secret River* (2005) and a companion memoir, *Searching for the Secret River* (2006). From *Searching*'s outset, Grenville links her complicity in the ongoing dispossession of Aboriginal Australians to roles Wiseman might have played in initial settlement:

> I urgently needed to find out about that great-great-great grandfather of mine. I needed to know what he was like, and what he might have done when he crossed paths with Aboriginal people.

Until I knew that, it felt like nothing but willful blindness—even hypocrisy—to go through symbolic motions. . . . We were strolling towards Reconciliation—what I had to do was cross the hard way, through the deep water of our history.[284]

The subsequent journey takes her from an obscure genealogical archive in London to provincial Wiseman's Ferry, less than an hour's drive from her home near Sydney, to "the Aboriginal place," the bush country traditionally owned by the Darug and

[283] Ibid., 13.
[284] Ibid.

Darkinjung peoples.[285] It's there, while sitting next to a campfire at night that she comes to a decision not at all unlike those made by Henry Reynolds and Alex Miller before her:

> I was beginning to sense the real dimensions of this thing. There was a story here that was bigger than my ancestor, bigger even than the tale of his relationship to Aboriginal people. It was about the life that the place held within itself, within its rocks and trees. The place was speaking to me as I sat listening, and although I couldn't hear it properly, and didn't know how to tell its story, I knew I was going to try.[286]

Part one of the memoir ends there, with no further elaboration as to the implications of claiming such authorial privilege. Part two of *Searching* is mostly concerned with the craft of novel writing, particularly writerly decisions that went into fictionalizing her research. Returning to the problem of representing Aboriginal perspectives, Grenville resolves to "create a hollow in the book, a space of difference that would be more eloquent than any words I might invent. . . . To let the reader know that a story was there to be told, but not try to tell it."[287] Scholars have previously criticized this notion of a narrative "hollow," arguing that it signals a self-preserving, limited engagement with narrowly imagined Aboriginality that is emblematic of the larger Reconciliation movement that inspired the novel.[288]

With this critique in mind, I return to the catalytic scene of Grenville's uncanny encounter on Sydney Harbour Bridge in order to suggest that historical and cultural complexities underlying this pregnant moment significantly determined fictional scenes of settler-Aboriginal contact in the novel. Grenville describes looking past several men with long beards and only to share an intense connection with a "tall handsome woman,"

---

[285] Ibid., 133.
[286] Ibid., 140.
[287] Ibid., 199.
[288] Gall, 101-2; Kelada, "The Stolen River," [4-6].

a curious phrase given the term *handsome* is typically associated with masculine aesthetics. More importantly, given that the only other physical descriptors associated with the woman are that she is "tall" and Aboriginal—and therefore likely read by Australians as phenotypically Black—it is not altogether unreasonable to assume that readers would associate her with the "tall, dark, and handsome" male archetype of so many romantic or erotic narratives.

The tension Grenville describes in this brief but meaningful moment undergirds several fictional encounters between *Secret River*'s protagonist William Thornhill and a number of Aboriginal men appearing throughout the novel. As noted, Grenville describes her own moment of contact as disorienting her relationship to people, the past, and the nation. It should not be a surprise, then, to find that confronting scene reimagined in a novel that draws so deeply from the lived experiences of one of her ancestors. Specifically, the novel's contact scenes highlight racial and cultural differences between characters so that Aboriginal presence engenders uncanny feelings in which Thornhill, like Grenville, becomes spatially, bodily, and morally disoriented.

Indeed, many of *Secret River*'s contact scenes involving Thornhill and Aboriginal men exhibit a palpable tension between heteronormative expectations of Anglo-European cultures and the supposed sexual deviancy of Indigenous peoples. As such, these encounters can be read as instances of the *queer uncanny*, which Paulina Palmer has argued signals a specific anxiety arising from having found oneself existing between the social expectations of heteronormativity and "less visible" queer urges and desires

considered unspeakable or taboo.[289] Likewise, Nicholas Royle succinctly contends that "[t]he uncanny *is* queer. And the queer is uncanny."[290] If, as critical analyses of the novel seem to agree, *The Secret River* is essentially a story about the quest to find a sense of belonging in a strange new land, then these moments of contact between Thornhill and Aboriginal men encapsulate the anxiety and capacity for violence that are ubiquitous in frontier narratives about the "clash" between "savagism and civilization."[291] More than that, they speak to the formation and regulation of heteronormative mores as essential elements of settler identity.

But for a brief prologue titled "Strangers," *Secret River* unfolds chronologically. "Strangers" opens the novel *in media res* on the very first night Thornhill, his wife, and their two sons William and Richard spend in the penal colony. Unable to sleep, Thornhill steps from a shabby, temporary hut into the dark night, feeling entirely disoriented and very much afraid. These emotions intensify when an Aboriginal man emerges from the night, naked but for a spear. They exchange words—or, rather, Thornhill curses the man in English and hears his words mimicked back by the Aborigine. Angry and fearful for the safety of his vulnerable young family, Thornhill briefly looks back to the hut in which they are sleeping only to discover upon returning to face the seemingly threatening Aborigine that he has vanished into the darkness as quickly and silently as he emerged from it—as might a ghost. The vanishing act establishes a motif recurring throughout the

[289] Palmer, 13.
[290] Royle, *The Uncanny*, 43.
[291] Gall, 96; Kelada, "The Stolen River," [2]; Leane, [13]. The phrase *savagism and civilization* was coined in Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, U of California P, 1988. For his explanation of the frontier as an essential site for contesting definitions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities in the colonizing cultural imaginary, see pp. 11-16.

novel: that Aborigines are potentially always lurking in shadows, watching settlers, and waiting to attack.

To an even greater extent, this scene forms the connective tissues between Thornhill's most distinct character traits: sexual shame, violent anger, and compulsive possessiveness. Through an encounter with a single Aboriginal man, the first such contact in Thornhill's life, these distinct but related characteristics emerge in rapid succession. Just moments prior to their meeting, Thornhill has been despairing over the enormity of the "foreign darkness" that is the Australian night. Indeed, he cannot even recognize the constellations of this hemisphere and, as such, he feels disoriented, diminished, and alone.[292] This quiet moment of crisis worsens when, like an apparition, an Aboriginal man materializes from the night: "the darkness moved in front of him. It took a moment to understand that the stirring was a human, as black as the air itself. His skin swallowed the light and made him not quite real; something only imagined."[293] Thornhill's further reading of this seemingly preternatural black body reveals that man is completely nude, a fact that leaves Thornhill feeling "skinless as a maggot" despite being fully clothed. Thornhill finds equally disturbing the spear that the Aborigine carries "[u]pright in his hand," like "a part of him, an extension."[294] In Thornhill's mind, then, embodied blackness signifies confrontation and threat.

More specifically, the phallic spear manifests within Thornhill fears of bodily violation to which he responds with assertions of his own virility and right to belong on the land. For instance, he associates the spearhead's sharp, irregular edge with violent

[292] Grenville, *Secret River*, 3-4.
[293] Ibid., 5.
[294] Ibid.

penetration: "It would not go through a man neat as a needle," he thinks. "It would rip its way in. Pulling it out would rip all over again."[295] And, he thinks, such a wound would likely result in a terrible death, with "his skin punctured and blood spilled beneath these chilly stars."[296] The thought of his family being similarly killed fills him with rage instead of fear, yet here again the description contains phallic and queer elements. That is, Thornhill does not just become angry, he becomes filled with anger such that he begins "expanding back into his full size."[297] The resurrection of Thornhill's manhood is particularly significant here given that he views himself as doubly emasculated by his initial imprisonment and his legal status as his wife's property.[298] Placing himself in the role of defender against an opponent wielding a projectile weapon literally arouses Thornhill because it represents a return to the gendered form of power he enjoyed prior to his incarceration.

In fact, Thornhill projects internal anxieties regarding queerness onto an Aboriginal Other to reclaim a sense of power from heteronormative masculinity. According to Scott Lauria Morgensen, queer power dynamics between settlers and Indigenous peoples are an essential machination of the biopolitics of settler colonialism, as "queering of Native peoples defined not only settler sexuality, broadly, but also the definition of queer subjects *among* white settlers: as a primitive, racialized sexual margin

---

[295] Ibid.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Prior to Thornhill receiving a commuted sentence, Sal loses her only source of income as a seamstress. Faced with desperate economic hardship—her husband imprisoned, her parents deceased, and an infant starving—Sal is forced to sell her sex to survive (69). Having finally arrived in Sydney, Sal is assigned legal rights over her indentured husband, now emasculated for having been treated as a convict while aboard the ship (76-77).

akin to what white settlers attempted to conquer among Natives."[299] Similarly, observes Jack Halberstam, queered Others' peripheral relationship to the polity often results in their being marked as "wild," that is, "ascribed to evil, to some colonial notion of primitive personhood and to a form of chaos that civilization comes to tame."[300] And this is certainly the case with *Secret River*, in which Thornhill's masculinity is restored via confronting the Aboriginal Other on what he perceives to be contested ground.

As it occurs in *Secret River*, taming wildness is rooted in that initial queered interaction taking place in the novel's prefatory chapter. Thornhill, who has become enraged at the thought of the Aboriginal man killing his sleeping wife and sons, is described as having "been stripped of everything already: he had only the dirt under his bare feet, his small grip on this unknown place. He had nothing but that and those helpless sleeping humans in the hut behind him. He was not about to surrender them to any naked black man."[301] Of course, his desire for physical confrontation goes unsatisfied, as the Aborigine disappears back into the dark forest. Imbued with Indigenous spectrality, the landscape is not just foreign and seemingly alive but also haunted by queered Indigenous subjects.

In the novel's concluding paragraph, Thornhill again gazes upon the forest, this time from the verandah of his fortress-like house. Near the end of his life and years removed from having taken part in the massacre, Thornhill discovers "a new emptiness" over the prospect that the colonizing project has been successful to the extent of having

[299] Morgensen, *Spaces between Us*, 32.
[300] Halberstam, 141-42.
[301] Grenville, *Secret River*, 6.

possibly killed off all of the "wild" Aboriginals he now longs to see.[302] Thornhill thus embodies Rosaldo's definition of imperialist nostalgia, as the rage and sense of purpose that filled him in earlier moments of contact have been replaced by uncertainty and, perhaps, regret. To be sure, his unease in old age stems in large part from having lost the oppositional Other against which he might imagine his own identity. Taken together, the two "hauntings" that bookend the novel represent the protagonist's interior journey from the vulnerability and outrage that defined him as a newly arrived convict to the desire that persists even as he possesses the wealth and power he coveted for so long.

As the next section demonstrates, a similar phenomenon has occurred throughout the US literary tradition, particularly in the form of the Indian burial sites. Because these sites are so often associated with hauntings and curses, the trope is most commonly associated with horror fiction and films. However, non-native storytellers have attached to this trope contextual significance derived from such diverse moments as pre-Revolution American Enlightenment, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights Movement. To that end, the following analyses bring together an eclectic body of texts in which an Indian burial site factors into character and plot development. While these works are overwhelmingly associated with horror fiction, my analysis privileges the historical context in which they were written to make legible the perpetual utility of symbolic Indian death within the settler colonial imaginary. As with William Thornhill's shifting attitudes toward Aboriginal spectrality, the following iterations of the Indian burial site trope in US literatures substantiates Wolfe's observation that recurring

[302] Ibid., 332-34.

symbolic representations of indigeneity continue to shape settler projects beyond the era of frontier warfare.

The Indian Burial Site Trope: Its Life, Death, and Return from the Grave

As a literary device, the Indian burial site fits within a broad, interrelated typology of Indigenous absence. While there are important contextual specificities associated with stereotypes such as the "Child of Nature" or "The Half Breed," they all serve a common purpose: absenting Indigenous presence and futurity from the settler colonial imaginary. In Wolfe's parlance, such distortion and erasure underpin "the logic of elimination" by which settler projects are formed and sustained.[303] Of course, settlers do not come to merely displace Indigenous peoples but to then replace them as a new indigenous population. The Indian burial site trope supports this process of indigenization in three important ways: first, by framing Native peoples as having largely died out in the distant past, thus making way for new natives; second, by treating their presence as residual, aberrant, and spectral—in other words, haunting; and third, by providing an antithetical counterpart against whom contemporary non-Natives can triumph in order to renew their sense of belonging. It seems that this hard-won sense of belonging is perpetually fleeting however. Like the malevolent spirits said to dwell within them, the Indian burial grounds reemerge time and again across the US literary tradition, suggesting that settler place-attachment is both unsettled and unsettling.[304]

By the 1990s, the trope had become so ubiquitous in US popular culture that, today, it is likely as groan-inducing as the moment when, in 1977, the TV sitcom *Happy*

[303] Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism," 398.
[304] Dickey, 43-48.

Days inspired the colloquialism "jumping the shark," the exact moment a trend is exhausted and becomes the target of ridicule. Indeed, the majority of scholarship dedicated to the burial site trope generally reflects the fact that it was so frequently used in high-profile horror novels and films between 1976 and 1986. In fact, the haunted Indian burial site and, to a larger degree, Indigenous spectrality, have been a part of the American literary tradition for nearly as long as the US has existed as an independent nation—just as they have with Australia's. Where J.D. Hennessey used Aboriginal haunting in his *An Australian Bush Track* (1896), published just four years before Australian federation, the most well-known poet of the US Federalist period, Philip Freneau, published "The Indian Burying Ground" (1787) within roughly a decade of the nation's independence from Great Britain.[305] But after more than a decade of plots involving haunted houses built atop cursed Indian graves, US audiences had, by the 1990s, apparently reached their saturation point. Just a few years into the twenty-first century, it seemed that the trope was all but dead, used sparingly on television as a vehicle for parody and satire.[306] Considering that this broad survey Indian burial ground references in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries begins with the western-horror hybrid "The Horror from the Mound," (1932) it seems fitting then that S. Craig Zahler

[305] For in-depth analysis of this poem, see "The Haunted American Enlightenment" in Bergland, *The National Uncanny*, 39-48.

[306] Dickey, 43. For example, while *The Scooby-Doo Show* was just getting started in 1976 when it used the "haunted" burial ground bit in an early episode (see footnote 12), *The Simpsons* lampooned the trope in the 1990 episode "Treehouse of Horror," as did *South Park* in the 1998 episode "Spookyfish," *Family Guy* in the 2006 episode "Petergeist" (2006), *Parks and Recreation* in the 2011 episode "Harvest Festival," and *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* in the 2013 episode "The Gang Makes Lethal Weapon 6."

should have resurrected the literary device for his own western-horror hybrid film *Bone Tomahawk* (2015).

"Indigenous Absence in Howard's Weird West

Originally published in *Weird Tales* in 1932, Robert E. Howard's "The Horror from the Mound" blends conventions of Western and horror fictions, particularly in the characterization of the cowboy protagonist and the vampire antagonist. Set in the border region of west Texas around (if not exactly) 1845, the story details the heroic but harrowing account of former cowboy Steve Brill, who unleashes and eventually destroys a centuries-old, vampiric Spaniard, Don Santiago de Valdez. Having unknowingly unearthed Valdez while plundering what appears to be an Indian burial mound, Brill discovers, too, that his neighbor Juan Lopez, the embodiment of several anti-Mexican stereotypes, belongs to a secret order meant to safeguard against the vampire's return. Owing largely to Brill's greed, Lopez fails his sworn duty and, having hurriedly penned a short history in which he reveals to Brill the truth of the mound, dies of fright when confronted by Valdez. The final showdown between cowboy and vampire takes place in Brill's home, which has accidentally been set afire in the course of their fighting. Nevertheless, the cowboy is able to break the vampire's back and escape, leaving Valdez to burn with the house. As the story closes, Brill gives thanks to God that no one else will ever know of the evil Spaniard's existence.[307]

[307] *Western American Literature* has accepted for publication an article-length critique of this short story that I completed while drafting this chapter. In that longer analysis, I analyze Howard's construction of Brill as a masculine white hero against four raced and gendered stereotypes: the vanished Indian, the enslaved African, the effeminate Mexican, and the bloodthirsty Spaniard.

Indigenous absence serves two related purposes in "Horror" by initiating the overarching plot tension and legitimizing the land claim symbolized in the antagonist's victory over the past. In the story's opening scene, Brill observes Lopez going out of his way to avoid walking near the mound. Amused, he teases his neighbor for this precaution: "Shucks," he says, "if that is an Indian mound, them Indians been dead so long their ghosts 'ud be plumb wore out by now."[308] Brill further reflects "on the mounds that are found here and there through the Southwest—relics of a past and forgotten age, containing the moldering bones of chiefs and warriors of a lost race," but this thinking flattens a complex history of Indigenous presence in the region in the mid-nineteenth century.[309] After the 1839 Council House massacre of unarmed, peace-seeking Comanche leaders in San Antonio, Texas, and the resultant retaliation sometimes referred to as 'the Great Comanche Raid of 1840,' the few remaining years of the Texas republic were spent in contentious negotiation with western tribes. Indeed, as of 1845, Native peoples were decidedly *not* absent from the southwestern portion of Texas in which "Horror" is set, and anyone living in the state, let alone that region, would have been well aware of the reality of Indigenous presence.[310]

Regardless, Brill's obsession with the contents of the mound and his assuredness in his cultural superiority lead to the vampire's resurrection. As a white man, Brill rejects Lopez's "grisly superstitious fears," musing that "Latin-Indian devils had no terrors for the Anglo-Saxon, tormented by the demons of drouth [*sic*] and storm and crop failure."[311]

---

[308] Howard, "The Horror," 304.
[309] Howard, "The Horror," 305.
[310] Anderson, *Conquest of Texas*, 181-211.
[311] Howard, "The Horror," 307.

As such, he barely hesitates before desecrating the burial mound, hoping to discover lost treasures from the Spanish expedition that passed through the area three hundred years ago. By this point, readers have learned that this is not the first time the story's supposed hero-figure has violated an Indigenous burial mound. Recounting one such instance to Lopez, Brill absentmindedly brags

> Me and some boys busted into one of them mounds over in the Palo Pinto country and dug up pieces of a skeleton with some beads and flint arrowheads and the like. I kept some teeth a long time till I lost 'em, and I ain't never been ha'nted.[312]

Then, while describing Brill's vandalism of the mound near his farm, the narration reveals that the cowboy has dug-up several such mounds, so many, in fact, that he knows the reasoning behind the tombs' internal architecture and the ceremonial practices that would have been performed during the burial.

However, the way in which Howard narrates Brill's mound desecration signals settler societies' pervasive misunderstanding of Indigenous mounds and other earthworks. A host of recent scholarship explains that mounds built by Indigenous peoples in North America were neither exclusively used for burial (which, when thinking of Indigenous peoples, settlers equate with absence) nor were they solitary structures. Instead, mounds figure into interconnected, built landscape systems with multiple purposes and uses that articulate embodied presence and continuity.[313] Pawnee scholar and Indigenous repatriation expert James Riding In suggests that the desecration of Indigenous burial sites is directly linked to the original colonial invasion of Indigenous

---

[312] Ibid., 305.

[313] Howe, 80-81; Allen, "Performing Serpent" 410-11; Allen, "Serpentine Figures," 809-12; Anderson, "Earthworks and Contemporary," 1-2; Miller, *Ancestral Mounds,* 1-21; Atalay, 285-88; Melamed 204-05; Sayre, 225-26.

lands.[314] Further, seemingly willful blindness to Indigenous humanity accounts for the fact that Brill's grave-robbing is not widely seen as morbid, sacrilegious, or even necessarily problematic. George Yancy argues that such blindness stems from the colonial gaze's coding of non-white bodies and the production of knowledge about non-white racial inferiority. Particularly when Indigenous burial sites are destroyed in the name of knowledge acquisition, as was certainly the case with Jefferson, anthropology and other means of scientific discovery "function as vehicles through which white hegemony is further expressed and maintained [as] knowledge and power are interwoven."[315] Indeed, within the contexts of "Horror from the Mound," neither Brill's unearthing of the mound nor his subsequent release of the vampire who kills Lopez detract in any way from his role as the narrative's hero.

Employing the uncanny is another of the distinct ways through which Howard articulates Native absence. Having discovered Lopez's corpse but not yet having read the tragic history of the de Estrada expedition, Brill is overcome by the sense that he is not at-home in this land:

> For some strange reason, the thought entered Brill's chaotic mind that though the land was new to the Anglo-Saxon, it was in reality very old. That broken and desecrated tomb was mute evidence that the land was ancient to man, and suddenly the night and the hills and the shadows bore on Brill with a sense of hideous antiquity. Here had long generations of men lived and died before Brill's ancestors ever heard of the land. In the night, in the shadows of this very creek, men had no doubt given up their ghosts in grisly ways. With these reflections Brill hurried through the shadows of the thick trees.[316]

[314] Riding In et al., 173-75.
[315] Yancy, 8.
[316] Howard, "The Horror," 314.

This brief passage evinces the uncanny—in Freudian terms, the unheimlich—at work in Howard's recognition of the southwest as a palimpsestual and therefore potentially unsettling space. Bergland explains: "The sense of unsettledness . . . is important because it evokes the colonialist paradigm that opposes civilization to the dark and mysterious world of the irrational savage. Quite literally, the uncanny is the unsettled, the not-yet-colonized, the unsuccessfully colonized, or the decolonized."[317] Brill's brush with the uncanny certainly evokes the pre-colonial Indigenous past as unsettling, framing it as 'hideous antiquity' in which generations of men died "grisly" death. Notably, Howard twice foreshadows this scene, referring very early in the exposition to "uncanny menaces" and, soon after, in an exchange between Brill and Lopez about the contents of the burial mound. After Brill questions Lopez's warning to steer clear of the accursed mound, the cowboy derides his neighbor for being superstitious about Indian curses. He receives a surprising rebuttal:

> "Indians?" snorted Lopez unexpectedly. "Who spoke of Indians? There have been more than Indians in this country. In the old times strange things happened here. I have heard tales of my people, handed down from generation to generation. And my people were here long before yours, Señor Brill."[318]

Not surprisingly, Brill misunderstands Lopez's meaning, interpreting his neighbor's words as both a challenge to the legitimacy of Anglo possession of Texas. Ever the hero, Brill conquers his fear of the uncanny and bravely confronts the evil vampire. As the story's sole survivor, Brill is affirmed as the only man who can rightfully declare this land as his own.

---

[317] Bergland, 11.
[318] Howard, "The Horror," 305.

While the story's focus quickly shifts from Indian ghosts to a vampiric Spaniard, Brill's claim to settler belonging relies throughout on the absenting of Indigenous presence. References to Indigenous peoples are scattered throughout the story, but usually in terms of Spanish or Mexican conflict prior to Anglo invasion. One such passage describes how Valdez initially came to be buried in the mound. According to the written history Lopez pens for Brill, the surviving members of the Spanish expedition that Valdez had fed on captured him while he was hibernating and "bore him to an old Indian mound nearby. This they opened, taking forth the bones they found there, and they placed the vampire within and sealed up the mound."[319] Two important implications emerge alongside those bones. First, the Spanish settler project is responsible for the dispossession of Indigenous people in the region, primarily through warfare but also in the literal displacement of their remains. Second, once Brill defeats the Spanish regime personified by Valdez—who, it should be remembered, kills Lopez—there will be no one left to make a counterclaim against Brill or the Anglo-American nation he symbolizes.

Written in 1932, amid widespread unemployment and financial insecurity, "Horror" makes legible the extent to which normative masculine whiteness is essential to the regeneration of settler identity in times of cultural crisis. Indeed, the Great Depression profoundly upset the standards by which white American men determined their masculinity, as "[n]ever before had American men experienced such a massive and system-wide shock to their ability to prove manhood by providing for their families."[320] As analyses by Philip Abbott, Michael S. Kimmel, and Josep M. Armengol demonstrate,

[319] Ibid., 316.
[320] Kimmel, *Manhood*, 128.

Depression-era men in the US—particularly white men—reoriented their concepts of masculinity around physical prowess rather than material possession.[321] In that way, the Depression can be read as an uncanny moment in white masculinity, as fundamental concepts by which manhood had previously been determined were redefined or devalued. The ideal image of masculinity looked differently than it had a generation before.

Even while it evokes a mythic nineteenth century Western frontier, Howard's "Horror" is deeply rooted in Depression-era crises, particularly in Brill's failure as a farmer. Notably, Brill does not own the land he farms, an indication that, with his "tall, rangy and tough as boot leather frame," he represents the new, idealized post-Depression US manhood that privileges physical capability over material possession.[322] Too, Brill is depicted as a victim of circumstance, as blizzards, hailstorms, drought, and swarming grasshoppers lay waste to his crops. Thus, his financial ruin is brought about by market dependency, the same phenomenon that precipitated the masculine identity crisis of the 1930s.[323] It is worth noting here that "Horror," published in 1932, predates the disastrous Dust Bowl crisis that devastated agriculturalists in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Kansas. Nevertheless, the narrator is quick to suggest that Brill's "failure had not been his fault" and that a more prosperous future is possible: "there were still broad rolling ranges to the west where a strong young man could make his living riding and roping."[324] Like his pioneer ancestors and the so-called "Okies" who would follow him, Brill's future and potential fortune lie in westward migration and his ability to profit from his own labor.

[321] Abbott, 464-65; Kimmel, *Manhood*, 128-35; Armengol, 61.
[322] Howard, "The Horror," 303.
[323] Kimmel, *Manhood*,128.
[324] Howard, "The Horror," 303.

Because "Horror" is invested in the long history of westward-moving colonization in North America—and because Howard draws from the exceptionalist rhetoric that energized continued settler invasion of Indigenous lands—the story treats Indigenous absence as a given. It is only fitting, then, that the imagined futurity Brill represents necessarily begins with the symbolically-rich image of an Indian burial mound. The way in which settler populations imagine the Indigenous dispossession can take on many forms, either accentuating or minimizing the role colonization plays in Indian absence. Regardless of the form it takes—whether it be an immediately recognizable burial mound or a ghost's faint apparition—Indian absences continue to shape settler presences.

Transcendence and Black Indigenization in Alice Walker's *Meridian*

The economic crisis of the 1930s and the US's emergence as an international power following the Second World War represent touchstone moments in the development of the country's national imaginary. Popular histories like Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation* (1998) and Timothy Egan's *The Worst Hard Time* (2008) celebrate the remarkable achievements of "ordinary" Americans who epitomize a seemingly unified—and unifying—spirit. The unrest of the 1950s and 1960s, typified by anti-Communist hysteria and the Civil Rights Movement, exposed the fallacy of that national fantasy, as counterculture and oppressed groups demanded recognition of their difference and their unique struggles to belong.[325] As I argued in the previous chapter, Black liberation movements in the US typically overshadow similar efforts by Indigenous

[325] Of course, there is a long tradition of protesting the various iterations of monocultural American nationalism produced before, during, and after this particular period, such as William Apess's "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (1833), Frederick Douglass's "What to a Slave is the Fourth of July?" (1852), and Richard Wright's *Native Son* (1940), for instance.

activists during the same period, primarily because Indigenous Americans are underrepresented in discourses where race and racism are considered the central issue. Settler colonial studies has at times corroborated the separation of Black and Indigenous concerns in the US, but more recent scholarship has emphasized the intersections between enslavement and dispossession in relation to the nation's colonial origins.[326] Alice Walker's second novel, *Meridian* (1976), not only provides an entry point into this kind of relational analysis but also demonstrates the complex tensions around belonging that settler colonial conditions create for non-settler groups.

Meridian is a coming of age story in which Meridian Hill's maturation as a Black woman in the American South coincides with the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. As her investment in social justice and activism deepens, Meridian's physical health deteriorates. Nevertheless, she is propelled forward by a spiritualism shared by her father and paternal great-grandmother, both of whom, like Meridian, have been transformed by interacting with an ancient Indigenous burial mound adjacent to their family farm. These profound moments of enlightenment effect Meridian's family members in varying ways. While her great-grandmother renounces organized religion and becomes a child of nature, her father mourns the past and devotes himself to the academic study of Indigenous removal and genocide. Meridian's experience is transcendental, as she gains greater consciousness by travelling out of her body and beyond the limits of time. Living up to her name, Meridian ascends to a higher plane whereupon she realizes that, while she embodies one of seemingly infinite forms of life, she is also connected to all forms of life. Returning to her

[326] See, for instance, Day (2015), as well as Hunziker (2018).

physical body, she is thus compelled to work toward the liberation of fellow Black Americans regardless of the suffering it will no doubt bring her.

Given these raced, gendered, and spiritualized contexts, Walker's use of the Indian burial mound trope might appear to be a radical break from its previous use by white American writers. However, as Chadwick Allen explains, the Sacred Serpent mound appearing in *Meridian* reiterates many of the most troubling aspects of the Indian burial mound literary device. First, by imagining a snake-shaped mound structure on Cherokee land in Georgia, the novel either conflates Indigenous burial mounds and earthworks built by diverse cultures across the continent or presents wholly fictional details that have no recorded referent in North American Indigenous cultures. Second, the mounds act to reinforce exceptionalism among non-Natives while reaffirming Indigenous absence and death. [327] Allen further suggests that Walker's misrepresentations of Indigenous earthworks and spiritualism likely stem from her use of popular but problematic texts *Black Elk Speaks* and *Lame Deer Seeker of Visions* for material. With both texts, John Neihardt (*Black Elk*) and Richard Erdoes (*Lame Deer*) are now known to have distorted or manufactured passages and themes while inaccurately presenting themselves as cultural informants and translators.[328]

Walker's reliance on these texts in place of tribal knowledge demonstrates a possibility in which non-settler populations are still entangled within and perhaps unwittingly contributing to the ongoing erasure of Indigenous presence mediated by patriarchal white male interpretations. Indeed, one of the most critical developments

[327] Allen, 394-95,404-08.
[328] Ibid., 394-95, 405-07.

emerging from the intersections of settler colonial studies, ethnic studies, and queer theory is the argument that, in settler nations such as the US, members of oppressed groups are often conscripted into legitimizing heteropatriarchal settler whiteness vis-à-vis similarly Othered groups.[329] In effect, the structural nature of these societies normalizes settler supremacy to such a degree that, even as oppressed or excluded Others challenge certain machinations of discrimination, they are sometimes concomitantly making a "possessive investment" in other machinations that undergird settler colonial identity politics.[330] Consider, for instance, the claims to Black belonging evident in blues musician Gary Clark Jr.'s incendiary 2019 single "This Land." The song can be read on one level as an extension of Richard Wright's 1940 protest novel *Native Son,* though Clark takes a decidedly more direct approach in demanding that whites recognize Black claims to national belonging. The chorus depicts Clark's impassioned response to white supremacists' insistence that he does not belong anywhere in the country: "Fuck you," he sings to them, "I'm America's son/ This is where I come from." The refrain "This land is mine," sung four times in a row, follows immediately after.[331] These claims to a particular kind of "native" American identity felt amongst Black communities evinces the complexity involved with intersecting claims to belonging made by Indigenous, settler, and exogenous groups. It seems a given that disputes arise between Indigenous people and settler colonizers; indeed, this continues to be a central focus of settler colonial

[329] For a wide range of examples on this phenomenon, see Day (2015) Saranillo (2013), Sánchez and Pita, (2014), Morgensen, "Settler Homonationalism," (2010).
[330] Lipsitz, 2-3; Hong, 6-8.
[331] Clark, "This Land."

studies and related fields. Less discussed are the potential tensions created by competing or conflicting claims by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of color in settler nations.

In the case of Walker's novel, *Meridian* perpetuates a number of the most negative literary representations of Indianness even as it imagines affective and political kinships between Black and Indigenous Americans,. The most obvious of these yokes indigeneity with death. Meridian's realization that she possesses exceptional gifts occurs only when she lowers herself into the burial mound's central pit, "where the ground about [her] was filled with the dead," thus paralleling other narratives in which Indian absence serves to imagine non-Native futurity.[332] Further, the one living Native appearing briefly in the novel, Walter Longknife, is a World War II veteran suffering from PTSD. Though Meridian's father repatriates a section of his land back to Longknife in an act of solidarity, the scheme fails because Longknife is too restless to stay in one place. Worse, the novel renders Longknife's battle with PTSD through the visage of the stoic Noble Savage trope: Meridian remarks that his "[s]quinty black eyes stared with steady intensity into space. He was a wanderer, a mourner."[333] In less than two pages, Longknife wanders in and out of the novel, and with him goes any further mention of Indigenous modernity.

More importantly, the novel heavily implies that, with Indigenous peoples either dead or perpetually displaced, Meridian and her father inherit indigeneity. Soon after Longknife's departure, the federal government seizes the land encompassing the Sacred Serpent, including a portion of land still farmed by Meridian's father, in order to establish a new park. Recalling dubious treaty agreements used to steal Indigenous lands, the

[332] Walker, *Meridian*, 53.
[333] Ibid., 43.

family receives "only token payment" for the farmland they have lost. More interesting is the fact that segregation laws bar Meridian and her family from entering the new park for years because of their racial identity. In this way, the Sacred Serpent mound serves as a site upon which to build a relational critique of the specific ways dispossession and exclusion effect Indigenous and Black peoples. With time, anti-Black segregation laws are overthrown and Meridian eventually returns to the park—recalling Longknife's previous return to his ancestral land. Though she can legally enter the grounds, Meridian realizes that the spirit of the place "had already and forever been lost" due to commercialization and white tourism.[334]

Meridian's ability here to proclaim foreclosure of an *Indigenous* spirit of place as a non-Indigenous—but indigenized—person makes Walker's depiction of Serpent Mound problematic. In fact, it potentially creates an unlikely bond between Walker's Meridian Hill and Howard's Steve Brill. These two characters are diametrically opposed in almost every sense, particularly in that Meridian attempts to create a place for herself in the world by actively challenging the very form of white masculinity that Brill so proudly embodies. Yet they are alike in that their affective attachments to place depend upon their respective connections to imagined Indian burial mounds. This unlikely bond evinces one way in which the US settler colonial project often conscripts non-white groups into the legitimization of patriarchal white sovereignty by creating situations in which minority groups compete against one another for limited resources and forms of power.[335] How much more revolutionary might Meridian's efforts have been had Walker

[334] Ibid., 53-54.
[335] Saito, 49-50.

depicted Longknife or other Indigenous characters as allies who could remain in place and work in concert with her against white supremacy? These characters, together, might have also then negotiated between themselves the ways in which Indigenous, Black, and white communities could cohabitate on lands to which they all have deep connections.

Focusing on *Meridian*'s use of the Indian burial mound trope allows for other unexpected comparisons beyond Howard's Depression-era tale. *Meridian* has overwhelmingly been read in relation to black feminism, civil rights, and the legacies of African and African American enslavement.[336] While these critical perspectives are clearly and immediately relative to the novel's focus on anti-Black racism, I want to follow Allen's lead in unsettling such readings by insisting upon the inclusion of Native Studies paradigms as a means of locating the novel at various intersections in the US's settler literary tradition.

Foregrounding the significance of the Sacred Serpent mound and taking into consideration the novel's publication date, Walker's novel can be read alongside the horror fiction and films most often associated with the accursed Indian burial ground trope. Published just one year after *Meridian*, Jay Anson's *The Amityville Horror* (1977) signals the beginning of a long decade in which Indian burial sites figure into popular US fiction and film at a frequency akin to the rate at which Reconciliation-era Australian texts rely on settler quests for truth and healing. *Amityville* was adapted for the screen in 1979, the year before Stanley Kubrick released his filmic adaptation of Stephen King's

[336] See, for example Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 1999, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2002; Carole Boyce-Davies, *Black Women, Writing, and Identity: Migrations of the Subject*, Routledge, 2002; and Ron Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*, Cambridge UP, 2001.

novel *The Shining* (1977). Critics largely agree that Kubrick added the Indian burial ground trope to his version of *The Shining* as a subtle critique of the nation's dependence on violence and capitalism.[337] In turn, King relied heavily on burial grounds and Indigenous mysticism for his bestselling novel *Pet Sematary* (1983), which was itself adapted into a film in 1989. The *Poltergeist* film franchise is also generally associated with the Indian burial ground, though the sequel, *Poltergeist II: The Other Side* (1986) engages Indian haunting to a much greater extent that then first film.

Because all of these works feature haunted houses built on or near Indian burial grounds, scholars generally associate them with the nation's unresolved anxiety over Indigenous dispossession.[338] The details concerning the source of this anxiety are vague. A particular tribe may be mentioned, as might the date of a particular massacre, but, for the most part, these works—like *Meridian*—bank on generalizations about Indianness. By contrast, Renée Bergland convincingly argues that *Pet Sematary* reflects King's anxiety over successful native title claims secured by Penobscot and Passamaquoddy peoples of Maine after more than fifteen years of litigation.[339] Bergland and Gesa Mackenthun both read King's use of fictional Micmac Indians in the novel as a purposeful act of occlusion and active forgetting; that is, rather than engaging with contemporary Indigenous presence and the legitimacy of land claims, *Pet Sematary* instead conjures up a controlled version of Indianness whose ability to frighten settler audiences is limited and, therefore, pleasurable.[340]

---

[337] Smith "'Real Horrorshow,'" 301; Nolan, "Seeing is Digesting," 200-201.
[338] Mackenthun, 97-103; Caterine, 48-52.
[339] Bergland, 164-67.
[340] Bergland, 167; Mackenthun, 102.

Though not a work of horror, *Meridian* indirectly enacts a similar form of Indianness that contributed to the genre's popularity over the following decade. Tellingly, the chapter involving Longknife, the Sacred Serpent mound, and Meridian's transcendent experience in the burial pit is titled "Indians & Ecstasy." There are a number of ways to interpret this title given the chapter's contents, among them that Indianness provides some sort of vehicle through which non-Indigenous peoples can experience ecstasy. Or perhaps through the spiritual connection members of the Hill family share with Serpent Mound, they are among the proverbial "Indians" named in the title. To be sure, Walker's characters imagine a different relationship to Indigenous peoples than do the central characters of films like *The Amityville Horror* or *Pet Sematary*. As Black Americans, they share with Indigenous peoples an overlapping history of dispossession and exploitation that made the US a settler nation. As such, there is no need for Meridian to fear the Indian dead who surround her in the pit—should their ghosts return seeking justice, it seems unlikely that they would seek it from her family. Moreover, Meridian's emergence from the tomb-like depression within the mound structure is likely meant to foreground the Christ-like sacrifices she will make for the Civil Rights Movement throughout the novel. But if Meridian is not haunted by the idea of Indigenous spectrality in the way of *Amityville*'s Lutz family and *Pet Sematary*'s Louis Creed, she is nonetheless possessed by a romantic idea of Indian spirituality directly associated with death and the distant past.[341]

[341] As this chapter develops from dissertation to book proposal, I am going to condense the previous discussion on Howard's story and remove the following section on *Bone Tomahawk* in favor of a more detailed relational analysis of Black-authored works in the US that invoke Indigenous burial sites, mounds, and other earthworks—among them

Even as the Indian burial site trope fell out of favor in the film industry by the 1990s, problematic representations of Indigenous Americans persisted. High profile films *The Last of the Mohicans* (1990), *Dances with Wolves* (1992), *Avatar* (2009), and Disney's *The Lone Ranger* have drawn criticism concerning cultural appropriation and other gaffs relating to stereotypical Indian characters. In 2015, however, the independent western-horror hybrid *Bone Tomahawk* breathed new life into the accursed burial ground trope. Unlike the many works to have used the trope before it, however, the film is unique in that, by engaging in the US's colorblind politics of the twenty-first century, *Bone Tomahawk* attempts to move beyond unresolved anxiety stemming from colonial dispossession.

Burial Grounds, Blood Politics, and *Bone Tomahawk*

Bone Tomahawk (2015) opens with two murdering thieves attempting to hide from approaching horsemen only to stumble upon what appears to be an ancient Indian burial ground. One of the men, Purvis, manages to escape what looks to be an Indian attack, but trouble follows him to the frontier town of Bright Hope. No-nonsense Sheriff Franklin Hunt (Kurt Russell) jails Purvis on suspicion just after his arrival, but only after first shooting him in the leg during the criminal's ill-advised escape attempt. Samantha O'Dwyer (Lilli Simmons) tends the prisoner's wound, just as she has been doing for her own husband Arthur (Patrick Wilson), who is bed-ridden at home with a broken leg.

Frank X Walker's poetry collection *Buffalo Dance: The Journey of York* (2004) and Tiya Miles's novel *The Cherokee Rose* (2015). I'm also planning to include Noongar writer Kim Scott's most recent novel *Taboo* (2017) in the discussion of Australian Reconciliation narratives that center on burial and massacre sites. Including these works will ultimately allow me to explore the intersections of Indigeneity and Blackness in greater depth and scope.

Samantha, Purvis, and a junior deputy are forcibly taken during the night by the same mysterious people whose burial site was disturbed days before. Sheriff Hunt, finding a strange arrow in the jail, sends for Professor Tall Trees (Zahn McClarnon [Hunkpapa Lakota]) only to learn that the culprits belong to no Indian tribe known to these white settlers. According to Tall Trees they are a lost race of cave-dwelling "troglodytes."[342] A rescue posse forms, including Hunt, his lovable but clueless sidekick Chicory (Richard Jenkins), Arthur, and former Indian-killer-turned-gentleman-gunman, John Brooder (Matthew Fox). Only a day into their journey, the would-be heroes have their horses stolen and must continue their journey afoot. Arthur's badly wounded leg causes him to lag well behind the rest of the party, whose attempt to infiltrate the troglodytes' cave is immediately foiled once they finally arrive. Brooder, for all of his experience massacring Natives, is killed within minutes of arriving, and Hunt and Chicory are taken prisoner. Samantha is likewise imprisoned, though Purvis has already been eaten. Such is the fate of the junior deputy as well, though his gruesome death takes place in front of Hunt and Chicory—and the film's viewers. The two remaining lawmen are able to poison one of the troglodytes with tincture of opium, though Hunt is fatally wounded for the subterfuge. Luckily, Arthur arrives just in time to free his wife and Chicory before they can be killed, too. The dying sheriff gallantly insists on remaining behind to take on the final three troglodytes alone, and while the unlikely survivors make their escape, three rifle reports sound in the distance, signaling an end to these horrible events.

Bone Tomahawk belongs to a subgenre of Westerns engaging in a metanarrative *about* Westerns. The film attempts to undercut many of the cornerstone tropes associated

[342] *Bone Tomahawk*, 0:36:00.

with the genre, particularly cowboys (read *heroes*) versus Indians (read *villains*) and the captivity narrative, which typically sees a small group of heroes ride into 'hostile territory' to recover a kidnapped white woman.[343] Race factors significantly into both of these motifs historically and, as such, *Bone Tomahawk*'s critique of Westerns indirectly involves a critique of the US racial imagination. However, given the film's release in 2015, this critique is largely framed by postracial politics of colorblindness. The result, at least as it concerns the film's representation of Indigenous Americans, evinces the degree to which racist stereotypes associated with indigeneity persist even as intentional racism is thought to have become more isolated and obscure as society becomes more socially progressive.[344]

Scholars working in critical race theory generally agree that colorblindness reinforces racist ideology while attempting to appear race-neutral in both legal policy and social practice.[345] Michael Omi and Howard Winant argue in particular that, for colorblind discourse to present an illusion of postracial equality, it must first "dismiss the immense sociohistorical weight of race, to argue that it is somehow possible, indeed imperative, to refuse race consciousness and simply not take account of it."[346] Many scholars also agree that colorblindness has become the dominant mode of coding racial inequality in the contemporary US precisely because it has converged with neoliberalism,

[343] John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956) is generally regarded as the exemplar of this type of narrative, though women's written captivity narratives flourished in North America beginning in the late seventeenth century with the accounts of Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Dustan.
[344] Robertson, 113-14; King, 62-70.
[345] Omi and Winant, 218-220; López,. 995; Bonilla-Silva, 235; Melamed, 42; Gerken, 13-16.
[346] Omi and Winant, 220.

which they contend obscures its own racially discriminatory underpinnings through the guise of pure capital interests and the preservation of 'traditional' moral values.[347] Literary texts, as Jodi Melamed observes, are an exemplary source for understanding how neoliberal colorblindness circulates conventional, racialized tropes in new, more subtle terms.[348]

The Western, perhaps more than any other genre, has disseminated more negative stereotypes about Indigenous Americans than any other form of storytelling.[349] At least one critic argues, however, that today's *post-Western cinema* movement (to which it could be said that *Bone Tomahawk* belongs) actively disengages with the tensions produced by Westerns of previous generations.[350] Similar to the limitations of using the hero's quest narrative in Australian Reconciliation-era narratives like Miller's *Journey to the Stone Country*, many post-Western films rearticulate the worst stereotypes associated with Indianness precisely because they continue to rely on the old tropes.

To be sure, *Bone Tomahawk* regularly troubles Western conventions. The supposed heroes have their horses stolen, for instance, and have to carry out the remainder of their quest on foot. That the horse thieves are Mexicans seems to be a coincidence more than a purposeful nod to the longstanding racist stereotypes that code Mexicans and Mexican Americans as criminals, particularly considering that Chicory calls Brooder a bigot for using the term "greasers" and sarcastically refers to his

[347] Ibid., 211-214, 220; Melamed, 39-42; Gerken, 6-7, 13.
[348] Melamed, 2-3, 42.
[349] Yellow Bird, 40-41
[350] Campbell, 9.

committing murder as an act of "Manifest Destiny."[351] Brooder's eventual death is entirely anticlimactic, given that the party relies on his military experience against Indigenous Americans to plan their rescue attempt. When the mission quickly goes awry and Hunt and Chicory are imprisoned in a cell next to Samantha, she derides the two lawmen as idiots, not heroes: "This is why frontier life is so difficult," she seethes. "Not because of the Indians or the elements but because of the idiots!"[352] Inverting the genre's valorization of heroic masculinity even further, the three characters marked by vulnerability—the badly injured Arthur, the young white woman Samantha, and the old fool Chicory—survive, while the two archetypal heroes—the grizzled Sheriff Hunt and Brooder, the professional killer—die.

It might not seem at first glance, then, that *Bone Tomahawk* engages in colorblind politics, particularly given that Professor Tall Trees directly calls out white characters for their racist beliefs towards Indigenous peoples. Asked by Sheriff Hunt what the kidnappers look like, Tall Trees replies "Man like you would not distinguish them from Indians, even though they are something else entirely."[353] He is clearly aware of the racial hierarchy at play within Anglo settler culture, going so far as to call out the sheriff, the embodiment of governmental authority, for his investment in white supremacy. And yet, in the same sentence, Tall Trees simultaneously critiques the way in which the US's racial imagination degrades Indigenous Americans just as he conversely legitimizes the notion that superior and inferior bloodlines determine standing within that same racial

[351] Lima, 4-5; Bebout, *Whiteness on the Border*, 62-65; *Bone Tomahawk*, 1:03:05, 0:59:50.
[352] *Bone Tomahawk*, 1:39:00.
[353] Ibid., 0:36:15.

hierarchy. "They're not my kind," he responds to Arthur, who has asked if Tall Trees refuses to join the search party—presumably as the token Indian scout—because he is "afraid of [his] own kind." Tall Trees then clarifies his difference from the beings he refers to simply as "troglodytes" thusly: "They are a spoiled bloodline of inbred animals who rape and eat their own mothers."[354] Here, then, *Bone Tomahawk*'s use of colorblind politics comes into focus. That is, the film is able use the conventional genre tropes of the Western (and, to a lesser degree, the horror film) precisely because it depicts a highly civilized, seemingly inoffensive Indigenous character vocalize the rhetoric of anti-Indianism against characters that he says are *not* Indians.

Bone Tomahawk's postracial slippage occurs as a result of what Kim TallBear has called *blood politics*, the peculiar entanglement of racial science and semiotics that distinguishes Native Americans from all others in the US cultural imaginary.[355] Professor Tall Trees seems purposefully depicted so as to undermine negative filmic representations of Indigenous peoples as Indians in traditional Westerns. His title, "Professor," does not appear to be at all ironic, as Tall Trees appears knowledgeable, articulate, and finely dressed. I certainly do not mean to suggest that depicting an Indigenous man in this way is in any way intentionally malicious; rather, Tall Trees' appearance, read in dialogue with his anti-Indian rhetoric, demonstrates *Bone Tomahawk*'s messy engagement with racial politics involving Indigenous peoples. TallBear explains that, unlike other non-white peoples thought to have been inassimilable to the Anglo settler body politic, "[t]hrough both physical and cultural dilution, the Indian

[354] *Bone Tomahawk*, 0:36:00.
[355] TallBear, 32, 45-46.

was thought capable of being reconstituted, reeducated, and made into a more fully advanced human being."[356] In this way, Tall Trees might be read, to use Robert F. Berkhofer Jr.'s term, as "the white man's Indian," a transitory figure marking the inevitable passage of savagism into civilization. In this regard, he is not at all unlike the Assiniboine chief who became the subject of George Catlin's most iconic painting, *Wi-jún-jon, The Pigeon's Egg Head (The Light), Going to and Returning from Washington* (1832), in which the artist creates a "before-and-after" effect by juxtaposing the same subject, on the left, in traditional clothing and, on the right, in western clothing. [357] In other words, Tall Trees can be read as embodying the civilizing ideology of cultural dilution—in his dress, to be sure, but also in his multiple fluencies in Indian and settler knowledges.

Tall Trees' words, much more so than his appearance, make him a problematic character, however. He is the one who first applies to these fictional "troglodytes" the racist rhetoric that was historically used against Indigenous Americans, calling them "cave dwellers" and "inbred animals" who "don't have a name [or] a language."[358] In using these descriptors, as well as making assertions about blood impurity, Professor Tall Trees articulates several of the most detrimental and persistent anti-Indian stereotypes ascribed to Indigenous peoples, including accusations of the two most taboo practices in Western thought: incest and cannibalism.[359] According to Arturo J. Aldama, this colonial discourse of Indian savagery "bases itself on a closed system of significations . . . defined

[356] Ibid., 46.
[357] Berkhofer, 88-89.
[358] *Bone Tomahawk,* 0:33:50-0:38:25.
[359] Berkhofer, 28.

by and within the imperial civilizing subject" in order to "inferiorize, infantilize, criminalize, and savagize" Indigenous peoples.[360] In postracial US politics, anti-Indian rhetoric often goes unrecognized because, as Dwanna L. Robertson points out, Indigenous oppression has been normalized to the point of becoming "invisible."[361]

Because it makes clear that the savage villains are *not* "Indians" per se, the film is then free to ironically use Western and horror plot devices such as the Indian burial ground and the captivity narrative, unburned by historical context. As a result, the film implicitly engages several more negative Indian stereotypes, including the practice of superstitious spiritual beliefs, thirst for revenge, exercising cruelty toward captives, and, ultimately, inevitable defeat at the hands of better-armed and more advanced settlers.[362] Consider, for example, the way in which Samantha's captivity plays on historical fears of miscegenation in addition to the problematic use of blood politics I have already discussed. The corruption of pure white womanhood "surfaces . . . as a fundamental underpinning of the Western," according to M. Elise Marubbio, because it "allowed filmmakers [of the 1950s] to displace racial tensions into the past and onto Native Americans," who were largely seen by non-Native audiences as a vanished people.[363] *Bone Tomahawk*'s use of the motif in 2015 necessitates more careful orchestration. It is not Professor Tall Trees, after all, who appears as a racial threat but the stone-aged primitives whom he himself has declared not be 'real' Indians at all. As such, the film's use of the captivity narrative can gesture toward fears of miscegenation by re-circulating

[360] Aldama, 16, 9.
[361] Robertson, 114.
[362] Berkhofer, 28.
[363] Marubbio, 110.

well-known stereotypes associated with Indianness while appearing to remain race-neutral.

The same is true of *Bone Tomahawk*'s use of the Indian burial ground. Just before the junior deputy is murdered in the caves, he tells Sheriff Hunt that the outlaw Purvis "killed a lot of people, and then he desecrated the burial ground of these things—these Indians or whatever they are."[364] After a decade or more of relative dormancy, the old burial ground trope is recalled from the periphery of the settler imaginary once more, and with it the logic that primitive savages must die so that civilization might persist. But if it is clear *why* these things have acted a certain way, it is still unclear exactly *what* these things—"these Indians or whatever"—actually are. The film as a whole expresses this same level of ambiguity towards the villainous troglodytes. Even as the seemingly reliable Tall Trees explicitly informs the posse—and, indirectly, the audience—that these "things" are not Indians, all of the symbols of savage Indianness recognizable to even casual fans of Westerns are thrust upon these supposedly non-Indian savages. And because they are marked by Indianness, they are also inevitably marked for death. The real irony is that the film's suggestion that these deracinated troglodytes are not Indians is, in a way, absolutely correct, so far as "the Indian"—as Gerald Vizenor points out throughout *Manifest Manners*—is itself "a simulation. . . . the absence of the tribal real."[365]

[364] *Bone Tomahawk,* 1:35:50.
[365] Vizenor, 4.

Conclusion.

Overlapping literary tropes and motifs found in US and Australian literatures suggest that the colonial past of both nation-states persistently haunt modern settler imaginaries. Uncanny place-attachment, Indigenous spectrality, and accursed burial and massacre sites represent distinct but interrelated articulations of this unsettling aspect of settler belonging. The recurring use of these literary devices forms legible trends in literatures of settler nations, particularly because they tend to proliferate in moments of cultural crises. In Reconciliation-era Australia, for example, Anglo settler populations were unsettled by major, rapidly-occurring developments in native title legislation, official admittance of forced removals, and acknowledgements of longstanding social and political disparities experienced by Aborigines as a result of colonization. Major writers and texts associated with the period, including Henry Reynolds's *Why Weren't We Told?*, Alex Miller's *Journey to the Stone Country*, and Kate Grenville's *The Secret River*, were acutely aware of the uncanniness brought on by imagined Aboriginal spectrality. As a result, these works often serve as mediations of anxiety over complicity and as a means by which white Australians could seek out the truth on their way to reconciliation.

These works evince an important crisis event in Australia's national history, to be sure, though it must be remembered that settler colonialism persists into the present via an internal structure that produces such events. Therefore this chapter has been framed around a relational analysis juxtaposing "event" literature produced as a result of Australia's Reconciliation movement with a structural survey of twentieth and twenty-first century American literature. My analysis of the latter has stressed the importance of the symbolic Indigenous specter as a necessary element in the operation of US

biopolitics. That is, I have argued that the nation continues to be necessarily "haunted" by the "ghosts" of Indigenous Americans, often through the symbolic Indian burial site, so that non-Indigenous populations in this land of conquest might re-imagine futurity in moments of social and political unrest. Anglo American horror writers such as Robert E. Howard, Jay Anson, and Stephen King have been the storytellers most frequently employing the Indian burial ground trope for this purpose, but as my discussion of Alice Walker's *Meridian* demonstrates, settler colonialism in the US has produced complex entanglements in which non-Native people of color are likely to be conscripted into the dispossession of Indigenous peoples even as they struggle against the forms of white supremacy that made initial dispossession possible. My concluding discussion on the film *Bone Tomahawk* further suggests that as the US polity becomes more entrenched in the rhetoric of postracial colorblindness, racialized tropes such as the Indian burial ground might potentially reemerge after decades of public ridicule.

In the following chapter, I discuss how exogenous Others function within settler hegemonies in relation to Indigenous dispossession. Up to this point I have discussed two ways through which settlers utilize narrative storytelling toward the larger colonizing project of displacing Indigenous peoples in order to manufacture a sense of native belonging. In the following chapter, I discuss a similar strategy active in the literatures and political discourses of the US and Australia, whereby labeling certain minoritized migrants as potential invasion threats is meant to legitimize the sense of settler belonging derived through Indigenous removal. This anti-immigrant sentiment, expressed as means of affirming settler place-attachment, accounts for the double register of *settler nativism* as I define it in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 4

SETTLER NATIVISM AND POST-9/11 INVASION NARRATIVES

In mid-June, 2015, a reality television star and notoriously unscrupulous land developer stood onstage, in front of a row of American flags, and announced his intention to become the next President of the United States. Donald Trump offered US citizens a new compact when he proclaimed that he would "Make America Great Again" by restricting the flow of people, jobs, and goods coming into or out of the country. Trump specifically took umbrage with undocumented immigrants from Mexico, claiming that "[w]hen Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best." He elaborated on this point in a now-infamous sound bite, stating that Mexicans immigrating to the US "have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems [to] us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." Trump's comments reiterate the basic talking points of what Natalia Molina terms a *racial script*, a built-in lexicon that predetermines how members of certain racial groups are viewed, treated, and talked about.[366] Trump's speech clearly engages a racial script on Mexicana/o—and, more broadly, Latina/o—people; in particular, it evokes what Leo Chavez terms *the Latino threat narrative*. Migrant peoples from across Latin America, codified simply as *Mexicans*, represent a threat to jobs, public safety, and moral decency—what some would think of as the 'American way of life.'[367] In retrospect, these

[366] Molina, 21.
[367] Chavez, 25.

comments portend a slew of similarly derogatory political rhetoric that has come to typify the Trump presidency.

Much of the attention paid to Trump's candidacy bid speech has rightfully focused on his depiction of Mexican immigrants as majority criminals with the occasional "good" person here and there.[368] Elsewhere in the speech, Trump's comments reveal the logic that normalizes and sustains racial scripts. "I speak to border guards and they tell us what we're getting," Trump said. "And it only makes common sense. It only makes common sense. They're not sending us the right people."[369] Two critically important themes involving current debates about immigration emerge out of this statement. The most obvious of these is the distinction between 'right' and 'wrong' people, which reinforces the discriminatory connotations of a 'good immigrants' versus 'bad foreigners' binary. The second, and perhaps somewhat less immediately recognizable, is the idea that common sense dictates the distinctions between the right people and the wrong people, the good people and the bad people, or, to state it more simply, us and them.

The protean nature of Trump's nativist rhetoric demonstrates that determining who belongs to a "them" group is always a matter of context. Given that so much of the anti-immigrant discourse taking place in the contemporary US is aimed at Latina/o and Arab peoples from a plethora of countries, it seems only logical that Trump would go on to remark that the threat to national wellbeing is "coming from more than Mexico. It's

[368] Especially given his insistence that there were "fine people" amongst the groups of white supremacists and those demonstrating against them at Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017.
[369] Donald Trump, *Presidential Announcement Bid* [speech], 16 June 2015, New York City, available at http://www.time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/.

coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably—probably—from the Middle East. But we don't know. Because we have no protection and we have no competence, we don't know what's happening. And it's got to stop and it's got to stop fast."[370] Trump thus appeals to the increasingly open animus many white Americans feel towards exogenous people of color by suggesting that looming demographic changes expose the nation to a greater risk of terrorist attack carried out by people who do not look like "us," speak like "us," or value the things that "we" value.

Trump's candidacy bid speech represents the confluence of discourses involving two important, overlapping developments: the debates that took place during the so-called culture/history wars of the 1990s and the reactionary responses to global terrorism after the September 2001 attacks on the US. The scope of these events involves far more nations than the US and Australia alone, but understanding the culture wars and the war on terror as contiguous issues provides further grounds for relational analyses between these two nations. For more than two decades now, American fear monger Patrick Buchanan has declared a 'state of emergency' over a covert Mexican invasion conspiracy termed *la reconquista* and the impending 'death of the West.'[371] Australia's federal Minister of Immigration Philip Ruddock began making similar claims during this period, declaring a "national emergency" in late 1999 and falsely claiming that more than 10,000

[370] Trump, *Presidential Announcement*; for more on the discursive links between Latina/os, Arabs, illegality, and terrorism, see Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*, New York UP, 2012, pp. 98;

[371] Bebout, 290-313; Buchanan was certainly not alone in disseminating this rhetoric. For more examples arguing that immigration threatens the US's sanctity, see Peter Brimelow's *Alien Nation: Common Sense about America's Immigration Disaster* (1996) and Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1994) and *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity* (2004).

"illegal immigrants" from Arab majority countries would soon overwhelm Australia's national security.[372] The rise of Australian politician Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party through the mid 1990s relied on a similar anti-Asian platform. Like the arguments Buchanan and others made about Latinas/os immigrating to the US, Hanson erroneously claimed that Asians were "swamping" Australian cities and depleting resources while refusing to assimilate.[373] Hanson's initial popularity was merely the cresting of a neoconservative wave that built in Australian politics as a direct response to the nation's official embrace of multiculturalism throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[374] Her seemingly improbable return to Australian politics in 2016 depended on nearly identical rhetorical attacks, this time against all Muslim immigrants. Hanson's platform pivot thus marks a shift in the ways white Australians view themselves and their oppositional Others.[375]

Hanson, like Trump in the US, is held in contempt by many Australians, who see her as provincially-minded, uninformed, and inarticulate. Both politicians have still managed to leverage populist support around what Ghassan Hage terms *paranoid nationalism*—a defensive attachment to one's nation based on the perception of ubiquitous threats to security.[376] The US and Australia have openly engaged in paranoid nationalism for almost the entirety of the twenty-first century, largely through then-President George W. Bush's initiation of a global "war on terror" in response to 9/11.

---

[372] Ruddock, n.p.; for further details, see Burke, 3.
[373] Jupp, *From White Australia*, 125-27; Buchanan, *State of Emergency*, 5.
[374] Jupp, 101-25; McNevin, 73-74. Multiculturalism is generally considered to have replaced the previous assimilationist platform and to have guided bipartisan federal agendas from the Whitlam government of the early 1970s until Howard's election in the 1996.
[375] Murphy, n.p.
[376] Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, 3-4.

The campaign not only continued throughout his and Barack Obama's pair of consecutive terms but also drew support from leaders of other nations, including Australia's then-Prime Minister John Howard, who came to be regarded as Bush's "deputy sheriff" in the Pacific.[377] Indeed, Howard won re-election in late 2001 largely owing to a national security platform that framed the ongoing *Tampa* crisis—the arrival of more than 400 Arab asylum seekers in Australian international waters in late August—in relation the Al Qaeda attacks on the US. Australian public support of the war galvanized after two terrorist-led bombings in Bali in 2002 and 2005 killed a number of vacationing Australian citizens. Anti-Islam sentiment peaked two months after the second Bali bombing, when racial violence erupted on the beaches of Cronulla, a suburb of Sydney. Images of angry white Australian males carrying signs or wearing body-paint proliferated on national media outlets, and their message to immigrants was clear. "We grew here. You flew here" they reminded those immigrants already in the country. "We're full. Fuck off" they told those who might have been considering whether or not to immigrate.[378]

Scholars working in the US and Australia have convincingly demonstrated that these more recent events are rooted in the countries' colonial origins and are shaped by common sense beliefs about the nation and national identity.[379] Donald Pease's survey of American exceptionalism places the events following 9/11 within a larger discussion of what he terms "a transgenerational state of fantasy" haunted by the nation's foundational violence against dispossessed Indigenous, enslaved African, and vulnerable migrant

[377] Jelly-Schapiro, 1-4, 17-19; Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, 73-76; Fickling, n.p.
[378] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 43.
[379] Volpp, 319.

peoples.[380] Eli Jelly-Schapiro similarly contends that the history of the US can be read as an evolving "security discourse" of military defense and capitalist order in which the precedence for extralegal violence that enabled settlers to colonize the Americas has been incorporated into the legal purview of the nation-state.[381] James Jupp's important work on the history of Australian immigration links contemporary debates over the detention of Arab-majority asylum seekers to the formation of what is colloquially referred to as *the White Australia policy*, a set of parliamentary acts passed since the onset of Australian federation (1901) that effectively restricted non-White immigration for more than one hundred and fifty years. David Carter notes that, until the 1960s, the comprehensive policy represented a universally accepted basis for national identity formation, not a politically divisive issue but "a deeply embedded cultural belief system."[382] White Australia just made sense, in other words.

This chapter considers instances in which the narratives of twenty-first century paranoid nationalism have coalesced with racist nativism in literatures of the US and Australia. Much has been written about literary culture after 9/11, though I am mostly concerned with the ways in which narratives of national renewal recapitulate norms of belonging in settler nations. I'm particularly interested in narratives that perpetuate settlers' eliminatory logic by transposing historical frontier violence onto modern, global 'frontier' sites. My critical discussion on these transit narratives engages a diverse range of prose fiction from the US and Australia. I focus on Philip Caputo's *Crossers* (2010) as an exemplar of US settler nativism before juxtaposing it in relation to Luis Alberto

[380] Pease, 38.
[381] Jelly-Schapiro, 20.
[382] David Carter, 312, 318.

Urrea's *Into the Beautiful North* (2009) and Ana Castillo's *The Guardians* (2008). I emphasize how the novels by Urrea and Castillo undermine the elision Caputo's novel makes between Western frontier masculinity and anti-terror border policing. My discussion of Australian novels reads Felicity Castagna's *No More Boats* (2017) in relation to Kim Scott's *That Deadman Dance* (2012). I demonstrate how contemporary multiethnic Australian fiction is actively drawing on the nation's settlement history in order to trouble the stereotypes associated with today's refugee population, often pejoratively referred to as "boat people."

I perform these relational critiques in order to make legible a third distinct rhetorical move inherent to the definition of *settler nativism* developed throughout this dissertation project. The misnomer that settler colonization ceased when the US and Australia gained national independence supports the presumption that settler indigenization is likewise complete. If this were the case, previous distinctions between settler and Native would cease to matter or even exist. Within this line of thinking, claims to Indigenous sovereignty warrant little merit, especially when juxtaposed against seemingly unrelated—but more pressing—issues such as national security and immigration restriction. Yet another distinction emerges between the supposedly native-born settler and the foreign immigrant so that the settler-as-nativist becomes an integral part of identity formation in narratives of belonging. Settlers' right to decide who belongs in conquered lands is often accepted as a given, both legally and culturally. Such common sense presumptions cannot go unchallenged, particularly amongst those who seek to destabilize the interrelated systems of power undergirding colonization, nativism, and imperialism.

Common Sense Indigenization in Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

I have demonstrated in previous chapters two ways in which settler nativism names attempted moves to indigenization, either by making superficial, fabricated claims to Indigenous identity or the more complex process of constructing settler futurity in relation to Indigenous spectrality. This chapter further develops the analytical possibilities inherent in the double register of the term *settler nativism* by exposing the tacit acceptance of indigenization as common sense knowledge that manifests when discussing anti-immigrant nativism in settler-nations like the US and Australia. Nativist claims to belonging in the settler colonial present are paradoxical, yet they are deeply ingrained in settler societies precisely because the processes of unwitnessing, silencing, and erasure of Indigenous sovereignty discussed in previous chapters have been and continue to be highly effective. The central argument developed in this project is that any critique on anti-immigrant nativist discourse occurring in nations formed and maintained by settler colonialism must meaningfully engage with the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples. For that to be possible, scholarship on immigration and nativism must first be framed in relation to critical Indigenous and settler colonial studies.

Nativism, an actively defensive form of xenophobia, can occur in any nation in which citizens identify as a distinct collective through ethnic, racial, or cultural nationalism. Nativist sentiments typically rely on binarial, antagonistic relationships rooted in national imaginaries: us versus them, natives versus foreigners.[383] Contemporary nativist sentiments often center on immigration restrictions, which have

[383] Higham, 3-5; Benedict Anderson, 23; Schrag, 4, 13; Behdad, 5-7; Hage, *White Nation*, 18-19; Jacobson, xxi-xxii; Galindo and Vigil, 422-23;

produced another binary: good, desirable, or model immigrants versus bad, undesirable, or illegal aliens.[384] As such, much of the scholarly discourse on immigration and nativism focuses on the vilification of certain exogenous populations based on economic, racial, and religious factors. This work is important and useful for understanding ways in which racialization and Islamophobia are structurally integrated into immigration and surveillance policies, but it also potentially (and unconsciously) contributes to the erasure of Indigenous sovereignty.

Scholars working on nativism in the US and Australia too-often stop short of acknowledging the fact that these supposedly native populations are present-day settler colonizers. In other words, they fall into the discursive trap of yet another, older binary: native versus non-native. Consider the following definition, which appears in an essay condemning racist nativism for its basis in white supremacy: "nativism is unique in that its ideological core rests on notions of nationalism and distinguishing between native and non-native."[385] Or this explanation of anti-immigrant sentiment in the US: "economic, social, and policy conditions have shifted so as to harden categorical divisions between immigrants and natives."[386] Drawing attention to this conflation is not meant to devalue the important intellectual contributions made by such work but neither is it semantic nit-picking. Erez Cohen notes that, in Australia, Indigenous and immigrant issues are not only codified into separate issues—Reconciliation or Multiculturalism—but that this

[384] Chavez, *Latino Threat*, 25; Molina, 4; Mamdani, *Good Muslim*, 15; Gerken 8; Lippard, 593-95; Huber, 221-26; Alison Bashford, 30-32; Behdad, 14.
[385] Lippard, 593.
[386] Massey and Sanchez R., 58.

siloing forestalls political solidarity against the state.[387] Insisting on *settler nativism* as the proper identifier when discussing anti-immigrant nativism in settler nations actively refuses acceptance of indigenization as a given or colonization as finished.

Recognizing the ease with which *native* is coded as "white American" or "white Australian" when discussing immigration disrupts the acceptance of settler indigenization as a self-evident fact. Mark Rifkin's concept of *settler common sense*, "the ways the legal and political structures that enable non-native access to Indigenous territories come to be lived as given," provides a name for the type of equivocation I've pointed out.[388] Ali Behdad similarly contends that common sense beliefs in a cultural "melting pot" or "a nation of immigrants" rely simultaneously on actively forgetting the colonial origins of immigration policy *and* willfully overlooking the economic exploitation and disproportionate policing of contemporary immigrants.[389] Jodi Byrd gestures at the consequences of equivocating settler and native identities in relation to immigration when she writes that "[t]he pairing of indigeneity with xenophobia lends itself to narcissistic nativism."[390] A far-right nativist organization calling themselves Reclaim Australia demonstrated just this kind of narcissism when, in 2015, members attempted to incorporate the Aboriginal flag into their anti-immigrant demonstrations.[391] It must be remembered that nativism is primarily a claim to rightful belonging, an issue settlers would like to believe has long been settled. Anti-immigrant sentiments articulated by members of settler populations thus inherently reassert settler sovereignty over

[387] Erez Cohen, 67-68.
[388] Rifkin, *Settler Common Sense*, xvi.
[389] Behdad, 7-10.
[390] Byrd, "Still Waiting," 75-89.
[391] Sparrow, n.p.

Indigenous lands without ever having to directly acknowledge original and ongoing dispossession.

The relationship between settler colonialism and anti-immigrant nativism has thus far received little critical attention.[392] Some scholars may even contend, as Catherine Dauvergne does in *The New Politics of Immigration and the End of Settler Societies* (2016), that "the settler society era is finished, and the paradigm has faded away."[393] The general consensus amongst scholars working in Indigenous, settler colonial, and postcolonial studies convincingly suggests otherwise.[394] Even so, much of this scholarship has only recently begun theorizing beyond a settler-Indigenous binary in order to account for the complexities of racialization, migration, and citizenship in present-day settler states. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui rightly notes that these very issues often expose incongruities between Indigenous and immigrant populations, making relational discourses especially fraught. Responding directly to Kauanui, JoAnna Poblette-Cross

[392] See Volpp and Bashford for two noteworthy exceptions.
[393] Dauvergne, 4-5. Dauvergne's premise is especially fraught given her habit of making sweeping claims about the self-evident demise of settler societies, the creation of a unified global governing body controlling migration, and the impossibility of Indigenous decolonization. Not surprisingly, she offers little to no justification for such claims, nor does she appear to have engaged the scholarship of key figures working in immigration, Indigenous, or settler colonial studies when developing her argument. Concerning the precise meaning of *settler society*, for example, she offers the rather understated admission that "[a] rigorous definition is not helpful, as my purpose is not to stake out and police boundaries of a certain category. Indeed, some of the work of this book depends on a degree of wobbliness in the concept, on its ability to mean different things at different times to different people" (10). Further, she suggests that *The New Politics of Immigration* "begins [the] process" of understanding the ways in which immigration policy is determined based on a good/desirable versus bad/illegal paradigm. For several examples of texts in which that process was not only begun but written about in great detail prior to Dauvergne's book, see notes 1 and 2.
[394] Coulthard, 108; Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 10; Cook-Lynn, xiii-xvii; Lowe, 7-8, 16; Grewal, 30-31; Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 1; Wolfe, " Recuperating Binarism," 257-79.

acknowledges that even as struggles to secure protections for migrant and immigrant laborers should not trump struggles for Indigenous sovereignty, there are potential opportunities for cross-cultural, anticolonial collaboration between Indigenous and (im)migrant peoples in settler nations.[395]

Works by Suvendrini Perera, Jodi Byrd, Mahmood Mamdani, Aileen Moreton-Robinson, and Ann Laura Stoler suggest possible directions for challenging settler nativism. While not always engaging one another's works, these writers offer compelling evidence that settler-national exceptionalism in the global arena fundamentally relies upon the perpetual colonization of Indigenous subjects and the oppression of similarly marked Others. Perera's *Australia and the Insular Imagination* (2009) includes a comparative discussion of ways in which the US and Australia have used the 'war on terror' to transpose logics of the "sovereign authority of the conquered homeland" onto newly "imagined geographies" of Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Pacific.[396] Byrd's *Transit of Empire* (2011) is premised on a similar argument, exposing even more ways in which the discursive construction thought of as "Indianness" informs the ongoing erasure of 'domestic' Indigenous peoples while being recapitulated through settler imperialism, essentially making "Indians" out of Arab and Muslim peoples.[397] Mamdani argues that even supposedly liberal concepts like multiculturalism in a 'nation of immigrants' are only made possible in settler nations through prior dispossessions of traditional inhabitants and the "uncritical embrace of the settler experience."[398] Like, Mamdani,

[395] Kauanui, "Colonialism in Equality," 645-48; Poblette-Cross, 501-02.
[396] Perera, 127-28.
[397] Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, xiii-xxxv.
[398] Mamdani, "Settler Colonialism," 13-15.

Moreton-Robinson links the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous populations with Australia's policing of non-white immigrant and refugee bodies. She contends in *The White Possessive* (2015) that Australian beaches are legible sites upon which heteropatriarchal white supremacy and racial violence against Aborigines has been rearticulated against Arab-Australians, both in the detention camps housing asylum seekers who arrived via boat and the in targeted violence of the 2005 Cronulla riots.[399] Stoler's concept of *recursive analytics* stresses reading contemporary global issues as the continuation of colonial and imperial histories that "*fold back on themselves*" in a "process of partial reinscriptions, modified displacements, and amplified recuperations."[400] In other words, the work of colonizing projects that ultimately enabled the founding of settler nations is not only incomplete, it is not unrelated to the imperial endeavors of those settler nations abroad nor their domestic defensive measures such as border militarization. These concepts are often rightly applied to critiques of the state, yet adopting them for literary analysis here demonstrates their embededness within settler culture as well.

My discussion of *settler nativism* in this chapter endeavors to better understand how the pairing of settler belonging and nativism produces and is produced by contexts specific to nations born out of settler colonialism. I contribute to the work begun by the above mentioned scholars by demonstrating that the *transit* of Indianness or Aboriginality theorized by Perera and Byrd takes place concomitantly alongside settler indigenization as a distinct process. Projecting Indianness and settler indigenization are

[399] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 34-43.
[400] Stoler, *Duress*, 26-27. Emphasis in original.

interrelated processes of identity construction, but they distribute and inflict power unequally amongst different groups based on the hierarchical ordering of subjects within the settler colonial framework.[401] The angry group of mostly white Australian men who gathered on the beach at Cronulla to confront Arab immigrants thought of themselves as *native* Australians, not *Aboriginal* Australians. Such distinctions are meaningful because of what they have to tell us about the way belonging is imagined and enforced in settler nations today.

Persistent Anxiety over Foreign Invasion in Settler Cultural Imaginaries

The US and Australia share a similar national tradition of invasion anxiety that predates the events of 9/11. Anthony Burke contends that insecurity over foreign invasion in Western countries stems from their basis in the notion of Hobbesian state sovereignty, so that anxiety remains a "potent, driving imperative" that produces and sustains national identity.[402] The "Yellow Peril" narrative concerning Chinese immigrants proliferated in the US and Australia in the nineteenth century, and the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor (December 1941) and Darwin (February 1942) have become touchstones in the cultural imaginaries of both countries since the mid-twentieth century. Cultural anthropologist Annette Hamilton reads the Darwin bombing as "the apotheosis of the long Australian nightmare of invasion by the Asian hordes," and indeed, anti-Asian invasion narratives

[401] While settlers are by and large the most likely candidates to be subjected to the process of indigenization, non-Native people of color can also be conscripted, as I demonstrate in the previous chapter's discussion of Alice Walker's *Meridian*. Similarly, white settlers are very rarely subjected to the process of Indianness, though it does happen, as David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon* (1993) demonstrates.
[402] Burke, 2.

had circulated in literary and political publishing outlets as far back as the 1880s.[403] William Lane's novella *White or Yellow?: A Story of the Race War of A.D. 1908* appeared in 1888, followed by Kenneth Mackay's *The Yellow Wave: A Romance of the Asiatic Invasion of Australia* in 1895 and C.H. Kirness's *The Australian Crisis* in 1909.[404] In the US, two of the most prominent literary naturalists were producing similar works. Frank Norris published the short story cycle "Outward and Visible Signs" between 1894 and 1895, with many of the stories depicting Asian characters as carriers of degenerative communicable diseases or agents of cultural regression. The following decade Jack London published two now-notorious essays, "The Yellow Peril" (1904) and "If Japan Wakens China" (1909), in support of exclusionary labor practices.[405] If, as Burke suggests, invasion anxiety is a fundamental tenet of Western national identity, the nightmare neither began nor ended at the turn of the twentieth century, nor at Darwin, Pearl Harbor, or the WTC. As such, the theme of foreign invasion in US and Australian literatures produces and perpetuates a common sense anxiety amongst settler populations, making this narrative form particularly well-suited to the type of recursive analysis Stoler suggests.

Literary historians agree that the invasion narrative is a subgenre of storytelling originated in England and distinguished by several tropes: plotting international conflict in relation to patriotic sentiment and developing themes such as vulnerability due to waning imperial strength, anxiety over increasing international rivalries, and precipitating

[403] Hamilton, 24; Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Narrative*, 136.
[404] For comparative analysis of these works, see Meaney, 73-98.
[405] These works and more are covered in detail in the first two chapters of Lye, *America's Asia* (2004).

national decline via degraded cultural ideals involving gender roles and racial purity. Critics further agree that such tales purposefully redirect readers' attention away from internal domestic issues and onto often highly racialized, non-white exogenous threats, while also stigmatizing internal disunity. [406] Previous analyses of this narrative type conclude that the fear of foreign dispossession remains a central part of settler colonial imaginary.[407] For example, Catriona Ross's discussion on the recurrence of Asian invasion narratives in Australia's literary tradition through the 1990s notes "a desire to strengthen white Australia's own sense of national belonging, to bolster their native authenticity and claim the land as their own."[408] In other words, invasion narratives in settler literatures evince simultaneous, interrelated anxieties over indigenization and nativism. Therefore, stories plotted around foreign incursion into the US and Australia provide an ideal archive in which to observe settler nativism's simultaneous double-movement in action.

US narratives of invasion written in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are distinct in that they first became synonymous with Latinas/os only to further encompass Muslims and Arabs after 2001. Novels about migration written during this period reflect changes in US immigration policy, so much so that Marta Caminero-Santangelo refers to a "Gatekeeper era" of US-Mexico border fictions to demarcate a

[406] Walker, 98-104; Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Narrative*, 135-40. There any number of fitting examples for this latter point, but the outcry in response to Muhammad Ali's refusal to be drafted into military service during the war in Vietnam stands out. Ali was denounced by politicians, media outlets, other high-profile Black athletes, and even Arizona's Pima tribe for claiming to be a conscientious objector based on religious and social justice beliefs.
[407] Ross, 88-89; Elder, 122; Hamilton, 18.
[408] Ross, 90-91.

paradigm shift following then-President Bill Clinton's Operation Gatekeeper initiative begun in late 1994.[409] As a result of the coordinated terror attacks on September 11, 2001, it has become common practice to think in terms of "post-9/11" literature that frames national identities in relation to Islamic and/or Arab Others.[410] These two sources of invasion anxiety have coalesced in the nation's Department of Homeland Security, which is tasked with policing the nation's southern border against undocumented migrants and monitoring potential terrorist activity. Rarely are these related concerns placed in conversation in the same creative work, however. The examples of US literature discussed in this chapter make up a few exceptions.

Meanwhile, the Australian history wars of the 1990s and early 2000s included a disagreement concerning the issue of *settler* invasion that was not present in the discourse surrounding the US culture wars of the same period. The use of the term *invasion* in primary school curricula to refer to British colonization became a key talking point in conservative backlash against Black Armband revisionist. Then Opposition leader John Howard was particularly opposed to the idea of settler invasion on the grounds that it unnecessarily burdened school children with a sense of shame about the nation's origins.[411] This is an especially salient detail to consider when analyzing Australian settler nativism, given that Howard's reelection as Prime Minister in 2001 depended largely on his response to the threat of foreign invasion and terrorist attacks.

Howard's campaign responded in particular to two key developments in the months prior to the vote: the August 2001 arrival of more than 400 Arab refugees on the

[409] Caminero-Santangelo, 58-61.
[410] Duvall and Marzec, 388-89; Anam, 664-65.
[411] Macintyre and Clark, 177-81.

Norwegian container ship MV *Tampa* and the September 11 terrorist attacks on the US. Howard's comments on the latter are profound for the ways in which they articulate the connections I have attempted to forge so far in this chapter:

> The tragic events of the 11th of September have changed our lives, they have caused us to take pause and *think about the values we hold in common with the American people and free people around the world*. That was an attack on Australia as much as it was an attack on the United States. It not only claimed the lives of Australians but *it assaulted the very values that we hold dear and that we take for granted*. So therefore a military response and wise diplomacy and a steady hand on the helm are needed to guide Australia through those very difficult circumstances. National security is therefore about a proper response to terrorism. It's also about having a far sighted, strong, well thought out defense policy. It is also about *having an uncompromising view about the fundamental rights of this country to protect its borders*, it's about this nation saying to the world we are a generous open hearted people . . . . *But we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come*.[412]

Howard's comments here predate those of Donald Trump's presidential bid speech by more than a decade, yet they are remarkably similar in a number of ways. They speak to similar anxieties of foreign invasion and vulnerable borders inviting terrorism. They call on strong, decisive military intervention. And just as importantly, they appeal to a shared sense of values and entitlement to rights as citizens of countries that value freedom. Both speeches ultimately articulate a common sense logic that binds the US and Australia to a much greater degree than 9/11 could be said to have done. Howard and Trump are both declaring that the legitimacy of settlers' claims to national belonging are substantiated, in part, by the degree to which the two settler nations can repel foreigners attempts to invade.

Aboriginal Australian writers Tony Birch and Kim Scott have responded to Howard's campaign speech by imagining a decolonial alternative in which Indigenous

[412] Howard, n.p. Emphasis added.

peoples' rights to welcome visitors to Country and their duties as hosts supersede the government's self-legitimizing authority. According to Birch, the shortcomings of the native title legislation have only reinforced the idea that Aboriginal "legitimacy does not lie within the legal system and is not dependent on state recognition." Birch argues that his and other Aborigines' moral authority originates with ancestral customary laws that predate Anglo colonization; therefore, he is empowered by his legal obligation to support refugees who have arrived as "visitors to the country of my elders."[413] Scott similarly suggests that shared experiences of colonial oppression could lead to future alliances between Aboriginal and refugee populations. He further posits that such alliances, "founded upon the heritage of First Australian communities, those responsible for first developing society on this continent," possess decolonial possibilities that could redefine national identity by decentralizing settler supremacy.[414]

Birch and Scott offer an alternative vision for the future in which the primacy of Indigenous belonging is not threatened or effaced by the recognition of immigrant and refugee rights. Instead, it is affirmed by them. Given that Indigenous and (im)migrant political struggles are framed within settler colonial paradigms as discrete and unrelated, alliances between these populations may very well prove essential for dismantling the authority undergirding settler nativism. Anticolonial or decolonial coalitions depend upon the recognition and mediation of relational connections shared by minoritized groups. Including Indigenous peoples in these efforts and working to address their concerns means that Othered groups who are non-Indigenous face complex questions over

[413] Birch, "The Last Refuge," 20-22. 20-22.
[414] Scott, "A Fantasy," 146-47.

belonging not entirely dissimilar to those of white settlers. In the next section, I consider how these non-Indigenous claims to belonging are in tension in settler and Chicana/o novels whose depiction of undocumented migration across the US-Mexico border draws from the related anxiety over terrorism that typifies post-9/11 literature.

The US-Mexico Border as Ground Zero

Philip Caputo's novel *Crossers* (2009) imagines families torn apart, brought together, and finally feeling at-home after destructive acts of foreign invasion. More well-known novels like Don Delillo's *Falling Man* and Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* are similarly about reorienting oneself in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks that occurred on 9/11. *Crossers* is unique from these works in that it predominantly takes place in the American Southwest rather than New York. Early on in the novel, protagonist Gil Castle moves from the northeast, which is haunted by the memory of his wife's tragic death aboard one of the planes flown into the World Trade Center (WTC), to the San Ignacio cattle ranch on the Arizona-Mexico border. Ben Erskine, Castle's grandfather and a legendary lawman of the Wild West, began the ranch in the early decades of the twentieth century. Castle's elderly Aunt Sally and his cousin Blaine Erskine currently manage the vast San Ignacio, which briefly provides Castle with the solitude he was unable to maintain as a wealthy stock broker and grieving widower.

Enter Miguel, an undocumented migrant from Mexico who has narrowly survived being murdered by members of the cartel for whom he was forced to traffic drugs while crossing the border. Castle feels compelled to provide Miguel sanctuary, perceiving in him some mutual sense of loss and suffering. Castle and his ranching family are subsequently entangled in a full-fledged border war that involves ruthless cartel leaders,

human traffickers, policing agencies from the US and Mexico, and a double-agent determined to bring about *la reconquista*. Yvonne Menéndez, one of the cartel leaders, harbors a lifelong vendetta against Castle's family, as Ben reluctantly killed her father during a dispute that took place while Yvonne was a child. The inevitable final showdown that concludes the novel leaves Blaine, Yvonne, and Miguel (as well as a score of other minor characters) dead, while Castle barely survives a serious gunshot wound. In doing so, he becomes the legal owner of his grandfather's ranch and the rightful inheritor of his legacy. Caputo's novel blends genre elements of the traditional Western the emerging post-9/11 literature, making it an exemplar for understanding settler nativism in relation to the transit frontier rhetoric and anti-immigrant sentiment.

In Caputo's novel, Mexican cartels are similar to the 9/11 attackers in that they not only invade Castle's homeland but destroy the very notion of home as a place of safety and belonging. Castle sells his New England house (a century-old Colonial, no less) and moves back to the more 'primitive' family ranch. The novel is plotted around his gradually rebuilding a sense of home only to once again have it threatened by some seemingly ubiquitous evil plaguing modernity. Cousin Blaine explains to Castle that the border region has been possessed by some unseen malignancy: "there's somethin' here now that didn't used to be here," he remarks. Castle agrees, but he immediately resituates his cousin's paranoia in relation to the pervading anxiety of global terror, linking a massacre of migrants attempting to cross into the US from Mexico to bombings in Tel Aviv and the attack on the WTC. "Whatever was here that didn't used to be here was

everywhere," Castle muses. "There was no sanctuary."[415] In this way, *Crossers* is a typical post-9/11 novel in that it tropes on home invasion as a global phenomenon reproduced at the familial level.

Caputo's novel is remarkable for the way in which draws Ground Zero and the US-Mexican border together as nationally significant sites of invasion. In doing so, it anticipates Arizona's passage of two controversial anti-immigrant laws in early 2010. Published in 2009, *Crossers* should be read in relation to SB 1070 (the *Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act*) and HB 2281 (dubbed the "anti-Ethnic Studies Act"), both of which code immigrant and Chicana/o difference as a potential for terrorist activity.[416] SB 1070 and HB 2281 gained support in part because they frame symbolically rich spaces—the neighborhood and the classroom—as targets for invasion and subversion by outsiders. Drawing on these fears, legislators called upon neighbors, parents, and teachers to be more vigilant in policing these sites where notions of familial and communal belonging materialize. Caputo's novel speaks to these very anxieties on a national scale.

Crossers is thus not unlike so many other invasion narratives that champion reinvestment in national ideals involving race, gender, and capitalistic ownership. Caputo introduces his protagonist as a man deeply traumatized by the sudden loss of his wife in an unfathomable act of violence. He immediately tests readers' empathy by also detailing Castle's decision to move west with his "minor fortune" after having taken early

---

[415] Caputo, 247.

[416] Lisa Marie Cacho, "But Some of Us Are Wise: Academic Illegitimacy and the Affective Value of Ethnic Studies, *The Black Scholar*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2010, pp. 2930; Roberto Dr. Cintli Rodriguez, "Arizona Criminalizes Indigenous Knowledge," *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2013, pp. 23-24.

retirement from his own brokerage firm and liquidating all of his assets. Even after having parceled out much of this wealth, "what remained was considerably more than enough to sustain him in style if he lived to be a hundred, which he fervently hoped he would not." This line of narration continues: "With all his belongings fitting easily into the cargo compartments of his Suburban and with his dog for company, he saw himself as a refugee of the strange new war that had begun on a temperate September morning. Were it not for his girls, he would have felt deracinated, jobless, wifeless."[417] It might seem that Caputo intends for Castle's sense of victimhood here to be a bit ridiculous, given that readers will understand that only his *material* belongings fit in his automobile because he's sold most of them and is 'jobless' only in the sense that he voluntarily retired early. To the contrary, the problematic depiction of Castle as a dispossessed war refugee proves to be an earnest point of reference against which readers can gauge the protagonist's growth by the novel's end. Indeed, *Crossers* shifts the terrain of the post-9/11 novel to the borderlands so that Castle is able to confront the villainous cartel members and prove his heroism in a way denied to him by the Al Qaeda attacks. The novel is thus not so much about restoring domestic relationships as it is about reinvestment in social norms of white settler masculinity, which encompasses heteronormative relationships but also property ownership and physical ability.

It is particularly telling that in the same passage where Castle is likened to a war refugee, he is also described as *deracinated*. In other words, he is not merely forced out of his colonial house or the broader northeast but from the comforts of affluent white privilege. Such ethnic distinctions prove a primary means of transiting the trauma of 9/11

[417] Caputo, 38.

to the US-Mexico border. Castle explicitly associates Al Qaeda and Mexican cartels as similar Others that cause him to experience personal loss:

He felt himself to be in a foreign land where he didn't know the language or the customs or what to expect next.

> He recognized this anxiety—it was the same that had descended on him when he'd visited Ground Zero nearly a year ago. Yet this was not an alien world, it was his own. *Just a different kind of terrorist*, Gomez had said yesterday. The same beast that had devoured Amanda had merely changed its outward shape, its name. Now it had materialized as someone called Yvonne Menéndez. Well, he wanted to look it in the eye without shrinking from it. Touch its flesh. Smell its breath. He wouldn't be truly free until he did.[418]

There are several important threads to tease out in this key passage. The first line refers to the new border malignancy of which Blaine previously spoke. As it appears here, however, Castle's uncanny relation to the border also harkens back to Buchanan's alarmist rhetoric concerning *la reconquista* and the corrosion of American (read *white*) culture. It is worth noting that Buchanan and other racist nativists have traditionally pointed to the persistence of Spanish as evidence that Latina/o immigrants are willfully resistant to assimilation.[419]

The intellectual labor performed by the remainder of the above passage attempts to coalesce anxieties concerning cultural erosion, terrorist invasion, and the fragility of settler belonging in order to justify the novel's turn to the familiar narrative of a reluctant hero triumphing over evil and, in the process, feeling reborn. Caputo's conflation the US-Mexico border and Ground Zero is evident enough, as is the association between Al Qaeda and Mexican cartel members. Much more interesting is Caputo's use of *alien* in

[418] Caputo, 432. Italics in original.
[419] Bebout, "Nativist Aztlán," 302; Chavez, 45-46; Galindo and Vigil, 423; Schrag, 14.

the lengthy passage quoted above. The term works to doubly signify Castle's general perception of the uncanny and simultaneously affirm his possessive claim to the US in the face of so-called illegal alien invasion: "this was not an alien world" he reminds himself, "it was his own." Castle's character growth—his transition from urbane victimhood to frontier bravery—is the process by which the transit of empire occurs in the novel. His development into an archetypal hero effectively triangulates Islamic terrorism, Mexican gang violence, and Indianness through the oppositional "beast" with whom he eventually faces off. Stated another way, *Crossers* brings the confrontation between savagism and civilization into the post-9/11 world of border insecurity and global terrorism. It does so in order that the protagonist might rediscover a sense of belonging rooted in the defense of a homeland to which his attachment grows in proportion to the mounting external threats he perceives.

Caputo's depiction of Castle as the gatekeeper defending Western civilization recalls President Bush's congressional address in which he ostensibly initiated the global war on terror. Just as Castle is determined to confront the evil beast head on in order to set himself free from the anxiety that has followed him across the country, Bush promised Congress that "[o]ur nation, this generation, will lift the dark threat of violence from our people and our future. . . . We will not tire, we will not falter and we will not fail." Bush also articulated the binarial logic of savagism versus civilization in his closing remarks, claiming that "freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war."[420] Further rhetorical analysis of public discourse from Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney following 9/11 suggests that both men habitually invoked what Mark West

[420] Bush, np.

and Chris Carey refer to as a "cowboy ethos [that] is at once a mixture of virtue and vice."[421] Appealing to a popular investment in the Old West fantasy and invoking the mythical figure of a frontier lawman allowed the Bush administration to operate under the auspices of American exceptionalism, pursuing peace through violent retribution.[422] *Crossers* employs a similar logic of frontier justice in that Castle can only feel as if he truly belongs at the San Ignacio—'free' in the language used in the novel—by defending it in a head-on confrontation with the evils of global terrorism.[423]

Luis Alberto Urrea's novel *Into the Beautiful North* (2009) subverts the Western frontier rhetoric undergirding the Bush administration's war on terror and, by extension, Caputo's novel. Set in the present-day and in a remote Sinaloan village of Tres Camarones, far south of the US-Mexico border, the novel directly tropes on the plot of John Sturges's classic Western film *The Magnificent Seven* (itself a retelling of Japanese auteur Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*). Cartel members have begun operations in sleepy Tres Camarones, and teenaged heroine Nayeli is inspired by *The Magnificent Seven* to follow the path north into the US in order to replace the many male villagers who have departed in search of work, including Nayeli's father. Instead of seven cowboy gunfighters for hire, Nayeli and her fellow travelers eventually return with a somewhat ragtag group of Mexican nationals who have been eking out a living at or just across the

[421] West and Carey, 396.
[422] Ibid., 382-96.
[423] This 'virtue and vice' combination was also prevalent in popular country music after 9/11, nowhere more so than in the songs of Toby Keith. "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue (The Angry American)" (2001) describes the 9/11 attacks as a "mighty sucker punch" for which the US military responded by "[lighting] up your world like the Fourth of July" and "[putting] a boot in your ass." In "Beer for My Horses," (2003) a duet with Willie Nelson, Keith imagines coming together with fellow extralegal posse members to celebrate having lynched "bad boys" working in the service of "evil forces."

border. *Into the Beautiful North* thus gently parodies *The Magnificent Seven* by centering the action on the search party delegation rather than the heroic Yankees they enlist as defenders. It is much more picaresque than the traditional Western, and even denies readers the chance to witness the epic showdown to which *The Magnificent Seven*—like so many Westerns, including *Crossers*—builds.

The novel also troubles the militarization of US border security after 9/11. Nayeli's group is detained by Border Patrol agents shortly after their first attempt at crossing. The Sinaloans experience detention, processing, and deportation procedures firsthand. The narration explains that, as a result of 9/11, the Border Patrol has been inundated with "gung-ho . . . Terminators," paranoid, over-trained agents who are "eager for action."[424] Tacho, an openly gay man who owns a café in Tres Camarones called La Mano Caído, is mistakenly detained under suspicion of terrorism as a result of the agents' hyper-awareness.[425] While being herded onto the deportation bus, Tacho tells Nayeli that he is glad to be returning to Tres Camarones and the café. Over the noisy crowd of deportees, Tacho joyously exclaims "¡LA MANO CAIDA!" A hush falls, and one already edgy Border Patrol agent declares "This guy's Al Qaeda!" while others tackle Tacho and take him into custody.[426] Tacho is roughly interrogated but ultimately freed before almost improbably reuniting with Nayeli and company to successfully re-enter the US on their next attempt. The implication throughout much of *Into the Beautiful North*

[424] Urrea, 158.
[425] The narrator explains early on that naming the café La Mano Caído—The Fallen Hand—was Tacho's way of defusing the villagers' insults that his sexuality made him "limp-wristed." See pages 18-19.
[426] Urrea, 162-63.

suggests that Homeland Security and its border security measures are drastic and ineffective to the point of ridicule.

Even as the novel satirizes policies like Operation Gatekeeper, research strongly suggests that increased militarization along the US-Mexico border has drastically increased the level of violence experienced by migrants and Mexicana/os. Migrants today risk crossing at more remote (and thus less policed) points along the border, resulting in greater risk of exposure, injury, and death. Harsher restrictions have also led to an increase in human trafficking organized by crime syndicates. Exorbitant trafficking fees have created a debt system between many undocumented migrants and criminal operations in Mexico, who routinely dehumanize their "cargo" through economic, labor, and sexual exploitation.[427] Attempting to secure the US border via increased policing and militarization has in effect exposed those who are most vulnerable to even greater hardship.

Anna Castillo's *The Guardians* (2008) offers a much more bleak vision of the forms of violence crowding the US-Mexico border than does *Into the Beautiful North*, though her critique is no less emphatic than Urrea's. The novel is plotted around a family's search for their missing relative, Rafa, who has disappeared en route to New Mexico on his most recent crossing. Rafa is ultimately revealed to have been held in a trafficker's flophouse and forced to produce drugs while his son Gabo and sister Regina try to locate him. They eventually enlist a number of helpers in their quest to find Rafa, most notably social justice advocate Miguel and his grandfather Milton, both of whom share narrating duties with Gabo and Regina. Their search ends in tragedy, as Rafa and

[427] Michalowski, 64-69.

Gabo are both killed as a result of the violence introduced into the region by the cartels and traffickers. Gabo's search for Rafa in *The Guardians* is similar to Nayeli's search for her own father in *Into the Beautiful North,* and both novels are not unlike *Crossers* in that the loss of a loved one dramatically affects each protagonist. Marta Caminero-Santangelo observes, however, that "Castillo's larger, contextualized narrative is about the historical factors that have given the coyotes [traffickers] their power," including immigration restriction, advanced policing of traditional migratory routes, economic domination through NAFTA, and the US's demand for illegal drugs and cheap labor.[428] Castillo and Caputo thus attribute drastically different causes to the same type of violence occurring at the border; as a result, *The Guardians* criticizes American exceptionalism where *Crossers* reaffirms it.

Castillo's metaphorical use of guardianship at the border invites comparisons with Caputo's depiction of his protagonist as a gatekeeper. The titular *guardians* find several potential referents throughout Castillo's novel. Regina is Gabo's de facto legal guardian in the absence of his mother and father who have both disappeared due to border violence. Gabo regularly prays to Catholic saints for guidance and protection. Miguel and Milton are in different ways keepers of Mexican American and Chicano histories in the US. Regina even morosely refers to the Franklin Mountains as "guardians between the two countries" for the way in which their harsh terrain contributes to the number of migrant deaths.[429] Then there are the Border Patrol agents, "better equipped for combat than the boys at war," and the Minutemen, who represent "unmitigated vigilantism at its

[428] Caminero-Santangelo, 88-89.
[429] Castillo, 5.

racist best" according to Miguel.[430] Minutemen appear in *Crossers*, too, but they are described so differently that they might be recognized as a wholly separate entity. Castle initially expects the worst from these "guest-guardians" who turn out to mostly be "retirees bored with golf and gated communities, looking for adventure on the border." Caputo's Minutemen appear to be anything but paramilitary vigilantes and are described as "a tolerable bunch, some even likable," who are mostly "[playing] the role of earnest Concerned Citizen."[431] Caputo's capitalization of "Concerned Citizens" here draws a presumably unintended but not altogether undeserved parallel between the Citizens' Councils that promoted segregation and white supremacy throughout the US South in the mid twentieth century. Regardless, the divergent ways in which Castillo and Caputo imagine gate-keeping and guardianship represent their largely antithetical conceptions of the border and border-crossing. *The Guardians* problematizes a notion that *Crossers* reaffirms: that national security and border policing are protective measures. Castillo's novel—like Urrea's—suggests instead that migrants are targeted with criminalization and thereby exposed to increasing threats to their personal well-being.

The most important distinction between *Crossers* and novels like *Into the Beautiful North* and *The Guardians* is that, for Castle, the US-Mexico border becomes a generative site of self-discovery, familial reconnection, and healing from trauma. Surveys of contemporary fiction suggest that Latino/a-authored novels of the twenty-first century thematically link border-crossing with exploitation, disappearance, and the resultant

[430] Ibid., 123-24.
[431] Caputo, 371.

trauma of familial loss.[432] This is certainly the case with *Into the Beautiful North* and *The Guardians*, in which the young protagonists of both novels desperately seek out of their fathers who have disappeared as a result of crossing over into the US. For much of *Crossers*, Castle is characterized by the unresolved trauma of his wife's sudden disappearance in the 9/11 attacks.[433] In stark contrast to the losses experienced by Regina, Gabo, and Nayeli due to border-crossing, Castle experiences a new sense of family belonging precisely because he assumes the role of border defender against the Menéndez cartel.

For all of their differences, however, non-Indigenous characters in *The Guardians* and *Crossers* make similar, conflicting claims to belonging and place-attachment that obscure Indigenous presence along the border. Regina and Miguel from *The Guardians* can be read as embodiments of Mexican and Chicano nationalisms, both of which Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez claims rely on abjection and selective acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples and histories.[434] In the same passage in which she reflects on the mountains acting as guardians along the border, Regina muses on the long, ongoing battle for ownership of the region:

[432] Delgadillo, 601-02; Caminero-Santangelo, 60.
[433] Recall the previously discussed passage in which "he saw himself as a refugee of the strange new war . . . . deracinated, jobless, wifeless" (38).
[434] Guidotti-Hernandez, 9-10. Guidotti-Hernandez makes clear that this is not merely an issue amongst Mexicana/os and Chicano/as, as US nationalisms are reliant upon similar measures.

> These lands, this unmerciful desert—it belonged to us first, the Mexicans. Before that it belonged to los Apaches. Los Apaches were mean, too. They knew how to defend themselves. And they're still not too happy about losing everything, despite the casinos up by their land. 'Keep right on going,' they'll tell tourists when they try to pull over on the highway that cuts across it during the dry season.
>
> Ha. I wish I could say that our here whenever some stupid hunter wanders near my property. It's just me and the barbed-wire fence between the hunter and government land where he can do as he pleases, all dressed up like if he was in the National Guard.[435]

Regina's claim to rightful Mexican ownership clearly belies Mexico's own colonizing invasion into Apache land, which seems to have shifted from the once fiercely-defended borderlands to somewhere further "up." How did this movement, which Regina frames as a process of "losing everything," occur in relation the borderlands transitioning from Apache to Mexican ownership? The US and Mexico combined over time to dispossess the Apache from lands that, today, straddle both sides of the international border. Regina's self-contradictory, selective acknowledgement of this history and her desire for something akin to Apache sovereignty in the present moment undercut her possessive counterclaim against the US. Too, Regina frames ownership of the land as a matter of defensive conflict, from the Apache defenders she admires to the military-like hunters she despises. For all of the ways in which she and Gil Castle from *Crossers* differ, the ways in which they imagine their claims to the land to be just and right are markedly similar.

In Miguel, Castillo offers a critique of the ways in which Chicano nationalism manufactures a sense of belonging through an idealized form of indigeneity. Miguel longs to be recognized as a revolutionary activist like the historical figures he studies and admires, yet he is nagged by misunderstanding and lack of appreciation from the people

[435] Castillo, 5.

with whom he most desires a connection. He bemoans the fact that he is "one of the few people around here who still calls himself Chicano" and is even referred to as "corny" for suggesting that a group of counter-protesters demonstrating against the Minutemen should call themselves "the People of Corn because it was our people who cultivated maize on these lands."[436] Miguel's form of Chicanismo relies on ambiguous claims to "our ancestor's lands," veneration of Aztecan cultural practices, and a helter-skelter appropriation of mystical "Indian" healing practices that include carrying a "Lakota pouch" and participating in a number of sweat lodges.[437] Guidotti-Hernandez's scholarship critiques this practice of Chicano nationalism for the ways that it uncritically codes Chicano as a masculinist type of indigeneity that privileges Aztec heritage at the expense of all other Indigenous groups in Mexico and the US.[438] Castillo seems to purposefully ridicule aspects of Miguel's character for these same reasons. Even as he is admirable and endearing in myriad other ways, Miguel can never fulfill his desire to be a leader amongst his people because so much of his identity relies on an insincere performativity that continuously proves to be ineffectual.

In *Crossers,* Castle's sense of place-attachment to San Ignacio requires a similarly convoluted process of indigenization. Unlike Regina and Miguel, Castle does not look to any of the nations or tribes indigenous to the particular section of borderlands in which *Crossers* is set. Remarkably, he adopts his cousin's romanticized misunderstanding of Aboriginal Australian belonging to describe his newfound relationship to his 'ancestral' homeland. Cousin Blaine serves as Castle's foil in several aspects, though their original

[436] Castillo, 41 & 125.
[437] Ibid., 108-09, 125, 187, 195.
[438] Guidotti-Hernandez, 18-20.

disparities blur over the course of the novel. As Castle moves from east to west, his urban sensibilities take on a rougher edge, and his abstract, progressive political ideals undergo a similar transformation as he becomes more emotionally and financially invested in the ranch. Indeed, the most telling moments of change in Castle's characterization occur in instances when he reflects on his sense of place-attachment to the land on which generations of his family have lived and worked. Castle's deepening love for the land develops alongside a growing defensiveness about potential invasion and dispossession, however. *Crossers* thus demonstrates the common sense double register of settler nativism in that, as Castle undergoes a process of indigenization on the San Ignacio ranch, he increasingly supports border restriction through the binary of good and bad immigrants.

The process of indigenization requires that non-Indigenous peoples in lands of conquest adopt a sense of emplacement that they interpret as indigeneity. *Crossers* manages to altogether avoid the issue of the Erskine family having played a role in the displacement of Indigenous peoples on whose lands the ranch now stands. Instead, Blaine appropriates a superficial, romantic notion of Aboriginal Australian place-attachment to explain his affective investment in the land, one that Castle will grow to feel as well. As the cousins look out upon the San Ignacio, Blaine relates to Castle the idea of being "[s]ung to the land," explaining how "An Aussie commando I knew in Vietnam told me that's what the aboriginal folks say about a place that's a part of you so much, you'd die bein' away from it." He further states "That's how I feel about this ranch. I've always

taken good care of it, and I intend to continue doin' just that."[439] Blaine's assertion of what Yu-Fi Tuan terms *topophilia*, "the affective bond between people and place," grafts a romantic misrepresentation of Aboriginal Australian belonging onto Anglo American settler identity.[440] Blaine imagines himself to be more of a steward to the land than its owner. In doing so, his defensive attachment to the ranch is made to appear noble and his potential for violence justifiable.

This particular attempt at indigenization is unique in that it depicts settlers from one settler nation appropriating a romanticized form of Indigenous belonging from an entirely separate settler nation. The notion that Blaine and Castle could be 'sung to the land' as described in *Crossers* only highlights the fact that settlers can never become a truly indigenous population, even as they form affective bonds to landscape and property.[441] Despite Blaine's claim that he feels the same way Aborigines feel about their lands, Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson adamantly contends that such commensurability is fundamentally impossible because Indigenous and settler populations do not relate to the land in the same way. [442] Moreton-Robinson, Irene Watson (Tanganekald, Meintangk Boadnik), and Mary Graham (Kombumerri and Wakka Wakka) explain that Aboriginal belonging is an ontological relationship to land (or *Country*, more precisely) based on laws developed by ancestral beings during the Dreaming, the time of the earth's creation. After these ancestral beings created the forms of plant and animal life we know today, they themselves became perceivable features of

[439] Caputo, 91.
[440] Tuan, 4.
[441] Garbutt, 175; Goldie, 13.
[442] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 11; Watson, 511-12.

earth such as land formations, sky, and water. Importantly, Aborigines today consider themselves descended from the ancestral beings, so that their connection to the land is physically, linguistically, and spiritually embodied simultaneously.[443] Law is manifested, in part, through songlines, paths across the continent created by the ancestral beings during the Dreaming. Bruce Pascoe explains that songlines form "cultural, economic, genetic and artistic conduits" that move "art, news, ideas, technology and marriage partners to centres of exchange."[444] In other words, pathways formed by songlines are the antithesis to settler nations' borders, which exists to divide people, places, and property. As an Anglo American, particularly one consumed with defending his ranch against outsiders, Blaine cannot be 'sung to the land' in any way resembling an Aboriginal understanding.

That does not suggest, however, that his attempt at symbolic indigenization is not without meaning. Understanding what Blaine 'feels' when he briefly talks about being 'sung to the land' helps explain how Castle's regeneration takes place over the course of the novel. His wife's death has left Castle feeling for most of the novel as if his life no longer has meaning or purpose, yet his aunt's death brings about the surprising realization that he has once again formed attachments to people and place and, more importantly,

[443] Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, 11-12; Watson, 512; Graham, 182-83. It's worth noting that Blaine wrongly assumes being disconnected from one's country would cause an Aborigine to die. As Moreton-Robinson explains, the complex set of cultural mores that constitute Law accounts for proper procedures of living on the lands of other clans (*White Possessive*, 14-15). It also must be said that Aboriginal people are very much alive despite the fact that so many are disconnected from their lands precisely because settlers have continuously dispossessed them, in many cases, by trying to kill them off the land.

[444] Pascoe, 129.

that he can imagine a future for himself.[445] Walking amongst the headstones of his family cemetery, Castle is struck by the feeling that "coming here had . . . restored the severed bonds to the land of his ancestors. Their hearts, stilled in their bodies, were in it, beating on in the grasses greened by the summer rains, in the everlasting miracle of the resurrected flowers, and so was his."[446] He feels as if he, too, is 'sung to the land,' in other words, with the heartbeats of several generations forming a rhythm between Castle and the San Ignacio.

Importantly, Castle's indigizenation through a supposed emotional reconnection with his ancestral lands has occurred alongside his increasing sense of defensiveness regarding border security. Both of these affective developments are bound up in the fact that Castle becomes a partial owner of the San Ignacio when Sally dies, his enormous wealth conveniently ensuring that the ranch will remain a family possession. Before he becomes a partial owner, Castle's outlook on immigration aligns with the prevalent good/bad binary; for example, he notes that some of the undocumented immigrants' discarded items he comes across suggest a degree of cultural refinement, as they are "not the possessions of poor, semiliterate, itinerant farm workers."[447] That perspective changes in response to an uncanny moment in which Castle discovers cartel drugs hidden in a remote but beautiful section of the ranch:

> The landscape had changed; that is, [his] view of it had, his imagination populating the underbrush and oak stands with smugglers watching his every move. Yet anger simmered under his uneasiness. Who the hell did these traffickers think they were to use his land—yes, it was his now—as a

[445] Caputo, 320-23.
[446] Ibid., 322-23.
[447] Ibid., 242. It is important to note that Castle's original good/bad binary is still materialistic and distinguished by class.

> warehouse for their goods? He was not, as he might have been in the past, inclined to forgive those who trespassed against him. He was beginning to think like Blaine.[448]

It might just as easily be said that Castle is beginning to think like the ideal settler citizen—a white, Christian, landowning male.[449] It is worth noting, too, that Caputo's description of the traffickers includes a subtle but noteworthy gesture to Indianness—they hide in the shadows, watching, waiting for the ideal moment to ride in and attack the unsuspecting cowboy. Regardless of how his new subjectivity is framed—whether he's rancher, an ideal citizen, or a cowboy—Castle's supposedly rediscovered connection to the land comes with a new defensive outlook on belonging that makes anyone crossing the border via his ranch an invader. In the novel's conclusion, Castle and a handful of law enforcement agents and clandestine assassins team up, à la *The Magnificent Seven,* to bring an end to Yvonne Menéndez's reign of terror on the border.

In addition to characters from Ana Castillo's *The Guardians*, Gil Castle of *Crossers* poses a number of unlikely similarities to Antonio Martone, the protagonist of Australian novelist Felicity Castagna's *No More Boats*. Castle and Antonio are haunted by the tragic loss of a loved-one in an event that each man blames on foreigners: where Castle loses his wife to the Al Qaeda attacks on 9/11, Antonio loses his dear friend Nico to a construction site accident that he attributes to the shoddy workmanship of Australia's new immigrant labor force. Castle and Antonio similarly struggle with the loss of their masculine identities, and both men attempt to right themselves by defending their adoptive homelands against a perceived wave of invaders. For Castle this means stopping the flow of "illegal Mexicans" through his grandfather's ranch, while Antonio focuses on

[448] Ibid., 352.
[449] Harris, 1716-19; Watson, 513-15.

the arrival of "boat people" such as the unskilled workers he blames for Nico's death and Arab refugees just arrived in Australian waters. Despite these similarities, Castagna's novel offers a much more nuanced vision of immigration restriction, refugee diaspora, and national identity than does Caputo's *Crossers*. Thus it can be read in relation to Noongar writer Kim Scott's historical novel *That Deadman Dance*, which reorients the concept of Australia's "boat people" to include British colonial invasion.

Multiculturalism, Terror, and the Legacies of White Australia

Felicity Castagna's *No More Boats* (2017) takes place in the Sydney suburb of Parramatta over the mere weeks that separated the arrival of the MV *Tampa* carrying more than 400 rescued asylum-seekers and the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks on the US on September 11, 2001. The novel alternates narrative perspectives from each of the four Martone family members. Antonio, the family patriarch, immigrated to Australia from Italy more than fifty years ago but has recently been forced into retirement from his construction job following a tragic workplace accident that claimed the life of his longtime friend and fellow immigrant Nico. Antonio is left with lasting physical, mental, and emotional damage as a result of the accident, for which he especially blames the unskilled migrant laborers who constitute much of Australia's current immigrant demographic. Rose, an Australian-born woman of English descent, struggles with her husband's new identity and his increasingly erratic behavior as she wonders what life could have been like had she followed her longtime friend and neighbor (and Polish immigrant) Lucy into a life of political activism and a romantic relationship. Francis Martone struggles with his father's growing notoriety and his own sense of personal failure, while his older sister Clare debates opening her heart to a former student and son

of Vietnamese refugees who is unexpectedly thrust back into her isolated life as an adult. The family ultimately fractures under the weight of the public scrutiny Antonio attracts by painting "NO MORE BOATS" on his driveway in response to the *Tampa* crisis, and the novel concludes with the impression that Australia is heading for similar misfortune in the years to come.

Throughout the novel, it is unclear how cognizant Antonio is of his own actions and their consequences: he first paints the message after unknowingly smoking one of Francis's joints and being guided by Nico's ghost. Antonio is continuously haunted by his old friend, even as he grows to believe that Prime Minister Howard is speaking directly to him through the media *and* as he is co-opted into white nationalist John Solomon's nativist crusade against the asylum seekers. The novel concludes on September 10th, as Antonio attempts to commandeer a river ferry with a plastic toy gun in an effort to dissuade immigrants from further encroaching on his home. This surreal scene goes unresolved, as news of the 9/11 attacks dominate Australian headlines and Antonio is forgotten. The novel's final line captures Castagna's political critique of the nation's present-day myopia concerning Australia's long, complicated migration history: "Before all the news stories that made us draw all those connections between Muslims in planes and Muslims in boats, there was Antonio Martone, the Italian immigrant who was trying to stop all those ferries coming up the Parramatta River with his plastic gun."[450]

No More Boats considers a range of cultural anxieties produced by the nation's transition from White Australia to multicultural Australia. Antonio belongs to that earlier wave of arrivants who were encouraged to assimilate into the predominantly Anglo

[450] Castagna, 219.

Australian culture, and his investment in heteropatriarchal nationalism reflects the values of the nation's post-war society. According to his daughter Clare, "he's old and he's angry that he's not in control anymore. He's always had a thing about migrants these days not working as hard, not trying to fit in as much as he did."[451] In other words, Antonio embodies a process through which certain immigrants can be absorbed into the settler population and, in turn, adopt nativist attitudes. It is no coincidence that Antonio is a homebuilder, as having built his own house in Parramatta symbolizes his successful assimilation and having taken part in Australia's nation-building scheme.[452] But by 2001, the construction site has come to represent his loss of control and his displacement within his adoptive nation. He thinks of himself and Nico as "the last of their kind," having "outlasted all the other people like them" (45). He has become defensive by this point, distinguishing himself from "*them*," the "faces without names" who come from Asian and Arab countries and "from God knows where."[453] To Clare's point, he does resent these new immigrant laborers for their cliquishness and lack of training, but he also begrudges his children's generation, born to "people like [him] who had migrated too long ago for anyone to remember that they were migrants too."[454] Antonio is caught between what he perceives to be two distinct groups, neither of which he identifies with. The current immigrant working class doesn't look, speak, or act like he does, while his

[451] Ibid., 135.
[452] Ibid., 2-3. According to James Jupp, southern Europeans were the next-best option in Australia's planned immigration program when migrants from the United Kingdom couldn't be enticed. Jupp notes, however, that Australian immigration officials stressed assimilation to these non-Anglo European arrivants, urging them "not to behave in any way which would attract attention" (20).
[453] Ibid., 42-44.
[454] Ibid., 43, 45.

own children identify more with "native-born" white Aussies than with him. He is a transitory figure caught between the histories of White Australia and multicultural Australia, out of place in both.

Castagna explicitly juxtaposes Antonio's migration experience with those of contemporary refugees fleeing economic and environmental disasters wrought by international warfare in their home countries. In a flashback scene set in Antonio's native Calabria, Italy, readers learn that

> post-World War II, the earth was . . . unstable on account of being blown to pieces by the allied forces not so long before. The pockmarked places on the side of the mountain where those bombs had hit filled with [rain] water and turned to mud. The buildings too, they turned to mud and the weak frames of houses that had been built too high, to fit too many people, they became bloated and collapsed and the people went with them.[455]

This passage is strikingly reminiscent of narration from the earlier scene in which Antonio disparages immigrant construction workers,

> Vietnamese or Chinese or whatever they were, poor shits making $400 a week. He had to admit they were fast and strong but they couldn't do things properly. They weren't even trained right. They came from countries where you just whacked up a scaffold with bamboo and string and when everything collapsed you covered up the whole mess by throwing the buildings and bodies into giant holes in the ground and starting again.[456]

Readers encounter both passages because they have access to Antonio's interior thoughts and memories, yet another suggestion that they are meant to be read in conversation. Indeed, Antonio's thought that "[w]hole villages had vanished like that. The lucky ones who survived, moved, materialised again somewhere else" could refer to either tow his

[455] Ibid., 81.
[456] Ibid., 43.

own village in Italy or those of migrants from Vietnam or China.[457] Nonetheless, Antonio can only see the perceived differences between himself and these new immigrants, who cannot or will not undertake the same process of assimilation he underwent after arriving in Australia.

Castagna's novel only subtly gestures at Australia's colonial origins, though it succinctly captures the nation's specific settler nativist anxieties in doing so. The novel takes place in a number of Sydney suburbs, though the Martone home, upon which Antonio paints his nativist declaration, is located in Parramatta. The first Governor of New South Wales Arthur Philip relocated the British colonial headquarters to this site in 1788 after determining that the First Fleet's landing site in Sydney Cove could not sustain the colonists' agricultural demands.[458] Castagna does not include this detail of settlement history in *No More Boats*, though by locating the novel in Parramatta, she inherently links Antonio's insecurities over his belonging with those of the earliest colonists, whose efforts to establish a British outpost in Australia were not guaranteed success.[459] Antonio's notoriety gains the attention of John Solomon, leader of a small-time white nationalist organization operating out of another nearby suburb. Solomon is a quasi-intellectual, given to lectures about the vulnerability of an imperiled white Australia. Antonio sits in on a "meeting of like minds" in which Solomon begins a speech by

[457] Ibid., 81. Antonio is thinking here of his own mountainside village in Calabria, destroyed by floods made more severe by the bombed out post-war landscape.
[458] Everett, 60.
[459] Everett notes that the governor's house first erected in Parramatta by Arthur Philip is not only the nation's oldest public building but also directly adjacent from a traditional Darug men's ceremonial site (60).

referencing the writings of nineteenth century Australian socialist and white separatist William Lane:

> 'Nations,' John Solomon explained, 'have swarming populations like beehives. When nations reach a critical stage of over-population people mass-migrate. Lane said China had a swarming population of sixty-five million and that was the late 1880s. Imagine, now it would be the same for the Middle East. It's happening every moment. We're seeing the effect of those swarming populations sitting in a boat called Tampa, right off our own shores. They're waiting, just waiting to swarm on in and start another hive.'[460]

Spurred on by Solomon's alarmist rhetoric, one of the other attendants "suggested that these swarming populations would probably get together with the Aboriginals, because they hate us too, and form some kind of militia and take over."[461] Persistent and emergent anxieties informing settler nativism are on display here, as Indigenous and exogenous others, both Asian and Arab, coalesce in a new moment of crisis in which contemporary white Australia projected onto asylum-seeking refugees fears of insecurity and dispossession born from nation's origins in settler colonialism.

The crisis central to *No More Boats* thus mirrors the crisis of Australia's modern settler state. Lucy McNevin suggests that Australians rekindled old anxieties over invasion at the turn of the twenty first century in large part due to their uneasy perception of borderless territoriality brought on by neoliberal global trade practices. That is, as the Australian economy became increasingly dependent on global markets and foreign investment, economic insecurity became more prevalent among the nation's domestic citizens. In turn, resentment grew amongst "average Australians" toward multinational corporations, the Australian state, *and* undeserving welfare recipients, ranging from

[460] Castagna, 146. This is the same William Lane who authored the previously mentioned invasion narrative *White of Yellow?: A Story of the Race War of A.D. 1908* (1888).
[461] Ibid.

Aborigines to refugees. According to McNevin, "policing directed at asylum seekers offset this identity crisis and served to legitimize a culture of state practice that was otherwise generating widespread feelings of anxiety and resentment."[462] It is no surprise, then, that at the same time during which policing measures against asylum-seekers intensified as a response to the *Tampa* incident, the Australian federal government enacted the Northern Territory Emergency Response (2007), commonly referred to as "The Intervention."

Under the auspices of emergency intervention to ensure the welfare of Aboriginal child abuse victims, the state has essentially reinforced colonial rule over Aboriginal communities in Northern Territory, criminalizing the consumption of alcohol and pornographic material and removing children from families declared unfit to support children.[463] Of course, the action taking place in *No More Boats* precedes the Intervention by several years. Nonetheless, the *Mabo* and *Wik* rulings on Aboriginal native title in the 1990s had already fundamentally challenged the ways Australians conceived of territory, and resentment over the perceived loss of control and enablement of Aboriginal welfare dependency carried over into the next century. Such discontent resonated with the 'average' Australians with whom Castagna has populated her novel, both the white nationalist Solomon, whose sense of belonging is based on common sense, and Antonio, the Italian immigrant who had so faithfully adhered to the assimilationist agenda that promised to absorb him into the Australian polity.

---

[462] McNevin, 69.

[463] See Strakosch and Macoun for extensive analysis of the Northern Territory Emergency Response as a tacit continuation of Australia's original settler colonial project.

No More Boats is a political tragicomedy, a point underscored by the heightened absurdity of the concluding scene in which Antonio makes his last stand. As he walks along the Parramatta River, Antonio observes what he perceives to be a group of Asian women performing a welcoming ceremony for an approaching ferry. Goaded by Nico's ghost, Antonio attempts to commandeer the ferry and prevent foreign invasion with a toy gun.[464] The novel ends without concluding the conflict, leaving readers to draw their own conclusions as to its resolution and Antonio's fate. I read two implied critiques at play in the novel's anti-climactic closing scene. The first undermines the sense of defensive patriotism and masculinity also found on display in Captuto's *Crossers*. Antonio's misguided attempt to play the hero is pathetic, not only in the sense that the toy gun symbolizes his impotency and ineffectiveness but also because readers witness the culmination of the deleterious effects the nationalist rhetoric of Solomon and Howard have had on Antonio's traumatized psyche. The second gestures at questions about hospitality and who has the right to welcome or deny entry to outsiders. Howard's infamous statement on the matter, repeated throughout the novel, asserts that the Australian government reserves that right, while Antonio's actions suggest that individual citizens might have to take it upon themselves to defend their homes, much as the Minutemen purport to do at the US-Mexico border. The group of women performing a welcoming ceremony on the riverbank at the conclusion of *No More Boats* suggests other possibilities exist beyond state defense and populist nativism. Kim Scott's historical novel *That Deadman Dance* explores one such possibility by reframing the scene of "contact" between settler and Indigenous peoples not as a collision of cultures but as a

[464] Castagna, 218-19.

failed opportunity for cross-cultural exchange between British arrivants and Noongar hosts. The novel elaborates on the decolonial possibilities posited by Scott and Tony Birch mentioned earlier in this chapter and provides readers with a different way to imagine belonging in contemporary Australia.

Noongar Hospitality Protocol and the Politics of Welcome to Country

Kim Scott's novel *That Deadman Dance* (2010) resists the linear chronology of a typical plot summary. Most of the action takes place in Noongar Country of present-day Western Australia between 1826 and 1844, though this nearly two-decade swath is divided into four non-consecutive parts: 1833-1835, 1826-1830, 1836-1838, and 1841-1844. What's more, scenes from protagonist Bobby Wabalinginy's later life intersperse the entire text, regardless of the novel's 'parts,' so that the novel develops events contemporaneously in a given year—say, 1836—but also in elder Bobby's present, the exact year of which is never stated. Bobby is a storyteller, and *That Deadman Dance* is his story insomuch as it is the story of the place that formed him and how Anglo settlement gradually changed his home. Noongar and British arrivants peacefully cohabitate for much of the novel, with some characters even forming intimate bonds of friend- and kinship. Wunyeran and Dr. Cross form the strongest of these cross-cultural relationships, though both meet untimely deaths because of a pervasive illness that significantly reduces the Native population. The two men are buried together, a symbolic representation of the novel's central arguments that, one, Aboriginal and arrivant

populations could have lived together in harmony and, two, that Anglo-Australian colonization was not an inevitably but a deliberate process.[465]

Bobby embodies the possibility of syncretism that existed between the two cultures he uses his language skills to mediate. Other forces are at work, however, and King George Town's expansion from temporary military garrison to permanent settlement hastens the deterioration of Indigenous-settler relationships. Geordie Chaine and his employees play a central role, as the unscrupulous Chaine amasses more and more capital through smuggling, overharvesting the whale population, and arranging his daughter's marriage to a politically powerful suitor. He is aided in many of these endeavors by Killam, a former soldier turned publican and jailer, and Skelly, a former convict with master craftsmen skills in woodworking. Both men harbor deep resentment toward the Native people, increasingly exploiting the power they derive as Chaine's employees to enact a litany of physical, sexual, and emotional abuses against the Noongar. Bobby remains hopeful throughout the novel that his white 'friends' will honor Noongar sovereignty and their cultural protocols for reciprocity, particularly sharing resources after settler capitalism has disrupted Noongar foodways. Bobby makes a final plea to Chaine and company in one of his trademark elaborate performances, only to be shunned by those whom he assumed to be his friends and extended family. His despair over having failed for the first time as a storyteller is compounded when, in the novel's

[465] This shared grave is eventually destroyed by settlers, as Cross's coffin is removed to a more central location and his new burial site made a public memorial. Wunyeran's skeletal remains are desecrated, however, broken by shovels and carried away by feral animals and flood waters. One of many in a string of insults to the Noongar hosts, this injustice deepens the growing schism between Natives and their colonizers (Scott, *Deadman Dance*, 309-14).

closing sentences, it is implied that police shoot two of the remaining Noongar elders, Menak and Manit.

Scholars writing about *That Deadman Dance* typically refer to it as a *contact novel*, a fictionalized "collision of cultures" in which "people meet in conditions of profound difference."[466] Writing about Scott's novel in particular, Tony Hughes-d'Aeth contends that *contact* is a favorable lens through which to view the novel because it emphasizes intercultural exchange between Indigenous and settler populations.[467] My reading of *That Deadman Dance* varies in that, while the novel certainly depends upon cross-cultural interaction and mediation, it also routinely displaces moments of initial contact. I contend that this is a purposeful move on Scott's part, one that responds to the way in which "first contact" narratives inherently legitimize settler arrival—and, more specifically, *conflict* between settler and Indigenous peoples—as the moment in which history begins.[468] Reading *That Deadman Dance* as a *Welcome to Country novel* rather than a contact novel acknowledges Scott's remaking of "first contact" by decentralizing settler arrival and foregrounding Indigenous sovereignty inherent to Noongar hospitality protocol.

"Welcome to Country" and the closely related "Acknowledgement of Country" refer to a recent phenomenon in Australian settler society of ceremonially acknowledging traditional ownership of colonized lands. The primary distinction between Welcome and

---

[466] Hughes-d'Aeth, "For a Long Time," 23. For other examples of criticism framing the novel in this way, see Brewster, *Giving This Country*, 30-31 and Kossew, 174.
[467] Hughes-d'Aeth, "For a Long Time," 23.
[468] Lai and Smith, 407-08. This sort of privileging of settler subjectivity is evident in Hughes-d'Aeth's reading, which suggests that "nothing happened" until the conclusion, in which *That Deadman Dance* becomes more aligned with the familiar contact narrative of conflict and Indigenous dispossession.

Acknowledgement rituals involve the speaker: Welcomes can only be performed by recognized Elders of the representative Aboriginal peoples associated with the Country upon which an event is taking place, while Acknowledgments can be performed by any non-Indigenous person or by an Aboriginal person not descending from that particular Country. [469] These related rituals gained widespread acceptance as part of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's reconciliation agenda, which included his much more discussed formal apology to members of the Stolen Generations in 2008. As with the apology, scholars working in Australian Studies debate the degree to which Welcome and Acknowledgement ceremonies engender tokenistic representations of Aboriginality under the guise of liberal multiculturalism. Despite their disagreements, scholars acknowledge that Aboriginal Elders often accept Welcome to Country invitations as a means of formally stating opposition to the state's claim to place.[470] Such counterclaims recall what Kevin Bruyneel, writing in the context of US-Indigenous relations, terms the *third space of sovereignty*, which "acknowledges the colonial imposition of boundaries on indigenous political subjects while also showing how this location on the boundaries is also the site of practices that challenge colonial rule."[471] My framing of *That Deadman Dance* as a Welcome novel is not meant to suggest that moments of contact are not critically important to the history of settler-Indigenous relations; rather, I suggest that

[469] For example, only Bigambul Elders can perform the Welcome ritual on Bigambul lands, though a Wakka Wakka person taking part in an event in Bigambul Country could offer an Acknowledgement in the absence of a Bigambul Elder. For more on welcome and acknowledgement protocol, see Reconciliation Australia, "Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country," 2017, available at https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Welcome-to-and-Acknowledgement-of-Country.pdf.
[470] Everett, 58-60; McKenna, "Tokenism or Belated Recognition," 478; Roman, 113-14.
[471] Bruyneel, 25.

Scott's novel makes legible the important distinction that Indigenous sovereignties existed well before and persist long after the arrival of settler colonizers.

Adapting this concept as a critical frame for Scott's novel does not magically solve the problematic power dynamics of settler dominance. It might even appear to merely repackage them. To avoid doing so, I suggest that the hospitality protocol described in Scott's novel be understood in relation to the concept of makarrata rather than the federal government's Reconciliation platform. I borrow the term from the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, issued by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates of the Referendum Council at the 2017 National Constitution Convention held at Uluru, a sacred site for many Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. Council delegates define *makarrata* as "*the coming together after a struggle*." In regard to Australian constitutional reform to acknowledge Aboriginal sovereignty, delegates have called for the establishment of a Makaratta Commission to "supervise a process of agreement-making . . . and truth-telling about our history."[472] Makarrata refers to a ceremonial practice meant to end disputes and ensure that grudges do not persist into the future. It differs from the majority of the federal government's Reconciliation measures—from Native Title legislation to Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country rituals—in that makaratta insists on inherent Aboriginal sovereignty and the right to negotiate outside the strictures of imperial rule, which have historically subjugated Aboriginal Australians. In

[472] A full-text version of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* can be accessed online via the Referendum Council's website. See https://www.referendumcouncil.org.au/final-report. Makarrata became of topic of discussion for many news outlets following the statement, two exemplars of which can be found at https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2017/05/30/indigenous-makarrata-discussion-hits-national-agenda and https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-10/makarrata-explainer-yolngu-word-more-than-synonym-for-treaty/8790452.

other words, makaratta decentralizes settler supremacy and legitimizes Aboriginal belonging based on adherence to traditional protocols rooted in Law.

From the very beginning of *That Deadman Dance*, Scott unsettles the primacy of Anglo arrival and first contact. The prologue is set in the most recent time during which the novel takes place, with Bobby already advanced in age and living alone, on the beach, in a meager dwelling. The section opens with Bobby speaking one word—"*Kaya*"—which readers quickly learn translates to "*hello* or *yes*" in his traditional Noongar language.[473] Already, the novel has disrupted the linear chronology and settler centrality that typify contact scenes, as the 'first contact' to take place in the novel occurs between the reader and Bobby, who offers us a traditional greeting—a welcome of sorts. Within less than two pages, readers are treated to a Noongar origin story that Bobby "carrie[s] . . . deep inside himself, a story Menak gave him wrapped around the memory of a fiery, pulsing whale heart."[474] Scott explains in an interview with Anne Brewster that the whale story, which recurs throughout *That Deadman Dance*, is a part of his traditional cultural cosmology that describes the spiritual kinship between Noongar people and the ocean's many life forms.[475] On one level, Scott's inclusion of the creation story in the novel's prologue conditions reader's to draw connections between Bobby and the original whale-rider; at the same time, it aligns with Aboriginal welcoming protocol by invoking Noongar history, cultural values, and personal obligations associated with the Country in which the novel is set.

[473] Scott, *Deadman Dance*, 1.
[474] Ibid., 2.
[475] Brewster, *Giving this Country*, 3.

The first contact between the novel's Noongar and Anglo characters also takes place in the prologue, though it too subverts the "collision of cultures" motif generally associated with such narratives.[476] Basic elements of this scene might not initially seem too dissimilar from the conventions of a more traditional contact novel, as readers witness an encounter between an Aborigine and an Anglo character meeting on a beach.[477] There are certainly elements of intrusion and potential violence underlying their exchange. Bobby has been sitting alone upon the beach, writing short phrases to himself on a piece of slate. Chaine arrives unannounced but for the "heavy tread" of his steps, and "thrust[s] himself into the little hut" uninvited. Bobby immediately notices that there is "[h]ardly space for the two of them beneath this roof" and that "if Kongk breathes in deep, stands up straight, this shelter'll explode." This contact scene also registers a number of marked differences between the two men. Chaine embodies excess, in wealth and habit (he exudes the smell of rum and cigars) and physicality. Bobby notes that Chaine hasn't just overcrowded the small space with his size, he also "[steams] with rain and body heat and ruddy health." He is seemingly running over in bodily surplus, to the point that "water cascade[s] over the brim of his hat and gushe[s] from his bristling beard." Bobby, on the

[476] Recall my discussion in the previous chapter concerning Kate Grenville's novel *The Secret River* (2006), which also begins with a prologue *in media res*. There, central character William Thornhill encounters the queer uncanny in his 'first contact' with an Aboriginal Australian, to which he reacts with potentially violent rage.

[477] Readers might consider the series of watercolor drawings created by First Lieutenant William Bradley and recorded in his journal *A Voyage to New South Wales* (c.1788). Bradley was a commanding officer among Captain James Cook's First Fleet and drew several arrival and contact scenes. Among these, *First Interview with the Native Women at Port Jackson, New South Wales* shows several dozen Aborigines gathered along a beach as soldiers make landfall in a small row boat. Many of these images are available online through Google Arts and Culture's online exhibition of the First Fleet Collections of the State Library of New South Wales. See more at https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/YQISIml9CVl_Kw.

other hand, can "[feel] the cold seeping into his bones," which lie under his "loose and wrinkled skin."[478] The stark difference between the two men's bodies foreshadows settler Chaine's capitalist accumulation and Bobby's loss of traditional culture, though readers will be unaware of these developments until much later in the novel.

It might be tempting to read the contrasts between Chaine and Bobby as Scott having fallen into one of the traps of the contact form, the binary of savagism and civilization. Even as Chaine disrupts Bobby's world, this isn't a collision between enemies, nor is it their first meeting. Readers learn in a later chapter that the title *kongk* refers to a "special uncle," meaning that, even though Chaine is a wealthy settler, Bobby regards him with some degree of familial respect and even adoration.[479] Bobby does appear diminished by comparison, bereft of basic comforts and his body breaking down where Chaine's exudes vitality. But Bobby is not the vanishing indigene; in fact, he has an incredible generative power that manifests itself through his use of language: "Life tingled in his very fingertips," the narration states.[480] Bobby keeps watch on the horizon while Chaine blusters about (farting, grumbling, and telling his host that he ought to have built a fire, to be specific) before leaving on account of not having seen any whales spouting. Bobby narrates Chaine's leave-taking on his piece of slate, writing "*Kongk gon wailz cum.*"[481] No sooner than he's written these words, Bobby sees them come to fruition: "Oh. Lotta spouts, a clump of silvery bushes blossoming in a great trunk of angled sunlight out there on the wind-patterned sea." Bobby's immediate joy is tinged by

[478] Scott, *Deadman Dance*, 3.
[479] Ibid., 72.
[480] Ibid., 4.
[481] Ibid., 4.

the nagging fear that he might be seeing yet another "great fleet of ships rolling in from the horizon," like the one that brought Chaine and other settlers to Noongar Country.[482] Setting fear aside, Bobby leaps into the role of town crier, spreading the news to everyone that the whales have returned, though the narration is careful to note that he would later return to his writing in order to record the event. Bobby's inexorable strength as a storyteller is on full display here, as the prologue comes to a close:

> Bobby wrote and made it happen again and again in seasons to come, starting just here, now.
> *Kaya*.[483]

Here, kaya seems to have a dual function, with Bobby perhaps greeting the returning whales in the same way in which he greeted readers, but also affirming that, yes, Bobby has recorded an event that will be encountered by readers for generations to come. In this regard, Bobby's language skills also serve to affirm the continuation of Noongar culture, as does Scott's novel.

Scott incorporates Noongar protocol throughout *That Deadman Dance*, a technique especially evident in passages in which non-Indigenous characters are welcomed to Noongar country. The charismatic Wunyeran routinely mediates between Noongar and British arrivants, acting both as a diplomat and negotiator. Perhaps the most notable scene in which he performs these duties occurs when he trains his new friend Dr.

---

[482] Ibid., 5. It's worth noting here that while *That Deadman Dance* doesn't use the descriptor "boat people" currently associated with refugees, it frequently describes European arrivants and settlers as "horizon people" or "people from the horizon." More importantly, the novel reiterates time and time again that Australia has known many "boat people," whether they have been from China, France, England or Noongar Country itself.

[483] Ibid., 5.

Cross to meet Menak in the proper fashion. The narration describes Wunyeran as playfully 'maneuvering' Cross toward the elder Noongar man, who

> held out a hand across the shrinking space between them. Cross grasped it and Menak immediately pulled him into an embrace. He then lifted him from the ground and with his arms around Cross's waist turned a full circle. Eyeball to eyeball: one man in a cloak of an animal skin, a hair belt, and with mud and grease smeared over his skin; the other with only the flesh of his face and hands exposed.
>
> Menak released him and stepped back. A beaming Wunyeran gestured for Cross to remove his jacket, then he unclasped Menak's cloak and slid it from his shoulders. He handed each man the other's attire.[484]

The novel has by this point established that the particular form of embrace and ceremonial exchange of clothing are customary practices amongst the Noongar people. In this instance, readers experience the ritual from the Englishman's point of view: "The surprisingly soft and pliable kangaroo skin hung easily from Cross's shoulders, enclosing him in the smell of another man, a very different man, of course, but a man for all of that. *Noongar*, he remembered. The scent was not so much that of a body but of sap and earth, the oils and ochres and who knew what else of this land."[485] Wunyeran and Cross demonstrate their mutual potential for cross-cultural understanding here, both in the ways in which Wunyeran facilitates the meeting and the way in which Cross's participation in the intimate ritual reminds him of their shared humanity.

Furthermore, the details with which Scott describes this scene suggest that what readers experience here is not merely contact between two different cultures but the observance of proper welcoming protocol through an interpersonal Noongar ritual involving reciprocity. Wunyeran's role in the formal introductions affirm his important standing amongst the Noongar people, as only certain members are qualified to carry out

[484] Scott, *Deadman*, 82-83.
[485] Ibid., 83.

a mediator's obligations. Together, Wunyeran and Menak are also affirming their claim to belonging, as the ritual is not only meant to introduce Cross to an important member of the Noongar people but also as a means of mediating a relationship between the stranger Cross and the sentient Country. The exchange of clothing suggests that Wunyeran and Menak are extending hospitality to Cross by offering him a form of protection from the Country to which they intimately belong. Anthropologist Francesca Merlan explains that

> from a local indigenous point of view, such introductions are protective, not simply 'welcoming' in the ordinary understanding of that word as 'kindly reception or greeting.' There is a pervasive indigenous sensibility that the living country may present dangers to people unknown to it and whose being is not intimately involved with it. Therefore, practices [like garment exchange], as well as a local's addresses to ancestral beings announcing who has come to visit, are understood to reduce that element of foreignness that might attract harm.[486]

Merlan further notes that "people who perform these kinds of acts assume that the country and its living forces are sensitive to smell, that locals and nonlocals can be distinguished, and the olfactory difference between them can be reduced by these small acts."[487] Cross first notices the feel of the kangaroo cloak, but the smells associated with it are even more poignant—a scent that is richly layered with elements of the land. Thus, Wunyeran and Menak extend hospitality and protection to their guest and, in the process, affirm their inherent right to do so as Noongar men.

Much of this cross-cultural goodwill will have been undone by the novel's tragic conclusion. Wunyeran and Cross both succumb to illness, and while their shared burial site initially signifies the bonds they worked to establish in their lifetimes, the graves' desecration symbolizes the breaking of those bonds as the greed of men like Chaine spurs

[486] Merlan, 300.
[487] Ibid.

on the settlement's 'progress.' Settlers' unwillingness to honor Noongar protocols for reciprocity compounds the unrest developing around Chaine's institutionalization of market capitalism through resource exhaustion and labor exploitation. Foodways have been disrupted by overpopulation and overhunting, and when Bobby, Menak, and their countrymen are denied a share of settlers' sheep and imported goods to which they are entitled by traditional protocol, the Noongar begin taking food without Chaine's permission. Bobby is eventually jailed for these offenses, but during an informal trial he reveals having witnessed Chaine murder two Aboriginal servants indentured to the colony's governor.

In exchange for a signed testimony that (unbeknownst to him) excuses Chaine of any wrongdoing, Bobby is granted a small audience with settlers for whom he performs a song and dance. Intending to "show them how people must live here, together," Bobby gently scolds the settlers for their unwillingness to adapt to Noongar Law. Narrating his own dance, he observes that "some people come to live here, and wanna stay like they never moved away from their own place," reminding them of the "need to be inside the sound and spirit of it to live here properly." "And how can that be," he asks the settlers, "without we people who have been here for all time?" In his final address to the audience, he simultaneously reasserts his sovereign authority and the reciprocal nature of Noongar hospitality: "This is my land," he states, "given me by *Kongk* Menak. We will share it with you, and share what you bring."[488] Bobby's performance does the work of makarrata in that it affirms Aboriginal belonging, involves truth-telling about wrongs that have been committed, and offers a peaceful resolution in order to restore harmony

[488] Scott, *Deadman*, 346-47, 349.

moving forward. His performance proves unsuccessful, as most of the audience leaves the meeting place without comment. As they make their departure, Bobby overhears gunfire suggesting that elders Menak and Manit have been shot.

Bobby's profound sense of loss at the novel's conclusion transports readers back to the prologue, explaining his bitterness and destitution, as well as the distance that exists between himself and Chaine later in life. Settler common sense suggests that the conclusion to *That Deadman Dance* should be read as the story's inevitable outcome, thus aligning the novel with the conventions of Australia's archetypal contact narrative. Bobby's greeting to readers—kaya—as well as the revelation that he has recorded King George Town's settlement history in a journal challenge such readings. Despite all that has transpired, Bobby retains the power to welcome visitors to his ancestral Country *and* the ability to translate his story into a medium white audiences are more likely to understand than traditional song and dance. In this way, Bobby's story and Scott's novel are doing similar work to that of many Elders offering Welcome to Country speeches and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates of the Referendum Council who met at Uluru in 2017. Each of these examples suggests that Aborigines' claims to belonging have not been extinguished by Australian settler colonialism, nor do such claims originate from the authority of settler government.

Conclusion

The aspect of settler nativism discussed in this chapter primarily involves the ways in which expressions of place-attachment and competing claims to belonging fundamentally inform common sense notions about the authority to regulate entry into contemporary settler nations. Fictional gatekeepers like Philip Caputo's Gil Castle and

Felicity Castagna's Antonio Martone are inspired by the political rhetoric of national leaders like George W. Bush and John Howard just as the alarmist propaganda of populist figureheads like Donald Trump and Pauline Hanson is informed by their respective nations' longstanding preoccupation with narratives of foreign invasion. My primary objective in this chapter has been to reiterate a critical necessity in ongoing challenges to anti-immigrant sentiment in nations like the US and Australia, and that is that nativist articulations in settler nations are illegitimate not only because they are consistently rooted in racist and undemocratic principles but also—and primarily—because they are always based on the incorrect presumption that contemporary colonizers and other non-Natives in settler nations represent an indigenous population.

There is a cognitive dissonance intrinsic to settler indigenization that becomes particularly apparent in works that deploy foreign invasion as a means of unifying settler and Indigenous peoples. Alternatively, Scott's *That Deadman Dance* presents readers with the hopeful possibility that cooperative relationships *can* exist. These possibilities extend beyond settler-Indigenous relations, as (im)migrant populations and racially marginalized peoples in settler nations share common ground in that they are located (and often placed in competition with one another) within a hierarchical structure that legitimizes settler sovereignty above all other claims to belonging. The persistence of Indigenous peoples, cultures, and nations within these structures is fundamental to any decolonial effort, including those involving African American, Latinx, migrant, and refugee populations. I'm also hopeful that in naming and challenging the particular function of settler nativism discussed in this chapter, future work might redefine the concept of invasion narratives in the literary traditions of the US and Australia. Much of

what has favorably been referred to as *contact* fiction might very well find itself in uncomfortable but productive conversation with *invasion* fiction. This is one of the ways in which settler colonial studies can contribute to the work being performed across academic disciplines and beyond national borders.

CHAPTER 5

SETTLER NATIVISM AS DYSTOPIAN FANTASY

In the previous chapter, I discussed how contemporary invasion narratives in the US and Australia fantasize an end to settler colonial dominance. This concluding chapter continues this line of thinking by focusing on the popular resurgence of post-apocalyptic and dystopian fiction in order to understand the disparate ways in which settler and Indigenous novelists think and write about the end of the world. Before doing so, it seems necessary to note the relationship between invasion, apocalypse, and dystopian narratives, each of which possess distinguishing characteristics that occasionally overlap. Works like John Marsden's YA *Tomorrow* series of novels (1993-2000) belong to a distinctly Australian storytelling tradition about foreign invasion that has been fantasizing the end of Anglo Australia since the late nineteenth century, decades before national federation. Catriona Ross's incisive critique of the genre's history concludes that "many of these stories are essentially the same dystopian tale of the loss of white Australia, told time and time again."[489] This is certainly the case in the earliest works of the genre, particularly Kenneth Mackay's *The Yellow Wave: A Romance of the Asiatic Invasion of Australia* (1895) and William Lane's *White or Yellow?: A Story of the Race War in A.D. 1908* (1888).

But not all invasion narratives culminate in dystopia. Indeed, the primary function of many invasion narratives is to suggest the possibility of a dystopian future narrowly thwarted by the heroic efforts of national subjects reinvested in patriotism—think

[489] Ross, "Prolonged Symptoms," 88-89.

previously disgraced Vietnam veteran Russell Casse (Randy Quaid) sacrificing himself to destroy the alien spaceship at the end of the 1996 blockbuster film *Independence Day*. Building from Ross, it may be more correct to say that many of these stories share similar anxieties that have continued to motivate invasion *and* dystopian tales, which depict distinct though often related—and, indeed, sometimes overlapping—narrative elements, especially in the contemporary literatures of the US and Australia.

As with invasion and dystopian narratives, apocalyptic fictions are by no means a recent literary development. Some scholars link current works of note to Western theological traditions and eschatology: the study of end times, final judgment, and the spiritual destiny of humankind.[490] Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), Peter Heller's *The Dog Stars* (2012), and Jane Abbott's *Watershed* (2016) are such examples, as they incorporate Biblical allusions to frame the gloom and despair of the worlds in which they are set. The sense of nihilism pervading much of *The Road* is perhaps nowhere more memorably rendered than in the line "There is no God and we are his prophets."[491] Heller's novel opens in similar fashion, with the narrator directly asking the reader "Did you ever read the Bible? I mean sit down and read it like it was a book? Check out Lamentations. That's where we're at, pretty much. Pretty much lamenting."[492] The tagline on the cover of Abbott's novel, published by Vintage Books' Australian division, adapts the so-called Golden Rule from the New Testament, thus directly appealing to potential readers' familiarity with scripture. Recontextualized for a drought-stricken Australia in which mercenaries called Watchmen hunt and kill dissidents at the behest of

[490] Leigh, 2-5.
[491] McCarthy, 170.
[492] Heller, 3.

the ruling Council, the phrase now reads "Do unto others. And take care of your own."[493] Both the survivalist motif and the neoliberal ideology underwriting so much of contemporary settler post-apocalyptic dystopian fiction, discussed in detail throughout this chapter, are particularly noticeable here, foregrounding the notion that the apocalypse is as much a political event as it is a spiritual one.

Tellingly, none of these three novels depicts the end-of-the-world scenarios in which they are set as the same end times occurring in the New Testament's Book of Revelations. Rather, they enfold elements of eschatology into scenarios that reflect contemporary fears concerning the fallout of life *after* a particular catastrophic event that *could be* interpreted as apocalyptic. These more secular works might then be thought of as incorporating the apocalyptic but not necessarily depicting the Apocalypse in the way that, say, Tim LaHaye's and Jerry B. Jenkins's *Left Behind* series (1995-2007) does. Pervasive as Christian theology has been across settler colonial projects emanating from Western Europe, Jessica Hurley and Dan Sinykin rightly point out that there is no singular, universal apocalyptic event that can serve as a reference point for all peoples and cultures. By extension, literary renderings of apocalyptic events or dystopian futures can function differently, from reasserting the hegemonic logics of oppression that lead to empire-building to exposing routes to emancipation from those very logics.[494] Scholars writing about the proliferation of apocalyptic and dystopian fictions in the twenty-first century have thus revealed how the genre has been the means to drastically different

[493] Abbott, n.p.
[494] Hurley and Sinykin, 453-56; Paik, 2; Gómez-Barris, 4.

ends, from the return of frontier masculinity to Indigenous decolonization and Black liberation.[495]

Until recently, dystopia has primarily been linked to anxieties over political totalitarianism and the harsh conditions that would ensue should democracy fail. Arguably the most well-known examples of this particular form of speculative fiction includes Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931), George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1949), Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954). Each of these novels could no doubt be read in relation to Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), but the fact that they were authored by British subjects during or directly after the two so-called world wars of the twentieth century is noteworthy. These works emerge out of contexts in which the nation that carried out the most far-reaching colonial operations in modern history experienced military aggression and economic hardships that legitimately threatened the nation's very existence. The sun might very well have appeared to be setting on the British Empire in the mid-twentieth century, and imagining what came next was a frightening prospect for those who would remain to face the coming night. The legacy of these politically-based dystopian novels persists in contemporary US and Australian literatures alike, particularly in works such as William Gibson's *Spook Country* (2007), Andrew McGahan's *Underground* (2006), and Richard Flanagan's *The Unknown Terrorist* (2008).

Political historian Gregory Claeys notes, however, that, beginning in the 1990s and with even greater verve in the twenty-first century, Western literary dystopia has

[495] Sugg, 793-811; Whyte, "Indigenous Science (Fiction)," 224-42; Sorensen, 523-46; Curtis, 15; Weaver, 142-44.

focused less on corrupt political regimes and more on terrorism, technological overdevelopment, overpopulation, and, in particular, environmental crises.[496] This shift is particularly legible in Abbott's *The Watershed* (2016), which includes a repressive ruling class known as the Council that comes into power only *after* damage caused by a series of supercell storms begins a process of global decline involving climatic, economic, and political destabilization—in that order.[497] *The Road* and *The Dog Stars* also fall into this category of contemporary dystopian fiction, exhibiting as they do a number of the genre's more recent themes and motifs.[498]

Contemporary settler dystopian fictions imagine a chaotic future world marred by catastrophe, typically through climate destabilization, resource scarcity, war, or disease epidemic. Often as not, one or more of these elements work in concert to bring about the fall of governments, massive reductions in population, and the erosion of social and cultural order.[499] As I have suggested, invasion *can* be a catalyst for these phenomena, embodied by climate refugees, aliens, zombies, or contagious pathogens, but apocalypse and dystopia do not necessarily depend upon some form of invasion to incite the plot tension. Indeed, the cataclysmic incident around which apocalypse fictions are framed often creates the possibility for invasion, as is hinted at in the conclusion to *The Dogs Stars*, where pandemic survivors inhabit the former US for nearly a decade before planes

[496] Claeys, 488.
[497] Abbott, 83-85.
[498] For brevity's sake, I generally use *dystopia* or *dystopian* rather than *post-apocalyptic* for the remainder of the chapter to refer to social life in a post-apocalyptic future fundamentally shaped by environmental crises. As Diletta De Cristofaro succinctly notes, "contemporary post-apocalyptic scenarios are predominantly dystopian." See De Cristofaro, [4].
[499] Andersen, 866.

from an unnamed Arab military force appear in the sky at novel's end. In novels like *The Dog Stars*, those characters who survive the initial period of devastation and crisis typically find themselves living in primitive conditions in an uncanny world, one that many of them recognize from their lives 'before' but that is seemingly irrevocably changed. In this time 'after' the end, the *post-* in *post-apocalypse*, characters find themselves struggling to ensure their day-to-day survival against exposure to harsh elements, disabling hunger, and extreme interpersonal violence. However, reading dystopian narratives in the context of settler colonialism makes clear the fact that the 'end' of the settler nation as we currently imagine it is not necessarily synonymous with decolonization, especially if the 'end' does not terminate the logics that previously underwrote the nation's existence.

Apocalyptic dystopian fiction suggests it is entirely possible for the settler nation to fall and the colonial structure to persist so that a 'new' nation might emerge by the novel's conclusion. In fact, many dystopian narratives depend upon the collapse of existing national governments so that a more perfect union might yet be brought into being. The most overt of these narratives tend to be mass-market techno-thrillers and survivalist fantasies such as John Birmingham's *The Disappearance* series, William Forstchen's *One Second After* series, and Chris Weatherman's *Survivalist* series.[500] As

[500] It's an interesting coincidence that even though *The Disappearance* series is set in the US (the second installment is titled *After America*) John Birmingham is an Australian citizen. It should be noted that Weatherman is well-known in the survivalist enthusiast community by his pseudonym "Angery American" [*sic*]. Penguin Books subsidiary Plume (the same imprint that has published Dorothy Allison, Toni Morrison, and August Wilson early in their careers) published the first five novels of the series (Weatherman has since self-published books six through ten) using the shortened *nom de plume* "A. American." When I asked Weatherman about the spelling of "Angery" [*sic*] via his

dystopian fiction is increasingly—if often begrudgingly—embraced as a literary form, some critiques voice concern about the aesthetic devaluation of 'high art.'[501] More troubling, though less widely discussed, are the ways in which literary dystopian fictions can inherit and transmit the neoliberal and colonial logics found in their more mainstream counterparts. Ghassan Hage argues, for example, that the contemporary crises of ecological destabilization and resurgent white supremacy are inextricably linked to one another, working together to enforce and reinforce the colonial logics of social and economic dominance on a global stage.[502] How, then, are environmental crises and racial anxiety related and relayed in the literary genre most concerned with imagining the conditions of future life? The answers largely depend on whose dystopia readers encounter.

Indigenous fiction writers and scholars in North America and Australia are increasingly turning to speculative fiction and, in particular, post-apocalyptic dystopian narratives as a means of critiquing ongoing settler regimes and imagining decolonial futures.[503] Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee) contends that speculative fiction has emerged as a platform through which writers from minoritized and marginalized populations "imagine otherwise," creating and claiming a "space for meaningful engagements and encounters that are dismissed by colonial authorities but are central to cultural resurgence

---

Facebook page, he claimed that it was an alternative spelling found in the dictionary. I have only been able to find this spelling at urbandictionary.com.

[501] See, for instance, Jill Lepore's 2017 *New Yorker* essay "A Golden Age for Dystopian Fiction." For counterarguments, see Buell, 228-30 and Paik, 1-2.

[502] Hage, *Is Racism*, 14-15.

[503] Whyte, "Indigenous Science (Fiction)," 225-26 and Weaver, 136-42.

and the recovery of other ways of knowing, being, and abiding."[504] Yet a paradox exists in many contemporary dystopian novels that, at once, depict a future devoid of racial animosity while relying upon the same savage-versus-civilized binary that has made agendas of relocation, assimilation, and termination of Indigenous peoples possible through settler colonialism.[505] In this way, the genre mirrors ongoing struggles for Indigenous sovereignty and the fundamental contradiction of settler colonial politics wherein the governing systems perpetuate their lifespan through oppressive measures similar to those they purport to eliminate.

Terms like *post-politics* and *post-political* have come into vogue amongst some philosophers much in the same way that *post-race* and *colorblindness* have become popular amongst political pundits. Each term alleges that contemporary democratic societies are increasingly depoliticizing as individuals gain greater freedom to 'choose' their lived conditions. Critics arguing against post-political ideology point to what Peter Y. Paik refers to as the "perennial stumbling block of liberal thinkers," the foundational myths upon which social and political orders are constructed.[506] Take for example the state of nature (and the resultant social contracts that follow), which depends upon the binarial logic of savagism versus civilization, a concept so shot through with essentialism, contradiction, and deceit that it cannot serve as a base for supposedly universal truths about democratic freedom. Rather than a solid foundation, the myth is an absence or a void, a hollow that is nonetheless framed as the bedrock upon which nations have been built and, in partnership with other myths such as *terra nullius* and manifest

[504] Justice, *Why Indigenous*, 154.
[505] Pearce, 105.
[506] Paik, 3.

destiny, expanded. Political systems like those used to govern the US and Australia appear legitimate because they are able to mask or otherwise obscure the fact that personhood, liberty, and inclusion into civilized society necessarily depend upon the creation of an antagonistic Other who is not only denied these same rights and privileges but also depicted as inherently devoid of the capacity to possess them.[507] Because settler colonial regimes are capitalistic, manufactured Otherness represents a deficiency that also makes possible the conditions by which Indigenous people have been dispossessed and, in the US, African-descent people have been treated as possessions in the name of settler accumulation and 'progress.'[508] Moreover, the post-political idyll of an individual's 'freedom to choose' is undeniably political because the very notions of *individualism*, *freedom*, and *choice* are vouchsafed against those from whom they are necessarily withheld. Just as the notion of post-colonialism does not adhere to the US, Australia, and other settler nations, neither does "post-political" accurately describe their current political climate.

Political theorist Elizabeth Strakosch suggests that one of settler colonialism's definitive and sustaining characteristics as a structure is that its agents routinely purport to be actively working toward ending the colonizing project even as they perpetuate its existence. Settler colonialism's political endgame—"a settled, apolitical future"—might seem counterintuitive at first glance.[509] In a separate work, Strakosch and coauthor Alissa Macoun offer two clarifying insights into the realization of this imagined future. First, *settled* colonialism is not synonymous with anti-colonialism nor decolonization but is

[507] Wilson and Swyngedouw, 1-10.
[508] Day, 103; Harris, 1715.
[509] Strakosch, "Beyond Colonial Completion," 29

instead the fully realized naturalization of settler sovereignty over all Others, foreign and domestic. Second, this realization is constantly deferred through what Strakosch and Macoun term *the vanishing endpoint of settler colonialism*—a political tactic that forestalls the potential for decolonization and demands, instead, that settler governance continue to exert colonial rule over minoritized groups.[510] Strakosch and Macoun point to Australia's neoliberal reconciliation agenda as an example, where Shared Responsibility Agreements between the government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities essentially authored a new social contract making these Indigenous peoples into liberal state subjects. When certain Aboriginal communities 'failed' to uphold parts of the agreement, the government was 'forced' to intervene via the 2007 Northern Territory Emergency Response, effectively colonizing scores of Aborigines yet again. This unique strategy of settler politics ultimately implies that the inherent deficiency of Indigenous peoples—articulated in this context as welfare dependency—prevents the settler nation from ever decolonizing. In other words, the rationale that Natives are impediments to progress has not only persisted from colonial frontiers to the settler present but further continues to shape how settler societies envision the future or, rather, *their* future.

Settler-authored dystopian fiction in the US and Australia narrativizes the vanishing endpoint of the colonial structure, creating a generic trope in which the potential end of modern settler society parallels the colonizing project's persistently deferred completion. Analyzing novels from Australia, Canada, and South Africa, Hamish Dalley has identified a specific narrative tendency in which members of settler

[510] Strakosch and Macoun, 51-52.

society encounter and overcome metaphorical extinction.[511] Such narratives draw upon apocalyptic anxieties to imagine potential futures in which the settler nation or a remnant of its ideals persist despite having been tested by global catastrophe. Still, the apocalypse predominantly signifies a major temporal shift in which characters think of life in terms of *before* and *after*. In the settler colonial context, this partition can be misread as de facto decolonization—indeed, in novels like Heller's *Dog Stars* it is portrayed as such. The survivalist motif central to the genre typically frames post-apocalyptic society in terms of 'starting over,' or, as Katherine Sugg writes, a "nostalgic return to premodern conditions."[512] That same type of nostalgia permeates much of environmentalist rhetoric, according to Ursula K. Heise, and may explain in part why dystopian novels had trended toward certain types of nature-related catastrophic events of late.[513]

A host of scholars criticize the depiction of a post-apocalyptic societal reboot for possessing the same utopian impulses that first made settler societies possible. Indeed, many critics contend that, when it comes to sociopolitical conditions in post-apocalyptic fictions, there is not so much a *post-* as there is continuity and devolution. Claire P. Curtis argues that Westerners' belief in the utopian ideal underlying democratic social contracts has resulted in an ironic convention in speculative fiction whereby "recreations of society simply mirror more traditional forms of political and social order" even as environments appear radically altered.[514] Several critics agree that the utopian impulses underwriting

[511] Dalley, 31-32. The notion that settler literatures rely on metaphorical death as a means to imagine the future is not limited to a single genre or settler nation, as my analysis in chapter two demonstrates.
[512] Sugg, 795. See also Curtis, 15 and Killingsworth, 169.
[513] Heise, 11-13.
[514] Curtis, 15.

colonizing projects have always necessitated a dystopian or apocalyptic counterpart for Indigenous peoples.[515] So, settler-authored dystopian fiction in the US and Australia captures a fundamental contradiction that typifies settler nations—the need to imagine a society that is both new *and* improved in comparison to the former metropole. The majority of dystopian works by settlers reproduce the perpetual deferral of settlement's completion because even when their works attempt to imagine life after the end of the world, they cannot help but reproduce the foundational myths that have shaped settler society. It seems that even in the post-apocalypse, settler societies in the US and Australia are determined to resist becoming post-colonial.

Abbott's novel *Watershed* stands out from other settler-authored dystopian narratives for the way in which it wrestles with the notion of a supposedly 'new' civilization being formed by catastrophe survivors. Indeed, one disillusioned character slowly dying from labor exploitation and resource scarcity within the Citadel echoes Curtis's mirror metaphor in decrying the state's exceptional use of power over its most vulnerable citizens: "It was as though they'd passed through a mirror into a reflection and were disappointed to discover that it wasn't a reversal of what had been but a strange exaggeration of all their worst faults. Nothing had changed."[516] Tasked with the immediate goal of survival, the settler descendants in *Watershed* fail to imagine other forms of sociopolitical organization and are thus left with violent insurrection as their only alternative. Even these ends are not truly revolutionary, however, as those who

[515] Anam, 661; Horne, 2; Weaver, 11; and Paik, 4-7.
[516] Abbott, 140-41.

attempt to overthrow the ruling Council are concerned primarily with possessing power rather than altering its social distribution.

Toward the novel's conclusion, the leader of a military coup explains that the soldiers' mutiny is aimed against the tyranny of the ruling Council, not against the continuation of settler society itself.[517] Taggart, the leader, admits "What we got, the Citadel and the settlements? It ain't perfect. Not by a long shot." Of course, he does not stop there. "[W]e ain't lookin' to break the system," he says. "We just wanna keep it going. Coz without it, we're all just gunna slide right back to where we were before."[518] Taggart's use of "before" here refers to the lawless period just after the collapse, not to the pre-collapse Australian settler nation that once existed. This distinction is important because it hints at how, even as *Watershed* can be read as critiquing the genre's investment in 'starting over,' it cannot escape reproducing the problematic binary of savagism versus civilization. Before elaborating on how this construct specifically shapes Abbott's novel, I want to first address how Indianness factors more broadly into settler dystopian narratives, even as Indigenous characters are largely absented.

Because the genre is predisposed to reiterating colonial logics, settler-authored dystopian fiction is deeply invested in indigenization. Indigenous characters rarely—if ever—appear in dystopian novels except for those written by Indigenous authors. Erasure of this kind normalizes settler belonging as a type of common sense that typically goes unacknowledged in the narrative. Further, it attempts to eliminate political identifiers by

[517] Unlike the US, Australia's path from colony to settler nation did not include a revolutionary moment nor has the nation experienced a civil war. As this novel demonstrates, that does not foreclose the possibility that such events might yet occur in the future.
[518] Abbott, 381-82.

and large, thereby returning humanity to the state of nature in which individual survival is the all-consuming purpose for existence, is entirely dependent upon one's own efforts toward accumulation and defense, and is, in the words of Thomas Hobbes, "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."[519] Kyle Powys Whyte (Potawatomi) notes however that non-Indigenous descriptions of dystopian futures bear an uncanny resemblance to the drastic environmental transformations wrought upon Indigenous peoples as a result of colonialism, including "ecosystem collapse, species loss, economic crash, drastic relocation, and cultural disintegration."[520] In this way, settler dystopian fiction is not unlike the Indian Burial Site and alien invasion narratives discussed in previous chapters because it, too, attempts to appropriate for the settler characters certain traits of Indigeneity even when their antagonistic counterparts are marked by characteristic Indianness.

Gestures at settler indigenization can be read in individual passages *of* and as a narrative structure *for* post-apocalyptic dystopian fiction in settler literatures. Both instances serve as a reminder that for all that can be said of the genre's speculative elements, too often the texts fall short of imagining fundamentally different futures. In the first instance, the nostalgic return to a supposedly primitive form of life amounts to little more than scenes of playing Indian or going Native because settlers lack a means of articulating ancient lifeways outside of the savagism versus civilization binary and 'Indianness' is the most readily deployable form of savagery in our collective

[519] Hobbes, 124.
[520] Whyte, "Indigenous Science (Fiction)," 226-27.

consciousness.[521] Thus, even in the largely evacuated, drought-stricken Los Angeles of the near future in Claire Vaye Watkins's *Gold Fame Citrus*, a few holdouts can gather for what they term *the raindance*, "a free-for-all of burners and gutterpunks caterwauling and cavorting in the dry canals of Venice Beach," complete with drum circle and stomp dancing.[522] Far from the ceremonial practices of agrarian Plains and Pueblo cultures who traditionally held dances according to planting cycles, the raindance in *Gold Fame Citrus* resembles a farmer's market at a Gathering of the Juggalos: a "[h]appy day . . . of revelry and bash," where characters buy and sell wilted produce, canned cheese, and tainted meat while the protagonist drunkenly shakes "a tambourine made from a Reebok box with broken Christmas ornaments rattling inside."[523] Scenes such as this one, in which non-Indigenous survivors perform stereotypical Indianness, are noteworthy because they reinforce the notion that misnomers about Indigenous peoples persist even (or especially) in moments where their erasure is most visible.

Settler indigenization also undergirds dystopia as a narrative framework by recuperating such narrative traditions as savage "antiselves of civilization" and the Vanishing Indian.[524] The former is especially evident in Abbott's *Watershed*, where readers learn that the period immediately after the environmental crisis's turning point devolved into rampant murder, rape, and cannibalism. One character who has managed to

---

[521] I use "playing Indian" and "going Native" after the respective works by Philip Deloria and Shari Huhndorf. The "lack" I refer to in this sentence is indebted to what James H. Cox terms in *Muting White Noise* (2012) "the failed imagination" of Eurowestern storytelling (251-55). See too Justice's *Why Indigenous Literature Matters* for a succinct discussion of how the savagism versus civilization logic has fundamentally influenced science-fiction and speculative fiction (149-52).
[522] Watkins, 15-16.
[523] Ibid.
[524] I borrow the descriptor *antiselves of civilization* from Vizenor, 7.

escape an unnamed city remarks that survivors in post-apocalyptic Australia are not "even third world. They were worse than that. Fourth, maybe fifth. . . . . that's how far they'd slipped."[525] As the Australian social order that we recognize today crumbles, new factions arise. There are the settlers who build the Citadel and other fortifications, subdivided into the ruling Council members, the elite warriors of the Watch, and the illiterate, impoverished citizenry struggling to survive as they labor to keep the Citadel running. According to the novel, survivors are no longer discriminated against based on racial or ethnic markers—"for the most part," anyway—but intolerance and social distinctions do still exist.[526] Beyond the settlement's walls there are other groups: the Disses (short for *dissidents*) who want to infiltrate the Citadel and overthrow the Council, Godders (militant Christian and Muslim fundamentalists) who are constantly at war and outlawed from the Citadel, and "eaters" (alternatively referred to as "savages" and "raiders" throughout the novel) who prey upon climate refugees caught beyond the walls of the Citadel. This last group, the eaters, functions as a faceless, peripheral threat in *Watershed*, the lowest form of life left in the broken world. As the name suggests, they literally rely on eating human remains in order to survive, but they also inflict brutal acts of physical and sexual violence as they attempt to scavenge and steal resources from other survivors.

Racial and ethnic discrimination may no longer exist in the dystopian Australia of *Watershed*, but the novel still relies upon the figure of the savage, a historically racially-

[525] Abbott, 49.
[526] Ibid., 61. There's even a Black character (singular) mentioned (briefly) in the novel, though nothing is said about his indigeneity, which presumably no longer matters. See pp. 242, 432.

coded stock character in colonial literature that functions as an uncivilized, non-white foil to the central characters. *Watershed* is typical of contemporary dystopian novels in that it relies upon a frontier populated by savages as a key component of the struggle to (re)create a civilization in new, dangerous environs. The link between settler colonialism, neoliberalism, and post-apocalyptic dystopia is abundantly clear here, as individual survival, population management through conquest, and the development of settler society coalesce on a new frontier.[527] Early on in the novel, climate refugees flee the cities knowing that "the savages were out there and ready to hunt."[528] The founding settlers responsible for the Citadel are eventually able to repel the eaters, so much so that, by the time the refugees whom readers follow for much of the novel finally arrive there, they discover that most of the eaters "had been killed or driven off, but not all." Sarah, one of the refugees, still has reservations, fearing that a "tiny settlement was no match for an army of savages."[529] Sarah's fear is not totally unfounded, however, as one of the eaters raped her teenage daughter Anna, who later died as a result of pregnancy complications. Sarah's grandson, Jeremiah (mostly referred to as Jem) serves as the novel's primary focus, and as a character his personality reflects the violence and social division underwriting the rape that brought him into existence.

As a member of the Watch, Jem is admittedly a ruthless mercenary responsible for scores of assassinations and other deaths. Yet, he has an increasingly conflicted conscious, eventually going so far as to fall in love with Alex (a Diss) and attempting to help her and others in their own coup against the Council. Readers catch glimpses of a

[527] Sugg, 800-01; Lloyd and Wolfe, 112.
[528] Abbott, 28.
[529] Ibid., 144.

softer side of Jem through the contraband letters written by his grandmother Sarah while he was a child, and even though he was forced to kill her as his initiation into the Watch, his having kept the letters all these years suggests that some remnant of her goodness still resides within him. Of course, he is also the product of rape, and, more specifically, the biological descendant of the "savage" who attacked his mother. In this way, Jem represents a post-racial form of the "half-breed" character of the colonial literary tradition, a liminal figure whose inner turmoil reflects the contest between savagism and civilization. He must decide between his desire toward Alex and the duty he feels as a member the Watch, and though the novel concludes without resolving this tension, the implication remains that his choice will determine what the potential for life in this "new" civilization will look like.[530]

Watershed is similarly torn between two desires, though here it is in relation to competing ideologies that seem especially typical of the unresolvable paradox at the core of settler colonialism. That is, the novel oscillates between the anti-cosmopolitan ethos of the pastoral *and* the Hobbesian state of nature that relies upon savagism versus civilization. Its plot reflects a conflicting duality between characters' need to escape the corruption and toxicity of urban and settlement surrounding *and* the risks that come along with bare-life existence beyond "the frontier." The novel's conclusion suggests that a better world might yet exist and that Jem will be instrumental in bringing it to fruition. This "utopia" can only exist, however, as a result of the *Watershed*'s liquidation of anti-

[530] Though a sequel has not yet been published, *Watershed* ends with multiple unresolved narrative threads and the remaining central characters setting out from the Citadel, which is now in chaos after the Watch and Disses have respectively attempted their own coups. I anticipate that, like many works of the genre, *Watershed* is the first in a series of novels.

Black racism, which in Australia, *also means Aboriginal sovereignty*—a topic never broached in novel. These new settlers might still have to defeat raiding savages beyond the frontier in order to make a better life possible, a seemingly ubiquitous narrative in settler literary traditions that is now highly criticized and routinely deconstructed. But the "raiders" of *Watershed* will likely be deracinated, detribalized peoples who do not possess a legitimate land claim.

Further, characters of *Watershed*, whether they are marked as savage, civil, or—like Jem—somewhere in between, can only rightly claim what they either produce through individual will or take by force. Belonging is thus a matter of male power expressed through possession and self-defense of one's property, which often includes women. Garrick, Jem's leader in the Watch, is notorious for demanding that his subordinates capture women to serve as his sex slaves while completing their clandestine missions. Jem is not only complicit in Garrick's enslavement of kidnapped women, he also claims physical ownership of Alex, the Diss woman with whom he becomes infatuated. The novel moves along what is essentially a romance plotline in which Jem 'courts' Alex by trying, at various points, to 'take her away' from her brother, her husband, and her captors. Jem is also determined to conquer Alex's fierce independence, which at times manifests in her violent refusal of his desire to take her into his sole possession.[531] In this way, even as *Watershed* calls attention to the fallacy of democratic utopianism, it also reiterates raced, gendered, and classed power dynamics through its

[531] Jem's final bit of dialogue, in fact, reiterates his right to ownership: "I'm gunna get her back," he tells his comrade just before passing out as a result of the torture he endured to liberate Alex from the Council. It is worth noting that Alex has, in fact been liberated, but has also rebuked Jem for his allegiance to the Watch rather than her group of Disses (436).

central characters and narrative structure. Abbott's is certainly not the only post-apocalyptic dystopian to exhibit this contradictory tension, however.

Heller's *Dog Stars* is an example of the Vanishing Indian trope's usefulness in narrativizing settler indigenization even after the settler nation has supposedly fallen. The novel is primarily concerned with the maintenance of masculine relationships and the potential to reestablish a sense of normalcy following catastrophe. Climate destabilization and a deadly pandemic have resulted in the collapse of political and social orders, denaturalization of the environment, and widespread depopulation. The novel is narrated by Hig, an outdoorsman with the soul of a poet, who finds himself surviving because he has aligned with a trigger-happy survivalist named Bangley. Even as their particular skills and resources complement one another and provide a means of survival, their personal outlooks on life threaten to destroy their uneasy alliance. Bangley often accuses Hig of "Recreating," pursuing "anything that didn't directly involve our direct survival, or killing, or planning to kill which amounted to the same thing."[532] Apparently devoid of the sentimentality he sees as a weakness in Hig, Bangley prefers to operate in a pure Hobbesian state of nature. As he tells Hig early on, "There is no safe place. Maybe on the planet. We got the perimeter, water, power, food, firepower. . . . We got no internal strife no politics cause it's just you and me. We got no internal to tear apart. . . . We keep it simple we survive."[533] It seems that many of those who survive the apocalypse are determined to make life complicated, nonetheless, refusing to give up the dream of

[532] Heller, 56.
[533] Heller, 22.

building a new safe place of community to which they and others like them might belong—nation-building, in other words.

Indigenous peoples indirectly factor into Hig's habit of Recreating, though like many settler-centric texts, *The Dog Stars* is more invested in recuperating Indianness than imagining a world in which Indigenous peoples survive. Hig employs a curious simile involving Indigenous people while waxing poetical about his unsettling relationship with Bangley: "There is much about the man that creeps me out but this is the worst, the unrelenting sense of being surveilled. I've learned to live with it the way the Cree in Canada must live with swarms of mosquitoes. Did live."[534] Perhaps this passage is meant to be read so as to suggest that mosquitoes are one of the many extinct life forms made extinct by climate destabilization. Or perhaps the Cree are now living elsewhere and thus no longer plagued by those Canadian mosquitoes. It is just as easy to interpret the passage as Hig having nearly forgotten that it is the Cree who have all died out. The metaphor is especially problematic given that it has predominantly been settlers who have been known to "swarm" Indigenous nations, just as it has been Canada's federal government that performed surveillance through the establishment of reserves and boarding schools. Read in the broader context of settler colonialism, this brief passage foregrounds the pervasive idea that Indigenous life no longer exists in the North America imagined in *Dog Stars*, while also conveniently erasing settler governances' potential role in having brought their extinction about.

The novel returns to these ideas in a subsequent passage in which Hig recalls having read about intertribal wars between Plains nations as a child. He remembers

[534] Ibid., 52.

having not been able to comprehend as a child "why anyone would fight in a country this big. Why the landscape ever became a territory that needed division."[535] Even though he anachronistically refers to the land as "a country," it is clear from this passage that Hig is referring exclusively to fighting amongst tribes and not to the US Army's campaigns against them in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. It seems that whatever books he read in his youth neglected to mention Chivington's massacre and mutilation of Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples at Sand Creek (Colorado) in 1864. And Custer's massacre of Black Kettle's band of Cheyenne peoples on the Washita River (Oklahoma) in 1868. Miraculously, he seems to have not read about Forsyth's infamous massacre of Lakota peoples at Wounded Knee Creek (South Dakota) in 1890. Instead, he knows only that warfare between Plains Indians led to their demise—became an impediment to their own progress, as it were.[536]

Hig's version of Plains history suggesting that infighting amongst Indigenous peoples caused their downfall serves as a metaphor for the apocalyptic future in which *Dog Stars* takes place. As an adult, Hig concludes that it is "Ideology that tears apart nations. Tore, past tense."[537] To be clear, he is thinking about the apparent self-destruction of Plains tribal nations here as a sort of precursor to the apocalyptic post-

---

[535] Heller, 97.

[536] Heller's angle of vision on Plains Indians' history may very well be inspired by influential works like Shepherd Krech's *Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (1999) and Andrew Isenberg's *The Destruction of the Bison: An Environmental History, 1750-1920* (2001), both of which, according to Leo Killsback, "passively blame Indian people for their own demise and justify blatant acts of genocide perpetuated and condoned by the United States." See Killsback, 87-88.

[537] Heller, 97. Hig's correction of verb tense here recalls his earlier thought about the Cree and mosquitoes. In both cases, the Indians are long gone and survivors like Hig have inherited their hardships.

national world in which he now finds himself *and* to the tumultuous cohabitation he shares with Bangley. "What nations now?" he asks, lamenting that those "left still fighting [are] scrapping over leftovers. Maybe banding together like me and Bangley."[538] Why evoke a historically inaccurate version of the demise of Plains nations in order to lament the fall of the US settler nation? One answer is that doing so creates the possibility in which Hig can imagine himself as belonging to a new 'tribe' formed solely on the apolitical desire to survive. And this tribal identity is the seed of hope that exists for humanity according to *Dog Stars*.

A few notable instances of nativism crop up throughout the novel in which ethnic tribalism accounts for Arab alterity.[539] Early on, Hig has an intense, violent encounter with a group of marauders, one of whom justifies the extreme violence he has carried out by suggesting it will soon no longer matter. "The A-rabs," he tells Hig. "They're here. Or coming. Kill us all."[540] The novel concludes with Hig and his fellow survivors attempting to establish radio contact with several pilots they witness flying over the compound. When Hig reports that the pilots seem to be speaking Arabic, Cimarron postulates that they might have been immune to the pandemic that so greatly reduced the population of the former US. Relying on her (rather convenient) medical training prior to the catastrophe, Cimarron suggests that genetic immunity could exist amongst an insular enough community. "The Arab countries are tribal," she reminds Hig. "An entire tribe

---

[538] Ibid.
[539] This in spite of the fact that Hig's 'tribe' consists of only white characters. Unlike the Arab characters mentioned, there's no consideration of whether or not race factors into Hig and company's survival, which is sort of my whole point about the politics of belonging in settler dystopian fiction.
[540] Heller, 88.

could be immune."[541] The novel concludes without resolving the hypothesis, yet it is clear that the tribe Hig has assembled exists precisely because they carry the immunity: they have each been exposed to and survived the virus. Moreover, they possess the ethical and moral righteousness to triumph over those survivors who have devolved into barbarism and failed to re-establish the sense of normalcy and decorum that comes with community. Their inherent civility is a form of immunity against savagery.

Beyond relaying the bit of information about a possible Arab invasion, the marauders Hig encounters clearly exist as a foil to the kind of tribe he eventually forms by the novel's conclusion. Indeed, he ends up killing two of the three men upon learning that they have raped and mutilated several women, acts that push even a 'good' man like Hig to murder. Survivors may now exist only as tribes and bands, but *Dog Stars*—like so many other works of the genre, including *Watershed*—is still deeply concerned with policing the boundaries between the savage and the civilized. McCarthy's *The Road*, for example, includes an exchange between father and son in which it is established that, as "the good guys" who are "carrying the fire" for humanity, they will never resort to cannibalism no matter how dire the circumstances become.[542] This precise concern returns at the novel's conclusion, as the boy is adopted into a community of fellow 'good guys' after his father's death. In a moment of levity, he earnestly asks the battle-hardened

[541] Ibid., 319.
[542] McCarthy, 128-29. It's worth noting that cannibalism is generally recognized as one of the ultimate taboos amongst Western cultures and, not surprisingly, was routinely falsely reported as a characteristic of Indigenous peoples in lands of conquest.

leader to confirm that they are, indeed, good guys who are carrying the fire and not eating children.[543]

Heller's *Dog Stars* concludes with a similar optimism deriving from a return to heteronormative male relationships. Where the tenuous coexistence between Hig and Bangley had been strained by their differing opinions on the use of violence as a means of survival, the addition of Cimarron and her father (whom Hig refers to as "Pops") brings peace to their community. Bangley's murderous rage is tempered by Pops, who fills the profound absence of a father figure in the young man's life. Cimarron, too, comes to replace the wife Hig lost to the pandemic, a loss he has mourned to the point of a despondency that has nearly cost him his life on several occasions. The novel's conclusion can thus be read not only as a romanticized return to the primitive, but also as an endorsement of a type of masculinity in which men are primarily defined by heteronormative roles as fathers, sons, and husbands. Though Hig acknowledges having jokingly thought of his arguments with Bangley as those of "a married couple," he also recognizes and accommodates Bangley's homophobia when first establishing their partnership.[544] *Dog Stars* further affirms that heteronormative relationships are essential to the futurity of the community, not only in that Hig and Cimarron may have children, but that Hig and Bangley will now be able to avoid the seemingly inevitable destruction that their polar opposite personalities would have caused. *Dog Stars* concludes, much like

[543] McCarthy, 283-84.
[544] Heller, 35. When they are first getting to know one another, Hig mentions to Bangley that he had been a publishing poet prior to the catastrophe. When he reads apprehension in Bangley's body language, he adds that he had also written a number of articles for fishing and outdoor magazines. Noticing a wave of relief in his demeanor, Hig imagines Bangley reacting thusly: "Phew, outdoor stuff, Hig is not a homo" (20).

The Road, with a sense hope for a settler futurity through the reproductive heteronormative family.

This ending represents a fruitful site for relational analysis with Indigenous-authored dystopian novels like Louise Erdrich' *Future Home of the Living God*, which not only recalls the colonial surveillance of Indigenous reproductive rights and child removal policies that formed a cornerstone of the state's extermination agenda but also denies readers the hopeful resolution symbolized by a happy family. Settler colonialism is particularly disruptive in that it not only physically displaces Indigenous peoples from their ancestral homes but also works to interrupt or terminate traditional social networks and cultural customs. Indigenous kinship bonds, gendered identities, and sexual practices have been especially targeted for assimilation or elimination by settler regimes concerned with nation-building. Through institutions of marriage, education, and healthcare services, Indigenous bodies, families, and communities have served as an oppositional Other against which a heteronormative national identity could evolve.[545]

As is generally the case with dystopian fictions, Erdrich's *Future Home* is inspired by contemporary social and political issues. At the same time, the novel is deeply aware of the historical violence enacted upon Indigenous women and children as a result of settler colonialism. In a 2017 interview with Margaret Attwood, Erdrich reveals that she began writing the novel in 2000 shortly after the election of President George W. Bush and returned to it shortly after the 2016 election of President Donald Trump. Erdrich interpreted Bush's election "as a disaster for reproductive rights" and a missed

[545] Rifkin, *When Did Indians*, 5-8; Lomawaima, 227-28; Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother*, 63-65, 73-75; Gurr, 80; and Li, 28.

opportunity to address climate change. Other novels soon pulled her attention away from what became *Future Home* and "[w]ith Obama in Washington," she says, "we seemed to have a chance to move forward—clean energy, the restoration of women's rights, a progressive Supreme Court. . . . But we have a tendency to regress after we move forward." Harkening back to previous campaign seasons, abortion regulations and federal funding for Planned Parenthood were early talking points before the US careened toward state and federal elections in 2016. In the Attwood interview, Erdrich does not go so far as to refer to Trump's presidency as apocalyptic—a debatable point according the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and their Doomsday Clock—though she does suggest that *Future Home* serves as "the biological equivalent of our present political mess."[546] She also uses pregnancy as a metaphor throughout the novel to represent the precarity created by this mess—both in the immediate, day-to-day lives of women whose reproductive capabilities make them increasingly vulnerable to abuse and in the long-term survival of humans, who appear to be on the verge of extinction just as the world around them seems to be on the precipice of an new geological age.

For all it might suggest about this particular moment of crisis and its consequences, brings the history of settler colonialism into conversation with current discourses on environmental crises and their aftermaths. For example, the novel recalls previous works of distinction in dystopia's literary tradition like Orwell's *1984* and

[546] Atwood and Erdrich, n.p.; Following Trump's inauguration, members of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved their Doomsday Clock to two minutes and thirty seconds before midnight, signifying the greatest proximity to global catastrophe since the first decade of the Cold War. See Amber Jamieson, "Doomsday Clock Closer to Midnight in Wake of Trump Presidency," *The Guardian* 26 Jan 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/26/doomsday-clock-closer-to-midnight-in-wake-of-donald-trump-election.

Attwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* by including advanced technological surveillance and forced procreation as essential plot devices. At the same time, *Future Home* is typical of contemporary Indigenous-authored fiction in that it invokes the lived realities of Native peoples who have, for centuries, endured colonization as a cultural and ecological apocalypse.[547] For Indigenous peoples living in contemporary settler nations, the present is profoundly influenced by colonization and its legacies, particularly as it relates to severed intimate bonds between kin, land, and language. Whereas settler literatures are routinely preoccupied with looming extinction, Indigenous literatures are more apt to expose the vanishing endpoint of settler colonialism while also imagining the continuation of Indigenous lifeways.

Perhaps for this reason, *Future Home* does not focus so much on the minute details of a central crisis event but instead depicts a slow drip of tangentially related minor crises whose accumulation still manages to surprise characters. Protagonist Cedar Songmaker's initial reaction to the theory of an evolutionary shift in human reproduction is telling: "Something is bursting through the way life was," she muses. "Everything has changed while I wasn't looking, changed without warning or word."[548] There are multiple ways to read this passage, one of which is to place it in conversation with Erdrich's comments about the presidential elections that inspired the novel. Doing so suggests a skepticism on Erdrich's part regarding the naiveté or complacency that prevents characters like Cedar (or a large portion of US voters) from remaining vigilant or forming proactive responses to early warning signs. For instance, the novel is distinct from the

[547] Whyte, "Our Ancestors' Dystopia," 207-08.
[548] Erdrich, 44.

current trend in dystopian narratives in that climate destabilization has already been occurring gradually for decades prior to the events depicted in the novel. All of the characters know this, but there is a sense that little has been done to address the changes or prevent future changes from occurring. Destabilization is both an understated, accepted reality of everyday life in *Future Home* and a possible explanation for the crisis event that eventually initiates the dystopian state.[549]

Also unlike other examples of the genre discussed in this coda, the event that finally signals the 'end of civilization' in *Future Home* is not overtly tied to catastrophic weather that result in largely uninhabitable environs. Rather, it is the realization that evolutionary mutations occurring *In utero* will likely mean that *Homo sapiens* are no longer able to reproduce. A new, totalitarian government based on fundamentalist Christian doctrine eventually emerges after the previous governing structure collapses. This new regime uses advanced surveillance technology such as hacking and drones in support of a program aimed at pregnant women. Eventually, even women who are not pregnant are targeted for imprisonment and forced breeding, as they are implanted with sperm and egg samples of white donors confiscated by the government from fertility banks. These forced pregnancies are carried out in hopes that some women, like Cedar, will deliver *Homo sapien* offspring—preferably males, as the last generation of human males are rumored to have been born with genital defects that will prevent them from reproducing. In other words, the end of the world scenario depicted in this novel revolves

[549] Lack of certain knowledge is a recurring theme throughout the novel, so it is never explicitly stated precisely *why* the crisis comes about. One theory suggests floated early on in the novel suggests that melting permafrost has released a virus or bacteria for which there is no immunity. See Erdrich, 8.

around the extinction of 'normal' white males and, by extension, normative white patriarchy.

Another way to read Cedar's musing about the world changing without warning is to consider how *Future Home* is not primarily concerned with regeneration in the same way that settler narratives like *Dog Stars* tend to be when taking up the question of extinction. Not only is life as we know it *not* regenerated by the end of the novel but something else—something *evolved*—is 'bursting through.' Indeed, Cedar insists at one point late in novel that "we aren't just copying ourselves," but that "humanity is going forward. . . . on some evolutionary forked road."[550] The future remains uncertain and it seems plausible that people—*Homo sapiens,* at least—will not exist then as they do now. But as Cedar's Chippewa stepfather Eddy reminds her, survival, adaptation, continuance, and restoration have not only formed Indigenous peoples' responses to colonization for centuries, they were traits of Indigenous cultures that existed *prior* to European settlement, as well.[551] Kyle Whyte argues in a similar vein that Indigenous conservation practices "are motivated by how we put dystopia in perspective as just a brief, yet highly disruptive, historical moment."[552] That is, distinctions between *before* and *after* do not necessarily adhere in Indigenous-authored dystopian fictions because the settler-dominated societies that are depicted in ruin in works like *Dog Stars* and *Watershed* were only made possible by the continual devastation of Indigenous societies.

In *Future Home*, Cedar's body makes legible the nightmare of future dystopia in relation to the horrible realities of violence against Native families throughout colonial

[550] Erdrich, 225.
[551] Ibid., 28.
[552] Whyte, "Our Ancestors' Dystopia," 208.

histories. For example, fictional scenes depicting the policing and surveillance of pregnant women can be read in conversation with actual government practices that regulate Indigenous women's reproductive rights. A litany of scholarship points to the fact that healthcare services under the auspices of the federally-controlled Indian Health Services have contributed to the eliminatory logic of cultural genocide against Indigenous Americans, not only through coercive surgical sterilization but also by restricting access to family-planning services that might reduce the likelihood unplanned teenage pregnancies, welfare dependency, and adoption.[553] As Barbara Gurr succinctly states, "[r]eproductive healthcare provides a mechanism through which the State polices Native women's motherhood."[554] In the novel, government control over reproductive rights manifests in the form of Mother, a representative of the new fundamentalist regime whose image is broadcast into hiding places of pregnant women being "sequestered in hospitals in order to give birth under controlled circumstances."[555] By novel's end, any woman found to be in violation of even the most minor laws is forcibly removed to militarized hospitals, artificially inseminated, and detained for the term of their pregnancies. Many women die as a result of genetic differences between themselves and their evolved offspring, the majority of which are stillborn. The novel suggests that the causes for these deaths are still unknown; nonetheless, the state continues to expose women to possible death in the name of research. On the rare occasions that the children

[553] Carpio, 50-51; Ralstin-Lewis, 82-83; Lawrence, 411-15; and Gurr, 71-72.
[554] Gurr, 80.
[555] Erdrich, 72.

survive, they are immediately taken from the mother, who remains imprisoned and awaits another forced pregnancy.[556]

The children's removal recalls the traumatic histories in which settler government officials sought to undermine Indigenous sovereignty by separating children from their families and placing them in boarding schools or with adoptive white families.[557] The removal of Cedar's child also recalls rampant adoption and fostering schemes that reached a crisis in the postwar twentieth century.[558] The fact that Cedar herself was raised under the cloud of a dubious adoption by white parents Glen and Sera Songmaker links her more directly to this history. "I've never understood how I was adopted," Cedar confesses within the first pages of the novel: "I mean, the legality there is definitely to be questioned. . . . Whenever I mention it, Glen and Sera hum and look away. Even if I scream, they don't look back."[559] As a result of reconnecting with her Ojibwe birthmother, Mary "Sweetie" Potts, Cedar eventually learns that Glen is her biological father, a fact Sera has also known but never revealed to Cedar. In order to save face in light of Glen's affair with a teenaged Sweetie, he and Sera 'adopted' Cedar on the basis that her birthmother was too young and unequipped to raise a child on her own.[560] When, in the novel's concluding passage, Cedar's unnamed son is taken from her just moments after he is born, readers will likely recall the scene just thirty pages prior in which infant Cedar was taken from Sweetie in the hospital. This parallel reading prompts us to question, then, how the realization of Cedar's worst fears in this new dystopian world are

[556] Ibid., 252-64.
[557] See Lomawaima; Jacobs, *White Mother*; and Woolford.
[558] Jacobs, "Remembering the 'Forgotten Child,'" 136-38.
[559] Erdrich, 4.
[560] Ibid., 219-21, 232-33.

in many ways merely the reflection of her own mother's experience—and that of countless other Indigenous women whose children were taken from them.

Unlike *The Road* and *Dog Stars*, *Future Home* does not conclude with the hopeful image of a unified family unit, head by a paternal figure and ready to face whatever future lies ahead. It is noticeable that both Glen and Phil, the father of Cedar's child, are absent from the final scenes in which Cedar is abducted, imprisoned, and forced to relinquish her child. While Glen has fallen out of contact after crossing into Canada so that he might smuggle his wife and daughter across the heavily guarded border later, Phil disappears when Cedar rebukes his plan to profit from her pregnancy:

> "Don't get me wrong," says Phil. "I'm not with them, honey, I don't believe in capital punishment for abortion, but I understand. They're fucked up and scared. I'm with you like lots of decent guys!"
>
> "The thing is," he says, very softly, "you have a treasure, Cedar, if our baby is normal. We would be in charge of things. Rich. Super rich! We'd be safe. If we somehow worked out genetically, I mean, to have a normal child the sky's the limit for us."[561]

Phil does not explicitly state *how* 'normal' children will make them powerful and rich, but one likely implication is that he and Cedar can sell the children to wealthy adoptive parents. As an outlaw expectant mother whose early identity formed in relation to Indigenous child removal practices, Cedar refuses to take part in Phil's market-based business proposal. So he leaves. And instead of a final scene hinting at settler futurity, *Future Home* concludes with Cedar alone, all but hopeless and imagining her child growing up in a world even more devastated by environmental and political crises.[562]

The novels discussed in this chapter are a reminder that settler nativism is and likely will continue to be a characteristic of settler societies. Whether in explicit

[561] Erdrich, 246.
[562] Ibid., 267.

statements like those found in *Dog Stars* about Indigenous extinction or in more the implicit evocations of savage Indianness in *The Road* and *Dog Stars*, the compulsion toward Indigenous elimination persists in the settler imaginary. I argued in a previous chapter that settler histories are "haunted" by Indigenous presences that demand some form of recognition and reconciliation. In this brief survey of speculative fiction about settler futurity, traces of Indianness are often less recognizable because Indigenous characters simply do not exist in these narratives. Yet because the resolution of the crises around which these novels' plots are constructed so often demands a return to liberal ideals, Indianness as an oppositional savagery crowding new frontiers continues to show up in the form of marauding cannibals, rapists, and murderers. These are imagined futures with Indians but not Indigenous people. Anxieties of foreign invasion persist into these imagined futures, as well. As with the Indian figure, the Invader threatens whatever fragile belonging survivors manage to negotiate amongst themselves, whether through foreign military forces whose attacks lead to catastrophic events or as hordes of the undead, infecting and consuming the nation.[563]

[563] Nguyen, "The Hidden Scars, np. In this op-ed for *New York Times*, Nguyen posits that "refugees are the zombies of the world, the undead who swim from dying states to march or swim toward our border in endless waves."

REFERENCES

Abbott, Jane. *Watershed*, Vintage Australia, 2016.

Abbott, Philip. "Titans/Planners, Bohemians/Revolutionaries: Male Empowerment in the 1930s," *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 30, no. 3, 2006, pp. 463-85.

Agamben, Giorgio. Homo Sacer: *Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 1995, translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford UP, 1998.

Aldama, Arturo J. *Disrupting Savagism: Intersecting Chicana/o, Mexican Immigrant, and Native American Struggles for Self-Representation*, Duke UP, 2001.

Aliess, Angela. "Iron Eyes Cody: Wannabe Indian," *Cinéaste*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1999, pp. 30-31.

---. "Native Son," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, May 26, 1996, third ed.

Allen, Chadwick. "Performing Serpent Mound: A Trans-Indigenous Meditation," *Theatre Journal*, vol. 67, no. 3, 2015, pp. 391-411.

---. "Serpentine Figures, Sinuous Relations: Thematic Geometry in Allison Hedge Coke's *Blood Run*," *American Literature*, vol. 82, no. 4, 2010, pp. 807-34.

Altenbernd, Erik and Alex Trimble Young. "The Significance of the Frontier in an Age of Transnational History," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2014, pp. 127-50.

Anam, Nasia. "The Migrant as Colonist: Dystopia and Apocalypse in the Literature of Mass Migration," *ASAP/Journal*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2018, pp. 653-77.

Andersen, Gregers, "Cli-fi and the Uncanny," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2016, pp. 855-66.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition, Verso, 2006.

Anderson, Eric Gary. "Earthworks and Contemporary Indigenous American Literature: Foundations and Futures," *Native South*, vol. 9, 2016, pp. 1-26.

Anderson, Gary Clayton. *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-1875*, U of Oklahoma P, 2005.

Armengol, Josep M. "Gendering the Great Depression: Rethinking the Male Body in 1930s American Culture and Literature." *Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2014, pp. 59-68.

Atalay, Sonya. "Indigenous Archaeology as Decolonizing Practice," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 30, nos. 3 &4, 2006, pp. 280-310.

Attwood, Bain. "Law, History, and Power: The British Treatment of Aboriginal Rights in Land in New South Wales," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2014, pp. 171-92.

Atwood, Margaret and Louise Erdrich. "Inside the Dystopian Visions of Margaret Atwood and Louise Erdrich," *Elle* 14 Nov. 2017, https://www.elle.com/culture/books/a13530871/future-home-of-the-living-god-louise-erdrich-interview/.

Barker, Joanne. "The Specters of Recognition," *Formations of United States Colonialism*, edited by Alyosha Goldstein, Duke UP, 2014, pp. 33-56.

Barta, Tony. "Sorry, and Not Sorry, in Australia: How the Apology to the Stolen Generations Buried a History of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2008, pp. 201-14.

Bashford, Alison. "Immigration Restriction: Rethinking Period and Place from Settler Colonies to Postcolonial Nations," *Journal of Global History*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2014, pp. 26-48.

Beardwood, Robert, "The Cosmopolitan Pastoral: The Paddock, the Novel, and the Nation," in *Australian Literary Studies in the 21st Century: Proceedings of the 2000 ASAL* Conference, ed. Philip Mead, ASAL, 2001, pp. 10-20. Available online at https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/JASAL/article/view/9587/9477.

Bebout, Lee. "The Nativist Aztlán: Fantasies and Anxieties of Whiteness on the Border," *Latino Studies*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2012, pp. 290-313.

---. *Whiteness on the Border: Mapping the U.S. Racial Imagination in Brown and White*, NYU P, 2016.

Behdad, Ali. *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Memory in the United States*, Duke UP, 2005.

Behrendt, Larissa. *Finding Eliza: Power and Colonial Storytelling*, U of Queensland P, 2016.

---. "In Your Dreams: Cultural Appropriation, Popular Culture, and Colonialism," *Law Text Culture*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 256-79.

Bell, Michael Mayerfield. "The Ghosts of Place," *Theory and Society*, vol. 26, no. 6, 1997, pp. 813-36.

Bergland, Renée L. *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects*, Dartmouth UP, 2000.

Berkhofer, Robert F. Jr. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian to the Present*, Vintage, 1978.

Birch, Tony. "The Last Refuge of the 'Un-Australian,'" *UTS Review*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2001, pp. 17-22.

Bone Tomahawk, directed by S. Craig Zahler, USA, Caliber Media Company, 2015.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*, 3rd ed, Roman & Littlefield, 2010.

Brennan, Frank. *No Small Change: The Road to Recognition for Indigenous Australia*, U of Queensland P, 2015.

Brewster, Anne. *Aboriginal Women's Autobiography*, Sydney UP, 1996.

---. *Giving This Country a Memory: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices of Australia*, Cambria, 2015.

Brigg, Morgan. "Biopolitics meets Terrapolitics: Political Ontologies and Governance in Settler-Colonial Australia," *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 42, 2007, pp. 403-417.

Brook, Stephen. "It's Australia Day: Don't Let the 'We Grew Here, You Flew Here' Crew Spoil It," *TheGuardian.com* 26 January 2011.

Browder, Laura. *Slippery Characters: Ethnic Impersonators and American Identities*, U of North Carolina P, 2000.

Brown, Vincent. "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 114, no. 5, 2009, pp. 1231-49.

Bruyneel, Kevin. *Third Space of Sovereignty: The Postcolonial Politics of U.S.-Indigenous Relations*, U of Minnesota P, 2007.

Buchanan, Patrick J. *State of Emergency: The Third World Invasion and Conquest of America*, Thomas Dunne, 2006.

---."War for the Soul of America," *Human Events*, vol. 52, no. 21, 1992, pp. 11, 14.

Buell, Frederick, *Apocalypse to Way of Life: Environmental Crisis in the American Century*, Routledge, 2003.

Burke, Anthony. *Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety*, Cambridge UP, 2008.

Bush, George W. "Presidential Address to a Joint Session of Congress," Washington DC, 20 Sept. 2001, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html?noredirect=on.

Byrd, Jodi A. "Still Waiting for the 'Post' to Arrive: Elizabeth Cook Lynn and the Imponderables of American Indian Postcoloniality," *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2016, pp. 75-89.

---.*The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, U of Minnesota P, 2011.

Caison, Gina. "Claiming the Unclaimable: Forrest Carter, *The Education of Little Tree*, and Land Claim in the Native South," *Mississippi Quarterly*, vol. 64, nos. 3-4, 2011, pp. 573-96.

Caminero-Santangelo, Marta. *Documenting the Undocumented: Latino/s Narratives and Social Justice in the Era of Operation Gatekeeper*, UP of Florida, 2016.

Campbell, Neil. *Post-Westerns: Cinema, Region, West*, U of Nebraska P, 2013.

Caputo, Philip. *Crossers*, Vintage, 2010.

Carmen, Leon. "Wanda and Me," *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), 15 March 1997, pp. 27.

Carmen, Leon and John Bayley [Wanda Koolmatrie]. *My Own Sweet Time*, Magabala, 1994.

---. "We Just Wanted to Tell a Story," Interview by Andrew Stevenson and Ava Hubble, *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 March 1997, pp. 8.

Carpio, Myla Vicenti. "The Lost Generation: American Indian Women and Sterilization Abuse," *Social Justice*, vol. 31, no. 4, 3004, pp. 40-53.

Carter, Asa "Forrest." *The Education of Little Tree*, 1976, U of New Mexico P, reprinted 1986.

Carter, David. *Dispossession, Dreams, and Diversity: Issues in Australian Studies*, Pearson, 2006.

Caterine, Darryl V. "Heirs through Fear: Indian Curses, Accursed Indian Lands, and White Christian Sovereignty in America," *Nova Religio*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2013, pp. 37-57.

Castagna, Felicity. *No More Boats*, Giramondo, 2017.

Castillo, Ana. *The Guardians*, Random House, 2008.

Chavez, Leo. *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation*, second edition, Stanford UP, 2013.

Claeys, Gregory. *Dystopia: A Natural History*, Oxford UP, 2017.

Clark, Anna. "History in Black and White: A Critical Analysis of the Black Armband Debate," *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 26, no. 75, 2009, pp. 1-11.

Clark, Gary Jr. "This Land," *This Land*, Warner Bros. Records, 2019.

Clark, Maureen. "Mudrooroo: Crafty Imposter or Rebel with a Cause," *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2004, pp. 101-10.

Clayton, Lawrence. "Forrest Carter/Asa Carter and Politics," *Western American Literature*, vol. 21, no.1, 1986, pp. 19-26.

Cohen, Erez. "Non-Anglo and Non-Aboriginal Australian Multiculturalism: The Third Side of the Black/White Divide," *Boundary Writing: An Exploration of Race, Culture, and Gender Binaries in Contemporary Australia*, edited by Lynette Russell, U of Hawai'i P, 2006, pp. 66-85.

Cook-Lynn, Elizabeth. *A Separate Country: Postcoloniality and American Indian Nations*, Texas Tech UP, 2012.

Coulthard, Glen. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, U of Minnesota P, 2014.

Cox, James H. *Muting White Noise: Native American and European American Novel Traditions*, U of Oklahoma P, 2009.

Curtis, Claire P. *Postapocalyptic Fiction and the Social Contract: We'll Not Go Home Again*, Lexington, 2010.

Dalley, Hamish. “The Deaths of Settler Colonialism: Extinction as a Metaphor of Decolonization in Contemporary Settler Literature,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2018, pp. 30-46.

Dalziell, Tanya. *Settler Romances and the Australian Girl*, U of Western Australia P, 2004.

Dauvergne, Catherine. *The New Politics of Immigration and the End of Settler Societies*, Cambridge UP, 2016.

Day, Iyko. “Being or Nothingness: Indigeneity, Antiblackness, and Settler Colonial Critique,” *Critical Ethnic Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2015, pp. 102-21.

De Cristofaro, Diletta. “Critical Temporalities: *Station Eleven* and the Contemporary Post-Apocalyptic Novel,” *Open Library of Humanities*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2018, pp. [1-27].

Delgadillo, Theresa. “The Criticality of Latino/a Fiction in the Twenty-First Century,” *American Literary History*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2011, pp. 600-24.

Dalley, Hamish. “The Deaths of Settler Colonialism: Extinction as a Metaphor of Decolonization in Contemporary Settler Literature,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2018, pp. 30-46.

Deloria, Philip. *Playing Indian*. Yale UP, 1998.

Deloria, Vine. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. 1969. U of Oklahoma P, 1988.

Dickey, Colin. *Ghostland: An American History in Haunted Places*, Viking, 2016.

Dixon, Robert. *Alex Miller: The Ruin of Time*, Sydney UP, 2014.

---. *Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, Gender, and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction, 1875-1914*, Cambridge UP, 1995.

Dolin, Kieran. “Place and Property in Post-*Mabo* Fiction by Dorothy Hewitt, Alex Miller, and Andrew McGahan,” *JASAL*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2014, pp [1-12].

Dorgelo, Rebecca. “Frontier Violence and the Power of the ‘Sacred’: Alex Miller’s *Journey to the Stone Country* and *Landscape of Farewell*,” *Frontier Skirmishes: Literary and Cultural Debates in Australia after 1992*, edited by Russell West-Pavlov and Jennifer Wawrzinek, Universitatsverlag Winter GmbH, 2010, pp. 128-40.

Due, Clemence and Damien W. Riggs. "'We Grew Here You Flew Here': Claims to "Home" in the Cronulla Riots," *Colloquy*, vol. 16, 2008, pp. 210-28.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Beacon, 2014.

Duthu, N. Bruce. *Shadow Nations: Tribal Sovereignty and the Limits of Legal Pluralism*, Oxford UP, 2013.

Egan, Susanna. "The Company She Keeps: Demidenko and the Problems of Imposture in Biography," *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2004, pp. [1-14].

Elder, Catriona. *Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity*, Allen & Unwin, 2007.

Ellemor, Heidi. "White Skin, Black Heart?: The Politics of Belonging in Native Title Australia." *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2003, pp. 233-52.

Erdrich, Louise. *Future Home of the Living God*, Harper, 2017.

Everett, Kristina. "Welcome to Country . . . Not," *Oceania*, vol. 79, no. 1, 2009, pp. 53-64.

"Father of the Aboriginal Flag Slams Reclaim Australia for 'Idiotic' Appropriation," At Large Media Pty Ltd [Australia], *newmatilda.com*, 8 April 2015, https://newmatilda.com/2015/04/08/father-aboriginal-flag-slams-reclaim-australia-idiotic-appropriation.

Fickling, David. "Australia Seen as 'America's Deputy Sheriff': Indonesia Wary of Howard's Government," *Guardian*, World News: Asia Pacific, 9 Sept. 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/10/indonesia.australia.

Fox, Karen. *Māori and Aboriginal Women in the Public Eye: Representing Difference, 1950-2000*, Australian National UP, 2011.

Franks, Travis. "'We Are Considered Undesirable Foreigners' in 'This Our Texas,': Mexican American Settler Nativism in *Caballero*," *MELUS*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2018, pp. 86-102.

Fraser, Morag. "Reading Australia: *Journey to the Stone Country* by Alex Miller," *Australian Book Review* [online], 20 May 2015, https://www.australianbookreview.com.au/reading-australia/alex-miller/journey-to-the-stone-country-by-alex-miller.

Free, Melissa. "'It is I Who Have the Power': Settling Women in Haggard's South African Imaginary," *Genre*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2012, pp. 359-93.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Uncanny*, 1919, translated by David McClintock, Penguin, 2003.

Galindo, René and Jami Vigil, "Are Anti-Immigrant Statements Racist or Nativist? What Difference Does it Make?" *Latino Studies*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2006, pp. 419-47.

Gall, Adam. "Taking/Taking Up: Recognition and the Frontier in Grenville's *The Secret River*," *JASAL*, Special Issue: The Colonial Present, 2008, pp. 94-104.

Garbutt, Robb. *The Locals: Identity, Place, and Belonging in Australia and Beyond*, Peter Lang, 2011.

Gelder, Ken and Jane M. Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia: Sacredness and Identity in a Postcolonial Nation*, Melbourne UP, 1998.

Gelder, Ken and Paul Salzman. *After the Celebration: Australian Fiction, 1989-2007*, Melbourne UP, 2009.

Gerken, Christina. *Model Immigrants and Undesirable Aliens: The Cost of Immigration Reform in the 1990s*, U of Minnesota P, 2013.

Germic, Stephen. "Land Claims, Natives, and Nativism: Susan Fenimore Cooper's Fealty to Place," *American Literature*, vol. 79, no. 3, 2007, pp. 475-500.

Goeman, Mishuana. *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*, U of Minnesota P, 2013.

Goldie, Terry. *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures*, McGill-Queen's UP, 1989.

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*, U of Minnesota P, 2017.

Goot, Murray. "The Aboriginal Franchise and Its Consequences," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 52, no. 4, 2006, pp. 517-61.

Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, 1997, second edition, U of Minnesota P, 2008.

Graham, Mary. "Some Thoughts about the Philosophical Underpinnings of Aboriginal Worldviews," *Australian Humanities Review*, vol. 45, 2008, pp. 105-18.

Greenshaw, Wayne. "Is Forrest Carter Really Asa Carter? Only Josey Wales May Know for Sure," *New York Times*, 26 August 1976, pp. 39.

Grenville, Kate. *Searching for the Secret River: The Story behind the Bestselling Novel*, 2006, Canongate, 2007.

---. *The Secret River*, Text P, 2005.

Grewal, Inderpal. *Saving the Security State: Exceptional Citizens in Twenty-First-Century America*, Duke UP, 2017.

Griffiths, Michael R. "Biopolitical Correspondences: Settler Nationalism, Thanatopolitics, and the Perils of Hybridity," *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2011, pp. 20-42.

Guenther, Lisa. *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlives*, U of Minnesota P, 2013.

Guidotti-Hernandez, Nicole M. *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping U.S. and Mexican National Imaginaries*, Duke UP, 2011.

Gurr, Barbara. "Mothering in the Borderlands: Policing Native American Women's Reproductive Healthcare," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2011, pp. 69-84.

Hage, Ghassan. *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*, Pluto, 2003.

---. *Is Racism an Environmental Threat?*, Polity, 2017.

---. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Routledge, 2000.

Halberstam, Jack. "Wildness, Loss, Death," *Social Text*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2014, pp. 137-48.

Hamilton, Annette, "Fear and Desire: Aborigines, Asians, and the National Imaginary," *Australian Cultural History*, vol. 9, 1990, pp. 14-35.

Handley, William R. "*The Vanishing American* (1925)," *America First: Naming the Nation in US Film*, edited by Mandy Merck, Routledge, 2007, pp. 56-76.

Haney López, Ian F. "'A Nation of Minorities': Race, Ethnicity, and Reactionary Colorblindness," *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2014, pp. 985-1063.

Hanson, Pauline. "Maiden Speech to Parliament, 1996," reprinted by *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 May 2016. Available at https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/pauline-hansons-1996-maiden-speech-to-parliament-full-transcript-20160915-grgjv3.html.

Harjo, Suzan Shown. "We Have No Reason to Celebrate an Invasion," *Rethinking Schools*, special edition, 1991, pp. 4-5.

Harris, Cheryl I. "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 106, no. 8, 1993, pp. 1710-91.

Hartman, Andrew W. *War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars*, U of Chicago P, 2015.

Hedge Coke, Allison Adele. *Blood Run: Free Verse Play*, Salt P, 2006.

Heise, Ursula K. *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species*, U of Chicago P, 2016.

Heller, Peter. *The Dog Stars*, Vintage, 2012.

Helton, Laura, Justin Leroy, Max A. Mishler, Samantha Seeley, and Shauna Sweeney. "The Question of Recovery: An Introduction," *Social Text*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2015, pp. 1-18.

Henry, Matthew. "Are We All Living in the Anthropocene?" *OUPblog*, Oxford UP, 29 Oct 2017, available at https://blog.oup.com/2017/10/are-we-all-living-in-the-anthropocene/.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, Rev. ed. Rutgers UP, 2002.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan, Parts I and II*, 1651, eds. A.P. Matinich and Brian Battiste, 2nd edition, Broadview P, 2011.

Hong, Grace Kyungwon. *Death beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference*, U of Minnesota P, 2015.

Horne, Gerald. "The Apocalypse of Settler Colonialism," *Monthly Review*, vol. 69, no. 11, 2018, pp. 1-21.

Howard, John. *2001 Election Policy Speech*, 28 Oct. 2001, Sydney, available at https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/partypol/1178395/upload_binary/1178395.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22library/partypol/1178395%22.

Howard, John and Liz Jackson. "An Average Australian Bloke," *Four Corners*, ABC News, 19 Feb 1996, available at https://www.abc.net.au/4corners/an-average-australian-bloke---1996/2841808.

Howard, Robert E. "The Horror from the Mound," 1932, *The Black Stranger and Other American Tales*, edited by Steven Tompkins, U of Nebraska P, 2005, pp. 303-19.

Howe, LeAnne. "Embodied Tribalography: Mound Building, Ball Games, and Native Endurance in the Southeast," *Studies in America Indian Literatures*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2014, pp. 75-93.

Huber, Lindsay Pérez. "'Make America Great Again!': Donald Trump, Racist Nativism, and the Virulent Adherence to White Supremacy amid U.S. Demographic Change," *Charleston Law Review*, vol. 10, 2016, pp. 215-50.

Hughes-D'Aeth, Tony. "Cooper, Cather, Prichard, 'Pioneer': The Chronotope of Settler Colonialism," *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2016, pp. [1-30].

---. "For a Long Time Nothing Happened: Settler Colonialism, Deferred Action, and the Scene of Colonization in Kim Scott's *That Deadman Dance*," *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2016, pp. 22-34.

Hunter, James Davison. *Culture Wars: the Struggle to Define America*, Basic, 1991.

Hunziker, Alyssa A. "Toni Morrison, Indigeneity, and Settler Colonialism," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 8, no. 4, 2018, pp. 507-17.

Hurley, Jessica and Dan Sinykin. "Apocalypse: Introduction," *ASAP/Journal*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2018, pp. 451-66.

Jacobs, Margaret D. "Remembering the 'Forgotten Child': The American Indian Child Welfare Crisis of the 1960s and 1970s," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 1-2, 2013, pp. 136-59.

---. *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940*, U of Nebraska P, 2009.

Jacobson, Robin Dale. *The New Nativism: Proposition 187 and the Debate over Immigration*, U of Minnesota P, 2008.

Jelly-Schapiro, Eli. *Security and Terror: American Culture and the Long History of Colonial Modernity*, U of California P, 2018.

Johnson, Miranda. *The Land is Our History: Indigeneity, Law, and the Settler State*, Oxford UP, 2016.

Johnston, Anna and Alan Lawson. "Settler Post-Colonialism and Australian Literary Culture," *Modern Australian Criticism and Theory*, edited by David Carter and Wang Guanglin, China Ocean UP, 2010, pp. 28-40.

Jupp, James. *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, second edition, Cambridge UP, 2007.

Justice, Daniel Heath. "A Lingering Miseducation: Confronting the Legacy of Little Tree," *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 12, no.1, 2000, pp. 20-36.

---. *Our Fire Survives the Storm: A Cherokee Literary History*, U of Minnesota P, 2006.

---. *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter*, Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2018.

Kabirl, Nahid Afrose. "The Cronulla Riots: Muslims' Place in the White Imaginary Spatiality," *Contemporary Islam*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2015, pp. 271-90.

Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani. "'A structure, not an event': Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity," *Lateral* [online], vol. 5, no. 1, 2016, n.p., http://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/.

---. "Colonialism in Equality: Hawaiian Sovereignty and the Question of U.S. Civil Rights," *South American Quarterly*, vol. 107, no. 4, 2008, pp. 635-50.

Kelada, Odette. "Love is a Battlefield: 'Maternal' Emotions and White Catharsis in Baz Luhrmann's post-Apology *Australia*," *Journal of Australasian Cinema*, vol. 8, nos. 2-3, 2014, pp. 83-95.

---. "The Stolen River: Possession and Race Representation in Grenville's Colonial Narrative," *JASAL* (online), vol. 10, no. 1, 2010, pp. [1-10].

Kelsey, Penelope and Cari M. Carpenter. "'In the End, Our Message Weighs': *Blood Run*, NAGPRA, and American Indian Identity," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2011, pp. 56-74.

Killingsworth, M. Jimmie. *Facing It: Epiphany and Apocalypse in the New Nature*, Texas A&M UP, 2014.

Killsback, Leo. "Indigenous Perceptions of Time: Decolonizing Theory, World History, and the Fates of Human Societies," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2013, pp. 85-113.

Kimmel, Michael. *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era*, Nation, 2013.

---. *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, Fourth edition, Oxford UP, 2017.

King, C. Richard. *Redskins: Insult and Brand*, U of Nebraska P, 2016.

Kossew, Sue. "Recovering the Past: Entangled Histories in Kim Scott's *That Deadman Dance*," *Decolonizing the Landscape: Indigenous Cultures in Australia*, edited by Beate Neumeier and Kay Schaffer, Rodopi, 2014, pp. 169-82.

Krauthamer, Barbara. *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*, U of North Carolina P, 2013.

LaDuke, Winona. "We Are Still Here: The 500 Years Celebration," *Race, Poverty and the Environment*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1992, pp. 3, 20-21.

Lai, Paul and Lindsey Claire Smith. "Introduction [Alternative Contact: Indigeneity, Globalism, and American Studies]," *American Studies*, vol. 62, no. 3, 2010, pp. 407-36.

Lawrence, Jane. "The Indian Health Service and Sterilization of Native American Women," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2000, pp. 400-19.

Lawson, Alan. "The Anxious Proximities of Settler (Post)colonial Relations," in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, second edition, eds. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, Blackwell, 2004, pp. 1210-23.

---. "Proximities: From Asymptote to Zeugma," *Postcolonizing the Commonwealth: Studies in Literature and Culture*, edited by Rowland Smith, Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1999, pp. 19-37.

Leane, Jeanine. "Tracking Our Country in Settler Literature," *JASAL* (online), vol. 14, no. 3, 2014, pp. [1-17].

Leigh, David J. *Apocalyptic Patterns in Twentieth-Century Fiction*, U of Notre Dame P, 2008.

Li, Stephanie. "Domestic Resistance: Gardening, Mothering, and Storytelling in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*," *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2009, pp. 18-37.

Lima, Lázaro. *The Latino Body: Crisis Identity in American Literary and Cultural Memory*, New York UP, 2007.

Lincoln, Martha and Bruce Lincoln. "Toward a Critical Hauntology: Bare Afterlife and the Ghosts of Ba Chúc," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 57, 2015, pp. 191-220.

Lippard, Cameron D. "Racist Nativism in the 21st Century," *Sociology Compass*, vol. 5, no. 7, 2011, pp. 591-606.

Lipsitz, George. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Benefit from Identity Politics*, revised edition, Temple UP, 2006.

Lloyd, David and Patrick Wolfe. "Settler Colonial Logics and the Neoliberal Regime," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2016, pp. 109-18.

Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. "Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: The Power of Authority over Mind and Body," *American Ethnologist*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1993, pp. 227-40.

Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, Duke UP, 2015.

Lourde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, eds. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, Kitchen Table P, 1983, pp. 94-101.

Lucashenko, Melissa. "I Pity the Poor Immigrant," *JASAL*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2017, pp. [1-10].

Lye, Colleen. *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945*. Princeton UP, 2004.

Lynch, Tom. "'Nothing but land': Women's Narratives, Gardens, and the Settler-Colonial Imaginary in the West and Australian Outback," *Western American Literature*, vol. 48, no. 4, 2014, pp. 374-99.

Lyons, Scott Richard. "Introduction: Globalizing the Word," *The Word, The Text, and the Indian*, edited by Scott Richard Lyons, SUNY P, 2017, pp. 1-16.

Macoun, Alissa, "Colonising White Innocence: Complicity and Critical Encounters," *The Limits of Settler Colonial Reconciliation: Non-Indigenous People and the Responsibility to Engage*, edited by Sarah Maddison, Tom Clark, and Ravi De Costa, Springer, 2016, pp. 85-102.

Mackenthun, Gesa. ""Haunted Real Estate: The Occlusion of Colonial Dispossession and Signatures of Cultural Survival in U.S. Horror Fiction," *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1998, pp. 93-108.

Macintyre, Stuart and Anna Clark, *The History Wars*, 2003, updated ed., Melbourne UP, 2004.

Maddison, Sarah. *Beyond White Guilt: The Real Challenge for Black-White Relations in Australia,* Allen & Unwin, 2011.

Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*, Pantheon, 2004.

---. "Settler Colonialism: Then and Now," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 41, 2015, pp. 596-614.

Marr, David. "The White Queen: One Nation and the Politics of Race," *Quarterly Essay*, vol. 65, 2017, pp. 1-102.

Marubbio, M. Elise. "Look at the Heart of *The Searchers*: The Centrality of Look to John Ford's Commentary on Racism," *Native Apparitions: Critical Perspectives on Hollywood's Indians*, edited by Steve Pavlik, M. Elise Marubbio, and Tom Holm, U of Arizona P, 2017, pp. 108-34.

Massey, Douglas S. and Magaly Sanchez R., *Brokered Boundaries: Immigrant Identity in Anti-Immigrant Times*, Russell Sage, 2010.

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*, Vintage, 2006.

McKenna, Mark. "Different Perspectives on Black Armband History," 1997, Department of the Parliamentary Library, 2012, n.p., https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/RP9798/98RP05.

---. "Tokenism or Belated Recognition?: Welcome to Country and the Emergence of Indigenous Protocol in Australia, 1991-2014," *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2014, pp. 476-89.

McLaren, John. "A Haunted Land," *Australian Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2005, pp. 153-68.

McMahon, William. "Australian Aborigines Commonwealth Policy and Achievements: Statement by the Prime Minister," 25 Jan 1972, n.p. Accessed at http://indigenousrights.net.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/384333/f61.pdf.

McNevin, Anne. *Contesting Citizenship: Irregular Migrants and New Frontiers of the Political*, Columbia UP, 2011.

Meaney, Neville. "'The Yellow Peril': Invasion Scare Novels and Australian Political Culture," *Australia and the Wider World: Selected Essays of Neville Meaney*, edited by James Curran and Stuart Ward, Sydney UP, 2013, pp. 73-89

Melamed, Jodi. *Represent and Destroy: Ratializing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*, U of Minnesota P, 2011.

Merlan, Francesca. "Recent Rituals of Indigenous Recognition in Australia: Welcome to Country," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 116, no. 2, 2014, pp. 296-309.

Michalowski, Raymond. "Border Militarization and Migrant Suffering: A Case of Transnational Social Injury," *Social Justice*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2007, pp. 62-76.

Miles, Tiya. *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom*, U of California P, 2005.

Miller, Alex. *Journey to the Stone Country*. Allen & Unwin, 2003.

---. "Prophets of the Imagination," *The Simplest Words: A Storyteller's Journey*, edited by Stephanie Miller, Allen & Unwin, 2015, pp. 265-77.

---. "Sweet Water," *The Simplest Words: A Storyteller's Journey*, edited by Stephanie Miller, Allen & Unwin, 2015, pp. 280-92.

Miller, Jay. *Ancestral Mounds: Vitality and Volatility of Native America*, Nebraska UP, 2015.

Mills, Charles W. "White Ignorance," *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, edited by Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, SUNY P, 2007, pp. 26-31.

Molina, Natalia. *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*, U of California P, 2014.

Moreton-Robinson, Aileen. *Talkin' up to the White Woman: Aboriginal Women and Feminism*, U of Queensland P, 2000.

---.*The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*, U of Minnesota P, 2015.

Morgensen, Scott Lauria. "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism: Right Here, Right Now," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 1, 2011, pp. 52-76.

---. *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*, U of Minnesota P, 2011.

---. Settler Homonationalism: Theorizing Settler Colonialism within Queer Modernities," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 16, nos. 1-2, 2010, pp. 105-131.

Morrissey, Philip. “Stalking Aboriginal Culture: The Wanda Koolmatrie Affair,” *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 18, no. 42, 2003, pp. 299-307.

Murphy, Katharine. Pauline Hanson Calls for Immigration Ban: ‘Go back to Where You Came from,” *The Guardian*, 14 September 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/sep/14/pauline-hanson-first-speech-senate-calls-for-immigration-ban.

Nguyen, Viet Thanh. “The Hidden Scars All Refugees Carry,” *New York Times*, 2 Sept. 2016, available at https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/03/opinion/the-hidden-scars-all-refugees-carry.html.

---. *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*, Harvard UP, 2016.

Nicoll, Fiona. *From Diggers to Drag Queens: Configurations of Twentieth Century Australian National Identity*, Pluto, 2002.

Nolan, Alan T. “The Anatomy of the Myth,” *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, edited by Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, Indiana UP, 2000, pp. 11-34.

Nolan, Amy. “Seeing is Digesting: Labyrinths of Historical Ruin in Stanley Kubrick’s *The Shining*,” *Cultural Critique*, vol. 77, 2011, pp. 180-204.

Nolan, Maggie, “In His Own Sweet Time: Carmen’s Coming Out,” *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2004, pp. 134-48.

Nolan, Maggie and Carrie Dawson. “Who’s Who? Mapping Hoaxes and Imposture in Australian Literary History,” *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2004, pp. v-xx.

O’Brien, Jean M. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*, U of Minnesota P, 2010.

---. “Tracing Settler Colonialism’s Eliminatory Logic in *Traces of History*,” *American Quarterly*, vol. 69, no. 2, 2017, pp. 249-55.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States*, 3rd edition, Routledge, 2014.

“Oodgeroo Noonuccal,” *Anthology of Australian Aboriginal Literature*, eds. Anita Heiss and Peter Minter, Allen & Unwin, 2008, pp. 40.

Paik, Peter Y. *From Utopia to Apocalypse: Science Fiction and the Politics of Catastrophe*, U of Minnesota P, 2010.

Palmer, Paulina. *The Queer Uncanny: New Perspectives on the Gothic*, U of Wales P, 2012.

Pascoe, Bruce. *Dark Emu: Black Seeds, Agriculture or Accident?*, Magabala, 2014.

Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Harvard UP, 1982.

Patteson, Richard F. "*King Solomon's Mines*: Imperialism and Narrative Structure," *Journal of Narrative Technique*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1978, pp. 112-23.

Pearce, Roy Harvey. *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, 1967, revised edition, U of California P, 1988.

Pease, Donald E. *The New American Exceptionalism*, U of Minnesota P, 2009.

Perera, Suvendrini. *Australia and the Insular Imagination: Beaches, Borders, Boats, and Bodies*, Palgrave, 2009.

Poblette-Cross, JoAnna. "Bridging Indigenous and Immigrant Struggles: A Case Study of American Sāmoa," *American Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 3, 2010, pp. 501-22.

Price, Joshua M. *Prison and Social Death*, Rutgers UP, 2015.

Probyn-Rapsey, Fiona. "Complicity, Critique, and Methodology," *ARIEL*, vol. 38, nos. 2-3, 2007, pp. 65-82.

Ralstin-Lewis, D. Marie. "The Continuing Struggle against Genocide: Indigenous Women's Reproductive Rights," *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2005, pp. 71-95.

"Reclaim Australia, No Room for Racism Rallies Clash in Melton," Australian Broadcasting Corporation, *abc.net.au*, 21 November 2015, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-22/reclaim-australia-no-room-for-racism-rallies-clash-in-melton/6961942.

Reconciliation Australia, "Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country," 2017, available at https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Welcome-to-and-Acknowledgement-of-Country.pdf.

Reynolds, Henry. *The Other Side of the Frontier*, 1981, U of New South Wales P, 2006.

---. *Why Weren't We Told?: A Personal Search for the Truth about Our History*, 2nd edition, Penguin, 2000.

Riding In, James, Cal Seciwa, Suzan Shown Harjo, Walter R. Echo-Hawk, and Rebecca Tsosie. "Protecting Native American Human Remains, Burial Grounds, and Sacred Places: Panel Discussion," *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2004, pp. 169-83.

Rifkin, Mark. Indigenizing Agamben: Rethinking Sovereignty in Light of the 'Peculiar' Status of Native Peoples," *Cultural Critique*, vol. 73, 2009, pp. 88-124.

---. *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance*, U of Minnesota P, 2014.

---. *When Did Indians Become Straight?: Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty*, Oxford UP, 2011.

Robertson, Dwanna L. "Invisibility in the Color-Blind Era: Examining Legitimized Racism against Indigenous Peoples," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2015, pp. 113-53.

Roche, Jeff. "Asa/Forrest Carter and Regional/Political Identity," *The Southern Albatross: Race and Ethnicity in the American South*, edited by Philip D. Dillar and Randall L. Hall, Mercer UP, 1999, pp. 235-74.

Rodoreda, Geoff. *The Mabo Turn in Australian Fiction*, Peter Lang, 2018.

Rolls, Mitchell. "Why Didn't You Listen: White Noise and Black History," *Aboriginal History*, vol. 34, 2010, pp. 11-33.

Roman, Curtis. "Welcome to Country Speeches: A Personal Perspective from a Larrakia Man," *ab-Original*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2018, pp. 110-14.

Rosaldo, Renato. "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations*, vol. 26, 1989, pp. 107-22.

Ross, Catriona. "Prolonged Symptoms of Cultural Anxiety: The Persistence of Narratives of Asian Invasion within Multicultural Australia," *JASAL*, vol. 5, 2006, pp. 86-99.

Royle, Nicholas. *Uncanny*, Routledge, 2003.

Ruddock, Phillip. *PM*, ABC Radio, 17 Nov. 1999

Saito, Natsu Taylor. "Race and Decolonization: Whiteness as Property in the American Settler Colonial Project," *Harvard Journal on Racial & Ethnic Justice*, vol. 31, 2015, pp. 31-67.

Sánchez, Rosuara and Beatrice Pita, "Rethinking Settler Colonialism," *American Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 4, 2014, pp. 1039-55.

Saranillo, Dean Itsuji. "Why Asian Settler Colonialism Matters: A Thought Piece on Critiques, Debates, and Indigenous Difference," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 3, nos. 3-4, 2013, pp. 280-294.

Sayre, Gordon M. "The Mound Builders and the Imagination of American Antiquity in Jefferson, Bartram, and Chateaubriand," *Early American Literature*, vol. 33, no. 3, 1998, pp. 225-49.

Schrag, Peter. *Not Fit for Our Society: Immigration and Nativism in America*, U of California P, 2010.

Scott, Kim. "A Fantasy of Sand and Sea," *A Country too Far*, edited by Rosie Scott and Thomas Keneally, Penguin, 2013, pp.141-48.

---. *That Deadman Dance*, Bloomsbury, 2012.

Sexton, Jared, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," In*Tensions Journal*, vol. 5, 2011, pp. 1-47.

Smith, Christopher. "Anti-Islamic Sentiment and Media Framing during the 9/11 Decade," *Journal of Religion & Society*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2013, pp. 1-15.

Smith, Greg. "'Real Horrorshow': The Juxtaposition of Subtext, Satire, and Audience Implication in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*," *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 4, 1997, pp. 300-06.

Sorensen, Leif. "The Apocalypse is a Nonhuman Story," *ASAP/Journal*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2018, pp. 523-46.

Sparrow, Jeff. "Reclaim Australia: The Fear Remains the Same but the Targets Keep Changing," *ABC News: The Drum*, 22 July 2015, available at https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-23/sparrow-reclaim-australia-the-targets-keep-changing/6642078.

Spillman, Lyn. *Nation and Commemoration: Creating National Identities in the United States and America*, Cambridge UP, 1997.

Strakosch, Elizabeth. "Beyond Colonial Completion: Arendt, Settler Colonialism and the End of Politics," in *The Limits of Settler Colonial Reconciliation: Non-Indigenous People and the Responsibility to Engage*, eds. Sarah Maddison, Tom Clark, and Ravi de Costa, Springer, 2016, pp. 15-33.

Strakosch, Elizabeth and Alissa Macoun, "The Vanishing Endpoint of Settler Colonialism," *Arena Journal*, vol. 37-38, no. 1, 2012, pp. 40-62.

Stewart, Anne. "Neoliberal Earthworks," *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2018, pp. 56-78.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*, Duke UP, 2016.

---."Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *The Journal of American History*, vol. 88, no. 3, 2001, pp. 829-65.

Sugg, Katherine. "*The Walking Dead*: Late Liberalism and Masculine Subjection in Apocalypse Fiction," *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 49, no. 4, 2015, pp. 793-811.

Taffe, Sue. *Black and White Together: FCAATSI, The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, 1958-1973*, U of Queensland P, 2005.

TallBear, Kim. *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*, U of Minnesota P, 2013.

Thomson, Irene Taviss. *Culture Wars and Enduring American Dilemmas*, U of Michigan P, 2010.

Treuer, David. *Native American Fiction: A User's Manual*, Graywolf P, 2006.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perceptions, Attitudes, and Values*, Columbia UP, 1990.

Tuck, Eve and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1-40.

Turner, Graeme. *Making it National: Nationalism and the Australian Popular Culture*, Allen & Unwin, 1994.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. *Into the Beautiful North*, Back Bay, 2009.

Veracini, Lorenzo. "A Prehistory of Australia's History Wars: The Evolution of Aboriginal History during the 1970s and 1980s," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 52, no. 3, 2006, pp. 439-54.

-----.*The Settler Colonial Present*, Palgrave, 2015.

Vimalassery, Manu, Juliana Hu Pegues and Alyosha Goldstein. "On Colonial Unknowing," *Theory & Event*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2016, n.p., https://muse.jhu.edu/article/633283.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, U of Nebraska P, 1999.

Volpp, Leti. "The Indigenous as Alien," *UC Irvine Law Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2015, pp. 289-325.

Walker, Alice. *Meridian*, Harcourt Brace, 1976.

Walker, David. *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia, 1850-1939*, U of Queensland P, 1999

Watkins, Claire Vaye. *Gold Fame Citrus*, Riverhead, 2015.

Watson, Irene. "Re-centring First Nations Knowledge and Places in a Terra Nullius Space," *AlterNative*, vol. 10, no. 5, 2014, pp. 508-20.

Weaver, Roslyn. *Apocalypse in Australian Fiction and Film: A Critical Study*, McFarland, 2014.

Wertheimer, Eric. *Imagined Empires: Incas, Aztecs, and the New World of American Literature, 1771-1876*, Cambridge UP, 1998.

West, Mark and Chris Carey. "(Re)Enacting Frontier Justice: The Bush Administration's Tactical Narration of the Old West Fantasy after September 11," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, vol. 92, no. 4, 2006, pp. 379-412.

Whitlock, Gillian. *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit*, U of Chicago P, 2010.

Whyte, Kyle Powys. "Indigenous Science (Fiction) for the Anthropocene: Ancestral Dystopias and Fantasies of Climate Change Crises," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, vol. 1, nos. 1-2, 2018, pp. 224-42.

------. "Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation and the Anthropocene," *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*, eds. Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann, Routledge, 2017, pp. 206-15.

Wildcat, Matthew. "Dearing Social and Cultural Death: Genocide and Elimination in Settler Colonial Canada—An Indigenous Perspective," *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2015, pp. 391-409.

Wilderson, Frank B. III. "Social Death and Narrative Aporia in *12 Years a Slave*," *Black Camera*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2015, pp. 134-49.

Wilson, Japhy and Erik Swyngedouw. "Seeds of Dystopia: Post-Politics and the Return of the Political," *The Post-Political and Its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticization, Spectres of Radical Politics,* Edinburgh UP, 2014, pp. 1-22.

Wolfe, Patrick. "Recuperating Binarism: A Heretical Introduction," *Settler Colonial Studies*, vol. 3, nos. 3-4, 2013, pp. 257-79.

---."Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 8, no. 4, 2006, pp. 387-409.

-----. *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*, Verso, 2016.

Woodson, Jacqueline. "Why James Baldwin Still Matters," *Vanity Fair*, 2 May 2016, https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2016/04/why-james-baldwin-still-matters.

Woolford, Andrew. *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States*, U of Nebraska P, 2015.

Yancy, George. "Colonial Gazing: The Production of the Body as 'Other.'" *Western Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2008, pp. 1-15.

Yellow Bird, Michael. "Cowboys and Indians: Toys of Genocide, Icons of American Colonialism," *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2004, pp. 33-48.

Zavaglia, Liliana. *White Apology and Apologia: Australian Novels of Reconciliation*, Cambria P, 2016.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Travis Franks grew up in Lorena, Texas. As an undergraduate, he completed the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program and, as a doctoral student, he completed a Fulbright Post-Graduate Fellowship in Queensland, Australia. His work appears in *Mississippi Quarterly*, *MELUS*, *American Indian Quarterly*, *Western American Literature* and the anthology *Teaching with Tension*. He is a founding member of the revolving ensemble band known as New Heroes of the Old War. As of the fall 2019 semester, he is also a Postdoctoral Associate in the Kilachand Honors College at Boston University.