Spirals of Transformation: Turtle Island Indigenous Social Movements and Literatures

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Abstract

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Spirals of Transformation analyzes the embodied knowledges visible in Indigenous social movements and literatures. It demonstrates how a heuristic of spiralic temporality helps us see relationships and purposes the settler temporal structure aims to make not just invisible, but *unthinkable*. "Spiralic temporality" refers to an Indigenous experience of time that is informed by a people's particular relationships to the seasonal cycles on their lands, and which acknowledges the present generations' responsibilities to the ancestors and those not yet born. The four chapters discuss the Pacific Northwest Fish Wars, several generations of Native women activism, Idle No More, and the No Dakota Access Pipeline movement respectively. Through a discussion of literatures from the same place, the heuristic helps make visible how the place-based values, which the movements I discuss are fighting for, are both as old as time and adapted to the current moment. In this way, spiralic temporality offers a different conceptualization than what the hegemonic settler temporality is capable of.

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Spirals of Transformation: "Our bodies contain all of these rings and motions"

We left shells on stone.
My family's hands move to release shells
The memory of origin.
We wear these elements at necessary times for strength.
We remember how helpless we were, leaving our beginning.
Not knowing, not expecting our tasks
to be part of immense concentric rings.
Water is always present.
The salmon in the season of warm winds.
The roots in spring.
Huckleberries, deep colored and round,
Roll into exquisite baskets with mountain designs.
The fir boughs cover the berries for coolness and fragrance.
The red choke cherries hang as if heavy with snow,
bittersweet to the tongue.
The deer walks quietly in our lives.
The elk, heavy with challenge, whistles,
his horns bent back over his rich brown shoulders.
Our bodies contain all of these rings and motion.

Elizabeth Woody, "Shells on Stone"

As I write this introduction in the spring of 2020, while being an uninvited guest in Coast Salish territory (particularly that of the Duwamish), a pandemic rages across the world. While I think about how indebted I am to these lands and waters, and to the peoples who took care of it for millennia (before settler capitalists invaded their territories and interrupted their traditional relationships with all of Creation), I realize I am in the middle of another return of familiar settler violence. Of course, the whole of what is currently the U.S. is negatively affected by the settler government's delayed response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is actively putting profit before people—especially Black, Brown, and/or Indigenous people. It does not read as a coincidence that the Indian Health Service (IHS) was only afforded $40 million in the U.S. Congress' plan to fight the pandemic, or that even that has been held up for weeks by

bureaucratic hurdles.[1] With the IHS perpetually underfunded and understaffed, and entirely unprepared to support a large outbreak of the virus in the many (urban and remote) communities it serves, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) has called for at least triple that amount.[2]

By not properly assisting the IHS and the NIHB in their efforts to protect the Indigenous peoples of these lands, the U.S. is failing to fulfill its treaty responsibilities once again (Mapes). It is also putting Indigenous people and peoples at risk of a reenactment of the devastation caused by the smallpox brought by early settlement (Wilkinson 537).[3] As Lummi Chairman Lawrence Solomon explains, "We have been around this for a long time, we hear the stories about the smallpox, … We made it through. People have that sense of pride that it will be tough, but we will make it through. We remember who we are" (Mapes). These lands have seen a version of this viral settler violence before; lessons learned and changed contexts will hopefully make that this iteration will be less destructive.

Even though the settler government is currently considering withdrawing all protective measures (literally claiming the elderly would willingly sacrifice themselves to protect the capitalist economy),[4] Indigenous nations are not willing to risk their people. Traditional teachings about the importance and obligations of coming together, spending time with elders, and welcoming guests are now being reinvented: tribes know the key to securing their peoples' survival is to take social distancing measures to stop the spread, so, for example, while casinos

[1] https://www.politico.com/news/2020/03/20/coronavirus-american-indian-health-138724 [03-24-2020]
[2] In a letter to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Azar, accessible for download at https://www.nihb.org/index.php [03-23-2020]
[3] Wilkinson reminds us, "European diseases -- deadly, long-distance travelers -- took out more than 90 percent of the Native population" (Wilkinson 2007, 537).
[4] https://www.axios.com/coronavirus-texas-official-grandparents-die-172ca951-891c-44e7-a9ec-77c486e0c5c3.html [03-24-2020]

close, the food gets donated (Mapes).[5] While the settler machine races on blindly towards so-called "progress," Indigenous peoples remember earlier iterations of comparable violence and use this experiential knowledge to protect themselves.

I acknowledge the land I learn and write from not as a formality, but as an acknowledgement of my ongoing relationship of responsibility with this land and its peoples. A land acknowledgement is more than just making a politically-correct reference to previous relations with the land; land acknowledgements are a form of reclaiming both a people's relationship with the land and a relationship with time, where relationships from time immemorial are spoken into the current moment to acknowledge their present relevance.[6] Land acknowledgements create a relationship with everyone in the space (or readership) and the land, and the original people and relations of the land; now that you know who the original people of these lands are, how will you make good on the responsibility that is created through the knowledge of the original relations of the land? What role will you take up?

Calling attention to the Indigenous peoples and relations of the land also calls up a particular mode of knowing and of practicing these relations and their inherent experiences with time that are not teleological or oriented towards progress. This, then, opens up ways to reclaim

[5] Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation communication director Chuck Sams even reminds us, "When Lewis and Clark came through on their return visit, we welcomed them" (Mapes).

[6] Acknowledging the land and its continuing relations evokes the first peoples of the lands, and creates a relationship across time which inspire responsibilities sprouting from that knowledge. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg) starts her book *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* with the recounting of a powerful experience of a land acknowledgement by Nishnaabeg elder Doug Williams in the city space where Simpson lives; she describes how the non-Native audience was "nearly silent, transfixed" by this recounting of what settlement had worked to destroy, but also how this insight into a past that was still present, the realization that "the landscape [she] knew as home would be almost unrecognizable to [her] Ancestors," and that Simpson herself had not realized until then that she "could barely even imagine the worlds that had already been lost" (Simpson 2). She writes that following that experience, she started to do land acknowledgements as well, "not as a mourning of loss but as a way of living in an Nishnaabeg present that collapses both the past and the future and as a way of positioning myself in relation to my Ancestors and my relations" (Simpson 2).

the connections that have been so thoroughly disavowed by the narrative of the U.S. settler state. Honoring place is the very first step in un-settling our ways of knowing, and breaking out of the limitations that reductively thinking of the space that currently is occupied by the U.S. as "the U.S." entraps us in.[7] The speaking of the acknowledgement of the first peoples creates a relationship to the land and its relations across historical time, re-awakening the responsibilities that those relationships instill. Thus, writing instead from occupied Coast-Salish lands, this dissertation is written in conversation with Indigenous thinkers and the land, and argues for acknowledging the spiralic temporality rooted in this set of relations.

It is also important to note that even though I am Belgian, for all intents and purposes, during my time living in the U.S. I am positioned as a settler colonizer. This positionality remains similar even upon my return home. While I might not myself continue to reside on stolen land, many Belgians from earlier generations settled on Turtle Island, and Belgium itself has an ongoing colonial relationship with its old African colony, Congo (even though Congo gained its independence in 1960). Belgium also continues to participate in Eurowestern imperialism across the globe. Thus, my responsibilities to a set of complex relations will continue, perhaps transformed by my new/old location. This work is one way I take up this

[7] "Un-settling" is more than creating unease or discomfort, as the dictionary definition of the term might suggest: it is the work to undo the settler colonial ground assumptions and limitations of possibility that the settler colonial frame aims to trap us all into, and tries to force us all to participate in. The choice for "un-settling" over "decolonizing" is informed by a focus on questioning the underlying warrants of theories and activism developed from starting points which takes the current settler colonial context of the U.S. for granted, from a non-Native point of view. The work for "un-settling" aims to express the need to center Indigenous Ways of Knowing from the ground up, not include them at a later point on an existing basis already informed by settler colonialism. After presenting a conference paper on teaching decolonial thought and practice in the composition classroom at the Native American Literature Symposium in 2018, a member of the audience asked, "what do non-Native people decolonize *to*?" This question and the related issues most famously discussed in Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's "Decolonization is not a Metaphor" have inspired me to step away from the use of the term "decolonization" as a non-Native, uninvited visitor on these lands, in order to not add to the many ways the term has been abused and voided of meaning. I instead opt for a term aimed directly at settler colonial modes of thought which entrap much of U.S. based non-Native scholarly work and activism.

responsibility; thus, and importantly, I do not aim to appropriate an Indigenous point of view or spectrum of view into a Eurowestern one, rather, this is an attempt to find a way I can assist the work for Indigenous sovereignty by working to un-settle the commonly accepted settler point of view in order to be better able to see and support the many Indigenous ones.

This dissertation shows, through a discussion of the embodied knowledges visible in Indigenous social movements and literatures, how a heuristic of spiralic temporality helps us see relationships and purposes the settler temporal structure aims to make not just invisible, but unthinkable. "Spiralic temporality" refers to an Indigenous experience of time that is informed by a people's particular relationships to the seasonal cycles on their lands, and which acknowledges the present generations' responsibilities to the ancestors and those not yet born. This complex set of relations to the land, lived in an embodied manner on that land or in diaspora, together make up the Indigenous concept of *place* as explained by Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene); "land" and "place" in this way do not refer to a possessive relation to territory, but rather are expressions of an "ontological framework for understanding relationships," i.e. the terms land and place are used to refer more broadly to all the relations to that place, which includes human peoples as well as rivers, rocks, and mountains, animal and plant nations, who all have agency (Coulthard 79-80). In such a worldview, *when* things happened in time becomes less important than *where* they happened and among which relations; the past and the future are all relevant in the now, what matters is how the events or actors are related to a particular place.

The relations on these lands are more complex than a simple settler-Indigenous binary and the other relations on these lands are not collapsible into this division. As the heuristic of spiralic temporality I suggest always gestures to multiple real lived experiences in any time, that

never collapse into a linear progressive timeline, it is always already non-binary and inclusive of non-Indigenous peoples. In this work, I center Indigenous worldviews and conceptions of place, which include all relations present in that place (including non-Indigenous ones, including ones racialized by the settler state). As such, I do not argue from a settler worldview which racializes different peoples, but center worldviews Indigenous to this place some call Turtle Island that are not organized around race but around relations of mutual responsibility. When I write "settler time" below, I refer to the ruling temporality of the white-supremacist settler state, which has as part of its project the denial of Indigenous sovereignty. This of course does not preclude other temporalities also exist on these lands; however, these other possible temporal experiences are not the hegemonic temporality that is making the Indigenous relationship with place as a set of relations invisible and even unthinkable. Understanding the non-possessive relations and conceptualizations that inform Indigenous movements can possibly transform the complex questions about other racialized peoples' relationships to this place some call Turtle Island in a way that allows for solidarity on terms not fully controlled by the hegemonic settler structure.

Other positions non-Indigenous peoples racialized by the U.S. hold on these lands matter, and the Indigenous movements I discuss of course were in conversation and relation with other social movements in their times. However, I am not able to do justice to that complexity in this dissertation, which focuses in on the Indigenous experiences, literatures, and movements from these lands through the heuristic of Indigenous spiralic temporality as informed by their worldviews—not settler-imposed racializations. Eve Tuck (Unangax) and K. Wayne Yang (non-Native) explain how the colonization of Turtle Island always has been structured by the triad of settlers, Native peoples, and enslaved African people, yet how these relations are more complex

than that schematic might suggest:[8]

> [A]lthough the setter-native-slave triad structures settler colonialism, this does not mean that settler, native, and slave are analogs that can be used to describe corresponding identities, structural locations, worldviews, and behaviors. Nor do they mutually constitute one another. For example, Indigenous is an identity independent of the triad, and also an ascribed structural location within the triad. Chattel slave is an ascribed structural position, but not an identity. Settler describes a set of behaviors, as well as a structural location, but is eschewed as an identity. (Tuck and Yang 7)

Settler colonialism in what is currently the U.S. relied and relies on the enslavement of stolen African peoples and the continued oppression of Black peoples in the U.S. and around the world. Many people Indigenous to Turtle Island are also Black. Other racial (racist) settler policies like the 1886 Chinese Exclusion Act or the 2017 "Muslim Ban" evidence how many other peoples, too, are in complex, often violent relationship to the settler state on these lands. I want to honor this complexity by admitting that in this work, I can only articulate one specific part of it, namely that of the Indigenous movements I discuss through their own worldviews, even though I am cognizant there are many other relations and complex layers I cannot explore here.

I argue that a heuristic of spiralic temporality can make legible how Indigenous ways of knowing inform Indigenous social movements; it can allow us to see how radical relationality with the land and non-humans and humans informs an Indigenous conception of time which is informed by these relations. The intervention I hope to make here, born out of my responsibility to the place I work and learn in, works to take away the power of the hegemonic Eurowestern settler narrative of "progress," and to replace it with a spiralic understanding of time, which

[8] My indicating people's positionality in terms of their ancestral and ongoing relation to place follows the practice of Cowlitz author and scholar Elissa Washuta and non-Native scholar Theresa Warburton in their edited collection *Shapes of Native Non-Fiction: Collected Essays by Contemporary Writers* (2019).

makes visible these embodied, local knowledges that are attuned to the land's cycles, from seasons to salmon runs. It is out of responsibility to this place that the first chapter centers on an ongoing issue in the Pacific Northwest, specifically.

I am indebted to the work of Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee scholar Vanessa Watts on Indigenous "Place-Thought," which was the first critical writing which introduced me to the consequences for understanding non-human agency in Indigenous, embodied, cyclical worldviews in the examples of Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee worldviews she discusses. Her 2013 article, "Indigenous place-thought & agency amongst humans and non-humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!)" explains how Indigenous ways of knowing and being cannot be separated, and are "based upon the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts," i.e. "Place-Thought" (21). Watts, through a comparison of the linear Christian worldview and her Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee cyclical worldviews, evidences how settler colonization did not only focus on the destruction of peoples and lands to achieve its goals of domination; it also worked and continues to work "in part through purposeful and ignorant misrepresentations of Indigenous cosmologies," which include animal and plant nations with agency (22). The disavowal of Indigenous worldviews is necessary to support a settler worldview where animal and plant nations are property, rather than actors with which humans might have relations of responsibility.

While the ubiquity of the settler progress-oriented temporality and its clear mind/body divide obscures Indigenous place-thought worldviews (Watts 22), the heuristic of spiralic temporality I want to work with here helps make legible how Indigenous "theories" are not separate from the place they were first thought in but rather *arise from that place*; they are

informed by place, and theory and practice or one in embodied, land-based practices (Watts 22). As such, every cosmology, place-thought, or way of knowing and being is particular to place; thus, I am not arguing for a "pan-Indian" analytic that is evenly applicable across the board for a better understanding of Indigenous worldviews, struggles, or literatures. What I *am* arguing for, is a heuristic of spiralic temporality which can help make visible how embodied place-based worldviews show up in social movements and literatures, and make clear how they are part of their place's local seasonal cycles and transformations.

My theorization of spiralic temporality is suggestive not prescriptive; I argue a heuristic of spiralic time makes relations visible, I am not arguing for prescriptively squeezing everything into a theoretical structure. However, throughout the chapters, the discussion will show how there might be a spiralic temporality *informing* what is going on as well; thus, I suggest it is both a heuristic to better understand what is happening *and* it is present in the embodied knowledges. I am indeed partially pointing out something that is already there; I show that in many ways spiralic temporality is often the structuring logic for much of the embodied expressions, both activism and literature. But it is perhaps not always as visible, or as self-evident, to a mind trained to only see linear "progress"—and since Indigenous worldviews are so informed by place, it might not always be present, either. Thus, I also argue for using a heuristic of spiralic temporality as a tool to apply to what we are seeing, to inspire ourselves to look for the relationships that we might otherwise miss.

The Indigenous nations have, do, and continue to speak for themselves; I want to be suggestive about these trends I see, which I think could help see the lessons learned in community with people continue forward to teach next generations in these new forms. In this

dissertation, I write about something I am a witness to, and that I want to aid and abet, as a partial response to my obligations to the place I learn and work from.

Spiralic Theories of Time

Through my discussions of both the Indigenous social movements and literatures, I show how they evidence Aymara scholar Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's description of Indigenous time as not being a linear sense of progress but instead one that is spiralic:

> There is no *post* or *pre* in this vision of history that is not linear or teleological but rather moves in cycles and spirals and sets out on a course without neglecting to return to the same point. The indigenous world does not conceive of history as linear; the past-future is contained in the present. (Rivera Cusicanqui 96)

The Spirals of Transformation of the title of this dissertation and this introduction refer to the embodied material knowledges which inform this spiralic concept of temporality, tied into Indigenous peoples' traditional practices, stories, and sovereignty struggles. As Elizabeth Woody (Warm Springs, Wasco, Navajo) describes in her poem "Shells on Stone" in the epigraph above, her people's "bodies contain all of these rings and motion" of the seasonal movements of all peoples (including plant and animal nations) which they are in relationship with through their shared relationship with the land and the river (Woody 47). The poem suggests the Columbia River peoples know themselves through, and find purpose and strength during hard times in, their origin stories which connect them to the spirit-beings and animal and plant nations of the Columbia River. The voluntary seasonal returns of the Salmon People, like the other seasonal iterations of their relationships, informed the Columbia River peoples' set of embodied knowledges which organized their lives and governance systems (Wilkinson 537). The Columbia

River, steady in its continuous movement, anchors all these human and non-human peoples to this place. Through the "water [that] is always present," the different generations are interconnected. In the embodied knowledges, expressed in daily practices that honor these relations (the family's "shells on stone"), the relationships between "all of these rings and motion" are emphasized (Woody 47). The early days must be remembered, and all peoples must fulfill their obligations towards each other, for the rings and motion to continue, and a thriving future to be built in the now.

Abenaki scholar Lisa Brooks argues for privileging a spiralic understanding of time in the context of literary periodization. Arguing for a rethinking of the organization of our U.S. American literary archive centered on place rather than a linear time which only starts at the point of arrival of settler colonists; she asks, "What different shape might literary history take if we account for distinct conceptions of time that arise simultaneously from particular places?" (309). Brooks cites Osage scholar Robert Warrior's "intellectual trade routes" and Fitzgerald and Wyss' argument for reading Indigenous literatures in this way. She encourages us to think across linear periodization in favor of tracing spiralic returns within literary texts to, for example, "see the ancient Pueblo story of Yellow Woman, as Leslie Silko does, moving through the life of a contemporary woman" in Silko's *The Storyteller,* as well as the millennial embodied knowledges in the land (Brooks 311-312). These spiralic returns also characterize Woody's "Shells on Stone." In her discussion of "spiral time," Brooks describes how this spiral time is not just one where the past is repeated in the present like a reoccurring cycle. Rather, it allows for the past to be present transformed (Brooks 309)–they are spirals rather than circles.

Gina Caison (non-Native) takes up Lisa Brooks' theorization of spiralic periodization in her book *Red States: Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, and Southern Studies* and describes it with

the term "spiralic time." Caison locates her work in U.S. Southern Studies, and theorizes "red states" as places with "at once the spatial conception of the U.S. South as a profoundly Indigenous place" *and* where settler temporal narratives obscure Indigenous presence in order to claim belonging through nativizing settler fantasies (3). *Red States*, then, studies the reception histories of U.S. Southern literatures in terms of their representations of Indigeneity, following "five core narratives—recovery, revolution, removal, resistance, and resilience," to argue these literatures helped produce "ideas of regional belonging that have consequences for how present-day conservative political discourses resonate across the United States" (4). Caison admits that this spiralic method might make archives look "messier, more incoherent, or even vaguely disjointed," but emphasizes how the method might also allow "new archives [to] emerge" from rethinking the "logics of the region we examine" as opposed to taking for granted the region's role in the U.S. settler narrative of progress (14). Caison proposes that spiralic time offers a method to break out of the Eurowestern linear approach to literary periodization, and to instead focus on organizing literature according to place, with the specific purpose to consider how "narratives of supposed or invented Native history get told again and again in order to buttress the specious land claims of settlers" (14). She "thinks with…[the] privileging of pattern over exceptionality" offered by the "spiralic temporality" (Caison's term) she sees employed in the Indigenous literatures she discusses, in order to push back on accepted settler narratives which have long dominated general and scholarly understandings of the U.S. South (Caison 23). Ultimately, Caison argues against the "Old South" vs. "New South" theorization structuring much of U.S. Southern studies, in favor of a spiralic historical understanding of the U.S. South which privileges enduring Indigenous presence.

I want to honor that it is Caison's reading of Brooks, which I first encountered during a presentation by Caison at MLA 2019, which put me on this path of thinking spiralically. In this dissertation, however, I want to apply a heuristic of spiralic temporality to better understand Turtle Island Indigenous social movements as well as their contemporaneous and/or coexistent (sharing place) literatures. Caison's spiralic reading method, building on Brooks, investigates the Indigenous histories that made and endure in the U.S. Southern states, despite the almost totalizing linear settler narrative which claims the U.S. South as a space of nativized belonging for settlers. I here expand on Caison's method by suggesting that the heuristic of spiralic time works beyond the issue of literary periodization, and that it can be used to better understand Indigenous social movements' concerns, purposes, and methods, and thus ultimately, to better understand enduring Indigenous ways of knowing and Indigenous peoples' inherent sovereignty.

Centering Indigenous ways of knowing the land, by centering the knowledge that is in the land, can counter settler social processes of "[c]oncealment, marginalization, boundaries" (McKittrick xi). Calls to counter colonial naming and map making practices have already had some influence: you will often find North American Indigenous people and their allies refer to North America as "Turtle Island," a name which comes from some nations' origin stories, such as the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe stories about Sky Woman (see Watts). Even though technically "Turtle Island" is specific to only a few Indigenous nations' origin stories, it has been taken on as a shared term by many Indigenous people in what is currently considered North America. Coming from the Guna people in what is currently Panama, "Abiayala" (sometimes spelled "Abya Yala" or "Abia Yala"), a term for all of the Americas, has come into more general use as well (Keme and Coon 42). These renaming practices are active attempts at undoing some of the power colonization has had on these lands by calling attention to the often totalizing

(settler) colonial narratives by way of using Indigenous terms for the land. Another example of countering the colonizer's narrative of these lands is that of Aaron Carapellas' "Tribal Nations of the Western Hemisphere" map: the map makes visible what colonizer maps have tried to make disappear through concealment and erasure. While incomplete and imperfect, it shows "approximately three thousand Indigenous nations throughout our hemisphere's geography," currently "the most complete map of names originating in our territories before and after the arrival of Europeans" (Keme and Coon 50). It is for this reason I choose to use the term Turtle Island when referring to "North America." While I acknowledge that this name is also imperfect and incomplete, this is one of the ways this dissertation works to un-settle some of the Eurowestern (thought and embodied) structures we take for granted.

Employing a heuristic of spiralic time to understand Indigenous social movements and literatures shows how they bring forward ancestral knowledges, cultural traditions, and lessons from past encounters, making visible, through a discussion of literature from the same place, how the values Indigenous movements are fighting for are both millennial *and* adapted to the current moment, both deepening their relations to ancestors and happenings from time immemorial *and* looking forward to thriving futures (Estes 18). In this way, spiralic temporality offers something different than what a settler colonizer temporality is capable of. Kevin Bruyneel (non-Native) argues that Indigenous sovereignty (which is an embodied sovereignty, informed by non-possessive relationality with the land and all its relations, as Robin Gray shows, see below) in this way goes beyond what he calls "colonial time" and others have called "settler time" (240). The settler colonial project limits Indigenous nationhood to either something from a long ago past that is no longer relevant—as such their treaties become "archaic premises and promises, from another time, which are not applicable in modern American time" (Bruyneel

172), or something that is always limited to traditional practices: any participation in the hegemonic so-called "modern American time" is considered evidence of the fact that the nations are no longer authentically Indigenous, and as such they also should not have sovereignty (Bruyneel 203). Both options evidence a settler obsession with "progress" which makes Indigenous sovereignty unthinkable in the present, let alone the future. Lenape scholar Joanne Barker explains that "imperialism and colonialism require Indigenous people to fit within the heteronormative archetypes of an Indigeneity that was authentic in the past but is culturally and legally vacated in the present"; palimpsestic settler temporality in this way provides the framework in which the settler states of Canada and the U.S. can present themselves as multicultural, liberal havens of democracy (3). Settler time either locks Native people into a romanticized past that is long gone, or into a present where surviving Native people cannot possibly be "authentic," in order to diminish Indigenous presence as *peoples*, and argue that, for example, their treaties have lost their relevance –something Indigenous social movements of all eras push back on.

Indigenous social movements and literatures are not stuck in the past, nor giving up authenticity for modernity. Rather, they use the same strategies and tactics from time immemorial to "change the colonial present, and to imagine a decolonial future by reconnecting to Indigenous places and histories" (Estes 18), as spiralic return and transformation have always been a part of cultural tradition (visible in Indigenous literatures, as Brooks and Caison have argued and demonstrated). In Lower Brule Sioux scholar Nick Estes's words,

> After all, Indigenous resistance is animated by our ancestors' refusal to be forgotten, and it is our resolute refusal to forget our ancestors and our history that animates our visions for liberation. Indigenous revolutionaries are the ancestors from the before and before and the already forthcoming. (Estes 256)

Understanding Indigenous social movements' particular struggles as part of spiralic transformations makes it easy to envision thriving, Indigenous futures, while making clear what we need to achieve to effect them: to un-settle settler colonizer reflexes to erase the past and replace it with a nativizing origin narrative more suitable to settler capitalist patriarchal white supremacist needs, and to instead develop land-based approaches to thought and feeling which take these spiralic relationships to the past and into the future into account.

As is evident from the constant presence of the always moving river in "Shells on Stone," settlers do not own the concept of moving across the land (despite settler "manifest destiny"). Many Indigenous peoples moved in seasonal cycles across wide areas of lands and waters. Indigenous people in diaspora, too, removed from their lands by direct or indirect settler violences, are still connected to their people(s)' original land base; as Robin Gray explains in the case of Ts'msyen, "No matter where we are in time and space, Ts'msyen have an enduring connection to home, to our own laws, and to our unique ways of knowing, being, and doing" (36:45-55). Indigenous mobility is different from settler mobility, because the peoples are informed by entirely different projects; they conceptualize their relationships to the land (and its non-human relations) in radically different manners. Where the settler project is in search of continuous "progress," and considers all non-human relations as property or resources which should be pushed to their limits to best serve the settler (with the "non-human" as a capacious categorization also including some racialized peoples), many Indigenous peoples traditionally consider themselves to be in reciprocal relationships of responsibility with all their human and non-human relations which mutually ensured all peoples' (human and non-human) survival, i.e. with their *place*. While this dissertation does not further spend time on conceptualizing settler time, I do want to spend a little time here considering it, in order to elucidate how Indigenous

conceptions of time appear in both written texts and embodied practices as spiralic, rather than progress-oriented.

Un-settling Temporality

In order to think spiralically, we need to start with undoing the lock Eurowestern teleological temporality has on the structure of our thinking. White Earth Ojibwe scholar Jean M. O'Brien's influential book *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England,* argues that the settler colonial master narrative with its binary thinking (traditional or modern, outside or inside, etc.) allowed settlers living on stolen Indigenous land, with living Indigenous neighbors, to be so caught in "a paradigm about the place of American Indians in U.S. history and the ongoing future of the United States" that they could not "recognize" Indigenous people as Indigenous people (xiv-xv). Mark Rifkin (non-Native) describes this paradigm as "generat[ing] a prism through which any evidence of such survival [of Indigenous 'occupancy, governance and opposition'] will be interpreted as either vestigial (and thus on the way to imminent extinction) or hopelessly contaminated (as having lost—or quickly losing—the qualities understood as defining something, someone, or some space as properly 'Indian' in the first place)" (Rifkin 5). Settler time limits Indigenous peoples to either a noble past or an inauthentic present: there is no Indigenous future in a settler temporality.

Rifkin's celebrated *Beyond Settler Time* theorizes the ways that Native Americans have been frozen in time or disappeared from time altogether by the settler colonial teleological organization of time, and I would add, of space, and of bodies. However, as Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche) identified it, the "minimum requirement for making sense of the history of our countries" is the understanding that "the Americas are built on the invasion and destruction of a

populated land with hundreds of distinct, complex societies, and a centuries-long slave trade involving millions of Africans" (Chaat Smith 20). The erasure of this "unpleasant truth" is why Indigenous peoples are always constructed as out of joint with settler time, "erased from the master narrative of this country and replaced by the cartoon images that all of us know and most of us believe" (Chaat Smith 20). Tuck and Yang summarize how the need within settler colonial society to "destroy or assimilate the Native in order to disappear them from the land" leads to cognitive dissonance in the Eurowestern mindset, causing a reliance on opposing narratives at the same time, "such as all Indians are dead, located in faraway reservations" and "contemporary Indigenous people are less Indigenous than prior generations," while 'all Americans are a "little bit Indian"' (Tuck and Yang 11). Erasing actual Indigenous peoples and replacing them with "proof" of 1% of DNA is a core tenet of the settler project, and expresses a settler temporality.[9]

Even as the post-WWII era birthed postmodern conceptions of time which imagined a breaking up of the linearity of time, the teleology of development was not necessarily deeply questioned. The obsession with progress was so complete, that, for example, the development made possible by series of dams that was installed on the Columbia River trumped the abundance of resources, knowledges, and communities that relied on an open river to continue (Wilkinson 533). "Progress" does not care what of other value it destroys in its wake. There is still the suggestion that society as a whole, and racialized groups within that multicultural society, are on a continuous track to further their emancipation. Postmodernism reconceptualized

[9] For more on this particular example of settler temporality, read Kim TallBear's *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013). More on a specific instance of this effort can be found in the Elizabeth Warren Syllabus: https://www.criticalethnicstudiesjournal.org/blog/2018/12/19/syllabus-elizabeth-warren-cherokee-citizenship-and-dna-testing [04-15-2020]

time as space and tried to close off that conversation in order to shirk the responsibility of dealing with the past in the present, by naming it inaccessible.

However, in many Indigenous worldviews, time is not linearly progressive—everything is just related through time. When you are your ancestors, what has happened to them, has happened to you, and needs to be contended with in the present, not relegated to some inaccessible past we have moved forward from. And, alternatively, the embodied knowledges created through practices going back to when time began both evidence this enduring presence of the past and can inform present and future transformations. As Blackfoot warrior Milton Born With A Tooth explained in 2018, "My people, we've always adapt[ed]. Whether it was the ice age, whether it was, you know, ever since time began we've always adapted, because we were prepared, because we've always understood nature" (15:36-47). Understanding time as spiralic, as based on recurring seasonal cycles with transformations and the relations between these iterations, allows us to see how our current moment is the result of spiralic movements and transformations all the way back to when time began and into the future. It posits an alternative to how settler time positions Indigenous peoples as anachronistic.

Settler time tries to make Native people past, or not-developed, or ancient, never allowed to be contemporary, and the future is always foreclosed. Indigenous people are positioned in the imaginary of the settler state as the past of which colonizers play off of; Indigenous people are always positioned against that coveted progress. Settler palimpsestic time likes to see everything as the last (of the dying Indians) or the first (of the conquering settler colonizers); settler time tries to erase thousands of years of relations to these lands, for example, by suggesting that "Kennewick man" actually had European features.[10] Settler time creates a way of relating to the

[10] A 2015 New York Times article explains how "a group of scientists filed a lawsuit…, arguing that Kennewick Man could not be linked to living Native Americans. Adding to the controversy was the claim

present where we forget what came before, where we are shocked time and time again that something could possibly happen—even if we have seen it all occur several times before, often in our own lifetimes. Settlers are so unfamiliar with U.S. settler colonizer history that they look to Nazi Germany for comparisons to explain the inhumane violence at the Mexico-U.S. border of incarcerating children and other people in tents or wire fence camps, rather than their own history of, for example, Indian boarding schools or Japanese internment camps.[11] Settler time works to overwrite what came before with narratives of hero explorers and valiant U.S. soldiers slaughtering Indigenous communities.

The settler colonizing structures of law, infrastructure, and epistemology Indigenous movements are fighting are always working to erase and replace, while never being able to fully make invisible what came before and is still present: much like a palimpsest. A spiralic understanding of time, amongst other things, makes it impossible to erase what came before and what is still here from that time that the settler colonial aims to obscure: Indigenous claims to these lands. As such it is important to note, while a settler temporality does not understand its own violences in a spiralic sense, Indigenous experiences of recurring settler violence can be and often are understood spiralically.

That the people and the land are intimately related is not and never was a secret to colonial power, rather, targeting Indigenous kinship structures was a central part of breaking the relationships between Indigenous people, and between them and their non-human relations: the

from some scientists that Kennewick Man's skull had unusual "Caucasoid" features. Speculation flew that Kennewick Man was European. A California pagan group went so far as to file a lawsuit seeking to bury the skeleton in a pre-Christian Norse ceremony." https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/science/new-dna-results-show-kennewick-man-was-native-american.html [03-24-2020]

[11] https://www.vox.com/first-person/2019/6/20/18693058/aoc-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-concentration-camps-immigration-border [04-15-2020]

land, the water, the animal and plant nations.[12] The breaking up of Indigenous kinship structures and the replacement of them by the settler nuclear family, facilitated the "breakup of Indigenous peoples' collectively held-lands into privately-held allotments controlled by men as heads-of-household" (TallBear 147). This process of breaking up the land into small pieces with only one relation with agency over the land, then also made available all of the so-called "surplus" lands (the number of chopped up parcels larger than the number of married men) for "transfer … to the state and to mostly European or Euro-American settlers" (TallBear 147-148).

Nick Estes and Melanie Yazzie (Diné) connect the policy of requiring Native children to leave their families and their lands to attend boarding schools to the process of taking land from Native nations. They discuss the example of "Richard Henry Pratt, the founder of the Carlisle Indian School, [who] was ordered to take Lakota children" as hostages, in order to force the tribal leadership to accept the imposition of this system of individual ownership of allotments and the opening up of the land to settlers (Estes and Yazzie 17). Emphasizing that once the communal relations were broken by settler impositions and the land was divided up, "violence, hunger, and theft of youth only increased," they connect these 19th century events with the current struggle against the Keystone XL pipeline (Estes and Yazzie 17). If the kinship relations between the people and the land had not been broken, if Indigenous children had been able to continue cultivating these relationships, if settlers had not divided up and taken control over

[12] Jodi Byrd, Alyosha Goldstein, Jodi Melamed, and Chandan Reddy, in their June 2018 special issue of *Social Text* "Predatory Value," argue that in the settler colonial context of the U.S., land was made property through a process of dispossession that is "perpetually incomplete" (2). Byrd et al argue for an alternative approach coming from the land and "grounded normativity," which is "quite literally situated in relation to and from the land but without precluding movement, multiplicity, multidirectionality, transversals, and other elementary or material currents of water and air," which also takes into account the agency of the land, the water, the animal and plant nations as understood in Indigenous ways of knowing and relating to the land and its relations (11). Byrd et al write, "The loss of land is not just a loss of property, territoriality, power, nation, or sovereignty; it is the loss of those philosophies that derive from the relationships the land itself activates, fosters, and nourishes" (14).

much of the land, the Keystone XL pipeline—which puts capitalist interests in "progress" over the health and survival of the land and all its relations—now would likely not have been able to trespass these lands and relations (Estes and Yazzie 17); all of these events and processes in this place are in relation across time. Through a focus on the spirals of transformation Indigenous movements as well as settler violences are a part of, we are able to see the relations and iterations that a focus on linear progress might miss.

Much of settler colonial notions of time are governed by capitalist notions of time, resource use (i.e. capitalist notions of relations to the land)[13] especially. Indigenous ideas about time exceed that; they cannot be explained within capitalist understandings of time, as Indigenous ways of knowing are not legible within a capitalist framework. Estes explains how the alternative worlds that can be created by starting from these land-based knowledges and the relationships of reciprocity, responsibility, and redistribution they invite, rather than from a basis which takes the settler (capitalist, patriarchal, white supremacist) nation state for granted, are exactly why Indigenous resurgence is such a threat to the settler state.[14] He describes how "Capitalism is not merely an economic system, it is a social relation," and that Indigenous resurgence and the communities built from land-based knowledges, such as the camps at

[13] Un-settling the ways we think about the land, as a source and holder of knowledge and many relations, rather than simply as property that was stolen and repurposed to create the U.S. nation space, reveals how centering Indigenous ways of knowing and relating requires a rethinking of our conception of "America" and makes visible both the arbitrariness and the overwhelming power inherent in colonial mapping and naming. As Jaskiran Dhillon points out, Indigenous ways of knowing the land and knowledge produced from and with the land cannot be "included" in settler approaches to the environment; in her words, "To acquire this knowledge means entirely shifting our current patterns of living in the every-day: it is cumulative and dynamic, adaptive and ancestral, and it is produced in a collective process that is fundamentally centered on the way one relates" (Dhillon 2). Starting from the land also makes onto-epistemologies (ways of knowing/being, always one in Indigenous worldviews) that start from the land visible and gives them to power to offer us ways to rethink our relationships to the land and to each other.

[14] See: Harris, LaDonna and Jacqueline Wasilewski, "Indigeneity, an alternative worldview: four R's (relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, redistribution) vs. two P's (power and profit). Sharing the journey towards conscious evolution." https://doi-org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/10.1002/sres.631 [03-30-2020]

Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline, are "premised on radical relationality," which "offer[s] a revolutionary different way of relating to people and the world" than settler capitalism does (Estes and Yazzie 45).[15]

In the manner in which the communities in the camps at the Mni Sose (or Missouri River) organized and mobilized to resist the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, they were also already imagining and living the alternative possibilities of living beyond, or despite of, the settler state. This approach of Sacred Stone and other camps at Standing Rock also relates to the Idle No More movement's focus "on a resurgence of Native ways of life and being" (Warrior 197). Robert Warrior points to the way in which the communal living in the #NoDAPL camps at Standing Rock, on the banks of the Mni Sose, was creating community not just with the human but also other beings in that area, most notably the river itself. The camps were living the Indigenous relationships to the land and all the living beings on and in it; "Those protecting the water do so in the way someone might protect someone who is defenseless" (Warrior 214). Using Glen Coulthard's concept of "grounded normativity," i.e. "the matrix of relationships" made up by an expanded sense of peoplehood which includes "land, water, animals, and even the air we breathe," Warrior calls for a need for scholars to see "ourselves as humans as part of a world in which our humanity is not the apex of life" (Warrior 197-198). Indigenous time is

[15] Estes refers to the work of John Trudell (Santee Sioux), celebrated Red Power poet and leader, to illustrate "how radical relationality, as caretakers of the earth, is coded into Indigenous resistance" (Estes & Yazzie 41). This "radical relationality" coming out of a worldview that honors reciprocal relations of responsibility with human and non-human nations, invites relationships of reciprocity and responsibility between radical organizing of the past, present, and future, between "the Black Radical Tradition and traditions of Indigenous resistance," and the ways they relate, shift, and grow as "accumulated knowledges and selectively inherited genealogies of emancipatory struggle" (Estes & Yazzie 41). Centering the land and shifting our starting point for thinking and relating is where alternatives are created that are not limited to the settler state's structures of knowledge that are often taken for granted.

ceremonial time, informed by the land: seasonal movements across the lands, seasonal housing, seasonal foods. Indigenous social movements operate in this same temporality.

"Place is a way of knowing": Relationality, Story, and Social Movements across Time

Indigenous cyclical understandings of time are informed by seasonally based knowledges and relationships; as such the relationship to time and the way time is understood differs from Indigenous nation to nation, depending on the land. Through a settler lens, Indigenous sovereignty in Turtle Island is expressed in Indian Reorganization Act (in the U.S.) or Indian Act (in Canada) elected tribal governments, which "negotiate rights with settler" governments (Gray 44:09-30). However, Indigenous sovereignty is informed by "dynamic ways of knowing, being, and doing that continue to anchor Indigenous sovereignty in place" (Gray 44:09-30). The heuristic of spiralic time allows us to see how radical relationality with the land and non-humans and humans informs an Indigenous conception of being a people, across many generations going back to when time began.[16]

The Indigenous social movements I discuss, too, are informed by an "embodied sovereignty" (Gray 21:00-14) which, according to Ts'msyen and Mikisew Cree scholar Robin Gray, is expressed in "decolonial activism that is equal parts resurgence and refusal" (21:25-29). The movements discussed in the following chapters were informed by a commitment to a resurgence of the traditional way of knowing, being, and relating, and a pushing back on the limited possibilities and frameworks offered by settler recognition. Capitalist time understands

[16] Daniel Heath Justice explains these connections as following: "Indigenous nationhood is more than simple political independence or the exercise of distinctive cultural identity; it is also an understanding of a common social interdependence within the community, the tribal web of kinship rights *and* responsibilities that link the People, the land, and the cosmos together in an ongoing and dynamic system of mutually affecting relationships" (Justice 151).

the individual as solely responsible, part of a network of relations of capitalist exchange, but with as sole purpose personal profit and enrichment. Indigenous radical relationality is not one of exchanges for personal profit, rather it is about foregrounding relations of reciprocity, responsibility, and redistribution, across generations.

Applying a heuristic of spiralic temporality to what the Indigenous social movements I discuss were organizing for, and against, offers us important insights into the historical relationships between resistance movements and between different movements across time. This is necessary for a proper understanding of the decolonial alternatives that are being developed in our current moment as not divorced from the actions of their relations through time, but as in conversation with and building on what has come before. Using spiralic time as a heuristic allows us to make legible, for example, how the Red Power movement is not only in relation with other civil rights movements at the same time, but also in relation with other Indigenous social movements across time. Building on a history of their peoples' sovereignty going back to when time began, Red Power activists allied with other cultural ethnic political organizations at the time, and engaged intellectually with decolonial ideas around the globe. At its core motivation and purpose, Red Power was a continuation as well as a renewal in the new context of a longstanding inherent sovereignty that needed to be protected from the U.S. government, and as such, in this iteration, they worked for recognition of their sovereignty by the non-Native public and the U.S. government. A heuristic of spiralic time also helps us see how Indigenous organizing and writing of the 1960s and '70s is relevant today, and helps inform our understanding of past, present, and future social movements continuing the work to make real a future imagined beyond our current time.

Storytellers, be it in the shape of published Native literatures or the passing down of familial stories, keep track of all these relations across time, the transformations and iterations; in this way, they are essential for tribal continuity and sovereignty (Bird and Woody 6). The oral tradition and the written literatures are in close relation, and always have been. Chris Teuton (Cherokee Nation) argues Indigenous ways of knowing have always maintained an impulse to respond to and engage with happenings in the moment through an oral tradition that is flexible and adaptive (the "oral impulse"); an impulse to record the knowledge in a lasting format which can also change, but more slowly (i.e. wampums, baskets, rock drawings - the "graphic impulse"); and an impulse to always be engaging both types of impulses with the community, and critique, adapt, and transform the knowledges to the new conditions (the "critical" impulse) (Chris Teuton xvi-xvix). It is the relation between these three impulses that keep Indigenous ways of knowing dynamic and creative, while always informed by the place they are. Indigenous literatures, according to Chris Teuton, combine both the oral and graphic impulses, and invite critical reflection (xix); they use oral techniques and storytelling devices that make the texts more "dialogic, open" and ask the reader to consider the larger social contexts the stories and their characters participate in (Chris Teuton xx). Oral and written storytelling can be understood as part of the same spiral, always adapting to the new conditions in the place they are created from.

Place-based traditional knowledges are at the source of an Indigenous sense of sovereignty and self-determination, as well as resilience. As Elizabeth Woody and Gloria Bird (Spokane) write, "Native individuals *define* themselves through relationships that include one's associations with family, household, or village," emphasizing that it is the "Native languages, histories, and traditions that respect what is shared in common" that are at the core of Native

writers' and communities' strengths (1). They recognize that those Indigenous people who perhaps do not think of themselves as authors, are still "invaluable record keepers of tribe and family," recording their community's knowledges, ensuring their passing on to the next generation (Bird and Woody 6). Sisseton-Wahpeton scholar Kim TallBear emphasizes, "Present-past-future: I resist a lineal, progressive representation of movement *forward* to something better, or movement *back* to something purer" (153); the actors and relationships across time and space, *all* are "lively conversationalists at my table—both embodied and no longer embodied" (153). The Eurowestern organization of both time and space, through its obsession with "progress," makes unthinkable these land-based worldviews which acknowledge all actors informing the present and the future that is always in the process of being shaped. Indigenous literatures, through their expressions of all impulses (per Chris Teuton), can embody these teachings and make them legible.

Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Crow Creek Sioux) underscores how the story of the people and the story of the land are closely related, if not the same story; she characterizes "the indigenous view of the world" as "that the very origins of a people are specifically tribal (nationalistic) and rooted in a specific geography (place), that mythology (soul) and geography (land) are inseparable, that even language is rooted in a specific place" (Cook-Lynn 88). She warns that writers who do not keep this Native worldview and land-based politics at the heart of their writing are in danger of succumbing to the "melting pot" ideal of the multicultural U.S., giving up the fight for sovereignty (Cook-Lynn 96). Cook-Lynn's expectation for Native literary endeavors are clear: they should be in service of the Native communities they spring from; she emphasizes the importance of strong relationships between Native authors and their tribal

communities and centers the explicit political role that literary imagination can have for the furthering of Native Nations' healing and struggle for sovereignty.

Craig Womack (Creek, Cherokee) takes up these concerns in his 1999 book *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*, arguing that "Native literary aesthetics must be politicized and that autonomy, self-determination, and sovereignty serve as useful literary concepts" (11). In his work, he centers the way Native literature can aid the Native Nationalist political work, and interrogates the relationship between Native literatures and Native peoples' lived realities, rather than the relationship between Native literatures and non-Native literatures (Womack 11). He builds on Kelly Morgan's insight that tribal literature (in their case Lakota literature) "contributes to Lakota cultural survival because it extends knowledge of cultural practices to future generations" (Womack 15). Rather than Western science's (mis)understandings of Native culture, which keep Native nations diagnosed with strict rules and customs (Western anthropology, ethnology, archeology, biology, after all, all wrote their different versions of Native histories and cultures), Native literatures are able to communicate a more porous, "ever growing and evolving" tribal knowledge to their people (Womack 15). Even though the traditional knowledges are as old as time, they are also constantly transformed in each new seasonal iteration to adapt to the new conditions, as is evident in Indigenous literatures.

Womack recalls the historical function of the stories from the oral tradition which always were in close relation to the political, lived realities of its people (Womack 16), a function which implied that they could and should have real life consequences. He reminds us that "the idea behind ceremonial chant is that language, spoken in appropriate ritual contexts, will actually cause a change in the physical universe," and encourages Native writers to center this possibility, so that contemporary Native stories can also have this political power (Womack 17). Cook-Lynn

characterizes Native writing as specifically political, and thus not easily inserted into a Western- or European-oriented canon. She describes how Native literary traditions and contemporary works' "sets of unique aims—the interest in establishing the myths and metaphors of sovereign nationalism; the places, the mythological beings, the genre structures and plots of the oral traditions; the wars and war leaders, the treaties and accords with other nations as the so-called gold standard against which everything can be judged" (84) have always been political, because they have always had the strengthening of the different Native nations' sovereignty as their projects. This position is reminiscent of Emma LaRocque's claim that,

> actually, much of Native writing, whether blunt or subtle, is protest literature in that it speaks to the processes of our colonization: dispossession, objectification, marginalization, and that constant struggle for cultural survival expressed in the movement for structural and psychological self-determination (xviii).

In this way, and as the contemporary iteration of a storytelling tradition which goes back to when time began, Indigenous literatures are important carriers of Indigenous ways of knowing, governing, and what in Eurowestern terms might be called political theory (it is all one in embodied Indigenous "place-thought"). Following this, Sean Teuton (Cherokee Nation) claims it is the *intellectual* aspect of the Red Power movement, reflected in the writing, that made them more likely to be successful than the early rebellions (5).

This change Sean Teuton notes in the early Red Power era, places Red Power in relation to what came before, and implicitly also to what comes after. It shows how the Red Power movement's Occupation of Alcatraz (1969-1972), Trail of Broken Treaties (1972), and Occupation of Wounded Knee (1973), amongst other well-known actions and strategies, were a reiteration of earlier Native activism, but with important transformations that made a tangible

difference. The literature of the Red Power era is known as Native Nationalist literature, counteracting the displacement from traditional lands and loss of tribal particularity in the shared struggle, through resurgence narratives where main characters return to their home reservation for healing (Huhndorf 114). Simon J. Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo) describes the shared project of "National Indian Literature" as having a voice which "is not a mere dramatic expression of a sociohistorical experience, but (…) a persistent call by a people determined to be free; it is an authentic voice for liberation" (Ortiz 12). The Native American literature from the post-Second World War period and beyond often centers these ideals, and helps think out, model, critique, and dream of what these Native nationalisms can look like in practice. They center the call for sovereignty, the need for a reconnection to the traditional lands and knowledges, and explore what freedom can or should look like for Native people. Gloria Bird identifies the power in writing, specifically for Native people. She describes how,

> at its liberating best, it is a political act. Through writing we can undo the damaging stereotypes that are continually perpetuated about Native peoples. We can rewrite our history, and we can mobilize our future. (Bird 30)

In the midst of the turmoil of the cultural nationalist movements, as well as in later periods where there was room for reflection on the accomplishments and failures of the movements, cultural nationalist writings explored the ideals and lived situations these activists were concerned with and fighting for. Lisa Lowe explains how "Culture is the terrain through which the individual speaks as a member of the contemporary national collectivity, but culture is also a mediation of history, the site through which the past returns and is remembered, however fragmented, imperfect, or disavowed" (x). The literature which engages with these issues of conquest, occupation, colonialism, and decolonization can reflect "the ways in which the law, labor

exploitation, racialization, and gendering work to prohibit alternatives"; yet they can also reflect possible lived alternatives to the realities of oppression, and even "imagine what we have still yet to live" (Lowe x).

This imaginative dimension was the conscious aim of celebrated Laguna Pueblo author Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (first published in 1977), perhaps the most widely read (or at least, most widely assigned in high school classes)[17] Indigenous-authored text in what is currently the U.S. In a 1976 interview, Silko describes that she feels the American Indian Movement (AIM) is on a "parallel road" to her aims, describing that she understands the purpose and context in which they are working, but that they are missing a long-term vision that goes back to why the situation is how it is (Arnold 7). Rather than just blaming the current colonizer government for what is happening (which Silko claims is AIM's approach to politicizing Native people), Silko describes being more interested in what brings a person to the point where they are now. At the risk of individualizing the responsibility of Native people encountering the settler colonizer state, she describes being more interested in what events in the person's life brought them to be struggling with alcohol and consequently in colonizer jail (using an often-cited AIM example) (Arnold 7). The wider implication is that we should see how historical factors and events which affected the person's ancestors, might have brought the person to alcoholism and then in trouble with the colonizer state—per the current research on epigenetics, for example.[18] The current knowledge about the genetic component of inter-generational trauma supports the relevance of a deeper historical understanding of what brought a person to such a moment.

[17] Non-Native scholar of contemporary Indigenous rhetorics Amanda Morris even wrote a call to high school teachers to teach other Indigenous texts https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/seven-texts-to-teach-instead-of-ceremony [03-30-2020]

[18] https://www.biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com/article/S0006-3223(15)00652-6/abstract

There is value and purpose in fighting settler colonizer palimpsestic time, which finds the issue only in the current moment, and which works to obscure deeper historical reasons for creating the present (and the responsibility settler colonizers carry in this). Silko is arguing for a more encompassing historical political vision, which arguably could make a stronger case when encountering settler ignorance. She says that she believes in story over direct political action, because stories can change people's minds, and educate them about what's happening with attention to the structural level (Arnold 7). Through story, Indigenous embodied knowledges can be made legible to all and inspire action.

Aiming to teach both Native and non-Native people about the historical transformations that brought us to where we are now, or where we were then, *Ceremony* applies a spiralic approach to its organizing temporality: the novel uses knowledge and political issues of the 1970s to go back to comment on the 1950s, so as to transform our understanding of that time, in order to then hopefully transform the current moment and the future for her people/all Indigenous peoples (Holm 253). Silko, by placing the critiques of the 1970s (against the Vietnam-war, against assimilation, *for* Native sovereignty and cultural revitalization) into the timeframe of the 1940s, makes the spiralic return of different iterations of a racist and exploitative apparatus in all U.S. wars (Holm 253), and the importance of Native cultural revitalization for healing and sovereignty, visible as such: as not typical only for the Vietnam-war era, but as relevant for understanding the history of how we got here, and for envisioning healthy, sovereign Native futures.

Published less than a decade after the 1969 Occupation of Alcatraz, and only a few years after the Trail of Broken Treaties, Silko's *Ceremony* considers the same issues that were called attention to in these actions. Even though Silko expressed not to believe in the direct-action

approach of AIM, and argues she is working in a different understanding of time, the main story of the novel, that of Tayo, holds "the essence of [Red Power's] radical philosophy" (Holm 266). *Ceremony* is set in the Laguna Pueblo reservation the author grew up on, and fits in with the period's many resurgence stories featuring male main characters returning to the reservation after being lured or forced away, which were being written as Relocation and Termination was moving people away from the reservations to urban centers.[19] Tayo is a Laguna Pueblo World War II veteran of mixed descent, who is suffering from a lost sense of self because of the trauma of the war, the loss of his brother in the war and his uncle at home ("the only one of his kin to be unequivocally kind to him" [Flores 53]) while he was away, the identification between Japanese men killed in the war and his Laguna family, and the disconnect between his sense of self and his Laguna Pueblo community and culture. Tayo's spiritual poverty and loss of culture is reflected in the poverty of the land; a drought has come to his community during the time he was at war, losing faith, praying for the end of the endless rain where he was, not realizing the ceremonial power of his words until he came back to his homeland and saw his personal drought mirrored in the land.

The land is the anchor of Tayo's experience. It is where his trauma of his experiences is reflected. But the healing comes from different complex relationships with *place*, with the land and all its relations. The novel shows how traditional knowledge strictly adhered to in its past iterations will not suffice (represented by the first Laguna medicine man, whose ceremony helps

[19] Even though Laguna Pueblo was never terminated, the effects of governmental policies of "Relocation" of Native people to the cities, off of their reservations, and of "Termination" of both the recognition of certain tribes, of tribal sovereignty, and of tribal memberships, had led to a decrease in Native people living in their tribal communities and being closely connected to their tribal knowledges, stories and land; disconnections that are still widely felt today. The literature coming out of the period is often that of resurgence narratives; these narratives speak of reconnecting with Native communities and cultures, something Shari Huhndorf has identified as "in some sense compensatory, a means of strengthening tribal ties loosened by historical currents and government policies" (114).

Tayo get a little better, but not all the way there [Flores 53]). What does work, is the curer Betonie's telling of "the history of the ceremony and the curers" and sharing of "the pattern (a mountain, a particular constellation of stars, certain cattle, and a woman) that will guide him through the ceremony" (Flores 53). Embodied in "Betonie the curer, for whom nothing is lost, who keeps everything, who keeps the ceremonies alive, *precisely by changing them*" (Flores 55, my emphasis), *Ceremony* points to the way Indigenous knowledges are millennial as well as porous, able to respond to the new realities in order to be purposeful, at the same time as it shows that Indigenous knowledges *can* indeed heal this new hurt. Traditional knowledges must be transformed to be able to offer healing in this new world: not by removing and replacing its histories, but by building on them and honoring the enduring relations across time.

Ceremony offers a political education through story, just as Silko described in the 1976 interview quoted above. As Silko herself noted, with Louise Erdrich, Allison Hedge Coke, and Joy Harjo, "the land itself can operate as a living text map, steering our ability to navigate an ever-changing world" (Silko, "Interior and Exterior Landscapes" 32, paraphrased in Brooks 314). When Lisa Brooks writes that "this spiral [of time] is embedded in place(s) but revolves through layers of generations, renewing itself with each new birth. It cannot be fixed but is constantly moving in three dimensional, multilayered space" (Brooks 309), this suggests that in and through place, a sense of historical relations is conceived and lived, which are connected across imposed periods of chronological time.

Glen Coulthard explains the role of land in Indigenous onto-epistemology as the following: "Place is a way of knowing, experiencing, and relating with the world – and these ways of knowing often guide forms of resistance to power relations that threaten to erase or destroy our senses of place" (79). The land, *place*, is holding the knowledge of spiralic histories

that inform its current being. Indigenous organizers' vision for Indigenous sovereignty too, is informed by this vision of the land as a guiding set of relations, be it sometimes expressed in U.S. legal terms of treaties to fulfill their purpose of achieving recognition of this land-based sovereignty by the non-Native public and the U.S. government. Silko, instead, relies on her Pueblo ways of knowing and being and uses story, rather than legal language, to share her teachings.[20]

Using the spiral as a heuristic allows us to see the relations between what is past, what is returning in the present, and what that teaches us about possible transformations we should make to build thriving futures. Sean Teuton sees the role of Native literature in the Red Power era as the vehicle to respond to the contemporary Native political struggles and to "imagine a new narrative for Indian Country" that could in turn "empower the people" (2), similar to Daniel Heath Justice's assertion that the power of Indigenous literature lies in what it is able to imagine: "to assert our self-determination, to assert our presence in the face of erasure, is to free ourselves from the ghost-making rhetorics of colonization" (Justice 150). Indigenous literatures' power is seen in how it rewrites the ways we understand the past to make visible its relation to Indigenous activism; the literature formalizes Indigenous cultural continuities, emphasizes agency, and breaks the Indigenous pasts out of the bounds of settler limitations.

[20] In the same 1976 interview, Silko describes learning Norse folktales and being upset at the Norse concept of the "Twilight of the Gods" where things end and the gods die, as in Laguna Pueblo storytelling time and story are understood to be cyclical and transformational: "at Laguna, we believe that those times did not truly end, but that things only change" (Arnold 30). She describes that when elders would tell stories at Laguna, someone would be told to open the door, to let the ancestors in (Arnold 31). She explains how in Laguna storytelling, the stories are like gifts direct from the ancestors; even if they might be "gone," the ancestors are gifting the stories, and are present in the room when the stories are shared. She describes, "And so the storytelling in that sense was an act of. . . so that there wasn't anything lost, nothing was dead, nobody was gone, that in the stories everything was held together, regardless of time" (Arnold 31, ellipsis in original). Through the sharing of story, the past is brought into the present, physically into the room.

This sharing of story makes the spiral of relations across time visible and tangible, by bringing past relations and events into the present space, making visible how the experiences and stories are spiralic or cyclical and come back transformed. What we then see are not direct repetitions of what came before, not just repetitions on repetitions, but spiralic transformations through time. The spiral makes visible the relationship to what came before, shows how all is connected, how everything returns just slightly changed, adapted to the new present, grown through the past experiences, complicated by new information.

Through readings of both literary productions and Indigenous social movements rooted in place, I show how a spiralic understanding of temporality informed by Indigenous ways of knowing is helpful to grasp both the true objectives of the Indigenous social movements, as the ongoingness of the relationships between place and its peoples. I argue that spiralic temporality is a useful heuristic to understand Indigenous social movements on their own terms—according to the embodied Indigenous ways of knowing, relations, stories, and values that inform them, as well as literatures from the same place that embody similar ways of knowing and being—rather than according to a limited settler colonial framework.

Spiralic temporality is made not just invisible but also *unthinkable* by a settler temporality which is palimpsestic: settler time aims to obscure the past and replace it with its own settler ideals. Yet, this process can never be completed, and as such, the settler colonial is always in tension with the Indigenous presence it aims to replace. Settler time is a fiction which is always in the process of being uncovered for its deceit. A heuristic of spiralic temporality, instead, helps us see how the settler temporal structure obscures the genocidal processes of settler colonialism, and importantly, it foregrounds the Indigenous ways of knowing and being that inform Indigenous social movements and literatures. I want to emphasize again that I am not

suggesting an *analytic* of the spiral that is always seamlessly applicable across the board, I rather suggest that it is a useful *heuristic* to understand some of the values, relations, and transformations across time, to make visible the complexity of Indigenous worldviews, the absence of absolutes and universalisms, and to make legible just one way of relating, theorizing, and practicing at work in Indigenous social movements and literatures which a Eurocentric analytic does not allow for.

Chapters

The chapters that follow are organized spiralically themselves: starting from the Pacific Northwest from which I write, the discussion spirals forward through time with each chapter, while relating to the past and the future through starting points embedded in the chapters: transforming approaches, changing orientations, reaching new publics, and developing and embodying new knowledges in the process. The texts I discuss, most by Indigenous women authors, do similar consciousness raising work as the Indigenous social movements, in the sense that they provide stories of old and new relations connected across time, space, and nations to inform our worldviews. The texts create a relationship between the reader and the world that the texts respond to, both creating a responsibility to imagine new futures where settler violence cannot continue and offering us the way to do so: by un-settling the Eurowestern ways of knowing we often take for granted and privileging Indigenous enduring presence and futures. My hope is that, in the spiral of time of which we are all part, we can restart from a relationship with the land and all its relations, a radical relationality that allows for a world not already limited by the settler imagination, but opened up through radical relationality across time, space, and relations.

In the first chapter, I read Elizabeth Woody's work, which always already centers the river as an essential player in the intricate set of embodied knowledges and relations of which Pacific Northwest Native peoples are part, to consider the Pacific Northwest fishing rights struggle as part of a spiralic history of the struggle for Indigenous sovereignty, and reveal how a clash of worldviews is the basis for the contention over fishing in the area. Even though I discuss the treaty law and court cases which interfaced with the Indigenous direct actions, the chapter focuses in on the struggle in the South Salish Sea (Puget Sound) organized from the Nisqually family home of Billy Frank, as well as the Yakama Sohappy family's fight for fishing rights on the Columbia River, to show how fishing is in the fabric of the Pacific Northwest Indigenous peoples, and of their conceptions of self. A spiralic reading of the fishing struggle makes visible what was actually at stake, clarifying the settler governments' deceit.

Chapter two focuses in on the specific spiral of Indigenous women organizing for Red Power consciousness-raising for Indigenous families and communities, while still also fighting the legal battle for legal protections and against genocidal practices with the U.S. settler state. Drawing out this particular spiral and following its iterations through the generations makes visible the particularities of this struggle and the relations to others, and allows us to read its presence in our current moment (for example in the campaign to honor and protect murdered and missing Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, known as MMIWG2S) in a way that acknowledges its long spiraling transformations and makes imaginable how it could successfully be made different in the future. From W.A.R.N.'s bringing to the fore of specifically gendered concerns to the MMIWG2S crisis continuing into the present day, this chapter looks at how Native women, through activism informed by truth telling, as well as through published and unpublished writing, call attention to the direct relation between Native women's wellness and

their communities' wellness, Native women's corporeal sovereignty and their peoples' spiritual and political sovereignty. Centering the concerns of W.A.R.N.'s first conference –sterilization abuse, political prisoners, education, the destruction of the family and the theft of children, the destruction and erosion of the land base—this chapter discusses activism around these issues in conjunction with *United Indian Women, Inc.* activist Dian Million's poetry, W.A.R.N. founding member Winona LaDuke's novel *Last Standing Woman*, survivor and organizer Yvonne Wanrow (Swan)'s poetry, and Louise Erdrich's novel *The Round House*.

Chapter three focuses on spiralic temporality as being future-oriented, as always already thinking about what responsibilities you have as your (future) progeny's ancestry. Spiralic time is a capacious temporality that takes the past into the present and imagines a future, by virtue of being connected to all that is, all that is yet to come, and all that got us here. In this way, spiralic temporality is primarily about relationality, and very much about futurity. Opening the chapter with a discussion of the round dancing flash mobs of the Idle No More movement, I first discuss Idle No More's project, to then show how Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* can be read to reflect a similar organizing structure and future-oriented purpose. I show how *The Marrow Thieves* is an origin story itself, sharing instructions for a future-oriented project. It tells "Story," a non-chronological, sometimes slowed down and told in much detail, sometimes sped up and synthesized, retelling of the historical events which created the oppressive future world of *The Marrow Thieves*. Through a non-linear temporality which allows the past to also always be the future, the novel shows how cultural continuity, strong intergenerational relationships, and trust in the young and future generations all offer keys to thriving Indigenous futures.

The last chapter returns to the central importance of the river, yet this time in Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota nations) territories. Building on Nick Estes' historical

work on the struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) in its relational context, this chapter demonstrates how the DAPL was just the most recent recurrence of a long-term struggle for the water and against settler colonizer encroachment on Oceti Sakowin rights to land, water, and their ways of knowing the world. This chapter, although centered on the present, attends to the larger spiral of settler violence against Oceti Sakowin, which includes the events of the camps at Standing Rock. Estes describes how it was the radical relationality and anti-capitalist alternatives in the #NoDAPL camps that were the real threat to the U.S. In the process/project of the resistance to the pipeline and the protection of the water, activists were living the alternatives to U.S. white supremacist settler colonial heteropatriarchy they were calling for, and which the U.S. has continually worked to erase, destroy, and/or make unimaginable since the first arrival of settler colonizers to these lands. I read the collection of Oceti Sakowin writing *This Stretch of the River*, to see how the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples of the Mni Sose or Missouri River identify themselves through place and relate to each other and the plant and animal nations of their lands through their relationship with the river and its tributaries. The slogan "Water is Life," made widely known through the actions against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock, should be understood in this widest sense. As will become clear in this chapter, "Water" is more than the H_2O needed by our bodies to live: it is the basis of all our relations. "Water is Life" is a stand-in to describe a worldview where humans are only one of the many peoples that have relations with the water and the land; a worldview which implies a relation of reciprocity, responsibility, and redistribution with all other relations.

I end this work with a Forward rather than an epilogue; the Forward is a renewed starting point more than the closing to this work. In the Forward, I consider some of the ways the spiralic histories I discuss in the chapters continue in the now: through direct-actions, online relating and

healing through social media, and urban resurgence efforts. Spiralic temporality shows up as a way of dreaming, a way of imagining, a way of surviving, by virtue of having some broader connection to those you are related to across time. It does so not in the imagination of a faraway future, but through imagining a future that is always being enacted in the now. I hope this work will inspire a reader to consider their own relationship to the place they are, and have that inform their own efforts to building more equitable relationships and solidarity across communities for a future which does not foreclose Indigenous futurities but instead encourages, supports, and celebrates them.

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Chapter 1. "This paper secures your fish": Settler "Progress" vs. Indigenous Continuity

"If one cannot comprehend how these particular
Indian people would be without their fish,
I don't know how one might explain it.
Perhaps--if one could imagine America
without its bombs?
But please review the attached.
Best wishes, Hank Adams"
Letter to Les Whitten, June 21, 1972

"Billy, are you hopeful? ...can we save the wild salmon?"
Billy Frank Jr: "So what you do is,
you do what you can in your lifetime.
Then that'll go on to another lifetime.
Then another lifetime.
Then another. ...
With a flicker of the right action,
that life will revive itself."
in Wilkinson, Charles: *Messages from Frank's Landing,* 103-10

In 1971, William Meyer (Eastern Cherokee), or 'yonv'ut'sisla (Burning Bear), questioned, "Are the Indians to forego their treaty rights, not to mention their 30,000-year-old tradition of fishing, to satisfy those who fish for a whim?" (72). Adding in no uncertain terms, "Without a doubt, the Indians pose no substantial threat to the survival of the fish, while the state regulations do pose a survival threat to the Indians" (Meyer 72). In just two lines, Meyer summarizes how the Pacific Northwest Fish Wars "epitomize the tribes' struggle to revive traditional cultures, treaty rights, and sovereignty" (Wilkinson, 2005, 153); their inherent rights to fish (reserved in the treaties) are deeply related to their traditional ways of knowing and being, and thus to their sovereignty as

peoples.[1] Yet, Washington State has a duplicitous history with honoring treaty rights. It has simultaneously protected off-reservation fishing rights in key court decisions and repressed the actual practice of fishing off-reservation. As the *Uncommon Controversy* report and fisherman/activist Al Bridges demonstrate (discussed below), the main way this repression has happened is through the pretense of conservation. While I discuss some of the science that lays this pretense bare below, that it was only a ploy to achieve more access to a diminishing resource is also evidenced in the fact that Indigenous peoples lived in relationship with the thriving, abundant salmon for "10,000 years or more," while the start of the salmon's decline is the same moment colonizers started to fish without limitations (Wilkinson 2005, 159). This repression is mobilized by a difference between Native and colonizer worldviews. For "twelve millennia or more"—according to Meyer, it would be closer to 30 millennia (69)—the salmon have played a central role in the lives and worldviews of hundreds of Indigenous "peoples from California up through Canada and Alaska" (Wilkinson 2005, 158). To understand the importance of the salmon to the Indigenous peoples who rely on their relationship with them to survive (both physically, as a person, and culturally, as a people), we must go beyond the understanding of salmon as an essential *resource,* to salmon as a *keystone species* in the way of life of these tribal nations.

I argue that, to understand this difference and the way it engenders the repression of off-reservation fishing rights, one must think intergenerationally, or *spiralically.* I show below how the worldviews that inform the fishing struggles in the South Salish Sea/Puget Sound and Columbia River regions were created from millennia-old reciprocal relationships of

[1] A similar 'Fish Wars' struggle happened in the Midwest. A place to start learning about that is Makah filmmaker Sandra Sunrising Osawa's documentary *Lighting the Seventh Fire,* on the struggle over walleye fishing in what is currently Northern Wisconsin.

responsibility between human peoples and non-human peoples which ensured the seasonal returns of the Salmon People and thus the continuity of Indigenous peoples dependent on them; the obligations and benefits in these relationships are essential aspects of the embodied knowledges passed on, renewed, and adapted across many generations. The Indigenous ways of knowing and being that motivate the struggles for Indigenous continuity, in this case in the form of the Fish Wars, reflect a spiralic relationship to time where both the ancestors and those not yet born guide the responsibilities, and thus the actions, in the present. Not only is spiralic continuity a tenet of the worldview of Pacific Northwest tribal nations, applying a heuristic of spiralic temporality allows us to see connections, returns, and relationships going back to when time began, which clarify the magnitude and enduring importance of the fishing rights issue for Indigenous sovereignty.

I begin with discussing Elizabeth Woody's contemporary reflections of Columbia River peoples' traditional teachings in her writing, and show how they are informed by and in relationship with other Columbia River embodied knowledges such as the tradition of basket weaving and its embodied expressions of spiralic temporal relations. Following, I say more about the different worldviews that inform Indigenous nations in the Pacific Northwest, and how those worldviews both originate from and organize the relationships between the human peoples and the Salmon People. Then, I offer a bit of history on the traditional Indigenous fishery as well as the court cases that interrupted and/or affirmed it in the Salish Sea and Columbia River areas, for further contextual grounding of the discussion. After that, I discuss the Nisqually and Puyallup direct actions, as coordinated from the Frank's Landing home site at Nisqually, closing the chapter with a discussion of direct action on the Columbia River, specifically that of Yakama spiritual leader David Sohappy Sr. and his relations. Out of these discussions, the use of a

heuristic of spiralic temporality, and of understanding the role of a worldview which thinks generationally and includes human/other-than-human relations, to grasp the particular history of the Fish Wars and the history of off-reservation fishing in this region emerges. Understanding and thinking through these worldviews allows us an insight into these histories and enduring issues in a way that a focus on a linear "progression" of court wins and losses alone could never allow.

Elizabeth Woody's Spiraling Cultural Continuity

In a poem called "Weaving," Elizabeth Woody (Warm Springs, Wasco, Navajo) notices the use of the sacred number four in the spiralic structure of the basket, and connects the intricate, skillful work of making the basket with the work of making a home for a family. Referring to what the poem suggests are likely to be the original names (in the language) of plant nations with roots that are harvested and collected in the basket by human people, as "our little sisters," the basket is likened to a home for all relations involved. The basket is the meeting point where these relations come together, to work together to provide for all:

> WEAVING
>
> Weaving baskets you twine the strands into four parts.
> Then, another four. The four directions many times.
> Pairs of fibers spiral around smaller and smaller sets of threads.
> Then, one each time. Spirals hold all this design
> airtight and pure. This is our house, over and over.
> Our little sisters, Khoush, Sowitk, Piaxi, Wakamu,
> the roots will rest inside.
> We will be together in this basket.
> We will be together in this life.
> (Woody 1994, 46)

Woody ends "Weaving" on the note that through this airtight spiralic structure, the basket is held together, the people involved are held together. The people are held together in the basket, as they are held together in their lives, thanks to the spiralic structures that bind and support them.

In a narrative non-fiction essay included in the edited collection *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America*, Woody tells of her childhood instruction in the importance of family and traditional ways of knowing and relating,

> Our legacy is that we still live, in some manner in congruence with the past, not in a linear fashion, as people tend to think of time, but cyclically, in accordance with the cycles that are as efficient as the spirals found in baskets and shells and petroglyphs. (Bird and Harjo 513)

Emphasizing the importance of cultural revitalization in many different possible manners, Woody states how she sees herself as part of a spiralic set of relations across generations, located in the particular, landed ways of knowing of her ancestors. Her writing clearly expresses a worldview informed by a spiralic understanding of time and relationality across time; I discuss it here in some detail in order to facilitate seeing the same spiralic structures of knowing and relating in the ways traditional fishers relate to the fish, as in the way the traditional fishery is organized. To better be able to read both the literature and the historical relationships, I will first detour via a discussion of basket weaving.

Basket weaving can be read as a physical representation of the spiralic temporality that informs Columbia River peoples' world views and thus their ways of knowing and being. Through the use of plant materials—bear grass, cedar bark, and many others—which are always renewing themselves with the seasons, as well as the teachings that have been passed on through the generations, basket weaving encompasses and expresses the worldviews, cultural meanings,

and survival skills continued through the generations, and transformed in each moment.[2] Wasco basket maker Pat Courtney Gold, born and raised on the Warm Springs reservation, explains this temporal experience through the telling of how traditionally, children receive a name when they are about a year old. This name is the name of an ancestor, and in this way, Gold tells us, "we have a birth again, of the ancestor, who is going to live through this child, with this child, and guide this child" (Craft in America 00:09-33). This naming expresses the ongoing relationship between generations, and expresses the Wasco temporal experience: "this is our concept of time, meaning, we have no real end, and we have no beginning. Everything is connected like a circle" (Craft in America 00:34-50). This cyclical worldview is expressed in the baskets, not just through their cylindrical form, but also through their interconnected designs, which require study to learn how to see where the narrative takes up the story and where it is woven into the now (Craft in America 00:50-01:11). Gold shows us how the traditional baskets use large figures to represent the ancestors, and smaller figures about a 10th the size to represent the current generation; this difference in size reflects the sacred importance of the ancestors to the people (Craft in America 02:51-03:03). Through the embodied story of the basket, generations going back to when time began are all connected and expressed, and shared with the holder of the basket.

However, every new basket, while being a continuation of an age-old tradition, is also new every time, expressing its own story in the spiralic history of a nation's stories. Aside from

[2] The materials show what land the basket is related to, as much as the designs show what people it is related to. For example, a traditional 1805 basket, now held at the Peabody museum, was started from a center made of dogbane (05:31-38). This dogbane grows plentifully in a traditional area by the Columbia River, which "must have been easy to get to, before the dams were built and before the railroad was put in" (Peabody Museum 05:46-6:15). It likely was an area where Indigenous women would go to harvest dogbane for weaving, as it is an area "perfect" "to sit and harvest, and process dogbane, and just have a good social event as well as getting your work done" (Peabody Museum 5:46-6:15).

the ancestors, Wasco baskets also feature images of condors, who used to roam the Columbia River region "for generations" but who have become extinct since the arrival of Europeans to the area (Craft in America 03:05-27). In a recent basket Gold made herself, she shows how she juxtaposed the traditional image of the condor with an image of an airplane, showcasing how traditions transform to express the realities and worldviews of the period in which they are created, while also being a continuation of the original tradition (while currently limited to zoos, the Condor People continue to be honored in modern baskets) (Craft in America 03:35). When she recreates the many geometrical faces (every face representing an ancestor [Peabody Museum 03:38-50]), she likes to give them all different expressions, so that every iteration is different. These differences, too, are informed by cultural norms; Gold explains, for example, "When we're fishing we usually whistle to get each other's attention, so I always have a face that's whistling" (Peabody Museum 05:03-08). In this way, the baskets are not merely a cyclical tradition, as in repetitions of familiar narratives and relations, but spiralic, as these repetitions are never fully identical, always transforming as they adapt to the present iteration.

Yet, the baskets are not just metaphors for this spiralic temporal experience, they themselves *participate* in the spiralic relations that make the worldviews (and thus the nations built from these values and principles). To basket weaving peoples, these baskets "are almost like a living entity" (Craft in America 01:46-50). The plants that give themselves to make the basket are thanked with offerings and prayers, because, as Gold explains, the plants are not just giving themselves to the basket maker, but also to their "basket, to [their] culture, and to the future generations who'll be seeing it" (Craft in America 01:24-1:39). When Gold went to study a "very, very intricate" (05:52) traditional basket, collected by Lewis and Clark in 1805 and now held at the Peabody museum, she describes how while she was holding it, "it was literally

communicating to [her] … and really told [her] its own story," explaining that she otherwise would never have been able to understand the stylized figures (06:00-10). The basket's story was related to the stories told in the millennia-old petroglyphs found on the Columbia River banks (Craft in America 06:11-23); these petroglyphs are understood to literally *be* the ancestors (Craft in America 06:24-28), per, for example, the story of She-Who-Watches discussed below. The stylized images of these ancestors also connect them to the river, as "the geometric outline around each of the faces was a symbol of [their] fishing nets" (Craft in America 06:28-35). Gold concludes that through these millennia-old images and their transformed iterations through time, from the petroglyphs through to today's baskets, the basket's "circle with no beginning and no end" "connects not only [Gold] to [her] ancestors," but also to the Columbia River (Craft in America 06:36-48), and thus to the importance of the traditional fishery.

Woody's work is in direct relation to these living baskets and their narratives. Basket weaving, as a cultural skill imbued with spiritual meaning, evidences the importance of the intergenerational relationships that inform much of the Columbia River peoples. In her writing, Woody connects these traditional crafts like weaving, and the narratives they embody and continue, to the importance of speaking the Native language to be able to conceptualize the world both more broadly and more deeply than possible in English. These are all ways to, "like [Woody's grandparents], ... repair our culture and make it anew" (Bird and Harjo 515). Woody ends her creative non-fiction essay circling back to the river, which is central in her writing as it is in the worldview that informs it: "In the sound of water, the sheen of river stone, a song is pervasive and faithful to continuance, and the memory in its own language tells the story well" (Bird and Harjo 515). The Indigenous language named the natural world Columbia River peoples were in relation with in a way that expresses that relation. Using the traditional language is thus

tied to reconnecting with the traditional worldview and ways of being and knowing the world, and "repair the culture and make it anew."

A longer version of the essay included in *Re-inventing the Enemy's Language* is printed as the introduction of Woody's collection of prose and poetry *Seven Hands, Seven Hearts.* In the longer essay, Woody, reflecting on life at her aunt Lillian's house, describes it as a lived example of the larger generational connections. She writes her aunt Lillian suggested "that there seemed to be no sense of time as we think of it" at the house (Woody 12). Rather, people would wake, eat, and sleep at different times, while remaining connected through the sharing of the space: "People would be sleeping on blankets on the floor while others were seeking advice from one another" (Woody 12). This togetherness through sharing the space, experiencing lives almost in different shifts, taking turns, is almost a metaphor for the different generations being connected through their connection to their lands, to their space. As Woody describes it, all generations are present in the current moment, as the ancestors' wisdom inspires, and the children or those who are not yet born inform the choices made by the present generation with decision making powers; generations all taking turns to be in the space, but connected through that space, and acting in relation and with respect to one another. Woody writes, "When I think of that house, I feel near the fire of intensity that warmed their efforts to survive the maelstrom of our dispossession" (Woody 13); similarly, through the awareness of the connection across generations, Native decolonial or resurgence actions are most grounded in the land and its relations.

Woody's first book of poems, *Hand into Stone*, dedicated to her grandparents, is a collection of previously published and new poetry. It was published in 1988, and won an American Book Award. The book directly engages Native fishing rights, opening with an

unnumbered page describing the loss tribes suffered with the flooding of Celilo Falls by a series of dams on the Columbia River. Laying fault clearly with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who decided on creating the dams and ending the role of Celilo (also known as Wy-am) as a meeting place for Indigenous people from nations "part of a network which extended from California to Alaska, as far east as Missouri and west to Hawaii," Woody writes:

> On the morning of March 10, 1957, the massive steel and concrete gates of The Dalles Dam closed and choked back the downstream surge of the Columbia River. Six hours later and eight miles upstream, Wy-am, the age-old Indian salmon fishery and falls, was under water and lost forever. Before that in 1934 with Rock Island Dam and again in 1938 with the Bonneville Dam, the salmon run was now assured eventual depletion and would never be fully restored. (unnumbered page)

By endangering the plentiful salmon runs, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers endangered the traditional economic and kinship systems that had always sourced and structured Native nations' wealth and wellness.

In the first section of the book, titled "She Walks Along the River," one poem is dedicated to David Sohappy (Yakama), whose commitment to traditional Waasat life I discuss below. This poem is called "She-Who-Watches...The Names Are Prayer" referencing a petroglyph of the same name (translated from the original name, "Tsagaglal") on the north side of the Columbia River, just past The Dalles. She-Who-Watches was a female chief turned into stone by Coyote, the Trickster, so that she could forever keep watch over her people and ensure they could continue their good life.[3] According to the story, the cliff drawing *is* the ancestor, not

[3] http://www.gatheringthestories.org/2013/10/26/the-legend-of-tsagaglalal-she-who-watches/ [04-20-2020]

a representation of her. The petroglyph of the old chief embodies the worldview that organizes the Columbia River peoples (as well as their fishery): it evidences the continued responsibility of the ancestors to their future generations, as well as the reciprocal obligations of the contemporary generations to act in a way that honors the ancestors' efforts, and repays them by continuing their work for the younger generations and those not yet born.

Woody adds in a footnote that Celilo Falls has been estimated to have been inhabited by Native peoples for 10,000 years. Easily sacrificed by settler colonizers perhaps exactly because of this importance to the traditional way of life in the area, "In 1956 it was sold to accommodate the Dalles Dam on the Columbia River" (Woody 1988, 8). In "She-Who-Watches…," Woody describes Celilo as "dispossessed, the village of neglect / and bad structure" (Woody 1998, 7); the Celilo Falls are now merely "faint rocks enrippled / in the placid lake of back waters" due to The Dalles Dam (Woody 1998, 7). Instead, there is the rail road. Clamoring along the Columbia river, the railroad inspires youth "to die from the wail of night and spirits" (Woody 1988, 8). As "Celilo Falls sank unwillingly in the new trading," its disappearance interrupted the traditional way of life, and instead, "everyone dissolved in the fall" (Woody 1988, 8). Woody here links the destruction of a key traditional fishing area, to the destruction of the peoples who relied on it. Celilo's history, going back to when time began, and all its relations to all the generations of human and non-human nations going back just as far, mean nothing to the settler colonizer, whose only concern is so-called progress, as represented in the poem (and embodied in real life) by the railroad.

Focusing the first section of the book on the river, Woody nevertheless sees connections across Indigenous experiences in what is currently the U.S. In "She-Who-Watches…" the experience of loss of the "Fishermen" for whom "A Strange Land awaits" now that their village

is flooded and the salmon runs which fed it and structured the peoples' lives for thousands of years have been interrupted, with the experience of "the Nez Perce, the Navajo, Cheyenne women, / those who wailed in the Long Walks" (Woody 1988, 7). Where other nations have been displaced from their lands by being forced to trek west, to "Indian Country," Columbia River peoples have been displaced by the dams flooding their lands and their fishing sites. To grasp why such a forced move from the traditional lands is so destructive to the cohesion of Indigenous peoples as peoples (or nations), we need to grasp the spiralic temporality that informs the worldview, and as such the internal organization and rules and obligations of these peoples.

The lands they are being removed from are the lands where the people's traditional stories teach them they were created, the lands they are obligated to care for, the lands who make them who they are, and tell them how to continue to be. Elizabeth Woody, in poetry and prose, expresses and embodies the Columbia River peoples' worldview introduced above. In the following section, I lay out the opposing worldviews involved in the clash between the settler colonizer search for property and resources to exploit, and the Indigenous peoples who worked to continue to fulfill their obligations and secure their peoples' continuity.

Settler Property v. Indigenous Relationality

While the Stevens treaties of 1854 and 1855 clearly secured the original right for Pacific Northwest treaty tribes to fish in all their "usual and accustomed grounds and stations" [45]—even

[4] Isaac Stevens was committed to his mission: within the year from his arrival in the Pacific Northwest, over seventeen thousand Indigenous people were involved in the treaties he pushed: at Medicine Creek, at Point No Point, at Neah Bay, and at Point Elliot. Indigenous peoples signed away around 64,000,000 acres of land to Stevens, securing only 6,000,000 acres for themselves (AFSC 20). However, Indigenous peoples did make sure to retain the right to keep fishing and harvesting beyond their limited reserved lands; all they consented to was a willingness to share the resource with settlers.

[5] "Their only concession was that they would share these off-reservation fishing grounds with white settlers" (Cohen Et al 38). I quote the treaty articles that reserve the rights to fish in full below.

stated literally as such during the negotiations of the Point No Point Treaty (1855) as "This paper secures your fish"[6]— the States of Washington and Oregon have consistently worked to embargo Native fishing in favor of non-Native commercial and sports fishing. The regular arrests of Indigenous fishers, off but also on the reservation, started in 1913; the State created State laws to deny treaty fishing rights, and even leased fishing rights to private companies rather than allowing Native fishermen to fish.[7] Yet, as early as 1886, the Federal Government had to send troops to protect treaty fishers (and their gear and temporary shelters for curing) from settler aggression (Wilkins 2000, 27). Washington State continued attempting to end Indigenous fishing regardless.

Using "conservation" as a cover (while ignoring how settler developments such as "farming, industrialization, and dramatic expansion of the logging business degraded rivers and estuaries and caused a concomitant diminishment in the numbers of salmon" [Institute for Natural Progress 220]),[8] States attempt to control Native fishing so as to almost make it impossible, thus impoverishing Native communities dependent on the catch for food and income through sale, and destabilizing their political and spiritual organization by making a key sacred

[6] From the "Record of the council proceedings wherein the Treaty of Point No Point was negotiated and executed, January 26, 1855, Exh. PL-15, Joint Appendix to *U.S. v Washington,* p. 331," qtd. in Implementing Indian Treaty Fishing Rights, Conflict and Cooperation by Fay Cohen in *Document 68: Critical Issues in Native North America - Vol II* (ed. by Ward Churchill). "In Usual and Accustomed Places - Contemporary American Indian Fishing Rights Struggles," by The Institute for Natural Progress, published in *The State of Native America,* Annette Jaimes (ed) (1992), even states "the Indians were repeatedly assured by federal negotiators as the U.S. assumed title to their territories," that "This paper secures your fish" (218).

[7] i.e. "In 1929, Washington state denied the Quinault [Nation] the right to fish, choosing to lease their rights to a private company of Bakers Bay for a $63,000 fee" (Meyer 70).

[8] A 1953 Washington Department of Fisheries pamphlet called "The Salmon Crisis," states "The main cause of salmon depletion can be traced directly to the environmental changes that have taken place since the advent of civilization in the Pacific Northwest" (qtd in AFSC 155). "Civilization" here of course should be understood by the start of settler colonization.

relation (the salmon) inaccessible.[9] Indigenous fishers started organizing and defying the settler state, demanding it affirm their traditional relationship with the salmon and their inherent right to fish. The resulting "Fish Wars" embody Indigenous nations' recurring struggle against settler colonizer encroachment of their traditional cultures and spiritualities as well as their sovereignty, as reserved in their treaties (Wilkinson 2005, 153). These treaties serve as references to the original ways of knowing and being that structured traditional Indigenous life in the Pacific Northwest, even though in many ways the treaties actually broke up the traditional relations between the peoples and the land and all its relations—for example through locking people into limited reservations rather than allowing them to continue their seasonal moves around their lands. Yet, Indigenous fishers strategically used the treaties in direct actions and court cases as approximations, or stand-ins, for their traditional ways and relations.

In a 1989 interview, Puyallup Elder and Fish Wars veteran Ramona Bennett puts her Coast Salish worldview at the center of her analysis of the Fish Wars and of the issue of settler colonial violence at large; arguing that it is because the Puyallup know heaven is not some faraway place but rather the Earth we live on today, that they know best how to take care of the planet:

> The reason white people can go from continent to continent destroying everything is because they believe they're going to heaven and it doesn't matter. But we know this is paradise. The spirit world is right here; the ones who aren't born yet and those who have passed on are with us every day. They teach us things. The young ones depend on us to leave something for them. (Katz 164)

[9] *As Long as the Rivers Run* shows the dire situation of the salmon runs. It is clear to the people fighting for their fishing rights that "there is no longer room for compromise, it's a question of survival as Indians, and it's a question of survival as human beings," because white people abuse the environment so much (Burns 28:15-30). Offering the Muckleshoot reservation on the White River as an example, we see how there was no fish to catch, because of the dam up river (Burns 28:31- 29:17), because of the silt (Burns 29:29), and because of mismanagement of the fish dam by-pass system and flood controls by Puget Power, the corporation running the dam (Burns 29:38-46).

Importantly, this Puyallup worldview requires thinking ahead to the next generations, and what kind of world will be left for them. The traditional Puyallup worldview relies on a temporality which sees the future generations and the past generations as present in the current moment; people's actions are informed by this presence, which ensures that the lessons from the past are not lost but incorporated into the actions, and that the consequences for future generations are taken into account. This "generational thinking" also makes it possible to see how colonizer encroachment on Native lands and fishing rights, as well as colonizer introduction of destructive technological "progress" in fishing methods and canning, disrupted not only the traditional way of Indigenous life, but the entire ecosystem.[10]

The difference between Native and settler colonizer worldviews (and the colonizers' disinterest in this difference [AFSC 72]) is recognized as being at the center of much of the problems. *Uncommon Controversy: An Inquiry into the Treaty-Protected Fishing rights of the Muckleshoot, Puyallup, and Nisqually Tribes of the Puget Sound,* a 1967 report on the Fish Wars prepared for the American Friends Service Committee and published by the National Congress of American Indians, finds that from the first treaties, it was clear that Indigenous peoples and settler colonizers had very different concepts of land, of relationality, and of resulting responsibilities. While in the traditional Puyallup worldview the land "was a part of the religious heritage, to be shared with friends, to be protected from enemies, but not to be used as a chattel, not an article to be sold" (AFSC 23), to colonizers, land was a commodity which could be bought and sold, and which should be made available to settlers, only to then fence it off (AFSC 23). The building of dams follows the same logic: even though they interrupt and even destroy

[10] In *Treaties on Trial*, Cohen et al show the 1898 Washington Annual Report already noting that "in the history of the salmon fisheries of the Atlantic Coast there is a warning against the extravagant manner in which our Pacific Coast salmon fisheries have been carried on for many years" (qtd. in Cohen 42).

entire fragile ecosystems which rely on the river, dams support settler values of "progress" and "development" through allowing the full exploitation of the water resource for energy to support land development (AFSC 171).[11] Colonizers assumed that, eventually, Indigenous people would assimilate into the new settler society to a point of disappearing, which would then also disappear their differing worldviews (AFSC iii). However, in the words of the *Uncommon Controversy* introduction, "This expectation has not been fulfilled to any great degree" (AFSC iii). No matter the settler colonizer violence and oppression, Indigenous peoples continue, as *peoples*.

The researchers and writers of *Uncommon Controversy* also note that these different values go beyond a different relationship to the land, to include a different relationship to time. They note that where for non-Native society, "Time is for accomplishing things, and is clearly divided into past, present, and future," for Native peoples, the emphasis is on continuity (AFSC 70) –what Ramona Bennett calls "generational thinking" (see below) and what I will argue can be understood as a "spiralic temporality." For these peoples, what was done to their ancestors was done to them, and their ancestors' roles and responsibilities in the ecosystem continued to be relevant guidelines (AFSC 73). Yet, colonizers only recognize time in the U.S. as starting with the arrival of the first white men, and per *Uncommon Controversy,* "the present sense of connection even with that time is tenuous" (73). The settler colony is continuously in the process of simultaneously celebrating settler courage and denying the violent history of settlement in order to narrate and authorize its own belonging.

[11] One example of these disastrous effects is visible on the Columbia River: "Completed inland near the Canadian border in 1941, [the Grand Coulee dam] rose 343 feet, far too high for fish ladders, and shut off more than 1,100 river miles of salmon habitat. The runs that Grand Coulee drove into extinction included the legendary Royal Chinook, the hardy Canadian-born [sic] fish with individuals commonly weighing 70 pounds apiece, some reaching 125 pounds." (Wilkinson 2005, 159-160)

Fishing as a practice of relations is a part of the Indigenous temporality, as it continues at the center of traditional Native societies on the Puget Sound who are continuing a "heritage of thousands of years of use and development" (AFSC 73) in order to secure the same recurring relationship with the seasonal salmon runs for their future generations. As such, no monetary value can be ascribed, and the thought of selling the land appears ludicrous and even "immoral": selling the land would do a violence to future generations by cutting them off from their sacred relationship to the land, "a factor awfully important in the Indian view of time-continuity" (AFSC 130).[12] It is the present generations responsibility to take care of the land and all their relations, as their ancestors have done before them, to ensure the survival and thriving of the future generations, including those not yet born. This practice is an expression of an embodiment of temporality as spiralic.

The Pacific Northwest is really two areas, related but with different experiences. On the west side of the Cascades mountain range, in the Salish Sea region, the Coast Salish traditions say the people are in a reciprocal relationship of responsibility with all their relations, including those who offer themselves up to feed the human people. Rather than consider the salmon a resource (or even a sport!) caught thanks to the fishers' own knowledge and skill, Charles Hill-Tout (Pemberton Lillooet) explains how the Salmon People are seen as recognizing this relationship to the human people, "voluntarily and compassionately" offering themselves to fulfill their obligation to the humans (qtd. in Turner 278). The fisher, then, is obligated to treat the fish with "respect and reverent care," making sure to use as much of it as possible, and return

[12] So, even those Native people who disagree with activist tactics to maintain and protect treaty fishing are not disagreeing with the central importance of fishing to Native life on the Salish Sea/Puget Sound, rather, they are more worried the activist methods might scare colonizers into taking away even more, doubting that it is "realistic" to expect real justice from them (AFSC 130). The *Uncommon Controversy* writers point out that funnily enough, it appears the more "extreme" Native activists are the ones trusting non-Native people's basic integrity the most (130).

those parts that cannot be used ("such as the bones, blood and offal") to the river, so that the fish can make itself whole again (Hill-Tout qtd. in Turner 278). Its spirit can then tell the others of its Salmon People that they were well taken care of, ensuring the recurring of a plentiful run (Katz 251). This first salmon is traditionally honored in a "First Salmon Ceremony."

One such First Salmon Ceremony is described by Vi Hilbert, aka taqʷšəblu (Upper Skagit). The ceremony takes place at, in this case, the Tulalip long house. A long house is "a big wooden structure, oblong, about one hundred feet long, in a beautiful setting. Open fires provide light and heat" (Katz 250). The ceremony involves drumming and singing, until someone announces that their "guest is arriving," their "guest is coming ashore" (Katz 250-251). Before entering the long house with the first salmon, the fishers bring the salmon to shore in a canoe and circle the long house four times (this is a sacred number, for the four directions) while chanting. When the first salmon is brought inside, the big feast in its honor begins. Once everyone and everything has finished, the first salmon's bones are "returned to the waters, to his people" (Katz 251). A First Salmon Ceremony ensures the millennia-old cycles continue, and the relationships between humans and Salmon People endure.

First Salmon Ceremonies evidence the importance of honoring the non-human relations humans rely on for their survival; this honoring translates directly into a respect and care for the non-human nations. The traditional worldview sees non-human relations as being in reciprocal relationships with human peoples; they have "the power to influence the life of the person using it"—both positively and negatively (Turner 278). As such, following the protocols to honor them and ensure the continuing cycles of traditional life is maintained by "social pressures against noncompliance; everywhere there are sanctions against waste, wanton killing, and destruction" (Turner 278). These reciprocal relations with the local animal and plant nations are part of why

the relation to the land is so important to Indigenous peoples; human and non-human are closely interrelated. Animal and plant nations play important roles in traditional narratives and teachings which explain the relations and responsibilities to the human peoples for all to live together sustainably, and to continue the seasonal cycles into the future for those not yet born.

On the east side of the mountains, around the Columbia River, the traditional spiritual system of Waasat (also spelled Walasat or Waashat), or the "Seven Drums Religion," is "more than a religion; it is an entire way of life" (Cash Cash 22). Drawing from the specific places peoples were created and continue to live, it is a system of ways of knowing and being that sees all of Creation as alive, as imbued with spirit. As a consequence, it is important to be in good relation with all peoples (human and non-human) the people depend on to live thriving lives. As such, "much of the ceremonial behavior involves the ritual harvesting of traditional foods" (Cash Cash 22); much like on the west side of the mountains, one does not want to upset the relations their people depend on. Place itself has spirit, also, and can "exercise humanlike agency" (Cash Cash 24), as recounted in the oral traditions. The continued sharing of teachings through the oral traditions makes sure that the younger generations are brought into the worldview, understanding different levels of meaning as they age (Simpson 7). The telling of the stories connect the contemporary generation with the previous generations, as well as with the lands all their previous generations had been in relation with, as told in the stories. To assure their accuracy, storied teachings must be re-told with "consistent repetition" (Cash Cash 21), as they are sometimes also slightly adapted to produce teachings that will suit the contemporary conditions.

For Columbia River peoples, Coyote, not the animal but a "spirit-being who served as a mirror of the human condition with all his wiliness, ingenuity, strength, and perseverance," helped shape the world, and specific landmarks within it (Cash Cash 21). Coyote's journeys

(always “upriver, never downriver” [Cash Cash 22]) explain the creation of the land, including events or actions that gave places their names, and the Peoples their relationship to the land. Coyote stories give shape and content to the worldviews of Columbia River peoples (Cash Cash 21). For example, a Nespelem story, transcribed by Franz Boas, explains the origin of the Columbia River as the revenge of a little spring of water against Coyote.[13] Frustrated by the sound of the trickling water, Coyote had tried to punch it to make it stop; yet, instead of quieting, the water started following him. Coyote grew thirstier and thirstier, the water growing larger until it was a river big enough to swallow Coyote whole, “and thus from a few drops of water originated the Columbia River” (Barcott 4).

Walter Krochmal, one of the narrators of the 1990 *River People: Behind the Case of David Sohappy* documentary (discussed below), tells the story of how Coyote saved a salmon from being stuck behind a dam built by “five Swallow Sisters,” and how the salmon thanked him by promising to come back annually to provide for the people living on the river (River People 00:37:05). Another story explains how Creator took away the Sun from the people, because they had forgotten their responsibilities; when a few of the elders recalled the prayers, the Sun was brought back; however, only during the day (River People 00:24:05). Creator told the people that they needed to tend to their relations, and honor them, if not, he would take away the salmon and other food sources for good (River People 00:24:05). The worldview, as visible in these teachings, clearly emphasizes the importance for all peoples to fulfill their obligations towards the other peoples they are in relation with, who rely on them and/or who they rely on. Creation

[13] Located in what is currently Washington State, on the Nespelem river, a tributary of the Columbia River, the Nespelem are one of the nations of the Colville Confederated tribes on the Colville Reservation.

was in that place the Indigenous nations' stories describe; this knowledge bids them to take care of that place, i.e. the land and all its relations, to stay there and be its protectors.

Despite the many changes to the land, the destruction of the thriving ecosystems, and the many legal and other colonizer challenges to the traditional way of life, this continuity of traditional values and relationships is still emphasized.[14] While daily life has changed dramatically, a worldview which places individual Native folks in relations of accountability to their communities (past, present, and future), and their peoples with other peoples (human and non-human), continues to inform Native behaviors and decision making (AFSC 72). Many cultural expressions were forbidden or diminished due to settler pressures, but exercising fishing treaty rights "remains as a visible point of identification" (AFSC 72), as "one of the major strongholds of the Indian's sense of identity as an Indian" (AFSC 73).

Settler government representative Isaac Stevens recognized this central importance of the fish, and thought affirming the rights would help Coast Salish and Columbia River nations to sign the treaties—as well as make sure they would be able to feed themselves in a way which "would not in any manner interfere with the rights of citizens," with "citizens" here referring to settlers, of course (Stevens, in his report on the Medicine Creek Treaty, qtd. in AFSC 23). Stevens' confidence in this might have been informed by his conviction that "in a generation Indians would be fully assimilated and would no longer demand rights *as Indians*" (AFSC 114, my emphasis). However, despite all these pressures on (and physical violence against) their traditional ways of knowing and being, Indigenous fishers continued their ways, be they transformed to respond to the contemporary conditions.

[14] Per *Uncommon Controversy,* "Considering the pressure for change which the people have been under, the wonder is not that most of the traditional practices have disappeared but rather that any of them remain" (72).

This relational worldview which collapses the different moments in time into a focus on the relationships of responsibility to the people in all those moments in time, endures in the present moment; this needs to be grasped to understand the Indigenous fishers' direct actions to protect their relationship with their original relations (which of course include the Salmon People). Through these stories that carry the teachings from the spirit-beings, through many iterations of generations of people, the contemporary people are connected to that mythical time where the teachings were created. Through the responsibilities the stories inform them of, contemporary people are also connected to the younger generations and those not yet born; they are bound by the obligation to take care of the people's relations, to ensure a thriving future for their future generations. The stories make legible how it is these reciprocal relationships of responsibility across the many generations that guide the actions traditional people take in their own time.

Using this spiralic analysis to understand the Fish Wars, we can see how it was primarily a struggle over different worldviews: one of a set of relationships of obligations across time, versus one of a progress narrative that is always forgetting its own beginnings in order to focus on individual growth and so-called "development"—which Indigenous people were not expected to be able to achieve as long as they remained Indigenous *peoples*. In the next section, I discuss the several legal cases that interfaced with the direct actions by Indigenous fishers in the Pacific Northwest, and through an application of a heuristic of spiralic temporality, show how the State of Washington's arguments against Indigenous fishers were unfounded—painfully obvious once the traditional Indigenous fishery and the worldview that informs it is understood.

"Conservation" vs. the Traditional Indigenous Fishery

Treaty of Medicine Creek, ART. III.

> The right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations is further secured to said Indians in common with all citizens of the Territory and of erecting temporary houses for the purpose of curing, together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their horses on open and unclaimed lands: Provided, however, that they shall not take shell fish from any beds staked or cultivated by citizens, and that they shall alter all stallions not intended for breeding horses, and shall keep up and confine the latter.
>
> (qtd. in *AFSC* 23-24, underline in original)

The period recognized as the Fish Wars refers to the most famous period of struggle to affirm treaty fishing rights, coinciding with civil rights struggles in other places in what is currently the U.S.A. It is often framed as beginning in the 1960s and resulting in "the Boldt decision" in 1974, but struggle started much earlier, and continued on in different locations until at least the late '80s. During this time, Native communities in the Puget Sound and Columbia River basin were staging publicized "fish-ins," with the presence of celebrities like Marlon Brando, Dick Gregory, and Buffy Sainte-Marie (Institute for Natural Progress 222). Strategized by Maiselle Bridges (Billy Frank Jr's sister) (Wilkinson 43), the fishermen turned activists in this way tried to get their message out to a wider, non-Native public in hopes of calling national attention to the anti-Native violence in the unnecessary arrests (Institute for Natural Progress 222).[15]

That the State's position regarding treaty fishing rights was one of anti-Native violence rather than a true concern of conservation, can be deduced from two facts: first, the fish runs were always aplenty so long as Native fishermen were the only ones fishing, using their

[15] Washington State game wardens arrested Native fishers "for "illegal" fishing, using tear gas, blackjacks, and excessive violence to subdue two dozen Indian men, women, and children. A series of night attacks by state officials followed, using terrorist tactics against old men and women, and violence against the very young. Many people were hospitalized." (Meyer 71)

traditional ways of fishing—including strategies for escapement as well as a First Salmon Ceremony to secure the continuation of the runs (AFSC 1). Secondly, the bans on traditional Native fishing methods, net fishing and spear fishing, demanded of the fishermen to fish in the rivers using methods that, because of the fish' lifecycles, would not result in much catch. Fishing became so difficult to access for Indigenous fishermen, that they were harvesting only "5% or less" of the total catch in Washington (Cohen Doc 68, 155). At the same time, the State was selling so many fishing licenses to non-Native commercial fisheries that "one-third to one-half the boats then fishing were unnecessary to catch the number of fish available" (Cohen Doc 68, 155). The fishing resource was depleting, and while the numbers suggest otherwise, Indigenous fishers were conveniently assumed at fault.

While the Fish Wars were centrally about a clash between the spiralic worldview of the Indigenous fishers versus the capitalist progress-focused settler colonizer worldview of the state governments and individual settlers, the wars were fought through a series of direct actions, which resulted in a series of settler court decisions which either supported or impeded the Indigenous fishery. The struggle between Native and non-Native fishermen, and according litigation in U.S. courts, started as soon as the non-Native fisheries became commercially not only viable but highly successful, with the proliferation of canneries, the invention of commercial fish traps, the completion of the railroad, and the arrival of many more settlers (Cohen et al 41)—all already happening only about 20 years after the treaties were signed.[16]

While the pressure on the Indigenous fishery to let go of their traditional ways was mounting, Indigenous fishers did not give in, but adapted. While the 1957 flooding of Celilo

[16] By 1883, the Columbia River and its tributaries hosted 55 canneries, by 1900, the Puget Sound region had beat that number; Faye Cohen writes "In three decades the odds changed remarkably: a salmon bound for its native stream was much more likely to end up packed in a can before it could reach either nets of the Indians or its birthplace" (Cohen Et al 40).

Falls (also known as Wyam) prompted Wyam elder and traditional overseer of the fishing at Celilo, Tommy Thompson, then almost 90 years old, to despair "There goes my life … My people will never be the same" (Wilkinson 2005, 161), Indigenous fishers did not give up the struggle to keep their relation with the Salmon People. Rather, they both adapted and revolted, in a series of more and less successful attempts to have the settler government recognize and protect their inherent rights to fish, as reserved by and for them in their treaties.

In the first court case, *US. v. Winans* (1905), the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the right to off-reservation fishing for treaty tribe fishers, but acknowledged a Washington State right to regulate some of the off-reservation fishing, without stipulating a system for division or regulation of the catch. So, while the court technically decided in the favor of treaty fishers' treaty right to fish, and even acknowledged access to fish was "not much less necessary than the atmosphere they breathed" (qtd. in Cohen Doc 68, 154), the State also had enough tacit support in the ruling to continue to harass Native fishers when they tried to exercise these rights.

The U.S. Supreme Court's opinion in the 1942 fishing rights case *Tulee v. Washington*, reversing a Washington Supreme Court decision, states that

> It is our responsibility to see that the terms of the treaty are carried out, so far as possible, in accordance with the meaning they were understood to have by the tribal representatives at the council, and in a spirit which generously recognizes the full obligation of this nation to protect the interests of a dependent people. (*Tulee v. Washington* 684-685)

Following the 1905 *US v. Winans* case, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that the State of Washington could not charge treaty fishers fishing licensing fees, as it would act "upon the Indians as a charge for exercising the very right their ancestors intended to reserve" (*Tulee v. Washington* 685). Important to note here is the obligation to interpret the treaties "in accordance

with the meaning they were understood to have by the tribal representatives at the council," in other words, in the way that the Indigenous treaty signers might have—a ruling which forces generous, in favor of Indigenous signatories, interpretations of treaties to this day. Thus, not only must treaty fishers be allowed to fish, fees cannot be collected of Indigenous fishers for the inherent rights to fish which they reserved for themselves in their treaties.

Historically, the U.S. Supreme Court's views on treaties are that they are both the supreme law of the land, *and* that they can be abrogated or changed by Congress without consent from the Indigenous nations involved, causing much of the confusion around their continued meaning (AFSC 76). For instance, *Tulee v Washington* and *State v Satiacum* both establish treaty precedence: *Tulee v. Washington* states, in addition to the call to protect the treaties mentioned above, that "Treaty takes precedence over state law and state conservations laws are void and ineffective insofar as their application would infringe on rights secured by treaty" (AFSC 86). In the 1957 *State v. Satiacum* ruling, Judge Donworth emphasizes that the Medicine Creek Treaty is the supreme law of the land, regardless of any State laws, and "superior to the exercise of the state's police power" –at least until the treaty is either "voluntarily abandoned" by the signatory tribes, or "abrogated by act of Congress" (qtd. in AFSC 93). However, the 1963 *Washington v. McCoy* case dismissed all previous court decisions which favored treaty fishing rights, and, defying the U.S. Constitution, ruled the State could enforce its "conservation" regulations through police power and arrest a Swinomish gill net fisherman –Judge Donworth wrote the dissenting opinion (AFSC 93). Yet, more pressure in the form of fish-ins—fishers would announce in advance to the government agencies and the press when and where they would go fishing in so-called "illegal" locations—resulted in later cases which reaffirmed treaty rights.

Treaty tribe fishermen organized "fish-ins" in response to the endlessly recurring

violences brought upon them by the State (in a way constant, but flaring up and dying down as the fish runs came and went), the first one happening in March 1964 as a response to a call by Makah elders to over fifty Indigenous nations to an organizing meeting in February '64 (Institute for Natural Progress 221). These fish-ins were publicized attempts to express treaty rights; treaty tribe fishers would fish in sites provided for by the treaty, yet closed to Indigenous fishing by the State (Institute for Natural Progress 221). The state cracked down with no regards to U.S. law or the press, destroying and confiscating gear, often violently arresting Native people fishing or standing by to protect the fishers (Institute for Natural Progress 221). This direct-action approach "plainly foreshadowed the American Indian Movement and other militant organizations of the 1970s" (Institute for Natural Progress 222).

One such fish-in led to a court case which demanded a policy change from the states. In 1968, Waasat (Seven Drums Religion) practitioner David Sohappy Sr. was arrested for fishing on the Columbia River. This arrest had a purpose: Sohappy was part of a group of treaty fishermen trying to get a court case going, in order to have treaty fishing rights on the Columbia River recognized and affirmed by the courts (River People 00:29:30). This 1968 case, *Sohappy v. Smith*, affirmed the treaty fishing right on the Columbia River in federal court, requiring the States to prove legitimate conservation concerns before being able to impose regulations on treaty fishermen (River People 00:30:10). This decision helped make future decisions in favor of the Indigenous fishery viable.

The 1974 Boldt decision is perhaps the most famous ruling concerning Indigenous fishing in the region, even though, as we saw, many other court cases and decisions complicate the legal history of the Indigenous fishery in the Pacific Northwest. However, the Boldt decision, aka *US. v. Washington*, was a decision so groundbreaking that it has become known by the name

of the judge rather than the claimant or defense; the Boldt decision stipulated a clear 50% division of the catch between Native and non-Native fishers. Ramona Bennett of Puyallup, at an event commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Boldt Decision in 2004, recalled that at "the first meeting of the lawyers, [she] was the only one who went from a tribe, it was all white lawyers" (10:42-53). At that meeting, the lawyers agreed they should "compromise," saying (Bennett puts on a lower voice to quote them), "We'll have to go for ten percent. Well, if we get 5% that will be good because the Indians are only one half of 1 percent of the population" (Bennet 11:00-09). Calling the white lawyers position "bullshit" to big applause of the Boldt 40 audience, Bennett adds that she "of course" told them that,

> you have nothing to compromise, you have nothing, and we don't have anything, this belongs to the future generations, our future generations of Indian people, and you cannot give away anything. (Bennett 11:15-39)

Bennett here makes very clear how the Coast Salish worldview continues to be at the center of the Coast Salish ways of life, even if the non-Native lawyers do not recognize its importance.

She explains how she had to remind them, "We were 99% of the population at treaty time" (11:40-46), emphasizing that if the treaties had to be interpreted the way they would have been interpreted at treaty time (per *Tulee v. Washington*), they should take that into account. She continues, "this is *our* resource, our resour*ces*, these salmons, these clams, these crabs, all of these roots, berries, deers [sic], this is *100% ours*" (Bennett 11:58-12:15, italics to mimic her emphases). The lawyers needed to understand this position, namely the stakes Indigenous peoples had in their relationships to all these non-human peoples as well as to their own children and those yet to be born, before going into court. Following this understanding of the Coast

Salish traditional worldview and relationships with non-human peoples going back millennia, when the decision was made that Indigenous fishers would have a right to 50% of the harvest, Bennett was not celebrating. At Boldt 40 she recalls, "the day I heard about the decision, I had my feet up on my desk, and I got the call, the fifty percent call, and I jumped up and found myself standing in my waste basket, yelling "WE LOST FIFTY PERCENT OF OUR FISH!" (Bennett 12:45-13:10). While generally presented as a win because of the affirmation of the off-reservation fishing treaty rights, many Native fishers saw (and continue to see) it as a loss, since before settlers arrived, they had had responsibility over the whole harvest.

The main fish that matter in the controversy are five species of salmon, and a sixth salmon-like fish: the steelhead trout. Steelhead trout is considered a game fish, and as such is regulated by the Washington State Department of Game, whose actions and legislation are heavily informed by sports fishermen lobbying groups. A series of State laws (RCW 77.08.020, RCW 77.16.060, RCW 77.16.040) categorize steelhead as a game fish, outlaw using nets to fish for game fish (i.e. the traditional Indigenous way of fishing for steelhead), and outlaw the selling or shipping of game fish (AFSC 86). The *Uncommon Controversy* writers conclude that these particular laws make visible how the State is not as much concerned with so-called "conservation" as it is with "allocation" to non-Native fishermen (86). The catch of the five species of salmon is regulated by the Washington State Department of Fisheries. The main issues for conservation are overfishing in salt water and environmental devastation, as salmon need very specific conditions to thrive: clean water of a certain temperature, gravel with a balance of protecting cover and air for the eggs to grow, unrestricted access to their river of origin, and more (AFSC 156-157). Yet, paper mills and other polluters which dump waste in the rivers and silt up the gravel, as well as commercial fisheries who overfish, were not prioritized in the

State's conservation regulations (AFSC 69).[17]

All six species are "anadromous": they are born up river, go into salt water for different durations of time depending on the species, and then return back to the same place up river to spawn and die–except for steelhead, who might repeat the cycle twice or even three times (AFSC 144-145). These anadromous salmon and steelhead have a peculiar "homing instinct," meaning they aim to go back to spawn in the exact place they were born (AFSC 145). As a result, any destruction of any tributary or river that is a possible spawning site cannot easily be replaced by a different stretch of river (AFSC 145). This instinct evidences how the salmon, through a process of miniscule changes and adaptations "over thousands and thousands of fish generations," are part of an intricate system of relationships anchored in the river (AFSC 158). The balance of these relationships between the river, the land, and all human and non-human beings belonging to it is a delicate one (AFSC 158), which Native fishermen have been a part of thousands of years. Both the Salmon People and the human peoples have millennia-old relationships with the place of their Creation, and they have lived together in reciprocal relationships of responsibility in these particular home locations and their seasonal moves from the beginning of time until settlers came long.

Traditionally, most Indigenous fishers are river fishers. Even for those nations living on salt water, fishers would fish in fresh water, as it was often safer and easier (and thus more efficient) to fish in places where the salmon were congregating in big numbers on their travels back up river (Newell 28, 32). When fishing for salmon in salt waters, fishers would choose places of calm water, "inshore channels and estuaries, bays, and inlets" where salmon grouped together before heading up the rivers; this type of fishing "involved tidal traps, harpoons, and

[17] "The City of Tacoma has 12 raw sewage outlets into the Puyallup River" (AFSC 162).

reef nets and trolling from canoes with hook and line" (Newell 33). On the rivers, a fish trap, weir, or net set up at the river mouth or further upstream (depending on which fishing sites they had access to) could catch a great number of mature fish passing through, without the effort or cost of fishing on open water. Closer to the mouth, more different kinds of salmon would still be running together; in smaller tributaries upstream, fewer fish would come through, but they would be easier to catch (Newell 32).

The more controlled fishing strategies on the river also made it possible to really see the amount of fish in the season's run, and thus help make decisions as to what number of fish needed to be allowed to continue its journey upriver to spawn (this is called "escapement"), per the obligations in their worldview (Indian Tribes 63). If the runs appeared small in numbers, fishers would limit their take (Turner 280). While traveling up river to spawn, the salmon usually do not eat. This means that a sports-fishermen-style hook and angler will not work for catching salmon at this matured stage of their lifecycle (Indian Tribes 63). Colonizer governments outlawing traditional fishing methods did so using conservation arguments that show they either did not know, or did not care to know, how the Indigenous fishing methods worked to support the thriving of the Salmon People, and thus "conserve" the "sustainability" (to use settler conservation terms) of the salmon runs.

Which sites fishers had access to would depend on who owned sites and how they were assigned. In the Coast Salish governing systems, Wayne Suttles (quintessential non-Native anthropologist focused on Coast Salish Peoples) explains, there were different levels of organized community (and thus of governing). The first level was that of a distinct family that lived together in their section of the "winter residences," i.e. long houses where different family units lived together. These wooden long houses would only be used during winter, the time for

resting and feasting; other times of the year the families and villages moved sites according to the seasonal cycle of which foods were available in which places, "respond[ing] to tidal cycles and reproductive cycles of fish and other sea life in their territories" (Newell 43). The winter house groups were also part of a village, as a group of long houses would usually be built together on a beach or riverbank. A tribe would often consist of more than one of those village groups, and would share a language, spiritual system, and customs around food gathering and sharing. As many families had ties across different tribes through intermarriage, there was also kin groups based on family-relation that would live spread out, but might co-own certain fishing locations, and who would come together at potlatches (Suttles 2).

Potlatches were not just parties, rather, they embodied the Coast Salish governing system. At these feasts, "oral traditions were recounted, basic traditions and values reinforced, rites of passage witnessed and celebrated, economic rights addressed, … disputes settled," and ownership of particular fishing site rights would be publicly transferred or passed down, so as to impede possible conflict over them and the resources they offered (Newell 42). The fish runs were managed in these potlatches, where decisions about allocations were made so as to avoid diminishing runs, and caught fish could also be redistributed to ensure the whole community was fed (Newell 42), or traded with visiting peoples (Newell 30). Potlatching evidences the shared worldview of relationships of obligation, to the Salmon People, and to their other human kin.

Individual fishers could own their own equipment and stages, but traditional leaders of the villages and extended families would direct the shared use, times, and allocations at shared sites like weirs (Newell 41). Salmon weirs, "essentially fence-like, openwork barricades with strong permanent foundations," were built in slower sections of rivers, and would guide fish into traps set up in the water, or towards places easily accessible to fishers standing on platforms that

were part of the weir (Newell 35). In this way, weirs were very efficient, they could stop all fish from passing it.[18] Thus, they would either be built to reach only partway across the river, or be used at maximum capacity only for short periods of time; during the downtime only the foundations (called "pilings") would be left in the river, to both mark the spot, and save labor next time (Newell 42). Dip netting could be done off of a platform on a weir, or from any platforms built on the riverbanks or protruding rocks that "overhung the eddies and backwaters where salmon rested and gathered their strength" (Newell 35). Weirs were often built and owned by entire villages, but smaller family groups would own their own drying stations and smokehouses at the shared site (Newell 41). Smaller effort fishing constructions such as dip-net stages or traps (sometimes part of the weirs, as described above) would be owned by individuals or families (Newell 41). This organizational structure for the Indigenous fishery had escapement (and thus sustainability) and redistribution of resources built into it. Unlike the settler-state-run fishery, the Indigenous approach to the salmon fishery assured everyone got what they needed, for subsistence or trade, for very many generations across millennia (Newell 45). Even just this introductory knowledge of the traditional Indigenous fishery belies the States' claims that it was the Indigenous fishers who were at fault for the diminishing salmon runs.

Evidence brought together in *Uncommon Controversy* shows how the State's reasoning of "conservation" to curtail Indigenous traditional fishing had no scientific support, either. It was the settler "development" of the land and the water that changed the environmental conditions for the fish (and all other human and non-human members of the ecosystem) to thrive or even survive: "dams, industry, logging operations, and dredging of stream channels, to name a few" (AFSC i). Yet somehow, the State has chosen again and again to blame Indigenous fishing rather

[18] Newell writes that they could result in the catch of "hundreds of salmon in a matter of minutes at the peak of the spawning runs" (35).

than regulate or curb the actual culprits (AFSC i).[19] Indigenous fishers worked to adapt to the colonizer-caused changes. When the dams were built, Indigenous fishers developed the technology needed to be able to fish successfully in the pools created by the dams, replacing traditional gill net technology with stronger man-made materials (Wilkinson 2005, 162). However, the state agencies responded by outlawing gillnetting above the Bonneville Dam—where Indigenous fishers would fish, but not below it—where the settler fishers would fish (Wilkinson 2005, 163).

Al Bridges (Nisqually) succinctly explains how, if "conservation" was really the state's main purpose or reason for wanting to stop Native fishing on the rivers, then really they should be stopping the commercial fisheries in the Puget Sound. As Bridges puts it: "One person in a boat out there in the Sound can take probably more fish in one day than our whole group here can take in one season" (Burns 12:17- 32).[20] The struggle over the fish, as they were becoming more and more scarce, turned into a "pattern of leapfrogging," where fishermen had to go further and further out into the ocean to catch fish, which were often still immature (Cohen et al 42). As a result, the treaty fishermen saw the number of fish that were able to complete their anadromous journeys steadily decline (Cohen et al 42). Not the Indigenous fishery, but the settler colonizer concern with "progress" and exploiting all resources to their maximum capacity, caused the steep decline in Salmon People.

We cannot properly understand the Fish Wars without thinking generationally; the importance of resistance to the state's bad faith arguments for conservation becomes much

[19] The differences between the worldviews, the Indigenous "sustainable" fishery and the colonizer fishery, is visible in the numbers: "It is estimated that some 50,000 Indians took 18,000,000 pounds of salmon annually from the Columbia River before the arrival of the non-Indian. In 1956 it was reported that the total harvest from the same river in an average year was only about 15,000,000 pounds of salmon—less than the Indians caught in prehistoric times." (AFSC 1)

[20] More on this in the section on Frank's Landing.

clearer when thinking generationally, or in the term I am arguing for, spiralically. Recent (2016) research on the water quality in the Puyallup River Estuary (on the Salish Sea/Puget Sound) shows evidence that Indigenous sovereignty directly correlates to a healthy natural environment; the data collected across generations shows how "local ecosystem health is entwined with local tribes' political and economic power" (Ballantine 62). To be able to see how this is true, one must think spiralically: beyond the current moment and experiences, back to many generations of ancestors who have taken care of the land and its complex ecosystems (or have wrecked it, as colonial settlement and "development" have done), and forward to the next generations, so that they can continue to live and thrive on these lands (Ballantine 63).

Ramona Bennett explained this to the youth at the Puyallup Chief Leschi school in 2009. Reminding them of the motivations for Chief Leschi's struggle and eventual ultimate sacrifice in the 1854-1856 Puget Sound War against the colonizers, Bennett said, Leschi "knew if he didn't stand for the Indian people, that the future generations were going to have nothing. And he knew that he loved us, without ever seeing our faces-he thought generationally, and that's how we have to think" (La Pointe-Gorman 2009, qtd. in Ballantine 63).[21] Through Chief Leschi's actions which attempted to secure the freedom of the future generations, the youth at Puyallup are not just connected to Leschi and their other ancestors, they are also connected to their future generations. They, too, carry responsibilities towards those younger than them, or those not yet born: "That's how we have to think, we have to leave something good for the ones coming after us, because we know we love them" (La Pointe-Gorman 2009, qtd. in Ballantine 63).

This generational thinking is an expression of a spiralic understanding of temporality; the emphasis is on the relationships across the generations, and on the lessons, obligations, and

[21] Leschi's 'X' signature appears on the Medicine Creek treaty, but he was adamant he did not sign. This resulted in a war, where Leschi was eventually hanged in a sham court procedure.

transformations the centering of these relationships in the worldview brings. It will be evident from the next section about Frank's Landing that this spiralic worldview informed their actions as well. Frank's Landing was the home site of Billy Frank Jr.'s family, key people in the Fish Wars. The land where the home site was built was government trust land given to Willie Frank, Billy Frank Jr.'s father, in exchange for Nisqually reservation land that was condemned for the building of Fort Lewis. Part of the issue in the fishing site of Frank's Landing is not only that the State was aggressively monitoring its off-reservation fishing restrictions (which went against treaty rights), but also, that "Billy Frank says that he was told the land would carry full reservation rights," while the State claims it does not, and the BIA claims "the only special privilege attached to it is tax exemption" (AFSC 118). In the following discussion of the direct actions on the Salish Sea organized from Frank's Landing, and in the final section, of the direct actions on the Columbia River led by David Sohappy Sr., it will become clear how all of the above is relevant on the ground. Applying a heuristic of spiralic temporality when considering the Fish Wars is key to grasping what was at the heart of the struggles: the continuation of sovereign Indigenous life, as Indigenous *peoples* (i.e. families, as we will see in the next chapter).

"You just do what you have to do to make sure your children and grandchildren will have a decent life": Treaty Fishing in the South Salish Sea

In order to continue their traditional ways of understanding and relating to the world, Indigenous people had to push back against settler encroachment on their rights and relations. Under the leadership of people like Ramona Bennett, Janet McCloud (Tulalip), Guy McMinds (Quinault), and Hank Adams (Assiniboine Sioux, grew up at Quinault), Salish Sea (Puget Sound) fishers

enacted a "sophisticated, multifaceted strategy" which included close relationships with the Quaker organization "American Friends Service Committee" (sponsors of *Uncommon Controversy*) (Wilkinson 2005, 169) and celebrities like Dick Gregory and Buffy Sainte Marie, as well as direct actions ranging from fish-ins to large protests at the state capitol in Olympia. Al Bridges (of Frank's Landing) called the struggle to continue their way of life as expressed in the fight for their treaty fishing rights, "the Indian's last stand" (Burns 13:29-36). In this section, I will focus on the fishing rights struggle as organized from Billy Frank's (Nisqually) home site "Frank's Landing" on the Nisqually River.

Janet McCloud describes how, in her worldview, humans are part of the set of relations of humans and non-humans and the land, and with that comes a responsibility to take care of these relations and as such of the Earth; natural disasters are the consequence of humans forsaking "the living laws about caring for the Earth" (Katz 282). McCloud, in this way, does not see her work for fishing rights as that of a "militant," rather, she sees it as part of her responsibility towards future generations. Keeping in mind her ancestors and her role as a future ancestor, McCloud explains her reasoning: "You just do what you have to do to make sure your children and grandchildren will have a decent life" (Katz 274). Hank Adams argues that in the case of the fishing rights struggle, Native nations involved need to be addressed as nations, in their "collective sovereign capacity" (Wilkins 27); the Native people fighting for their fishing rights are not "militant" radicals but rather families protecting their livelihoods and traditional way of seeing and belonging to the world. Adams emphasizes that Indigenous peoples can only fulfill their obligations to the fish, the waters, and to the "contract with our children, born and unborn, our own contract to their future," their obligations to "all our people for all time," as *peoples*, as nations –not as individuals (Wilkins 27). Securing fishing rights is securing a future

for the peoples; Indigenous fishers fighting this struggle for their treaty rights is a taking up of a responsibility which is created and informed by their traditional worldview and their spiralic understanding of time and generations, which is directly related to their sovereignty as peoples.

By understanding the Fish Wars as inspired by a spiralic worldview, illustrated in Woody's writing, we are able to better see the role women played in these struggles. Most of the written sources on the Fish Wars in the Pacific Northwest appear to focus on the central men, Billy Frank Jr., who later became the head of the newly created Northwest Indian Fishery Commission, and Hank Adams, who took on different roles in Washington, DC to advocate for Indigenous sovereignty, but they do not seem to center many of the women.[22] Yet, when we shift our understanding of the Fish Wars as direct actions to push for protections of the treaties in the settler courts, to understanding that the treaties in this fight were a stand-in for the Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the world, for Indigenous self-determination and continuation of life *as peoples*, we can see how the Fish Wars are a continuation of the ongoing story of Coast Salish life going back to when time began. When we consider not the benchmarks that mark linear "progress" in Indigenous rights under colonization, but instead the motivations and relations that went into the struggle to retain inherent rights to fish, we come to a fuller understanding of the Fish Wars. They were not merely a struggle over resources, but a struggle over sovereignty and the continuation of a way of life that allowed both human and non-human peoples to thrive. In this view, it is evident that Indigenous women most definitely were an essential part of the fishing rights struggle, and of continuing a healthy life for Indigenous families as that first level of the Indigenous nation.[23]

[22] "Adams, an Assiniboine-Sioux, was born on May 16, 1943, on the Fort Peck Reservation, in Poplar, Montana. Early in his youth, his family moved to the Quinault Reservation, in Washington State." (Wilkins 5)
[23] See also Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

Washington State was not interested in supporting continuity for the Indigenous nations. Janet McCloud tells of the October 9, 1965 attack on Native fishers on the Nisqually river by the State, for example, describing how "they beat up Indians and bashed their heads in" (Katz 278). In response to the violence, Nisqually fishers wrote to the State and invited the press to join them on a fishing excursion to show the State they would continue to exercise their rights despite the State's violence. McCloud describes the ensuing actions by the state as "frightening":

> We were on the river fishing in a little boat—my husband and me, our two sons, and two reporters. My mother was on the bank with the younger children and elders. And the state unleashed all this police power against us. High-powered boats, there must have been a hundred and fifty of them, came out of the bushes from every which way, and they just rammed our boat. (Katz 278)

From even just this one event, it is clear that, while to McCloud this was about her family fighting for continuing their ways, the State made no distinction between men, women, and children, and saw all Indigenous fishing as a dangerous revolt against the State requiring to be squashed. Continuing traditional Indigenous life was a violation of the settler colonial race to "progress," and as such the fish-in was violently interrupted, and the Indigenous fishing families enjoyed little protection under the law.

Hank Adams, in 1975, alleged none of his requests for investigating of "complaints of criminal violations against anyone associated with Franks Landing people" were ever followed up on, causing "a rather large grouping of Indian people" to not be able to access any recourse from "any protections of federal laws no matter what offenses might be committed against their

persons, properties, or rights" (*Akwesasne Notes* 39).[24][25] The people living at Frank's Landing on the Nisqually River were experienced as a big enough threat to the goings-on of Washington State that, according to Adams, the U.S. Attorney's office instigated rumors that "Franks Landing people are members of a "secret terrorist organization called 'The Red Hand'" and that they would be "responsible for the disappearance or death of a federal agent who had them under surveillance" (*Akwesasne Notes*, 39). The Bureau of Indian Affairs, while technically a federal agency which should protect treaty rights, assisted the Washington Game Department's attacks against traditional fisher families from the Nisqually, Puyallup, and Muckleshoot Tribes in 1964, by sharing "confidential agency information" about those families and people the State was compiling files on (*Akwesasne Notes*, 39). McCloud sees the State's focus on the Nisqually as deliberate; even though the State knew it was outside of legal bounds, it chose to target the Nisqually, "the most impoverished tribe, the most socially disorganized tribe" to stop their traditional fishing and to instead make room for more sportsmen fishing (Katz 278). Undermining the fishing meant undermining the tribe's ability to survive as a tribe; the State worked to interrupt this continuation of Indigenous life, in favor of settler colonizer success.

Al Bridges explains how his community "used to think we'd find justice in the courts, this was before we'd be arrested and we'd be taken to jail and we'd serve our time and then we'd come back out and we'd hide around and fish" (Burns 14:34). While continuing to exercise their rights to fish, they changed course in their approach to freeing themselves from State violence, and instead focused on getting the attention of the non-Native public. Realizing that they were

[24] One example of this Adams experienced first hand: when he was shot by two white men while protecting a friend's river fishing net, police officers doubted his version of the events, and pursued no consequence (Wilkins 9).
[25] Adams was at that time a member of a U.S. Senate Indian Policy Review Commission Task Force (*Akwesasne Notes* 39)

wrong to think they could just appeal to Christians' righteous indignation for the mistreatment of Native people(s) when they found out "all these people beating us, and the judges, were deacons in their churches, they were pillars of their communities" (Katz 279), the Nisqually moved to convince the non-Native public through public actions rather than legal actions (which often remained invisible to the larger public), inviting the press to fishing excursions (i.e. fish-ins) and bringing in celebrities to stand with them (Burns 14:16-59, Katz 278). Bennett lists many non-Indigenous groups that also worked to support the Indigenous fishers, like "the Jewish Anti-Defamation League, urban league, the united churches from Seattle and Tacoma … the socialist workers party radical women," making clear they were all part of the effort (Bennett 04:04-40).

However, as the mainstream press strongly favored settler commercial fishing and misrepresented the issue around fishing as if conservation of the salmon and steelhead resources were all dependent on stopping Indigenous traditional fishing (the line Washington State and settler fishers were towing), this resulted in difficulties in convincing the non-Native public of the Native fisher's righteousness (AFSC 191). So, the Survival of American Indians Association (SAIA, the main organization of Salish Sea traditional fishers at this time) filmed and created a documentary on the fishing rights struggle, *As Long as The Rivers Run*. Published in 1971, the documentary was "filmed between Autumn 1968 and Winter 1970" (Burns 00:36). Made by Makah filmmaker Carol Burns, the script was supervised by Hank Adams.[26] In it, the central role of the women in the struggle and in the families is made visible, as is the unnecessary violence against Native fishermen and women, and the solidarity that strengthened the movement in its

[26] During the title rolls, we see footage of Al Bridges and others fishing. Made by Carol Burns ("camera - script - editing," Burns 57:39), the film was produced by the Survival of American Indians Assocation (Burns 57:08), in cooperation with the Puyallup Tribal Council (Burns 57:13), the Muckleshoot Tribal Council (Burns 57:15), United Indians of All Tribes Alcatraz (Burns 57:21), United Indians of All Tribes Seattle (Burns 57:24), "and many other Indian people" (Burns 57:28). Hank Adams served as "program content advisor" (Burns 57:55), the voice-over was done by Semu Huaute (Burns 58:01).

ability to pressure the courts to rule in their favor.

Focused on Frank's Landing, the central location where the Fish Wars played out in the South Salish Sea, the film places the more well-known activist Billy Frank Jr. within the larger set of his relations at the Frank home site on the Nisqually River. Billy Frank Jr.'s father Willie was first arrested for illegal fishing in 1934; the harassment by the State and by non-Native fishermen would continue until it blew up in full force in January 1962 with a Washington State attack on treaty fishers fishing for the winter run of chum salmon (Wilkinson 2000, 34). Dedicated to Valerie Bridges (1950-1970), the daughter of Al and Maiselle Bridges (and thus Billy Frank Jr.'s niece), who passed unexpectedly while swimming in the river, *As Long as The Rivers Run* shows the central role the women of Frank's Landing played in the Fish Wars.[27] The Fish Wars were not just about Billy Frank Jr. and Hank Adams, however crucial of roles they took on, the Fish Wars were about protecting and continuing life as Indigenous peoples, as Indigenous families.

As Long as The Rivers Run first explains the status of the Frank's Landing: the land on the Nisqually river front was given to Bill Frank Sr., held in federal trust, to make up for the land he lost by the condemnation of the Nisqually reservation on the east side of the Nisqually River for the building of Fort Lewis in 1917 (AFSC 61-62). This created an opening for contestation of Nisqually jurisdiction on the land. Because it was offered in exchange for reservation land and also holds federal trust status, as reservation land does, the Franks consider it to be under Nisqually jurisdiction (AFSC 62). However, Washington State uses this contested status to battle

[27] When Valerie Bridges drowns unexpectedly, and without suspicion of any malintent, the loss is great. Dozens of people from all over attend her funeral, people who had met her in the struggle, from Alcatraz Island to people from "all over the West" who had been involved in the fishing rights struggle (Burns 46:40-58). "They vowed to continue in the struggle to which Valerie had given all of her short life" (Burns 47:14-18).

Nisqually expression of their legal rights and to enforce State law, in defiance of the treaties. The people living at Frank's Landing are all members of the same extended family: Bill (or Willie) Frank Sr., who the land was named after, and his wife Angeline, as well as Billy Frank Jr. and his wife Norma and their children Sugar and Maureen. In another house on the property, there is Maiselle Bridges (Bill Frank Sr.'s daughter) and Al Bridges, who have three daughters, Alison, Valerie, and Suzette. Suzette is the oldest daughter, she eventually lives with her husband she met in the struggle, Sid Mills, and their baby, also at Frank's Landing.[28] Also living at the site is Curly, "another of Bill Frank's grandchildren" (Burns 05:04). After this introduction to the setting of the documentary, which focuses on the involvement of the people of Frank's Landing in the Fish Wars, the first thing we learn is that the young women Valerie and Alison played an essential role in the Fish Wars.

It is clear from the SAIA doc's first minutes that the women of Frank's Landing were as central to the fishing struggle as the men whose names we've come to know. By minute 11 of the documentary, we are shown footage of Al Bridges and Billy Frank Jr. having to "once again … bail a daughter out of jail" (Burns 10:39-11:35); this minute of footage shows us how Valerie is barefoot as she is being signed out of jail, and we also see a number of young children playing on the steps of the building as they wait for Al and Billy to come out with Valerie. The Fish Wars were not a struggle of Indigenous men alone, they were about Indigenous families fighting to continue their way of life, fighting to continue being Indigenous, in the defiance of the

[28] Sid Mills, a Yakama soldier stationed at Fort Lewis, participated in the 1968 actions which brought larger crowds in to support the Franks and the SAIA. We learn that of all people who came, Sid was the only one who stayed: he married Suzette Bridges (Burns 21:38). To transition us to this focus on Sid, we are brought to Suzette; the film shows her shouting through a megaphone at a protest: "and I keep trying to explain to these people, we're never never never going to be like them!" (Burns 21:01-08), and decrying the "genocide on my people" (Burns 21:21-24). In this way, the film makes sure to be clear about the fact that Sid Mills presence is thanks to Suzette, who was also already deeply involved in the struggle.

continuing efforts of the settler colonizers to "kill the Indian and save the man."[29] While the Fish Wars might be remembered by main cases such as the Boldt Decision, we can better understand what was really at stake when we consider this time as part of a spiralic continuation of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Fishing at Frank's Landing is a continuation of the millennia-old cultural tenets that make Nisqually, Nisqually. The voice-over explains how, every fall, they set their nets for fish, "like all their ancestors" (Burns 05:35); some of the harvest is kept for themselves, some is sold, "even as their ancestors did when they traded dried salmon for articles of the interior" (Burns 05:40-45). However, an important divergence in the situation is noted, when the narrator explains, "One thing is different than it used to be, now when they set their nets in the evening, the game wardens watch from the other side of the river" (Burns 06:00-05). We see footage of the game wardens on the water during night fall, while Al Bridges and Sid Mills are trying to fish. We can hear the wardens shout through their speakers that "you have no jurisdiction on this property. There is no court to tell that you have jurisdiction on this property" (Burns 06:40). In defiance of treaty law, the game wardens are there to effect State law. Then, the film cuts to Valerie Bridges, who in an interview confirms that Al and Sid were arrested that night (Burns 06:54). She goes on to explain what to her was the only logical consequence, "so the following day, to let them know that weren't gonna quit fishing, Alison and I, my youngest sister, set the net up there at the [unintelligible], about a mile, mile and a half from here [Frank's Landing], up river" (Burns 06:57-07:08). Regardless of settler recognition of their inherent rights, even though these rights were reserved in their treaty, Nisqually fisher people were going to continue what they had always done, as was their cultural obligation (and necessity for subsistence and trade). Fishing

[29] Carlisle's infamous phrase for explaining the purpose of the residential schools.

families were fighting to continue their lives, so even though the men were jailed, the women continued.

Referencing the section in the 1854 Medicine Creek treaty which guarantees the signees the right to fish in their "usual and accustomed places" (quoted at the top of the previous section), the narrator goes on to explain Valerie learned to fish from her grandfather at a young age, as appropriate for Nisqually continuity. The film brings us back to Valerie retelling the night she and Alison were arrested, and she tells us what's really at stake here, namely, their treaty rights:

> We set the net, waiting for the state. We just gotta let them know that we're not gonna quit fishing. We have this fishing right, it's the treaty supreme law of the land under their constitution, and we're not gonna give up our fishing rights. There are treaties throughout the United States being broken, that's really what it is, the treaty we're fighting for, treaties throughout the United States. (Burns 08:04-29)

Valerie clearly sees the connections between her ability to practice her nation's traditional fishing, her nation's sovereignty, and U.S. settler colonizers' attempts to undo Indigenous nations through undoing their access to their inherent rights, which make them who they are as peoples and nations. Later in the documentary, Maiselle Bridges explains how she and others felt a need to organize themselves and started the "Survival of American Indians Association," because they were tired of being moved around. She names the defense of treaty rights as the SAIA's main purpose, and explains how since starting the SAIA in 1964, "the fight has been building up and gradually it's really, you know, taken up our full time" (Burns 15:42 - 16:16). Knowing that their fishing rights were deeply tied to who they are as peoples, Nisqually women as much as the men dedicated their lives to the struggle.

A spiralic understanding of temporality and intergenerational relationships allows us to understand the relays between the roles the women played in their families and in the struggle to protect them, and the state's repression of off-reservation fishing. Valerie Bridges explains the fishing struggle had taken up the women's full time, saying "We resisted when they did try to take our nets because it is our property, and [we're] not only protecting our property but ourselves, 'cause, we too have been clubbed, night raids, tear gassed, and, we're getting sick and tired of it" (Burns 08:30-44). Janet McCloud's newspaper *Survival News*, made on a repaired mimeograph and self-published, describes one of such instances where the game wardens attacked the people fishing:

> "The children were hurt and scared, trying to get free. I grabbed the warden's arm and said, 'Let go of them. You're hurting them' A game or fish warden grabbed both my arms from behind—sticking their knee in my back . . . Wardens were everywhere and they all seemed to be eight feet tall—they were shoving, kicking, pushing clubs at men, women and children. We were vastly outnumbered yet we were all trying to protect one another. . ." (qtd. in Katz 279)

Fishing was about continuing life as Indigenous peoples, within the struggle families were still at the center. All generations were part of this fight for their right to fish, to continue their obligation to their ancestors and future generations. Fighting to continue exercising the right to fish was an example of community care, of taking up responsibility in their relations to other generations. Maiselle explains how her daughters essentially grew up in the fishing struggle (Burns 10:12-18), as her youngest daughter, now 19, "was 2.5 years old … the first time her dad

was arrested and did 30 days in jail" (Burns 09:17). As fishing was a central part to the Coast Salish way of life, so was the struggle to protect it.[30]

After the more dramatically publicized actions of 1968, including fishing actions on the water right by the Capitol in Olympia in order to draw attention to the issue, many of the fishers were in jail. We see footage of one of those actions where the police (in boats) drag away the fishers' net (Burns 19:18); in this particular case, we see Billy Frank Jr. and Hank Adams getting roughed up by the police officers arresting them (Burns 19:49-20:15). The voice-over tells us how by 1969, with most of the men and some of the women in jail or tied up in one of the "dozens of cases still in court" (Burns 21:48), "the Survival of American Indians Association was broken" (Burns 21:49-53). Norma Frank and Maiselle Bridges were left to fish by themselves when "Al, Sid, and Valerie were all in jail" (Burns 21:58 - 22:02), and "Suzette had just had a baby" (Burns 22:03-05). We see footage of Norma and Maiselle in their little boat setting out their net (Burns 22:08-10), and then immediately also a big group of game wardens on the opposite bank of the river. Two of them get in a boat to harass Norma and Maiselle, and we see them take their net (Burns 22:32), first dragging the boat with the women in it (Burns 22:35) and eventually dragging Maiselle and Norma, who are still holding on to the net, onto the river bank (Burns 23:17-23). During the back and forth, we hear Maiselle explain to one of the officers that it is their treaty right to fish (Burns 22:58); talking back to the officer's claims that what they are doing is illegal, she instead points out that he is the one "encroaching on [their] land" (Burns 23:06). Both Norma and Maiselle are arrested (Burns 23:28). No matter the times

[30] The fishing struggles did not only have a consequence on the people in terms of losing family members to jail for periods of time. Thousands of dollars went to bail payments, and when there was no fish, there was no food. McCloud explains how sometimes she and her husband would both get arrested, and sometimes when he was jailed and she was not, she and the women would fish instead (Katz 279). Because this fishing was always "in defiance of the state" (Katz 279), financial consequences involved the McClouds going periods of time without proper sustenance and almost losing their house (Katz 279).

people were clubbed, arrested, jailed, Nisqually fishers were going to fish, as that is an essential part of what made them Nisqually. As we saw above, salmon are a keystone species in the Coast Salish worldview; understanding the spiralic temporality the Frank's Landing bunch saw themselves a part of shows how continuing to fish despite settler oppression was essentially inevitable.

Fishing is central to the Coast Salish peoples ways of life and of their governing practices, and thus their sovereignty. The people of Frank's Landing were fighting for their fishing rights as an expression of their sovereignty, cultural and political. As discussed above, fishing for subsistence and trade is part of a cultural and spiritual governing system, which also involves cultural songs and dances, and a particular relationship to their lands. Accordingly, we see the Frank's Landing people involved, in addition to the fishing rights struggle, in cultural revitalization in the form of drum and dance groups, as well as struggles to take land back. For example, SAIA show both dancing and the taking back of land as interconnected. We see that Alison Bridges co-organizes a weekly cultural practice where folks from all ages practice traditional songs and dances in Tacoma (Burns 36:50-38:43). This cultural resurgence is connected with being stronger as a people, and living all of the traditional values, beyond dancing and crafting, including looking out for each other, and standing up for each other (Burns 38:44). The film then moves to the occupation of Fort Lawton, but continues to show footage of the dancing, because the footage of the first action at Fort Lawton was destroyed by police.

Inspired by their visit to the occupation of Alcatraz, Coast Salish people joined in the struggle to turn the abandoned Fort Lawton in Seattle into a set of facilities for urban Native people in the Seattle area, who suffered a complete lack of adequate housing and other services

(Burns 41:18).[31] This too turned into an occupation (Burns 41:33). While the voice-over tells us about the occupation, we see more footage of the traditional gatherings Alison Bridges helps organize, as a first attempt to take over Fort Lawton was violently stopped by the army. There is no video footage of the events, but we are told by a voice-over that the film equipment and tape was destroyed by the officers, and many people beat up, even after they were already locked up in their cells [the doc states 64 people were arrested, including a 3-year old child], "people tried to tell their stories, but the army denied everything" (Burns 41:33-42:06). Then we do see footage of a second attempt, when a group of a few dozen people entered the Fort together by climbing from the cliff site; we hear them say that one of the officers told them that they should clear out, as he has "35,000 soldiers at his disposal" and is willing to call them if he felt it was needed (Burns 43:55). This attempt also ended in people fleeing back down the trail on the side of the cliff, or waiting peacefully to get arrested. The documentary notes "young Sugar Frank," one of Billy Frank Jr.'s children living at Frank's Landing, was arrested for the first time that day, while the Frank's Landing family knew it would likely not be the last (Burns 44:37), as they saw "more and more people coming together, in victory and defeat, they were united" (Burns 44:43-48). When we see the Fish Wars as a struggle over competing worldviews, competing ways to organize and interact with the world and all our relations, we can see how all these topics are connected: traditional dancing, taking land back, and exercising fishing rights are all part of the same work to continue Indigenous life as it has been lived in these places for millennia, be it adapted to and transformed by the changing contexts.

[31] John Vigil, he had been to Frank's Landing to help the Nisqually fight for their right to fish, he was one of the first at Alcatraz and he gave the folks who came from Frank's Landing a tour (Burns 24:44). They represented their people at Alcatraz. Thanks to the media attention for to Alcatraz occupation, more non-Native public attention was going to Indian Country (Burns 27:55), which also helped the fishing rights cause.

In September 1970, the people from Frank's Landing, including some activists from other places who decided to stick around to help out (Burns 48:48), joined in with a "united stand" of Indigenous fishers for their rights to fish in the Coast Salish area (Burns 48:50). This time they came together on a tiny piece of land in the city of Tacoma, "between the railroad tracks and the sewage treatment plant" (Burns 49:00-08), which the Puyallup tribal council had discovered was still reservation land.[32] There, they set up camp, and announced they were going to protect their fishing with "armed guards" (Burns 49:13-16). Sid Mills, who moved into the Puyallup camp with Suzette and their baby, explains that the camp was set up because Native people were being beat up and arrested by the settler police for fishing or even just for existing (Burns 49:56-50:06). Native people realized that no one was going to help them out and stand with them (Suzette Mills, Burns 49:26-35), and the only solution was to "stand together as one" and be sovereign from the U.S. (Burns 49:46-55); the camp on the Puyallup was one attempt at creating such a space, protected from anti-Indigenous violence by their own armed guards (Burns 50:06-24). However, despite its location on Puyallup reservation land, the camp was attacked by settler police, and many arrests were made (Burns 50:25-53:35). The State continued to defy treaty law in order to protect its own bottom line.

By the end of 1970, the State was starting to allow Indigenous net fishing during specific periods of time (Burns 54:18-36), but that inspired a new challenge to Indigenous fishing and survival: buyers dropped the price of fish to 10 cents a pound (Burns 54:37-41). As a result, Indigenous people had to organize again, to force higher prices, and ensure fishers' livelihoods (Burns 54:42-45). At Frank's Landing, people who had just been released from jail because of their involvement at Alcatraz or around the Puget sound, came together to clean and process fish,

[32] The Puyallup has a complex history of checkerboarding of their land due to federal policies like the Dawes Act and the continued growth of the city of Tacoma, which confuses jurisdiction.

which the Frank's Landing folks were buying at 40 cents a pound and selling and shipping to faraway places like New York City for up to $1 a pound (Burns 54:46-55:05). Suzette Mills explains how in this way, they were able to "eliminate the middle man," and offer livable prices for the fish (Burns 56:04-17). No matter how the settlers tried to get them to stop their ways, Indigenous fishing families continued to take care of each other and their peoples.

Concluding the documentary with a reference to cultural continuity, we are reminded that Native peoples on the Salish Sea/Puget Sound have always fished and will always continue to fish, in whichever way possible, be it transformed by the new eras. Suzette Mills emphasizes that they will always keep fishing, like they "have in the past centuries" (Burns 56:25-29), and like her son will continue to do when he grows old enough to fish (Burns 56:36-42). Mills states clearly how Native peoples will keep on fighting for their traditional fishing, "for as long as it takes" (Burns 56:43-47), before the film ends with an image of the elders Bill (Willie) Frank Sr. and Norma with their grandchild (Burns 57:03-07). This image once again affirms that the fishing struggle is a struggle for protecting Indigenous life, Indigenous families, to continue their life as Indigenous peoples. The struggle on the Salish Sea/South Sound was closely related to the struggle on the Columbia River, and the different court wins and losses affected both areas. Yet, at the same time, due to the different nations involved and differing local histories, the struggle on the Columbia River took a different approach.

In the next section, I will discuss the Sohappy family's defiance of settler colonizer law, in favor of their own laws and obligations as sanctioned by Waasat, or the Seven Drums Religion. While the Frank's Landing family was involved in political organizing around the fishing rights issue, including publicized fish-ins and celebrity-supported demonstrations at the Capitol in Olympia, David Sohappy's family was mostly deeply involved in traditional spiritual

life, approaching the fishing rights issue from somewhat of a different angle. Sohappy Sr. was a traditional Waasat leader fighting to continue exercising his assigned spiritual obligations, in order to secure the seasonal returns of the Salmon People and thus the future of his people. I close with this discussion to showcase the obvious limitations (if not violence) in the settler state's blatant disinterest and disregard for the spiritual motivation in the fishing struggle in favor of their own focus on "progress" and an American future which was always already foreclosed to Indigenous peoples. I tell the Sohappys story here to emphasize the importance of a heuristic of spiralic temporality in grasping what was at stake in the Fish Wars, i.e. an Indigenous sovereignty that was not dependent on a recognized tribal council but on the continued exercise of millennia-old obligations and traditions.

"I know the white man says I'm breaking his laws, but what about my laws?": Treaty Fishing on the Columbia River

At the same time as the fishing struggle was heating up on the Salish Sea/Puget Sound, treaty tribe fishermen on the Columbia River ("the Big River" or "Chi Wana" in Sahaptin [River People 00:19:30]) were taking action against the repeated violence from State officials on their fishing.[33] Although the Yakamas initially declined to join in with the fishing struggle, a 1965 raid resulting in the arrest of "more than a dozen elderly Yakimas peacefully going about their business—as they had all their lives—in time-honored fishing locations along the river" caused them to join in.[34] In 1966, a group of Yakama fishermen even made a "citizen's arrest, at gun

[33] The time references for the film here reference the time stamps in the script, rather than the film. As such the references are perhaps less precise than the ones directly related to the films above, but easily reference the script available at video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/river-people-behind-the-case-of-david-sohappy [04-20-2020]

[34]The Yakama changed the spelling from Yakima in favor of "Yakama," an older traditional use. I use "Yakama," unless when quoting sources who spell it as "Yakima."

point, of a Washington state officer who they contended was trespassing on their federally reserved fishing site" (AFSC 112). Then in 1968 came the arrest of David Sohappy Sr. for fishing on the Columbia River, which resulted in *Sohappy v. Smith*; this case resulted in a win for the Columbia River fishery, as it concluded that the State now had to prove their concerns about conservation with the proper evidence before acting on treaty fishermen (River People 00:29:30-00:30:10).

The Columbia River, for thousands of years the home of plentiful runs of salmon so densely populated that people "could practically walk on them" (River People 00:22:30), was an important site of struggle exactly because it was where the fish runs started and ended (River People 00:32:30). Once the settlers started developing their Ocean fisheries, they depleted the mature fish able to return to the Columbia River, as they "were catching roughly 80% of all the salmon destined for the Columbia River" (River People 00:33:15). Thomas Keefe, Jr., defense attorney for Sohappy Sr. and Jr. in their later 1982 "Salmon Scam" case, summarizes how of "at least a hundred major causes of declines of the salmon runs on the Columbia River," "David Sohappy and Indian fishing would not make that list of the top 100" (River People 00:25:25). The State's "conservation" argument was a sham; their true purpose was stopping Indigenous people from accessing a diminishing resource settlers wanted to keep for themselves.

Despite the importance of fishing on the Columbia River to the Yakama people, the Yakama reservation, created by Isaac Stevens in the 1855 Yakama Nation Treaty, did not just not border on the river, it was 50 miles away from it. When the reservation was designated, no attention was paid to the Yakama's traditions and livelihoods. The Yakama Nation conceded to "giving up nine million acres of their land" but reserved for themselves the right to fish in their usual and accustomed grounds and stations (River People 00:18:05). Yet, many Yakama people

stayed trapped on the reservation, and in many families the fishing tradition started to fade (River People 00:18:45). However, from the time when "as many as 50,000 people" built their lives on the edge of the river, the Columbia River was a central part of the Yakama worldview and daily life (River People 00:19:30). The Columbia River continued to be that "sacred place" for those Yakamas living traditionally, who called themselves "River People" (River People 00:01:50, 00:18:45). David Sohappy Sr. explains the relationship between the Yakama and the salmon as a sacred relationship, where the salmon "has to be worshipped" as it will not return to those people who do not worship it (River People 00:03:15). This Sohappy Sr. learned from his elders, says Johnny Jackson; Sohappy Sr. was raised with the Waasat or Seven Drums religion and taught to always "respect the land, to respect the water, to respect the river, to respect the food" (River People 00:06:15). His grandparents had not allowed him to attend school past the fourth grade, as they were adamant he would be raised in the traditional ways, and not be brainwashed into the settler progress narrative (River People 00:08:20).

Thanks to the traditional way he was raised, David Sohappy Sr. became a spiritual leader of the River People. The great-nephew of Waasat prophet Smohalla, Sohappy was committed to living his obligations. Smohalla believed "all wisdom comes in dreams," and he told of a dream of a future where the earth was destroyed; he warned them "that they must always remain along the river and continue fishing, because only those who follow the old ways would survive" (River People 00:11:25). This spiritual conviction and commitment to the traditional ways informed the Sohappy family's actions on the river. These teachings motivating Yakama fishing center conservation in the way that they require honoring the fish and being in good relation with the fish (for example, through First Salmon Ceremonies, discussed above and shown in the film) and with the environment both human and non-human nations live in, in order to ensure

continued abundance. As such, the State's suggestion that the Sohappys are acting out of greed is evidence of the settler State's campaign to erase and replace Indigenous peoples, rather than of a real concern about the environment.

Surviving on the salmon harvest (both for subsistence and to sell for income) became harder and harder each time a new dam was built to help the colonizer nation's "progress." The *River People* documentary includes a clip of a federal advertisement for the dams, which claims the settlers "tamed" the river: the dams "uncover[ed] a treasure trove of idle resources," and turned the river into "a seaway to an empire," the ad proudly proclaims (River People 00:20:35). Offering "Power for millions of Americans who look westward hopefully, for land and jobs, for security and happiness," the dams are said "to make the American dream come true" (River People 00:20:35). Dams indeed did further the "American Dream" in two ways: they helped (and continue to help) disappear Indigenous peoples by disappearing their foods, lands, and relationships to the land and all its relations, while providing energy for further settler developments which also continue to move or even disappear Indigenous peoples. The dams made it difficult for the anadromous fish to find their way to their homes again, and deterioration of the Columbia River water quality and temperature made that fish had to change their age-old habits and spawn in new places (River People 00:34:45). If the fish were not completely blocked by the dams, they were at the very least much delayed. This delay could cause destructive delays in the strict schedule anadromous fish must hold to most successfully propagate the species (AFSC 158). Despite their outward focus on "conservation," state agencies were well aware of the true causes of the disruption of the salmon runs.

That dams destroyed fish habitats was known early on: a 1958 Department of Fisheries "Working Draft" report already stated that, due to the many dams' flooding of 75% of spawning

areas,

> Not more than six or eight important salmon areas remain accessible to salmon throughout the entire river system, where formerly hundreds of miles of gravel bars provided nesting grounds for spawning salmon and steelhead. (Moore et al *Fisheries* (1958) p 121-122 qtd. in AFSC 167)

The report goes as far as to state that any new dams "would completely destroy the natural salmon and steelhead production areas in the main portion of the Columbia River and its tributaries" (Moore et al *Fisheries* (1958) p 121-122 qtd. in AFSC 167). However, treaty tribe fishermen were blamed for the lack of returning fish; the Sohappys were investigated by the Fisheries Department for supposedly being responsible for the theft of 40,000 fish who were missing from their usual spawning areas above the Bonneville Dam (River People 00:15:25, 00:34:25), even though they were found with much less (Sr. was caught with 317 fish, Jr. 28). Early morning June 17th, 1982, a flashy and aggressive raid on the Sohappys home site on Cook's Landing, involving "13 carloads of heavily armed federal and state law enforcement officials, complete with air support," was justified with a press release claiming Sohappy Sr. was a "ring leader" of Indigenous people stealing fish (River People 00:15:25, 00:01:10).[35] Even though scientific evidence later showed that the high fluoride content of the river water, a consequence of the aluminum mills on the river, was the cause for the fish spawning in new locations, the Sohappys were still tried and convicted to five years in prison in what was called the "Salmon Scam" case (River People 00:34:45). The research done by the writers of *Uncommon Controversy* (published in 1967) of the Department of Fisheries' own publications, however, show that environmental degradation should be centrally considered as a cause for salmon loss; they write: "The salmon will disappear even if all fishing is stopped unless the

[35] They "burst into the Sohappys' house with guns drawn, searched the place, held children, locked them in a trailer for several hours" (River People 00:15:25).

environmental changes which are proceeding apace are modified" (AFSC 170). Rather than punishing the aluminum mills who had caused the pollution, Indigenous fishers were put on trial as "poachers" and incarcerated. The knowledge that Indigenous peoples were not the cause for the salmon depletion, did not seemingly affect the State's harassment of Indigenous fishers.

Phil Stanford, a journalist investigating the 1982 Sohappy "Salmon Scam" case, recognizes the outsized punishment for the so-called "Salmon Scam" operation as racist, pointing out "five years for 317 fish and five years for 28 fish, come on. It happened to Sohappy, because he is inconvenient and because he is an Indian" (River People 00:35:25). Showing little to no knowledge of the history of the land and the content of the treaties, Stephen Schroeder, Federal Prosecutor in the 1982 case against David Sohappy Sr. and Jr., argues that the Sohappy's views are "extreme" (River People 00:06:55). Evidencing he also does not know much about the Yakama, Schroeder also speaks patronizingly of the Seven Drums religion, suggesting it is "convenient" in the way it supports (even though it rather *informs*) the Sohappy Columbia River fishing (River People 00:14:45). Schroeder states that "[settler] society [can't] really tolerate" this view the Yakama fishermen have that they can "fish whenever and wherever" they choose (River People 00:06:55). Attorney Thomas Keefe Jr. of the defense, however, knows how central fishing is to the traditional Yakama or "River People" life and explains how David Sohappy Sr. "is doing exactly what he was taught by his father and by his grandfather, and as they were taught by their grandfathers" (River People 00:07:30). Keefe, here, is explaining the Yakama experience of time, where previous and future generations are always part of the present equation, while Schroeder's view evidences the Eurowestern colonizer temporal experience where everything is cast in terms of "progress," no matter how many lives (human and non-human) are destroyed along the way.

From these statements, it is clear Keefe understands the Sohappys were merely fighting to continue their way of life. Keefe adds, while the documentary shows images of the Sohappy's home, that anyone who's visited the humble shack can see that the Sohappy family "are not greedy people" (River People 00:08:00), despite how the State tried to present them. Myra Sohappy, Yakama fisherwoman and David Sohappy Sr.'s wife, questions this Eurowestern obsession with progress, she asks,

> "Progress, I mean, the way of progress. They just take, take, take, they never stop until it's all gone then they move to another country, take, take, take until all their resource is gone, then where will they go?" (River People 00:46:10).

Schroeder embodies this destructive settler focus on "progress," when he explains his view that the Sohappys should give up their treaty rights and their home on the river. He considers that "it would be nice if the Indian peoples could fish whenever they wanted to and wherever they wanted to," but explains that it is just the consequences of "progress" that "one of the burdens of modern life is that there's not enough for anything to go around anymore" (River People 00:24:55). Myra Sohappy disagrees with Schroeder's conviction that progress means inevitable depletion of natural resources (and thus of Indigenous peoples as peoples), and that Indigenous people should get with the program. She explains in an interview that she is "just waiting for David to be free" (River People 00:04:40), as she knows that fishing to provide for his relations is continuing an age old, and essential Yakama practice: "We have the right to sell the fish. We don't have jobs, sit behind a typewriter and sit on the boss' lap. No, we have to go out and fish. That's our life. It will always be our life" (Myra Sohappy, River People 00:04:40). Rather

than choosing "modernity" and its burdens, the Sohappys choose to continue Yakama traditional life despite settler violence.

The 1855 Yakama Nation Treaty reserved this inherent right to fishing in its Article III, which is almost identical to the other Pacific Northwest treaties articles on fishing rights (i.e. the Nisqually's Medicine Creek Treaty Article III quoted above):

> The exclusive right of taking fish in all the streams, where running through or bordering said reservation, is further secured to said confederated tribes and bands of Indians, as also the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places, in common with the citizens of the Territory, and of erecting temporary buildings for curing them; together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed land.

The treaty guaranteed the fishing site of Celilo Falls, one of the largest Indigenous fishing sites on the continent ("Some 2,000 fishers from the Umatilla and Warm Springs tribes of Oregon, the Yakama of Washington, and the Nez Perce of Idaho depended on Celilo's bounty" [Wilkinson 2005, 160]), into perpetuity. However, the Dalles Dam (built 1952-1957) flooded and completely disappeared Celilo (Lavender 428-429).[36] Although the fishing at Celilo "accounted for three-quarters of all the salmon taken above the Bonneville Dam," this loss was never compensated (Lavender 428-429). While many fishers had to give in, and adjusted to reservation life (away from the river) as best as possible, the Sohappys remained committed to their spiritual way of life, which included the obligation to fish, per Smohalla's instructions.

[36] Wilkinson explains how deep the anti-Indigenous feelings ran in settlers in the area, 'The tribal councils objected to the proposed The Dalles Dam, to no avail. Oregon and Washington fisheries also opposed The Dalles Dam, but as a gauge of the anger and misconceptions of the era, state officials gave the Army Corps of Engineers ammunition that flooding Celilo and eliminating Indian fishing (just 1 or 2 percent of the Columbia River harvest) would be a "direct and outstanding contribution to conservation."' (Wilkinson 2005, 160-161)

In order to be able to live the traditional fishing life, the Sohappy family lived off-reservation, on Cook's Landing. In the 1940's, David Sohappy, Sr.'s grandparents had been moved from their original home site to the reservation, as the land was condemned by the federal government for the building of the Hanford Nuclear Reactor (River People 00:26:05). The Yakama who had to move were promised new homes, which Yakama elder Johnny Jackson says were never built (River People 00:27:15). All that was provided were small parks where Yakama fishers could set up temporary camps, while they were assumed to live full-time on the reservation (River People 00:27:15). Cook's Landing was built by the government after the dams flooded much of the land where the River People lived (River People 00:28:00). Despite Bureau of Indian Affair regulations allowing only temporary camps, starting in the 1960's the Sohappy family built their full lives on Cook's Landing (River People 00:16:10). This recommitment to life on the river was part of the strategy to fight for the affirmation of treaty fishing rights (River People 00:28:00). Myra Sohappy makes clear her commitment to Yakama traditional life and to her land: "I live here. No government is going to shove me off. If anybody is going to do away with me, it's going to be nature, the creator" (River People 00:17:35). Choosing not to give in to colonizer pressure, Myra Sohappy was committed to living on her traditional land, practicing her traditional ways, in order to ensure the health and happiness of future generations, and impede the destruction Smohalla prophesied.

That the Sohappys were breaking settler law did not bother them, as they were following Yakama traditional law. Myra Sohappy questions the relevance and importance of settler law to her Yakama life,

> I know the white man says, I'm breaking his laws, but what about my laws? The laws we got, unwritten laws. Our laws come from the creator. That's the way we got to live. Is it a crime to try to survive and eat in this country? (River People 00:10:15)

Her son, David Sohappy, Jr., agrees it is worth breaking settler laws, because through going to court and to prison, they can pressure the government to recognize treaty law (which reserves their inherent rights to fish), and the fishing struggle can end (River People 00:04:00). Referring to the long history of the Yakama people's role in the Columbia River ecosystem, he ridicules the federal government's power to question the Sohappys' presence on Cook's Landing, asking, "Who are they to call anybody a squatter?" (River People 00:04:00). While the colonizer agencies try to control and end Indigenous fishing, the Sohappys know they are continuing millennia-old cycles of reciprocal relationships with the Salmon People. As much as the settler government's obsession with "progress" works to interrupt the cycles of traditional Columbia River life of both human and non-human peoples, the Sohappys trust their spiralic understanding of time and reciprocal obligations to continue to guide their lives.

From this discussion of the Fish Wars through a heuristic which pays close attention to the spiralic relations and worldviews that informed the Indigenous peoples' role in them, an understanding of the Fish Wars not limited by linear settler temporality (and its foreclosure of an Indigenous present and future) becomes accessible. From this, the central importance of the family as the most immediate level of Indigenous sovereignty also becomes apparent; despite the historical attention to the key male organizers, a heuristic of spiralic temporality shows the important roles women and the family–across the many generations—played in the fights to

practice and defend Indigenous fishing and thus Indigenous sovereignty. Despite Isaac Stevens' conviction Indigenous peoples would quickly disappear as *peoples*, approaching the Fish Wars through a heuristic of spiralic temporality makes visible how strong Indigenous sovereignty remains, thanks to these struggles to continue Indigenous traditional embodied knowledges, including the obligations to the Salmon People. I now move to discussing the structural quality of violence against Indigenous women and their families, in all the shapes and forms it takes. In chapter 2, I bring Indigenous women's organizing to its proper place, upfront in its unrelenting fight for the continuity of Indigenous families as Peoples.

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Chapter 2. "[I]t's a system of families that keep who we are alive": Native Women's Ongoing Fight for Corporal, Spiritual, and Political Sovereignty

> We are standing up and taking up the battle. Here and now. To protect our young so their unborn can know the freedom our Grandparents knew. The future of our young and unborn is buried in our past. We are today who will bring the rebirth of spiritualism, dignity and sovereignty. We are Native American women! - Regina Brave[57]

> We Women of All Red Nations, continue to realize that our struggle in this hemisphere is unique. Our land base is guaranteed through international treaties. Our culture and way of life has survived through resistance to foreign domination. Our fight today is to survive as a people. Indian women have always been in the front lines in the defense of our nations. Today we are targets of the colonial governments of the western hemisphere. Our young are being attacked through the racist educational system of governments and churches. Our unborn are attacked through programs of genocide called sterilization. We value our young for they are the very foundation of our future generations. Only by throwing off the yoke of colonization with the strength of our spirituality will we survive as Peoples Nations. We will work on local, national and international levels to obtain our goals of true liberation and freedom. We, the Women of All Red Nations will take our place and stand proudly with our sisters in the world in the common struggle for all basic rights.[58]

Fish Wars leader Janet McCloud (Tulalip) co-founded the Northwest Indian Women's Circle, among many other organizations, to respond to the need for protecting Indigenous women's bodily autonomy that became apparent through conversations with the many young Indigenous women she would meet while organizing (Payne 7). In a 1981 interview, McCloud describes the core issues she found were the sexual objectification of Indigenous women, the lack of education about "sexual responsibility" and bodily autonomy, forced sterilizations, and the large number of

[57] In United States Commission on Civil Rights. National Indian civil rights issues: hearing held in Washington, D.C., March 19-20, 1979. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979, p 46.
[58] In United States Commission on Civil Rights. National Indian civil rights issues: hearing held in Washington, D.C., March 19-20, 1979. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979, p 44.

Indigenous children in foster care (Payne 7). She sees the solutions lie in the family, as basic education of Indigenous youth starts in the home; one example is the way she worked to bring back puberty rituals and support from women elders to newly menstruating Indigenous girls (Payne 7). The family is the moment of continuance, the relations of continuity, and each individual is responsible for their own body, their actions within that moment. Explaining that Indigenous traditions can continue even when removed from the land, she says, "I tell them your *body* is your natural world and that's the only one you have jurisdiction over. The natural universe, we're sharing it with plants, animals, birds, everything; but no matter where you live, you're living in *your* natural world too" (Payne 7, emphasis in original). McCloud, informed by her generational thinking discussed in the previous chapter, emphasizes that strength can be found in the realization of Indigenous women's embodied connections to the natural world. McCloud, also a co-founder of Women of All Red Nations (W.A.R.N.), an organization of Indigenous women from all over Turtle Island, is resonate with this message.

The mainstream feminist movement made activist Carol Hanish's "the personal is political" resonate around the world (Ibrahim 6), yet largely failed to understand the intersectionality of Native women's experiences (Million FT 55).[59] Native women's issues at their base were not commonly attributed to Native men, but rather to settler colonial structural violences, which included the Eurowestern gender binary. In most Indigenous traditions gender was not binary, but a continuum and was heavily based on roles rather than on any biological difference (Million IM 100). These roles had been violently interrupted by Christianity and colonization. It was understood that settler violence against Native women affected entire communities and their spiralic generations, linking corporeal with economic and political

[59] The U.S. women's movement did organize in support of Yvonne Wanrow, see below.

sovereignty (Arvin et al 18). Native women's organizing ideals started from an awareness of their situatedness at the intersection of "gender, sexuality, race, indigeneity, and nation" (Arvin et al 11).[60] Katrina Jagodinsky (non-Native) argues Native women's activism around protecting their bodily autonomy is a fight for "corporeal sovereignty"; this term makes visible "the interrelatedness of Indian women's productive and reproductive labors and their sacred and secular relationships to homelands" (5), a connection at the center of the settler colonial approach to land theft.[61]

The settler colonial project in what is currently the U.S. relied on settlers' "abilities to claim and control Indigenous women's productive and reproductive labors and access to land" as much as it did on the violences of more traditionally recognizable warfare and legal measures (Jagodinsky 4). These settler violences against Indigenous women are historical traumas that spiral through the generations (Deer 465). Because of women's central role in the family and thus the nation, "protecting and responding to individual women who are sexually assaulted" is not just about protecting individual Indigenous women; it is centrally also about "addressing the foundational wellness of the community where it occurs," where family is the organizer of the whole (Deer 465). In the words of Chase Iron Eyes, "it's a system of families that keep who we are alive" (King and Castle 4:44-48). Gender violence interrupts Indigenous relationality with the land and each other and through "fostering epidemic levels of anxiety, hopelessness, apathy, distrust and suicide" creates "the intergenerational staying power to destroy generations of families" (L. Simpson 2014). To protect future generations, this cycle has to be stopped.

[60] Evidenced in Yvonne Wanrow's poetry, discussed below.

[61] Scott Laura Morgensen argues that Eurowestern heteropatriarchy and its gender binary are not only essential to the settler colonial project, naturalizing the settler through naturalizing heteropatriarchal binaries as the organizing structure "of their religious, economic, and political life," but also the key ruse under which the West supposedly 'liberates' the rest of the world through bringing it into the Eurowestern fold of what is considered the universal human (Morgensen 13).

The relationship to the land had to be broken in order to be able to turn the land into a settler capitalist commodity; to make this possible, the equitable relationships with the land and its relations and the gender egalitarian balance of the community had to be interrupted (L. Simpson 2014). Communities suffering from colonially imported gender violence do not have the physical and emotional capacity to bring people together against settler encroachments on the people's sovereignty (L. Simpson 2014). Thus, the stronger the people stand against sexual assault, the stronger the community is as a people (Deer 465). When understood as not standalone moments of violence but as part of a structural objective of settler colonialism which returns reinvented in different moments, it becomes clear how the way to undo the cycle of violence is to strengthen intimate and familiar relationships as well as the relationship to place, the latter through rebuilding the relationships of responsibility with plant and animal nations (which requires fighting for them, too). This way, people can come together as stronger peoples who can mobilize to take back agency, relationality, and land.

A heuristic of spiralic temporality can help make visible how Native women's organizing concerns were keyed into their intergenerational relations and traditional knowledges. They were organizing to protect the continuity of their nations through protecting their own bodies, their children, and their families, and ensuring cultural continuity. The sacredness of motherhood was about the continuity of life and, in this sense, did not stand outside of the sacredness of the family, and thus of the people. The feminine principle *is* the earth (Watts), in different people's Creation stories often helped in the Creation by a male co-creator (Million IM 99). A heuristic of spiralic temporality can help us see how Indigenous women's movements' main concerns came back down to the continuity of the nation, of nurturing reciprocal relationships that rebuild or strengthen the people's relation to the land and to each other, in order to ensure the people's

futurity.

Unlike the other women's organizations from the 1970s and '80s, Indigenous women were not fighting for equality with men; they fought the settler mindset that was bent on taking their children and destroying their families in order to access the land as a set of resources rather than relations. This struggle included the fight for Indigenous men's well-being and to reconnect them with their nurturing role as well, and for a resurgence of traditional knowledges and practices which would reinstate a balance in the relationships with the land and all its relations and ensure the people's continuity.

As Indigenous women formed a particular stance from their embodied experiences, they did not readily adapt any agreed upon position. Many advised against this because of the particularity of their differently lived experiences of colonization in specific places. At the same time, while many loyalties were shared, they did not speak across the board as "women" or easily as any collective (Mihesua, Jaimes-Guerrero, Green). Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah explains,

> Because Native women vary in their cultural ideologies, appearance, and social and moral values, no one feminist theory totalizes Native women's thought, and there are differences of opinion among Native women over who among them are "feminists." How we as Native women define ourselves as female and how we relate to the concept of feminism, to feminists, and to each other, how we define colonialism, and how men and women should behave depend on our relation to our tribes, our class, appearance, life partners, education, and religion. (Mihesuah 159)

Early movements like W.A.R.N. brought some collective concerns to light, but it did not assume any woman or woman-identified person would ever claim a feminist stance. Yet, the issues that they readily agreed on were responses to particularly genocidal settler programs that directly affected Indigenous family, and the families *as peoples*.

In this chapter, I center the concerns of W.A.R.N.'s first conference –sterilization abuse, political prisoners, education, the destruction of the family and the theft of children, the destruction and erosion of the land base—and discuss how Native women's creation of their organizing principles and literary writing informed each other, and were informed by a strong necessity to express the family as the nation. Indigenous nations are formed through familial ties and understood as families informed by a spiralic understanding of temporality and intergenerational relationships. Thus, the continuous recurring of sexual violence against Indigenous women in every generation including today, the continuous recurring of attacks against Indigenous women's bodily autonomy and ability to reproduce, and of caring for their children (transformed in each iteration, each child removal, to boarding school, or forcibly put in foster care) are direct attacks to Indigenous family that are always also an immediate attack on the Peoples.

From W.A.R.N.'s specifically gendered concerns to the MMIWG2S crisis continuing into the present day, this chapter looks at how Native women, through activism informed by their felt truth telling, as well as through writing, call attention to the direct relation between Native women's wellness and their communities' wellness, Native women's corporeal sovereignty and their Native nations' spiritual and political sovereignty. I first lay out some of the history and central concerns of W.A.R.N. organizers to discuss the way Indigenous women from all over Turtle Island came together to fight for their future generations. Then, I go into several aspects of this larger struggle W.A.R.N. participated in in more detail.

First, I discuss Dian Million's "The Housing Poem," which centers an exploration of the Native family as a push back against ongoing genocidal settler colonizer practices that displace Native people from their lands and their peoples. Then I discuss how Winona LaDuke's novel

Last Standing Woman, which at heart is a story of different women in spiralic relation across time despite displacement and other violences, reflects LaDuke's (and the movement she is a part of) concerns with tribal sovereignty, under attack by settler capitalist environmental devastation and violence against Native women's corporeal sovereignty. The novel expresses a spiralic understanding time, showing how the women of White Earth are connected to the women of their pasts and their futures in a way that is cyclical but not repetitive.

Structural settler attacks against Native women and the Native family of course played out in specific instances of violence and resistance. The discussion of Yvonne Wanrow (Swan)'s case, and Wanrow's understanding of her case as fitting in a larger "genocidal plan" against Indigenous peoples (visible in her poetry), shows how a spiralic understanding of personal and cultural continuity, as well as strong mutual ties to community and the movement, were able to turn a tragedy for one Native survivor into a shared win for all Native women. However, violence against Native women's corporal sovereignty is ongoing. Thus, finally, I discuss the crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People (MMIWG2S) through a reading of Louise Erdrich's engagement with the ongoing violence against Native women's corporeal sovereignty and the difficulty of navigating colonizer law in her 2012 novel *The Round House.*

Through the drawing out of this particular spiral, following Indigenous women's activism and writing through the generations, this chapter makes legible the particularities of this struggle and its relations to others. This insight makes it possible to read Native women's activism in our current moment in a way that acknowledges the long spiraling transformations that made them what they are today, while making imaginable how they could successfully support the building of thriving Indigenous futures.

Women of All Red Nations

The Women of All Red Nations (W.A.R.N.) organized themselves after the example of the many international women's rights organizations they encountered at the 1977 United Nations Convention on Indigenous Rights in Geneva, Switzerland (Theobald 1), which W.A.R.N. founding members Phyllis Young, Pat Bellanger, and others took part in as representatives for the International Indian Treaty Council (Castle 275).[62] The women that came together at W.A.R.N.'s 1978 founding conference hailed from "over thirty Native nations" (USCCR14), including leaders "Madonna Thunder Hawk, Lorelei Means De Cora, Agnes Williams, Phyllis Young, Lakota Harden, Pat Bellanger, and Janet McCloud" (Castle 275). Although part of the cause for organizing was the recognition of Native women's special role in the health and strength of Native nations, another reason was the U.S. government surveillance, oppression, and suspected infiltration of the American Indian Movement (Castle 275). The U.S. federal government was focused on jailing all male AIM organizers, so the women from AIM connected with others and started W.A.R.N.

At the conference, it was agreed that getting truthful information out about the everyday violences and abuses that were taking place against Native women was the number one priority; they identified the most pressing issues as "sterilization abuse, political prisoners, education for survival, the destruction of the family and the theft of our Indian children, the destruction and erosion of our land base" (USCCR14) as well as proper education for Native children

[62] Jimmie Durham writes: "All of the other liberation organizations— in Africa, the MidEast, Asia, and South America, have organization of women. And they are winning their fight for freedom. So for me the question is always, "Do we want to be free or not?" If so we need a strong national organization, that begins on a community level and answers community needs while doing national and international work. For that to happen, one of the things we must have is a strong women's organization" (USCCR41).

(USCCR15).[63] Dian Million (Tanana Athabascan) writes about Native women's insistence on truth telling as the work to include "lived experience, rich with emotional knowledges, of what pain and grief and hope meant or mean now in [their] pasts and futures," what Million calls "felt theory," in the analysis of the needs and goals of the struggle (Million FT 54).

Telling these truths is not about centering the trauma and limiting Native women to a status as victims, rather the opposite: Native women used their agency to no longer hide these painful experiences and instead bring the violences out into the open, in order to create opportunity for healing—for themselves, and for their communities (Million TN 73). Additionally, by turning their felt experiences into shared knowledge, they furthered the project of decolonization. Through garnering understanding of the complex of experiences under colonization, they made it possible to organize appropriate action to liberate Native peoples from the always adapting settler colonial structures, from organizing survival schools for their children and pushing for the Indian Child Welfare Act, to challenging Canada's genocidal policies at the U.N. (see below). Million underscores that "[t]o 'decolonize' means to understand as fully as possible the forms colonialism takes in our own times" (Million FT 55). The experiences of violence resonate today and into the future, as do the structures that (continue to) create them (Million TN 71); acknowledging and healing from this past that is present is needed in order to create openings for thriving futures. Without these felt knowledges, the structures cannot be undone at the root.

In her 2016 article "The State Is a Man, Theresa Spence, Loretta Saunders and the Gendered Costs of Settler Sovereignty," Audra Simpson (Mohawk) describes how Indigenous

[63] Lorelei Means and Janet McCloud write: "A perfect example: A child of Movement parents is 9 times out of 10, more politically aware on issues than the average child. How we teach our children daily, is who they will be, and what strengths they will carry as adults" (USCCR15).

women's bodies are imbued with layers of meaning, "signifying … the dangerous possibility of reproducing Indian life and most dangerously, other political orders. Other life forms, other sovereignties, other forms of political will" (15). In the case of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (of which the Mohawk are a part), women are central to the political structure, they "transmit the clan, and with that: family, responsibility, relatedness to territory" (A. Simpson 15) - in other words, they represent a challenge to the settler patriarchal order. Simpson describes how Native women, to settlers, were equated to the land in the ways that they were inherently "rapeable." Much like the way settlers treat the land as a commodity for resource extraction, gendered settler structures (embodied in settler colonizers who do the violence) consider Native women as "matter to be extracted from, used, sullied, taken from, over and over again, something that is already violated and violatable in a great march to accumulate surplus, to so called 'production'" (A. Simpson 15).

In Canada, the Indian Act committed "statistical genocide," by gendering the ability to pass on "Indian status," causing "over 25,000 women [to lose] status between 1876 and 1985," and now "anywhere from one to two million of their descendants" cannot claim *status*, i.e. be so-called "recognized" by the Canadian government as Indigenous and eligible for status-related rights and privileges (Morgensen 10). When in 1970 a case against this gendered approach to furthering the elimination of Native peoples was brought to the Canadian Supreme Court and lost–the Court claimed "the Indian Act had precedent over the newly enacted Canadian Bill of Rights" (Million FT 57)—some of the main Red Power organizations supported this decision. Organizations like The National Indian Brotherhood argued that focusing on women's issues took away from the struggle for Indigenous sovereignty, and in this way they enforced the heteropatriarchal settler colonial structural violence against and silencing of Native women

(Million FT 57).[64] It took until 1985 for new Canadian policy to be introduced which amended the sex discrimination in the Indian Act, yet even this Bill "C-531 has never fully alleviated the issues of band membership that the women sought" (Million FT 58). In the U.S., the 1887 "Dawes Act" or "General Allotment Act" turned communally held tribal lands into private allotments, structuring new ownership along patriarchal lines (Huhndorf and Suzack 5), and making so-called "surplus" lands available to settlers (TallBear 147).

Lorelei Means (Winnebago) and Janet McCloud identified the difference between W.A.R.N. and immigrant women/non-Native women of color's rights organizations as being one of differing worldviews: they write of how where other organizations discuss "Band-Aid" solutions (most of which involved better inclusion into the settler nation state system), W.A.R.N. centered their "sacred duty to Mother Earth, [their] relationship to Grandma Moon, and [their] unborn generations" and so instead fought for Native sovereignty and an end to the violence against Mother Earth (USCCR 15). Winona LaDuke (White Earth Ojibwe), in the same W.A.R.N. brochure, puts the care for the land and the fight against capitalist commodification of the land and its natural resources at the front of the struggle. She emphasizes the need to protect the little land Native peoples are still in charge of, because "in order to remain as Indians we have to fight to keep that" (USCCR 22). She emphasizes the urgency of stopping the Bureau of Indian Affairs before it completes its selling out of Native lands and sovereignty to produce resources for non-Native society. Using the example of the Navajo uranium mines which produce energy to provide electricity to private firms, while at the time of writing "80% of the Navajo houses had no electricity" (USCCR 22), she describes W.A.R.N. as an opportunity for

[64] "both heteropatriarchy and heteropaternalism refer to expressions of patriarchy and paternalism that rely upon very narrow definitions of the male/female binary, in which the male gender is perceived as strong, capable, wise, and composed and the female gender is perceived as weak, incompetent, naïve, and confused" (Arvin et al 13).

Native women to work together on "a local, regional, national and international level" for the protection of Native sovereignty over "air, land, resources, and future" (USCCR 22).

This future is at risk not only because of the capitalist destruction and poisoning of the planet and its lands and waters, but also because of the specifically gendered colonizer practice of sterilizing Native women (either without notice at all, or with "consent" achieved under pressure of, for example, taking away their other children) and of stealing Native children through forced placement and dispersion in foster homes. Under pressure of Native nurses and others, a "Government Accountability Office investigation" into sterilization abuse against Native women researched the realities in Indian Health Services (IHS) "areas in Albuquerque, Phoenix, Oklahoma City, and Aberdeen, South Dakota" (Theobald 158). The report showed that 1974 Department of Health, Education, and Welfare guidelines were enforced unevenly, if at all. This meant Native women "consented" to sterilization without being told about alternative options, about the procedure's irreversible character, and/or about how their reproductive decisions did not affect their eligibility for financial or other government support programs; IHS doctors also continued to sterilize Native women under the age of 21 and ignored the requirement of a 72-hour waiting period between the time of consent and the time of the procedure (Theobald 158).

Members of W.A.R.N. undertook their own investigation of Indian Health Services practices and found it likely that "more than a quarter of all American Indian women have been sterilized, leaving only about 100,000 women of child-bearing age who can have children" (USCCR 24). Taking away Native children from their homes was more than a threat, women testified that "they [had] left their children with a relative or babysitter, and returned home to find that a social worker had taken the children," and they often were incapable of ever locating

the children again (USCCR 26). W.A.R.N. concluded that "[p]ublic and private welfare agencies apparently are operating under the assumption that most Indian children would be better off growing up non-Indian" (USCCR 26); non-Native social workers featured in the 2018 *Dawnland* documentary explain their working logic indeed was that "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree" and thus it was in the best interest of the child to be removed from its Native family (Mazo and Pender-Cudlip 36:03-31).[65]

Qwo-Li Driskill (Cherokee), Chris Finley (Colville), Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen in their introduction to their edited collection *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, & Literature* emphasize how Native women's organizing's "dissent from current leadership does not separate them as feminists from Indigenous communities but tries to mobilize these communities' capacity to dissent collectively from colonial regimes" (9). Through the work, Native women activists both theorize and practice Indigenous feminist theories (always plural and varied, and not often named as such), importantly employing the concepts of gender and sexuality as essential parts to the anticolonial framework of the struggle for Native sovereignty and decolonization (Driskill et al 9). In this way, they rethink the Native nation, and its expressions of sovereignty, for a thriving future of true liberation from colonialist thought and practices.

Pat Bellanger (Ojibwe), at the second W.A.R.N. conference held at Janet McCloud's home site in Yelm, WA, summarizes W.A.R.N.'s main organizing concerns and intents:

[65] The feature-length documentary *Dawnland* follows the work of the 2012-2015 Truth and Reconciliation commission in what is currently the U.S. state of Maine. This TRC (the first in the U.S.) addressed the ongoing removal of Wabenaki children from their families by white social workers, despite the 1978 passing of the Indian Child Welfare Act. The film follows Wabenaki organizers and participators in the TRC, and we witness continued anti-Native sentiment from then present-day social workers. More at https://dawnland.org/ [02-28-2020]

> To us, it is impossible to separate the fate of our children from the fate of our families- they are the same. We needed to come together as families. The women define the family and the family is the base of our culture and our culture, our families are under attack at every level, in every way. The question is: Who are our enemies? The question is: How would they destroy us? The question is: how are we to organize ourselves to fight for our children's future? (W.A.R.N. 1)

In the following sections, I discuss some of the ways different (groups of) women have stood up and organized against the settler colonizer attack on Native peoples, and have responded to Bellanger's questions in their specific experiences with settler violence against Indigenous women, children, and families. I start with a discussion of Dian Million's "The Housing Poem" which illustrates how, when you are disconnected from place, through family stories, you can remain connected to the family genealogies; when a relationship to a particular land is lost, this relationship to land becomes embodied in other kinship practices. A strong family can continue traditional relations to place, even when removed from that place.

In Support of Native Families: Dian Million's "The Housing Poem"

Native women's writing responds to the issues brought by colonization and patriarchy in ways that combat the silencing and marginalization of the life-threatening violences and which reimagine possibilities for Indigenous futures (Huhndorf and Suzack 9). Tanana poet and scholar Dian Million's "The Housing Poem" shows the importance of family relationships at the same time as it redefines what is considered a family. Written in the 1980s, while Million was living in Portland, OR and doing organizing work with the American Indian Movement group *United Indian Women, Inc.* (who considered their group a chapter of W.A.R.N.), the poem reflects the lived experience of building kinship relationships far from home, pushing back against settler

colonial gender and familial expectations. In the introduction to the poem in the collection of Native women's writing, *Reinventing the Enemy's Language*, Million describes her preoccupation with the loss of Native children to the U.S. foster care system and the destruction of Native families. "The Housing Poem" imagines an alternative to this historical reality. The poem is at the same time an imagined decolonized future in the present and a going back to Indigenous values and relationships transformed for the present context, a past not so far in the past, still remembered in the communities' stories and imaginaries. In this way, "The Housing Poem" reflects a spiralic experience of temporality.

"The Housing Poem" tells the story of a woman who moves into a cheap little house with a yard and a cast iron stove in the kitchen. Every stanza describes more people moving into the house or the yard, people who are related through family bonds as well as through reciprocal relationships of responsibility, sharing love, skills, and space: "Pretty soon their mom Elsie came to live with them too/ because she liked being with the laughing young people/ and she knew how the stove worked the best. / Minnie gave up her bed and slept on a cot" (Million HP 164). The importance of these shared spaces and reciprocal relationships is present in every line, and especially embodied by the short stanza before the tone of the story changes. A child is born, and everyone in the little house cares for it communally: "By and by Rupert and Onna had a baby who they named Lester, / …, and they were glad that Elsie and Sarah/ were there to help" (Million HP 165). Elsie and Sarah are the elders in the household, the grandmother and great-grandmother of the baby Lester, respectively. The emphasis on the importance of their presence suggests an importance both of elders as specifically of women, with knowledge, love, and experience to share with their relations.

The poem turns at the end with a possibly destructive meeting with the settler colonial

imaginary, or rather lack thereof: “One night the landlord came by/ … and was surprised to find Minnie, Rupert and Onna, Sarah and/ Elsie, Shar and Dar all singing around the drum next/ to the big stove in the kitchen/ and even a baby named Lester ….//He was disturbed/ he went to court to evict them/ he said the house was designed for single-family occupancy,” and then we end with the crux of the matter, where the worldviews most visibly collide, as the last lines offer us the insight: “which surprised the family/ because that’s what they thought they were” (Million HP 165). All the way through, but particularly in this line, the poem shows us the four R’s of Indigenous worldviews in action.

These four R’s stands for Reciprocity, Relationality, Responsibility, and Redistribution. Harris and Wasilewski, through intertribal workshops, developed a theorization of a shared worldview between Indigenous nations, one which centers these four R’s and their related obligations, respectively: the “cyclical obligation,” long term dynamic relationships, possibly across generations; the “kinship obligation,” understood as **“**the profound sense that we human beings are related, not only to each other, but to all things, animals, plants, rocks — in fact, to the very stuff the stars are made of”; the “community obligation,” meaning that we have a responsibility to take care of our wide range of relations, to treat everyone, from sisters, to deer, to trees, as blood-kin, and to create space for them; and finally the “sharing obligation,” the obligation to always try to balance and rebalance our relationships with all our relations (Harris and Wasilewski 492-493). “The Housing Poem”’s family embodies these obligations in all the different ways they make their home, together.

Traditional communal knowledge is at the source of a Native sense of sovereignty and self-determination and resilience. Million’s poem takes a clear stance for opposition to a settler worldview that destroys Indigenous families. Importantly, even though it shows us the struggle

with the landlord who does not understand this Indigenous sense of kinship, the poem ends without foreclosing the possibility that the family can remain. Its open ending leaves room for trusting decolonial possibilities for the future.

"The Housing Poem," through its loving depiction of a multi-generational family practicing radical relationality, showcases the purpose and joy of Indigenous parenting, which includes "leaving their children in the care of extended family members—grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or other people in the community" (Davis 86). Elders play an important role in this family structure, "as key contributors to [children's] emotional and spiritual development" (Davis 86). In this way, the poem pushes back against the racist stereotypes which allowed a lack of understanding of Indigenous family values, and which inspired white social workers to "label [Indigenous] people as unfit parents" (Davis 86), and remove their children to a non-Indigenous home.

Studies on the removal rates of Indigenous children from their families showed that "25 to 35 percent of [Indigenous] children nationwide had been taken from their families," with some states having rates going up to 85 percent (Davis 84). This meant that, "[o]n average, across the country, [Indigenous] children were twenty times more likely than non-[Indigenous] children to be placed in foster care," usually with non-Indigenous families (Davis 84).[66] Much of the cause for these disproportionate numbers lies with the majority white social workers who were at liberty to make these decisions 'based on more subjective determinations of "neglect," "social deprivation," or "emotional damage,"' seemingly unaware of their own racial, cultural, and class

[66] Davis writes, "In 1969, Joseph Westermeyer discovered that of more than seven hundred foster homes known to have taken in Indian children in Minnesota, only two had an Indian parent. By 1977, more than 90 percent of adopted Indian children not residing with family members lived in non-Indian homes" (84).

biases (Davis 85-86).[67] While some white social workers now know that Native families live "such a different concept of the family" than they might be used to, understanding that "the tribe is the family as opposed to this nuclear family" (Mazo and Pender-Cudlip 36:30-46), the importance for Native children to be raised in their own cultures is in many ways still neglected. Jane Sheehan, a white social worker, expresses a familiar sentiment in a 2014 interview for the documentary *Dawnland* when she says: "two sneakers for the feet are sometimes more important than [pause] learning an Indian dance [chuckle]" (Mazo and Pender-Cudlip 37:07). Eurowestern values were and often still are applied to poor Native families and in this supposedly benevolent manner, many Indigenous families were and are broken up and had and have their children removed.

Once an Indigenous family had to apply for support from welfare, or an Indigenous child got in trouble at school for being late, missing class, or in any way responding to the racist taunts they regularly suffered, the family would be "exposed to surveillance and vulnerable to intervention" (Davis 83). Indigenous children were removed from their parents because social workers considered more affluent, white parents to provide a more fitting context for a child than its own poor, Indigenous family, going as far as to state "an Indian reservation is an unsuitable environment for a child" (qtd. in Davis 86). James Cadwell, former South Dakota child protective services worker and foster parent, likens the situation to the boarding school era, saying "It's very similar to the dynamics that were going on with the boarding schools: Remove the kid from the family, and literally kind of brainwash them" (Lakota Law Project 5:25-41).

"The Housing Poem" evidences the contemporary complex Native family structures are spiralic returns (transformed continuations, not repetitions) of traditional Native family

[67] Davis notes that "[b]y 1977, only about one hundred professionally trained Native social workers existed in the entire United States" (85).

structures, despite the pressures of settler capitalist individualism and the nuclear family. Native people are removed from their families and their traditional lands (as Million was herself, and then able to find her relations again), but their values and knowledges endure, allowing for the building of contemporary complex family structures informed by the traditional ways, in order to raise happy, healthy, Native children.

This understanding of the central importance of the spiralic intergenerational relations that make the family, also is visible in Winona LaDuke's (continuing) work, which centers personal, cultural, and political sovereignty for Native women, families, and peoples, often centering capitalist colonizer environmental practices' violences against Native peoples in the struggle. In the 1990s, LaDuke, key organizer with W.A.R.N. since its inception and continuing today with for example food sovereignty projects at White Earth and the struggle against the Line 3 pipeline in Minnesota, published a novel which directly engages with many of W.A.R.N.'s core issues, and makes clear their intersections and reverberations in daily life in White Earth through the generations. In the following section, I discuss how LaDuke transforms the traditional resurgence narratives by centering a Native woman's return, and by orienting her novel through a gendered critique. *Last Standing Woman* is a true Red Power novel, as updated with W.A.R.N.'s priorities.

Revising Red Power: Winona LaDuke's *Last Standing Woman*

Winona LaDuke's activism uses a plurality of approaches—direct action, academic articles, literature, farming of traditional foods and of hemp—to work for Indigenous self-determination and to develop pathways for independence from settler colonizer capitalist structures. Purposefully an activist novel, her 1997 *Last Standing Woman* addresses environmental,

sovereignty, and other issues she finds, while making visible the relations across seven generations that offer traditional knowledge and spiritual strength for the Anishnaabe at White Earth to thrive, in a didactic way for a young adult audience. The novel's driving Red Power consciousness updates Red Power organizing's priorities by transforming the political and culturally informed activism from the previous era to reimagine what Indigenous activism could and should look like to achieve decolonized Indigenous futures.

The early Red Power movement, despite the presence of many strong female voices, such as Buffy Sainte-Marie, often suffered from colonially imported misogyny.[68] Prioritizing how gendered and environmental oppression tie into other anti-Native oppressions that are more well known, her novel *Last Standing Woman* is a story of seven generations of Anishnaabe women. Ishkwegaabawiikwe or "Last Standing Woman," is a name and according role in the community passed on through the generations to different story-telling women of the Anishnaabe in White Earth. The novel's story brings together the many different but strongly related concerns LaDuke researched and organized against, and goes beyond the time of writing, imagining a future where the community's aims start to be fulfilled.

One of LaDuke's enduring focal issues is that of settler environmental devastation, reflected in the novel through a focus on deforestation and its threat to wild rice on the White Earth reservation. In a 1985 article co-written with fellow organizer Ward Churchill called "Native America: The Political Economy of Radioactive Colonialism," focusing specifically on the issues surrounding uranium mining on Indigenous land (which include a discussion of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* and uranium mining on Laguna land), Winona LaDuke develops a

[68] The Cree singer-songwriter (and adoption-survivor) wrote movement songs like "My Country, This of Thy People You're Dying" and "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee," used her fame to support direct actions like the Occupation of Alcatraz and the Fish Wars, and financially supported activists, including for example Yvonne Wanrow (Swan).

structural understanding of the enduring effects of colonialism through a focus on environmental degradation. LaDuke and Churchill link the destruction of the land for capitalist resource extraction to issues of Indigenous sovereignty, traditional cultures, and possibilities of healthy thriving futures:

> Land has always been the issue central to North American politics and economics. Those who control the land are those who control the resources within and withon [sic] it. Whether the resource is oil, natural gas, uranium or other minerals, water or agriculture, land ownership, social control and the other aggregate components of power are fundamentally interrelated. The situation is universal, but in this hemisphere, given the peculiarities of a socio-economic apparatus of power which has been literally imported in its entirety, the equation is all the more acute. (LaDuke and Churchill 107)

The article describes how, even though the negative consequences of mining operations (displacement of communities, loss of land for all time because of radioactivity, and early deaths of workers) were known during the 1970s "energy crisis," the "community outrage" remained, in their words, "a bit constrained" because of the communities' economic dependency on the mines; in their first case study at Churchrock, in Navajo/Diné country, "half the jobs and nearly 80% of income … derives from uranium production" (LaDuke and Churchill 115). Even though Red Power organizers were aware of the environmental issues, these issues were not centered in the earlier activism because the major destructive resource extraction efforts had made themselves essential to the economies of many Native nations.

In LaDuke's *All Our Relations,* a 1999 discussion of nine different Native struggles for land and life, one of the chapters goes deeper into the history of the White Earth community that *Last Standing Woman* is set in. Amongst other things, we learn how the Anishinaabeg who live in White Earth originally had lands stretching out across what are now five northern U.S. states and four southern Canadian provinces. They are now spread over separate territories and

reservations, the result of several treaties with, wars between, and resistances against the different colonial forces (LaDuke AOR 117). The community's history spreads far beyond the borders of the reservation, as "Anishinaabeg original landholdings included millions of acres around the Great Lakes; today, the Anishinaabeg traditional homelands consist of close to ten million acres in 100 reserves and reservations in the lakes region, and a sprinkling in the great prairies" (LaDuke AOR 117). LaDuke in *All Our Relations* makes mention of a Lennie Butcher, for example, who is regularly arrested for hunting outside of the perimeter of the reservation, as he does not recognize its borders as being the limits of his freedom to exercise his historical cultural customs (LaDuke AOR 133).

The collusion between U.S. government, Reorganization Act tribal governments, and resource extraction companies, discussed in the 1985 "Radioactive colonialism" article, and the defiance of colonially imposed borders as described in *All Our Relations,* are reflected in *Last Standing Woman*, be it with the focus on logging as is appropriate to the White Earth lands. In "Radioactive Colonialism," LaDuke and Churchill tie the creation of U.S. style tribal governments, which did not reflect traditional governing structures and so diminished tribal sovereignty, to the relatively easy cooperation with resource extraction corporations. Through "a primary (and classic) vehicle of neocolonialism" that was the "Indian Reorganization Act" of 1934, "The new 'governments'" owed allegiance to the U.S., as that was where their power originated (LaDuke and Churchill 109, 110. Brackets and quotation marks in original); they were tasked with a number of "economic planning" decisions:

> mineral lease negotiations, contracting with external corporate agencies, long-term agricultural ranching leasing, water rights negotiations, land transfers, and so on; all of which required direct approval from Bureau of Indian Affairs representatives most of which had long been staunchly resisted by the traditional leadership. (LaDuke and Churchill 109-110).

As a result, sovereignty was undercut: land was lost to resource extraction, and people had to move away from the land that was being exploited, "disrupt[ing] familial integrity and community organization" (LaDuke and Churchill 111). When Red Power activists were on their Trail of Broken Treaties action to Washington, D.C. and ended up occupying the B.I.A. offices, they were ridiculed by many Tribal Chairmen across the country, members of the National Tribal Chairmen's Association, who called them "a splinter group of militant blackmailers" and supported the B.I.A. and the U.S. government against its own people (Trail of Broken Treaties). The corruption of these Chairmen is represented in *Last Standing Woman* in the Anishnaabe councilmen, yet in this novel, which is focused on imagining ways things could be changed for the better, they do not have the last word.

The main event of *Last Standing Woman's* spiralic telling is the occupation of the White Earth tribal offices by Anishnaabe activists who decry the corruption of their tribal chairman, an event which carries some resemblance to the 1973 AIM occupation of Wounded Knee. The struggle around land and the use of the land as a resource for capitalist ventures, is addressed directly in the novel, through a lens that centers Indigenous knowledges, relationality to "all our relations" (i.e. all that is alive, including animal and plant nations), and gendered oppression. The story of *Last Standing Woman* starts at the end of the 19th century and continues into the future (from the date of writing), into the start of the 21st century, connecting the several eras through a lineage of storytelling Last Standing Women.

The novel teaches us about White Earth, from the coming of the first white settlers, the relocations, through the Christianization, the forced boarding schools, and the illegal taking of most of the Native land, to an insurrection against the injustices of the capitalist ventures legally and illegally begetting Native land, and a struggle to recuperate culturally and historically

important Anishinaabeg items from the Smithsonian institute in Washington, DC. Where Silko's *Ceremony* aimed to do the work of consciousness-raising through a complex of stories set in a recent past that might help develop a political consciousness for the present and future, *Last Standing Woman* is more directly about demanding, and *taking*, the land and sovereignty back in the contemporary time. In *Ceremony*, gender issues are addressed through Tayo's remaking of his spiritual masculine/feminine balance and its larger reverberation for the community (per Sharon Holm); *Last Standing Woman* centers Indigenous women, and champions a Native nationalism that takes the lessons from its preceding decades and writes a future of sovereignty and repatriation of lost knowledges and people. LaDuke's approach embodies a cyclical return to ceremonial knowledges made illegal by colonial powers; she brings tradition into the present through the use of the Ojibwe language which colonizers also attempted to destroy, the women warriors setting the record straight on internalized colonizer misogyny, and through the telling of the return of sacred drums, hidden from the Christian missionaries for decades.

A key moment in the text is the chapter where the "Women's Warrior Society," or Ogichidaa Ikwewag in Ojibwe, takes matters in their own hands and punish one of their tribal councilmen for the sexual abuse he has inflicted on a young Anishnaabe girl, using traditional cultural tools to do so (ricing sticks, used to gather wild rice) (LaDuke LSW 231-235). The event reads like a revenge fantasy for all the non-fictional tribal councilmen and chairmen, or other Native men, who were in cahoots with the oppressors, embodying and acting out colonial misogyny amongst other acts of destruction.[69] It also reads as a reinvention, with added

[69] The Ogichidaa Ikwewag are a group of women warriors, using their collective power to act to protect one of their own as well as the larger community. The White Earth community suffers not only from aggression from without, but also from within. Alcoholism, violence, and sexual abuse had been part and parcel of Indian life for a long time. One example is that of Fred Graves, a member of the tribal council, who is known to abuse his daughter. Protected by his position, no one dares to act. Sexual abuse has been so normalized, that it is often even seen as a "rite of passage"; it is a sickness passed on through the

traditional details, of an action described by AIM and W.A.R.N. activist Madonna Thunder Hawk, where a group of Native women beat up the rapist of a young Native girl. They got a girl to trick the perpetrator and lead him to a place where a group of women armed with Billy clubs and sticks was waiting for him; they "took his pants off, and told him, next time an Indian girl gets raped, we're gonna get you, and we're gonna cut your balls off. And from that time, it didn't happen anymore" (King and Castle 20:54-21:08).

While *Last Standing Woman* exposes the bleak aspects of the lived realities of the Anishnaabe at White Earth, it centers the strength that is found in its women, in its community, and in its traditions. LaDuke imagines a present and a future for Native peoples, reconnected with their land and their relations through their traditions, their stories, and their languages. When, in the story, in the summer of 2000, White Earth representatives manage to collect a number of the remains from their ancestors from the Smithsonian and other institutions (LaDuke LSW 268), they take months to relearn the language, the songs, and the ceremonies that they had been made to forget by the white missionaries, in order to properly rebury their ancestors with dignity (LaDuke LSW 281). Throughout the novel, LaDuke may show the bleak realities, but never without also imagining paths to healing and thriving. She does the historical educating that Silko and W.A.R.N. described Red Power activism needs to do in order to come up with a more complex understanding of the present, and then uses that Red Power analysis to imagine what the following transformation in the community's spiralic history, informed by these insights, might

generations, of which the victims are said to survive and come out stronger (LaDuke LSW 232). The Ogichidaa Ikwewag disagree with this viewpoint, as there had been suicides by abused young girls and "for one of them, people said, her grandfather and her father were the same person" (LaDuke LSW 233). It was decided the warrior women would act; they took out their ricing sticks, surveyed the house until the councilman could be caught in the act, and then stormed in. They sent him out in the street, chasing "the naked man through the housing project with the might of their ricing sticks" (LaDuke LSW 235). One of them takes in the girl and the community comes together in court and speaks out, leading to a conviction to five years in prison (LaDuke LSW 238).

look like.

LaDuke shows how particular historical knowledge about the Anishinaabeg and their culture can support a deeper theoretical understanding of the axes of power at play in the community of the story. The "issues of subjectivity and identity" are interlocked with "institutional, geopolitical, material, and cultural practices of power and privilege" (Kim 115). The cultural identity of the Anishinaabeg is very much related to their cultural practices of harvesting and hunting, the spiritual drums, dances, and songs, and their relation to the land. These cultural practices have all been near destroyed by the colonizing powers, as those feared that a holding on to their spirituality would have negative consequences for the ability of the central government to rule the people of White Earth; Christianity was used to suppress local practices and disempower the Anishinaabeg (LaDuke LSW 55). This was related to land ownership issues, which are related to white capitalist enterprises on Native land: Christianization aimed to destroy Anishnaabeg spirituality to weaken their resistance, racialization through blood quantum was used to decide who was able to own land according to the BIA, and multinational corporations pushed to buy the lands that were made "available" in the process. The novel incorporates an analysis of the White Earth community's history of colonization, and offers a vision of what a thriving future could look like for the White Earth community, and when understood more structurally, for Native communities everywhere.

A focus on the instances of violence against women and LGBTQ2S people is integrated in a bigger picture. For example, we see the discussion of the oppression from within the community Kway Dole suffered for being an out lesbian, despite being one of the essential members of the women's group that call themselves the Warrior Women or Ogichidaakwe, is immediately tied to the influence of Western ideals, the so-called "American Values" (LaDuke

LSW 207). (Female) homosexuality was a "well known, uncloseted fact, part of the intricate, social fabric of White Earth" (LaDuke LSW 205); the community has a history of Warrior Women "who took wives, lived singularly or fought as well as any man" (LaDuke LSW 205). Regardless, under the influence of "the imposed intolerance of colonialism, churches and 'American Values,'" the Anishinaabeg's historical valuation of diversity suffered and so had Kway Dole (LaDuke LSW 207). Her mother had always been steadfast in her support, and the grown-up Kway is a valued member of the White Earth community who plays an important role in the resistance against the capitalist oppression of the Indigenous community.

Revaluing queerness and shaking off the "American Values" that have been indoctrinated through centuries of settler occupation and Christianization is a subversive act reconnecting the community to its own cultural identity and heritage. A politics which means to reinstate the oppressed in their worth needs to actively create space for the personal differences which have such clear political connotations, of which sexuality is one—by giving Kway Dole her own chapter in the novel, LaDuke does exactly this work (LSW 205-212). Through the chapter, the cultural imperialism of the U.S. is tied to the colonial history, which is tied to gender and sexuality oppressions within the community.

The central event of the novel, which the spiralic telling of White Earth (hi)stories all lead up to, is the occupation of tribal offices by the "Protect Our Land Coalition." The tribal chairman in the novel has sold out tribal lands and waters to logging companies for personal gain,[70] and then works together with the B.I.A. and the FBI to fight the activists occupying the

[70] The distance between the community and its government grows every day; "from what Elaine and the others could see, their own council was not likely to listen to the community anymore. Money and favors for approving the new mill's permit were already beginning to roll into the council" (LaDuke LSW 149). The chairman suddenly owns a new pick up truck; other representatives somehow acquire new boats. In contrast, when the people from the housing project -meaningfully nicknamed 'Hungry Hill'- that is grouped together with the tribal offices and surrounded by the FBI during the occupation, are being

offices. The community of White Earth is under fire from the U.S. government, as well as U.S. and global corporations, but these forces are all understood to be part of a bigger global capitalist system that has such local results as taking land away from the community, and so making it harder for them to foresee in their livelihoods; LaDuke does this through the spiralic telling of the settler colonizer history that brought White Earth to its contemporary conditions, and through showing how the resistance against the corrupt tribal council immediately invites the FBI to come and (try to) suppress it (LaDuke LSW 172).

The activists stand strong in their traditional knowledge, which helps them fight the FBI attackers during the occupation, and strengthens their traditional relations. They build sweat lodges near the building they occupy (LaDuke LSW 214), and outwit the FBI by catching them in their fishing nets they put up around the entrances (LaDuke LSW 208), for example. The intersection of oppressive forces is clear from this situation, where the tribal government, the local sheriff, and the FBI work together to protect the interests of the major corporations who see profits to be made in White Earth. In this instance of the novel, much like in the 1985 "Radio-Active Colonialism" article and *All Our Relations*, it is clear how the organized social movements must think bigger than the immediate adversary, which is already a double headed one: the tribal council and the saw mill corporations.

Last Standing Woman subverts the tradition of the resurgence, return-to-the-reservation narratives that were so popular in the 1970s and 80s, like *Ceremony*, in the way one of, if not the,

evacuated with help of the progressive white community, they ask to drive the evacuating cars themselves. The organizers of the evacuation accede, assuming it has to do with pride. However, it actually shows the difference in class: "'The real reason,' he said, 'is because most of them have never been in such nice cars, and they just want to try them out'" (LaDuke LSW 197). While the Anishnaabe community suffers great poverty, both in terms of the material as in terms of the spiritual, the tribal government prospers. While the loss of land is a source of great trouble for the community, "Potlach, a British conglomerate, leased almost half of the tribal land from the tribal government," as well as acquiring the permit for a new mill (LaDuke LSW 147).

pivotal character(s), Alanis, through her presence during the activism in defense of traditional knowledge and land, finds her way back home to the White Earth Reservation (Similar to LaDuke, who is Anishnaabe from the White Earth reservation, however, she was born in Los Angeles and largely grew up in Ashland, Oregon, before first moving to White Earth in 1982). Of mixed heritage, Alanis grew up in an urban location (Denver), away from the reservation, and only starts spending a lot of time on the White Earth reservation once she is deployed by her newspaper employer to report on the occupation. During the occupation she 'returns' to White Earth, a 'home' she was disconnected from, and she learns and becomes involved with her people.[71]

This process is a struggle to her, as she is supposed to keep her distance as a journalist. At first, the distance between her and her relatives is obvious. Alanis becomes aware of how different it is that she has the possibility to live anywhere she wants, as the people living on the reservation do not have this luxury (LaDuke LSW 183-184). When the occupation team is preparing for a possible tear gas attack by the FBI, she calms herself down by reminding herself that she is "a reporter, not a member of the takeover committee" (LaDuke LSW 185). Over the course of time she realizes her own involvement, and starts to feel a "political anger," eventually siding with the Anishnaabeg for good (LaDuke LSW 198). After the occupation ends, she regularly returns to White Earth for other work assignments. In the end, she gives in to her passions and marries one of the young men who took part in the occupation. Alanis' daughter is

[71] At first, Alanis explains, "You know my family is from White Earth, but having only been there a few times, I don't really know much about it" (LaDuke 165). However, soon enough, through taking up her responsibilities to her relations, this changes. LaDuke herself was raised off the reservation but has returned and lived at White Earth for a very long time now. Through her commitments to her relations, she has become a force to be reckoned with in support of her nation and all Indigenous nations. She founded one of the most effective land return movements in U.S. history for White Earth, advocates for resurgence through food and traditional knowledge practices, and is active against the proposed Line 3 pipeline.

named by Lucy St Clair, who by that time (2001, beyond the time of writing) has become a midwife. Her name is Ishkwegaabawiikwe, Lucy's name; this way the lineage of strong women is extended into the future, connecting the newborn to the women from her tribe's past as well as its future (LaDuke LSW 291).

While still being concerned with similar issues as to educating her readers about Indigenous histories and settler colonizer violences which worked to interrupt them, *Last Standing Woman* seems less concerned with being recognized by the settler state as sovereign Indigenous peoples than with revitalizing sovereignty through a resurgence of traditional knowledges, the return of ancestral remains, and a taking back of political decision making power from the colonially installed tribal government. Opening the main story of the novel (after a set of maps, an author's note on the novel's relation to real events and traditional stories, a list of the cast of characters, and a prologue which introduces the storyteller), is a section called "White Earth" which expresses LaDuke's view on colonizer legal documents:

> "*Gaawiin wan endam gin asemaa,"* those old spirits whispered. *'Do not forget your* asemaa, *your tobacco."*
> The white man's law was different. The white man's law was all paper. A series of twenty or so treaties by the 1860s would leave the *Anishnaabeg* less land and more priests. …
> Except the paper, the *masiniaigin*, was not the land and it was not the people and it was not the magic. It was just the paper. (LaDuke LSW 24, italics in the original)

This reading of the treaties differs from how the treaties are used in Indigenous social movements, as they form the legal base for demands of recognition of Indigenous sovereignty from the settler state. LaDuke's writing here introduces the transformation of Red Power political consciousness as centered around recognition, to a political consciousness centered around resurgence.

Regularly using Ojibwe language words, *the* holders of traditional knowledge and world view, the text centers traditional knowledges even when fighting tribal council and the FBI. Her critique of Indian Reorganization Act tribal governments is reflected here in the way she presents the White Earth tribal government as being in collusion with the settler government; they are the antithesis of what Indigenous sovereignty should achieve. Instead, she imagines a future of healing, beyond the time of writing, where stolen remains held in the Smithsonian are returned to White Earth (LaDuke LSW 268-283), among other things that heal the relations with the ancestors. Through transforming a by then almost traditional genre of Indigenous novels of return, LaDuke at once makes visible her relation to these texts, as the way she reinvents the genre for her contemporary moment. Close to the end of the novel she emphasizes again, "*Anishnaabeg* understood that both the making and the unmaking were essential parts of life and necessary to keep the balance. After all, what was dawn without dusk and what was life without constant change?" (LaDuke LSW 287, italics in original).

Taking up the project of Native nationalist literature as Simon Ortiz described it, story is central to the healing of the community and the recovery of its sovereignty. While Ishkwegaabawiikwe is still in the womb, the child starts telling Alanis (the novel's main character) the stories from the women of her past; she is a dibaajimokwe, a storyteller. At the end of the novel, we learn that she, Alanis' daughter, is the narrator of the novel who identifies herself in the prologue and epilogue. The stories she tells her mother during the pregnancy "[soon] formed a web that surrounded them both and linked them from past to future. While before there seemed to be no time, now there seemed to be nothing but time, as each story joined their lives to a whole" (LaDuke LSW 296). In her epilogue, Ishkwegaabawiikwe writes: "I do not believe that time is linear. Instead, I have come to believe that time is in cycles, and that the

future is a part of our past and the past is a part of our future. Always, however, we are in new cycles. The cycles omit some pieces and collect other pieces of our stories and our lives" (LaDuke LSW 299). This clear expression of a spiralic understanding of time, where the past and the future are intricately related, and the past comes back transformed, is made visible in how the women in the novel affirm the power they have as women, how they live their genealogies, and how they are connected to the women of their pasts and their futures through the remembering of stories, songs, and names, in a sense of time that is cyclical but not repetitive.

In the next section I discuss the case of one Indigenous woman storyteller whose understanding of her case as just one instance in an ongoing spiral of anti-Indigenous settler violence, similar to the way LaDuke presented the issues at White Earth, helped her win her fight. With a strong sense of corporeal, cultural, and political sovereignty, Colville artist and organizer Yvonne Wanrow (now again known as Swan) managed to change U.S. case law through her insight that her case was an example of structural settler colonial violence against Indigenous people, especially Indigenous women, and the related work to organize a movement to support her struggle, and in this way the struggle of all Indigenous women, to keep her children safe. Despite her displacement from her homeland (to which she eventually did return), Wanrow was able to reach out to larger familial structures of support, i.e. her people and the American Indian Movement, as well as the mainstream women's movement. While her suffering shows what the spiralic settler violences can look like for one woman's embodied experience of this structural oppression, her success also means the success of her family, her people, and the movement she was a part of in the struggle to secure thriving futures for Native peoples.

"Like Mother Earth / her will to live / is strong / against overwhelming odds": Yvonne Wanrow (Swan)'s Struggle Against the U.S.' Genocidal Plan

Writing in and for the struggle for Native liberation was not usually published for a wider audience. Much movement writing, both journalistic and creative, was published in volunteer-run movement newspapers or papers like the Mohawk Nation's *Akwesasne Notes*.[72] But Native people in the struggle also wrote story and poetry as part of that struggle, if only as a way to process their situations. Colville mother, "artist and writer," Yvonne Wanrow (Colville, and now again going by her maiden name, Swan) (*Akwesasne Notes* 40), whose court case created a larger interpretation of the standard of what was considered "reasonable" to include deviations from the "rational" white male standard (Coker and Harrison, CCR), wrote many poems while she was fighting her accusation and then conviction—poems which she was so kind and forthcoming as to share with me to discuss here, as she feels "they may help others understand a little bit about what a person like me felt as I was facing prison and separation from my loved ones. Others where I face the American injustice head on, may also lend courage to someone" (personal communication, May 28, 2019).[73]

On Mother's Day, May 13, 1973, Wanrow was convicted by an all-white jury of the murder of 62-year-old white man William Wesler, a known child molester who lived only two doors down from the place of Shirley Hooper, Wanrow's 8-year-old son Darren's (white)

[72] Listing the Trail of Broken Treaties, the AIM occupation of Wounded Knee, and the suspicious death of John Trudell's family[72], Sherry Cohen in a piece for *Off Our Backs!* claims the "government presses white-out all news about Native people," because "They do not want the many peoples of this land to know that the indigenous peoples are strong, deeply spiritual and fighting every moment to preserve their sacred ways" (6). For this reason, without the social media of today, alternative newspapers such as *Off Our Backs* and *Akwesasne Notes* were crucial to Wanrow's and the larger struggles.

[73] The poems discussed here were sent to me over email for the purpose of discussing them in this chapter, yet at a later date may appear in print: Yvonne (Wanrow) Swan is currently developing a manuscript of poetry and art from that era of her life for publication.

babysitter (*Akwesasne Notes* 40). According to an article in *Akwesasne Notes* discussing the case, on August 11, 1972, Wesler, who at an earlier time had molested Hooper's 7-year-old daughter, had tried to lure Darren and Hooper's 10-year old daughter into his home, but they got away (*Akwesasne Notes* 40). Scared for what Wesler might do next, and with no action from police ("They told Hooper to file a complaint later, and suggested that she spread flour outside her bedroom window so that there would be footprints in case the man returned that night" - *Akwesasne Notes* 40), Hooper asked Wanrow (who had a broken leg in a cast) to come over with her gun, and have the women and the children all stay together for safety.

Staying awake to watch over the two women's five children together, and worried by noise coming from the Wesler house close-by, Wanrow invited her sister and brother-in-law to join them; they brought three more children, bringing the total of children in the house to eight. Unbeknownst to the women, Wanrow's brother-in-law left the house to confront Wesler, who then came to the Hooper home, joined by his friend David Kelly. In the chaos that ensued when the two attackers entered the house through the front door, left unlocked by Wanrow's brother-in-law, Wanrow, unable to physically struggle because of her broken leg, shot her gun, killing Wesler and injuring Kelly. The women immediately called the police, who rather than supporting Wanrow or reading her rights, questioned her over the phone on the recorded call (*Akwesasne Notes* 40). This phone call, where perhaps the shock from the altercation, or just the habit of dealing with high-pressure situations, could be heard in Wanrow's level-headed tone of voice, was used in court to convict Wanrow to 20 years in prison (*Akwesasne Notes* 40, CCR).

1973, the year Wanrow was found guilty by an all-white jury, was also the year of AIM's Occupation of Wounded Knee (Coker and Harrison 215); anti-Indigenous sentiment was more present in the media than ever. Wanrow's trial started on May 7, 1973; the next day, the 71-day

Occupation of Wounded Knee ended in "562 arrests and 185 federal indictments" and "was front page news all over the country" for at least a week (Coker and Harrison 220). (Wanrow) Swan explains how the American Indian Movement and her other support systems "immediately [saw] that [she]

> was prosecuted with the same political anti-Indian sentiment used against other natives. The conservative press sensationalized the Wounded Knee incident and it became international news. A lot of it was negative, and racist court people used that as leverage to prosecute and penalize native people. That's always been the American way, but Wounded Knee was a major opportunity to exploit. I almost went to prison, another negative statistic. (personal communication, February 14, 2020)

This anti-Indigenous climate was so palpable that it was noticed beyond the Indigenous people involved. Justice Robert Utter, writer of the 1977 Washington Supreme Court decision in *State v. Wanrow* which found her not guilty, remembers that "Those were times of *strong* anti-American Indian sentiment in Spokane County," with Indigenous people being the largest minority in the area (Hughes 107, emphasis in original). He recalls having to convince the other judges on the court one-by-one until he reached a plurality, even though the judges might suffer consequences from their majority-white constituencies (Hughes 108, Coker and Harrison 252).

Wanrow's later lawyers argued against a 1978 re-trial by posing that the anti-Indigenous sentiment in the local newspaper in their coverage of the Wanrow case, as well as in the national newspapers in their coverage of the Wounded Knee occupation, should have been taken into account as part of the context in which the all-white jury was making its judgment of an Indigenous woman killing a white man. Additionally, they argued, the all-white jury was not informed enough on Indigenous issues to be able to gauge whether or not Wanrow's response was "reasonable." However, the court dismissed these arguments and ruled that the jury *could*

decide whether or not Wanrow had acted reasonably *as a woman*, separately from her Indigenous identity (Coker and Harrison 255). Unable to have the re-trial dismissed, Wanrow reached a plea deal with the State; in exchange for pleading guilty to manslaughter and second degree assault, she received 5 years probation and 1 year of community service (Coker and Harrison 255). Already having been involved in supporting community members in their legal battles, Yvonne (Wanrow) Swan describes this sentence as "easy, all I did was continue volunteering" (personal communication, February 14, 2020).

The actions of her original lawyer, her assigned public defender, who had submitted a guilty plea at first, against Wanrow's wishes (*Akwesasne Notes* 40), might have also played a part in Wanrow's initial loss. On the first day of the trial, a local newspaper had printed an article stating "Mrs. Wanrow had pleaded guilty to the charge last year but changed the plea to innocent" (Appellant's Brief at 53, State v. Wanrow, No. 20876 (Wash. Super. Ct. 1973) qtd. in Coker and Harrison 231). Wanrow's later lawyer (hired through a crowdfunding campaign, *Akwesasne Notes* 40), appealed the conviction to the Washington State Court of Appeals, which reversed the murder conviction for Wanrow "based on the illegal use of her tape-recorded conversations with the police following the incident" (CCR).

Fearing setting a precedent against the use of such taped recordings, the State appealed the reversal. However, that is when Wanrow got connected to the Center for Constitutional Rights. Lawyers from the center joined the case and the all-women-lawyers team successfully argued that the use of the phone recording was illegal, and "submitted a supplemental brief attacking the sex stereotyped instructions on the issue of self-defense" (CCR). This second argument turned *State of Washington v. Wanrow* into a landmark case altering gendered discrimination against women in their consideration of what would be a "rational" response to

the type of danger in which Wanrow found herself and especially her children.[74] The Supreme Court of Washington affirmed the reversal (and thus acquittal), arguing that Wanrow had the right to have her actions be understood according to her own *"perceptions of the situation, including those perceptions which were the product of our nation's long and unfortunate history of sex discrimination"* (qtd. in CCR, italics in original). Yet, it took a few more years to fully move on from the case; failing to avoid a retrial, Wanrow agreed to the above described plea deal in April 1978.

Yvonne (Wanrow) Swan, writing in 2019, explains her attitude during the 7-year process as not staying "in a pessimistic depressed state too long," thanks to the love and support she felt from her relationship to the Creator, taking the shape of both the "Grandfather" and the "Grandmother" or "Sacred Mother" (personal communication, June 3, 2019). Instead, she tried to get her "innermost feeling" she had about the settler government's "genocidal plan" out to others, so that they might see "the big picture of impending genocide" (personal communication, June 3, 2019). In a 2002 interview, presented in Donna Coker & Lindsay C. Harrison's chapter "The Story of Wanrow: The Reasonable Woman and the Law of Self–Defense," Wanrow attributes her understanding of her case as being one fight in a larger struggle against settler colonial "race and sex oppression" to the American Indian Movement and Women's Movement

[74] Coker and Harrison offer a summary of "events that occurred within twenty-four hours of the homicide: Wesler had grabbed her son; Hooper's daughter had identified Wesler as the man who had sexually assaulted her; Hooper's landlord had stated that Wesler had molested a prior tenant's young son; Hooper had told Wanrow about seeing someone she thought was Wesler crouching in the bushes outside her home the week before; someone had twice attempted to break into Hooper's home in the previous four days and had cut the screen on her bedroom window; someone had unscrewed her front porch light; and the police had refused to arrest Wesler on charges of child sexual assault or attempted kidnapping. . . . Wesler, a large sixty-year-old man standing six feet ten inches, had entered Hooper's residence despite her screaming for him to leave; Wesler had been intoxicated when he entered the house; he approached Wanrow's young nephew on the couch; he remarked that the boy was cute; Wanrow was five feet four inches, a small woman, had a leg in a cast and had been using a crutch; Wanrow had gone to the door to call for Chuck Michel's assistance and received no reply; when she turned around, Wesler was right in front of her and seemed to be coming towards her" (237).

who took up her case (215-216). In a 1976 poem titled “What the Great White Father Said,” Wanrow (Swan) describes what she identified as that “genocidal plan”:

> Put the Indians in a group
> on the Reservations
> then divide the group
> into several sections,
>
> Take the children from their homes
> put their fathers in prison
> feed the women wine and booze
> and don’t let them find the reason,
>
> Make the children form ideals
> that keep them from their culture
> dont let them think of things
> that remind them of nature,
>
> They might get stingy of their land
> that we need for our resources
> we must develop it and use it
> to build our armed forces,
>
> If they dare to protest
> use your guns and ammunition
> blind them with your badges
> lest they rule their nations.
>
> --yvonne wanrow, 1976
> (personal communication, June 3, 2019)

Recognizing a number of separate genocidal policies as being part of one large-scale genocidal project, Wanrow lists the reservation system, the Dawes Act or General Allotment Act, the

residential schools, the introduction of alcohol to already devastated Native communities, the inordinately large numbers of Native people incarcerated compared to their population totals, as consequences of the U.S.'s insatiable hunger for more land and natural resources, and its wish to build an ever larger military complex to counter the inherent power of Native nations. In five short stanzas, Wanrow makes legible the plethora of approaches to erase and replace Native peoples for the creation of the United States. Connecting the high incarceration rates and drug abuse to purposeful genocidal policies rather than to some sort of inherent fault in Indigenous peoples (as the settler propaganda continues to claim), makes visible what is at stake, and what needs to be fought against. Seeing her case as part of a larger anti-Native structure of settler colonizer violence, the poem, in this way, shows the need to not just fight for Wanrow's specific case, but also to struggle for structural change.[75]

(Wanrow) Swan says about AIM that she, herself, "had the same drive to seek justice as AIM people" (personal communication, February 14, 2020). Wanrow and her sisters created the "Defense Committee for Yvonne Wanrow," using their artistic skills and training to "create fashion shows in order to raise money and publicize Wanrow's plight" (Coker and Harrison 239). When she met and "fell in love with [musical artist and AIM member] Floyd Red Crow Westerman before [her] trial," (personal communication, February 14, 2020) –they had a daughter, Chante, together in May 1974 (Coker and Harrison 255-256)—he introduced Wanrow

[75] Her specific situation was also a direct consequence of these larger settler colonial processes. The Columbia River dams described in the previous chapter, for example, also affected Colville. The 1935 Grand Coulee dam flooded Kettle Falls and thus destroyed a main food site for the Colville, impoverishing them (Reyes 3). The Colville came dangerously close to being terminated, and Wanrow/Swan herself was relocated to San Francisco by the U.S. government, who enrolled her in fashion design schooling (Coker and Harrison 217). When her three-year old daughter Julie died suddenly of encephalitis, Wanrow returned first to Colville, and then moved to Spokane to finish fashion school (Coker and Harrison 218). It was because the only place she could afford was in an impoverished and dangerous area, and she did not trust to rely on the police, that Wanrow bought herself a gun in the first place (Coker and Harrison 218).

to other people from AIM, who "immediately became supportive. It was like my family got bigger" (personal communication, February 14, 2020). Through Westerman, Wanrow also met Bill Kunstler, the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) lawyer who had defended Russell Means in his Wounded Knee trial; Kunstler connected her with Nancy Stearns and Elizabeth Schneider, the women CCR lawyers who took on her case (Coker and Harrison 234-235). Noting "the women's movement at the time was very strong," (Wanrow) Swan credits Cree artist Buffy Sainte-Marie's support for her ability to spread her message widely: Sainte-Marie gave her the money to buy a plane ticket to speak with Sainte-Marie's publicist, Karen Shearer, in Los Angeles (personal communication, February 14, 2020). Shearer wrote "a five-page press release" which was shared with "the feminist and the Native American press," resulting in a large grassroots support base for Wanrow (Coker and Harrison 239).

Thanks to the organizing efforts of the Defense Committee for Yvonne Wanrow, people came from all over to get involved in the campaign:

> They met with local church groups and women's organizations, sponsored fund-raising events, held press conferences, collected signature petitions, wrote letters to the Governor on Wanrow's behalf, and coordinated communication with members of the national Wanrow Defense Committee. (Coker and Harrison 244)

In Washington, DC, a "Native Women's Benefit to Free Yvonne Wanrow," also noted as "NATIVE WOMEN'S BENEFIT TO HONOR YVONNE WANROW AND THE STRUGGLES OF NATIVE WOMEN" was organized, featuring (in addition to "Yvonne Wanrow, the guest of honor who will be here") "Floyd Westerman, Indian folk singer, AIM singers and drummers, Bernice Reagan, Black songwriter, Ja Shin Do Karate demonstration, speakers from Women of All Red Nations and the Native American Women's Association" as well as "many solidarity statements from women of Peru, Ethiopia, Iran, Grenada and South

Africa" (Cohen 6). The second day of the convening reflected much of W.A.R.N.'s key concerns:

> On Saturday, the educational and cultural program begins at 9:30 AM for Registration, includes the Native American Solidarity slide show The Question You Ask, workshops on karate, fighting violence against women and children, fighting racism and sexism, the rape of Mother Earth and nuclear power and a Native Women's panel on forced sterilization, forced adoption, welfare, and political prisoners. (Cohen 6)

In the *Off Our Backs* article by the D.C. Chapter of the "Yvonne Wanrow Defense Committee," announcing the two-day fundraising event, a national day of "solidarity vigils" on the first day of Wanrow's new trial, April 16, 1979, was also announced (6). Other benefit concerts featured "such well-known performers as Buffy Sainte–Marie and Rita Coolidge" (Coker and Harrison 256).

After her case concluded, Wanrow continued to be involved with AIM, crediting them with offering her the structural analysis of her case which helped her get through it:

> That was what saved me, to focus on something else; minimize my personal struggles. It put me in solidarity with other Indian people. Instantly, I was sympathetic to AIM, I understood it as being a spiritual movement. American Indian movement, that doesn't sound like any military force to me. It sounds like the wind. It sounds like a spirit, a spirit of defense. We are in defense of our land, our life, our human rights. There's nothing wrong with self-defense and self-defense is not a crime. . . . When I got up to speak eventually on my own behalf, that was the main thrust of my talk. That Indian people are defending their rights and their land. As a person, I'm defending my rights as a mother. A mother that's defending her children and other people in that home. (qtd. in Coker and Harrison 256-257).

Her obligations as a mother are to her children, to her family, to her People in their place. Connecting her defense of her inherent personal sovereignty to that of her family and her People, (Wanrow) Swan describes how, as she "saw a big dangerous picture, it made [her] more and

more determined to fight in every way [she] could" and concludes that "As long as we keep love, unconditional love, ahead of us in our decisions, we will be just fine" (personal communication, June 3, 2019). This focus on centering love and the "Sacred Mother" is also visible in Wanrow's poetry.

One 1976 poem titled "Woman" describes the importance of this love, as well as the shape it takes when women are under threat in the structural way Wanrow experienced it herself: that of co-resistance, a continuing shared struggle to protect life and love.

Woman

Like Mother Earth
her will to live
is strong
against overwhelming odds,

the sacredness of her body
has been violated
by arrogant shows
of weakness,

she is in pain
remembering
past abominations,

She is victimized in present situations,
and wonders about the future,

We must stand together
beside her
and obey the command

of her heart
that knows only love.

--yvonne wanrow, 1976
(personal communication, June 3, 2019)

Describing the experience of spiralic temporality in a singular moment as a collapsing of the ideas of past, present, and future as all relevant violences in the now, "remembering past abominations, she is victimized in present situations, and wonders about the future," Wanrow concludes that the only way for Indigenous women to thrive in the love that Mother Earth bestows on all women is for people to "stand together beside her"; i.e. for all to fight for women to be in their rightful reciprocal relationships with their families, their Peoples, and their place.

Through her struggle, she was evidence of women's power, and brought attention to Native American women's specific circumstances, to a growing national women's movement. Sherrie Cohen (non-Native) writes, "The u.s. [sic] government wants all people, especially women, vulnerable and defenseless. Yvonne's successful defense of her children, herself and her home is an example to all of us to fight back" (6). However, similarly to Wanrow's poem "What the Great White Father Said," Cohen does not focus on Wanrow *as a woman* alone; she also points to the fact that "Genocide of the Native people has always been and still is the plan of the u.s. [sic] government" (6). Cohen's article connects the U.S. occupation of Indigenous lands, the high unemployment rates (50-85% on the reservations), the low average income rates ("2500 is the average annual income for Native American families living on reservations"), the high suicide rate ("On some reservations, the suicide rate is 10 times higher than the national average") with gendered violence against Native American women ("25-30% of all Native women have been sterilized. 25-35% of Indian children are stolen from their parents and placed in white foster homes. Another 25% are sent to Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding

schools"), arguing that "If the child-molester had been a Native American and Yvonne had been white, the case would never have come to trial" (6). From experience, her own and that of other Indigenous women in the past Wanrow is in relation with, Wanrow (Swan) knows that the way to survive and create opportunity for Indigenous women to thrive is for the people to stand together beside her, and be in loving kinship with her.

In the final section of this chapter, I will conclude my discussion of this particular spiral of Native organizing with a focus on the ongoing patriarchal settler-capitalist created crisis of violence against Native women, reflected in the ongoing crisis of catastrophic proportion of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit people, through a reading of Louise Erdrich's *The Round House.* Yvonne Wanrow Swan's story shows how, if it were not for the complex of circumstances that made she was able to defend herself –both in the moment of the forced entry into her home and during the many years in court—she herself would have been part of the appalling statistics of women lost to violence and the settler court system.

"[H]er absence stopped time": MMIWG2S & *The Round House*[76]

Jancita Eagle Deer (Brulé Lakota) in 1974 reported a 1967 rape by her then legal guardian, Legal Services Lawyer on the Rosebud Reservation William Janklow (Honor the Earth). Because of settler colonial governance, the tribe had limited jurisdiction, and it meant Janklow not only went unpunished, but continued his career, going on first to becoming South Dakota's State Attorney General in 1974 and later South Dakota Governor in 1978-1987 (and again in 1995-2003)

[76] Part of this section will appear in the introduction to the journal *Settler Colonial Studies'* forthcoming special issue on gender, edited by Yu-ting Huang and Rebecca Weaver-Hightower.

(Honor the Earth).[77] When Eagle Deer first reported the rape, the FBI had been forwarded the case by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), but never followed up (Tharp 35). Janklow did not attend a 1974 tribal court hearing which meant to consider disbarring Janklow for tribal court (the only power a tribal court had over a white man), following a petition by Eagle Deer to not let Janklow practice in tribal court because of the alleged rape (Tharp 35). Shortly after that, Jancita Eagle Deer was killed in a mysterious hit-and-run, 200 miles from her home (Honor the Earth). Her stepmother, Delphine Eagle Deer, who had taken up the case after Jancita's death, was beaten to death by a BIA police officer –the case also remains unsolved (Tharp 35). Janklow was not only untainted by his role in these violent events, but made sure to secure that impunity more structurally: Janklow went on to advocate for the 1978 *Olyphant v Suquamish* case, which stripped tribes of most of their jurisdiction over non-Native offenders. Janklow's rule in South Dakota was so anti-Native that it was dubbed "the Mississippi of the North," seizing Native lands and further diminishing tribal jurisdiction (Honor the Earth).

Louise Erdrich wraps the main narrative of *The Round House* (2012) through and around a narrative clearly based on Jancita's. In *The Round House*, we read the narration (from an undescribed point in the future) by Joe, now an adult, but 13 years old at the time of the events, about the summer of 1988, when his mother (Geraldine) was attacked and raped by a non-Native community member. The rape of Geraldine turns out to be tied to the case of Mayla Wolfskin, a young Native woman who "worked for that one governor, you know. He did all those bad things. Nothing stuck to him" (Erdrich 173), clearly invoking Janklow. The governor in the novel had gotten Mayla pregnant, and Geraldine, in her role as tribal membership administrator, had met up

[77] Just in time to prosecute Dennis Banks for his involvement in direct actions in Custer and Wounded Knee. For more on this, watch *A Good Day to Die*, a documentary film about Dennis Banks' involvement in AIM. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1540733/ [04-20-2020]

with her to create a birth certificate that named the child as Indigenous, and named the governor (named Yeltow in the novel) as the father. Linden Lark, the perpetrator, had attacked Geraldine when she was trying to meet up with Mayla and her baby to get her the file. In a clear iteration of settler patriarchal violence, the attacker,

> screamed at Mayla and said he loved her, yet she had another man's baby, she did this to him. But he still wanted her. He still needed her. She had put him in this awkward position, he said, of loving her. You should be crated up and thrown in the lake for what you've done to my emotions! He said we have no standing under the law for a good reason and yet have continued to diminish the white man and to take his honor. (Erdrich 161)

Lark covers them all in gasoline but his matches are wet, and as he goes out to grab some other matches, Geraldine escapes and finds her way back to her family. Mayla disappears, and her baby ends up in foster care. This scenario is as credible as it is violent, just one illustration of the massive crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S).

The May 2019 Canadian "National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women" report, two years in the making, calls the MMIWG2S crisis a "deliberate race, identity and gender-based genocide" (Chief Commissioner Marion Buller, in the first paragraph of her preface to the report) and offers over 230 recommendations.[78] Much of the non-Native public response, however, was focused on the appropriateness of the term "genocide," rather than on the severity of the (genocidal) crisis.[79] In what is currently the U.S., the Urban Indian Health Institute, a division of the Seattle Indian Health Board, developed a fact-finding report on MMIWG2S, subtitled "A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States" (published

[78] https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/ [04-20-2020]
[79] https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/news/the-national-mmiw-report-s-use-of-the-word-genocide-sparks-an-international-debate-QeuGxX0zh0abHVNGcSf4KQ/ [04-20-2020]

November 14, 2018).[80] Even with its limitations in what researchers were able to find due to police incompetency or disinterest (5,712 cases of MMIWG were reported in 2016, of which only 116 were logged in the DOJ database [UIHI 2]), the numbers are staggering. While the Violence Against Women Act now does incorporate some limited allowances in tribal jurisdiction on non-Native offenders in domestic violence cases, this does not do enough to address the violence the majority of Native women experience. Over 70 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives live in urban areas, partially due to federal acts such as the 1950s Termination and Relocation policies, partially due to "current barriers to obtaining quality educational, employment, and housing opportunities on tribal lands" (UIHI 3). Prevailing issues stopping prosecution of perpetrators go beyond the key issue of tribal jurisdiction, to the larger structure of settler colonialism which are relevant both on remote reservation lands as well as urban areas: a lack of prosecution by non-Native governmental structures, "lack of proper data collection, prejudice, and institutional racism" (UIHI 3). The Sovereign Bodies Institute aims to respond to this need for proper data collection with the creation of the most complete MMIWG2S database to date, logging "cases of missing and murdered indigenous women, girls, and two spirit people, from 1900 to the present," since 2019 also expanding its scope beyond what is currently the U.S. and Canada, hosted at https://www.sovereign-bodies.org/mmiw-database [04-20-2020].

The Sovereign Bodies MMIWG2S database, just as the Canadian "National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women" show how resource extraction sites with their notorious "man camps" have become sites of renewed frontier violence and extremely high rates

[80] While not stated in the title of the report, it is clearly stated on page 3 that the findings include Two-Spirit people.

of (sexual) violence against Indigenous women.[81][82] Amnesty International's 2016 "Out of Sight, Out of Mind" report focuses on sites in northern BC, but its findings can be extrapolated to other resource extraction contexts. Erika Guevara Rosas, Americas Regional Director for Amnesty International, summarizes,

> Unbridled resource development in this region is creating an environment where Indigenous women and girls are confronted with levels of extreme violence that are shocking and pervasive, even when compared to the already-deplorable level of marginalization this group confronts in Canadian society more broadly.[83]

The influx of so-called "shadow workers," uncounted temporary workers, increases the local population by 15 to 50%, causing less availability as well as price hikes of housing and other essentials. Temporary workers suffer no community accountability, and easily escape tribal jurisdiction. Combine the vulnerability of a population whose community cohesion and access to traditional foods has suffered from land and culture theft, and which has little access to social services, with "well-documented patterns of binge-drinking and drug abuse among some resource sector workers in northeast BC which contribute to the high rate of violent crime," and a volatile situation is created where Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people fall victim to living at this intersection of gender and settler colonialism. [84]

Reports like the ones mentioned above make visible, through their accumulation of years of research and data, how settler colonialism in Turtle Island and elsewhere has present-day, felt, violent consequences to Indigenous people(s), especially in terms of specific, structural, and

[81] https://newrepublic.com/article/155367/connection-pipelines-sexual-violence [04-20-2020]
[82] https://intercontinentalcry.org/more-pipelines-mean-more-threats-of-sexual-violence-for-indigenous-women [04-20-2020]
[83] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/11/canada-rampant-resource-development-puts-indigenous-women-and-girls-at-higher-risk-of-violence/ [04-20-2020]
[84] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/11/canada-rampant-resource-development-puts-indigenous-women-and-girls-at-higher-risk-of-violence/ [04-20-2020]

violent gendered oppression. Importantly, not only the murdered and missing suffer from these structures of gendered violence, their entire communities are afflicted by the loss of their mother, family member, friend, teacher, loved one, as well as by (very often) the not knowing of their whereabouts or the how of their deaths, as masterfully illustrated in Edrichs' *The Round House*.

The novel opens with the disappearance of Geraldine, which causes a suspension of her family's (and thus the narrator, Joe's) experience of time. Geraldine is who the family revolves around, the loss of her presence immediately affects the family's experiences. Joe tells us,

> Women don't realize how much store men set on the regularity of their habits. We absorb their comings and goings into our bodies, their rhythms into our bones. Our pulse is set to theirs, and as always on a weekend afternoon we were waiting for my mother to start us ticking away on the evening.
> And so, you see, her absence stopped time. (Erdrich 3)

Without his mother there, the family's daily cycles were interrupted, and a future could not be imagined. Indigenous women play central roles in the continuity of their families and their sovereign peoples.

The Round House's plot pivots around jurisdictional issues; what drives much of the plot, which starts with a violent sexual assault of the mother of Joe, a thirteen-year-old Dakota boy, is the fact that there is no legal way to hold the perpetrator accountable. Evidenced in this interchange between Joe's father, a tribal judge, and Joe, while waiting for the police in the hospital where Joe's mother has been admitted after the attack:

> Now if the police would come. They need to get a statement. They should have been here.
> We turned to go back to the room.
> Which police? I asked.
> Exactly, he said. (Erdrich 12)

We then find out which different police all show up: a state trooper, an officer local to the town of Hoopdance, and Vince Madwesin, from the tribal police (Erdrich 12). As Joe's father is a tribal judge, the story manages to seamlessly include the information about legal issues. Joe's father made sure the three different kinds of police would be there to interview Geraldine, as "it wasn't clear where the crime had been committed—on state or tribal land—or who had committed it—an Indian or a non-Indian" (Erdrich 12). Joe, the narrator from the future describing the events of 1988, explains that even then, at 13, he knew that these questions would not affect what had already happened, but they would affect what was going to happen now: "they would inevitably change the way we sought justice" (Erdrich 12).

The lack of clarity of jurisdiction on the land where the attack took place suggests that the attacker was familiar with the issues around jurisdiction and with the ways the land had been cut up into different types of land: "Three classes of land meet there, my father said. His voice pulled tight with fear. Tribal trust, state, and fee" (Erdrich 160). The violence took place in a location where, if the exact place of the crime could not be pinpointed, jurisdiction could not be pinpointed, and legal repercussions would be close to impossible to pursue. The attacker put a sack over Geraldine's head, ensuring she would not know exactly where the attack happened (Erdrich 159). In her description of the attack, Geraldine relates part of the attacker's confident speech as to how this complex of colonial and tribal law will ensure his continued freedom:

> I won't get caught, he said. I've been boning up on law. Funny. Laugh. He nudged me with his shoe. I know as much law as a judge. Know any judges? I have no fear. (Erdrich 161)

Even though the evidence to prosecute the attacker, identified as Linden Lark, is there, the question of jurisdiction remains: "Lark committed the crime. On what land? Was it tribal land? fee land? white property? state? We can't prosecute if we don't know which laws apply"

(Erdrich 196-197). Erdrich's central attention to this issue, a direct consequence of additive settler colonizer policies, makes visible why this issue of the return of the land and of full sovereignty over that land is essential to preserve Indigenous communities and ensure the safety of their people, particularly the ones at the intersection of gender and settler colonizer oppression.

The "toothless sovereignty" of Joe's reservation (Erdrich 142) is illustrated also through the presence of an FBI agent, Soren Bjerke, who could possibly be in charge of the case if the attack turned out to have taken place on land where Public Law 280 ruled. The narrator Joe, speaking from a point in the future about that summer of 1988, explains:

> That Bjerke was here anyway went back to Ex Parte Crow Dog and then the Major Crimes Act of 1885. That was when the federal government first intervened in the decisions Indians made among themselves regarding restitution and punishment. The reasons for Bjerke's presence continued on through that rotten year for Indians, 1953, when Congress not only decided to try Termination out on us but passed Public Law 280, which gave certain states criminal and civil jurisdiction over Indian lands within their borders. If there was one law that could be repealed or amended for Indians to this day, that would be Public Law 280. (Erdrich 142)

In addition to the jurisdictional complexity, there is also the issue of a lack of federal prioritization of cases of violence against Indigenous women. As the research on MMIWG2S has shown, there appears to be little federal or state interest in protecting Native women's corporeal sovereignty. The narrator Joe explains how his father, the tribal judge, goes to meet with the U.S. attorney, in an attempt to convince him to take the case of Geraldine's attack seriously. Joe explains how "The problem with most Indian rape cases was that even after there was an indictment the U.S. attorney often declined to take the case to trial for one reason or another" (Erdrich 41).

By setting the central narrative back in time, narrated from a moment in the future from the past that is present in the novel, Erdrich plays with the readers' experience of temporality. Different moments in time are simultaneously experienced as the present in the reading, making visible the intricate connections across time, and pushing back against a linear progress narrative which tries to leave the past in the past, and showing the enduring quality and spiralic return of colonial trauma. Aside from starting the novel by showing how time stops for the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, Erdrich also makes clear how intergenerational experiences of violence stick with every generation.

Linden Lark, the perpetrator of the violence against Geraldine and Mayla, is a direct descendant of perpetrators of earlier violence:

> He's studied us, said my father softly. Knows we can't hold him. Thinks he can get away. Like his uncle.
> What do you mean?
> The lynching. You know that.
> Old history, Dad.
> Lark's great uncle was in the lynching party. Thus, I think, the contempt.
> I wonder if he even knows how people here keep track of that, I said.
> We know the families of the men who were hanged. We know the families of the men who hanged them. We even know our people were innocent of the crime they were hung for. A local historical dredged that up and proved it.
> […]
> We'll get him anyway, I said. Won't we, Dad.
> But he was staring at his desk as if he saw through the oak top into the file beneath it and through the manila cover to the photograph or record of old brutality that hadn't yet bled itself out. (Erdrich 211)

The telling of the events from a point in the future, regularly inserting commentary from the future onto what is past, brings what is past into the present, with continuing relevance into the

future ("a record of old brutality that hadn't yet bled itself out"). Published in 2012, the narrative is set in 1988, shortly after the passing of ICWA (1978) and the ruling in *Olyphant v Suquamish* (1978), showing the continued relevance of these past decisions. Written during the years of activism to push for the passing of the Violence Against Women Act, which included special rules around tribal jurisdiction over non-Native perpetrators of domestic violence on reservations (passed in 2013), *The Round House* makes tangible why tribal sovereignty is key in ending the MMIWG2S crisis, and why the provisions around tribal jurisdiction are needed in VAWA, and should be extended.[85]

Native women organized and continue to organize themselves in support of Native women's corporeal sovereignty and Native children's health and education, in order to strengthen the Native family, and as such the Native nation's cultural and political sovereignty. Regina Brave (Oglala Lakota), a veteran from the Wounded Knee occupation who continues this struggle today, in a statement printed in a 1979 W.A.R.N. brochure (quoted at the top of this chapter), summarizes this position as Native women "standing up next to [Native] men," in order

[85] In recent years, the number of books concerning the MMIWG2S crisis is proliferating, from books focusing on particular serial killers like Stevie Cameron's 2010 *On the Farm: Robert William Pickton and the Tragic Story of Vancouver's Missing Women* (Knopf Canada), or Warren Goulding's 2001 *Just Another Indian: A Serial Killer and Canada's Indifference* (Fifth House Publishers), to books on the larger issue at hand, such as D. Memee Lavell-Harvard and Jennifer Brant (eds)'s 2016 *Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada* (Demeter Press), Ray Michalko's 2016 *Obstruction of Justice: The Search for Truth on Canada's Highway of Tears* (Red Deer Press), Sarah Deer's 2015 *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Univ Of Minnesota Press), and Amy Casselman's 2015 *Injustice in Indian Country: Jurisdiction, American Law, and Sexual Violence Against Native Women* (Peter Lang Inc). *Keetsahnak / Our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Sisters* (Edited by Kim Anderson, Maria Campbell & Christi Belcourt), published by Wayne State University Press in April 2018, is a collection of writings created in accompaniment of the traveling exhibition "Walking With Our Sisters." "Walking With Our Sisters," changing locations between Indigenous communities, called attention to the issue of MMIWG2S in what is currently Canada, honoring all those who have been lost by creating a long path of "over two thousand [donated] mocassin tops (sometimes called vamps)" (Keetsahnak xi), set side by side, with room for visitors to walk along these vamps left empty by those who were taken away by violence. The texts in the collection make tangible the "tension between personal, political, and public action" and "look at the roots of violence and how it diminishes life for all" (Keetsahnak xi).

to create a world for their children "so their unborn can know the freedom our Grandparents knew" (46).[86] Because "[t]he future of [their] young and unborn is buried in [their] past"; Native women, through their intergenerational work in support of healthy Native families, "will bring the rebirth of spiritualism, dignity and sovereignty" (USCCR46). This spiralic defensive action and cultural and spiritual expression was taken by the women in defense of the families and of themselves, against a genocidal system that sought (and continues to seek) to erase them.

In the following chapter, I focus on the way Native women's organizing's efforts to strengthen spiralic continuity is also always future-oriented. I discuss the creation of the Idle No More Movement and its embodied expression of spiralic temporality, the round dance, and read Métis author Cherie Dimaline's 2018 *The Marrow Thieves* in order to consider how spiralic temporality perhaps can also function as an organizing structure. Through their embodied expressions of spiralic temporality, both the Idle No More movement and *The Marrow Thieves* show how Native youth have a crucial role to play in ensuring their Peoples futurities, and how important it is for those futures to be guided by their ancestors and their traditional knowledges.

[86] Known as "Grandma Regina," she was very active in the Standing Rock Sioux NoDAPL movement, for example. https://bismarcktribune.com/news/local/bismarck/grandmother-defiant-to-the-end/article_d1edfa99-be3c-555d-8158-f9994d8cb4a6.html [04-20-2020]

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Chapter 3: Spiralic Time and Cultural Continuity for Indigenous Sovereignty: Idle No More and *The Marrow Thieves*

In *The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement* (2014), Tanya Kappo (Sturgeon Lake Cree) details a round dance flash mob at West Edmonton Mall, describing how the "people were glowing," and how, even if the dancing itself was only a moment, "it was powerful enough to awaken in them what needed to be woken up—a remembering of who we were, who we are" (Kappo and King 70). Cree elder John Cuthand tells the story of how the round dance was a gift from an ancestor who was unable to find rest because her daughter would not stop grieving her death. The mother brought "*something from the other world to help the people grieve in a good way"* and taught her daughter the round dance ceremony; the round dance ceremony creates a space where the ancestors can join the dancers and all are "*as one*" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 24, italics in original).

Idle No More's round dancing in malls, public squares, and legislative buildings as such thus directly calls up support from and involvement of the ancestors; round dancing is powerful in part thanks to its expression of cultural continuity and relations across many generations. Through the round dance, the ancestors were brought in to connect with the people, and the dancers imagined themselves as future ancestors, creating a space for those not yet born. As a result, the "people were glowing." This physical, circular movement, which connects the future ancestors dancing in the present with their ancestors invited in the space, is adaptable to different settings, and will never be exactly the same twice.

In the previous chapters, I have argued a heuristic of spiralic temporality can make Indigenous social movements' relationships to their larger histories and relationships legible, and can help to understand the spiralic relations and reverberations in Turtle Island Indigenous

resurgence and resistance, as well as to denaturalize dominant settler temporality. In this chapter, I focus on how spiralic temporality cannot just work as a heuristic that makes visible the relations between what otherwise might look like distinct moments in time, but also appears as a purposeful organizing principle of the movements I discuss. The power in the round dance ceremony, for example, can be better understood if we see how it is informed by a worldview organized according to spiralic temporality. Idle No More's focus on the spiralic (cyclical, but transforming for the moment rather than mere repetition) resurgence of cultural traditions and ancestral knowledges are exemplary of a new generation's experience of spiralic time. This is an experience of time that is better able to intervene in Canada's national temporality of reconciliation.

The Canadian nation sees historical redress through the process of reconciliation as an end in itself, rather than a continuing spiral. In the same way young people in this movement are experiencing time through round dancing, we can come to understand how they are able to counteract or respond to the underlying assumptions of a Canadian national temporality of reconciliation; one that is linear and progressive. Writing about Idle No More in the conclusion to his book *Red Skins, White Masks*, Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) describes the movement as "what a resurgent Indigenous politics might look like on the ground" (160). Derek Nepinak (Minegoziibe Anishinabe), Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, in an interview with Leah Gazan, explains the essential role younger generations play in Idle No More and Indigenous resurgence broadly. New generations of leaders did not personally experience the residential schools, Nepinak claims, so they do not suffer as much from the negative connotations settler colonizer violence attaches to Indigenous cultures (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 84). Residential schools taught Indigenous students, with the risk of severe

punishment, not to speak their languages, not to practice their spiritualities, in short, to assimilate the best they could, or else. This new generation is freer to look back, says Nepinak, and to discern what Indigenous knowledges are helpful and essential to build the thriving future older generations have been working for.

I argue that Cherie Dimaline (Métis)'s post-apocalyptic young adult novel *The Marrow Thieves* (2017) does similar consciousness raising work on radical relationality and Indigenous youth's power to build their futures in the now as the Idle No More Movement. Like other Indigenous futurist texts (and the Afrofuturist works they are indebted to), *The Marrow Thieves* employs a "conception of time" which "reject[s] the notion that all tradition is regressive by narrating futures intimately connected to the past" (Cornum).[12] Through *The Marrow Thieves*' organizing principle of spiralic time which puts Indigenous youth at the center, the novel reveals a temporal aspect to the Idle No More movement that otherwise might go unnoticed. Round dancing is also about bringing a future into the present, one that pushes back against the temporality of a progressive narrative where the Canadian state seeks to remake the Indigenous. The novel offers a counter reality to that of Canadian settler "progress" and "reconciliation." Writing directly to Indigenous youth, Dimaline invites them to see themselves as part of a continuing spiral of Indigenous presence going back to when time began and continuing into a time when they themselves will be ancestors. *The Marrow Thieves* emphasizes Indigenous

[1] Lou Cornum defines Indigenous futurism as "centered on bringing traditions to distant, future locations rather than abandoning them as relics. Indigenous futurism does not care for speed so much as sustainability, not so much for progress as balance, and not power but relation." Cornum further explains the project of Indigenous futurisms as the "profound deconstruction of how we imagine time, progress, and who is worthy of the future." https://thenewinquiry.com/the-space-ndns-star-map/ [04-20-2020]

[2] Grace L. Dillon (Anishnaabe) coined the term "Indigenous Futurisms" based on the existing "Afrofuturism," which Dillon describes as "weav[ing] in traditional knowledge and culture with futuristic ideas and settings" (https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/looking-towards-the-future-indigenous-futurism-in-literature-music-film-and-fashion-1.5036479/from-growing-medicine-to-space-rockets-what-is-indigenous-futurism-1.5036480 [04-20-2020])

youth's central role in resurgence, within and beyond Idle No More.

The Marrow Thieves responds to the Native youth suicide epidemic by inviting youth to see the central role they play in the spiralic history of their nations, and how thriving futures can be lived in the present. The novel models Indigenous alternative ways of being in relation despite of or against settler colonizer oppressions, emphasizing the importance of conceiving of a different world, and living in it in whatever (even though limited by settler colonizer violence) ways that you can. To illustrate this, the novel employs a spiralic temporal structure, one that invites a heuristic of spiralic temporality to see the novel in relation to other novels by Turtle Island Indigenous authors. It invites the readers to see the communities in *The Marrow Thieves* in relation with historic and contemporary Turtle Island Indigenous communities and the issues and values they have been and are currently experiencing, defending, and living. The novel illustrates how the spiral of Indigenous life is still moving into the future, settler violence and oppression be damned.

In this chapter, I will first detail how we might theorize and embody spiralic temporality by way of "radical relationality" and a "dynamic of care" that express the four R's, responsibility, reciprocity, relationality, and redistribution, mentioned in the previous chapter; this discussion considers spiralic temporality not just as a heuristic, but also as an organizing structure. Then, I further discuss how seeing the spiralic relations across time helps us better understand Idle No More's focus on Indigenous cultural continuity, not as a straight line, but as a history of cyclical return, with essential transformations, rather than repetitions. From there, I discuss how Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* takes up the themes from Idle No More, illustrating how spiralic temporality informs Indigenous resurgence and resistance. In this sense, what the novel in relation to the movement reveals, is how a heuristic of spiralic temporality can

support thriving Indigenous futures through making visible the larger spiral of Indigenous cultural continuity and radical relationality.

Indigenous Resurgence & Spiralic Time

The Kino-nda-niimi Collective's edited collection of writing on Idle No More, *The Winter We Danced*, begins with an emphasis on this spiralic continuity, making clear that "most Indigenous peoples have never been idle in their efforts to protect what is meaningful to our communities—*nor will we ever be*" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21, my emphasis). This relationship to what came before is not merely one of repeating a sterile past, but one of an unstoppable continuation of peoplehoods, transformed in and for each moment, always with an eye on creating a thriving future for Indigenous peoples. Spiralic time does not only allow for a dynamic return and rebirth of the past into the future, but emphasizes the relationships across time between related, transformed experiences.

Syilx scholar and author Jeanette Armstrong explains how in her Syilx worldview, "physical-earth time is conceived of as cyclic, as in a spiral. Day becomes night and returns to day *but never to the same day*" (167, my emphasis). She makes clear cyclic or spiralic do not mean repetition or routine, but instead point to cycles of transformation, cycles where new iterations return transformed. She explains how "Within that stable spiraling from one year to the next," physical beings on this earth change, "are born, grow, reproduce and die," while the cycles themselves, of the seasons, of the moon, of the days, do not change (Armstrong 167). The only thing for sure in her worldview is the spiral: the endless cycles of transformations, or of "continuous physical changes" (Armstrong 167).[3] Abenaki scholar Lisa Brooks has theorized the

[3] Armstrong gives an example of how the cycles of change inform how Syilx tell time as "change relative to other things" (167). She gives the example of her father's reference to the 1818-1819 Spanish Flu

spiral as "embedded in place(s)" (309), allowing both for a deep grounding in a particular land or water, while also allowing for movement: Indigenous peoples are not prisoners of their traditional lands, many peoples have always been moving around seasonally, trading across large territories, fighting or building kinship relations with other tribes (Vizenor MM ix).

Thinking through Indigenous relationships to the land (and the central role of the feminine), Vanessa Watts (Mohawk and Anishnaabe), in her onto-epistemological model of "place-thought," assumes a non-linear temporality which allows the past to always also be the future. Starting from the Indigenous worldviews of the Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee (of which the Mohawk are part), through the story of Sky Woman's body becoming the land, Watts explains how a going back to traditional knowledge is also a listening to what is currently being said as well as leading us to imagining a transformed future, and a path to starting to live that future in the present. She emphasizes this is 'not a question of "going backwards," for this implies there is a static place to return to' (Watts 32), when instead traditional knowledges have always adapted and changed through time. Since Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee never understood time as linear, they can access their traditional teachings also through "the ability to travel in dreams, to shapeshift, to understand what might happen tomorrow, etc." (Watts 32). Thus, resurgence is not an attempt to access "something which has already come and gone," but rather "simply to listen. To act" (Watts 32); through remembering traditional practices, relations across time are strengthened and perhaps rebuilt.

These renewed relations then bring also renewed responsibilities with them, responsibilities to maintain continuity. In *The Sacred Hoop,* Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo)

pandemic as "the-winter-people-died": "The great flu epidemic killed over two-thirds of our population, when my father was in his puberty. That change was what happened, not the number of years counted from some point one thousand nine hundred and nineteen years past. The count of years is irrelevant" (Armstrong 167).

describes that

> this is the reason traditionals say we must remember our origins, our cultures, our histories, our mothers and grandmothers, for without that memory, which implies *continuance rather than nostalgia*, we are doomed to engulfment by a paradigm that is fundamentally inimical to the vitality, autonomy, and self-empowerment essential for satisfying, high-quality life. (214, my emphasis)

Resurgence is not about reminiscing about an "authentic" past, but rather about the ways that, despite the interruptions by settler violences of land theft, residential schools, violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people, commodification of the environment, of Indigenous cultures, and of Indigenous people, Indigenous cultures persist. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, Native women play a key role in this continuity and as such have also taken on key roles in the organizing and resurgence efforts to protect and ensure thriving Indigenous futures.

Culture can still be traditional, even when it must resurge transformed in the present, for example through expression in a colonizer language; we learn this from Joy Harjo (Mvskoke) and others in the edited collection of Native women's writing *Reinventing the Enemy's Language*. Gloria Bird (Spokane), in the introduction, explains how Indigenous peoplehood lasts despite of all of the attacks by colonization; despite the loss of language, Indigenous worldviews persist (Bird and Harjo 24). She describes an example:

> my aunt once, when we were looking at what was left of Mt. St. Helen's, commented in English, "Poor thing." Later, I realized that she spoke of the mountain as a person. In our stories about the mountain range that runs from the Olympic Peninsula to the border between southern Oregon and northern California our relationship to the mountains as characters in the stories is one of human-to-human. (Bird and Harjo 24)

Despite the take-over by English, the enemy language, the worldview where non-human peoples

have agency as much as human peoples do, persists. Joy Harjo reminds us that the war on Indigenous peoples has not ended, but that to use "the enemy language" in a way that expresses Indigenous worldviews, be it in a necessarily limited way because of the use of English rather than the appropriate tribal language, is a practice of "*de*colonization" (Bird and Harjo 25, emphasis in the original). According to her tribal worldview, language is a tool for healing, and expressing yourself through words, through song, is "to remember ourselves during these troubled times**"** (Bird and Harjo 21). She writes that "to speak, at whatever cost, is to become empowered rather than victimized by destruction" (Bird and Harjo 21). The power of language to help Indigenous people "remember themselves," to be a tool for healing from colonizer violence, to be a path to cultural continuance, explains why story, poetry, and even long-form writing such as novels are so important to Indigenous resurgence. *The Marrow Thieves* clearly is a part of this work, as I will show below.

The spiralic Indigenous temporality Brooks describes, appears similar to Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's description of Aymara Indigenous time as not being one of a linear sense of history but instead one that moves in circles and spirals. In her critique of how the North American academy has taken up postcolonial studies and the decolonial, Rivera Cusicanqui emphasizes the need to be responsible to the Indigenous worldview those ideas developed in, and to remain responsible to the Indigenous social movements on the ground. She lays this out, while taking into account how Indigenous time is spiralic. This conception of time and place and the relations it requires, demands a fundamental change in colonizer worldviews; one necessitated if there will be "a 'radical and profound decolonization' in its political, economic, and, above all, mental structures" (Rivera Cusicanqui 97). Rivera Cusicanqui explains, within her Bolivian context, how colonizer attempts to reconcile and include Indigenous peoples through "the rhetoric of

equality and citizenship" eventually just "allow for the reproduction of the colonial structures of oppression," where everyone in power remains firmly entrenched (Rivera Cusicanqui 97). These words might as well describe the Canadian linear epistemology of "reconciliation," which Idle No More organizers understood as limited in this way; they call for a shift in worldview informed by spiralic temporality which is needed to understand Indigenous resurgence and resistance against colonizer oppression.

Jeff Corntassel (Cherokee Nation) and Taiaiake Alfred (Kanien'kehá:ka) define the keys of Indigenous resurgence as Indigenous self-sufficiency in terms of connection to the traditional lands, language, foods, spiritually grounded actions, and "learning-teaching relationships that foster real meaningful human development and community solidarity" (614). Describing her first experience learning from Nishnaabe Elders, Leanne Simpson (Michi Saagiig) explains how her reconnecting to Nishnaabewin through the Elders' practice "was a returning, in the present, to [her]self. It was an unfolding of a different present. It was *freedom as a way of being* as a constellation of relationship, freedom as world making, *freedom as a practice*" (18, my emphasis). Practices of freedom through creating communities of relationality, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution are not limited to more visible revolutionary spaces like the Sacred Stone and other camps at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline (see Estes 45); *The Marrow Thieves,* for example, shows how these communities of "radical relationality" which are resisting the colonial project merely by living in these relational ways can be created within city and other spaces as well, even while on the run and not solely in one place.[4]

Radical relationality is an orientation which acknowledges "the personhood of the other animals around us, the organisms that we can see only with a microscope, and even or perhaps

[4] See Chapter 4 for more on the camps at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

especially the hills, mountains, rivers, planets, and atmosphere we experience the universe alongside" (Warrior 215). Radical relationality as an orientation for Indigenous struggle makes connections across generations and moments in time to both learn from what came before and to be able to imagine a thriving Indigenous future (Estes 41); it informs dynamics of intergenerational language transmission, hunting and gathering skills, and (hi)stories. Sylvia McAdam (or Saysewahum)'s explanation of "nahtamawasewin," "one of our [Cree] most sacred and peaceful laws," as a defining orientation for Idle No More appears as another iteration of this same principle of "radical relationality" (McAdam 66). McAdam explains in *The Winter We Danced* how the Cree elders she consulted were on board with Idle No More's efforts and offered their prayers, and underscored the need to use their own laws, particularly "nahtamawasewin"; "invoked in times of crisis and great threat," "'Nahtamawasewin' means to defend for the children, all human children; it's also duty to defend for the non-human children from the trees, plants, animals, and others" (McAdam 66). Through invoking "radical relationality" to inform Indigenous resistance, Indigenous organizers and activists are making visible how their actions in their time are in relation with those that came before and those that are still to come; Idle No More was just one contemporary iteration of a spiral of Indigenous resistance rooted in cultural continuity.

"When the circle is made, we the ancestors will be dancing with you and we will be as one"

The Idle No More movement started out of a one-day workshop organized by four women in Saskatchewan: Sylvia McAdam (Nehiyaw), Jessica Gordon (Pasqua), Nina Wilson (Nakota and Plains Cree), and Sheelah McLean (non-Native). Their aim was to educate both Native and non-Native communities on how the 457-page Bill C-45, a proposed measure to modify a number of

laws, would directly affect First Nations in Canada (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21).[5] The "teach-in" was in direct response to this newly proposed Canadian governmental policy which would endanger Indigenous people and non-human relations and the land and water. It focused on the legislation's clearing space for further commodification of all relations, through scaling back consultation requirement with Indigenous communities, undoing prior protections to lands and waters, and allowing access to First Nations territories without proper consent (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21). Building on existing community struggles for cultural continuity and against settler colonizer encroachment, the one-day event sparked into a large-scale, eventually even global, movement collectively named "Idle No More," which brought people together through a focus on "three broad motivations or objectives" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 22).

The first of the three demands was the repeal of many sections in the new "omnibus legislation (Bills C-38 and C-45)" pertaining to "the exploitation of the environment, water, and First Nations territories" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 22). Secondly, the need to alleviate the emergency conditions—related to "self-sustainability, land, education, housing, healthcare, and others"—in many First Nations, most notoriously Attawapiskat (known for its high youth suicide rate), in respectful collaboration with First Nations communities (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 22). The third objective was for the Canadian government to commit to a reciprocal nation-to-nation relationship between Canada and Indigenous communities. These "mutually beneficial" relationships should be informed by the "spirit and intent of treaties" and the related "recognition of inherent and shared rights and responsibilities as equal and unique partners," instead of unilaterally making decisions harmful to Indigenous (First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit, and Métis) nations such as the proposed omnibus bill (The Kino-

[5] These are listed as "the Indian Act, the *Fisheries Act*, the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, and the *Navigable Water Act* (amongst many others")" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21).

nda-niimi Collective 22). At the core of all the demands is a demand for respect for Indigenous sovereignty and an end to Canadian legislative violence against Indigenous peoples.

The focus of Idle No More was shared, and purposely without central leadership. Instead, myriad local groups addressed their own issues in ways that were suitable for their place and time. Ken Coates (non-Native) in his book *#IdleNoMore: And the Remaking of Canada*, describes the movement as one "of mothers and children more than warriors and activists," naming Idle No More's purpose as being more about culture than about politics (Coates xi). A closer look at the movements' concerns and actions makes clear that on the ground, it was a movement of mothers and children who also were warriors and activists, with concerns which were cultural as much as political. Idle No More was Indigenous families fighting for Indigenous families, i.e. for cultural continuity of their peoples as peoples. In order to secure cultural continuity and Indigenous sovereignty, matters of governmental policy needed to be addressed head on. Modeling the world they were fighting for in the process of the struggle, actions took the shape of "flash mobs" of round dancing. This embodied practice and ceremony that connects generations across time, reclaimed space for Indigenous continuity often in spaces usually controlled by settler colonizers, such as malls, city centers, and Canadian legislative buildings (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 24).

Describing the origin of Idle No More's 2012-2013 winter of actions, The Kino-nda-niimi Collective emphasizes the relation of Idle No More to Indigenous history and future, describing it as "an emergence of past efforts that reverberated into the future" (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21). In Sylvia McAdam (Saysewahum)'s words, "Idle No More resistance began long before in different names, different locations through the generations since the arrival of Europeans" (McAdam 65). Naming the relations of Idle No More's actions with "the

maelstrom of treaty-making, political waves like the Red Power Movement and the 1969-1970 mobilization against the White Paper, and resistance movements at Oka, Gustafson Lake, Ipperwash, Burnt Church, Goose Bay, Kanostaton, and so on," The Kino-nda-niimi Collective suggests a vision of Idle No More as one flashpoint that got a lot of attention in a spiralic history of continued Indigenous resistance to Canadian encroachment on Indigenous lands, languages, and lifeways which often goes unnoticed (The Kino-nda-niimi Collective 21).

Russ Diabo (Kahnawake Mohawk)'s 2012 *First Nation Strategic Bulletin* article "Harper Launches Major First Termination Plan: As Negotiating Tables Legitimize Canada's Colonialism," reprinted in *The Winter We Danced,* makes clear how Canadian "reconciliation" efforts continue to happen on settler colonizer Canadian terms. Diabo's dissection of Harper's 2012 termination strategies shows how the current "reconciliation" is built on efforts to "negotiate" with tribal leadership in order to diminish Indigenous sovereignty, turn Indigenous nations into Canadian municipalities, and always work toward the goal of legitimizing the settler state through this disappearance and assimilation of Indigenous nations into the Canadian settler colonizer state (Diabo 55).[6] Both an example of and a metaphor for Canada's vision for Indigenous Peoples, Canada originally rejected the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007, because of the UNDRIP's incommensurability with "Canada's domestic policies, especially the articles dealing with Indigenous Peoples' Self-Determination, Land Rights, and Free, Prior Informed Consent" (Diabo 57). Canada eventually signed the UNDRIP in 2010, but treats it as subordinate to its own federal domestic policy (despite it being an act of international law), and continues to make unilateral policy decisions

[6] Diabo makes visible how the 2012 Termination policy was a direct extension from earlier legislation such as the Indian Act and the 1969 "White Paper on Indian Policy which set out a plan to terminate Indian rights," of which the original timeline of 5 years to achieve this goal of termination was extended to a slow, "long-term implementation" (Diabo 55).

concerning First Nations (Diabo 57). Sylvia McAdam describes how despite Idle No More gaining traction globally, and the many "resounding "no consent" protests, rallies, and teach-ins," most of the proposed measures "aimed at privatizing Treaty land, extinguishing Treaty terms and promises as well as Indigenous sovereignty" were accepted and turned into legislation (McAdam 66). Despite a supposed commitment to reconciliation, Canada continues to unilaterally make decisions that negatively affect the Indigenous peoples whose territories it occupies.

Brian Burkhart (Cherokee Nation) emphasizes that the theorization of the relationship to land is at the heart of both Indigenous sovereignty and the settler colonial project (122). In *Red Skin, White Masks*, Coulthard summarizes resurgence as theorized by Leanne Simpson and Taiaiake Alfred as "draw[ing] critically on the past with an eye to radically transform the colonial power relations that have come to dominate our present" (157); considering resurgence through spiralic temporality makes legible how reclaiming the past does not mean being limited to an infinite repetition of the same cycle of traditional knowledge, but to the fluidity of the continued relevance of the core values of Indigenous ways of knowing (156). In her 2017 book, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, speaking from her Nishnaabeg context, Leanne Simpson conveys the "real urgency of resurgence" (5), as continued settler encroachment on treaty lands and treaty rights makes it increasingly important for Indigenous peoples to exercise their treaty rights and to continue to embody the systemic alternatives to the settler colonial structures as Nishnaabe people "have always done" (6). The urgency is real, as Simpson argues, because the violent erasure of Indigenous peoples by settler societies is real and ongoing, "the force that has removed [her] from [her] land, it has erased [her] from [her] history and from contemporary life, and it is the reason we currently have

thousands of missing and murdered Indigenous women and Two Spirit/queer people in Canada" (Simpson 7).[7] Spiralic temporality allows us to see how experiences of Indigenous cultural continuity are related across moments in time, and how these relations structure the present and inform the future.

"[T]o set the memory in perpetuity": Spiralic Temporality in *The Marrow Thieves*

Full of metaphors and different tools to help interpret the present day colonial context in what is currently the U.S. and Canada, Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* explicitly models how Indigenous resurgence is continuity, and that traditional Indigenous ways of knowing are quite literally, in the case of the novel, the key to Indigenous not just survival, but thriving. In *The Marrow Thieves*, Dimaline shows how the colonial, capitalist progress narrative is embodied through environmental destruction and imagines a further development where the issues with "progress" are reflected in colonizers' loss of their ability to dream, or their ability to imagine a thriving future for themselves. Rather than addressing the settler colonizer anti-Indigenous policies and treaty breaking habits directly, *The Marrow Thieves* is set in a future which echoes contemporary concerns by Indigenous people regarding reconciliation discussed above; it is a post-apocalyptic world where all of the Canadian government's termination and so-called "reconciliation" efforts have paid off in favor of the Canadian settler colonizer state. There appear to be no strong Indigenous nations anymore, tribal leadership has very limited power, and

[7] Simpson admits it took her many years to realize that the stories the Elders she was learning from told her were of a practice that also embodied a theory, and that she was only able to get to this transformed understanding "through deep engagement with the Nishnaabeg systems inherent in Nishnaabewin … including story or theory, language learning, ceremony, hunting, fishing, ricing, sugar making, medicine making, politics, and governance" (19). Nishnaabeg knowledge is embodied knowledge, which enables a transformation of worldview and of being in the world that strengthens Nishnaabeg nationhood despite, or regardless of, settler colonial structural violence (Simpson 7).

Native people have been forcibly assimilated into Canadian society in a way that detached many from their languages and cultures. The novel uses the familiar images of "blood memory" and bone marrow to embody Indigenous ways of knowing and being in ways they can be passed on.

In this way, *The Marrow Thieves* itself appears to take the shape of a spiralic transformation of an earlier iteration of this blood narrative in Native literature: Gerald Vizenor (White Earth Ojibwe)'s *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991). Chadwick Allen, in his book *Blood Narrative,* describes how Vizenor's humorous story takes the concept of "blood memory," as coined by N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa), and turns it into a tangible substance which can be extracted from Indigenous people's DNA in order to literally, physically heal Indigenous children (Allen 192). Transforming Vizenor's satirical take on "blood quantum politics" through the empowering qualities of Indigenous memory physically present in the blood, Dimaline starts from the other side of the same idea: the ways settler colonizers, perhaps through the process of reconciliation, could learn how to turn that into a tool to help themselves, and further destroy Indigenous people and peoples. *The Marrow Thieves* addresses the histories and present of anti-Indigenous capitalist violence, which is also violence against the non-human world, and centers Indigenous radical relationality and cultural continuity as the guides to building thriving futures in spite of and against the violence of the world.

The Marrow Thieves' reflection of *Idle No More* concerns also puts the text in relation with earlier work by Native women authors writing for thriving Indigenous futures, for example, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*'s engagement with Red Power, and its resurgence narrative of returning to the reservation for healing. *Ceremony* imagines possibilities for futures where Native people find healing through reconnecting with the land and their communities, despite the distressing consequences of U.S. Termination and Relocation policies at the time (See

Introduction). There are stylistic and narrative similarities also with Winona LaDuke's *Last Standing Woman*, for example in how the storyteller of *Last Standing Woman* is the child of Alanis, an Anishnaabe woman once estranged from her community, but who returns to the White Earth reservation and ends up standing and fighting with them for what is needed for the community's future (See Chapter 2).

In *The Marrow Thieves*, non-Natives lose their ability to dream, and thus their vision for living. Dimaline describes how, although the changing earth was giving all the signs that the human peoples neglected their obligations towards it and cried out in much devastation ("she went out like a wild horse, bucking off as much as she could before lying down" (Dimaline 87)), settler governments would not change their linear progression towards total destruction. Millions of people died; melting polar ice changed climates and caused violent weather, tsunamis, tornados, and earthquakes; oil and gas pipelines "snapped like icicles and spewed bile over forests, into lakes, drowning whole reserves and towns" (Dimaline 88)–yet settlers would not change their ways. Dimaline writes,

> "But the powers that be still refused to change and bent the already stooped under the whips of a schedule made for a population twice its size and inflated by the need to rebuild. Those that were left worked longer, worked harder. And now the sun was gone for weeks at a time. The suburban structure of their lives had been upended. And so they got sicker, this time in the head. They stopped dreaming. And a man without dreams is just a meaty machine with a broken gauge. (Dimaline 88).

The progress-oriented settler temporality and worldview preclude futurity through their "miscalculation of infallibility" (Dimaline 87), i.e. because settlers do not honor reciprocal relations but instead use up every resource until they are all gone, they have little to guide them, and thriving futures are hard to imagine (or "dream"). Thus, they reach to Indigenous people to

ensure their own futurity. However, much like their extractive relationship to the land, settlers did not attempt to enter in reciprocal relationships with Indigenous peoples; rather, they treat them like another resource to exploit.

The novel takes up the issue of settlers finding themselves through the foil of the Native in the most literal way;[8] it connects the driving plot point of colonizers taking Native people's dream-holding bone marrow for themselves with earlier iterations of appropriation and extraction. Dimaline explains how, at first, non-Native people looked to Native peoples for teachings and guidance, in a way Native people had experienced before: "the way the New Agers had, all reverence and curiosity" (Dimaline 88). However, also "like the New Agers," they swiftly changed course and started trying to appropriate traditional knowledges to better serve themselves, without taking on the according obligations; settlers asked themselves, "How could they best appropriate the uncanny ability we kept to dream? How could they make ceremony better, more efficient, more economical?" (Dimaline 88). This commodification of traditional ways led directly to the commodification of Indigenous peoples; as a result of these developments, Indigenous bodies are turned into resources to serve settler "progress."

Colonizers lost their ability to dream, but their Church and their scientists figure out that Native people still can dream, and that they hold their dreams in their bone marrow (Dimaline 89). In the new residential schools, non-Native people leech the bone marrow out of the Native people they have been able to catch, in order for those stolen dreams to sustain non-Native life. Patrizia Zanella (non-Native) explains the new iteration of the term "school" for the purpose of taking bone marrow for dreams: "By largely forbidding the use of Indigenous languages and separating kinship ties, the old system of residential schools similarly participated in the theft of

[8] For more on this common settler trope, see Philip J. Deloria (Yankton Dakota), *Playing Indian,* Yale University Press, 1998.

memory, growth, and dreams" (Zanella 8). Using the same term is a powerful way to make that connection clear and comment both on the past of residential school violence and the present of superficial Canadian reconciliation attempts which are a violence in their wish for easy "progress" and erasure of past harms despite their current reverberations.

The colonial violence and racism Dimaline describes in the hellscape of a future in which the story is set is not hard to believe, because this future society she imagines builds on what we have already seen happening in the past and which we continue to see happening in the present. Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) in *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter* emphasizes that, "[w]hen apocalypse appears as an overt theme in Indigenous writing, it's more than speculation – it's experiential, even in its most fantastical, because in a very real way it hasn't ended" (Justice 168). Through a depiction of what the world might look like if the current threads of colonial power imbalances and violences are allowed to continue to develop, the novel shows it all has come to pass in different iterations before: through the residential schools, through different waves of genocide, through the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people epidemic.

The violence Native people are subjected to in the text builds on what we have seen in the past and continue to see; it appears as a vision of a spiralic transformation of settler colonizer anti-Indigenous violence. Yet, the alternatives Dimaline posits, the new world building possibilities as well as the way people survive through the hardships, are also not new: they are rooted in long histories of survivance and relations across time and space, cultural resurgence, etc.; Indigenous strength lies in their spiralic relations across time.

In Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves*, we follow a teen boy, Francis, or French(ie), a nickname inspired by his Métis identity. We first meet him when he loses his family to the

marrow thieving colonizers (specifically to their police-like force called "Recruiters"); he soon encounters a new, complex family, created out of different people who were on the run separately and came together for safety and for community, and starts to build relations with them (Dimaline 15).We learn about Frenchie's experiences in his voice, but it is Miigwans, the father figure in the new family Frenchie becomes a part of, who tells "Story," the complex of narratives which holds Indigenous knowledges and experiences all should know to be able to live and thrive in the post-apocalyptic world of *The Marrow Thieves*—which looks a threatening amount like our current world.

This "Story" again puts Dimaline's novel in relation with LaDuke's *Last Standing Woman*. The story of *Last Standing Woman* is told by a storyteller who connects women across time, across generations, from seven generations ago to beyond the time of writing. It imagines the reconnecting of Native people with their relations, through a returning to the land of Alanis, and through the returning to the land of ancestors that were being held at the Smithsonian—this last act a reflection of the possibilities the passing in 1990 of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) created. Both *Last Standing Woman* and *The Marrow Thieves*, within their contemporary conditions, address the political landscape, and center Indigenous radical relationality to their human and non-human kin and other Indigenous ways of knowing in their visions for thriving Indigenous futures. *The Marrow Thieves*, for example, addresses the environmental destruction of the world, including the bursting of the pipelines Native communities are currently fighting all across what we currently call North America.

The Marrow Thieves itself uses a thematic spiralic structure, which allows transformation to come to pass. We learn that Frenchie's new composite family is attempting to run away to

safety, on foot through the snow and the woods, with only what they can carry on their backs. They are headed north, away from a new wave of residential schools. Stories from survivors who ran away, like Miigwans, taught them that colonizers are locking up and killing Native people. In the beginning of the text, we are told that Frenchie's father, when they were still together, had already told him to walk north:

> "North is where the others will head. We'll spend a season up by the Bay Zone. We'll hole up in one of those cabins up there and I'll try to find others. We'll find a way, Frenchie. And up north is where we'll find home."
> "For sure?" [Frenchie asks, and his dad responds,]
> "Hells yes, for sure. I know so because we're going to make a home there. If you make something happen you can count on it being for sure." (Dimaline 6)

In an experience of time as spiralic, the knowledge of the victories against oppression gained by earlier generations, helps lend confidence in their generation's ability to endure and succeed in turn.

In the end, Frenchie does find a thriving Indigenous community up north, and he is reunited with his father who turns out to be a part of it. Through the central role of cultural continuity and relations across time, both to the ancestors and to those not yet born, spiralic time is evidenced to be a central trope in the text, essential in the struggle against settler colonizer violence. Frenchie's father's confidence in the future underscores both the importance of this image of a thriving future to motivate the struggle that is happening in the current moment, as the belief that this future can and will exist, no matter how hard settler colonizers work to keep Indigenous people(s) limited to the past and outside of the contemporary experience.

The Marrow Thieves places Indigenous youths' ability to thrive not in a future of Indigenous liberation but one of a renewed iteration of the constant state of emergency of

Indigenous apocalypse (Canadian "reconciliation" claims notwithstanding). In this way, the novel models resurgence, action, existing, resisting, loving, survivance, and thriving in a way which can be related directly to our current moment, which is one of an apocalypse in progress since 1492. The novel emphasizes the importance of intergenerational relationality, of cultural continuity, of building relations (blood and otherwise), and to both live fully as Indigenous youth and also to resist the violences and the pressures of the settler colonizer structures. The text is not one where Indigenous youth live happily ever after in a world that appreciates them, rather, it is a story about Indigenous youth figuring out how to still live happily while the apocalypse is everywhere around them. The aim is to show Indigenous youth that there is a future, and that they already have the power to create it.

The Marrow Thieves engages with an Indigenous temporality, and imagines an Indigenous future which is not quite like the next step in the settler colonizer teleological "progress" narrative, but rather is a future which is still deeply grounded in the relations to the lands and the stories and histories of the pasts and present times. In a 2017 interview with *The Star*, Dimaline explains how she sees her young adult novel functioning as making visible the spiralic relations between the ancestors, the youth today, and those not yet born:

> We have a suicide epidemic in our communities. I've done a lot of work in the past with Indigenous youth and one of the things I realized is that they didn't look forward, they didn't see themselves in any kind of a viable future. And I thought, what if they read this book where they literally see themselves in the future, and not just surviving but being the heroes and being the answer, then that's it. (Dundas)

The novel makes visible a route to cultural continuity despite of and in spite of the contemporary experience where "[t]he end of the world is every day right now" (Dundas). While imagining this future of struggle, Dimaline's characters all still get to also enjoy life. The story is not just one of

survival in the face of violence, there is also much room for reconnecting to traditional knowledges as they exist transformed in the novel's future present, as well as for teen angst and joy about love and sex and family. Despite the violence of commodification of their literal beings, the characters remain firmly connected to their relations, old and new, and to their own humanity. Surviving is more than just physically making it to the next day: it is also about building "a life worth living" (Dimaline 152), a life where Indigenous people can thrive.

The epigraph of the novel, *"For the Grandmothers who gave me strength. / To the children who give me hope,"* firmly places *The Marrow Thieves* into relation with both those who came before and those who are yet to grow or even to be born. This relationship across generations is evidence of the spiralic relations going from when time began into the future, as well as a call to attention and action of the need to strengthen these intergenerational relations, for the well-being of Indigenous children (both alive today and those not yet born) and, by extension, of Indigenous nations and their sovereignty. Michael Chandler and Travis Proulx (both non-Native)'s 2006 research on First Nations youth suicide suggests that "cultural continuity" is a core factor in youth suicide. Chandler and Proulx refer to the discussion of time in philosophy, from Heidegger and Kierkegaard to Ricoeur to Gallagher, to establish that a human's daily choice to keep living despite hardship is decided by the person's ability to imagine themselves in a future (127). For humans, our lives only make sense when we can understand ourselves as part of a timeline, when we can see our pasts and our presents in a way that helps us anticipate our futures (Chandler and Proulx 127). A second, important aspect of this continuity in time is that for Indigenous youth specifically, this *self-continuity* is keyed in to cultural continuity. Chandler and Proulx demonstrate that "persistent peoples require access to *shared* procedures and practices (cultural tools, if you will) that allow them to imagine and

sustain a *shared* history and a *common* future" (136, emphasis mine, brackets in the original). Their research with First Nations in what is currently British Columbia, Canada indicates that those communities with strong cultural continuity have low or zero rates of youth suicide, while the inverse is also true: the nations that so far have been less successful in "preserving ties to their cultural past and in achieving a measure of local control over their own present and future civic lives," "typically suffer youth suicide rates many hundreds of times higher than the national average" (138). Chandler and Proulx conclude that projects that "serve to preserve or rebuild [ties to their past and future] work as protective factors that shield [Native youth] from the threat of self-harm" (140).

Lisa Wexler (non-Native) similarly posits "that a historical understanding of and affiliation with one's culture can provide Indigenous youth with a perspective that transcends the self," which can help them see themselves as part of their nation's story and "offers young people a collective pathway forward" (272). Her research shows that Native American children who know more about their cultural identities and about their communities' histories have a stronger sense of belonging and identity. This supports their self-continuity: when the youth know more about their past and their connections with their ancestors and their place in the community, these are "cultural tools" that they can use so that they can more easily imagine a successful future for themselves in this community (Wexler 272). Essential here is the focus on the relational aspect of this experience; for Indigenous people, self-continuity requires cultural continuity, the belonging in the larger story of the nation and larger set of relations with the traditional lands.

Dimaline reflects this drive for self-continuity through cultural continuity in the younger generations wish to re-learn and live the traditional ways of knowing, embodied in cultural

practices they only sort of know. Frenchie describes how during their family's travel north,

> Us kids, we longed for the old-timey. We wore our hair in braids to show it. We made sweat lodges out of broken branches dug back into the earth, covered over with our shirts tied together at the buttonholes. Those lodges weren't very hot, but we sat in them for hours and willed the sweat to pop over our willowy arms and hairless cheeks. (Dimaline 21-22)

Even though they are on the run for the marrow-thieving Recruiters who are always on their heels, the youth desire to make space and time to re-learn and practice as well as they could those traditional knowledges that teach them who they are, how to relate, and how to be. Healing and meaning are found through these resurgence practices, by creating connections between the present generation and all those who have come before. Through these practices, the youth actively work to participate in the spiral of Indigenous sovereignty of which they are a part.

Thinking of the past as always present, and of the current self as that of a future ancestor, so of the present as also a future past, informs the living of the future in the now. Per Nick Estes' description of the power of radical relationality in the #NoDAPL camps, there is a present potential to actively choose to make the future we strive for real in our present. Not only does one need to be able to imagine a future to see purpose in living in the now, we need to work on making that future our current reality. *The Marrow Thieves*, through making the spiralic movements and relations visible, models the many small ways in which we can do that now, and speaks directly to Indigenous youth to invite them into these spiralic relations. One of the key ways to strengthen self- and cultural continuity, is the re-centering of Indigenous ways of knowing.

In a 2017 interview with Trevor Corkum (non-Native) for 49th Shelf, Cherie Dimaline herself explains how *The Marrow Thieves* grapples with settler colonizers violences such as

"residential schools and the danger of shallow reconciliation efforts, commodification of culture," and emphasizes that "[i]t's crucial at this time that we accept that the Western way of thinking about our world is a broken theory, that Indigenous Traditional Knowledge is vital to any forward movement" (Corkum). One moment in *The Marrow Thieves* that illustrates this lesson, is when it describes a Council, led by Frenchie's father, setting off to the capital to try and convince the people in power that a whole new world grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing was necessary for a future where everyone could thrive to be possible (Dimaline 141). The Council recognize that the key to ensuring a futurity on the dying Earth is to unlearn Eurowestern settler logics and to start from the land, to reconceive of the world in a way that will not inevitability lead to another repeat of violence like the coming of early explorers and settlers, like the residential schools, like the destruction of the environment.

Miigwans, who takes on the role of the family's mentor and guide, was the guide on Frenchie's father and his Council's journey to the seat of the settler government, and describes the reasoning for the attempt:

> They had this crazy notion that there was goodness left, that someone, somewhere, would see just how insane this whole school thing was. That they could dialogue. That they could explain the system had to die and a new one be built in its place. Like that wasn't scarier to those still in the system than all the dreamlessness and desert wastelands in the world. (Dimaline 141)

David Gaertner (non-Native), in a blog post titled "Welcome to the Desert of Reconciliation," concurs that this moment is perhaps one of the most essential in *The Marrow Thieves*. Gaertner, referring to the same 2017 interview with Dimaline by Corkum, understands Miigwans' analysis of the moment as Dimaline's refusal of "shallow reconciliation efforts." The call to take seriously Indigenous ways of knowing, and their incommensurability with capitalist settler colonizer societal structures, sets up an understanding of Canadian reconciliation as always

limited by their own settler colonizer worldview, a worldview which leads Canada directly to its own as well as larger planetary destruction. Instead, in order to break out of the system non-Native people are married to because of how it solidifies their own position of power, the settler colonizer political economy needs to be thoroughly transformed, starting from Indigenous worldviews (Gaertner, via Coulthard, Aug. 2018). *The Marrow Thieves* models what centering Indigenous ways of knowing during a state of constant, settler colonizer imposed, emergency looks like, and, importantly, shows them to be the key to liberation.

The novel itself is a story about how things came to be how they are at the end of the narrative, offering teachings on how to understand the world we live in today, and modeling ways to use Indigenous ways of knowing to transform the future. We begin with Frenchie, who never learned his language, and who loses all of his remaining family members at the beginning of the novel. We then follow him as he makes a new set of relations, learns some of the language, works to reconnect with ancestral knowledges (with some stumbling, like when he at first does not recognize the importance of the elder Minerva's teachings [Dimaline 38]), and then chooses a path which catalyzes a renewed empowerment of his new family, and for the larger Indigenous communities. He does this so successfully that he even reconnects with his father, without that meaning he is set up with a choice between the two sets of relations: the story models how he can hold all of his complex relations at once, and remain in reciprocal relations of responsibility with both his blood and chosen relations (Zanella 13). The fact that the narrative is told in the past tense by someone who participated in the events suggests that they survived, that they made it, that they are in a situation where they have the time to tell this story which makes up the novel.

The story of the novel is a continuation of the "Story" that is being told in the novel,

the ”Story” of how the world of the novel came to be how it is. “Story” in the novel serves as teachings and guidance for Frenchie’s complex new family while they try to find a way to get away from the mortal danger of the Recruiters. Miigwans, the family’s guide and the teller of “Story,” explains that they all need to know “Story,”

> because it was imperative that we know. He said it was the only way to make the kinds of *changes that were necessary to really survive*. “A general has to see the whole field to make good strategy,” he’d explain. “When you’re down there fighting, you can’t see much past the threat directly in front of you.” (Dimaline 25, my emphasis)

“Story” are teachings from the past iterations of both anti-Indigenous violence and Indigenous cultural practices. This knowledge is shared so as to allow the listeners of “Story,” the members of the new family, to make the necessary transformations, rather than have repeat experiences.

It is through the knowledge of “Story” and the earlier iterations of settler violence and Indigenous resistance and resurgence that Frenchie and his new family know that if they work to continue their traditional practices, they too can survive this violence. And not only can they survive, perhaps lessons can be learned from the previous generations’ experiences to ensure Indigenous futurity for good. Miigwans starts “Story” by explaining “Anishnaabe people, us, lived on these land for a thousand years,” and when the newcomers “who renamed the land Canada” came, the Anishnaabe people welcomed them. He goes on the explain how war and disease brought the Indigenous peoples to their knees, despite the fact that they were supported by their traditional knowledges; Miigwans tells the family, “We were great fighters - warriors, we called ourselves and each other — and we knew these lands, so we kicked a lot of ass.” … “But we lost a lot. Mostly because we got sick with new germs” (Dimaline 23). Because they did not yet have the knowledge needed to defend themselves against these “new germs,” Indigenous peoples suffered immense amounts of loss.

Miigwans explains how settler colonizers doubled down on these losses and opened the first residential schools, striving to completely eradicate Indigenous ways of knowing, languages, and even lives. He describes the painful experiences of the earlier generations with a previous iteration of residential schools; these schools might not have been bone marrow factories, but they too were destructive: "We suffered there. We almost lost our languages. Many lost their innocence, their laughter, their lives" (Dimaline 23). However, the insight Miigwans wants the youth to take away is that despite all of the violence and the great losses, as a people, Anishnaabe not just survived, but got the schools to close: "we got through it, and the schools were shut down. We returned to our home places and rebuilt, relearned, regrouped. We picked up and carried on" (Dimaline 23). Miigwans family, too, can rebuild, relearn, regroup, and carry on, is what "Story" teaches them.

While struggles continued and many years were lost to the deep hurt caused by all the losses ("too much pain drowned in forgetting that came in convenient packages: bottles, pills, cubicles where we settled to move around papers" [Dimaline 23]), the resurgence of traditional practices, of education within the appropriate cultural contexts ("classrooms we built on our own lands and filled with our own words and books" [Dimaline 24]) is what made the people, the people again. They regained their strength and their inherent sovereignty through remembering their spiralic relations across the generations which informed their identities; Miigwans emphasizes: "And once we remembered that we were warriors, once we honored the pain and left it on the side of the road, we moved ahead. We were back" (Dimaline 24). The "we" here is the people, his people, yet of many generations ago. It was through the reestablishing of the relations with the earlier generations and the resurgence of traditional knowledges embodied in practices that the earlier generations' eventual victory was brought into the present, Indigenous

self- and cultural continuity was strengthened, and sovereignty was rebuilt. An attentive listener to "Story" can learn from their ancestors and reach for their traditions as well, and let them be guides in their own struggle for survival.

"Story" explains, through a reflection of time as spiralic, how the thieving of the marrow began: "It was like the second coming of the boats, so many sick people and not enough time to organize peacefully" (Dimaline 87), and it describes how Native people "were moved off the lands that were deemed 'necessary' to that government, same way they took reserve land during wartime" (Dimaline 88). So that the destruction and violence of earlier iterations might not return to finish the job, it is important to remember its "Story" and "*set the memory in perpetuity*" (Dimaline 25, my emphasis). Importantly, traditional knowledges can and should be transformed to fit the new conditions, as a full understanding of history and culture is needed "to make the kinds of changes that were necessary to really survive" (Dimaline 25), and build thriving futures.

Crucially to the novel's plot and concerns, "Story" shows how not just the anti-Indigenous violence reiterates through spiralic movements in time, the key to ending all the violence does too. Dimaline locates this key in Indigenous cultural continuity, personified by the character of Minerva, an elder who speaks the language (Dimaline 38), practices the culture (Dimaline 152), and knows how to use herbs for healing (Dimaline 93). When the core family we follow loses the elder Minerva, they find her collection of jagged-edged jingles, made from lids taken off with the "camp can opener and stamped with expiry dates and some with company names: Campbell's, Heinz" (152). When one of the younger ones asks about the jingles (confused because jingles are meant to produce noise, which they are told not to do in this current world in which they are being hunted), the response is powerful, even though at that

point it still unknown that it is exactly what holds the key to their liberation. One of the older family members explains how "[s]ometimes you risk everything for a life worth living, even if you're not the one that'll be alive to live it" (Dimaline 152). This is one of the many moments where the relations across time, across generations, are shown to be central to the characters' way of conceiving of the world and of their place in it.

Not only are their traditional cultural practices essential to their survival as a people, they can be transformed in the moment without losing value (using Campbell's & Heinz lids, for example). The jingles connect the people we are following in the story with their ancestors through the continuation of the healing cultural practice of the jingle dress dance, born during a previous apocalyptic time, the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918-1919 (Child 126), transformed for their present. At the same time, the jingles also connect them to a future where their descendants are thriving, as they are cause to imagine themselves as future ancestors continuing the culture transformed. Frenchie's new community consider themselves not just in relation with their ancestors, but also conceive of themselves as future ancestors to those who are not yet born. In this way, the jingles represent spiralic time through their cultural meaning and the connection across time they represent.

Another moment where the spiralic experience of time is made tangible in the present is when Miigwans explains what happens to the Native people that do get taken by the new schools, where "they leach the dreams from where our ancestors hid them, in the honeycombs of slushy marrow buried in our bones" (Dimaline 90). Miigwans explains the relations between generations, between the ancestors and the future generations. Once they are destroyed by the non-Native people taking their dreams, the people "join [the] ancestors, hoping [they] left enough dreams behind for the next generation to stumble across" (Dimaline 90). The aim is

always for cultural continuity, as Indigenous cultures, language, and spiritualities are proven to be the key to Indigenous liberation. This cultural continuity is also about personal, familial relationships (in the previous chapters, we have seen the family *is* the Native nation). This is evidenced here in the way the people who are taken follow their ancestors' example in life, and become ancestors for the new generations in their deaths; they are not gone but remain in relationship with the living, and their experiences and knowledges guide the future generations continuity. One could argue they, too, just like the jingles, are examples of spiralic time personified, in the ways they hold the traditional teachings, transform them for the present, and pass them on for the future generations to apply to their own lives.

Miigwans, a survivor of the new residential schools, synthesizes the development of the new residential schools as updated, transformed versions of the old residential schools (Gaertner Oct. 2018). Moving through a recognizable cycle, Indigenous people were first displaced from their lands, their cultures commodified; then their literal blood became the commodity, and the high need moved the process from voluntary "medical trials," to subjecting incarcerated Native people, to the creation of new residential schools in order to incarcerate even more Native people to leech from (Dimaline 88-89). Miigwans explains how Native people were tricked into participating, to "then [keep] us locked up, figuring out ways to hone and perfect their 'solution' for sale" (Dimaline 89). Needing to assure their access to commodified Native blood, "they turned to history to show them how to best keep us warehoused, how to best position the culling" (Dimaline 89). However, Indigenous peoples already have the key to break out of this settler erasure; also part of this experience of time as spiralic are the Indigenous resurgence strategies that inform Indigenous survivance.

The alternatives Dimaline posits, which center Indigenous women in their roles as

knowledge holders, teachers, and leaders, are also not new: Indigenous survivance is rooted in long histories of Indigenous culture, language, and kinship traditions, and relations across generations, time, and space. *The Marrow Thieves* suggests a way to un-settle the Eurowestern ways of knowing we take for granted, as they are what create the destruction of the world, and to restart from a relationship with the land and all its relations; it invites us to think with an Indigenous spiralic vision that allows for possibilities for a world not already limited by the settler imagination, but opened up through radical relationality across time, space, and relations. The Indigenous people fleeing the violence, despite having lost so much of their relations, to people, to traditional lands, to language, come together and create new families, new relations. They figure out new ways to live on the land as the land has changed through exploitation, while their old knowledge which informed a traditional relationship to the land is still relevant. At one point, Frenchie chooses not to shoot a moose during a hunt, because the moose would be too big to take it all. What had to be left would rot, which is not a good use of the animal, even if the part they could have carried would have filled their bellies for a few days (Dimaline 49). Survival is more than the food itself, it is also about survival of traditional values, of a worldview which promises a healthy community with all their relations, based on radical relationality.

While he considers whether or not to kill the moose, Frenchie considers the moose's relationship to time and to Frenchie's own experiences. He muses,

> He was so frigging big. It was like he was a hundred years old, like he had watched this all happen. Imagine being here through it all – the wars, the sickness, the earthquakes, the schools – only to come to this? (Dimaline 49)

Frenchie honors the moose as a relation part of a spiralic experience of time. Much could perhaps be done with the part of the animal they could use, but much more would be wasted, and

as such shooting the moose would dishonor the relation. On his walk back to camp, Frenchie admits feeling some regret about his decision, but then recognizes that he "was empty-handed, but something in [his] chest was burning a little brighter" (Dimaline 50). The decision to do right by his relation (the moose), had brought him closer to the kind of world, the kind of community he wanted to be living in. We start the following chapter with the moose recurring in Frenchie's dreams as a quiet presence, as the welcoming "soft warmth of his flank" waiting for Frenchie at the end of a long path along a wall (Dimaline 52). Frenchie muses, "In a way, I got that moose. He visited me in my dreams" (Dimaline 52). The rest of this short chapter considers the question "Do you think circumstances make people turn bad? Or that people make circumstances bad to begin with?" (Dimaline 53). From the moose's continued, calming presence in Frenchie's dreams, we might conclude that if nothing else, at least Frenchie stayed true to the shared values, making a world of good in bad circumstances.

When Minerva, the new family's elder, is taken, and the jingles she secretly had been collecting are found, Frenchie's new family decides to stop running. At that point, the new family had lost both their youngest member (Riri) to Native people collaborating with the Recruiters, and their elder (Minerva) to the Recruiters themselves. Having lost "their roots and their future respectively" (Zanella 16, unpublished), and having killed a man involved in the loss, Frenchie comes to the painful realization that the only way to ensure their continuity is by standing up to their oppressors. He urges his family to stop running away from the danger and instead to charge towards it:

> The rest of my little family looked at me with curiosity. Something had changed. Whether it was this second huge loss or the life I'd taken with all the speed of vengeance back at the cliff, I wasn't sure. But there was no more north in my heart. And I wasn't sure what I meant to do until I said it out loud.

"I'm going after Minerva." (Dimaline 153)

Minerva might have been stolen from them, but the jingles she left them are a strong reminder of the power the family has in their shared knowledges and spiralic relations across time, as well as of the central importance of the elder Minerva as holder of so much knowledge. Even without having been sewn onto a dress to perform the healing jingle dress dance, the jingles already carry cultural power to remind the family of their inherent sovereignty and the strength in their relations.

Once they change direction, the family find another, bigger community made up out of Native people from all over. This bigger community is leading a fight against the marrow thieves, and in the process, or as a basis, created a safe-haven for Native refugees north of the existing residential schools. Their camp, hidden behind a cave, smells of "Tobacco. Cedar. And the thick curl of something more, something I thought I'd only ever smelled with the memory of smell" (Dimaline 168). This memory of a smell suggests that the knowledge of it was passed on through the generations, without Frenchie ever having been able to experience it himself, until he gets to this camp.

This memory could be interpreted as a "blood memory." This recurring trope suggests a kind of memory of a knowledge that is passed on through the generations, without actually ever having been taught. We see it, for example, when Frenchie tries to hunt by himself in the very beginning without ever having hunted before. He describes he hopes it will somehow come to him, as some kind of "blood memory" (Dimaline 10). The use of "blood memory" here emphasizes the connections across time, even when people were forced to skip the practice of cultural continuity for one or more generations. We learn that the smell of the camp which is known without ever having been smelled before is the smell of sweetgrass (Dimaline 168), a

traditional herb.

Other traditions guide the Indigenous community as well: right when Frenchie's family first enters the camp, the Council of that camp just ended a sweat to welcome a new Council member (Dimaline 168). We learn that it is the same Council Frenchie's father traveled with to try and change the world's leaders' minds, but with some new members as well. The Council members are described to be seven people all from different nations, Frenchie's father still with them (Dimaline 169). Frenchie finding his father, and the smaller complex family finding this culturally strong and resilient community, is interpreted as proof that the decision to stop running and to take matters in their own hands, was a good one (Dimaline 177).[9] From this community, Frenchie and his family learn what happened with Minerva.

The moment Recruiters try to take Minerva's bone marrow in the so-called "school," her singing in the language explodes the whole system. This resurgence of traditional knowledge relies on her "blood memory":

> The Recruiters would later be identified through dental records. … Minerva hummed and drummed out an old song on her flannel thighs throughout it all. But when the wires were fastened to her own neural connectors, and the probes reached into her heartbeat and instinct, that's when she opened her mouth. That's when she called on her blood memory, her teachings, her ancestors. That's when she brought the whole thing down. She sang. She sang with volume and pitch and a heartbreaking wail that echoed through her relatives' bones, rattling them in the ground under the school itself. (Dimaline 172)

As a result, the whole building is blown up, ending the operations there. The dental records comment suggests all workers present were killed in the explosion, but Minerva survives.

[9] "We are going to get Minerva. French was led here by that belief, and it turned out to be a good one. Minerva is close by, and he found his dad. That's a pretty overwhelming sign we're on the right path." (Miigwans, Dimaline 177).

Through her singing in the language, she connects with the ancestors who are buried underneath the building. This connection through land, through language, through ceremony, and through kinship across time, is what transforms the cultural teachings into the power to bring down the destructive so-called school, and into an opening for a future where Indigenous people's fates are transformed. Other Native refugees camped in the woods in the area use the smoke of the burning building to smudge. They make ceremony out of the end of the violence there: "the campers made their hands into shallow cups and pulled the air over their heads and faces, making prayers out of ashes and smoke. Real old-timey" (Dimaline 174). The power of cultural continuity is in Indigenous self-determination and transformation. Minerva's cultural knowledge, some of it passed on through blood memory, meaning despite the oppression by settler colonizers, is shown to be the key to the possibility for a thriving Indigenous future.

Another essential aspect of the work for thriving Indigenous futures is the relationship with place, with the land and all its relations; the people and the land share their experiences with violence as well as their healing capacities. The newly created diasporic community in the north exists out of Indigenous people from all over Turtle Island; yet, while they come together in their new configurations and in new locations in order to protect their families from the marrow thieves' settler colonizer violence, this does not mean they have given up their relationships of responsibility with their original homelands.

Settlers have destroyed the land and poisoned the water, so they reached into Native communities and stole theirs. Miigwans explains in "Story" that "America reached up and started sipping on our lakes with a great metal straw. And where were the freshest lakes and cleanest rivers? On our lands, of course" (Dimaline 24). Thanks to the reciprocal relationship with the land, Indigenous communities took great care of their lands and all their non-human relations;

the settler colonizer conception of land as property and resources and their focus on linear progress made that eventually, the only livable lands and drinkable waters were also destroyed.

Miigwans continues to tell Story, explaining how eventually, after the "wars for the water," "The Great Lakes were polluted to muck. It took some doing, but right around the time California was swallowed back by the ocean, they were fenced off, too poisonous for use" (Dimaline 24). Much of what was the United States has been completely destroyed, either flooded by the rising sea level, or turned toxic from environmental degradation. Clarence, a leader Frenchie meets at the camp up north, explains to him, "Closer you get to the coasts," … "the more water's left that can be drunk. The middle grounds?" … "Nothing. It's like where the bomb landed and the poison leached into the banks, everything's gone in all directions till you get further out" (Dimaline 193). The water and the land were made unlivable. The cities are not in much better shape. Frenchie describes how "the sidewalks were shot through with arterial cracks and studded with menacing weeds that had evolved to survive torrential rain and lack of pollinators" (Dimaline 8). As settlers destroyed the land, they also wrecked the relations with the animal and plant nations. Of the animals left, Frenchie says, "Wildlife was limited to buzzards, raccoons the size of huskies, domestic pets left to run feral, and hordes of cockroaches that had regained the ability to fly like their southern cousins" (Dimaline 8). The land and all its relations, including human and non-human peoples, had to suffer the consequences of the settler drive for so-called "progress." The suffering of Indigenous peoples in this apocalypse caused by a linear settler temporality's obsession with progress and development is directly related to the suffering of the land and its other relations.

The experience of immense loss Frenchie has when Riri is lost and all he has left is the one boot she was wearing he managed to hold on to, is likened to the loss of grounding. The

feeling of loss results in a complete detachment from place, an alone-ness floating in space:

> There is a feeling that has no name because, really, it is such an absence that it exists only in a vacuum of feeling and so, really, can have no name. It sucks you inside out and places you in a space where touch and taste and sound and sight all turn to ash. I was there now, alone. There was no mooring, no ground, no sky. There was just me and the boot... (Dimaline 135)

This feeling of loss of such a young relation, of a family member that should have become the next generation, is likened to the loss of all senses and relations, of all grounding. We might from this image deduce how a loss of the physical land and all its relations, which the peoples belonged to, might lead to a similar sense of "no mooring, no ground, no sky." Closer to the end of the novel, the takeaway from the telling of the destruction of their lands and the consequences in "Story" becomes clear.

For the people who belong to those lands, true healing on Turtle Island requires the healing of the land; Clarence explains this to Frenchie:

> "All we need is the safety to return to our homelands. Then we can start the process of healing."
> I was confused. "How can you return home when it's gone? Can't you just heal out here?"
> Miig and General gave each other knowing looks, and Clarence was patient with his answer. "I mean we can start healing the land. We have the knowledge, kept through the first round of these blasted schools, from before that, when these visitors first made their way over here like angry children throwing tantrums. *When we heal our land, we are healed also*." Then he added, "We'll get there. Maybe not soon, but eventually."
> (Dimaline 193, my emphasis)

The traditional knowledges, past on through the generations, make that Clarence knows that the lands are as important as the cultures; we have seen in the previous chapters how the relations in

a place all inform the worldview coming from that place. Clarence here explains how that essential knowledge about the land and how to care for it was passed on across the previous iterations of settler violences. It is that knowledge that informs Indigenous ways of knowing and being even in their apocalyptic future present. They know that "Maybe not soon, but eventually," the land will be healed and future generations of Indigenous peoples will live healed and thriving lives. Trusting on the futurity promised in a temporality that is spiralic, their actions are motivated by the idea (discussed above) that "[s]ometimes you risk everything for a life worth living, even if you're not the one that'll be alive to live it" (Dimaline 152).

"Our history is still unfolding"

While not literally in the grip of a bone marrow extricating machine, Indigenous people in Canada *are* in the grip of Canadian genocidal violence, commodification of Indigenous cultures, and of Indigenous lands and waters. In response to the death grip of the settler colonizer nation on their lands, Idle No More emphasized the central role of culture and continuity for Indigenous sovereignty. Round dance flash mobs were an essential part of Idle No More's actions; centering culture and Indigenous people being Indigenous people (rather than centering the interaction with settler colonizers and/or the settler colonizer state), the round dances were a powerful experience for the drummers, singers, and dancers who participated.

Evidenced by Idle No More, and illustrated by *The Marrow Thieves*, even as the situations in different moments in time vary, the power of relations, language, culture is in their not being static but living. *The Marrow Thieves* offers imaginations of healing in the future. It presents a spiral of relations through writing and telling story that center resurgence, relationality, and a plurality of futures where Native people do more than merely struggle to

survive: they find ways to build community, create new relations, and fight for what matters, while still being honest to the experience of violence and other trauma that Native people exponentially have to live through. Recognizing the working of spiralic time as a non-linear temporality which allows the past to also always be the future, emphasizes continuity and intergenerational relations.

"Story" within the story of *The Marrow Thieves* models the cyclical churning and the ways in which time loops around itself in this imagined future of the novel that is also the present. It models radical relationality, and through its insights offers the key to ending all violence: cultural resurgence, which is always also cultural continuity, even if the continuity is one only accessible through "blood memory," rather than being purposely passed on through living relations. *The Marrow Thieves* is providing that key through making its critique on superficial reconciliation and through its embodiment of continuity of culture transformed.

This approach to live radical relationality and to give space to teen angst, love, and joy, as *The Marrow Thieves* does, is essential, because as Aman Sium (Tigrinya and Eritrean) and Eric Ritskes (non-Native) write, "If we are waiting for the dismantling of colonial structures before we focus on rebuilding Indigenous and decolonial alternatives, we will always be too late" (viii). Instead, through the resurgence of embodied practices that rebuild the relationship with the land, both the peoples and the lands to which they belong can be healed. In Sylvia McAdam (Saysewahum)'s words (speaking about Idle No More's purpose):

> it is in the lands and waters that Indigenous people's history is written. Our history is still unfolding; it's led by our song and drums. (67)

In the following chapter, I discuss how Indigenous radical relationality informed the daily practice of the movement camps against the Dakota Access Pipeline. Readings from the collection of Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakota) writing, *This Stretch of the River,* and Demian DinéYazhi''s "Water Is Life: A Poem For the Standing Rock / Demian DinéYazhi' Wishes He Was at the Camp of the Sacred Stones in North Dakota" offer insight into the traditional embodied knowledges and relations informing and supporting the water protectors. I also consider the ways the pipeline is a renewed iteration of settler colonial violence against Mni Sose (the Missouri River) and the peoples who belong to it; while settler temporality does not allow for iterative histories, applying a heuristic of spiralic temporality makes legible how settler violences, too, are experienced spiralically in this particular place. A heuristic of spiralic temporality helps make visible how traditional Indigenous worldviews, and the central relation of the river, support ways to both better understand the structural, iterative nature of settler violences and to better work against and un-settle them. The now well-known phrase "Water is Life" is a battle cry which centers a worldview of radical relationality in the struggle against settler violences to the land and all its relations, and *for* Indigenous sovereignty.

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Chapter 4. "[T]his is what the prophecy looks like": Radical Relationality, Spiralic Temporality, & the #NoDAPL Movement

I know nothing chokes the spirit
Of the damned river
Nothing chokes the powerful purpose
Of this silent creation—Mnisose
-Lydia Whirlwind Soldier[1]

We must stand together and we must kill the black snake.
-Tamakawastewin (LaDonna Brave Bull Allard)[2]

The #NoDAPL movement is part of the long spiralic history of Indigenous sovereignty, resistance, and resurgence (partially) described in this dissertation. Much like the Idle No More (or #IdleNoMore) movement discussed in the previous chapter, #NoDAPL was able to create a strong base of support through making legible the connection between protecting the environment and Indigenous sovereignty (Dhillon and Estes 2). The #NoDAPL movement reunited the Oceti Sakowin ("The Seven Council Fires," a confederation of Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples, also known as "The Great Sioux Nation"), joined by many thousands of other Native and non-Native people, in support of Native sovereignty and against settler intrusion on sacred Native lands and waters.[3] However, the #NoDAPL movement was not an exceptional or

[1] Howe and TallBear 1-2
[2] https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/dakota-access-pipeline-prayer-1.3887441 [03-05-2020]
[3] Much like all earlier organizing described in other chapters, celebrities like Jane Fonda (https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/24/standing-rock-thanksgiving-jane-fonda-dakota-access-pipeline [2020-02-10]) and Mark Ruffalo (https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/mark-ruffalo-in-standing-rock-leo-dicaprio-jesse-jackson-head-to-standing-rock-29XiY-sTnEugO_RFlCMtzQ [2020-02-10]) visited the camps, Shailene Woodley was arrested (https://time.com/4538557/shailene-woodley-arrest-pipeline/ [2020-02-10]), and Woodley designed and promoted "I stand with Standing Rock" T-shirts as a way to raise funds to support the water protectors (https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/entertainment/people/shailene-woodley-533430#7u8zmA1uwSEOPst4.99 [2020-02-10])

new occurrence. In this chapter, I build on Kul Wicasa scholar Nick Estes' historical work on the struggle against the North Dakota Access Pipeline in its context as just the most recent recurrence of a long-term struggle for the water and against settler colonizer encroachment on Indigenous nations' rights to land, water, and their ways of knowing and being in the world. Although centered on the present, the discussion in this chapter spirals out to its contexts before and after the events of the camps at Standing Rock.

Where a heuristic of spiralic temporality focuses on how Indigenous peoples and their ways of knowing and being are always in relation to those who have come before and those who are yet to come, settler colonial time is a temporality weaponized to obscure the spiralic reality of intergenerational relationality and cyclical returns with transformations. Despite its own attempts to hide the continuous recurrence in different forms of its genocidal project, settler colonial violence, too, participates in Indigenous spiralic temporality, because it is part of Indigenous lived experience. I argue that an Indigenous, rather than a settler colonial, imagination of history and time is what allowed the Standing Rock movement to be more than a protest. The No Dakota Access Pipeline or #NoDAPL camps were an actual realization of the future that Indigenous people are fighting for; in this way, the camps brought the spiralic temporal relations together in their place, evidencing a spatial dimension to spiralic temporality.

In *Our History is the Future*, his essential book on the #NoDAPL struggle and its place in larger Oceti Sakowin history and traditions, Estes describes how the #NoDAPL camps, similarly to Ruth Wilson Gilmore's "abolition geography," created Indigenous freedom as a *place* (252-253). Not limited by the settler colonizer frame of possibilities, the camps "created that future ["without settler colonialism and the oppressive institution of the state"] in the here and now" through a centering of a radical relationality which "capaciously welcomed the excluded" (Estes

253). Referring to the #NoDAPL camps as an example, Estes underlines that Indigenous radical relationality forms "an infrastructure, a solid foundation," of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, yet one which is "not immutable," as evidenced in different iterations of Indigenous social movements (some of which are described in this dissertation) (Yazzie and Estes 41). In this way, #NoDAPL evidences how the future is both temporal and spatial. A heuristic of spiralic temporality also allows us to better see the particular spiralic relations in a particular place, and offers insights which support the building of new relations to that place (the land and all its relations) in that place. The NoDAPL camps, informed by an understanding of radical relationality and intergenerational relations as spiralic and all present in the now, created a space to rebuild spiralic relations and rebuild Indigenous sovereignty in *place,* i.e. in the complex set of reciprocal relations of responsibility with the land and all its (human and non-human) relations.

Part of the transformation of the water protectors' movement, in this particular return, is that they were able to produce their own narrative. Thanks to their mass use of social media, #NoDAPL water protectors and supporters were able to get their stories, and the understandings of history and the treaties which informed their actions, out to a large audience. Many non-Native people would otherwise only have access to the linear settler colonial media narrative that purposely divorces the #NoDAPL movement from is relations to earlier iterations of Oceti Sakowin sovereignty and the struggle against settler colonial intrusion and destruction. The mobilization of an understanding of the intergenerational relations (including with those who have passed and those who are not yet born) and returns (not repetitions) allowed this alternative way of thinking temporality to be realized, not just as the aspirational work towards shared goals announced in prophecy, but made real in the present in the sovereign Indigenous space of the #NoDAPL camps.

In the following sections, I first introduce the #NoDAPL movement, and then place the DAPL in the ongoing spiralic history of the Oceti Sakowin by summarizing two earlier iterations of settler encroachments on Oceti Sakowin sovereignty, namely the coming of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and the Pick-Sloan dams. Next, I read the Oak Lake Writers Society, a group of Oceti Sakowin authors, edited collection *This Stretch of the River* for the ways it is informed by, embodies, and employs Oceti Sakowin ways of knowing while setting the record straight on settler misgivings originating from and perpetuated by Lewis and Clark. Understanding the worldview illustrated by the texts in the collection allows for a clearer understanding of Oceti Sakowin motivations in their actions against DAPL, as well as the DAPL's relations to earlier iterations of settler violence. Then, I discuss how the people creating the #NoDAPL camps, informed by Oceti Sakowin ways of knowing, started living the future they were fighting for through their practice of radical relationality and their work to fulfill their responsibilities to their relation, the Mni Sose (or Missouri River), in the shape of the #NoDAPL fight. In closing, I consider the #NoDAPL movement's relations and effects beyond Oceti Sakowin lands and waters, through a discussion of Demian DinéYazhi' (Diné)'s poem "Water Is Life: A Poem for the Standing Rock --Demian DinéYazhi' Wishes He Was at the Camp of the Sacred Stones in North Dakota."

"[T]his is what the prophecy looks like"

Adapting a common protest chant to fit their purposes, Water Protectors at Standing Rock and at #NoDAPL support marches across the world shouted in call and response, "Tell me what the prophecy looks like, this is what the prophecy looks like" (Dhillon and Estes 1-2). The coming of the Dakota Access Pipeline (or DAPL) fulfills the Lakota prophecy of the Black

Snake, which "would come into the homeland of the people and cause an existential threat," according to Nicole Ducheneaux (Lakota), one of the attorneys for the Standing Rock tribe (Adams-Heard). Tamakawastewin, most commonly known by her English name LaDonna Bravebull Allard (Dhillon and Estes 43), explains how her people had been waiting for the prophecy to come true, considering, for example, whether the black-tar covered highways were perhaps the Black Snake (People questioned this idea, asking "The interstates are covering the Indian trails and the Indian roads. How would that destroy the world?" [Dhillon and Estes 45]). But when the oil pipelines came, leaking black liquid that killed everything alive it touches, "then we understood: this is what is coming to kill the world" (Dhillon and Estes 45). Importantly, the Black Snake Prophecy also includes that the people will "stand up and stop it. We have no other choice but to stop the Black Snake to save the world" (Dhillon and Estes 45). The pipelines must be stopped, if people want to live, rather than continue "destroying what gives us life" (Dhillon and Estes 45). The Black Snake Prophecy brings a future into the present, calling people to fight for and create the future world they want their descendants to thrive in, in the present.

Nick Estes argues that "prophecies like the Black Snake are revolutionary theory" (14). The Black Snake Prophecy informs Oceti Sakowin worldview, including how to live with the land, water, human and non-human peoples, and is evidence of a relationship to temporality which is counter to the settler colonizer "linear conception of time" that allows people "to distance themselves from the horrific crimes committed against Indigenous peoples and the land" (Estes 14). Linear settler time does not only allow the disavowal of the relation to past violences (which endure into the present), but also creates new narratives to take up the space of a possible awareness of the relation.

Estes claims stories like that of Thanksgiving are like war propaganda, actively obscuring actual violence and erasing Indigenous experiences. He reiterates how, for Indigenous peoples, there is no strict divide between the present and the past. Not only is "the present … structured entirely by our past and our ancestors," what possible futures can be built are "also determined by our understanding of our past"; in other words, "Our History is the Future" (Estes 14-15). This conception of temporality, where prophecy from the past informs the future building in the present—and where the relationships between all these generations and movements is emphasized, not ignored—structures the #NoDAPL movement: in its struggle against the pipeline, the movement built on its age-old traditions to start living a thriving Indigenous future in the present.

While perhaps not always perfectly executed, the #NoDAPL camps at Standing Rock brought traditional values into the present, and demonstrated how the camps and water protectors could serve the creation of thriving Indigenous futures by adhering to relations of accountability. Melanie Yazzie (Diné) and Cutcha Risling Baldy (Hoopa Valley Tribe) call this Indigenous feminist "ethos of living well"—built on Indigenous relational values and squarely opposed to settler capitalist commodification of those relations—"radical relationality" (2). The "radical" here denotes both a going back to "roots or origins, as in a relationality from which all life and history derives meaning and shape" and a "revolutionary change" "towards decolonization" (Yazzie and Risling Baldy 2). Radical relationality invites relationships of reciprocity and responsibility between organizing movements of the past, present, and future, between "the Black Radical Tradition and traditions of Indigenous resistance," and the ways they relate, shift, and grow as "accumulated knowledges and selectively inherited genealogies of emancipatory struggle" (Estes and Yazzie 41). Sarah Sunshine Manning (Shoshone/Paiute) describes

#NoDAPL as a moment Indigenous peoples had been waiting for, in her words,

> Our blood memory yearned for Standing Rock. We yearned for the health and well-being of generations past, the days of healthy families, healthy communities, and a healthy land to walk and live upon. Our blood memory yearned for deep purpose and connection, again—connection so lacking in a world addicted to material things, a world moving so fast that it forgets the most basic elements of just being human. (Dhillon and Estes 290)

The radical relationality lived in the #NoDAPL camps was a spiralic return to the "deep purpose and connection" experienced by Indigenous peoples before settler encroachments on their lands and ways of life and relating, an experience Manning viscerally knows through blood memory (see a more detailed discussion of blood memory in chapter 3). #NoDAPL was not a one-off. It came not out of the blue but was rather, in Marcella Gilbert's (Lakota/Dakota) words, "a continuation of Native struggles" (in Dhillon and Estes 287).[4]

In line with the discussion of Native women's organizing in the previous chapters of this dissertation, in *Our History is the Future*, Estes makes clear "It should come as no surprise that #NoDAPL was led primary by Indigenous women"; he lists "youth leaders, such as Bobbi Jean Three Legs, Zaysha Grinnell, Tokata Iron Eyes, and Jasilyn Charger," as well as elders "LaDonna BraveBull Allard, Phyllis Young, and Faith Spotted Eagle" (83-84). Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate scholar Kim TallBear connects the #NoDAPL struggle, led by women such as Tamakawastewin, known as LaDonna Bravebull Allard, directly to the #IdleNoMore movement, started under the leadership of 4 women in Saskatchewan (three Native and one non-Native, see chapter 3) (Dhillon and Estes 43). Despite settler mainstream media's focus on stereotypical expectations of Indigenous leadership (men in headdresses), Estes emphasizes that "it was

[4] Marcella Gilbert also lives this continuation; the daughter of Madonna Thunder Hawk (Oohenumpa Lakota), she is, together with her mother, continuing the work. For more on Madonna Thunder Hawk and Marcella Gilbert, see the 2018 documentary Warrior Women, www.warriorwomenfilm.com [04-20-2020]

common for Two-Spirited people and women to hold leadership roles in all aspects of camp life—from sitting on the general camp council (composed of elders and traditional leadership), to leading direct actions" (62). That women of all ages started and co-led the camps was visible on social media, however; social media is also where they originally broadcast their call to join the camps in the first place.

Water Protectors at the #NoDAPL camps made good use of social media to share words, photos, and videos with an ever-growing audience.[5] The hashtags #NoDAPL, #waterislife, and #mniwiconi took off, resulting in many people responding to the call to either join in person or send donations, to make calls to their representatives or organize solidarity actions in other locations. Marcella Gilbert notes that this social media presence is what made #NoDAPL so successful, as opposed to the 1973 American Indian Movement takeover of Wounded Knee (in which her mother, Madonna Thunder Hawk, participated), which was not able to speak directly to the general public (Native and non-Native).[6] While the mainstream media attention Oceti Sakowin received in 1973 did put Oceti Sakowin back on the map for many non-Native peoples who had grown up on a steady diet of media littered with romanticized or "disappearing" Native Americans, not being able to control the narrative meant that the American Indian Movement at the time could not as effectively get their version of the events across (Dhillon and Estes 287). In the case of #NoDAPL, however, water protectors were able to use the mainstream media and general public's interest in a romanticized view of ecological plains "Indians" (perhaps the most

[5] The #NoDAPL message received much support and solidarity in places around Turtle Island and the whole world. The September 13, 2016 national day of action for example, resulted in "more than 100 events in 35 U.S. states and at least five other countries, including Canada, Japan and Portugal" (Yesennia Funes, "Twitter Recap of Today's Global #NoDAPL Day of Action," *Colorlines*, Sept. 13, 2016. https://www.colorlines.com/articles/twitter-recap-todays-global-nodapl-day-action [03-05-2020])

[6] "At its height, the 1973 encampment at Wounded Knee involved two hundred people, whereas there were more than ten thousand at Standing Rock" (Elizabeth Ellis in Dhillon and Estes 179).

commonly known stereotype from the Hollywood movies) to then instead share their own messaging about the enduring relevance and importance of the treaties, of their cultural and spiritual views and values, and about what twenty-first-century Indigenous peoples and their daily lives look like (Elizabeth Ellis, Dhillon and Estes 180). Much like with the Idle No More movement, social media helped the #NoDAPL movement grow at a high pace, allowing people from all over the world to stay informed regardless of—even despite of—the mainstream media's messaging about the water protectors.

Indian Wars Again, and Again, and Again

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is the newest iteration of anti-Indigenous violence in Oceti Sakowin lands, a continuation of the violence heralded by the 1803-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition and embodied in the Pick-Sloan dams' flooding of tribal lands, which, through dislocating entire Indigenous communities and disrupting the Mni Sose (also known as the Missouri River)'s natural flow, interrupted the lives of all relations depending on the river.[7] The #NoDAPL camps at Standing Rock, according to Nick Estes, created a "vision of an anticolonial Indigenous world coexisting with non-Indigenous people," yet that message was smothered in the coverage of the recurring police violence against the water protectors (63). The DAPL, by now a "1,172-mile underground 30" pipeline transporting light sweet crude oil from the Bakken/Three Forks production area in North Dakota to Patoka, Illinois," uses economic arguments to garner support;[8] it would "increase domestic crude oil production, create eight to twelve thousand new jobs, and generate millions of dollars for the American economy"

[7] For example, "On the Crow Creek Sioux Indian Reservation, the Fort Randall and Big Bend dams flooded approximately sixteen thousand acres of reservation land and displaced 40 percent of the tribe's population ([Danker] 88)" (Hernandez 85).
[8] https://daplpipelinefacts.com/ [03-05-2020]

(Hernandez 88). To achieve these goals, Energy Transfer Partners, "one of the largest and most diversified midstream energy companies in the country with more than 86,000 miles of pipelines traversing 38 states," was supported in its struggle against #NoDAPL water protectors by both private and public police forces.[9] Dhillon and Estes recognize the collaboration between state and private security forces to protect settler capitalist interests against Indigenous water protectors, taking the shape of "the ritualistic brutality of tear gas, pepper spray, dog attacks, water cannons, disinformation campaigns, and twenty-four-hour surveillance" as a modern iteration of the so-called "Indian Wars," which also aimed to clear the land of its Indigenous protectors (5).

Estes notes, for example, how the September 3, 1863 Whitestone Hill massacre, "payback and punishment" in the 1862 Dakota Uprising, was repeated when, on the same day in 2016, DAPL security forces charged peaceful water protectors with attack dogs (Dhillon and Estes 46-49).[10,11] Tamakawastewin (LaDonna Bravebull Allard) describes how, when the DAPL police attacked with dogs, she asked a police officer on a road nearby for help in stopping them. The officer responded, "Ma'am, I'm only supposed to watch the road" (Dhillon and Estes 49). That is when Tamakawastewin realized the only option was to fight back, even if it meant breaking settler law:

[9] https://www.energytransfer.com/ [04-20-2020]
[10] The Dakota Uprising, also known as the Dakota War of 1862, is not a further part of the discussion in this chapter, out of space considerations.
[11] Tamakawastewin describes: "Just as I got up there, I watched this guy jump out of this white truck and pepper spray a whole line of women and children. At that time, the young men came and were trying to get in front of the women and children. They pushed the fence down to try to prevent them from being pepper sprayed. Then they sicced the dogs on us. I remember I was standing there in the field. It was like I froze. There was a big black and white dog with blood dripping from its mouth and a big grey-headed pit bull on the other side." (Dhillon and Estes 49).

> Every incident that happened, with the police and the military actions, happened on an event of something that already happened in Indian Country. It was like we were repeating everything all over again. It was like our ancestors were standing with us saying, "You stand, and we stand with you. It's okay." It was really hard some days to watch people get hurt. (Dhillon and Estes 49)

But in the struggle, she saw "amazing bravery," she saw "who we were and who we still *are*" (Dhillon and Estes 49, emphasis in original). Tamakawastewin's account of this event shows how spiralic temporality is not merely a theory which makes visible the relations between recurring actions across moments in time, it is also an embodied experience of relations of responsibility across generations, felt by the people, the land, and the river.

Those struggling today do it out of responsibility for the future generations, to create possibilities for Indigenous futurity in their *place*, supported by the ancestors whose goals they work to continue to fulfill. This coming together of generations in the present is an embodied experience. Consider, for example, Zaysha Grinnell, "a fifteen-year-old citizen of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation, the descendants of Sacagawea," who in her person connects the DAPL and its violences to the violences "confronted by her ancestors during the fur trade, two centuries ago" (Estes 84). Similar to the pipeline taking over Indigenous lands, and bringing violence to Indigenous communities, especially women, girls, and two-spirit people through the man camps that accompany them, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's expedition used Sacagawea to support their mission to be "the leading edge of the plow of Manifest Destiny" (Howe and TallBear ix).[12] Lewis and Clark were understood in this way by the people celebrating them as the harbingers of progress in the West, the openers of the West to settlement. This is also what

[12] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/11/canada-rampant-resource-development-puts-indigenous-women-and-girls-at-higher-risk-of-violence/ [03-05-2020] More on the ongoing MMIWG2S crisis in chapter 2.

they mean to Indigenous people, except this so-called progress, celebrated by settler colonizers, was not experienced positively by the Indigenous nations of these lands and waters.

Following the Doctrine of Discovery (created by a papal bull in the 15th century and later most famously affirmed by Chief Justice John Marshall in Johnson v. M'Intosh in 1823) and their Eurowestern ideas of mapping and property, Lewis and Clark on their 1803-1806 expedition imagined they could easily undo the spaces they so-called "explored" of their original relations and histories, replacing them with their own namings and stories of a "Manifest Destiny."[13] Lewis and Clark used the power of colonial maps and naming to claim ownership of what they saw as unknown, "uncivilized" space. As Lydia Whirlwind Soldier describes, "Although every river and landmark had already been named by the original inhabitants, every member's name was affixed to the land. Their names were carved into trees, rivers, streams, and mountains as they traveled west" (Howe and TallBear 23). Following Lewis and Clark's 2.5-year-long Corps of Discovery trek came the rail road, the murder of "all but 550 buffalo, leaving the Natives without their food source" (Howe and TallBear 28), and a series of treaties and unilateral U.S. decisions that continually diminished Native land holdings. The river which functioned as the central life force in Oceti Sakowin ways of life, also brought waves of settler violence with enduring consequences; in the words of Craig Howe (Oglala Lakota) and Kim TallBear, "[i]n the wake of their keelboat and canoes, devastating processes were set in motion with effects still rippling today" (ix).

[13] Joanne Barker (Lenape) explains how the Doctrine of Discovery centrally was about turning land into property and thus resource to support colonization: "While it was accepted that Indians maintained particular rights associated with their status as the original inhabitants of the land, the exclusive rights of property in the land belonged to the nation who discovered the lands. Discovery was demonstrated by the appropriation of the lands for agriculture, which in turn secured the rights of the discovering nation to claim full sovereignty within the lands and against all other claims" (7).

The depictions of Lewis and Clark's travels and of their encounters with Indigenous peoples written by the journalists in the expedition party are often taken at face value, as to interrogate their accounts is to interrogate Manifest Destiny and the foundation of what is currently the United States. Yet, this expedition, which moved "the frontier" all the way to the Spanish colonizers and traders on the west coast, needs to be questioned, with all its implications for the Manifest Destiny narratives it inspired. Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) calls the "historic almanacs, diaries, travel journals, and other writings by explorers and men of the frontier" that have shaped our imaginaries of the U.S., and especially of the oft-romanticized American West, "itineraries of violence" (157). Literary and cartographic representations of the spaces that make up what we currently call North America give shape to the way U.S. space is imagined; they work to confirm the "Manifest Destiny" imaginary that Lewis and Clark operated from. Indigenous peoples play a minoritized but essential role in these constructions of spatial imagination; Goeman names them as "the constant present absence upon which the myth of nation-state dominance depends and expands" (157). This opening up of the West by the 1803-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition reproduced an image of Native peoples as the opposite of "progress," always in the process of disappearing. Lewis and Clark's journals, and the stories that came from them, inspired settler philosophies, dreams, and foundational ideas we still encounter today.

The Pick-Sloan plans to control the Mni Sose is evidence of this progress-oriented way of thought in practice. Officially titled the "Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Project," a combination of the separate plans by Lewis Pick and William Sloan, the Pick-Sloan series of dams were a response to the 1944 Flood Control Act (Capossela 145). They "inundated over 356,000 acres of Tribal land in the late 1950s and early 1960s," forcing communities to relocate

from the fertile riparian bottomlands of the Mni Sose at the center of their ways of life and of knowing, to "the barren plains above the river valley" (Capossela 145). Sicangu Lakota scholar Sarah Hernandez points out the parallels between the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Pick-Sloan dams–all military men, embodying the battle of men against nature, forever changing the life of the Mni Sose—and argues the embody Patrick Wolfe's theorization of settler colonialism as a 'structure,' in the way their establishment of "progress" in the region "privileg[ed] the American nation, with little regard for the twenty-eight tribal nations living along" the Mni Sose (Hernandez 83-84). Prioritizing the U.S. economy over the lives of the Oceti Sakowin, Pick and Sloan—much like Lewis and Clark's goal to tame the West and the DAPL's proposed economic benefits—worked to commodify the river into a source of energy, "stabilizing agricultural development, and increasing tourism and recreational activity" (Hernandez 84).[14]

This displacement and destruction of the traditional lands for many Oceti Sakowin peoples strongly diminished their ability to practice their traditional lifeways and exercise their sovereignty. For non-Native people, the river might be read as a metaphor for the passing of time and the journey towards "progress." But for Oceti Sakowin, Mni Sose, "stretch[ing] 2,341 miles from the Rocky Mountains to the Mississippi River, providing water and sustenance to more than two dozen tribes" (Hernandez 74), is part of their creation stories (Hernandez 75), and the site of many spiralic returns. The site of the Standing Rock Sacred Stones camp, for example, was the site where the river used to create the stones which gave the Cannonball River its name. Yet, "After the Army Corps dredged the mouth of the Cannonball River, the swirling waters stopped creating the sacred stones" (Estes 51). Evidenced most acutely by the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe's inability to "establish a viable community since" the theft of most of their lands

[14] The dams' hydro-power produced "3.2 million kilowatt hours for American ranchers, farmers, and other settlers residing along the river" (Lawson 109 qtd. in Hernandez 84)

(Hernandez 84), "When land and water are taken and destroyed, so too is the possibility of a livable future" (Estes 51). The DAPL is just a new iteration of this settler colonial violence. The land provides for its kin when there is a respectful relationship, but when settlers attack the river it will stop being able to provide. Dams, obstructing and destroying, prevent the completion of fish runs (as described in Chapter 1). Reversing the destruction of the river is needed in order to heal the water and the land, which in turn will allow the healing of its peoples.

The #NoDAPL movement is not just evidence of the spiralic returns of colonizer violence, but also of the returns of traditional values and culture that inform resistance against colonizer encroachment on Native sovereignty. Casting the #NoDAPL camps as a spiralic return of the Oceti Sakowin's ancestors' actions, Tamakawastewin (LaDonna Bravebull Allard) recounts:

> Our grandfather Tatanka Ohitika had sun dances down on the Cannonball River with Wise Spirit. At that time, they put medicine in the ground. Everybody who came to the camps could feel that medicine. They put that medicine in the ground to pray for our water and to pray for our earth. Who has the right to take that away? (Dhillon and Estes 44)

Tamakawastewin here insists on her people's sovereign and reciprocal relations with their place, the land and all its relations, which continue to offer both guidance and support, and an obligation to take care of them in turn. The current generations benefit from the care earlier generations put into these relations with their place and thus into ensuring futurity for their people; the people's continuity is the land's continuity, and settler disruption of the one results in similar interruption of the other as well.

After the displacement of Oceti Sakowin tribal communities, and a slew of U.S. measures diminishing the reservations, the #NoDAPL movement brought the Oceti Sakowin nations back together to struggle for a common cause. By creating spaces of radical relationality in the

#NoDAPL movement, the camps made visible what these futures could, and already do, look like. In Dhillon and Estes 's words, "#NoDAPL wasn't a failure because DAPL was ultimately built," rather, it successfully united Oceti Sakowin and Native and non-Native allies in support of Native sovereignty and a healthy environment (5). Through the day to day actions of protecting the sacred and creating relations, the #NoDAPL movement offered "a collective vision of what the future could be," creating spaces to (re)imagine and start building, "Indigenous decolonization and the political project of getting free—freedom for ourselves and the planet" (Dhillon and Estes 5). Sarah Hernandez describes the effect of the movement on Oceti Sakowin youth as having provided "a reminder of [their] early ancestors' intimate connection with the sacred river" (89). Much like the DAPL's reiteration of familiar settler violence, the #NoDAPL movement reunited Indigenous peoples to once-again resist settler encroachment on their sovereignty and the relations that are essential to their futurities.

In the process/project of the resistance to the pipeline and the protection of the water, Indigenous protectors were living the alternatives to the U.S. white supremacist settler colonial heteropatriarchy they were calling for, and which the U.S. has continually worked to erase, destroy, and/or make unimaginable since the first arrival of settler colonizers to these lands. As illustrated by Daniel Heath Justice's approach to reading Indigenous literatures in his critical work *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter*, Indigenous literatures often inhabit options for holistic methodologies for looking at the world, and for being human in the world. The texts from *This Stretch of the River* that I discuss below do similar consciousness-raising work as the movement camps, in the sense that they provide stories of old and new relations connected across time, space, and nations. They invite the reader into these relationships, asking for Indigenous readers to see themselves represented in the Indigenous people who are resilient and work to remain

connected to cultures, language, and importantly, each other. They also invite non-Native readers to recognize themselves as perpetrators of an enduring violence, the logical conclusion of which is abuse of the land and its relations in the shape of the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Writing the River

In *This Stretch of the River* (2006), the Oak Lake Writers' Society writes back to the settler narratives of the Lewis and Clark bicentennial, centering Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota (Oceti Sakowin) ways of knowing and relating. *This Stretch of the River* starts from the river and all its relations, rather than the conquest and "discovery" that European "curiosity" brought to the peoples that belong to these lands and waters. Writing from and about the same lands and waters the #NoDAPL camps were built on to protect, the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota) authors' collection of poems, stories, essays, and conversation shows how the Oceti Sakowin have a genealogy of relationships to the waters and the lands that Lewis and Clark sought to discover–going back to when time began. The essays and conversations in *This Stretch of the River* make legible the violence of settler disrupting and re-mapping of Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota spaces.

Alternatively, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota ways of knowing do not require displacement or erasure. They center the river rather than capitalist gain, and make clear the need for reciprocal relations of responsibility with all human and non-human relations of the area, based in Oceti Sakowin ways of knowing which are deeply historical and passed on through the generations, but always open for revision through lived conditions. Lydia Whirlwind Soldier expresses the starting point of these relationships in the closing words to her lyric essay "The Renaming of a Nation" in the volume: "In those buffalo days / Mnisose was the Grandfather

River. / It was, is still an artery to the paradise / we call home" (Howe and TallBear 30); the river, through its ever-presence, connects the contemporary generations to their earlier and future, more balanced, relations in the same place. Rather than using Indigenous ways of knowing solely as an opportunity for settler transit that, per the history of much non-Native writing about Native peoples, results in settler ownership of Native space, *This Stretch of the River* offers a way to rethink our spatializations of the "American West" from a standpoint that centers the ways of knowing expressed in the affective relations of the Mnisose, "Grandfather River."[15] The #NoDAPL movement and lived community created in the camps on the banks of the Mni Sose at Standing Rock are one example of what this praxis of considering the Mni Sose as "grandfather river" looks like in this contemporary moment.

The river that helped give Lewis and Clark their identity as great explorers, is the same river from which Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples developed and continue to draw their identities and worldviews from, as reflected in *This Stretch of the River* as well as in the "radical relationality" of the #NoDAPL camps at Standing Rock. Lewis and Clark's "infantilizing American Indian people" in their travel journals inspired many more settler stories in support of the fledgling colonizer nation which "helped perpetuate negative stereotypes of American Indian people," and which wrote Oceti Sakowin out of contemporary existence both in U.S. literatures and U.S. settler society's public consciousness (Hernandez 79). Mni Sose, or the Missouri River, is both evidence of the literal experience of colonization as symbolic of the literary colonization

[15] Referencing Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's work on the settler-colonial nation-building role of American literature, Kim TallBear critiques Stephen E. Ambrose's 1998 (in celebration of the bicentennial) *Lewis & Clark: Voyage of Discovery,* making a point which is also essential to Jodi Byrd's critique of Deleuze and Guattari's "rhizomatic West" in her book *Transit of Empire*. In TallBear's words: "While Indians and others are integral to the story, their purpose in Ambrose's narrative is to clarify Euro-American national identity and history. In spite of changes in historical scholarship, Ambrose continues with a colonial model of narration in which he tells a story about "discovery" and the "opening" of the West by Euro-American men" (Howe and TallBear 55).

taking over the space with settler narratives which erase Indigenous presence, knowledges, and belonging (Hernandez 74). As such, *This Stretch of the River* is a great literary starting point to consider both colonization and Indigenous resistance and resurgence as experienced by and with Mni Sose. The collection is one contemporary reflection of the continued importance of river stories for Oceti Sakowin. *This Stretch of the River* evidences how sacred tribal stories are taken up, transformed for the contemporary moment, and shared, "provid[ing] future generations of Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota young people with a roadmap to protect and defend the river and their tribal nations" (Hernandez 83). Because, in Gabrielle Wynde Tateyuskanskan's words in her "Isanti River Poem": "An attentive heart knows a river's well-being / is a measure of our humanity" (Howe and TallBear 75).

Per Kim TallBear in "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family," "Decolonization is not an individual choice" (152). Everyone involved in the relations of accountability which start with Mni Sose needs to do the work of undoing settler colonizer control and confinement and of working towards radical relationality. The texts in *This Stretch of the River* both address the consequences of settler spatial and temporal logics and their violences carried out in its name (removal, residential schools, termination), and center Indigenous worldviews and kinship structures that have been, are, and continue to be developed from ways of knowing that acknowledge the relationship to the land and all its beings.

This Stretch of the River clarifies to readers who may not experience the Mni Sose's cycles of flooding and incubating growth what the kinship relation to the river is, how the river acts out its responsibilities toward its kin, how the relationships are reciprocal, and how settler colonial surveyors, communities, logics, and structures have attempted to break these relationships and ignored these agencies in order to establish themselves. The Oak Lake Writers

Society centers Mni Sose in the Oceti Sakowin worldview (or, perhaps, waterview): the source of all kinship relations and the first living example of radical relationality between the river, Oceti Sakowin, and all their non-human relations. It is these river-based ways of knowing which inform the radical relationality and water-based worldview which inform the #NoDAPL movement.

Opening *This Stretch of the River* is a poem by Lydia Whirlwind Soldier simply titled "Mnisose." The poem circles from the river's current condition where "it is not free," to a description of its thriving life and the lives it supported before the river was dammed. Describing how the river was "damned" by "a Hidatsa chief sign[ing] / away the river," the poem then circles back to Mni Sose's current limited conditions, describing the colonized experience with some detail. She describes how the dams made "life [grow] stagnant,"

> large bodies of mirrored hate stand,
> whitecaps flash in the wind with no place to go
> runoff from plowed fields and feedlots
> gather into cesspools until gates open
> to water streams below (Howe and TallBear 2)

Eurowestern agriculture, not in good relation with the place they occupy (i.e. the animals and stolen land it relies on), depletes the land, poisons the water, and carries such toxic relations to others living downriver. The interruption of the river's flow of life, for millennia a steady presence for all its relations in its continual movement, makes not just the river's life grow stagnant, but all life that depends on the river's movements.

While being honest about the current reality, the poem ends on a hopeful note that the future might bring back the history Whirlwind Soldier knows: the river might return, be it transformed because of its experiences, to live free and provide for its relations. Whirlwind

Soldier knows that the river's spirit is still strong, because "in [her] mind's shadows Mnisose shines / with the morning star" (Howe and TallBear 2). And because she knows the memory of the river, she knows of its healing spirit from her friend who lived on the river "on a houseboat with her grandfather," "when she came home to heal her / boarding school wounds" (Howe and TallBear 1). Even though "life linked to the river was hard," it was also "free and happy" (Howe and TallBear 1). Living in reciprocal relation with the river may not always be easy, but it *is* a way of life that heals both the people and the place.

Yet, "that was when the river was free," "long ago, before / nearly every stream was molded in / concrete and civilized" (Howe and TallBear 1). The term "civilized" echoes deeply here, because of its resonance with settler colonialism's promise to so-called civilize the Indigenous peoples of these lands. Civilization in settler colonizer actions meant controlling the river, destroying its traditional lifeways, and breaking up the kinship relations between the people and the lands and waters they belong to.

However, Whirlwind Soldier knows that "nothing chokes the spirit/ of the damned river/ nothing chokes the powerful purpose/ of this silent creation—Mnisose" (Howe and TallBear 2). In the closing lines of the poem, Whirlwind Soldier makes a spiralic return to the way the river once was, long ago, as described earlier in the poem. After going through the violent experience of the dams, which created so much hurt that "elders wept," "villages vanished, life on the river / quietly slipped into the darkness / of rising water" (Howe and TallBear 1), the spirit of the river has not been broken, and hope is still there for the river's powerful purpose to achieve full expression once again. Things might never be the same, but thanks to Whirlwind Soldier's knowledge of how the river used to thrive and provide for all its relations, she knows with certainty that it will overcome its current entrapment. She

writes, “hope flares with the / bursting seeds of prairie flowers,” as every year the promise of return and abundance in the prairie flower seeds invites a vision of a river once again free to thrive (Howe and TallBear 2).

The waters of Mnisose are currently choked by dams and their gates, which control the river’s flow. But the interdependence between the river and the people Whirlwind Soldier describes, suggests that the “powerful purpose” (Howe and TallBear 2) of Mnisose—which cannot be choked—might be closely related to the powerful purpose of the Oceti Sakowin to not let their spirit be broken by settler colonizers’ continued violence and choking of Oceti Sakowin nations’ sovereignty. Kathryn Akipa (Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate), in her essay “The Beginning of Sorrows,” describes a strong feeling of connection between her “experience of cultural discomfort and grief over my lost village on the banks of the Missouri rivers” and the actions of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804 (Howe and TallBear 17). Lewis and Clark’s motivational values of “expansion, domination and Manifest Destiny” continue to echo loudly in the dammed (or “damned”) Mni Sose and all of the ways Oceti Sakowin ‘have been [and continue to be] culturally, linguistically, religiously, environmentally and legally brutalized by those who would claim to be [their] bridge to what [settler colonizers] term “civilization” (Howe and TallBear 17). By rebuilding the radical relationality between the river and its peoples, the knowledge of a vibrant past and current strength bring a thriving future within grasp, both for the river and for all the peoples (human or non-human) that belong to and rely on it. The #NoDAPL camps for a moment lived a glimpse of what such a future might look like in their embodied expression of spiralic temporality and practice of radical relationality.

In the collective conversation which closes *This Stretch of the River,* the Oak Lake Writers Society contributing authors discuss their different relationships to the water, and tell

stories of their own experiences and of intergenerational knowledge and ceremonies anchored in the rivers of the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota lands. The European-American "discoverers" were looking to own the lands, species, and peoples of the "American West" through cataloguing them. Mishuana Goeman points out how "Maps exert political control by manipulating the representation of space into a language of normativity" (18), causing settler maps and namings to be taken for granted, and traditional Indigenous relations with the land to be obscured or erased entirely. Lanniko Lee (Cheyenne River Sioux) explains how this owning through knowing is contrary to the way the Indigenous peoples related to the land and its relations. They knew only what wanted to be known. Lee explains, "We didn't go about naming objects, plants and phenomenon like Western explorers; our belief back then was that the "thing" gave its power and the knowledge of its being-ness to us" (Howe and TallBear 86).

The texts in the collection offer what the river has to share as a starting point, rather than employing the European scientific cataloguing of the river and its land. The collection is not just a critical review of the history and present consequences of the Lewis and Clark expedition; it offers an alternative starting point that does not take for granted the settler-nation building powers of the expedition and its related literatures and cartographies. Instead, the contributors emphasize relationality and responsibility in their Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota (Oceti Sakowin) nation-building literatures.

This interconnectedness between Oceti Sakowin and Mni Sose is put into words by Dakota poet Gabrielle Wynde Tateyuskanskan's "Isanti River Journey" poem (Howe and TallBear 73-75), where she relates how the Dakota people "emerged from the river" (Hernandez 75). "Isanti River Journey" relates a number of the violences done to the peoples that belong to Mni Sose, from when "In 1600 a malignancy / appeared on the waterways" (73), to the

"unfulfilled promise of treaty annuities" which starved "Dakota women and children" who were then "force-marched from Cansayapi / to a concentration camp / located near the precious / river womb of origin" –a reference to the Dakota War of 1862 (74).[16] The removal of Dakota people from their traditional lands and waters happened "on an overcrowded steamboat / taken by an undertow of sorrow" … "moving against the Missouri River current" (74), much like the first colonizers appeared "traveling against the current" (73). The "river journey of deportation" (74) was going against the natural flow of the river and its relations. Rebuilding their radical relationality after so much destruction, removal, and return ("In 1867 the Sisseton and Wahpeton / moved back to Lake Traverse and were / reunited with their ancient waterway" [Howe and TallBear 75]), the Dakota have transformed their lifeways to live in the current conditions according to traditional water-based worldview values.

Describing the spiralic transformation of the past knowledge into the present world for a thriving future, the "Isanti River Journey" poem connects this transformation to the way rivers, too, are both affected by and actively affect their surroundings, relating how "Like ancient rivers that have / reshaped their shores / the people have adapted, moving from loss toward life" (Howe and TallBear 75). In accordance with the Indigenous women activists discussed in the earlier chapters, Tateyuskanskan emphasizes the intergenerational relations across time, "In dreams I share memories / of ancestors held in my veins" (Howe and TallBear 75). Similarly to Sarah Sunshine Manning's expression of blood memory (discussed above) and *The Marrow Thieves'* use of the concept of "blood memory" to point to knowledges from previous generations and of dreams to signify futurity (discussed in the previous chapter), Tateyuskanskan here describes her

[16] With many possible causes recorded for the Dakota War of 1862, one of them was the anger at Indian Agent Andrew Myrick's "Let them eat grass" response to the hunger Dakota people experienced as a result of the U.S. not fulfilling its treaty promise of providing food to the peoples whose livelihoods they destroyed (Peacock 186).

embodied experience of spiralic temporality as held in her blood and her dreams. It is through dreaming that she can connect with her ancestors' knowledges that she knows are present in herself, despite settler colonizers' violent interruptions of the spiralic relations between generations that make the people who they are.

Tateyuskanskan makes clear that "The people will never forget that / they were prevented from / grieving ceremonially for their losses" (Howe and TallBear 75); through ceremony, relations are honored and ancestors can find their way – not allowing the people to fulfill their obligations towards their lost relatives disrupts their relationships and causes permanent harm. To start to heal this harm to their intergenerational relations (and thus their contemporary People), "The Dakota Oyate walked with anguished hearts / in November 2002 to remember / ancestors who disappeared" (Howe and TallBear 75). She emphasizes the temporal and generational relationality enduring to today: "This inherited memory has been / etched in my genes" (Howe and TallBear 73); even when the relations are eventually healed, the moment of disruption will be passed on through "blood memory."

Lee describes the role of the river and its "changing nature" which changes the land, and the role of the people who belong to it. Lee explains the historical shared knowledge Indigenous peoples living by and with the river had about their lands, and what were safe places to build a home and what were flood plains, describing this knowledge as tied to a sense of responsibility towards their families and communities, as well as knowledge about their own identities and their "connectedness to the land" (Howe and TallBear 83). Kim TallBear explains the rivers as Dakota roads, which still define the Dakota landscape (Howe and TallBear 85), echoing Tateyuskanskan's "Isanti River Journey" poem which describes how "Dakota ancestors have often traveled / the natural highways created by water" (Howe and TallBear 73). Lydia

Whirlwind Soldier explains how "the rivers were important boundaries," not just in the sense of "land descriptions, in maps, in designating meeting places," but also in the connectedness between the people and the rivers (Howe and TallBear 85). Emphasizing the river's central role in Oceti Sakowin relations, with the Mni Sose considered the "grandfather river," she asks, how does changing it, through dams like the settlers did, affect everyone who relies on the river?

> How does that change affect the lives of the people, the animal and plant nations? These were not issues that the government thought about when it built the dams. How many of those animals and plants that Lewis and Clark saw are now extinct? And, how many more will disappear? Can man ever replace what was lost? (Howe and TallBear 85)

Settler capitalist commodification and exploitation of "natural resources" work to break the kinship relations which inform Indigenous ways of knowing, of thinking in relationality and with responsibility. Settler colonizers knowingly build homes on flood plains, loaded with insurance, to allow a profit off the loss (Howe and TallBear 83).[17] Through imposing their settler colonizer worldview onto the river, controlling its waterways, attempting to control its spirit, colonizers deeply affected Oceti Sakowin radical relationality with the river and all their relations. Accustomed to the river's changing nature, Oceti Sakowin know that the river will once change back. The river's strong spirit will find a way to break free from settler control, and once again take up its central role in Oceti Sakowin relations of accountability, when "life … teemed with whooping cranes and eagles" and "the shores were heavy with trees and game" (Howe and

[17] A Department of the Interior advertisement to promote the damming of the Columbia River and the hydropower it would generate included in *River People: Behind the Case of David Sohappy* could not be more clear as to its purpose: "America's conquest of the Columbia has begun. An unshackled giant becomes a seaway to an empire. The promise of power for every corner of the Northwest. Power to uncover a treasure trove of idle resources, to turn them into useful goods for which a nation waits. Power for millions of Americans who look westward hopefully, for land and jobs, for security and happiness. Power to make the American dream come true" (River People 00:20:25, 00:20:35). For more on the negative effects of dams on a river, see chapter 1.

TallBear 1).

Lee emphasizes how Oceti Sakowin "everyday lives were spent learning lessons about change and our people used those lessons to make decisions like where to build our homes and where to plant our gardens" (Howe and TallBear 83). The Mni Sose makes and remakes Oceti Sakowin space through flooding and carrying cottonwood seeds in the flood waters. In this way, the river plays its essential role in the community: by planting cottonwood seeds in fertile soil which encourages growth (Howe and TallBear 83). The river, the land, the peoples, the plant and animal nations, are all a part of this unmaking and remaking of the space. The relationality and mutual responsibility inherent in this process centers the changing land and water spaces that ebb and flow in relation with the human, plant, and animal peoples, as described by Lee. It is evidence of what Robert Warrior calls the "matrix of relationships" which should inform our reorientation to acknowledge peoplehood beyond the human (Warrior 197).

The very last pages of *This Stretch of the River* collection houses a poem called "River Power" by Lee. In it, Lee muses that the knowledge of the power of the river is passed on and continued, even if the contemporary generation has not been able to experience or relate to the river in that same way. The knowledge "of river power, / of love in different forms, / of comic bullheads / and waterbug adventures, / …" still informs the "twilight dreams" for a better world, for a thriving future (Howe and TallBear 107). As long as the knowledge of the river's central role and powerful spirit continues to be passed on, the people will be able to remember: "shorelines lapping away, / a time passed, but not forgotten" (Howe and TallBear 107). So that once the dams come down, the river, Oceti Sakowin, and all their relations will return to their full power. In the meantime, through the telling of the stories as well as the living of this radical relationality with the river, even if in small pockets of time and place such as the #NoDAPL

camps, the powerful spirit of the river is made tangible in the present.

On the page before, Lydia Whirlwind Soldier's poem "Mni Wiconi" summarizes the poems, essays, and conversation of *This Stretch of the River* into its core idea, that water is "life everlasting" (Howe and TallBear 105). Unlike the limited and destructive energy provided by the series of dams on the river, Mni Sose's "eternal energy" is the source of life and meaning for Oceti Sakowin and all non-human relations who come from and/or rely on the river. The river is the "Source of eternal energy / spiritual law, ancient Lakota teachings" which continues to inform Oceti Sakowin lifeways (Howe and TallBear 105). The "whisper of hope … / carried by the healing sound of water" now informs a truth resounding around the planet, uniting peoples across the globe in a shared purpose to protect the water: that "mni wiconi," "water is life" (Howe and TallBear 75). In the next section, I discuss how the #NoDAPL camps, informed by a "mni wiconi" worldview, created a version of the thriving Indigenous future they were fighting for in the present.

"They're living the dream"

At the center of the #NoDAPL struggle are Oceti Sakowin traditional worldview and sovereignty; to Oceti Sakowin, "Mni Sose is a relative: the Mni Oyate, the Water Nation. She is alive. Nothing owns her" (Dhillon and Estes 2). Sharing this water-based worldview with many Indigenous nations (for example those discussed in chapter 1), water is both the place to start thinking from and an ancestor "with agency within this network of life, one who deserves respect, care, and protection" (Yazzie and Risling Baldy 1). Tamakawastewin (LaDonna Bravebull Allard) explains that this relationship to the river is not in some faraway past, as she describes growing up still being able to drink water directly from what is currently called the

Cannonball River (Dhillon and Estes 46). She describes how the location of the #NoDAPL camps on the river was a "multitribal area," "a place of passage": the place where the river, before the dams, used to make the sacred stones after which the Sacred Stone camp was named, was also the place where a Mandan village, an Arikara village, and a Yanktonai village used to be in close proximity of each other (Dhillon and Estes 46).[18] The river is where all Oceti Sakowin's relations come together, protecting the water also protects all human and non-human relations who depend on the water; water teaches how to develop and maintain relations of accountability to all (Yazzie and Risling Baldy 1,2). Consequently, protecting the river from settler assaults like the inevitable pipeline leaks follows Oceti Sakowin traditional laws.[19]

Dhillon and Estes claim it is exactly this obligation which is "contrary to settler law," "while also reminding the United States of its own obligations to uphold its own treaties" which invoked such violent crackdowns on the peaceful protectors (Dhillon and Estes 2). Water protectors called on the Fort Laramie treaties of 1868 and 1851 to claim their right to stop Energy Transfer Partners to build DAPL, as the treaties enshrine Oceti Sakowin's "sole jurisdiction of Mni Sose's waterways" (Dhillon and Estes 2).[20] The now widely popular (thanks to social media) rallying cry "mni wiconi" or "water is life" is based in Oceti Sakowin traditional worldview, connecting traditional knowledge going back to when time began to the contemporary moment, helping imagine and inspire what is needed to create thriving Indigenous futures despite the repeating, returning settler assaults on Indigenous life, lifeways, and

[18] Lewis and Clark only recognized these as cannonballs, from which came the English name (Dhillon and Estes 45-46).
[19] The pipeline "leaked at least five times in 2017. The biggest was a 168-gallon leak near DAPL's endpoint in Patoka, Illinois, on April 23" https://theintercept.com/2018/01/09/dakota-access-pipeline-leak-energy-transfer-partners/ [04-20-2020]
[20] For more on the role of the treaties in the #NoDAPL struggle, see https://nycstandswithstandingrock.wordpress.com/standingrocksyllabus/ [04-20-2020]

environment (Dhillon and Estes 3). In this way, mni wiconi is evidence of a spiralic experience of temporality which informs Oceti Sakowin contemporary life, animating the #NoDAPL movement's motivating values and goals. Spiralic temporality is not just about conceptions of time, but is also embodied in lived relations across time, across generations, lived in place. At the Standing Rock camps, this took the shape of "a deeply intergenerational struggle, with grandparents organizing alongside grandchildren and sometimes great-grandchildren" (Dhillon and Estes 4); together they lived spiralic temporality in their place. The spiral is both temporal and spatial, intergenerational relations (including those already passed and those not yet born) manifest the past and the future as co-existent in the present.

In order to support the participation of Water Protectors of all ages, youth leaders were uplifted, and the camps created a free schooling program offering "anticolonial education for liberation" (Estes 59), calling up the American Indian Movement's survival schools of the 1970s and '80s.[21] With traditional "values of interdependency, reciprocity, equality, and responsibility" (Yazzie and Risling Baldy 2) guiding the work, the Water Protectors could rely on each other's and the Standing Rock tribe's generosity; many people who came to the camps left their day jobs behind to be able to instead volunteer their time and energy to the support of the camp communities (Estes 59).[22] The centrality of "radical relationality" for the #NoDAPL organizing shows how, despite the many environmental arguments against DAPL also supporting the #NoDAPL struggle, Indigenous ways of knowing the land and knowledge produced from and with the land cannot just be "included" in settler approaches to the environment; in Dhillon's

[21] For more on these survival schools, see Davis, Julie L. *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. U of Minnesota Press, 2013.
[22] "There was no running water, but the Cannon Ball Community Center opened its doors for showers. There was no electricity, but Prairie Knights Casino, the tribal casino two miles up the road, had Wi-Fi. And there were no flushable toilets, but Standing Rock paid for porta potties" (Estes 58).

words, “To acquire this knowledge means entirely shifting our current patterns of living in the everyday: it is cumulative and dynamic, adaptive and ancestral, and it is produced in a collective process that is fundamentally centered on the way one relates” (Dhillon 2). To be able to recognize the non-Eurowestern temporality and conception of place at the core of the #NoDAPL struggle, one must un-settle their mindset and framework.

Tradition, despite how it is often diminished by condescending settlers, does not equal stasis or routine (ritualized repetition without adaptation).[23] Rather, tradition transforms; it adapts to the situation in which it is brought to bear. Despite the limitations of settler colonizer stereotypes of Indigenous people as always already disappearing or as necessarily “inauthentic” if existing in the contemporary moment, contemporary Indigenous peoples rose and continue to rise to the occasion through a reconnecting with traditional knowledge, because “as colonialism changes throughout time, so too does resistance to it” (Estes 21). Going back to the past in order to transform it into the present and build toward thriving futures is how “dynamic and vital traditions of resistance,” grounded in Indigenous worldviews and relationships to land and all its relations, are created and continued (Estes 21). Kim TallBear sees the shared grounds for the #IdleNoMore (or #INM) and #NoDAPL movements to be “Indigenous peoples’ recognition that [their] lives and treaty rights are also dependent upon the well-being of our other-than-human relatives, water, and land” (TallBear 2019, 14). Indigenous resurgence and resistance can change the story of settler “Manifest Destiny” by condemning “the physical violences of the global resource wars,” and by offering stories that show “the violences intrinsic to knowledge systems

[23] A common meme, for example, states “Tradition is just peer pressure from the dead” https://www.reddit.com/r/meme/comments/ewpnzp/tradition_is_just_peer_pressure_from_the_dead/ [03-05-2020] It is also commonly used by white vegans to ridicule Native people for eating animals, for example https://twitter.com/jamesbuffyboyle/status/1149055457778130944, https://twitter.com/Bewyds/status/989897833305141248?s=20 [03-05-2020]

that restrict what is politically and ethically possible to extractive economies and accumulation by dispossession" (Melamed 183) by expressing traditional knowledges and reciprocal, respectful relationships with the land and their relations.

The #NoDAPL camps showcased the possibility of an alternative informed by Indigenous ways of knowing and relating, building from a land-based (or water-based) starting point. Nick Estes describes that the biggest threat of the camps were the radical solidarity and revolutionary community they created, where people self-regulated without police or capitalism. He explains how the alternative worlds that can be created, starting from these land-based knowledges and the relationships of reciprocity, responsibility and redistribution they invite rather than from a basis which takes the settler (capitalist, patriarchal, white supremacist) nation state for granted, are exactly why Indigenous resurgence is such a threat to the settler state. He describes how "Capitalism is not merely an economic system, it is a social relation," and that Native resurgence and the communities built from land-based knowledges, such as the camps at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline, are "premised on radical relationality," which "offer[s] a revolutionary different way of relating to people and the world" (Estes and Yazzie 45). In the manner the communities in these camps at the Missouri River organized and mobilized to resist the construction of the North Dakota Pipeline, they were also already imagining and living the alternative possibilities of living beyond, or despite of, the settler state, rebuilding their relations to their place.

Tamakawastewin (LaDonna BraveBull Allard) described the "blessings" of seeing Dakota people living with the land, "roasting deer meat on the grill.

> The women were cutting meat on the side to dry it. Kids were running and screaming. All of these people sitting around the fire were telling stories and what it was like to live on the river," and, importantly, "They were all speaking Dakota." (Dhillon and Estes 51)

The Sacred Stone and other camps at Standing rock approach in this way also related to the Idle No More movement's focus "on a resurgence of Native ways of life and being" (Warrior 197). Warrior points to the way the communal living in the #NoDAPL camps at Standing Rock, on the banks of the Mni Sose, was creating community not just with the human but also other beings in that area, most notably the river itself. The camps were living the Indigenous relationships to the land and all the living beings on and in it and, by doing so, embodied praxis creating a contemporary manifestation that continues a long history of land-based onto-epistemologies.

Tamakawastewin (LaDonna BraveBull Allard) "saw our culture and our way of life come alive" (Estes 52), a spiralic return for the Dakota people. Faith Spotted Eagle calls it "the rebirth of a nation," a moment and a place for Dakota youth to live in the same way as their elders, to live in the way they had learned about in "stories of living along the river"; "They heard them talking about the campfires and the Horse Nation, and they're actually living it. They're living the dream" (Estes 58). The call to support this future at Standing Rock was heard all over Turtle Island. In the next section, I discuss a poem, written and published contemporaneously with the #NoDAPL movement, which considers the meaning of the #NoDAPL movement in other places.

Water is Life, All Across Turtle Island

Demian DinéYazhi' (Diné)'s "Water Is Life: A Poem For the Standing Rock --Demian DinéYazhi' Wishes He Was at the Camp of the Sacred Stones in North Dakota" starts with "a simple equation / even a mathematician could get behind."[24] DinéYazhi' references the 2015 Gold King Mine spill, which "sent over 3,000,000 gallons of toxic wastewater down the / animas river in the four corners region of the united states / and you probably didn't even hear about it,"

[24] Full poem at https://lithub.com/water-is-life-a-poem-for-the-standing-rock/ [04-20-2020]

in the same stanza as his expression of obligation to support the Standing Rock Sioux fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline. By doing so, he implores us all to do the math: if the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is not stopped, the same devastation will occur in the Mni Sose river basin. We have seen the environmental destruction caused by settler commodification of so-called natural resources before, DinéYazhi' emphasizes through listing other similar events, and if the DAPL is allowed to be completed, he cautions, we should expect to see the devastation continue to unfold. This poem about Standing Rock water protector camps, why they matter, what they mean, and how water is life, everywhere, was published on Lit Hub during the Standing Rock moment (October 2016).

Mirroring the repetition of slogans shouted at protest marches, the poem ends with:

> *you should erect a monument in public site that honors this sacred fight*
> *you should erect a monument in public site that honors this sacred fight*
> *you should erect a monument in public site that honors this sacred fight*
> *you should erect a monument in public site that honors this sacred fight*
>
> and with all this positive energy / ancestral memory / and sacred medicine
> I think we all just might[25]

While perhaps not recognized by the author, but much like the #NoDAPL camps themselves creating the sovereign Indigenous space in the process of protecting it, the poem does create "*a monument in public site*," by being a poem "*that honors the sacred fight*," published in an open-access, online space which can be shared indefinitely (or at least as long as the LitHub site exists). Physical monuments often simultaneously mark a place and a moment in time for public memory; DinéYazhi''s poem similarly creates a space where the spiralic relations brought

[25] (italics in original)

together in a particular place and time, part of a larger spiral of Indigenous sovereignty, can be remembered and honored in a future that is already always in ongoing relation with the space and time of the #NoDAPL camps.

While DinéYazhi' might not be able to support the #NoDAPL struggle through a physical presence in the camps, his poem, through connecting continuity of Indigenous life and love from his own relations to the ancestors and to the water of the Columbia river to different sites of Indigenous struggle to protect the land, the water, and Indigenous sovereignty, does this work of sharing Indigenous worldview, relationality, and obligation to protecting the water.

Aman Sium (Tigrinya and Eritrean) and Eric Ritskes (non-Native) summarize that Indigenous "Stories are decolonization theory in its most natural form" (ii). Through telling the story of the reverberations across the lands and waters of the importance of the #NoDAPL struggle, DinéYazhi' theorizes the importance of "the philosophy of Mni Wiconi (Water is Life)," supporting the endurance of the history of the relationship between the people and the river, as well as supporting "the possibility of a future when our collective memory is reconfigured" (Dhillon and Estes 8). Because, as Jaskiran Dhillon and Nick Estes write, "To destroy the land is also to destroy the histories of the land, and thus limit the possibilities of a livable future" (8); it is essential to create art which "work[s] against the colonial epistemic frame to subvert and recreate possibilities and spaces for resistance" (Sium and Ritskes iii). Through story, Indigenous futurities are created and affirmed; DinéYazhi''s poem participates in this tradition, transformed (in the shape of a poem published online).

Focusing on one key aspect of the Oceti Sakowin motivation, DinéYazhi''s poem centers Indigenous knowledges and relationships first and foremost. The poem reminds us of a number of previous iterations of this ongoing struggle between Indigenous peoples and colonizer

commodification of the land, listing some of the ways colonizer violence against Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty is destroying the planet and, consequently, the peoples. The poem relates other catastrophic events for Indigenous peoples to the contemporary struggle at Standing Rock, emphasizing "the threat of pollution and endangering the environment" to "sacred ancestral / indigenous land." Settler colonizer obsession with exploiting "natural resources" is not just about environmental devastation, it is directly linked to the devastation of Indigenous nations, to the theft of Indigenous, sacred lands, lives, and cultures.

> google: moskva river fire after oil spill 2015
> google: cuyahoga river fire 1969
> google: wounded knee 1973
> google: churchrock uranium mill spill 1979
> google: david standard american holocaust death toll
>
> over one hundred million indigenous people killed
> …
> because of colonial dumbfuckery european curiosity

At the time of writing, the pipeline was not yet finished, and the #NoDAPL camps were still active. The poem details what would happen if the pipeline got built, by referencing the colonial violence that it is directly connected to. The violence will inevitably occur: oil spills, ruining the water and the land, making it unlivable for Indigenous peoples and all non-human relations that live in and on the land and water. Like LaDuke, Wanrow, and others before him whose writing showcases how their particular experiences were part of a structural settler colonizer effort to destroy and replace Indigenous peoples, DinéYazhi' is clear that colonization is what brought capitalism and white supremacy to Turtle Island. Colonization allows oil to destroy the planet.

However, this spiralic return of the Indigenous experience with settler violence is

different: this time Indigenous peoples came together by the thousands, with non-Indigenous allies, and, thanks to social media, were able to get their narratives out as well and influence the (inter)national conversation. Writes DinéYazhi',

> except this time the indigenous people aren't stereotyped as cannibal savages threatening white tourists looking for a little bit of culture looking for something to discover looking for something new to eat consume colonize repeat eat consume colonize
> repeat: colonial dumbfuckery european curiosity

The stereotypes were still abundant, but this time Indigenous organizing was so strong, that they were able to share their own stories - despite the many violent police tactics obstructing information from going out to the rest of the world. Despite the lack of support from corporate media, Indigenous water protectors got their message out in a plethora of ways, which resulted in much support from other Indigenous peoples and non-Native allies across Turtle Island and the globe. In the poem, we might also recognize some phrases we have all come to know from #NoDAPL's strong social media presence, such as "water is medicine," "indigenous resistance is ceremony," and "destroy white supremacy." This poem was published on the open-access literary site Lit Hub (which does not focus on Indigenous writing alone) and, in this way, was and is able to reach a wider audience than earlier movement writing was able to.

Perhaps the core idea in this water protector poem is that "Indigenous resistance is ceremony." Once that point is deeply understood, it changes the terms of the conversation about resistance. DinéYazhi considers, similarly to Nick Estes' idea that it was the living proof of the viability of anti-capitalist, decolonized Indigenous life in the camps to be the real threat of the #NoDAPL movement (discussed above). The fact that Indigenous "medicine isn't based around capitalism or death politics" is "maybe … what terrifies them"; the "them" here possibly

referring to supporters of DAPL, as well as to settler colonizer society at large.[26]

DinéYazhi' describes how a passing connection with Indigenous strangers immediately comes down to the expression of relationality. Their introduction is a sharing of who their relations are, and emphasizes the healing, ceremonial work being done in the Standing Rock #NoDAPL camps, "the medicine and the songs." In this short interaction at the center of the poem, the emphasis is on kinship, on the healing power of Indigenous cultural practices, on the importance of protecting the water and the land for future generations. Because, as the connection between DAPL and other settler capitalist engineered disasters on Indigenous lands listed earlier in the poems show, if the pipeline is not stopped, more leaks will happen, more water and more people will be destroyed.[27,28] The way to stop the pipeline is to come together, build reciprocal relationships of responsibility in place, and build the alternative to the kind of world that normalized violences such as the DAPL.

After describing this meeting, DinéYazhi' goes on to connect the settler violence in Standing Rock, ND to the settler violence where he lives, in Portland, Oregon, by the Columbia River. This relationality between different sacred waters is directly related to the relationality between Indigenous peoples. DinéYazhi narrates how this unexpected connection is a rare occurrence in Portland, so he interprets the creation of the new relation as an affirmation of traditional knowledge:

[26] This point is also at play in *The Marrow Thieves*, as we saw in the previous chapter with Frenchie's father's council's failed attempt to convince the settler government to take a different approach.
[27] Writing in 2020, this truth has become reality: DAPL leaked at least five times in 2017, four of which happened before the DAPL was even in full operation on June 1, 2017. https://theintercept.com/2018/01/09/dakota-access-pipeline-leak-energy-transfer-partners/ [03-05-2020]
[28] The struggle against the DAPL is not over yet, however, many groups are continuing to work together to fight the DAPL and its expansion plans, as evidenced in the protested March 5 hearing about the NoDAPL expansion: https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/environment/ct-dakota-access-pipeline-illinois-commerce-commission-20200305-ws6fukbvx5fgpinwmlpcudzqhy-story.html [03-05-2020]

WATER IS MEDICINE
A CONTINUAL CEREMONY
IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

However, despite water's central important in Indigenous worlds, settlers tend to treat water as a commodity that can be owned, sold, and destroyed, depending on their own interests.

Linking the destruction caused by the Columbia River dams with the contemporary shifting claims over a piece of beach near Portland on the Columbia River, DinéYazhi' describes how "cismale white queers" express frustration about how straight people have taken over "their" space, without wanting to face how "their space" already was stolen Indigenous land and water. The site of "a nude beach primarily populated by cismale white queers," would not be possible without settler commodification of the land:

> on a beach that would not exist unless the earth was exploded to construct a series of man-made dams along this rivers natural course
> that would not exist unless sacred indigenous lands and cultural artifacts were drowned or displaced entire populations relocated removed by force by gunpoint by threat of death

DinéYazhi''s description of the destructive impact of the Columbia River dams and his understanding of how that destruction relates to the present-day realities on the river bank, illustrates the connection with the Mni Sose and the DAPL and the struggle against it. Both are evidence of the recurring history of white settler colonizers commodifying Indigenous lands, peoples, and cultures for settler colonizer consumption and enrichment, reducing Indigenous people(s) to ever-in-the-process-of-disappearing stereotypes.

DinéYazhi' shows how this 2016 iteration is just the familiar anti-Indigenous settler violence circling back around:

white
tourists looking for a little bit of culture looking for something to discover looking for something new to eat consume colonize repeat eat consume colonize
repeat: colonial dumbfuckery european curiosity

Annita Lucchesi (Cheyenne), executive director of the Sovereign Bodies Institute, puts it in no uncertain terms, "If you can use and abuse the water and land, you can use and abuse the people around you too."[29] The struggle around the Dakota Access Pipeline once again appears as a clash of worldviews: one where land exists solely to be commodified, versus one which centers radical relationality (reminiscent of the Fish Wars, for example, as discussed in chapter 1). This clash of worldviews is as old as when the first colonizers arrived on Turtle Island; an application of Eurowestern Christian/Enlightenment thought to an Indigenous world that was illegible to these Eurowestern colonizers. Nick Estes explains how, for the Oceti Sakowin, history is the land itself: "the earth cradles the bones of the ancestors" (Estes 47). As the reading of Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* in the previous chapter suggests, the power to destroy the boarding school (perhaps symbolizing all of settler colonizer violence) lies in the bones of the ancestors that are brought to shake the earth through ceremony. Tamakawastewin (LaDonna Bravebull Allard), in a 2018 interview, puts this violence against the "cultural patrimony" in no uncertain terms: "*they took our footprint out of the ground*" (Dhillon and Estes 44, emphasis in original). Perhaps part of why the ancestors buried in sacred ground need to be removed to make room for the pipeline is also that the ancestors hold power that could be called on to end the pipeline; the Oceti Sakowin could not be allowed to continue to live their resurgence praxis in the #NoDAPL camps, because this praxis of radical relationality could potentially make Oceti

[29] https://intercontinentalcry.org/more-pipelines-mean-more-threats-of-sexual-violence-for-indigenous-women/ [04-20-2020]

Sakowin so strong they could win their land back.

The frustration with settler colonizer queer people claiming land that is not theirs to claim, land that is the direct result of anti-Indigenous violence, is not allowed to take over the discussion, however. The poem does not end with white settler queers' lack of understanding of the meaning of the land and the water, instead, DinéYazhi' connects his experience with the beach to images of Indigenous ancestors protecting the water, and of the narrator experiencing how water gives life, how water is life:

> I walk out until the river gets deep enough for me to submerge my entire body
> then I dunk under and come out drenched in life

this kinship connection with the ancestors through the relation to the water is also connected to other struggles of other relations. In the water, DinéYazhi' "remember[s] standing rock

> the resistance / the medicine / the language
> and I feel momentarily transplanted / for a second

The water, and especially, Indigenous peoples' relation to the waters they belong to, connects the Mni Sose at Standing Rock to the Animas river mentioned earlier in the poem, to what is currently known by its settler name the Columbia River. Through this relationship to water, all "water and life on earth" is connected, and should be protected. This poem is a call to stand up against settler capitalist destruction of land and water to support settler colonial lifestyles, settler colonial economy, settler colony. It celebrates the ceremony in the Indigenous relationship to water, and to other people.

Yet, the poem does not end before the narrator connects this experience of anti-Indigenous violence (through destruction of peoples as well as their life worlds) to the violent

deaths by the hands of police and other terrorist agents of Black people and of queer people of color, naming the June 12, 2016 shooting at Pulse, a queer Orlando, FL night club, which resulted in the deaths of 49 queer people, mostly of color, as well as the July 5, 2016 shooting by police of Alton Sterling, and the July 6, 2016 shooting by police of Philando Castile—all contemporaneous with the #NoDAPL movement. Exposing the thread that connects all of these iterations of settler violence, DinéYazhi' includes in his poem a text he sent to "joshua,"

> when there's no one left to trust
> destroy white supremacy
> until there's nothing left but love
> destroy white supremacy
> until we are able to choose how we
> wish to survive
> destroy white supremacy
> until there is nothing left to love
> destroy white supremacy
> until it is ground down to dust
> destroy white supremacy
> destroy white supremacy
> destroy white supremacy
> destroy white supremacy
> destroy white supremacy
> and then I take a picture of the columbia river gorge looking out toward the direction of standing rock and send it to him

The chorus of "destroy white supremacy" (again repeating the form of a protest slogan) notes white supremacy as the uniting factor in all the violence listed in the poem, from shootings of Black people by police to DAPL – settler colonialism is white supremacy. It makes equitable relations impossible. It is what will end the world. But there is power in Indigenous ceremony, kinship, water as medicine. The view of the Columbia river facing Standing Rock is a picture

which inspires faith in the struggle. The river and the radical future lived in the #NoDAPL camp evidence that a different world is possible. The river connects DinéYazhi' to the struggle at Standing Rock, creating a vision that capitalist settler violence can be and will be overcome.

> and with all this positive energy / ancestral memory / and sacred medicine
> I think we all just might

The struggle can be won. Attention can be redirected towards the struggles that are central to our time. People are listening, connecting, rising up.

At the time of writing (2016), the decolonial alternatives lived in the #NoDAPL camps were successful enough in creating a decolonial future made real in the present, despite the extreme violence of the militarized police against peaceful water protectors (from employing water cannons in temperatures much below freezing to attack dogs), to inspire DinéYazhi' to believe the DAPL would be defeated. Even though the DAPL was eventually completed, Dhillon and Estes's celebration of the camps as a win in their own right through their "living the dream" of these decolonial alternatives, inspires a reading of the poem with the same conclusion. The moment of encounter with Indigenous water protectors who enter in relationship with the author through their discussion of the #NoDAPL struggle is just one example of the radical relations created and sustained through the struggle. "the resistance / the medicine / the language" which "momentarily transplant[s]" DinéYazhi', too, are evidence of how the #NoDAPL camps made their decolonial alternatives real in the present. Spiralic temporality makes visible how the wins and losses of the #NoDAPL movement are not lost to this moment that is now over but, rather, are evidence of the strength of longstanding traditions of Oceti Sakowin lifeways and values and allow us to read the completion of the DAPL as just one loss in one battle, while the larger war keeps being waged and Oceti Sakowin keep getting stronger. Tamakawastewin says, "We can

live a thousand years, and people are always going to remember what happened here because we're not done yet" (Dhillon and Estes 52). #NoDAPL was just one movement in a larger moment, one frontline of many frontlines, one moment in a larger movement. "and with all this positive energy / ancestral memory / and sacred medicine," settler colonialism and its violences against all who complicate its relentless ambition for "progress," just might be overcome for good.

I chose to name what follows a Forward, rather than an epilogue, in keeping with the spiralic tendencies of much of the place-thought, movements, and literatures I discuss. It is meant as a renewed starting point. Informed by what came before, I can now start a new project which continues to add to the spiral of the work for Indigenous sovereignty. In the Forward, I ask some questions and share some examples that can guide both myself and a reader in thinking how to adapt and transform the knowledges shared and arguments made in this work for building thriving futures in our present informed by our shared responsibilities to place and to each other.

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Forward: "Crucial to finding the way is this: there is no beginning or end"

This is not quite a conclusion, but rather a pause to plan a future; more than the close of this particular dissertation project, it is also a new beginning. I want to use this space to reflect on what futures this work on Indigenous social movements, literatures, and spiralic temporality might allow the world to dream differently. While the ongoing global pandemic has made our collective and our individual futures more uncertain than ever, Indigenous nations specifically are suffering the consequences of long-term settler dismantling and neglect of Indigenous sovereignty and (in the U.S.) the Indian Health Service. Settler colonialism is (also) about white supremacy (reflected in Demian DinéYazhi''s poem about Standing Rock discussed in chapter 4) and existing inequality and injustices are causing especially Black people to also be disproportionately affected by the pandemic, resulting in harrowingly high numbers of losses of Black lives, as well as Native lives (including, of course, Black Native lives). As Black public health scholar David R. Williams summarizes, "This [the disproportionate number of Black deaths] is the result of a set of social policies working as designed"; settler colonialism is white supremacy.[1] Yet, as I hope this dissertation has been able to partially show, the knowledge to stop settler colonialism's white supremacist death drive already lives in the world.

Indigenous people are supported by their knowledge of many earlier iterations of pandemics and apocalyptic events to work out strategies to best protect their people, especially their elders, and can be inspired by their own embodied ways of knowing to dream up many new possibilities and start building them in the now. While this dissertation is focused specifically on Indigenous peoples' movements, literatures, and sovereignty, without attention to their

[1] https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-people-are-dying-of-covid-19-at-alarming-rates-heres-why_n_5e8cdb76c5b62459a930512a?ncid=engmodushpmg00000006 [04-20-2020]

racialization by the settler structure, I hope its suggestions and takeaways are open enough to allow for thinking with and building connections with racialized non-Native peoples, particularly for the work for Black liberation and Native decolonization, as both Black and Native people are at the core of the settler colonial project, and many Native people are also Black. I had to do justice to the project I committed to, and as such I have been unable to do justice to the complex relations all at play at the same time on Turtle Island. However, attention to these relations does need to be paid, and these projects (of thought and practice) that do consider these relations require our attention.

Black scholar Tiffany Lethabo King's *The Black Shoals*, for example, "tries to imagine futures for Black and Native peoples" through offering insight into "the connections between these insurgencies ['Black abolition and Native decolonization'] and the transformative capacity that they each contain."[2] In *The Black Shoals*, King offers an "alternative reading practice" in order to make legible the many ways "Blackness mediates the relations of conquest in the Western hemisphere," so as to "disrupt the movement of modern thought, time, and space to enable something else to form, coalesce, and emerge" (11). King's work draws attention to the many ways Indigenous and Black peoples are already intricately connected with each other, both through their differential relations to conquest, as through their complex relations with each other, and how they disrupt and offer alternatives to settler colonial ways of knowing and structuring. *The Black Shoals* offers one example of what taking up the work of building possibility and capacity for thriving futures in ethical, equitable relationships to each other and to the place people are can look like and can offer us to make those futures real in the now.

Like "Story" in *The Marrow Thieves*, I wonder what story will be made out of our

[2] https://www.blackagendareport.com/bar-book-forum-tiffany-kings-black-shoals [04-20-20]

experiences in this pandemic. What will these experiences of suffering (of Native nations, Black communities, non-Native settlers, and many others on these lands) ask of the relationships of solidarity and responsibility that are demanded in these times, of our mutual aid work, and of the alternatives we envision that we strive to make real right now? What, even within the extreme limitations of so-called "social distancing," allows us to not just dream but build? What futures that are responsible to *place* and each other are made possible?

In this dissertation, I hope to have shown how, while settler palimpsestic time may be trying to occlude Indigenous futurity, the spirals of Indigenous sovereignty instead suggest that not only will there be an Indigenous future, perhaps the future will be Indigenous. A heuristic of spiralic temporality, as I have spent the four previous chapters arguing, can help a reader better grasp what was actually at the heart of the issue in the four iterations of Indigenous social movements I discussed; it has allowed us to see not only that the key issue for Indigenous sovereignty is the land, or rather *place*, but also how and why that is the case. In this way, it has also made visible the destructive drive of a settler progress-obsessed framework, and thus the need to un-settle what we think we know about the place we are; this generational view also asks of non-Native people (and Native people in diaspora) to consider what the relations of the place we are, are, and how we might (continue to) take up our responsibilities and be in good relation with the place and the peoples who have belonged to it since time began.

A heuristic of spiralic temporality ask us to deepen our knowledge and look for the relations, across time and often across spaces, which motivate it. This heuristic allows us to see how radical relationality with the land and its non-human and human peoples informs an Indigenous conception of time which is informed by these relations; this new understanding can urge us to act against settler temporality in service of these many relations. Indigenous cyclical

time is informed by seasonally based knowledge and relationships, as such the relationship to time and the way time is understood differs from Indigenous nation to nation, depending on the land. Perhaps there are lessons to be learned from what a heuristic of spiralic temporality has made visible in the previous chapters, in the particular places the struggles I discuss took place, and perhaps this plurality of insights can help us build equitable relationships of mutual responsibility on these occupied lands—as long as these relationships have the specific intention to further Black liberation and the many Indigenous nations' continuing sovereignty projects, rather than to re-center settler experiences or settler futures. To support the building of particular Indigenous futures (particular to place and People), settler temporality needs to be un-settled, and Indigenous experiences and leadership need to take the lead.

One ongoing example of what the shared work for Indigenous futures can look like is the fight of the Puyallup against a Puget Sound Energy Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) facility on their ancestral territory.[3] This struggle appears as a contemporary reiteration of the Fish Wars struggle discussed in chapter 1 of this dissertation; once again, Salish Sea/South Sound peoples are having to organize to protect the lands to which they belong, to fulfill their obligations to their place and all its relations, including the waters and the fish peoples. As Puyallup Vice Chair David Bean explains, "We have a responsibility to take care of them [the salmon], to make sure that they take care of us, for generations to come" (Puyallup June 26, 00:49-54). Similar to *As Long as the Rivers Run* and *River People*, Native Daily Network (NDN) created a feature-length documentary film called *Ancestral Waters* (2019), which follows some of the key direct-action organizers involved in the Puyallup fight against the LNG facility.

[3] Despite being named after the Salish Sea (Puget Sound), Ramona Bennett explains, "the owners of Puget Sound Energy live in Australia, they aren't local" (Puyallup May 31, 01:52-57).

As is said at the start of the documentary, much of the video material is pulled from activists' Facebook livestreams (NDN 00:01-10). Social media have played an important role in sharing Indigenous perspectives with their particular social media audiences (as I discussed in chapters 3 and 4). While being very important in the moment, as a way to push back against the mainstream media's inattention or neglect to the issue at hand—especially Indigenous perspectives, social media posts can also be fairly ephemeral and disorganized across different specific people's and organizations' accounts. By creating a documentary from these materials, the Puyallup perspective can be collected and shared into the future, much like *As Long as the Rivers Run* and *River People* show us what Indigenous direct action looked like in their times. In this way, the Puyallup organizing against the LNG facility continue an age-old traditional practice of creating and sharing oral knowledges, to ensure that future generations know what their ancestors did to protect them, and can learn from their strategies (and, perhaps, their mistakes) when building their futures in their times.

Ancestral Waters explains the treaty of Medicine Creek (to which the Puyallup were signatories along with Nisqually and Squaxin Island), the reservation of fishing rights in the treaty's third article, and the history of Nisqually Chief Leschi's revolt during treaty time. The documentary then connects this to the Fish Wars at Frank's Landing: the voice-over explains that "the spirit of Leschi lived on in these people, as they fight for their right to exist" (NDN 09:52-10:51). After the initial display of the site of the Puyallup fishing camp in fall 1970 (discussed in Chapter 1), footage from *As Long as the Rivers Run* is shown. The excerpts from the film document the violent arrests made at the Puyallup fishing camp. They include images of Al Bridges and Sid Mills and feature a John Trudell (Santee Sioux) song as a soundtrack where Trudell links the Puyallup struggle to "Leschi's resolve" to defend his people's sovereignty

(NDN 11:20-12:23). We also hear a voice-over connecting the 1970 united stand for fishing rights to the current stand to protect the salmon habitat from LNG (NDN 11:27-33). "Water Warrior" Dakota Case (Puyallup) explains the importance of not just the treaty fishing rights but also the habitat protection, referencing a report which said their "salmon might be extinct in four years" if things continue on as they are (NDN 13:07-49). In response to the report, a number of Puyallup came together on the river to share prayers, and ceremonially thank every salmon who passed through (NDN 13:49-55). After explaining this history, and its continued relevance through its relations to the present-day peoples and their struggles, the film zooms in on the current struggle against the LNG facility.

Case explains how the Puyallup struggle is informed by the fact they have lived on their lands for "thousands on thousands of years," and by the resulting "connection [they have] to this land, these waters, to the salmon, to everything around [them]" (NDN 07:56-08:08). Opening with the sounds of the drum of a heartbeat superimposed on the Morse code distress signal S.O.S., *Ancestral Waters* introduces itself in the following manner: "For the past three years, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Tacoma activists, and a host of amazing allies have worked together to protect the water. This is their story…" (NDN 00:33-37). This opening description frames the work of the Puyallup, and those working in solidarity with them, as not one of "activism," but as one of "protection"—they are simply continuing their role as caretakers of the land (including the waters), a role central to the Puyallup worldview, as we learned in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

The documentary casts the contemporary water protectors at Puyallup in direct relation to their ancestors: the main organizers clearly articulate this relationship, and it is visualized through the inclusion of footage from *As Long as the Rivers Run*, their regional predecessors.

The film also shows the relations between the No LNG fight and more recent struggles; the first example provided is the spring 2016 victory against a proposed methanol plant in the Port of Tacoma (NDN 00:54-1:11). Then, we move to the Standing Rock Sioux struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) (NDN 01:25), where we see Nancy Shippentower (Puyallup) share words of support from the Puyallup leadership with the people gathered at Standing Rock (NDN 2:04-17). Like the Frank's Landing family's reciprocal connections with the contemporaneous Occupation of Alcatraz, the Puyallup see their contemporary fight against the LNG facility in direct relation with the contemporaneous struggle of the Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL).

Chester Earl (Puyallup) explains the Puyallup support for the Standing Rock as support for Indigenous peoples' treaty rights; Earl sees Standing Rock's struggle against the DAPL as aligned with the Makah struggle for their treaty whaling rights, which Puyallup also supported (NDN 2:15-27). Making clear treaty rights are at the center of the different issues, Earl explains that, since the ancestors thought those culturally specific rights should be reserved in the treaties, "it is [their] responsibility to stand with them": the contemporary generations are obligated to continue protecting those treaty rights (NDN 02:28-42). David Bean (Puyallup) states, "what affects one of us, affects all of us" (NDN 03:37-39). Not just an expression of lived, millennia-old and continuing-into-the future relations with human and non-human peoples, this experience of shared consequences is also a legal fact. Many court cases that are decided considering one particular event or issue, end up having repercussions for all Indigenous nations within what is currently the U.S.[4]

[4] Most famously, perhaps, this is devastatingly true for the Supreme Court case *Oliphant v. Suquamish* (1978), which severely limited tribal sovereignty over non-Native offenders on tribal lands for every Native nation located within what's currently the U.S.

Bean explains that the Puyallup support Standing Rock because they see the Standing Rock struggle to protect their water, to protect future generations, as similar to Puyallup's fight to protect the water and the salmon people and all other relations from the LNG facility. In his words, Puyallup, like Stand Rock, are fighting to protect:

> our habitat that provides life for our resources, our natural resources, our salmon, our shellfish. we are fighting to protect our habitat so that we can continue to harvest our seafood so that our children can continue to harvest seafood, as our ancestors have done before us. (NDN 02:43-03:24)

The struggle against the LNG facility on their ancestral territories is a struggle *for* Puyallup continuity, *for* a thriving, healthy Puyallup future, in relationship with their human and non-human relations in and on the land. From their own belonging to their place, and their taking up of their responsibilities and obligations towards the land and its relations across generations, Puyallup are in solidarity with the Standing Rock's struggle for their own place and relations.

Indigenous peoples are leading the fight for better relations with the land and its human and non-human peoples in many places: the Puyallup stand against this LNG facility, Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline,[5] Ojibwe peoples–feat. the important leader Winona LaDuke—against the Line 3 pipeline in Minnesota,[6] Native Hawaiians against the Thirty Meter Telescope on their sacred Mauna Kea,[7] the Wet'suwet'en against the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline,[8] and many more. These struggles against the fossil fuel industry and against colonial science interrupt the settler obsession with "progress" and development, and instead re-center a

5 https://www.nodaplarchive.com/ [04-20-2020]
6 https://www.stopline3.org/ [04-20-2020]
7 http://kahea.org/blog/no-the-state-should-not-allow-tmt-on-mauna-kea [04-20-2020]
8 https://www.facebook.com/unistoten/ [04-20-2020]

traditional Indigenous relationship to the land and all its relations (human and non-human) which follows the teachings of their ancestors and works to ensure a thriving future for the future generations.

Non-Native people, too, have an important role to play in this. Our obligation to the place we are, and to the Indigenous peoples who belong to it, asks us to be in solidarity and actively support and invest in these struggles—and, crucially, to follow Indigenous leadership. This is one way to start being in better relationship with each other, and to work on un-settling the structures on which the colonization of Turtle Island depends. This includes putting pressure on settler governments to support Indigenous sovereignty, and to take up their obligations towards Indigenous nations. This is necessary because treaty rights are repeatedly violated for corporate interests. For example, even though the 2013 Martinez Decision requires protection of their habitat to ensure the Puyallup treaty fishing right for all generations, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) finally received all needed permits to build the LNG facility.[9] Even before a crucial permit had

[9] The Puyallup have chosen not to litigate on the basis of the Martinez decision, so as to not put that win at risk (see again *Oliphant v. Suquamish*). However, the city of Tacoma and the State of Washington should still be expected to follow federal law. When Judge Boldt made his decision about the allocation of the fishing resource, he also postponed deciding on two additional issues: whether the treaties implied habitat protection, and whether the fair share includes hatchery fish (Blumm and Steadman 657). The hatchery fish issue was resolved in 1985 by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, affirming a lower court's ruling that the Boldt decision encompasses hatchery fish as well. In 2013, Federal District Judge Ricardo S. Martinez affirmed a 2007 decision on the habitat issue, confirming that the 1854-1855 Stevens Treaties indeed include habitat protection as part of the ensured continuation of the salmon and steelhead runs—this is more colloquially known as *The Martinez Decision*. However, in this decision, Martinez did not clearly delineate the U.S. Federal Government's role in habitat protection, nor "the scope of the remedy that the court should prescribe," and thus, it has been able to skirt this responsibility (Blumm and Steadman 659). The many court cases altogether read the enduring meaning of the fishing clause in the Stevens treaties as implying "a trinity of rights": "a right of access, a right to a fair share of the harvest, and a right to habitat protection" (Blumm and Steadman 660). Despite this responsibility, enshrined in treaty law and affirmed by several more recent court decisions, the State of Washington is allowing Puget Sound Energy to build a Liquid Natural Gas or LNG facility on the tide flats in Tacoma, WA, to store fracked gas. These tide flats are within the original delineation of the Puyallup lands—before allotment and other policies divvied up and sold most of the reservation land to non-Native land owners in order to build and expand the city of Tacoma and its industrial development.

not been given, PSE started building anyway. Rather than being punished for their illegal construction, they were affirmed by the eventual supply of all needed permits.

The settler government agencies which supplied the facility with the needed permits clearly put "progress" before people's (and the land's) well-being. In *Ancestral Waters*, elder and Fish Wars veteran Ramona Bennet (Puyallup) voices her concerns at a rally, explaining the gravity of the struggle against the LNG facility: "Our Puyallup Reservation is looking right in the face of death and disaster, poison and explosion" (NDN 04:49-05:02). When Bennet speaks of "death and disaster," she is not speaking in hyperbole. In a separate video for the Puyallup Tribe's official Facebook page, Bennett explains how extreme of a misnomer "liquid *natural* gas" is; the gas needs to be fracked to be accessed and Bennett points out, "Then where they're fracking why are the women all having miscarriages and the elders dying, if it's so clean?" (Puyallup May 31, 01:04-10). Despite how LNG often is presented as the cleanest energy, it causes detrimental environmental consequences and poses highly dangerous risks.

Not only does the LNG facility violate treaty rights, the Martinez Decision, and a 1990 Puyallup land claims settlement, it also exposes the surrounding communities to great hazard, both Puyallup and non-Puyallup. *Ancestral Waters* explains that LNG, when stored at -260 degrees Fahrenheit (-162 degrees Celsius) only takes up 1/600th of the volume regular natural gas takes up (NDN 06:44-56); the facility at Puyallup would store between 250,000 and 500,000 gallons of LNG daily (NDN 06:57-07:05), and "8 million gallons of LNG is 4.8 billion gallons of gas" (NDN 07:10). These numbers mean that an explosion would have the power of "161 kilotons of TNT," which is more than 10 times as big as the atomic bomb in Hiroshima (equivalent to 15 kiloton of TNT) (TNT 07:17-34). This means the blast zone includes the

location of the Northwest Detention Center (a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, prison), as well as many public schools.

The issue of the LNG facility thus directly affects more people than just the Puyallup. As such, while the Puyallup are taking the lead to defend their lands, their place, to the benefit of everyone within the facility's "hazard zone," including undocumented people, they are supported in this fight by several different nations and groups. Seventeen other Washington Tribes and the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, for example, all undersigned a March 28, 2019 letter to Washington State Governor Jay Inslee to ask for a new Environmental Impact Statement.[10] Puyallup are also supported by many local organizations, such as the 18 organizations who signed an April 8, 2019 letter to Tacoma Mayor Woodards, Tacoma City Council Members, and Fire Chief Duggan expressing deep concern about the threat to the health and safety of the people incarcerated at the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC), which lies within the LNG facility's "hazard zone" and which does not have an evacuation plan.[11] *Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility,* who also signed the letter concerning NWDC, additionally have published op-eds, and have written directly to Governor Inslee, to express concern over the effects of the LNG facility to water and air quality and the health and safety of Tacoma residents.[12] On May 8, 2019, Inslee changed his stance and announced he no longer supported the facility (although he claimed no jurisdiction).[13]

[10] http://news.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov/17-washington-tribes-stand-with-the-puyallup-tribe-against-lng/ [04-20-2020]

[11] In the letter, "Northwest faith and social justice leaders call out moral issues regarding LNG safety risks for individuals at the Northwest Detention Center," the organizations explain NWDC's safety plan requires detainees to "shelter in place," which would not safeguard them from the effects of a possible explosion or fire at the LNG facility.

[12] Representing more than 800 members, "Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility (WPSR) is a 40-year-old, physician-led advocacy organization working to create a healthy, just, peaceful and sustainable world. We take on the gravest current threats to human health and survival - nuclear weapons, economic inequity, and a climate crisis driven by dependence on fossil fuels." https://www.wpsr.org/ [04-20-2020]

[13] http://news.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov/gov-inslee-comes-out-against-lng/ [04-20-2020]

This approach of appealing to the governor, the local government, and the public through letters and pamphlets using a plurality of arguments and evidence was co-designed by the Puyallup Tribe and the communications firm they hired to support the development of Puyallup's own communications; aside from these "official" channels, the Puyallup Tribe and individual Puyallup tribal citizens are also organizing marches and blockades on the ground, with solidarity and support from non-Native people, as is shown in *Ancestral Waters*. In many of these different strategies, non-Native support which affirms Puyallup sovereignty and thus their leadership in this case can strengthen the Puyallup position and thus help build healthy Indigenous futures on these lands.

The capitalist temporality that rules U.S. society (and much of the world) understands the individual as solely responsible, alone in a network of relations of capitalist exchange but with as sole purpose personal progress: i.e. profit and enrichment. Indigenous radical relationality, however, is not one of exchanges for personal profit, rather it is about foregrounding relations of reciprocity, responsibility, and redistribution. Perhaps these values and knowledges can offer helpful guidance for the dream work Native peoples, Black people, non-Native settlers, and others need to build solidarity and equitable relationships for, to ensure a livable future beyond settler "progress." It is not unlikely that the novel corona virus is a consequence of capitalist exploitation of nature: deforestation causes habitat loss, allowing diseases to be brought from wild areas into human communities.[14]

The pandemic appears as both entirely new (it is the *novel* corona virus after all, which no medicine or vaccine currently exists for) and an expected transformed return (there are many corona viruses, and experts have been expecting a global pandemic). As such, existing

[14] For example, the Ebola virus is most found in areas with high deforestation; HIV developed from the macaque lentivirus. https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/coronavirus-habitat-loss/ [04-20-20]

knowledge and stories can be adapted for this moment; perhaps a heuristic of spiralic temporality can assist us in recognizing what relationships we need to build or strengthen, from our own positionality and possibly fraught relationship to the land we occupy, and what responsibilities each of us can or should take up to do our part to un-settle oppressive structures and support the work for thriving Indigenous futures. Indigenous people are showing the world that this work does not have to stop because we are now all limited to our own spaces; many webinars and online campaigns are organized to continue to support the ongoing struggles like the ones I listed earlier, for example.

Another example of Indigenous futurity in this spiralic return of a new pandemic is the online practice of the jingle dress dance. This healing dance was created in Ojibwe country during the 1918-1919 flu pandemic, and slowly but surely was popularized across much of Turtle Island (Child 126). It has taken up a new, transformed role to bring its healing abilities into our future, once more through social media. The Facebook group "Social Distance Pow Wow" is a place where Indigenous people are creating healing and community through sharing videos of themselves jingle dress dancing while "social distancing" (or rather "physical distancing") is ordered all over Turtle Island and many places around the world.

The jingle dress dance in particular is an excellent example of the reflex of adapting to the new situation without losing "authenticity" of the traditional; the jingle dress dance is a healing dance which promotes physical, spiritual, and emotional healing (Child 128). Many stories of its origin exist, as many Ojibwe nations have their own version of a story of a specific child (with known name and families) that was deathly ill and was healed thanks to a new type of dress and dance revealed to her father in a vision (Child 130). Red Lake Ojibwe scholar Brenda Child explains how the jingle dress was "an innovation, but one consistent with Ojibwe spiritual

practices and traditions of song and dance" (131). Even in its creation, the Jingle Dress Dance was a transformation of existing embodied knowledge for a new moment; now during the Covid-19 pandemic it once again is transformed to be able to continue its healing and comforting work through video.

Many examples like this, where the lie of the incommensurability of Indigenous tradition and Indigenous futures is made plainly obvious, exist. For example, Native women of all ages (including some tiny tots) are participating in the Tik Tok app "brush challenge" (where people pretend to pass a brush across a series of short videos edited together, and show themselves in a before and after makeover), presenting themselves "made over" with their regalia. Before this particular pressure to reinvent practices to suit social-distancing orders, Indigenous traditions were always already being rethought in the new conditions. This not only in the larger social movements and direct-action campaigns I have discussed, but also in many smaller expressions of Indigenous sovereignty and radical relationality with the land – including in the cities. One example of this are the urban cultural resurgence practices of Michi Saagig scholar and artist Leanne Betasamosake Simpson.

In *This Accident of Being Lost*, a work of Nishnaabeg land-based knowledge in practice free from academic genre expectations, Simpson describes the resurgence work her "Fourth World Problems Collective" does in her urban neighborhood in what is currently Peterborough, Ontario to continue the Nishnaabeg tradition of maple syrup harvesting. The "Fourth World Problems Collective" is made up out of Nishnaabeg friends and relations of different generations and genders, they work to reconnect with traditional culture, in their own contemporary way.

Simpson describes the ceremony the Collective holds before they start their sugar harvesting; they build a fire in her yard to make some offerings to the ancestors and ask for their

help. She “mumbles some Aanishnaabemowin” (the Nishnaabe language) as she puts her offering of tobacco into the fire, but describes having to think about both the prayer and the process in English, because her knowledge of the language is still too limited (Simpson 7). She thinks, “it looks different because there are three streets and 150 houses and one thousand people living in it, but it is my sugar bush. It is our sugar bush. We are the only ones that are supposed to be here. Please help us” (Simpson 7). When they have all made their offerings, the Collective goes out to where the trees are located, where Simpson describes seeing “salmon, caribou, eagle, and crane circling our sugar bush at the end of the street” (8). This presence shows how the process of living their Nishnaabeg traditions creates relations across time; the ceremony of the fire offerings and the sugar harvesting creates relationships that connect past-present-future and create a way of being in the world that is free from settler limitations. While the settler context still instills fear—Simpson describes thinking to herself, “If I get caught, hide my kids” (8)—it does not stop their work to continue their resurgent practice.

Simpson describes that, in order to have access to the sugar maples that grow in the neighborhood, her Collective designed flyers to share with the residents. She describes the residents as mostly liberal voting, something which the rhetoric of the flyers tries to resonate with in order for the Collective to be able to do their traditional sap collecting without having the police called on them; the flyers read “Thank you for your support in our urban sugar-making adventure” (Simpson 5-6). Due to settler temporality’s inability to allow Indigenous peoples to exist as “authentically” Indigenous in the present, the traditional sap collecting efforts are not expressed in the language of respect for Indigenous traditions, but rather in terms of “a fun adventure.” The rhetoric of the flyer is carefully chosen in order to be able to create just enough space for the Nishnaabeg Collective to be able to exercise their traditional relations with the

sugar bush and all the relations involved (including other members of the collective, the "salmon, caribou, eagle, and crane" mentioned above).

Even within this context limited by settler structures, Simpson and her collective are able to live their "radical relationality," or in Simpson's own words from her book *As We Have Always Done*, "freedom as a way of being as a constellation of relationship, freedom as world making, freedom as a practice" (18). It is through the embodied practice of the traditional relationships with the land, *the place*, that this community of "radical relationality," rooted in Nishnaabeg knowledge, is able to continue *as Nishnaabeg*.

Simpson's urban Indigenous resurgence practice, particularly that of the Nishnaabeg relationship with the sugar bush, evidences a successful effort to continue the Nishnaabeg relationship with the land and all its relations, despite settler-imposed limitations and attempts at foreclosure of a Nishnaabeg future. It is an ongoing process of re-learning traditional knowledges, and re-establishing relationships across time that settlers worked hard to interrupt (through for example the residential school system and other strategies discussed in the chapters preceding this Forward). What Indigenous futures could be possible if non-Native people committed to un-settling the violent frameworks Indigenous peoples are having to fight to protect their place and their continuity?

Using a heuristic of spiralic temporality to consider the Indigenous social movements I discuss here, has shown how the people involved in them understood themselves as part of a larger spiral of history where both their ancestors and those not yet born are present in the now, motivating their concerns and actions. This allows a reader to better grasp their conceptualizations of sovereignty and their relationships to their lands in a way that acknowledges their obligations to place and to the future generations of all their relations in that

place, including plant and animal nations. This then offers a strong set of counter-knowledges to the U.S.'s property relationship to stolen land and a progress narrative evidencing a ruling palimpsestic temporality where Native people no longer exist, but also every settler is a little bit Native (and Black and other people of color blend into a multiculturalism palatable to white supremacy). Perhaps thinking about ourselves as part of a larger spiral of history in this moment of a new global pandemic can make visible both how and why things have played out the way they have, while also offering us insights into the obligations we need to fulfill to be able to build bridges across communities and help dream (and build!) a way out of the current inequitable and oppressive situation. The alternatives that we develop in our current moment are not divorced from the actions of their relations through time, but are in conversation with and building on what has come before; the knowledges and leaders for a better world are already among us.

Our settler selves must vacate the devastating illusion that we are the epitome of a linear development of progress (settler time is not the builder of futures, but the destroyer). Undoing this mindset takes the realization that we are instead a part of spiralic histories that will continue beyond us and which might ask of us what we did during this time. Un-settling a settler mind can motivate us to continue the work for building thriving futures beyond this apocalyptic experience which is forcing us to rethink many of the structures we were taught to take for granted. I hope this work has shown how a heuristic of spiralic temporality can be generative through the ways it opens up understandings of the social movements and literatures I discussed. However, the approach, again, is not an analytic which should be copied and applied everywhere and always in the same way. Instead, it is a way into understanding some of the organizing in support of Indigenous sovereignty according to the local, land-based ways of knowing and being that inform them. In this way, it can offer a stronger foundation to see specific ways to act in

solidarity, to act upon the (perhaps newly discovered) responsibilities we have to these particular lands we occupy, and to the Indigenous peoples we owe.

Rather than a clear key to a map, a heuristic of spiralic temporality might be more akin to a guide who can help you see the map in different ways. In this way, a heuristic of spiralic temporality can help us see how we might fit into the spirals of time of which we are part, and what they might hold for us to help us build thriving futures beyond the ongoing iterations of apocalypses endured on these lands sometimes called Turtle Island. I'd like to leave you now with these many possibilities, and with the closing lines of Mvskoke poet Joy Harjo's "A Map to the Next World":

> We were never perfect.
>
> Yet, the journey we make together is perfect on this earth who was
> once a star and made the same mistakes as humans.
>
> We might make them again, she said.
>
> Crucial to finding the way is this: there is no beginning or end.
>
> You must make your own map.

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