



D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies

Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies (NCAIS) Graduate Conference

February 9-11, 2024



Multiple generations of unidentified women observe a Chicago-area powwow. Orlando Cabanban photographs, Newberry Library

Located near the confluence of several waterways, the Newberry Library sits on land that intersects with the aboriginal homelands of several tribal nations: the Council of the Three Fires: the Potawatomi, Odawa, and Ojibwe Nations; the Illinois Confederacy: the Peoria and Kaskaskia Nations; and the Myaamia, Wea, Thakiwaki, and Meskwaki Nations. The Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Kiikaapoi, and Mascouten Nations also call the region of northeast Illinois home. Indigenous people continue to live in this area and celebrate their traditional teachings and lifeways. Today, Chicago is home to one of the largest urban Indigenous communities in the United States, and this land remains an important place for Indigenous peoples. As a Chicago institution, it is the Newberry's responsibility to acknowledge this historical context and build reciprocal relationships with the tribal nations on whose lands we are situated.

Schedule at a Glance

The NCAIS Graduate Conference sessions are open to all students and faculty at NCAIS institutions. However, the NCAIS Liaisons' Meeting, Graduate Luncheon, and Refreshments & Dinner are limited to student presenters, faculty liaisons, and session chairs. The NCAIS Steering Committee meeting is limited to committee members.

Friday, February 9

2 pm – 4 pm: Optional Tour and Collection Presentation (*Meet in Lobby*)

Saturday, February 10

8:00 am: Registration Open; Coffee and Light Breakfast Available (*Rettinger Hall*)

8:45 am: Welcome and Opening Remarks (*Rettinger Hall*)

9:00 am – 10:30 am: Concurrent Sessions (*Rettinger Hall and Baskes Boardroom*)

10:30 am – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions (*Rettinger Hall, Baskes Boardroom, and B84*)

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm: Lunch

- NCAIS Liaisons' Annual Meeting (*Towner Fellows Lounge*)
- Graduate Student Luncheon (*B91, B92, and B94*)

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions (*Rettinger Hall and Baskes Boardroom*)

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm: Break

3:30 pm – 5 pm: Concurrent Sessions (*Rettinger Hall and Baskes Boardroom*)

5 pm – 6 pm: Refreshments (*Ruggles Hall*)

6 pm – 8 pm: Dinner and Keynote Presentation (*Ruggles Hall*)

Sunday February 11

9 am – 11 am: NCAIS Steering Committee Meeting (*The McRae Room, the Talbott Hotel*)

Detailed Agenda

Friday, February 9

2 pm – 4 pm: Optional Tour and Collection Presentation with **Rose Miron**, Director of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies at the Newberry

Saturday, February 10

8:00 am: Registration Open; Coffee and Light Breakfast Available (*Rettinger Hall*)

8:45 am: Welcome and Opening Remarks, **Laura McEnaney**, Vice President for Research and Academic Programs at the Newberry and **Rose Miron** (*Rettinger Hall*)

9:00 am – 10:30 am: Concurrent Sessions

- **Session 1: Diverse Forms of Resistance Across the 19th and 20th Century United States** (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: John Hall, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“When the land was sold, the power of the chiefs seemed to go”: Captains and Choctaw removal as Domestic Crisis, 1828-1850, **Edward P. Green**, Penn State University

Celebrity, Humor, Showmanship: Contesting Settler History through Miami Performances, **Joshua A. McGonagle Althoff**, University of Minnesota

“How to Make an Indian Movie”: AIM, *A Man Called Horse*, and Revenge, **Brianna Tafolla Rivière**, University of California-Davis

- **Session 2: Examining the Language and Enaction of Community, Sovereignty, and Borders** (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: Kristin Arola, Michigan State University

Towards a Foundation for Inuit Histories, **Patricia Johnson-Castle**, University of Minnesota

Porous Border Grammars: (Alter)native Approaches to Border Theory, **Nathalie Martinez**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Pan-Indigeneity and the Language of Community, **Cyanne So-lo-li Topaum**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

10:30 am – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions

- **Session 3: Indian Missions, Boarding Schools, and other Colonial Education across the American West** (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: Kallie Kosc, Oklahoma State University

Indigeneity on Trial at the Californio Borderlands of Experience, **James Bland**, University of Oklahoma

Education for Redemption: Stolen Children, Schools, and Settler Colonialism in the Intermountain West, 1850-1890, **Nathan Tanner**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Government Schools as Development: Nakota and Oceti Sakowin Resistance and Adaptation to Non-Native Education at the Fort Peck Reservation, 1875-1920, **Richard Maska**, University of New Mexico

“I don’t want my children to go away. I want them to go to school here”: Education and Labor in Indigenous Borderlands at Fort Bidwell Indian School, **Analiesa Delgado**, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

- **Session 4: Tribal Nations’ Responses to Federal Policies Across the 19th and 20th Century** (*Basques Boardroom*)

Chair: William Bauer, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

A Company of Kin: Pokagon Village and the Business of Tribal Nationalism, 1821-1841, **Zada Ballew**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Precipitating Nations: Post-Removal Kansas Territory and the Path to the Civil War, **Sheldon Yeakley**, Oklahoma State University

Empires of Exclusion: Blood, Nation, and the Reconfiguration of Power in Nazi Germany and the United States, **Kabl Wilkerson**, Harvard University

Jicarilla Apache, Project Gasbuggy, and the Early Years of Fracking in Indian Country, **Joshua Coleman**, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

- **Session 5: Survivance and Relationality Across Film, Literature, and Poetry** (*B84*)

Chair: Kelly Wisecup, Northwestern University

An Indigenous Sound Studies Approach to Reading the Multiform Novel, **Erin Cheslow**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Relationality and Survivance in Joy Harjo’s “Tobacco Origin Story”, **April Best**, Michigan State University

Kin, Catastrophe, and Metonymic Trans*formations, **Kai Chase**, Northwestern University

The Native Way: Exploring Tribal Traditions in *Reservation Dogs*, **Jacob Hicks**, Oklahoma State University

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm: Lunch

- NCAIS Liaisons' Annual Meeting (*Towner Fellows Lounge*)
- Graduate Student Luncheon (*B91, B92, and B94*)

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions

- **Session 6: Indigenous-Led Education in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries** (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: Jean O'Brien, University of Minnesota

Self Determination and Incarceration: AIM Survival Schools in the Minnesota State Penitentiary, **Chris Getowicz**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Weaving Our Positionalities into the Work of Indigenous Education, **Shayla Chatto**, University of Washington

Community-Based Participatory Land-Based Education Model, **Shirley S. Thompson**, University of Manitoba

- **Session 7: Creating Communities of Care and Relationality in Mexico, Taiwan, and New Mexico** (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: Lloyd Alimboyao Sy, Yale University

Creating *Curanderas* in Ecologies of Medicine: Indigenous *pueblos originarios* of Atotonilco el Grande and Metztitlan, **Gaby Báez**, University of Oklahoma

Not-So-All-American Acequias: Courses of Contestation and Community in Territorial New Mexico, **Jacquelyn Davila**, Yale University

Learning in Resistance: The Ljavek Community's Ongoing Community Building and Land Justice Advocacy in Taiwan, **Susan Hou**, University of Washington

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm: Break

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm: Concurrent Sessions

- **Session 8: Contemporary Issues Across Turtle Island: MMIW, Child Welfare, Land Acknowledgements, and Representation** (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: Jonathan Radocay, University of Washington

“Of a somewhat onerous and exceptional character”: Guest, Visitor, and Ally in Historical and Modern Treaty Discourses, **Jayson Gislason**, University of Manitoba

Legislative Gaps: Colonial Reality and Indigenous Imaginings in Tommy Orange's *There There*, **Alison Hsiao**, University of California-Davis

Indigenous Fathers & the Child Welfare System, **Leona Huntinghawk**, University of Manitoba

A Purépecha Fountain: Midwestern Mexicanidad at a Glance, **Pau Nava**, University of Michigan

- **Session 9: “Untelling” and Re-Framing Archival Texts Using Indigenous Stories and Memories** (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: **Matthew Kruer**, University of Chicago

Re-Reading Misrepresentations in Samson Occom’s *Narrative* as Literature, **Alexander R. Kinnaman**, Michigan State University

Ella Deloria and the Speaking of Status, Fame, and Gaze, **Kaylen James**, University of Minnesota

Wičhákini Yeló/Renewed Life: Recontextualizing Ella Deloria’s Epic *Dakota Tales*, **Julia Marsan**, University of Chicago

The Origin and Purpose of Storytelling, **Robin Olive Little Jackson**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

5 pm – 6 pm: Refreshments (*Ruggles Hall*)

6 pm – 8 pm: Dinner and Keynote Presentation: “New Legislation on Indigenous Issues in Illinois” by **Andrew Johnson**, Executive Director, Native American Chamber of Commerce, and **Josee Starr**, Director of Operations, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, in conversation with **Rose Miron** (*Ruggles Hall*)

Sunday February 12

9 am – 11 am: NCAIS Steering Committee Meeting (*The McRae Room, the Talbott Hotel*)

Abstracts

Session 1: **Diverse Forms of Resistance Across the 19th and 20th Century United States** (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: John Hall, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“When the land was sold, the power of the chiefs seemed to go”: Captains and Choctaw removal as Domestic Crisis, 1828-1850, Edward P. Green, Penn State University

In 1830, an elite group of Choctaws signed the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, a document that ostensibly exchanged the nation’s lands east of the Mississippi River for those in Indian Territory. While scholars have charted the debates and contests that emerged in the run up to the signing of the treaty, they have yet to analyze the ways that the nation fragmented in its aftermath. The challenge posed by removal also generated a domestic crisis, driving a contest between two paradigms of authority and power that had hitherto existed side by side with relative ease. The first came from elites and the nascent National Council, who increasingly derived their resources from the Atlantic economy and treaty annuities; the second from deeply held traditions of non-centralized authority, localized decision making, and maintenance of matrilineal kinship. By turning to the underutilized testimony of thousands of Choctaws before U.S. land commissions in the 1830s and 1840s, we can begin to understand the quotidian interactions between individuals that shaped the contest between these two systems of power. Choctaws voted with their feet, and most chose to put their faith in local leaders, called captains. Examining the range of ways that captains attempted to protect their people’s land, familial structures, and pursued their own plans for political organizations in the face of increasing white violence reveals both the strength bonds that bound Choctaws together and the inability of US colonialism to break the nation’s sovereignty.

Celebrity, Humor, Showmanship: Contesting Settler History through Miami Performances, Joshua A. McGonagle Althoff, University of Minnesota

The Muk-Koons-Kwa Company told a story at once familiar and foreign to non-Native audiences. Many had heard the story of Mahkoonsahkwa (Francis Slocum) before, but the version put on by Myaamia (Miami) performers in the 1920s focused less on the initial violence of her captivity and instead on her adopted identity as a Miami woman and elder. The Muk-Koons-Kwa Company was intervening at a crucial time in the memory politics of Indiana and the United States more broadly. As the nation prepared to celebrate the 150-year anniversary of the Revolutionary War, cities and states poured resources into public historical works like statues, memorials, and pageants in order to interpret the past for present audiences. The Company performers were only the latest in a line of Miami people who in the early 20th century had attained local fame and used their platforms to express a different inflection of the past and a specific familial relationship to Myaamionki (Miami homelands). This paper charts how Miami people strategically took advantage of settler expectations of Indigenous “authenticity” and used public speaking engagements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to chastise the federal mistreatment of Miami people and argue against national narratives of Indigenous “conquest.”

“How to Make an Indian Movie”: AIM, *A Man Called Horse*, and *Revenge*, Brianna Tafolla Rivière, University of California-Davis

On April 22, 1970, the American Indian Movement (AIM) met with Hollywood producer Sandy Howard and actress Corrina Tsopei to discuss their new film *A Man Called Horse*. What was supposed to be reconciliation between the film production crew and the political organization turned into a heated confrontation about Native authenticity, representation, and exploitation. The film, which proclaimed itself to be the most authentic film about Native Peoples ever made, was rejected by AIM, who called it anti-Native and racist. This meeting led eventually to a full-fledged protest and boycott led by AIM against *Horse* and include condemnations by human rights organizations, police arrests, and a bomb threat to a theater in Minneapolis. The tension between AIM and *Horse*'s production team speak to historic tensions between colonizer epistemologies and Indigenous realities. This paper examines AIM's protest and boycott as well as the making of *Horse* to consider concepts of Indigenous authenticity, commodification, and ethno-graphic revenge- or rather revenge of consent. I borrow from Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson's theory on revenge to argue AIM's protest was not just an act of resistance to Hollywood's treatment of Indigenous Peoples but also a refusal to argue within preestablished boundaries of Indigenous authenticity. AIM's revenge manifested through political protest to reveal how hollow Hollywood's conceptions of authenticity were as well as to acknowledge the continued presence and voices of Indigenous Peoples.

Session 2: Examining the Language and Enaction of Community, Sovereignty, and Borders (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: Kristin Arola, Michigan State University

Towards a Foundation for Inuit Histories, Patricia Johnson-Castle, University of Minnesota

Though Inuit are one of the most anthropologically studied ethnicities there very little is written on the ontology of Inuit sovereignty. Inuit are the only Indigenous group in Canada who have all settled land claims (modern treaties) with federal and provincial/territorial governments. A requirement of land claim settlements is the recognition of the sovereignty of the Canadian state, the relinquishing of some territorial claims in exchange for recognition of sovereignty of the remaining territory, and a payout for the surrendered land. Unlike other Indigenous groups who explicitly assert sovereignty rooted beyond the settler variety, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (the organization that represents all Inuit in Canada) leverages our incorporation into the Canadian state in an attempt to improve living conditions among Inuit. Many First Nations in southern Canada are members of Number Treaties (1871-1921) and experienced combinations of consistent contact with settlers; displacement caused by settler agriculture/urbanization; and the tyrannical of the Indian Act. This is very different to the socio-political history of the majority of Inuit in Canada who experienced a late but rapid onset of colonization starting after the Second World War. Using the work of Aileen Moreton-Robinson, this paper examines Inuit relationality to land and social structures emphasizing Inuit qaujimaqatugangit (“what Inuit have always known to be true” or “traditional knowledge”) to demonstrate how Inuit sovereignty predates the existence of Canada and is not contingent on Canadian sovereignty. The work of understanding Inuit sovereignty is essential to the academization of Inuit history.

Porous Border Grammars: (Alter)native Approaches to Border Theory, *Nathalie Martinez*, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Grammars are structures that frame, orient, and define. Rooted in logics fostered by histories of coloniality and imperialism (Moreton-Robinson 2015; King 2019; Wynter 2003), the grammars of borders manifest through, within, and across militarized boundaries (De León 2015; Brown 2010), citizenship (Galemba 2018; Nyamnjoh 2022; Picozza 2021), race (Achieme 2021; Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018; Loza 2016), and language (Mendoza 2018; Mignolo 2000; Rosa 2019) among other realities. Taking up the calls from Indigenous scholars and activists such as Jodi Byrd [Chickasaw] (2019), Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui [Aymara] (2020), and Audra Simpson [Mohawk] (2014), this paper (re)centers Indigenous epistemologies and phenomenologies, as well as critical Indigenous and Black theories to explore the embodied experiences that contribute to an (alter)Native grammar of borders. Mobilizing these tools and (re)centering everyday theorists who inhabit, cross, work, and live within these borders, (re)conceptualizes the border beyond the “expanse” (Simmons 2019) of settler imaginaries and contests the metanarratives that exhibit the coloniality of border grammars manifested through dialogues of state, power, and nation (Lugo 1997). Of critical note within this Indigenous-centered piece, I urge us to recognize that these grammars are interrelated; thus, the following grammars are analyzed as “shoaling” (King 2019)—in flux and woven with and against one another. Such an “indigenous-centric methodological approach” provides a preliminary analysis of how border theories have been complicit in “processes that have kept indigenous peoples as a necessary pre-conditional presence within theories of colonialism and its ‘post.’” (Byrd 2011, xxxiv). Thus, this paper contributes to scholarship that intervenes in White colonial and settler colonial discourses that shape border grammars and shows how exposing and (re)framing these approaches is critical to collaboratively cultivating tools of futurity with, by, and for communities that live within and beyond borderscapes.

Pan-Indigeneity and the Language of Community, *Cyenne So-lo-li Topaum*, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Twentieth and twenty-first century Indigenous literatures have demonstrated an interest in developing an expansive form of Indigenous community, one composed of many different nations and held together by shared experiences of colonialism and settler violence. This idea goes beyond the realm of fiction and plays a powerful role in Native political and social activism. As such, the meanings of communal language (“we,” “us,” and “community”) expand and contract according to the speaker. What is, however, sometimes overlooked in efforts to render solidarity as already accomplished or active, or as a means to recover a lost unity between Indigenous peoples, is that (1) solidarity must be continuously renewed and enacted, and (2) the past is not one of intertribal unity but of linguistic and communal difference. Solidarity between different tribes and nations is transitory, instantiated through agreement and enacted in specific contexts, but it is not system-produced, it is not “natural.” The naturalization of kinship is a fallacy that projects originary wholeness onto the past and treats solidarity as a *fait accompli*. The capaciousness of collective language has no prescribed limit, but its membership is contingent on active and respectful solidarity. Moreover, the tribal/national “we” and “us” have an irreducibility such that, even when enmeshed in a broader, networked intercommunal alliance, communal language persists in having a double meaning: the “we” and the “us” of sovereignty and the “we” and the “us” of solidarity. While pan-Indigenous solidarity is vital, it must at all times be respectful and recognizant of self-determination.

Session 3: Indian Missions, Boarding Schools, and other Colonial Education across the American West (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: Kallie Kosc, Oklahoma State University

Indigeneity on Trial at the Californio Borderlands of Experience, James Bland, University of Oklahoma

This is the final chapter of my thesis. The thesis follows the emerging Californio identity through the twin development of missions and presidios. Both arms of the Crown and their agents simultaneously relied on and coerced Native participation in order for colonial California to function. I cover two court cases tried in Alta California in the early 19th century. In both, accused Native subjects were prosecuted for grievous crimes. The drama of both court cases demonstrated the close-knit community and local culture of Californios. Drama also exposed the dangerously narrow roles Native subjects occupied at the bottom of colonial life. First, a San Francisco Mission neophyte was convicted of the rape and murder of a presidio soldier's daughter. He was convicted and his sentence became a heated debate between the clergy and civil authorities. Secondly, a mixed-race couple- a Spanish officer and a Native woman- were caught in the act of desertion onto a foreign ship in order to carry on their illegal relationship. Explicit in the language of both trials was the accusation that the transgressions threatened the very identity and cohesion constructed around Californios. Involvement of army and church for personal motives demonstrated a society that acted (as much as possible) separately from Mexico City, with an outspoken local purpose (brotherhood of local soldiers, evangelization of local Natives, conscientious voice of local clergy). Both church and state were fundamental in affirming Californios; both were involved when Indigeneity came to trial.

Education for Redemption: Stolen Children, Schools, and Settler Colonialism in the Intermountain West, 1850-1890, Nathan Tanner, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

This paper documents how 19th century white Mormon religious and political leaders in the Intermountain West geographic region, relying on a racist scriptural hermeneutic of Indigeneity, utilized child removal, relocation, and schooling nefariously to appropriate Indigenous land and harness their labor in the construction of a theological apartheid state. From 1850 through the 1890s, white Mormon settlers in the Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico Territories created Territorial Statutes in some instances, and subverted settler legal structures in others, to steal, occasionally adopt, as well as indenture Indigenous children and youth from various tribes in the region. White Mormon settlers justified their virtual enslavement of Indigenous children by claiming they were "redeeming" them from a purported sinful state of existence. While Mormons' grandiose vision of constructing a theocratic empire never fully materialized, white Mormon settlers arguably succeeded in their pursuit to colonize the Great Basin and portions of the Southwest by employing genocidal tactics of removing and relocating children from their tribes, and utilizing schooling, as tools to secure economic, political, and social dominance over the land and its Indigenous inhabitants. In addition, this paper illuminates the ways Indigenous peoples and communities resisted Mormons' attempts to school them amidst their colonialist expansion efforts. Ultimately, this study intends to bridge some of the historiographical gaps concerning Indigenous education in the interior of the American West, as well as contribute to ongoing debates about schools' role in racial identity and nation state formation.

Government Schools as Development: Nakota and Oceti Sakowin Resistance and Adaptation to Non-Native Education at the Fort Peck Reservation, 1875-1920, *Richard Maska*, University of New Mexico

This paper provides a brief overview of Nakota and Oceti Sakowin engagement with non-Native schooling at the Fort Peck reservation in northeast Montana from 1875-1920. It draws on critical Indigenous studies and critical development theory to contextualize government run boarding schools and day schools at Fort Peck alongside other government-directed projects geared toward the integration of Indigenous communities into national markets. At Fort Peck, development consisted of land allotment and the construction of buildings and irrigation infrastructure. U.S. officials imposed these projects without the consent of the Fort Peck tribes and over their continuous objections. Non-Native schools, as Brenda Child points out, similarly furthered the state's mission of "extending Christianity, private property, and incorporation into the nation at a time when indigenous land holdings and resources were still viewed as ripe for plunder." Fort Peck parents, however, were not passive recipients of this colonial project. Instead, they prioritized the continuance of Indigenous lifeways that undermined the school policies and challenged the state's project of assimilation and incorporation. By the early twentieth century, agents had succeeded in compelling regular attendance across the reservation. Here, Nakota and Oceti Sakowin parents shifted from open acts of resistance to strategic adaptation to the school system and vocal advocacy on behalf of their children. Ultimately, the tribes' engagement with non-Native education reveals the strength of family and community life, their commitment to their children, and the resilience of Nakota and Oceti Sakowin nationhood.

"I don't want my children to go away. I want them to go to school here": Education and Labor in Indigenous Borderlands at Fort Bidwell Indian School, *Analiesa Delgado*, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

In 1931, Willard Carmon, an Achumawi man, recounted his experience at Fort Bidwell School to an anthropologist, stating: "Then they sent me to a school at Fort Bidwell. I stayed just one day." He goes on to discuss his experience in various boarding schools including Chemawa in Oregon, and the Greenville school in California. He notes that he ran away from both schools, but was sent to a different one after he would return home. Most of the reports from the Fort Bidwell Indian School are government documents, but little snippets of children's lives within those old army barracks remain within anthropological texts, oral histories, and by deconstructing government sources. Though Willard Carmon's words may be brief, they raise important questions about the boarding school experience. Why did he want to leave Fort Bidwell after one day? What did his family think when ran away from these boarding schools and returned? Moreover, Carmon's account sheds light on a history that is all too common for children who were taken from their families. In 1898, the Fort Bidwell Indian School opened in Fort Bidwell, California. Boarding school curriculum forced children into sites that were hubs of industrial training, embedded in western ideas of gender roles. My paper argues that Fort Bidwell's focus on industrial training, primarily because of a lack of funding and staff, suggests that the employees in boarding schools were preparing students for a life of domestic service rather than citizenship in the United States.

Session 4: Tribal Nations' Responses to Federal Policies Across the 19th and 20th Century (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: William Bauer, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

A Company of Kin: Pokagon Village and the Business of Tribal Nationalism, 1821-1841, Zada Ballew, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This paper offers an Indigenous business history of the Indian Removal era from the perspective of one of the wealthiest Potawatomi owned-and-operated villages in recorded history. Pokagon Village was founded by a company of Potawatomi and their kin to pursue collective economic sovereignty in their remaining homelands. Organizing themselves into a village allowed this “company of kin” to trade locally, bargain collectively, and hold increasingly privatized lands and other resources communally amidst a landscape that was becoming checkered with American farmsteads. Pokagon Village, by many accounts, was a success—for it was the largest gathering of Potawatomi in the land that was becoming the United States, demonstrating a shared commitment to creating and sustaining this Native company despite U.S. American expansion. By 1830, it was clear Pokagon Village was not in a state of “savagery” nor decline, but, instead, highly “civilized” and growing in size, status, and wealth, offering its Indigenous community, as well as their immigrant neighbors, opportunities to live, work, and worship within its sovereign borders. But little did the people know their prosperity would not last. Within a single generation, the Pokagon Village near present-day Niles, Michigan was born, prospered, and liquidated, forcing its residents to rebuild on privately owned and publicly taxed lands in present-day Silver Creek, Michigan. By tracing the rise and fall of Pokagon Village, this paper reveals the early nineteenth century origins of a commitment to the ancestors and descendants of this company of kin that has sustained Pokagon Potawatomi business for centuries.

Precipitating Nations: Post-Removal Kansas Territory and the Path to the Civil War, Sheldon Yeakley, Oklahoma State University

Found within the Newberry Library's Special Collections is a fascinating text entitled *The Old Shawnee Mission*. In this short 1928 publication, Edith Connelly offers an intriguing historical revision to the understanding of the events which captivated Kansas and the United States during the mid-nineteenth century. This amateur historian claimed that “the organization of Kansas-Nebraska Territories, the formation of the Republican Party, and the precipitation of the Civil War” were all due to the “movement started in the squalid council house of the Wyandotte Nation.” After surviving the displacement of Indian Removal in 1843, they established a growing community in what is now Kansas City, Kansas. In the 1850s as the Wyandotte and their neighbor Indigenous nations confronted questions of enslavement, manifest destiny, and popular sovereignty they took actions which held regional and national implications. A coalition led by Wyandotte citizens offered a plan for Kansas and Nebraska to be incorporated into the Union under Governor William Walker Jr. (Wyandotte). While the United States' Congress rejected this Indigenous-sponsored proposal, observers like Connelly claimed that it “precipitated” the crisis of Bleeding Kansas which in turn led to the Civil War. Too often, portrayals of national events within United States history after Indian Removal ignore the participation of Indigenous peoples. An analysis of the Wyandotte and their neighbor nations within Kansas Territory during the 1850s offers a vision of how Indigenous peoples continued to shape their and the United States' future.

Empires of Exclusion: Blood, Nation, and the Reconfiguration of Power in Nazi Germany and the United States, *Kabl Wilkerson, Harvard University*

Between 1934 and 1936, seemingly disparate visions of state authority in both Nazi Germany and the United States through U.S. Indian Policy came to rely upon the establishment of a “blood quantum” as the basis for political reorganization. This paper seeks to understand the social consequences of tribal political reconstitution following the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act and subsequent expansions to Alaska and Oklahoma in 1936, with particular attention paid to the formation of a federal definition for Indian status through blood quantum. It analyzes the new political relationship established by the Indian Reorganization Act, with an emphasis on the process of racialization through the creation of a blood quantum under Article 19. The paper focuses on Oklahoma tribes, in particular, who faced altogether different challenges as they debated the merits and pitfalls of the IRA, ultimately rejecting overt attempts to establish a tailored blood quantum model unique to Oklahoma. This paper likewise illustrates that there were international observers who interpreted developments in American Indian policy with their own goals in mind, as in Nazi Germany. Amid the myriad complications built into the process of tribal political reorganization, these developments became a source of intrigue for Nazi jurists and legal scholars as they engaged in their own process of political reorganization in explicitly racialized terms. In this case, the creation of blood schemas underscored larger political shifts in federal power in both the United States and Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1936.

Jicarilla Apache, Project Gasbuggy, and the Early Years of Fracking in Indian Country, *Joshua Coleman, University of Nevada-Las Vegas*

Project Gasbuggy was test for a supposed “peaceful” use for nuclear weapons which occurred in northwestern New Mexico. The test took place in Carson National Forest and sought to see if a new method of fracking could be using nuclear weapons to stimulate gas extraction. The Jicarilla Apache Reservation borders Carson National Forest. Gasbuggy is an example of the ongoing settler colonialism of the United States and the nuclear colonialism that emerged after World War II. Building from Tracy Voyles idea of “wastlanding” Gasbuggy is a further example of how Indigenous land is seen as a wasteland but also refers to how the United States has routinely argued that Indigenous Nations are wasting their land and not making use of it in “productive” ways. Nuclear testing on and near Indigenous land was also happening concurrently with the United States implementation of Termination policy. This is not a coincidence and the two are heavily linked, being motivated by similar factors. Domestic nuclear testing policies happening around Indigenous land and ending the trust relationship were both attempts to prove superiority of capitalism as a social structure as opposed to the USSR and communism. Nuclear testing not only builds an arsenal but also demonstrates the nation’s military power and ability. Termination is part of this as the government felt that the trust relationship is not only an example of socialism, but Indigenous ideas of land ownership also do not align with American ideals.

Session 5: Survivance and Relationality Across Film, Literature, and Poetry (B84)

Chair: Kelly Wisecup, Northwestern University

An Indigenous Sound Studies Approach to Reading the Multiform Novel, *Erin Cheslow*, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

In Keri Hulme's *The Bone People* (1983), speech is often evasive, cut off by trauma or disability. Sound, however, pervades the novel. Simon, or Clare, a white boy adopted by a Māori couple, is mute and barely literate. Since the day he was found washed up on a beach in Aotearoa New Zealand, he has not spoken a word. Instead, he fills his world with sounds, singing to stone, or listening to the stone sing back. And, because he must find ways to communicate with others, his sounds are transcribed into text in creative ways. Where dialogue cannot represent his speech in the novel, the reader must instead "hear" Simon through the speech of others as they repeat what they understand him to have said. In the interplay of Simon's muteness and intense communication, I argue, is an invitation to listen to forms that appear to be silent, including the written page. I read this complex novel through an Indigenous sound studies lens, finding in its many experimentations with form a sounded world that is transcribed into writing. For Simon, there is no simple hierarchy between oral and written forms, nor can sound be simply mediated by the novel. Instead, Hulme emphasizes the soundscapes that emerge when characters are unable to speak, when life has been oriented away from mobility and community through colonial structures. These soundscapes carry an invitation to listen differently, to rebuild relationality with the people and places cut off by the limitations of speech and writing.

Relationality and Survivance in Joy Harjo's "Tobacco Origin Story", *April Best*, Michigan State University

Published in 2019, *An American Sunrise* by Joy Harjo (Mvskoke) is a multi-genre collection of poetry, oral history written as down as personal testimony, and historical events that includes "Tobacco Origin Story," a creation myth poem of the first humans and the tobacco plant. The single stanza, 49-line poem includes themes of survivance, relationality, animism, and memory. This paper uses Gerald R. Vizenor's argument for and aesthetics of survivance that resists historical absence, literary tragedy, nihilism, and victimry through communal stories and memory. In addition to Vizenor, Jodi A. Byrd's description and use of relationality that is "rooted in context and the prime context is place" provides the lens through which this paper examines the depictions of plants and people that appear in the poem. By examining the various representations of and references to plant life, Byrd's definition underscores the relational rootedness between a spatial-temporal place and the various life forms abiding with it. The speaker in Harjo's poem articulates this relationality saying, "We knew our plants like / Relatives. There stories were our stories, there / Were songs for everything then" and resists erasure through singing the story anew as an act of survivance, both aesthetic, through the poem itself, and linguistic, by using Mvskoke: "We're getting dressed to go plant new songs with words. / Our sun is dimming faster. / Mvto hece, mvto hvse, mvto." The poem bridges memory to futurity through the imagery of stars and seeds in ways that provokes readers to sing with her.

Kin, Catastrophe, and Metonymic Trans*formations, *Kai Chase*, Northwestern University

This work examines collective environmental wellbeing as imagined in hemispheric American apocalyptic fiction about Black and Indigenous trans* and two-spirit transformations. While current environmental justice scholarship has begun to recognize the intersections of race, Indigeneity, gender, and climate catastrophe, we still need a more careful genealogy of how Euro-American property logics

are the support beams to these structures. Used to simultaneously delineate where someone's self and space begins and ends, property lines are foundational to landed dispossession, gender binaries, and enforcement of anthropocentric hegemony. Property formations also frame minoritized bodies as devoid of communal context, thereby flattening the resolution of narratives into assessments of individual fulfillment and happiness. I examine the relations between property formation, individual and collective kinship, and two-spirit responsibilities in Amanda Strong's (Métis) short film *Biidaaban* (2019). *Biidaaban* (2019) follows an Anishinaabe nonbinary youth as they diligently revive the practice of tree tapping in their ancestral lands. As a two-spirit Anishinaabe person, they are culturally responsible to their community in a way that redirects from the Western literature's emphasis on the interiority of individual protagonists. The film showcases more-than-human relationships as vital to what Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor calls survivance, or the survival that is more than survival, the continuance of Indigenous joy, culture, and language. My paper argues that the film considers the pitfalls of viewing individual happiness as a proxy for systematic change, directing us instead to tensions between individual autonomy and community sovereignty.

The Native Way: Exploring Tribal Traditions in *Reservation Dogs*, *Jacob Hicks*, Oklahoma State University

For decades, Native Americans on screen have been subject to caricatures like the stoic Indian, yet recent shows like *Reservation Dogs* present a more authentic portrayal of tribal people. I reflect on the ways in which *Reservation Dogs* presents a quotidian tribal experience by examining how the show uses Native traditions like spirits, Deer Lady, owls, music, clothing, and more that informs the everyday lives of the main characters composed of four Indigenous adolescents. I argue that *Reservation Dogs* both confronts the colonial tropes of the past while portraying tribal traditions in ways that correlate with what tribal scholar, Gerald Vizenor, has termed "survivance," a practice in which tribal communities can survive against trauma, tragedy, and discrimination in the contemporary world, thereby resisting colonial assimilation. However, *Reservation Dogs* is only one of a growing number of Native-led productions to bring culturally authentic representation. The show sets itself apart in how co-creator, Sterlin Harjo, invites collaboration with his cast and crew to show what it means to be Indigenous on a reservation through the practice of Mary Mouglick's term, "new myth," taking traditional myths and reconfiguring them into the contemporary world. Deer Lady and other figures are used to provide moral lessons on overcoming adversity, yet also serve as omens of death and grief. This argument is only part of a growing discourse of Indigenous representation examining how Indigenous people are developing their cultural identity in contemporary America to bring spiritual healing.

Session 6: Indigenous-Led Education in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries

(Rettinger Hall)

Chair: Jean O'Brien, University of Minnesota

Self Determination and Incarceration: AIM Survival Schools in the Minnesota State Penitentiary, *Chris Getowicz*, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

During the 1970's the American Indian Movement (AIM) emerged as one of the most visible examples of indigenous activism. Its activism has tended to be remembered for sensational protests like those at

the BIA in Washington D.C. or at Wounded Knee in South Dakota. Alternatively, more local accounts of AIM activism have highlighted efforts to combat police brutality, provide legal aid services, develop housing and healthcare programs, and establish education programs like those of two Survival Schools in present day Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. The scholarship of Julie L. Davis has shown the ways these local programs like the Survival Schools are the most lasting efforts of the American Indian Movement and add to the vibrant histories of Indigenous education and self-determination. This research attempts to add to this scholarship through revisiting Stillwater State Penitentiary where some of the founding members of the American Indian Movement helped establish spiritual and education programs, known as the Indian Folklore Group, in the years preceding the 1969 founding of AIM in nearby Minneapolis. In revisiting these early experiences of AIM activists, it looks at the subsequent development of Indigenous adult education programs at Stillwater and other Minnesota state correctional facilities coordinated through the Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis. This history helps reveal another of the lasting local effort of the American Indian Movement, that being one of cultural and spiritual resistance contesting terms in the heart of the carceral apparatus of the settler colonial state.

Weaving Our Positionalities into the Work of Indigenous Education, *Shayla Chatto*, University of Washington

A move toward implementing Indigenous education in K-12 public schools across the United States is happening through Indigenous-led efforts calling for state-mandates on teaching tribal history, culture, and government. The National Congressional of American Indians reported, “Almost 90 percent of [35] states surveyed said they have current efforts underway to improve the quality of and access to Native American curriculum.” (NCAI, 2019). In 2018, Washington State Senate Bill 5028 passed, requiring teacher education programs to prepare all educators to teach tribal history, culture, and government. However, less is known on how educators are implementing Indigenous education in their classrooms. A close examination through a case study can provide insight into how Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators contend and attend to their positionality, professional development, and the local tribal community when teaching state-mandated Indigenous Education curricula (Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty curriculum in Washington State and tribally developed curriculum)? Additionally, this study seeks to re-story their prior teaching/learning experiences to unsettle settler colonial education by working alongside educators while weaving our positionalities into the work of Indigenous education. To situate and ground this work, the Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM), Navajo/Diné story rug, will be used to weave a metaphoric story rug that coalesces with the research process (Tachine, 2015). This study aims to contribute to the ongoing research on Indigenous education in public schools, to inform teacher preparation programs and school districts in preparing educators to teach Indigenous education, and to ensure all students receive an Indigenous education in schools.

Community-Based Participatory Land-Based Education Model, *Shirley S. Thompson*, University of Manitoba

In Canada, many First Nation school systems maintain the standardized provincial educational model as mandated by the provincial or territorial government’s education department. Several significant historical events, including the numbered treaties, the Indian Act, and the Indian residential school system, transformed existing Indigenous educational models. Educational processes and policies implemented in school systems are designed to sustain the cultural, political, and social structures of

Canada as a collective nation-state. These school systems reinforce dominant, settler colonial culture. School systems, especial on-reserve school systems are sites of assimilation and control that promote Western philosophies of education, ideologies, and perspective. The major goal of this research is to develop a viable education model that supports Indigenous ways of being, doing, and knowing in the current school system using land-based pedagogy. The research will explore the knowledge and teachings of land-based experiential experiences guided by elders and land-based knowledge holders. This research study builds on scholarship of existing Indigenous knowledge and practices of land-based pedagogy informing and being an integral component of Indigenous people and their everyday life. This research aims to counter hegemonic ideological production by decolonizing education and examining and transforming educational policies, practices, and institutions. This research is designed using a blended Indigenous research methodology supported with a community-based participatory approach. The research methods will include journaling, oral storytelling, and experiential learning. It is qualitative in nature and honours Indigenous knowledge, praxis, and worldview.

Session 7: Creating Communities of Care and Relationality in Hawaii, Mexico, Taiwan, and New Mexico (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: Lloyd Alimboyao Sy, Yale University

Creating *Curanderas* in Ecologies of Medicine: Indigenous *pueblos originarios* of Atotonilco el Grande and Metztitlan, Gaby Báez, University of Oklahoma

Indigenous collective health in the countryside relied on “healing geographies” in the aftermath of the Spanish invasion to survive. By the early 18th century, Indigenous populations of Mexico were recuperating from the mass deaths caused by *cocoliztli* and smallpox in the 16th centuries. In this context, midwives and healers expanded their networks, education, and methods, which in turn attracted the attention of the Spanish legal and church authorities. They began to explore and investigate the medicinal lands and waters of New Spain, for its commodity potential. However, the medicine worlds of the Indigenous countryside continued to express its power in relationship with the *curanderas* and healers who deployed this ecologic sovereignty. Indigenous healers and practitioners embodied circulating and situated knowledges and ultimately belonged to geographies of healing that threatened empire. Throughout the Indigenous countryside, healers moved with the waters of the Panuco River system and the eastern Sierra Madre mountains. They carried plants and knowledge between and among communities. Their identities as healers were formed through their relationships to plants, water, and a populated landscape. They learned from the natural world and the people that they healed. This paper discusses a trial of *curandera* María de Escobar and shows the ways that individual healers relied on situated knowledge and place to sustain rural *pueblos* in the Spanish empire, in the absence of Spanish colonial infrastructures of health, while revealing larger developments of science, race, and citizenship in Mexico.

Not-So-All-American Acequias: Courses of Contestation and Community in Territorial New Mexico, Jacquelyn Davila, Yale University

Acequias are man-made irrigation ditches rooted in Indigenous and colonial Spanish agricultural practices whose earthen arteries still stretch out across New Mexico’s arid landscape. Traditional acequia communities — associations of Pueblo and hispano farmers united in the communal ownership and management of local ditches — are at the core of New Mexicans’ historic ways of living

and laboring. In an arid environment where irrigation is intrinsic to agricultural production, these systems of shared water management, labor, and self-governance prioritized local interests and subsistence farming but presented challenges for American capitalist development during New Mexico's territorial period (1850-1912). This paper traces how acequias, initially recognized by American military surveyors as markers of civilization and agricultural production during the Mexican–American War, would become racialized symbols of economic backwardness through the course of the nineteenth century. Anglo settlers realized that while acequia communities settled along New Mexico's principal rivers and tributaries presented a barrier to their economic ambitions, acequias could facilitate the forced settlement of nomadic Diné/Navajo peoples into agrarian lifestyles. By centering these ditch systems as sites of community and contestation, this study intervenes in the fields of Indigenous, agrarian, and environmental history and exposes both the fragility and violence of settler-colonial projects at the margins of American empire.

Learning in Resistance: The Ljavek Community's Ongoing Community Building and Land Justice Advocacy in Taiwan, *Susan Hou*, University of Washington

This paper draws from my ongoing dissertation research in collaboration with the Ljavek 部落 (bù luò, i.e., community). The Ljavek Community is an urban Indigenous community in Kaohsiung City, which is one of the largest cities in Taiwan. The community formed during the 1950s by mainly Paiwan Indigenous people who migrated to Kaohsiung City for economic opportunities, worked as laborers, and transported timber through the Kaohsiung Port. Since the 1990s, the Kaohsiung government has repeatedly requested and even forcefully removed Ljavek residents as part of the city's expansive urban development planning. The ongoing legal trials and interactions between the Ljavek community and the government exemplify how conflicting epistemologies and axiologies between colonial and Indigenous perspectives of land enact detrimental consequences. Specifically, there are legal ramifications to the conflicting perspectives of land as property and land as agentic, a way of life, and in relation with humans and more than humans. In this qualitative study, I draw from the learning sciences and the learning in social movements literature to explore how learning happens in Ljavek's experiences in building home and belonging in Kaohsiung City, as well as how learning happens in Ljavek's resistance to the government. The learning in social movements literature suggests that learning occurs in collective movements for social change, including place-making, resistance, and community-building. This study leans on conversations with Ljavek residents to explore the interweaving dimensions of labor, bodies, affect, and Indigenous land in urban settings while examining how Taiwan's settler colonialism is well and alive.

Session 8: Contemporary Issues Across Turtle Island: MMIW, Child Welfare, Land Acknowledgements, and Representation (*Rettinger Hall*)

Chair: Jonathan Radocay, University of Washington

“Of a somewhat onerous and exceptional character”: Guest, Visitor, and Ally in Historical and Modern Treaty Discourses, *Jayson Gislason*, University of Manitoba

When Lord Dufferin described Treaty 6 to the Canadian parliament in the 1877 Speech from the Throne, he declared that: “The provisions of this Treaty are of a somewhat onerous and exceptional character.” He argued that the: “Undoubtedly large” cost of the provisions of this Treaty were justified

because the policy was: “Humane, just, and Christian”. These provisions are a set of terms unique to Treaty 6, entitling the signatory nations to guarantees of healthcare and economic security. Historians such as Sheldon Krasowski have documented the unique nature of these terms, noting the reprimand that Treaty Commissioner Alexander Morris received from the Privy Council Office after negotiations; J.R. Miller noted that the Privy Council was wary of a shift from treaty partner towards dependency. Modern critics such as Carol A. Mullen have argued that anticolonial allies on Indigenous land carry the duty to acknowledge their own positionality as guest. Meanwhile, other land acknowledgement instructions suggest individuals refrain from using such language, citing implications of an invitation. By analyzing the Speeches from the Throne and Orders in Council that originated in the period of the numbered treaties (1870-1920), this paper seeks to establish the relational positionality of settler politicians to Indigenous lands in the Canadian west, as historical guest. Furthermore, this analysis will be anchored by an examination of the historiography of the numbered treaties and argue that modern land acknowledgement practices that emerged in recent years in Canada are not novel but have existed in various forms over the span of Canadian history.

Legislative Gaps: Colonial Reality and Indigenous Imaginings in Tommy Orange’s *There There*, Alison Hsiao, University of California-Davis

In what ways does legislation structure everyday reality? How can we understand the gap between the law and the lived experience of Native peoples? Legislation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People (MMIWGS2+) proliferates; recent acts like the Savanna’s Act and Not Invisible Act and presidential executive orders have been passed and issued; even specialized task forces and oversight meetings have been formed, but very little has been done to remedy the pressing issue of disproportionate violence against MMIWGS2+. Even as the US allocates funding and advocates partnership between tribal governments and US state and federal governments, more and more Indigenous women are disappearing. My project seeks to answer the question of how these gaps between legislation, what the acts and groups promise, and colonial reality, the (non)realization of these promises in Native communities’ lived experience, produce a structure of feeling. While liberal ideas of freedom and equality undergird US legislation, these promises are not reflected in the white supremacist structures that systemically target Native peoples. My project turns towards literature like Tommy Orange’s *There There* and activist documents like the Yurok Tribe’s *To’ Kee Skuy’ Soo New-Wo-Che* reports to explore how MMIWGS2+ extends genocide and produces new contexts of being for Native peoples. The literary renderings of colonial reality as seen in *There There* emphasize the harrowing constraints of colonial reality, but also crucially show how Native communities build from these structures of feeling and produce imaginings of futurity that move beyond the horizon of US legislative promises.

Indigenous Fathers & the Child Welfare System, Leona Huntinghawk, University of Manitoba

The child welfare system in Manitoba has a long history of violence in the Indigenous community. It has been part of the colonial agenda for many years. What we know about fathers involved in the child welfare system is that they are excluded to the point of ‘invisibility’ (Gill, 2022; Walmsley et al., 2015; Brewsaugh & Strozier, 2016; Brown et al., 2009). The focus remains strongly on the mother and child(ren). The situation seems to be more dire when examining the fatherhood experiences of Indigenous males, as Indigenous fathers are the “most socially excluded population group in Canada” (Ball & Moselle, 2015, p. 1). Statistically speaking, fathers whose children are involved with the child welfare system fit into a certain demographic: “young, poor, Indigenous or otherwise racialized, unemployed, lack education and skills, and face much more disadvantage” than the average Canadian

male (Walmsley et al., 2015, p. 185). There is a reduction of risk to children when fathers are actively engaged in parenting. On a systemic level, child welfare agencies need to ‘see’ fathers. This research study will use qualitative inquiry and storytelling to explore the experiences of Indigenous fathers who (or their children) have encountered the child and family services (“CFS”) system in Manitoba.

A Purépecha Fountain: Midwestern Mexicanidad at a Glance, *Pau Nava*, University of Michigan

Frida Khalo, Dolores Huerta, Maria Felix, Rigoberta Menchu; a stroll through the many images of women featured in Pilsen’s public murals range from Mexicana, Latina, Central American and more. Yet one specific trinity of unnamed Mexican women remains repeatedly replicated via public murals, restaurant names and more under the title of “La fuente de las Tarascas”. Originally from Michoacán, la fuente is known as a famous tourist attraction in the center of the capital city of Morelia, Michoacán. The fountain is made up of three indigenous Purépecha women featured topless and wearing traditional long pleated skirts. The women gaze up towards the sky as they hold up a large fruit basket announcing the fruits of the city center. This paper asks, who is la Michoacana? How did she get here and what is her place within the many images of Midwestern Mexicanidad? The inspiration for this spatial analysis of gender comes from the images featured in the mural by Alejandro Medina (2006) located on 18th street and Wood in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood. This paper is part of a larger dissertation project examining visual representations of Mexicanidad within Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood dating back to the 1970s Chicana/o movement to today.

Session 9: “Untelling” and Re-Framing Archival Texts Using Indigenous Stories and Memories (*Baskes Boardroom*)

Chair: Matthew Kruer, University of Chicago

Re-Reading Misrepresentations in Samson Occom’s *Narrative as Literature*, *Alexander R. Kinnaman*, Michigan State University

Samson Occom’s Short Narrative of My Life (1768) is perhaps Samson Occom’s best known work. However, rarely is it taken as a piece of literature. Occom’s Narrative is most often read as a historical, informational document. Rarely is much credence given to style, to narrative, or authorial discretion. My contention which I explore in this paper is that Occom’s Narrative ought to not only be taken as an artifact of historical concern, but also as a work of literature. Occom’s Narrative is more than a “a Short Plain and Honeft Account of [his] Ielf” (Occom auto 1R) but also an untelling of “great miſs Representations by Some” (Occom 1R). In a brief guide for teaching Occom’s Narrative, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, paraphrasing Harold William Blodgett’s Samson Occom (1935) informs us that “after he returned from England in spring of 1768” Occom wrote the Narrative to “refute ... that he was a Mohawk, that Wheelock received large sums for his support, and that he had been converted just before the English tour in order to become a special exhibit (Blodgett 27).” However, this explanation fails to account for the fact that Occom’s first draft is dated as being written in November 1765. By approaching Occom’s Narrative as an active untelling, as an artifact which still operates today (how might Occom be known without his Narrative?) in response to his misrepresentation, I forward a reading of the Narrative which seeks in the trace of his representations, those original misrepresentations which remain unknown.

Ella Deloria and the Speaking of Status, Fame, and Gaze, *Kaylen James, University of Minnesota*

Through a wide-ranging exploration of Lakota archives and place-based knowledges, this paper develops an Indigenous critique of fame and status as mediated through settler technologies—specifically, I critique the way in which fame and status are situated transactionally as scarce resources that must always be competed for within settler contexts. With the generous support of the Newberry Library’s NCAIS Short-term Fellowship this past summer, I conducted close readings on Lakota stories, languages, and songs at various archives throughout South Dakota and the Newberry Library. One of the outcomes of this research was my development of a framework for understanding what it means to be seen or not seen, to give or receive attention, and to have visibility within Indigenous contexts, as opposed to settler contexts. For purpose of this presentation, I will focus on Ella Deloria’s manuscripts in the Lakota language to demonstrate some of these other ways of understanding status, attention, and gaze. For example, the Lakota word for looking is more akin to the idea of beholding something—we differentiated a gaze that consumed from a gaze that was inherently contemplative and thought-provoking. The former gaze, a gaze that consumes, could be so powerful that it was said that it could harm or even kill a man, as Ella Deloria explains in her notes about Lakota legend, Cetan Maza. Drawing upon similar Lakota phrases, I broadly argue that western fame and status are a tool of coloniality that propagate individualistic ideologies within new media and popular culture.

Wičhákini Yeló/Renewed Life: Recontextualizing Ella Deloria’s Epic *Dakota Tales*, Julia Marsan, University of Chicago

“Abandon the colonial perspective,” poet Robert Bringhurst once wrote of Indigenous American epic literature, “and the problem goes away.” Academic fretting over the state of the ‘epic’ genre rings false for any student of Indigenous heritage languages, whose education begins with stories of brave heroes, scheming tricksters, supernatural power, and other-than-human kinship. However, due to linguistic ignorance and racial biases, creators of Indigenous-language epics have rarely been invited to participate in academic discourse. The unpublished 1937 manuscript of *Dakota Tales in Colloquial Style*, composed by Dakota writer Ella Deloria, collects five Lakota-language stories, clearly epic in form and theme. Deloria’s tales bear all the hallmarks of epic: derived from a centuries-old oral literary tradition, they recount heroic adventures, explain etiologies, and teach Lakota philosophy. Yet because they were composed in Lakḥótiyapi, Deloria’s *Dakota Tales* failed to find a publisher, and her manuscripts are only available for contemporary study in settler-colonial archives. This paper presents a recontextualized reading of *Dakota Tales* as a modern, Lakota epic cycle, and argues for a revival of academic discourse around archival manuscripts composed in Indigenous languages. By closely reading her manuscripts for content, form and style, and presenting *Dakota Tales* as a critical text for contemporary Lakota readers, this paper exhorts scholars to return Deloria’s epics to the final words of her longest tale: wičhákini yeló, renewed life, indeed.

The Origin and Purpose of Storytelling, Robin Olive Little Jackson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

The origin and purpose of storytelling has long been a part of our everyday life, ranging from movies, books, plays, and campfire tales. It has been an integral facet of communication and exchange between cultures. Its position in modern society may have drifted farther away from its original purpose as a

teaching tool, memory device, and at times a harbinger of doomsaying. Storytelling is what makes us human, and it is what truly separates us from other species on the planet. That there is an inherent need to give a narrative spin to our experiences to make them memorable, or somehow place our existence as an important part of the world's existence. Storytelling grounds us, gives narrative to our existence and supports us in making sense of our surroundings. On a wider scale the communication skills developed via storytelling to become an important tool for use as memory storage, and teaching between other groups. With the advent of larger brains with information hungry neurological pathways, our capacity to learn and dream set humanity on a new path. With this study I will explore the unique narrative pathways that still exist in Indigenous world and understand the importance of its continued use within many of those cultures today. This work will be an important facet to my eventual dissertation work involving how memory and archive function differently within Indigenous societies. I believe that this work is a vital steppingstone to understanding differences between Indigenous and Euro-American culture.