

**Mikinaakominis / TransCanadas
Literature, Justice, Relation**

May 24-27, 2017
University of Toronto

An interdisciplinary Conference sponsored by the
University of Toronto and the University of Calgary

Organized by
Smaro Kamboureli (Toronto) & Larissa Lai (Calgary)

Keynote Addresses

Dina Al-Kassim (UBC)

Listing Waters: Towards a Poetic Theory of Indigenous and (Un)Settled Solidarities

“Did I say, The Dead?
There is no Death here,
There is only a change of worlds.
-- Duwamish, Chief Seattle

Climate crisis and the politics of water depletion entangle Canada and its literatures in the web of global solidarities, resistance movements for land and water rights and the poetry attending to resource inequality. Out of balance and under siege, water shortage presages a change of worlds without precedent. Among the many poets attentive to ecological ethics, water rights and Indigenous claims, Rita Wong has produced a body of work in *Undercurrent*, *Perpetual* and *Forage* that sets in motion an “(un)settled” solidarity. Palestinian Canadian poet Mahmoud Darwish’s poetry similarly is inspired by and engages with the speeches of Chiefs Seattle (1854) and Joseph (1877, 1890). Wong and Darwish return to the practice of indexing or listing the names of water, its many qualities and attributes as a means to rematerialize forms of solidarity and experience under threat. Listing water becomes the evidence of unsettled solidarities, between Indigenous sites separated by oceans, between the nonCanadian and the Native, between the Chinese Canadian and the Indigenous. Moving between these confluences, a theory of solidarity, not as alliance nor identity, emerges in the form of a subtle yet tenacious adherence.

Warren Cariou (Manitoba)

Landsensing: Body, Territory, Relation

Wet’suwet’en hereditary chief and Unist’ot’en Camp member Toghestiy recently summed up his philosophy of Indigenous resistance and resurgence by saying “you have to taste the land.” This presentation is an attempt to understand Toghestiy’s call for a deeply engaged, sensual, bodily relationship with territory—as an act of ethical and Indigenous belonging. I argue that colonialism and extractive capitalism have encouraged an ideology of environmental “percepticide” (Diana Taylor) in which citizens have repressed their connections to the land. Drawing upon Jeannette Armstrong’s classic essay, “Landspeaking,” Dian Millions’ “felt theory,” and my own experience of my home territory, I attempt to articulate a sensory ethics of land-based belonging. I engage particularly with four “primary materials” gathered from the land of my home territory: bitumen, spruce gum, blueberries and sage. I will also reflect on my practice of Petrography, which utilizes Athabasca bitumen to create photographic images of the land.

Afua Cooper (Dalhousie)

Blackness Rejected: The Canadian Federal Government and the 1911 Order-in-Council Banning Black Migration to Canada

In 1911, the Canadian Dominion (federal) Government led by Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier passed an order-in-council which effectively closed off the migration of Black people to Canada. The order-in-council states: "the Negro race...is deemed unsuitable to the climate and requirements of Canada." This was the first time that the government used race to effectively prevent would-be immigrants from coming to this country. Black men in particular were viewed as a danger to White women's purity. The ban on Black migration reflected Canada's White-only immigration policy that had been in full force since Confederation in 1867. Using literary sources, this presentation reveals how Canadian politicians, policy makers, and intellectuals view the Black body as a pollutant, and as such a threat to the emerging new, and White Canadian nation.

Plenary Addresses

Jordan Abel (SFU)

**Positioning Intergenerational Trauma:
Nisga'a Nationalism and the Materiality of Marius Barbeau's Totem Poles**

Thinking through my position within Indigeneity, this talk is about finding ways to articulate what it actually means to be both an intergenerational survivor of residential schools and an urban Indigenous person. Likewise, it's about how we talk about and sometimes perform Indigeneity. It's also about accountability and Indigenous relationships with community. Ultimately, it speaks to decolonization and relationality.

Eileen Antone (Oneida of the Thames Nation)

That Indian He Don't Want To Be A Puppet Any More

Indigenous People in Canada have been struggling against colonization for many years. Harold Cardinal brought it to the attention of the world through his books *The Unjust Society: The Tragedy Of Canada's Indians* and *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians*. He produced literary work that portrayed the harsh conditions of the Indigenous people of Canada as did many other Indigenous scholars and writers using their particular experience to change the face of history. This paper is about storytelling and my personal journey of working to help build a vibrant, regenerative, creative community for Indigenous people in the post-secondary education system. As Art Solomon stated in 1991, "in the course of history there came a disruption. And then education became 'compulsory miseducation' for another purpose, and the circle of life was broken and the continuity ended. It is that continuity which is now taken up again in the spiritual rebirth of the people." The post-secondary education system is a place to decolonize and continue transforming in response to institutional and governmental politics.

Phanuel Antwi (UBC)

Anti-Colonial Alphabets: Calculations of Activism and Archives

“26 \ 150.” This equation hacks the number of letters in the English alphabet and the number of years in the ongoing work of (re)making the settler colonial project of Canada. I want to suggest that encrypted in these letters and numbers, these hieroglyphics of sense-making, lies, to borrow from Ngũgĩ Wa Thiongo’s *Decolonizing the Mind*, “the domination of the mental universe of the colonised” (16). And yet, the calculated violence that conditions the technologies that shape and form our mental universe remain unthought. Working with the non-linear thinking that Denise Ferreira da Silva refers to as “poethical” or “compositional” thinking of black radical thought, I read Dionne Brand’s *No Language is Neutral* and NourbeSe Philip’s *Zong!* as anti-colonial activist archives oppositional to the calculations of these hieroglyphics, pressuring them to pull apart the violence inscribed in them so we learn to gather around the violence and be transformed by it.

Sedef Arat-Koç (Ryerson)

From Islamophobia to *Islamophilia*?

Public Discourse, Dancing Orientalisms and the Unspeakability of Muslim Women’s Experiences

Especially with the popularization of civilizational clash discourses in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, Western publics have been preoccupied with gender issues concerning Muslim women living in the West and in other parts of the world.

In Canada, public discourse has been saturated for more than a decade with debates on “reasonable accommodation” (Quebec), “Sharia law” (Ontario) and introduction of legislation on “barbaric cultural practices”. While many critics have critiqued the Islamophobic undertones in these debates, they have not found it easy to avoid the culturalist trap of the debates altogether. The paper cautions that some of the attempts to counter the Islamophobic trends in dominant discourse lead in the direction of –what we may call— *Islamophilia* that in turn reproduces Orientalism in the analysis and politics of issues Muslim women face. Framing of the debates as anti- or pro-Islam, restrains development of analysis and politics on the issues, making it very difficult to think and to talk about Muslim women’s actual experiences in their concrete historical material context and complexity.

David Chariandy (SFU)

‘Just Us:’ Statehood and the Language of Kinship

Drawing upon Ato Quayson’s exploration of national identity in the era of “delirious sovereignty, affronted ethno-nationalism, and transnational cosmopolitanism,” Imre Szeman’s discussion of “the role of literature in shaping our understanding of environmental justice and of the need for an energy commons,” and Deanna Reder’s analysis of Maria Campbell’s scripting of Metis kinship ties against the divisions sowed by the Regina vs Powley federal ruling, my response will highlight the renewed

tensions between the grammars of Canadian statehood and the language of kinship. Specifically, my response will indicate how contemporary Indigenous and diasporic writers broaden the terms of social and environmental justice by articulating kinship ties against state exclusions and sedative accommodations.

Margery Fee (UBC)
Diplomacy After Reconciliation

The shift from nationalist to neoliberal in Canadian discourse opened fractures in hegemonic representations of the proper relations between the white settlers infamously called “old stock” by Stephen Harper, the diasporic peoples they racialized and denied the vote, and the sovereign Indigenous owners of the land. Will the second coming of Trudeau liberalism open a space to rearticulate these relations and how they connect us all with the planet? Thinking reconciliation *after* resurgent revitalization of the worldviews colonized by white Canadianness might be a start. Whether territory was ceded by treaty or not, the continuing sovereignty of the Indigenous peoples requires all newcomers to engage in diplomatic relations with them. Could such diplomacy begin with the acknowledgement of diverse but equally valid worldviews and laws, rather than from Western ideals? Imaginative representations will play a powerful role in the resurgence and the diplomacy required to create the world we all long for.

Len Findlay (Saskatchewan)
Federal State, Feral Culture: (Not)Withstanding Canada in its 150th Year

My preliminary intervention in the Activist Agora will be to read this moment of nation (re)formation, and to mark areas of ensuing unreadability as sites for the interplay of hope and fear, the domesticated, the native, and the wild. Hope and fear are key terms in the staging of 21st-century democracy’s global predicament, and in a distinctively Canadian interplay of dark days and sunny ways. The Canadian state continues to exercise significant control over literary, artistic, and popular culture, in a mix of legislation, policy, power, and desire, the last of these revealing presumptuous yet apprehensive forms of dependency. Moreover, the state is currently positioning itself to ‘solve’ the challenges posed by Indigenous peoples and a ‘wave’ of pitiable/threatening new arrivals. However, state-sponsored compassion and restitution require a new national, feral imaginary if they are to succeed beyond the order paper.

Tasha Hubbard (Saskatchewan)
Re-storying and Restoring the Buffalo to the Indigenous Plains

The genocide of the buffalo in the nineteenth century was catastrophic for Indigenous peoples and the land. This paper explores art’s transformational potential to clear space, both metaphorical and actual, for the return of the buffalo to the land. Adrian Stimson’s ‘Re-Herd’ installations ask the

participatory audience to reflect on the buffalo's absence and potential restoration. I will also discuss the concept of re-storying in relation to my short film *Buffalo Calling*. Indigenous creative expression on the buffalo functions as imagination, as restoration, and as futurity, to remind Indigenous peoples of our kinship relationship to our relative the buffalo. These concepts are also being practiced amongst twelve plains Indigenous nations who have signed an international treaty to bring the buffalo back to the land. Restorying and restoration of the buffalo is equated with restoration of Indigenous consciousness, knowledges, and relationships.

Christopher Lee (UBC)

The World(liness) of Chinese Canadian Literature

In a recent special issue of *Canadian Literature* that I co-edited with Christine Kim, we argued that Asian Canadian critique should interrogate how national epistemes have become sedimented in various cultural, activist, political, and institutional projects that have coalesced around this term "Asian Canadian." This paper both extends and focuses this call by constellating three theoretical lenses to reframe the cultures the Chinese migration beyond nationalist horizons: (1) the trans-national lifeworlds of migration; (2) the world-views of Chinese migrants; (3) the world-system in which migration became historically possible. While contemporary Chinese Canadian writing in both Chinese and English has tended to foreground the nation-state as the locus of social belonging, I argue that the formal labour of historical narrative consists in surfacing traces of, after Edward Said, the worldliness of literature.

Lee Maracle (Toronto)

Memory Has Bias

If you live in a structured and oppressive world, you may want to examine the bias of memory of those on top as opposed to those below. I will discuss how memory affects what we see, how to examine memory from an Indigenous (Sto: lo) perspective, and toward what end this examination should move. There really is no such thing as objectivity, since those remembering are subjective and connected to one side of the bias or the other. Memory is active and requires engagement, i.e., activity around the subject of remembering. How then, do I decolonize my memory?

Sophie McCall (SFU)

Recognition, Resurgence and Arrival in the Work of Indigenous and Diasporic Writers

I ask how the works by Indigenous and diasporic writers (Lee Maracle, Marie Clements, Leanne Simpson, Dionne Brand, Wayne Compton) address the question: "What does it mean to live on unceded Indigenous territories?" Building on the work by Dene scholar Glen Coulthard, who establishes a dialogue between the work of Frantz Fanon and Indigenous studies, I situate the struggle for Indigenous rights in debates concerning the politics of recognition, land, arrival, and belonging within and between contested spaces of Indigenous and black studies. If land (and water) become key in bringing about meaningful and sustainable change in Indigenous communities, what does it mean to arrive, live, and

travel through unceded Indigenous territories? Reading texts that in very different ways proclaim Indigenous presence, history, and land title in the context of encounters with diasporic communities exposes the many fracture lines, as well as possibilities for building affiliations, in the struggle for decolonizing Indigenous lands, peoples, and histories in Canada.

Erín Moure (Montreal)

Being Closer: Rethinking Time and Public Space

Taking up, once again, crucial notions of *autre*, *l'autre*, and *autrui* as I wrote of them fifteen years ago in *O Ciudadán*, I will explore how we can think these today in relation to the notion of "agora" and its correlate of proximity of citizens, of dwellers. How does activism invoke proximity, convoke us? And what of the "approximate" which in some languages (Portuguese, Galician, *aproximar*) can mean to come close, to be close, the act of being in proximity, being close, closeness? As if to underline an urgency to this thinking of citizenship and public space, the word "now" in Galician is "agora," the time of immediacy in which proximity and closeness are possible. Taking into account the contributions of others in the conference, can rethinking time itself lead us to a new way, a corridor of ways, of activating public space, now?

Ato Quayson (UofT)

**Delirious Sovereignty and Affronted Ethno-nationalism: Concerning
Cosmopolitanism and National Identities**

Taking my cues from the startling developments in Britain after Brexit, and from the rise of Donald Trump, this talk will focus on exploring the nature of national identities today with respect to the three categories of delirious sovereignty, affronted ethno-nationalism, and transnational cosmopolitanism. After September 11, 2001 it became evident that the United States had succumbed to an extreme form of nationalism in which the assertion of sovereignty articulated as a sense of siege, with the identification of enemies internal and external enemies as the default mode. Affronted ethnonationalism is of a piece with this, but turns on the idea that the independence of the nation-state is somehow under the influence of powers well beyond it. (For Trump, China; for the Brexiters, the EU). However, given that these positions are not being held exclusively by fringe constituencies, they raise important questions regarding existing views of cosmopolitanism and its economic entanglement with forms of indigeneity on the one hand, and with expressions of ethnicity, on the other. The paper will try and navigate a critical position through these various keywords, concluding on some of the implications that are raised for the Canadian example of dialogue and nation-building.

Deanna Reder (SFU)

Determining Indigeneity: Considering the Powley Test alongside Metis Kinship Ties

While *Regina vs. Powley* (2003) ostensibly ruled that the Canadian Constitution affirms Metis hunting as an Aboriginal right, its real potential is its ability to act as a test to determine who is and is not Metis. One of the first major Canadian legal cases that recognizes that Metis have Aboriginal rights, this decision is unimaginable without the work of forebears like Maria Campbell; her autobiography, *Halfbreed* (1973), one of the classics of Canadian Indigenous literatures, traces Metis experience in Western Canada from the hanging of Louis Riel in 1885 to the Red Power Movement of the 1970s. Yet throughout *Halfbreed* Campbell emphasizes the Cree-Metis value of *wahkowtowin*, a value for loyalty and obligation towards kin. This paper contrasts the 2003 ruling that is likely to divide communities and undermine kinship ties of obligation with Campbell's warning about the tactics of the settler government that aims to divide and conquer.

Imre Szeman (Alberta)

Pipelines and Territories: On Energy and Environmental Futures in Canada

This paper will offer an overview of the place of oil and energy in our neoliberal present and futures still to come. It will do so via a focus on the current politics of pipelines in Canada. While pipelines have previously drawn media and political attention—usually when they fail, spilling oil into the fragile environments through which they move—the past several years has seen pipeline construction become front-page news in Canada. Why? What has changed about pipelines that have made these once deliberately invisible forms of infrastructure newly visible? This paper presents a wideranging exploration of territory, sovereignty and Indigeneity in 21st century Canada, and the role of literature in shaping our understanding of environmental justice and the need for an energy commons.

Pauline Wakeham (Western)

#IndigenousReads and the Public Pedagogy of Reconciliation

On National Aboriginal Day 2016, Prime Minister Trudeau released a statement repeating one of his frequent credos: “No relationship is more important to our government and to Canada than the one with Indigenous peoples.” What was new about this iteration, however, was its coupling with an invitation “to join the #IndigenousReads campaign...to raise...understanding through shared culture and stories and encourage steps toward reconciliation.”

Much could be said about the way that Trudeau's statement and Indigenous and Northern Affairs' #IndigenousReads campaign risks re-appropriating Indigenous literature as “shared culture” for a hegemonic version of reconciliation that leaves settler colonial structures intact. In this paper, I will flag those risks. However, I am more interested in considering how the terms of Trudeau's invitation might be transformed by Indigenous literature itself. How and what do Indigenous literatures teach about relationality and how might they call differently-positioned readers into decolonial relationships?

Rinaldo Walcott (OISE UofT)

‘Lament for a Nation’ and Reading Canada in the Americas

This paper takes up George Grant’s *Lament for a Nation* (1965) in the post-Black-Lives-Matter moment to ask as set of questions about how the project of Canada conceals what I will proffer are its black gifts. These gifts both tangible and not will be used to index a national project that has as its unconscious an idea of blackness that it must keep at bay to achieve its national imaginary. Reading against the grain of critiques of Canadian multiculturalism, I argue instead that the question of blackness and Black people has always subtended the project of Canada. Accounting for and recognizing the black gifts bequeathed by Black people opens up an arena or analytic for confronting the national project that exceeds critical engagements and denunciations of multiculturalism in favour of a project that suggest the project of Canada, not unlike all of the Americas is founded in post-Columbus forms of antiblackness that continue to haunt its present.

Rita Wong (Emily Carr)

Imagine Peace: Starting with Water’s Humble Autonomy

A poetics of water is one where respect and reverence for water guides one’s journey. Words and bodies follow buried streams, threatened rivers, and rising oceans to grapple with what it might mean to exercise some form of responsibility as an uninvited guest speaking a borrowed tongue on stolen land. The debt I owe to the Indigenous people on Turtle Island is immense, and so I begin a journey of reciprocity by responding to Dorothy Christian and Denise Nadeau’s call to protect our sacred waters. In so doing, I learn the middle voice, the pivot where actor is acted upon, because our watery bodies need to remember that we are part of the watersheds, and in that realization, to turn our efforts to preventing those who would be human from desecrating the waters that they and we rely on.

Doctoral Students Plenary Addresses

Alec Follett (Guelph)

‘The path of peace’ in *undercurrents*: Rita Wong’s Water Activism

Central to Rita Wong’s writing and activism are the relationships among food, water, everyday actions and decolonization. Recently, Wong has been a vocal critic against the proposed Site C-dam in northern British Columbia. If completed, this dam would flood the Peace River Valley, which is important to agricultural production, wildlife, and Treaty 8 First Nations. This disregard for the river system that provides food for Indigenous peoples, settler-folk, and animals alike is typical of the dominant destructive settler mentality. Wong’s new collection of poetry, *undercurrents*, works to counter this destructive worldview by cultivating a respectful relationship with water that is enacted through everyday practices.

In this paper I attend to the decolonial politics of the everyday made visible in *undercurrents* by its centering of Indigenous-settler material and affective relations. I argue that this collection offers an alternative to the disregard for Indigenous perspectives in contemporary materialist environmentalism.

The material turn in environmental writing, such as Stacy Alaimo's immensely important work that considers how materials, rather than words, act on the body, rarely engages with Indigenous perspectives. In *undercurrents*, water is a powerful material agent that necessitates humility. With humility in mind, Wong's deeply personal poetry, enacts her call from "Decoloniasian" to circumvent whiteness in favor of Asian Canadian-Indigenous relationships by engaging with how Indigenous artists and communities understand water. From this intercultural perspective water is life and thus the daily fight for water is also a fight for life. But to fight for life/water on the Peace River, the Athabasca tar sands, downtown Vancouver, and other sites where settler modernity disrupts water's life-giving flow, requires, as *undercurrents* suggests, humility enacted on a daily basis, as a lived experience, in relation to Indigenous peoples and to that essential fluid.

Max Karpinski (Toronto)

Diddling the Archive: Rereading Pastoral through Roy Kiyooka's *The Artist and the Moose*

Roy Kiyooka's *The Artist and the Moose*, published posthumously in 2009 but written and rewritten over the final twenty-five years of Kiyooka's life, imaginatively investigates Tom Thomson's mysterious death in Algonquin Park, an event that was instrumentalized as a catalyst for a Canadian cultural nationalism. I read *The Artist and the Moose* as a tactical response to the "pastoral myth" central to "all social mythology" in Canada, as described by Northrop Frye in his "Conclusion" to *A Literary History of Canada* (1965). Kiyooka contests what critics such as Robert Lecker and Roy Miki have revealed as the "centralism" of Frye's pastoral myth, offering instead the attempts of a Prairie-born Japanese Canadian to elucidate "a new Canadian aesthetic" (*The Artist* 41). Kiyooka's vision challenges the reading of "a hostile Tundra" by those "Official Documents" of Canadian literary scholarship, documents that consistently "diminish[] both 'Moose' and 'Native'" (24). In other words, Kiyooka asks us to rethink the originary myths that simultaneously define a "Canadian" relationship to land, elide the Indigenous peoples displaced by settler appropriation, and instantiate the anthropocentrism that underwrites contemporary extractionism.

The title of this presentation emerges from the opening line of Kiyooka's text, "'Did you hear about the Moose that flew over the moon?'" (11) with its reference to Mother Goose's ubiquitous nursery rhyme. I read Kiyooka's desire for an oppositional and revisionist aesthetic as "diddling" the archive, that is, as an undoing of those "Official Documents" of Canadian cultural nationalism. But the phrase or concept is useful too in its resonance with other, recent Canadian poetry that rewrites, transforms, or disrupts archival material associated with the settler-colonial project, such as Rachel Zolf's *Janey's Arcadia* (2014) and Jordan Abel's *The Place of Scraps* (2013). Probing these connections, I offer *The Artist and the Moose* as an alternative narrative of Canadian literary production since the Canadian centennial, a lineage of pastoral parallel to Frye's that seeks to articulate an ethics of the citizen's relationship to land, landscape, and extracted resources.

Camille Van Der Marel (Alberta)

Bookkeeping: Discourses of Debt in Caribbean-Canadian Literature

What is owed in the colonial aftermath? This question anchors anti-colonial thought, orients postcolonial studies' ethic, and informs what Leela Gandhi characterizes as anxiety over the field's motivation of "postcolonial revenge" (x). Most importantly, this question lies at the heart of postcolonial critique's emancipatory potential. As David Scott describes, "[t]he colonized had been dispossessed, materially and psychologically, and the task of the anticolonial project was the restoration of the colonized to full self-possession" (11). The language of owing, of debt, resounds throughout Scott's portrayal of anti-colonialism's ideological project. These emancipatory desires, however, have been repeatedly undercut by transnational capital's force and indifference, exemplified by many plantation colonies' foundering upon national independence and neo-liberalism's conflation of political and consumer agency. Concurrently, postcolonial studies' critical purchase has lessened as academics reorient themselves and their research towards the language, theory, and politics of transnationalism.

What I have noticed amidst these disciplinary shifts is that the 'colonial,' the 'postcolonial' and the 'transnational' are increasingly severed from one another, characterized as distinct historical moments in a teleologic progression; such temporal breaks are denied time and time again in the literature of the Caribbean-Canadian diaspora, where colonial pasts insistently enter the transnational present and do so through the language and logic of debt. Works by Dionne Brand, David Chariandy, and Nalo Hopkinson, to name only a few, destabilize not only financial debt's most basic tenets but also the economic logic that informs cultural studies' temporal paradigms. For the purposes of the Mikinaakominis conference, then, I would like to discuss how Caribbean-Canadian literature's discourses of debt challenge literary studies' tendency to parse colonial pasts from transnational futures, debtor from creditor, diaspora from settler-colonial nation. The question of what is owed in the colonial aftermath is compounding rather than amortizing in contemporary Caribbean-Canadian literature, with significant implications for Canadian literary studies' own intellectual investments.

Global Perspectives of Canadian Literature

Jennifer Andrews (New Brunswick)

Americans Write Canada

"Americans Write Canada" explores representations of Canada in American literature, paying particular attention to the ways in which American writers use Canada as an imaginative space and alterna(rra)tive landscape from which to probe how concepts of identity, citizenship, and belonging have fundamentally shaped what it means to be 'American.' Using Richard Ford's *Canada* as a test case, I examine the "(in)visible citizen," those who in the context of American capitalism, are unable to fully access the benefits of citizenship because of their marginal status (see Phelan). In his 2012 novel, Ford refigures the idea of a "Canadian conscript" (396), inverting the draft-dodger model of the Vietnam era to locate his protagonist within a framework of limited visibility while refuting easy binaries that historically relegated Canada to the role of a youthful, virtuous, and virginal female nation.

Sandra Almeida (Minas Gerais, Brazil)

Beyond Global/Local Spatial Politics: Analyzing Canlit from a Comparative Perspective

This presentation aims to discuss the field of Canadian Literature from a comparative perspective, having in mind the experience of scholars in Brazil who have over the years dedicated themselves to the study of the literatures of the Americas, not as a homogenous literary and spatial construction, but rather as a potential site for critical thinking. I argue that such a comparative perspective fosters the possibility of building critical standpoints about literary studies that shifts the traditional focus on national literatures to more analytical and critical ways of discussing literatures (meaningfully in the plural) in a relational context that unsettles the binary model of a global and/or local perspective.

Michael Bucknor (West Indies, Jamaica)

**Postcolonial Intimacies and the Black Atlantic:
The Cultural Production of Caribbean/Canadian Writing**

A comparison of the institution-building work of Barbadian-Canadian writer Austin Clarke at Toronto's CBC with that of his partners at BBC in London has already shown the transnationalism of Caribbean and Caribbean-Canadian literary production. Caribbean-Canadian writers, through cultural institutions such as CBC, expose Canada as a central node in the Black Atlantic network. This paper emphasizes the role of literary friendships, the affect of political passion, and the effectiveness of maroon economic strategies characterizing the collaborative maneuvers of Caribbean-Canadian writers in negotiating a capitalist economy. How can we reconceive Gilroy's notion of the Black Atlantic if the circuits of cultural production are witnessed from the private space of letters? How do black transnational intimacies affect our understanding of cultural production and black creative writers' access to capital? Through the lens of postcolonial intimacies, this paper illustrates how Clarke at the CBC established Black Atlantic circuits of collaboration throughout the world.

Guy Beauregard (Taiwan)

Transpacific Precarities: Reading Asian/Canadian Writing in Asia

My paper engages with two terms that have rapidly gained attention in contemporary critical discourse: transpacific (Suzuki 2014; Hoskins and Nguyen 2014) and precarity (Bourdieu 1998; Standing 2011; 2014). In doing so, I draw upon the work of Butler (2004; 2009), who distinguishes between the "more or less existential conception" of precariousness and the "more specifically political" nature of precarity. I build upon this distinction to discuss two Asian/Canadian texts: Souvankham Thammavongsa's *Found* (2007), which uncovers a path from Laos to a refugee camp in Thailand to Canada; and Rita Wong's *forage* (2007), which tracks the impact of e-waste shipped from North America to China. My paper provides a geopolitically situated reading of these texts, including a

discussion of their reception in Asia, to argue that new configurations of "literature, justice, relation" should not be limited to those in Canada alone.

Pilar Cuder-Domínguez (Huelva, Spain)

**Poetic (Re)Embodiments of Slavery:
Cultural Memory, Social Justice and Blackness in Canadian Literature**

Black Canadian writers have struggled to counteract what Katherine McKittrick has graphically described as living black Canada as "unvisibility," which often entails dispelling the mistaken notion that slavery never existed on Canadian soil, together with the over-simplistic perception of Canada/Canaan as a safe haven for freedom seekers. As a result, many Black Canadian works perform a didactic role in educating fellow Canadians about a part of their common history that non-Black Canadians are unaware of, and in addressing the historical roots of current social inequalities. This paper provides a close reading of two poetry collections published in 2014—Sylvia D. Hamilton's *And I Alone Escaped to Tell You* and Charles C. Smith's *Travelogue of the Bereaved*—highlighting the ways in which they recuperate the enslaved Black body for Canadian history; they restore dignity to the enslaved, construct an alternative site of memorialization, and dismantle hegemonic narratives of Blackness in the nation.

Eva Darias-Beautell (La Laguna, Spain)

W'daeb-awae or the Limits of Knowledge: Indigenizing Elizabeth Hay's *Late Nights on Air*

According to Basil H. Johnston, w'daeb-awae is an Anishinaubae expression to say that someone is telling the truth while simultaneously denying that full possibility by casting the limits of individual knowledge. The decolonizing practices of many contemporary Indigenous scholars and writers in Canada showcase a certain epistemological shifts in that direction. But what is the role of nonIndigenous scholars and writers in the transformation of the field of Canadian Literature? With these questions in mind, I propose to read Elizabeth Hay's *Late Nights on Air* from a relational and reciprocal standpoint, probing the novel's inscription of the idea of North vis-à-vis its (spectral) representation through the Berger Inquiry. I intend to examine the possibilities of researching back (Smith) white settler's nationalism by means of a decolonizing critical practice that indigenizes its discursive power by queering it.

Martin Kuester (Marburg, Germany)

Ecological Indians in the Global Indian Village: Contemporary Canadian First Nations Writing

This paper will juxtapose romantically traditional and startlingly shocking or surprising views of nature and creation myths in recent literary works by First Nations authors such as *Boyden's The Orenda*, *King's The Back of the Turtle*, *Taylor's Motorcycles and Sweetgrass* and *Moses' Kyotopolis*. While Thomas King admits that the traditional rhetoric of "our relationship with the earth" nowadays "sounds worn out and corny," he

claims this is "not the fault of Native people," but that rather Native concepts and attitudes "have been kidnapped by White North America and stripped of their power." I will interpret the literary texts from a European point of view in the light of ecocriticism and approaches such as Shepard Krech's provocative *The Ecological Indian*. I will also take into account insights gained during a recent "Canadian Ecologies" Lecture Series organized by the Marburg Centre for Canadian Studies together with a high school cooperation project.

Belén Martín-Lucas (Vigo, Spain)

**Posthumanism, Diaspora, and Indigeneity:
Feminist Interventions in TransCanadian Speculative Fiction**

This paper examines the strong posthumanist component in the speculative fiction of Hiromi Goto, Nalo Hopkinson, Larissa Lai, and Eden Robinson from a critical stance that combines affect theory, postcolonial literary criticism, and feminist theories. Though emerging from radically different situated knowledges, their narratives share several crucial aspects of critical posthumanism, such as the focus on environmentalism, relational subjectivity, and accountability based on a strong sense of collectivity. Reading their speculative fiction as a form of political critique, I will focus on their depiction of new posthumanist affective bonds, to emphasize how their activist cultural work contributes to the production of critical theory and offers imaginative responses to current oppressions.

Claire Omhové (Montpellier, France)

Landscape Manuals: How to Do Landscape in Words and Pictures after the Centennial

Jeff Wall's *Landscape Manual* (1969) was one of the first manifestoes to herald the emergence of conceptual photography in Canada, along with other experimental ventures such as the creation of N.E. Thing Co Ltd in 1966. Like Wall, the founders of NETCO had an interest in the material and aesthetic production of landscape, its consumption as well as its ideological instrumentalization. Iain Baxter has never ceased to reflect critically on these aspects, even after landscape was pronounced obsolete as a genre, and even before environmental emergencies brought to the forefront questions regarding how the land is viewed and represented, and how such representations naturalize the interactions between human beings and their environment. Starting from the 1960s Vancouver scene and its resistance to the Group of Sevenification of Canada, this paper will address how the pedagogy of Canadian landscape artists and writers have evolved to encourage their viewers/readers to engage ethically with landscape.

Katja Sarkowsky (Muenster, Germany)

**Imagining Land/Scapes Across Oceans:
Transnational Memories of Place in Canadian Life Writing**

Place, mapping, land/scape, and geography play a crucial role in Canadian life writing, providing ways of exploring past and present displacement as well as issues belonging. This presentation focuses

on the function of land and landscape as remembered and imagined across oceans in Canadian life writing, that is, on examples in which the remembered and/or imagined landscape of one's own, one's parents', or one's ancestors' geographical origins are projected upon and related to the autobiographical subject's present location(s) in Canada. I will concentrate on two disparate but equally instructive examples: Roy Kiyooka's *Mothertalk* (1997) and Alice Munro's *The View from Castle Rock* (2006). Both texts, I argue, by way of their specific forms and generic transgressions use the landscape of (family) origin -- Japan and Scotland respectively -- to re-interpret both settlement and displacement in Canada as well as autobiographical writing and speaking positions.

Eleanor Rao (Salerno, Italy)

Cinderella Literature? Canadian Literature in the Italian context

Canadian studies entered Italy only in the 1980s and the 90s. Before then, Canada was like a blank space in the perception of the majority of scholars and publishing houses. Still considered a 'Cinderella literature,' ancilliary to the literatures of neighbouring USA and Great Britain, the few courses and seminars on CanLit were often swallowed up by the English and American curricula. Today, the scene is slightly different, mostly thanks to translations of writers such as Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro published by major publishing houses. Nevertheless, even such publications are marred by the fact that these authors are often marketed as American. Our joint paper will trace the main turning points of the study of Canadian literature in Italy in the last 50 years by focusing on the key scholarly approaches adopted, and charting future paths in light of recent changes in the humanities in Europe.

Gillian Roberts (Nottingham, UK)

Cross-Border Adaptations and the Told-To Paradigm

This paper examines what I want to call the "told-to adaptation," namely the adaptation of an Indigenous literary text by a non-Indigenous screenwriter and director, a version of what Sophie McCall identifies as the phenomenon "in which, typically, non-Aboriginal recorders collect, edit and structure stories by Aboriginal narrators" (First Person Plural, 2). As McCall argues, the "told-to" narrative produces "a variety of contact zones of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal interactions" (2-3) that are often "implicated in ... debates over cultural property" (4) but may also offer the potential for more genuine cross-cultural collaboration in "a meeting ground for multiple voices" (5). As an example of this phenomenon, which I conceive of as a subset of postcolonial film adaptation, I will discuss the 2013 adaptation of Richard Van Camp's novel *The Lesser Blessed* (1996) by writer-director Anita Doron, and its framing by those involved in making the film.

Eugenia Sojka (Silesia, Poland)

Oh, Canada! How have you been constructed in Poland? Polish translators, writers, and publishers and their representations of Canada

The paper focuses on the historically changing status of Canadian literature and culture in Poland in the 20th and 21st century. It examines the impact of the political situation of the country on the decisions of publishers, translators and scholars interested in promoting Canadian literature. It comments on the mythology of Canada created by Polish writers seduced by the exotic otherness of the distant land and it explores the striking post-communist development of Canadian literature and culture in Poland: the flourishing of the field resulting from the work of scholars and translators supported by the international Canadian Studies programs and no decline of interest in the field at the time of financial austerity in the recent years. The paper also discusses the current publishing trends and various initiatives of Canadian Studies Centres and programs in Poland which predict future directions in the evolution of Canadian literature and culture in the "Lesser Europe."

David Stirrup (Kent, UK)

Fast Borders and Loose Borders: Sovereign Rhetorics

Christina Gish Hill argues that the nation-state lens through which Native peoples are collectively conceived produces a binary formulation in which they become designated "either as bounded entities with uniform membership, culture, and territory like the state or as chaotic, boundless, irrational entities lacking national formation". The resulting logics of containment or control (in which Native peoples are defined as either "parallel" to the nation-state or "contradictory" to the security of the nation-state) dictate federal policy. Taking this rhetorical ambivalence as a given, this paper will explore how it is disrupted by the spectre of the Canada-US border in a range of representations of the border in the work of a range of Indigenous artists and writers, effecting a broad-view analysis of the ways in which the Canada US border is rhetorically employed in an evasive strategy of simultaneously invoking and erasing the hard borders of the settler nation-state.

Concurrent Sessions Papers

Jordan Abel (SFU)

Towards an Inclusive Corpus: Topic Modeling, Indigenous Poetry and Colonial Borders

As Andrew Goldstone and Ted Underwood convincingly argue, topic modeling can reveal "entrenched patterns" and "long-term transformations of the terrain caused by social change" when applied to corpora that contain thousands of documents and span multiple decades. However, constructing a corpus can often be both canonically fraught and problematically exclusive. In this paper, I'll discuss the challenges that have emerged in my attempt to construct a corpus comprised of every book of Indigenous poetry published in Canada (extending from Pauline Johnson's 1895 book *The White*

Wampum to Marilyn Dumont's 2015 book *The Pemnican Eaters*), including the technical difficulties of topic modeling a multilingual corpus and reading multilingual data. In addition, the paper will also explore the problematic methodologies of accounting (and counting) for gender, race, and nation when much of the work already being done in this field has consisted of assigning information to those categories without any self-identification from the author. Finally, the paper will conclude by thinking through the problematic (but necessary) process of defining and limiting a corpus, and ultimately will explore what it means to define a corpus of Indigenous poetry through colonial and national borders when much of the writing in that corpus resists the limitations of those very borders.

Jennifer Adese (Carleton)

From Racialization to Relationships: Decolonizing Métis Literary Analysis

For many, the concept of Métisness is a confusing one. People from all walks of life struggle to articulate Métisness beyond a base understanding of “Métis are mixed-race.” Such an articulation is woefully inadequate to the task of recognizing Métis people's Indigeneity. In many ways, Literary Studies has reified the Métis as mixed-race narrative in its engagement with Métis literatures in ways that often complicate, rather than make intelligible, Métis people's Indigeneity. It is from a foundation of Indigenous peoplehood that we can move beyond readings that reinforce rather than challenge racebased narratives of Métisness. Through a lens attentive to what it is that makes Métis an Indigenous people, we decolonize contemporary and increasingly widespread (mis)conceptualizations of Métisness in Literary Studies, in our teaching, and in everyday life. In order to do so scholars must become, at minimum, better acquainted with the growing body of literature produced within the field of Métis Studies that addresses what it means to be Métis. This paper therefore brings together the work of scholars in the field of Métis Studies such as Brenda Macdougall and Chris Andersen, and places them in conversation with select pieces of Métis children's literature published by the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) by Métis authors such as Leah Dorion and Wilfred Burton. Children's literature is an important site for applying this reading practice as it immerses us within an intergenerational space of Métis past, present, and future. By foregrounding my analysis with the Métis concept of *wahkohtowin* (loosely – though reductively – translatable as “kinship”) I argue that we can develop a reading practice that affirms, rather than negates, Métis peoples' distinct Indigeneity that recognizes that intricacies of Métis land-based knowledge, Métis kinship relationships, and Métis languages.

Mathew Arthur (Vancouver) and Reuben Jentink (UBC)

Composting Settler Nationalism

Recycling is a liberal value, it asks for incremental change and polite amendments. Revolution, on the other hand, creates waste: displaced bodies, abandoned infrastructure, and institutional ruins. Our collaborative recomposition of annie ross' scavenged art series *Happy Birthday Super Cheaper* alongside Anna Lowenhaupt-Tsing's multispecies ethnographic approach asks how compost might intervene in knowledge projects and in the politics of nationalism. Compost is transformation, it offers leaky openings into political and intellectual life; compost asks us to attend to human and nonhuman

contingencies—those unlikely pairings that emerge from regenerative processes with or without human aid.

Compost contrasts the easy reuse of past knowledge trajectories (as “turns”) and the “turning” of compost (as the material-semiotic demands of attending to multispecies life) under the rubric of nationalist neoliberalism. Method, figured as compost, situates disciplines and academic/writing practices as potential sites of transformation. Without attention to the specificities of local landprocesses, the recent accretion of theoretical moves under the catchwords “affect” and “new materialism” are subject to a hazardous repetition of neoliberal abstractions. Compost is ubiquitous but demands hyperspecificity: care for the particularities of site-specific agents. Composting keeps us in place.

Compost also figures the regenerative capacity of Indigenous languages as they encode spiritual and topographic knowledge connected to material pasts and virtual futures. Following Leroy Little Bear’s description of the intertwining of Siksika language and Niitsitapi metaphysics, we aim to draw attention to the myriad ways in which English encodes and deploys nation-building projects such as “reconciliation” and “restoration.” We contend that, in Canada, restoration is a project of “recycling”—of laying green sod on ailing political and intellectual infrastructure. Instead, we propose “compost” as a performative theoretical mode capable of restorative work that opens the commons to both the rematriation of Indigenous land and life and the decomposition of settler nationhood.

Nadine Attewell (McMaster)

Interracial Intimacy and Institutional Form: Hong Kong, Liverpool, Salt Spring Island

In this paper, I read three photographs of schoolchildren taken around the same time, on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia (1929); in an impoverished working-class neighbourhood near the Liverpool docks (1936); and at a selective British-style public school in colonial Hong Kong (1919). Drawing on literary critic Caroline Levine’s account of the entangled ways in which “aesthetic and social forms [act] in the world,” I reflect on the complex of looks and postures through which the photographs’ black and Asian child subjects negotiate their proximity to one another. But I also attend to the (counter) institutional projects that make the photographs signify in relation to one another, resonating across differences of class, geopolitical location, and migration history. How do such photographs, in both their content and their formal iterability, intervene in the frameworks through which we approach diasporic cultural production in Canada? What kinds of practices of reading – and therefore writing – do they demand of us?

Aubin Mathieu (UBC-Okanagan)

Re-Radicalizing Contemporary Queer Activism: Modeling blewointment press’s Intersectional Creative Space

Although efforts from the LGBT liberation movement have made great strides in addressing the oppression of queer people, recent events, such as the Black Lives Matter protest at the 2016 Toronto Pride Parade, demonstrate a need for creating a more intersectional movement that addresses other systemic issues, such as race and class oppression. Thus, this paper will question how creative practices developed by Vancouver’s blewointment press, which intersected concerns of sex, gender, race, and

class during the early stages of Canada's lesbian and gay liberation movement (1960s-1980s), offer an important re-intervention for transforming contemporary queer activism. In *The Canadian War on Queers* (2010), Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile argue that, during the last fifty years, the Canadian State has continuously constructed queer people as terrorists. This paper calls for a return to a previous historical moment to examine the type of creative strategies deployed in the 1960s to examine how they may gain new radical value in our current moment. Extending Leo Bersani's concept of an "anticommunal mode of connectedness," which promotes the connection of different queer people beyond separate and marginalized communities, my paper turns to *blewointment press* as one model of intersectional community building. Specifically, the press produced an alternate queer space engaging multiple marginalized concerns by facilitating the collaboration of Anglo-Canadian, Asian-Canadian, First Nations, and Québécois poets. Examining this effort will show how this space produced an intersectional community that engaged and challenged its constituents through the production and circulation of queer poetics. To avoid romanticizing its accomplishments, I will also evaluate its limitations and obstacles in negotiating differentiating values. As a whole, I will contend that the press's ability to create an affinity group that worked across boundaries offers a lead for re-radicalizing queer activist efforts through its production of an activist space of intersectional resistance.

Paul Barrett (McMaster) and Kate Siklosi (York)
Neoliberal Tools or New Humanist Critique?
Theorizing Class, Race, and Nation in the Digital Humanities

Recently in Canada, the digital humanities has enjoyed increasing popularity as a tool for teaching, researching, and disseminating texts, and also a means of generating collaborative scholarship across disciplinary borders. However, the digital humanities, and perhaps its practitioners, have also recently been described as a collection of neoliberal tools whose "institutional success has for the most part involved the displacement of politically progressive humanities scholarship and activism in favour of the manufacture of digital tools and archives."

Our paper will offer a response to these accusations and concerns about the digital humanities by discussing our two DH projects: a digital, online edition of M. NourbeSe Philip's *Zong!* (2008) and the development of a number of digital tools that offer experimental methods for reading Austin Clarke's corpus.

Both Philip and Clarke are concerned with unsettling discourses of the human, particularly as received notions of "the humanities" are implicated in racialized conceptions of who counts as human. Their work therefore provides two excellent case studies to examine the limits and potentials of the digital humanities to interrogate both the humanities and their attendant forms of humanism. Our discussion will link the pragmatic and methodological challenges of both projects with the apparent aporia of critical analyses of race, gender, indigeneity and diaspora within digital humanities work.

As part of our analysis we pose a series of questions that will animate the debate over the relation between the digital humanities and transformed political categories. Specifically, we are concerned with whether the digital humanities represent a displacement of critical questions of power in favour of a cloistered technological positivism? What vision of the humanities is at stake in this digital work and how might it be reinvigorated through a critical engagement with theories of race, class, and Indigeneity? How might this digital turn represent a new form of Said's "worldliness" that infuses

humanism with a new vocabulary of critique? Along these lines, how can the tools of digital technology be used to further theoretically critical and culturally progressive projects, specifically in the Canadian context?

Gregory Betts (Brock)

Before Decolonization / Avant Decolonization: On New Futures from New Pasts

In this talk, I use “avant-garde” to recognize artists unsatisfied by the present, and whose work reveals an intrinsic investment in the possibilities of a better future. Given this frame, it is noteworthy that Canada’s avant-garde artists are increasingly attuned to the Indigenous populations and their rising influence in Canadian culture. Indeed, a new avant-garde in Canada is emerging through the combination of art and politics specifically oriented to advancing anti-imperialism, combatting fascism, and rethinking the racist underpinnings of Western capitalism. In particular, a subset of authors are mapping out a necessary re-imagining of settler-Indigenous relations, thinking about new ways that settlers in Canada can inhabit the land without erasing the Indigenous peoples and cultures who preceded them.

The intersections of Indigenous decolonization and the avant-garde highlight a pun that points backwards as much as forwards. The pun hinges on the difference between *avant* and *avant*: the French adverb for earlier or before and the French adjective for forward or in front. If the *avant-garde* are those in front, the future-oriented soldiers of a better tomorrow, the *avant* of Canada also refers to those who came before Canada – including the begetters of the colonial legacies of British and French settlements, and then also the aboriginal populations who long preceded them. The earliest use of the term *avantgarde* in Canada that I have found dates back to 1704, in reference to the *coureurs de bois* and *des Sauvages*, natives, Metis, and French Canadiens sent to battle *avant* of the French military. They were the sacrificial lambs of battle, the first soldiers sent into hostile territory, those most likely to be killed. The before-Canada and the *avant-garde* meet again in contemporary times when the legacy of those European revolutionaries intersect with the politics and poetics of decolonization.

Myra Bloom (Toronto)

Translating the Solitudes

In the years since the second sovereignty referendum in 1995, Québec’s political tensions have given way to more “relaxed social interactions” between anglophones and francophones (Simon, 2006). Critics from both cultures have attributed this deescalation to an increasingly multicultural and globalized society. Immigration, particularly in Montreal, has created a “polyglot and hybrid culture” in which “the old epics of identity” are less viable (Simon, 2006). The effects of globalization have moreover made nationalist discourse “more difficult to maintain” in an interconnected world (Di Sciullo, 2011): recent statistics report that 61% of anglophones and 87% of francophones in Québec are bilingual (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013). This paper will consider how anglophone writers distill this ethos in the reoccurring trope of the translator, which features in a number of contemporary fictions including Zoe Whittall’s *Bottle Rocket Hearts* (2007), Heather O’Neill’s *The Girl Who Was Saturday Night* (2012),

and Claire Holden-Rothman's *My October* (2012). I will also suggest a possible tension between the anglophone conception of hybridity embodied in these texts and the alternative visions of contemporary Québec culture advanced by francophone theorists (Harel, 2006) and writers (Bock, 2011; Hamelin, 2010). My ultimate aim is to complicate the tired idea of the "two solitudes," but also the possible paradigms that have been advanced as alternatives.

Sebastiaan Boersma (UBC)

A Poethics of Affectibility

This essay looks at poethics as a way to host a dialogue between recent literary readings on the Left with what Denise Ferreira da Silva calls the "poethical" thinking of black radical thought. The aim of this essay is toward a comparative hermeneutic and a new form of reading poetry and poetic matter, mimetically; that is, it is a strategy of reading as well as a thought figure, routed not by way of cognition (the Kantian Doctrine) or consciousness-raising (shorthand for ideology critique), but affective or bodily comportment and tone (Nealon, "Reading on the Left"). In the first part of the essay, I look at how black thought enacts a socio-poetic project that inhabits and solicits "the human differential within the general ecology" and as such, can be said to exemplify a mimetic practice as otherwise worlding (Moten, "Blackness and Poetry"). Moten's historical-ontological-political project, I argue, continually gestures to a mimetic relation, which always involves a practice, that is always already being enacted through what he, interchangeably, calls "the rub" or "blur" of poetry. "To think poetry in the name of (its) blackness," Moten suggests, allows and requires something else (other) than "critique". In the blur or rub of poetry and blackness, critique gets displaced through a mimetic practice—that is to say, an anti-interpretive erotics—that engenders a para-ontoepistemological grammar of modernity (carried in the Category of Blackness) attending to what is continually articulated and disavowed by European post-Enlightenment thought, and to the socio-ecological disaster that it has led us to. Insofar as a poetic matter operates by way of an otherwise relationality (affection, intention, and attention), it signals other political ways of knowing, doing, and existing. Finally, I turn to the poetry of Jasmine Gibson to consider how a "Black Feminist Poethics" might go about the task of emancipating "the Category of Blackness from the scientific and historical ways of knowing that produced it in the first place" (da Silva, "To Be Announced").

Bridgette Brown (Carleton)

Transnational Feminine Civility: Florence Randal and E. Maud Graham, Canada's 'Teachers for South Africa' (1902)

This presentation gives fresh attention to the role of women in Canada's colonial past, specifically their complicity in Empire and their contribution to nation building. In this paper, which stems from my doctoral research into the transperipheral exchanges of nascent settler colonial discourse between South Africa and Canada, I examine the published letters of two women who worked as teachers in Boer concentration camps during the South African War (1899-1902). In 1902, Florence Randal (the future mother of Dorothy Livesay) and Ellen Maud Graham published accounts of their travels and teaching in South Africa. Reading these non-fictional accounts of the women's role in an imperial war reveals their gendered mobility as they travelled to a sister colony to police whiteness and

instruct Boer women and children in the English language. These New Women sought adventure and career advancement, and their privileged mobility placed them in a respectable position from which to write home and portray their experiences. In this paper, I also touch on photography, print and periodical culture, and material exchanges between the two colonies, while revealing how the women obscured and eliminated many obvious evidences of war trauma, violence and the subjugation of indigenous peoples. Reading their narratives in our contemporary moment allows us to understand the transperipheral project of settler colonialism, as the women reflect on population logics and territorial management in South Africa, through the lens of war. I argue, finally, that the women represented a specific feminine civility that modelled Anglophone, Protestant whiteness, which operated not just domestically (in Canada), but transnationally, and not just between the colony and the metropole, but also between peripheral points in the Empire.

Olivia Burgess (UVic)

‘Let’s Settle This’: Reconciliation Politics and Resource Politics in Canada

Beginning in 1990 with the *R v Sparrow* decision, “reconciliation” has become increasingly associated with Aboriginal rights and title claims, with interpretations of Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982, and with the discourse of Aboriginal-Settler and Aboriginal-State relations more generally. “Reconciliation” has become the *mot du jour* in the Indigenous politics conversation. While the reconciliation that occurs on the ground, in communities, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals and between humans and non-humans remains an admirable goal of productive decolonization practices, my paper will demonstrate how the official, state-initiated reconciliation that appears in policies, court decisions, and formal government apologies actually works to reproduce colonial power dynamics, to reinforce the sovereignty of the Canadian state, and, ultimately, to soften Indigenous communities for resource development.

Engaging in the discourse of narrative studies, my paper focuses specifically on narratives of reconciliation and their role in, or effect on, the concurrent multi-billion dollar resource-extraction projects currently awaiting approval to cross Indigenous lands. Reading two coexisting but seemingly incompatible narratives of reconciliation—one emerging on the ground and within communities, the other emerging through an official government discourse—my paper will illustrate how “reconciliation” functions as a floating signifier within settler-colonial Canada, one whose meaning becomes increasingly difficult to determine even as it becomes the highest aim of both law and policy when it comes to Indigenous-state relations.

Lauren Burr and Sarah Humphreys (Waterloo)

Digital Gaming Paradigms and the Decolonization of Indigenous Texts

Roopika Risam recently argued that the digital humanities can (and has) created spaces of engagement and resistance for historically marginalized peoples. Building upon Risam’s assertion that the intersection of digital worlds and humanistic disciplines can “create spaces to imagine new modes of critique,” my research assistant and I propose to present a “gamified” digital academic edition of an Indigenous text that reconfigures the colonial practices endemic to academic publishing and editing.

This digital scholarly gaming edition or social knowledge edition offers an alternative to academic publishing standards, which are conventionally “associated with exclusive power structures.” How can digital gaming paradigms reconfigure the relationship between text, reader, and community? Can digital gaming affordances revalue texts by authors whose knowledge systems have been devalued by western academic publishing and editing standards? Our project attempts to answer these questions by creating a digital edition of Mourning Dove’s *Cogewea* (1927) that addresses the problems currently plaguing the 1981 University of Nebraska Press print edition.

In affiliation with a SSHRC funded project, The People and the Text (peopleandthetext.ca), our edition of Mourning Dove’s *Cogewea* (1927) uses digital gaming affordances and protocols, which break from the Eurocentric forms of editing and publishing that stifle or even silence the Okanagan knowledge systems crucial to the novel. We are in the process of building this edition using Twine, a digital storytelling platform, which is open access and offers opportunities to tell stories (even archival stories) beyond traditional print and publishing conventions. Through Twine, we are able to create connections between the novel and its print history; the reader and the cross-cultural knowledge expressed in the novel; and the reader and the paratext (annotations, introduction, cover-art and so forth). This digital edition challenges the western educated reader to move beyond the conventions of academic texts and engage with *Cogewea* in ways that empowers and privileges Indigenous knowledge.

Clint Burnham (SFU)

Irreconciling Psychoanalysis: Settler Affect, the Cree Mirror, and the Indigenist Gaze

This paper proposes to ask how we can think about a post-TRC cultural landscape in terms of psychoanalytic theory, engaging with three possibilities. I begin with the crucial role that affect plays as a “settler blockade” – that is, how what Paulette Regan calls “feel[ing] good about feeling bad”, or settler reactions to and stasis around the TRC and indigenist critiques, mobilizes a kind of immobility (similar to Ahmed’s “nonperformative”), a “white fragility” (Robin DiAngelo) that reinscribes colonial paradigms. Mired in pity, fear, and guilt, the settler subject “enjoys their symptom” as a way of not understanding, and taking action, on colonial histories of the residential schools and other trauma. Then, I offer the stories of the Cree mirror (Neal McLeod), a post-Lacanian scene of misrecognition that simultaneously critiques colonial technologies of vision while satirizing indigenist gender relations. In these stories, the Cree subject does not see him or herself in the mirror, suggesting the need for a new politics of representation. Finally, I propose, Jeff Barnaby’s *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* paradoxically suggests the impossible gaze: “don’t look”, a character tells a young girl, and perhaps the audience, indigenous and/or settler, even as the film stages a series of genre-bound retellings of residential school traumas, political struggle, and what Kevin Lee Burton calls the “rez aesthetic” of Mi’kmaq land. Providing an example, to adapt David Garneau, of an indigenist “irreconcilable gaze”, Barnaby’s film also marks a cultural politics of restitution, or even resurgence, without falling into easy or anodyne solutions to the contemporary moment. This paper will suggest neither a reconciliation nor even a conciliation, of indigenous cultural work and psychoanalysis, but instead attempt to work through their non-extractive negations.

Alison Calder (Manitoba)

Poor Old Kaw-Liga: Truth, Reconciliation, and the Limits of Colonial Fantasy in Dianne Warren's *Liberty Street*

In this paper, I read Dianne Warren's 2015 novel *Liberty Street* in light of Glen Coulthard's argument in *Red Skin, White Masks* that Indigenous participation in the colonial politics of recognition facilitates a one-sided closure that reinscribes unfair power structures. I argue that the "reconciliation" effected between Indigenous and non-Indigenous characters at the novel's end represents a white liberal fantasy that is seen as fundamental to the construction of the colonial self. Early in the novel, an Indigenous man, Silas Chance, is killed in an unsolved hit-and-run. The novel's focus is the trauma experienced by two non-Indigenous characters, Frances and Dooley, because of Silas's death. Confronting her repressed memories about Silas is constructed as essential to Frances' healing. Her contact with Silas's family, which takes place through Facebook, represents "the optics of recognition and reconciliation" (Coulthard 156): after Frances "recognizes" Silas by confronting her own past and then telling Silas's sister about his fate, nothing else is required of her, and his family's final words, "rest in peace, Uncle," indicate that closure has seemingly been achieved. This is a successful resolution from the dominant perspective in that colonial violence, experienced as a trauma by the non-Indigenous viewer, has been identified as originating in a particular perpetrator, who coincidentally dies and is eliminated from the community. The tidiness of this ending is undercut, however, by the presence of Kaw-Liga, a wooden Indian figure that is allowed to decay and ultimately be destroyed in Frances's family's farmyard. Here, their complicity in colonial neglect of Kaw-Liga undermines Frances's role as mere bystander to Silas's death. Read through Coulthard, the emptiness of Frances's recognition of Silas becomes clear, as it allows the appearance of reconciliation and closure, while actually hiding the unequal power structures that legitimate ongoing colonial violence.

Lily Cho (York)

Indexicality and Captivation in Kim Fu's *For Today I Am a Boy*

This paper examines the idea of photographic indexicality for recuperating the possibilities of captivation in fiction. Specifically, I will consider the relationship between the indexical and the lexical, between representation and language for reading realist Asian Canadian fiction. Indexicality is not realism. But both indexicality and realism ask for an interrogation of their claims to truth. Such claims have a particularly powerful stake in the representations of difference. This paper explores the claim to truth and beauty -- to the idea that seeing is believing, and that believing is its own beauty -- in Kim Fu's novel. Fu's work demands that its readers allow for the generative possibilities of captivation.

Gale Coskan-Johnson (Brock) and Neta Gordon (Brock)

Decolonizing the Survey Course: Trading in the Timber for Trees

Affirming the necessity of postcolonial educational practice, Beverley Haun asserts that “What we need to teach our students and ourselves to aim for in this process is the creation of, and conscious holding open of, an imaginary space where we maintain a meta-cognitive awareness of the exclusionary discourses we are constituted by” (177). We endeavor to “hold open” such a space while planning and teaching the first-year survey course, the type of course that has not – in Arun Mukherjee’s words – been branded as postcolonial (191), but that ostensibly introduces students to a field of study. The term “survey” links such courses to real colonizing procedures: surveying the field, invoking historical benchmarks, marking borders, and imagining conclusions as inevitably manifest. In other words, procedures that make timber out of trees.

Within an increasingly managerial university space, the putative function of the survey course threatens to reaffirm notions of easily demarcated “foundational” knowledge, notions that are only “resisted” in more “advanced” learning spaces. The teaching conditions associated with the survey course – including high enrolment caps and dependence on textbooks – tend to produce learning spaces semiotically coded as hierarchical, “efficient,” fixed, and impersonal, spaces that make it difficult to explicitly consider a local geography of knowledge sharing. This project considers how to build and deliver the survey course in a way that does not reproduce normative, colonizing violence, and that attempts to “hold open” a space in which, as Haun puts it, “we respond ethically to others through and during our studies” (191). Over the course of the next academic year – during which we are both teaching new first-year survey courses – we will collaborate on syllabus construction, discuss teaching experiences (successful and otherwise), and develop an account of the effects of our efforts. Our collaborative contribution will refuse the scholarly impulse to assert mastery over our subject and instead, invite our audience into the imaginative spaces that, at the moment of presenting, we will yet be working to hold open.

Lauren Cross (UBC)

Decolonial Relations: Reading Land / Place and Language in Leanne Simpson and Junot Díaz

Nishnaabeg writer Leanne Simpson grapples with historic and contemporary settler-colonial impositions on Indigenous peoples within Canada in her collection of stories and songs, *Islands of Decolonial Love* (2015), whose title is inspired by the Dominican-born New Jersey-raised author Junot Díaz. Díaz who spoke in a 2012 interview with Paula M. Moya about “decolonial love” and its capacity to liberate people from “that horrible legacy of colonial violence,” takes up neocolonialism and its shaping of race, gender, and class in both the Caribbean and the United States through his fiction. In this paper, then, I argue that the intertextual connection between Simpson and Díaz implicitly connects Indigenous struggles for decolonization with those of the diaspora. By reading Indigeneity alongside the diasporic, a new space emerges through which we can consider colonial violence as well as land/place and language across Turtle Island from disparate angles. Reading Díaz alongside Simpson, I claim, animates the co-implicated decolonial topographies shared between Indigeneity and the diasporic while giving shape to decolonial strategies from diverging, albeit aligned, vantage points.

Larissa Lai, furthermore, mobilizes “epistemologies of respect” as a framework to think through relations and differences between Indigenous peoples in Canada and Asian Canadians who are engaged in colonial and neo-colonial forces and structures. Without simplifying or generalizing Lai’s theories, I suggest that Lai offers one way into discussing Indigenous peoples and members of Black Caribbean

diasporas and the kinship and respect that is possible – and already practiced – between them. Clearly, none of the preceding traumas should be equated with one another, nor homogenized; however, I suggest the expressions of land/place and language in Simpson and Díaz carve out a unique space to approach different experiences and histories of colonial traumas in a motion not of universality, nor of hostility, but of respect in the mutual movement for decolonization.

Jeff Derksen (SFU)
Productive Presentism

The neoliberal attempt at arresting or killing time – the so-called end of history – has now cracked and both history and the future are before us again in multiple forms. But given this restart, what models do we have to examine the present now that it too can be reimagined? In rereading time within Marxist thought Massimiliano Tomba proposes that “The gambit consists in thinking politically temporal diversities...” (Marxist Temporalities, xiii). Reading against the grain of conceptions of linear time (developmental and Marxist), and against a chronormativity that flattens the difference of the pluralities of temporalities that constitute the present, in this paper I wish to speculate on the potential and diversity of the present. Further, I wish to explore if there is a form of productive presentism that we have overlooked due to the lock on temporality that was part of the neoliberal project. Has our critical attention focused on a reconfiguration of the past in order to build a different future (one more just, more sustainable, and one that is finally decolonized, etc.) and has therefore diminished the present?

If we understand the present as a plurality of temporalities, can an attention to the present, particularly a queer reading that cuts against a temporal evenness, reveal a potentially emancipatory temporality brewing in the present? Countering the great swindle of the period of presentism that we have just exited — a period which reductively foreclosed a future outside of capitalist value practices and tried to diminish the potential of pasts that imagined a different present (or, former futures) — I will argue, is a process that intensifies the present (and the various and competing experiences of it) to reveal or make tangible the multiplicity and unevenness of the present and the potential that it holds.

Joel Deshayé (Memorial)
Transnational Nostalgia and ‘Cowboys & Riels’ in Frank Davey’s *The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Co.*

On the theme of “TransCanadas,” my paper will consider the transnationalism of the titular character of Frank Davey’s *The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Co.* (1985), a book of poetry. One hundred years after Riel’s hanging and the end of the Northwest Resistance in 1885, *The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Co.* describes Riel in the context of the Western genre, specifically its American figure Davy Crockett, and the transnational economics associated with border crossings between Canada and the United States. Alongside Riel’s exile in the United States and Davey’s ironically parallel cross-border shopping in Washington state, the book reflects upon the assemblage of pump organs in nationally “central” Ontario from steel imported from Britain. Such transnationalisms, though often pre-national in the Western, foreshadow Davey’s views of the nation in *Post-National Arguments* (1993). They furthermore coincide with theory outside the field of literature by thinkers such as Arjun Appadurai,

whose *Modernity at Large* (1998) explores landscape metaphors that he calls “scapes” (33) to explain transnational capitalism and related phenomena such as regional nostalgia. My paper will raise questions about nostalgia, region, and genre by framing *The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Co.* as an “occasional” Western, i.e., one readable as a commemoration of Riel’s hanging and as a sometimes-Western book. Although Davey’s persona argues that Riel is “real” because “[y]ou couldn’t play / cowboys & Riels, you couldn’t play / Riels & Indians” (49), I argue that Riel’s construction as “real” is both a comment on nostalgia for an imagined West and a suggestion that Riel has a racially hybrid status—as cowboyIndian—that reinscribes his transnationalism and his exile from nation-states.

Lindsay Diehl (UBC)

Disrupting the National Frame: A Postcolonial, Diasporic (Re)Reading of *Disappearing Moon Cafe* and *The Concubine’s Children*

This paper re-examines SKY Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Cafe* and Denise Chong’s *The Concubine’s Children*. Although these novels are commonly discussed in Asian Canadian Studies, the dominant framework for understanding privileges a modern Canada over a traditional China. This framework takes its cues from a feminist plot structure, which was influential in the 1980s and 90s when these novels were written. In depicting a daughter’s movement from silence to voice, this structure risks positioning issues of gendered oppression in the past. Moreover, when it interacts with stories of immigrant parents and their Western-raised children, it can reify East-West distinctions, by projecting Orientalized difference onto the parents and linking the children’s acculturation with increased freedom and autonomy. Therefore, this paper utilizes a postcolonial, diasporic perspective to emphasize textual moments within these novels that destabilize this plot structure; it seeks to examine questions beyond the national frame and disrupt notions of Canada’s liberal progressivism. These questions are especially relevant given current debates within Asian Canadian Studies about the limitations of a multicultural approach. Correspondingly, I situate these novels more clearly within a global context of imperialism, colonialism, and capitalism. Additionally, I present some of my own grandmother’s stories about my great-grandmother to signal my investments in exploring Chinese Canadian mother-daughter narratives. I ask: how can writers and critics move away from discussing Westernized daughters as ‘free’ and ‘modern’ in comparison to their ‘unfree’ and ‘tradition-bound’ immigrant mothers? As my great-grandmother was a concubine, this topic is of special interest to me. By creating a dialogue between my grandmother’s stories and the stories of these writers, I consider the possibility for innovative and subversive interactions with feminist narrative structures and conventions. Overall, my goal is to call attention to, and complicate, the underlying notions of national and developmental history which typically organize this genre.

Petra Fachinger (Queen’s)

‘Reconciliation’ in Post-Apology Residential School Narratives

Anishinaabe playwright Drew Hayden Taylor’s *God and the Indian* (2014), Métis author Joan Crate’s *Black Apple* (2016), and British Canadian novelist Jennifer Dance’s *Red Wolf* (2014) mark a

shift in residential school narratives from life writing to fictional and dramatic accounts by authors who did not attend residential schools themselves. While all three texts are written from different subject positions and are shaped by the conventions of their respective genres, their authors all admit to having been challenged to find appropriate artistic means to portray the residential school experience. Taylor's two-act play stages the physical confrontation between an Anglican priest and a Cree survivor, a scenario hitherto undiscussed in literature in Canada. While Taylor's play is not the first to deal with the legacy of residential schools, it is the first to put sexual abuse front and centre. Equally provocative is Crate's choice of telling the residential school experience from the perspective of a white nun. NonAboriginal playwright Wendy Lill's *Sisters* (1989), to which Crate's "resistant text" (Rymhs) in the vein of Basil Johnston's *Indian School Days* (1988) writes back from an Aboriginal perspective, is the only other residential school narrative seen through the eyes of an agent of the institution. Finally, Dance's problematic novel for young adults is one of the first residential school narratives written by a nonAboriginal author from the perspective of a survivor. As Taylor's and Crate's narratives show, the mandate of the TRC to instigate a "process of truth and healing leading toward reconciliation" needs to be problematized because reconciliation is a construct framed within settler political culture. Their creative interventions not only draw attention to the ubiquity of crimes committed against Aboriginal children, but they also identify problems with the discourse around truth, healing, and reconciliation. By telling her residential school narrative as a historical novel and a "lupine fable of indigenization" (Johnson 338), as it is based on an extended analogy between the extinction of wolves because of encroaching settlement and the genocide on Indigenous people, Dance implies that reconciliation must begin with Canadians learning about the history of residential schools, so that in the end we can be "reconciled" with our shameful history of failed relations with Aboriginal peoples. But historical narratives of the colonial past often run the risk of disregarding its living legacy, the persistent reality of colonial violence, and the need for social change. Most importantly, as Dewar suggests, we owe survivors and those working with survivors "our support, primarily through the acceptance that they can and should be – and are, most important – leaders in the efforts to educate Canada and the world about our shared history" (165).

Michael Farnan (Western)

Representing Wilderness: Community, Collaboration, and Artistic Practice

My research into Canada's representational practices has allowed for a critical examination into the political and cultural tensions that persist within Canada's enduring colonial narratives. As such, my proposed presentation (and panel participation) will explore ways in which decolonial art and theory seek to challenge configurations of identity and power. This includes the development of settler-based strategies aimed at unsettling dominant political and cultural narratives. Specifically, in relation to my own art practice, this means finding ways to challenge the colonial legacies of our settler past and the contemporary representational practices that continue to privilege and empower colonial constructions of space and place. My work operates in relation to issues of iconic national identity, and counters them with the local, domestic, and lived practices of people through the building of collaborative relationships that I believe are crucial if we are to truly understand the social and political character of this country.

Jeff Fedoruk (McMaster)

Literary Speculations on Vancouver's Eastside: Reading Gentrification, Tracing Displacement

This paper posits Canadian urban space as a site of struggle for Indigenous, diasporic, and settler populations facing pressure from market-led forces of gentrification. I see the current dynamic of Canadian urban issues as an extension of White Canada's "frontier" mentality towards expansion across the country, so that marginalized peoples have become doubly and often triply displaced. I also see Canadian literary production as a historically contingent part of this process; indeed, the 1970s push for a national literature has helped delineate the country's social and racial margins. Yet, current literary production in the country has the potential to disrupt these narrow notions of "progress," by addressing what Urban Studies critics of gentrification have so far been unable to account for: that although a significant amount of data has been generated regarding how populations are displaced, this data does not address what happens (spatially or culturally) to these populations once they are displaced. Literature, by attending to the affective structures of urban experience, can provide the missing information while simultaneously unsettling popular policies of "creative" city development. My paper will compare recent geographical studies with fictional and non-fictional narratives of one of Vancouver's most vulnerable areas—at the overlap between the Strathcona, Chinatown, and Downtown Eastside neighbourhoods. Specifically, geographer Nick Blomley and poets Daphne Marlatt (with Carole Itter) and Wayne Compton all focus on the nuances of narrative form in tracing complex and often polemical stories of displacement and its affects in the city. Ultimately, this paper offers an approach to Canadian Literature that re-examines cultural production in urban space, proposing new ways of navigating the Strathconas and Chinatowns throughout Canada.

Gregory Fenton (McMaster)

'Not just about me and my body': Exploring Racial and Sexual Kinships in *For Today I Am a Boy*

This paper explores structures of kinship in Kim Fu's novel, *For Today I Am a Boy*, especially those kinships built in a cross-racial capacity. The novel is an Asian Canadian text invested in the politics of Asian Canadian identity, community, and kinship structures, but/and – the conjunction is crucial for my analysis – also a text exploring trans identity, queer politics, and self-care from within homophobic, transphobic culture(s). Through critical readings of intersections between race and sexuality, I examine power relations as they are established and unsettled between the protagonist, Peter, and those with whom he establishes intimate relationships. David Eng highlights the "ephemeral, intangible, and evanescent feelings of kinship" (*The Feeling of Kinship* 15) – echoing Raymond Williams' "structures of feeling" – and this focus underscores the complex affective dimensions of cross-racial kinship as it contributes to processes of identity formation and self-care. I argue that kinship in the novel reveals concealed forms of inequality and racist power dynamics, but does so in a way that challenges the fixity of subjectivity and the stability of referents such as masculinity, queerness, "Asianness," and embodiment. The structures of kinship as they are imagined in the novel further complicate the place of politics within these structures; processes of self-care, for instance, are at times privileged against and before the possibility of a politics of kinship. My paper will examine the place of self-care in relation to a politics of kinship, the sustainability of whiteness as an independent power

structure within kinship structures, and the capacity for cross-racial relationships within a queer diasporic context to unsettle racist and patriarchal hierarchies.

Ryan Fitzpatrick (SFU)

Poetry and Racialization in the Thick of Canadian Space

In her book *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (2006), Katherine McKittrick argues that “[t]he production of space is caught up in, but does not guarantee, longstanding geographic frameworks that materially and philosophically arrange the planet according to a seemingly stable white, heterosexual, classed vantage point” and, further, notes that “[p]ractices of domination, sustained by a unitary vantage point, naturalize both identity and place, repetitively spatializing where nondominant groups ‘naturally’ belong” (xv). McKittrick’s locational politics recognizes what Alexander Weheliye calls a racializing assemblage, a thick relational network that locates and encloses individuals and groups according to race. Within a racializing assemblage, networked forces and materials actively racialize bodies. Space produces race through conditions where not only are spatial practices limited for racialized bodies, but where those bodies also come under fire, violently attacked through legislative and policing structures, economic processes like gentrification and redlining, and ongoing histories of colonial theft.

In my paper, I will read the work of three poets – Marvin Francis, Dionne Brand, and Mercedes Eng – who all interrogate the spatial regimes that racialize bodies. Their poetry questions the intersection of material structures and what Roy Miki identifies as the expressive “race codes that bind” (*Broken Entries* 207). Writing through racialized and Indigenous experiences in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Vancouver respectively, Francis, Brand, and Eng stage, map, and resist spatial pressures operating at the scale of the body. I will trace out the differences and similarities in these writers’ approaches, from Francis upending the settler codes that both erase Indigenous people from urban spaces and police those same bodies, to what Paul Barrett calls Brand’s “poetic map of diasporic resilience” (*Blackening Canada* 35), and to Eng’s maps of both the material shifts of gentrification and the shifting social positions possible from her subject position.

Victoria Freeman (York) and Ange Loft (Jumblies Theatre)

Talking Treaties in Toronto

As a white settler-descendant, activist, author, and academic historian, the central question in my working life has been: where am I and what is my relation and responsibility to the Indigenous peoples of this land? After writing my first book of creative non-fiction about my own ancestors’ involvement in the colonization of North America, and then my 2010 PhD dissertation exploring the historical memory of Toronto’s Indigenous and colonial past, these concerns have propelled me into the field of community-arts engagement focused on Toronto’s Indigenous and treaty history and collaborative creation with Indigenous and other artists. In this presentation I will reflect on various projects I have been involved in, and the political and ethical questions that have arisen in the process, particularly with regard to collaboration. I will focus on my experience working with First Story Toronto and Jumblies Theatre on the Talking Treaties project. This collaborative project began in March 2014, and has been

co-lead by Ange Loft (Mohawk), assistant artistic director of Jumblies Theatre, and myself, with assistance from Jumblies artistic director Ruth Howard and many others from both organizations. Over the past year, it has included ongoing historical research, including oral interviews with community leaders, elders, knowledge keepers, etc.; various community and artist explorations (e.g. Glendon College, NCCT, Evergreen Brickworks, OCAD, Fort York, Train of Thought); educational presentations and events, such as a half-day public event at George Brown College Waterfront Campus in June 2015; and the creation of curated audio installations based on the interviews. Talking Treaties will culminate in a site-specific performance/community arts engagement event at Fort York at the 2017 Indigenous Arts Festival next June and the production of a feature-length documentary film on the history and current significance of treaties in Toronto.

Norah Franklin (UofT)

‘Each in his holy hill’: Leonard Cohen’s *Let Us Compare Mythologies* and Secularism in Quebec

In 1956, on the eve of the Quiet Revolution in Québec, a Jewish Montreal writer named Leonard Cohen published his debut collection of poetry with the title *Let Us Compare Mythologies* and a dust jacket that identified his central themes as “the relation of Gentile and Jew” and “the problem of and need for love.” This paper reads Cohen’s collection in the context of the relationship between the Jewish minority and the Christian majority in Québec in the post-war period and conversations around religious pluralism in the years leading up to the Quiet Revolution—what Nicole Neatby calls the “‘drum roll’ period” for the Liberal party’s rearticulation of the political culture of the province, including the adoption of a secular framework for public life. In his poetry, Cohen captures the contradictions that are inherent in the secular public sphere, imagining secular Québec as a site of religious flourishing but also registering the ways in which secularism circumscribes religion and redefines it as a private matter of belief.

My research participates in a recent movement within the Humanities and Social Sciences that involves examining the ideological workings of secularism, as well as the ways in which the academy has furthered a flawed understanding of secularization as the decline of religion in modernity. Interestingly, the first efforts in the English Canadian field to examine secularism focus on Québec and the very public debate about “reasonable accommodation” in the province. Critics have not, however, explored the ways in which the field relies on master narratives about secularization in its readings of canonical figures like Cohen. In my paper, I draw on the most recent thinking on the Quiet Revolution and present-day secularism in Québec, while also working to challenge some of the narratives around religion and secularity that are so foundational in the field of English Canadian literature.

Deanna Fong (SFU)

Un/enclosure: Race, Sound, and Performance in Roy Kiyooka, Wayde Compton, and Jordan Abel

In *Undercommons*, Stefano Harney and Fred Moten outline an oppositional politics based on a refusal of “the call to order” (9): the refusal to be counted-as-one within representational systems—racialization, colonialism, and patriarchy—instead boldly asserting, “We owe each other indeterminacy. We owe each other everything” (20). As Jack Halberstam suggests in his introduction, indeterminacy is

bound up with the pure plenum of sonority: its indistinction “between noise and music, chatter and knowledge, pain and truth” (8). Sound spills over both the structures of language and the affordances of the media that inscribe them. In so doing, it points to the limits of signification, asking, in the tradition of negative philosophy, what exists outside the interwoven systems of cognition and social organization. Working at the intersections of negative philosophy and critical race theory, my paper, “Un/enclosure: Race, Sound, and Performance in Roy Kiyooka, Wayde Compton and Jordan Abel” will examine the work of three contemporary writers of colour who use mediatized sound in performance as the basis of a socially radical and politically oppositional poetic praxis. Kiyooka’s hybrid book of poetry and oral history, *Mothertalk*, uses the tape recorder as a tool for self-representation and articulation, collecting and re-enacting the narratives of his Japanese-Canadian family; Compton’s “schizophonic” (199) dub plate performances of the poems in *Performance Bond* highlight the materiality of both voice and medium to resist a naturalized connection between voice, speech and body; Abel’s play between textual erasure and auditory plenitude in printed and performed instantiations of *Place of Scraps*, *Un/Inhabited* and *Injun* not only make visible the erasure of Indigenous peoples and communities in the Western canon (here signifying as both writing genre and dominant cultural formation), but, in performance, creates an uncontainable, vital auditory excess that insists on the presence—the present-tense-ness—of Indigenous voices.

Elizabeth Galway (Lethbridge)

Young Readers for a Young Land:

The Politics of Nation-Building in Early Canadian Children’s Literature

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, writers of Canadian children’s literature were very much part of the nation-building enterprise that shaped much Canadian literature for adults during this same period. In spite of a widespread interest in fostering national pride on the part of children’s authors, however, the articulations of national, regional, gendered, and racial identity that found expression in these works were surprisingly varied. The complexity of the attitudes voiced in children’s literature reveals the extent to which politics and ideology shaped writing for the young, and demonstrates that readers had to negotiate myriad views on many issues of concern to the emerging nation. The discussions of indigeneity, British colonialism, immigration, and Canadian nationalism that flourished in the pages of children’s magazines, novels, and school texts, indicate that child readers were not simply passive readers who were easily indoctrinated into a single conception of Canadian nationalism. Rather, the plethora of views that were expressed in children’s literature required readers to engage with debates about what the nation represented and to actively construct their own sense of nationhood. The works for children written by Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake), for example, include a fictional tale about Residential School experiences that invites young readers to bridge the divide between settler and indigenous communities. Johnson is an example of a Canadian writer whose works for children have received less critical attention than her poetry and prose for adults, yet her writings for young readers offer a fascinating glimpse into literary attempts to construct a particular vision of inclusiveness for the emerging nation. By looking at the writings of Johnson and others, this paper will consider some of the ways in which early Canadian literature may have had a lasting impact on understandings of place, community, and identity in generations of readers.

Libe García Zarranz (Cambridge)

Feeling Sideways: Shani Mootoo's Decolonial Affects

In the study *The Transmission of Affect* (2004), feminist philosopher Teresa Brennan discusses the multiple and heterogeneous ways in which different modalities of affect are transmitted between bodies. Focusing on human subjects, Brennan aptly claims that “the taken-for-grantedness of the emotionally contained subject is a residual bastion of Eurocentrism in critical thinking, the last outpost of the subject’s belief in the superiority of its own worldview over that of other cultures” (2). Instead, her theory of affect discusses more permeable, indeed decolonized, ways of being and becoming, whereby the boundaries of the body unavoidably remain open and porous. Following Brennan’s thinking, this paper proposes to reflect carefully on the transmission of affect between non-normative bodies, particularly queer, transgender, and racialized bodies, as a form of what I call “feeling sideways.” Moreover, in *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (2009), queer theorist Kathryn Bond Stockton proposes an alternative model to linear accounts of growth (literal and figurative) where delay, lingering, and irregularity prevail. This paper works with and expands Stockton’s insights by focusing particularly on modes of feeling sideways as a form of decolonial affect. In particular, I want to examine how affects such as shame, anger, and joy circulate among those excentric bodies that move sideways, grow sideways, feel sideways. As a case study, I will look at the latest novel by Indo-Trinidadian-Canadian writer and visual artist Shani Mootoo, *Moving Forward Sideways Like a Crab* (2015), which problematizes the transmission of affect between a white Canadian man and his Trinidadian adoptive mother, now a transgender man. The concept of sideways growth is here evoked with additional references to movement, embodiment, and storytelling. Mootoo’s work, I argue, traces a genealogy of subaltern affects (Gunew 2009) that rewrites and re-experiences normative temporal, spatial, and bodily relations with important ethical repercussions.

David Garneau (Regina) and Ashok Mathur (UBC Okanagan)

O trans-K’inādās and complicated reconciliations: how artists make meaning by walking around together

Over the past five years, there have been a number of artistic projects that have addressed questions, problems, and articulations around reconciliation discourses in connection to colonial histories including, but not limited to, residential schools and other forms of aggressive assimilation. These artistic projects have ranged from individual and grassroots response (installations in artist run centres, performance art actions, and the like) to larger-scale exhibitions officially sanctioned by major galleries or bodies such the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In these multilayered approaches, the overarching intent is to produce bodies of work that can exist within the annals of Indigenous art history, that is, stand as record of artistic output. However, there is also a growing movement that exceeds these physical manifestations, consisting of critical gatherings and residencies that affirm through ephemera. What is deeply resonant about these moments is how the contributing writers and artists inhabit a space and time together, not (necessarily) what they produce as a final outcome. While the paintings, installations, performances, literatures, and other art forms that do precipitate from these ephemeral

spaces might be seen as end-products in and of themselves, they also contain and reflect what might be called the essence of these incubational spaces. This presentation will explore the machinations of gatherings that were thusly formed, a bringing together of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants to consider the complications of reconciliation in its manifold forms.

This presentation will trace events such as residencies on reconciliation at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (2012), Thompson Rivers University (2013), University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus (2014, 2015), up to and including the recent O k'inadas // complicated reconciliations artist residency at UBCO in 2016, led by a three-person artist collective drawing on their members' Tahltan, Haida, and Japanese histories. The accretion of community will be a focal point, how artists, writers, and thinkers develop conceptual questions through those intensive times spent together as a collective of disparate individuals gathered with purpose. Central to these gatherings has been the bringing together of Indigenous and racialized Canadians to work these ideas and performances apart from the dominant gaze. This presentation, replete with visuals depicting the interactive nature of the gatherings, will take the position that such meeting places are in and of themselves an important legacy contributing to Indigenous art history in a manner unparalleled by more defined products that reside in galleries and museums. By enacting k'inādās, this walking around on the land together becomes a major force of collective creation.

James Hahn (UofT)

Documentary and Orality in *The Hundred Cuts* and *Blue Marrow*

Manina Jones observes that "It has become a critical commonplace to say that the documentary is the quintessential Canadian form of representation." Documentary works promote a critical reconsideration of not only historical figures and events, but also the evidence with which contemporary readers (re)construct and engage with such figures and events. Yet certain historical moments, such as those pertaining to the colonial conquest of North America's Indigenous peoples, underscore the need to also reconsider the documentary's reliance on written/ printed evidence. When, in 1989, Stephen Scobie remarked that the "documents" utilized by a poet "may include actual historical accounts, or transcriptions of interviews and oral history," he unwittingly posited a definition of the documentary long poem in which eyewitness testimony and "oral history" are denied the authority granted to what he termed "actual historical accounts." My paper considers the ethical dimensions of long poems that challenge this definition by exploring the disconnect between written and oral accounts of Canada's invasion and settlement. Colin Morton's *The Hundred Cuts: Sitting Bull and the Major* (2009) thematizes this disconnect by figuring the titular Sitting Bull as a man whose utterances are misrepresented by colonial agents. I contend that, despite the ethical imperative that drives the poem's interrogation of documentary evidence, *The Hundred Cuts* represents another instance in which Sitting Bull's voice is co-opted. For a striking counterpoint to this problematic, I look to Louise Bernice Halfe's *Blue Marrow* (2004), which foregrounds the oral storytelling traditions of the poet's Cree ancestors in its treatment of Indigenous relations with settler-invaders, while also exploring the difficulties occasioned by submitting such a narrative to the boundaries of print.

Heike Harting (UdeM)

Critical Animal Studies and Trans-Speciesism in Andre Alexis's *15 Dogs*

This paper reads *15 Dogs* through critical animal studies and suggests that the novel develops a post-race and transspecies discourse that employs animals neither metaphorically nor in a nonrepresentational Kafkaesque manner. Rather, the novel's dogs function as independent actors whose alterity questions received discourses of dominance and subjugation, Otherness and agency, and advocates a non-anthropocentric discourse of human and non-human relationality (Glissant). In Alexis's novel, 15 dogs become the pawns in a wager between Apollo and Hermes. Despite the Gods' assumption that human intelligence will not render the animals happy, the dogs develop their own unpredictable desires and capacities. Neither fable nor Platonic dialogue, the narrative creates its own post-humanist genre and "poetics of species" (Susan McHugh). Both aspects question the category of the human and posit, in Derrida's words, the "animal" as "the abyssal limit of the human" (381). Derrida's reading of "speciesism" as the foundation of a "humanist concept of subjectivity" (Huggan and Tiffin, 5) is keenly aware that the figure of the animal has historically provided the rhetoric of race and racism through which to define who counts as human. Against the normative Western metaphysical constructions of the human, Alexis's novel, in Derrida's terms, imagines a relational ontology of being. "Being after, being alongside, being near would appear as different modes of being, indeed of beingwith. With the animal . . . These modes of being," Derrida insists, "express a certain order of the beinghuddled-together" (379). Alexis's novel, I want to suggest, explores modes of being-huddled together and invites us to rethink given post-race discourses without abandoning the politics of critical race theory. Instead, it expands the latter through a transspecies discourse of relationality and reroutes Canadian postcolonial studies through critical animal studies.

Jeremy Haynes (McMaster)

Canada Reads *The Orenda*: Obscuring Assimilatory Logics in the Discourses of Reconciliation

Since the commencement of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2008, Canadians have developed an increasing awareness of Canada's colonial history, as well as its social and political legacy. Joseph Boyden's historical novel, *The Orenda* (2013), depicts the 17th century war between the Wendat (Huron) and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) in a way that places it in conversation with Canada's colonial past. During the 2014 season of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Canada Reads (CR 2014) program, Boyden's novel became part of a nationalist dialogue about reconciliation and its sociopolitical meaning. While CR 2014 at first appears to be a debate about literature, the dialogue between panelists Wab Kinew and Stephen Lewis is more intelligible as a narrative that portrays reconciliatory discourse within a nationalist frame. Implicitly, both narratives highlight how the cultural and sociopolitical valences of Canada's decolonizing project are undermined by sanctioned ignorances about the Settler state's relationship with First Nations. These gaps ultimately allude to an absent, parallel discourse organized by Indigenous epistemological assumptions about land, law, and treaty relationships. This ultimately suggests that even when reconciliation discourse may appear to be socially progressive it is doing so under a colonial logic that seeks to minimize challenges to its authority. For example, *The Orenda* depicts the Haudenosaunee system of wampum in a way that reproduces primitivistic stereotypes in a context which would have otherwise been premised by the founding law of

the Haudenosaunee, Gayanesha'gowa (the Great Law of Peace). This essay presentation claims that after 150 years of assimilatory programs in Canada, the discourse of Indigenous and Settler conflict has evolved to obscure Indigenous knowledge systems from its registers and instead reproduce a colonial logic veiled in a discourse of social justice and the rhetoric of reconciliation.

Sarah Henzi (UdeM)

Irreconcilable 'Myths of Métissage': Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism in Québec

Currently, there is a trend in Québec of “settlers claiming Métis heritage because they just feel more Indigenous” (Chelsea Vowel). From Roy Dupuis, Carole Poliquin and Yvan Dubuc’s documentary film *L’empreinte* (2015) to Dominique Gagnon’s documentary collage of the North (2016) to the recently self-appointed non-status Indigenous community Mikinak, such appropriations and misrepresentations have brought about many reactions regarding Indigeneity in Québec; more specifically, regarding this identity-forming “footprint,” the “catch-all” Métis-ness, that makes up much of an invented, desired Québécois cultural identity as distinct from Anglo-Canadians. This, however, also brings up questions of ethical and political representations, and how these are further mediatized and insufficiently challenged amidst discussions of ‘who were the least worst colonizers’; Roy Dupuis has stressed, after all, in an interview “that the French did not come to Québec as conquerors, and that they were charmed by the ‘sexual liberation of les sauvagesses’” (Vowel). This paper explores a number of Indigenous voices from Québec on this matter, such as Wendat historian and poet Louis-Karl PicardSioui, Innu slam poet Natasha Kanapé Fontaine and Mohawk writer Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, amongst others—more precisely, how these voices deconstruct the problematic wording of “métis” and other myths of métissage that have led to the current debate around “nativeness” which is at the heart of settler colonialism in Québec, and how the claiming of Indigeneity by settler populations ultimately means circumventing any need to engage in actual decolonization.

Jennifer Henderson (Carleton)

Residential Schools Gothic: Generic Trace and Public Memory

This paper proposes that some of the constraints on public reckoning with the past and present of settler colonialism in Canada have to do with a neoliberal imaginary's specific senses of time and space. I use the category of genre to understand how these are expressed in hegemonic residential schools recognition. "Residential school gothic" organizes the representation of residential school experience according to the topos and narrative logic of a late 18th-century genre, even though it stakes its truthclaims in transparency. The genre's conventions of spatio-temporal remoteness and Latinate perversity produce a public memory of residential schools that only works to affirm the freedom and enlightenment of the present. The 2012 feature film, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, an extremely genre-conscious work, deconstructs "residential school gothic" by means of a chronotopic disjunction that sets it against the wholly different aesthetic and affective register of the Red Power era.

Scott Herder (UofT)

Cultural Memory, Critical Gestures, and the Politics of Literature

In light of recent upsurges in the study of cultural memory in Canada, this essay examines the roles that literature and criticism have in posing questions to, and shifting, existent ways of remembering past events. As a case study, the essay examines various ways that Canadian literature has depicted the event of the First World War. Rather than discuss the war itself, however, the essay focuses instead on how the event has been consistently abstracted as a matter of informing Canadian cultural memory, and how works of literature, even if they are resistant to a celebratory mode of commemoration, are received in a way that reinforces its seeming integrity. Despite literary and/or critical efforts to reorganize ways of remembering the event—such as in Charles Yale Harrison’s *Generals Die in Bed* and Timothy Findley’s *The Wars*, as well as a recently renewed interest in its depiction, including Joseph Boyden’s *Three Day Road* and Jane Urquhart’s *The Stone Carvers*—governmental and institutional ways of remembering persist and overwhelm the potential politics of these works of literature. Rather than accomplishing a transformative view of the First World War, the ways of remembering depicted within these works of literature seem to have been either rejected or absorbed and incorporated in keeping with the static meaning of the event. As a result of this case example, the relationship between literature and cultural memory appears to be more complex than simply accounting for a work of literature’s counter-memory. Therefore, rather than detailing the ways in which the politics of a literary narrative might reflect, or deflect, events of the past as a matter of historicization, this essay gestures toward a mode of critique that engages more directly with ways of remembering in order to explore the possibilities for how meaning is drawn from the past.

Evangeline Holtz (UofT)

‘no inward limits’: Activating the Downtown Eastside in Maria Campbell and Sachiko Murakami

Maria Campbell’s autobiographical protagonist in her 1973 memoir *Halfbreed* dreams of travelling to Vancouver as a child (from her rural Saskatchewan): “a city meant all sorts of exciting things to a little girl” (38). Campbell depicts her shattered expectations through her portrayal of a Vancouver rife with drugs, violence, and survival sex work. While Campbell escaped, between the 70s and 2002 at least fifty-nine women (more than half Aboriginal, many of whom street level sex workers) disappeared from Vancouver’s DTES (Ferris 123). The recent government inquest into Missing and Murdered Indigenous women attempts to assuage this crisis, however, critics such as Leanne Simpson counter that the war on rape, murder, and violence towards Indigenous women is being waged by the same colonial state which created the conditions for the epidemic in the first place (“Not Murdered, Not Missing”). Alternative methods for retributive justice, for decolonizing Vancouver, for memorializing murdered and harmed women, necessitate aesthetic and collaborative actions. My paper draws on scholarly and activist work by Karyn Recollet and Larissa Lai to *activate* (Recollet’s term) the space of Vancouver’s DTES through a literary collaboration between Campbell’s *Halfbreed* and Sachiko Murakami’s poetry collection *The Invisibility Exhibit* (2008). Lai writes that, “[a]nti racist work of the past few decades constantly puts both First Nations people and people of color in conversation with European settler cultures, but not with each other” (99), while Recollet’s “radical decolonial love” (141) is achieved through a process of activating a space by undoing its state of permanence, so that the space,

its aesthetic creations, and its participating community connect in lovingly “indeterminate”(141) ways. Sachiko Murakami’s Internet presence consistently demonstrates her solidarity with Indigenous peoples, and her collection enacts an imaginative and interactive textual *exhibit* for readers to attend, contemplate, and *activate* compassion for the marginalized women of Vancouver’s DTES.

Isabella Huberman (UofT)

‘My Bigwomansisterlittlemother’: The Language of Love in Tracey Lindberg’s *Birdie*

In the liminal pages of her collection of poems, songs and essays *Islands of Decolonial Love* (2013), Leanne Simpson (Anishinaabe) quotes Dominican-American author Junot Diaz’s concept of “decolonial love” as “the kind of love [Diaz's characters] long for intuitively, the only kind of love that could liberate them from that horrible legacy of colonial violence.” In her work, Simpson makes the claim that love can free the subject from colonial entrapment, configuring a place for love at the heart of the struggle for Indigenous resurgence. Love is held to be a revolutionary tool, what Chela Sandoval in *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000) theorizes as a “political movida,” opening the subject to the creation of new ways of thinking, knowing and being, and able to generate a consciousness that rejects the constraints imposed by a history of oppression.

In this paper, I call upon the theoretical frameworks of Simpson, Diaz and Sandoval to understand the model of love in Cree/métis author Tracey Lindberg’s 2015 novel *Birdie*, a model centered on kinship among women. Bernice, a young Cree woman, has been broken by a history of childhood sexual abuse, traumatic experiences in foster and institutional care, and of homelessness. Her aunt, her cousin and her non-native employer bond together to bring Bernice out of her silence. I argue that to validate and affirm relationships of decolonial love, the four women of the narrative create a new language. In “Cree-ing” (W. Cariou 2014) the English language, Lindberg’s women innovate words and develop a new discourse enabling a decolonized consciousness to emerge. The characters establish what they alternately call a “madefamily” or a “womenfamily,” illustrating the kin-making of women hurting from colonial legacies. Language becomes a means to explore and rebuild relations of acceptance, intimacy, connection and love.

Dallas Hunt (UBC)

‘But I want to survive’: Indigenous Futurities and Otherwise

Set in a nondescript desert dystopia, George Miller’s film *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) alludes to the westerns of yesteryear and the Australian “outback,” spaces coded as menacing in their resistance to being tamed by settler-colonial interests. Miller’s film depicts a world in which the extractive lust for fossil fuel energy precipitates the end of the world. This paper charts how Miller’s film, while preoccupied with issues pertaining to global warming and ecological catastrophe, replicates and reifies settler replacement narratives, or what Canadian literature scholar Margery Fee (1987) has referred to as “totem transfer” narratives. These narratives, prevalent in settler stories from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, depict a scenario in which settlers leave the chaotic and restrictive confines of the city and flee to the idyllic and enlightening expanses of the rural or natural world. Here these settlers encounter one or several of the last remaining members of a “forgotten tribe” indigenous to the area.

Ultimately, the settler characters are given an object through which the “Natives” transfer their knowledges and disappear from view, helping white settlers remedy the self-created ills that currently threaten their worlds. This paper will trace a genealogy from late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century totem transfer narratives to the present replacement narrative offered by *Mad Max: Fury Road*. Further, I consider the broader implications of the return of these replacement narratives in the contemporary context of climate change, and gesture to emerging Indigenous futurist texts and the decolonizing potentials they offer.

Dean Irvine (Agile Humanities Agency, Toronto)

This DH Went to Market: Indigeneity, Neoliberalism, and Digital Economies

I have accumulated a collection of souvenir coffee cups and miniature portable drives; all bear trademarks of the Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI), which has been hosted by Ray Siemens, beginning at Malaspina College (now Vancouver Island University) in 2001 and migrating to the University of Victoria in 2004. The history of DHSI is coeval with the launch and marketing of the digital humanities (DH) as a multinational franchise (consider, for instance, the growth of the DH Training network to Oxford, Leipzig, Beirut, Bern, Indianapolis, Guelph, Halifax—all modeled on DHSI). Both DH and DHSI coincide with the twenty-first-century institutional formation of the neoliberal university. The coffee cups and portable drives that DHSI alumni carry around act as ubiquitous advertisements circulating after the event itself through a global dispersion of DH institutions, conferences, and workshops; their trail is the signature of neoliberal marketing, an unfettered access to DH markets. Let’s not confuse this with neoliberalism writ large, however (see, for instance, the recent polemics about DH and neoliberalism in the *LA Review of Books*); these niche markets and the economies of scale are but a miniature version of deregulated global flows of multinational corporate capital.

Each year DHSI begins in an auditorium, where the participants gather and, in recent years, university administrators acknowledge that the audience is gathering on the traditional territory of the *Ws'anec'* (Saanich), *Lkwungen* (Songhees), and *Wyomilth* (Esquimalt) peoples of the Coast Salish Nation. This ceremonial acknowledgement has yet to make a lasting and demonstrable impact on the institute curriculum or the participation of First Nations students, researchers, and instructors. For the June 2017 installment of DHSI, Dorothy Kim and Angel David Nieves will be offering a short workshop on “Race, Social Justice, and DH: Applied Theories and Methods,” which will “pay special attention to queer theory, critical ethnic studies, postcolonial theory, WOC/Black feminism, Indigenous studies, and disability studies” in an intersectional approach to “challenge the all-white discourse, often dominated by scholars in the disciplines of English and history, that is too often found in digital humanities.” Even so, none of the 48 5-day courses offered over a period of two weeks addresses indigeneity; this lacuna is especially telling after a year in which the DH community has been embroiled in controversies about diversity and DHSI has issued its own intersectional “Statement on Ethics and Inclusion.”

This paper will address the productivity of such intersectional modes of disciplinary and institutional practice, but place particular emphasis on the need for public reconciliation of the DHSI curriculum with the dispossession of indigenous peoples and their traditional lands on which DHSI takes place each June. My critique of DHSI and the DH economy is informed by David Harvey’s notion of

neoliberalism as “accumulation by dispossession” (see *Geographies of Freedom*), Matthew Jockers’ approach to DH through the vocabularies of macro and microeconomics (see *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History*), and Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron’s concept of multiple and mixed digital markets in “The Californian Ideology.” While my trivial accumulation of DHSI tokens may be a sign of a neoliberal micro-market economy, one whose currency is traded in symbolic capital, the histories of imperial dispossession experienced by the Coast Salish First Nation whose traditional lands play host to the DH microeconomy is by no means symbolic; their continued dislocation from hereditary lands is a material dispossession measurable on a scale to neoliberalism’s global free market. My measurement of the histories of DH and DHSI by virtue of an accumulation of symbolic goods (souvenirs) and capital (digital knowledges) needs to be reconciled with the corresponding macroeconomic loss of indigenous knowledges, languages, and cultures on which neoimperial acts of accumulation and dispossession are predicated in the DH and DHSI microeconomy.

Christine Kim (SFU)
Decolonizing Minor Empires

Without discounting the very real and serious nature of the violences committed within North Korea, I am interested in examining dominant understandings of North Korea as post-WWII cultural fantasies about North and South Korea from my vantage point as an Asian Canadian scholar. I hope to use these moments as entry points into a conversation about how the legacies of the Korean War and cultural Cold War politics continue to exist in Canada, a nation shaped by colonial violence against indigenous peoples as well as by its long histories of Asian and other racialized migration, in order to ask what the larger projects of deimperialization and decolonization might look like for Asians outside of Asia. These cultural representations of North Korea as well as North American responses to them provide an opportunity to consider how the illegibility of North Korea is produced through a forgetting of larger historical, political, and imperial forces and contexts that, in turn, produces a particular form of intimacy for Western liberal democracies, and perhaps even for certain parts of a global public.

Kathryn Kuitenbrouwer (UofT)
Enchanting History: Translating truth into Truth

Kathryn Kuitenbrouwer will discuss research associated with her novels *All The Broken Things* and *Perfecting* to show the delicate and intimate manoeuvre of translation between historical veracity and fictional truth. She will discuss the ways in which her larger writing project — the intersection of realism and enchantment — works to accommodate themes of war-strife, nationhood, ideology, the animal, disability, and particularly the relation of her lifespan to world event. In claiming the Vietnam legacy (Agent Orange, US involvement in Afghanistan, 9/11, and international terrorism) as material for fictional projects, Kuitenbrouwer asks, “How does the personal intersect with the mythic? Can the historical stories of one’s lifetime be said to be one’s own stories, and where is the limit of propriety? Might appropriation be an avenue to empathy?”

Zhi Lei (Queen's)

***The Concubine's Children and Disappearing Moon Cafe:
Vancouver's Chinatown as a Porous and Transgressive Space***

Michel Foucault points out that heterotopias inject otherness into everyday society in a number of ways, one of which is being detached from “traditional time” (20). Literary critics including Lisa Lowe and Daniel Martin have discussed Chinatown as portrayed in Chinese North American literature as a space where histories are accumulated. Lowe’s discussion of San Francisco’s Chinatown in Fae Myenne Ng’s *Bone* underlines the layers of histories that question the image that American mainstream society has of Chinatown. Daniel Martin argues that Vancouver’s Chinatown as described in Sky Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Cafe* disrupts Canada’s celebration of multiculturalism through its accumulated histories. While the discussion of the heterochronic features of Chinatown is important, focusing on these features undermines Chinatown’s significance in a globalized world and runs the risk of portraying it as an archaic ghetto inappropriate as a setting for contemporary Chinese Canadian literature. Indeed, Maria Ng and Glenn Deer have expressed their impatience with the “Chinatown genre”. Ng voices dissatisfaction with the attention Chinese Canadian novels pay to historic Chinatown by arguing that they insufficiently reflect the recent life of Chinese immigrants. Deer takes this argument further and hails Asian Canadian literature set outside of Chinatown as a new wave of writing that moves beyond a “marginalized ethnic enclave” (Deer 122). In response to Ng’s and Deer’s discussions, I argue that rather than perpetuating its claustrophobic and exotic image, recent Chinese Canadian literature set in Vancouver’s historic Chinatown redefines its significance. Drawing on Michel Foucault’s concept of heterotopia and Henri Lefebvre’s idea of “lived” space, my paper explores the portrayal of Vancouver’s Chinatown and its people in Denise Chong’s *The Concubine’s Children* (1994) and Sky Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Cafe* (1990). Chong’s and Lee’s works characterize Vancouver’s Chinatown to various degrees as a porous space by portraying its spatial connection with other areas of British Columbia, including other Chinatowns, Indigenous settlements, and white neighbourhoods. Moreover, the porosity of Chinatown is reflected in the portrayal of transgressive relationships among Chinatown characters, ranging from adultery within the same ethnic group to miscegenation.

Joanne Leow (Saskatchewan)

Lost Islands: Wayde Compton Writes Back to Pauline Johnson

E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)’s 1911 story “The Lost Island” is itself a retelling of a Squamish legend and prophecy of the possibility of indigenous resurgence in the time of Canadian colonialism. The idea of a wholly new island erupting in the Burrard inlet and its geopolitical, social, and material implications are taken up by the black Vancouver writer, poet and theorist Wayde Compton in his 2014 work *The Outer Harbour*. The volcanic island is promptly named Pauline Johnson and the contested “new” land is a recurring backdrop in Compton’s interconnected speculative short fictions. By close reading three of the short stories in Compton’s collection, this paper considers how the acts of reimagining and re-writing unceded indigenous land produces new and uneasy spaces for both contact and solidarity. Compton’s story “The Lost Island” highlights the complexities of activist movements and their complicity in reproducing narratives for the mainstream media. Faux poster art and apartment floor plans in “The Boom” explore the visual aspects of neo-colonialism and condo culture, while the

everrelevant issue of migrants and coastlines is heightened in “The Outer Harbour” when a detention facility is constructed on the new island. Turning the trope of *terra nullius* on its head, this paper explores how

Compton’s work spatializes the indigenous and diasporic struggles for land rights in the face of capitalist encroachment and xenophobia. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity, always apparent in Compton’s work, have here sought to further alter the material, social and cultural spaces of Vancouver. In reshaping the city itself with this imagined island, Compton’s work will be read as an attempt to think through the contested Canadian urban in terms that are at once contemporary and historical, indigenous and diasporic, prophetic and material. This paper will also include a brief reflection on teaching these two stories together in an undergraduate course on decolonizing literatures.

Alexandra Lépine (Western)

**Authentically Inauthentic: Hybridity and Resurgence in
Drew Hayden Taylor’s *Motorcycles and Sweetgrass***

My paper explores themes of authenticity and hybridization in Drew Hayden Taylor’s novel *Motorcycles & Sweetgrass*. Using Neal McLeod’s concept of spiritual exile, and home I attempt to illuminate the various ideological uses of the rhetoric of authenticity within the novel, arguing that the concept and standard of authenticity is often mediated by settler-colonialism. My paper demonstrates how the characters and their relationships as well as the action of the novel mock cultural authenticity and work to expose its pitfalls. In contradistinction to the assertion that authenticity is the final measure of cultural validity, I argue that the novel works to upend the logic of authenticity while celebrating tradition and establishing a distinctly Indigenous outlook separate from settler narratives. In a mode similar to McLeod’s notions of storytelling Taylor attempts to both bring readers back to a communal sense of history and story, and stimulate thought on how culture is constantly shifting, rendering itself authentically inauthentic.

My paper posits that what is important in sorting through this cultural maze is not what is authentic, but what is healing, what is restorative, what resists assimilation while maintaining sovereignty. In order to do this, there must be a conscious effort to tear down settler narratives and standards of authenticity and culture; to combat the settlerism and white supremacy that has taken hold in the cultural milieu. Indigenous people should strive to be authentically inauthentic and instead turn to deal with those internal contradictions that hold back self-determination. Taylor invites us to return home through cultural praxis, through stories, and invites settlers to join in the story while keeping a respectful distance.

Lucia Lorenzi (UBC)

**Reconfiguring Responses to Colonial Violence:
Silence in Marie Clements’ *The Unnatural and Accidental Women***

In her Introduction to “Other Conundrums: Race, Culture, and Canadian Art,” Monika Gagnon argues that her “sense of the contemporary dilemma is that naming racism’s operations means racializing oneself within the very terms and operations that have historically enabled racist discourse to

proliferate” (22). Mapping Gagnon’s framework of the representational conundrum onto gendered and sexualized violence—which, in Canada, so often takes place along racialized lines—this paper interrogates how contemporary artists and critics take up the task of representing these forms of violence.

I pose the following questions: What are the current conundrums faced by representing racialized bodies in moments of violence, historically and political situated as we are in a moment of media saturation? Who is compelled to identify themselves within the terms and operations that enables sexualized and gendered violence to proliferate? What does it mean to reconcile the forms of critical and creative violence that we might enact in our practices, and what alternative modes of creation or critique allow us to do the least harm? If we position our academic and artistic practices as modes of critical intervention into the field of anti-violence and anti-racist work in Canada, what does it mean for us to confront the forms of violence that take place within our own communities and spaces?

As a means of responding to these questions, I take up one example of representing violence as a possible means of resisting some parts of the conundrum that Gagnon identifies. By examining Marie Clements’ play *The Unnatural and Accidental Women*, and its refusal to stage violence by mapping it onto racialized bodies in predictable or normative ways, I argue that while Clements represents violence through the framework of racialization, she does so by reshifting and resituating the terms and operations of violence as well as of resistance.

Cheryl Lousley (Lakehead)

**Public Memory, Mourning, and Extraction Industries:
‘The Glace Bay Miner’s Museum’ and *February***

Memory and mourning rarely figure in discussions of environmental aesthetics, which tend to overemphasize the future as the always-deferred site of environmental disaster. Moreover, Rob Nixon argues, the slow pace of much ecological violence enables a certain “spatial amnesia” whereby the “unsettlement” and displacement of communities by industrial development projects and ecological decline gets forgotten and erased from national memory. In a comparative discussion of three Canadian texts, this paper foregrounds their modes of rendering loss as a way to understand extraction, production, and the relationship between energy systems, cultural practices, and public accountability. Sheldon Currie’s carnivalesque short story “The Glace Bay Miner’s Museum” uses the museum as a public institution for remembering to call on national audiences to share the burden of mourning lives and lands sacrificed in coal mining. Yet its film adaptation Margaret’s Museum, as a period film, risks offering a comforting, museum-like distance for viewers, as if coal mining was a regionalized industrial past that has been rightly left behind, rather than displaced spatially (to Asia, Africa, Australia, and elsewhere in the Americas), displaced temporally (over the life span of miners and resource communities), and displaced onto other hydrocarbon energy systems (including bitumen mining and fracking). Lisa Moore’s novel *February* presents a fictional version of a wife mourning her husband killed in the February 1982 collapse of the offshore oil-drilling rig Ocean Ranger. I argue that Moore’s formal emphasis on duration—on the time that reading takes—interpellates the reader as arbiter of public accountability in an echo of the Royal Commission on the Ocean Ranger Marine Disaster (1982-3), from which Helen quotes extensively in the novel. Remembering the public judgment and recommendations, and not simply a memorialized disaster, matters when regulations become “red-tape” in the neoliberal rhetoric of the subsequent Hibernia oil-field boom.

Morris Lum (Independent Artist, Mississauga),
Tong Yan Gai (Chinatown)

Tong Yan Gai (Chinatown) is a journey taken across Canada on a path that was built by Chinese immigrants. Armed with a large format camera, I am searching for the clusters of communities that over time have built Chinatowns for the purpose of expansion and growth. My aim is to focus and direct the attention towards the functionality of the Chinatown and explore the generational context of how the "Chinese" identity is expressed in these structural enclaves. These images document the memory and explore the future of the Chinese community in Canada. Tong Yan Gai (Chinatown) series will also be a visual record of the cityscapes and include a number of cultural fixtures in these communities such as small mom and pop shops, Chinese restaurants, and community organizations.

Geoffrey MacDonald (York)

Marvellous Counteractions: Metaphysical Resistance in Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song*

There has been general agreement in the postcolonial field that magic realism challenges physical, cultural, and religious aspects of coloniality. Magic realism has been hailed as both an important literary device and a transcendent way of imagining beyond the ugly realities of life under imperial control. Magic realism has specifically been juxtaposed with realism, a form that is most often associated with politicized representations that are linked to resistance and liberation struggles. Despite the celebratory nature of much criticism on magic realism, few have noted the ways in which narratives that blur or complicate realist representations of political issues are marginalized in discussions of resistance literature. This is largely because traditional resistance literature theory often dismisses texts that do not directly depict and reinforce the goals of a specific movement. My paper—part of a dissertation on how Indigenous North American and Anglophone Caribbean women's uprising textualities transform literary understandings of resistance—argues that magic realism in decolonial feminist literature associates resistance and liberation with larger metaphysical questions that predate or counteract European notions of religion, ontology, and/or spirituality. I look at *Celia's Song* (2014) by Lee Maracle in the context of contemporary debates about magic realism and argue that her emphasis on spirituality in decolonization reframes the boundaries of indigenous resistance. The novel's infusion of "magic" into the domestic lives of its characters is linked to Sto:lo history, cosmology, storytelling, and the violence that plagues the contemporary community. By focusing on domesticated "women's" spheres, indigenous spirits, and colonial and neocolonial oppression, the novel explores the role of metaphysical forces in a transformational resistance that intersects multiple indigenous identities. I consider magic realism an aestheticization of marginalized aspects of liberation struggle that are crucial to unsettling the coloniality of power, rather than an expression of exotic or "otherized" cultural tropes.

Jody Mason (Carleton)
Citizenship, Pedagogy, Institutions

In her recent survey of the relation of Canadian literatures to citizenship, Lily Cho contends that the connection between these fields has been understood as either a “cultural” or a “pedagogical question” (527, 530). With reference to the latter, Cho cites the particular importance of Donna Pennee’s essay “Literary Citizenship,” which, in turn, draws its conception of critical citizenship from the work of Len Findlay and Smaro Kamboureli. However, if the pedagogical emphasis that Cho identifies found significant expression in Cynthia Sugars’s 2004 collection *Home-Work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy, and Canadian Literature* and was then taken up in many of the essays that appear in *Trans.Can.Lit: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature* (2007), the methods and questions raised by these scholars have not found much traction in Canadian literary and cultural studies, particularly in relation to the question of how citizenship has been articulated through community and state institutions in the past, in historical moments that precede the current salience of postsecondary institutions in the making of Canadian literature. To what extent has the possibility for critical citizenship that Pennee identifies in contemporary institutions of culture been present in other historical contexts—early twentieth-century frontier labour camps, where Canada’s first citizenship education program was developed; residential schools for Aboriginal children, where, as Tina Loo and Carolyn Strange have observed, the state’s earliest citizenship education programs were forged; the managed public of “Citizens’ Forum,” a CBC radio (and later, television) program that reached Canadians from 1943-1965; or the job-creation programs of the 1970s that nourished the arts as a means of realizing “participatory” citizenship?

While, as Cho suggests, the study of how “Canadian literary texts engage in [the] cultural work of contesting citizenship” is crucial (530), I contend in this paper that such lines of inquiry, focused as they are on representation, must find a complement in materialist methods that study how cultural forms have been instrumentalized and disseminated via community and state institutions as elements of citizenship education.

Brendan McCormack (UBC)
‘It Sounded Like Us’: *Nesika* and the Poetry of Indigenous Newsletters

Literary history of the post-White Paper Indigenous “Renaissance” in Canada, starting with Cardinal’s *The Unjust Society* (1969) and Campbell’s *Halfbreed* (1973), is predominantly told as history of the book. Yet, while trade monographs broke institutional barriers and announced an Indigenous ‘coming-to-voice’ for mainstream Canada, critical study privileging the book has marginalized alternative forms/mediums of literary publishing within Indigenous communities from where that voice was coming. This paper works with archival holdings from Xwi7xwa Library (UBC) and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) to examine one such medium: *Nesika* (Chinook “Our”), the newsletter published by the UBCIC in the mid-1970s. One among dozens of contemporaneous newsletters printed by activist Indigenous political organizations at the time, *Nesika* circulated widely within new networks of dissemination created by a substantial Indigenous alternative press; and attention to the creative and critical writing it published enables new understandings of how a communal literary consciousness emerged with/in wider Red Power Indigenous political consciousness.

This print movement has been examined infrequently, largely in communication studies, and not as a literary movement. More than news media, *Nesika* published reader-submitted poetry, short fiction, traditional stories, and reviews, engendering literary culture as part of its political reporting on land claims, constitutional activism, and tribal governance. This paper will look specifically to the work of “occasional poets” (Ruffo) published in *Nesika*—amateur writers, often adolescent, contributing “‘poems’ of various calibers and attributes, bound together by the common thread of being engaged in speaking out” (Armstrong). An archive of Indigenous resistance writing was produced within communities creating, editing, and publishing beyond the print barriers of mainstream markets. Asserting the vitality of this literature to the political and creative energies animating its activist medium will require further decolonizing the “literary” vis-à-vis forms of Indigenous cultural expression overlooked in the institutional memory of CanLit.

Robert McGill (UofT)
The Vietnam War and Canadian Nationalism

Robert McGill’s novel *Once We Had a Country* (2013) tells the story of people migrating to Canada from Czechoslovakia, Jamaica, Laos, and the US during the Vietnam War. Along with short readings from the novel, Robert will discuss how war-era immigration came to transform Canadian nationalist discourse. He will also speak about the focus in *Once We Had a Country* on North Americans’ mass-mediated perspective on Vietnam during the war, and he will consider the effects of such spectatorship—and of Canadians’ self-consciousness about it—on Canadian literature and Canadian nationalism. Moreover, he will draw on his scholarly research addressing other twenty-first-century Canadian novels about the war, identifying and examining a trend that has involved protagonists who are US veterans, and he will consider a tendency on the part of contemporary novelists to practise a “covert” nationalism that rehearses sanguine war-era notions of Canada in a manner liable to go undetected by non-Canadian readers.

Hannah McGregor (SFU)
Podcasting, Pedagogy and Canadian Literature

As excitement about Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) as a solution to the crisis of the humanities classroom fades, another possible model for open online pedagogy has come to the forefront in the form of the podcast. Slate writer Leon Neyfakh explains that “The conventional wisdom among podcasters ... is that, in 2016, listeners want audio programming that makes them feel as though they’re getting to know a person or a topic intimately, whether through the familiar banter of beloved panelists or through lovingly produced works of storytelling.”

The podcast models a different kind of pedagogy than the MOOC. It isn’t the lecture that constitutes pedagogy in this case—a one-way address in which the academic benevolently mobilizes or translates their knowledge, to trade on grant-writing jargon, for a non-specialist audience. Podcasts instead model the careful generation of a community of listeners who, through social media and online commentary, generate diverse and unpredictable responses.

The first half of this presentation will analyze contemporary podcasts that engage in forms of Canadian cultural and literary criticism, including Molly Swain and Chelsea Vowel's *Métis in Space* and Dina Del Bucchia and Daniel Zomparelli's *Can't Lit*. Focusing not just on the content of these podcasts, but also on formal dimensions such as seriality and length as well as promotion through social media, this analysis will attempt to delineate the characteristics of the Canadian cultural criticism podcast as a genre.

The second half of the presentation will consider the possibilities for rethinking podcasting as a form of public pedagogy and criticism that blurs the boundaries between traditional institutions of knowledge production—including universities and presses—and the forms and venues made possible through digital media.

Aparna Mishra Tarc (York)

Re-storying Justice: The Reparative Potential of Storytelling

My paper addresses the centuries long, (mis)appropriated, and vexed role of storytelling in articulating and re-articulating diverse accounts of multiculturalism in Canada. The meanings of this storytelling, whether oral or textual, find 'pedagogical enactment' in public forums of storytelling. Storytelling is used to bear witness to a history of genocide towards Indigenous children and families in survivor testimonies given to the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to deliver ideas of Canadian identity in Adrienne Clarke's Massey lectures, and to produce compelling accounts of our multiculturalism (Kamboureli, 2006). Informed by Adriana Caravero's notion of storytelling as a form of democratic exchange that is particularly challenging or challenged by situations of inequality, I will suggest that this 'agonizing' mode of literary exchange creates uneasy possibilities for renewed relations for both those who testify from unimaginable loss at the hands of the nation and those who benefit from reproducing false and idealized nationalisms.

Farah Moosa (Vancouver Island U)

Memory, Forgetting, and the Air India Story in *children of air india* and 'Kanishka Poems'

In her afterword to *children of air india: un/authorized exhibits and interjections* (2013), poet Renée Saklikar states: "A central experience of being held within the saga that is Air India is one of forgetting/remembering. The events leading up to the bombing, the act itself and its aftermath, are well documented, are obscured within the mainstream of Canadian culture" (112). My paper explores how Saklikar's *children of air india* and Uma Parneswaran's "Kanishka Poems" (2000) engage with the Air India archive and/or dominant versions of the Air India story in order to (re)inscribe the event and its victims into Canadian public memory. As the niece of family members who were killed in the bombing, as the daughter of a South Asian Canadian immigrant who lost her Indian sister and brother-in-law, as a 1.5 generation immigrant to Canada (now a Canadian citizen), and as an Air India victims' family member who attended the Air India trial and testified at the inquiry, Saklikar is an integral part of the Air India story. What captures my interest is how Saklikar weaves court and inquiry documents, coroner's reports, and newspaper articles into deeply personal sequences that re-imagine the lives and deaths of the eighty-two children who were murdered on Flight 182. Through her juxtapositions,

Saklikar draws attention to the unofficial narratives that exist within, against, and alongside official versions of the story. Similarly, Uma Parameswaran documents the afterlives of women whose families were killed in the bombing while contextualizing the event itself in terms of Canada's histories of racism. I argue that by interacting with dominant versions of the Air India story and drawing attention to its unofficial narratives, Parameswaran and Saklikar not only memorialize the lives lost in the bombing, but also reinscribe the lessons of Air India into Canadian cultural memory. My analysis draws on theories of cultural memory (Bal), grievability (Butler; Dean), and trauma and its aesthetic representation (Gordon; Simon).

Maral Moradipour (Western)

Relationality, Kinship, and Continuance in Leanne Simpson's 'nogojiwanong'

Leanne Simpson's short story, "nogojiwanong" in *Islands of Decolonial Love* is a four part story about the michi saagiig Nishnaabeg and their "new neighbours." I will examine how the first part entitled "she is the only doorway into this world" prompts us to think about relationality, kinship, and continuance as concepts rooted in Anishinaabe theory. Furthermore, I will consider how non-indigenous people living on Anishinaabe land can learn from these concepts in striving to be "decolonizing influences" (Simpson, *The Gift*). My close reading and grappling with notions of relationality, kinship, and continuance will be informed by the works of the following Anishinaabe scholars: Gerald Vizenor and "survivance," Scott Richard Lyons' "x-marks" metaphor, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair's challenges to hybridity, and Johannah Bird on kinship and form. I argue that Simpson's text suggests engaging in decolonization on the land that Anishinaabe are stewards of means to challenge the existence of the settler-colonial state.

Laura Moss (UBC)

Modified Seeds and Morphemes: Going from Farm to Page

In "On Being an Alberta Writer," Robert Kroetsch explained that the goal of his long poem *Seed Catalogue* was to create a kind of palimpsest by setting the historical object of the catalogue alongside living voices. Thirty years later, Rita Wong added new layers to the palimpsest of prairie farming in poems such as "Canola Queasy" and "Nervous Organism"— poems that challenge the impact of genetic modification on plants and animals through poetically modified language. At the same time, in her verbatim docudrama, *Seeds*, Annabel Soutar added to the palimpsest by turning to the case of patent infringement against Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser by chemical giant Monsanto. The call for papers for "Mikinaakominis / TransCanadas: Literature, Justice, Relation" asks what kinds of activist and cultural labour criticism and creative writing can perform. In this paper, I will explore the ways in which artists have cultivated what Wong calls the necessary "dialogue we need to face scary, interrelated phenomena like social and environmental injustice, pollution and global warming." This paper will address such "scary interrelated phenomenon" by focusing on creative responses to seed practices and agribusiness in work by Kroetsch, Wong, and Soutar that has, at different times, explored both the politics and the poetics of seed production.

Lianne Moyes (Montreal)
Translating Natasha Kanapé Fontaine’s ‘Mes lames de tannage’

Signed and posted to the internet on July 6, 2012, “Mes lames de tannage” is one of Natasha Kanapé Fontaine’s most important slams: it was the first video recording of a slam that she posted to the internet in November 2012 at the time of the Rimouski book fair; it was the slam she delivered at the November 2013 demonstration in Kanehsatake protesting Conservative government policies on resource extraction; and it was integrated into the documentary “La charte des distractions,” an independent film made in early 2014 in response to the highly divisive debates in Quebec on the proposed Bill 60, known as “La charte des valeurs.” In the paper I am proposing, I analyse “Mes lames de tannage” from the perspective of a reader who has also attempted to translate the slam into English. The process of translating a writer whose mother tongue is Innu but who was raised in French outside her community of Pessamit, a writer who works primarily in French but is also in the process of reclaiming her Innu tongue, brings to the fore all the pitfalls of moving from one colonial language to another. The “arrival” in English is a compromised one. Yet as Michèle Lacombe points out in an essay in *Indigenous Poetics in Canada* (2015), there is a need for French-English translations of writers like Kanapé Fontaine. Indeed, the translation of Kanapé Fontaine’s first collection of poems appeared in 2015 with Mawenzi House but her slams, perhaps because they are a more ephemeral form, published on-line, have not been translated. As well as offering a reading of “Mes lames de tannage,” this paper addresses the (limited) role academics can play in creating conditions of possibility for dialogue between English-speaking and French-speaking Indigenous writers, and the risks of imposing further layers of colonial relations through the process of translation.

Angelo Muredda (UofT)
‘What’s Goin’ To Become of Boys Like That in the End?’: Disability, Kinship, and National Entanglement in Irene Baird’s *Waste Heritage*

“What’s goin’ to become of boys like that in the end,” a middle-aged shopkeeper asks in Irene Baird’s *Waste Heritage*, her 1939 novel about the peripatetic young generation on the front lines of the labour disputes of British Columbia in 1938. Though his question is nominally triggered by the waves of unemployed men occupying the city centres of Victoria and Vancouver, striking in hopes of labour and board, the shopkeeper’s anxieties are also directed toward the more precarious case of Matt and Eddy, a pair of twenty-somethings whose progress is hampered after a police assault leaves them with numerous cognitive and physical impairments. Who, he wonders, will ensure their safe passage, and what responsibility do the Canadian citizens of his relatively comfortable generation owe to the likes of their most vulnerable successors — wounded “boys” like Matt and Eddy? This paper considers the ethical questions that the uncomfortable embodied presence of disability raises in Baird’s novel. Following Ato Quayson’s contention that disability often triggers a form of “aesthetic nervousness” in the tenets of literary representation, this paper considers how disability, and its attendant promise of unpredictability, complicates the novel’s argument for a form of national identification grounded in an intergenerational ethics of care and social security. This paper will also consider how the novel’s treatment of Matt and Eddy as the vulnerable offspring of an unmoved nation state engenders a discussion on the

intersubjective, economic, and political demands that vulnerable bodies like that of the disabled child make upon national citizens.

Judit Nagy (Károli Gaspar, Hungary)

Palimpsestic Reflections of the Korean Canadian Diaspora through Ins Choi's *Kim's Convenience*

In the foreword to his play entitled *Kim's Convenience* (2012), Korean-Canadian playwright Ins Choi introduces the work – which has toured Canada and has been adapted for the small screen by CBC for the 2016/17 season – as follows: it is “my love letter to my parents and to all first-generation immigrants who call Canada their home” (V).

Indeed, the 59-year old head of the Kim family, Appa is the embodiment of an archetypal first-generation 1970s Korean immigrant to Canada, toiling away at his grocery store in Regent Park. His Confucian values and home cultural heritage provide a constant source of conflicts with his immediate environment, including his own family, some other Korean diaspora members as well as outsiders. This paper will make use of two different yet interconnected interpretations of the word ‘palimpsest’ in the analysis of Kim Choi’s play. Firstly, Margaret Atwood’s reference to Canada as “a palimpsest, an overlay of [...] generations” in the March 1985 issue of the *New York Times Book Review* directs our attention to the differences between first and second generation immigrants’ perception of the host country, and how second-generation Jung and Janet challenge the values Appa believes in.

Second, in their dictionary definition of the term ‘palimpsest,’ Merriam and Webster focus on the importance of change and its manifestations. Regarding this understanding of the notion, it will be demonstrated how Appa’s character undergoes a gradual change along the course of the play, which is triggered by a series of palimpsestic reiterations of his current context.

Wanda Nanibush (AGO, Toronto)

Performing Sovereignty in Contemporary Indigenous Art

The main question underlying this talk is: how do contemporary Indigenous artists engage the politics of sovereignty and land? The focus will be on works that exhibit a poetic rather than didactic approach to the relation of resistance and artistic production. We will delve into why this choice is made and how it shifts the debate on sovereignty and what it could mean. The work of artists like Rebecca Belmore, Frank Shebageget, Nadia Myre, Ursula Johnson and more will be discussed. Palestinian artists will also be examined in order to ask: Does this approach work in a Palestinian context?

Rehab Nazzal (Western)

The Olive Tree, the Land and the Palestinian Struggle against Settler Colonialism

Walking in Palestine reveals the trauma the land and its Palestinian inhabitants have endured throughout the longest military occupation of modern times. Illegal Israeli colonies and roads, military structures, cement walls, barbed wire, segregation signs, checkpoints, and watchtowers are but some of the manifestations of the Zionist settler colonization of Palestine. A walking trail in an olive grove in the Palestinian hills disappears overnight, destroyed by Israel’s occupation forces and replaced by a “buffer

zone,” a wall, or a segregated road. Thousand-year-old Palestinian olive trees are “beheaded,” burned, uprooted, or stolen and transplanted into a colony by Israel’s forces and armed colonists. At any moment, Israeli military orders can close a Palestinian town or road either temporarily or permanently.

My presentation consists of a visual account of the Zionist settler-colonial encroachment into the West Bank under the pretext of security. It focuses on the confiscation of the last remaining agricultural and recreational land of the district of the Palestinian city of Bethlehem and the uprooting of its ancient olive trees. The images, captured between August 2015 and June 2016 reveal what the land has endured from the start of its annexation to the erection of a section of Israel’s Apartheid Wall.

Orly Lael Netzer (Alberta)

Witnessing Kinship: Reading Mini Aodla Freeman’s *Life Among the Qallunaat*

In *Critical Collaborations* Smaro Kamboureli identifies a major break currently enthralling the scholarly field of Canadian literary studies in English. This shift, Kamboureli argues, is pivoted by the notion of kinship within and between critical considerations of Indigeneity, diaspora and ecology (4). In this paper I argue that critical attention to readings of Canadian autobiographies as testimonial acts can further the emerging kinship project in ways that, rather than metaphorize a postcolonial nation, move towards acts that decolonize of the state.

The discourse of autobiography encompasses narratives of testimonial accounts that give witness to personal experiences in the contexts of global citizenship and the nation-state (Rak; Smith & Watson). The tradition of thinking about witnessing through autobiography bestows readers with a responsibility and accountability towards the life being shared (something with which readers of fiction are not tasked). I thus suggest that reading autobiography encompasses an ethical imperative, and seek to explore the ways in which reading autobiography can both foster and trouble kinship between settler and Indigenous communities.

My theoretical discussion is grounded in a reading of the restored edition of Mini Aodla Freeman’s memoir *Life Among the Qallunaat* (edited by Keavy Martin and Julie Rak with Norma Dunning). I suggest that the book is a meeting ground which models varied (successful as well as failed) attempts at kinships, inviting readers to engage with the ways in which autobiography can mobilize acts that decolonize the state. As I trace the transits of the memoir in the cultural field (defined by Pierre Bourdieu), I acknowledge my position as an immigrant-settler reader, take up Daniel Heath Justice’s notion of kinship and Margery Fee’s engagement with Canada as postcolonial, as well as Larissa Lai’s idea of “ethics-under-construction”, and address discourses of witnessing and ethics in autobiography (Jolly and Jensen; Whitlock).

Lindsay Nixon (Concordia) and Gage K. Diabo (Concordia)

Kinship and Healing in Indigenous Literature

In Leanne Simpson’s story and/or song “smallpox, anyone” from *Islands of Decolonial Love*, Simpson recollects seeing Rebecca Belmore’s *Fringe* (2008) for the first time. Simpson describes affect, the feeling of viewing *Fringe* in a public art space and its embodied complexities. Simpson feels the

trauma presented by Belmore embodied in her own physicality. She reflects on the ways settlement, and her interactions with settlers, cut into her body, tear open her flesh, just as Belmore portrays in *Fringe*. This is not only a song of trauma but of gratitude for kinship, as well – healing through good relations and decolonial love. Across the wound are rows of red beads, in the place of blood, hanging from the stitched cut, healing the body they adorn. This motif of beading as reification of kinship practices, traditional art and storytelling as decolonial praxis of love, has appeared in Indigenous poetics throughout Turtle Island.

Indigenous novelists like Thomas King and Robert Alexie have drawn attention to the extent to which colonial residue has affected even the simplest mechanisms of cultural and interpersonal exchange. In *Green Grass, Running Water*, for instance, King's various protagonists and narrative threads gradually converge as his characters overcome the geographical, cultural, and linguistic barriers which prevent them from engaging in meaningful dialogue with each other. Alexie's characters in *Porcupines and China Dolls*, meanwhile, reflect the difficulties of coping with trauma in a community where colonially-imposed shame, taboo, and voicelessness have prevented individuals from reaching out, listening to, and ultimately supporting each other. By thematizing and transforming the ways in which individuals (fail to) communicate, King and Alexie's narratives explore the challenges and possibilities of intercommunal and especially intracommunal dialogue as part of a decolonizing truth process. It is truth which leads to love.

We will survey the work of Indigenous poets who have been envisioning the social and political philosophy of resurgence through kinship and decolonial love. Then, we will draw from Indigenous fiction to consider how kinship processes and decolonial love must first come from a place of listening and dialogue – then healing.

Vinh Nguyen (Waterloo)

The Emergence of Southeast Asian Canadian Literature

Vinh Nguyen will discuss the emergence of Southeast Asian Canadian literature and how it engages with the legacies of the Vietnam War. In particular, he will focus on refugee migrations to Canada in the wake of the war. Discussing recent, awarding winning texts by Kim Thuy, Souvankham Thammavongsa, and Madeleine Thien alongside earlier works by Nguyen Ngoc Ngan, Phan Kim Phuc, and Thuong Vuong-Riddick, he will explore issues such as diasporic identity and memory, the specificity of the Canadian national context in relation to Southeast Asian American literature, and the politics of representation and affective articulations. He will also address the implications of recent efforts to commemorate Vietnamese Canadian history in the Journey to Freedom Day Act and the Memorial to the Victims of Communism.

Jeff O'Brien (UBC)

The Labour of the Missing, the Work of the Dead: From Ruin to Archive

This paper examines what Walid Sadek calls *the labour of the missing*—a form of affectual labour enacted by those left behind, that is, the disappeared, the displaced, the missing—alongside the idea of *the work of the dead* (Thomas W. Laqueur) in order to ask how these forms of labour can be

understood in their present, yet spectral, abilities to haunt the land now occupied by the other in terms of settler-colonialism. To begin, I focus on the material ruins of Lifta, a dispossessed Palestinian village that was depopulated during *Nakba* (the catastrophe) of 1948, as a case study that demonstrates the relationship between the ruin and memories of the disappeared. An investigation into the mnemonic connection between the ruin and memory dovetails with a discussion on the relationship between colonized land and colonial archives, and how visual artists employ representational strategies to destroy the sovereign, colonized archive. These practices, I argue, enmesh the labour of the missing with the work of the dead and open onto broader problem sets of colonialism, whether in Palestine or Canada.

Stephanie Oliver (Alberta)

Burning Buried Ancestors: Bitumen and the Poetics of Relation in Warren Carriou's 'An Athabasca Story'

In recent years, many literary critics have examined the “poetics of relation” (Glissant 1997) as it pertains to complex Indigenous-settler relations in Canada (Wong 2008; McCall 2012; Eigenbrod 2012; Lai 2014). Building on this work, my paper examines the poetics of relation in the context of the Alberta oil sands, a site that shapes settler-Indigenous relations in ways that reinscribe ongoing colonial processes predicated upon the destruction of Indigenous lands.

While much petro-criticism overlooks Indigenous-settler relations, ecocritical scholar Stephanie LeMenager foregrounds the poetics of Indigenous-settler relations in her acknowledgment of bitumen extraction's impact on Indigenous communities. For example, in her 2015 ACCUTE plenary, LeMenager read Rita Wong's poem “A Magical Dictionary from Bitumen to Sunlight” (2015) – a poem that imagines bitumen as “buried ancestors, unearthed & burned” (22-4) – as a theorization of settler cultures' often-unacknowledged relationships with ancestors that “we burn ... and carry with us” everyday (LeMenager 2015).

Drawing on Wong and LeMenager's work, my paper examines the particular poetics of relation imagined by Métis writer Warren Carriou's “An Athabasca Story” (2012). Building on Daniel Heath Justice's (2008) conceptualization of Indigenous ontology as fundamentally relational, I read Carriou's story as imagining a poetics of relation that suggests oil consumption is predicated upon embodied relations with Indigenous ancestors. The concept of “relations” is a recurring motif in the story: in it, the Cree trickster Elder Brother is in search of “his relations” when he stumbles upon an oil sands site, where the avaricious workers “talk[] as if [they have] no relations at all” (Carriou 72). The story teaches us to beware the denial of relations that characterizes capitalist exploitation; indeed, when Elder Brother becomes greedy for bitumen and ignores the earth's cries of pain, he gets trapped in the muck “as if he was a fossil” and is eventually processed into the oil in our cars today. By using the figure of Elder Brother to think through what is often called “petromodernity,” Carriou critiques what LeMenager calls the “stage-y” conceptualizations of time that separate past from present, and demonstrates the central role Indigenous storytelling must play in developing a poetics of relation that recognizes the continuity and co-existence of Indigenous ancestors in “the everyday anthropocene” (LeMenager 2015).

Lara Okihiro (UofT)

The Ethics of Materialism:

Caring for Things in Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* and Miki's *Mannequin Rising*

In his discussion of fetishism, Marx warns us against investing objects with power and turning them into commodities promising us personal gratification because, in doing so, we overlook the people and the labour involved in the production of the items. However, in this Anthropocene era, as depicted in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013) and Roy Miki's *Mannequin Rising* (2011), every inch of the planet has been touched by human production and consumption. Echoing Marx's concern, more recently, thing theorists and object-orientated ontologists have argued against laying claims on objects in order to try and understand them on their own terms. On the other hand, speculative materialists, like Jane Bennett, argue that we need to fetishize objects to make their meaning and production matter to us, in order to prevent us from treating things in terms of our personal need and disposing of them when they no longer suit our purposes (*Vibrant Matter* 2010).

Through an examination primarily of Ozeki's novel, in which a Hello Kitty lunch box washes onto Canadian shores after the Fukushima disaster, this paper engages the question of the ethics of materialism and how to treat things in order to cultivate relationships that avoid harming the world and the people around us. Do we need to try to see a thing for what it is? Or, do we need to romanticize an object to give it significance? Does accoutring things with meaning allow us to see the complexity of things more clearly, or does it prevent us from seeing the complex reality? Attending to the representations of objects in the book – the physical and material items that are discarded and repurposed – I ask to what extent endowing objects with significance can help us learn to be better humans or bad fetishists.

Julia Polyck-O'Neil (Brock)

Unmaking Place: (Re)Reading Vancouver in Jordan Abel and Jeff Derksen's *Place Critical Poetics*

Contemporary poets Jordan Abel and Jeff Derksen occupy different sociocultural positions and backgrounds in Vancouver (located on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Watuth, and Stó:lō First Nations), but in many ways share a similar project: the enterprise of dismantling and poetically reconstituting their surroundings. In examining a selection of their writings according to theories linking spatial production and poetics, as well as different interpretations of the term 'decolonization' such as those of Glen Coulthard, I wish to examine how conceptual writing in Vancouver contributes to the way poetic interventions might shape or reimagine collective understandings of the city. Abel and Derksen's participation in this enterprise contributes to the development of a collective counter-narrative within Vancouver's literary legacy of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Importantly, this 'place-making' counter-narrative denotes a dialectical interpretation of the project of decolonization, a term that inhabits Vancouver literatures, including those of Abel and Derksen, according to different scales of meaning. By means of Abel's conceptual practice of erasure and intervention within found textual and visual materials and Derksen's recombinant serial aesthetic, Vancouver's colonial and socio-economic imaginaries are bracketed and redressed by means of their respective engagements with poetics and space.

Abel's writings engage in a conceptual-material project, appropriating and effectively détourning texts borrowed from historic and popular cultural sources. Derksen's writings adopt a similar ethos,

building from found, often banal, sources adopting and adapting text according to an aleatory mode to generate social and economic critiques largely pertaining to his immediate surroundings. Both inhabit the dual roles of author-critics in their praxes, and as such, both partake in the development of Vancouver counter-narratives, subverting dominant hegemonic discourses within the context of both individual cultural identity and the public identity of Vancouver. In this way, according to the specific scales of their unique projects, their poetics and politics actively shape Vancouver's collective spatial imaginary according to a decolonial mode, altering the way Vancouver reads itself and is read by outside audiences.

Thy Phu (Western)
Family Photography, Canadian History

We often think of domestic images as consisting only of snapshots, but they can also be photographs taken by the press and by the state. Visual culture shapes discourses of family, which in turn are integral to the ways that the state envisions itself in relationship to its citizens (and those whom it excludes from citizenship). This presentation explores the complex relationships between photography and the politicized idea of family, by focusing on domestic images of Southeast Asian refugee communities. At a time when definitions of family are shifting as rapidly as the very technology of photography itself, these artifacts, I argue, provide a crucial, though seldom studied, resource for understanding integral connections between personal memories and national histories.

Malissa Phung (Trent U/Sheridan College)
Decolonizing Asian-Indigenous Relations through Narratives of Sino-Indigenous Indebtedness

There exists a tradition of acknowledging and restoring Asian-Indigenous relations in Canadian literature, one initiated by Indigenous and Asian Canadian writers such as Lee Maracle (Stó:lō), SKY Lee, Marie Clements (Métis), and Joy Kogawa. In Chinese Canadian historical fiction more specifically, the depiction of these relations ranges from stories of friendship, kinship, hospitality, and care to distrust, disavowal, and cross-racial denigration. Whereas instances of positive and compassionate relations and intimacies crop up in David H.T. Wong's graphic novel *Escape to Gold Mountain*, in Paul Yee's recent novel *A Superior Man*, intimate relations with Indigenous figures become a source of racial and colonial shame for Chinese bachelors, a theme also explored in *Disappearing Moon Cafe*, Lee's seminal text on the history of Asian-Indigenous relations in Canada. This paper argues that the treatment of Sino-Indigenous relations in these literary texts points to a historical and ongoing relation of indebtedness between Indigenous and Chinese Canadian communities. Drawing on the concept of kinship across difference by Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee) and Larissa Lai, the paper suggests that this relation of indebtedness can be claimed by post-1967 Chinese Canadians and Asian Canadians more broadly, a community often divided by genealogical differences too insurmountable to overcome. Claiming this relation of indebtedness as the basis of Asian-Indigenous relations constitutes a decolonial project that moves away from the language of reconciliation, which often prioritizes settler guilt and sorrow at the expense of displacing and overwriting Indigenous communities and their grievances. If

decolonial projects were to focus instead on honouring and acknowledging relations of indebtedness, then the emphasis would shift towards a more actionable solidarity project of learning how today's Asian Canadian settler citizens/migrants/refugees can express gratitude for a wide range of sociopolitical debts: such as the acts of kindness, compassion, and hospitality that Indigenous communities like the Nuu-chah-nulth and Nlaka'pamux peoples have historically shown to Chinese settlers.

Tavleen Purewal (UofT)

Port Geographies: Indigenous and Diasporic Kinship in Dionne Brand and Lee Maracle

I will attempt to read the port geography – by particularly referencing the Vancouver port that was a site of my engagement with anti-pipeline activism – through ideas of kinship and relation in order to conceptualize the transcanada cultural engagement of Indigeneity and black Diaspora. The port's representation has either contributed to naturalizing the militarized boundaries of exclusion (Mountz), depicted a cultural *mélange* (Nassy Brown), or contributed to trade and extractive industries' propaganda (Davies). My paper asks what happens when the port geography is reclaimed for purposes of solidarity building, for which I rely on Dionne Brand's *A Map to the Door of No Return* and Lee Maracle's *Talking to the Diaspora* for their literary imagination and solidarity work and for their representation of the Vancouver port.

To see the port as a dialogue between the two literatures can easily frame my analysis as a discussion of the land (Indigeneity) meeting the sea (Diaspora), with the port as mediator. Speaking about the relations involved in comparing cultures, Edouard Glissant in *Poetics of Relation* argues that “[p]rime elements do not enter into relation” (161). We must not essentialize nor treat as absolute entities the land and the sea. I follow Glissant's discursive method that understands meaning through the unfolding time of interactions between different textual signifiers and discourses: “nobody knows how cultures are going to react in relation to one another” which is why “communication is continuously in flux” (163). I, therefore, propose a dynamic of kinship and relation between Dionne Brand's and Lee Maracle's respective texts, but their internal contradictions and temporally unfolding interactions might veer my analysis elsewhere. I will continue to practice a kinship methodology in the way of discussing Brand, Maracle, and the port geography in tandem, but remain open to the various ways such a kinship is produced (or unproduced) and to the various imaginings of the port. My paper will expand on and put into conversation Daniel Heath Justice's articulation of kinship and Marlon Bailey's conception of kinship in black drag culture with Glissant's theorization of relation.

Erin Ramlo (McMaster)

Community Song-Work in Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song*

Lee Maracle's novel *Celia's Song* repeatedly references the role that voices, speaking, and song have to play in community healing and growth. The novel, set in a West Coast Indigenous context, follows a community reeling from the intergenerational effects of colonialism, including abuse, addiction, and suicide. I argue that Maracle employs song, in particular, as a mechanism of community vocality and activism. Drawing on Maracle's own oratories, as well as Jace Weaver's concept of “communitism” (i.e. community activism), I argue that Maracle positions song as a cultural and bodily

practice that can rally disparate groups of people and that initiates, begets, and facilitates healing. Voice, in *Celia's Song*, traverses spatio-temporal and cultural boundaries to create a broad and polyphonic whole, as beings as diverse as the land, humans – both Indigenous and settler – animals, and the dead come together in song. Thus, the novel positions song and cultural practice as mechanisms that can rally diverse communities and effect forms of solidarity across fraught relationships attenuated by colonial violence. Through their songs, Maracle's characters are bridging generations, race, and religious lines, to form a multi-valent vocal chorus that, mobilizing Indigenous cultural practice, has healing effects upon the traumatized bodies of individuals in the community. More broadly, though, I argue that Maracle is gesturing to wider concerns about the healing of whole communities and structures of relationship scarred by colonialism as she advocates for the practice of speech, and the practice of song, as rallying tools that simultaneously allow for both individual healing and expression, and the coming together of community in solidarity. Thus, I argue, the novel's song-work moves out of a distinctly Stó:lō practice, to advocate for the very human act of speech and expression as being important for communities reeling from the effects of colonialism, displacement, and trauma.

Madeleine Reddon (UBC)

Indigenous Modernism: Dehabituating Reading Practices

This paper invents a term, Indigenous modernism, to instigate an intervention within several disciplinary fields (Indigenous studies, English literature, Critical Race Studies). In assessing some of the contradictions inherent in such a paradoxical (and inflammatory) term, I chart how the established set of taxonomic classifications of literature within the English discipline create “racially pure” zones of literary production. I argue that habituated accounts of Indigenous and Black literature and its authors enforce and sediment racialized boundaries between “high” and “low” literatures while decontextualizing their histories of production within the academy. Modeled on a Freudian reading practice, my methodology is meta-critical and informed by psychoanalysis. Arguing that “symptomale” reading—the discovery of hidden material within a network of signs—misreads Freud and inaugurates a tradition of ineffectual analysis, I return to the hermeneutic set out by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Understanding the symptom as contradiction between alternating or opposed logics, rather than as a sign to be deciphered, I consider several instances of “failed” reading as symptomatic encounters between the canonizing, and colonizing, impulse of literary studies and a resistant outside. To do so, I examine the reception history of several texts that fall under the rubric “Indigenous modernism” (Paula Gunn Allen's *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows*, Jean Toomer's *Cane*, and D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded*) and suggest that these texts' resistance to being read provides avenues for establishing anticolonial genealogies of interconnection between Indigenous and Black writing.

Candida Rifkind (Winnipeg)

Countervisual Tactics in Tings Chak's *Undocumented: The Architecture of Migrant Detention*

This paper theorizes the affective and ethical work of Tings Chak's experimental visual narratives about migrant detention in Canada. It argues that Chak's multimodal visual-verbal texts

constitute a countervisual practice that seeks to disrupt the dominant ocular regime of migrant subjects. In so doing, Chak exposes the Canadian state's secretive incarceration of migrant detainees in a series of experimental texts that collide image and narrative, subject and object, document and invention.

I am most interested in Chak's "graphic novel" based on her MA thesis in Architecture: *Undocumented: The Architecture of Migrant Detention* (2014). *Undocumented* includes first person narration, quotations, photographs, architectural drawings, and comics. In 2015, Chak remediated some of the drawings into a gallery video that uses animation and sound to "walk" the viewer through being processed as a detainee. *Undocumented* resists the conventional representation of migrants as abject bodies by drawing the viewer into the spatial configurations of migrant detention centres to rotate our gaze to the structures that frame migrant lives. Rather than making a spectacle of the "undocumented" migrant body, Chak exposes the Canadian government's carceral regime as a series of undocumented spaces.

My analysis brings together comics studies, visual criminology, and affect studies to consider how Chak's works insert the viewer into a vicarious experience of precarious lives. I ask how her handdrawn images can disrupt the photographic regime of the "migrant image" (T.J. Demos) and how her countervisualization is a demand for "the right to look" (Nicholas Mirzoeff). I also consider the risks she takes in representing migrant detention as a subjective spatial experience for the non-migrant viewer in relation to the political and visual work of "framing the framer" (Judith Butler, Trinh Minh-ha). I conclude that Chak's political critique of the violence of carceral architecture is also a formally radical experiment in representing the experiences of migrant detention in Canada.

Anna Sajecki (Alberta)

Open Border, Open Road: Canada and the Road Trip Genre

How does genre translate the lived Canadian experience? What can genres teach us about the historical and spatial shifts that have accompanied narratives of Canadian belonging in an era of accelerated social and economic change? How might a genre do the work of realizing the influence of globalizing and transnational forces on meanings of nationalist identity? My proposal channels these questions through an intensive reflection on the ways in which the road narrative has functioned in Canada as a genre that collectively reflects and mediates the shifting experiences and implications of Americanization on Canadian identity. Academic work on the road narrative primarily places the genre in an American context, in which driving enacts a form of individualist liberal freedom indivisible from a tradition of mobility undergirding the settling of the American frontier (Cotten Seiler; Ann Brigham; Ronald Primeau; Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark; Tim Cresswell). Moreover, the highway has long been a considered a technology of modernization and Americanization that encouraged a reconfiguration of spatiality aligned with capitalist imperatives under the Fordist regime (Lewis Mumford; Dolores Hayden; Brian Ladd; Eric Avila; David Harvey; Edward Soja). And yet, the Trans-Canada highway has generally been conceived as a nationalist experience and technology that enables the mediation and unification of Canadian space (Jonathan Vance; Mark Richardson; Peter Unwin; Maurice Charland). Beginning with Canadian road narratives from a period of post-World-War-II-era optimism, to road narratives reflecting impacts of Americanization in the stagflation periods of the late 1960s and 70s, to films distilling the implications of NAFTA on Canadian citizenship, to —finally—an existential reevaluation of the role of driving and citizenship in the Anthropocene, my dissertation asks: how do

these road narratives trace the changing relationships of Canadians and Canadian nationalist sentiment to the lived impact of Americanization and globalization?

Szu Shen (UBC)

Reading Beyond Our Settler Colonial Present

In his 2015 book *The Settler Colonial Present*, Lorenzo Veracini contends that settler colonialism is a distinct mode of domination that continues to shape and characterize our “global present” (6). While Veracini is certainly correct in his observations of settler colonialism’s contemporaneity and globality, this paper wishes to push his argument further by asking how our critical reading praxis might engage beyond the “settler colonial present” to contribute to the difficult task of imagining and bringing forth decolonial futures. In asking this question, this paper takes its cue from Leanne Simpson’s remarks on Audre Lorde’s famous contemplation: “I am not so concerned with how we dismantle the master’s house, . . . but I am very concerned with how we (re)build our own house, or our own houses” (32). This paper suggests that one way we might begin to undertake such imaginative work is through a reading practice that actively reads across accepted disciplinary, political, and geographic boundaries. It will do so by juxtaposing the varying afterlives of uranium in the following three sites: Port Radium in Canada, where the production of uranium contributed to the making of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945; Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, where the US government conducted a series of nuclear weapon tests between 1946-1958; and Orchid Island in Taiwan, where indigenous Tao people have been living in proximity to the nation’s nuclear waste since 1982. In doing so, this paper seeks to explore how unexpected forms of global relations and affinities might take shape in and across indigenous and other racialized communities—and how such affinities might help us to read beyond our “settler colonial present” and envision new ways to relate to one another.

Winfried Siemerling (Waterloo)

Memory and Witnessing, Documentary and Poetry: Sylvia Hamilton’s *And I Alone Escaped to Tell You*

Sylvia Hamilton is best known for her documentary films, which she has now directed for over twenty-five years. They represent an outstanding contribution to interventionist critical black memory culture and social justice in Canada. In films such as *Black Mother, Black Daughter* (NFB 1989, codirected with Claire Prieto) or *The Little Black Schoolhouse* (Maroon Films, 2007), Hamilton shows important relational qualities of critical memory culture, placing testimony in conversational contexts that evoke sites of memory and often include the filmmaker herself. In the process, we see black subjects as agents who shape their own lives, and do so through language. Hamilton has written about such relational aspects in her extensive scholarship, which speaks to black culture, education, and especially the history and lives of black women in Nova Scotia, often addressing these issues through discussions of her own documentary films on these subjects.

Besides documentary films and scholarship Hamilton has also published poetry, which has received less critical attention, and produced installation art. The purpose of this paper is to examine most notably her recent volume, *And I Alone Escaped to Tell You* (2014), parts of which were used in her installation *Excavation: A Site of Memory* (2013, 2014). The paper will explore the relation between Hamilton's poetry and her other documentary work. It will investigate how the volume, which evokes survival and the task of witnessing in its very title, uses strategies of bringing the past to life that Hamilton has also utilized in her films, albeit in different forms. In much of Hamilton's work across various media, I contend, engaging with sites of memory and documenting the past are acts of mediated self-articulation that enable agency and possibilities of self-determination.

Erin Spring (Lethbridge)

'This land carries all I'll ever need to know': Reading Canada from the Reserve

My current postdoctoral project emerges out of a concern that Indigenous readers are not having opportunities to read and discuss culturally relevant fiction. Contemporaneously, children's literature and reader response scholarship does not fully engage with what Indigenous voices could bring to our understanding of young people's responses to and engagement with fiction. For the most part, their voices remain silent. There is a particular urgency for such research, especially in response to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recent findings. Today, ongoing colonial practices of assimilation and dispossession impinge on Indigenous peoples' rights, freedoms, and cultures. There is a need for reconciliation work between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada, including — and perhaps most urgently — for young people.

This paper focuses on my current reader-response study with Blackfoot youth who live and attend school on the Kainai Blood Reserve in rural, southern Alberta. Through reading discussion groups and the creation of place-journals, comprised of visual responses, such as maps, photos, and sketches, I seek to understand the ways in which my participants perceive of and represent their identities, particularly in relation to the land. My participants are reading and discussing several Canadian texts, including one set on their reserve. This process is encouraging the youth to celebrate the values and identities that were stripped from their families and communities through cultural assimilation, thereby fostering reconciliation. Their responses illustrate the ways in which reading these texts has reaffirmed, confirmed, and challenged their conceptualizations of nationhood, place, identity, and community. Drawing on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework, including reader-response and young adult fiction criticism, I will share the ways in which reading culturally relevant and local, placebased fiction has encouraged my Blackfoot participants to have discussions about their cultural, social, and place-based identities, both within and beyond the text.

Shaun Stevenson (Carleton)

Shifting the Terrain: Water and Indigenous Land Rights in Canada

With Mohawk artist Alan Michelson's 2005 video art installation *Two Row II* as an entry point, I interrogate what sort of encounters might be possible between two distinct cultures, interconnected through their relationships to a seemingly shared body of water, as it cuts across territories that have been historically and contemporarily contested. In Michelson's piece, the two banks of the Grand River

move horizontally across a screen in monumental panorama, superimposed with the Two Row Wampum. On the bottom half of the screen, and consequently, within one of the purple rows of the wampum, moves the bank of Haudenosaunee territory of the Six Nations of the Grand River. On the other half of the screen, and within the wampum's parallel purple row, the riverbank bordering the nonIndigenous townships of Ontario—Caledonia, Middleport, Brantford—moves slowly across the top of the screen. The video is further accompanied by two audio tracks, played over top one another. One track plays a Canadian dinner boat cruise captain's tourist narrative of the 'official' local European history of the Grand River and surrounding areas, while the other track captures Elders from Six Nations speaking about what the river has meant to Haudenosaunee peoples. As the tracks play simultaneously, the installation's audience is confronted by overlapping narratives, as they must struggle to discern one from the other.

This paper suggests that Michelson's *Two Row II* sets the stage for an ethical encounter between two distinct cultures, interconnected through their relationships to a shared body of water, the Grand River. I explore what sort of ethical encounters might be possible through this shared water as it cuts across territories that have been historically and contemporarily contested, in order to probe the limits of land-based discourse in relation to Indigenous land rights issues in Canada.

Nora Foster Stovel (Alberta)

**'All the People That on Earth do Dwell':
Equality and Ecology in the Essays of Margaret Laurence**

Margaret Laurence is renowned for her Manawaka Saga, wherein she addresses earth (*The Stone Angel*), air (*A Bird in the House*), fire (*The Fire-Dwellers*), and water (*The Diviners*) creatively. Her fifty uncollected essays advocate for stewardship of the planet through ecology and nuclear disarmament and for salvation of Canada's natural resources by campaigning against pollution of waterways, destruction of farmlands for building construction, and testing of American Cruise missiles over prairie skies.

Two ideologies influenced Laurence: the Social Gospel—Jesus's New Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," advocating community—and North Winnipeg's "Old Left," advocating social justice, inspiring Laurence's "anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, antiauthoritarianism." She quotes the blessings "Peace on earth, good will to men," the "Old Hundredth," and "All people that on earth do dwell," the hymn that catalyzes Hagar's epiphany in *The Stone Angel*. Laurence advocates respect for diversity among all people: "Within our diversity lies our strength. [...]"

We are different. Differences are to be honoured, recognized and understood on both sides."

In "Ivory Tower or Grassroots?: The Novelist as Socio-Political Being" she affirms, "Fiction becomes a matter of the individual characters moving within a history which includes past, present, and future, and the emergence through these characters of beliefs which cannot be didactic but which [...] are both religious and political." She advocates tolerance of racial, national, and religious diversity and champions indigenous peoples everywhere—from the Scots of the Highland Clearances to the Ghanaians of colonial Britain, and from Canada's Aboriginal peoples to women every-where—demonstrated in "Tribalism as Us Versus Them." Although she sympathizes with Quebec's injustices, she advocates Confederation. She sympathizes with disadvantaged peoples, be they Scottish crofters,

postcolonial Africans, or Prairie Métis. Moreover, she believes Canadian and Nigerian authors, including herself and her colleague Chinua Achebe, are composing “a truly non-colonial literature.”

Cyrus Sundar-Singh (York/Ryerson)
Africville: Dogs, Gods, and City Hall

“Africville—Dogs, Gods, and City Hall” is critical essay performed as a site-specific live documentary inside a church with an audience. The church becomes a “container”, (a physical, metaphorical and philosophical space), in which the various parts of the Africville story in conjunction with the audience unfolds. The triumvirate of story, performance, and audience is used to create an interactive and immersive documentary experience incorporating various traditional and contemporary elements such as: oral storytelling, poetry, musical score, and archival materials.

The energy of the performance is shared between all three “players”: the narrator (the outsider), the singer (the insider), and the audience (the Africville diaspora). As with Verbatim-theatre, all lines are pulled from transcriptions and the full ‘script’ is printed in a program that doubles as a liturgy to be followed and recited where required. For the duration of the performance, the gathered audience becomes the community of Africville. This is a 20-minute performance.

I hope to convey the sense of “loss”, in fact, a “Great Loss”. Placing this story inside a sacred space (church/site) not only frames the documentary (camera and tripod), the audience within become the community. The “loss” becomes a shared experience and thus more profound. As a filmmaker and storyteller, I am constantly seeking ways to explore the “telling” of the story, and site-specificity has offered me another outlet.

Katrin Urschel (UofT)
Dancing Together? Reconciliation through Dance in Indigenous Literature

Two recent dance productions brought Indigenous issues to mainstream audiences in Canada. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet created *Going Home Star* (choreographed by Mark Godden and written by Joseph Boyden) with the support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and performed it on a national tour. And the Fall For Dance North Festival commissioned a *First Nations Hoop Dance*, curated and directed by Santee Smith (Mohawk), for its inaugural festival at the Sony Centre in Toronto in 2015. While different in style, message, and Indigenous involvement, both productions opened up space for a productive dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. This dialogue, however, is too important to stay within the narrow confines of the dance world. My paper will contextualize this current momentum and discourse in a broader discussion of dancing bodies in Indigenous literature and culture.

Dance functions as an embodiment of politics by drawing attention to material realities: many markers of identity are inscribed on the surface of the dancing body. Dance in literature adds psychological realities, intellectual considerations and spiritual ramifications to the sensory experience of dance, presenting it as a rich and powerful means of expression. Lee Maracle’s novel *Celia’s Song* (2014) and Joanne Arnott’s poem “In My Dance Class” capture this multifaceted dimension of dance perfectly. Both texts wrestle with the postcolonial legacy of a divided society and situate dancing in

contexts of violence. At the same time, they present dance as a holistic activity that can help transcend power struggles and heal multi-layered wounds.

My paper will examine these texts in light of the recent dance performances mentioned above. Treating literary representations and landmark dance performances together will facilitate an analysis of the current state of Indigenous/non-Indigenous dialogue. Are we dancing for one another or with each other? And why does it matter?

Aritha Van Herk (Calgary)

The GPS of Place: Navigating Embodiment and Escape

Is Canada now, by virtue of its sheer size and diversity, an “unrepresentable subject” that can neither celebrate nor subvert its history and its future trajectory? At a time when literature veers from heavy polemic to nihilistic erasure, where does a writer locate home in terms of text and style, subject and form? And what does home have to do with place except for the truism that our connection to place is as varied and uncomfortable as our connections with people; our creative connections overlap with those same vexations.

The rareness of “placeness” as a site, despite its frequent deployment, must make us ask how we can articulate place at a time when place is more a conceptual term than a locatable destination. Can place still enunciate longing and belonging? Does place continue to serve as the key circling all that has been lost and all yet to be found? Or is placelessness a liberating occasion for experiment and change, an opportunity to escape temporality and the conditions of historical replication.

In my work on place writing and place biography, I seek to find a language and a space to articulate interventions with place that escape setting or genre, expectation and banishment. I intend to perform a ficto-critical exploration of place as fluid and discontinuous, dangerous and comforting, a space of yearning and regret, as well as a space of anticipation and generative diversion.

Bart Vautour (Dalhousie)

Personal Libraries of the State: Theorizing the Libraries and Cultural Life of Canada’s Foreign Missions” and Cultural Life of Canada’s Foreign Missions

Alongside the founding of what is now the Jules Léger Library in Ottawa as the official library of the Department of External Affairs (now Global Affairs Canada), the Canadian state has a long history of both creating and dismantling the equivalent of the “personal library” for its official residences and missions abroad. The aim of my paper is to draw upon the theoretical methodologies of textual studies, print cultural studies, and curatorial studies to initiate an investigation of an understudied aspect of “official” culture as it moves from a single state to sites abroad. By investigating the ways in which literary texts and other cultural products are subject to a particular mode of governmentality throughout the twentieth century, my paper takes up numerous representational examples that provide evidence of different configurations of the production and dissemination of “official” Canadian culture through what I’m provisionally calling “the state’s official personal library abroad,” inasmuch as the library simulates the personal library of the ambassador of the day. As ambassadors come and go, the embassy’s personal library maintains a projected image of taste, erudition, and cultural competency. That said, there are

important and telling moments when individual representatives and their families have shifted the development of the libraries and shifted the outward projection of Canadian cultural accomplishment. For example, P.K. Page's involvement in official cultural representation in Brazil and Mexico while her spouse, Arthur Irwin, was the Canadian Ambassador adds much to our thinking about both the production and reception of Canadian literature abroad. Further, my paper also investigates the role of diplomatic missions in the founding and support of Centres for Canadian Studies and academic programs in Canadian Studies abroad through the divestment of the state's official personal libraries, which was the case for the founding of the Centre for Canadian Studies at the University of La Laguna in 1992 upon the gift of the library from the Canadian Embassy in Spain. I suggest that by studying the history of libraries in Canada's foreign missions through a lens that understands those libraries as both personal libraries and official state-sanctioned cultural repositories, we can get a better sense of the ways the Canadian state has projected its ideal citizen as a cultural collector of material objects for outward display to global audiences.

Karina Vernon (UofT)

'Making Things Right': Black Settlement and the Politics of Urban Territory

This paper takes our current moment of urban crisis—a moment that has galvanized the related but also separate anticolonial movements of BlackLivesMatter and Idle No More—as an opportunity to consider the possibilities that exist, as well as the barriers that prevent, black Canada from intertwining its struggle with that of Indigenous nations as part of a larger decolonizing program.

Black diasporans territorialized on Turtle Island are, in Sa'ke'j Youngblood Henderson's terms, treaty people: their citizenship, like those of all non-native settlers, depends on the gift of citizenship which may or may not have been offered willingly, given the coercive historical circumstances under which the numbered treaties were signed. How can black Canada pay restitution (Taiaiake Alfred) for this and other gifts and so rebalance our relations? Trinidadian-Albertan writer F.B. André's short story, "Is There Someone You Can Call?" from his fiction collection *Belonging* (2007), is a provocative place from which to theorize the challenges of conjoining black and Indigenous decolonizing movements.

In André's story, a black couple in an unnamed urban location attempts to move into a house they've recently bought only to find it still occupied. Throughout the story, the narrator lingers on the threshold of the house. But remaining there is dangerous: outside, the local police are firing bullets. "If I stay outside," the narrator considers, "I'll be game soon. But I'm reluctant to re-enter the house; I have this foolish feeling—not quite like I'm intruding, but as if I'm stepping on something" (137).

André's story, I argue, offers a vision of the future in which black diasporans commit to a juridical reframing of land and land rights from those of the British legal system and the current liberal democratic state to Indigenous traditions of governance in an effort to protect Indigenous selfdetermination in their homelands. This paper concludes by considering what such an unsettled black citizenship might look like.

Erin Wunker (Acadia)

Archives Undone: Towards a Poethics of Feminist Archival Disruptions

“Q: ‘Do you experience any dread of the Indigns?’

A: ‘I have no fear of Indigns, for I have never seen one.’ (Rachel Zolf, “What the Women Say of the Canadian North-West: The Indign Question?” *Janey’s Arcadia: Errant Adventures in Ultima Thule*, 2014)

This is a paper about witnessing, about the ways that seeing is structured by institutions such as archives, and about how disruption can, sometimes, focus our eyes on what has been remaindered—left out through acts of violent omission—of the archive. The paper opens with a consideration of the ways in which generative feminist disruptions in Canadian literary culture are complicated. Having laid the critical foundation of critical practices and historical memory in the production of Can.Lit, which takes up questions of gender and race, I turn to Rachel Zolf’s *Janey’s Arcadia* to more closely unpack an example of poethical feminist archival disruption. More specifically, I read Zolf’s text as a poethical wager; what Retallack suggests is a “thickening of poetics.” For Retallack, “poetics without an h has primarily to do with questions of style.... By contrast, your poethical work begins when you no longer wish to shape materials (words, visual elements, sounds) into legitimate progeny of your own poetics” (38). *Janey’s Arcadia* enacts a thickened poetics. Though it draws on archival documents and systems of organizing and re-presenting information, it is also a porous text. It reveals its own messy engagement with histories and systems of oppression without laying claim on the poetic texts that emerge. I argue that Zolf’s text is an example of an emergent focus on using experimental and avant-garde poetics as a mode of settler-colonial unlearning, an enactment of justice to come, and of performative literary activism. Zolf’s text never simply talks back to the white-supremacist colonial archive using its own tools. Instead, Zolf’s text performs a sustained engagement with embodied affect as well as textual history. I conclude by situating *Janey’s Arcadia* into an ever-evolving and generatively disruptive feminist literary coalition of texts whose aesthetics are grounded in affective activism.