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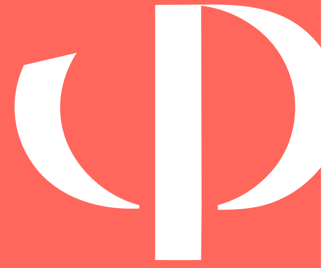
Native American and Indigenous Philosophy



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BOOK REVIEW

Andrea Sullivan-Clarke: Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island

Reviewed by Dennis H. McPherson, Tracy Shields, and J. Douglas Rabb

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APA STUDIES ON

Native American and Indigenous Philosophy

JOSEPH LEN MILLER, EDITOR

VOLUME 24 | NUMBER 1 | FALL 2024

FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

Joseph Len Miller
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

In this issue of *APA Studies on Native American and Indigenous Philosophy*, we have four articles concerning ethics as it pertains to Native American and Indigenous philosophy, as well as a review of a new book on Indigenous philosophy. Each of these articles demonstrates different ways of engaging with Native American or Indigenous philosophy. From asking whether Westerners can write about Indigenous philosophy to articulating, clarifying, and defending Indigenous ethics, these four articles offer a range of ethical questions concerning engaging with Native American or Indigenous ethical concepts and frameworks.

First, we have "Can it be Ethical for a Western Philosopher to Write about Indigenous Philosophies?" by Kat Wehrheim, which, as the title suggests, offers an argument concerning what is required to engage with Indigenous philosophy as a Western philosopher. Second, we have an article by John Miller (Métis Nation), a PhD student from the University of Toronto, entitled "Obligation, Accountability, and Anthropocentrism in Second-Personal Ethics." In this article, Miller argues that the analysis of obligation we get from accounts of second-personal ethics cannot properly account for our obligations *to* nonhuman beings and ecosystems, and instead offers an account of obligation that is based on the Métis notion of *wahkootowin* or kinship. Third, we have Áila Kel Katajamäki O'Loughlin's (Sámi) "'Surely, you don't mean *rocks*': Indigenous Kinship Ethics, Moral Responsibility, and So-Called 'Natural Objects'" in which O'Loughlin details moral responsibilities we have towards rocks using Indigenous Kinship Ethics. Lastly, E. Ornelas explains the ethics of care that inform an Indigenous abolitionism in "An Indigenous Abolitionist Ethics of Care." Ornelas argues that further articulating an abolitionist ethics of care also affirms Indigenous futurity.

These articles are followed by a review of Andrea Sullivan-Clarke's (ed.) *Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island* (Broadview Press). Reviewed by Dennis H. McPherson, Tracy Shields, and J. Douglas Rabb, this book contains four readings that were written specifically for the book, and other contemporary readings that cover a range of philosophical topics (i.e., metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics). As few explicitly philosophical anthologies exist concerning Native American thought, this book is a welcomed contribution to the lineage of bolstering Native American and Indigenous thought.

We are incredibly honored and grateful to include these articles and this review in our fall issue. As we look forward to future issues of the journal and further engagement with Native American and Indigenous philosophy, we hope to strike a balance between explaining Indigenous concepts and frameworks and addressing contemporary issues faced by Indigenous peoples and communities. We hope that these articles serve as a way of honoring our traditions, ideas, and ancestors, as well as serving as an invitation for readers to engage with Native American or Indigenous philosophy.

FROM THE CHAIR

Exciting Times for Native American and Indigenous Philosophy

Joseph Len Miller
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Hesci! This is my first issue as chair of the APA's Committee on Native American and Indigenous Philosophers, as well as the new managing editor of *APA Studies on Native American and Indigenous Philosophy*. As such, I first want to thank our former managing editor, Agnes Curry, for providing me guidance (and reminders!) in taking on this new role, as well as for her commitment to her position and our journal during her time as managing editor. Her dedication, kindness, and patience served as an inspiration for me, and, as I'm sure my colleagues will agree, her time as managing editor will be missed (note to my colleagues and the reviewers: though I will fail, I promise I'll *try* my hardest to emulate Agnes's work ethic and politeness!). I also want to thank former chair, Andrea Sullivan-Clarke (Muscogee), for her time as our chair, but also for her continual professional support throughout my career. I first met Andrea in my first year in my PhD program. Outside of the Philosophy Department at the University of Washington, Seattle, we were talking with a group of fellow graduate students, and I mentioned that I was Native American. Andrea said she was too. I asked, "What tribe?" She responded, "Muscogee." I thought she was kidding... I had never met another Muscogee outside of either my family or the state of Oklahoma. From that point on, Andrea has been a source of encouragement and (professional and emotional) support for my career. Her ambition and excitement in professional matters will be hard to replace, but I will do my best to follow in her footsteps. Okay, now, on to some updates.

APA ANNUAL MEETINGS

This year, our committee was able to host sessions at each of the annual APA meetings. At the Eastern Division meeting in New York, Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner (Luiseño and Cupeño) and I presented on an initiative that we started (along with Getty Lustila (Choctaw), Janella Baxter (Choctaw), John R. Miller, and Ashley Lance (Blue Lake Rancheria tribal member, Yurok descendant)) called *pine* (Philosophy of Indigenous Education). We had a fantastic discussion about the place of Indigenous ideas and students in philosophy courses, and we were able to make connections to people and areas of philosophy that were exciting and encouraging. In New Orleans, at the Central Division meeting, we had a fantastic, well-attended session by John R. Miller (whose article is included in this edition) and Joel Alvarez on the epistemology of dreams. Both presentations received positive feedback and engaged the attendees in conversations and exchanges that challenged common Western notions concerning the moral status of non-human animals and eco-systems and the epistemic status of dreams. During the Pacific Division meeting in Portland, we were able to host two sessions. One session was dedicated to Sullivan-Clarke's (ed.) new book, *Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island*, and highlighted ways of using the book in different philosophy courses (e.g., Environmental Ethics, Intro to Philosophy, etc.). The other session included incredibly engaging presentations by Ornelas and O'Loughlin (both of which are included in this issue). These presentations seemed to challenge attendees in the best possible ways by encouraging them to critically challenge their notions of moral status and the methods (e.g., incarceration) of settler colonialism. Each of these meetings and presentations helped to not only expose audiences to Native American and Indigenous philosophy but engaged them in critical conversations that challenged Western assumptions concerning normativity.

SAVAGE EDUCATION WORKSHOP

In the summer of 2023, Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner and I were able to organize and host a summer workshop—with funding from the APA's Diversity and Inclusiveness Grant—entitled *Savage Education*. This was the first iteration of the workshop, as we're hoping to have this be an annual event. The aim of each workshop is to focus on pedagogical implications of Native American boarding schools. The theme of the first workshop was "Epistemic Injustices of Native American Boarding Schools." Given its proximity to Carlisle, PA—grounds of the former Carlisle Indian Industrial School—our first workshop was held at West Chester University. As part of the workshop, we traveled to the gravesites of former Carlisle students to remember and pay our respects. Jeremy Johnson, Cultural Director of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, joined us and opened the workshop with a prayer and discussion of the history of Lënapehòkink ('Homelands of the Lenape')—the land now occupied by West Chester University. Although these topics and histories can be painful and difficult to discuss, this was an uplifting and encouraging experience. Besides being an opportunity to discuss an under-discussed topic in philosophy (e.g., the epistemic legacies of Native American educational policies), most of us had never attended a workshop in philosophy that was comprised of entirely Native American and Indigenous participants. We hope that this workshop will continue to be a source of inspiration and conversation concerning epistemic legacies of Native American boarding schools and Indigenous pedagogies.

READING GROUPS: *INDIGENOUS FICTIONS* AND *INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGIES*

There are also two virtual reading groups that were started over the past year. Both hosted by *pine*, there is an Indigenous Pedagogies Reading Group that meets in the spring (started in spring 2023) and an Indigenous Fictions Reading Group that meets in the fall. In the fall of 2023, the Indigenous Fictions group read Louise Erdrich's *Future Home of the Living God*, and in the spring of 2024 the Indigenous Pedagogies group read Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel Wildcat's *Power and Place: Indian Education in America*. For the upcoming Indigenous Fictions group in fall 2024, the reading will be Mona Susan Power's *A Council of Dolls*. For spring 2025, the Indigenous Pedagogies group will be reading *Plantation Pedagogy: The Violence of Schooling Across Black and Indigenous Space* by Bayley J. Marquez. If you're interested in joining or hearing more about either group, please feel free to contact me at JMiller4@wcupa.edu.

NEWLAMP 2024 (NORTHEAST WORKSHOP TO LEARN ABOUT MULTICULTURAL PHILOSOPHY)

Lastly, this past June at Northeastern University in Boston, Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner helped to organize a workshop with Candice Delmas on teaching Native American and Indigenous philosophy for non-Native philosophy teachers. With funding in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): Democracy Demands Wisdom, this workshop was a weeklong event led by me, Getty Lustila, and Yann Allard-Tremblay (Huron-Wendat First Nation) from McGill University. There were over thirty participants that engaged in discussions of Indigenous philosophy texts, creation of Native American/Indigenous philosophy syllabi, and discussions concerning Native American and Indigenous philosophical concepts and ideas. I can only speak from my experience, and I won't be able to say enough here to convey my excitement and gratitude for the workshop and all those that participated, but this was an incredibly moving and encouraging week that highlighted the need for, and increasing interest in, engaging with Native American and Indigenous philosophy. Leaving the workshop, I felt rejuvenated and encouraged to keep researching, teaching, and engaging others in discussions concerning Native American philosophy. This workshop highlighted that it's not just that more people are becoming interested in Native American and Indigenous philosophy—it's that there are more and more people that are willing and wanting to engage with it in a positive and respectful manner. If you're interested in finding more info on the workshop, please visit NEWLAMP's website.

SUMMARY

Given these past events, given the number of new people that have become interested in Indigenous thought, and given the wonderful work and commitment by members of the APA's Committee on Native American and Indigenous

Philosophers, I'm incredibly optimistic about the status of Native American and Indigenous thought in philosophy. It's clear that people are interested in Native American and Indigenous thought, and I hope this issue can serve as a way of encouraging people to further engage with Indigenous scholars and ideas. To all of you contributing to these efforts by reading this issue, I'd like to say *mvto* (thank you)!

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

We invite you to submit your work for consideration for publication in *APA Studies on Native American and Indigenous Philosophy*. Work submitted goes through anonymous peer review. Our project in this journal is to engage in scholarly and pedagogical conversations that further develop this field in its integrity. We accept work that foregrounds these philosophical perspectives. We also accept work that addresses the professional and community concerns regarding Native American and indigenous philosophies and philosophers of all global indigenous nations. This is an inherently decolonial project. **We do not accept work that engages merely in comparative exercises or uses Native American and Indigenous philosophy merely to solve the philosophical or practical problems generated by Western thinking.**

We welcome comments and responses to work published in this or past issues. We also welcome work that speaks to philosophical, professional and community concerns regarding Native American and indigenous philosophies and philosophers of all global indigenous nations. Editors do not limit the format of what can be submitted; we accept a range of submission formats including but not limited to papers, opinion editorials, transcribed dialogue interviews, book reviews, poetry, links to oral and video resources, cartoons, artwork, satire, parody, and other diverse formats. In all cases, however, references should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* and include endnotes rather than in-text citations. For further information, please see the Guidelines for Authors available on the APA website. Please submit material electronically to Joseph Miller (JMiller4@wcupa.edu). For consideration for the spring 2025 issue, please submit your work by January 15, 2025.

ARTICLES

Can It Be Ethical for a Western Philosopher to Write about Indigenous Philosophies?[1]

Kat Wehrheim
INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

1. INTRODUCTION: A LAST STEP INTERWOVEN WITH A FIRST ONE

In one way, I should have asked the above question years ago. In another, I feel relief at the sight of each further question revealing itself along the way: it is only when learning has been confined to its pre-existing comfort zone that all one's questions can be asked from the outset.[2]

As a Westerner based in the United Kingdom, I recently conducted some research in the discipline of Environmental Philosophy. The research project looked at the all-but severance of post-Enlightenment Western relationships with the more-than-human world, and asked whether and how the West might be able to learn from and with Indigenous philosophies to regenerate these relationships lost.[3] It looked at the Dialogues and at the shared ground that they found with quantum theory;[4] it looked at Viola Cordova's work and at the shared ground that she found with Spinoza's thought;[5] it looked at everyone in Anne Waters's anthology[6] and at a number of authors beyond, and at the shared ground that they found with American Pragmatism and with phenomenology.[7] Perhaps more than anything, it helped me to begin to feel more comfortable in my own skin as I argued the difference between science and scientism, which was something I had been discouraged from articulating as an undergraduate in the 1980s.

I hope I came in humility. Whether or not I did, I certainly closed in humility: to my relief, and as a corollary of the project's engagement with the participationalist paradigm underlying the areas of shared ground sketched above, I saw a conclusion emerge that predicted no similarity of experience if and when the West embarks on its own journey of regeneration. Had this been otherwise, concerns of having fallen into the trap of validation would have needed to be raised.

I was generously invited to meet a group of Indigenous philosophers in an informal setting last winter. In the near future, I am going to be seeing some of the group's members again in a more formal context. This raises questions of how I can become a good colleague to them. Although I think, with Henry Bugbee, that the answers may emerge in the act of working together,[8] I do not want this to be my only thought: engagement with existing experience need not involve expectation of encountering its exact replica.[9]

In parallel, following completion of the above research project, I continue to try and honor the final step on Gregory Cajete's list of stages when creating a new object—the step

of making the new object (in my case, the project's results) available to be used for good.[10] I ask myself how *this* can be done ethically too. Both questions, on reflection, sit within the wider issue of whether it can be ethical at all—and, if so, how—for a Western philosopher to write about Indigenous philosophies. Boundaries are certain to reveal themselves, and these will deserve to be respected.

"Define *ethical*," many might urge me now. And I find, having at least partially become disentangled from exclusively Western ways of looking at things, that I am unable to do this fully in advance. I could discuss universalized principles of deontology and of utilitarianism and of virtue ethics, and then duly apply these. I could make a case from the legalities of the issue and dismiss it as one of simply making sure everyone is cited when they should be. Much as these thoughts matter, I feel that exclusive focus on them would miss the point. In light of a participationalist paradigm that has me continuously co-creating more than it has me aiming to represent what may already be manifest,[11] part of the challenge will relate to questions arising in the living, where noun-answers based on preconceived categories will not help.[12] An honest approach must be one of engaging with dynamics as they emerge as much as it will be one of considering previously familiar states of affairs.[13] The ethics of my engagement may turn out to have more to do with Brian Burkhart's jazz analogy[14] than with a series of preconceived requirements to be ticked off a list.

However, a few points to consider have already come into view.

How can my work interact with the past wrongs of colonialism?[15] And with present-day, technically post-colonial, but actually worryingly similar injustices?[16] What good can it do, and what harm, and what circumstances are likely to nudge it towards the former? What meanings are likely to emerge from it? How can I ensure that issues of incommensurability between paradigms do not translate into my talking nonsense anyway?

The questions are interwoven, and it will not be entirely possible to answer them in sequence. I will stay with the above sequence at the beginning, and treat the remainder as the complex that it is about to show itself to be: with the remainder, I am going to progress from caveats regarding the two paradigms sharing any philosophical debate at all to thoughts relating to potentially fruitful modes of engagement.

2. PAST AND PRESENT WRONGS

I was shocked as I began to learn about past wrongs. Being based in the United Kingdom, I almost certainly understood less about these than I would expect someone to if they were based in a settler colonial state. I remember commenting to a friend at the beginning of my project that I was baffled by our European imposition of first traveling to help ourselves to other continents and now complaining about migration to ours. Vaguely knowing that there had been past wrongs then turned out not to be the same at all as learning what some of these were. I am sorry, not because I was personally present to commit these wrongs, but because they were committed on my behalf in the sense that I have been on the receiving end of privilege resulting from them to this day.

With regards to present-day wrongs, I learned that much of what used to be understood as specifically colonial injustice is still going on in technically post-colonial times.[17] I saw my project on the receiving end of one of the dynamics of its still going on, finding it accused, by some, of being "not philosophy" because it did not limit itself to Western philosophy.[18] Sharing in one of the dynamics, however, is not the same as sharing in a web of them. I have not done the latter, and it is likely that the option of doing the latter may not even be available to me:[19] I may not have an option of choosing whether I want to be courageous enough to, nor of choosing whether to assume that it would solve anything if I did. What I do hope to do is to become a colleague who contributes usefully as a way of acting responsibly on what I am learning.

Emergence of useful contribution relates to the above questions of good and of harm, of meanings, and of coherence. Vine Deloria's quip of each Indigenous family having their own resident anthropologist[20] has been echoed many times over: for example, once again at last year's Congress of the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences at York, when stories emerged of academic practices falling short on all three of the above fronts.[21] The relevance of this point cannot be limited to the discipline of anthropology alone:[22] a philosopher cannot be assumed to be immune simply on the grounds of their being a philosopher. The questions, then, deserve a closer look.

3. WESTERN ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHIES: POTENTIAL GOOD, POTENTIAL HARM, AND ISSUES OF MEANING AND COHERENCE

3.A) A SERIOUS CONCERN'S MOST SERIOUS SIDE: CAN THE TWO PARADIGMS PHILOSOPHIZE TOGETHER AT ALL?

The question of whether philosophical discussion between Indigenous and Western paradigms can successfully take place at all—irrespective of whether, within this, Westerners then comment on Indigenous paradigms or only on their own—is an open one, particularly in light of the above issues of discrimination. Concerns such as Dale Turner's have been raised for good reason:[23] a philosopher is not going to argue that debating philosophies will not work unless they have seen it not working, and unless they believe that the roadblocks preventing it from working have remained in place.

Disrespect precludes the knowledge process, as Shay Welch points out.[24] Welch's point is richer and more serious than it would have been within an exclusively representationalist paradigm: within an exclusively representationalist paradigm, we would be dealing with epistemic injustice pertaining to knowledge understood as the thing known, such as, for example, that discussed by Miranda Fricker[25] (albeit, now in a context of philosophical

diversity, with a need for additional accommodation of genuine incommensurability problems,[26] some of which may be understood through the impossibility of a complete phenomenological reduction[27]). Corruption of the knowledge base (as understood from within an exclusively representationalist paradigm)[28] resulting from the above could arguably be viewed as a less serious concern here. Not much is likely to be lost if an approach fails to gain traction whose fault lines have already been shown to be too great: cherrypicking from each of the existing frameworks, or approaches of meeting in an imaginary middle of the existing, have been dismissed for being doomed from the beginning, as all that is likely to emerge is incoherence and potentially more domination.[29]

There is more at stake than this, however: when Welch points out that disrespect precludes the knowledge process, the wording chosen, as well as the fact of her statement being made in the context of her book discussing performative knowledge processes, demonstrates that her concern relates to more than just to Western conceptions of epistemic injustice in a representationalist paradigm. It is also Merleau-Ponty's weaving of the network that carries our existence,[30] and the playing of Brian Burkhart's above jazz, which disrespect is going to preclude from taking place. Where there is no respect, but where there is, instead, objectification, agency cannot move into the relationships concerned, because the objectifying partner is, in the act of objectifying, retaining unilateral control.[31]

It is at this point that a crucial dimension to Dale Turner's concern is revealed. To the extent that universalist disrespect remains in place, it is not only the above, inappropriate cherrypicking from the existing which is going to be prevented: it is also potentially fruitful, shared learning and creation of new paths towards liveable neighborliness which is going to be short-circuited.

I am going to argue, however, that it is the disrespect that needs to go, not the engagement. Once it has, there may be hope of Brian Burkhart's above jazz being played, and of Merleau-Ponty's next network being woven skillfully enough to carry our neighborly existence.

3.B) HUMILITY, THE MIND-BODIES OF CABBIES AND VIOLINISTS, AND A PRAGMATIC THOUGHT WITH A SMALL p: CAN IT BE ETHICAL FOR THE WEST TO ASK FOR HELP OPENING OUR PARACHUTES?

The post-Enlightenment West has, through our own fault as we struggled to distinguish between the science enabling us to have vaccination programs on the one hand and the scientism preventing us from seeing the wood for the trees on the other,[32] spent five hundred years largely segregated from the subjective company of the more-than-human world. Our interspecies relationships have mostly been based on objectification,[33] and our openness to interaction with the sacred appears to have narrowed, as pre-Enlightenment expectations of the inclusion of shared meaning-making in interspecies relationships[34] gave way to post-Enlightenment prevalence of dogmatised forms of interaction[35] with what has been referred to by Sa'ke'j Henderson as a "noun-God."[36] If we were to seek attunement in interspecies kinship, there is every possibility that we would, at least until we had embarked on a period of retraining, find that we had, through lack of practice, deprived ourselves not only of role models and of Wittgensteinian riverbeds in this regard, but also of some aspects of the necessary neurophysiological makeup.[37]

Intolerance emerged as a corollary of universalist near-reduction of the world's dynamics to those of but one familiar set of billiard balls.[38] The trouble with this is not that Newtonian physics is suddenly "wrong":[39] the trouble starts when we work on the assumption, and expect others to, that Newtonian physics must be all that there is. Indigenous societies have, as a result, through our Western fault as discussed above, also experienced gaps in their opportunity to continuously renew and keep alive their rhythms of interaction in interspecies kinship. These gaps have been imposed rather than chosen, and have therefore understandably been unwelcome and, wherever possible, duly resisted.[40] The resulting smaller gap in intellectual, emotional, embodied, and spiritual affinity means that Indigenous understandings of philosophical concepts such as agency in relationship are likely to be richer among Indigenous philosophers than in Western philosophical circles by and large, and it means that Indigenous philosophers, as well as their Indigenous friends and families without formal philosophical training, are on average likely to become more easily reaccustomed to attunement in hearted, minded, embodied, and spiritual interspecies kinship.[41]

The West would be foolish not at least to try and learn from this attitude of respectful responsiveness, just as we would be negligent if we failed to acknowledge that we ought to. It is not only our own, Western well-being in relationship with our own non-human kin in Western—in my case, European—localities that is at stake here. It is also time for a much-needed spur to become better neighbors to those currently impacted, potentially in localities many miles from ours, by our overgrazing of the world's climate commons.[42]

There remains, of course, the unfairness of our having pushed everyone off a climate cliff, and of our now asking those who did not do the pushing to show us how to open our parachutes. There also remains, however, the even greater unfairness of *not* asking, when we already know that our impact at the bottom of the cliff will destroy our homes for everyone.[43]

3.C) HOW CAN THE PRAGMATIC QUESTION OF OUR FALLING OFF THE CLIMATE CLIFF INTERACT FRUITFULLY WITH PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE BETWEEN PARADIGMS?

Attempts have been made by contemporary Western science to learn from physical expressions of Indigenous relationships with non-humans alone, thus once again severing engagement with the physical from engagement with questions of meaning. Outcomes have been found to display the characteristics discussed in the context of

inappropriate cherrypicking from the existing above.[44] I would argue, with the Indigenous philosophers so far referenced, that the two above issues are inextricably related, and that at least two dimensions to this relatedness are relevant here.

Firstly, when Viola Cordova asks her three philosophical questions of what the world is, of what it is to be human, and of what the role of a human is,[45] it is only in the very first instance of post-Enlightenment Western perception that the three questions may appear anthropocentric and thus largely unrelated to questions of kinship with the more-than-human world. They are not: this not only becomes clear through other authors' works referenced (for example, Brian Burkhart's above *Indigenizing Philosophy through the Land*), but also through Cordova's own (for example, her above "Ethics: The We and the I"). Cordova's philsophical questions may use the word "human," but they use it in the knowledge that to be human is to be inextricably interrelated with those who are not.

Secondly, as shown in the context of terminology at the beginning of this paper, in a paradigm where philosophy relates to our hearted, embodied, and spiritual as well as to our minded interaction with the humans and non-humans around us, a pragmatic question cannot be a pragmatic question alone: it is also, by its very nature, a philosophical one. Here, the physical manifestations of climate emergency are, by necessity, as much at the heart of any philosophical endeavor as Cordova's (at first glance) generalized questions are, as the two modes of enquiry are one. A Western philosopher worth their salt, when encountering physical expressions of Indigenous practice in relation to interspecies kinship, will therefore not be able to help but engage with the philosophical meanings involved too.

Any sense of the unexpected about a Western philosopher writing about Indigenous philosophies in relation to the climate emergency may thus well be connected, I would argue, with another concern.

The inaugural issue of the *APA Studies on Native American and Indigenous Philosophy* (at the time known as the *Newsletter on American Indians in Philosophy)*[46] contained several contributions arguing in favor of philosophical debate between paradigms—on the proviso that it *was* philosophical debate rather than ill-conceived research methodology thinly veiling post-Enlightenment Western imposition, misinterpretation, and disregard. Between the lines, the inaugural *Newsletter* feels as full of hope and as full of resolve now as it is likely to have felt in 2001: Indigenous philosophers at the turn of the millennium were claiming this new avenue opening up to assume their rightful place at the table.[47]

The inaugural *Newsletter* contains no setting out of expectations with regards to Western philosophers' subsequent engagement with Indigenous philosophers' scholarly contributions to be published. My interpretation of the absence of this discussion is to conceive it as likely to be related to the continuing and unprofessional prevalence of Western failure to cite Indigenous scholars,[48] rather than to see it as an indication of Indigenous philosophers' unwillingness to be cited in Western-authored work. The tone of the inaugural *Newsletter* leaves me with a sense of a hand being extended in friendship, on the proviso that when I extend mine in response, this must be done with integrity. The question does not seem to be one of whether or not it is possible for me to be welcomed. The question seems to be one of how I can take steps to increase the likelihood of my being any good.

3.D) A POTENTIAL ROLE FOR AN ACADEMIC APPROACH, AND FOR A WESTERN PHILOSOPHER WITHIN THIS

The discussion, thus, returns to the question of how a Western philosopher's writing on Indigenous philosophies can find a useful role to play in engagement with the pragmatic and philosophical issues at stake. It will be unusual for a Western philosopher to have anything to offer with regards to any particular tribe's interspecies kinships: we will not usually have lived these and, when engaging with transformative philosophies, reading is not the same.[49] A Western philosopher's writing on the subject of Indigenous philosophies will therefore usually—and in my case, certainly—remain within the academic bounds of commenting on areas of philosophical unity in diversity between Indigenous worldviews such as those outlined by Leroy Little Bear.[50] Any reference to my own hearted, minded, embodied, and potentially spiritual experience, where I include it, will not be Indigenous because I am not.

Can such an academic approach play a useful role?—I would argue that it can: for example, Shay Welch describes her approach in *The Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System* as an academic one.[51] I have learned from her book, and I now hope that this learning is making me better able to grow into new forms of emotional and embodied kinship with non-humans where I am. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke's recent thoughts on scalability cast further light on issues of shared ground between Indigenous philosophies,[52] as do examples of other authors positioning themselves as writing from a tribal perspective while acknowledging the relevance of their thinking to wider Indigenous philosophical debate.[53]

Can such an academic approach play a useful role when it is being offered by a Westerner, though? Again I am going to argue that it can, despite the fact that, even as I write this, alarm bells ring. There are pitfalls to be wary of. There are prerequisites to be met. Finally, crucially, any prerequisites known in advance, although these may be necessary, cannot be sufficient in a realm where agency may move into relationship and where it is thus impossible to predict all that may turn out to be required. With this in mind, it is, nonetheless, going to be helpful to have a closer look at any alarm bells already ringing now.

3.D.1. SOME PREREQUISITES OF AN ACADEMIC APPROACH BEING SUCCESSFUL

Examples of academic approaches to engagement with previously unfamiliar paradigms misfiring are plentiful,[54] as

are examples of misuse of what has been learnt outside academia.[55] Conversely, looking at the above-mentioned Dialogues as an example of an academic approach felt to be successful by those involved,[56] some key features transpire: measures were taken to counteract any known potential for epistemic injustice, and experts were involved and were listened to.[57] A list of participants at the first Dialogue,[58] alongside a discussion of comments made by those present,[59] both show that there must have been transdisciplinary, joined-up thinking. Between the lines of references to the Dialogues, there remains a sense of underlying mutual respect,[60] and of willingness to be surprised rather than to meet the surprising with incredulity and to disreard it as an unwelcome anomaly.[61]

These known characteristics of an approach felt to be successful by those involved can be seen to be mirrored in work reflecting on encounters between non-Indigenous paradigms too: for example, in an anthology discussing feminist and intersectional thought in relation to what is currently perceived to be mainstream philosophy,[62] as well as in John Polkinghorne's thoughts on the relationship between the findings of quantum theory and possible engagement with a Western form of spirituality.[63] Having thus featured in a range of related scenarios, the above characteristics may, at least arguably, represent elements of a family resemblance of what may be necessary prerequisites to successful engagement with a previously unfamiliar paradigm.

And yet, they cannot be sufficient: as stated above, where there is agency in relationship, not all prerequisites to a successful approach can be anticipated. Relatedly, when commenting, academically or otherwise, on an approach involving heart, body, and spirit as well as mind, useful comment cannot come from mind alone. Shay Welch is an expert on Indigenous philosophy and on dance, but the reasons why I feel I have learned from her book are about more, beyond these observable forms of expertise: I would argue that they are about the fact of her knowing what she is talking about being synonymous with the fact of her living it.[64] Once the dynamics of a participationalist paradigm are taken into account, interaction with an Indigenous philosopher's work cannot usefully limit itself to accurate representation in citation alone: it will, if it is going to be any good, also involve co-creative engagement.[65]

3.D.2. SPINOZA'S FICTIONS AS ONLY THAT, AND THE ROUNDABOUT HELPFULNESS OF HAVING LITTLE TO SHARE

This co-creative engagement deserves a closer look.

Previous sections showed Indigenous philosophies to be rooted in locality, so that any elements of philosophical unity in diversity identified cannot be all-encompassing. Relatedly, it was shown that philosophies engaging with hearted, embodied, and spiritual as well as minded interaction in a world conceived under a participationalist paradigm cannot be approached through the written word alone.

At first glance, then, it might appear at odds with this for me now to be arguing that a Western philosopher, with no Indigenous background of their own enabling lived knowledge of Indigenous philosophies, may nonetheless engage co-creatively and potentially comment usefully on these.

I would also consider, however, that an easily overlooked crux of the matter lies in the very dynamics of such a participationalist paradigm grounded in locality: in a roundabout way, my absence of lived Indigenous knowing may well turn out to have its own, unexpected use in my own, specific context. It was argued above that much of the trouble in our contemporary Western overgrazing of the climate commons relates to the five-hundred-year gap in our preparedness to enter into our own kinship relationships with the more-than-human world in our own localities. A Western philosopher engaging with Indigenous paradigms and, as a result, taking their own baby steps towards bridging their own gap, minded, hearted, embodied and, perhaps, in time, eventually spirited, as agency finds its way back into their own interspecies relationships—in my case, in Europe—may in time produce writing that rings true in the lives of my fellow European overgrazers of the world's climate commons.

Under a performative knowledge system in a participationalist paradigm, where learning cannot simply mean taking on board someone else's propositional knowledge, the push created by my lack of lived experience of interspecies kinship in Indigenous localities towards seeking lived engagement in my own locality may turn out to be conducive to fruitful philosophizing. For one thing, when knowledge is hearted, embodied, and spirited alongside being minded, propositional knowledge is not enough even when argued from within a largely representationalist paradigm, as, for example, John Dewey points out.[66] Secondly—and Dewey alludes to this,[67] as does Merleau-Ponty,[68] as does Bugbee,[69] but none of them with the subtlety of Viola Cordova's pond analogy[70]—*any* form of direct knowledge transfer between interlocutors, propositional or otherwise, must fall short of being able to tell the recipient what to do because in the living dynamic of shared learning and creation in locality and under a participationalist paradigm, the recipient's jazz band will be playing its own variations on any signature tune.[71] When debating the wisdom or otherwise of explaining a story just told, Lindsay Keegitah Borrows decides against it with the words, "I don't want to steal the story from you."[72]

Simply to reference an author's thoughts without relating to them as Dewey's entire live creature[73] in one's own, ever-emerging network of relationships would therefore be bound to fall flat. Equally, to resort (perhaps in an ill-conceived attempt at experiential learning in order to overcome this flatness) to appropriating another person's or group's ceremonial customs in their existing relationships of interspecies kinship—in relationships, in other words, which are someone else's and not ours—would also be bound to end in failure: it would not only be the arrogant cultural appropriation that it is, on a par with the peyote "pilgrimages" deplored by Cajete above, which would be reason enough not to go anywhere near

it. Equally importantly, it would be an empty, ineffectual gesture because the relationship from which a meaningful gesture could grow is not there.

It is thus not the noun-based outcome, tamed to submit to membership of categories already familiar, which is available to be learned here: it is the signature tune of shared dynamic, to be improvised upon. It is in the relationships that *are* there to be formed, in a Western learner's own locality, where shared learning and creation lies waiting to be allowed to find its way back to the center, and it is the verbs of shared learning and creation that are needed for this.[74] When Mary Midgley speaks of our need to begin from familiar categories as we set out to approach the previously unfamiliar,[75] she immediately qualifies this by emphasizing the importance of then letting go, just as Spinoza emphasizes the use of fictions as early stepping stones and as nothing more than these.[76] McPherson and Rabb,[77] and Linda Tuhiwai Smith,[78] caution with regards to the same pitfall.

A small proportion of my sharing may be propositional: I may, for example, be able to help a fellow Westerner's engagement with Grimaldo Rengifo's work[79] by remembering my own difficulties and nudging them in the direction of Kyle Whyte's[80] alongside. More importantly, I hope that as my lack of lived experience of interspecies kinship in Indigenous contexts pushes me to embark on my own relationships with non-humans near me, I may, between the lines of my writing, play variations on signature tunes which may resonate with my fellow overgrazers beyond our minds alone, and which may help them, too, to help us all to find our way to a better way in and with the post-Enlightenment European places where we are.

4. CONCLUSION

It was shown that any philosophical engagement between the paradigms concerned will necessarily be undertaken not only in the shadow of past colonial wrongs, which in itself is reason for humility, but also from a position of wariness of continuing universalist imposition: universalist structures have been shown still to be in operation; universalist paradigms have been found to be adept at hiding under an invisibility cloak.[81]

A number of caveats arose from these considerations, and it was shown that these become all the more serious once conceived from within a participationalist paradigm. A handful of prerequisites to potentially fruitful engagement were identified. However, it had to be emphasized that these, necessary as they may be, cannot be expected to be sufficient, as additional ones may arise from the dynamics of lived engagement.

Bearing in mind the above caveats, potential for positive engagement was then also found. The very impossibility of a Western philosopher taking anything other than a purely academic approach to elements of philosophical unity in diversity between Indigenous worldviews was found to be capable of becoming useful in an unexpected way. It was a Western philosopher's very inability to take a lived tribal perspective which showed the potential to nudge them towards their own hearted, embodied, and spirited engagement in interspecies relationship in their own, different locality, and alongside their minded endeavor. It was shown that this form of engagement may turn out to be helpful to fellow overgrazers of the climate commons in search of their own new path:[82] acknowledgement of the possibility of there being agency in relationship may arguably be taken on board propositionally; openness to its actually being able to emerge appears more akin to William James's thoughts with regards to sleep.[83] It is, I would argue, in this dynamic that the contemporary West may find its way back into kinship in the world, both in its own locality—in my case, in Europe—and then in its neighborly relations.

Space may open up for renewed possibilities as we allow ourselves to be reshaped in the living, agentive interspecies relationships waiting to be rekindled in our own, Western localities. It may become possible for our regeneration of our own ability to be hearted, embodied, and spirited beings alongside being minded ones to grow into more than a means to an end of learning more *about* Indigenous philosophies to indulge our idle curiosity. It may become possible that we will, as we learn *from* more than *about* (and with *from*, for the reasons discussed, necessarily involving the experiential, co-creative in our own locality), become more thoughtful neighbors to those currently affected by our overgrazing of the climate commons. It may then become possible that we develop capacity to do even more than this, and that a few of us may go on from learning *from* to learning *with*: while the importance of neighborly, peaceful coexistence over universalist imposition cannot be overstated,[84] some neighborly questions may, at the same time, benefit from collaborative ways forward being sought.[85] Such collaborative ways forward become more likely to lead to liveable networks of neighborly coexistence the more we in the post-Enlightenment West, too, learn to regenerate our own interspecies kinships, and the more we allow ourselves to reattune to our own experience of the unity of philosophical and pragmatic engagement. The land in Europe, for one, has endured a dearth of such engagement for centuries now, with the fallout being felt all over the world. In a network of living complexity that is more than controllable billiard balls, thriving connections between neglected nodes are waiting to be woven back in.

If Spinoza's thinking is anything to go by, and if it is true that the network of all that there is is too complex for any of us to grasp, then we will need each other. If Raimond Gaita's thinking is anything to go by, then the way we may find each other is in the awe we may experience when we allow ourselves to be moved by the inherent dignity of each, so that all may contribute[86] to the great jazz band of the whole. When I think about that, it helps my Western heart feel the gap in understanding narrow: it brings concepts into view, such as Anne Waters's of sacredness being located in our maturing in relationship,[87] which would previously have felt too far away from my accustomed way of being in the world to approach. These concepts may, in turn, help to narrow all manner of other gaps as they appear along the way. This hope of mine is for myself, as well as for my fellow overgrazers, a few of whom may, with any luck, have read this far.

NOTES

1. Some agonizing went into terminology here: the term "philosophy," defined as "thinking about things" in the first philosophy lecture I ever attended, is arguably too small for what is being asked of it when arguing from within a paradigm where mind will not submit to its post-Enlightenment Western separation from heart, spirit, and embodied interaction (for example, Leanne Simpson with Edna Manitowabi, "Theorizing Resurgence from within Nishnaabeg Thought," 290). However, replacement of the term would carry some risk of placing what is being said into a context of mainstream claims of other-than-Cartesian philosophies somehow being "less-than" (for example, Andrea Nye, "It's Not Philosophy," 104). On balance, "philosophy" stayed.
2. For example, Mary Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*, 127.
3. Questions of scalability may arise from my use of the generalized term "Indigenous" here: with one distinctive feature of Indigenous philosophies being their inextricable connectedness with relationships between humans and non-humans sharing in the same land, there cannot, of course, be any one universal learning outcome at the end of any such research. This issue is going to be explored further in the course of this paper—in particular, in section 3.d, with particular attention to the thoughts of Leroy Little Bear and of Andrea Sullivan-Clarke in this regard. For the purposes of this introduction, suffice it to say that authors from a range of Indigenous backgrounds are going to be cited, both from various parts of the Americas and from further afield (for example, Linda Tuhiwai Smith). As discussed in greater depth in section 3.d, these citations relate to areas of philosophical unity in diversity as initially proposed by Leroy Little Bear, rather to any attempt at any form of comparative study.
4. The Dialogues were a ten-year series of transdisciplinary academic conferences taking place from the early 1990s into the early 2000s. Their purpose was to explore shared ground between a cluster of three elements of philosophical unity in diversity between Indigenous worldviews proposed by Leroy Little Bear on the one hand, and the findings of quantum theory on the other. Direct reference to outcomes of discussions at the Dialogues is made, for example, in David Peat's work (F. David Peat, *Blackfoot Physics*), as well as in Glenn A. Parry's (Glenn A. Parry, *SEED Graduate Institute: An Original Model of Transdisciplinary Education Informed by Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Dialogue*), Sa'ke'j Henderson's (James Sa'ke'j Youngblood Henderson, "*Ayukpachi*: Empowering Aboriginal Thought," and in Gregory Cajete's (Gregory Cajete, *Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence*. In subsequent years, additional Indigenous philosophers made reference to there being shared ground between Indigenous thought and quantum theory (for example, Viola F. Cordova, *How It Is*; Anne Waters, "Broadening the Scope of American Philosophy at the Turn of a New Millennium"; and Shay Welch, *The Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System: Dancing with Native American Epistemology*. In the later examples, boundaries become blurred between output directly coming from the Dialogues and additional understandings emerging through further engagement.
5. Viola F. Cordova, *The Concept of Monism in Navajo Thought*.
6. Anne Waters (ed.), *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays*.
7. For example, Scott Pratt, *Native Pragmatism: Rethinking the Roots of American Philosophy*, as well as aspects of Bruce Wilshire's work (Bruce Wilshire, *The Primal Roots of American Philosophy: Pragmatism, Phenomenology, and Native American Thought*, and *Fashionable Nihilism: A Critique of Analytic Philosophy*.
8. Henry Bugbee, *The Inward Morning*, 224.
9. For example, Thomas Norton-Smith, *The Dance of Person and Place: One Interpretation of American Indian Philosophy*, 127.
10. Cajete, *Native Science*, 46–52.
11. For example, Viola Cordova's shifting sand analogy (Cordova, *The Concept of Monism in Navajo Thought*, 99), and Karen Barad's agential realism (Karen Barad, "Meeting the Universe Halfway: Realism and Social Constructivism without Contradiction."
12. For example, Henderson, "*Ayukpachi:* Empowering Aboriginal Thought," 262–64.
13. For example, Pratt, *Native Pragmatism*, 163–66.
14. Brian Burkhart, *Indigenizing Philosophy through the Land: A Trickster Methodology for Decolonizing Environmental Ethics and Indigenous Futures*, 292.
15. For example, Dennis H. McPherson and J. Douglas Rabb, *Indian from the Inside: Native American Philosophy and Cultural Renewal*, 26–59.
16. For example, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies*, 14.
17. For example, Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, "A Case of Epistemic Injustice," and also, more recently and now with stronger focus on structural issues, Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, "Epistemic Refusal as a Form of Indigenous Resistance and Respect."
18. Well-known examples of this dynamic include references made by Viola Cordova to having been called "primitive" and thus deemed incapable of engaging with philosophical thought (for example, Cordova, *How It Is*, 40), as well as the above-referenced insight offered by Andrea Nye into similar experiences in a variety of feminist and intersectional contexts (Nye, "It's Not Philosophy").
19. Alison Bailey, "Locating Traitorous Identities: Toward a View of Privilege-Cognizant White Character."
20. Vine Deloria Jr., "Knowing and Understanding," 44.
21. Alanis Obomsawin, after a moving keynote address emphasising the transformative power of love while being candid with regards to the issues in need of transformation, in her subsequent interview with Eve Tuck related encounters with anthropologists where unhelpful questions were asked and heads measured, both of which reinforced harmful patterns of racism and objectification, perpetuated unloving and disrespectful meanings created, and remained largely irrelevant with regards to any research output useful to the community concerned. Congress 2023 of the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Reckonings & Re-imaginings, "Seeds of the Future: Climate Justice, Racial Justice, and Indigenous Resurgence."
22. For example, Devon Abbott Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*.
23. Dale Turner, "Oral Traditions and the Politics of (Mis)Recognition."
24. Welch, *Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System*, 45.
25. Miranda Fricker distinguishes between two types of epistemic injustice, both arising from discrimination, and both (since Fricker's points are made from within a predominantly representationalist paradigm) relating to knowledge as a thing known (rather than to knowledge as process). The two types are: testimonial injustice (prevention of contribution to the knowledge base on the grounds of who the potential contributor is) and hermeneutic injustice (prevention of contribution to the knowledge base through failure to make available mainstream concepts, thus making it unnecessarily difficult for a potential contributor to make themselves understood to the mainstream). Miranda Fricker, "Evolving Concepts of Epistemic Injustice."
26. For example, McPherson and Rabb, *Indian from the Inside*, 147–48.
27. For example, Ted Toadvine, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty."
28. Miranda Fricker, "Epistemic Contribution as a Central Human Capability."
29. For example, Eduardo Grillo, "Development or Decolonisation in the Andes?" in *The Spirit of Regeneration: Andean Culture Confronting Western Notions of Development*, ed. Frédérique Apffel-Marglin with PRATEC (London/New York: Zed Books, 1998), 236. The abbreviation "PRATEC" stands for *Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas*. PRATEC is an organization founded and led by Western-educated academics originally from an Indigenous background, whose aim it is to strengthen Indigenous-led attempts to regenerate Indigenous modes of interaction with the land in the Peruvian Andes. In relation to Grillo's comments referenced here, an important distinction needs to be made explicit: the "eclectic and impossible stance" criticized by Grillo in his paper is that of attempting to pick and mix from existing ideas extracted from both paradigms as they currently are. Grillo is not precluding, on the other hand, the possibility of embarking on processes of shared innovation and

becoming: in light of his and his surviving colleagues' accounts of PRATEC's continuing operations, he cannot be. What appears to have taken place, rather, is that PRATEC's founders found it impossible, and thus refused, to continue to engage with Western structures on Western terms, and instead drew a line in the sand by "deprofessionalising themselves": they insisted on operating on their own terms, and initially with limited contact with mainstream institutions. Eventually, from their position of strength thus developed, they then (and only then) located areas of potentially fruitful collaboration. Their courses (which had initially been offered without mainstream involvement), focusing on Indigenous forms of relationship with the land, and on the interaction of these with the discipline of agronomy, were then (and only then) developed into an accredited program at master's level. (For example, Jorge Ishizawa, "Community-Based Learning in the Peruvian Andes: Decolonising the Academic Disciplines.")

30. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Nature: Course Notes from the Collège de France*, 176.

31. Brian Burkhart references Martin Buber's work on *I-thou* relationships in this regard: Burkhart, *Indigenizing Philosophy Through the Land*, 108. Buber, while acknowledging the relevance of both *I-thou* and *I-it* relationships to successful interaction (for example, Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, 23), makes clear that the absence of objectification in *I-thou* is crucial to the emergence of living relationship (for example, Buber, *I and Thou*, 28).

32. For example, while Gregory Cajete characterizes science as dealing in "systems of relationships and their application to the life of the community" (Cajete, *Native Science*, 66), David Bohm and David Peat point out that the tendency of post-Enlightenment Western science to engage in fragmentation and, as a corollary, its frequent failure to consider unintended consequences of a course of action embarked upon, has much to answer for when it comes to present-day melting ice caps (David Bohm and F. David Peat, *Science, Order, and Creativity*, ix–xxiii.

33. There is a world of difference between the exploitative relationships found, for example, in the course of research conducted by Compassion in World Farming (Compassion in World Farming, *Farm Animals: Dairy Cows*) and the interspecies kinship discussed, for example, by Viola Cordova in "Ethics: The We and the I."

34. For example, Louise Westling, *The Logos of the Living World: Merleau-Ponty, Animals, and Language*, 49–60.

35. The issue of fragmentation discussed by Bohm and Peat above not only expresses itself (as pointed out by the authors) in a contemporary Western tendency to see science as an entirely separate issue from questions of meaning and of sacredness: a parallel ossification of both secular and spiritual engagement through a preference of each for allegedly universalizable principles over mutually responsive, respectful relationship also appears to have taken place (for example, Cordova, *How It Is*, 43–44). This is despite the fact that, at second glance, we may find that there is less of a need to choose between the two than initially anticipated from a post-Enlightenment Western point of view (for example, Anne Waters, "Language Matters: Nondiscrete, Nonbinary Dualism").

36. Henderson, "*Ayukpachi:* Empowering Aboriginal Thought," 253.

37. Although, for example, William James supports the primacy of lived relationship with the sacred, as well as the diversity of such relationships necessarily following from this (for example, William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 332–33), James was aware at the time of writing that his stance was going to ruffle feathers, as post-Enlightenment Western religious understandings tend to take a different view (James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 334). The corresponding near-absence of Western engagement in embodied, ceremonial relationship with more-than-human nature, in turn, is likely to have entailed at least temporary loss in our neurophysiological capacity for such engagement. For example, John J. Holder, "James and the Neuroscience of Buddhist Meditation") discusses neurophysiological change in London cabbies and in accomplished violinists in response to sustained engagement in their respective occupations (which only occurs in individuals with sustained engagement in these); Frans de Waal, relatedly, reports findings of seasonal neurophysiological change in songbirds (*Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* 267).

38. For example, Enrique Dussel, "Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures)."

39. For example, Peat, *Blackfoot Physics*, 170. David Peat here gives a mathematical example of potentially fruitful shared ground once post-Enlightenment Western scientific engagement is no longer viewed to be in a relationship of mutual exclusion with Indigenous conceptions of science. The example chimes with Anne Waters's thinking in "Language Matters: Nondiscrete, Nonbinary Dualism" referenced above.

40. For example, Pratt, *Native Pragmatism*.

41. Examples of initiatives to support such reattunement are being reported to be finding their way into formal education: for instance, Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner, "Teaching Reciprocity: Gifting and Land-Based Ethics in Indigenous Philosophy."

42. The above-mentioned PRATEC project is a case in point: although no major carbon emitter itself by any stretch of the imagination, the project reports being adversely affected by the climate emergency. (PRATEC, *Climate Change in Andean Communities*, http://www.pratec.org/wpress/pdfs-pratec/climatechange.pdf). Parallels thus become observable between the climate emergency and Garrett Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons (Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"): in the short term, there are—albeit selfish as well as short-sighted—benefits to be had from overgrazing. A change in attitude, rather than mere technological intervention, would be required to create a sustainable way forward.

43. For example, NASA, *Global Climate Change*, https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/carbon-dioxide/.

44. For example, Christopher Low, "Different Histories of Buchu: Euro-American Appropriation of San and Khoekhoe Knowledge of Buchu Plants."

45. Cordova, *How It Is*, 83.

46. *APA Newsletter on American Indians in Philosophy* 01, no. 1 (Fall 2001), https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apaonline.org/resource/collection/13B1F8E6-0142-45FD-A626-9C4271DC6F62/v01n1AmericanIndians.pdf.

47. For example, Viola F. Cordova, "What Is Philosophy?" 16.

48. For example, Devon Abbott Mihesuah, "Academic Gatekeepers," 33.

49. While the very fact of my finding ample Indigenous philosophical thought available in written format implies that Indigenous philosophers must envisage readers being able to benefit from reading their work, consensus also soon emerges, on the other hand, on reading on its own being insufficient. (For example, McPherson and Rabb devote almost the entire second half of *Indian from the Inside* to experiential learning.) The latter chimes with the underlying participationalist paradigm: as a corollary of, for example, Burkhart's locality and of Welch's performative knowledge systems discussed above, it cannot be possible simply to distill Indigenous knowledge into propositional knowledge, consume it as such, and then to copy and paste it into a different situation with different relationships. It can only be possible to learn to become aware of opportunities, dynamics, and attitudes conducive to embarking on one's own hearted, embodied, and spirited as well as minded journey of shared learning and creation within one's own relationships.

50. In the context of the above-mentioned Dialogues, Leroy Little Bear proposed three elements of philosophical unity in diversity between Indigenous worldviews. These were, firstly, his point of nature being alive and imbued with spirit; secondly, of Indigenous individuals and groups being coparticipants in nature, which shows patterns as opposed to following laws; and thirdly, of knowledge including that which may be manifesting (also referred to as the spiritual) as well as that which is manifest (also referred to as the physical) (Parry, *SEED*, 89). Although Little Bear broke up the above areas of philosophical unity in diversity into three separate key elements for the purposes of initial knowledge transfer on this occasion, he treats these as one dynamic in his own work (for example, Leroy Little Bear, "Jagged Worldviews Colliding"). An overarching theme not made explicit by Little Bear in the three elements referenced, but emerging between the lines (as well as becoming evident, for example, from his above paper), is a tendency for Indigenous worldviews to conceive dualisms as complementary rather than

as diametrically opposed in the way that they would tend to be viewed in a Cartesian-based, contemporary Western paradigm. Anne Waters's paper on this characteristic of Indigenous worldviews was referenced in relation to questions of scientism above (Waters, "Language Matters: Nondiscrete, Nonbinary Dualism").

51. Welch, *Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System*, 4.

52. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke points out that while areas of philosophical unity in diversity (such as, for example, those cited from Leroy Little Bear's work above) cannot be all-encompassing, a realistic approach will acknowledge that these exist, alongside there being, on the other hand, features which will not travel between localities (Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, "*Discovering Reality* and a First Nations/American Indian Standpoint Theory").

53. For example, Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwew James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, "*Bagijige*: Making an Offering," xxvi.

54. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's above-referenced seminal work, *Decolonising Methodologies*, was first published in 1999, and recent research shows that the problems outlined have by no means gone away: Jeffrey Ansloos, "Rethinking Indigenous Suicide," is but one example.

55. Cajete, for example, points out that Western "pilgrims" taking the medicine plant of peyote out of context only to get high simply represent yet another instance of cultural appropriation (Cajete, *Native Science*, 209).

56. For example, Peat, *Blackfoot Physics*, 15.

57. For example, Peat, *Blackfoot Physics*, 14–15; and Parry, *SEED*, 45–60.

58. Parry, *SEED*, 62.

59. Parry, *SEED*, 45–60.

60. For example, Peat, *Blackfoot Physics*; Henderson, "*Ayukpachi*: Empowering Aboriginal Thought"; and Cajete, *Native Science*, 307–09.

61. For example, Parry, *SEED*, 66.

62. I found a number of contributions to the above anthology edited by Uma Narayan and Sandra Harding, *Decentering the Center*, helpful in this regard. In particular, and dovetailing with the distinction made in the previous section in the context of Grillo's thought between (inappropriate) cherrypicking from the existing on the one hand and shared learning and creation on the other, Sandra Harding asserts the nature of philosophy to be such that it must permanently remain unfinished (Sandra Harding, "Gender, Development, and Post-Enlightenment Philosophies of Science," 256).

63. John Polkinghorne, after a distinguished career as a quantum physicist at Cambridge (where he had originally studied under Paul Dirac) later became one of a number of physicists exploring potential shared ground between quantum theory and the spiritual (in his case, between quantum theory and Christianity). His treatment of the necessity of our inability to understand the world in its entirety remains close to a representationalist view of verisimilitude: his work stops short of embarking on comprehensive engagement with a participationalist paradigm of shared becoming, although, due to some of his arguments being made from quantum theory, elements of a participationalist paradigm do shine through. Of particular relevance to the points being made here is Polkinghorne's comment regarding the importance of embracing the unexpected: "There can be times when one just has to hold on to the strangeness of experience by the skin of one's intellectual teeth, knowing that progress will not come from a facile abandonment of any part of that experience" (John Polkinghorne, *Quantum Physics and Theology*, 90).

64. Welch positions herself not exclusively as an author who writes about Indigenous philosophies from an academic perspective as cited above (Welch, *Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System*, 4) but, alongside this, as a writer who values her Oklahoma Cherokee heritage in its own right as well as a source of starting points for experiential learning for others (for example, in a practice-based integration of an Indigenous conception of creative engagement into a Higher Education program in Native Philosophy: Shay Welch, "Assignment Description: Native American Philosophy, Spring 2022." It is in the interplay of the theoretical with lived participation in co-creation that a glimpse of the potential for learning emerges: Welch regards a dance performance as a successful one if it succeeds in guiding the audience on *their* right path (Welch, *Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System*, 160).

65. McPherson and Rabb, for example, besides (as discussed above) devoting almost the entire second half of their book to experiential learning, stress the importance of Indigenous philosophies being transformative philosophies: McPherson and Rabb, *Indian from the Inside*, 158–63.

66. John Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 70. Dewey asserts that an entire lifetime might not be enough to verbalize even one emotion.

67. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 51–52.

68. Merleau-Ponty, *Nature: Course Notes From The Collège de France*.

69. Henry Bugbee, as Dewey and Merleau-Ponty above, works on an assumption of our participation with the world around us, thus showing shared ground with the above-referenced findings of quantum theory, with Spinoza's network of relationships, and with Indigenous philosophies, to the extent that he acknowledges the misapprehension of attributing exclusive validity to a representationalist understanding of our interactions. Bugbee adds to previous American Pragmatist and European Phenomenologist discussion an explicit synthesis of our imaginative engagement in meaning-making with our embodied participation: drawing on his wartime experiences on board a naval vessel, he sketches defining moments for the protagonists as those when understanding materialises (frequently in non-verbal form) as a naturally developing fruit of their commitment to the relationships they are participating in (Bugbee, *The Inward Morning*, 187–93). What even Bugbee stops short of, however, is engagement with forms of interaction at eye level with more-than-human nature, such as, for instance, the relationality described by the above-referenced PRATEC project, which exemplifies Leroy Little Bear's elements of philosophical unity in diversity in the sense that spiritual as well as material agency can be understood to be located in inter-species relationship as much as in the individuals concerned. Bugbee relies on—and visibly appreciates—non-human nature as a backdrop for *his* philosophizing (for example, Bugbee, *The Inward Morning*, 226). This is, however, not the same as to acknowledge non-human nature as a partner in a relationship of co-creative philosophizing.

70. For example, as discussed in a lecture shortly before Cordova's death, "Together with the place we live, we are cocreators of the world, bringing it into existence moment by moment. So there is no escaping responsibility. (. . .) "Your life is a pebble thrown in a pond," she told the students (. . .) . "And not just the pebble; your life is the pebble and the water and the energy that moves the waves and the movement of the waves themselves." (. . .) They knew the magnitude of the gift of self-respect and wisdom she was giving them." Kathleen Dean Moore, "Introduction," in Cordova, *How It Is*, xiii–xiv.

71. It may be useful to recapitulate here that Brian Burkhart's jazz analogy (Burkhart, *Indigenizing Philosophy through the Land*, 292) is offered in the context of the remainder of his work emphasizing the importance of allowing interspecies relationships in place—which entails locality rather than universalism—to grow into ethical forms of shared becoming. This chimes with Shay Welch's above-referenced comments regarding the dynamics of interaction between (nonverbal as much as verbal) story, teller, and recipient (Welch, *Phenomenology of a Performative Knowledge System*, 160), whereby a story successfully told will be helpful in guiding the audience on their own path (as opposed to expecting them to follow the teller's).

72. Lindsay Keegitah Borrows, "Stories and Reflections from Neyaashiinigiming," 407.

73. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 32.

74. For example, Henderson, "*Ayukpachi:* Empowering Aboriginal Thought," 262–64.

75. Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*, 127.

76. For example, Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics*, 175: E5P31S.

77. McPherson and Rabb, *Indian from the Inside*, 63–64. In the context of their phenomenological analysis of a vision quest, the authors offer a nuanced discussion of the potential usefulness or otherwise of references to Western categories when approaching non-Western experience. Their focus when

discussing the positives of such an approach is, in contrast to Midgley's and to Spinoza's above, mainly on the potential use of Western categories to overcome initial Western scepticism: less prominence is given to their role in offering initial help on a journey towards learning to a Westerner whose first encounter with the previously unfamiliar may have left them off balance and in need of a pair of stabilizers before they regain their balance and are able to continue their journey to meet the unfamiliar on its own terms. Either way, McPherson and Rabb could not be clearer with regards to the need then to leave behind any reliance on previously familiar categories borrowed from a different paradigm: "We make these comparisons not to subsume the vision quest under these preconceived categories" (*Indian from the Inside*, 63.).

78. Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies*, 58. The passage referenced here is a particularly pertinent example of the thrust of Smith's argument in the remainder of her seminal work: in the context of her discussion of conceptions of time and space, the author describes Western persistence in subsuming non-Western experience under Western categories as an approach resulting not only in misunderstandings, but also—as, for example, discussed in sections 3.a and 3.b above—in domination.

79. For example, Grimaldo Rengifo, "The Ayllu": Rengifo explains that when conversation takes place between, for example, a human and a stone, the stone is not anthropomorphized but is, rather, conversed with as a stone.

80. I found Kyle Whyte's thoughts regarding diverse animacies helpful when approaching Rengifo's account of relationships experienced in "The Ayllu" referenced above. (Kyle Whyte, "An Ethic of Kinship," 32.)

81. For example, Wilshire, *Primal Roots of American Philosophy*, 164.

82. This chimes, for example, with a point made by Vine Deloria with regards to land being consecrated by groups placing their roots in it, and entering into new relationships with fellow humans and non-humans sharing in the land, thus developing new forms of spiritual unity in the locality in question (Vine Deloria Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*, 288).

83. James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," 405: James points out that sleep must be experienced to be known.

84. For example, Pratt, *Native Pragmatism*, 78–106.

85. Pratt, for instance, exemplifies this line of thought by referencing a ship analogy first offered by Roger Williams: "Passengers can be expected to support the smooth operation of the ship as a present shared interest," while retaining their ability to make use of private cabins while travelling. The latter serve as a metaphor for passengers' ability to retain and embrace the diversity of their distinctive characteristics and preferences (Pratt, *Native Pragmatism*, 133–34).

86. For example, Raimond Gaita, *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love and Truth and Justice*, 106.

87. Anne Waters, "Sacred Metaphysics and Core Philosophical Tenets of Native American Thought: Identity (Place, Space), Shared History (Place, Time), and Personality (Sacred Emergence of Relations)," 13–14.

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Obligation, Accountability, and Anthropocentrism in Second-Personal Ethics

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The Métis Nation has a long and ongoing relationship with the nonhuman creatures with whom it shares territory. Naturally, any culture that lives so closely with the other beings in its territory develops ideas about the proper relations between humans and other beings. For the Métis,

a guiding principle of the relations between humans and other beings is *wahkootowin*, or kinship.[1] *Wahkootowin* underlies Métis politics, governance, social life, and ethical thought.[2] *Wahkootowin* ethics, as I interpret the view, is committed to two important features of ethical obligation.

First, obligation is *direct*. My *wahkootowin* obligations, when I have them, are always between me and some other being, with no intermediary. It is the kinship relationship directly between my spouse and I that binds me to honor our vows. When I have obligations to my siblings or parents, it is also that kinship relationship between the two of us that generates the obligations and has normative power over me. *Wahkootowin* obligations are also *directed*: they are always obligations *to* someone else. It makes no sense to say that I stand in a kinship relationship to no one in particular. Because those relationships are the basis of the *wahkootowin* ethical system, it likewise makes no sense to say that I have an obligation to no one in particular. Neither of these points are stated directly by the Métis thinkers who have written on *wahkootowin*, but I take them to be obvious features of kinship relations generally, and so take them as features of obligations generated by *wahkootowin* relationships as well.

There is an already established picture of ethics which can give an ethical worldview where obligations are direct and directed. Second-personal ethics is a style of ethical thought that takes our obligations *to each other* as central to moral life. In the second-personal ethics literature, one prominent analysis of obligation comes from Stephen Darwall: roughly, I am obligated to act in a certain way toward you just in case you have the proper standing to hold me accountable for so acting.[3] In this paper, I argue that this analysis of obligation cannot properly account for us being obligated *to* nonhuman beings and ecosystems. One potential solution to the problem I raise comes from Scanlon's Trustee Model.[4] On that view, the reasonable rejection of our principles for action by a human trustee standing in for nonrational beings stands in for such an act by the beings themselves. While this view has some apparent positives, I argue that it retains a problematic anthropocentrism. On the trustee view, I argue, our obligation is not directed to the proper object, and so depends in an undesirable way on rational agents, viz. human beings.

I use the Métis notion of *wahkootowin* as the basis of an account of obligation. While a literal translation of *wahkootowin* is something like "relative" or "relation," I use the English word "kinship" as a translation of *wahkootowin*, since I think it captures some of the normative connotation that comes along with the term in Michif and Cree.[5] Métis scholar Brenda Macdougall says that *wahkootowin* is a Cree concept that "represents how family, place, and economic realities were historically interconnected, the expression of a world view that laid out a system of social obligation and mutual responsibility between related individuals."[6] I argue that *wahkootowin* offers a ground for obligation that can provide the attractive features of a second-personal account while including all the beings that ought to be included in our ethical reflection.

From a *wahkootowin* perspective, the domain of related individuals is much broader than just human beings. Métis elder Maria Campbell writes of *wahkootowin:* "at one time, from our place it meant the whole of creation. And our teachings taught us that all of creation is related and interconnected to all things within it. *Wahkotowin* means honoring and respecting those relationships."[7] Métis scholar Zoe Todd even extends kinship to oil, as a part of the landscape of the Métis homeland.[8] The idea that we might have ethical obligations to oil demonstrates the radical departure that *wahkootowin* makes from other ethical views. Oil is not normally among the beings considered in moral deliberation. Thus, the notion of kinship that *wahkootowin* seeks to capture is much broader than the English word would imply.

In her book *One of the Family: Métis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan*, Brenda Macdougall explains four major values of *wahkootowin*: reciprocity, mutual support, decency, and order.[9] While Macdougall does not give us an explicitly ethical interpretation of *wahkootowin* (the pieces are there, but her concern is about social structures and not ethics in particular), I want to use *wahkootowin* and the principles we get from Macdougall as the foundation of a distinctly Métis ethical system. This is not to say, of course, that I intend to speak for all Métis communities in articulating my interpretation of a *wahkootowin* ethics, nor that all Métis communities would look to *wahkootowin* as the central concept or value on which to build their ethical worldview. I seek instead to articulate one Métis person's interpretation of the principles of *wahkootowin* as a central concept in ethical life, and to explain why it offers a preferable picture to the second-personal ethics that we get from Darwall.

I argue that each *wahkootowin* principle has a place in a *wahkootowin* ethical system. Mutual support can fill out the positive content of *wahkootowin* ethical relationships. We can use mutual support to help us figure out what a relationship demands of us, given the type of relationship and the needs and abilities of the parties. Reciprocity helps us understand relationships that seem to have a one-sided dependence relation. With attention to reciprocity, we can see why not every relationship has to be an exchange of material support. Reciprocity can also help us understand when our relationships are failing, and in so doing help us understand the claims *wahkootowin* relations put on us. I argue that decency can be used to give an explanation of impermissibility in a *wahkootowin* ethics. To say that an action is impermissible is to say that doing it would be *indecent*. The question of how to establish what would be decent in a particular circumstance is a difficult one, but I think that the fourth characteristic, order, can help us understand what demands decency places on us.

Order functions as something of an "ideal" against which to compare our actions and institutions. The smooth functioning of kinship relations is the product of order, and so once we understand what it is for a kinship relationship to function smoothly, we can refer to order to evaluate our relationships and institutions to see whether they meet the requirements of smooth functioning. What it means for a relationship to function smoothly is, obviously, deeply

dependent on the nature of the relationship, the individuals involved in it, and so on. But attention to the needs and capacities of the related beings and the nature of the relationship can help orient our ethical deliberation toward an ideal of smooth functioning. That ideal is the purpose that order serves in a *wahkootowin* ethical system. This is only a quick outline of the *wahkootowin* ethics, and, of course, much more could be said on each of the principles and how they function to give us a comprehensive account of ethical life. But for our purposes here, this sketch should suffice.

DARWALL AND THE ACCOUNTABILITY PICTURE

One interesting approach to ethics in the anglophone world—for instance, by Stephen Darwall—is *second-personal* ethics. These views emphasize as central the idea that ethical obligations are primarily second-personal in nature, i.e., that they are owed by some agent to some other being. Darwall's analysis of obligation, which I call the "accountability analysis," provides a theory of obligation that can easily capture the directness and directedness of obligations I outlined above. However, the accountability analysis is not well-suited to explain our obligations to nonhuman creatures and the land. It leads to a picture of obligation that is fundamentally anthropocentric. So this article is meant to explain the features of Darwall's view that are compatible with the *wahkootowin* view, and also to explain why his analysis of obligation is ultimately unable to account for what I consider vital (true!) claims of the *wahkootowin* ethical system.

There are two important features of second-personal ethical obligation that are well-suited to include beings that have been left out of most ethical deliberation. As such, they are also features of my interpretation of *wahkootowin* ethics. Like second-personal obligations, *wahkootowin*-based obligations are *direct*, i.e., that they hold between two agents without intermediaries,[10] and they are *directed*, i.e., they are obligations *to some other* and not general obligations. An example that I take to be an undirected obligation would be something like "reduce suffering." This obligation is one that Darwall would call third-personal, I contend—there are some state of affairs, like suffering, that are bad. If we have an obligation to reduce suffering generally, the obligation in that situation is to change the state of affairs. This is an *agent-neutral* obligation. Instead of an obligation that holds between me and someone else, it is one that is supposed to give any agent a reason to act, without reference to their relationships to others.[11] An undirected obligation means that there is no obligation *to* some other to reduce suffering.

My argument is that *wahkootowin* offers a way to get obligations of the appropriate kind—direct and directed—without falling prey to the anthropocentrism present in the accountability analysis of obligation. *Wahkootowin* obligations, as a result of their nature as kinship relations, are both direct and directed. The key feature of the accountability analysis which results in anthropocentrism is the requirement for second-personal competence that Darwall demands in his picture of obligation. In the next section, I will explain why a requirement for second-personal competence results in problematic anthropocentrism, and why the attempts to include nonhuman creatures in second-personal ethics lapses back into anthropocentrism when it tries to hold on to the requirement for second-personal competence.

As a first pass at Darwall's picture of moral obligation as accountability, we can look to his chapter "Moral Obligation: Form and Substance" where he says that an argument can be made from "moral obligation's form as fundamental answerability to one another as representative persons."[12] The idea here is that the basic nature of moral obligation has to do with others, and their ability to call us to account for our actions. Answerability is at the center of accountability—to be answerable to someone else is for them to have a claim on you to give an account of your actions. We often think, for instance, that parents are not answerable to their children. We implicitly endorse this idea when we accept "because I said so" as a legitimate answer to a child's question about why they can or cannot do something. Parents are not answerable to children, we might think, because children lack the right sort of abilities to legitimately demand answers from their parents.[13] On the other hand, there is an idea that a government only has the moral authority to constrain or demand the actions of its citizens if there is some mechanism through which that government can be held accountable—often, through democratic or legal structures which allow the citizens to force the government to explain, defend, and redress harms done by its actions.

The basic requirement to be a moral agent in Darwall's picture is to have what he calls *second-personal competence*—"whatever psychic competences are necessary to enter into mutually accountable, interpersonal relationship."[14] The vital pieces of second-personal competence, for Darwall, are these: First, rational agency.[15] Second, the ability to imaginatively project into some other's point of view.[16] Third, the capacity to make normative judgments, and to regulate one's own behavior by such judgments.[17] The combination of these three capacities is what characterizes second-personal competence for the rest of this article. The idea is that someone is second-personally competent if they are capable of recognizing the demands others make on them, and that they make on others, and if they are capable of changing their behavior in virtue of these demands.

As I understand it, Darwall's picture of obligation depends on accountability. So, for Darwall, x is obligated to y just in case y has the standing to hold x accountable for acting (or refraining from acting) in a certain way. I take it that both standing and holding accountable are necessary. If a creature could hold us accountable but lacks the standing to do so, then no obligation exists. Likewise, if the creature has standing but is utterly incapable of holding us accountable, then no obligation exists. If another creature with standing chooses not to hold us accountable, then no obligation exists—this, I take it, is how we explain the possibility of consenting to acts which would be immoral to commit without that consent. This is why, for example, it is not immoral for a surgeon to cut me open, even if the surgery is a failure or ends up causing me harm. It would be immoral for a burglar to cut me open, even if they do

little lasting harm. Indeed, even if the burglar accidentally performed a perfect appendectomy, which unbeknownst to me I needed, it would be immoral of them to do so without my consent.

Darwall's view is that second-personal obligations are both direct and directed.[18] The argument that these obligations are directed is relatively simple—in virtue of their second-personal nature, these obligations are always directed at some other. It makes no sense to say that I have an obligation *to you*, where the "you" refers to no one. We might think that sometimes the "you" refers to an imagined person, or some composite body like a group, corporation, or city population. But even in these cases, the directedness of the obligation is clear—it's to another, whether the other in the case is a representative person, a group, or a concrete individual.

As for directedness, it is not clear that Darwall is committed to the idea that *all* obligations are direct. Nonetheless, I think that the basic case of a dyadic second-personal moral obligation *is* always direct. If I owe you some act, then I owe you that act directly, not through my owing the act to some other person. So if I have an obligation to not harm my sister, then my obligation is to her and not my parents who might be happy that I treat her well. Rather, it is because I have an obligation *to my sister* to refrain from harming them that I ought to do so. This follows from the structure of second-personal obligations, especially the basic case of a dyadic[19] obligation.

Having established the directness and directedness of Darwall's view, we can move on to some interpretive work. I want to explain why I think that Darwall's accountability analysis cannot keep the directness and directedness that I find so appealing about second-personal pictures of ethics when nonhuman creatures are considered objects of obligation. There is an obviously anthropocentric way to interpret Darwall's view, which I will call the "literal" interpretation. If we interpret the phrase "holding *x* accountable" in the strongest way possible, then we would say *y* needs to be able to use language to satisfy their side of the obligation relation. That is, it would only be possible for *x* to be obligated to *y* if *y* can articulate or communicate their intention to hold *x* accountable. Since we humans primarily communicate using language, and only understand human language,[20] it's clear that the literal interpretation of Darwall's requirement is anthropocentric. Leaving aside the question of standing, on this view only humans could possibly hold one other accountable.

This is not a particularly plausible interpretation of Darwall's position, however, because it completely leaves out cases in which our being held accountable could be reasonably expected, but we are not actually called to account by anyone else. Clearly, this less demanding kind of accountability is the kind that is at play in most normal situations. When I walk down the street, if I, for some reason, seriously consider blocking the street to another walker or restraining a stranger, I simply imagine and take as authoritative the fact that they would likely hold me accountable for impeding their progress down the street and that they have standing to do so. In these common cases, the expression of the intention to hold someone accountable is not explicit. We need an interpretation that accounts for the hypothetical nature of most of the accountability relations between people. After all, we do not refrain from engaging in immoral behavior because someone has expressed their intent to hold us accountable for it in every case.

So let us abandon the literal interpretation of holding someone accountable in favor of a less explicit interpretation of that action, according to which we have a reasonable expectation that we would be held accountable by others. This is where the idea of a representative person comes back into the discussion. A representative person need not be someone who actually exists. Rather, it is an embodiment, in some sense, of the moral community. For Darwall, I take it that often actual persons *are* representative persons, who speak on behalf of the moral community. But I leave open the possibility that a representative person might be a hypothetical person. Darwall's requirement for imaginative capacities as a part of second-personal competence leads me to think that these capacities might be used to conjure up a hypothetical representative person, at least some of the time. The idea is that there are some things which are legitimately claimed by *any* being that possesses second-personal competence. Since I have second-personal competence, I can use my imaginative capacities to understand what I owe any arbitrary being that also has second-personal competence.

Now we have a picture of obligation that looks something like this: *x* is obligated to *y* just in case *y* has the standing to hold *x* accountable, and *x* has reason to believe that *y* would hold them accountable for acting in some way even if *y* never, in fact, expresses their intention to hold *x* accountable before the act takes place. Hence, I know without blocking the doorway into the hospital that I would be legitimately held accountable for doing so. I therefore recognize that it would be immoral for me to unnecessarily restrain someone else's freedom of movement without good reason. Or, as another example, it would be immoral for me to knowingly give false directions to a stranger, even when I know I'd never be caught, and never see that person again.

Darwall's discussion of representative persons, and the requirement for imaginative projection in second-personal competence, both open the door for this less demanding sort of interpretation. It is a less demanding interpretation than the "literal" interpretation above because it does not require explicit statement of an intent to hold someone accountable—the imaginative capacities of the agent can take the place of these explicit declarations in many cases. Because it is less demanding, this interpretation is more plausible than the literal interpretation. It matches more closely our actual experience of moral life, which is not one in which we spend much time making or receiving declarations of an intent to hold each other accountable for this or that action. However, I argue that even this less demanding version of Darwall's analysis of obligation cannot account for our obligations to nonhuman beings.

The reason that even the less demanding version of Darwall's analysis cannot account for our obligations to nonhuman beings is because the requirement that *y* hold *x* accountable unavoidably excludes nonhuman beings who *should* be included. Even in the less demanding version of the accountability analysis of obligation, it is required that *y* hypothetically hold *x* accountable. The challenge, then, is to come up with a picture of holding *x* accountable that can include all the relevant nonhuman beings. First off, it cannot be a picture that involves human language. After all, nonhuman beings do not use human language. Human language is certainly the most common mechanism for articulating that *y* wants to hold *x* accountable, but even in the most plausible cases, like orcas or corvids, human language is not a possible mechanism for holding another accountable.

The next solution, which I take from Darwall himself, is to focus on *reactive attitudes*.[21] Examples of reactive attitudes are things like indignation or resentment. It seems plausible to think that indignation or resentment can express an intention to hold someone accountable for their acting in a way that produces the relevant reactive attitude. So if we can infer from their actions that orcas or corvids can feel resentment or indignation toward us, we can infer that they intend to hold us accountable for our actions.[22] And indeed, it seems that we often do this with humans. It's hardly an unfamiliar situation to recognize through nonverbal clues that a person has taken offense to your actions.

The reactive attitudes approach manages to explain how we might be held accountable by some animals. And this is not nothing—it definitely serves to account for our intuition that we owe something to what are sometimes called "higher animals." But the view that I want to defend does not limit our ethical obligations to higher animals, whatever one takes that term to denote. Rather, I want to defend the idea that there is something literally true about the idea that we have obligations to rivers and ecosystems, plants and all the animals. While some animals can be captured by the reactive attitude approach, it certainly won't work for other candidate beings. At this point, the reader can choose which they think is the most plausible candidate for ethical consideration. The point stands that for many animals, plants, and probably all ecosystems, reactive attitudes cannot be the mechanism for accountability. It seems almost incoherent to say that a river is indignant; even if not incoherent, it would be a kind of indignance that is so different as to make us (almost) completely insensitive to it. It would therefore not function as a mechanism for accountability.

THE TRUSTEE MODEL

One attempt to explain how we might include nonverbal and even nonhuman beings into the moral world comes from Tim Scanlon's book *What We Owe to Each Other*. While Scanlon would not have characterized his approach as a second-personal one, especially since this book predates Darwall's use of the term, I think that the contractualism in Scanlon's book is a natural fit for the theory of obligation as accountability. Scanlon's view is that his contractualism says an action is right when the principle on which it is based could not be reasonably refused by others.[23] I think the attention to whether others accept or reject the principles for our actions is closely related, though of course not exactly the same in all respects, to the picture of obligation that we have seen from Darwall—it is concerned with consideration of others as autonomous, rational agents who have standing to object to our actions or principles.

I'll call this approach the "trustee model," and it works basically how it sounds like it would: a human takes up the position of trustee for the nonverbal or nonhuman being, and advocates on their behalf.[24] The trustee holding us accountable stands in the for nonhuman being holding us accountable. An example of this would be wildlife conservancy and stewardship initiatives: in these cases, human beings advocate and act as trustees for the nonhuman beings under their care. Humans are the ones who hold us to account for our actions that affect the creatures under their care.

There are a couple things to say about this right away. First, I don't want to argue that there is nothing valuable about reminders from other humans that we have obligations to nonhuman beings. Elders, friends, and other members of the human community can *and should* remind us, when we need a reminder, that we have obligations to others. They do this in the case of humans too. Children might need instruction on their obligations to the nonhuman beings around them as they learn, which they get both from interactions with other beings on the land and from human teachers and kin. In that sense, human trustees are necessary and fulfill an important role in communities.

The reason the trustee model fails to properly capture our obligations to nonhuman beings is not because it is or would be bad for humans to act as reminders or advocates for nonhuman beings. The reason the trustee model fails is because it depends unavoidably on humans to work. If the mechanism of our obligation is mediated by humans, as in the trustee model, then we end up with a theory that says that, were there no other humans, we could have no obligations to nonhuman beings. So it is safe to say that the trustee model is fundamentally anthropocentric. It is an indirect mechanism of obligation, and the obligation that we have to other beings is not indirect. We have an obligation to other beings and the land, not via some other person but via our kinship relations to those beings.

WAHKOOTOWIN

At the beginning of this piece, I mentioned that *wahkootowin* as a concept is a natural consequence of the Métis nation's close relationship with the beings of their homeland. While this is not the place to defend the claim in detail, I want to give my explanation of why we have *wahkootowin* relations with nonhuman beings. In this, I do not pretend to explain how other Métis thinkers ground these relations. I only want to present my understanding of them, to give one picture of our relationships to other beings. I draw my understanding of kinship from Marshall Sahlins's book *What Kinship Is—And Is Not*. In that book, Sahlins defines kinship as "mutuality of being."[25] He says that mutuality of being means that two beings are "intrinsic to one another's existence."[26] My interpretation of what it is to be intrinsic to another's existence is what makes

it true that we have *wahkootowin* relationships to other, nonhuman beings.

First, if I depend on another being for my existence, then that being is intrinsic to my existence. Second, I think that if I cannot be fully understood without reference to another, then that other is intrinsic to my existence. So we can say that my parents are kin; to understand *who* I am, one must understand that I stand in relations to them. This is also true of non-biologically related humans too: one's spouse is (typically) an integral part of one's life and identity. A complete description of me without my spouse is simply not a complete description of *who I am*.

The main idea of Sahlins's view, I think, comes from the titles of the chapters of his book: first "What Kinship Is – Culture" and second "What Kinship Is Not – Biology."[27] Kinship is not merely a record of biological inheritance. Biological facts are important, certainly—my biological parents are *in some sense* intrinsic to my existence, since without them I would not exist. But they may or may not be intrinsic to it *now*—they may or may not currently be kin. Likewise, I did not have a *wahkootowin* relationship to the land on which I currently reside until I moved here—I grew up in the territory of the Ktunaxa people, and their land was the land intrinsic to my being during my formative years. Now I have less of a connection to that land, and my more pressing *wahkootowin* obligations have to do with the traditional territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) peoples.

The formulation that Sahlins uses—that kinship is mutuality of being—is not a Métis formulation of the notion of kinship. But it is an explanation for what Métis thinkers say about *wahkootowin*: that it is a connection that "drew the land, creatures, and people together as spiritual relatives with all of creation."[28] That "at one time, from our place it meant the whole of creation. And our teachings taught us that all of creation is related and interconnected to all things within it."[29] Precisely what draws together the land, creatures, and people is not stated explicitly in Macdougall nor in Campbell's explanation. My candidate explanation is that the facts of our dependence on other creatures to maintain the lifegiving functions of the land and other beings, and the necessity of referring to these particular other creatures in a full description of our selves, draws us together "as spiritual relatives with all of creation," as Macdougall puts it.[30]

There are several reasons for preferring *wahkootowin* relations as a foundation for obligations to the accountability analysis we saw above. First, kinship relations take the right sort of directed form. They can explain our obligations *to* other beings. Second, kinship relations are direct. They do not depend on intermediaries, like the trustee model. With attention to these two facts, we can see that *wahkootowin* ethics not only retains the attractive features of the second-personal view of ethics, but it is also able to include other beings that also should be within the domain of morality. *Wahkootowin* allows us to capture the obligations that we have to nonhuman beings and to land as well as to other humans.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this essay is not to argue against Darwall's view on its own terms. I do not hope to have shown any internal inconsistency, any fallacy, or any other error in argumentation. Perhaps there are some! But my purpose is instead to show that, if we accept the (eminently plausible) idea that we humans can and do have obligations to nonhuman beings and to the land, Darwall's analysis of obligation, and ones like it, are not fit to account for those obligations. These views are too attached to anthropocentric notions of cognitive capacities and accountability that leave them unable to account for nonhuman beings. They either cannot include such beings at all, or have to give up the directness, which I take to be a key feature of the relationships that humans have to their nonhuman kin. We need a different theory of obligation to explain those cases.

I argued that the Cree/Métis concept of *wahkootowin* can provide the beginning of such a theory, because kinship relationships also have the attractive features of Darwall's second-personal theory. They are direct and directed, and so if we take my ethical interpretation of *wahkootowin*, we can preserve the attractive features of the second-personal picture without accidentally excluding a large part of the ethical domain. When we interpret the notion of kinship as "mutuality of being," I argued that we are able to explain why nonhuman beings should be included. They should be included because they sustain the conditions necessary for our existence, and because a full understanding of a human being is impossible without appeal to the land and other beings that make their life possible. Therefore, the nonhuman beings and land around us are intrinsic to our existence. We are what we are, inescapably in virtue of the nonhuman beings and land around us. *Wahkootowin* captures the way that more than just humans are intrinsic to our being, and the obligations that come along with those relations.

NOTES

1. Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan*; Saunders and DuBois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*.
2. Saunders and DuBois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 42; Gaudry, *Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk — 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'*, 78–79, 143–47; Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 469–70; Brenda Macdougall, "*Wahkootowin*: Family and Cultural Identity in Northwestern Saskatchewan Métis Communities," 433.
3. Stephen Darwall, "Form and Substance" 42.
4. Thomas M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 182–87.
5. Macdougall, "*Wahkootowin*: Family and Cultural Identity in Northwestern Saskatchewan Métis Communities," 433.
6. Macdougall, "*Wahkootowin*: Family and Cultural Identity in Northwestern Saskatchewan Métis Communities," 432–33.
7. Maria Campbell, "We Need to Return to the Principles of Wahkotowin," 5.
8. Zoe Todd, "Fish, Kin and Hope: Tending to Water Violations in *Amiskwaciwâskahikan* and Treaty Six Territory," 106–07.
9. Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 8.
10. In the basic case. I think that the generalization from individual agents to community-agents probably merits some discussion (it's not entailed from what has come before now), but it does not seem too problematic to make the argument.

11. Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect, and Accountability*, 9.
12. Darwall, "Moral Obligation: Form and Substance," 42.
13. This is not absolute, of course—children do sometimes have standing, depending on the context. I do not want to endorse this style of parenting here, either. I only use this example as one with which most readers will be familiar.
14. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 46–47.
15. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 47.
16. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 47.
17. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 47.
18. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 9.
19. That is, between two people. In this context, this means it's both direct and singular. I take that to be the basic case of both kinship and obligation, here.
20. I am not a linguist nor a philosopher of language, but I want to leave space here because it seems to me like complex communication between other species could be counted as language, at least in some cases—I'm thinking here of orcas, who have complex cultures and pass down information from one generation to another, apparently through some means other than genetics.
21. Darwall, "Moral Obligation," 70.
22. This may be even more liberal than Darwall would prefer—it seems that reactive attitudes might require more recognizably human cognitive capacities than I indicate here. If that's so, then his view is even more restrictive, and reactive attitudes are clearly not going to solve the anthropocentrism problem. In this section, I grant perhaps too relaxed a picture of the capacities needed for reactive attitudes, yet I think even that relaxed picture fails.
23. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 195.
24. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 182–83.
25. Marshall Sahlins, *What Kinship Is—and Is Not*, 2.
26. Sahlins, *What Kinship Is—and Is Not*, 2.
27. Sahlins, *What Kinship Is—and Is Not*, 1, 62.
28. Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 132.
29. Campbell, "We Need to Return to the Principles of Wahkotowin," 5.
30. Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 132.

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"Surely, you don't mean rocks": Indigenous Kinship Ethics, Moral Responsibility, and So-Called 'Natural Objects'

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> Mino-Mnaamodzawin [living well] considers the critical importance of mutually respectful and beneficial relationships among not only peoples but all our relations, which includes all living things and many entities not considered by Western society as living, such as water, rocks, and Earth itself.[1]

> Traditionally, one of the most important ways to maintain relations and the socio-cosmic order has been the practice of honoring various *siedis* with gifts. *Siedis* are sites of thanking for the abundance of the land and giving back to various spirits that guard certain activities or spheres of life. Commonly they are rocks in their natural locations which sometimes are of unusual shape and color.[2]

1. INTRODUCTION

"Surely, you don't mean *rocks*?"—I have been asked this question more than a dozen times during philosophy presentations on moral responsibility within the ethical framework of Indigenous Kinship Ethics. As the opening epigraph from Deborah McGregor (Anishinaabe) outlines, *living well* in Indigenous Kinship Ethics requires moral consideration of other-than-human animals and so-called "natural objects,"[3] such as water and rocks. This moral maxim is culturally familiar to me as someone who is a part of both my mother's Sámi culture as well as my father's Irish culture where consideration of so-called "natural objects," including and especially rocks, is practiced in everyday contemporary life, such as Sámi *siedis* featured in the second epigraph from Rauna Kuokkanen (Sámi). However, via the "surely, you don't mean rocks?" question raised unremittingly at philosophy conferences, I have realized the extent of the gulf in misunderstanding by the field of philosophy when it comes to moral responsibility toward so-called "natural objects."

To be clear: I *do* mean rocks. Or more specifically, I mean to clarify that the relation-measure in Kinship Ethics generates moral responsibility toward all members of the moral community (anything in relation to any other thing),

including human-animals, other-than-human-animals, and so-called "natural objects" such as trees, water, and rocks. While my argument in this paper can stand for any so-called "natural object," I focus on rocks for two reasons: first, because rocks represent the largest misunderstanding in philosophy when it comes to moral responsibility, or in other words, because rocks are the *hardest sell*, and second, because of my own cultural familiarity with the moral value of rocks. In short, the gulf between what I know to be true and what is reasonably acceptable to argue in philosophy is the widest when considering rocks. I aim to speak to that gulf here.

Therefore, my focus in this paper is rocks. When I say rocks, I mean the solid mineral material that forms parts of the earth's surface, otherwise known as pebbles, boulders, or a mountain range. Specifically, my aim in this paper is to detail the kind of moral responsibilities that humans have toward rocks within the ethical framework of Indigenous Kinship Ethics. This responsibility is complex and contextual—like all moral responsibility—but complexity is not a compelling argument to dismiss ethical obligation. To do this work, I provide a brief overview on Kinship Ethics and the relation-measure in Section 2. In Section 3, I detail the pluralistic moral responsibilities that human agents have to so-called "natural objects" such as rocks, including an example of Sámi *siedi* gifting practices in Section 3.1. In Section 3.2, I expand the conversation on the moral responsibilities that so-called "natural objects," such as rocks, have toward human agents through a model I refer to as *two tiers of humility*. Finally, in Section 4, I connect the rock-responsibility view presented in this paper to contemporary moral issues in Indigenous Environmental Justice.

2. THE RELATION-MEASURE IN KINSHIP ETHICS

Kinship Ethics is a family of ethical theories united by the central role kinship plays in determining right action. Indigenous Kinship Ethics is one variety of theory within the broader Kinship Ethics orientation which specifically engages Indigenous conceptions of kinship as a guide for right action.[4] Indigenous conceptions of kinship provide ethical guidance derived from origins distinct from kinship conceptions rooted in the queer relationality of Queer Kinship Ethics, for example, or caretaking in Feminist Care Ethics. When I refer to the *relation-measure* of Kinship Ethics, I mean the standard for moral community membership and with that, moral responsibility, based on relatedness. The relation-measure asks: Is a thing/being/entity in relation to any other things/being/entity? If the answer is yes, the thing/being/entity in question has moral value and is a member of the moral community due to its relatedness.

The moral community is a network of moral responsibility. I take being a member of the moral community to mean that I have moral responsibilities toward those other members, and that those other members have moral responsibilities toward me. While philosophers have accepted moral responsibilities toward animals (for example, to disavow animal cruelty) as increasingly reasonable over the past fifty years, it is still puzzling for many philosophers to think about human agents having moral responsibility to so-called natural objects, such as trees, water, and rocks.[5] It is further puzzling to think about trees, water, and rocks having moral responsibilities toward human agents. Questions abound. For example, Do I have a responsibility to all rocks, all trees, all water? Is the moral responsibility I have to a tree identical to the responsibility I have to my human family member? How do I know if a rock is fulfilling its moral responsibility to me? In the following Sections 3–3.2, I begin to answer these questions by honing in on what reciprocal moral responsibilities between rocks and human agents look like.

3. A HUMAN AGENT'S MORAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ROCKS

Once I started focusing specifically on rocks two years ago, friends and colleagues sending bits of "rock theory" my way. A dear friend and writer, Adam Swanson, emailed me sections of Ticht Nahn Han's reflections on the Diamond Sutra in Buddhism, which details rocks as "beings without thought" and "beings not totally without thought," as well as what respectful relations look like with these beings. My sister-in-law Lauren sent me a text that read "That person is my rock—as a common saying to express how supportive and reliable someone is!" Patricia Johnson-Castle (Inuit), a colleague and friend from the University of Minnesota's workshop for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, pointed out the central feature of rocks in the 2022 academy-award winning film "Everything Everywhere All At Once" when another workshop member had a still from the film with the subtitled dialogue "Be a rock" as their Zoom background. Once I began to pay attention, it was apparent that information on the moral value of rocks was everywhere. In this section, I explicate what it means to fulfill or not fulfill the moral responsibilities human agents have toward rocks in Indigenous Kinship Ethics.

The moral responsibilities human agents have toward rocks is grounded by where the responsibility is derived from—relationality. Moral community membership and moral value derived from relatedness is based on a metaphysical understanding of the connection of all things. Patty Krawec (Lac Seul First Nation Anishinaabe) illustrates one way of thinking about the connection between rocks and the human when she contends: "When I say that the land is my ancestor, that is a scientific statement. . . . Stones are also our relatives. Whatever I eat has taken up nutrients from the ground, including minerals, and the land itself becomes part of me."[6] Krawec offers one micro example of a connection between rocks and humans through the food chain as a way to illustrate the many and ultimate connections between all entities. It is this network of connection which grounds reciprocal moral responsibility and provides both evaluative and prescriptive guidance on how to act rightly (and wrongly) toward rocks.

McGregor writes about the Anishinaabek concept of *mino-mnaamodzawin*, loosely translated from the eastern dialect Anishinaabe language as 'living well with the world." McGregor details mino-mnaamodzawin as "encompass[ing] the well-being of other 'persons' . . . although there are many paths to achieving it (Borrows 2016:6)."[7] When McGregor clarifies that "there are many paths to achieving" living well, she affirms Indigenous Kinship Ethics as a moral pluralism. That is to say that there is one clear wrong but

many ways to do right by rocks, depending on who you are, which rocks we are talking about, the cultural context, the land upon which these decisions are being made, etc. The wrong in Indigenous Kinship Ethics is violating the relationality that imbues all life with meaning. Therefore, I commit a moral wrong against rocks when I violate the dignity of or fracture reciprocity between these entities and myself, or between those entities and other entities. Due to the morally pluralistic nature of Indigenous Kinship Ethics, committing wrongs (or *not* living well) according to Indigenous Kinship Ethics is altogether a clearer task than living well and doing rightly. Anything that violates reciprocity through excessive taking such as acts of subjugation or patterns of exploitation violates a criterion of living well in Indigenous Kinship Ethics.

What it looks like to positively live well and act rightly by rocks in Indigenous Kinship Ethics is more complex. Looking again to McGregor, living well in Indigenous Ethics means to "consider the critical importance of mutually respectful and beneficial relationships among not only peoples but all our relations" through reciprocity which "continually strive[s] for balance."[8] In practice, reciprocity and actions which reflect consideration for an entity's dignity will look differently according to context. Philosopher Brian Burkart (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) refers to this contextual application of living well in Indigenous Kinship Ethics as *Land-Based Locality*.

Burkhart maintains that a universalizing way for a thing-in-relation to live well is through doing and meaning making according to the specific context of a particular relation with the land. There are multiple ways to live well and act rightly, and those ways to live well according to one's relations are understood only through getting to know those relations, including and especially the relation a moral agent has to land. Indigenous Kinship Ethics includes a universalizable wrong of exploitation and fracturing relational reciprocity; however, the normative right in Indigenous Kinship Ethics is only universalized in specificity to one's land-based locality. McGregor's ways of living out mino-mnaamodzawin is grounded in Anishinaabe land and culture. My own specific ways of living well will depend on the lands and cultures of both my Sámi and Irish ancestors, as well as looking to the leadership of the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples upon whose land I currently reside/occupy in what is called Minnesota.

If living well and doing right by rocks can only be practiced in land-based specificity, how does a human agent go about discovering what one's own contextually right action looks like? I can offer two instructions for discovering what living well looks like in practice by looking to scholars of Indigenous Kinship Ethics such as McGregor (2018), Burkhart (2018), Krawec (2022), Wildcat (2009), Yunkaporta (2020) and Yazzie and Baldy (2018). First, to practice "living well" in land-based locality means the following:

1) paying attention to one's relations, and

2) investing in one's relations/divesting from exploitation.

Paying attention is hard work. I like the word choice of "paying" in the phrase "paying attention" as a reminder that attention is a form of resource and currency.[9] To whom and what I pay attention are the relations in which I invest. I can pay attention to who I am, where I come from, the land upon which I live, the history of that land and the Indigenous peoples who are the traditional and contemporary stewards, and the many ways that I am bound up in relations. It follows that the more I know about my next-door neighbors, for example (what they like, dislike, what is important to them, who counts as family), the better neighbor I will be to them. If I know that their three grandchildren spend the night every other Thursday, then I can consider that schedule when planning my next raucous backyard party as a way to show respect and care for both the relationship I have with my next-door neighbors and the relationships my neighbors have with their children and grandchildren. Paying attention as a way to be a better neighbor, or relative, works the same way for rocks.

There is a third and essential component of living well in land-based locality: community. The work of paying attention and the work of investing in relations and divesting from (even complicit) participation in exploitation and marginalization is hard work that cannot be done alone. So to practice "living well" *well* in land-based locality means the following:

1) Paying attention to one's relations,

2) Investing in one's relations/divesting from exploitation, and

3) Growing this ongoing work in community.

One single human agent cannot hold all perspectives on the many relations of this world. We need to do this work of attention with others to help us check for opportunities to pay attention that we might have missed or help support us in accountability processes as we work to divest from exploitation.

Anthropologist and friend Esther Liu recommended Elizabeth Povanelli's 2021 *In Between Gaia and Ground* as an example of paying close attention to rocks. I find the shift in perspective striking in this passage and here I quote Povanelli at length:

> One can also see how skin—or perhaps at this point, we can say a sack that holds something that operates in relation to itself—also provides a crucial imaginary for the difference between organic skin and rock surfaces. Skins, or sacks, are protective covers; surfaces are simply the place where this comes to an end. This difference ramifies into subsequent ones like the legalities of the difference between murder (possible with human life), killing (with animal life), and destruction (inorganic objects). Without these insides or outsides, murder, killing, and destruction weave into and out of each other. If a rock is a rock qua rock or the soil is soil qua soil, then from its point of view humans are merely a moment on the

> journey and travels of minerals. In producing us, they maintain themselves insofar as we will return to their condition. In other words, the assertion that the self-repair of life has a different status than the inert passivity of nonlife allows the latter to be treated very differently than the former. But rocks use gravity to sack themselves, or gravity sacks rocks; the more gravity, the denser the rock is. To unsack these various formations of rocks requires other sacked materials—whether the chemicals that frack shale or diamonds that cover drill tips.[10]

Through paying attention to rocks, Povanelli is able to trouble the distinctions Western paradigms have set up between "life" and "non-life," and the subsequent justifications of the differences between murder, killing, and destruction.

Povanelli's troubling of the differences constructed between human-animals, other-than-human-animals, and rocks is indicative of how "becoming kin," as Krawec analyzes, "often begins with having difficult conversations, and being willing to listen to the things marginalized people, the ones we are so used to helping, have to say can be difficult."[11] This kind of paying attention allows a human agent to invest in relations, which often requires divesting from (even passive) participation in exploitation and subjugation. For example, "We cannot talk about restoring our relationship to land without talking about restoring the land to relationship with the people from whom it was taken," Krawec assesses.[12]

3.1 SIEDI

There is a beach in Tanafjord at the top of the world in Sápmi, the northernmost region of the fennoscandian peninsula, where egg-shaped pebbles audibly sing in chorus as they wash back up the shore with the arctic tide. Roughly 320 miles southwest of Tana, the Enron Polku trail rises [thirty meters] above the tundra landscape to look out over the boreal forests of Lapland. A little more than halfway up the accent, there is a Scots pine tree that is over seven hundred years old, surviving at least five forest fires in the region. In between Tanafjord and the centurion Scots pine is the Äijih island in Lake Inari, a towering rock formation in the middle of the lake, one of the over two hundred islands in the largest lake in Finland, which is a well-known *siedi*.

I offer one example of relationality with rocks—the reverential role that *siedi* rocks hold in Sámi culture, both in Sápmi and in the Sámi-American diaspora—to detail the kinds of moral responsibilities to rocks that Indigenous Kinship Ethics commits us to in pluralistic ways. In the arctic Indigenous culture of the Sámi peoples, *Siedi* are sacred sites, typically large stones in the landscape where vows are made and offerings are given.[13] In the Sámi worldview, it is an important and regular practice to spend time with and give gifts to certain rocks known as *siedis*. Not all rocks are *siedis*, although it is important to morally consider all rocks as relatives, just as it is important to consider the seven-hundred-year-old Scots pine and the conical signing pebbles as having their own relations. *Siedis* are unique in that they are a site of give-back ceremonies for all of the abundant natural world. Perhaps this is because although the centurion Scots pine will eventually decompose back into the earth, the rocks have and will see it all. They are one of the oldest relations.

Kuokkanen frames gifting to *siedi* as a practice of respect for the land:

> Siedis are considered an inseparable part of one's social order and thus it is an individual and collective responsibility to look after them. . . . I suggest that [giving to siedis] rather is a voluntary expression of a particular worldview that reflects the respect of and intimate relationship with the land. The Sami siedi practices, like many other gift practices concretely contribute to the well-being of an individual and a community. They represent relation and constant engagement with the living world and keep its abundance in motion with the help of gifts.[14]

Sámi anthropologist Tiina Äikäs maintains, "the relationship between a siedi and a human [is] a reciprocal one."[15] The "natural" world sustains all human and other-than-human life, and human agents give back to *siedis* in gratitude for this sustenance. The reverential role that *siedis* play in contemporary Sámi culture—both in Sápmi and in the Sámi-American diaspora—demonstrate one example of what rightful relations with rocks look like in the context of land-based locality.

3.2 RETHINKING RECIPROCITY WITH TWO TIERS OF HUMILITY

Rocks are a part of reciprocal moral responsibility with human agents. In addition to the moral duties human agents have to rocks, this reciprocal moral responsibility means that rocks have moral responsibilities to humans, albeit how a rock acts wrongly by me is unknowable to a human agent. In this section, I aim to expand the conversation on how rocks fulfill their moral responsibilities to human agents with two considerations: first, I argue that a model of what I call *two tiers of humility* assuages concerns for knowability of moral responsibilities from rocks, and second, I refer to Kuokkanen's theorizing of give-back ceremonies to assert that while unknowable in specificity, human agents have good reason to believe rocks have already fulfilled all moral responsibilities toward human agents.

First, I argue that a model of what I call *two tiers of humility* assuages concerns for knowability of moral responsibilities from rocks. While some philosophers argue for a separation of moral agents and moral patients[16] to mitigate the unknowability of how, for example, a rock, acts rightly or wrongly, I disagree with this view on grounds that it erases agency from beings deemed nonrational by human agents. Instead, I prefer framing a *two tiers of humility* view of agency in a discussion on reciprocal moral responsibility. In the two tiers of humility view, the first tier is comprised of beings which I think I can surmise what their moral responsibility looks like in action (such as other human agents[17]). The second tier consists of beings whom the specifics of acting out their moral responsibility seems to be beyond my surmising (rocks, a river, babies). The two

tiers of humility view is indicated by the fact that a limit to human understanding does not prove an absence of the metaphysical moral responsibility, only that a human agent could not understand the shape of that responsibility in the same ways we think we can with members of our own human species. Agency is maintained for all parties in the two tiers of humility view; it simply takes more humility on the part of human agents to acknowledge the agency of beings such as trees, water, and rocks by accepting a limit to human knowledge.

Brian Burkhart (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) offers that when considering the relationship between human agents and non-humans, "I must see myself as an agent, but not an active agent in relation to passive things but an agent among agents" because for Burkhart, recognizing the agency in non-humans "is part of coming to terms with what I am in concrete locality. What I am is a thing-in-relation and not an isolated thing that can come into relations or not."[18] Burkhart illustrates the reciprocal responsibility between human and non-human agents in Indigenous Kinship Ethics.

Rocks, as members of the moral community, can fulfill their reciprocal responsibilities because "all beings have the potential to realize mino-mnaamodzawin . . . mino-mnaamodzawin recognizes that other beings or entities in Creation also have their own laws (natural laws) that they must follow to ensure balance."[19] McGregor recognizes the moral duties of beings such as rocks as nonidentical to the duties that human agents have. The moral responsibilities that rocks have toward human agents is specific to their rock-ness and context, and can be interpreted as following "natural laws."

Second, I refer to Kuokkanen's (2006) theorizing of *give-back ceremonies* to assert that while unknowable in specificity, human agents have good reason to believe rocks have already fulfilled all moral responsibilities toward human agents. Kuokkanen suggests that:

> the notion of the gift is one of the structuring principles of many Indigenous peoples' philosophies. The understanding of the world which foregrounds human relationship with the natural environment, common to many Indigenous peoples, is manifested by the gift, whether give-back ceremonies and rituals or individual gifts given to the land as a recognition of its abundance and reinforcement of these relationships. While these gift practices are often very different from one society and culture to another, the purpose of giving is usually alike: to acknowledge and renew the sense of kinship and coexistence with the world."[20]

From Kuokkanen's analysis, we can see that give-back practices such as Sámi *siedi* gifting "concretely contribute to the well-being of an individual and community."[21] Kuokkanen describes the practice of gifting to *siedis* as a give-back ceremony that is common to many Indigenous cultures. By taking Kuokkanen's theorizing seriously, we can understand that a human agent's act of "giving-back" recognizes the gifts that a human agent has already received from so-called "natural objects" such as rocks. A human agent would not be alive at a juncture to give thanks unless gifts from the natural world had already sustained that human agent's life.

Kuokkanen distinguishes gift practices and give-back ceremonies from gifts within a system of capitalist economic exchange. Instead of a goal of accumulation present in ethos of indebtedness or "tit for tat" reciprocity, giving back to the earth in the Sámi worldview foregrounds gratitude for the abundance of the land which has already sustained all life.[22] Kuokkanen is careful to apprehend that "this is not romanticization: the relations Indigenous peoples have forged with their environments for centuries are a consequence of the living off the land and the dependency on its abundance. They are a result of a relatively straightforward understanding that the well-being of land is also the well-being of human-beings" therefore "the land itself . . . [is] considered equals that need to be respected and honored rather than endlessly exploited."[23]

Give-back ceremonies are predicated on a worldview that recognizes that humans are only alive, with family, and able to flourish as a direct result of the natural world including rocks being the glue of the earth and water as integral to all life. Therefore, within a give-back paradigm, rocks have always already fulfilled their duties to human agents.

In brief, I do mean to commit us to expansive reciprocal responsibility where human agents are morally responsible to rocks, and rocks are morally responsible to human agents. For "if these reciprocal obligations and duties are enacted," McGregor argues, "then balance is achieved."[24] The two tiers of humility view and the give-back paradigm help shape a conception of rock-responsibility where rocks do have responsibilities to human agents, although what those responsibilities look like in practice is unknowable to human agents.

4. IMPLICATIONS: NATURAL RELATIVES AND INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In this last section, I discuss the implications of moral responsibility to so-called "natural objects" such as rocks in both personal and political spheres. I am especially interested in how a discussion on the moral responsibilities that human agents have to rocks come to bear on global conversations in Indigenous Environmental Justice.

First, the personal: each human agent has moral responsibilities to rocks, and that human agent has the potential to fulfill or not fulfill those responsibilities. An individual from any cultural background has the potential to live well with all of one's relations. However, I want to stress here that I do not mean that non-Sámi human agents should start leaving gifts at rocks like the Sámi practice of *siedi* gifting, for example. This would be an inauthentic attempt at paying attention to one's relations and would instead reflect paying attention to someone else's particular relations, not to mention cultural appropriation which fractures relationality as a practice of exploitation. Instead, I mean that one should look to the patterns of 1)

paying attention to one's relations, 2) investing in those relations/divesting from exploitation, and 3) growing this ongoing work in community, to derive one's own land-based way to live well with rock relations. Additionally, the rock-responsibility view presented in this paper requires protecting other entity-to-entity relations as a part of living well. That means living well includes acts of solidarity with Indigenous water protectors, for example, as a way to protect the relations water has to all other beings on this planet.

The Water Protection movement within Indigenous Environmental Justice is one exemplar of the results of paying attention to one's relations with so-called "natural objects" and investing in those relations. As Melanie Yazzie (Diné) and Cutcha Risling Baldy (Hupa, Yurok and Karuk) celebrate:

> From the Oceti Sakowin protecting the Missouri River from contamination from the Dakota Access Pipeline, to the Māori declaring that the Whanganui River has rights akin to those of Humans (Roy, 2017), water is seen as an ancestor and a relative with agency within this network of life, one who deserves respect, care, and protection.[25]

Yazzie and Baldy connect paying attention to and investing in water as a relation to the emerging political success of water protection worldwide. They go on to spell out how water protection policies present an:

> accountability to water view [which] envisions and enacts an ethos of "living well," which Harsha Walla (2013) points out defies "the capitalist and colonial system's logic of competition, commodification, and domination. . . . Living well requires "interdependency and respect among all living things.[26]

Yazzie and Baldy emphasize the role of water protection predicated on connection and respect among all beings as a requirement of living well. My hope is that we can look to the work of Indigenous water protectors and philosophers such as Yazzie and Baldy[27] when discerning what living well with rocks can look like in a contemporary moral context.

When it comes to rocks, one such contemporary moral context is the minerals in the ground of the Sámi city of Kiruna on the Swedish side of the borders of Sápmi. For those who are unfamiliar with the history of rocks in Kiruna, here is a brief summary: The Swedish mining company Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara AB (LKAB) manages a mine that began operations mining iron ore out from "underneath" Kiruna in 1898. Since 1898, the LKAB mine has removed 950 million tons of iron ore. So much iron ore that in 2004 the Swedish court declared that the village of Kiruna would have to be relocated further away from the mine due to buckling of the ground underneath the village. Then in 2020, a 4.9 Mw magnitude earthquake went off in the footwall of the mine; this earthquake was not produced by natural causes, but instead, by mining.[28]

In January 2023, LKAB announced they had discovered twenty million tons of rare earth minerals adjacent to the mine, including lanthanum, lutetium, lanthanum, cerium, praseodymium, neodymium, promethium, and samarium; all minerals needed for the production of iphones, wind turbines, and electric cars.[29] Swedish Minister for Energy, Business, and Industry Ebba Busch has heralded that "the EU's self-sufficiency and independence from Russia and China will begin in the mine," as there are no current deposits of rare earth minerals outside of control of Russia and China.[30]

Spokesperson for LKAB Jan Moström has conferred

> We are already investing heavily to move forward, and we expect that it will take several years to investigate the deposit and the conditions for profitably and sustainably mining it. We are humbled by the challenges surrounding land use and impacts that exist to develop this into a mine and that will need to be analysed to see how to avoid, minimize and compensate for it. Only then can we proceed with an environmental review application and apply for a permit

according to the press release from LKAB's website, which cites cooperation with Swedish government officials as the news of the newfound deposit went to press.

Taking a closer look at Moström's statement, the "land use and impacts" which Moström feels "humbled by" are the 10,000-year-old traditional reindeer migration routes of the Indigenous Sámi people, which are protected under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Assuming generosity that LKAB sincerely wants to "avoid, minimize and compensate for" the destruction of Sámi way of life, the use of the "and" conjunction of that statement communicates clearly that mineral extraction in Kiruna will continue with or without right relations with the Sámi of the area.

How do our moral responsibilities to rocks come to bear on the Kiruna mine both past and present? What does "living well" with rock relatives in Kiruna look like in this pivotal moment? I leave these questions for the focus of future work. However, I mean to highlight here the necessity to pay attention to rightful rock relations as a pressing moral problem in contemporary ethics.

5. CONCLUSION

The relation-measure in Indigenous Kinship Ethics counts any thing in relation to any other thing as a member of the moral community. Therefore, human agents have reciprocal moral responsibilities with all things in relation. This reciprocal moral responsibility means that I have moral duties to rocks and that I can act wrongly toward these so-called "natural objects" when I violate the dignity of or fracture reciprocity between these entities and myself, or between those entities and other entities. Living well, or acting rightly by rocks, looks different in practice according to a human agent's land-based locality. One example of living well with rocks according to land-based locality is the gifting to *siedi* rocks in Sámi culture. This example

provides one illustration of the general requirements to live well, which include 1) paying attention to, 2) investing in one's relations/divesting from exploitation, and 3) growing this ongoing work in community. Another example of living well in relation to so-called "natural objects" on a larger scale is the emerging political protections for water that Indigenous Water Protectors have led worldwide over the past forty years. Examples like water protection can help guide our thinking through kinship with rocks in pressing contemporary moral contexts such as the Kiruna mining dilemma.

NOTES

1. McGregor, "Living Well with the Earth: Indigenous Rights and the Environment," 10.
2. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift: Reclaiming Indigenous Peoples' Philosophies," 261.
3. I use the term "natural object" following Andrew Brennan, *The Moral Standing of Natural Objects*, to denote things like rocks, trees, and water, even though all objects are natural.
4. In this paper, I provide only the most succinct overview on Kinship Ethics and the relation-measure. For a more in-depth version of my own overview, see O'Loughlin (forthcoming). In addition, see Deborah McGregor, Rauna Kuokkanen, Melanie Yazzie (all of whom I cite in this text) as well as Kyle Whyte, Brian Burkhart, Leanne Betasomasake Simpson, Daniel Heath Justice and more.
5. Richard Sylvan's 1972 Last Man Thought Experiment acquainted analytic philosophy with the intrinsic moral value of trees.
6. Patty Krawec, *Becoming Kin*, 137.
7. McGregor, "Reconciliation and Environmental Justice," 10.
8. LaDuke, *Last Standing Woman*; McGregor, "Reconciliation and Environmental Justice," 10.
9. Lakota and Dakota scholar Kaylen James theorizes an intervention on the term "paying" in "paying attention" and suggests we think about attention as something we "gift," as in "gifting attention" (forthcoming).
10. Elizabeth Povanelli, *In Between Gaia and Ground*, 128.
11. Patty Krawec, *Becoming Kin*, 148.
12. Patty Krawec, *Becoming Kin*, 131.
13. Turi, *An Account of the Sámi*; Itkonen and Koskimies, *Inari Sámi Folklore*; Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift."
14. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift," 161.
15. Äikäs, "What Makes a Stone a Siedi, or, How to Recognize a Holy Place?" 14.
16. The moral agents and moral patients view holds that rational agents have moral responsibilities toward both other rational agents, as well as "moral patients" which are broadly defined as beings without rationality who are worthy of moral consideration from rational agents, but do not have moral responsibilities toward rational agents. One example of the moral agents vs. moral patients divide is between human-animals and other-than-human animals. See Evelyn Pluhar, "Moral Agents and Moral Patients."
17. Though I am probably wrong about this surmising anyway.
18. Burkhart, *Indigenizing Philosophy through the Land*, 292–93.
19. McGregor, "Living Well with the Earth," 19.
20. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift," 255–56.
21. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift," 263.
22. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift," 265.
23. Kuokkanen, "The Logic of the Gift," 263.
24. McGregor, "Living Well with the Earth."
25. Melanie Yazzie and Cutcha Risling Baldy, "Introduction: Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Water," 1.
26. Yazzie and Baldy, "Introduction: Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Water," 2.
27. In addition to the work of Melanie Yazzie (2017 interview) as well as Yazzie and Baldy, see Deborah McGregor ("Traditional Knowledge: Considerations for Protecting Water in Ontario"; "Living Well with the Earth"; "Mino-Mnaamadzawin"); Cutcha Risling Baldy ("Water Is Life: The Flower Dance Ceremony"); Winona Laduke (*To Be a Water Protector*); and Kyle Whyte ("Indigenous Women, Climate Change Impacts, and Collective Action.").
28. Reuters, "Sweden Reports Its Biggest Ever Quake Caused by Mining in Arctic," May 18, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-sweden-quake-idUSKBN22U1QM/.
29. "Why an Arctic Treasure Is Spurring Hope and Dread," *The Journal*, January 30, 2023, https://www.wsj.com/podcasts/the-journal/why-an-arctic-treasure-is-spurring-hope-and-dread/349B258C-BABD-4FC7-8302-F53C43CCB382.
30. "Europe's Largest Deposit of Rare Earth Metals Located in Kiruna Area," LKAB, January 12, 2023, https://lkab.com/en/press/europes-largest-deposit-of-rare-earth-metals-is-located-in-the-kiruna-area/.

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An Indigenous Abolitionist Ethics of Care

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INTRODUCTION

What is the relationship between abolition and decolonization? And how can Indigenous philosophies and practices foster both? What might be the components of an Indigenous abolitionist ethics of care? Hupa scholar Stephanie Lumsden explains, "prison abolition politics are indispensable to tribal sovereignty" because abolition necessitates "the dismantling of all violence done to communities by settler colonialism" and "entails a commitment to a future in which communities are safe and healthy."[1] By settler colonialism I mean "a structure not an event," as Patrick Wolfe clarifies; it is that which "strives for the dissolution of native societies" as well as "erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base," not as a one-time occurrence but as a continual configuration.[2] In terms of the settler colonial carceral state, we might also understand carcerality to be a structuring force rather than a single moment.[3] In order to further connect the stakes of abolishing prisons and police with the stakes of decolonization, in this paper I illuminate the ethics of care that inform an Indigenous abolitionism, which I identify as: (re)claiming relationality, building movements of solidarity, ensuring bodily and community sovereignty, delegitimizing settler law, defining mending and safety on one's own terms, and fostering cultural resurgence. Finally, I end by arguing that further articulation of an abolitionist ethics of care—that builds up and restores capacities[4] of Indigenous individuals, communities, and nations—also affirms Indigenous futurity.

While I draw from Indigenous scholars across Turtle Island, as well as so-called Australia and New Zealand, I also recognize the need for cultural specificity in this work. Just as criminologist Chris Cunneen asserts, "the praxis of decolonialism cannot be universally prescribed and will be differentiated along a range of axes, determined by historical and contemporary contingencies," so too must abolition be nonprescriptive.[5] Instead, I encourage readers to think of these Indigenous abolitionist ethics of care as *de*scriptive rather than *pre*scriptive, as possible articulations of ways in which we might practice abolition and decolonization from our particular locations. In this spirit, I endeavor to describe the abolitionist elements and throughlines that I have noted across a diversity of locations, contexts, and Native nations. At the same time, I do not wish to be prescriptive, because I affirm the sovereignty and self-determination of all Indigenous peoples to experiment, collaborate, and find what works best. This is what Coulthard and Simpson refer to as grounded normativity, or "Indigenous place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge."[6]

ABOLITION AS A DECOLONIAL PROJECT

The present-day movement for abolition takes its name from the project to abolish slavery in the United States—still an unfinished project due to the Thirteenth Amendment.[7] The Thirteenth Amendment bans slavery and "involuntary servitude" in the United States; yet it includes the clause "except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." Hence, slavery and involuntary servitude are still legal so long as they are solely inflicted as punishment for a convicted crime. This also means that the pursuit to abolish slavery is ongoing. Despite the etymology of the term emanating from the location of the US settler state, the movement for police and prison abolition has nevertheless come to be relevant across a multitude of geopolitical contexts.[8]

Abolitionism tells us that policing, prisons, and punitive justice lack both efficacy and compassion, that these practices are rooted in racialized terror;[9] these structures are an outgrowth of settler colonialism;[10] and they are misogynist, ableist, classist, homophobic and transphobic.[11] The present-day overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal punishment systems of settler states, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, confirms that such systems function as tactics of removal, exclusion, marginalization, destabilization, dispossession, erasure, control, and death.[12] As Yavapai/Chiricahua Apache legal scholar Grace Carson writes on Turtle Island,

> Policing and incarceration of Native people has taken place from the moment our lands were colonized. Not only was the genocide of Indigenous people enacted by the State—a literal policing of who did and did not have a right to be alive on stolen land—but our people were forced into detainment in boarding schools, our spirituality and languages were policed so that our culture would be erased, and our movements have historically been met with violence by police and military. This policing and incarceration of Indigenous peoples still takes place in what is now known as the United States.[13]

In light of these historical and contemporary violences, the ethical implication of abolition draws on a concern for the welfare of all bodies, at all levels—individual, collective, geographic—affected by carcerality.[14] The "object of abolition," according to Harney and Moten, is "[n]ot so much the abolition of prisons but the abolition of a society that could have prisons."[15] In other words, abolitionists reject a social system that sees the practices of threatening, confining, controlling, maiming, and killing people (who may or may not have caused harm) as a legitimate and desirable form of redress.[16] At the same time, abolition's advocates know that it is not a single event based in diminishment nor absence. Instead, abolition must be thought of as an addition, transformation, alteration, reordering, creation, and substitution to our present

world.[17] In this way, abolition is an aspiration that seeks to move beyond retributive institutions that, at present, do more harm than good.

A specifically Indigenous critique informs us that abolition is a key element of decolonial resistance to settler violence, control, and attempts at monopolizing sovereignty at all levels.[18] As Tuck and Yang aver, decolonization is not an abstract metaphor for liberatory politics—it is centered on the unsettling of settler colonialism and the rematriation[19] of land to Indigenous peoples, and it is primarily "accountable to Indigenous sovereignty and futurity."[20] For this reason, I cover the abolitionist ethics of care that most resonate with Indigenous sovereignty and futurity: (re)claiming relationality, building movements of solidarity, ensuring bodily and community sovereignty, delegitimizing settler law, defining mending and safety on one's own terms, and fostering cultural resurgence.

INDIGENOUS ABOLITIONIST ETHICS OF CARE

While arguably "ethics" or "ethics of care" are terms that have emerged within the Western philosophical canon, nevertheless "the stories of an Indigenous community may include the existence of virtues, like humility or gratitude," that serve as ethical guideposts.[21] For example, Muscogee philosopher Joseph Len Miller says,

> While there is no Mvskoke word that directly translates as "harmony," my understanding of harmony is based on the phrase *etemeyaske vpokate*, which translates to "living together peacefully." . . . Harmony is a standard of relationships. . . . Relationships are the roots or foundation of ethics. Relationships confer responsibilities.[22]

Similarly, Boulton (Ngāti Ranginui, Ngai te Rangi, and Ngāti Pukenga) and Brannelly describe relationships, support, and stewardship as all Māori ethics of care, contrasted with settler colonial and neoliberal "privileged irresponsibility."[23] Therefore, we might still consider what ethics, values, standards, protocols, and practices ground and guide an Indigenous abolitionist framework.

(RE)CLAIMING RELATIONALITY

Considering that settler colonial carcerality is predicated on disconnection, an Indigenous abolitionism labors to (re) claim connections to land, kin, and lifeways.[24] Such an ethic of care requires attention to responsibilities, obligations, interdependence, collectivity, reciprocity, engagement, communication, and relationships with both humans and the more-than-human world.[25] This might take the form of what Robyn Maynard and Leanne Simpson describe as community experiments in collective care. As numerous abolitionist scholars have pointed out, an ethic of care grounded in decolonization and abolition is not attempting to reform harmful institutions in order to make them kinder and gentler—it is about more than merely surviving within settler states' cages that continue to disconnect us, it is about "a vision of a different world altogether" wherein we all may thrive.[26] Within this "different world," we must continually maintain relationships and enact solidarities. Following Leanne Simpson, Diné scholar Andrew Curley encourages us to build "constellations," or "shared political orientations . . . [that] allows one to build connections across difference."[27]

BUILDING MOVEMENTS OF SOLIDARITY

Crucially, movements for decolonization and abolition must be allied with those who are most systematically impacted by settler colonial carcerality.[28] For this, we must consider how anti-Blackness functions through the state's policing, prisons, and punishment.[29] And we must acknowledge that Black and Indigenous communities are not discrete; forgetting to do so would ignore the lived experiences of Black Indigenous people.[30] Simultaneously, we are able to recognize how any calls for bolstering settler power and jurisdiction are antagonistic to the aims of such movements for solidarity.[31] As Carson suggests, both abolition and decolonization are "invested in eliminating the structures of white supremacy"; therefore, these praxes put us all on the path towards collective liberation.[32] Hence, an Indigenous abolitionist ethic of care serves and benefits more than Indigenous communities—it affirms self-determination to all those who have been denied it. As Joanne Barker (citizen of the Delaware Tribe of Indians) states plainly, "Our liberation is bound up together."[33]

ENSURING BODILY AND COMMUNITY SOVEREIGNTY

Through a settler colonial imperative to sever Indigenous relationships to land, the goal is to strip Indigenous peoples of stewardship and sovereignty in their traditional and ancestral homes. This cleaving also serves to deny access to life-giving relationships and resources.[34] Clearly, incarceration is one such method of achieving these aims, by separating a person in order to control an entire peoples.[35] In contrast, decolonial and abolitionist spaces are those where all bodies, at all levels—individual, collective, geographic—are free.[36] Indigenous abolitionist ethics of care are therefore tethered to self-determination and sovereignty.[37] Sarah Deer (Muscogee Creek) provides a comprehensive overview of US settler colonialism's sexually violent history, in which there is an inseparable connection between the sovereignty of Native bodies and the sovereignty of tribal nations. "It is impossible," Deer tells us, "to have a truly self-determining nation when its members have been denied self-determination over their own bodies."[38] The loss of self-determination on an individual level creates the conditions for a loss of political self-determination, and vice versa. For example, the ability for tribal nations to respond, especially in traditionally affirming ways, to gendered and sexualized violence has dwindled over the years, leaving vulnerable many Native relatives who identify as women, girls, trans, gender non-conforming, and/or Two Spirit.[39] Lumsden expands on this: "By displacing Indigenous jurisprudence and imposing state punishment on Native people, incarceration legitimizes settler law."[40]

DELEGITIMIZING SETTLER LAW

The settler state seeks control over whether and how Indigenous peoples may even exist. This is too often and falsely framed as a story of how the enclosure and punishment of individual, communal, and geographic

bodies produces "safety." Concerns over security are only a motivation insofar as the state manages the Other—deemed dangerous, pathological, disposable, criminal, guilty, and deserving of punishment—for the sake of the settler population.[41] This is to say, what constitutes a crime under the purview of the settler state has been constructed with Indigenous (as well as Black and other marginalized) communities in mind.[42] It is as if there is no other option except for the "laws that we don't even create."[43] We are to believe that settler law is superior and more rational, leading to much of the power to solve conflicts and redress harms from within Indigenous communities being "abdicated . . . to the by-law officers, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and the courts."[44] All of this has simultaneously "undermined and concealed Indigenous legal traditions" while at the same time "justified settler colonial infringement on Indigenous rights, lands, and bodies."[45] Yet settler states do not have a monopoly on law, only a skewed perception of what it should entail.[46] Abolition serves as an Indigenous ethic of care when it challenges settler epistemology, which has only "a unitary vision of the criminal law" and supposedly "'common-sense' perceptions of the world around us."[47] Instead, we are encouraged to "re-cent[er] the worldviews, understandings, and responses of the colonized."[48] This is itself an affirmation of agency and self-governance beyond a politics of recognition.[49]

DEFINING MENDING AND SAFETY ON ONE'S OWN TERMS

One of the greatest lies that the carceral system has told is that it makes an imaginary "us" "safer." But who is sheltered in the arms of the settler state? The disproportionate rates of Indigenous peoples incarcerated in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand paints a very different picture of this supposed safety. For incarcerated Indigenous peoples, such as the women in Seliš-Ksanka-Sčłqetkwmcin Nation scholar Luana Ross's *Inventing the Savage*, the inside of jails and prisons reproduce the gendered settler norms and restrictions of the outside world. Not only are these spaces antithetical to any traditional healing practices—in fact, they are actively antagonistic to those aims—they also subject Native individuals who identify as women, girls, transgender, gender nonconforming, and/or Two Spirit to the cisheteropatriarchal whims of non-Native police, corrections officers, wardens, doctors, counselors, etc. Although Indigenous sentencing courts have been implemented with the settler state's blessing, there exists "a strongly performative element" to these spaces of redress, since "the results of these initiatives have not halted the increase in the rate of Indigenous imprisonment."[50] Even with landmark cases such as *McGirt v. Oklahoma* opening up certain channels of Indigenous-led prosecution, still settler law enforcement, courts, and governing bodies struggle or outright refuse to release their grip on Indian country. Nevertheless, Indigenous communities must be able to define what it means to mend relations and create safety on their own terms. Furthermore, the ways in which Native nations are able to freely determine how best to protect from and address harm is deeply connected to sovereignty; or as Carson suggests, "Tribes cannot practice or continue to shape their traditional restorative justice practices and systems without the necessary sovereignty to enforce these traditions and knowledges."[51] As a form of care, this is yet another expression of bodily, legal, spiritual, and epistemological self-determination, in which healing is practiced without deference to the settler carceral state.

FOSTERING CULTURAL RESURGENCE

Crucial to healing, an Indigenous abolitionist ethic of care fosters space for cultural resurgence. This is pertinent considering that settler states have deliberately denied Indigenous peoples access to—even criminalized and punished—practices such as dancing, speaking our languages, wearing traditional dress, abiding by our lifeways, etc. Lumsden connects Native boarding schools to incarceration, and thereby connects the imperative for both decolonization and abolition: "The federal government attacked the future of Native cultures when it required that Native children be sent to boarding schools tasked with remaking the children into assimilated Americans by eradicating all traces of Native culture."[52] By extension, removing Indigenous people from community, through various modes of incarceration, works to eliminate Indigenous cultures.[53] Surely, the (in)ability to participate in cultural and religious practices is not experienced equivalently by all incarcerated Indigenous people. This is why those who are able to resist in ways such as sharing stories within and beyond prison walls are enacting and affirming forms of Indigenous knowledge production.[54] Such stories—particularly stories from incarcerated Indigenous women, girls, trans, gender nonconforming, and/or Two Spirit people—are "key decolonial theories that offer tools to prison abolitionists not only for prison abolition but also to support decolonial efforts of Indigenous communities on Turtle Island" and beyond.[55] Hearing stories from incarcerated and formerly incarcerated Indigenous people, providing access to cultural practices, "invest[ing] in those areas of life that support and build people and communities," and other quotidian "practices of unsettling and refiguring our relationships" are all forms of care that move toward decolonization and abolition.[56]

CONCLUSION

Within the specificity of the US context, abolition is still an unfinished project. At the same time, abolition is relevant to a multitude of Indigenous peoples throughout differential carceral settler frameworks across the globe. Enacting an Indigenous abolitionist ethics of care is a "continuous creative process" of welcoming Indigenous futurity in and beyond the present moment.[57] Settler colonialism is predicated on reproducing itself into the future and "lasting" Indigenous peoples.[58] An Indigenous abolitionist ethic of care contrasts with this notion of settler modernity and linear progress, allowing us to see that we have—have *always* had—the tools at our disposal to live without policing, prisons, and punishment.[59] This is an ethic of care that is descriptive rather than prescriptive, that links rather than disconnects, and that reaches across time and space. Mvskoke scholar Laura Harjo echoes this in *Spiral to the Stars*: "Indigenous futurity serves the community, and it imagines and constructs the worlds we want to live in. (Re)imagining is a decolonizing methodology."[60] For the purposes of this project, Indigenous futurity is fostered when we (re) imagine and construct an abolitionist, decolonial world by

(re)claiming relationality, building movements of solidarity, ensuring bodily and community sovereignty, delegitimizing settler law, defining mending and safety on our own terms, and fostering cultural resurgence. There was a time before the settler state and its attendant police, prisons, and punishment—and there will be a time after. Indigenous abolitionism performs an ethic of care that takes us closer to this liberatory, decolonial horizon.

NOTES

1. Stephanie Lumsden, "Reproductive Justice," 34.
2. Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 388.
3. Craig Fortier, "Abolition and Decolonization as Pedagogy and Practice," 110; Lisa Guenther, "Settler Colonialism, Incarceration, and the Abolitionist Imperative: Lessons from an Australian Youth Detention Center," 102; Laura Harjo, *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke Tools of Futurity*, 10.
4. I understand these capacities and relationships in an expansive, rather than an anthropocentric, sense. Here, I am informed by Seneca Nation scholar Mishuana Goeman's literary analysis of Chickasaw author Linda Hogan's 1994 novel, *Solar Storms*. Goeman establishes that Hogan "asserts a scale [of time and space] based on connection, thus collapsing the settler scale that separates humans, lands, animals, and so on" ("Ongoing Storms and Struggles: Gendered Violence and Resource Exploitation," 101). Goeman goes on to explain that the colonization of (so-called) Canada and the United States produces relationships that are regarded as discrete and distinct from one another. From a settler colonial perspective, the scales of these relationships make them wholly different. In opposition to this, Goeman urges that "we examine spatial injustice and Native feminist practices . . . that enable us to delve more deeply into the ways that gendered and sexualized violence has multiple connections that spread out on vertical and horizontal scales" (100). In this way, injustice reaches across temporal and spatial planes, touching multiple generations and scales of being. Spatial injustice, as Goeman instructs, is an unjust "settler model of redistribution," in which Indigenous "land, resources, and ways of life are infringed on" at these multiple scales (106). All the while, the people of "mainstream" settler states "continue to receive capital and electricity"—not to mention other tangible and intangible resources—as benefits of this infringement (106). Spatial injustices, or the "multiple connections" that Goeman delineates, are exactly the kind of Indigenous feminist theorizing that helps us to see how carcerality is not discrete, but is part of a web of colonization, white supremacy, capitalism, ecological destruction, ableism, and cisheteropatriarchal domination. As Goeman would have it, seeing these scales and connections of spatial injustice requires "a consideration of all bodies: the human, the land, the water" (107).
5. Chris Cunneen, "Decoloniality, Abolitionism, and the Disruption of Penal Power," 20.
6. Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Grounded Normativity / Place-Based Solidarity," 254.
7. Thalia Anthony and Vicki Chartrand, "Rise Up," 255; Grace Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1109–10; Chelsea Whitaker and Cierra Russell, "An Abolitionist Approach to Creating Communities of Care," 229.
8. Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, "Introduction," 2; Tracey McIntosh, "Settler Violence, Family, and Whānau Violence in Aotearoa New Zealand," 20; Michael J. Viola et al., "Introduction to Solidarities of Nonalignment 10.
9. Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, 2; Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* 10–11.
10. Sherene Razack, *Dying from Improvement*, 4–5; Luana Ross, *Inventing the Savage*, 16.
11. Eric A. Stanley, "Introduction," 2–3; Liat Ben-Moshe, *Decarcerating Disability*, 1–2; Andrea J. Ritchie, *Invisible No More*, 236.
12. Anthony and Chartrand, "States of Prison Abolition," 49–52; Theresa Rocha Beardall and Russell Edwards, "Abolition, Settler Colonialism, and the Persistent Threat of Indian Child Welfare," 536; Danielle Bird, "Settler Colonialism, Anti-Colonial Theory, and 'Indigenized' Prisons for Indigenous Women," 110, 113; Vicki Chartrand, "The Quotidian Violence of Incarcerating Indigenous People in the Canadian State," 257; Cunneen, "Decoloniality, Abolitionism, and the Disruption of Penal Power," 21; Chris Cunneen and Juan Tauri, *Indigenous Criminology*, 6; Fortier, "Abolition and Decolonization," 110; Guenther, "Settler Colonialism," 102; Laurel Mei-Singh, "Accompaniment Through Carceral Geographies," 77–78; Sol Neely, "Aan Yátx'u Sáani," 90; Emily Riddle n.p.; Toronto Abolitionist Convergence, 4.
13. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1085.
14. Lauren Brinkley-Rubinstein and David H. Cloud n.p.; Allegra M. McLeod, "Abolition and Environmental Justice," 1541; Allegra M. McLeod, "Prison Abolition and Grounded Justice," 1161; Keith Miyake, "The Racial Environmental State and Abolition Geography in California's Central Valley," 591; David N. Pellow, "Struggles for Environmental Justice in US Prisons and Jails," 59; Laura Pulido and Juan De Lara, "Reimagining 'Justice' in Environmental Justice," 77; Carlee Purdum et al., "No Justice, No Resilience," 419; Julie Sze, "Abolitionist Climate Justice, or ICE Will Melt," 44; Malini Ranganathan and Eve Bratman, "From Urban Resilience to Abolitionist Climate Justice in Washington, DC," 116; Amy Shackelford et al., "Abolitionism and Ecosocial Work," 4; Ki'Amber Thompson, "Toward a World Where We Can Breathe," 1699.
15. Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons*, 42.
16. Chartrand, "Quotidian Violence," 263.
17. Beardall and Edwards, "Abolition, Settler Colonialism, and the Persistent Threat of Indian Child Welfare," 568; Bird, "Settler Colonialism," 116; Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1087; Debbie Kilroy et al., "Abolition as a Decolonial Project," 231; Mei-Singh , "Accompaniment Through Carceral Geographies," 77; John Moore, "Abolition and (De) colonization," 38, 46; Riddle n.p.; Whitaker and Russell, "An Abolitionist Approach to Creating Communities of Care," 230.
18. Smith et al., "Introduction," 13.
19. "Rematriation is the return of land to Indigenous governance. Indigenous governance is about relationality and responsibility within and across species, territories, and waters. It is as diverse as those beings, that land, the rivers, lakes, and seas to which it is responsible. It upholds values of reciprocity, generosity, and cooperation. It reflects a genuine equity between genders and sexualities and across generations. It accounts for the most vulnerable and advances mutual aid and community care. It assumes that women and other-than-heterosexually-defined individuals center structures of governance and cultural practice. Indigenous governance would abolish state prisons, the military, and intelligence, not because there would be an absence of law but because the law would not be driven by capitalism" (Joanne Barker, *Red Scare*, 116).
20. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," 36.
21. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 182.
22. Joseph Len Miller, "What Do We Need to Know?" 185, italics in original.
23. Amohia Boulton and Tula Brannelly, "Care Ethics and Indigenous Values," 77.
24. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1086.
25. Clément Barniaudy, "Becoming Aware of the Living Air," 172; Boulton and Brannelly, "Care Ethics and Indigenous Values," 81; Cherni Li Liew and Ailsa Lipscombe, "Transforming Indigenous Knowledges Stewardship Praxis through an Ethics of Care," 646; Robert Michael Ruehl, "Reimagining Justice as Preservative Care for Sustained Peace," 360; Naomi Scheman, "The On-the-Ground Radicality of Police and Prison Abolition," 152; Amanda Monehu Yates, "Transforming Geographies," 111.
26. Anthony and Chartrand, "States of Prison Abolition," 58; China Medel, "Abolitionist Care in the Militarized Borderlands," 875; Rodante van der Waal et al., 4

27. Andrew Curley et al., "Decolonisation Is a Political Project," 1051.
28. Anthony and Chartrand, "States of Prison Abolition" 47; Nick Estes et al., "United in Struggle," 256; Jennifer Elyse James, "The Problem Is Not (Merely) Mass Incarceration," 37; Scheman, "On-the-Ground Radicality," 150; Viola et al., "Introduction to Solidarities of Nonalignment," 11.
29. James, "The Problem Is Not (Merely) Mass Incarceration," 36; Kilroy et al., "Abolition as a Decolonial Project," 231; Sepulveda n.p.; Smith, Tuck, and Yang, "Introduction," 13.
30. For more on this topic, see the scholarship of Ann Marie Beals (Mi'kmaq) or Ashton Dunkley (Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape).
31. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1086.
32. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1118.
33. Barker, *Red Scare*, 124.
34. Mei-Singh, "Accompaniment Through Carceral Geographies," 76.
35. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1119.
36. Barker, *Red Scare*, 115.
37. Benson, "Carrying Stories of Incarcerated Indigenous Women as Tools for Prison Abolition," 161; Cunneen and Tauri, *Indigenous Criminology*, 131; Neely, "Aan Yátx'u Sáani," 74.
38. Sarah Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape*, xvi.
39. Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe (1978) divested tribal courts of jurisdiction over non-Natives, meaning such courts could not criminally prosecute non-Native defendants. This is part of a larger pattern of Native nations' diminished and constrained self-determination—overt outcomes for Indigenous bodies and for those that cause harm to Indigenous bodies—of which US federal powers like the Bureau of Indian Affairs embody.
40. Lumsden, "Reproductive Justice," 33.
41. Ross, *Inventing the Savage*, 14.
42. Barker, *Red Scare*, x; Guenther, "Settler Colonialism, Incarceration, and the Abolitionist Imperative," 99; Moore, "Abolition and (De) colonization," 37; Neely, "Aan Yátx'u Sáani," 78; Ross, *Inventing the Savage*, 14; Toronto Abolitionist Convergence, 6.
43. Estes et al., "United in Struggle," 261.
44. Peter Irniq, "Healthy Community," 205.
45. Bird, "Settler Colonialism, Anti-Colonial Theory, and 'Indigenized' Prisons for Indigenous Women," 113.
46. Hunt n.p.; Moore, "Abolition and (De)colonization," 41.
47. Cunneen and Tauri, *Indigenous Criminology*, 17; Sepulveda n.p.
48. Cunneen, "Decoloniality, Abolitionism, and the Disruption of Penal Power," 26.
49. Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 25.
50. Cunneen and Tauri, *Indigenous Criminology*, 124.
51. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1083–84.
52. Lumsden, "Reproductive Justice," 35.
53. Archibald, "Indigenous Storytelling," 198.
54. Benson, "Carrying Stories," 148.
55. Benson, "Carrying Stories," 145.
56. Chartrand, "Quotidian Violence," 263; Guenther, "Settler Colonialism, Incarceration, and the Abolitionist Imperative," 105.
57. Carson, "Tribal Sovereignty, Decolonization, and Abolition," 1117; Sepulveda n.p.
58. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, xxi.
59. Harjo, *Spiral to the Stars*, 4.
60. Harjo, *Spiral to the Stars*, 34.

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BOOK REVIEW

Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island

Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, ed. (Peterborough ON, Canada: Broadview Press, 2023).

Reviewed by Dennis H. McPherson, Tracy Shields, and J. Douglas Rabb

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With *Ways of Being in the World*, Dr. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke has produced what is in essence a wonderful anthology of Indigenous philosophical thought. All of the authors are Indigenous. The editor herself is Indigenous, Muskogee Nation of Oklahoma. Even the copy editor is Indigenous, Mi'kmaw. The colorful cover artwork, as well as the five black and whites inside, are by Indigenous artist Po Chapman (Anishinaabe-Haudenosaunee). Four of the readings were written specifically for this book: "Where Does Agency Come From? Exploring Indigenous Models of Mind" by Kurtis Boyer (Métis), "Native American Epistemology through Dreams" by Joel Alvarez (Puerto Rican, Ecuadorian), "The Epistemology of Deep Disagreement and Indigenous Oral Histories" by Paul Simard Smith (Métis), and "What Do We Need to Know to Live in Harmony with Our Surroundings?" by Joseph Len Miller (Muscogee). The other readings are carefully chosen from mostly contemporary sources.[1] For example, the creation story of "Skywoman Falling" is taken from Robin Wall Kimmerer's book *Braiding Sweetgrass*. "Skywoman Falling" is, of course, the origin story of Turtle Island. Sullivan-Clarke is quite well aware that "many Indigenous communities in North America do not use the term 'Turtle Island' and the story of how North America came to be is not part of their worldview."[2] Nevertheless she uses the term in her subtitle to indicate that the Indigenous philosophies examined in her book are limited to those of North America. As she explains:

> I opted to use the term not to privilege one worldview over another. Rather, my decision to use "Turtle Island" resulted from my preference to use an Indigenous term instead of one that stemmed from colonialism. A second reason was that I wished to challenge the presupposition that the Americas were discovered, and named, by Europeans.[3]

In introducing Robin Wall Kimmerer and the "Skywoman Falling" story, Sullivan-Clarke reminds us that "stories often provide the philosophical content of Indigenous philosophies. One can look within the story for metaphysics, epistemology, and values. At the center of the story is the notion of a relationship and it would be part of the community's ontology."[4] Her use of Western philosophical terms such as metaphysics, epistemology, and ontology is quite deliberate. Her "primary purpose is to supplement the texts that are normally assigned in an undergraduate Introduction to Philosophy course."[5] Although her book is divided into sections on Philosophy of Religion, Metaphysics, Epistemology, and Value Theory, she admits that "it is good to realize that these divisions, in the case of Indigenous philosophical thought, are artificial."[6] She even admits that "this is not an Indigenous way of approaching philosophy."[7] Still, her book is intended to encourage fellow philosophers to take an interest in researching Indigenous philosophy and introducing it into the regular first-year Introduction to Philosophy course so that they and their students have "the opportunity to engage with philosophical thought not found in the traditional canon."[8] To that end, "Each of the readings is introduced in the chapter to help the student recognize the context in which the philosophical thought is developed. Additional materials, such as discussion questions and pedagogical/cultural sources, are included after each article to serve as resources for instruction."[9] For example, the following "Suggestions for Critical Reflection" are provided after the "Skywoman Falling" reading:

1. What areas of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory) do you find in the story of Skywoman? Provide examples to support your view.

2. What sorts of relationships are involved in the story of Skywoman? What conclusions about relations does the story provide?

3. Does the concept of reciprocity apply to our world today? Would it require a complete change in worldview to achieve it at the same level as it is achieved in the story?

4. What would ethical obligations or responsibilities look like for a worldview that focuses on the sorts of connections and relationships discussed in this piece?[10]

Additional resources are accessed by scanning a QR code. These are given after every reading. They access a wealth of information including videos and documentaries, artwork, suggestions for further reading, etc. In the case of "Skywoman Falling," an animated video that tells a shortened version of the story is provided. It would be suitable for showing in class to initiate discussion.

Sullivan-Clarke's book is much more than an anthology. Let us call it Anthology+. It is a fully prepared course, which could be given as a second- or third-year standalone course or, with some selection, as a supplement to a first-year Introduction to Philosophy. Sullivan-Clarke argues:

> [Given] the number of Indigenous people who conduct research in philosophy as well as those able to teach such courses is quite small . . . it doesn't seem reasonable to expect only Indigenous people to teach this material even if that would be ideal. Arguably, Western institutions should devote space for Indigenous philosophy, especially that of the local communities. However, as it stands, I worry that if we wait until there are enough Indigenous professors to teach philosophy, it may never be offered at all.[11]

We remain nonjudgmental concerning Sullivan-Clarke's unbecoming display of Euro-Western impatience here. In current circumstances, what should the role of the Indigenous philosopher be? Nonindigenous philosophers will approach this material with their own pre-judgments, their own pre-understandings based on their own life experience. In the metaphysics section of Sullivan-Clarke's book immediately following the "Skywoman Falling" reading, there appears an essay by Hilary N. Weaver (Lakota) entitled "Indigenous Identity: What Is It, and Who Really Has It?" Noting that "stereotypes have a powerful influence on identity," Weaver reminds us "nonindigenous people do not want to see aspects of Native people that do not support their own ideas and beliefs, thus leading to a perpetuation of stereotypes. These external perceptions may influence how Indigenous people see themselves."[12] Sullivan-Clarke is well aware that many Indigenous students discover their cultural identity while attending university. She even says:

> I drew from personal experience while drafting the contents of this book. My hope was to inspire those who grew up like me—away from the teachings and community of my people. Colonialism is responsible for so many struggling to find their way home and be accepted as a member, and feeling lost through no fault of their own.[13]

In the supplementary readings in Part One of her book, we are referred to an article by Thurman Lee Hester, Jr., and Dennis McPherson titled "The Euro-American Philosophical Tradition and Its Ability to Examine Indigenous Philosophy."[14] They argue:

> For Euro-American philosophers, or anyone else, to examine Indigenous thought they must be willing to return to the very roots of the discipline; to return to a very basic definition of philosophy. Philosophy is a thoughtful interaction with the world. No one goes through their entire life without at times reflecting upon the world. Some people spend almost their entire lives engaged in this activity. Every nation in the world has had such people. These are their philosophers.[15]

From this Hester and McPherson conclude, "the Indigenous person engages in philosophy by thoughtfully examining the world. The outsider examines Indigenous philosophy by thoughtfully interacting with the Indigenous philosopher."[16] Until we encountered Sullivan-Clarke's book we thought this was self-evident. Now we are not so certain. Let us call it the McPherson-Hester Hypothesis: "The Indigenous person engages in philosophy by thoughtfully examining the world. The outsider examines Indigenous philosophy by thoughtfully interacting with the Indigenous philosopher." Does Sullivan-Clarke's approach challenge or support the McPherson-Hester Hypothesis? Do the author biographies and the introductory essays Sullivan-Clarke has written constitute sufficient interaction with an Indigenous philosopher for the nonindigenous philosopher to get the most out of the readings? Even working through the readings themselves is still encountering Indigenous philosophy admittedly on the page. Is it "thoughtfully interacting with the Indigenous philosopher?" Or is Sullivan-Clarke claiming we don't have to? Is she challenging the McPherson-Hester Hypothesis?

We know of one nonindigenous philosopher who claims that she needs to study an Indigenous philosophy text "only in the company of its author or an Indigenous philosopher, *not in the solitude of my study*."[17] This ally is Dr. Sandra Tomsons, coeditor with Dr. Lorraine Mayer (Cree Métis) of *Aboriginal Rights: Critical Dialogues*.[18] A unique characteristic of their book is "the inter-philosophy dialogues between the two editors at the end of each section."[19] Perhaps Sullivan-Clarke would like to try something like this in a future edition of her book. She could work with a nonindigenous colleague who has successfully used her book in a first-year philosophy class. We are still not clear if her book challenges the McPherson-Hester Hypothesis, or is, in actual fact, a unique way of supporting it. She does provide a list of fourteen points as "tips for teaching the Indigenous philosophies in this text," the most important of which is "get to know the local Indigenous people."[20] Just talking with these folks and recognizing that you are on their ancestral land can be the first step toward the personal changes that often accompany research in Indigenous philosophy. Sullivan-Clarke does not sufficiently warn her readers about this very real possibility. She might have cited something like *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* by Shawn Wilson (Cree): "If research doesn't change you as a person, then you haven't done it right."[21] We conclude this review with a drawing by Dennis and Tracy's daughter, Mary McPherson. Titled *Cross-Assimilation*, it won a Governor General's award for Indigenous Art in 2015. In the context

of our review it adds depth to our critique of this important book.

NOTES

1. A complete table of contents is available on the publisher's website: https://broadviewpress.com/product/ways-of-being-in-the-world/#tab-table-of-contents.
2. Andrea Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 2.
3. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 2.
4. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 86.
5. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 3.
6. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 3.
7. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 3.
8. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 3. For the first course/program in Indigenous philosophy to be offered through a department of philosophy and the obstacles encountered, see J. Douglas Rabb, "Ethics in Locality: Confessions of a Not-so-Innocent Bystander," *Canadian Journal of Practical Philosophy* 5 (2021), (https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/csspe/vol5/1/6/).
9. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 4.
10. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 98.
11. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, xiii.
12. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 106.
13. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, xiv.
14. Thurman Lee Hester, Jr., and Dennis McPherson, "The Euro-American Philosophical Tradition and Its Ability to Examine Indigenous Philosophy," *Ayaangwaamizin: The International Journal of Indigenous Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (1997): 3–9.
15. Hester and McPherson, "Euro-American Philosophical Tradition," 9.
16. Hester and McPherson, "Euro-American Philosophical Tradition," 9.
17. Sandra Tomsons, "Epistemology: Constructing or Deconstructing Worlds?" *APA Newsletter on Indigenous Philosophy* 11, no. 1 (2011): 7, emphasis added.
18. Sandra Tomsons and Lorraine Mayer, *Philosophy and Aboriginal Rights: Critical Dialogues* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2013).
19. Tomsons and Mayer, *Philosophy and Aboriginal Rights*, xxvi.
20. Sullivan-Clarke, *Ways of Being in the World*, 4.
21. Shawn Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Winnipeg: Fernwood, 2008), 135. See also the section on Transformative Philosophy and the Incommensurable in Dennis H. McPherson and J. Douglas Rabb, *Indian from the Inside: Native American Philosophy and Cultural Renewal*, 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co, 2011), 158 ff. In her lists of supplementary readings, Sullivan-Clarke on more than one occasion cites only the first edition of *Indian from the Inside* rather than the second. It should be the second edition. In his forward to the second edition, Jace Weaver (Cherokee) writes: "It reminds me of Vine Deloria's second edition of his classic *God is Red*. Although the core remains intact, the text has been so thoroughly revised it is almost a completely new book" (3).