

Call for Papers: Global Indigenous Literature and Climate Change

Special Issue to Appear in *Transmotion: An Online Journal of Postmodern Indigenous Studies*

<http://journals.kent.ac.uk/index.php/transmotion>

Extended Deadline for Abstracts: December 1, 2020

Late in March of 2014, Oglala Sioux Tribal President Bryan Brewer declared war on the Keystone XL, a pipeline projected to snake through reservation land in the northern United States. In support of this effort, Indigenous activists from various communities (and their allies) coordinated a wave of protests against the development of oil-pipelines and the extraction of tar sands on Native lands, igniting what came to be known internationally as the #NODAPL movement. Sioux scholar Nick Estes has chronicled how this movement sparked a desire for the “tradition of Indigenous resistance that is a radical consciousness [...] one that expresses the ultimate desire for freedom” (48). ed

The events at Standing Rock have been driven by global forces and thus resonate on a global level. This past year, Australia experienced severe drought and wildfires of unparalleled scope, both of which were fueled by deforestation and other destructive land use practices. In response to this eco-cataclysm, Aboriginal activists, such as Alexis Wright, have called on Australia’s leaders “to recognize the depth and value of Aboriginal knowledge and incorporate our skills in hazard management” (2020). Speaking on behalf of Marshall Islanders, Indigenous poet and activist, Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner, has illustrated how rising sea-levels have resulted in flooding, drought, and the erosion of her ancestral homeland—epistemological as well as geological injuries. In response to this dilemma, Jetñil-Kijiner has also advocated for the importance of listening to communities who can draw on deep collective histories to envision strategies for navigating what Elizabeth DeLoughrey has called the “submarine futures of the Anthropocene.” These examples are just a few instances in a global pattern, where extreme resource extraction is linked to the persecution of frontline communities, those who experience the first and the worst of climatological collapse. Yet these instances also speak to the powerful ways that Indigenous communities across the globe are spearheading movements to redress and counteract the violence of anthropogenic climate change, along with it is driving forces of colonialism and capitalism. These movements help us critically reflect on how we define our relationship to the land, to other humans and non-humans, and to history and time, in order to push back against the genocidal wave of ecological violence. Inspired by the work of such activists and thinkers, *Transmotion* calls for submissions to contribute to a special issue on the topic of **Global Indigenous Literature and Climate Change**.

The central theme of this issue has inspired a significant amount of critical interest in recent years. In their influential essay “On the Importance of a Date, or Decolonizing the

Anthropocene,” Heather Davis and Zoe Todd (Métis) examine the ways that climate change discourse might productively shift if we reconsider the Anthropocene’s origin point. Challenging the typical mid-20th century start-point, Davis and Todd propose linking the Anthropocene to the Columbian exchange (1610). Using a date that coincides with colonialism in the Americas, they explain, allows us to understand the current state of ecological crisis as inherently ascribed to a specific ideology that is animated by proto-capitalist logics based on extraction and accumulation through dispossession—“logics that continue to shape the world we live in and that have produced our current era” (764). It is precisely this long-standing intimacy with environmental disruption that attunes Indigenous communities to our contemporary climatic shifts. For Potawatomi philosopher, Kyle Powys Whyte, this sense of “colonial déjà vu” allows Indigenous communities to consider how their accumulated knowledges might productively disrupt and undo the universalizing and violent logics of the Anthropocene. His work is dedicated to crafting what he calls “Indigenous climate change studies”—a mode of praxis that “perform[s] futurities that Indigenous persons can build on in generations to come. [It is] guided by our reflection on our ancestors’ perspectives and on our desire to be good ancestors ourselves to future generations” (160). This vital work has been amplified by the critical energies of scholars like Candis Callison, Joni Adamson, Marisol de la Cadena, Elizabeth Povinelli, Leanne Simpson, and Jaskiran Dhillon, among others.

We invite work that explores this flourishing branch of Indigenous Studies, focusing on the significance of Anthropocene narratives in a global Indigenous arena. Bringing together scholars researching climate and environmental change in relation to diverse geographical and historical contexts, we hope to explore questions surrounding what an anti- and decolonial Anthropocene discourse might look like and what potential it holds for transnational solidarity and Indigenous sovereignty. What are some of the ways that Indigenous perspectives understand—and re-inscribe—climate change knowledge? How do Indigenous artists and activists reconcile the local exigencies of their environment with the global discourse on climate change? How do literary texts reflect and intervene in these contexts? And what is to be gained from studying disparate literatures and societies under the unifying frame of climate change? This special issue aims to explore these and other questions, featuring work that spans a plurality of forms, such as literature, art, film, or related modes of cultural production. We invite articles, creative pieces, or hybrid works that engage with these topics and which align aesthetically with the aforementioned editorial emphasis.

We particularly welcome submissions that engage with the following topics:

- Reflections on the relationship between activism and aesthetics.
- The genres of climate fiction.
- The relationship between environmental humanities (EH), disability studies, and queer theory—as understood from Indigenous perspectives.

- Indigenous studies and related EH fields, such as energy humanities, new materialisms, medical humanities, and oceanic studies.
- The similarities and differences between postcolonial ecocriticism and Indigenous climate change studies.
- Affect, Indigeneity, and the Anthropocene.
- Examinations of temporality.
- Questions of interdisciplinarity, particularly between the hard sciences and the humanities.
- Questions of extraction, both material and informational.
- The complicity of academic institutions in abetting climate violence (particularly those institutions built upon Indigenous lands).
- Anti-colonial and Indigenous critiques of the settler-nation, neoliberalism, and globalization.
- Transnational activism and decolonial movements around climate violence.

Any questions should be directed to Editor David Carlson, California State San Bernardino (dajcarls@csusb.edu), and to Guest Editor Martín Premoli, California State San Bernardino (marpreoli@gmail.com).

Timeline:

Abstracts (up to 300 words) and brief author CV to be sent to the Guest Editors by **1st December 2020**.

Accepted pieces will be due by **1 March 2021** and should be submitted directly to the Transmotion website for peer review, in accordance with the journal guidelines. Projected publication in **Fall 2021**.