

# INTRODUCTION

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*Water is life.  
Land is our first teacher.*

This is a book about these, perhaps the most foundational ideas in Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education. All the pages that follow come back to these ideas. But these ideas can be perceived to be more simple than they are. Their simplicity can mask the deep implications involved, their resounding consequences. For example, to say *water is life*, *land is our first teacher*, and to ignore Indigenous presence and relationship with those lands and waters, is to miss the point entirely. Indigenous feminist scholarship has been especially careful to remind: there is no decolonization without Indigenous presence on Indigenous land and waters (Hunt, 2013; Simpson, 2016).

Part of the planning and decision-making for this book happened along the curve of the Yanaguana, the San Antonio river. If you have ever been to San Antonio, you may be familiar with its distinctive downtown feature called the River Walk, which wends along the banks of the river at many stretches well below street level. If you have traveled this path, you have shared space with many other travelers earthly and celestial, as we were taught by Gary Pérez, an Indigenous knowledge keeper who presented Coahuiltecan teachings at the Indigenous Pre-conference of the American Educational Research Association in April 2017. The river Yanaguana has a unique horseshoe-shaped path that is mirrored in the sky by a constellation, a celestial river of the same shape, known also as the constellation Eridanus. Not only can the shape of the river be mapped as an overlay upon the shape of the stars, but according to Pérez, the two rivers, water and celestial, also meet to make a path that ancestors use to travel between worlds. The Yanaguana

is a path between these worlds for ancestors traveling during profoundly symmetrical moments, such as the solstice, when the earthly and celestial rivers meet exactly on the horizon. It is also for ancestors traveling at more quotidian times, because those two rivers also touch and separate whenever they share sky, as ordinary occurrences.

If you have been near the river during Fiesta San Antonio, as we were when planning this book, then you have perhaps experienced the massive, now 10-day party that is often likened to Mardi Gras. It is historically connected to a commemoration of the battle of the Alamo, a symbol for Anglo settler revenge against the Mexican army and for the grand narrative of Texan exceptionalism. Let us remember the Alamo was the Spanish *Misión San Antonio de Valero*, a site where Native children were abducted and schooled and buried, where Anglo settlers who supported slavery and who pretended to convert to Catholicism in hopes of securing land grants tried to stage a seizure of Native land then occupied/claimed by the new nation-state of Mexico.

Fiesta is an affair of complex desires, with people of many generations taking a hard-earned stroll in a vibrant nightlife that is often missing in norteamericano society. Payday advances increase just before Fiesta, an indication that many of the people celebrating are living paycheck to paycheck. Lovely people from many communities—many of whom are no doubt Indigenous, many Mexican, many of whom are critical of the monumentalization of the Alamo—come out to celebrate Fiesta. Some, like ourselves, are visitors to the river, arriving by way of a large carbon footprint.

We start here, at the river's edge, to do more than locate our book or to put the labor that made this book in a particular place. We start here to ask: what does it mean to celebrate colonialism, as Fiesta does, when water is life—even the water in the seemingly human-made curves of the river walk? What does such a “celebration” do to the water? Yes, there are many plastic cups and flakes of confetti that remain on streets and the water walk the morning after; but what does the commemoration of colonial violence do to our relations with water? Further, what does our planning of this book along the Yanaguana do to the water?

In September 2017, at an event in Toronto called *Water is Life (But Many Can't Drink It)*, Winona LaDuke described the deathly short-sightedness of the extractive fuel industry. In this discussion, LaDuke shared images of water crystal-line structures before and after human prayer (this is also something that you can look up online, a few keywords revealing images like those LaDuke shared). The “before” images were comprised of deflated-looking mushy droplets, whereas after human prayer, droplets had been restructured with the gorgeous symmetries that we might associate with snowflakes. This is evidence that human prayer can have a healing effect with regard to the microscopic structure of water. In sharing these images, LaDuke was reminding us that humans have a relationship to water that is reciprocal, that people can heal water that heals us.

At the same event, Métis artist Erin Marie Konsmo was one of the invited respondents to LaDuke's lecture, along with Christi Belcourt and Isaac Murdoch, all members of the Onaman Collective. We were so engaged by Konsmo's remarks

that we asked permission to share some of their notes here, in this introduction. We also asked them to provide the essay that would become the afterword of this volume, on accessing Indigenous land/water and bodies. In response to LaDuke's lecture, Koonsmo asked,

What might "Water is Life" mean in the context of a city like Tkaronto? How/does urban life change the way we engage and protect water, life, and each other?

Sometimes it feels really hard to hear "water is life" when we're losing young people to the river in Thunder Bay almost every month. Many of our youth and women have been found beside or in water sources.

We need to think about life at all times of creation. Even under dire circumstances of climate change. How can we love and build right relation with profoundly polluted water, water that we are entangled in harming through the infrastructures and systems we have to live through (sewers, garbage, industrialism)?

This question brings me to thinking about disabilities, desirability and disposability.

In order to love and build good relations through ongoing colonialism and environmental destruction we need to get rid of concepts of purity (which also ultimately harm our city kin). They also harm gender and sexuality-complex folks and people with disabilities. Myself included. I also hear purity concepts weaponized against people who have experienced sexual violence.

Rarely do we hear people talk about environmental justice and disability. I think coming to terms with and identifying that purity is a destructive and isolating concept is important to how we treat cities and our kin who live there. Whether that's purity around the water or land or purity around cultural and ceremonial knowledge. We are in a time where we are entangled in infrastructure. We need to not force dogmatic practices of land/water on our people, because it's ultimately ableist, incorporates shame if you don't meet that standard and leaves very specific people behind.

Finally, how do we think about water and gender? Often these things are segmented and isolated in building social movements, but they overflow. How can water help us approach gender differently?

Water brings us together. If we could rally together for trans youth like we do for water, what would that look like? How can we make sure people are bringing Two Spirit youth with them and then making supportive ceremonial environments, not essentialist ceremonies? Almost every Two Spirit person I know faces barriers to ceremony. It is important that we start mentoring Two Spirit people to hold those ceremonies.

Water is self-determining. You're not going to go to the lake in August (a hot month) and tell it to be an ice cube. If we love water in all the various forms that it takes, then we can love our family in all the complex ways that they exist. If we could model more of our relationship to the land in the

ways that we have relationships with other people, we may see the ways that Two Spirit, Trans and gender complex people already have their existence in our worlds.

(Konsmo, 2017)

We are grateful to Erin Marie Konsmo for allowing us to print these words from their conversation with Winona LaDuke. Konsmo's connective threads between murdered and missing Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people; the shorelines of polluted rivers that can become final resting places for Indigenous peoples; gender, sexuality, disability; and the harms of purity discourses do a great deal of work to bring complexity to saying that water is life.

As we have only begun to indicate here, the abiding ideas that *water is life* and that *Land is our first teacher* bear much complexity in their seemingly simple phrasing. Among the Indigenous scholars who have written about the notion of Land as first teacher across generations, Sandra Styres is one of those who have most directly taken up these ideas in her work. Styres writes, "Land as first teacher is a contemporary engagement with Indigenous philosophies derived from a land-centred culture and based on *very old pedagogies*" (2011, p. 717, emphasis original). The article emphasizes how creating pedagogy and curricula to reflect and engage the notion of Land as first teacher can mean centering and grounding student learning "to the land that holds their stories, (re)membered experiences, and has recorded tracks of both their and their ancestors' journeying" (*ibid.*, p. 726). Styres locates the learning she has done to generate this writing in work with students in Sioux Lookout, and in the teachings of Ojibwe-Anishinabe traditional teacher Eddie Benton-Benai. She engages Benton-Benai's 1988 book, *The Mishomis Book*, to reflect on the implied responsibilities in the understandings within Land as first teacher. "What tracks are we leaving as educators? What tracks are we teaching our students to leave?" Styres asks (*ibid.*, p. 728). These questions are but one way to describe the generational ethic required in forming theories and systems of education that are wholly influenced by water as life and Land as first teacher. Styres continues to consider this ethic and many of the themes that are important to this book in her chapter, *Literacies of Land* (Chapter 1), which serves to open the remainder of the volume.

## Prompting the Fields and Waters of Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education

This is the first volume of a new books series in Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. The creation of this book series is, like many Indigenous efforts in education, a next step in a long history or long path taken by so many others. The book series is one of many efforts to widen a field that has at times been characterized as a trail of letters: Indigenous writers and educators writing to one another, across generations and colonized territories. Notes scribbled in margins, reaching across the page to one another,

becoming the page. Messages in bottles, gathering together in an eddy. In the next section, Eve Tuck and Linda Tuhiwai Smith have crafted brief missives, in part to one another, but mostly for you, the anticipated readers, and for the anticipated Indigenous and decolonizing authors who will create books that will also appear in this series.

### ***Writing to One Another—Eve Tuck***

One thing that I feel like I have learned from Linda Tuhiwai Smith is how to engage our writing as letters out to other Indigenous people, who are working in their own ways to decolonize their home territories and the other spaces they move within. Because we are spread across great distances, because our homelands and our worksites (if separate, like mine) are geographically dispersed and our time is taxed by university demands (the emergencies that always pop up), our writing is our way of saying, “I am still thinking of you, and the last conversation we had.” Once, when I was still a graduate student, Linda and I talked about the idea that Indigenous women and non-binary people are always writing to each other in our footnotes. I have held that idea in my heart, and over time, have grown the courage to move what would have been footnotes to the body of my writing. Now, we have a whole book series on what was once only sayable in footnotes.

Several summers ago, Linda and I were on a panel speaking to graduate students and early career scholars. Their questions, I realized, were nearly identical to the questions I asked Linda when we first met nearly a decade before. How do we get the space to do the work that is meaningful here? How do we keep writing when it feels like no one gets it? Linda’s answers—take the space; do the writing; we are out here reading you—continue to resonate, to reverberate across the decisions I make as a scholar. Her book *Decolonizing Methodologies*, but even more, her insistent presence in the academy and in the field, show what those answers—take the space, do the writing, we are out here reading you—mean when applied to a life’s work.

So the relationships have been fruitful, the writing has been fruitful, the moving of whispers in the footnotes to discussions happening deep within the body, the lands of our work, has been exceedingly fruitful. I have a mix of fury and gratitude, always, for the opportunity to do this work.

### ***Writing in the Field(S) of Education and Indigenous Studies Feels Different Now—Linda Tuhiwai Smith***

Writing in the field(s) of education and Indigenous studies feels different now than it did when I initially published *Decolonizing Methodologies* in 1999. These days I feel that I am not alone, writing into an emptiness or vacuum to a colonial system that is intent on destroying Indigenous peoples. My early efforts

seemed like a cry in the wilderness or message in a bottle or whisper in the dark, hoping to catch the attention of someone somewhere who would accept the message and respond. I knew the message was worth writing. I thought the message needed to be carried at an international level and be aligned to the work being done on the rights of Indigenous peoples and deeply connected and engaged with our communities. These fields did not exist as fields of Indigenous scholarship when I began my career or when I wrote *Decolonizing Methodologies*.

My observation of earlier Maori or Indigenous scholars was that the academy consumed them, changed them, distracted them, and isolated them from the Indigenous world and that we, as a community, could not trust all of them to work for us. My critique of colonialism was not just about looking at the colonizer but also looking at what colonial hegemony was doing within our own Indigenous minds, spirits, and behaviors. I saw the need for a decolonizing agenda that dealt with the whole of the dialectic of colonizer–colonized and recognized the role of education as a means to transform colonialism at deep levels of knowledge, pedagogy, the shaping of minds and discourses.

Now, I feel that I am writing as part of a community of Indigenous scholars who have deepened understandings of the work of decolonizing education and, importantly, created new approaches to education that theorize, revitalize, enhance, and produce Indigenous educational experiences that support Indigenous futures.

There is much that feels the same, however. There are still more scholars working with deficit approaches who are trying to either “save” us from ourselves or fix us up, sort us out, and, in some cases still, convince us that they “know best.” I am reminded quite often that faculties of education are still dominated by academic staff who are ignorant and hostile to Indigenous peoples. I feel a sense of *déjà vu* that some of my early work still needs to be restated.

### ***On Institutionalizing Indigenous Studies/Maori Studies—Linda Tuhiwai Smith***

Institutionalization of Indigenous studies and Maori studies in Western-dominated academies is not, in itself, a thing to aspire to, but creating “safe” places is often a practical response to isolation and marginalization. Of course, decolonization teaches us that putting a group of Indigenous academics together does not naturally translate to safe, healthy, and stimulating environments. As scholars, we are not immune to, or above, the historic trauma of our peoples and we have to work purposively to create healthy decolonized academic spaces. The severing of Maori studies from anthropology and linguistics was seen as an important stance of self-determination that, in the academy, represents a major academic debate and academic “win.” It only works, however, if Maori studies reimagines itself at the same time. That project has proven more challenging to achieve than what was initially

imagined. In a fundamental sense, the day after the declaration of decolonization and formal transfer of power becomes the first day of work to decolonize.

I like the idea of, and have worked to create, networks and communities that cut across institutions and communities. When I was a student, an Indigenous conference was primarily a conference during which white scholars discussed their research about Indigenous people. Now, I see a growing body of Indigenous scholars in research programs, in networks and collaborations, in journals, at conferences, in symposia, and in special interest groups that have formed in recent times. I think these structures of Indigenous collegiality have proven to be very powerful in advancing our scholarship, creating the academic language we need, and mentoring our researchers. Talking with each other is a far more stimulating way to advance Indigenous intellectual work than trying to talk to each other through the mediating presence of non-Indigenous scholars.

My own academic background is multidisciplinary. I majored in history and politics at the bachelor's level, did a master's degree starting in counseling and then transferring to sociology. My Ph.D. supervisors in education were a sociologist and psychologist. I do not have any particular loyalty to a single discipline. I am intrigued, as my work shows, in how academic disciplines work to discipline language and thought, as well as to institutionalize and legitimate knowledge. Understanding the nature of academic disciplines and their underlying philosophies and methods has helped me deconstruct the power of disciplines to define and represent Indigenous peoples and our ways of knowing and being, and to entrap us in their sense of reality. A decolonizing agenda has to help Indigenous peoples to create and revitalize our own frameworks, language, theories, methodologies, and practices that work for us.

For readers who wonder whether or not you should be attending more meaningfully to the work of institutionalizing Indigenous studies, you are probably used to going it alone but have established networks and good, strong collaborations that give you a place to be and a sense of a shared community. The questions become ones such as, *Where do you find your community? Who do you consider your peers? Who is the audience for our/your work? Who do we love spending time with?* I tend to see us as growing community rather than institutionalizing decolonial and Indigenous studies.

There does not need to be a rush to establish Indigenous studies in any mainstream university nor to take up Indigenous research by agencies. I think the Indigenous studies trend is a repositioning trend to strengthen kinds of teaching and research that is often fragmented and piecemeal and unsatisfying to teach. That trend is part of a process that may lead somewhere else in 20 years' time. The other trend mostly occurring in Canada and Australia is to seek ways to "Indigenize" the academy, which can often mean simply adding more Indigenous people to university settings. This aspiration is an entirely different proposition and is not about Indigenous studies per se but often about inclusion, equity, and reconciliation. Somewhat cynically, it can also be viewed as about mainstreaming,

dispersing, infusing, or shoring up white privilege by keeping it firmly in positions of power. The critical questions in terms of the call to “Indigenize” are, *Who is making the call? Who is controlling the way that call is articulated? What Indigenous capacity is being developed and how is that being sustained over the long term?* Sometimes these new ideas are opportunities to advance Indigenous thought and scholarship, Indigenous engagement and participation, but sometimes they simply add more work on to the shoulders of the few Indigenous scholars and other staff available in an institution with little attention being given to growing capacity, developing careers, improving relationships, or indeed transforming institutional practices.

### ***Locating Our Work in Education, When It Might Have Had a Home in Other Fields—Eve Tuck***

Part of how I ended up locating my work in education has to do with the way that my story has unfolded—that I worked with mentors who located *their* work in education, that the community organizing that I learned from early in my career was across environmental, education, and anti-carceral system movements. I was doing participatory educational design, participatory curriculum development, and participatory action research in my role as a community educator in a community youth organization before I learned the words and terms for what I was doing later in university. This isn’t to say that I am somehow advanced or unique, but that community learning spaces already do so much of what gets legitimated and valued as research in the academy. So, part of how I found myself in the field of education has to do with the types of organizing that I saw as most urgent at the time that I was entering graduate school: school policy, environmental racism, policing, and community-led social change.

I also sometimes pause to consider why I have *stayed* in the field of education, rather than move to another interdisciplinary field. This has to do with what I experience as the disciplinary advantages of working in education, rather than fields that also engage Indigenous studies, community organizing, local schooling, participatory approaches to knowledge creation, and intergenerational learning. I could have located my work in another field, and still be able to get at those same questions and practices that have mattered so much to me. So what keeps me here in education, at least for now?

First, this is a field that, when it is at its best, embraces and anticipates change. Change, the likelihood of change, the certainty of change with uncertain outcomes, are foundational to questions of education and learning. The whole field pivots on how change happens and how our efforts as humans can bring about the changes we want to see. This is at the level of the individual, at the level of communities, and at the level of societies or polities—and this is not an ordered scaling; change does not necessarily go in the order from individual to polity, or from polity to individual. I like working in a field in which change is at the core of what we talk about. However, sometimes our field tries to discuss or deal with



change by making things static when they definitely are not static. Education in this way, when it tries to make itself too much like other fields, makes humans and human activities into predictable boxes that can be stacked to add up to certain things/certainty. I disbelieve in those research practices and disbelieve in their centrality to our field.

I also like working in a field that is concerned with relationality. This is why teacher education, teacher research, and teaching are so integral to educational research more broadly. The relationality of teaching is so immediate, so urgent, that it doesn't allow itself to be overshadowed. It helps to remind that much of what we are looking at, what we are studying when we are doing educational research, is engaging in and simultaneously seeking to know more about relationships and relationality. So, there are questions in my work that would be addressed very differently if I were a historian or an anthropologist. One prominent example has to do with my more recent collaborations to understand more about Black peoples' and Indigenous peoples' relationships to each other within and beyond settler nation-states. To attend to those connections in a way that prioritizes history will yield different results than attending to them in ways that prioritize ongoing relationality, as my collaborators and I have been doing. Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2008) discusses the concept of *self as relationship* in Indigenous research, a concept he attributes to his father Stan Wilson (2001). Shawn Wilson writes,

Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded in their relationships with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land and with future generations who will come into being on the land. Rather than viewing ourselves as being *in* relationship with other people or things, we *are* the relationships that we hold and are part of.

(p. 80)

The relationality that I am emphasizing as being especially possible, especially legible within the field of education (as opposed to other fields) is an indelible feature of Indigenous research and Indigenous studies. There is a productive compatibility that I have experienced in working in both these fields.

What has always kept me interested in the field of education as an Indigenous scholar is the way that international conferences on education, such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education (WIPCE), draw a critical mass of Indigenous educational scholars from around the globe. It should be said that this is not necessarily attributable to the design of AERA, whereas WIPCE does intentionally engage Indigenous scholars by design. Nonetheless, education is a field that attracts Indigenous scholars, and not only because of exclusion from other fields. Maybe education is a field that Indigenous people have greater access to because so many of us are educators. Maybe it is because the field is so large that proportionally as

an “asterisk” group (Shotton, Lowe, & Waterman, 2013)—as numbers too small to be reported—that at a large conference like AERA we are quite sizeable even if we are less than a percentage point. Yet education also attracts Indigenous scholars because of the role of compulsory schooling in colonization, the necessary future-building work that must take place to interrupt practices of assimilation/eradication in schools, and the space made by generations of Indigenous educators for us to meet and forward Indigenous futures.

Thus, Indigenous perspectives on education have never been limited to the liberal values of increasing equity and citizenship in the nation-state; in other words, have never been delimited by the field of education. Indigenous educators pragmatically enact decolonizing work while settler scholars can only imagine decolonization as philosophical and theoretical. Indigenous educators carry forward Indigenous teachings and carry forward the relations—circling back to the teaching-as-relation and self-as-relation—that is the heart of Indigenous futurity. This book series is dedicated to this work, Indigenous + decolonizing work in education, which is not a small intersection in the field of education; it is already beyond the field of education.

### ***Bringing Your Work Home—Linda Tuhiwai Smith***

Indigenous graduate students and Indigenous scholars often ask me what it can look like to bring our work home. It is a question about how you understand your work and understanding that there are multiple ways to articulate your work to multiple audiences, including home. If we problematize the national tone, then there are multiple and complex audiences at home, as well.

The trick is recognizing that bringing your work home involves a number of elements. One is to bring yourself home. It’s not a “Pack up the thesis and I’m done, I’m graduated, I’m going home, wow.” It doesn’t happen like that, I think. As someone who has gone in pursuit of advanced education, how do you bring yourself home as an intellectual? That can be quite challenging. You can be home as a daughter, as a niece, as a branch out, as a descendant, as a member, but how do you bring yourself home as an intellectual? I wouldn’t recommend you arrive home with a newly minted Ph.D. and say, “I’m here! I’m your intellectual.” That probably won’t go down well.

The idea of bringing your work home has the element of bringing yourself home, and then there’s the element of how your work speaks. How do you want your work to speak? Who do you want your work to speak to? In some senses, advanced degrees give you a platform to speak. I think advanced degrees also give you an opportunity to expand your work further afield.

If I look at what I’ve tried to do over the long years of my career, probably the least effective way to bring my work or to take my work home to my different communities is to get them a research report. Boring, boring, boring to them.

I have returned home with poems and short stories. And then there is talking, conversing with people about ideas and approaches, trying to apply them to strategies that they can use at home, trying to expand the way we think about the issues at home. I recently went home and spoke to our governance entity about food and food governance. People were enthusiastic because food resonated with every single person in the room. But they were sort of baffled with the governance part until we talked about what it means to govern our food, starting from the production of food from the earth and the ocean, to what we put in our mouths. They got really excited about governance and then, organically, I talked about the background policy for the tribe and suggested some strategies that they could use to implement community-level food sovereignty.

It's so easy sometimes to be disappointed at home because things often take so long to change. You're trained in a way to see the implications of decisions. You can be at home, and you can see decisions being made, and you almost feel like you know what the consequences of decisions are, and you really, really want to feel compelled to intervene and say, "You can't do this" and "You should know this." That's a really tricky space to be in unless you've got lots of strategies for influencing change that you're not just going to learn in a Ph.D. program. You actually have to learn those strategies in the world of community activism, because they're subtle. I don't know about your communities, but my communities have long memories. They have especially long memories for when you mess up. They're forgiving if you carry on trying, but I just think that's another part of the work.

I have sort of dipped in and out of community work, but quite frankly, sometimes, being involved in projects has just made me frustrated and I want to scream. That's a flagrant indicator that maybe I shouldn't be doing that work; I should give all my information and become an adviser to someone else who is prepared to do that kind of work.

For some of us, our work is most effective at the borders of our homes, not in our homes. Our role might be to be outside speaking for our communities or speaking into those communities that are hostile to our homes or speaking to those communities that potentially could support what we do at home, but essentially, working at the borders of your homeland, you're not working within home. You have a role, and it's like a sentinel at one level, sentinel on the border, or you might be beyond the border. You might actually be somewhere else trying to do work for your home.

But I think it's just always about taking yourself home and being connected and understanding that that's a particular role. I would not say that it is an easy role. I would say that it is always a challenging role. I don't have easy solutions for how you manage that role if you come out of an Indigenous or First Nation. Even in the community—communities are complicated.

### **Revisiting “Insiders” and “Outsiders” in Indigenous Research—Linda Tuhiwai Smith**

When I wrote *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), discussions of being an insider or outsider in ethnographic research were prevalent. Anthropology departments now teach people how to be a research insider, and there is an industry around making yourself inside, as though that is the solution to the kinds of tensions that are raised in considering who is inside and who is outside a community. I think really, in practice, there is no inside. Even if you are researcher in your own community, by being a researcher, you’re positioned in relation to the community in a complicated way. You might know the community. You might have the language of the community. You might have relationships in the community. But the role of research always positions you in a somewhat different space with different responsibilities, including ethical responsibilities and intellectual responsibilities, let alone managing relationship responsibilities if you are a researcher.

Interestingly, some anthropology research still clings to traditional ideas of being able to immerse oneself in primitive cultures. Here in New Zealand, we still endure graduate students from European universities who come to our communities to do research without any ethical documents or pre-established relationships with a host New Zealand institution. Some arrive unannounced to a community event. They look so hopeless and pathetic that a community member feels sorry for them and takes them into their homes and feeds them. Then the community member finds out that they’re there to do research and are seeking “contacts” and “networks.” The act of taking them in and sharing food obligates their host to try and help them. In fact, researchers need to approach the community in more formal ways. This is kind of subterfuge of innocence where one arrives like some naïve traveler saying, “Oh, I’ve just been sent to do my Ph.D. Help me, help me!”

That example of the insider/outsider notion was really common when I started writing *Decolonizing Methodologies*. It shocks me that the practice still happens, that people can come literally from the other side of the world and think that they can immerse themselves in our community and think they can become like an insider. When I am teaching about insider/outsider, I make clear that it is a very kind of crude binary if you think about it. It is much more complicated in terms of what is the outside, what is the inside, and whether there are really sides anyway. More and more, we are teaching our own students about positioning and positionality, the responsibilities of yourself as a researcher, but also understanding that you can position yourself in different ways when you understand that context.

I have undertaken research with my own communities, with Indigenous communities that are not my own and with communities that transgress traditional notions of geopolitical and genealogical community such as urban youth, social service providers, women. One of the reasons I have enjoyed working with communities to which I do not belong is because I am not drawn into all the domestic

dramas of my community. I just smile when they look at me and say “Oh, did you hear the latest?” I can just say, “No,” and get on with our work. If I am in my own community, all that stuff is always in the room. You hear the latest gossip and little dramas. That is what comes with me working in my community. But I have also enjoyed working in other Indigenous contexts where I have been able to focus on the particular aspects of research of interest to me. I have been able to do that in a good way with that Indigenous community and develop a really good partnership in research. Increasingly, I am more concerned with the deeper issues that empirical research hints at but often fails to pick up upon, or with connecting different parts of a puzzle that cannot be answered in a single project. This may be a question about the ways in which Indigenous values inform multiple strands of work, or how Indigenous knowledge is being utilized across different domains, or ideas about resilience and resistance, well-being, and hospitality.

These days, when I am thinking about the insider/outsider, I think it is what a beginner needs to know about boundaries, borders, liminality, and intersectionality. An Indigenous researcher needs to know so much more than that. It comes back to how you position yourself, how you understand yourself, your intentions and capacity to work in a good way, your skills at negotiating complexity and your ability to work in relation with community, with land and water, with a wider sense of the world.

### ***Losing Patience for the Task of Convincing Settlers to Pay Attention to Indigenous Ideas—Eve Tuck***

Learning from Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s work, much of my writing has expressed some impatience with regard to research practices *on* Indigenous peoples. I have been critical of damage-centered research (Tuck, 2009), which focuses solely on the supposed damage of Indigenous people in the supposed aftermath of colonization (supposed because settler colonialism continues to violently shape Indigenous life). I have also written with Wayne (Tuck & Yang, 2012) to critique superficial, additive employs of the term decolonization in education discourse, and have argued for using the term with specificity, not just as an emptied synonym for whatever project someone was already wanting to make happen. To say that decolonization is not a metaphor is to resist using decolonization as a trendy term, and in settler colonial contexts, to resist delinking decolonial projects from the rematriation of Indigenous land and life. In settler states that are also antiblack states founded through the violence of chattel slavery, decolonization also must involve abolition.

So, I’m somewhat used to expressing impatience in my work, but more recently, I have become frustrated by the way that Indigenous scholarship is taken up in the settler academy. For most of my career, I have advocated for the centrality of Indigenous social thought in fields of education. Most of my interventions have focused on the possibilities afforded by attending to Indigenous writings,

worldviews, teachings, approaches to relationship, ethics, histories, and futurities. I have done this because I am convinced that Indigenous texts, for the most part, do the work to teach readers how these texts need to be read.

One extended analogy that I have made to describe the relationship between Indigenous social thought and Western theory is that of the New York City subway system. I was a New Yorker for much of my adult life, and I hold the NYC subway system in high regard (note I am describing the network of tracks, not necessarily the company that runs the trains!). A map of the criss-crossing routes is something to behold. Trains go all over the city, taking one below rivers, beneath stone and skyscrapers, above avenues and through the most sacred parts of the city. Subway lines route from this corner to that corner, from this neighborhood to that beach. Entryways from the street are well marked, often with a glowing green ball, or one that glows red to convey that it is closed for now. Signs from the street indicate “downtown only,” or “uptown only,” and where a train will go to (and not go to) is clearly marked on the platforms. For me, thinking of this underground world of connectivity and travel and hubs and pathways is a good way to think about Indigenous knowledges. Indigenous knowledges have many of these characteristics and are also usually sign-posted—*this will take you in this direction, but not in this direction. This is open for you now. This is how you get to your destination, but this is also how you get to other destinations.*

To extend this analogy, sometimes listening to a person who is trying to understand something only by engaging Western theory is like listening to a person who keeps trying to take a taxi cab in rush-hour traffic. They complain about getting stuck, the slow ride, the cost of the trip. Being an Indigenous scholar in the settler academy is like listening to someone go on and on about the dilemmas of cab rides while knowing that the subway system is just beneath the surface.

Again, I feel that I have spent much of my time in education encouraging people to take just a short journey on a subway, or at least check out a map. I feel that I have been standing at the subway entrance, calling to colleagues and students as they hop in their individual taxi cabs into gridlock traffic.

I find myself less willing to do this now. I am weary after so many conference presentations in which Indigenous scholars present work and then someone in the audience asks them a question that expects them to do more work. When I was in graduate school, I hated conference presentations because no matter how carefully I articulated my project, there was always someone in the audience who wanted me to do more labor for them; either tell them what they can do or help them see how they can save all the “Indian” children. In most cases, this question was posed even if my presentation critiqued the ways in which white settlers make their experiences the center of life and work. Now, especially when I am serving as chair or discussant on panels with new Indigenous scholars, I warn audiences away from asking self-serving questions or questions that make Indigenous scholars create honey-do lists for settlers.

There have been several “turns,” including the ontological turn, the material turn, the spatial turn, each of which is actually a turn to where Indigenous people have always been (see also Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). I recently became totally exasperated when I saw a social media post by a white settler colleague asking for recommendations of “more practical” readings by Indigenous scholars, which would provide more detail about what decolonization looks like “in reality.” To watch settler scholars sift through our work as they effectively ask, “Isn’t there more for me to get from this?” is so insulting. It seems like the tacit (and sometimes arrogantly explicit) request for more (details, explanation, assurance) is actually a form of dismissal. It is a rejection of the opportunity to engage with Indigenous texts on their own terms. It is a deferral of responsibility through asking, “Isn’t there something less theoretical? Isn’t there something more theoretical? Something more practical? Something less radical? Can’t you describe something that seems more likely or possible?” These insistences upon Indigenous writings contradict themselves while also putting all the onus of responsibility on Indigenous people to make the future more coherent and palatable to white settler readers. In reading Indigenous work, they ask for more work, even if they have done little to fully consider what has already been carefully and attentively offered. Often it seems that settler readers read like settlers (that is, read extractively) for particular content to be removed for future use. The reading is like panning for gold, sorting through work that may not have been intended for a particular reader, sorting it by what is useful and what is discardable. Again, something being purportedly too theoretical is often the reason that Indigenous work is discarded or disregarded, whereas that “too theoretical” idea may be entirely practical, life-sustaining, and life-promoting for an Indigenous reader.

I spent almost all my career, up until recently, believing that if white settlers would just read Indigenous authors, this would move projects of Indigenous sovereignty and land rematriation in meaningful ways. I underestimated how people would read Indigenous work extractively, for discovery. I underestimated how challenging it would be for settlers to read Indigenous work, after all these years of colonial relations.

Indigenous and decolonial theories are unfairly, inappropriately expected to answer to whiteness and to settler relationships to land in the future. At the end of *Decolonization is Not a Metaphor*, Wayne and I write about the importance of incommensurability. We write that incommensurability is an ethic that contests reconciliation—reconciliation is about rescuing settler normalcy, about ensuring a settler future. A settler future is preoccupied by questions of, *What will decolonization look like? What will happen after abolition? What will be the consequences of decolonization for the settler?*

Wayne and I close the article with the insistence that decolonization is not obliged to answer questions concerned with settler futures. “Decolonization is not accountable to settlers, or settler futurity. Decolonization is accountable to Indigenous sovereignty and futurity. The answers to those questions are not fully

in view” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 35). What I am coming to more fully understand is that the questions of “What will decolonization look like?,” when posed by settlers, are a distraction to Indigenous theorizations of decolonization. They drain the energy and imagination of Indigenous scholarship—they pester, they think they are unique, and they are boring. I want time and space to sketch the next and the now to get there. Decolonization is not the endgame, not the final outcome of a long process, but the next now, the now that is chasing at our heels. I am lucky to come from the long view.

## A Preview of the Chapters in This Book

One thing that readers will immediately notice is that the chapters and organization of this book do not readily adhere to the more typical divisions within education as a broad field. Chapters drift between things that elsewhere get called higher education, curriculum and instruction, out-of-school learning, special education, educational research. This is part of the river-like design of this book, a way of showing how interventions afforded by Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education re-order and re-imagine the divisions within education that have been naturalized. These divisions do not have to be the way that we approach our teaching and research in education. They have an impact on what gets constructed as a problem and what can be understood as a solution. They do not need to have so much influence. They can be washed away.

We have found that water—in its insistence on being what it is (as Erin Marie Konsmo points out), in its profound relationship to places, to its multiplicity of forms, in its fluidity, and its worldwide connections to all places and peoples—has become an appropriate organizing principle for this book. This introduction began with a discussion of Yanaguana river and its celestial river companion, the constellation Eridanus. To live and make research as though water is life necessarily means attending to ways that water as relation is regenerated through ceremony, through restoring and establishing good relations with water. It means turning away from water as a colonial commodification. The connection of these two distinct but related projects of Indigenous relation-making and decolonization can inform approaches to education. As such, readers will notice that chapters highlighting the centrality of water as teaching, as relation, and as place have been distributed throughout the chapters—to signal difference/diversity in Indigenous thought but to also weave a connective pathway within the chapters. Ocean, rivers, reef—waters and their interconnected lands—thread and flow throughout this book.

Our opening chapter, “Literacies of Land: Decolonizing Narratives, Storying and Literature” offers important frameworks about reading, teaching, and writing from an emplaced perspective that is based on classroom practices by Sandra Styres (Kanien’kehá:ka), residing on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Oniatari:io. Space is connected but different from place, different from land, and



different from Land—and Styres takes us quickly and meaningfully to appreciate literacies of Land as decolonizing and Indigenous knowledge-making praxis. Choosing to capitalize “Land” is to recognize Indigenous Land as source of philosophy, of cosmology, of spirituality. Thus Styres extends and perhaps explodes the theories of critical literacy and place-based literacies. Literacies of the Land are “about reading all of the things around us that are not necessarily the written word.” The Land teaches us both pathways beyond colonization and original instructions on being-in-relation, and thus teaches us what we hope the words “Indigenous and Decolonization in Education” would mean in this book series. As the opening chapter for this book, “Literacies of Land” articulates so many principles about Land as sentient, as consciousness, as teacher, as relation that are shared in the chapters in this book.

Along the spirit of water as relation, and as a relation that teaches, Naadli Todd Lee Ormiston (Northern Tutchone, Tlingit) describes “paddling as pedagogy” in his chapter, “Haa Shageinyaa: ‘Point Your Canoe Downstream and Keep Your Head Up!’” Naadli shares his learnings from and meditations upon a 55-day, 850-mile journey in a canoe on the Eagle, Bell, Porcupine, and Yukon rivers. Readers might be struck by the contrast between critical Western philosophies of pedagogy as reading and writing the world—acting upon the world—and Tlingit philosophies of knowledge creation where learning and teaching are in collaboration with the world: the waters, the weather, the wildlife. Certainly, paddling and living on the water is an embodied practice of persons-in-movement, but it is also a collaborative practice where living is interdependent with one’s paddling companion, the plants and animals, and the trails and traces left behind by previous travelers. Along Ormiston’s journey is evidence of settler encroachment in forms of physical violations that are so clearly epistemological violations as well, yet still the river life is all around, collaborating, flowing, teaching.

Chapter 3, “Rez Ponies and Confronting Sacred Junctures in Decolonizing and Indigenous Education,” is an artful engagement of colonial incommensurabilities and decolonial embodiment through the connections between horse, rider, and land. Diné author Kelsey Dayle John compels us to think about the Diné horse and riding as relation, as methodology, as knowledge transmission. “The way I was taught, Diné call this hózhó . . . walking in beauty.” Diné receive instruction on relations with animal nations, and on navigating the borders of colonial/decolonial, through observing and participating in the embodiment acts of respect for horses amidst a landscape scarred by colonization. Weaving narratives about riding horses together with careful writings on decoloniality and Indigeneity, Kelsey Dayle John takes us on a ride that reverberates with a grounded Diné epistemology about incommensurability and decolonization without privileging these academic terms and, indeed, without using academic theory as the carrier and conduit of thinking on these matters. “Horses are a gift,” in so many ways, including an active source of dynamic knowledge of ground and movement, that teaches the Diné rider decolonizing pathways.

In Chapter 4, “River as Lifeblood, River as Border: The Irreconcilable Discrepancies of Colonial Occupation from/with/on/of the Frontera,” Marissa Muñoz (Xicana Tejana) speaks as a restorying and, indeed, restorative guide along the banks of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo—the waters that have come to be the geopolitical boundary separating Laredo, Texas from Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. These borderlands are Muñoz’s home and her grandmother’s home before her. Grounded in place-based knowledges, Muñoz meditatively addresses incommensurabilities of Mexican/Indian/American colonial relations and realities. Deliberately not heavy with borderland theory, this chapter opens possibilities for an evolving Xicanx epistemology that engages Indigenous and decolonizing pasts, presents, futures through place-based *conocimiento*. Marissa Muñoz navigates us through the borderlands, taking the Rio Grande rather than any border wall or political demarcation as the place of restorying, “in order to remember who we were before our river became an occupied, armed, international border.”

“Indigenous Oceanic Futures: Challenging Settler Colonialisms and Militarization” offers a critical framework for addressing (de)militarization in Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education. Noelani Goodyear-Ka’ōpua (Kanaka Maoli) insightfully situates projects of decolonization in the “global” conditions of empire built upon and maintained by militarization. Goodyear-Ka’ōpua uses the fluidity of oceanic boundaries and movements to unsettle the naturalization of land-as-territory with stable landscapes readily available for cartographic borders. This chapter begins with a story of contemporary 2014 Oceanic voyaging on double-hulled sailing canoes as a practice of navigating to an Indigenous future—a voyage that necessarily connects oceanic (de)toxicification, border crossings, and regeneration of Indigenous relations connected by the Pacific. In the same year, a voyage of massive firepower by the US Pacific Fleet around the “Rim of the Pacific” enacts a settler futurity—and puts into perspective the geopolitical stakes of demilitarization and Indigenous oceanic futures. By “looking at lands from vantage points on the ocean,” this chapter connects thinking about futurities by Indigenous scholars across lands and oceans. Readers will appreciate the scope of ideas covered in accessible and storytelling manner, such as futurities, futurisms, resurgence. This chapter combines many of the existing tools in Indigenous and decolonizing studies for “visions for and practices of decolonial future-making.”

Chapter 6, “The Ixil University and the Decolonization of Knowledge” details contemporary efforts of an autonomous university dedicated to Indigenous land, culture, and resource preservation, created and run by the Maya in the Ixil Region of the western highlands of Guatemala. Author Giovanni Batz (K’iche’ Maya) shares the contexts of nation-state mining, hydroelectric dams, resource extraction, and the negative effects of nation-state educational institutions on distancing Indigenous students from their communities. These conditions of Indigenous place and communities may resonate with many readers. The Ixil University, in response to these conditions, prepares students to defend their territories, resources, cultures, and communities, and does so without seeking state

recognition. Batz writes about Indigenous efforts with great care and respect—rooting his perspectives in modern Mayan epistemologies and carefully sharing only what is permissible and necessary for the reader. This chapter is an important contribution in considering Indigenous educational institution-building beyond the parameters of the nation-state.

In Chapter 7, “Decolonizing Indigenous Education in the Postwar City: Native Women’s Activism from Southern California to the Motor City,” Kyle T. Mays (Saginaw Chippewa) and Kevin Whalen engage history, place, and Native feminisms in the creation of Indigenous urban educational institutions. They tell the story of Judy Mays, a Saginaw Anishinaabe woman who was instrumental in the development of Detroit’s Indian Educational and Cultural Center, founded in 1975, and Medicine Bear American Indian Academy, founded in 1994. They also tell of a connected but radically different context, Sherman Institute in Southern California’s Inland Empire, an off-reservation boarding school originally intended to assimilate Native American youth into whitestream society. They detail the labors of Native women, with particular attention to Lorene Sisquoc (Cahuilla/Apache), to “transform Sherman Institute from a place of dispossession into a hub for intertribal cultural survival.” Mays’s and Whalen’s writing moves across space and time, with specificity to place and history, a motion that offers broader insights into the interplay between Indigeneity, class, place, and race—particularly Blackness in the case of Detroit. And through all this, they focus on urban Indigenous feminisms in revitalizing pedagogies and institutional transformation.

Chapter 8, “Queering Indigenous Education,” is a talking chapter by Alex Wilson (Neyonawak Inniniwak) in an interview with Marie Laing (Kanyen’kehá:ka). Discussing land-based education with a perspective attuned to two-spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ communities, Wilson describes the inseparability of land sovereignty and body sovereignty. This perspective rethinks pedagogical practices that may substitute Indigenous traditions for colonial traditions in education, yet nonetheless reproduce the colonial commitments to fixity and to hierarchizations embedded in Western pedagogical paradigms. This means women and two-spirit people bear the “whiplash” politics on their very bodies, in forms of violation, in the murdered and missing, in the un-understood suicide. In restoring traditional understandings of bodies to land, fluidity and tradition become complementary. Wilson offers both teachings that are translatable to other settings and roots their discussion in the specificities of the land-based education master’s program at the University of Saskatchewan, LGBTQ2S activist histories, and land epistemes of Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

“What makes research ethical?” is the question that opens Madeline Whetung’s (Nishnaabeg) and Sarah Wakefield’s chapter, “Colonial Conventions: Institutionalized Research Relationships and Decolonizing Research Ethics.” Their discussion learns from a half century of Indigenous critiques of the colonizing impact of research. This history includes institutional attempts to correct for the worst violations of research, while simultaneously reaffirming the power of university

ethic boards to evaluate and approve research as ethical. Their purpose is not to just critique, but to pragmatically ask what can be done to create genuinely ethical research in relationship to people and places, as well as to foster accountability to embedded Indigenous knowledge. They account for how the academy is porous, with Indigenous presence inside and outside, even though institutional ethics codes presume Indigenous people to be non-researchers. Written in an engaging dialogic style between an Indigenous graduate student and a non-Indigenous professor who has served on university ethics boards, the chapter forwards challenges to the power of universities and ethics as “something we *do*” rather than something adjudicated.

What would it mean to move from learning about Indigenous peoples to learning from Indigenous peoples? This is the paradigm shift that Adam Gaudry (Métis) and Danielle Lorenz envision for mandatory university Indigenous Course Requirements (ICRs), in Chapter 10, “Decolonization for the Masses? Grappling with Indigenous Content Requirements in the Changing Canadian Post-Secondary Environment.” The advent of ICRs in the Canadian context ought to be critiqued as another attempt by the settler state to sidestep the transformative project of decolonization with a liberal project of curricular inclusion of Indigenous content. The authors reject the notion that simply providing more information about Indigenous peoples and cultures will remedy colonial relations. However, they suggest that ICRs can be a decolonizing program if education on treaty relations and practical experience become a primary concern of ICR policies. The authors synthesize the debates over these mandatory course requirements—which were exciting developments from the reconciliation movement—attending closely to the pedagogical, ideological, and practical questions that arise for university faculty, students, and administrators.

“E Kore Au e Ngaro, He Kākano i Ruia mai i Rangiātea (I Will Never Be Lost, I Am a Seed Sown from Rangiātea): Te Wānanga o Raukawa as an Example of Educating for Indigenous Futures” presents a case study from a Māori tertiary education institute in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Author Kim McBreen (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Ngāi Tahu) explains that this story must be considered within the broader context of the massive developments in Māori educational institutions and situated within the larger movement for treaty rights and decolonization. Te Wānanga o Raukawa is one of three wānanga, which are higher education institutions based on Māori practices and philosophies and offering a range of programs from vocational training to certificates, to diplomas, to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. Chapter 11 details the history and principles of Te Wānanga o Raukawa as part of this larger four-decades-long effort to reverse Māori linguistic and cultural extinction.

In “Designing Futures of Identity: Navigating Agenda Collisions in Pacific Disability,” Catherine Picton and Rasela Tufue-Dolgo consider how disability policy in Samoa is formed at the collisions of multiple ideological and cultural conceptualizations of disability. For Picton and Tufue-Dolgo, these collisions

occur both between and within colonial disability discourses, contemporary global ones, and Fa'asamoa (the Samoan way). Chapter 12 argues that existing policy has not accounted for the dynamic ways that community ideologies of disability are shaped and reshaped. They propose the Samoan concept of Tutusa (to be the same, equal) as a framework for honoring the many voices in disability, and as a tool for navigating the competing discourses in Samoan disability policy.

In “Decolonizing Education through Transdisciplinary Approaches to Climate Change Education,” Teresa Newberry and Octaviana V. Trujillo (Yaqui) discuss their curricular and pedagogical practices at Tohono O’odham Community College, which is a tribally controlled college and the institution of higher education of the Tohono O’odham Nation. Transdisciplinary approaches are an important antidote to STEM-centric treatments of climate by incorporating traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) or Indigenous knowledges (IK). Newberry and Trujillo are particularly attentive to the question of pedagogical efficacy for Indigenous students in their work on climate change education. Transdisciplinary approaches that incorporate Indigenous knowledges are not only better research, but also better educational practice in supporting the educational success of Indigenous students. Such approaches offer high-context emphasis on community, place, specificity; and examples of problem-based learning meant to address Indigenous global and community problems. The authors share directly from their pedagogical practices—including models for incorporating elder input, science input, and policy input into climate change problem-solving.

In Chapter 14, “With Roots in the Water: Revitalizing Straits Salish Reef Net Fishing as Education for Well-Being and Sustainability,” Nicholas XEMFOLTW Claxton (Tsawout) and Carmen Rodríguez de France (Kickapoo) guide us through the revitalization of the SXOLE, or Reef Net Fishery, in the territory of the WSÁNEĆ People, on Southern Vancouver Island in British Columbia. The Reef Net is an ancient fishing technology developed by the Straits Salish people to fish for Pacific Salmon. This chapter describes the history, context, and specific efforts to restore the fishery. A holistic decolonizing/revitalizing approach connects a tribal school with the restoration of the Reef Net and its practices. Indeed, the SXOLE is already a school of sorts—“the WSÁNEĆ traditional educational system or way, which fostered a deep knowledge, connection, beliefs of the people to the salmon and to the lands and Waters.” As detailed in the chapter, its revitalization necessarily confronts multiple layers of colonization including settler law, schooling, diet, religion, economy, and environment. It offers a clear case of active decolonization of the education system.

This book would be incomplete without Chapter 15, a discussion of Indigenous language revitalization efforts. chuutsqa Layla Rorick (Hesquiaht) in “Walyaʔasukʔi Naananiqsakqin: At the Home of our Ancestors: Ancestral Continuity in Indigenous Land-Based Language Immersion” describes the Hooksum Outdoor School, a Hesquiaht-centered language immersion program. With an engaging approach, Rorick stories her own language journey as a literal calling

from the land and from the ancestors. Her writing brings to life the re-membering of language as a restorative practice to counter the *dismemberment* or disembodiment enacted by residential schools and the reserve system. Rorick not only details the ways in which her Language Nest makes use of physical areas as curricula (place names, etc.) but even how re-membering operates at the level of grammar—because “our language integrates location information that directly connects speech to place.” Given the diversity of Indigenous languages and their health as spoken languages, it is hard to generalize practices of language revitalization. However, what might be resonant with readers are the pedagogies of land-based language education that triangulate stories, ontologies, and place with Indigenous language.

The afterword, “Meeting the Land(s) Where They Are At,” is written with loving humor, urgency, and patience. This is a story-sharing conversation between Erin Marie Konsmo (Métis) and Karyn Recollet (urban Cree) about meeting Indigenous Peoples and Lands “where they’re at,” namely meeting them in their disabled and “impure” realities. The authors share insights that are accessible yet profound, such as the acknowledgment that lands and waters are polluted everywhere, and so to treat some waters as “pure” and sacred and others as impure is against Indigenous callings for defending the water. Likewise, to treat normative bodies as capable and pure enough to be defenders of the waters, and others as too ill, too contaminated, too disconnected, is a form of ableism and queer-phobia. To meet lands and peoples where they’re at is to engage with waters/bodies as they are. Considering how we nurture people not yet within reach of the water, Konsmo and Recollet discuss “the choreographies, the practices that we can employ ‘at the water’s edge’ so that we can make sure that no one gets left behind.” These practices may not be free of colonial contamination, but they are practices of harm reduction, of healing.

## The Futurities of Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education

This is a book about and written as Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies. As such, we are emphasizing land, water, and the more-than-human world, emphasizing relations as accountability, emphasizing a past-present-future that exceeds any nation-state or modern imperial formation. The chapters were all composed for the purpose of showing the edges, the hesitations, the bold futures of Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education. Here is what is remarkable: each of the chapters understands that the 21st century will be one of regeneration. The horrors of settler colonialism, of capitalism will not be the end chapter of the human story. It is powerful to write from this notion as a given. It is powerful to consider, as a baseline, that this millennium will be one of decolonization.

While powerful, it isn’t easy to write as though this is a given. Settler governments and presidents, universities, schools, extractive infrastructures, the carceral

system can seem very total, very permanent. Still, this book persists in wanting more, in wanting another kind of future. We can use the word future to describe a time that comes after now, a time that we will come to inevitably. We can also use the word *futurity*, a word that imbibes the future with what we are doing now to bring about different futures. The authors in this book attend to what we are doing now to bring about the futures we can't even fully imagine yet. This is because as Indigenous peoples and decolonizing educators, we have responsibilities that require/urge/direct/instruct us to be good ancestors to future generations of human and non-human entities, to the earth and sky, to land and water, to the stars and the molten crevices of the earth, to the past and the future. Our learnings and teachings have incorporated decolonizing strategies partly to protect us from what has happened under settler colonialism, partly to recover and revitalize those aspects of our knowledge we still need, and partly to ensure we are critically reflexive in our engagement with concepts such as education.

We hope that this book, a “first” in some ways, simply the “next” in so many more, can inspire conversations and works across many colonized territories, so that revitalization is more within reach, more inevitable. For those of you who, like us, have so far only found a place for these conversations in the edges of the scene, we hope that this book and the book series it opens can bring the ideas that matter to you out of the footnotes and into the body of the work.

This is a home for you, if you have only found a home so far in the footnotes.

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