



This photo is from the SBS TV series on the Brisbane suburb of Woodridge, in the City of Logan, where Melissa Lucashenko's article "Sinking Below Sight: Down and Out in Brisbane and Logan" was written. Daniel Hartley-Allen, *Woodridge in Pictures: Lost in Logan*. <http://www.sbs.com.au/programs/gallery/pictures-theres-beauty-often-misjudged-suburb?cid=inbody%3Alogans-indigenous-history-a-language-almost-lost-and-story-of-survival>.

Writing Aboriginality: The Portrayal of Indigenous People in Australia's Walkley Award-winning Features

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Abstract: This article explores, via a detailed case study of a Walkley Award-winning long-form story, how journalist and author Melissa Lucashenko used literary and narrative devices to construct a magazine-style feature about Indigenous Australia. The only Indigenous writer to earn a Walkley Award for long-form writing, Lucashenko received the award that is Australia's equivalent to the Pulitzer.

Keywords: Australian literary journalism – narrative journalism – Indigenous – Aboriginal – Walkley Awards – Melissa Lucashenko

A rich archive of peer-judged, exemplary journalism is provided by Australia's premier journalism prize, the Walkley Awards, which have celebrated literary journalism in the form of magazine-style feature articles since 1956.¹ This analysis is drawn from research into a corpus of twenty-three long-form articles that won in the Walkley categories of "best feature" or "best magazine" feature between 1988 and 2014.² In that study the focus is on the specific ways the journalists use literary and reporting devices, with limited degrees of success, to communicate notions of Aboriginality to the Australian community. The present article³ considers how one author, Melissa Lucashenko, the only Indigenous author of a winning Walkley feature on the topic of Aboriginal issues,⁴ constructed her story, given the high level of discrimination that still exists towards Indigenous Australians. The analysis is informed by the larger research project, which investigated the ways in which journalists employed narrative and reporting devices to communicate emotions to readers of these Walkley Award-winning features. It further explored whether these stories, through the conveying of virtues such as honesty, empathy, and responsibility to readers, could be considered as contributing to the nourishing of a community.

To contextualize this study, in the twenty-seven years that the research spans, only seven of the forty-four Walkley Award-winning news and magazine feature articles, or sixteen percent, are concerned with Indigenous issues. Of these, only one is a news feature. When narrowed to the twenty-three magazine-style feature articles within this corpus, there were six, or just over one quarter, of the stories that were concerned with Aboriginal issues. Although the Walkley Awards have had a separate award for the coverage of Indigenous affairs since 1997,⁵ Indigenous voices have been and continue to be marginalized in the mainstream media, with one researcher finding that in news stories on Indigenous issues Aboriginal sources "never make up more than about twenty percent of sources used."⁶

More recently, the controversy over the Indigenous community's views on the constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians suggests the lack of diversity of Indigenous voices in the media is an ongoing issue.⁷ Following the publication of a poll conducted by the federally funded "Recognise" campaign, which claimed the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders supported constitutional recognition,⁸ the Indigenous-led social media outlet, IndigenousX,⁹ conducted its own online poll, which found only twenty-five percent supported the (now defunct) "Recognise" campaign, and that many would vote no in a referendum that asked only for symbolic constitutional recognition.¹⁰ The mainstream media's widespread acceptance of the "Recognise" survey and the subsequent slowness, or complete failure, of

many media outlets to report the alternate statistics, demonstrate that a range of Indigenous voices continue to be ignored.¹¹

The mainstream media's marginalization of Aboriginal experience, combined with an ignorance about the complexity of the range of voices that exists throughout Indigenous communities, inform this discussion of award-winning long-form journalism on Indigenous issues. While Ghassan Hage has perceptively observed that Australians "have begun to relate to ourselves and our land in the way that people who were thieves in the past relate to themselves and to what they have stolen and kept,"¹² the Walkley Award-winning features concerned with Indigenous issues may be considered a small but nonetheless important means of helping readers comprehend the past and continuing struggles of this diverse community.

Despite the comparatively small number of articles, the topics covered across the Walkley feature articles provide compelling evidence of the determination of journalists to tell the untold stories of Indigenous Australians, as well as demonstrating the importance of place in conveying meaning to readers. The present essay also argues that an awareness of how these stories are heard by us, the readers, who are immersed in our own, to use Bourdieu's terminology, *habitus*,¹³ enriches our understanding of the stories that are often written "from the margins" only to be heard "from the center."¹⁴

The subject matter of the seven Indigenous stories within the Walkley corpus makes for harrowing reading. In 1994 journalist Rosemary Neill wrote about a "hidden epidemic" of domestic violence in Aboriginal communities,¹⁵ which was, coincidentally, the same year that thirty-year-old Janet Beetson was found dead in her cell from a treatable heart condition. In 1997, a young freelance journalist, Bonita Mason, won a Walkley for telling Beetson's story,¹⁶ while reporter Gary Tippet received the same honor for his article about an Aboriginal man who killed his childhood abuser with an axe, afterwards proclaiming he felt "free."¹⁷ In 1999, Richard Guillatt reported on an Indigenous man and a woman who took the Australian government to court for forcibly removing them from their parents, and two years later journalist Paul Toohey exposed the struggle of a town to save their young people from petrol sniffing.¹⁸ In 2006, journalist Chloe Hooper wrote about the death of a man in custody, from injuries received after his arrest, which led to riots in the remote community of Palm Island.¹⁹ Then in 2013, Lucashenko, forced by her own circumstances to return to one of Australia's poorest regions, told the story of how she and three other women survived in the face of a seemingly relentless cycle of poverty.²⁰ All seven of these winning magazine features, about Indigenous Australians and their experiences as part of a society in which they were not allowed to vote until 1967, are concerned with

exposing stories that have largely been untold, hidden by history, or ignored by the mainstream media.²¹

Australia's Colonized Past

Australia's Indigenous population has, since colonization, suffered from government-sanctioned violence and the slaughter of their people, as well as the forced removal of children from their parents.²² Until 1949, non-Indigenous Australians were officially citizens of the United Kingdom, and it was not until 1969 that Australian citizenship was given primacy over having the status of a British subject.²³ Considering Australia's Indigenous population were not given the right to vote until 1962, and compulsory voting for Aboriginal citizens was not brought in until 1967,²⁴ it is unsurprising that the theme of identity would inform many of the stories within this corpus. Despite the overwhelming and unequivocal body of historical evidence of the deliberate marginalization of Indigenous people within Australian society, the experience of Indigenous people has been (and continues to be) dismissed and denied by commentators in Australia's conservative press.²⁵

This marginalization has, along with a range of other social and cultural factors, such as alcohol and drug dependence, contributed to poor health outcomes as well as cycles of generational poverty.²⁶ A person of Aboriginal descent has a life expectancy ten years fewer than the national average, and the leading causes of death include heart disease, diabetes, respiratory failure, and lung cancer.²⁷ The national imprisonment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults is fifteen times higher than that for non-Indigenous adults.²⁸ An Indigenous population comprising less than three percent of Australia's total population makes up twenty-eight percent of the adult prison population, a figure that jumps to almost forty-eight percent when it includes the number of Indigenous children in juvenile detention.²⁹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are three times more likely to experience sexual violence than non-Indigenous women, and around one in twelve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults were forcibly removed from their families by government officials and are part of the Stolen Generations.³⁰

A paramount consideration regarding the coverage of Indigenous stories is the question of authorship. Out of the seven Walkley feature articles, white journalists wrote all but one. The exception is Indigenous writer Lucashenko, whose 2013 article, "Sinking Below Sight: Down and Out in Brisbane and Logan" (the subtitle a play on Orwell's 1933 autobiographical work *Down and out in Paris and London* on his own experience of poverty), tells the story of the decline in her own fortunes following her marriage break-up, as well as the stories of three women trying to survive in a cycle of poverty.³¹ Melbourne

Indigenous author and academic Tony Birch has argued that more long-form journalism by Aboriginal writers is needed. In an interview on writing about Indigenous values and cultures, he noted, "First Nations people and communities have not only had history denied to us, OUR stories have been both destroyed and misappropriated. . . . [T]hose who have their history denied to them are entitled to the dignity of telling and controlling their own."³²

Teaching Indigenous Literary Journalism

I suggest that Australian tertiary educators of literary journalism subjects should always endeavor to include articles concerned with Indigenous themes. Of equal importance is that teachers should encourage critical evaluation of the authorship of these articles, asking students to consider whose voices are being heard in the stories—or whose voices are being silenced. In order to understand the challenges of teaching Australian university students about magazine-style literary journalism and Aboriginal issues, or stories written by an Aboriginal journalist, it is first helpful to briefly summarize the developments in the inclusion of Aboriginal content in Australian schools across the education sector. As already outlined in this article, the violent colonization of Australia by European settlers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was informed by a belief that the Indigenous inhabitants were inferior to the white population, and subsequent government policies, such as the forced removal of "half-caste" children, reinforced these beliefs. In terms of government initiatives, in 1998, the "Australian and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy Taskforce" was formed, and, over time, a number of policy frameworks were devised, including the "National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy," a policy that provided for ACARA, the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority's "Development of the Australian Curriculum."³³ ACARA developed a succession of plans—the "National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 1996–2002,"³⁴ "Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005–2008,"³⁵ and most recently, the "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014."³⁶ The Australian Curriculum's website states the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority "is designed for all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures."³⁷ A 2014 study on the way in which high school teachers taught Aboriginal issues to students concluded that while the new Australian Curriculum was evidence of the government promoting a more inclusive school system, for "real change to take place there must be a cultural shift in the perception of Aboriginal people by the dominant group."³⁸ Booth's study found

that teachers had a responsibility to combat the negative images of Aboriginal people that were “often seen on the news and throughout the media.”³⁹ In this regard, an analysis of the way in which the Walkley Award-winning journalists write about Aboriginal issues can contribute to a deeper understanding of Australia’s complex and fraught historical relationship with its past.

The Walkley Awards and Racial Inequality

Australia’s top journalism prize by is, by definition, a highly subjective and elitist field.⁴⁰ The winners are chosen by a panel of media practitioners, who appear, within the time frame of this study, to have all been white, with one notable exception: Lucashenko, the 2013 magazine feature winner, was one of the judges for the “All Media: Coverage of Indigenous Affairs” Walkley Award in 2014.⁴¹ The ramifications of this racial inequality, when considered within the theoretical framework of Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, means that non-Indigenous judges have been influenced by their upbringing, education, and myriad other factors such as family influence and the workplace.⁴² They have the privilege of being white and also the privilege of being professional journalists who are in the position of deciding what constitutes excellence in journalism. Just as they can be expected to hold similar ideals and aspirations, as encapsulated in the Walkley Foundation’s judging criteria (which include ‘accuracy and ethics’—and thus arguably includes honesty among other attributes),⁴³ they must also be seen as part of a society that has a deeply troubled history and relationship with the Indigenous population.⁴⁴

Lucashenko, whose work spans novels, essays, poetry, and lectures, has spent her career navigating between the worlds of Indigenous and mainstream Australia.⁴⁵ Through an inter-weaving of reporting, personal observation, and experience, Lucashenko exemplifies the virtue of self-awareness in her 2013 Walkley Award-winning article, “Sinking Below Sight,” by effectively functioning as a reflexive and reflective practitioner who consciously inserts or conceals her presence within the narrative.⁴⁶ The Walkley judges commended her article as a “beautifully crafted work on what it means to be the very poorest urban Australian. . . . The end result is a compelling story that shines a light on us all.”⁴⁷

What follows is a look at how Lucashenko’s emphasis on place, combined with the construction of her narrative voice, enables her to express emotions to readers and, in the process, construct virtues such as self-awareness, responsibility, honesty, empathy, sympathy, compassion, courage, and resilience. Also included in this analysis is the virtue of *phronesis*, a term used by Aristotle⁴⁸ and adapted here to refer to the ability to take action based on wise decisions. This virtue encapsulates the civic function of the feature article,

that is, the extent to which the writer is encouraging readers to engage with the question of how well people live together as a community.

An important recurring element is Lucashenko’s declaration that “The poor *are* always with us,”⁴⁹ evidence of her determination to provide readers with what the judges describe as “a unique insight in to living in grinding poverty, whilst the rest of Australia chooses to look away.”⁵⁰ “What then shall we do, we Black Belt dwellers?” Lucashenko asks. “What hope of escape, in an Australia where the dole has now fallen far below the poverty line and this same dole is now what we expect single mothers who can’t find work to raise their children on?”⁵¹

It is here, where Lucashenko calls into being what can be defined as drawing upon Anderson’s theory of the imagined community,⁵² an imagined *virtuous* community, namely the “Black Belt,” in particular, the single mothers struggling to survive.⁵³ Lucashenko’s question also demonstrates the importance of not assuming the journalist is addressing one single imagined virtuous community. Some readers in her audience would be aware of and sympathetic to the issue of Indigenous poverty, but many may be unfamiliar with the lived experience, the emotional lives, of the people Lucashenko is writing about.

Lucashenko’s reconstruction of her experience and that of three other women living in one of Australia’s poorest areas provides insight into the interplay of literary and reporting devices in communicating emotions to readers. It permits them to consider the lives of women such as Selma, who says, “We had nothing, bombed house, jack shit, but still Mum was trying to do little tiny jobs and send money back home, would you believe?”⁵⁴ The subtle visibility of Lucashenko as a narrator consolidates the value of a story that is “endurable, readable across the gulf of time”⁵⁵ because she uses the literary device of *metalepsis*, the term given to when a “narrator crosses narrative levels,”⁵⁶ to shift the narrative voice between what can be called a *visible-but-dimmed first-person* narrator and a *touched-up third-person* narrator.⁵⁷ While many readers may have been aware of the *paratextual* information⁵⁸ that Lucashenko is a writer and poet of Koorie (Aboriginal) and European descent,⁵⁹ apart from one reference to “my Black Belt peers,” she does not elaborate upon this in her article.⁶⁰ The absence of “autobiographical” information is important in terms of discourse analysis, as these absences reinforce the similarities between Australians, challenging readers to consider that those without money are not unlike themselves, and therefore cannot and should not be easily dismissed or forgotten: “The mass of the rich and the poor are differentiated by their incomes and nothing else, and the average millionaire is only the average dishwasher dressed in a new suit. . . . Everyone who has

mixed on equal terms with the poor knows this quite well.⁶¹

Lucashenko's construction of herself as writing from *within* the experience, of speaking to readers as one of the members of the community, sets her story apart from the others in the Walkley Awards magazine feature category, and indeed many or most articles written about Indigenous Australians. Lucashenko has been acknowledged as a writer who "has built up a steady body of non-fictional work that both interrogates and seeks to illuminate the meaning of place, story and belonging, not just for Aboriginal people but (and increasingly so) for all Australians."⁶² It is helpful to consider how Lucashenko's construction of herself may affect the way in which readers "hear" her story by encouraging them to appreciate common connections with those she writes about.

By using the first-person voice, and through varying her visibility within the narrative, Lucashenko demonstrates awareness of these different readers,⁶³ and by directing their attention away from herself, she is able to challenge them to consider the place of urban Indigenous Australians in society.⁶⁴ In this way Lucashenko is constructing a narrative that encourages readers to experience the virtues of compassion, sympathy, and empathy, and to counter the social and political discourse that the poor only have themselves to blame for their predicament.

This feature, to refer once again to Bourdieu's terminology, is deeply informed by the journalist's habitus,⁶⁵ that is, the culmination of her lived experiences as evidenced in Lucashenko's declaration that "Divorce had cost me my farm"—and led her to move to Logan City, "one of Australia's ten poorest urban areas."⁶⁶ Lucashenko also employs the discourse of class, communicating to readers through the sharing of details about her own life, showing how a person can fall into poverty after enjoying the security of a middle-class lifestyle. Lucashenko's self-awareness, combined with her privileged position as a journalist, is imperative in informing readers about a part of society many would never have experienced. Lucashenko's central message for readers is that the poor are "just like us."⁶⁷ By providing readers with a combination of her own graphic observations and the words of the women she interviews, Lucashenko encourages readers to experience full empathy. She recounts how Selma, after years of physical abuse, stood up to her partner, employing the discourse of violence and power in her words to him: "I said to him, just do it cunt, ya dead dog. If ya gonna be a big man, just do it and put me outta my misery."⁶⁸ This quote and Lucashenko's description of the violence Selma experienced confront readers with the terrible reality of her life, yet permit them to admire her courage in standing up to her abusive partner. In transporting readers into her narrative, Lucashenko challenges them to question their assumptions about their own society.

When Lucashenko does place herself clearly in the narrative she writes about her first experience in her new town, at the local shops with her teen, being confronted by a vomiting junkie: "We fell about, snorting and leaking with laughter. Ah, the serenity."⁶⁹ This scene makes Lucashenko very visible to readers, so that in terms of "narratorial presence"⁷⁰ they are able to experience the episode and the emotions of shock, revulsion, and the relief of laughter alongside her. This section of the article also demonstrates Lucashenko's skill in employing humor in her construction of the lives of three women, Selma, Marie, and Charmaine, which arguably would further engage readers with their story.⁷¹ Lucashenko's use of literary devices is balanced by solid reporting skills that draw upon the official sociological discourse by giving readers context, that "9.5 percent of people in the greater Brisbane area officially live below the poverty line."⁷² Again, Lucashenko counter-balances these facts by including her own experience in the narrative, for example, selecting and framing the following information from her emotional life: "As a seventeen-year-old caring for three small kids in Eagleby, I believed that nearly all Australians lived like we did, with far too many animals, dying cars and bugger all disposable income."⁷³ Lucashenko's description is an example of the sociological discourse of her childhood as well as a demonstration of how her habitus informed her beliefs about her community, her family, and herself. Importantly, Lucashenko does not present readers with an overwhelmingly negative portrayal of the region where Brisbane's "Aboriginal underclass have historically concentrated; in mainly housing commission ghettos where all the whites are poor too."⁷⁴ Instead she draws upon a discourse of being what might be described as "poor but managing," and in the process emphasizing a sense of community, a place where " 'everyone mixes in together' and, as one of my interviewees stated, 'You don't have to worry about snobs staring at you if you go to the shops in bare feet'."⁷⁵ The women she interviews also express some hopes for their future:

When I asked Selma if she had any dreams for the future, she surprised me by quoting Martin Luther King Jr: "*If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl.*" She spoke of expecting to finish TAFE⁷⁶ soon, and of desperately hoping to go to QUT to get a degree in human services. With two work placements behind her, one of them paid, she is beginning to faintly see options that never existed before. She talked of working in domestic violence services to help other women. She hopes her Aboriginal sons will finish high school.⁷⁷

Lucashenko and the women she writes about display the virtue of self-awareness, conveyed through the descriptions of the women as working toward better futures for themselves and their children. The narrative is imbued

with the virtues of honesty, responsibility, resilience, and courage. In turn, the experience of reading about people with these traits establishes the opportunity for readers to feel the virtues of compassion, empathy, and sympathy towards the subjects of the article. By asking and answering the simple question, “And what dreams are possible for the Brisbane underclass in 2013?”⁷⁸ Lucashenko is strengthening a sense of community with her readers, a notion that the only reality separating “us” from “them” is circumstances that could change at any moment. This awareness establishes this article as an example of *phronetic* journalism, for it transports readers successfully into a compelling narrative world and in doing so exposes them to experiences that deepen their understanding of society.⁷⁹ Furthermore, this understanding contains the potential for readers to be altered by the experience of reading this article, perhaps making them more aware of the pressures on low-income earners and therefore more sympathetic to their situation. Lucashenko concludes by repeating the word “we” as she reminds her readers how they could easily slip into the poverty experienced by the women about whom she has written:

... and we—yes, we: Marie, Selma, Charmaine, Melissa—become the poor ourselves, and then are quickly demoted to that faceless population which Australia in 2013 finds easy to stereotype, and convenient to demonise, and ultimately, under a federal Labor government in the tenth wealthiest nation on earth, ultimately only sensible to forget.⁸⁰

The above quote is a strong example of Lucashenko’s literary efforts to use narrative and reporting devices to address issues that lie at the heart of what it means to live together as a community and to share in the ideal of the “good life.”⁸¹ Her narrative, emphasizing again and again that the “poor *are* always with us,” achieves the purpose of *phronesis* by using literary devices to challenge a dominant discourse that blames the poor for their own poverty. She articulates the experience of six women, herself included, all of whom have connections to the Indigenous community, in such a way that readers are transported into the narrative and permitted to imagine what it would be like to be “down and out” in one of Australia’s poorest suburbs.

Conclusion

The Walkley Features on Indigenous Australians provide evidence of how journalists, through communicating critical issues, such as land rights, deaths in custody, poverty, and drug use, encourage readers to come to terms with “the suffering, destruction and human tragedy consequent upon the European settlement of Australia.”⁸² Beyond demonstrating how journalists can combine literary techniques and reporting skills to convey emotion and a sense of virtue to readers, the seven feature articles on Indigenous issues

within the larger corpus of Walkley Award stories also perform the important news function of providing a voice to those who are marginalized. In order to fulfill this function a journalist must necessarily meet “the Bourdieusian imperative of considering the place of others.”⁸³ The preceding analysis of Lucashenko’s narrative shows how journalism, by informing readers of the lived reality of Indigenous people, can construct narratives that demonstrate Ahmed’s premise that “how we feel about others is what aligns us with a collective.”⁸⁴ It is the ability of the authors of the Walkley Award magazine features to intersect issues of morality with a communal concept of the greater good that provides readers with the information needed to understand how society is treating—and failing—many members of its citizenry.

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Author Duncan McCue, age seventeen. Photo by Bruce Matthew.

Seeking *Debwewin*: Literary Journalism through an Indigenous Lens

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Abstract: This short essay argues that representations of Indigenous peoples in Canadian literature and journalism have characteristically been based upon stereotypical tropes, and that Indigenous writers and journalists are beginning to contribute more diverse portraits of Indigenous peoples. Further, Indigenous works of literary journalism could be interpreted through an Anishinaabe analytical framework described here as *debwewin* (truth).

Keywords: Anishinaabe – Canada – Indigenous – journalism – literary journalism – Ojibway

Aaniin! Aankwadaans n'dzbinikaaz. Maiingan n'dodem. Chippewas of Georgina Island *n'doonjiba. Anishinaabe n'dow.*⁸⁵

This is a traditional greeting, in the language of my people. It's how I identify myself amongst my people: my name, clan, community, Nation. But, like many people, I have multiple identities. I recently became a visiting journalist at Ryerson University's School of Journalism in Toronto. This essay arises from a question Bill Reynolds, my colleague at Ryerson, asked me. In an effort to help Indigenize the curriculum at Ryerson—which in fact is happening across Canada right now in the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report's Call to Action 86⁸⁶—Bill approached me and said, “Can you recommend any literary journalists that I can discuss in my class?”

I said, “That's a great question, Bill.”

Initially, I couldn't come up with any names. There are a few, such as Dan David,⁸⁷ but there were so few that I thought to myself, *What's up with that? Why are there so few Indigenous writers who have taken up the form of literary journalism?* So I would like to walk through my thinking process after I asked myself that question.

I'm also going to talk about my own book, *The Shoe Boy*,⁸⁸ my venture into literary journalism outside my CBC career. The book itself I won't talk about too much, but rather the challenges I faced. There were two.

My primary struggle was simply recalling the story. *The Shoe Boy* is about the five months I spent hunting and trapping with a Cree family in northern Quebec, near the community of Chisasibi on the shores of James Bay. I'm Ojibway, so this is a different tribe amongst whom I lived. The trip occurred in 1988, so writing the memoir was a search-and-rescue mission in some ways, writing when I was in my forties about my seventeen-year-old self. That was a typical challenge that anyone writing a memoir would face.

The second challenge, as an Indigenous author and journalist, was to deconstruct the two-dimensional, imaginary portrait of the Indian that, unfortunately, still exists in North America. When I start to think about Indigenous voice I have to go back to Canadian literature itself. Historically, in Canadian fiction, the Indian has been a pretty conventional figure. There are lots of them and they share one common trait—they have little or no voice. For example, Duncan Campbell Scott's work is often included in the canon of Canadian poetry, yet his writings about Indigenous people portray a noble yet vanishing race whose ways of life were doomed. When Indigenous characters *literally* spoke they often used florid, romantic language. Consider, for example, the fearsome Iroquois in E. J. Pratt's long poem, *Brébeuf and His Brethren*: “I have had enough . . . / Of the dark flesh of my enemies. I mean / To kill and eat the white flesh of the priests.”⁸⁹ Indigenous people in these

works are often subordinate characters because their movements are always in relation to the white figures in the story—their existence, in other words, is contingent upon the white person. The Indian is either shown as a kind of faithful friend (Tonto the sidekick, speaking in monosyllabic grunts), or the savage foe (“the Indians are coming to surround the wagon trains!”).

In Canadian literature we see the denial of Native voice, all of which helped the colonial project, which ultimately was about land dispossession. So, when Margaret Atwood wrote her seminal survey of Canadian literature, *Survival*,⁹⁰ she did not include or comment on any Indigenous authors. Fortunately, since the early 1970s, when *Survival* was published, Indigenous authors are becoming increasingly well known to readers in Canada and around the world: Tomson Highway, Thomas King, Drew Hayden Taylor, Eden Robinson, Katherena Vermette, Lee Maracle, Tracey Lindberg, Richard Wagamese, and Richard Van Camp, to name but a few. Thanks to them, we are now beginning to see Indigeneity expressed in more full and complex ways as they give Indigenous perspectives on human relationships, on relationships with the land, on relationships with the spirit world.

Turning to Canadian journalism, sadly, many journalists in this country have continued the same tropes that we've seen in Canadian literature. Indigenous people certainly have been *underrepresented* in journalism—there is a lack of stories about Indigenous people and their communities—but they have also been *misrepresented*. Many journalists—ostensibly in the pursuit of truth—have presented Indigenous characters as nothing more than pitiful, penniless, and powerless.

Over and over again, on the front pages of our newspapers and leading our news broadcasts, the stories of Indigenous peoples are presented through a narrow lens by journalists who fail to identify or appreciate the complexities of Indigenous culture, history, or politics. First Nations in the news are often cast only as burdens upon Canadian taxpayers, or impediments to Canadian progress.

For me, *The Shoe Boy* was about getting beyond news coverage that, in Canada, so often rehashes those tired victim and warrior narratives. Let me briefly use my experience writing *The Shoe Boy* to illustrate some important tenets of Indigenous literary journalism, and perhaps you'll see how they dovetail with some key principles of literary journalism.

Pablo Calvi has described concerns about journalists being “extractive” in gathering their information from Indigenous peoples.⁹¹ The way I describe it to students is that journalists have often been not so much storytellers as *story-takers*.

As an Indigenous journalist, I could not be a story-taker when it came

to *The Shoe Boy*. The book is about a real family, a Cree family, who are very much still alive. Robbie Matthew, Sr., is still very much a well-respected elder in the Cree community. And so, unlike my practice with my CBC work, I shared the text with him and his family and asked for their blessing to publish it. That was important—to be part of the circle, to share the story, to gain consent.

In the work of Indigenous writers, we see Indigenous peoples presented not as a homogenous group but heterogeneous, with as many differences as similarities. As an Ojibway writing about the Cree community in *The Shoe Boy*, it was important for me to convey the diversity amongst Indigenous peoples. I ventured to the trap line in James Bay to learn more about my own Indigenous heritage, but not being able to communicate in the Cree language of my hosts, I was a fish out of water. The irony of being the Other during this cultural journey wasn't lost on me, even as a teenager.

Another aspect of literary journalism as practiced by Indigenous writers is an exploration of duality. In my own work I see splits between urban and rural, contemporary and traditional life, Indigenous spirituality and Christianity. These splits aren't problematic; they're part of Indigenous life. Where non-Indigenous writers may interpret such divisions as antagonistic, Indigenous writers are more apt to explore Indigeneity as a broad spectrum of experiences.

Finally, when we begin to examine Indigenous literary journalism, more humor shows up in the representation of Indigenous people. There's a scene in *The Shoe Boy* where I receive some letters from my girlfriend, who lived far away, near the city of Toronto. I've been in the bush for four months—I've had no contact with her. Robbie looks over at me and smells the scented Coco Chanel that she has dabbed all over the letter—which was quite exciting to a seventeen-year-old—and he says, "Those videos—all the kids wanna do it doggie-style now." For the record, this is not how a traditional elder typically talks—but that sense of humor is common among Indigenous people.

If I were to apply an analytical lens to the few examples of Indigenous voice in Canadian literary journalism, I would use *debwewin*, an Anishinaabe word that roughly translates to "truth." Truth is one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, a set of principles my people believe help ensure the survival of our communities by teaching us the important ways to live as a human being.⁹² I don't speak Anishinaabe myself, although I am learning. When I think about *debwewin* I look to the writings of Basil Johnston, a famous Anishinaabe writer, storyteller, language teacher, and scholar. In addition to publishing sixteen books, from novels to memoirs, Johnston was a foremost authority on Anishinaabemowin (the Ojibway language), who produced numerous lan-

guage resources, teaching guides, thesauruses, and dictionaries. Johnston said that when you literally translate the word *debwewin*, it means that you "speak from the heart" and, he said, "a speaker casts his words and his voice only as far as his vocabulary and his perception will enable him."⁹³

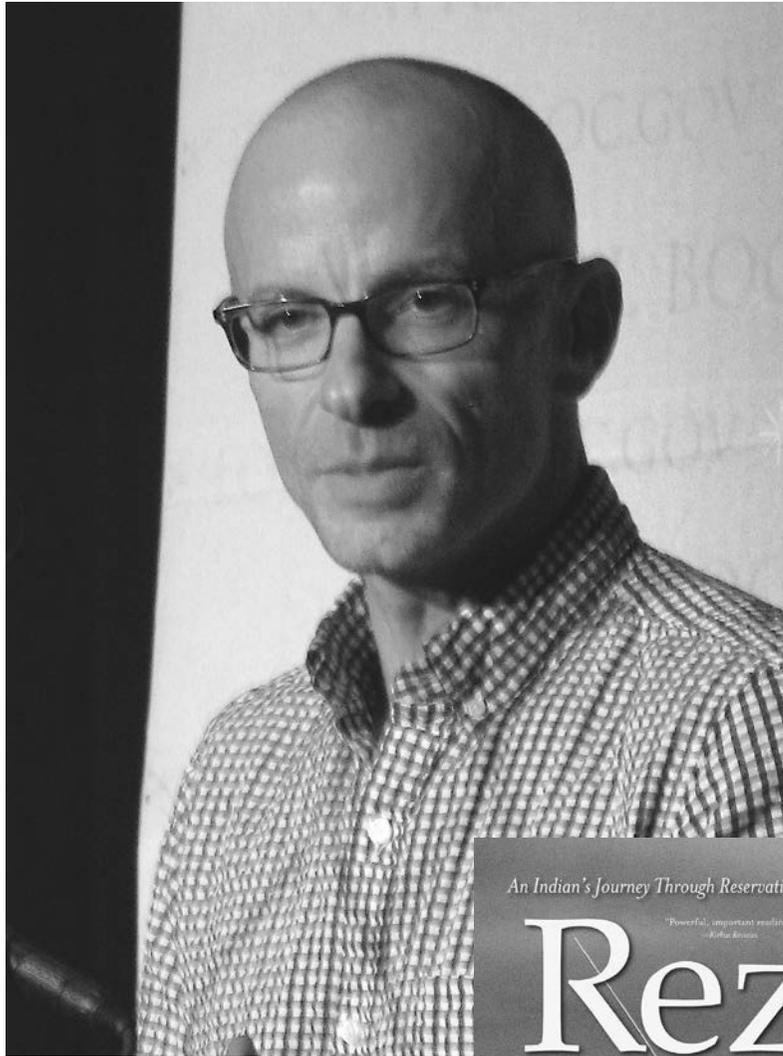
The elders often say, "Don't talk too much." That's a common teaching among our people. The point is not to keep children quiet, but to talk about things that you know. That's what Johnston is getting at when it comes to *debwewin*. That's at the heart of David Treuer's work as well, in his first work of full-length nonfiction, *Rez Life*.⁹⁴ Treuer turned his eye for detail as a novelist upon his own people, the Ojibwe of northern Minnesota, to produce a work that combines history, journalism, and memoir. In examining his own reservation, Treuer in *Rez Life* delivers representations of the Ojibwe as a complex and humorous people who defy stereotypes.

When we look at truth and literary journalism and the whole narrative framework, *debwewin* means there is no absolute truth. The best a speaker can achieve, and a listener can experience, Johnston tells us, is a very high degree of accuracy.⁹⁵

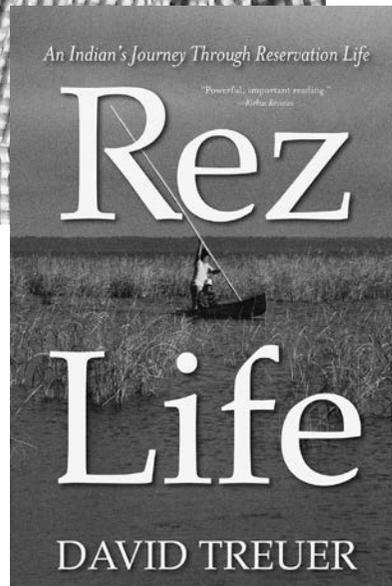
I believe we will see more Indigenous literary journalism in the future, as Indigenous writers and journalists continue to grow and flourish. And, if we begin to apply *debwewin* as an analytical lens to Indigenous literary journalism, then we're heading for a very exciting place indeed.

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David Treuer, author of *Rez Life*.
Image by Slowking4, Wikimedia Commons.



Writing from the (Indigenous) Edge: Journeys into the Native American Experience

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Abstract: Coward examines two book-length reports on Native American life in the United States. *The Good Red Road* (1987) by Kenneth Lincoln and Al Slagle explores Lakota life on the northern plains. David Treuer's *Rez Life* (2012) investigates the complicated lives of Ojibwe and other reservation Indians. Both books offer stories of Native American struggle and redemption.

Keywords: Indigenous literary journalism – Native American culture – Indian reservation life – Kenneth Lincoln – David Treuer

This essay examines two books about Native American life in the United States. The first book, *The Good Red Road*, published in 1987, was a collaboration between University of California Los Angeles professor Kenneth Lincoln and his Cherokee graduate student, Al Slagle.⁹⁶ The second book, *Rez Life*, by the Ojibwe novelist David Treuer, was published in 2012, twenty-five years later.⁹⁷ Both books are presented as journeys into Indian Country in the United States; both are long-form, nonfictional efforts to document and explain Native Americans and Native American culture to non-Native readers. In the following paragraphs, the two books are described and critiqued in an effort to understand how these writers investigated and made sense of Native people and Native culture at these two points in time.

The inquiry was guided by several research questions. How did these writers approach Native Americans and Native American life? How did they portray Native Americans? What stories did they emphasize or ignore? Finally, how successfully did these writers make sense of the Native American people and life? One way or another, these questions reflect four centuries of fraught relations between Native Americans and Euro-Americans in the United States. To put it more plainly, non-Native Americans have been mostly wrong about Native Americans and Native American lives since the English settlement of Jamestown in 1607. From then to now, Euro-American ideas about Native Americans have been shaped by racial myths and misinformation, most of which have been produced and perpetuated by media and popular culture. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, ideas about Indians were shaped by newspaper stories and illustrations, captivity narratives, dime novels, popular literature and poetry, art and advertising, and Wild West shows.⁹⁸ In the twentieth century, Indian stories were dominated by romantic, action-packed Hollywood westerns, a genre that later migrated to television.⁹⁹ These stories and images helped make the armed and dangerous Sioux warrior—his feather headdress blowing in the prairie wind—the most popular Indian of them all. These distorted stories also explain the continuing need for the kinds of thoughtfully produced examinations of Indian life presented in *The Good Red Road* and *Rez Life*: in-depth reports that emphasize the Indian voice in the centuries-long debate over the place of Indians in the United States.

Field Studies, Literary Voice, and Narrative

The Good Red Road grew out of an “on-the-road seminar” that Kenneth Lincoln taught on the northern plains where he grew up.¹⁰⁰ More formally, Lincoln describes his journey as “autobiographical ethnography,”¹⁰¹ a fusion of “interdisciplinary scholarship, field studies, literary voice and narrative structure in a text addressed to specialists and general readers alike.”¹⁰²

In fact, Lincoln’s *Red Road* journey was an extended trip, starting with the original on-the-road class in 1975 and continuing with Slagle through five more years. The final text weaves together all of these trips into one journey and a single narrative voice, a literary construction that simplifies the story but alters the time line of these experiences and sacrifices some of the story’s literal accuracy.¹⁰³

For Lincoln, an English professor who specialized in Native American studies, the class was a way for him to reconnect with his Nebraska roots and introduce his students and readers to the Native people and places of the plains. Although Lincoln had a long-standing connection with a Lakota family in his Nebraska hometown,¹⁰⁴ he was well aware of his outsider status among the Native people. This was one reason he collaborated with Al Slagle, a Cherokee graduate student who brought a Native identity to the project.¹⁰⁵

The result of Lincoln’s traveling classroom is a highly personal narrative into the lives of Lincoln and his students, including personality conflicts within the group and Lincoln’s confession of an affair with one of the women in the class. More to the point, *The Good Red Road* offers detailed descriptions of the group’s encounters with the Native people of Pine Ridge, Rosebud, and other reservations. The strength of this method is immersion, which allows the authors to develop a level of intimacy with their subjects. Lincoln, Slagle, and the other students travel extensively and spend time with a variety of Indians in a variety of settings, observing, listening, asking questions, trying to understand the people, places, and cultural traditions they encounter.

For example, Lincoln introduces readers to Mark Monroe, his Lakota “brother” in Alliance, Nebraska. Monroe runs a community Indian Center in Alliance, where he deals with alcoholism, housing, unemployment, hunger, and health care, as well as local racism. Indians in Alliance, Lincoln discovers, have struggled for years to live as Indians in the white world. Lulu Lone Wolf tells Lincoln, “We lived twenty-two years in LA. . . . It took me a long time to get over feelin’ Indian in a bad way, y’ know? When I came back here, then I got to go the opposite way, be a dirty Indian again.”¹⁰⁶

Later, Lincoln and his students spend time in the home of a Lakota elder named Luther Clearwater and his family, a visit that reveals a generational dispute about traditional Lakota ways, including the powers of a sacred pipe.¹⁰⁷ The students also meet with Benjamin Crow, director of a Rosebud alcohol rehabilitation center and himself a recovering alcoholic. Crow described alcoholism on the reservation in stark terms. “Probably ninety percent of all deaths here are alcohol-related,” Crow tells the class.¹⁰⁸

At another point, Lincoln is invited to participate in a sweat lodge ceremony, an invitation that causes him to reflect on his role as a scholar and as

an outsider: “I come as they asked me, a white man, asking for brotherhood. I come with my own pipe for blessing and instruction. . . .”¹⁰⁹ As the ceremony continues, Lincoln shifts to an insider perspective, becoming a spiritual participant alongside his Lakota brothers. Lincoln prays, “May we cross the desert between us and find the courage to heal ourselves. I ask that we help bring this land, the body of our people, back to life.”¹¹⁰ Lincoln is deeply moved by the experience. “I seemed to drop down beneath thought, to let my mind focus on nothing, interrupted by the blend of prayer and play, of communal support and the spirits’ abandon,” he writes.¹¹¹ “The people prayed with me, I sang with them; we were in accord under this dark Dakota night.”¹¹²

Lincoln’s achievement in this scene is based on physical access—his invitation to participate—as well as his deeply felt spiritual connection that allows him to shift from outsider to near-insider. That is, Lincoln is able to shed his detached, academic self in favor of a more open and responsive presence within the ceremony. This shift is useful for his readers, providing them with a first-person account of a Lakota spiritual experience usually closed to non-Indians. This and similar situations in the book render Lakota life in evocative and dynamic ways, revealing its spiritual beauty as well as its fragility.

To their credit, Lincoln and Slagle are sensitive to the dangers inherent in their telling of Lakota stories. Their literary method, Lincoln writes, involves “dialogical” anthropology, which “requires letting ‘others’ speak among themselves and with us in print.”¹¹³ This effort gives them a way to “dispel [Indian] stereotypes, often the cultural baggage of out-dated or faulty ethnography.”¹¹⁴ Lincoln and Slagle also worked to protect cultural and tribal knowledge, and insist that their narrative “invades no tribe’s secrecy nor any person’s privacy.”¹¹⁵ This is possible, they note, because they published with the permission of their sources and allowed a variety of readers to review the manuscript before publication.¹¹⁶ All of these efforts lead to a nuanced and deeply felt portrait of Native life on the northern plains, warts and all. In *The Good Red Road*, Lincoln and Slagle open a pathway into Native American life in the last quarter of the twentieth century that is by turns insightful, troubling, and ultimately hopeful.

The Personal Grounded in Reporting

Like *The Good Red Road*, David Treuer’s *Rez Life* is a highly personal narrative, a memoir grounded in Native history and extensive on-the-rez reporting. Starting with his friends and family around Leech Lake, the Minnesota reservation where he grew up, Treuer sets out to dispel stereotypes, explain the love/hate relationship many Indians have with reservations, and investigate the convoluted history and disastrous consequences of federal

Indian policies. “Most often rez life is associated with tragedy,” he writes. “We are thought of in terms of what we have lost or what we have survived.”¹¹⁷ That’s a mistake Treuer intends to correct. “[W]hat one finds on reservations is more than scars, tears, blood, and noble sentiment. There is beauty in Indian life, as well as meaning. . . . We love our reservations.”¹¹⁸

Writing about contemporary Ojibwe life as an Ojibwe, Treuer qualifies as an insider, an Indian who knows rez life because he grew up there. But Treuer is also an outsider of sorts. His parents were not typical on the rez—his father was an Austrian immigrant (and Holocaust survivor); his mother, a Leech Lake Ojibwe with a prestigious law degree. Treuer himself was well educated, first at Princeton, where he studied anthropology and creative writing (and worked on a senior thesis with Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison), and later at the University of Michigan, where he earned a Ph.D. in anthropology.¹¹⁹ Treuer’s insider/outsider position allows him to locate and tell intimate stories of the Ojibwe and other reservations using local knowledge as well as his deep reservoir of legal, political, and anthropological information. Moreover, Treuer uses his novelist’s gift for storytelling to make *Rez Life* a compelling read.

Treuer takes an unsentimental approach to reservation life. One of the book’s opening scenes, for instance, recounts his grandfather’s suicide. A veteran of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge, Eugene Seelye was “a hard-ass,” as Treuer puts it.¹²⁰ Treuer continues: “He was not one of those sweet, somewhat bashful elderly Indians you see at powwows . . . , willing to talk and tell dirty jokes; not the kind of traditional elder that a lot of younger people seek out for approval and advice. . . .”¹²¹ More grimly, Treuer describes his sudden, intense anger at the blood-stained bedroom carpet he finds himself cleaning after his grandfather’s suicide. “That carpet,” he writes, “that cheap cheap carpet, that carpet the same color as the reservation is colored on some maps of northern Minnesota. And just as torn, dusty, and damaged. Just as durable. Just as inadequate.”¹²²

Treuer is equally unsentimental about the challenges of growing up on the rez. He writes, for instance, about the chaotic life of Jeffery Weise, the teenager who killed his own grandfather and eight others before killing himself on the Red Lake Reservation in 2005. Treuer reports that Weise’s father committed suicide when Weise was a child.¹²³ “Two years later his mother, Joanne Weise, went out drinking, crashed her car into a tree, and suffered massive brain damage,” Treuer notes.¹²⁴ Neglected and depressed, Weise fell apart. Treuer quotes one of Weise’s Internet postings: “I’m living every mans [*sic*] nightmare and that single fact alone is kicking my ass. . . . This place never changes, it never will.”¹²⁵

Treuer follows this story with a more uplifting report about Dustin Burnette, a Leech Lake Indian whose life was equally troubled. “Yeah, I got all the bad stuff about being Indian and none of the good. I got the bad teeth and the instability and the alcoholism and all that,” Burnette says.¹²⁶ Burnette’s mother died of an aneurysm when he was sixteen; he was raised by his grandmother.¹²⁷ He was smart, though he didn’t care for school. One day a new Indian counselor showed up and confronted Burnette, prodding him to get serious and eventually helping land him a full-ride college scholarship.¹²⁸ In 2009, Burnette, a college graduate, returned to Leech Lake to teach the Ojibwe language in a tribally run immersion school. “I found a family, at ceremonies, in the language,” Burnette tells Treuer. “I’ve got a purpose, people who rely on me. It feels good, man. It feels great.”¹²⁹

Beyond individual stories, Treuer critiques federal Indian policies, explaining long-running disputes over fishing rights, tribal membership, law enforcement and tribal courts, boarding schools, gaming and more. One of the most misunderstood topics, he writes, is Indian sovereignty, the right of tribes to control their own territory and affairs. Although the government paid lip service to tribal sovereignty and signed hundreds of treaties with Indian nations, most tribes lost much—if not all—of their traditional lands.¹³⁰ In addition, federal Indian agents regularly worked against the interests of the Indians they were pledged to protect. “Fraud, cronyism, nepotism, double-dealing, skimming, and outright murder were common,” Treuer concludes.¹³¹

Treuer’s solution to the problems facing Indians today is something he calls the “new traditionalism,”¹³² an idea that combines the old ways of Ojibwe life—ricing, tapping maple trees, fishing, hunting, speaking Ojibwe—with the contemporary world of technology and popular culture. Revival of the tribal language is at the center of this idea. For Treuer, a language activist, “the language is the key to everything else—identity, life and lifestyle, home and homeland.”¹³³ The new traditionalism, Treuer explains, embraces and reorients the old ways so that Indians can live fully and well in the twenty-first century. With fluency in the language, Treuer argues, the Ojibwe can choose “to live their modern lives, with all those modern contradictions, in the Ojibwe language—to choose Ojibwe over English, whether for ceremony or for karaoke.”¹³⁴

Much like Lincoln and Slagle, Treuer immerses himself in reservation life and builds his story around a variety of Ojibwe and other reservation sources. This method allows *Rez Life* to highlight a variety of powerful Native voices from “ordinary” Indians rarely heard in contemporary American nonfiction, a literary achievement in itself. Unlike Lincoln and Slagle, however, Treuer uses no pseudonyms or hidden identities.¹³⁵ He writes that he obtained permis-

sion from all of his sources and quoted every person exactly as recorded, and not quoting anyone from memory. Treuer also avoids what he calls the “loose historicism” of assigning feelings to his sources,¹³⁶ a practice he believes would distort the truth of his narrative.

Treuer’s principal goal in *Rez Life* is to report the bitter but largely forgotten truth about Indians and reservation life to non-Indian readers and to make the case for the importance of American Indian culture in the twenty-first century. “To understand American Indians is to understand America,”¹³⁷ he proclaims. Indians, after all, were the first Americans and they have something to contribute to the larger American story. But first, Treuer makes clear, they must find a way to thrive in a massive, unrelenting, technologically advanced and homogenous consumer society that easily dominates Native culture and language.

Treuer, for one, is guardedly optimistic. He concludes his book with a scene on a reservation lake in Minnesota: “While spearing walleye on Round Lake that April I felt this [Native] way of life and the language that goes with it felt suddenly, almost painfully, too beautiful to lose. . . . And I thought then, with a growing confidence that I don’t always have: we might just make it.”¹³⁸

Conclusions

It is almost impossible to overstate the problem of the Indian in the American popular imagination, where knowledge about Native American life—that is, accurate historical and cultural information—has been largely diminished or neglected in favor of stereotypes and clichés produced and perpetuated by the mass media and popular entertainment. Taken together, *The Good Red Road* and *Rez Life* provide a powerful response to this misinformation. Both books offer valuable insights into modern Native American life and both books give Native speakers a voice. The books differ in emphasis and tone, but they both succeed in revealing the complicated realities of Native American life. Lincoln and Slagle are more autobiographical and more romantic; they focus more on Native spiritual life. Treuer is more attuned to Indian-white relations, reservation history, and the practical social, cultural, economic, and racial issues of reservation life. Despite these differences and the twenty-five-year gap between these books, both narratives are good-faith efforts to explore and explain American Indian life honestly and in greater depth than routine daily journalism can provide.

Although neither book was written by a journalist and neither is billed as literary journalism, both books employ some of the key practices of literary journalism, including subjectivity, immersion, direct observation, and exten-

sive interviewing. As previously noted, Lincoln, Slagle, and Treuer immerse themselves in Native life, spending many months among Native people, gaining experience in Indian country by observing, interviewing, and listening. In the case of Lincoln and Slagle, these methods allow them access to Lakota ceremonies, where they participate alongside their Lakota sources in search of spiritual deliverance. Lincoln captures the deeply human spirit of a Native ceremony: “People were coming together: to pray, to cry, to sing, to think, not to think, to lose themselves to the spirits of one another and the petitioned powers of a nurturing land, old family spirits, the comforting darkness.”¹³⁹

For Treuer, writing about the rez is an intensely personal experience involving his own reservation upbringing as well as the lives of his Ojibwe family and friends. Treuer also conducts more formal research into Native American history and the history of the federal reservation system. As an Ojibwe writer, Treuer also advocates for such issues as tribal sovereignty and the revival of Native languages. Finally, Treuer places his Native American story in a national context: “Indian reservations, and those of us who live on them, are as American as apple pie, baseball, and muscle cars. Unlike apple pie, however, Indians contributed to the birth of America itself.”¹⁴⁰

In all these ways, *The Good Red Road* and *Rez Life* apply the tools of literary journalism to render Native American life in a personal, culturally nuanced, and deeply observed narrative. As literary journalism, these books live up to—and perhaps exceed—the standard articulated by Richard Lance Keable that literary journalism “engages readers imaginatively in the aesthetics of experience and the search for understanding, meaning, and insight.”¹⁴¹

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Image from the documentary, *The Oka Legacy* (2017). Reproduced by permission of Resolution Pictures.

Indigenous Literary Journalism, Saturation Reporting, and the Aesthetics of Experience

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Abstract: This essay seeks to examine Indigenous literary journalism's potential to make the reader feel the words written on the page. Tom Wolfe's method of saturation reporting, John Hartsock's conception of the aesthetics of experience, and David Beers's formulation for long-form nonfiction writing, the personal reported essay, are used to elucidate this idea, focusing on two award-winning features by Mohawk journalist Dan David.

Keywords: Indigenous – Mohawk – Oka – literary journalism – personal journalism – Canada

This essay discusses the real possibility of an Indigenous literary journalism by examining the work of Mohawk journalist Dan David, specifically two magazine features (and cover stories) he wrote. Taken chronologically, the first, “Anarchy at Kanehsatake,” was published in *This Magazine* in 1996.¹⁴² It won a Canadian National Magazine Award in the category of Reporting.¹⁴³ The second, much lengthier story, “All My Relations,” was published the year following, also in *This Magazine*.¹⁴⁴ It, too, won a Canadian National Magazine Award in the category of Public Issues: Social Affairs (as well, it received an Honorable Mention in the category of Personal Journalism).¹⁴⁵

This Magazine,¹⁴⁶ the periodical for which David wrote, was launched by a group of Toronto school activists thirty years before, in 1966, as *This Magazine Is about Schools*. By the early 1970s the publication evolved into a left-wing general interest magazine with strong ties to unions and union culture. By the 1990s, while still supporting unions, its focus on them waned (although, ever loyal, unions still placed advertising in the magazine). Identity politics began to dominate the concerns of the left—especially the next generation of activists. Its most famous editor, Naomi Klein, took over the publication at age twenty-three, in 1993.¹⁴⁷ At this juncture her resume would have included editor-in-chief of the *Varsity*, the University of Toronto student newspaper, and a brief stint reporting for the *Globe and Mail*. She was not yet an international activist brand and author of a succession of influential books, including *No Logo* (1999), *The Shock Doctrine* (2007), and *This Changes Everything* (2014). Other luminaires of Canadian culture who have contributed to the magazine over the years include poet/novelist Michael Ondaatje, of *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987) and *The English Patient* (1992) fame, and the near incomparable Margaret Atwood, who lately has gained, or regained, international acclaim for the television adaptation of her dystopian novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), and whose name continues to sit among the Editors at Large on the *This* masthead. So, judging by history, David’s stories were published in a small but influential Canadian magazine that recently observed its half-century birthday.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps we might see this essay as a case study of a particular kind of literary journalism, the pointedly political kind, and so here is the story of David’s two (and only two, actually, at least so far) major magazine features.

Growing Up Kanienke:haka

David was (and is) primarily a broadcast journalist. He is Kanienke:haka, or Mohawk, and was born in the United States, in Syracuse, New York. He moved with his family to what was then known as Oka Reserve (now

Kanehsatake) when he was four years old, in 1956. His Mohawk mother, Thelma, was born on the Canadian side of the border in Kanehsatake, a Mohawk territory in southern Quebec, south of Montreal. (Kanehsatake is called a territory because it is not legally a reserve. It’s on the *lac des Deux Montagnes*.) His Mohawk father, Walter David, Sr., was born on the Canadian side as well, in Akwesasne, which straddles both U.S. and Canadian territory. (Already we can glimpse a stark difference in the way Mohawks demarcate territory from the French in Quebec, the English in Ontario, and the U.S. in New York State.)¹⁴⁹

The first article came about when David met *This Magazine*’s then-editor Clive Thompson—whose name some may recognize as a major technology feature writer based in New York—for coffee. David told Thompson about a story he had to get out of his system, a story about his home, Kanehsatake. Thompson listened and then said, “Okay, send me a draft.” David never expected the draft to be a cover story.¹⁵⁰

Mohawk society is matriarchal, so what vexed David and a lot of people was that it was being run, or overrun, in a decidedly anti-democratic manner by Chief Jerry Peltier, a self-styled mayor for life, and his band of “critters,” the nickname for his goon squad, who were terrorizing the community, the women, the children, getting kids hooked on dope, filming teen girls having sex with critters and then selling the results, firing warning shots at any of the women who were trying to talk to the English police, the French police, the provincial government, the federal government—all to no avail. No one would help the women:

My sister has a friend named Wanda Gabriel. She is one of the women who has signed an affidavit against the council, and both she and her sister Cindy have also been targeted. Cindy lives down on “the avenues,” along the shores of the Ottawa River, near the school. The “critters” pulled up late one night and started shooting at her house. She called the SQ (Sûreté du Québec, the Québec provincial police) liaison officer who is responsible for crimes in the territory.

“The woman [who answered the call] could hear the gunfire over the telephone,” says Wanda, with a roll of her eyes. “The SQ told my sister the liaison officer wasn’t there: ‘Could my sister call back on Monday?’”¹⁵¹

Imagine the university being run by a despot with gun-toting brown shirts driving around terrorizing everyone, firing shots through schoolroom windows—the school rooms of anyone brave enough to try to make the area inside the campus perimeter a sanctuary for freedom of speech and movement for everyone. Or the Hell’s Angels, say, setting up shop in the town hall

and riding roughshod over the locals.

“Anarchy at Kanehsatake” is an angry, potent feature. David gets at the frustration inside this world by seeing it through his older sister Linda Cree’s eyes, by looking at her calendar on the wall, looking at the itemization of police intrusions, of critters’ warnings, of television helicopters hovering low over Mohawk land scaring children, a station from Montreal trying to capture footage of suspected marijuana fields on video for the six o’clock news:

[You] may remember Kanehsatake as a Mohawk community outside Montreal and the site of the 78-day armed stand-off known as the “Oka Crisis” of 1990. . . . [T]hen again, you may have heard about Kanehsatake in the headlines this summer, after the media exposed the existence of huge marijuana plantations on the territory.

My sister has seen all this and more, marking it down on the calendars hanging on her kitchen wall. . . . Hasty scribbles of her children’s hockey practices . . . are intermingled with death threats.

Names, dates, places. . . . Many of her notes spill over into the margins and run down the edges of the page. “You should see the other side,” Linda says, flipping to the previous month. “Look at that.”

*September 22: 3:10 p.m. — Blue/white helicopter hovering over sweat lodges, gardens — talking to Pam at the time — left 3:23.*¹⁵²

Life Changing Events at Kanehsatake

David wrote “Anarchy at Kanehsatake” to get the bile out of his system. Then Don Obe, a longtime magazine editor who at the time was a professor of journalism at Ryerson University in Toronto, talked to David about writing another piece. At the time David was in the second year of a three-year stint teaching a journalism course on diversity at the school. Obe, in addition to his duties at Ryerson, was also a senior editor at the literary journalism program at the Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, located inside Banff National Park. Obe told him, Dan, listen, why don’t you come to our writing program—you should be able to write a story on anything you want.¹⁵³ Obe offered David the chance to go really long, 10,000 words long, affording him a precious month of not thinking about anything except working through what had happened behind the barricades several years previous, when David went home to Kanehsatake after an armed standoff between police and Mohawks began. David went behind the barricades as a journalist—he wanted to get the story from the inside, and he had the sort of access many others did not, that is, to feel the anger, confusion, and fear from both sides in the dispute—but still, to have such a personal stake in the matter, as these were

his people, including family members, who were under attack.

Obe’s father George was also a Mohawk, from Oka,¹⁵⁴ so Obe may have implicitly understood a bit of what David had gone through behind the barricades during the seventy-eight-day, armed standoff between the Canadian government and the Mohawk Nation in the summer of 1990. And the writing program at Banff, at the time and to this day, emphasizes the journalist’s personal stake in the story. In other words, it is possible that Obe was asking David to reach deeper inside his psyche than he had ever done before in order to expunge the true toxicity of the story.

Relations between the government and the Mohawk Nation have never been peachy, but there was a trigger to the standoff. The mayor of the town of Oka wanted to raze the forest above the town site, called “the Pines,” and bulldoze the graveyard, the Mohawk graveyard, to extend a whites-only golf course from a nine- to an eighteen-hole layout. If one were in a mood to empathize, one might venture to say that the Mohawks had a point when they put the barricades up. David drove for three hours from Maniwaki, a reserve north of Ottawa, where he was living at the time, to Kanehsatake to be with his family, his people. He writes:

Once in the Pines, I find people from all over the territory, all ages, all families, all factions, walking around in elation, confusion and fear. Most people are caught up in the euphoria of the moment; they’ve survived the police raid and driven the attackers off their land. Others just wander around, aimless and dazed. A few prepare themselves in personal ways to kill or to die. . . .¹⁵⁵

There was a firefight between Mohawk Warriors and SQ. It lasted thirty seconds. One police officer died. The forces of government rolled in. The Mohawks put up their barricade, expecting something, maybe retaliation.

The second police attack never really materialized. The cops didn’t swarm into Mohawk territory but, as David reports, they disrupted any Mohawk wanting to leave:

The police pull a young couple from their car, force them to strip at gunpoint in the middle of the road in front of dozens of people. Little kids in the backseats of cars cry while cops hiding behind sandbags shout insults and aim assault rifles at their parents. The police tear groceries out of people’s arms and throw them into the ditch. I won’t pick up a gun. I become a food smuggler instead.¹⁵⁶

In terms of the Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC) and its recommendations,¹⁵⁷ which were published in 2015, David said what happened in 1990 cast a long shadow over reconciliation and the commission’s many worthy Calls to Action. The next generation, which suffered the trauma of

witnessing the brutalizing of their parents from the back seats of cars, would grow up wanting to have nothing to do with white authorities, nothing to do with politics, nothing to do with reconciliation.¹⁵⁸ This makes reconciliation difficult, for instance, with something like Call to Action 43, which states, “We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation.”¹⁵⁹

As noted, David arrives at the standoff as a journalist, intending not to choose sides, but these were his people under attack. And so, once he crossed into Mohawk territory, perhaps in retrospect inevitably, there is a turn in the storytelling: David writes, “I become a food smuggler instead.”¹⁶⁰ He admits he is not an objective journalist in this situation, and maybe cannot be one, but this revised approach sounds like one a literary journalist might take. Recall John Hartsock’s aesthetics of experience¹⁶¹: David reexamines his experience and turns it into an aesthetic exercise. It may also be therapy for David to be in Banff, in one of the writing cabins, thinking about and reliving exactly how it goes down, this latest skirmish in the ongoing discord between two civilizations.

When David does make the turn, he leapfrogs over the hard-news, objective, just-the-facts kind of reporting onto new terrain, and it is exhilarating for him:

It may sound strange, but I feel I’ve found home for the first time in a long while. I left years before to get away from people grown used to silent resignation. I’ve returned to find people filled with pride, hope and even dignity. Inside the barricades, people who haven’t spoken to each other in decades over long-forgotten arguments, hold hands and stand together in one great circle under the Pines. . . . There is such peace behind those barricades. It’s easy sometimes to forget the stone-throwing mobs outside. . . . I listen under those trees while my soul dances to the sound of Mohawk, Mi’qmaq or Kwakiutl voices weaving themselves into the beat of a drum. . . . My summer is like that: periods of tremendous peace and hope punctuated by flashes of anger, fear and deep despair.¹⁶²

This turn in David’s journalistic approach also recalls David Beers’s concept of the “personal reported essay.”¹⁶³ David examines his family history. He examines the after-effects of being personally involved with people behind the barricades, and of dealing with sleep-deprived, bitter, armed people on both sides of the conflict. And he reports, reports, reports—after all, it is his boots that are on the ground doing the reporting, and his years of experience ensure that there is a no dereliction of duty in this regard.

Finally, David’s choice to go behind the barricades and be with not only his family members but also the Mohawk warriors recalls Tom Wolfe’s con-

cept of saturation reporting from inside a subculture.¹⁶⁴ David used his sister’s testimony as an entrée into the nightmare rule that had engulfed Kanehsatake to write his “Anarchy” story, and his reporting skills to ferret out the rest of information. For “All My Relations,” he himself became the agent inside the subculture, showing us a world we might not have otherwise ever known, at least in such personal terms. The eye-opening part of the story is the fact that, despite the perception from the outside that David must have been in the tank for the Mohawks—David couldn’t find work with CBC after he left Kanehsatake, even though he had the experience and the knowledge—inside the barricades he had to wrestle with the posturing and double dealing he knew only too well from past reporting experience:

I know there’s no turning back once I cross that imaginary line at the road-block. I worry about what the Warriors will do when they see me behind the barricades. I know them from the civil war between Warriors and anti-Warriors at Akwesasne, near Cornwall, the summer before. They know me from the stories I write about the smuggling, the guns and the violence that seem to follow them. Some have threatened me. . . .¹⁶⁵

David had already flushed the bile out of his system with “Anarchy at Kanehsatake,” so now, in Banff, Obe, Lynn Cunningham, and Barbara Moon were encouraging David and giving him advice on how to make it better,¹⁶⁶ to be more reflective, take a longer look at history, at the history of his family in particular, looking backward, then looking forward. After all, his great-grandfather was one of the souls buried in the Pines. His great-grandfather had stood up to the Canadian government, time and again. His great-grandfather had sailed to England to get an audience with the King Edward VII, wanting action. The situation was urgent. The Seminary of St. Sulpice and the federal department of Indian Affairs were conspiring to take away more Mohawk land:

For the seminary to have clear title to the land, the Mohawks must go. . . . This suits the department just fine since it has embarked on an inflexible policy of assimilation. In the words of the poet, the bureaucrat, the deputy superintendent of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott, the aim is to remove “every vestige of Indianness” from the Indian until there are “no more Indians and no more Indian problem.”¹⁶⁷

David even echoes his great-grandfather’s visit to England when he must travel there to receive a Commonwealth Fellowship. Like his forebearer, he finds himself embroiled in another crisis over identity: Is he American, Canadian, Mohawk? David is not about to allow himself to be given the fellowship as an American, and the requisite brinksmanship ensues before he prevails. Indeed, David has a lot to mull over in his story.

Conclusion

Considering the force of these two stories, it is puzzling that David has not written more literary journalism–format features. He told me those were the two stories he had to get out of his system.¹⁶⁸ Once they were published, life took over. He was in South Africa, on and off, 1993–1999, helping to evolve the South African Broadcast Corporation from government mouthpiece to independent public broadcaster. He said that was a lot more satisfying than living through the Oka crisis. Then, back in Canada, he was appointed the first director of news at the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, 1999–2001. Then there was more broadcast journalism, journalism training, and teaching, along with research, writing, and consulting jobs at Indigenous organizations.

Strangely, this past winter, twenty years after “All My Relations,” David said he had been thinking of going back to writing at feature length. In a recent e-mail he wrote, “I pulled out a dusty draft or dozen and brushed them off. Then I wondered why we, Indigenous artists and writers, have no (none I could find) shared literary spaces of our own. I’ve started asking others (Indigenous and non-) ‘Why not?’”¹⁶⁹

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Reporting on Indigenous Issues: The Extractive Matrix of Journalism vis-à-vis Native Latin Americans

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Abstract: The idea of the Native American Indian was constructed by the chronicles of the conquistadors and rooted in those same colonial narratives. It was then popularized in books for centuries and school manuals, movies, and television shows for decades. Understanding some aspects of the coverage of mining and drilling in the Amazon Basin and, more recently, the coverage of the disappearance of tattoo artist Santiago Maldonado in Patagonia, will serve to unpack aspects connected to the representation of Native Americans in the southern part of the continent in order to propose better alternatives to what is here called a *colonized narrative* approach.

Keywords: Native Latin American – journalism – colonialism – narrative



Image of Carnival mask, City Museum, La Paz, Bolivia (2017)

This article is the product of a panel on Indigenous literary journalism, thus it is imperative that the first idea discussed here be the very notion of *Indigenous*, a highly problematic concept. *Indigenous* and *Indian*, its predecessor, are qualifiers that, as Mexican ethnographer Guillermo Bonfil Batalla has noted, can only be anchored in the idea of colonization:

The Indian is born when Columbus takes possession of Hispaniola on behalf of the Catholic kings. Before the European discovery, the population of the American continent was formed by an array of different societies, each one with its own identity. . . . There was no such thing as ‘Indians’ nor any concept that unified the entire population of the continent. . . . In the colonial order, the Indian is the defeated, the colonized. The subsequent consolidation of the colonial regime makes explicit the content of Indigenous as a category into a system.¹⁷⁰

To the extent that Indigenous, as a signifier, both reinforces the idea of the Native American as a subject who was colonized and defeated, and continues to reduce the Aboriginal peoples to a symbolic position of inferiority, it is safe to assume notions such as *Indigenous issues* will prevent a fair understanding of the topic, and shape the researcher’s vision so as to accommodate a preexisting narrative imposed by the violence of domination and colonialism.

But the discussion of the term Indigenous goes far beyond a debate around nomenclature, or the purely symbolic level of language. As Bonfil points out throughout his work,¹⁷¹ the notions of Indian and Indigenous hide a physical, material dispossession, the deprivation of a land and a culture that the white conquistadors imposed on the natives of America, and which their white progeny perpetuates. This material effect on the world cannot be swiftly swept under the rug through the magic pass of a new signifier.

A third problem with the definition of Indigenous to refer to this area of human tension as an area of scholarly inquiry is that there is no such thing as a homogenous Indigenous identity. There are, on the contrary, thousands of nations, each with a material history, and a symbolic one, with their legends, mores, and uses; but also, and more importantly, a present and a future. As Bolivian ethnographer Sarela Paz put it, in an interview in Cochabamba in 2015, there are no pure Indigenous identities, but “agents” who move across social settings and conform their performance to their changing circumstances.¹⁷²

The idea of the Native American Indian was constructed in the chronicles of the conquistadors and rooted in these same colonial narratives. For centuries the image was then popularized in books, and for decades in school manuals, movies, and television shows. A sketch of this portrayal of the Latin American Aborigines was distilled by Novaro: The *Indian* of the school man-

uals is a black and white entity, he [the pronoun corresponds with the portrayal] is ragged, lives in a hut, is malnourished and, for all of these reasons, cannot want to be whoever he is.¹⁷³

In a recent piece for *Columbia Journalism Review* about the closure of the Indian Country Today Media Network, Mary Annette Pember evoked the portrayal that the American legacy media offer of the natives in the North: “My colleague Wilda Wahpepah, former metro editor at *The Oregonian*, noted that Indians are often caught in a ‘3-D paradigm’ in the legacy press. Wahpepah—of the Kickapoo and Ho Chunk Nations, and a master of brevity—noted that, if Indians appeared in the newspaper, then they were usually, ‘dead, drunk or dancing.’”¹⁷⁴

But despite the similarities there are clear differences between these portrayals. These narratives circulate through and depend on specific historical and material context. It is in the best interest of reporters to grapple with the particularities of each context, and the duty of long-form writers—those who have extra time, space, and resources—to point out, and show how to avoid, these *topoi*, and to help construe new, fairer, and more accurate representations of Native Americans in the media.¹⁷⁵

Understanding some aspects of the coverage of mining and drilling in the Amazon Basin and, more recently, the coverage of the disappearance of Santiago Maldonado in Patagonia, will serve to unpack some aspects connected to the representation of Native Americans in the southern part of the continent. We will discuss some of the key mechanisms in the portrayals of Native Americans and will try to propose better alternatives, that is, to what we call a *colonized narrative* approach.

“Beggars Sitting on a Sack of Gold”

In January 2012, Ecuadorean president Rafael Correa repeated a public statement that he had been blasting since 2010. This time, he did so amidst the opening of the Eleventh Oil Round, his government’s attempt to expand the country’s drilling frontier from the booming North into southern Amazonia.

“We cannot be beggars sitting on a sack of gold,” he said, referring to the unexploited oil reserves that lay under the southeastern region of Ecuador’s Amazon basin. The previous oil rounds in the country had left a trail of devastation and insurmountable pollution at the core of the Amazon territories, which are mostly occupied by native Ecuadorians. However, Correa’s statement asserted that the destruction could be reversed, something that had not occurred in the past fifty years. His full statement read:

We cannot be beggars sitting on a sack of gold. Let us reject those foolish

actions [protests] that have no support whatsoever, which do not withstand the minimum analysis. That mining damages nature. . . . All human activity has an effect on nature. If we want zero pollution let's stop driving cars, because cars pollute. What we strive for is the right balance, and repair the environmental damage. Do you know that mining produces less environmental damage than farming? And that ninety-five per cent of environmental damage can be reversed? This I have read into it, I have informed myself, because I did not know about mining, and I tended to believe in what certain fundamentalists said: no to mining because it goes against our ancestral cultures, it affects the Pacha Mama. And I started to look into it, and it is not like that. So, my fellows, we cannot be beggars sitting on a sack of gold.¹⁷⁶

The first phrase was lifted and reproduced across all media platforms, as a sound bite on radio and television, and as a one-liner by most if not all Ecuadorean newspapers. It even reached *El País* in Spain and the BBC in London. It spread because the underlying idea was already part of a dominant paradigm, easy and catchy. The oil wealth buried under Ecuadorean soil had been hijacked by a group of primitives, believers in the Pacha Mama, the Kichwa name for Mother Earth. Progress, and modernization, encouraged by the Ecuadorean government, were at risk, challenged, and stalled by the primitive beliefs of a group of natives.

Superficially read, there is no literal, overt racism in Correa's statement, nor direct discrimination. But there are two elements that are not reflected in the statement: The first one is that oil and mining in the Amazon basin have caused irreversible damage (or, a kind of damage that has not yet been reverted by the Ecuadorean government or its partners in the oil and mining business). A clear case is the devastation suffered by the Cofán nation in the province of Sucumbíos, where hundreds of open oil pools and formation water still pollute over 1,700 square miles of rivers and groundwater, and have caused an increase in cancer and skin illness for the nation and all the residents in the area.¹⁷⁷ The aversion to oil exploitation doesn't stem simply from an "archaic" belief but from the direct experience of reality.

But Correa's statement spread easily because it was grounded on a pre-existing, colonized narrative, easily assimilated by Western readers. In one of its most brutal iterations, this narrative lays on Sarmiento's inaugural *topos*: civilization or barbarism.

Can we exterminate the Indians? For the savages of America I feel an invincible repugnance and I'm unable to remedy it. These bastards are nothing but filth whom I would hang right away if they reappeared. Lautaro and Caupolicán are nitty Indians, that's the way they are. Impervious to progress, their extermination is providential and useful, sublime and great. They

must be exterminated without even forgiving the child, who already has the instinctive hatred of the civilized man.¹⁷⁸

In the dyad, everything originally American is aggregated under the column of barbarism. Imperviousness to progress, primitivism, poverty, and filth were immediately connected to the American Indians. This narrative had enough power to justify and guide the genocide of the American natives in the southern part of the continent, from Venezuela to Argentina.

It could be argued, with Bruner, that "once shared culturally . . . narrative accruals achieve, like Émile Durkheim's collective representation, 'exteriority' and the power of constraint."¹⁷⁹ That exteriority, which can also be described as neutrality, allows for ideas to circulate more or less freely through the mass media as objective assessments, impartial observations that can confirm certain social constructs. In most cases, these constructs are functional and accommodate to the cultures that originated them. It is not surprising, then, that the "lazy Indian" narrative, or the "anti-progress native" one, be functional to the Ecuadorean government on its most extractive, industrial, and "modernizing" phase, while it is brandished amidst Correa's intent to breach the ancestral territories, which are legally protected by the Ecuadorean constitution itself.

Instead of unpacking the narrative, the stories that followed Correa's statement reinforced it, albeit by not questioning it. *El País* replicated the scientific and technical "guarantees" that the government had offered to the Indigenous nations without reminding readers that little or none of the pollution caused by these same oil companies in the north had been cleaned up or reverted.

The main challenge that the mining plans of Rafael Correa's government will face is the opposition of indigenous and social organizations, such as the National Confederation of Indigenous Organizations of Ecuador (Conaie), which has expressed its preoccupation with large scale mining polluting the water, having a large environmental impact, and having an impact on collective rights. . . . Facing these challenges, vice-minister Auquilla said that the mining projects prepared in Ecuador include environmental studies and studies on water usage, and emphasized that there is "a guarantee from the Ecuadorean state that the technologies used by the companies will be the least polluting ones, and the impact will be corrected in time."¹⁸⁰

In the two sides of the story (the Conaie's and the government's), the experts and technical knowledge usually weigh on the side of the government and buttress the Western narrative of progress, whereas the native Ecuadorean is mainly a defensive point of view, based on "collective" and ancestral "rights."

Santiago Maldonado and “Surprise” Indians

Far from being all-encompassing, these cases are examples of a narrative that has been reproduced to a point of naturalization. The case of Santiago Maldonado, an Argentine tattoo artist who disappeared under confusing circumstances on August 1, 2017, in Patagonia, has reawakened some of the most ancestral lines of hatred and colonialism.

Maldonado, who was protesting together with the Mapuche natives of Patagonia, was last seen by witnesses being escorted by officers of the Argentine Gendarmería Nacional, a military body of border agents, after a clash between protesters and the force near the lands of fashion tycoon Luciano Benetton. The Mapuche claim that the land Benetton bought from the Argentine government is part of their ancestral territories and subject to international treaties that warrant the Mapuche its possession and use. The case triggered a popular outcry and several articles that directly or indirectly questioned the Mapuche side of the narrative and doubted the sacred nature of the territories. But it was one editorial piece, written by media star journalist Jorge Lanata and published in *Clarín* newspaper,¹⁸¹ that summarized Sarmiento’s *topos* with utmost clarity, perpetuating the colonized narrative that, as Novaro noted in her 2003 essay, makes the Aboriginal nations examples of a barbarism that needs to be outgrown, and considers the ancestral nations as outsiders of history.¹⁸²

While describing the context of the disappearance of Maldonado in his editorial of August 26, 2017, Lanata first questioned the legitimacy of the Indigenous groups:

The indiscriminate distribution of land has taken decades of irregular procedures, supposed ancestral groups who are no such thing, illegal and violent occupations, political strongmen in disguise, etc. . . . Even Law 23,302 says that “the self-identification of peoples in the complementary census of indigenous populations” has an “open end.” The list keeps constantly growing—the law says—as part of the dynamic process of self-identification in which the aboriginal peoples of this country live,” as if, according to the needs of every new government, new “surprise” Indians were to appear.¹⁸³

Later in the piece, Lanata equates the protestors with hordes from the seventies who believe that the war is ongoing.¹⁸⁴ The protestors are portrayed in vivid detail as:

. . . a lovely group of sensitive militants with curly hair who fight to declare Mapucheland as an independent state in order to go back to living in the eighteenth century. Since 2013 there have been seventy-seven attacks perpetrated by RAM, the Ancestral Mapuche Resistance, in Río Negro, Chubut, and Neuquén arson, threats, kidnappings, rustling, destruction of

machinery, etc. . . . RAM on the Argentine side and CAM, the Araucan-Malleco Coordinator, pursue with armed force a fight to create a Mapuche nation which in Argentina would stretch over the territories south of the Salado and Colorado rivers. The snob middle classes sympathize with the Indians: they imagine them as peaceful ashtray artisans who once a year pray to the Earth. Exploiting that guilt, the North American Indians succeeded in keeping most of the casinos in their hands. Now there are groups who want to go back to the ancestral state. If that happens, will the Mapuche still buy their women as they have always done? Will they keep children of two lineages and be polygamous? Will they have a different legal system? Will they stone adulterous women like they do in Bolivia? Should we respect cannibal cultures by eating the students?¹⁸⁵

Clearly, Lanata’s editorial is an extreme case of palpable racism and an attempt to naturalize several colonized narratives, and it reads almost as a provocation. But the case of Maldonado is captivating because many other news stories, more neutral in their tone, also crystallized the same bias due to historical ignorance or denialism—or economic/material ownership. Ignorance of historical facts, and a soft approach to contextualization allowed for these reactions to freely circulate in the mainstream press (*Clarín* is the largest daily in circulation in Spanish-speaking South America).

Unpacking Colonized Narratives

Identity, as Bonfil points out, is not a one-way avenue. An Indigenous Identity cannot be reduced to race, DNA, language, or even culture as a broader, more general indicator. In Bonfil’s terms, the Indigenous identity is a result of self-identification and several cultural markers. But even these are much more complex than the simplifying narratives with which the ancestral cultures are associated in the press.

During my coverage of the Sápara of Ecuador,¹⁸⁶ I resorted to a few techniques that helped me deconstruct some of these narratives in order to aim the coverage in the right direction. Most of the work had to do with digging into the long historical context, keeping myself wary of any exoticism, and avoiding what I have called the “extractive matrix” of Western journalism, which has had a direct, material resonance in the lives of the natives.

As Novaro argues,¹⁸⁷ when the Indigenous narratives focus on the “exotic” as opposed to the “norm,” that exoticism is contingent on the ignorance of the observer, much more so than on an intrinsically extravagant attribute of the Aborigines. In that vein, during my reporting I tried to remain aware of the cultural differences, and whenever an event or an approach surprised me, I reflected upon the reasons for my own surprise. These reasons usually had to do more with my background, upbringing, and expectations than with the events themselves.

Understanding the historical, material context of these nations was also instrumental for understanding their plight and their mistrust, while guiding the reporting in more fruitful directions. Coming into Sápara territory, it became clear that the years of exploitation, the decimation of the Sápara population by Western rubber companies in the early twentieth century, their enslavement, and the appropriation of their territory by the Ecuadorean government, had resonated deeply into the community. These events had to be in the background of their stories today. And those stories could only be accessed through human empathy and participation. In the end, the journalistic narratives became part of a negotiation, a dialogue that included the discussion of a certain approach, and the setting—if possible—of a common goal. It was important, as part of that process, to recognize the limits of the journalistic language vis-à-vis its objects: The notion of a “source,” for instance, had a deeply instrumental resonance, and wasn’t conducive as a framework for this kind of work. Reducing the communication with my informants to a sourcing process would have framed the reporting within the same kind of extractive matrix I was trying to avoid.

It became clear that the best approach to the construction of these narratives was to use the tools of an ethnographer (participant observation, thick descriptions) who is devoted to the development of a testimony or an oral history. In many instances during my reporting, the narrative was built as a collaboration. Sometimes even the notion of authorship (as problematic as this already is) remained diluted. In many ways, this collaboration was a further attempt—albeit imperfect—to avoid replicating the inherently extractive and colonizing matrix that underlies both journalism and certain kinds of Western literatures.

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Notes: Martin, Writing Aboriginality

¹ Walkley Foundation, “The Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism”; Walkley Foundation, “History”; Hurst, *The Walkley Awards*. The 1956 Walkley Awards were established a full twenty-three years before the U.S. Pulitzer Prize established its own feature category in 1979. Pulitzer Prizes, “Feature Writing.”

² Martin, “‘Inscribing Virtues in Australian Literary Journalism’.”

³ This article is based on Martin, “Writing Aboriginality: A Case Study.”

⁴ Lucashenko, “Sinking Below Sight,” 53–67.

⁵ Burton, “The Walkley Review,” 20.

⁶ Meadows, “A Time for New Voices,” 23.

⁷ Education Services Australia. “The 1967 Referendum,” para. 4. While “it is often stated that the 1967 referendum granted citizenship and the right to vote to Aboriginal people, for the first time. This is not strictly true. In 1962, the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* was amended so that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could vote. Unlike the situation for other Australians, voting was not compulsory. The 1967 referendum [. . . made two important changes] to the Australian Constitution. The sections of the Australian Constitution under consideration were:

Section 21: “The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to: . . . (xxvi) The people of any race, *other than the aboriginal people in any state*, for whom it is necessary to make special laws” (italics added).

Section 127: “In reckoning the numbers of people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, *aboriginal natives should not be counted*” (italics added).

The change gave the Commonwealth (rather than the States) power “to make laws for Aboriginal people” and “to make it possible to include Aboriginal people in the census, which in effect made them count as Australian citizens for the first time.” (Under Section 127, this was not possible.) The debate centers upon the opposition to a “symbolic” recognition of Indigenous Australians in the constitution in favor of a treaty that is developed in consultation with the many diverse Aboriginal communities.

⁸ Recognise, “Support for Change,” para. 12.

⁹ Liddle, “Constitutional Recognition Survey.”

¹⁰ McQuire, “Online Poll Finds Majority of Black Australia Opposed to Recognise Campaign,” para. 1.

¹¹ Latimore, “Jumping the Gate,” para. 3.

¹² Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, 152; see also Hage, *Alter-Politics*.

¹³ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 16.

¹⁴ IALJS-12, “Literary Journalism: From the Center, from the Margins.”

¹⁵ Neill, “Our Shame,” 1–2.

¹⁶ Mason, “The Girl in Cell 4,” 56–61.

¹⁷ Tippet, “Slaying the Monster,” 1.

¹⁸ Guilliat, “The Lost Children,” 18–23; Toohey, “Highly Inflammable,” 24–28.

¹⁹ Hooper, "The Tall Man."

²⁰ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 53–67.

²¹ See also Meadows, "A Time for New Voices," 23; Attwood, *Telling the Truth about Aboriginal History*; Clark, *Scars in the Landscape*.

²² Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Social and Emotional Wellbeing: Removal from Natural Family"; Australian Human Rights Commission, "Bringing Them Home."

²³ Parliament of Australia, "Australian Citizenship: A Chronology," para. 1. "Australian citizenship was created through the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948*, and came into effect 26 January 1949. . . . Prior to 1949, Australians could only hold the status of British subjects." After 1949 an Australian citizen was also considered a British subject. The Citizenship Act 1969 changed the status from being British subjects to "having the status of a British subject." This distinction gave primacy to the term "Australian citizen" (para. 86, under sub-heading: "Nationality and Citizenship Act 1966").

²⁴ Education Services Australia. "The 1967 Referendum," para. 4: "It is often stated that the 1967 referendum granted citizenship and the right to vote to Aboriginal people, for the first time. This is not strictly true. In 1962, the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* was amended so that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could vote. Unlike the situation for other Australians, voting was not compulsory."

²⁵ The University of New South Wales published a guide on the use of Indigenous terminology that caused media controversy for using the word "invasion," not "settlement," to describe European colonization. Radio announcer Kyle Sandilands said the term was "divisive" and Australians should "get over it." Cruikshank, "Threatening History," para. 8; see also Aly, "Why Australia Lies to Itself," para. 17; Kerin, "UNSW Defends Indigenous Guidelines."

²⁶ RCADIC. *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Report*.

²⁷ Australian Indigenous Health Infonet. "Mortality"; Australian Indigenous Health Infonet, "Summary of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, 2016."

²⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, "4704.0: The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples"; Latimore, "Not an Event But a Structure."

²⁹ Latimore, "Not an Event But a Structure," para. 8.

³⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, "4704.0: The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples"; Australian Human Rights Commission, "Bringing Them Home"; Victorian Health Department, "Violence against Women in Australia: Research Summary."

³¹ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight."

³² Tony Birch as quoted by McLaren, "Approaching Indigenous Characters and Culture," para. 1 (emphasis in the original).

³³ Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority, "ACARA: Development of the Australian Curriculum."

³⁴ Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs Australia (MCEETYA), "A National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander Peoples 1996–2002."

³⁵ MCEETYA, "Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005–2008."

³⁶ MCEETYA, "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014."

³⁷ ACARA, "Cross Curriculum Priorities: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures," para. 2.

³⁸ Booth, "Teaching Aboriginal Curriculum Content in Australian High Schools," 139.

³⁹ Booth, 140; see also Sarra, *Strong and Smart*.

⁴⁰ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 16.

⁴¹ Barbara Blackman, e-mail to the author, April 6, 2016, Subject "Walkley Judges – Indigenous?"

⁴² Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 16.

⁴³ Walkley Foundation, "Walkley Awards Judging Criteria."

⁴⁴ Attwood, *Telling the Truth about Aboriginal History*; Bacon, "A Case Study in Ethical Failure," 17–41; Meadows, *Voices in the Wilderness*; Prentis, *A Concise Companion to Aboriginal History*.

⁴⁵ Lucashenko, "Melissa Lucashenko: Author Profile," para. 1.

⁴⁶ Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*; Mason, "Journalism Practice and Critical Reflexivity," 158–79; Bacon, "A Case Study in Ethical Failure," 17–41.

⁴⁷ The Walkley Foundation, "Melissa Lucashenko."

⁴⁸ Aristotle, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, NEII.7, 1107b18–20.

⁴⁹ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 67.

⁵⁰ Walkley Foundation, "Melissa Lucashenko."

⁵¹ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 66.

⁵² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 48–59.

⁵³ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 54.

⁵⁴ Lucashenko, 56.

⁵⁵ Coward, *Speaking Personally*, 29.

⁵⁶ Lee, *Our Very Own Adventure*, iv.

⁵⁷ Aare, "A Narratological Approach to Literary Journalism," 133, 134.

⁵⁸ Genette and Maclean, "Introduction to the Paratext," 261.

⁵⁹ Lucashenko, "Melissa Lucashenko: Author Profile," para. 1.

⁶⁰ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 66.

⁶¹ Lucashenko, 66.

⁶² Gildersleeve, "Ropes of Stories," 80.

⁶³ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 53–67.

⁶⁴ Aare, "A Narratological Approach to Literary Journalism," 106–39.

⁶⁵ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 16.

⁶⁶ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 53; Browitt and Nelson, *Practising Theory*; Benson and Neveu, *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*.

⁶⁷ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 53.

⁶⁸ Lucashenko, 65.

⁶⁹ Lucashenko, "Sinking Below Sight," 54. The phrase, "Ah, the serenity," is

a line from the popular 1997 Australian film, *The Castle*, which tells the story of a working-class family who fight to stop the demolition of their home.

⁷⁰ Lee, *Our Very Own Adventure*, 8–9.

⁷¹ Lucashenko, “Sinking Below Sight,” 54.

⁷² Lucashenko, 54.

⁷³ Lucashenko, 55.

⁷⁴ Lucashenko, 54.

⁷⁵ Lucashenko, 54.

⁷⁶ TAFE is an acronym for “Technical and Further Education” and is an Australian tertiary education system that delivers vocational training courses at their numerous colleges and institutes, such as QUT, Queensland University of Technology.

⁷⁷ Lucashenko, “Sinking Below Sight,” 59.

⁷⁸ Lucashenko, 55.

⁷⁹ Martin, “‘Inscribing Virtues in Australian Literary Journalism,’” ii.

⁸⁰ Lucashenko, “Sinking Below Sight,” 102.

⁸¹ Hage *Alter-Politics*, 20; see also Preston, *Understanding Ethics*; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.

⁸² Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, 88.

⁸³ Thomson et al., “Why the Where Matters,” 154.

⁸⁴ Ahmed, “Collective Feelings,” 27.

Notes: McCue, Seeking Debwewin

⁸⁵ Hello! My name is Aankwadaans. I am Wolf Clan. I am from the Chippewas of Georgina Island. I am Anishinaabe (translation mine).

⁸⁶ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Calls to Action, 10. Commonly known as The Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC), Call to Action 86 states: “We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations.”

⁸⁷ Reynolds, “Indigenous Literary Journalism.”

⁸⁸ McCue, *The Shoe Boy*.

⁸⁹ Pratt, *Brébeuf and His Brethren*, Section VI, “(The Mission to the Petuns and Neutrals).”

⁹⁰ Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide*.

⁹¹ Calvi, “Reporting on Indigenous Issues.”

⁹² The Seven Grandfather Teachings are *Nibwaakaawin* (Wisdom), *Zaagi’idiwin* (Love), *Minaadendamowin* (Respect), *Aakode’ewin* (Bravery), *Gwayak-waadiziwin* (Honesty), *Dabaadendiziwin* (Humility), and *Debwewin* (Truth). See also Bimaadiziwin and Baker, *An Ojibwe Peoples Resource*.

⁹³ Basil Johnston, quoted in Eigenbrod, *Travelling Knowledges*, 4.

⁹⁴ Treuer, *Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey*. See also Coward, “Writing from the

(Indigenous) Edge.”

⁹⁵ Johnston, quoted in Eigenbrod, said, “In so doing the tribe was denying that there was an absolute truth; that the best a speaker could achieve and a listener expect was the highest degree of accuracy.” Eigenbrod, *Travelling Knowledges*, 4.

Notes: Coward, Writing from the (Indigenous) Edge

⁹⁶ Lincoln, preface to *The Good Red Road*, xvii.

⁹⁷ Treuer, *Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey*.

⁹⁸ See Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*; Coward, *The Newspaper Indian*; and Moses, *Wild West Shows*. See also Coward, *Indians Illustrated*.

⁹⁹ Rollins and O’Connor, eds., *Hollywood’s Indian*.

¹⁰⁰ Lincoln, preface to *Good Red Road*, xv.

¹⁰¹ Lincoln, xv.

¹⁰² Lincoln, xvi.

¹⁰³ Slagle writes, “We have sometimes altered names, the order of incidents, and the places where they actually occurred.” Slagle, afterword to Lincoln with Slagle, *Good Red Road*, 263.

¹⁰⁴ Lincoln writes that he was “adopted” into the Monroe family of Alliance, Nebraska, and became part of their “extended family.” The father of the family, Mark Monroe, “gave me his Lakota name, *Mato Yammi* or ‘Three Bears.’” Lincoln, preface to *Good Red Road*, xvii.

¹⁰⁵ Lincoln, xvii.

¹⁰⁶ Lincoln, with Slagle, *Good Red Road*, 39.

¹⁰⁷ Lincoln, with Slagle, 170–78.

¹⁰⁸ Lincoln, with Slagle, 166.

¹⁰⁹ Lincoln, with Slagle, 198.

¹¹⁰ Lincoln, with Slagle, 198.

¹¹¹ Lincoln, with Slagle, 200.

¹¹² Lincoln, with Slagle, 201.

¹¹³ Lincoln, preface to *Good Red Road*, xv.

¹¹⁴ Lincoln, xvi.

¹¹⁵ Lincoln, xv.

¹¹⁶ Slagle, afterword to Lincoln with Slagle, *Good Red Road*, 263.

¹¹⁷ Treuer, *Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey*, 5.

¹¹⁸ Treuer, 6.

¹¹⁹ David Treuer, University of Southern California.

¹²⁰ Treuer, *Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey*, 10.

¹²¹ Treuer, 10.

¹²² Treuer, 17.

¹²³ Treuer, 188.

¹²⁴ Treuer, 189.

¹²⁵ Treuer, 189.

¹²⁶ Treuer, 190.

¹²⁷ Treuer, 190–91.

¹²⁸ Treuer, 192–93.

¹²⁹ Treuer, 193.

¹³⁰ Treuer, 38–42.

¹³¹ Treuer, 41.

¹³² Treuer, 300 (italics in original).

¹³³ Treuer, 300.

¹³⁴ Treuer, 300.

¹³⁵ Treuer, 300, 321.

¹³⁶ Treuer, 300, 321.

¹³⁷ Treuer, 20.

¹³⁸ Treuer, 305.

¹³⁹ Lincoln, with Slagle, *Good Red Road*, 200.

¹⁴⁰ Treuer, *Rez Life: An Indian's Journey*, 3.

¹⁴¹ Keeble, “Expanding the Horizons of Literary Journalism,” 170.

Notes: Reynolds, “Indigenous Literary Journalism”

¹⁴² David, “Anarchy at Kanehsatake.”

¹⁴³ National Magazine Awards (NMAs), Searchable Archive.

¹⁴⁴ David, “All My Relations.”

¹⁴⁵ NMAs, Searchable Archive.

¹⁴⁶ *This Magazine*, “About *This Magazine*.”

¹⁴⁷ MacFarquhar, “Outside Agitator.”

¹⁴⁸ Additional historical information on the magazine, including ownership, philosophy, editorial focus and content, staff and contributors, drawn from issues of the magazine, minutes of the board, and other documents in the author’s private collection.

¹⁴⁹ Actually, Dan David says that his father’s birthplace story is quite a bit more complicated: “Walter M. David Sr.’s family lived on Cornwall Island. A home birth, as most were back then, but registered by the Catholic Church in Hogsburg, New York, which is also on Akwesasne Territory. This has always caused confusion with [federal government] bureaucrats in Ottawa who think one-dimensionally. Akwesasne comprises these jurisdictions: 1) U.S.A., 2) Canada, 3) Ontario, 4) Quebec, 5) New York State, 6) St. Regis (American tribal council), 7) Akwesasne (Canada band council), and 8) Haudensosaunee (traditional government, aka the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy).” E-mail interview with the author, September 12, 2017.

¹⁵⁰ Dan David, in-person interview with the author, Balzac’s Café, Ryerson University campus, Toronto, March 24, 2017.

¹⁵¹ David, “Anarchy at Kanehsatake,” 12 (SQ definition added; bracketed content in the original).

¹⁵² David, 12.

¹⁵³ David interview, March 24, 2017.

¹⁵⁴ Fitterman, “Newsmen Don Obe Shared His Passion for Good Writing,” para. 17.

¹⁵⁵ David, “All My Relations,” 27.

¹⁵⁶ David, 27.

¹⁵⁷ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Calls to Action*, 10. Commonly known as The Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC), the report issued ninety-four calls to action. Call to Action 86, which was directed specifically at journalism programs (see note 86, page 55), the prime motivation behind putting together a panel on Indigenous literary journalism for IALJS-12 in Halifax, Canada, May 11–13, 2017. The thinking was: Why stop at Canada? Why not internationalize the call?

¹⁵⁸ David interview, March 24, 2017.

¹⁵⁹ Truth and Reconciliation Report, 4.

¹⁶⁰ David, “All My Relations,” 27.

¹⁶¹ Hartsock, *Literary Journalism and the Aesthetics of Experience*, 1. In his introduction, Hartsock talks about how human beings like to impose idealized ambitions on themselves, idealizations that can “be reduced back from whence they came, the phenomenal world, the world of consequences, as a result of the negotiation between the testimony of our vital senses—the aesthetics of experience—and the murky ambitions of abstract consciousness.” Hartsock, 1. Here, I am interpreting David’s turn in the story as just that kind of negotiation.

¹⁶² David, “All My Relations,” 28.

¹⁶³ Beers, in interview with author, as quoted in Reynolds, “The Edge of Canadian Literary Journalism,” 74–75.

¹⁶⁴ Wolfe, “The New Journalism,” *Bulletin*, 22. In his introduction to *The New Journalism with an Anthology*, Wolfe opines that many journalists are not cut out for the rigor of saturation reporting. “Assuming this side of it isn’t too overwhelming, Saturation Reporting, as I think of it, can be one of the most exhilarating trips, as they say, in the world. Often you feel as if you’ve put your whole central nervous system on red alert. . . .” Wolfe, in “The New Journalism,” Part 1, 52. The reader feels this red alert in David’s reporting when he says:

I hate these people and their guns. One Warrior kid—he must have been about 14 years old—stops my car on the way into the Pines. It’s near the end of summer. We all know the army’s going to sweep through the territory any day. . . . Some of the Warriors have been out there at checkpoints like this for days without rest. But I need to get my dad out of the Pines. The kid tells me to turn my car around and go back. . . . This is my land. And I’m going to pick up my dad.

He raises his AR-15 and aims it at my gut. . . . I look into the kid’s eyes. They’re empty. He could blow me away without a pause, without a flicker of concern. The look in his eyes isn’t much different from the look I’ve seen all summer from the police and the army at their roadblocks. It’s the look of people too whacked out by military mindset, fatigue or dope to care anymore. For the first time inside the barricades, I’m scared.” David, “All My Relations,” 27–28.

¹⁶⁵ David, "All My Relations," 27.

¹⁶⁶ Dan David, e-mail interview with the author, September 7, 2017.

¹⁶⁷ David, "All My Relations," 32.

¹⁶⁸ David interview, March 24, 2017.

¹⁶⁹ David, e-mail interview, September 7, 2017.

Notes: Calvi, Reporting on Indigenous Issues

¹⁷⁰ Bonfil Batalla, *México Profundo: Una civilización negada*, 110–11 (translation mine); see also Bonfil Batalla, "El concepto de indio en América," 17–32.

¹⁷¹ Bonfil Batalla, "El concepto de indio en América," 17–32; see also Bonfil Batalla, *Mexico Profundo*.

¹⁷² Sarela Paz, Bolivian ethnographer, interview with author, December 19, 2015.

¹⁷³ Novaro, "'Indios', 'Aborígenes' y 'Pueblos Originarios,'" 199–219; see also, Novaro, "Pueblos indígenas y escuela"; Dussel, *1492 el encubrimiento del otro*.

¹⁷⁴ Pember, "Indian Country Today Hiatus," para. 8.

¹⁷⁵ Machaca, *La escuela argentina*.

¹⁷⁶ Correa, *Sabatina* (translation mine); Bonilla, "No podemos ser mendigos sentados."

¹⁷⁷ Calvi, "Secret Reserves," 74–87.

¹⁷⁸ Sarmiento, *El Nacional*, November 25, 1876 (translation mine).

¹⁷⁹ Bruner, "The Narrative Construction of Reality," 19.

¹⁸⁰ Mena Erazo, "Ecuador apuesta su crecimiento a la minería a gran escala," para. 9, 11 (translation mine).

¹⁸¹ Lanata, "Un grupo de militantes 'sensibles'."

¹⁸² Novaro, "'Indios', 'Aborígenes' y 'Pueblos Originarios,'" 199–219; see also Hacher, "Bordar el genocidio mapuche"; Enriz, "El verso del indio trucho."

¹⁸³ Lanata, "Un grupo de militantes 'sensibles,'" para. 3–4 (translation mine).

¹⁸⁴ When Lanata mentions the "war" he is referring to the Argentine "Dirty War" during which the state "disappeared" some 30,000 civilians, according to the *Nunca Más*, a document elaborated by the CONADEP (National Council for the Disappearance of People). In that document the idea of a "war" is debunked, and is redefined as terrorism of state.

¹⁸⁵ Lanata, "Un grupo de militantes 'sensibles,'" para. 1–5 (translation mine).

¹⁸⁶ Calvi, "Secret Reserves," 74–87. The remaining four hundred Sápara live in the South-Eastern province of Pastaza, deep in the Ecuadorean Amazon basin. They have been opposing oil drilling in their territory since the late 2000s. My long-form piece reports on that plea and is the result of several years of reporting in the field.

¹⁸⁷ Novaro, "'Indios', 'Aborígenes' y 'Pueblos Originarios,'" 199–219.

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