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## Journal of Transnational American Studies

### Title

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### Permalink

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### Journal

Journal of Transnational American Studies, 5(1)

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### Publication Date

2013

### DOI

10.5070/T851007145

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# Environmental Justice, Transnationalism, and the Politics of the Local in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*

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The transnational turn in American Studies challenges the exceptionalism of an imagined "American" community and seeks to recognize the ways that America is connected to communities both within and outside its boundaries, countering notions of citizenship that have characterized the nation-state. New American Studies scholar Amy Kaplan argues that only a transnational perspective can account for America's imperialist legacy, while ecocritics Ursula Heise and Rob Nixon consider how the transnational might bear on ecocriticism.[1] Indeed, in contemporary ecocritical theory, as with American Studies, it has now become imperative to turn to the "transnational" as the geopolitical frame through which to perceive and elucidate contemporary environmental concerns. In this article, I examine some of the promises and pitfalls of the turn to the transnational in ecocriticism. I argue that the transnational, and its promises of world citizenship[2] and "multinaturalism,"[3] may be an effective means to an end but, at times, may be less effective—and sometimes even damaging—than an "excessive investment in the local."[4] Both must be recognized as political strategies, holding the potential for both mobilization and limitation, a cautious approach to transnationalism that I read in Leslie Marmon Silko's work, especially *Almanac of the Dead*, and in my own observations of Alaska Native politics of the local in and around Juneau. In the end, the transnational is a worthwhile strategy but should be treated as just that—a strategy that can, despite environmental justice theorists' best intentions, silence non-transnational indigenous politics.

Some of the most fruitful transnational ecocritical work is in the field of environmental justice (EJ). Scholars, such as David Naguib Pellow, T. V. Reed, Rob

Nixon, and Joni Adamson, claim that the relationship between global and local imaginaries must be recognized if we are to achieve environmental justice. Adamson urges the literary critic to be adept at "mov[ing] at times from a large-scale pattern or theory to a specific place" and asking "how differences in ecological, cultural, economic, political, and social conditions get produced and how those differences manifest themselves differently in specific places."[5] In her article on *Avatar*, too, she cites the connections indigenous communities make with James Cameron's Hollywood blockbuster film *Avatar* as evidence that indigenous communities are engaging in an indigenous eco-cosmopolitics. Grasping the transnational gestures of indigenous politics means transcending the binary of global/local in our politics and poetics of place, and identifying a common cause against multinational capitalism, which threatens indigenous sovereignty in part because it threatens the environments within which indigenous groups exist. In this vein, Pellow argues that "global environmental justice movement networks rooted in both local grassroots power and transnational coordination represent one of the best hopes for pushing states and industry toward more socially and ecologically sensible policies."[6] And echoing Adamson and Pellow in advancing a "transnational ethic of place," Rob Nixon insists that we attend to "local materiality while exposing the web of transnational forces that permeate and shape the local."[7] Perhaps the most important reason to consider transnationalism within environmental justice ecocriticism is articulated by T. V. Reed. According to Reed, recognizing the post- and decolonizing efforts of environmental justice texts (which, by their very nature, question conventional scales and borders) renders the transnational lens more conducive to justice than lenses that reify the nation-state. Since colonial-capitalism has "gone global in [its] modern capacity to utterly destroy the environment and humanity within it,"[8] Reed continues, then it makes sense that environmental justice movements would respond at the global scale. These arguments illustrate the value of thinking transnationally for environmental justice ecocriticism. They allow us to use an eco-cosmopolitan sensibility, to use Heise's term, to understand that an event like Chernobyl is intimately related to waste practices in American suburbia, for example, and that if the source of oppression is global, then so too must be resistance against it.[9]

Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* has been read as exemplary of transnational indigenous environmental justice literature. Joni Adamson anticipated discussions about transnational environmental justice and *Almanac* in her first book, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism*, and developed arguments about the role of indigenous groups' global environmental justice movements further in her June 2012 *JTAS* article, "'¡Todos Somos Indios!' Revolutionary Imagination, Alternative Modernity, and Transnational Organizing in the Work of Silko, Tamez, and Anzaldúa," and in her *American Literary History* article of the same year, "Indigenous Literatures, Multinaturalism, and *Avatar*: The Emergence of Indigenous Cosmopolitics." Affirming Shari Huhndorf's notion that the

novel "revises indigenous politics by positioning transnational alliances,"[10] Adamson adds that *Almanac* even redefines indigeneity in transnational terms, suggesting what she calls an "alternative modernity."[11] Reed puts it this way: "critics still need to catch up with Silko" in terms of *Almanac*'s contribution to "doing global decolonial environmental justice cultural criticism."[12]

I want to suggest that, although the novel articulates a transnational indigenous identity and environmental justice themes, as Huhndorf and Adamson argue, it also reflects long-standing indigenous suspicion of totalizing theories such as "transnationalism." Silko explores the difficulties, as much as the potential, of thinking transnationally about indigenous politics, especially in its relationship to the politics of global environmental justice. The novel's treatment of the local/global dialectic, which transnationalism ostensibly transcends, is anything but resolved by its end. The novel does not allow an easy reading of its environmental and indigenous themes in transnational terms, even as it provokes such a reading, and even as it points to some of the problems with failing to think in transnational terms. Although transnationalism is a successful strategy of environmental justice and a productive lens through which to understand and work toward environmental justice, transnationalism as a framework for both theory and action may not be the most productive lens through which to strategize *indigenous* environmental justice. In our appreciation of models of transnational environmental justice, we also need to be aware of the strategies and rhetorics that may not fit the transnational frame, especially those that actively resist it, and even consider the reasons for these oppositional discourses as grounds to rethink the transnational turn. Yes, *Almanac* models the transnational indigenous and environmental justice elements that Adamson and others outline, but there is also evidence that Silko is uneasy about the implications of the transnational frame. These ambivalences register the costs of thinking transnationally. Just as much as the novel celebrates coalition-building across the Americas, it explores the compromises that indigenous peoples make when they enter into these transnational activist movements, and leaves readers with as much of a sense of suspicion as optimism about the transnational indigenous-led uprising that the novel forecasts and with which it ends.

**Why Transnational Environmental Justice Ecocriticism?**

Transnational environmental justice ecocriticism offers an alternative to important critiques of the dominant ecocritical attachment to "the local." The traditional canon of environmental literature, from *Walden* to Wendell Berry, asserts that an environmental ethic begins with a commitment to one's place, an "ethic of proximity." In postmodernity, a return to place and its materiality creates the conditions for a frontal attack on the "placelessness" of late capitalism and its attendant environmental destruction. For this reason, ecocriticism is often dismissed as an unsophisticated discipline because it holds onto a naïve nostalgia for some

mythical "pure" nature, while cultural theorists insist that no space is "pure," and that hyperspatiality and hypermobility render the environmentalist view of "place" obsolete, and therefore a poor guide to environmental activism. As Buell notes, for example, "devotees of place-attachment can easily fall into a sentimental environmental determinism."[13] Meanwhile, ecocritics more attentive to environmental justice concerns have shown how attachment to place can lead to isolationism, NIMBYism, environmental determinism, essentialism, and xenophobia, often accompanied by a nostalgia for "the country," a pastoral myth, or a pure "wilderness," constructions of nature that fail to recognize their dialectical relationship with other places. Attachment to place is often about blood-and-soil nativism that denies the other places and processes that constitute any given place.

In contrast to the local, place-based ethic, a transnational perspective highlights the uneven power relations among communities and draws attention to the ways in which different places bear on other places. For instance, a transnational perspective helps us see that the success of the North American mainstream environmental movement—such as the groups known as the "Big 10"—can occur at the cost of environmental justice elsewhere[14]: successful antipollution measures in the US have led to the increased pollution of less powerful but more vulnerable nations, which become sacrifice zones for the US's continued rates of production and consumption, for example. Echoing Heise's arguments about risk in *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet*, Pellow thus notes that transnational EJ is "acutely aware of the ways in which risk travels across social and geographic borders, because these networks were born out of the recognition of this fact" (236).

A transnational EJ approach to global environmental problems also emphasizes the role of wider political and economic processes, like colonialism and globalization, in environmental degradation. As Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* shows us, these forces exact their toll over the long term and therefore escape easy narrative framing and political management, and by extension the popular imagination. Transnational environmental justice attends in *spatial* terms to what Nixon's book attends to in *temporal* terms—the project of reframing our understanding of environmental justice beyond the dominant time/space conventions of Western thought. A transnational ethic of place, as Nixon writes elsewhere, goes beyond mainstream environmental views of place in order to "recuperate, imaginatively and politically, experiences of hybridity, displacement, and transnational memory for any viable spatial ethic."[15] But Nixon also asks us to rethink environmental justice in temporal ways, too: "the exponential upsurge in indigenous resource rebellions across the globe during the high age of neoliberalism has resulted largely from a clash of temporal perspectives between the short-termers who arrive (with their official landscape maps) to extract, despoil, and depart and the long-termers who must live inside the ecological aftermath" (17). For Nixon, then, thinking transnationally is important for environmental justice because it challenges dominant constructions of the local/global binary and of temporal boundaries. This

transnational sense of place neither glorifies the hypermobility and placelessness associated with capitalist globalization nor sentimentalizes the local. It also allows us to see cause-and-effect trajectories of "long emergencies" rather than only spectacularized, media-friendly events.

A transnational sense of place and time might help us recognize, for instance, that the environmental and human health impacts of the US military's use of Agent Orange in Vietnam expand beyond Vietnam's national borders and beyond the time-frame that we typically consider having occupied the country. The environmental effects span around Southeast Asia and affect ecosystems that are not limited to Vietnam. The human health costs of the chemical have lingered much longer than the official record suggests and manifest in places outside Vietnam. We like to ignore the ways that Agent Orange has affected so many US soldiers' bodies and lives. A transnational environmental justice perspective looks closely at how the power and politics of unique places and events are conditioned by, and can also affect, broader global forces and eras. Often framed in terms of self-determination or territorial rights, as opposed to sustainability or environmental protection,[16] transnational environmental justice movements decenter the US as the geographical core of environmentalism and "expand earlier definitions of environmental inequality to include context-specific, fluid frameworks that could potentially apply to vulnerable people and environments anywhere in the world" (79), and, as Nixon might add, these frameworks show how vulnerable people and environments are maintained over long histories and long futures of injustice. Thus, transnational EJ can be seen as a strategic imperative; as markets and states increasingly operate within transnational networks and spill over the regulatory boundaries of the nation-state, so too do movements of resistance (229–30). Such a perspective eschews the "nation" as a basis by which to create sustainable human–nature relations, and recognizes that the histories and forces of diaspora, colonialism, and globalization have produced the ecological problems we face today, and will continue to face in the future. In other words, the "nation"—geographically and because of the limited temporality of national politics—is part of the problem.

Such theorizing about a transnational ethic of place has contributed to canonization of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* as a seminal environmental justice text. As Adamson and Claudia Sadowski-Smith have each argued, *Almanac* promotes a transnational ethic of place that creates conditions for environmental justice that are better than those arising from the ethic of place espoused by mainstream environmentalism since the 1970s. For example, Sadowski-Smith reads the story of Geronimo in the novel as one that "enlarges the U.S.-centric lens on indigeneity."[17] Further, she observes that a Laguna Pueblo character's return home both "reaffirms his own tribal identity" and "symbolizes important intersections between his tribe and emerging hemispheric pan-Indian activism" (83). Sadowski-Smith concludes that "*Almanac* expresses this expansive and inclusive sense of community as pan-tribal struggles for land and border crossing rights" (83),

and that it "recognizes that any opposition movement today needs to construct its local struggles in global terms" (84).

Adamson also argues that the novel outlines a transnational ethic of place, contending that "Silko is at pains to expand definitions of 'indigeneity' into a different kind of collective label,"[18] one which sees us "all" as Indians (as in the Zapatista phrase she uses as the title of her article, "¡*Todos somos indios*!"). Like T. V. Reed, Adamson reads *Almanac* as anticipating the kind of transnational environmental justice movements we see today, such as the Zapatista movement in southern Mexico and the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in 2010 (6). In her view, the founding documents of environmental justice "read like a summary of *Almanac*'s larger themes" (4). She finds that indigenous women writers like Silko "are not only imagining a revolutionary future but building coalitional capacity among transnational indigenous groups," some members of which "self-identify as 'native,'" even when they are not recognized as such by the nation-state, because their "interests in social justice and environmental protection overlap" (3). Reed also argues that transnationalism is a productive lens through which to understand *Almanac* because, in it, "tribal geo-history trumps national borders."[19]

### *Almanac* and the Limits of Transnationalism

These interpretations pose *Almanac* as a paradigmatic transnational environmental justice text: it suggests that the nation-state is a barrier to environmental justice, it connects social justice and environmental concerns, it builds coalitions across national boundaries often despite differences between groups, and it even redefines—or at least challenges the national imaginaries implied in—what it means to be "native." But I want to examine some assumptions in these arguments and suggest that transnational coalition-building may be as problematic as it is beneficial. For instance, redefining "native" to include groups that are not officially recognized as native opens the potential for nonnatives to appropriate nativeness or "go native," to use the title of Huhndorf's first book, with troubling implications for indigenous self-determination.[20] Coalition-building can redefine identity politics in important ways that these scholars celebrate, but such a challenge can also be exploitative and potentially negate cultural differences. Similarly, the obligation to construct local struggles in global terms may not always be in the best interests of a particular community. The universalizing imperatives can deny local concerns to serve larger strategic interests. What concerns me about the transnational turn, in other words, is its privileging of the global connections over the specificity of the local, even as it attempts to challenge this binary.[21] Finally, indigenous-environmentalist coalition-building is much more conflictive than these transnational environmental justice readings acknowledge, a fact with which *Almanac* is profoundly concerned.

Geographer Victoria Lawson uses the term "jumping scale" to describe the transnationalization of environmental justice movements that Pellow, Adamson, Nixon, and Reed investigate. By taking a "regional view and jump[ing] scale to globalize it," such movements "legitimate that view and negate other regional and local views."[22] It is precisely this paradoxical legitimation *and* negation that I believe is a more central concern in *Almanac* than the legitimation for which it has received most scholarly attention. Failure to recognize those *negations* may seriously compromise indigenous claims. The transnational frame can confound efforts to localize the sources of injustice and address them. This concern is as central a project in the novel as challenging national borders and articulating the grounds for a global indigenous movement. Although Silko recognizes the value of hemispheric activism in *Almanac* and in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*, *Almanac* is neither utopian nor pan-Indian, as some have argued. Focusing on the *transnational* environmental justice implications of the novel misses important specific US–Mexico borderland indigenous notions of "place," which are only "transnational" when viewed from the dominant perspective of nation-states and transnational non-governmental organizations, and fails to fully account for what might be lost when alliances are built across national boundaries. Rather than emphasizing the novel's potential to model transnational indigenous environmental justice, a less nation-state-based perspective might focus on the novel's ambivalences—especially about environmental movements, including environmental justice movements—as a better indication of its indigenous politics. Nixon argues that environmental justice is a "mobile rhetoric," offering a "strategic rhetorical common ground" for dispossessed communities to "becom[e] visible, audible agents of globalization from below." Environmental justice therefore holds the promise of offering "transnational visibility and audibility."[23] In his very valorizing of the ability of environmental justice rhetoric to help discrete, localized movements jump scales, Nixon hints at the pitfalls too. As in any form of strategic politics, nuances are compromised for the gain of wider apprehension and resistance, and the mobility of the rhetoric implies that there will be times and places where the rhetoric *doesn't* fit. As important as it is to examine the rhetorical strategies of *resistance* that shape transnational environmental justice movements, we also need to be as attentive to the anxieties these narratives reveal. Such attention serves as a crucial corrective to the universalizing, totalizing instinct of much Western environmentalism.

Upon first reading, *Almanac*'s treatment of place seems to articulate an essentialist Laguna-centric vision of justice, which originates and materializes in Laguna-Pueblo land, a very specific, local place. At the same time, the novel eschews the essentialist, determinist, and sentimental notions of place-attachment by promoting a concept of indigenous identity that transcends nation, continent, borders, and even time, as scholars have shown. In this way, the novel does advance what might be better called a prenational (as opposed to transnational) ethic of place, yet is exemplary of the "place-responsive ecoliterature of global scope" that

Lawrence Buell once mused might be an "impossibility."[24] It is the novel's seeming transcendence of the conflict between global and local that has made it so compelling to transnational scholars in geography, environmental justice, border studies, Native American Studies, and indigenous studies, as it links the very real consequences of environmental losses in a specific place to the political and ethical power of a global movement. Critics admire the novel's ability to simultaneously locate injustice in a particular people and a particular place, and illustrate how this people and place are inextricably linked to communities, places, forces, economies, and histories from around the hemisphere and even globe. Readings of *Almanac* as a prototypical transnational environmental justice novel thus emphasize the nonreductive racial identity politics of Silko's indigenous revolution,[25] note its prescient anticipation of the Zapatista resistance movement (the exemplary case of "jumping scales" geographers almost always cite) and its transnational rhetoric, and hail the novel's subversion of long-standing indigenous identity politics, which seems to provide only two options—pan-Indianism or tribalism.[26]

But this resolution of the novel's paradoxical treatment of place—as both local and specific, and transnational—is too simple, even as it rejects both the environmental determinism of "ecological Indian" identity and the unsentimental acceptance of placelessness in postmodernity. Silko is as uncomfortable with as she is hopeful about the compromises that the Laguna people must make to "jump scales" in order to join forces with indigenous revolutionaries and with other groups of exploited activists (the jumping of scales in the novel that transcends identity politics—Adamson's point) to subvert the dominant hegemony (represented in the novel as the abstract "Destroyers"), and return the lands they have appropriated to those indigenous to it. The jumping of scales is based on shared structures of exploitation rather than tribal identity claims, but joining a transnational movement also entails some compromises to create what might be called strategic indigenism, extending Spivak's theory of strategic essentialism. As Sadowski-Smith notes, "some social movements will require coalitions among very different kinds of people with disparate goals and perceptions of the issues at hand."[27] Coalition-making with disparate communities creates the conditions for both the promises and the pitfalls of transnational environmental justice. *Almanac* scrutinizes this tension. It does not make transcending the binary between local and global indigenous identity politics seamless, clean, or utopian. Rather it suggests that the loss of specificity of *local* injustices, landscapes, and identities experienced by disparate indigenous communities across the Americas can be a hidden cost of this transnational jumping of scales, even when the global movement is countering an even worse source of loss—colonial-capitalism. The novel emphasizes localness and materiality in ways that question how transnationalism imagines global resistance. This contradiction is not resolved by the novel's end, suggesting that Silko is more wary of transnational indigenous environmental justice than has been argued.

One way that Silko reveals her ambivalence about the transnational is in her treatment of the concept of a local landscape. In *Almanac*, Silko dramatizes the critique of the concept of "landscape" that she articulates in *Yellow Woman*, in which she argues that "landscape" as Westerners define it is "misleading." The accepted definition assumes the viewer is "somehow *outside* or *separate from* the territory she or he surveys."[28] This colonial, ocularcentric notion of landscape reflects colonial ideologies that reinforce the human–nature binary, facilitate visual conquest of land by assuming the possibility of an objective perspective, and privilege aesthetics as a way to understand a landscape over stories of human history in the land. In contrast, Silko's notion of landscape includes humans and histories; in Pueblo narratives, "it is impossible to determine which came first, the incident or the geographical feature that begs to be brought alive in a story that features some unusual aspect of this location" (33). The loss of knowledge of specific landscapes is thus a source of evil. Knowing the land means knowing its unique history, as Calabazas explains in *Almanac*: "each location, each place, was a living organism with time running inside it like blood, time that was unique to that place alone."[29] Places are unique because time and space are materially interconnected; time is like blood running through a place. History—a people's identity, power struggles, ancestors, and fates—inheres in specific places; history is present and alive with the spirits of ancestors, and it is emplaced, a reading that resonates with Nixon's theory of slow violence, to be sure. This is one example of how Silko registers the importance of localness and specificity of place and politics. Even as this example suggests a transnational reading—a people's history is certainly interconnected with forces and peoples from elsewhere—Silko's attention to the specificity and materiality of local places can also be read as a sign that she is worried about the costs of jumping scales.

In another illustrative textual example, Calabazas tells the story of Geronimo, the same story Sadowski-Smith reads as indicative of the novel's transnationalism (mentioned above). I read this story with a different focus. Calabazas weaves his points about the specific materiality of different rocks into his version of the story about how Geronimo escaped his captors. "Stupidity" about the specificities of landscape and people is not only the result of a bad land ethic, but it can also be a source of vulnerability of those in power, to be exploited by the weak. According to Calabazas, Europeans failed to capture Geronimo because they failed to perceive differences in both features of the landscape and among different Indians. To Europeans, "a 'rock' was just a 'rock' wherever they found it, despite obvious differences in shape, density, color, or the position of the rock relative to all things around it. . . . the hills and canyons looked the same to them. . . . Strategists for the Yaquis and the Apaches quickly learned to make use of the Europeans' inability to perceive unique details in the landscape" (224–25). The Europeans' inability to appreciate differences in humans and in the landscape was the source of their undoing. The Yaquis and Apaches could use it to "exploit the weakness of the whites" (225). The fact that inattention to nuance in landscape can result in one's

own undoing, as Calabazas suggests here, attests to the importance of local specificity in the novel. Again and again, Silko impresses upon her readers that, whatever the benefits of jumping scales for a hemispheric environmental and indigenous justice movement, ability to appreciate nuances in landscape and the materiality of particular places cannot be compromised. There may be promise in transnationalizing, but not at the cost of negating differences between places and people.

Achieving this balance on the ground (literally and figuratively), the novel seems to suggest, is not as easy as theorizing or idealizing it. Indeed, at the novel's end, we see other costs of jumping scales, despite the benefits of strategic indigenism. At the International Holistic Healers Convention in Tucson, Silko shows how transnational and transcultural alliances with different groups are possible—as many scholars have argued—but also problematic, a tension that has received less attention because, I believe, of the appeal of the transnational. Adamson reads the end as a glimpse of how a transnational environmental justice revolution might occur, but a different reading would show that Silko is as hesitant as she is optimistic about the revolution. At the convention we learn that environmentalists will play a crucial role in indigenous revolution, in part because they share anticapitalist views with indigenous groups. But the relationship between environmentalists and indigenous groups is fraught with conflict. The purpose of the international convention, "called by natural and indigenous healers," is "to discuss earth's crisis" (718). A group of "eco-warriors," called Green Vengeance, are featured guests. The Barefoot Hopi, one of the Indian revolutionaries, aligns with the eco-warriors, but he clearly does so only strategically, not because of any shared affinity based on identity claims, as the white environmentalists at the convention might want to believe, and as the scene has been taken to espouse.

Like the real-life group "Earth Liberation Front" or ELF, Green Vengeance presents a video of acts of destruction committed by the eco-warriors against iconic infrastructural monuments to capitalism and environmental degradation, the most symbolic of which is Glen Canyon Dam. The video celebrates six eco-warriors who "gave their lives to free the mighty Colorado" river as an act of "war" against the "biosphere tycoons who were rapidly depleting rare species of plants, birds, and animals so the richest people on earth could bail out of the pollution and revolutions" (728). The Barefoot Hopi speaks about what indigenous groups share with the eco-warriors, whom dominant society often calls "terrorists": "eco-warriors have been accused of terrorism in the cause of saving Mother Earth. So I want to talk a little about terrorism first. Poisoning our water with radioactive wastes, poisoning our air with military weapons' wastes—those are acts of terrorism!" (734). Despite evidence that a Green Vengeance–indigenous alliance is emerging at the convention, Silko makes it clear that the motives of Green Vengeance are quite different from those of the indigenous communities. Both may want a complete overhaul of the capitalist system, to label the government as the true terrorists, and to value the land for

purposes other than profit, but their alliance can only be tactical and temporary, which is not to say that it isn't important or effective. This scene in the novel insists that indigenous groups must have the power to choose the terms of their activism, which may explicitly conflict with the environmentalists' terms. True, the Hopi's promise that "a force was gathering that would counter the destruction of the earth" (734) foreshadows a revolution, but the "affluent young whites, fearful of a poisoned planet" are not seen as ethical allies but in instrumental terms, as they function to help the Hopi to "raise a great deal of money" as "Green Vengeance had a great deal of wealth behind their eco-warrior campaigns" (726). This is not the only time Silko treats environmentalists suspiciously but as useful in instrumental terms. The novel is rife with these guarded responses to environmentalists' efforts to align with indigenous characters and communities. It is as if Silko wants to recognize that there is value in indigenous groups jumping scales to join global environmentalism but also shows the costs of playing the "ecological Indian" to indigenous groups.

A transnational environmental justice reading of the novel's end sees the pantribal indigenous alliance, which includes veterans, African Americans, and environmentalists, as "inclusive, expansive though specific,"[30] with the shared goal of targeting centers of colonial-capitalist socio-ecological destruction, such as an international power grid and the Glen Canyon Dam. Adamson reads this aspect of the novel as being not about ethnicity but rather civil rights.[31] *Almanac* is an example of transnational environmental justice in part because, as Pellow observes about transnational environmental justice more broadly, "it connect[s] the local struggles of communities against . . . practices by corporations and states and in favor of socially, economically, and environmentally progressive projects" on multiple scales.[32] The pantribal uprising in the novel unites not solely on the basis of a universal indigenous identity but through shared experiences of colonialism and environmental injustice, which is the way in which Pellow shows that transnational EJ networks are formed today. Because activists in the global South share "the experience of colonialism, racism, and exploitation at the hands of other nations and ethnic groups," he argues, "they have made the *pragmatic* decision to join forces with allies across borders to increase their leverage at home and elevate the visibility of their struggles beyond their domestic national spheres" (234, emphasis mine). Perhaps Chela Sandoval's theory of "affinities," which focuses on shared agendas, is then a better way to understand the promise of transnational environmental justice than identity politics, which rely on the assumption that identity is essential or, at the very least, static.[33] Indeed Reed argues that these different groups "will not embrace exactly the same story, the same ideology, but each will see part of the truth." Paraphrasing Bridget O'Meara, he continues, "diversity and tension among positions is one of the great strengths of the global justice movement"; "this kind of creative tension among identities and ideologies typifies the global justice movement at its best."[34] These strategic alliances are important; they illustrate the pitfalls of a transnational revolution based on identity politics, and they reflect the promises of

the global justice movement. Yet we must take care to understand the sources of the tensions as well; sometimes they reveal unequal power relations, conflicts of interest, and historical injustices that should be attended to just as much—if not more—than resisting global hegemonies. This is especially apparent when indigenous groups seek to do things like build dams that do not support the dominant notion of what it means to be an environmental justice advocate. What happens, for instance, when the interests of the disparate groups diverge, in part because of their relative disparate relationships to structures of power?

Thus, perhaps this "pragmatic decision" at the novel's end is pointing to the downside as much as the promises of transnational environmental justice. The Barefoot Hopi's foretelling of "all human beings belong[ing] to the earth forever" is treated more as rhetoric deployed to persuade environmentalists to finance revolution on *indigenous* terms, rather than any essential affinity—even if the environmentalists naively interpret Barefoot Hopi's words as induction into authentic indigeneity.[35] This isn't an example of redefining nativeness to include people with shared views about oppression and injustice, as the statement "*todos somos indios*" suggests (depending, of course, on who says it and in what context). The environmentalists have money and so have benefited from capitalism (and are therefore, from Silko's indigenous identity standpoint, morally suspect). But they have a resource that indigenous activists need to spark a revolution that can be internationalized to others who are also exploited rather than enriched by capitalism. In another illustrative example, Angelita's ambivalent appropriation of Karl Marx's theories for indigenous purposes demonstrates these promises and problems with jumping scales and totalizing that transnationalism promotes.

In another passage, Silko reveals her ambivalence about building alliances with white New Agers who want to "go native"; she mocks the whites who perform goddess and tree worship, making their gestures seem superficial and even ridiculous: "freshly cut evergreen trees were tenderly arranged in a circle by white men wearing robes; it looked as if tree worship was making a comeback in northern Europe" (719). Silko is portraying tree worship as a simulacrum of connecting to nature; the *performance* (to extend Judith Butler's theory) of nature worship matters more than the trees themselves, as they have been cut down and torn from their roots for the ceremony. Indigenous groups risk cultural appropriation when they build coalitions. In another example, "white men from California" (the state that is often associated with New Age appropriation of Native American traditions) dress themselves in "expensive new buckskins, beads, and feathers" and rename themselves "Thunder-Roll" and "Buffalo Horn" (719). Here, Silko seems to suggest that elite white men "go native" because they are alienated in their capitalist lives, rather than that they understand or respect indigenous identity(ies). This environmentalist appropriation of indigeneity serves to "buttress [environmentalists'] own positions and beliefs" and has little to do with learning from native peoples, to use Jace Weaver's words.[36] These examples illustrate Silko's

nervousness about the transnational and transcultural affinities, which she portrays as strategic and even effective but also as ethically flawed. Transnational environmental justice movements, which rely on these kinds of alliances and affinities, can be as potentially damaging as they are successful at mobilizing global support.

This reading of *Almanac* underscores a problem with the transnationalization of environmental justice: potential erasure of the ways in which *place* shapes the contours of individual environmental justice struggles, serves as the literal and discursive grounds on which resistance is organized, and generates public awareness of specific, emplaced struggles. Although transnational theory attempts to account for these local materialities, as Nixon and Adamson have both argued, analyses of environmental injustice need to recognize that the conflict between the global and the local cannot be fully transcended. The transnational approach to "one-earth" environmental problems, for example, ignores differences among different groups of people, fails to recognize that not all communities contribute to or bear the environmental costs and benefits of capitalist development equally, and neglects the fact that some indigenous groups may even choose the developmental alternative when their interests are taken into account. In other words, what happens when indigenous groups seek empowerment in ways that are destructive to the environment, at least as global environmentalism defines it? These tensions are evident in the novel but less so in readings that emphasize its resonance with transnational environmental justice.

Of course, the transnational environmental justice framework has the potential to universalize, even as it seeks to attend to the "local materiality" of given places. In their introduction to a Special Forum of *JTAS* on the implications of transnationalism for Native American Studies, Hsinya Huang, Philip Deloria, Laura Furlan, and John Gamber put the problem this way: "Can we imagine a knowledge system that functions on inclusive principles rather than exclusive ones while at the same time not subsuming material practices, specific experiences, realities, and histories to abstract theorization?"[37] My argument here is that this goal, even if redefined as "trans-indigenism," to use Chadwick Allen's term,[38] is difficult to achieve, and that Silko captures this; you cannot show the problems of transnationalism without posing a narrative in which transnationalism is taking place.

**The Limits of Transnationalism for Indigenous Politics: An Alaska Case Study**

With the caveat that I am new to Southeast Alaska and am only beginning to grasp the concerns of indigenous identity in the region, I would like to draw on observations of my own local, specific place to further illustrate my concerns about transnationalism as a movement and as a critical framework. Indigenous land claims where I work, on the campus of the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) in Juneau, illustrate the tension that can exist between contemporary transnational theorizing

and effective environmental justice discourse. Transnational environmental justice theory insists on the importance of focusing on affinities among oppressed communities across national borders and identities. But since I arrived here, my own ideas about "indigenous cosmopolitics" have simply not matched my experiences, in numerous ways. Indigenous discourse in and around Juneau is based on what eco-cosmopolitan scholars might dismiss as a provincial, isolationist "sense of place." It is grounded, contained, modern, and very local, while avoiding language that once organized tribal politics, such as "homeland" and "nation." My observations here have challenged my previous belief that transnationalism is the most productive framework for environmental justice mobilization and have impelled me to think more critically about transnationalism. Thus, I want to share those observations here, as they explain my hesitation to look for transnational resonances in indigenous environmental justice movements and discourses. Understanding why many native people "remain wary of an idea like transnationality" helps us refine and perhaps rethink the theory.[39]

Unlike campus sustainability clubs, which also often deploy a discourse of place by emphasizing the *ecological impact* of campus practices and buildings, the indigenous community at UAS focuses on place by emphasizing *language*. They therefore do not explicitly articulate identity claims in terms of environmentalism. Yet "sense of place" is central to indigenous discourse on campus. The Alaska Native elders, students, and instructors of the campus, for example, ask that we all learn the Tlingit names for places on campus, that we pay attention to the native history of this place (which is on active Tlingit land by permission), and that we insist the campus reflect Southeast Alaskan tribal identities, and thus recognize their (different) cultures.[40] Focus on loss of language as loss of environmental knowledge is framed in very local ways, even if the phenomenon of indigenous language loss could be understood in global terms.

The campus indigenous community uses a nuanced definition of "environment" (for instance, "sense of place") that mainstream environmentalists would necessarily understand, claiming traditional ties to the land—the salmon, the ocean, the eagle, the raven, the bear, the flora of the rainforest, Auke Lake, and traditional ecological knowledges. Even the term "traditional ecological knowledges" is increasingly being replaced by "local" ecological knowledges, which further attests to the fact that "the local" remains an effective and strategic indigenous imaginary. But this native, environmental "sense of place" is only one piece of a larger story—about colonialism, boarding schools, language, trauma, whiteness, subsistence, and sustaining cultural practices in the present and the future. To promote this sense of place as simply "environmental" would miss all these dimensions, at least in a world where dominant environmentalism is still so closely tied to colonialism and is expressed in terms of preserving rainforests and appreciating wilderness, rather than in terms of cultural survival.

The local indigenous community uses "sense of place" discourse (which many geographers and ecocritics have challenged for its misguided nostalgia and inward-looking white nativism when it is deployed, for example, against the new wave of immigrants to the United States) for a liberatory, inclusive purpose: to make the nonnative community on campus aware and respectful of the specific cultural and historical identity of this place. Any rhetoric of localness I have ever encountered in my ecocritical readings is not like the rhetoric of localness I have observed here; it's not about loving where you live, it's about having deep, long, historical ties to a place, which you recognize as the spaces your ancestors inhabited. Thus, when it furthers the interests of dominant groups, place-based essentialism can perpetuate an unjust status quo. But rejecting essentialism as "bad politics," as transnational environmental justice ecocriticism might, creates a "theoretical blind spot." As Alcida Ramos explains, when "essentializing occurs in a context of political inequality," and especially in its use by Indians, who are "invariably placed on the weaker end of the power spectrum," it can be effective in challenging patterns of dominance, especially at the micropolitical level.[41]

I do not mean to dismiss the current ecocritical suspicion of "sense of place" as a way of raising issues of social justice within environmental discourse. I simply want to suggest that claiming a fierce, local, and inward-looking sense of place can be just as valid and empowering; it all depends on the relative power of the individual or community vocalizing the rhetoric within any given political context. To reject this kind of politics without regard for who deploys it or how it is used is to fail to discern important differences among communities and the uniqueness of a given community's history and experience of injustice. Worse, it treats the discourse itself as more important than the politics in which it is engaged, a fallacy of theorizing that can be just as exclusionary as essentialism when used by those in power. As Ramos observes, the tools of anthropology—the concept of "culture" for instance—were theorized as "useless" by scholars just as the indigenous communities they were studying began to use "culture" to negotiate power (368–69). Ramos's insights apply to the claims of the Alaska Native community at UAS. The debate over the term "culture" is palpable in Juneau, even as scholars may consider the way the term is used here obsolete. Further, just as ecocritics are becoming suspicious of the concept of the "local" (and for good reasons), the "local" has become an important liberatory discourse for this particular indigenous community, and perhaps for other communities as well. I would even go as far to say that it operates to *protect* local indigenous interests in the context of transnational coalitions.

To ignore all discourses of the local as, at best, circumscribed by the transnational or as, at worst, essentializing defeats the liberatory purposes of environmental justice theorizing in the first place, and I fear that the transnational frame loses the power of the local in favor of jumping scales, a loss that *Almanac* narrates. Huang et al. concede that the global lens may miss more complex, localized politics, such as those I just described: "while the dominant idea concepts concerning

the transnational weight our thinking toward the global, there are internal national communities—not simply aspirational or cultural but actual and political—that point in more complex directions."[42] Using a transnational or even trans-indigenous frame, one could certainly argue that the UAS indigenous community's discourse of the local has global implications and influences, but I see neither this global frame nor a critique of national borders as central to the community's politics of place and strategy of empowerment. On this campus, in this place, a discourse of the local cannot be dismissed as a failure to recognize cross-border affinities of colonial oppression. Rather it must be seen as the healing process from (and resistance to continued projects of) assimilation, displacement, diaspora, and fragmentation. Outside tools have more often proven appropriative and inappropriate, or worse, exploitative and destructive.

Thus, getting back to *this* place is one way to attempt to recover from Alaska Native displacements—to cities, to distant boarding schools, and across oceans to serve in the US military, for example—displacements that have torn apart local clans, tribes, and families. I believe this kind of turn to the local is not as simple as the homecoming dramatized in Silko's *Ceremony*, countering the over-simplicity of what is often said to be the inspiration for *Almanac*. I also believe such a turn to the local can be as significant a form of "alternative modernity" as transnationalism, and I believe Silko thinks so too. Learning the stories of one's particular and unique place is one way to reclaim cultural integrity and resist ongoing structures of inequality—structures that are seen as originating in projects of globality that are justifiably suspect. A suspicion of ideas from the outside, especially meta-theories such as "transnationalism," is a fundamental part of Southeast Alaska Native resistance. Even if one could articulate Alaska Native claims within a transnational context, these would not be the terms of Alaska Native resistance. In other words, one could easily argue that neoliberalism is a cause of much joblessness and poverty among Alaska Natives, or that global colonialism is at the root of it all, but the appeal of jumping scales isn't evident in the discourses or activism of resistance here. No matter how much I, as an environmental justice theorist, may wish Alaska Natives would tap into a global movement of indigenous resistance, I have to realize that this is *my* goal, not theirs. Environmental justice in this place can therefore mean claiming the theories that are now rejected by the dominant trend in ecocriticism, which makes indigenous discourses of place seem naïve and parochial; failure to do so can result in a kind of "ecological othering."[43] That is, when indigenous groups do not participate in the transnational, they are not included in dominant discussions. For the UAS indigenous community, deploying the discourse of "sense of place" is just as much a critique of dominant discourses and power relations as it is a reflection of indigenous cultural and environmental perspectives and claims.

## Conclusion

Transnationalism is an important lens through which to understand and embolden environmental justice efforts and literature. *Almanac* also shows that transnationalism was the way of the Americas before colonialism, and to move freely across borders is a form of resistance, as Reed argues: "the guns, drugs, healers, dealers, and revolutionaries who cross the border with impunity represent a kind of *trans*nationalism that preceded colonization and continued despite colonization; it also presages a truly postcolonial reality."[44] Indeed, to the extent that transnationalism highlights the myth of the nation-state, sheds light on the interrelationships between peoples, flows, and economies, and "presages a truly postcolonial reality," then certainly it supports environmental justice. But the desire to understand indigeneity in global terms can have unintended consequences of ignoring indigenous rhetoric and identity that fails to fit the transnational framework. As Chadwick Allen argues, in part because of its ironic reification of "the nation," transnationalism can be just another form of nonindigenous theorizing that only articulates indigenous interests in terms of dominant interests. He asks, is "climbing aboard the 'transnational' bandwagon" "anything other than . . . an engulfment of the Indigenous within and beneath systems of meaning-making dominated by the desires, obsessions, and contingencies of non-Indigenous setters, their non-Indigenous nation-states, their non-Indigenous institutions, their non-Indigenous critical methodologies and discourses[?]"[45] and argues for a "trans-Indigenous" perspective instead. But there are also differences among "the indigenous," and failing to acknowledge how different groups in different places must frame their own environmental justice concerns and define their own identities and interests is much more than a "theoretical blind spot"; it might even be complicity in the continued erasure of Alaska Native presence in this cultural and physical landscape.

The dominant transnational EJ readings of *Almanac* insist on its ability to achieve the promises of transnationalization while simultaneously being "rooted in the specific cultural and historical traditions of individual tribes populating the border area,"[46] but they ignore the problems Silko finds in balancing these tensions in *Almanac*. The meaning of localness—which I maintain is distinct from indigenous considerations of homeland or nation—becomes so abstract as to be meaningless. In order to draw attention to the structural injustices (of colonialism, global capitalism, and militarization, for example) that unite many disempowered communities, transnational theory runs the risk of ignoring the differences between disparate communities' conditions of oppression and unique forms of resistance, even as it permits a particular community to gain visibility and perhaps even justice on a global scale. Furthermore, in considering environmental justice as particularly amenable to a transnational frame, a transnational environmental justice reading of *Almanac* ignores the ways in which the novel is highly suspicious of how global environmentalism translates into human power dynamics on the ground. While

identifying opportunities for transnational coalition-building is important environmental justice work, in the field and in theorizing, we need to be more sensitive to the ways in which transnationalism is strategic. Consequently, it can be as totalizing as it is liberating; everything depends on who claims it and in what context.

Perhaps, as I hinted at the beginning of this article, we ought to read *Almanac* as more concerned with slow violence—the ways injustices are experienced "downwind in time"[47]—rather than as dispersed and resisted across geographical *space*. A geographical analysis of the novel may be less revealing than a temporal reading of it, some of which has been done in considering Silko's "500-Year Map" and the ways in which the novel embeds time in space. But as a narrative that dramatizes the otherwise unspectacular "long emergencies" of pollution, climate change, colonial trauma, domestic violence, PTSD, disability, military legacies, and intergenerational violence, *Almanac* exemplifies the kind of alternative environmental justice literary forms Nixon calls for—one that resists the temporal constraints of an "ecology of spectatorship" (185). Adamson gestures in this direction. In "Indigenous Literatures, Multinaturalism, and *Avatar*," she champions Nixon's theory as a way to read *Almanac*, which, as she writes, invites "all the people and nations of the Earth to extend their temporal gaze so that they might see, as if through the eye of the octopus, the multiple relationships among living organisms and species."[48] Taking it a step further, I would argue that a temporally long view of injustice is perhaps more fruitful to really challenging Western environmental paradigms than a geographically expansive analysis. The transnational approach sees indigenous communities resisting transnational forces by jumping scales, whereas a temporally expansive view sees causal temporal connections between colonial racism and contemporary environmental refugees, for instance. This latter perspective does not require strategic or performative identity politics to unite across boundaries and does not potentially erase the particulars of the "now" in the same way that transnational thinking runs the risk of ignoring the spatial and temporal unevenness of inequality. In other words, less than insisting that "todos somos indios," perhaps *Almanac* shows that "we're all downwinders now, some sooner than others."[49] *Almanac* dramatizes what Nixon calls "attritional lethality" (200), narrates them as interconnected, and, through its treatment of time, challenges environmentalist assumptions about what counts as an environmental issue or story. *Almanac*'s length, form, and genre grapple with the fact that "long dying" resists dominant narrative structure. As valuable and innovative the transnational turn has been for much environmental justice ecocriticism, it remains incumbent on those concerned with environmental justice and indigeneity to register indigenous *suspicions* of environmentalism and transnationalism, as deployment of "the local" can be as much a liberatory strategy as jumping scales.

**Notes**

I am indebted to Shari Huhndorf for keeping me focused on the *indigenous* claims of *Almanac of the Dead*, to Joni Adamson for leading the discussions about indigeneity, environmental justice, and ecocriticism, as well as her enthusiastic support of my research, and to Jenifer Rae Vernon for encouraging me to put my thinking about *Almanac of the Dead* and transnationalism in conversation with my observations of Alaska Native identity politics in Juneau. I also thank the anonymous *JTAS* reviewers for their rigorous critique of initial drafts of this article.

[1] See Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 3–21; Ursula K. Heise, "Ecocriticism and the Transnational Turn in American Studies," *American Literary History* 20, nos. 1–2 (2008): 381–404; Rob Nixon, "Environmentalism and Postcolonialism," in *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond*, ed. Ania Loomba, Suvir Kaul, Matti Bunzl, Antoinette Burton, and Jed Esty (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 233–51; and Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[2] See Ursula K. Heise, *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[3] Joni Adamson, "Indigenous Literatures, Multinaturalism, and *Avatar*: The Emergence of Indigenous Cosmopolitics," *American Literary History* 24, no. 1 (2012): 143–62.

[4] Heise, *Sense of Place*, 10.

[5] Joni Adamson, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 83–84.

[6] David N. Pellow, *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 144.

[7] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 52.

[8] T. V. Reed, "Toxic Colonialism, Environmental Justice, and Native Resistance in Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*," *MELUS* 34, no. 2 (2009): 31.

[9] Heise, *Sense of Place*, 32.

[10] Shari Huhndorf, *Mapping the Americas: The Transnational Politics of Contemporary Native Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 141.

[11] Joni Adamson, "'¡Todos Somos Indios!' Revolutionary Imagination, Alternative Modernity, and Transnational Organizing in the Work of Silko, Tamez, and Anzaldúa," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 3, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2mj3c2p3.

[12] Reed, "Toxic Colonialism," 25.

[13] Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 66.

[14] Pellow, *Resisting Global Toxics*, 14.

[15] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 243.

[16] Pellow, *Resisting Global Toxics*, 78.

[17] Claudia Sadowski-Smith, *Border Fictions: Globalization, Empire, and Writing at the Boundaries of the United States* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 81.

[18] Adamson, "'¡Todos Somos Indios!'" 6.

[19] Reed, "Toxic Colonialism," 36.

[20] Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[21] Others have forwarded theories that reverse this hierarchy, which similarly challenge the local/global binary but which do not celebrate jumping scales over the localness of a specific resistance. I'm thinking here of Sarah Wald's revision of the term "denizenship," which asserts that migrant and diasporic identities can be founded on multiple senses of place, or Doreen Massey's "global sense of place," which argues that a specific place is unique precisely because it materializes a range of histories, politics, economies, and contested meanings. In other words, transnationalism is not the only way to imagine an antiessentialized, outward-looking sense of place. See Sarah Wald, "Denizenship: Linking Ethnic Studies, Ecocriticism, and Citizenship Studies" (paper presented at the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment Off-Year Symposium, Juneau, AK, June 15, 2012); and Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," in *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 146–56.

[22] Paraphrased in Erin H. Fouberg, Alexander B. Murphy, and H. J. de Blij, *Human Geography*, 10th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 23.

[23] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 37.

[24] Buell, *Future of Environmental Criticism*, 92.

[25] Reed, "Toxic Colonialism," 31.

[26] Sadowski-Smith, *Border Fictions*, 76.

[27] Claudia Sadowski-Smith, introduction to *Globalization on the Line: Culture, Capital, and Citizenship at U.S. Borders*, ed. Sadowski-Smith (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 16.

[28] Leslie Marmon Silko, *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 27, emphasis original.

[29] Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (New York: Penguin, 1992), 629.

[30] Lindsey Claire Smith, *Indians, Environment, and Identity on the Borders of American Literature: From Faulkner and Morrison to Walker and Silko* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 176.

[31] Adamson, "Indigenous Literatures," 150.

[32] Pellow, *Resisting Global Toxics*, 145.

[33] See Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

[34] Reed, "Toxic Colonialism," 36.

[35] Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*, 719.

[36] Jace Weaver, "Introduction: Notes from a Miner's Canary," in *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice*, ed. Jace Weaver (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 4.

[37] Hsinya Huang, Philip Deloria, Laura Furlan, and John Gamber, "Charting Transnational Native American Studies," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 4, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3w4347p6.

[38] See Chadwick Allen, "A Trans*national* Native American Studies? Why Not Studies That Are Trans-*Indigenous*?" *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 1–22, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/82m5j3f5.

[39] Huang et al., "Charting Transnational Native American Studies," 4.

[40] My observations here are informed in part by teaching Thomas Thornton's *Being and Place among the Tlingit* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007) in my Introduction to Geography course at UAS, but even more by my participation on a campus committee, Cultural Inclusion Action (CIA), which seeks to make the campus and curriculum more culturally inclusive. Some efforts include hiring more Alaska Native faculty, promoting Alaska Native events on campus, supporting Alaska Native students, and sharing ideas about culturally sensitive pedagogy. I am indebted to Ernestine Hayes, Joe Nelson, Sol Neely, Lance Twitchell, Alice Taft, Kristie Livingston, and CIA for sharing their thoughts on these issues with me.

[41] Alcida Ramos, "Pulp Fictions of Indigenism," in *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference*, ed. Donald S. Moore, Jake Kosek, and Anand Pandian (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 374.

[42] Huang et al., "Charting Transnational Native American Studies," 8.

[43] I develop this theory in my forthcoming book, *The Ecological Other: Bodies, Nature, and Exclusion in American Culture* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013).

[44] Reed, "Toxic Colonialism," 37.

[45] Allen, "Trans*national* Native American Studies?" 3.

[46] Sadowski-Smith, *Border Fictions*, 77.

[47] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 220.

[48] Adamson, "Indigenous Literatures," 159.

[49] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 232.

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