



Leaving the Land Before Time: The Planetary Presence of Indigenous World Literatures

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Too often, the pull of the policy audience has resulted in decolonization being enlisted as a hollow metaphor that seeks to reconcile settler complicity and secure settler futurity. This seduction has immense consequences for the substance, style, and politics of research in Indigenous studies. As such, the field of Indigenous literary study cannot blindly adopt the agendas of those making or administering policy. I advocate that a primary impediment to an increased consciousness about Indigeneity lies in *how* we study the contemporary literature of Indigenous peoples. This requires a reconceptualization of Indigeneity away from its boundedness to specific lands and pasts that valorize ties to first contact, instead embracing the reality that Indigenous peoples are a contemporary presence throughout the world. In response to this reimagining, my research investigates: (i) how the study of Indigenous world literatures might destabilize characterizations of absence that isolate Indigenous peoples to particular places and pasts, and (ii) how these literatures can entrench Indigenous presence as planetary phenomenon. I make this intervention by modeling a cosmic methodology that recognizes Indigeneity and Indigenous peoples as omnipresent and thriving; it is, at its heart, a project that contributes to the ongoing work of decolonizing literary study itself through the minds of those who study and teach literature.

Vanessa Evans is a doctoral candidate in the Department of English at York University. She holds a B.A. in English from the University of Calgary and an M.Litt. in Modernities from the University of Glasgow. Vanessa is currently a visiting lecturer at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at JGU Mainz.