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Values of the Land: Kinships as Climate Solutions in 'The Honorable Harvest' and 'Land as Pedagogy.'

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Abstract

Potawatomi scholar Kyle Powys Whyte's concept of kinship time promotes responses to the climate crisis grounded in kinships and responsibilities. This article explores the land-based relationships and kinships within the essays 'The Honorable Harvest' by Potawatomi scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer and the essay 'Land as Pedagogy' by Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson in the context of Whyte's kinship time theory. I centre my analysis of these essays around four values: care, consent, respect, and reciprocity. These values underpin the kinships with the natural world presented by Kimmerer and Simpson and relate to the responsibilities which Whyte identifies as foundational to kinship time. I argue that reading these texts alongside one another reveals the ways in which the kinships with the land presented by Kimmerer and Simpson are integral solutions to the climate crisis. Fundamentally, Kimmerer and Simpson reject and oppose the oppressive and exploitative systems at the centre of the climate emergency: settler colonialism and extractive capitalism, whilst simultaneously providing kinships with the living world as ways of mitigating such crises.

Self-Reflection

Climate change discourses, and by extension Environmental American Studies, should always be self-reflective in nature. As such, it feels apt that this article begins with a self-reflection section: self-reflection enables us to consider the interdependencies of our world and to challenge and dismantle the structural

inequalities and violences within academia. My own journey with Environmental American Studies began slowly and somewhat unexpectedly. However, there are two pivotal texts which have shaped, and continue to shape, the way I navigate this field. The first of those is Rachel Carson's 1962 text *Silent Spring* which I encountered initially as an undergraduate student. Little did I know then, but a fascination with how women write about the natural world would delineate my academic interests from that point on. A second and arguably the more influential text for my own personal research is *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013) by Potawatomi scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer, which I was introduced to several years later. As the common denominator with both of these texts indicates, it is the ways in which women experience, theorise, and write about the natural world that interests me. I have subsequently revisited American environmentalism in ways which intentionally depart from the long-standing tradition of environmentalist writing as a white, male, middle class movement. As Teena Gabrielson notes the historical cannon of American nature writing has 'reaffirm[ed] white, middle-class, domestic virtue or a heroic, able-bodied, white nationalism.'[1] In rejecting the masculine, and often colonial histories, of American nature writing, contemporary women scholars tell alternative narratives which illuminate climate solutions and provide hope amongst the current rhetoric of despair. A decolonial approach is developed more fully with Indigenous writers, who not only recognise climate change as a form of colonial violence, but critically offer means of opposing colonial practices and systems. My research argues that not only are women disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, with women making up 80% of people displaced globally as a result of the climate emergency, but their writings also hold great possibilities in imagining new futures and realities in the face of such crises.[2]

As I write a draft of this article in August 2023, wildfires burn in Hawai'i, and once again, Indigenous peoples are facing colonial violences in the form of the climate

[1] Teena Gabrielson, 'The Nature of Gender', in *The Cambridge Companion to Environmental Humanities*, ed. Jeffrey Cohen and Stephanie Foote, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 56–69, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009039369.006, 56.

[2] 'Climate Change Exacerbates Violence against Women and Girls', OHCHR, accessed 14 November 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/07/climate-change-exacerbates-violence-against-women-and-girls.

crisis. It is with this violent context in mind that I propose a new focus is required for Environmental American Studies, one which centres the scholarship of women environmentalists to provide effective and hopeful solutions to the colonial and heteropatriarchal climate crisis. My work departs from and moves beyond the problematic histories of early ecofeminist scholarship, which was too often essentialist and failed to address the complexities of intersectionality. As Greta Gaard suggests an 'intersectional ecological-feminist approach' will be pertinent to addressing the innumerable environmental injustices currently unfolding, however as Gaard continues, contemporary ecofeminism 'will need to be more cognizant of its rich and prescient history.'[3] Ecofeminism is a term fraught with problems and exclusivities. However, women's environmental writing offers ways of mitigating the climate crisis, and so my work engages with Gaard's instruction that contemporary ecofeminist scholarship must be self-reflective of the problematic and exclusive history of the field.[4] My research offers a new focus on women's environmentalist writing within American Studies, creating critical conversations between women scholars from both Indigenous and Euro-American cultural backgrounds.

This paper, however, centres the works of Indigenous women scholars, theorists, and thinkers to consider how these women critique oppressive power structures, namely settler colonialism and extractive capitalism: and so the focus of this article is the essays of two Indigenous authors: Potawatomi scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer and Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. My research thus seeks to contribute meaningfully to decolonisation work within Euro-Western Higher Education and within Environmental American Studies discourses. Reflecting upon the decolonisation efforts within Environmental American Studies, I find myself coming back to and dwelling on the essay 'An Indigenous Feminist's Take on The Ontological Turn: "Ontology" is Just Another Word for Colonialism' by Métis scholar Zoe Todd. Within this essay Todd invites her readers to contemplate critical questions regarding how Indigenous Knowledges, scholarships, and writings are used within

[3] Greta Gaard, 'Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism', *Feminist Formations* 23, no. 2 (1 July 2011): 26–53, 44.

[4] Ibid.

Euro-Western academic contexts.[5] Recognising my positionality as a non-Indigenous scholar operating within the UK Higher Education system, which represents an imperial academic epicentre, there is no way for me to conduct my research without engaging with the questions, concerns, and problems raised by Todd. Reflecting upon Todd's analysis of how Indigenous Knowledges can be used in non-appropriative ways within Euro-Western academia is a critical aspect of my own self-reflection.

The word decolonisation tends to be thrown around carelessly within academia today, and as Unangaŝ scholar Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang pertinently identify, decolonisation 'has been superficially adopted into education.'[6] As such, references to decolonisation in academia are often metaphoric and empty. As my research centres the ways in which women environmentalist scholars reject and oppose oppressive hierarchies, I look to their works for guidance on how decolonisation can be enacted by challenging these violent systems. Decolonisation, then, demands continual self-reflection to consider not just the ways in which these violent systems operate but to reflect upon our own closeness and relationality to them. Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox notes,

> using, respecting, and making space for Indigenous Knowledge constitutes a fundamental challenge to power relations in whatever context it operates. Indigenous Knowledge has transformative potential with respect to confronting settler colonial norms within institutions.[7]

Challenging existing power structures and norms within Euro-Western academic and climactic discourses requires engaging with critical Indigenous scholarship. If we, as

[5] Zoe Todd, 'An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: "Ontology" Is Just Another Word For Colonialism', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, no. 1 (1 March 2016): 4–22, https://doi.org/DOI: 10.1111/johs.12124, 4-8.

[6] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, 'Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor', *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630/15554, 2.

[7] Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, 'Traditional Knowledge, Co-Existence and Co-Resistance', *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, no. 3 (2014): 145–58, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22236/18046, 148.

scholars of Environmental American Studies, accept that climate crisis discourses should include discussions of the operations of settler colonialism, then we have a responsibility and duty to enact decolonisation in meaningful and non-metaphoric ways. Audre Lorde's notable theory 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house'[8] can be used to question the impact of operating within an oppressive academic system to achieve effective and realised change. Similarly, with respect to the question of whether meaningful decolonisation work can occur within a settler colonial state, Simpson advocates for a rebellion that operates outside the realms of settler colonialism and therefore does not 'accept colonial permanence.'[9] In order to critique and challenge the coloniality of the systems we operate within, it is critical to engage with scholars such as Simpson, who dismantle pervasive colonial violences. Irlbacher-Fox asserts that 'non-Indigenous people are fully responsible for learning about Indigenous peoples, about policies that have been used against Indigenous peoples that have been constructed to control and hurt Indigenous peoples and their interests.'[10] Hence, the responsibility to decolonise Environmental American Studies, in meaningful and non-metaphoric ways, lies with us all.

Introduction

My discussions here are an extension of the work originally presented at the British Association for American Studies 2023 conference as part of the GreenBAAS panel on new research in Environmental American Studies. Potawatomi scholar Kyle Powys Whyte argues that understanding climate change in terms of relationships, relationality, and responsibility can be critical for providing solutions to the multifaceted climate crisis.[11] In an approach that he calls 'kinship time', Whyte advocates for centring kinships and relationships in understanding and responding to

[8] Audre Lorde, 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House', in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, ed. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, Fourth edition (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 94–97, 95.

[9] Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 153.

[10] Irlbacher-Fox, 'Traditional Knowledge, Co-Existence and Co-Resistance', 153.

[11] Kyle Powys Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', in *The Cambridge Companion to Environmental Humanities*, ed. Jeffrey Cohen and Stephanie Foote, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 39–55, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009039369.005, 39-41.

the climate crisis, in favour of linear time-based approaches.[12] Perceiving climate change through linear time, Whyte notes, is comparable to 'a ticking clock' which creates a sense of panic and encourages 'swift action.'[13] But such swift action, Whyte continues, 'obscures […] responsibilities to others who risk being harmed by the solutions.'[14] Not only does the climate crisis disproportionately affect those least responsible for it, but climate solutions also run the risk of being harmful; as Whyte asserts Indigenous peoples have a 'growing concern that renewable energy solutions to climate change can be harmful in their own right.'[15] Kinship time, however, offers a more considered and thoughtful approach to climate solutions. As Whyte notes, many Indigenous scholars and theorists examine the climate crisis in relation to kinship time.[16] I will be drawing on Whyte's definition and exploration of kinship time in my analysis of Kimmerer's essay 'The Honorable Harvest', which comes from the essay collection *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013) and Simpson's essay 'Land as Pedagogy', from the essay collection *As We Have Always Done* (2017). Reading these essays alongside Whyte's work frames the kinships presented by Kimmerer and Simpson as essential climate solutions; I argue that Kimmerer and Simpson provide ways of mitigating the climate crisis through curating kinships with the living world which juxtapose and critique the violent systems of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism. Within the parameters of this article, I focus specifically on settler colonialism and extractive capitalism, but this analysis could be extended further to include other forms of systemic violences such as heteropatriarchy. I explore how the intimate relationships with the living world presented by Kimmerer and Simpson are rooted in the following critical values: care, consent, respect, and reciprocity. I begin by exploring Whyte's definition of kinship time before contextualising the essays by Kimmerer and Simpson, the main body of this article is then separated into four sections each analysing one of the values underpinning the kinships in Kimmerer and Simpson's writing. These sections provide an exploration of how Kimmerer and Simpson present close relationships with the natural world which, I suggest, provide

[12] Ibid., 39-40.

[13] Ibid., 39.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 47.

value driven climate solutions. I aim to contribute to the decolonisation of climatic discourses by promoting a greater awareness of and response to intersectional scholarship on both climate crisis and decolonial solutions.

To begin, let us explore Whyte's definition of kinship time in further detail as this is central to my discussions of decolonial climate solutions. According to Whyte, 'kinship promotes interdependence through shared responsibilities.'[17] Highlighting that responsibilities and kinships are mutually beneficial to all who enter into such relations, Whyte continues, 'Responsibilities operate best when they have qualities attached to them, including trust, consent, and reciprocity.'[18] Whilst kinship time identifies that collective responsibility is pertinent to climate solutions, this approach is currently painfully absent from mainstream Euro-Western climate responses and policies. Whyte's analysis finds trust, consent, and reciprocity to be among the key qualities underpinning the responsibilities within kinships.[19] Comparably, within Kimmerer and Simpson's work I identify care, consent, respect, and reciprocity as foundational values to relationships with the land. This is not to suggest that these are the only values or ethics within Kimmerer and Simpson's work, instead I propose these values are the points of communality between these two essays which most effectively speak to Whyte's kinship time.

Arguably, Whyte's kinship time theory presents an antithesis to the Anthropocene. Giovanna Di Chiro argues that 'the pan-humanism of the concept of Anthropocene reflects and shores up neoliberal, individualist, entrepreneurial forms of "resilience", which trade on the notion that if "we" (humans) are *all* to blame for the climate crisis, then *no one* is to blame and, therefore, *no one* is responsible, so we're all left to our own devices to become more resilient.'[20] If the Anthropocene problematically renders all humans blameless for the climate crisis, then kinship time deems all humans

[17] Ibid., 52.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 48.

[20] Giovanna Di Chiro, 'Welcome to the White (M)Anthropocene?: A Feminist-Environmentalist Critique', in *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*, ed. Sherilyn MacGregor (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 487–505, 489. (original emphasis).

responsible for climate solutions; this collective responsibility ultimately begins with restoring relationships. Whyte argues,

> Kinship time is no less adamant about mitigating climate change, but this adamancy aims at engendering better situations through establishing and repairing shared responsibilities, bringing about an interdependence that could lower carbon footprints in ways that support everyone's safety, well-being, and self-determination.[21]

According to Whyte's analysis, kinship time is adamant about finding climate solutions through shared responsibility. Within this context of responsibility, I am interested in the values that Kimmerer and Simpson identify as critical for establishing kinships with the natural world: care, consent, respect, and reciprocity. Thinking reflectively, as we must, we have to ask: what would international climate policy look like if it were centred upon these values?

To answer this question, we also have to ask: what do kinships based on care, consent, respect, and reciprocity look like? In her chapter 'The Honorable Harvest' Kimmerer provides a respectful, reciprocal, and sustainable approach to consumption, which is grounded in Indigenous Knowledges and diametrically opposes the indiscriminate consumption of extractive capitalism. Kimmerer provides a set of guidelines for harvesting and consuming in an honourable way, which she calls 'The Honorable Harvest.' Honourable denotes something morally right, which is therefore entitled to 'respect, esteem, or reverence.'[22] Etymologically, honour is partly a borrowing from the Latin *honor* denoting respect and dignity.[23] This guidance is grounded in an intimate closeness with the land – a kinship – whereby the natural world is treated with respect and compassion. Simpson's essay 'Land as Pedagogy' fuses Indigenous storytelling with critical scholarship to advocate for Indigenous Knowledges and

[21] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 54.

[22] 'Honourable | Honorable, Adj., Adv., & n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 5 August 2023, https://www.oedra.com/dictionary/honourable_adj?tab=meaning_and_use#1536539.

[23] 'Honour | Honor, n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 5 September 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/honour_n?tab=meaning_and_use#1533395.

education as forms of resistance. Simpson begins her essay with a retelling of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg story 'Binoojiinh Makes a Lovely Discovery', Binoojiinh is a gender-nonconforming child who uses the pronouns they and theirs, and who comes to know of maple trees and the sweet sap they produce.[24] In the story, after watching a squirrel nibbling on bark and then sucking it Binoojiinh mimics and eventually discovers maple sap.[25] This story lays the foundation of Simpson's analysis and provides an example of experiential learning from the land. Both Kimmerer and Simpson address experiential learning from the more than human in these relationships, as Simpson writes, learning comes 'both *from* the land and *with* the land.'[26] Whilst the pedagogical qualities of the land will not be the central focus of my analysis here, these relationships with the natural world evoke a range of critical concepts, including; gratitude and gifting, being actively engaged with the natural world, and gaining consent from the land. I am interested in the related core values which underpin the kinships depicted in Kimmerer and Simpson's writing: care, consent, respect, and reciprocity.

The ethical qualities of the intimate land-based pedagogical relationships depicted by Kimmerer and Simpson are what the Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard describes as 'grounded normativity.'[27] According to Coulthard, grounded normativity, a fundamentally anti-colonial and anti-capitalist concept, describes 'the modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and nonhuman others over time.'[28] Hence, through their presentations of kinships, Kimmerer and Simpson critique and resist settler colonialism and extractive capitalism. Grounded normativity represents the basis of relations with the natural world, which are rooted in experiential practices and knowledge systems that provide moral and ethical guidance.[29] In his analysis of these place-based ethics, Coulthard

[24] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 145.

[25] Ibid., 146-147.

[26] Ibid., 150. (original emphasis).

[27] Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Indigenous Americas (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 13.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

draws attention to the fact that 'the theory and practise of Indigenous anticolonialism, including Indigenous anticapitalism, is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around *the question of land*.'[30] Land here is recognised both in material terms and as the basis informing grounded normativity.[31] Within the context of grounded normativity, then, it is explicitly clear how settler colonialism attacks Indigenous lands and all aspects of Indigenous cultures and ways of being. I suggest that reading Kimmerer and Simpson's work and centring critical Indigenous scholarship in Environmental American Studies can contribute to a decolonisation of climate discourses. Further, this can be extended to call for decolonial approaches to wider climate debates and policies outside of academia; this would require a rejection of the power systems responsible for the climate crisis which simultaneously oppress people and destroy the natural world. As such, climate policies would be informed by values, ethics, and relationality to consider how both our consumption practises and climate solutions must be grounded in ethical relationships with all beings.

Relationships with the Land Grounded in Care

Indigenous climate scholarship is critical to changing Euro-Western public attitudes to the climate crisis: Kimmerer and Simpson both depict intimate kinships with the natural world grounded in care, in part because these kinships are comparable to familial bonds. This is notable because the operations of both settler colonialism and extractive capitalism act to destroy care as care is antithetical to notions of progress within these violent systems. To take care of someone is to look after them, implying concern and interest.[32] Ethics of care provide a threat to settler colonialism and extractive capitalism which depend upon self-interest and individualism to consolidate political and economic power, as such care *must* be eliminated. Farhana Sultana notes,

> Ethics of care and collectivity are how we have survived colonialism, capitalism, development, disasters, and disruptions. Caring for each other,

[30] Ibid. (original emphasis).

[31] Ibid.

[32] 'Care, v. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 30 August 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/care_v?tab=meaning_and_use#10191380.

> despite differences, is what carries us forward through devastations of cyclones, sea surges, riverbank erosion, loss of livelihoods, and degradation of homelands.[33]

Settler colonialism and extractive capitalism operate on a complete lack of care. Sultana identifies care as a means of surviving the violences of the climate emergency. Like Whyte, Sultana advocates for ethical and collective approaches to climate solutions. Within the context of the climate crisis care is inherently collective; incorporating care within climate solutions would require a prioritisation of community, caretaking, and stewardship. Kimmerer and Simpson's intimate kinships with the land display how communities of care can, and should, be extended to the natural world.

Care is inherited from the Germanic root karâ, which etymologically has associations of trouble and grief as well as care.[34] There is a distinct emotional connection here, suggesting that caring leaves you vulnerable to grief or emotional turmoil if something negative happens to those that you care about. In his work on kinship as time Whyte frames care and caretaking as a duty or responsibility, writing: 'responsibility refers to bonds of mutual caretaking and mutual guardianship.'[35] Critically, this draws attention to the shared responsibility of caretaking and the adjacent act of stewardship. The definition of care provided in the 2020 edited collection *The Care Manifesto,* states that:

> Care is our individual and common ability to provide the political, social, material, and emotional conditions that allow the vast majority of people and living creatures on this planet to thrive – along with the planet itself.[36]

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[33] Farhana Sultana, 'Decolonizing Climate Coloniality', in *Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility*, ed. Rebecca Solnit and Thelma Young Lutunatabua (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2023), 62.

[34] 'Care, n.[1] Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 30 August 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/care_n1?tab=meaning_and_use#10189144.

[35] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 42.

[36] The Care Collective, *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence* (London: Verso, 2020), 6.

Fundamentally, then, care is about recognising responsibilities and interdependencies.[37] To care for someone, whether that be person, plant, animal, or any other aspect of the living world, implies an understanding of your own ability to impact their well-being. In the context of climate solutions, this exploration of care serves as a critical reminder that everything is interconnected, and nothing is isolated. As Kimmerer argues, we have a responsibility to consider our human and non-human relations when we make choices about consumption, as our actions have direct impacts on the world.[38]

Kimmerer makes a direct comparison between the treatment of family members and the natural world. In her advocation for extending an ethics of care to the living world, Kimmerer writes,

> If you're visiting your sweet grandma and she offers you homemade cookies on her favourite china plate, you know what to do. You accept them with many 'thank yous' and cherish the relationship reinforced by cinnamon sugar. You gratefully take what has been given. But you wouldn't dream of breaking into her pantry and just taking all the cookies without invitation, grabbing her china plate for good measure.[39]

Kimmerer continues by stating that 'as a culture […] we seem unable to extend these good manners to the natural world.'[40] In this critique of capitalist extractive practices, Kimmerer notes how human interactions of familiarity and care are not currently extended to the natural world. Instead, Kimmerer advocates for treating the living world with the same care, gratitude, and good manners as you would to your grandmother or another family member. This comparison displays the depth and intimacy of these relationships. Pertinently, these kinships go beyond biological relatives to incorporate all aspects of the living world. Whyte emphasises that kinship

[37] Ibid., 5

[38] Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013),185-7.

[39] Ibid., 184-5.

[40] Ibid., 185.

is 'not the same thing as close family relationships or shared biological descent.'[41] Whyte provides an understanding of kinship that includes not just family or relatives but a multitude of relationships with all beings,[42] which reinforces the ways in which Kimmerer and Simpson exemplify incorporating the natural world into their community. Hence, the kinships presented by Kimmerer and Simpson are parallel to familial bonds, without being restricted by a definition of kinship which exclusively refers to biological or family relations.[43]

In Simpson's retelling of the story of Binoojiinh's maple sap discovery, care is a foundational value of Binoojiinh's kinship with the land. Before Binoojiinh makes the discovery of maple sap, they enquire about the Ajidamoo's well-being: 'And while that Binoojiinh is lying down, and looking up they see Ajidamoo up in the tree "Bozhoo Ajidamoo! I hope you had a good winter." "I hope you had enough food cached."'[44] Here Binoojiinh is building a relationship which extends ethics of care to the natural world; they are concerned with the squirrel's food supplies and their well-being. For Binoojiinh, the squirrel, along with the rest of the natural world, is their kin. It can be argued, then, that this kinship with the natural world is comparable to a familial relation in that it is built upon love and care. On this Simpson writes, 'They [Binoojiinh] learned what it felt like to be recognized, seen, and appreciated by their community. They *came to know* maple sugar with the support of their family and elders. They come to know maple sugar in the context of love.'[45] Binoojiinh's discovery of maple sugar occurs against a backdrop of love and care, coming not only from family and elders, but also from the land.[46] Simpson notes how 'at every turn, Binoojiinh is met with very basic, core Nishnaabeg values – love, compassion, and

[41] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 48.

[42] Kyle Powys Whyte, 'Kyle Whyte: Braiding Kinship and Time: Indigenous Approaches to Environmental Justice' 8 March 2022, video, 1:25:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1L2pdcVxUo.

[43] 'Kin, n.[1] Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 30 August 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/kin_n1?tab=meaning_and_use#40175081.

[44] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 146.

[45] Ibid., 150. (original emphasis).

[46] Ibid.

understanding.'[47] These core Nishnaabeg values cultivate a kinship rooted in care between Binoojiinh and the natural world. In this story, the land is an integral part of Binoojiinh's community. We can read the relationships with the land presented by Kimmerer and Simpson as akin to familial bonds, in part because they both advocate for extending ethics of care (often associated with familial relations) to the natural world. By contrast, in many Euro-Western understandings, relationships with the natural world are separate, distinct from, and less of a priority than human-to-human relationships. Kimmerer and Simpson invite their readers to consider the effects of cultivating a kinship and closeness with the natural world that is equal to the care within familial bonds.

If we want to understand how we might interact more ethically with the world around us, we should consult the first guideline of Kimmerer's 'The Honorable Harvest', which states '*Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you may take care of them.*'[48] Whilst these guidelines are not in order of importance, Kimmerer identifies an ethos of care which grounds 'The Honorable Harvest.' This care flows both from people and the living world. Caretaking and stewardship are intrinsically connected to knowing, which is to say you cannot take care of and protect something that you do not understand or know. Within the story of Binoojiinh's discovery, learning and knowledge occurs from observing the land. Simpson stresses the 'importance of observation and learning from our animal teachers', she explains that Binoojiinh enacts this 'when they watch the squirrel so carefully and then mimic its actions.'[49] Reading Simpson's theory of land as pedagogy and the story of Binoojiinh's discovery within the context of the climate crisis suggests that caring for the natural world derives from knowledge and understanding. Thus, these intimate kinships must be grounded in a deep knowledge of the living world in order to provide effective care. Kimmerer and Simpson's work suggests that climate solutions and environmental stewardship should be rooted in knowledge to inform *how* we care for the world.

[47] Ibid., 149.

[48] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 183. (original emphasis).

[49] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 150.

Critical theories on care and stewardship have the potential to transform understandings of the systemic values of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism driving the climate crisis. The care depicted in Kimmerer and Simpson's writing rejects and defies the violences of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism, by instead encouraging readers to imagine another reality: one where productivity is replaced by care. One of the ways in which Kimmerer rejects capitalistic productivity in favour of care is through the tools she uses for foraging, she writes: 'While a sharp trowel would make digging more efficient, the truth is that it makes the work too fast. If I could get all the leeks I needed in five minutes, I'd lose that time on my knees watching the ginger poke up and listening to the oriole that has just returned home.'[50] In this example Kimmerer opts for a less efficient tool for foraging as an act of care for the natural world, noting that a 'simple shift in technology would also make it easy to slice through neighboring plants and take too much.'[51] Capitalism perpetually takes too much; through the exploitation of land and people this system prioritises rampant profiteering above all else. Capitalistic notions and understandings of progress – evidenced here in the form of a more efficient tool – encourage indiscriminate consumption and eradicate care. Progress can be understood as an advancement or 'movement towards an outcome or conclusion.'[52] Within capitalistic terms these notions of progress and advancement are innately positive and idealistic. However, the alternate reading of progress presented by Kimmerer reveals capitalism to be a system wholly concerned with progress, at the cost of both humanity and the more than human. The narratives presented by both Kimmerer and Simpson champion interdependent kinships built upon care as alternatives to heteropatriarchal violences, capitalistic notions of efficiency and the wider exploitative and violent context of settler colonialism. Writing from their perspectives as Indigenous women, Kimmerer and Simpson respond to these masculine, colonial and extractive violences and as such I argue that women *should* be at the centre of climate solutions.

[50] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 178.

[51] Ibid.

[52] 'Progress, n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 21 September 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/progress_n#eid.

Relationships with the Land Grounded in Consent

Consent derives, in part, from the Latin *cōnsentīre* meaning 'to feel together' 'to be in harmony' and 'to be in agreement.'[53] This, like the origins of care, has emotional implications, which in this instance derive from an emotional harmony of feeling together. The exploitative and extractive consumption encouraged by heteropatriarchal, settler colonial, and capitalist societies is inherently non-consensual; there is no feeling, harmony or agreement guiding these relentless forms of consumption. Kimmerer and Simpson reject the disharmonious practices within these violent systems, as these women writers advocate for restoring the balance and harmony of the living world through consensual consumption. Both Kimmerer and Simpson write of land-based consumption, Kimmerer describes foraging for leeks and in Simpson's essay Binoojiinh consumes sap from the maple tree. Yet, the examples of consumption within these essays are far removed from capitalistic forms of exploitative consumption.

Simpson notes how 'coming to know also requires complex, committed, *consensual* engagement.'[54] In contrast, settler colonialism, an exercise in large scale land theft, is inherently non-consensual, as it perpetually attempts to exploit Indigenous peoples and their lands. As Simpson writes, 'Within the context of settler colonialism, Indigenous peoples are not seen as worthy recipients of consent, informed or otherwise, and part of being colonized is engaging in all kinds of processes daily that given a choice, we likely wouldn't consent to.'[55] The presentation of consensual relationships and kinships in Simpson's essay act as a form of resistance to the non-consensual violences of settler colonialism. When the maple tree produces sap for Binoojiinh it is a consensual process: 'The maple tree does not have to produce sap for Binoojiinh; the tree has agency over this act.'[56] Under settler colonialism and capitalism the tree has no agency: no one is asking the tree for permission and certainly no one is waiting to hear the response. The motivations of settler colonialism

[53] 'Consent, v. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 9 November 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/consent_v?tab=etymology#8580915.

[54] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 161.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., 157.

intimately align with those of extractive capitalism, according to Unangax̂ scholar Eve Tuck, Klamath scholar Angie Morrill and Native Hawaiian scholar Maile Arvin, 'Conceptualizations of land and place that rely upon latent notions of property are tangled in the ideologies of settler colonialism' and are 'dependent on constructions of land as extractable capital.'[57] United by their understandings of land as property from which to gain profit, settler colonialism and capitalism are built upon an inherent disregard for consent; under both systems, then, the natural world is reduced to a bundle of resources to be exploited and used. Within the colonial context of North America, the extraction of maple sap for capital and profit destroys the agency of the natural world. Simpson notes that when the settler colonial system of extractive capitalism attempts to imitate and appropriate the story of Binoojiinh's discovery of maple sap it eradicates the wisdom and destroys the agency of the maple tree. Critiquing these non-consensual processes Simpson writes that settlers

> easily appropriate and reproduce the content of the story every year when they make commercial maple syrup in the context of capitalism, but they completely miss the wisdom that underlies the entire process because they deterritorialize the mechanics of maple syrup production from Nishnaabeg intelligence, and from Aki.[58]

Kimmerer's critique of non-consensual systems centres around the violences of the contemporary corporate agribusiness, which offer an extension of the ideologies of settler colonialism established by Simpson. Through the guidelines of 'The Honorable Harvest', which include *'Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer*' and '*Take only that which is given',*[59] Kimmerer reminds us that capitalism is built upon exploitation and greed: a system that takes everything, including resources which are not freely given, and leaves nothing in return. Asking permission, and listening to the answer from the land, is one way in which this consensual relationship is enacted. In

[57] Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, 'Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy', *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 8–34, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43860665, 21.

[58] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 154.

[59] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 183. (original emphasis).

her story of foraging for leeks, Kimmerer asks permission but critically, she listens to the answer, which reinforces that consensual relations of consumption involve being prepared *not* to consume:

> I dig my trowel in around the edge of the clump, but they're deeply rooted and tightly packed, resisting my efforts. It's just a small trowel and it hurts my winter-softened hand, but at last I pry out a clump and shake away the dark earth. I expected a cluster of fat white bulbs, but in their place I find ragged papery sheathes where the bulbs should be. Withered and flaccid, they look as if all the juice has already been sucked out of them. Which it has. If you ask permission, you have to listen to the answer. I tuck them back in the soil and go home.[60]

Arguably, Kimmerer's kinship with the land enables her to listen to the answer from the leeks; she observes and understands their reply. As a result of her kinship with the land Kimmerer knows when to take and, perhaps most importantly, when *not* to take. In this example, Kimmerer illuminates how the land does not consent by resisting her efforts, and the bulbs themselves send a message as they are 'withered and flaccid' when she digs them up.[61] Yet, these responses from the land go unheard within the system of extractive capitalism.

In her critique of extractive processes Kimmerer writes, 'Taking coal buried deep in the earth, for which we must inflict irreparable damage, violates every precept of the code. By no stretch of the imagination is coal "given" to us. We have to wound land and water to gouge it from Mother Earth.'[62] Within the parameters of capitalism, extraction and exploitation go hand in hand. There is an important distinction here between that which is given, and that which is taken. In discussing gifts given by the land, Kimmerer describes it as hearing a 'yes' from the land, she writes:

[60] Ibid., 176.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 187.

> I can't explain it, but it is a kind of knowing that is for me just as compelling as a no-trespassing sign. This time when I push my trowel deep I come up with a thick cluster of gleaming white bulbs, plump, slippery, and aromatic. I hear *yes,* so I make a gift from the soft old tobacco pouch in my pocket and begin to dig.[63]

Comparing the reply from the leeks to a 'no-trespassing sign' highlights the clarity of the response once you know how to listen to the land. Listening, then, is critical to cultivating a kinship with the natural world. Kimmerer's depiction of asking and listening reminds her readers that relationships with the land require two-way communication. Echoing Whyte's assertion that kinship relationships are inextricably bound up in responsibility, [64] Kimmerer suggests that like any relationship, developing a kinship with the land takes time, energy, and commitment, it asks things of us: that we listen to and gain consent from the natural world. Just as these kinships with the land reject and resist the violent and non-consensual practices of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism, the same is needed within climate policy. In response to the damages inflicted by these violent systems Kimmerer and Simpson advocate for cultivating and investing in value driven consensual relations. If international climate policy was also governed by these ethical principles, it would offer consensual solutions which work for all living beings and, critically, would oppose the non-consensual practices of the many exploitative systems causing such crises.

Relationships with the Land Grounded in Respect

While asking the land for permission epitomises consent, it equally displays respect for the land; and this is crucial to our ability to avert climate catastrophes. Respect for the Earth must be central to international climate discourse and policy. Etymologically, respect stems from the Latin *respicere*, meaning 'to show concern for', 'to take notice of' and 'to look round, look back, to look round at.'[65] Hence, there is an active nature to respect: to respect someone is to be fully engaged and attentive to

[63] Ibid., 178.

[64] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 42.

[65] 'Respect, v. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 5 September 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/respect_v?tab=meaning_and_use&tl=true#25667955.

them. Kimmerer notes that 'asking permission shows respect for the personhood of the plant, but it is also an assessment of the well-being of the population.'[66] In this understanding Kimmerer makes a critical connection between asking permission and recognising the personhood of the plant, which demonstrates how respecting the land is grounded in valuing the land. The guidelines of 'The Honorable Harvest' are a way of recognising the animacy of the natural world. Kimmerer draws attention to the fact that these examples of kinship time respect the animacy and sentience of the natural world. As mentioned, the term honourable connotes something morally right or just.[67] For Kimmerer, respecting the land is inextricably bound up in questions of morality and ethics. Accordingly, within Kimmerer's worldview harvesting and consuming should be an ethical practice. If 'the Honorable Harvest' is offered as a climate solution, then the systems responsible for the climate crisis are inherently dishonourable. To treat the natural world with dishonour is to 'violate the honour [and] respect' of the world.[68] A far cry from the agency of the maple tree that Simpson describes, dishonourable extraction and consumption strips the land of resources and dignity. Juxtaposing the respect and honour she demonstrates toward the land, Kimmerer questions the morality of how capitalist, heteropatriarchal, and settler colonial societies operate and consume. Kimmerer notes:

> The taking of another life to support your own is far more significant when you recognize the beings who are harvested as persons, nonhuman persons vested with awareness, intelligence, spirit – and who have families waiting for them at home. Killing a *who* demands something different than killing an *it*.[69]

Here, Kimmerer's use of language forces us to confront the realities and repercussions of capitalist consumption. Kimmerer recognises human consumption as the taking of lives, which frames it as unlawful murder.[70] Arguably, nothing subverts the personhood of plants more than killing them in dishonourable and disrespectful

[66] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 178.

[67] 'Honour | Honor, n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary'.

[68] 'Dishonour | Dishonor, v. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 9 November 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/dishonour_v?tab=meaning_and_use#6569144.

[69] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 183. (original emphasis).

[70] Ibid.

practises. Kimmerer calls for a reframing of how we regard and speak about the living world, moving away from addressing more-than-human-beings as 'it', and instead acknowledging them as our kinfolk with pronouns to reflect this.[71] As Kimmerer's argument proves, language matters: it holds power. The language we use holds critical influence in shaping relationships with the natural world; it reveals and dictates whether we respect plants as non-human persons or whether we think of them as inanimate things, which ultimately affects the ways in which we consume and how we contribute to the climate crisis. Kimmerer argues that to cultivate intimate kinships with the land we must address the natural world with respect as our kinfolk, not as inanimate objects that exist solely to be consumed. In so doing, this promotes a departure from the power structures and hierarchies underpinning the capitalist exploitation and extraction responsible for the climate crisis.

Violences such as settler colonialism which attempt to damage connections between Indigenous peoples and their lands have an incontrovertible impact on these intimate connections to the natural world. Which is to say that as physical access to the land is critical for Indigenous learning from the natural world, settler colonialism and its continual attempts to sever ties between Indigenous peoples and their lands is a constant threat to Indigenous Knowledges. Simpson notes how settler colonialism poses a threat to Indigenous Knowledges and consequently to respectful kinships with the land, stating, 'by far the largest attack on Indigenous Knowledge systems right now is land dispossession.'[72] For Simpson, respectful kinships with the land also establish an educational connection, which, in turn, enables learning to occur. Simpson explores how respect is a concept integral to the process of learning from the land and Nishnaabeg knowledge, theorising that education from the land 'comes from being enveloped by land.'[73] This educational relationship with the land is 'dependent upon intimate relationships of reciprocity, humility, honesty, and respect with all elements of creation, including plants and animals.'[74] Respect is an integral facet of the educational kinship that Simpson's essay depicts. Respecting the land is a

[71] Ibid.

[72] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 170.

[73] Ibid., 154.

[74] Ibid.

rejection of and form of resistance to settler colonialism which continually disrespects Indigenous peoples and their lands.

In rejecting the threat of settler colonialism, respect is omnipresent within the story of Binoojiinh's discovery and defines their interactions with the natural world. Respect is present in how Binoojiinh observes the processes of the natural world, in how Binoojiinh speaks to the squirrel with kindness, in how Binoojiinh treats their community and how their community treats them in return, and in how Binoojiinh respects the maple sap and the products of the living world.[75] Speaking to the aforementioned activeness implied in the etymology of the word respect, Binoojiinh is active in their respect for the natural world; they respect and actively take notice of the processes unfolding before them. Consequently, Simpson's presentation of kinship involves being engaged with the natural world in a respectful manner, which corroborates Whyte's presentation of the responsibilities underpinning kinship time. As Whyte argues, 'kinship time, as opposed to linear time, reveals how today's climate change risks are caused by people not taking responsibility for one another's safety, well-being, and self-determination.'[76] In the story of Binoojiinh's discovery, respecting the natural world is one of the responsibilities foundational to this kinship. Conversely, violences such as settler colonialism and extractive capitalism which attempt to damage connections between Indigenous peoples and their lands are grounded in disrespect, hence the climate crisis emerges directly from the disrespectful ideologies and practises of these systems. As Kahnawà:ke Mohawk scholar Gerald Taiaiake Alfred asserts, 'Colonization is the process of disconnecting us from our responsibilities to one another and our respect for one another, our responsibilities and our respect for the land, and our responsibilities and respect for the culture.'[77] Whereas Whyte's theory of kinship identifies responsibilities as central to climate solutions, Alfred's work explores how settler colonialism, and its associated violences, are innately disrespectful to the land, to Indigenous peoples and to their responsibilities and cultures. Whilst settler colonialism and extractive capitalism are

[75] Ibid., 146-9.

[76] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 40.

[77] Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*, 2nd ed (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5.

characteristically disrespectful, the guidance from Kimmerer, Simpson, and Whyte reveals that climate solutions must be grounded in respectful kinships with both human and more than human beings. Respectful climate policy would thus not only reject and prohibit *all* disrespectful practices, but it would centre the safety, well-being, and personhood of all peoples and the natural world.

Relationships with the Land Grounded in Reciprocity

One of the guidelines of 'The Honorable Harvest', according to Kimmerer is, '*Give a gift, in reciprocity for what you have taken.*'[78] Reciprocity and gifting are, therefore, central to Kimmerer's kinship with the natural world. As Kimmerer notes elsewhere in *Braiding* Sweetgrass, reciprocity is, 'a culture of gratitude' where 'everyone knows that gifts will follow the circle of reciprocity and flow back to you again. This time you give and next time you receive.'[79] A reciprocal relationship is one characterised by a 'mutual or simultaneous exchange.'[80] This speaks to Whyte's understanding of the responsibilities upholding kinship time as 'bonds of mutual caretaking and mutual guardianship.'[81] There is an inherent balance and mutuality to reciprocal and interdependent relations; whereby the well-being of one individual or group is not prioritised over others. Within his 1983 book *The Gift,* Lewis Hyde argues that a gift differs from a commodity, as giving a gift establishes a relationship between those involved.[82] Commodity culture places monetary value on the natural world, establishing it as a series of resources to be extracted to meet never-ending human need. The relentless urge to consume speaks to the relatedness of extractive capitalism and the climate crisis. Commodity culture asks nothing of consumers – except, perhaps, that they continue consuming – the relationship established is therefore purely transactional without any moral or ethical obligations. Whereas, a gift requires an active kinship, in which people must reciprocate the offerings from the living world. Hyde depicts this reciprocal quality as the gift discharging energy 'so long as

[78] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 183. (original emphasis).

[79] Ibid., 381.

[80] 'Reciprocal, Adj. & n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 15 November 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/reciprocal_adj?tab=meaning_and_use#26569823.

[81] Whyte, 'Time as Kinship', 42.

[82] Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property*, (London: Vintage, 1999), xiv.

we attend to it in return.'[83] This speaks to the ongoing nature of reciprocity, and the obligation both Kimmerer and Simpson depict in returning the gift, which is done, in part, by offering tobacco before taking. Simpson notes:

> There is an implicit assumption in this story that Binoojiinh offered tobacco to the maple tree before they cut the bark to collect the sap. They do this as a mechanism to set up a relationship with the maple tree that is based on mutual respect, reciprocity, and caring. By placing the tobacco down, they are speaking directly to the spirit of the maple tree. I understand it as their spirit speaking directly to the spirit of the maple tree, entering into a balanced relationship of mutuality.[84]

Accordingly, the reciprocal act of leaving a gift of tobacco is the culmination of the values underpinning these kinships with the natural world; it displays care, consent, mutual respect, and reciprocity. Reciprocity derives from the Latin word *reciprocus* meaning 'moving backwards and forwards.'[85] The obligation to respect a gift is emphasised in the origins of the word reciprocity; it is a cyclical process whereby gifts and respect move backwards and forwards. Capitalism, ignoring the limits of the living world, denies any sense of obligation or responsibility and instead encourages infinite consumption. Instead of gifts, economic profit defines the exchanges within this system, and these transactions flow in only one direction. Reading Kimmerer and Simpson's exploration of reciprocity alongside Whyte's kinship time theory reveals how this culture of gifting provides a sustainable form of consumption. These value-driven kinships counterbalance the extractive processes of capitalism which have detrimental effects on the living world. Consumption is an unavoidable reality of life, as Kimmerer notes, 'In order to live, I must consume. That's the way the world works, the exchange of a life for a life for a life, the endless cycling between my body and the body of the world.'[86] The question, then, is how do we consume in ways that

[83] Ibid., 49.

[84] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 157.

[85] 'Reciprocus', Oxford Reference, accessed 5 August 2023, https://www-oxfordreference-com.uea.idm.oclc.org/display/10.1093/acref/9780191739583.001.0001/b-la-en-00001-0008591.

[86] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 177.

respect the body of the world? According to Kimmerer and Simpson, reciprocity is imperative for such thoughtful consumption.

Within these narratives of thoughtful consumption and reciprocal kinships, obligation and responsibility are instrumental. Obligations to the natural world denote being indebted 'for a benefit or service' and such oaths or promises are 'mutually binding.'[87] Within Kimmerer and Simpson's relationships with the living world, ethical obligations demonstrate human responsibilities to respect and care for the land, on this Kimmerer writes 'One of our responsibilities as human people is to find ways to enter into reciprocity with the more-than-human world. We can do it through gratitude, through ceremony, through land stewardship, science, art, and in everyday acts of practical reverence.'[88] Kimmerer confirms Whyte's observations that responsibilities are central to kinships, and whilst there are many means and ways of enacting such responsibilities, for Kimmerer the attentiveness to this obligation is critical. In the essence of Simpson's land as pedagogy theory, Coulthard seeks guidance for reciprocity and obligation from the land itself, he writes; 'the land *as system of reciprocal relations and obligations* can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world in nondominating and nonexploitative terms.'[89] In exploring the basis for such obligations Coulthard explains, 'in the Weledeh dialect of Dogrib (which is my community's language), […] "land" (or dè) is translated in relational terms as that which encompasses not only the land (understood here as material), but also people and animals, rocks and trees, lakes and rivers, and so on.'[90] Hence, this obligation to the natural world derives from human beings being considered 'as much a part of the land as any other element.'[91] He continues, 'Furthermore, within this system of relations human beings are not the only constituent believed to embody spirit or agency. Ethically, this meant that humans held certain obligations to the land, animals, plants, and lakes in much the

[87] 'Obligation, n. Meanings, Etymology and More | Oxford English Dictionary', accessed 21 September 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/obligation_n.

[88] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 190.

[89] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 13. (original emphasis).

[90] Ibid., 61.

[91] Ibid.

same way that we hold obligations to other people.'[92] According to Coulthard, the human responsibility of 'find[ing] ways to enter into reciprocity'[93] which Kimmerer depicts, exists, in part, because humans are part of the land and therefore have ethical obligations to the living world. If international climate policy were to look to critical Indigenous scholarship for guidance on cultivating relations of obligation and reciprocity, it would centre a sense of responsibility to all other aspects of the living world, leading to 'nondominating and nonexploitative'[94] solutions to the plethora of crises inflicted by the destructive violences of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism.

Interestingly, both Kimmerer and Simpson deploy the phrase 'enter into' when describing these relationships of reciprocity and mutuality. As mentioned, Simpson depicts the leaving of tobacco for the maple tree as 'entering into a balanced relationship of mutuality.'[95] Whereas Kimmerer argues that humans have a responsibility to 'enter into reciprocity' with the natural world.[96] These examples draw attention to the active and ongoing quality to reciprocity as a climate solution. Kinships cultivated through reciprocity are never completed or finished, rather these relations continue endlessly within the spirit of obligation and responsibility. Drawing on Rob Nixon's argument that climate change is a form of 'slow violence', [97] in an antithetical sense we can understand entering into ongoing relationships of reciprocity as a slow but enduring *climate solution*. In this time of crisis such deliberate, intentional, and thoughtful action is imperative. Effective climate solutions are built around relationships and responsibilities which critically require continual obligations to the land and to each other. In the essence of kinship time, Kimmerer and Simpson focus not on immediate, short-term solutions, but rather on changing the culture around consumption to ongoing reciprocal and sustainable kinships.

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass,* 190.

[94] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 13.

[95] Simpson, *As We Have Always Done,* 157.

[96] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass,* 190.

[97] Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

To conclude, women's writing challenges the ecologically damaging heteropatriarchal ideologies of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism and offers solutions for the continuing climate crisis. In reading the relationships with the land depicted in Kimmerer and Simpson's writing in relation to Whyte's kinship time, I have explored the ways in which these value-driven approaches provide radical alternatives to exploitative systems. As such, the writings of Kimmerer and Simpson are among some of the most critical works within climate discourses as they forge ways of surviving the climate crisis. Kimmerer notes how the guidelines of 'The Honorable Harvest' are not written down but rather they are 'small acts of daily life',[98] which frames maintaining a close kinship with the natural world as an ongoing activity, requiring time and attention. Arguably, within the context of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism abiding by the guidelines of 'The Honorable Harvest' is a daily act of resistance. In their own ways, Kimmerer and Simpson both present forms of active resistance against the oppressive and exploitative systems of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism, and one critical form of such resistance is extending values of kinship to both humans and the more-than-human. Kimmerer and Simpson provide guidelines for forming kinships with the natural world which will mitigate the climate crisis whilst urging their readers to confront and challenge the realities of settler colonialism and extractive capitalism. These guidelines champion collective care over rampant profiteering, consent over exploitation, respect over dishonour, and reciprocity over irresponsible consumption. Thus, Kimmerer and Simpson present kinships with the natural world as diametrically opposing forces to settler colonialism and extractive capitalism. Ultimately, these value driven kinships with the natural world should be the foundations of climate solutions and discourses, both within and outside of academia. As we look to the future of Environmental American Studies it is vital that we prioritise the values of these kinships: care, consent, respect, and reciprocity.

[98] Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass,* 183.

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