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"I'm Writing This All Down So I Don't Forget": The Indigenous Futurist Short Story and Kinship as Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Resistance

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While Speculative fiction often entertains a future free of Capitalism and invites speculation, Native American Post-Apocalyptic short speculative fiction is not purely speculative. Native American and First Nations Two-Spirit, Transgender and Indigiqueer authors write alternative futures and re-imagine new spaces of belonging. Although indigenous futurist literature, under the umbrella of speculative fiction, offers alternative imaginings to the dystopian capitalistic present, it is not guaranteed that settler colonialism has been expunged in these alternatively reimagined Indigenous futures. Love After the End, an anthology of Indigenous futurist short stories authored by Two-Spirit writers, approaches the dystopian-now and erasure of trans-lives in a nuanced way that complicates contemporary Western and postcolonial trans-imaginings of the future. Although Kai Minosh Pyle's "How to Survive Apocalypse for Native Girls" and Jaye Simpson "The Ark of the Turtle's Back" depict reimagined societies, Indigiqueer peoples are still situated on the margins. While Pyle's short story depicts a society free from capitalism, Indigenous youth still face ongoing persecution for challenging and resisting the colonial gender binary, Jaye Simpson's "Ark of the Turtle's Back" imagines a future where Native trans-indigenous have limited access to life-saving gender affirming care and their rights are revoked. Thus, in my paper I argue Pyle, and Simpson unsettle, upset, derange and perplex the colonial binary, and persistently challenges erasures of said belonging.

First Nations Oji-Cree member of the Peguis First Nation and Two-Spirit/Indigiqueer writer Joshua Whitehead describes the Native Apocalypse as "a longevity of virology and a historicity of genocidal biowarfare used against Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island since the docking of colonial powers into our homelands" (9). Indigenous futurist short stories take place in postapocalyptic, often ruined worlds, and are set in a "dystopian present" milieu, or as Whitehead loosely defines as the aftermath of Native Apocalypse (10). Both Whitehead and Indigenous studies scholar and Nishnaabeg author Leanne Betasamosake Simpson imply that Native Apocalypse has ushered in a seemingly inescapable dystopian-present due to Euro-Western Settler colonialism and an attempted erasure towards Native lands, cultures, and customs. Simpson refers to a resistance in response to this erasure. In the following passage Simpson refers to centering Indigenous knowledge systems, more specifically Nishnaabeg intelligence, and urging a return to recognizing Indigenous presence, such as unique Indigenous thought systems, and how they respond within the framework of colonial systems. She refers to a struggle which responds to pervasive colonial systems of erasure:

> This means struggle. Struggle because we are occupied, erased, displaced, and disconnected. Struggle because our bodies are still targets for settler colonial violence. Struggle because this is the mechanism our Ancestors engaged in to continuously rebirth the world. And our struggle is a beautiful, righteous struggle that is our collective gift to Indigenous worlds, because this way of living necessarily continually gives birth to ancient *Indigenous* futures in the present. (Simpson 21)

First Nations Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer authors that write Indigenous futurist short stories draw attention to how settler colonialism could further damage Native lands, cultures, and customs. This includes engendering systems of erasure that nullify Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer existence.

However, despite the bleakness of Native Apocalypse, the stories analyzed in this article, Kyle Minosh Pyle's "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" and Jaye Simpson's "The Ark of the Turtle's Back" encourage utopian thinking. Native methodologies that attempt to foster new spaces for trans lives can forge hopeful futures for Native peoples. Indigenous futurist short stories deconstruct and interrogate normative heteropatriarchal kinship, a kinship loosely defined by Leanne Simpson as one that excludes queer bodies: "I use the term *heteropatriarchy* as an umbrella term to mean the intertwined systems of patriarchy and heterosexism to include its manifestations as heteronormativity, transphobia, and cis-normativity" (253). Heteropatriarchal kinship is a a power structure within society that bestows privilege and leadership to Cis, Eurowestern heteronormative individuals and

allows dispossession to persist and Indigenous alternatives, including Indigenous reimagination within stories resist such forces (Simpson 34, 35). Simpson states, "[The Radical Resurgence Project[1]] refuses dispossession of both Indigenous bodies and land as the focal point of resurgent thinking and action. It continues the work of dismantling heteropatriarchy as a dispossessive force. It calls for the formation of networks of constellations of radical resurgent organizing as direct action within grounded normativities and against the dispossessive forces of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and white supremacy" (34, 35). Reimagination and resistance in response to heteropatriarchy via Indigenous stories and Indigenous thinking is essential to Simpson's discussion about heteropatriarchy and how dangerous oppressive colonial systems are to women, Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer peoples. Simpson's discussion raises significant concerns about how heteropatriarchy manifests within communities and leads to women, Two-Spirit, and Indiqueer people being alienated from their own communities and families.

Two-Spirit authors ask what can be done to reimagine the relationship between kinship and those who are excluded. In Indigenous futurist short stories kinship is utilized by those in power to either exclude queer bodies within their own communities or inspire resistance against heteropatriarchal colonial systems of oppression. I cite Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* and Foucault's commentary on the body. As he states in "Torture":

> But the body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies to admit signs. This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination...(25, 26).

I see an affinity with how Foucault expresses how the body is vulnerable to political forces beyond its control and how Simpson describes Queer bodies at the mercy at heteropatriarchal laws. This informs my discussion in which kinship as an embodied tool can be a political force that has power over the body. Scholar Francesca Mussi describes kinship as necessary for inclusive belonging: "A fundamental value in Indigenous cultures, kinship is understood as the profound power of our relationships to one another and to our other-than-human relations" (78). Mussi implies that

[1] Defined as alternative methodologies of Nishnaabeg story and action that resist and writing back against heteropatriarchy (34).

kinship has a profound power or influence over relationships to one another but also relationships to the surrounding environment (408). Although the scope of my discussion is not ecocritical, I am interested with Mussi's commentary that kinship, though a unifying force of solidarity, has been impacted by the assimilating colonial threat of residential schools: "In addition to undermining family/community ties and land relations, Indian residential schooling also had crucial impacts on Indigenous views of gender and sexuality, thus affecting kinship relationships. Kinship, in fact, also encompasses relationships with the marginalized within our own human societies (Mussi 408, 409). Mussi specifies that by targeting Indigenous peoples who did not conform to traditional gender norms, colonial forces were able to isolate or alienate those from their own kin, and otherize them. By having power over Indigenous bodies, these colonial residential schools would irreparably transform the way in which kinship was perceived. Community was reduced to landownership which encouraged an establishment of the Euro-Western nuclear family and gender roles that were Euro-Western examples that would uphold this heteronormativity.

Additionally, according to Leanne Simpson, several Jesuit missionaries were tasked with the mission of "suppressing Indigenous Queer Relationships" (124, 125). Simpson states that Jesuit colonizers would enforce assimilation or conformity via kinship, as Jesuits had been "...[counseling] Indigenous parents who were not conforming to the colonial gender binary to force conformity" and enforcing that binary on them (124). As a result of forcibly attempting to make them conform to an artificial binary, a violence of erasure was enforced and even encouraged against queer and gender non-conforming indigenous. Thus, kinship when it is influenced by heteropatriarchy can bring about an exclusion of queer bodies by imposing Euro-Western gender norms. The destruction or transformation of kinship leads to an erasure of trans lives. Any sort of gender variance was ignored and, instead, a rigid colonial gender binary was "... reinforced through residential schools, day schools, and sanitariums, where children were separated into boys or girls, their hair forcibly cut, and their clothes changed to skirts or pants, and where they were punished for normal, healthy expressions of sexuality and gender expressions outside of the rigidity of Victorian masculinity and femininity" (126, 127). When residential schools forcibly removed Indigenous youth from their parents, they attempted to assimilate and reinforce the colonial binary as an act of cultural erasure against 2SQ Indigenous peoples. From 1831 to 1936, according to Simpson, residential schools committed genocide against 2SQ Indigenous peoples and erased histories of belonging for 2SQ that pre-existed and thrived pre-colonial contact, erasing histories of gender variance that were not seen as "special" within the community (126): "Indigenous gender variance was soon viewed as outdated or

archaic, special, or strange, forgotten and relegated to the past" (126). Simpson, like Whitehead and other Indigenous studies scholars such as Jameson Sweet, refer to how Indigiqueer, Two-Spirit and gender nonconforming First Nations peoples are alienated from their own communities when they are otherized and treated as special and different (Simpson 122, Whitehead 11, Belcourt 3, Morgensen 135). Those who are treated as "special" are seen as outliers in their communities, instead of as a part of it. However, this exclusion was not always the case. Simpson's *As We Have Always Done* cites Nishnaabeg elders and Cree Indigenous studies scholar Alex Wilson when referring to a "gender variance that existed in many Indigenous communities prior to the strategic implanting of the colonial binary" (123). Simpson like other Indigenous studies and Queer studies scholars attribute this to an "artificial [gender] binary as a mechanism for controlling Indigenous bodies and identit[ies] and sets out two very clear genders: male and female" (123). Simpson echoes the scholarship of Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit writers about how heteropatriarchy threatens the lives of Indigenous youth and their place within their own communities (Simpson 111).

Indigenous futurist literature written by Queer Indigenous authors, poets and filmmakers often reflects on the ever present and dominant issue of alienation from one's own family or community. Indigenous Speculative Fiction, or Indigenous futurisms, or even Indigenous Science Fiction distinguishes itself from Western Science Fiction, and Postcolonial Speculative Fiction by transcending mere speculation (Brown Spiers xii). In First Nation and Native American storytelling, speculation relies on perceiving the past, present and future as they coincide, instead of as distinct. Past, present, and future are intertwined, bleeding together; Indigenous storytelling transcends the rigidity in which the West defines temporality and unimagines[2] the future that the west imagines. This allows a space where alienation is written into the future to encourage a reimagination of such alienation. This alienation is relevant to my argument that dismantling or altering kinship threatens the existence and belonging of Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit bodies. Queer and Two-Spirit authors such as Kai Minosh Pyle, and Jaye Simpson address the colonial gender binary as a lingering parasite that perverts a relational and loving kinship. This exclusivity, indicative of a violent colonial past, ostracizes Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit people from their communities and families, dehumanizing them and making them monstrous (Greenesmith 140, Linguardi 269, Stryker 29;31). I cite Stryker's "My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage" who describes the transgender body as viewed by society as "monstrous," a product of

[2] To Borrow from Wenzel's *The Disposition of Nature* (20–23).

science much like Frankenstein's monster and therefore othered by society: "Like the monster, I am too often perceived as less than fully human due to the means of my embodiment; like the monster as well, my exclusion from human community fuels a deep and abiding rage in me that I, like the monster, direct against the conditions in which I must struggle to exist" (245). Two-Spirit authors write about this monstrous exclusion and alienation, and the frailty of community when it is not strong enough to resist heteronormative authority. Whether it is to emphasize that Indigenous youth suffer when colonial violence is internalized and affects surrounding communities or to illuminate how heteropatriarchal discourse permits gender violence against those who are excluded from their families and communities, Two-Spirit authors argue that Indigenous thinking and Indigenous methodologies encourage a solidarity amongst Indigenous queer peoples. Just as kinship has the power to destroy, it also has the power to unite marginalized communities. Simpson contextualizes kinship within Nishnaabeg grounded normativity, or spiritual ecological well-being of all living things, that allows a revitalization of Nishnaabeg methodologies. This form of loving or resisting kinship is prevalent in Two-Spirit utopic stories where Two-Spirit authors remind their readers of transformative methodologies that encourage what Pyle calls trans-solidarity. Pyle writes that being Two-Spirit allows insight into how "Two-Spirit people embody their own unique forms of resistance" and how "heteropatriarchy, assimilation, homophobia operate…" (22). Like Simpson and Whitehead, Pyle's scholarship emphasizes the importance of kinship-inspired resistance against these colonial systems of oppression and the necessity for reconstruction. Two-Spirit authors remind Indigiqueer, Two-Spirit, gender nonconforming, and trans communities how it is possible to imagine new communities that are shaped by Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer peoples.

"How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls," Kai Minosh Pyle

Kai Minosh Pyle's "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" centers around Nigig, a young Two-Spirit woman who writes a diary in a futuristic society that has survived the Apocalypse:

> I'm writing this down so I don't forget. I want to be one of those seventy-year-old women with their photo albums and old diaries, the ones who recite stories from when they were children or from even further back. Migizi used to say things like "we are future ancestors" all the time. I think about that a lot. (79)

Migizi is Nigig's missing gender nonconforming 2spirit friend who slowly convinces her that kinship is not as it should be within their community. Nigig does not question

the relationship between love and law: "Love is part of Kinship Laws—it is Kinship Laws. Of course, in reality Kinship is just as much about hating each other and messing each other up as it is about loving each other, but without Love there wouldn't be any Kinship at all" (83). Nigig recognizes that "Kinship Law" does not necessarily dictate love itself, but that it is necessary for love. However, as Nigig continues to reflect on Migizi's words, she notices a pattern of exclusion and realizes the frailty of Kinship Laws[3] if love allows others to be alienated. At the climax of the short story Nigig confronts the ruling body of Migizi's clan at a gathering, wondering if they know where Migizi is. Nigig notices how they arbitrarily carry out the law and she learns that Migizi was accused of killing their family, but their biggest crime according to their clan was that they questioned Kinship laws and the Eagle Clan ousted Migizi because they were questioning how the Kinship laws were carried out. When Nigig speaks with the head of the Eagle Clan, asking about Migizi, the leader of the clan responds as follows:

> Kinship is exactly the reason why that freak had to be gotten rid of," she spat. "Do you even know what they did? [...]. They were trying to pick a fight over the Kinship laws. I wondered for a long time why they were hostile about that—but then when you've murdered your entire family, I guess your only hope is to overthrow the norms of Kinship" (90).

Nigig ponders what the clan leader says and realizes that kinship when it is treated as an absolute can be utilized to justify acts of exclusion towards those who do not conform to such an absolute power dynamic. The clan ultimately only cares about how they maintain control and utilize kinship to enforce their power. This is done in the form of the authority of the family and if Migizi thwarts what their family believes, as influenced by the Eagle Clan, they are violating the gender binary and ultimately the Kinship Laws. Migizi questioning kinship laws and not conforming to the gender binary that the Eagle Clan utilizes to maintain their authority, estranges them from their family and their community:

> [Migizi] told me about how they had asked their parents, as a young teenager, if they could cut their hair and ask an elder for a new name, one that didn't end in kwe. They told me about their mother had cried and their father had screamed, how they had left in the dead of night. They told me how the people they had grown up with, their close and extended kin, had one by one shut their doors in Migizi's face, even though it was winter in Anishinaabewak. (86)

[3] Pyle capitalizes Kinship Laws to show how Nigig exemplifies how important the relationship between "kinship" and "law" is to her and her community.

When Nigig asks how that could happen to them if "kinship" is "love," Migizi says, "Kinship is a two-sided coin, Nigig. You always gotta ask yourself, who is being excluded here?" (87).

Most telling is Migizi who writes of their trauma, giving testimony to their family's violence:

> *What does it mean to break Kinship with someone who has never regarded you as their kin? I know you and Shanay have seen the burns on my skin (you're not as subtle as you think, my friend). The people who did that to me should have claimed me, should have treated me with love. […].*
>
> *The night I left they tried to burn me. They were laughing, telling me if I wanted to be a faggot so bad I should burn like one. Nigig, I was so scared. I fought them and I ran and I didn't look back to see what happened.* (93)

Migizi's statement—"[I] should have been treated with love"—exemplifies Migizi's alienation towards her own community and family. Whenever Migizi speaks of their family, they mention their family was consumed by the "wiindigoog," a cannibalistic creature that latches onto hunger and transforms humans into monsters. Whether their family is literally being consumed as if eaten by the wiindigoog or if Pyle is alluding to a larger complexity of their becoming monstrous in response to their family member coming out is unclear and unspecified. However, this ambiguity allows the reader to imagine both scenarios which allows Migizi's use of the wiindigoog in storytelling to be reflective of the pain they experience as of losing their family merely because they identify as gender nonconforming. Pyle juxtaposes domestic and exclusionary violence to depict how the gender colonial binary, when influenced by those who use kinship to justify who is kin and who is not, may consume the family in a twisted representation of kinship.

Considering this revelation of her friend's trauma by their family and community, Nigig decides to leave Anishinaabewaki to pass on her friend's teachings. She leaves with Shanay and Shanay's grandmother as she adopts a new family beyond the community. She hopes to pass on lessons she has written down so that she may foster a loving community. Nigig states in one of her final diary lines:

> I don't know if or when I will come home. Or if home will even mean the same thing to me once I've left. But I hope that you'll read what I've written here and remember the stories of the people that I love. […]. I don't know your name. I don't know who your kin are. But I know you're worth it, niijiikwe. And I know now that the only way to survive the apocalypse is to make your own world. (94)

With Nigig's final lines, Pyle hopes to embolden her readers that there is a possibility where inclusive kinship may create a space for Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer bodies. Pyle's imagining of a world without loving Indigenous kinship draws attention to the pervasive persistence of the colonial gender binary and its connection with normative Kinship Laws. This traditional normative kinship carried out as "Law" encourages transphobia and homophobia against Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Indigenous. The concept and status of "Law" encourages people to believe that it is followed without question, and an unquestionable kinship is problematic to the community.

Few recognize that kinship is utilized in a harmful way. Only the older generations, the *kookums*, or grandmothers within Pyle's story understand this. Both Shanay and Nigig's kookums try to warn the younger generations that those in power, the Eagle Clan, the clan which Migizi came from, have been perverting the meaning of kinship. Nigig deconstructs these confining heteronormative aspects of Kinship Law and sees her girlfriend and her grandmother exiled in the name of Kinship Law. Queer Indigenous and Two-Spirit are excluded from their own communities via arbitrary influence and are uniquely poised to identify how kinship is altered after suffering years of gender violence from the colonial state and being abandoned and alienated by one's own kin and community. In "Can the Other of Native Studies Speak?" Billy-Ray Belcourt writes, "To be queer and native and alive is to repeatedly bear witness to worlds being destroyed, over and over again" (Belcourt 4). Pyle contextualizes this erasure and violence:

> The form of heteropatriarchy that settler colonialism has generated in the Americas has devastated Two-Spirit people for centuries. From murder and massacre during the early periods of colonization, to abuse from church and government officials in boarding and residential schools, to the enormous rates of violence against Two-Spirits in today's world, the atrocities committed by agents of settler colonialism have long targeted Two-Spirit people because of their race, indigeneity, gender and sexuality. Two-Spirit people inherit this intergenerational trauma as well as the abuse they face in their own lives. (576)

Simpson furthers this discussion and describes the way in which Queer bodies and Queer spirits are "crushed," especially those of Queer youth. As a result, Queer bodies are being eliminated from Indigenous spaces and "their *Indigenous* worlds [are] destroyed" (120). Additionally, Leanne Simpson urges that Queerness should be recentered within resurgence and of reimaging Indigenous worlds: "Queer Indigenous youth are our teachers and our most precious theorists, even though they shouldn't have to be. They have experiences with acute heteropatriarchy as expansive

dispossession" (144). Although Queer bodies are aimed to be erased and targeted, and alienated, Indigiqueer peoples are uniquely poised to recreate and reimagine the future. Nigig desires to learn from these ideals that inspire change for Two-Spirit peoples.

The relationship between ancestor and descendant is vital to how Pyle writes kinship in "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls." Simpson defines *kobade* as the Nishnaabeg word for the phrase "a link in a chain—a link in the chain between generations, between nations, between states of being, between individuals. I am a link in a chain. We are all links in a chain" (8). Simpson emphasizes an ancestral reverence that is necessary to understanding "the self," to pave the way for future generations. For example, Nigig is writing for future generations and warning them not to lose sight of how important an inclusive and loving kinship is to community. Nigig seeks to follow in her grandmother and Shanay's grandmother's footsteps. One of her entries is as follows:

> Here is my first instruction: when the apocalypse happens, make sure you bring your kookum. Mine is named Alicia. She doesn't have an Anishinaabe name, because when she was born they were only starting to get them back. You're going to want your kookum when the apocalypse happens because kookums know everything [...]. Kookums secretly *know* that they're right all the time, but they also know that different teachings are correct. (80)

What stands out to me here is the line that "Kookums secretly *know* that they're right all the time, but they also know that different teachings are correct," implying "different" from the status quo. In "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" intergenerational storytelling is a form of resistance. Kookums pass down their "different teachings" as Nigig mentions. Pyle emphasizes the necessity of passing down stories or instructions to remember how kinship is loving and inclusive. The act of "becoming our own descendants," extends to Migizi and Nigig who desire to be storytellers and pass down stories. Shanay reminds Nigig the importance of telling stories. In Nigig's diary Shanay writes her instruction: "'Everyone has ancestors, but not everyone knows theirs" and Nigig responds, "This is very wise, I think. I know most of my ancestors going way back because of the old papers from the Nation and from the government that existed before the Nation, but because of the border wars, some people don't have the records, like Shanay. And some people like Migizi, don't have kookums to tell them stories" (84). Pyle stresses the importance of an ancestral kinship connection that crosses generations, and resists assimilative systems, while challenging a dystopian-present where Indigenous gender variance is all but forgotten (Pyle 578). Pyle emphasizes that it is important for Two-Spirit individuals

to recognize Two-Spirit gender variance of the past and of the present (586). Pyle states, "It would be foolish, of course, to ignore the shifts of settler colonialism and settler heteropatriarchy on Two-Spirit and other Indigenous people, but recognizing the continuities between historical and modern Two-Spirit people does not require us to do so. Instead, it allows us to see kinship among Two-Spirits across time" (586). By reflecting on the past and the future, and by becoming a link in the chain, Nigig establishes a kinship that connects her to the Two-Spirit peoples of the past and Two-Spirit of the future. Pyle reminds their readers that a generational connection resists an artificially established gender binary that can lead to non-alienating spaces for Two-Spirit peoples. Pyle describes this kinship as Trans*temporal and emphasizes the responsibilities that are owed to the Two-Spirit of the past, and the Two-Spirit of the future (587). This hopeful Two-Spirit imagination of the future encourages storytelling that links generations and encourages a hopeful resisting kinship.

"The Ark of the Turtle's Back," Jaye Simpson

Like Pyle's "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" Jaye Simpson's "The Ark of the Turtle's Back" is an Indigenous futurist short story that takes place in a far-off future. However, instead of imagining a future-society where Indigenous peoples create their own partially survivant[4] society, free of capitalism and western society, Simpson's portrayal of the future echoes a destructive pattern of Native Apocalypse. Simpson's future world is entrenched in the capitalistic dystopian milieu where Indigenous bodies are reduced to commodities and exploited. Simpson's story depicts a slow destruction of the Earth, widespread exploitation of Queer Indigenous peoples, and an exodus that follows. It is a short story disaster narrative that examines what happens when the Earth's destruction by Euro-Americans becomes too much for Indigenous peoples to justify staying. This story, however, offers a utopian imagination of the future where Two-Spirit and Indiqueer peoples utilize indigenous methodologies reminiscent of a resisting kinship to establish a future for Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer individuals.

On a reservation, far away from the city center, 2spirit, Niichiiwad (Ni) attempts to survive with her queer family consisting of, Axil, Giiweden and Ashe. Ni notices an apocalypse beginning to form but plans to stay with her family as the Earth crumbles. She is eventually convinced by her sister Dakib, who is sending her hormones from the

[4] Referring to Gerald Vizenor, who states survivance is "an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry" (16). Survivant technologies and survivant stories are hopeful, resistant modalities that exceed the victimry of Native Apocalypse.

city, that there is a plan for escape, and that they need to leave the planet as they will die with it:

> Ni, a mass exodus. I can try to explain, but we have to go. The Senate is planning to swoop everyone up and force us into labour camps on the new settlements. They lied about trying to harvest the ice in comets and ice planets. They never had the infra-structure! Plus, the filtration needed would be beyond what is capable of the time. It will only be a matter of time before they come to take everyone capable from the Rez to work (68).

Departing from the Earth, however, causes severe destruction and eventually its death. When Ni and her family leave Earth, Ni describes how she is impacted by the Earth's destruction: "I am screaming, not from the procedure, but the sacrifice. I am trying to let go of Nimama Aki. I am trying to reconcile with this selfishness: letting Nimama die so I can carry children." (70). "The Ark of the Turtle's Back" concludes with Ni undergoing gender affirming surgery so she may carry children and live on the new planet with her family.

Simpson's Indigenous futurist short story depicts a hopeless imagination of the future. Jimmy citing Walters states, "that within a Eurocentric perspective of gender and sexuality Aboriginal Two-Spirit people 'experience a wide range of challenges including poverty, violence, suicide and hopelessness'." (22). Gilbert claims that Eurocentric values cultivate cultures of hopelessness for Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer peoples. In Simpson's future-society Indigenous bodies are only valued as labor to satisfy the endless hunger of capitalistic regimes. The UICS (United InterCountry Senate) or the NIA abduct Indigenous peoples and Queer Indigenous and force them to work on the colonized Moon or Mars bases (64, 65, 66). Meanwhile on Earth clean water is a limited resource and Ni cannot undergo gender affirming surgery because "[contaminated] water [during surgery] means infection, failure, and death" (68). Additionally, Ni and her family's lives are threatened, which makes the planet difficult if not impossible to live on. Ni and her family live away from the city so as not to attract unwanted attention. Ni, especially, is subjected to harmful vitriol and "accused of pretending to be a woman" (64). Ni cannot imagine leaving because she is reminded of an obligation to her deceased guardian Koko-Wahe, who raised her and Dakib, and gave everything up so they could survive, and fear for her family. Hopelessness prevents Ni from leaving. Donner's "Kinship and the politics responsibility: an introduction" states that capitalism and its hegemony create a hierarchy of kin which allows dispossession, and this hierarchy is enabled through the nuclear family (333, 332). However, Ni does not subscribe to Donner's definition of the nuclear family. She

lives with a found family or chosen family which is mistreated by society and lives on the margins. Yet, she still has a sense of kinship ties relational to her caretaker, sister, her chosen family and the Earth. Ni does not contemplate escape, as she and her family and trying to merely survive.

Ni's sister, Dakib, reminds Ni that she is being complacent. When Ni says she is staying for her beloved guardian, Dakib reminds Ni that Koko-Wahe resisted colonial systems of oppression as well. In response to Dakib's offer, Ni states, "Koko-Wahe didn't return home after five generations of displacement and kidnapping for you to rush us outta here" (64). However, Dakib warns Ni that refusing to leave will endanger their family and they will all be detained or shipped off to another colonized planet. The only option is to leave Earth permanently and do more than just survive.

The Ark, while an example of miraculous escape, is still an example of resisting kinship, and is described as such:

> The project we've been working on is based on a discovery from nearly one hundred and fifty years ago: a planet that can sustain life, a planet nearly four times the size of Earth, existing with a star's habitable zone! Over a hundred and thirty years ago, they sent terrafomers and filtration systems to help prepare for our arrival, and it's ready now! Cities are already built to sustain us, animals and plant life already trans-planted. There are buffalo, Ni! Buffalo!" (69)

This sustainable project is established in the name of relational kinship. It is a utopian project that inspires hope because it considers a future where Indigenous peoples create a space for themselves without heteropatriarchy and colonialism.

Dillon references the term "Indigenous Scientific Literacies" to argue that Indigenous peoples have a place in the genre of science fiction (Dillon 7). Dillon states, "Indigenous scientific literacies represent practices used by Indigenous peoples over thousands of years to reenergize the natural environment while improving the interconnected relationships among all persons (animal, human, spirit, and even machine). Some of its features include sustainable forms of medicine, agriculture, architecture, and art" (Dillon 7, 8). These scientific literacies are emphasized in "The Ark of the Turtle's Back." Ni, for instance, is taught by Koko-Wahe how to make water last longer when access is limited by the government. The Ark itself is a prescient survivant project that exceeds the dystopian-now, and offers a chance for escape, and the entire plan to cultivate instead of colonizing a planet is an example of utopian technology that enable those who are marginalized to create a space for themselves. I argue that indigenous scientific literacies like the Ark are examples which dream of alternatives to the dystopia-now.

Yet, Simpson does not gloss over the erasure against Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit peoples who cannot leave or decide to stay. Simpson reminds their readers that those who do not board the Ark are destroyed, their bodies erased, their stories never told. Unlike Pyle who emphasizes the importance of writing things down, Simpson takes a different approach. Those who are left behind are gone, and ultimately forgotten as the planet dies. The horror that Ni embodies during their destruction emphasizes, what is lost, and in recognizing that she will not know their stories. Their absence is a reminder in its own way of the necessity of storytelling because those who do not make it are left without a story, without history or memory. Pyle's "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" approaches Native Apocalypse differently. Nigig writes down the voices and instructions of many characters in her diary because they are important to emphasizing the importance of inclusive kinship. However, Nigig's search for Migizi does not eclipse the voices of other characters within the story because it does not need to. While I cannot be sure that Simpson is mirroring Native Apocalypse in that those left behind are left without a story, I believe she is proposing the importance of storytelling.

Simpson's definition of kobade, or the link between ancestor and descendant, is important in reimagining kinship, resisting pernicious colonial systems of oppression, and encourages trans solidarity. Kobade is emphasized throughout Jaye Simpson's short story via Ni and Dakib's ancestral connection to Koko-Wahe. This does not mean that Ni's story or struggle mirrors Koko-Wahe's, but that Koko-Wahe's spiritual presence lives on through the resisting kinship of Ni and Dakib. Before Ni boards the Ark, she resigns herself to a life of survival, but when Dakib reminds her that her ancestor Koko-Wahe wanted more for her, she is reminded of her link between Wahe and her future descendants. Ni, although initially unable to have children, voices what is important to her, and what she ultimately desires for her and her partner:

> I want twins, Axil. I want babies on babies. I want brown babies. I want fat brown babies. I want them to speak the languages. I want them to know our songs. I want them to have everything Koko-Wahe tried to give me and Dakib. (75)

When she speaks of her joy here, of imagining a future that she never thought possible to Axil, she is reminded of what Koko-Wahe sacrificed for her This quote emphasizes that despite being taken from their home, Koko-Wahe does everything in her power to try and create a better future for Ni and Dakib. This generational impetus to do better for future generations is not unique to Native storytelling, but in the Indigenous futurist short story this generational obligation is emphasized in relation to a loving, resisting kinship. When Wahe is taken from her home, it is implied that Ni and Dakib are taught how to think beyond the dystopian-present. Wahe teaches Ni and Dakib so that

they are prepared to do more than merely survive Native Apocalypse. Ansloos states, "While being two-spirit is political, it is intergenerationally so. Across generations, two-spirit peoples have asserted a dynamic understanding of the community, identity, language, land, and place—not merely (as anthropology might frame it) as a cultural practice, but rather, as a political worlding of Indigenous sovereignty" (78). Prescient decisions such as building an Ark and mapping out a future for Indigenous descendants or fostering and sustaining a new planet to promote life are established that invoke this intergenerational two-spirit connection for the sake of two-spirit peoples (Simpson 68).

Concluding Statement

The Indigenous futurist short story is more than a warning story and draws attention to progressive and inclusive kinship embodied by Queer Indigenous and 2SQ. Two-Spirit peoples are resisting and imagining methods alternative to a pervasive colonial gender binary by unimagining acts of resurgence via kinship. Whitehead names queerness a hinterland and Indigenous futurist literature written by Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer authors recontextualizes the discussion around gender-based violence to ask who is being excluded or omitted in the name of kinship? (10). Simpson, Pyle and other Indigenous futurist 2SQ authors in *Love After The End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indiqueer Speculative Fiction* unsettle, upset, derange and perplex the colonial gender binary, and upend colonial constraints of belonging. A relational loving kinship allows new ways in which the dystopian present is re-imagined, and fatalistic ends are challenged. These voices elide genre, upend heteronormativity, speak loudly, and hope to be heard. The Indigenous futurist short story written by Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit authors ultimately recognizes the frailty of an artificial gender-imposed binary. Jack Halberstam in her lecture entitled "Trans*. A Quick and Quirky Guide to Gender Variance" emphasizes how the artificial gender binary forces children to confirm to rigid and artificial colonial gender binary: to identify them as man or woman. Indigenous futurisms written by Two-Spirit or Indigiqueer peoples remind Indigenous peoples and the trans communities that belonging to a community should not require a Western medicalized transition to justify or legitimize an artificial colonial gender binary. Nigig is not a Two-Spirit woman because she fits a certain binary or undergoes medical transition, but because she is recognized and validated by her kin within her own community. Stories like Pyle's and Simpson's depict futures where trans lives may be written into the future and imagines alternative complex kinship relationships when the colonial Western gender binary is still permitted. Regardless, Pyle's and Simpson's short stories inspire narratives of hope despite the dystopian-present and the destructive dehumanizing erasure of Native Apocalypse.

Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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