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Article abstract

US settler colonialism deploys metapolitical force against Indigenous epistemologies of land and body to destroy, erase, and contain Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood. Literary and visual grammars are crucial to these settler biopolitical and necropolitical technologies -- and Indigenous resistance. “Love Poems: 1838–1839” by Cherokee Two-Spirit poet scholar Qwo-Li Driskill challenges a settler-colonial cartography of time and space by disrupting the visual grammars of settler colonialism as they manifest in literary forms and rules. Driskill resists and refuses how settlers use writing as a visual and literary activity both to produce and reproduce time as linear and land as fungible object. Creating a specifically Indigenous literary/visual cartography of a Sovereign Erotic, I argue that Driskill disrupts settler heteronormativity of writing/mapping land and body, by impressing an Indigenous literary and visual form onto the page. These cartographies rewrite/map time and space according to Indigenous knowledges and practices of land and love. “Love Poems 1838–1839” is, then, a poem which is both story and map of erotic sovereignty as a crucial component of Indigenous nationhood and presence on the lands of the Americas.

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**“WHO GAVE YOUR BODY BACK TO YOU?” LITERARY AND
VISUAL CARTOGRAPHIES OF EROTIC SOVEREIGNTY IN THE
POETRY OF QWO-LI DRISKILL**

NAVEEN MINAI

Abstract: US settler colonialism deploys metapolitical force against Indigenous epistemologies of land and body to destroy, erase, and contain Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood. Literary and visual grammars are crucial to these settler biopolitical and necropolitical technologies -- and Indigenous resistance. “Love Poems: 1838–1839” by Cherokee Two-Spirit poet scholar Qwo-Li Driskill challenges a settler-colonial cartography of time and space by disrupting the visual grammars of settler colonialism as they manifest in literary forms and rules. Driskill resists and refuses how settlers use writing as a visual and literary activity both to produce and reproduce time as linear and land as fungible object. Creating a specifically Indigenous literary/visual cartography of a Sovereign Erotic, I argue that Driskill disrupts settler heteronormativity of writing/mapping land and body, by impressing an Indigenous literary and visual form onto the page. These cartographies rewrite/map time and space according to Indigenous knowledges and practices of land and love. “Love Poems 1838–1839” is, then, a poem which is both story and map of erotic sovereignty as a crucial component of Indigenous nationhood and presence on the lands of the Americas.

Résumé: L'idéologie des colons américains déploie une force métapolitique contre les épistémologies autochtones de lieu et de corps afin de détruite, d'effacer et de contenir la souveraineté et le sentiment de nation des Autochtones. Les grammaires littéraires et visuelles sont essentielles aux technologies biopolitiques et nécropolitiques de ces colons—et à la résistance autochtone. “Love Poems: 1838-1839” du poète et érudit Qwo-Li Driskill de la nation Cherokee Two-Spirit, remet en cause la cartographie spatiale et temporelle coloniale des colons en perturbant les grammaires visuelles colonialistes telles qu'elles se manifestent dans les formes et les règles littéraires. Driskill résiste et refuse la manière dont les colons utilisent l'écriture comme une activité visuelle et littéraire visant à produire et reproduire le temps comme un concept linéaire et le lieu comme un objet fongible. En créant une cartographie littéraire et visuelle spécifiquement autochtone d'un Erotique Souverain, j'avance que Driskill interrompt l'hétéronormativité coloniale de l'écriture et la cartographie du lieu et du corps, en imposant une forme littéraire et visuelle indigène sur les pages. Ces cartographies redécrivent et redessinent l'espace et le temps selon les savoirs autochtones ainsi que leurs pratiques du lieu et de l'amour. “Love Poems 1838-1839” est donc un poème qui raconte et dessine la carte de la souveraineté érotique comme une composante cruciale du sens de nation et de la présence autochtones sur le territoire des Amériques.

When you first open Qwo-Li Driskill's (Cherokee) *Walking with Ghosts* to pages 56 and 57, you don't notice the words; you notice the spaces in between the words. This is because there are two names in dark block letters at the top of the page next to one another:

TENNESSE

INDIAN TERRITORY

Just like that. Then there are words underneath each name but you can't read the words under each name without reading the words under the other name because there isn't that much space between the words. It's a slim book of poetry.

Then you notice the name of the poem: "Love Poems: 1838–1839." Yet this is singular poem—so what is the 's' for?

Then you notice the first words under TENNESSEE and INDIAN TERRITORY across the space between them:

What was left behind?

I know you were driven away,
taken from everything that
taught you love

Who was driven away from where and had to leave behind what? What love was this you driven away from? Did this happen in 1838? It's the first date in the title after all.

In this essay, I use visual and literary analysis to read Driskill's poem, "Love Poems: 1838–1839." I argue that Driskill challenges a settler-colonial cartography of time and space by disrupting what Mishuana Goeman (Seneca) calls the visual grammars of settler colonialism (236) as they manifest in literary cartographies of time and place. Driskill resists and refuses how settlers use writing as a visual and literary activity both to produce and reproduce time as linear and space

as land as fungible object (Rifkin 72). Driskill asserts Cherokee sovereignty in several forms, which are components of Cherokee sovereignty and nationhood: what Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) details as literary sovereignty (Vizenor vii-7), what Robert Warrior (Osage) defines as intellectual sovereignty (1-20) and what Driskill has termed erotic sovereignty (50-64) through their writing as a literary and visual activity.

Mishuana Goeman and Glen Coulthard (Dene) have demonstrated that settler epistemologies map time as linear in order to alienate land from body and people, as categories of both experience and nation. Land then becomes a fungible object, and Indigenous nations are dislocated and displaced from both their homelands and from time, in what Anne McClintock terms anachronistic space (66). According to the linear time of settler historiography (and thus History), Indigenous nations are located in the temporal space of the past, which means that they are not present on their lands in both senses of the word: not there on the land and not there in the present and future of the new nation-state of the United States of America. Land is converted (pun intended) into the fungible object and territory of the U.S. state and civil society. This straight line of time also seals Indigenous nations and their experiences of the biopolitical (Foucault 135-159) and necropolitical (Mbembe 11-40) violence of settler colonialism in the past. The continuous and structural nature of settler colonialism is therefore concealed (Wolfe 388). As Lorenzo Veracini points out, settler narratives of nationalism and territory are temporal ones: Indigenous peoples lived here long ago but they refused modernity and progress and therefore no longer exist, which also means that the genocidal violence that may (or may not) have been committed against them is over (Veracini 95-116).

Linear time is heteronormative time (Halberstam 1-21). In *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*, Scott Morgensen demonstrates that settler line as linear time is heteronormative time (1-30). Deborah Miranda (Ohlone-Costanoan) has shown that this is a necropolitical technology of settler colonialism in that heteronormativity is a logic of settler conquest which dictated the genocide of Indigenous nations for their non-monogamous non-heterosexual modes and practices of gender, sexuality, and sex (253-284).

Settlers marked these modes and practices as both immoral according to heteronormative standards and discourses of savage as primitive. Thus, settler heteronormativity dislocates Indigenous nations to the past with no place in the present and future of the U.S. precisely because both are defined by heteronormative futurity (Morgensen 31-54).

Writing is pivotal to this settler cartography of time: diplomacy, law, historiography, maps, literature are part of what Michel Foucault terms regimes of truth that produce linear time as a material and epistemic reality. I argue that literary form is as much part of these regimes, borrowing from Jace Weaver's (Cherokee) definition of literary creation as follows: "to impress form on the relative formlessness of a life or a culture, to exercise selectivity over what is included and what excluded, is an act of literary creation" (ix). Alongside, I use visual culture to read a literary text based on my interpretation of Scott Richard Lyons' (Leech Lake Ojibwe) work in *X Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*. Lyons examines the Xs made by leaders of Indigenous Nations on treaties with settler governments as a metaphor for different positions and strategies Indigenous peoples have used to negotiate with settler epistemologies and institutions (1-34). I take up Lyons' notion of X marks to think of writing as a literary and visual activity, to think of writing as marks on the page, and to think of both the marks and the page as equally important components of writing. An act of literary creation includes making use of words and symbols as much as the space of the page.

Thus, I contend that along with writing in terms of words, grammar, numbers, the rules of linearity in literary form are also crucial for the production and reproduction of settler time. Writing, like cartography, is both a literary and visual activity used in settler regimes of truth to produce land as fungible object. Writing and cartography both produce marks on a page, and both the marks on the page and the spaces between those marks on the page constitute the meaning of the text—whether it is a poem or a map. Writing, like mapping, creates and recreates settler modes of time, and therefore necessarily space, on the page.

Settler modes of time and space are written in three important ways. First, the vertical placement of poetic text on the page in English re-

produces the linearity of settler time. Second, the use of metaphor in-scribes land and body in two different conceptual domains that create alienation and enable the objectification of both. Third, the use of gendered pronouns (he and she) collapses sex, gender, and sexuality—which is itself a collapse of practice and desire into identification as a biopolitical technology—within a heterosexual matrix (Butler 22-34).

Driskill disrupts each of these biopolitical and necropolitical technologies in settler literary and visual cultures in “Love Poems: 1838–1839.” They do not place the text (words, symbols, numbers) vertically on the page. They do not use metaphor to write land and body. And they do not use gendered pronouns, so that the reader cannot see and therefore cannot read sex, gender, and sexuality through the heterosexual matrix.

What Driskill doesn’t do can be read as resistance to settler literary and visual grammars. I contend that what Driskill does is an act of literary and erotic sovereignty. To borrow from Weaver, they impress a specifically Indigenous form onto the page to create an Indigenous literary and visual grammar that rewrites and reshapes time and space on the page. This rewriting and reshaping of time and space on the page is part of what Driskill calls the “survival cartographies” (Driskill 55), that is, written literatures rooted in Indigenous stories as epistemologies of land, body, and intimacy. These stories are literary and visual maps of what Jodi Byrd (Chickasaw) calls the “sacred geographies that constitute Indigenous peoples’ histories” (118), to which Driskill returns to articulate a Sovereign Erotic as an act of decolonization (Driskill 58).

Lines

First, verticality. The first sign of verticality as part of the literary and visual grammar of settler time is in the title of the poem: “Love Poems: 1838–1839.” The dates 1838 and 1839 indicate the historical context and subject of the poem: the Trail of Tears, which was the forced removal of the Cherokee (and other Nations, including the Choctaw) from their homelands in what is currently Tennessee to what was then known as Indian Territory (currently known as Oklahoma).

The distinctness of the two columns and the imperative to order this distinctness vertically is signaled by three literary and visual components. The dates indicate the distinctness of the two columns because the dash marks linear movement in both time and space: Tennessee (1838) to Indian Territory (1839). The dash also indicates both the span of the Trail of Tears, and that the Trail of Tears is sealed in time with a beginning in 1838 and an end in 1839.

Alongside, the title indicates a plurality: love poems. This is confirmed by the colon which precedes the dates. There is one poem (singular) but the title contains a plural (poems); furthermore, there are two dates (1838 and 1839) and two names for two columns (Tennessee and Indian Territory). Therefore, each column could be read as a separate poem, emphasized by the colon's function to signal a list of items.

The words, the dash, and the dates marked thus on the page delineate the distinctness of the two columns, and the nature of this delineation: the linearity of their location in history – and therefore, how the columns should be marked or delineated on pages 56 and 57.

According to settler literary and visual grammars, Tennessee should be written (placed) on the first page, and Indian Territory should be written (placed) on the second page because 1839 comes after 1838 in settler imaginaries of time. This location of Tennessee and Indian Territory one after another in a vertical order would correspond to and reproduce linear time. Verticality is the recognizable and familiar literary and visual form of time and history. And it is time that determines the ordering of space, including movements: the movement from 1838 to 1839 dictates a linear movement in time and therefore in space, from Tennessee in 1838 to Indian Territory in 1839.

To borrow from Ann Laura Stoler, this settler-colonial order of things (1-54) also dictates that Indian Territory comes after Tennessee because linearity is also singularity. It is again time that determines location in space, which means that there is a singularity to who and what is in this space on the page: one experience, one set of words, followed by another in singular, linear time. Settler logics of literary and visual form reproduce and reinforce these rules of linear time on the poetic space through writing and placement in this space.

Goeman has demonstrated that settler-colonial hierarchies of forms of life and experience are constructed along a single straight line of Time and History (23-34). Linear time is the biopolitical and necropolitical technology used to construct narratives of civilization and modernity. The U.S. settler state deploys linear time as a necropolitical technology to force the Cherokee to move from 1838 to 1839 as a straight line on a map of the Americas because they are marked as savage by settler time, and therefore as dispensable by settler metapolitical force (Rifkin 90). This is how a map of the Americas is re-marked as a map of the United States of America. This is how the American state and nation is territorialized through the violent accumulation of life and land. The land of the Cherokee is remapped as American territory and the Cherokee are now out of time and out of place. They are sealed in the background of the origin story of the United States (Goeman 24-26), re-located in anachronistic space.

The forced removal of the Cherokee is about both emptying the lands of Indigenous Nations and about disrupting Indigenous epistemologies that are rooted in the land and in which land is a living entity. The settler epistemic centering of time and the construction of time as linear produce land as dead space (Goeman 31), or a thing that can be owned and traded. In settler literary and visual grammars, land becomes blank space which is the background to the words on the page.

Driskill writes Tennessee and Indian Territory side by side on these pages. This means that the reader cannot help but see (read) both on the page in front of them. They constitute and complete the poem together on the space of the page, which is confirmed by the colon visible in the title of the poem. The colon precedes the dates and signals the presence of both Tennessee and Indian Territory on the same page, which the linearity of settler literary form as cartographic form would make absent and hence separate in both time and place. This would also separate the narrative in and of Tennessee and Indian Territory from each other, which would seal each narrative on separate pages in a reproduction and reinforcement of sealing the effects of settler violence on Indigenous nations in time (Goeman 24-26)—the page can be turned and the past is no longer visible on the page the reader is presently reading.

Here the reader cannot read what happens in each column as separated by linear time reproduced and reinforced by vertical poetic form in a settler literary imagination. Here the reader must read Tennessee and Indian Territory side by side at the same time; the reader must read 1838 and 1839 side by side at the same time. The words of Tennessee and the words of Indian Territory in 1838 and 1839 are both grounded in the same poetic space of the same page. Therefore, the space of this page becomes the epistemic anchor, rather than time. As Coulthard has discussed, this is a crucial distinction between Indigenous and settler epistemologies (79). This means that the white space of the page becomes more than background to the black marks on the page; the white space is no longer background as distant from the reader as viewer; it is no longer dead space which is only functional for the marks on the page. Rather, this space matters.

The sentences of each poetic textual voice move into each other's space on the page. Through both the different lengths of the sentences and the placement of verses of each poetic voice, the movement of text on the page recalls and creates the visual effect of a river. The words move across the page, which also means that the space between the words and sentences and poetic voices is no longer blank where blank means dead space, space only as background. The textual space between and around Tennessee and Indian Territory is vital for the words and sentences to move. Poetic textual space, then, as the writing (mapping) of land is no longer blank space as a thing, or as background. It is the ground of the poetic voice; it is the space where the poetic voices of Tennessee and Indian Territory as persons is grounded. The space in between and around the poetic textual voices is the literary and visual ground that anchors and makes possible the personhood of Tennessee and Indian Territory.

Moreover, the reader cannot read (see) the poetic textual voices of Tennessee and Indian Territory without each other so that there are two voices speaking simultaneously as a literary and visual experience. The reader is therefore caught in the poetic space between Tennessee and Indian Territory. This means that the reader is in between time too: 1838 (Tennessee) and 1839 (Indian Territory), and the reader located in 2005 as the date of publication of *Walking with Ghosts*. Temporality, therefore, is reconfigured as an experience of space in between

through poetic form within a Cherokee epistemology, rather transcendence through linearity according to settler logics of time and space.

The centering of space rather than time means that the marks Tennessee makes on the page are no longer sealed in 1838 as the past with the turning of the page, separate from the marks Indian Territory makes on page. Both sets of marks are formed and placed in relation to each other, which highlights their relationship: Tennessee is the homeland the Cherokee were forced to leave behind and Indian Territory is the name of the place designated by the U.S. settler state where the Cherokee were forcibly relocated to. The marks made on Tennessee, Indian Territory, and the Cherokee by settler violence are placed on these pages. This is Driskill's defiance of settler epistemologies, which deploy linearity to seal settler violence in a distinct and distant past that can be dismissed and erased by the turning of a page.

Both of them speak to a "you," which I argue is Driskill located in the space on the page between Indian Territory and Tennessee. This is evident not only through the context of the Trail of Tears referenced by the dates in the title. The forms of necropolitical violence that the U.S. settler state inflicts on the Cherokee and Tennessee are catalogued in the poem—as is the survival and resistance of the Cherokee, which is grounded in Indian Territory. Settler literary and visual grammars work to erase the marks of violence on Indigenous nations through linear time: you can turn the page and the trauma of Tennessee will be left behind. You can use verticality to seal Tennessee and Indian Territory on each page one after another, and seal each in 1838 and 1839.

Driskill refuses to obey the settler directive to forget. Instead, they document the methods and effects of settler violence alongside the technologies deployed by the U.S. settler state to dismiss and erase the trauma, loss, and grief of the Cherokee. Driskill's writing serves to both name and remember the marks left on Indigenous nations by this violence, and to mark these traumas as structural and ongoing.

There are four verses in parentheses under "Tennessee." The first three of the four verses are a catalogue of mechanisms of settler-colonial violence against the Cherokee. The verses in parentheses are opposite in content, tone, and feeling to the verses not in parentheses: the former catalogue settler-colonial violence, while the latter catalogue Chero-

kee modes of love, intimacy, and sensuality in the relationship between land and body as defined in Cherokee epistemology.

Parentheses are used to designate asides, explanations, or afterthoughts; sentences are considered complete without the thoughts expressed within parentheses. Yet here the content of the verses in parentheses is about precisely the attempted destruction of what is written in the verses that are not in parentheses. The verses in parentheses answer the question of why Driskill had to leave Tennessee behind and what was left behind. Hence the verses in parentheses are not asides or afterthoughts; rather, they are crucial to the poem.

The content and tone of these verses disrupts the pleasurable experience of the verses not in parentheses for the reader in a parallel of the disruption of the pleasure between Tennessee and Driskill. Even in moments of pleasure for the reader, the verses in parentheses are unforgettable because they are an undercurrent of the trauma endured by Tennessee and Driskill. In a settler literary and visual grammar, parentheses serve to seal and contain the violence of the U.S. settler state. However, this trauma cannot be contained between the marks of the parentheses on the page; rather, the effects of settler violence and the attempts by the U.S. state to seal those effects in the past is marked indelibly on the page through Driskill's performative use of the marks of the parentheses. Driskill marks how the U.S. settler state tries to contain these violent disruptions as historical asides or afterthoughts, whereas they are central to the creation of the U.S. and constitute ongoing trauma for the Cherokee.

I argue that in the context of the grammatical function of the parentheses, one way to read the volume of verses in parentheses in this column is that of a whisper. Tennessee whispers of the violence and trauma of forced removal from both land and systems of knowledge and meaning rooted in the land to Driskill. The volume indicates the force with which the U.S. settler state has removed the Cherokee from Tennessee, and the force with which the Cherokee are compelled by the U.S. state to forget their trauma and loss. Yet the words Tennessee whispers to Driskill are marked on the page and pivotal to the subject of the poem. This then is Tennessee's stubborn defiance of the physical and epistemic structural violence of the U.S. settler state. Mem-

ory is evidence and archive, and it is archived in the form of poetry on these pages—and memories of Cherokee nationhood, epistemology, and trauma are honoured through the poetic marks on these pages by Driskill as a Cherokee Two-Spirit poet.

This is Driskill's literary and visual refusal of how linear settler time seals the structural nature and effects of settler colonialism into the past, which also enables U.S. nationhood and statehood to rest on the refusal to acknowledge the contemporary presence of Indigenous nations. Driskill subverts the literary and visual function of the parentheses, transforming them through their relationship to the other marks on the page from literary signs of concealment to visual signs of disruption.

I argue that these parentheses function as marks of an Indigenous archive of feeling (Rifkin 25-36) within this poem, which means that this poem functions as an archive of the ways in which settler colonialism is a structure not an event (Wolfe 388). As Rifkin reminds us, one of the key biopolitical technologies of the U.S. settler state is to relegate the feelings and experiences of Indigenous nations to the realm of the personal and the individual in order to conceal the structural, ongoing, and violent nature of settler colonialism (Rifkin 30-36). This is a deployment of metapolitical force as sovereignty, whereby the U.S. state asserts sovereignty by determining the terms and categories for the legibility of life. This includes literary and visual forms and grammars—the form of an archive, the grammar of a poem, memory as marks made on the page, and memory as the evidence of histories of settler violence. Writing is crucial to the settler binary between memory and history in which memory is personal, individual, and affective and therefore not public or collective. Poetry as an archive of feeling and memory of the land of Tennessee is Driskill's challenge to the metapolitical force deployed by the U.S. settler state.

The first verse in parentheses indexes two forms of settler violence against the Cherokee: “(Did you know they tried to/erase you, forbade me to/speak your name?)” (Driskill 56). The word “erase” signals the physical forced removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee, which is also the removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee as the source of their knowledge, thought, and consciousness. These systems of meaning in-

clude the terms of legibility for land, body, gender, sexuality, and relationships, referenced here in the “love formulas,” “dark syllables,” and “incantations” (Driskill 56) that are grounded in the land of Tennessee.

The sovereignty of the U.S. settler state is based on the destruction of the Cherokee and their systems of knowledge and meaning. This is because the land of Tennessee must be emptied of the Cherokee and their relationships to the land in order to be transformed into the territory of the U.S. state and then into property of American citizens. This transformation pivots on the alienation of body and land; bodies also become commodities within settler epistemologies.

The work of feminist and queer of colour scholars such as Michelle Alexander and Grace Hong has shown that this is always already a racialized and gendered process in which certain bodies are owned as commodities by other bodies (Alexander 1-94) and categorized as such in legal, social, and political terms (Hong 31-106). White supremacy and heteropatriarchy are both key logics and mechanisms (Smith 66-73) through which this alienation of body and land and the commodification of both are produced and reproduced in the U.S. Thus, the U.S. settler state targets both the physical presence of the Cherokee, and Cherokee logics of land, body, personhood, and nationhood for erasure.

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Writing is central to settler erasure of Cherokee logics of land and body and is deployed in several ways. Settler frameworks of knowledge prioritize writing over orality within a linear temporal narrative of civilization and modernity whereby orality is seen as primitive and savage and writing is the mark of progress and facticity. Indigenous nations are also written out of the present and future of the U.S. nation-state by being located in anachronistic space (McClintock 66) in American political, cultural, and intellectual structures and production. Meanwhile, the land of the Americas is remade as the national territory of the U.S. through the use of the map as a settler-colonial technology that produces land as dead space through visual and literary taxonomies (Goeman 236). Within these literary and visual grammars, metaphor is pivotal for the alienation of body and land, as is the gendered binary be-

tween the personal and political, which divides labour, space, relationships, and experiences.

Commodification of bodies and land is underpinned by these logics. This is why “the erotic is not the realm of personal consequence only” (Driskill 52), and erotic sovereignty is necessary for Indigenous nationhood.

That the U.S. settler state “forbade me to speak your name” (Driskill 56) marks the political and cultural silence the U.S. has tried to impose on the Cherokee. This silence is imposed not only on Cherokee vocabularies of land, body, and nationhood but also on the articulation of the trauma and grief the Cherokee have endured because of settler violence.

Settler literary and visual grammars are crucial to the imposition of this silence. Their presence is both based on and reinforces the removal of Cherokee literary and visual forms and practices. Settler literary and visual cultures in the U.S. locate Indigenous nations in landscapes of the past, and thereby contain them in the past through linearity in cultural form, vocabulary, and practice. Indeed, the land of the Americas is transformed into an empty landscape through these literary and visual cultures (Goeman 235-265). Moreover, the replacement of Indigenous literary and visual cultures with settler literary and visual grammars through the removal of Indigenous nations on the land of the Americas means that Indigenous knowledge and meaning are not transmitted intergenerationally. The Cherokee cannot speak Tennessee’s name and Tennessee cannot be articulated as lover because those formulas and syllables have been erased and forbidden in settler literary and visual cultures.

These literary and visual grammars are crucial to settler-colonial structures because it is through these cultures that narratives of the settler state are constructed. It is through these grammars that the figures of the savage Indian, the adventurous pioneer, the damsel in distress, and the poor farmer are created against a background of a landscape of the Americas always already emptied of Indigenous nations because they are not legible as sovereign polities according to settler definitions (Rifkin 88-92). These figures are transformed by turning the pages through and of a linear history of the American Dream: the pioneer-

farmers fight the British empire (Clark and Nagel 109-130) to become proto-American citizens (Veracini 1-15; 95-116) and rescue the damsels in distress from the savage Indians (Klopotek 251-274). The savage Indians become tragic and noble (Klopotek 251-274), disappearing from what is now the national sovereign territory of the U.S. in which the damsels in distress fight for universal suffrage as a mark of American exceptionalism and the American Dream (Morgensen 1-54). You turn the page and the figure of the Indian disappears as the figure of the American citizen appears.

The settler violence documented in this poem as Tennessee's testimony in the verses in parentheses contradicts these literary and visual narratives and their affective force. The second verse in parentheses is: "(After they seized you/they told me not to touch/anyone again.)" (Driskill 56). These verses in parentheses resist the U.S. national mythology of the nature and form of contact between Indigenous nations and settler colonists as one of civilization: the word "seized" in the second verse in parentheses connotes the force with which Driskill and Tennessee were separated by the U.S. settler state, a physical contact that is violent and sudden. These verses indict the U.S. settler state as a violent one that deployed illegal force against Indigenous nations (Rifkin 90). There is nothing inevitable here about the turning of the page as an act of linear time; instead, the meaning of the marks on the page and the turning of it in settler literary and visual grammars is highlighted.

Rifkin notes that Driskill's poetry attends to structures of feeling experienced by Indigenous peoples as effects of settler violence (Rifkin 45-92). The words "anyone again" (Driskill 56) connote a powerful undercurrent of loneliness, isolation, and loss of pleasure and love for Tennessee (and Driskill). This is highlighted by the immediately preceding sentence that pauses at the word "touch," and by the emphatic fact of this sentence containing only two words. Here, the word "anyone" means nobody else, while "again" carries a lonely resonance of continuous time. Love, pleasure, and sex are grounded in the relationship between land and body as that of lovers in Cherokee systems of meaning. The forced removal of Driskill from Tennessee is a removal from land as lover, land as home, and from land as the source of knowledge (Goeman 24-34) and knowledge of pleasure that sustains and nourishes Driskill.

Feelings are marked as specifically political matters in this poem. Pain is indicated in the last two lines of this verse: “My bones shriek like trains/filled with Nations!” (Driskill 56). The visual and aural sign of “bones shriek” conveys a visceral account of pain precisely because of how unusual this phrase is: this is a bone-deep (a more familiar turn-of-phrase) pain. However, this is more than metaphor precisely because throughout the poem Driskill the poet has been pushing against the rules and boundaries of English as a settler-colonial language and the ways in which it has been deployed to contain, destroy, and erase Cherokee logics and practices of nationhood.

The word “seized” connotes not only the violence of forced removal but also the settler dictate to “not touch/anyone again,” that is, the settler prohibition of Cherokee forms of collectivity. This includes reservations, residential schools, war, famine, and the destruction and restriction of resources for survival from Indigenous communities through environmental degradation of Indigenous spaces, violation of treaty rights to hunting and fishing spaces, and mining. In other words, settler colonialism enforces the rule to “not touch/anyone again” (Driskill 56) by destroying and restricting the land which Cherokee nationhood is grounded in.

The trauma of settler violence is embedded in Driskill’s bones, beneath skin, muscle, and blood. The magnitude of settler-colonial violence is such that Driskill’s bones have felt and borne witness to this pain and trauma. The experience of trauma is reemphasized by Driskill’s use of the word “shriek,” which means to scream and/or a sharp, shrill cry, and the two emotions associated with this type of sound are terror and pain. This constructs a visual and aural experience for the reader of the degree of physical violence of the forced removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee.

The U.S. settler state also forces loneliness and isolation on Tennessee as a necropolitical tool against the Cherokee, to try and destroy the ways in which Cherokee make home, make community, make love. As Driskill and Sara Ahmed have argued, feelings are political matters (Ahmed 1-19), and they are grounded in both time and space (Driskill 50-64). The loneliness and isolation the Cherokee feel is a direct consequence of the forced removal from Tennessee, the homeland in which

their frameworks, vocabularies, and experiences are grounded. Feelings, then, are not just effects of settler violence but also evidence of the structural nature of settler colonialism (Rifkin 1-44).

Yet the words “tried to” signal that the U.S. settler state’s deployment of metapolitical force as necropolitical violence is incomplete and unsuccessful. This is evident in the marks Driskill has made on these pages, which mark the survival of Cherokee logics of land and body. Driskill not only speaks Tennessee’s name, but they also name Tennessee as their lover in and according to Cherokee formulas, syllables, and incantations of nationhood in which land is a living entity. Driskill refuses settler colonial logics of land as thing, as property (Goeman 23-33)—and in English no less, through a subversive deployment of the rules of grammar and form.

Sovereignty is also asserted by Driskill’s capitalization of the word “Nations” in defiance of the U.S. settler state’s use of physical, cultural, and intellectual violence against Indigenous nations. This highlights the difference between nation and state here as well, defying the definition of the U.S. as a nation-state in which Indigenous nations are considered a racialized minority rather than sovereign nations according to the settler-colonial epistemologies of political modes of community. Driskill does this through the rules of English grammar: capitalization is supposed to be used sparingly, for proper nouns, such as names of nations, states, and national communities with citizenship—such as Americans. Furthermore, capitalization is used to focus attention on particular elements in terms of what distinguishes them/that element from others. Therefore, the capitalization of the word “Nations” here by Driskill indicates precisely that the Cherokee refuse to comply with the U.S. settler state’s exercise of metapolitical authority to categorize Indigenous Nations as racialized minorities in order to both destroy and contain them. This is Driskill’s emphasis on the Cherokee as a sovereign nation whose lands are occupied with violent force by the U.S. settler state, and of their refusal to comply with settler-colonial definitions of sovereignty and nation.

The fact that Tennessee is testifying to settler-colonial violence is evidence of how these attempts to contain and destroy the Cherokee have failed and are incomplete, even as they are traumatic. The last verse in

parentheses indicates this space in between trauma and survival, between the failure and magnitude of settler colonial violence: “(Or was it a map, coded/to find your way back to me?)” (Driskill 57)

There is more uncertainty in this verse than the other verses in parentheses; the second verse in parentheses is a statement, while first and third are rhetorical questions indicated by the grammatical combination of the phrase “Did you know.” In contrast, this last verse in parentheses reads as sincere question, containing uncertainty, possibility, and hope—of Driskill finding their way back to Tennessee.

The map refers to the “quilt appliqued stars” (Driskill 57) in the previous verse not in parentheses. This indicates Tennessee wondering (hoping) if that quilt could help Driskill “remember the birth of the Milky Way” (Driskill 57), remember Cherokee knowledge systems of the universe in which land is a lover who gives pleasure and knowledge. The reference to the visual sign of a map is important here, also constructed through the visual of the Milky Way in the quilt appliqued with stars. The Milky Way appears as a dim, glowing band arching across the sky, a mythological and visual path for Driskill to follow which only they can read as such—hence why it is “a map, coded” (Driskill 57)—because both they and Tennessee are located within a Cherokee epistemology.

Yet while there is hope in this question, there is also uncertainty as to whether Driskill can go back in both the literal and figurative meanings of the word “map” here, of returning to Tennessee as both Cherokee homeland and of remapping Tennessee according to Cherokee logics of sovereignty and land. This uncertainty is highlighted by the fact that this verse in parentheses is located between two verses not in parentheses across the page in the column titled, “Indian Territory”: “Hush. This is home now” (Driskill 57).

While this experience of being caught in between can be read as an effect of structural, hence continuous, settler violence, I argue that it can also be read here as a double-woven narrative (Driskill 73-75). Driskill proposes the use of the Cherokee basket weaving practice of double-weaving as a method of storytelling, arguing that in a double-woven design, two contradictory narratives and the tensions between them are maintained in the creation of a new narrative. I argue that in lo-

cating “you” between Tennessee and Indian Territory, in between 1838 and 1839, and in between 1838—1839 and 2005, Driskill has written a double-woven narrative. The tension between pain and pleasure, the lover left behind and the lover who makes space for that loss, the loss of “everything that/taught you love” (Driskill 56) and rewriting those Cherokee logics of land and love in English—these tensions are held on to and rooted in the poetic space (rather than time) of the page.

This is confirmed by what Indian Territory says to Driskill earlier in the poem: “I don’t expect you to forget/only to love me as well” (Driskill 56). This signals a specific mode of love that Indian Territory creates for Driskill in the rest of the poem, which resists the settler demand for Driskill to forget and turn the page on being “driven away/taken from everything that/taught you love.” “I know” is Indian Territory’s recognition of the violence Driskill has experienced; this love has space on the page for Driskill’s grief and loss along with comfort and pleasure: “This is home now.” Therefore, “Hush/This is home now” is not an echo of settler dictates that the Cherokee turn the page on Tennessee; rather, these verses are Indian Territory asking Driskill to allow and enable themselves to grieve, heal, and make home again with Indian Territory. This is how Driskill weaves another narrative in an act of literary sovereignty: this poem is a living archive of Cherokee logics of land, love, and literary creation. The marks Driskill has made on the page are located within Cherokee epistemology in which space is centered rather than time. Driskill does not deny the effects of settler violence on the Cherokee but they do not surrender to that violence either; instead, they mark both grief and survival through the marks on the pages of this poem.

Tennessee and Indian Territory both bear witness to the Trail of Tears and to Cherokee resistance to settler colonialism, and their testimony is memory as embodied experience. Here in a poetic space produced through Cherokee literary logics, memory is not cordoned off from history as the personal cordoned from political through the binaries of the heterosexual matrix (Rifkin 25-31), and the trauma of settler violence is not sealed in a finished past according to linear time. Memory is felt and living in the bodies of Tennessee, Indian Territory, and Driskill.

Topographies

This memory is of Cherokee epistemology, located in Tennessee and in the relationship between the Cherokee and Tennessee. This knowledge is of land as person in Cherokee systems of thought so that land is not a fungible object or property or dead space upon which nationhood and statehood is territorialized. Instead, land is a person with whom the Cherokee are in a relationship of mutual recognition and respect. Cherokee nationhood as a collectivity includes their homeland as a person rather than *terra nullius* (Wolfe 147).

This is the knowledge that the U.S. settler state “tried to/erase” (Driskill 56) to enable the alienation and commodification of body and land. This erasure requires that Tennessee be silent, that is, that Tennessee become a thing rather than a speaking subject. When the U.S. settler state “forbade me to speak your name” (Driskill 56), this prohibition is of the personhood of Tennessee—the Cherokee are forbidden from speaking Tennessee’s name as the name of a person in Cherokee. This articulation would be an assertion of Cherokee sovereignty because Cherokee nationhood is based in the mutual personhood of the Cherokee and Tennessee, and in the relationship between them. These logics of “collectivity and forms of sociospatiality” (Rifkin 23) are targeted for destruction and dismissal by the settler state in order to erase and replace Indigenous nations on the land of the Americas and transform the land into a fungible object and sovereign territory of the U.S.

A key mechanism by which the personhood of land is denied in settler logics is metaphor as a literary and visual grammatical function. Metaphor is a crucial component of the epistemology and ontology of settler colonialism, which is produced and reproduced in and through literary and visual grammars as settler grammars of place (Goeman 235-238). Goeman and Rifkin have argued that settler-colonial taxonomies of time and place reconfigure relationships between body and land by enacting an alienation between them. Land and body are reconfigured as property and commodity (Goeman 24-28) while, as Rifkin argues, body as “physicality, inter-subjectivity, and vulnerability is cordoned off” (Rifkin 28) within the category of the personal. Metaphor in English is the likening of two things located in different conceptual domains; thus it is through metaphor that settlers separate

land and body into two different conceptual domains so that each can then be objectified and commodified according to colonial and capitalist desires and technologies. Metaphor is a crucial literary and visual mechanism of how settler structures alienate land and body from each other in order to objectify and commodify both.

It is also therefore not a coincidence that decolonization is used as a metaphor in the settler colonial context of the U.S. to erase the realities of both settler colonialism and decolonization. In “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” Eve Tuck (Unangax) and K. Wayne Yang show that decolonization is often used as a metaphor and/or a synonym for social justice, civil rights, and human rights. They argue that decolonization is not commensurable with these goals in the settler-colonial context of the U.S. because decolonization is first and most importantly about a repatriation of land to Indigenous peoples. Therefore, decolonization is not, and cannot be, a metaphor (1-40).

This settler deployment of metaphor is what Driskill refuses in “Love Poems: 1838—1839” by writing land and body from within the same conceptual domain and centering land as the basis of their epistemic framework (Coulthard 79-83). The survival of Cherokee epistemology is marked in Driskill’s writing because they write Tennessee and Indian Territory as poetic textual voices signifying their personhood. In other words, Driskill writes Tennessee and Indian Territory as people. This is an act of literary sovereignty because Driskill writes the personhood of Tennessee and Indian Territory in English by naming them as the subjects—rather than objects—of the poem and as poetic speaking voices.

Let me reiterate and clarify: this is not anthropomorphism whereby an object, animal, or divine being is given human characteristics. Rather, Tennessee and Indian Territory are people: poetic textual subjects who speak. Both speak to Driskill directly through the use of the word “you” and the poem is from their point of view. Driskill centers Tennessee and Indian Territory as subjects by using “I,” “who,” “me,” and “my,” which are words in English that denote a person as a speaking subject. Tennessee asks, “What was left behind?” (Driskill 56), and testifies to the violence of the settler state: “(Did you know they tried to/ erase you, forbade me to/speak your name?).” Indian Territory asks, “Who gave your body/back to you?” (Driskill 57), and acknowledges

Driskill's trauma: "I know you were driven away/taken from every thing that/taught you love" (56). Land is a living entity as much as Driskill and the Cherokee are. The reader must read (see) Tennessee and Indian Territory as people here where here is poetic space mapped according to Cherokee literary and visual logics in which land is mapped as person.

This act of literary sovereignty is particularly poignant in the case of Indian Territory: "Indian Territory" is the name of the geographic location to which the U.S. settler state forcibly moved the Cherokee during what is now known as the Trail of Tears. It is a name, therefore, given to the land by the settler state and the purpose of the name as marking the property of the U.S. is evident in the name: "Indian" as the figure of the Indian who must be disappeared from the land, and "Territory" is the land as the area under the jurisdiction of a state. The latter also denotes the injustice yet to come after 1839: the statehood of Oklahoma. "Territory" is also defined as an organized division of a country not yet admitted to full rights of a state. It is no coincidence that this definition of "territory" is applicable to the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, or Australia—all settler-colonial states. This is because each state is founded upon the land mapped as territory through the genocide of Indigenous nations and their material and epistemic relationships to their homelands.

Driskill crafts their survival and defiance as a Cherokee Two-Spirit person by writing Indian Territory as person in English by rejecting the rules of English grammar. Land and body are not metaphors for each other in this poem, which is used to alienate land and body from each other through "literalizing legal narratives of land as fungible object" (Rifkin 72). Indian Territory as a settler-colonial cartographic invention cannot contain who Indian Territory is and what Indian Territory means to Driskill in Cherokee logics of land, body, and subjectivity.

This personhood is reaffirmed through Driskill's description of the bodies of Tennessee and Indian Territory. Tennessee reminds Driskill of their "arms, muscled rivers/you came to/each morning," while Indian Territory tells Driskill to "Love the winding trails to my belly/the valleys at my sternum" (Driskill 56). The topography of land is written therefore as the topography of body, reaffirming both the person-

hood of land and the definition of body and land through each other, in Cherokee logics. This is highlighted by words Driskill uses to mark the personhood of land: Tennessee's arms are not like muscled rivers; the skin and muscle of Indian Territory's belly are not like winding trails; and their sternum does not dip like a valley. There are no metaphors here. The reader cannot see (read) Tennessee and Indian Territory as objects or landscapes. Tennessee, Indian Territory, and Driskill are subjects located in the poetic space Driskill has remapped according to the "dark syllables" of Cherokee logics of land and body.

It is in these logics and relationships that Cherokee forms of sociospatiality and nationhood are located. This is why land and body are crucial epistemic categories targeted by the settler state for material and epistemic destruction (Miranda 253-284). The Cherokee are forcibly removed from Tennessee both because the U.S. settler state desires the accumulation of land as territory and property, and because Cherokee epistemology is grounded in their homelands and their relationship with their homeland as a person.

It is therefore in the space of these pages remapped according to Cherokee literary and visual logics that Driskill locates and marks their definition of land, body, and sociality. The marks they make on these pages make the space matter. Poetic space here becomes a sacred geography (Byrd 118) through an assertion of Cherokee literary and visual sovereignty. This matters because visual and literary grammars are part of the metapolitical force deployed by settler states against Indigenous nations to displace, disavow, and/or disassemble (Rifkin 23) their logics of land, body, and nationhood. The disruption of Indigenous relationships to land is "a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence" (Tuck and Yang 5).

Erotics

The relationship between Driskill, Tennessee, and Indian Territory that settler violence disrupts is the relationship between lovers. In other words, Tennessee and Indian Territory are not people who are strangers—they are lands as subjects or people defined as such through the framework of love and a loving relationship with Driskill and the Cherokee. Thus the framework of Cherokee sociospatiality is one of

lovers which is a specifically Cherokee ethics of relationality (Byrd 118).

This highlights not only the nature of how Cherokee nationhood is rooted in their homelands, but also underscores how body, eroticism, sexuality, pleasure, love, intimacy are all key categories of sovereignty. This is why the U.S. settler state deploys metapolitical force as a matter of sovereignty, that is, the force to determine the terms of legibility of life, which include eroticism, gender, sexuality, love, body, and intimacy. Cherokee concepts, practices, and experience of eroticism, love, pleasure, gender, sex, and sexuality are located in their homelands and in their relationship to their homelands as the relationship between lovers. The power to determine the meaning of these concepts, practices, and experience is a matter of sovereignty. This is why what Driskill calls erotic sovereignty matters.

It is these meanings which are targeted for destruction by the U.S. settler state through forced removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee. Tennessee asks, "What was left behind?" and reminds Driskill that it was "Love formulas/written in dark syllables,/whose incantation/undulated/like our tongues" (Driskill 56). The word "formula" refers to mathematical relationships expressed in symbols or methods for doing something; hence, the formulas of love that Driskill was forced to leave behind are Cherokee symbols and practices of eroticism, sex, intimacy, pleasure. This is emphasized by Driskill's use of the word "syllable," which refers to units of pronunciation or the sounds of how to love—the construction of language itself, rather than only a matter of translation. The words "formula" and "syllable" signal more than different words for love, sex, and intimacy; rather, they signal the construction of the systems of understanding and articulation that create those words and how those words sound and what they mean. It is Tennessee as land and lover who taught Driskill love (Driskill 56).

This is why it is not just what was left behind, but also who and where: Tennessee. Tennessee is the land (where) that was left behind and the lover (who) that was left behind. Forced removal from Tennessee also meant leaving behind Cherokee concepts, vocabularies, and practices for eroticism, love, sexuality, and pleasure. As Tuck and Yang argue, "Geopolitics and biopolitics are completely knotted together in a

settler colonial context” (35) precisely because sexuality, love, and intimacy are key categories epistemic and material sites through which settler biopower is deployed. Sexuality pivots on two poles: individual and population both defined through the category of body, that is, the body of the individual citizen and the body politic, which is population, which is nation (Foucault 135-159). The terms of legibility for both then are matters of sovereignty as the power of life and death. This is why gender, sexuality, love, sex, desire, and pleasure—the erotic—are matters of sovereignty and key mechanisms of settler biopower and necropower.

Driskill asserts erotic sovereignty in writing Tennessee and Indian Territory as their lovers according to Cherokee logics of land, body, and nationhood and, in writing both, how the U.S. settler state tried to destroy these logics and relationships.

Tennessee is marked as a lover first in the second verse: “Love formulas/written in dark syllables,/whose incantation/undulated/like our tongues” (Driskill 56). Since this is Tennessee speaking to Driskill here, the word “our” signals contact between Tennessee and Driskill. The nature of this contact is defined by the visual Driskill creates here: “undulated/like our tongues,” which is the visual of kissing constructed through the words “undulated” and “our tongues” in which the word “undulate” refers to a smooth sensuous movement, usually in time to a rhythm. In other words, this is Tennessee and Driskill kissing sensuously.

This kiss is sensuous and that sensuousness and this intimacy also contains knowledge: alongside their tongues, the word “undulated” is also used for the incantation or speaking of the “dark syllables” of Cherokee formulas of love. Thus, speaking these words, articulating these sounds, is like kissing. As Rifkin notes, “Voice here is physicalized as a pleasurable entwining with a lover” (72-73). Hence Cherokee forms and logics of intimacy, pleasure, and eroticism are written as both practice and words, as both touch and sound. Driskill creates a literary and visual sensuality by using the words “undulate” and “incantation”: the word “undulate” implies not only kissing but also a smooth and rhythmic movement of bodies as in dancing, while “incantation” signals chanting and spells in a world of magic. Thus, the “dark syllable

bles” of Cherokee formulas of love move like Tennessee and Driskill’s “tongues” do, a movement of both sound and touch, between body and land. This is how Tennessee taught Driskill Cherokee systems of meaning of Indigenous nationhood based in land as storied space (Goeman 24), land as a feeling entity (Rifkin 73), and land and body imagined, defined, and experienced through each other (Rifkin 13-24).

Driskill’s resistance to settler literary and visual deployment of metaphor to alienate body and land is reiterated in the fourth verse. The pleasure, eroticism, and love between Driskill and Tennessee and the reciprocity of definitions of body and land in Cherokee epistemology that is grounded in that relationship is “written in dark syllables” (Driskill 56): “My arms, muscled rivers/you came to/each morning” (Driskill 56). This is unusual imagery on an elemental level because rivers are liquid while muscles are solid—yet Driskill is disrupting the basis of these elemental oppositions in English by using this imagery to map the topography of the land of Tennessee as the body of Driskill’s lover. Tennessee cradled Driskill’s body every night; the rivers of the land are the arms of the lover, both strong in and through that relationship between Driskill and Tennessee. Tennessee’s rivers are arms that cradle Driskill but in between the rivers is also the land in topographic terms. Therefore, Driskill’s body is also the land of Tennessee, so that Tennessee and Driskill are defined in and through each other in reciprocal personhood based in love. The point is precisely that, as Lisa Tatonetti has argued, “the erotic consequently functions as body/land matrix” (xxi). Land and body are not metaphors for each other here in this poetic space, the sovereign literary and visual space of the Cherokee.

Tatonetti’s argument that the erotic is a theoretical concept that encompasses, “particularly, the experience, articulation, and generative nature of desire” (xix) is confirmed with vivid imagery in the sixth verse, in Driskill’s experience of the land as a lover as a generative experience. The sixth verse has a list of foods: corn, pumpkins, and tomatoes. The descriptions of these foods are sensuous and corporeal: rows of corn “ears swaying slightly on their stalks” recalls the undulation of Tennessee and Driskill’s tongues as they kiss in an earlier verse; the pumpkins are “thick with flesh” and the tomatoes are “swollen with juice” that is “so acidic/they could blister your lips” (Driskill 56). These

descriptions of both the food and the sensate experience of eating them are both sensual and sexual, that is, erotic. This reinforces the notion of land as lover beyond metaphor: the corn, pumpkins, and tomatoes given to Driskill by Tennessee is an experience of desire and pleasure, of sexual intimacy, and of the erotic as generative. The relationship between land and body is one of sensual pleasure, produced here through the senses of touch and taste just as touch and sound is underlined in the second verse. Land and body intersect to be defined through each as more than metaphor, and this definition is of shared corporeal pleasure between lovers.

The third verse in parentheses catalogues how the U.S. settler state forcibly removed the Cherokee from their homelands to use the lands as property and commodity: (“Did you know when you left/they drank every drop?”) (Driskill 57). The word “when” signifies how the forced removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee is integral to the founding of the U.S. The land of the Americas was not empty; rather, the origin story of the U.S. is based in the transformation of land into property and commodity, and the elimination of an ethics of relationality which includes land as the basis of nationhood. The Cherokee are removed from Tennessee and from their relationship to Tennessee so that the U.S. state can objectify and commodify Tennessee. “They drank every drop” (Driskill 57) signals how the U.S. settler state drained Tennessee of sustenance and nourishment (corn, tomatoes, pumpkins, formulas, syllables), which they gave to Driskill as a lover, based on reciprocal respect and pleasure between them—the erotics of sovereignty and nationhood.

The eighth verse emphasizes both the sensory and sensual relationship between land and body, and the corporeality of the memory of Tennessee, which is the memory of a Sovereign Erotic (Driskill 50-64). “A quilt appliqued with star” (Driskill 57) references a particular kind of quilt making, appliqué. This is a needlework technique in which a pattern or scene are created by attaching smaller pieces of fabric to larger pieces of contrasting color and/or texture. Thus, textural depth and sensation is highlighted here in the physical labour of making a quilt. The quilt itself is something you wrap around your body. Hence, over time, your body and the appliquéed quilt are, as Ahmed says, impressed

upon each other (1-19) so that the sensation of the stars applied onto the quilt are transferred to Driskill's body.

It is this sensation of these stars that contains the memory of "the birth of the Milky Way," (Driskill 57), that is, of Cherokee knowledge of the world. The word "birth" signals the beginning of the Milky Way, that is, the universe. Thus the "tactile sensations of embodiment" (Rifkin 71) present in the appliquéd quilt wrapped around Driskill's body are embodied memory of Cherokee epistemologies of the world and relationships within that world. Memory is knowledge mapped as sensuous and sensation, and is pressed through texture and touch onto Driskill's body, in the act of Driskill wrapping this quilt around their body. The quilt, Tennessee, and Driskill are all palimpsests of each other, of "pasts and presents that fluidly intersect, overlap, and rearrange through the *felt* experience of history and memory" (Tatonetti 146). This experience is felt as sensuous and sensual, as erotic. As Tatonetti argues, "the erotic, then, when acknowledged, is a decolonial imperative—to feel, to remember, to act—that is situated in the body" (xx).

The corporeality of feeling, memory, and action is highlighted in the last element of the list of what was left behind: "And your body's/silhouette/scratched forever into me" (Driskill 57). This is the silhouette of Driskill's body "scratched forever into" (Driskill 57) Tennessee. While the word "me" reinforces the personhood of Tennessee, the word "scratched" indicates a more emphatic relation between memory and body than the visual of a quilt. Instead of an appliquéd quilt, the word "scratched" signals the needle used to create quilts so that this visual is of something being sharply scratched or carved into surface or material. As Byrd has argued, "the land both remembers life and its loss and serves itself as a mnemonic device" (118) and this memory is corporeal through the erotic as "body/land matrix" (Tatonetti xxi). Thus, the body (politic) of the Cherokee and the body of Driskill is carved into the body of the land of Tennessee: "And your body's/silhouette/scratched forever into me" (Driskill 57).

Tennessee was left behind because of settler violence, both material and epistemic, and epistemic violence made material. The second verse in parentheses catalogues this: "(After they seized you/they told me not to touch/anyone again.)" This is Tennessee bearing witness to the set-

tlar-colonial prohibition of Cherokee erotics as sovereign erotics, that is, of Cherokee knowledge and practice of eroticism, pleasure, desire. This is not about the experience of touch but about the ability to touch and to be touched, the definition of the sense of touch. It is the formulas and syllables of the sense of touch as eroticism, as intimacy, as relationships between Tennessee and Driskill that the U.S. settler state “tried to erase” (Driskill 56).

This focus on the sense of touch is reiterated with the command the U.S. settler state issued to Tennessee after the forced removal of Driskill from Tennessee’s arms: “they told me not to touch/anyone again” (Driskill 56). The words “not to touch” is where the sentence pauses and breaks, signaling and underlining in visual and aural ways to the reader the sensory and affective force of the settler prohibition of Cherokee logics of body, land, and love. Alongside this, the word “erase” in the first verse in parentheses points to both the role of writing in the destruction of Cherokee nationhood, and to the sense of touch: the erasure of the marks of Cherokee nationhood from the land of Tennessee, the erasure of the personhood of Tennessee, the erasure of Driskill’s “body’s silhouette/scratched forever into” (Driskill 57) Tennessee. These logics underpin Cherokee forms of life and the terms of legibility for life. This is why they are the targets of the U.S. settler metapolitical authority (Rifkin 90), that is, the sovereign right to define the parameters of life and touch as the terms of contact and ethics of relationality between them.

“I know you were driven away,/taken from everything that/taught you love,” Indian Territory tells Driskill, acknowledging that they were driven away from their homeland. As Driskill writes in, “Stolen from Our Bodies,” “I have not only been removed from my homelands, I have also been removed from my erotic self and continue a journey back to my first homeland: my body” (53). As I have argued above, the body is a crucial site for settler-colonial biopower and necropower and categories of gender, sexuality, desire, and sex are key mechanisms by which a body—individual and collective—is defined. This is why definitions and practices of the erotic are, as Tatonetti argues, “not simply tied to but actually *constitutive of* sovereignty and Indigenous nationhood” (xviii).

Alongside writing Tennessee and Indian Territory as their lovers, Driskill marks the erotic sovereignty of the Cherokee on these pages in two other important ways that focus on the body as the first homeland from which the Cherokee have been forcibly removed by the U.S. settler state.

Driskill does not use gendered pronouns to write Tennessee and Indian Territory. This means that the reader cannot read (see) either poetic voice as gendered. This is a disruption of the literary and visual grammars of settler colonialism as heteropatriarchal grammars (Morgensen 31-54). As I have discussed above, linear time is key to the settler epistemic alienation of body and land, and is deployed as a biopolitical and necropolitical mechanism. The nature of this biopolitical and necropolitical technology is gendered and sexualized as heteropatriarchal.

In *When Did Indians Become Straight? Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty*, Rifkin argues that heteropatriarchy has been pivotal for “inserting Native peoples into structures of settlement” (29) and the destruction of Native sociospatiality (Rifkin 5). The terms of legibility of life in the U.S. are determined through the heterosexual matrix, which marks land and body as objects, heterosexuality as normative, gender as binary and the organization of life as personal and political according to that binary. These logics underpin the heteronormativity of eroticism (Driskill 50-64) in which body and sex become objects within sexuality as a settler regime of truth (Morgensen 1-30), and sexual love, desire, and pleasure (feelings) are relegated to the gendered and racialized realm of the individual and the person as separate from the collective and the public (Driskill 50-64).

Gender is a key component of settler use of metaphor to alienate land from body and objectify them both. As McClintock explains, land is transformed into property through the literary and visual notion of virgin land and/or the feminized body which is then occupied and owned by imperial forces (21-74). This is not coincidental, for as Morgensen’s work shows, dominant American modes of sexuality are determined by settler colonialism, that is, sexuality as a regime of truth in the U.S. is a settler sexuality (1-30). This pivots on the definition of gender and sexuality through the heterosexual matrix that creates gender as a binary and locates the two components of that binary (mascu-

line and feminine) in opposite conceptual domains in a move reminiscent of metaphor. I argue that the deployment of metaphor to alienate land and body is therefore a sexual and gendered deployment from the start, and is key to how land and body are objectified and commodified by settler-colonial structures. The sovereignty of the U.S. includes sexuality and it is a settler sexuality because it is defined, as Morgensen argues, “by attempting to replace Native kinship, embodiment, and desire” (23) with “the heteropatriarchal sexual modernity exemplary of white settler society” (ibid).

Literary and visual cultures are important sites and technologies for the construction and deployment of settler colonial epistemologies of body and land. Miranda demonstrates that Spanish conquistadors first targeted members of Indigenous nations for violent punishment (including death) whom they could not see (read) as either men or women according to the heteronormative visual cultures of Spain (253-284). Morgensen points out that Spanish, French, and British colonists used the category of “berdache” to denote Indigenous peoples who did not conform to their heteronormative forms of gender and sexuality. Berdache is an Orientalist term that was used to “condemn Middle Eastern and Muslim men as racial enemies of Christian civilization” (Morgensen 36) on the basis that their sexual practices and desires transgressed sexual morality and normativity, which was always already marked as heterosexual. This became a word in settler and colonial archives which U.S. anthropologists continued using until the 1970s when the concern and objection of Indigenous academics and activists began to be registered on a more visible scale (Morgensen 55-90). These words were used to locate Indigenous people in anachronistic space as a temporal moment before white heteropatriarchal modernity that is, as savage and primitive on a linear line of global and universal civilizational time (Goeman 23-34). This justified settler-colonial violence as a civilizational mission—the mythology of the touch of the United States with Indigenous nations as the civil and moral contact between a civilized nation and a savage people who are therefore excluded from the category of person and thus of nation. Settler and colonial archives as written records were used to erase Indigenous nations by casting them as relics of a completed American past

and then as exotic inspiration commodified for an exceptional American present and future (Morgensen 31-54).

Driskill's refusal to mark themselves, Tennessee, and Indian Territory with the categories of gender and sexuality in settler regimes of truth also resists the collapse of relationships, acts, bodies desires, and practices are collapsed into one another as categories of singular (as linear) identities in settler epistemology. This collapse is produced through a visual grammar determined by the heterosexual matrix which is always already part of a settler-colonial structure. Sexual and gender deviance is marked through the figure of the Indian as part of the visual grammar of the U.S. settler state and nation. The emergence of this visual grammar can be historicized within and alongside the emergence of biopower and necropower—both of which are modes of power which arise in the context of settler colonialism. This visual grammar is thus a biopolitical and necropolitical technology of settler-colonial metapolitical force.

Driskill's refusal to use gendered pronouns in a poem about eroticism, sex, desire, and love therefore does crucial decolonizing work: topography of land is topography of body as the body of a lover who touches Driskill: Tennessee's "arms, muscled rivers/you came to/each morning" (Driskill 56) and Indian Territory "comforted you/as you hugged knees to your/bruised body" (56). This is erotic touch and pleasure as a decolonial imperative (Tatonetti xx) because these are definitions of body and land and forms of collectivity not determined by heteronormativity. In other words, personhood is not determined through the heterosexual matrix, and land and body are not alienated through heteropatriarchal logics deployed at the interstices of biopower (Morgensen 1-54) and necropower (Miranda 253-284).

It is from the memory of Cherokee logics of the erotic as a praxis and as a concept that denotes the "experience, articulation, and generative nature of desire" (Tatonetti xix) that Driskill re-marks the personhood of Indian Territory and their relationship to the land of Indian Territory as a lover, according to the formulas, syllables, and incantations of Cherokee logics of body, land, and eroticism which Tennessee taught them. Driskill rewrites (literary) and remaps (visual) Indian Territory

in defiance of how the U.S. settler state “tried to erase you/forbade me to/speak your name” (Driskill 56).

Tennessee is the lover from whom the Cherokee were forcibly removed during the Trail of Tears, and Indian Territory is the lover whom the Cherokee found. The first thing Indian Territory tells Driskill is “I know you were driven away/taken from everything that/taught you love” (Driskill 56). This is Indian Territory’s immediate and direct acknowledgment of Driskill’s trauma of forced removal from Tennessee. Indian Territory also refuses to obey settler dictates to forget this loss through erasure and silence: “I don’t expect you to forget” (Driskill 56). Indian Territory—as land, as lover—has made space for Driskill’s grief and loss at the forced removal that the US settler state would erase and forbid Driskill from remembering. This space is in direct defiance of the U.S. settler state’s literary and visual command to turn the page on Tennessee through settler time as linear time. Indian Territory makes space for Driskill’s grief within their relationship as lovers so that this acknowledgement is part of the ethics of relationality between Driskill and Indian Territory. Indian Territory is the lover who has made space for Driskill’s trauma and grief so that they do not have to forget in the land of Indian Territory where the Cherokee have been forced to relocate. This is particularly poignant because, as I have discussed earlier, Indian Territory is the name given to this land by the U.S. state in order to contain the Cherokee. Yet Driskill as a Cherokee Two-Spirit poet remaps the meanings of this name according to Cherokee logics of body and land.

The reader must read (see) the words and sentences by both poetic textual voices in the same poetic space simultaneously. Indeed, the words spoken by Tennessee and Indian Territory are located on the space of the page in relation to each other through placement, punctuation, and line breaks so that the words spoken by each move into the other’s space. Tennessee and Indian Territory share this poetic space across time (1838 and 1839) and this collectivity (nationhood) is located in this space. This means that Tennessee is not forgotten and Indian Territory is not ignored, so that both are important for the survival and continuance of the Cherokee. Driskill’s grief of removal from Tennessee is marked alongside the comfort provided by Indian Territory in this poetic space shared between the three lovers.

This is confirmed by Indian Territory: “I don’t expect you to forget/only to love me as well” (Driskill 56). Settler literary and visual grammars of linearity and singularity of form of feeling are refused here: Driskill does not have to forget Tennessee in 1838 to love Indian Territory in 1839, so that grief is present in the same poetic space as love. Indeed, Indian Territory has made space for Driskill’s grief within the space of their love. The love between Tennessee, Driskill, and Indian Territory is therefore not defined according to settler definitions of love, desire, and relationships as linear as singular, that is, as both heterosexual and monogamous. Their relationship is not marked by singular straight line of settler time. Rather, it is in this poetic space mapped according to Cherokee literary and visual logics that all three poetic textual presences are marked here. It is the centering of space rather than time (Coulthard 79-83), as per Cherokee logics of nationhood, that makes these presences possible on these pages.

This non-heteronormative erotic as an ethics of relationality is highlighted in the third and fourth verses. The third verse is two words: “Love me” (Driskill 56). The use of two words and a period as punctuation signals Indian Territory’s insistence on the love between them and Driskill. This is not a form and practice of love that compels Driskill to forget Tennessee through linear as singular and heteronormative time. It is a repetition of the second verse: “love me as well” (56), which highlights survival: Driskill has survived settler violence though it is not a triumphant survival, in particular because settler violence is ongoing. Indeed, the tension between Tennessee and Indian Territory is symbolized by the third verses each speak in this specific point on the page:

(Did you know they tried to/ erase you, forbade me to speak your name?)	Love me.
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However, this tension is held onto here in this poetic space as Cherokee literary and visual space and Indian Territory’s insistence symbolized by repetition is a mark of a defiant survival of the Cherokee. The two words Indian Territory speaks to Driskill located in the space between

is a request that Driskill make space for them in the collectivity of Cherokee nationhood the way Indian Territory has made space for Driskill.

This reciprocity as part of a Sovereign Erotic as generative desire which is non-heteronormative and collective is emphasized in the fourth verse: “Love the winding trails to me/belly/the valleys at my sternum/the way I slope towards you like/promise” (Driskill 56). These words by Indian Territory are located next to the words by Tennessee about the topographies of their bodies as topographies of Driskill’s lovers so that the reader must read (see) both the “arms, muscled rivers” of Tennessee and the “winding trails to my/belly/the valleys at my sternum” (Driskill 56) of Indian Territory. This is, then, a corporeality and sensuality shared between Tennessee, Driskill, and Indian Territory in the poetic space of the page. This sensuality is not cordoned off from memory and grief and survival. Rather, this sensuality marks memory, grief, and survival on these pages in the bodies of Tennessee and Indian Territory mapped here as the bodies of Driskill’s lovers.

This memory is felt in the resonances between these topographies: the poetic note of the way Indian Territory moves towards Driskill in a sinuous and sensuous movement, that is, “the way I slope towards you” (Driskill 56), which recalls the undulation of Tennessee and Driskill’s tongues as they kissed. And as with Tennessee, land as lover and erotic touch between Indian Territory and Driskill contains knowledge: “the way I slope towards you like/promise” (56). The word “promise” has multiple meanings, including “assurance,” “possibility,” and “pledge.” All three meanings are relevant here because it is this verse that signals the beginning of a healing process for Driskill through a Sovereign Erotic as praxis. It is in and through the erotic touch and experience that Driskill’s will begin to heal and make a home again, precisely because this is a Sovereign Erotic, that is, eroticism as a Cherokee logic of body, land, and love. In this love, there is space for grief and loss alongside pleasure and joy, which are held onto together (Driskill 69-92).

It is these forms of feeling and “dimensions of peoplehood that do not register in the archive of settler governance” (Rifkin 71), and which the U.S. settler state tries continuously to erase and forbid through violent force. This Sovereign Erotic as memory—of Cherokee nationhood, of

logics of land and body, and of the trauma of settler violence—is what the U.S. settler state targets for erasure and silence through the deployment of linear time, to “erase and bury Indigenous connections to place and anaesthetize settler colonial histories” (Goeman 24). The erotic encompasses “genealogies of sensation, varied for different peoples, that trace how peoplehood inheres in forms of feeling” (Rifkin 4).

The erotic as memory and knowledge is emphasized in the four verses spoken by Indian Territory. These verses are Indian Territory’s promise made material on these pages as marks of a form of a sensuous and sensual love that is not linear, not singular, not restricted and contained to the realm of personal only (Driskill 52). Here, Indian Territory marks both the effects of settler violence on Driskill and Cherokee logics and practices of love, intimacy, and sexuality, which are grounded in the body of land as body of lover.

The first verse is, “Who comforted you/as you hugged knees to your/bruised body?” (Driskill 56) This verse is located across from Tennessee’s testimony of the violence of how the U.S. settler state “seized you” (Driskill 56)—and the bruises on Driskill’s body confirm this violence. It is this confirmation that the reader must necessarily read (see) in these verses together as the method and effect of settler violence. Driskill’s body is bruised with the violence of the forced removal and their posture indicates how Driskill tries to protect their body during this violence, but they “hugged knees to your/bruised body,” which is also a visual of someone trying to hold themselves together after a traumatic experience. Settler violence leaves bruises on the bodies of the Cherokee that contain fear and sorrow alongside pain. Pain is marked on the bodies of the Cherokee through the bruises and the transformation of their bodies into this position of sorrow and of isolation. The isolation of this grief and loss to the realm of feelings through the metapolitical binary between political and personal is, as Rifkin and Driskill have demonstrated, a biopolitical technology deployed by the US settler state to seal both the Cherokee, this violence, and these effects, in the past as finished – the turn of the page.

Alongside this pain and grief there is also pleasure and joy in this erotic space made by Indian Territory for Driskill and in the relationship be-

tween Driskill and Indian Territory as lovers: the four verses that begin with “Who” are also a literary and visual map of erotic touch and pleasure—including orgasm--shared by Indian Territory and Driskill.

The first verse recounts not only Driskill’s pain but also how Indian Territory touched them because they were in pain: the word “comforted” (Driskill 56) connotes gentleness and support, made material in the touch of Indian Territory. The second verse continues this touch: “Who laid you down/covered you with kisses” (56), in which gentleness and support are incorporated into an erotic touch so that Driskill experiences the sensation of the bruises alongside the sensation of the kisses. Both sensations are present in a parallel to how Tennessee and Indian Territory are present. Driskill’s body is marked by both bruises and kisses, and this simultaneity is marked on the page in this verse:

Who laid you down, covered you
with kisses
as you cried,
“My bones shriek like trains
filled with Nations!”

The reader must therefore read (see) both, which means that pain and grief are not forgotten or erased by Indian Territory as they lay Driskill down and cover them with kisses. That Indian Territory covers Driskill with kisses as erotic touch denotes an Indigenous defiance of the U.S. settler state’s command: “they told me not to touch/anyone again” (Driskill 56). Driskill and Indian Territory touch according to Cherokee logics of love, sexuality, intimacy as logics of body and land after the Cherokee were forced to leave Tennessee and their kisses behind.

Pleasure is indicated in the first two lines of this verse: “Who laid you down, covered you/with kisses” (Driskill 56). These are the intimate, pleasurable acts of a lover; thus this visual reinforces the personhood of Indian Territory and the relationship between them and Driskill as defined by Cherokee epistemology.

Pain is indicated in the last two lines of this verse: “My bones shriek like trains/filled with Nations!” The third line of this verse is what connect the first two (of pleasure) and the last two (of pain): “as you cried”

(Driskill 56). This sentence connotes pleasure and pain as two narratives being double-woven (Driskill 73-74) in this verse, specifically through the words “as” and “cry”: the former signals the singular moment in which there is both pleasure and pain, while the latter can denote cries of both pain and/or pleasure. It is precisely in the and/or that the work of double-weaving of these two modes of experience and feeling is located, in this moment of erotic touch and sexual intimacy between Indian Territory and Driskill.

This is underscored in the seventh verse in which Driskill reaches a sexual climax:

Who held you as you convulsed “My body is an open-mouthed moan!”

This is because of the acts of erotic intimacy mapped in the previous three verses and the specific words Driskill uses here: the words “convulse” and “open-mouthed moan” (Driskill 57) connote extreme pleasure, that is, an orgasm. However, convulsions can be described as powerful, involuntary contractions of muscles, so this can indicate pain as well. Both pleasure and pain can, in other words, cause the body to convulse. This simultaneity of meaning is also located in the word “moan,” which denotes a low sound that can signify both pain and sexual pleasure. In fact, this is exactly what is happening in this verse: this is Driskill’s experience of the pain of settler-colonial violence and the pleasure of sexual ecstasy with Indian Territory. In addition, the phrase “My body is an open-mouthed moan!” (Driskill 57) denotes this duality as an experience beyond and more than metaphor precisely through the word “is” rather than “as is” or “like.”

I argue that Driskill has double-woven two “seemingly disparate” (Driskill 74) modes of feeling, that is, pleasure and pain, into a new narrative through the marks they have made on these pages. Both are held onto in this poetic space as is the tension between them. I argue that this is an act of erotic sovereignty because Driskill marks both as political. Both signal the effects of settler-colonial violence, and the survival of the Cherokee through that violence. Both mark the erotic as a source of memory and knowledge of Cherokee logics of land, body, and desire, which nourishes Cherokee forms of life and nation.

Driskill marks historical pain and sexual pleasure in the realm of the political by defying the settler metapolitical authority that would isolate them both in the bodies of the Cherokee removed from land and removed from nationhood and erased from the national territory of the U.S. Instead, Driskill's pain is caused by the disruption of their reciprocal and pleasurable relationship with Tennessee. Driskill endures and their pleasure, and joy with Indian Territory is located in Indian Territory's recognition of their pain and grief. Thus, pain and pleasure are marked here as "collective experience and, by extension, potentially an experience of collectivity—peoplehood" (Rifkin 21).

This literary and visual map of Indian Territory and Driskill having sex in this poetic space that is shared with Tennessee is Driskill's assertion of erotic sovereignty in defiance of settler violence and violent metapolitical force. The poetic space of these pages becomes the grounds where Indian Territory "laid you down, covered you/with kisses" (Driskill 56) as the same space where Driskill "came to/each morning" in Tennessee's "arms, muscled rivers" (56). Indian Territory is not a replacement for Tennessee and Tennessee is not forgotten in Driskill's relationship with Indian Territory. Replacement and erasure are both effects of settler logics of linearity and singularity in literary and visual grammars that produce and reinforce settler epistemology. Rather, Driskill remembers the formulas, syllables, and incantations that Tennessee taught them about land, body, love, sexuality, and nationhood and remarks those logics in literary and visual form. The erotic, then, is the realm in which Driskill the poet resists and refuses the settler metapolitical authority (Rifkin 90).

The erotic is therefore a space of pleasure that is an experience of healing from trauma and pain (Driskill 54). Eroticism and sex here are not apolitical and ahistorical modes of feeling, experience, or articulation, as settler-colonial logics would dictate. Rather, sex is defined according to Cherokee epistemology and the erotic is political and public. The erotic as praxis contains memory of and space for acknowledgment of settler-colonial violence and the trauma caused by it. It is also knowledge of Cherokee formulas and syllables of body, land, sexuality, and intimacy. This is Driskill's assertion of erotic sovereignty as an integral component of Cherokee sovereignty and nationhood.

Indian Territory asks, “Who gave your body/back to you?” (Driskill 57). The previous four verses have mapped sexual intimacy between Indian Territory and Driskill. This erotic touch is a space of healing from settler violence, where there is pleasure and pain both as Driskill remaps the topographies of the bodies of the lands of Tennessee and Indian Territory according to Cherokee logics of land, body, and love.

The words “your body/back to you” (Driskill 57) mark Cherokee sovereignty as erotic and embodied. This sovereignty is grounded in land and in land as person and in land as lover. These are the formulas of Cherokee sovereignty, and Driskill marks those dark syllables in the dark ink of the words on these pages as an Indigenous archive of memory as knowledge constituted by and in the literary and visual form of this poetic space.

Driskill’s reclamation of literary and erotic sovereignty refuses settler definitions and cartographies of land and body along with the literary and visual grammars that produce and reproduce them. Cherokee sovereignty and nationhood are grounded in their homeland and in their relationship to those lands as the relationship between lovers. That Indian Territory gives Driskill’s body back to them marks Driskill’s return to their body as the return to land and as the return to Cherokee nationhood. This is because “geopolitics and biopolitics are completely knotted together in a settler colonial context” (Tuck and Yang 35).

Driskill defines the erotic as a space, mode, and tool for Indigenous sovereignty (51-52) precisely because settler metapolitical authority reconfigures categories and forms of life. This reconfiguration is based on the alienation of body and land so that both can be objectified and commodified through linear time. It is materialized through gender, sexuality, sex, intimacy, and feeling as key sites and categories of settler metapolitical authority as biopower and necropower.

Linear time manifests as heteropatriarchal logics of sexuality, gender, and space. Literary and visual cultures in settler societies reproduce linear time as settler time through verticality of form and the production of literary and visual space as dead space as only background for marks that are made. The erotic is constitutive of Indigenous sovereignty and a decolonial imperative precisely because gender and sex-

uality are crucial necropolitical and biopolitical technologies of settler colonialism.

Driskill remaps the spaces of these pages as literary and visual space according to Cherokee logics and narrates a story of decolonization as a story of erotic sovereignty in which the erotic is memory and knowledge of Cherokee logics and forms of land and body. This return to stories is a return to body, is a return to land. It is in the space and desire, and space as desire, between Tennessee, Driskill, and Indian Territory that Driskill's resistance to the literary and visual grammars of settler colonialism is located.

The last thing Indian Territory says to Driskill is “You are home./You are home” (Driskill 57). For Driskill, the journey is one of forced removal from their homelands, of violence, injustice, and loss. It has been a journey they cannot retrace to a lover they cannot go back to. The repetition may be read as reassurance and comfort—but there is also a finality, indicated by the two periods used as punctuation for each line, which signals Driskill's loss and grief for Tennessee.

Yet the Cherokee have survived and their presence is marked in this poetic space. Driskill is here in the space between Tennessee and Indian Territory and has remapped homelands according to Cherokee logics of land, body, and nationhood. Driskill marks these logics on the pages, and these marks both challenge and disrupt settler logics of literary and visual form and grammar. This poem is a story as a survival cartography in which “Scraps of stars” (Driskill 57) are marked in the dark ink and bright space of the words and symbols that mark this poetic space as home. Indian Territory speaks gently: “This is home now” (Driskill 57).

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