CALL FOR PAPERS: Landbody: Indigeneity’s Radical Commitments

The C21 conference landbody considers the implications of Native ontologies and epistemologies, emphasizing the animate, living nature of place and the conceptual primacy of connection and locale. Despite colonial incursions, Native communities continue tribal lifeways, constructing and reconstructing systems of reciprocal survival in regions and localized spaces throughout lands and other spaces occupied by and contested by colonial powers and people. Place is not a neutral backdrop. An ontological connection to a specific land comprises a central component of indigenous being, a commitment to place contrary to current celebrations of migration, individualism, and cosmopolitanism.

Two sets of questions animate this conference. First, what are the implications of these connections to the lives and practices of indigenous peoples? What are the effects of the dispossession of land, or of the concurrent settlement and control of that land by a foreign force? How does holding onto land, or fighting to retain legal claims to it, retain collective identity? How does the land communicate with the people who inhabit it, and vice versa?

Second, how do American Indian and other indigenous philosophies and lifeworlds affect, transform, and undermine the categories of the settler colonialists, such as the global capitalist presumptions of constant corporate growth and change? What echoes and ignorances underpin contemporary academic assumptions about thought and place? What are the pernicious effects and implications of the racial and settler colonial assumptions of time, space, and civilization, and how might they be resisted? What does recognizing that land is a people, animals are peoples, and the vitality of relationships between all forms of the living and non-living entail? What must theory learn from autochthony and indigeneity? Is asking such questions more about mutual respect and understanding or are they merely indirect appeals to self-satisfied settler colonial pretenses of atonement (or even an attempt to use indigenous thought to continue such colonialism)?

We seek proposals for critical, conceptual, and historical papers or creative presentations that address the questions above. Topics for proposals might include, but are not limited to:

- collective memory, diaspora, and being “out of place
- gendering locations and memory
- refusal, resistance, and rebellion
- fallacies of human/animal and culture/nature distinctions
- environmentalism and lived identity
- linguistic dwelling
- claims of justice, nationhood, sovereignty
- speculative fictions of Nations and place
- ruins, ruination, touristic economies
- distributions and circulations of knowledge
- animism and theology
- violences to land as violences to people
- foreign substances and survivance
- queering land
- repatriation and redemption
- pluralizing temporalities and “development”
- generations: reproduction and renewal alongside settler colonialism

Send abstract (250 words) and CV (1-page) by Friday, January 15, 2016 to Kennan Ferguson, Director, Center for 21st Century Studies at c21@uwm.edu
Conference website: c21.uwm.com/landbody