

“we know how to travel”: Indigenous Perspectives on More-Than-Human Movement in the Poetry of Gloria Alvernaz Mulcahy and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

September 20, 2024

In this talk, I will think through some Indigenous writers' poetic representations of more-than-human movement through water, and what these works can teach guests to Turtle Island about moving in a way that respects Indigenous peoples, their waters, and lands. Through putting into conversation several poems by Tsalagi Aniyunwiya poet Gloria Alvernaz Mulcahy from her collection *Borderlands & Bloodlines* with poems by Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson from her mixed genre collection *Islands of Decolonial Love* that each involve movements of more-than-human beings, this paper considers how these Indigenous writers represent relationality in travel. I attend to several of Mulcahy's and Simpson's poems that feature the movements of non-human animals and more-than-human beings, including whales, salmon, and spiritual beings, to discuss the Indigenous poets' renderings of more-than-human travel in connection to and conversation with waters. With attention to the poets' use of language, including Indigenous languages, I establish how the more-than-human beings' embodied, sensual, and relational modes of travel creatively engender kinship between the water, more-than-human beings who live in the water, and Indigenous peoples.

When: Friday, September 20 from 12pm to 1:30pm

Where: In person room 7-152

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