

people tell different stories, a point that should inspire future scholars to follow in Fixico's path. Second, Fixico discusses how Native people pass on oral traditions and tells how his family members shared stories with him. We meet Fixico's parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, World War II veterans and veterans of tribal politics. The book's series of stories upon stories emphasizes the generational nature of storytelling. Finally, Fixico grounds these stories in place as he relates visits to the places mentioned, such as when he and his son traveled to southern Arizona to visit the mountains in which Geronimo and the Chiricahua Apache lived (68–69).

Yet, American Indian stories are, at times, contested; non-Indians appropriate American Indian stories for their own purposes. In the chapter on warriors, Fixico defines "warriorship" as "relatives, friends and *enemies*" (70; my emphasis). In revering certain American Indian men, Fixico highlights well-known American Indian warriors such as Geronimo (Apache), Black Hawk (Sac and Fox), Osceola (Seminole), and Crazy Horse (Lakota), but also others less well-known, including World War II fighters like his Uncle Telmond and family friend Phillip Coon.

Americans have appropriated these warrior stories, however: United States airmen shout "Geronimo" as they leap from planes, the Chicago hockey team is named the "Black Hawks," and Florida State University's mascot is "Osceola" riding "Renegade." Although stating that Americans have "used" and "exploited" some of these figures, such as Crazy Horse, to "commercial advantage," Fixico stops short of critiquing cultural appropriation (84). More critical engagement with how Americans have exploited these stories may have been helpful here, or a more exclusive focus on what these men mean to American Indian communities and storytelling practices.

The prose, written for a general audience, is folksy, and readers will gain an understanding of one of the leading figures in American Indian studies. We learn about Fixico's deep family connections, his penchant for sugar (Mountain Dew and M&Ms) and disdain for hiking, although he spent a good deal of the book doing it (perhaps he needs better shoes). *That's What They Used to Say* is a welcome addition to Native American studies and history that provides a framework for people to better understand American Indian oratory. Fixico makes American Indian oral traditions relevant to other disciplines and centers stories in understanding American Indian ways of knowing. It will certainly become standard in courses and reading lists on American Indian studies and history.

William J. Bauer, Jr.
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This Wound Is a World: Poems. By Billy-Ray Belcourt. Calgary, Canada: Frontenac House Poetry, 2017. 63 pages. \$19.95 paper.

Queer and two-spirit Indigenous people find themselves at the intersection of settler-colonial and heteropatriarchal systems of control, hierarchy, and oppression. Through his poetry in *This Wound is a World*, Billy-Ray Belcourt (re)imagines a new world

through a queer lens: “what if everyone was a little bit gay? what if the creator was trans?” (12, 24). Coming at a time when it is integral to center the queer Indigenous critique in the decolonizing project, Belcourt’s work conveys the pain and trauma that queer and two-spirit Indigenous bodies hold and that make their bodies and critique so essential to decolonization.

The heteropatriarchal settler-colonial states enforced a program of gender normalization integral to their hierarchical structure of control. Considered a threat to that hierarchy, the first Indigenous peoples targeted in the Americas were those who did not align with colonialist gender norms. Queer Indigenous bodies were wished and dreamt out of existence from early colonization. Throughout *This Wound Is a World* the poet focuses on death, suicide, or not existing/ghosting. In “Gay Inclinations” he claims to be the boundary between reality and fiction, as he was dreamt out of existence (11). As he navigates the pain and invisibility of the two-spirit body, Belcourt brings forth the impact of the continued targeting of queer and two-spirit Indigenous populations.

For queer or two-spirit Indigenous sexual partners, relationships meant experiencing not only their own pain, but also that of their Native lovers. Belcourt imagines a bacteria “that could infect/the trauma away” and that their bodies “could finally begin/to heal” (26). This imagining of the power that queer and two-spirit Indigenous couples have to disrupt the pain and trauma, as well as create a process of healing, furthers their importance at the center of decolonial work as argued by Qwo-Li Driskill in *Asegi Stories: Cherokee Queer and Two-Spirit Memory* (2016). How would centering these experiences make way for a process of healing and removing the repetitive trauma and pain experienced by these bodies, as well as other bodies impacted by the settler-colonial, heteropatriarchal systems of oppression?

Queer holds different meanings for different people who identify with the term. For Belcourt, being queer means “knowing your body is both too much and not enough for this world” (30). The queer identity rejects the heteropatriarchal normalization of gender and sexuality. Connections to their community remain important for queer Indigenous people, just as they are for other Indigenous peoples. When their bodies are rejected by their communities and society, they not only do not fit the norms that the colonial structures of oppression enforce, but their identities move beyond gender and sexuality as seen by those structures, thus becoming too much for the world. The system of oppression puts them in a bind: to reject their own bodies and desires, or reject their communities and culture, a decision that remains difficult for many to process and make. How do you make the decision to accept yourself while raised in a system that encourages you to work for the community?

The rejection and pain held in queer and two-spirit Indigenous bodies causes a desire not to exist or survive any longer. He argues that “being native and queer/is to sometimes forget how to love yourself/because no one else wants to” (33). When their community rejects their queerness and the world rejects their indigeneity, where do queer Indigenous people learn to love themselves and survive? In turn, queer Indigenous people are left deciding between rejecting themselves or rejecting their communities, a struggle that Belcourt addresses through the round dance and suicide.

Belcourt describes an experience where he was rejected by a Native man in a round dance—the man refused to hold Belcourt’s hand because of his sexuality—but despite the circle being broken, the poet continued to dance. He argues, “it is a protest. And even though I know I am too queer to be sacred anymore, I dance that broken circle dance because I am still waiting for hands that want to hold mine too” (17). This brings forth the importance of centering and creating space for queer Indigenous experiences in our communities, scholarship, and activism. By choosing to center their queer Indigenous identity, two-spirit and queer Indigenous peoples are faced with rejection from their community. Choosing to reject their identity often leaves them facing death, suicide, or other conditions that come with rejection. Where does this leave them space to belong and fully accept their identity?

Their rejection in society and their community comes from a system that upholds toxic masculinity. As Belcourt imagines a different world where everyone was a little bit gay (12), he shares the story of his grandmother, who imagines a world without men. What would it look like to have a different world? If everyone were a little bit gay, would it eliminate the “othering” based on gender and sexuality? Would it create a path to heal the trauma and the pain that comes from gender-based violence? Belcourt’s grandmother envisioned a portal into the other side of her basement where “she would give birth to a world/without men/only women/made/from other women’s heartbreak” (24). What does it mean for the women to hold the pain of other women? What would a world look like that eliminated violence and oppression based on proving and upholding masculinity?

Scholars, authors, and activists use their work as a means of creating space for themselves and their identities, as well as others in their community. They hope to use their experiences and their trauma as a means of “help[ing] this city heal from its trauma;” in other words, centering their experiences, and fighting for their communities and right to survive (20). Like Driskill and other scholars, Belcourt seeks to center the queer Indigenous experience and perspective in decolonial movements. In *This Wound Is a World*, Belcourt uses his poetry as a means of analyzing his experiences in the larger context of living under a settler-colonial system of oppression and control, and also amid decolonial movements seeking to destroy systems of oppression and to reclaim Indigenous rights and belonging to land and place.

Kylie Gemmell

University of California, Los Angeles